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The Representation of Trauma
and the Therapeutic Effect of
Spirituality and Narrative in
Patricia Grace's *Cusins* (1992),
Baby No-Eyes (1998) and *Tu*
(2004)

Departamento
Filología Inglesa y Alemana

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UNIVERSIDAD DE ZARAGOZA

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University of Zaragoza 2018

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Doctor of Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

First of all, I would like to explain my background and why I decided to accomplish the difficult task of tackling the Māori situation in New Zealand during the period of British colonization and afterwards. My first academic contact with non-western literatures occurred at the University of Zaragoza in 2011. I was doing the degree in English Studies, and Dr. Dolores Herrero taught the fifth-year subject titled “Other Literatures in the English Language.” The title aroused my curiosity and I decided to enroll in the subject. After some classes, students realized that this subject belonged in the field of postcolonial studies and that the name had been properly chosen, because the syllabus of this subject was made up of literature produced by people who had their origins in colonized places, in other words, these writers were considered to be the exotic “others” from a western perspective. Then, we realized that this subject dealt with a literature that aimed at countering the influence and hegemony of the western literary canon. Reading novels such as *Midnight Children* (1981) by Salman Rushdie and *Doctor Wooreddy’s Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World* (1983) by Mudrooroo Narogin was a very gratifying literary experience, because they described historical events from a passionate, humorous, critical and undoubtedly alternative point of view. These stories clearly offered a peripheral perspective which had not been taken into consideration in the official version of history, but which was just as important to articulate a fairer account of what had actually happened. The more versions and stories we are offered of any event, the better we will be able to have a reflective and balanced opinion.

One year later I took the decision to enroll in the *Master in Textual and Cultural Studies in English* at the University of Zaragoza, as my interest in this kind of literatures had increased. Doctors Susana Onega and Dolores Herrero taught the subject “Trends in Contemporary British Fiction,” which included units on non-western literatures in which students had the opportunity to learn about relevant critical theories and authors from different geographical and cultural backgrounds. These novels examined, among other things, the way in which colonial power/knowledge had oppressed colonized peoples and their cultures with the help of metropolitan language (English in this case) and discourses. The colonization process represented a point of no return in the life of indigenous populations, as the novels analyzed in this subject clearly brought to the fore. Eventually, I chose to analyze David Malouf’s *An Imaginary Life* (1978) in my MA Thesis because this novel, in tune with postcolonial criticism, questions western ideas about linguistic and cultural hegemony. It was my interest in these ‘ex-centric’ literatures and my wish to question the ethics of contemporary western culture that finally led me to write this PhD Thesis. When I started reading the novels of Māori authors such as Witi Ihimaera and Patricia Grace, I felt hooked by their language and the antipodean context out of which they had emerged and, although this literature was particularly demanding, as it belonged in a world that was entirely unfamiliar to me, I also felt that in Patricia Grace I had discovered a writer from whom I could learn a great deal. I therefore entered a cultural universe made up of complex characters whose motivations were mainly marked by their losses and longing. Not only did they live in communities very different from our western nuclear families, but they also dressed, talked and thought differently, which triggered my curiosity even further.

This Māori literature reflected, not only the different cultural practices of this community, but also the oppression and marginalization to which these people had been

subjected. Among other things, these novels show how the descendants of the colonizers killed indigenous peoples with absolute impunity in order to grab and take control of their lands. One of my main reasons for writing this Thesis was, therefore, the belief that the traumas inherent to the processes of colonization and decolonization are by no means over yet.

As is well known, the word “trauma” derives from the Greek word meaning “wound,” which alluded to the physiological injury resulting from an external event. The concept of trauma, a western construction, was coined in the late nineteenth century; trauma acquired additional significance when survivors and witnesses of industrial and railroad accidents began to show symptoms, such as mutism, amnesia, tics, paralysis and recurrent nightmares in the absence of any observable physical injury. Later on, in the twentieth century, Sigmund Freud published his seminal work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), in which he defined traumatic neurosis as “a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli” (2015: 25). Freud related “traumatic neuroses” not only with industrial accidents, railway disasters and other accidents involving any life risks, but also with the First World War. He argued that, in the case of “war neuroses,” the fact that the same symptoms sometimes came about without the intervention of any gross mechanical force seemed at once enlightening and bewildering. One of the most important features of these neuroses was, according to him, the inability of the victims to recall the episode that provoked it, together with a simultaneous sensation of its recurrence in the present. For this reason, trauma quickly became understood, not merely as a psychic injury, but also as a wound in the memory.

The so-called ‘Post-Vietnam Syndrome,’ increasingly diagnosed in veterans in the 1970s, ultimately led to the adoption of the concept ‘Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder’

(PTSD) in the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III), published by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. The high number of post-traumatic responses resulting from the Vietnam War was attributed to the specific terrible conditions endured by the soldiers. As this Association made clear, the main feature of PTSD was the development of characteristic symptoms following a psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience. PTSD included the symptoms of what had previously been defined as shell shock, combat stress, delayed stress syndrome and traumatic neurosis. From that moment onwards, PTSD was employed to analyze the symptoms and psychological reactions of traumatized individuals regarding both human and natural catastrophes. The most relevant examples of trauma in contemporary western culture are: the Jews who suffered the Holocaust and its effects upon their descendants; the African-American people who suffered segregation; people fighting or simply involved in war zones; and raped women, among others.

In the 1980s, some of the excesses of postmodernist and deconstructionist thinking brought about a reaction, also called 'ethical turn,' aimed at promoting ethical values in aesthetic and cultural relations. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, this ever-increasing commitment to ethics dovetailed into the development of a number of critical approaches, such as cultural studies, feminist, queer, postcolonial and Marxist theories, and a new critical approach to historicism, mainly developed by Stephen Greenblatt, known as New Historicism. Trauma studies also emerged as a sub-branch of the so-called 'ethical criticism,' mainly thanks to the thrust of the Yale School of Deconstruction and the publications of critics such as Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub (1991) and Cathy Caruth (1995; 1996), to mention but some of the most outstanding. As Marita Nadal and Mónica Calvo have observed:

In different manners, the increasing interest in trauma was a response to concerns about memory, politics, representation and ethics that became prominent at the turn of the twentieth century, and which have mainly focused on the extreme forms of violence and victimization that came to light after the World War II. (2014: 1)

For early trauma critics, much poststructuralist criticism had remained indifferent to what was going on in the real world, that is, outside the text. To quote Caruth's words: "Recent literary criticism has shown an increasing concern that the epistemological problems raised by poststructuralist criticism necessarily lead to political and ethical paralysis" (1996: 11). Moreover, they suggested that linking psychoanalytical and deconstructive approaches might help to better comprehend the traumatic histories within the texts. In tune with this, they asserted that self-reflexive and anti-linear narratives should be preferred to direct and linear ones, as the latter might point to the uncomplicated overcoming of the traumatic moment. On the whole, this new theoretical field aimed at analyzing the representation and implications of human suffering, both personal and communal, mainly as shown in the increasing number of testimonial texts about the Holocaust.

Trauma studies presented themselves, not only as a powerful means to analyze ethics, politics and history, but also as an essential tool to understand the world, even to change it for the better. Most of the leading figures of this new field of study (Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub, Geoffrey Hartman, and Dominick LaCapra, among others) believed in Freud's psychoanalysis and his notion of *Nachträglichkeit* as the very foundation of trauma studies. Most of them regarded trauma as the consequence of a single extraordinary and catastrophic event, such as the Holocaust, and shared the influence of deconstruction and the Derridean concept of *aporia* as regards their definition of 'traumatic experience.'

In 1991, Felman and Laub published *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. This seminal work examines the act of witnessing, both in relation to general acts of writing and reading and those particularly related to the Holocaust. It offers a literary and clinical viewpoint, and construes for the first time the trauma of the Holocaust as a radical crisis of witnessing. Felman and Laub defended that a fragmented narrative reproduces trauma symptoms accurately because traumatic events inexorably disturb the individual's perception of chronological time. The shock of the event provokes some kind of temporal break on the victim's mind that prevents him/her from fully experiencing the event. From this moment onwards, this (non)event will recurrently return to haunt the victim, thus forcing him/her to re-experience it.

Against this formulation of trauma narratives that denies the possibility of resolution and recovery, another influential theory, mainly associated with the work of psychiatrist Judith Herman and her seminal book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (1992), also began to develop. This work was labelled as innovative because it explores the psychological consequences of the full range of traumatic life events and, most importantly, regards narrative as an empowering and effective therapeutic tool for the treatment of trauma victims. As Herman argues, when trauma narratives are properly located in their historical and social contexts, they can undoubtedly contribute to healing and recovery, since they can thus manage to integrate clinical and social perspectives. In this way, Herman explores the healing aspects of narrative in opposition to the undecidability theories put forward by classic trauma studies. She defends that personal testimony is quintessential to integrate traumatic experiences and work them through, because the reconstruction of the traumatic story in a specific context can help traumatized people to come to terms with the traumas that brought about their damaged mental condition. In other words,

this effort can lead trauma survivors to begin their process of trauma resolution by means of reorganizing their fragmented minds. Furthermore, Herman studies the similar feelings of disempowerment and denial that can be found, both in the public traumas borne by combat veterans or victims of political violence and terrorism and in private ones resulting from traumatic events, such as rape or incest. Last but not least, this critic introduces what has generated constant discussion in trauma and literary studies for the last two decades: the differences and similarities between individual and collective traumas.

In her introduction to *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1996), Caruth conceives history as being intrinsically traumatic, and trauma as a bridge between different historical experiences. Since trauma defies linguistic processing, this critic goes on to argue, the language used to describe the ‘unclaimed’ experience of trauma will always be symbolic. Moreover, Caruth focuses her study on the psychological consequences for the individual’s mind. Her conception of ethical cross-cultural engagement consequently seems to ignore collective trauma and, as a result, her trauma theory partly shirks the analysis of the practices that have for so long contributed to oppressing whole communities. Caruth’s conception of trauma is, thus, far too individualistic and, by extension, Eurocentric, as it offers a very narrow perspective of the so many cultural and collective traumas that can be found in the world. Although Caruth claims that “trauma itself may provide the very link between cultures” (1995: 11), she seems to overlook the fact that an exclusionary individualistic western framework will necessarily exclude ‘other’ cultures, thus rendering their connection impossible.

As regards Dominick LaCapra, his main interest was not only in trauma narratives and their relation to historiography, but also in their potential to play a leading role in

the processes of acting out and working over and through traumatic experiences. His seminal work, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2001), thoroughly examines the role of trauma in narratives throughout history. LaCapra's work is most useful to evaluate the different dimensions, not only of cultural trauma, but also of its intergenerational transmission. He believed in the individual's capacity to overcome the acting out of trauma (Freud's process of melancholia) to eventually work it through (Freud's process of mourning). Some other important theoretical binaries are, for him, 'loss/absence' and 'historical trauma/structural trauma.' He associates loss with specific historical events and regards it as their consequence; loss, according to him, can be mourned and worked through. On the other hand, absence is a product of structural trauma, which can only be lived with; in other words, it cannot possibly be worked through. Historical trauma is concomitant with specific events, whereas "structural trauma (like absence) is not an event but an anxiety-producing condition of possibility" (2001: 82). He also elaborated on other important concepts, such as 'founding trauma,' namely, "a trauma that should, and (in the best of all circumstances) does, raise the question of identity as a very difficult question, but that, as a founding trauma, itself becomes the basis of an identity" (2001: 161); and 'empathic unsettlement,' which implies the affective response of the historian/listener when the victim expresses her/his traumatic experience.

One of the issues that has prompted intense debate in the field of trauma studies recently is the concern shown by scholars such as Roger Luckhurst (2008), Michael Rothberg (2008), Gert Buelens and Stef Craps (2008) about earlier trauma theories' limitations. They identify some areas in which classic trauma theory needs to be decolonized because it continues focusing too much on the deconstructionist approach and on the Freudian individualistic model of trauma, where recovery is not possible and trauma develops in a never-ending state of melancholia that results in submission and

stagnation as their inevitable consequences. For his part, Rothberg presented a new project which might become the basis for a discussion about the ‘decolonization of trauma studies.’ He believes that trauma studies can be a crucial tool to analyze postcolonial literary texts. However, Eurocentrism, together with the ‘event-based’ concept of trauma as put forward by classic trauma theory, prevent us from fully acknowledging the sustained action and effects of the insidious trauma inflicted by colonialism, a kind of trauma that still persists nowadays. As he sees it, this questioning and broadening of trauma research can help to identify and understand situations of exploitation and abuse so far overlooked and neglected in mainstream western studies.

In keeping with Rothberg’s “Decolonizing Trauma Studies: A Response” (2008), many postcolonial scholars have defended the need for a new conceptual model of interpreting and analyzing trauma. To give an example, Stef Craps affirms that the founding texts of the field “tend to ignore traumatic experiences and histories of currently subordinate groups both inside and outside western society, and/or to take for granted the universal validity of definitions of trauma and recovery that have developed out of the history” (2010: 53). Trauma theory, being a western construct, has tended to focus too much on the Holocaust as the paradigm of trauma, thus marginalizing other non-western traumatic episodes. This prevalence is very dangerous because it seems to convey that the genocides committed by western countries during colonial times and afterwards are less important or, what would be even worse, that the murdering of indigenous peoples were not genocides at all. This biased model of trauma reinforces Eurocentrism and threatens to undermine non-western traumas, instead of promoting cross-cultural solidarity. For this reason, it is important that trauma studies should look beyond the western context and pay more attention to present-day insidious traumas

associated with colonial oppression so as not to make the gap between ‘them’ and ‘us’ even wider.

To make up for this gap, Rothberg propounds a redirection of trauma theory in order to achieve a more rigorous, global and ethical paradigm. He believes that it is necessary to think of alternative modalities of approaching colonial traumas in order to fight racial and political violence: “The essays in ‘Postcolonial Trauma Novels’ offer many of the tools we will need in the simultaneously intellectual, ethical, and political task of standing against ongoing forms of racial and colonial violence” (2008: 232). Accordingly, he defends the need to involve postcolonial literature in trauma studies, because surveying traumatic literary texts that expound the cultural specificity of subordinate groups creates an alternative canon of trauma novels that should be utterly significant, both in trauma and postcolonial studies. Therefore, a decolonized trauma theory needs to reconsider the alliance between postcolonial and trauma theory in order to do away with former Eurocentric attitudes and find new ways of managing trauma. As is stated by Anne Whitehead (2004), trauma fiction actually borrows from postcolonial fiction in its use of stylistic devices, its concern with the recovery of memory, and its interest in bringing marginalized or silenced stories to public consciousness.

In the 1980s, Professor Jeffrey C. Alexander coined the term ‘cultural sociology’ as a sub-discipline of sociology. This new sociological approach turned the focus from the individual to the collective and tried to renovate fields such politics, economics and law by reevaluating the sociological understanding of these disciplines in relation with social action. Besides, it presented a model of cultural trauma which put the emphasis on institutional and power actions and how they affect collective groups of people over prolonged periods of time. As has already been argued, the individualization of trauma

has given rise to thorough debate because it is closely connected with the impossibility to recognize 'colonial trauma' as a collective experience. As a matter of fact, the western ideology of the ruling class in command tended to privilege the individualization of trauma and psychological healing as a way to maintain their status. It was in that context that the clinical psychologist and Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, Laura S. Brown, exposed her ideological and political approach to trauma studies. In her article "Not Outside the Range: One Feminist Perspective on Psychic Trauma" (1991), she discusses the canonical definition of trauma that appears in the American Psychiatric Association's DSM-III-R, which describes trauma as "an event that is outside the range of human experience" (1987: 247). This 'event-based' trauma definition does not consider to be traumatic chronic psychic distress produced by forms of structural violence, such as racism, sexism, and classism. The problem in Brown's opinion is that the dominant elites determine the public discourse on trauma. She emphasizes the need to reconsider current definitions of trauma, and encourages the use of the concept 'insidious trauma' (coined by the feminist therapist Maria Root) in trauma studies in order to push the limitations of the field a step further. In this way, trauma theory will begin to take into consideration people from oppressed social groups "for whom insidious trauma is a way of life" (1995: 108). In other words, she asserts that trauma occurs within the social, historical and political context and that, from an ethical and moral point of view, a cultural approach to people who have experienced trauma becomes necessary for a truly decolonization of early trauma theory. Root's notion of 'insidious trauma' offers a useful framework in order to understand certain long-term consequences of the institutionalized sexism, racism, and classism that has systematically denigrated the socially 'othered.' The members of marginalized groups, victims of numerous political and social injustices, have often been diagnosed with an

individual illness that can only be cured when the individual finally gains linguistic control over his/her pain. The outcome of this is that individualization neutralizes collective action against political, social and economic inequalities, because the traumas borne by colonized people are collective in nature and impossible to locate in an event that took place at a singular, historically specific moment in time.

As Sam Durrant (2004: 22) asserts, literature functions as collective memory, strives to engage us as a collective, and invites us to participate in the creation of a community. This in turn means that collective trauma may not be fully analyzed unless the object of the investigation is directed towards communities and their sociocultural frameworks. From the perspective of postcolonial theory, colonial trauma must be explored in connection with the history of colonialism, through the narratives of victims and perpetrators alike, so that a wider scope can be achieved. In order to accomplish this task, the use of postcolonial narratives can be a useful mechanism to offer traumatized people the possibility to come to terms with their repressed wounding, and thus pave the way to their recovery.

In *The Splintered Glass: Facets of Trauma in the Post-Colony and Beyond* (2011), Dolores Herrero and Sonia Baelo-Allué speak in favour of a change from the precedent deconstructionist and psychoanalytic trauma approach towards a sociological orientation in postcolonial trauma studies, because “events are not inherently traumatic, since the effect of trauma depends on the socio-cultural context of the society affected and, for an event or situation to acquire the dimension of trauma, it must have destabilized the structures of meaning of a collectivity” (2011: xiii). They also suggest that cultural trauma should concern the real experiences of people rather than being an exclusive theoretical discipline. As is well known, Frantz Fanon’s theory has been quite useful to analyze the specificities of trauma in colonial settings because it expounds the

negative effects that the colonized have suffered as a result of constant exposure to violence and othering. He asserts that the only possibility for the black colonized is to wear a white mask, which unavoidably alienates them from themselves. These victims end up assuming and internalizing the colonial discourse and, consequently, lose their self-esteem and confidence. Moreover, Fanon develops Hegel's Master/Slave paradigm by exploring the relations of oppression between the colonizers and the colonized. He criticizes the racist structure of colonialism, which deprives the colonized of agency and imbues them with a lethal complex of inferiority and sense of unbelonging.

Similarly, in "Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects," Irene Visser pointed out that: "An openness to indigenous belief systems and their rituals will give access to explorations of specific ways in which postcolonial fiction expresses new avenues towards the perception of trauma, its aftermath, and possible resolution" (2016: 19). She argued that Rothberg's project of decolonizing trauma theory must explore and introduce non-western religious and spiritual traditional practices in the analysis of postcolonial trauma narratives in order to achieve a more fruitful and diverse area of investigation. Thus, the response to previous trauma theory, in which spirituality and non-western healing practices were typically ignored, should incorporate the different traditions and ceremonies of non-western cultures as essential elements that will undoubtedly help colonized people to recover from their traumatic experiences.

During colonization, the feeling of cultural and religious superiority over the colonized was the Eurocentric colonialist tendency. The colonizers imposed Christianity on the natives, at the same time as they tried to erase their cultures and beliefs, which caused deep insidious traumas and feelings of unbelonging in the colonized communities. Postcolonial fiction has often denounced the way in which indigenous cultures and cosmogonies were disintegrated. In order to make amends for past wrongs,

the Eurocentric belief of ideological supremacy, together with western cultural prejudices, should be duly recognized and overturned in the process of decolonization of trauma theory. The scope of trauma theory must therefore be liberated from its constraints in order to integrate non-western narratives, in which trauma is placed in the context of indigenous rich spiritual traditions. In other words, a comprehensive research effort is needed in order to determine the efficacy of spiritual/religious beliefs, experiences, and practices on persons from different socio-cultural backgrounds.

An instance of the link between spirituality, resilience, and mental health in Māori culture is Mason Durie's *Whaiora: Māori Health Development* (1994). This work presents a four-sided health system, known as *te whare tapa whā* (a four-sided house) model, which acknowledges the positive contribution that spirituality makes to Māori physical and mental health, taking into account the interdependence that exists, not only between the mind, spirit and the body, but also between the individual and the community (the family). This study brings to the fore, not only the positive relationship between spirituality and health in the Māori community, but also the great impact that environmental and social circumstances have on Māori physical, mental and spiritual health.

This notion of spirituality is precisely the pillar of the two major conceptual models that exist, to some degree, in the world's religions: the duality model and the unity model. The duality model predominates in western religions; God is seen as separate from human beings but able to affect us on all levels. Prayer and meditation are the main methods of communicating with and attuning oneself to God, and all healing and moral guidance ultimately come from God. On the other hand, the unity model predominates in Eastern thought, as well as in the mystic traditions of many religions. According to this model, from a spiritual level we are part of God because we are all

one within the ‘oneness of the universe,’ and healing and ethical decisions arise from connecting with that oneness. Prayer and meditation are methods to connect with that cosmic or spiritual oneness. A wide range of spiritual healing traditions emphasize the central importance of the connection of all life to spiritual or cosmic realities. Healing is usually understood as the restoration of the much-desired condition of wholeness or harmony through cultural rituals and spirituality. Religion and spirituality thus contribute to arousing positive emotions by means of enhancing strong individual and communal beliefs. In the case of Māori people, for instance, spirituality and rituals can help them to internalize and accept their sense of loss and helplessness in order to prompt a process of recovery. Māori holistic worldview and its spiritual practices emphasize the reciprocal support and care of people, because they promote human virtues such as *aroha* (love), *whakapapa* (bond with their ancestors) and interdependence with nature, which help to maintain and strengthen community bonds. These are the cultural values that help Māori to cope with colonial mistreatment and insidious trauma by directly increasing positive emotions and neutralizing negative ones.

Over the last century, the government of New Zealand claimed that its main aim was to integrate indigenous peoples in order to form one nation. Nevertheless, the problem of this forced ‘integration’ was that its only purpose was the enforcement of different forms of ‘assimilation,’ without ever taking into account the opinion of Māori people. As a matter of fact, Māori became British, and then New Zealand citizens, no later than Pakeha. Consequently, they demanded the end of assimilationist policies and respect for their own culture. In other words, they wanted to replace assimilation by self-determination as the only way to overcome a collective trauma that had seriously damaged the perception of their own race and culture, thereby altering their sense of

identity. European colonial discourse had forced colonized people to perpetuate the very system that oppressed them. A very effective means to achieve this was, without doubt, linguistic colonization, because language has decisive effects upon people's consciousness. Speaking the language of the colonizers means accepting and internalizing their culture, and by extension their collective consciousness, which identifies the colonized as inferior and childish. The internalization of all of these negative self-images eventually led Māori to feel frustrated and incapable of performing any task or responsibility. With a view to airing all of these issues, this Thesis will acknowledge the centrality of language and the oral tradition in Māori culture, all the more so when it comes to working through trauma. Taking as examples works written by Toni Morrison and Patricia Grace, Irene Visser (2016: 16) claims that postcolonial fiction demonstrates that trauma can be narrated with integrity, and that oral storytelling not only enables a process that allows insight, acceptance, and access to various modes of redress, but it also becomes a communal ritual that paves the way for healing, as it connects past and present while drawing upon the ancestors and their sacred power to restore harmony and health.

The wound of trauma damages personal and collective structures of meaning, which results in confusion about reality; the disruption of indigenous identities was nothing but the outcome of internalizing otherness as an imposed social construction. It could also be argued that the nineteenth- and twentieth-century racism that caused Māori insidious trauma has been nowadays replaced by another form of covert, indirect and inexplicit racism, which operates at all cultural and institutional levels in New Zealand and is articulated through cumulative aggressions against Māori. As a result of this and the low socio-economic and cultural position that they occupy in New Zealand, this community is still suffering a number of mental and physical problems. One of the main

purposes of current trauma theory should therefore be to prevent any individual or community from being represented by fixed binary structures of the kind ‘self vs. other’ and ‘we vs. them.’

My PhD project seeks to contribute to the project of decolonizing trauma studies by carrying out a textual study of three specific novels by Patricia Grace: *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) and *Tu* (2004). In particular, this Thesis intends to explore how these novels address the aforementioned ethical and literary concerns raised by trauma studies. As was argued before, early trauma theory will not be enough to study Grace’s narratives because it takes for granted the European ethnocentric conceptions of trauma and recovery, and this approach fails to acknowledge the traumatic experiences of the Māori community. This biased perspective, rather than promoting cross-cultural solidarity, contributes instead to the perpetuation of western beliefs, practices and structures that preserve dominant injustices and inequalities.

In her prolific *oeuvre*, Grace deals with a great variety of topics: loss of Māori cultural values; land dispossession; social inequalities; colonial racism and neocolonial practices; Māori autonomy, resilience and political activism, etc. However, trauma, identity problems and loss can be regarded as the main themes that bind together the three novels analyzed in this Thesis. Grace’s fiction provides a new epistemological framework from which to analyze the on-going harmful effects of personal and collective traumas. *Cousins*, *Baby No-Eyes* and *Tu* were chosen as the main corpus of this study because, in my opinion, they are the best examples to illustrate the insidious trauma that the Māori community has endured from the colonization period until the present moment. Furthermore, they probe how Māori people can use their cultural and racial pride as weapons to reassemble their fragmented identities and begin a process of healing, supported by the love of their communities. These three novels depict Māori

characters as rather different from Pakeha: despite their marginality and poverty, they cling to fundamental spiritual values and the *aroha* towards their community, in clear contrast to Pakeha, who are mainly characterized by materialism, individualism and selfishness. Although, at the beginning of *Cousins*, Mata wanders alone, silent and aimless, she eventually manages to end up firmly rooted in her community, with a strong sense of membership and belonging. Mata has embraced the ancient Māori spiritual and cultural values and the love/*aroha* of her *whānau*¹ as her last hope to work through her trauma, because it is in her *whānau* that she finds her true sense of belonging and a new vision of the world thanks to the help of Māori cosmovision and traditions. In *Baby No-Eyes*, Te Paania is similarly able to recover from the death of her husband and daughter with the help and love of her *whānau*. Likewise, in *Tu*, Tu is able to overcome his insidious trauma only after returning to his ancestral land and admitting that he needs his family to go on with his life. The three novels emphasize the importance of their protagonists' integration into their Māori community and culture. Grace makes it clear in her work that Māori cannot work through their insidious trauma in isolation. Thus, the active role of protection that the community plays in these stories becomes crucial for the redressal of Māori grievances and the overcoming of their traumatic experiences.

These three novels disclose the hideous history of cultural dispossession and colonial wrongdoings suffered by the Māori community. In this way, they allowed me to introduce and make use of the ethical discourse posed by the 'scholar of the future' (as described by Derrida in *Specters of Marx*); in tune with the project of decolonizing trauma studies started by Rothberg, I wanted to carry out an analysis which might foster

¹ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'whānau': 2. (noun) extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people - the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society. In the modern context the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members.

a fairer society. Although I have mainly relied on Derrida's theories, in the chapter devoted to *Baby No-Eyes*, I strongly believe that these three novels invite readers to make the hauntological reading that Derrida proposes when formulating his theory of "demi-deuil" (mid-mourning) better than the rest of her work. Furthermore, these narratives emphasize the need to ontologize the spirits/ghosts of the past in order to develop one's spirituality and achieve mental peace and balance; only after incorporating the past into the traumatized self and relying on resilience emanating from cultural and spiritual values can traumatized people be able to work through and over their traumas. This hauntological reading entails never-ending mourning, which incorporates the ghosts of the past, not as western negative conceptions, but rather as positive figures that can teach people about the mistakes and wrongdoings committed in the past. These ghosts appear in these three novels in order to denounce and vindicate past colonial injustices and crimes that keep Māori collective memory alive: Mata's mother and Kui Hinemate in *Cousins*, Riripeti and Baby in *Baby No-Eyes*, and Tu's relatives in *Tu*. Māori will not leave their ancestors behind because they alone can help the community to question and defy western hegemonic discourses, condemn the injustices of the past, and pave the way for an inspiring future.

Moreover, these three stories masterfully illustrate that the verbalization of trauma, whether oral or written, is quintessential in the process of reorganizing the fragmented memories of the traumatic self. They highlight how the colonial oppressive regime has silenced the Māori community for a long time, and that this is the main source of the insidious trauma experienced by many of them to date. *Cousins*, *Baby No-Eyes* and *Tu* endow Māori people with the confidence they need to utter their stories without fear; in them, Māori voices dare to challenge racist colonial discourses and reinforce their own culture and traditions. In contrast to what early trauma aporetic theory claimed, Grace's

characters make use of oral storytelling and war diaries to describe the harm done to Māori individuals and their communities and to provide them with the tools they need to overcome their traumas. The characters in these narratives revisit not only their own past but also that of the whole Māori community, and end up being the owners of their own stories and offering new perspectives that question and counter the official historical version of past events. Besides, they use both English and the Māori language as weapons against the colonial authorities because, as can be inferred in these novels, language can become a powerful weapon to subvert the power discourse of the colonizers. Likewise, the oral tradition is shown as an essential element in their process of healing because, as was argued before, Māori stories have the power to bring fragmented memories together and retrieve Māori dignity by imprinting pride of race on them.

My study will consist of four chapters. The first one, “Patricia Grace and the Rise of the Māori Renaissance in the Land of the Long White Cloud,” will provide a brief outline of the history of Aotearoa/New Zealand, to which both Māori and Pakeha belong. An overview of key moments with regard to the cultural history and politics of New Zealand will allow for a better understanding of the reasons that have brought about Māori insidious trauma over numerous generations. This outline will focus, not only on the relations between Māori and Pakeha within a postcolonial environment, but also on the inequities and discrimination that can still be found in a society controlled by the Pakeha majority. The second part of this chapter will be devoted to the Māori Renaissance that took place in New Zealand in the 1970s. It will briefly explore the main literary works and authors of this cultural movement. Moreover, it will explain the political, social and historical context in which this artistic movement originated so that it can be properly understood. The Māori Renaissance was not a static or monolithic

movement: it tried to re-tell the Eurocentric/official version of history with the help of the voices and experiences of Māori people who had remained silenced during the ignominious colonial period; recreated a world in which Māori cultural epistemology occupied a central space; and provided diverse responses to the mistreatment suffered for a long time. This chapter will describe the Māori Renaissance as a movement that was continually growing and changing depending on the socio-historical situation of New Zealand. The final section of the chapter will offer a biographical sketch of Grace's life and works with a view to placing her in the context of the Māori social and cultural movements that have occurred in New Zealand from the 1950s till the present moment before accomplishing the analysis of her three novels.

The second chapter, "Insidious Trauma, Blood and the Healing Function of *Aroha* and Resilience in Patricia Grace's *Cousins*," is concerned with the way in which *Cousins* tackles the long-term insidious trauma undergone by Māori during the colonial period and afterwards; as this novel makes clear, Māori trauma is not the outcome of a unique time-bound horrible event, but rather of a life full of abuses and mistreatment. In addition, it will explain how the colonizers tried to erase Māori culture and traditions by imposing upon them a racist colonial education based on physical and psychological violence and abuse, and how Pakeha systematically 'othered' indigenous populations as a way to reinforce their colonial discourse and maintain their privileged position in New Zealand society. As Fanon (1952) argues, western civilization and its culture are responsible for colonial racism, and insists on stating that a continuous and enduring exposure to disempowerment and denial of autonomy makes socially mistreated alienated groups develop and internalize a destructive psychological system of self-hatred and insecurity. Since trauma victims internalize the blame imposed upon them by the colonizers, Kalí Tal (1996) concludes, they will end up believing that it was they

who brought their suffering upon themselves. The first section of this chapter will explain the importance of the 'kaupapa Māori psychology,' based on the holistic cosmovision of the Māori community, with the help of Mason Durie's (1994) description of these indigenous beliefs. This model is, basically, a four-sided system, which consists of the spiritual, the mental, the physical, and the familiar as the four pillars upon which the health of a member of the Māori community depends. Furthermore, this chapter will pay special attention to some Māori cultural elements exposed in the novel, such as spiritual beliefs, mythology, *aroha* (love) and tradition, mainly because of the importance they have in all Māori communities. The integration of Māori spirituality and cultural values will be regarded as quintessential to trigger off the healing process of the characters and reinforce the cultural responsibilities of support and care that Māori have to one another. This chapter will therefore emphasize that Māori cannot start the process of trauma recovery without their spirituality, their culture and, most important of all, the support and love of their communities.

The third chapter, "The Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma, Identity and Language in Patricia Grace's *Baby No-Eyes*," will deal with a controversial topic in our contemporary world: bio-colonialism. It will denounce the unethical appropriation of the eyes of a Māori little baby perpetrated by Pakeha doctors in the novel. The true event depicted in *Baby No-Eyes* signals the on-going colonization of Māori; Pakeha people take Māori body parts in the present just as they took Māori land and resources in the past; they do not care about the ethical implications of their acts, it is only their profit that matters. The desecration of Baby perpetrated by Pakeha doctors provokes the deep trauma of her mother, Te Paania, and of her granny, Gran Kura which, as Smith (1999), Najita (2006), Keown (2005) and Mutu (2011) point out, means the perpetuation of colonization in the twenty-first century. This chapter will also make

reference to some of Freud and LaCapra's theories in order to better understand Derrida's conception of an interminable mourning, which he labelled as 'mid-mourning.' These theories also point to the importance of the intergenerational transmission of trauma, so prominent in Grace's novel. In *Baby No-Eyes*, it is Tawera who inherits the Māori trauma of colonization, till he eventually becomes what Derrida (1994) calls a 'scholar of the future' and Fanon (1963) describes as a 'native intellectual': he is finally able to work through his trauma without leaving behind the ghosts of his past. This chapter will also rely on the revision that Stuart Hall made of Michel Foucault's theories of power/knowledge in order to explore how colonial Pakeha institutions have imposed their racist discourse on the indigenous populations of Aotearoa during and after colonization. In short, this chapter will show how colonial power/knowledge made use of a supremacist discourse that regarded indigenous peoples and their languages as inferior to the superior cultural knowledge imparted in the colonial schools. The last section of this chapter will discuss the role of language as a site of resistance with the help of some theories put forward by bell hooks (1989, 1994), Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) and Bill Ashcroft (1989). Finally, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* will also be mentioned in relation to Grace's novel in order to prove that the colonized can also use the language and culture of the colonizers to undermine the establishment from within.

The fourth chapter, titled "Traumatic Lack of Recognition, Postwar Annihilation and the Therapeutic Effect of Narrative in Patricia Grace's *Tu*," will deal with the Master/Slave dialectic, initially posed by Hegel (1807) and later developed by Fanon (1952) when discussing colonial relationships, with a view to explaining the lack of recognition that the Māori who fought in the World Wars received by Pakeha when they came back home. Firstly, this chapter will offer an overview of the Māori struggle for

the acknowledgement of equality, and will make it clear that it was the subsequent denial of their rights in their own country that further increased Māori alienation. This chapter will also link the characters' identity problems with Lacan's interpretation of Hegel and Freud's concept of desire in relation to identity. Moreover, it will explain that Pakeha authorities established a blood quantum classification with the intention of assimilating, even extinguishing, indigenous populations. The ethical theory about identity politics posed by Nancy Fraser (2005; 2009) will also be introduced in order to confirm that creating fairer societies is, after all, possible. As this critic argues, social equality can be achieved through economic redistribution and social recognition. Therefore, if Māori characters are able to make their political voices heard, they will in turn have a chance to change the power relations rooted in the colonial structure of power established in New Zealand. The last section of this chapter will focus on Judith Herman (1992) and Irene Visser's (2016) theories on literature's potential to help people overcome their traumas, in opposition to the aporetic conclusions about the impossibility of representing trauma put forward by earlier trauma critics, such as Caruth (1995; 1996) and Felman and Laub (1991). It will argue that Grace's novel is a good example of LaCapra's concept of 'writing trauma,' since the traumatic experiences narrated by Tu undoubtedly contribute to fostering his healing process. In addition, this chapter will analyze Grace's novel by using Jeffrey C. Alexander's (2012) social theories on the cultural construction of collective traumas via narrative and the promotion of political action to enforce social change.

In short, this Thesis will study Patricia Grace's *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) and *Tu* (2004) in an attempt to support the ethical project of decolonizing trauma that can give way to a rather more inclusive model of interpreting and analyzing the collective/cultural traumas of non-white peoples. It will bring into focus the traumatic

experiences of Māori people as told by themselves and from their own perspective, together with the cultural, social, political, and historical conditions that made them possible, with a view to denouncing the cultural and political abuses that are still perpetuating Māori inequalities and pain at present.

CHAPTER 1

PATRICIA GRACE AND THE RISE OF THE MĀORI RENAISSANCE IN THE LAND OF THE LONG WHITE CLOUD

The Origin of *Aotearoa* and the Construction of New Zealand

As a Māori, I don't actually believe that there is any difference between what is history, what is reality, and what is fantasy. As far as I'm concerned, the whole world is imbued with and energized by legend, by a sense of spirituality and other-worldliness; it's something that I believe in. Memory for me is not a legendary voice; and because our culture has been maintained by the voice rather than the written word, I tend to look at our stories as having their own truth.

*Witi Ihimaera, Spiritcarvers: Interviews with Eighteen Writers
from New Zealand*

In Polynesian mythology, Māui is the gifted, witty demigod responsible for fishing up the North Island of Aotearoa. After a miraculous birth and upbringing, Māui won the affection of his supernatural parents, taught useful arts to mankind, snared the sun and tamed fire. Despising him, Māui's four brothers conspired to leave him behind when they went out fishing. Overhearing their plans, Māui secretly made a fishhook from a magical ancestral jawbone. Then one night he crept into his brothers' canoe and hid under the floorboards. It was not until the brothers were far out of sight of land and had filled the bottom of their canoe with fish that Māui revealed himself. Then he took out his magic fishhook and threw it over the side of the canoe, chanting powerful incantations as he did so. The hook went deeper and deeper into the sea until Māui felt the hook had touched something. He tugged gently and far below the hook caught fast. It was a huge fish! Together with his brothers, Māui brought the fish to the surface. Māui cautioned his brothers to wait until he had appeased Tangaroa, the god of the sea,

before they cut into the fish. They grew tired of waiting and began to carve out pieces for themselves. These are now the many valleys, mountains, lakes and rocky coastlines of the North Island. To this day the North Island is known to Māori as Te Ika a Māui or Māui's fish. The South Island is also known as Te Waka a Māui or Māui's canoe, and Stewart Island or Rakiura is known as Te Punga a Māui or Māui's anchor stone.² Māori were the first inhabitants of New Zealand or Aotearoa, meaning "Land of the Long White Cloud."

According to the Māori oral tradition, the first explorer to reach New Zealand was Kupe. Using the stars and ocean currents as his navigational guides, he ventured across the Pacific on his *waka hourua*³ from his ancestral Polynesian homeland of Hawaiiki. Archaeologists date the arrival of Polynesians to Aotearoa around 1000 years ago. It is believed that Māori came from an island or group of islands in Polynesia in the South Pacific Ocean. There are some similarities between the Māori language and culture and others from Polynesia including the Cook Islands, Hawaii, and Tahiti. More *waka hourua* followed Kupe over the next few hundred years, landing at various parts of New Zealand. Today, Māori *iwi*⁴ can trace their entire origins and *whakapapa*.⁵ The seven canoes that arrived in Aotearoa were called Tainui, Te Arawa, Matatua, Kurahaupo, Tokomaru, Aotea and Takitimu.

Although a Dutchman, the explorer Abel Tasman, was the first European to lay sight on the country, it was the British who actually colonized New Zealand. Tasman

² <http://www.newzealand.com/us/feature/the-legend-of-new-zealand/>

³ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'waka hourua': 1. (noun) double canoe.

⁴ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'iwi': 1. (noun) extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

⁵ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'whakapapa': 4. (noun) genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent - reciting whakapapa was, and is, an important skill and reflected the importance of genealogies in Māori society in terms of leadership, land and fishing rights, kinship and status. It is central to all Māori institutions.

was leading an expedition to discover a great southern continent, 'Great South Land,' that was believed to be rich in minerals and precious metals. In 1642, while searching for this continent, Tasman sighted a large high land which was the West Coast of the New Zealand's South Island. Tasman annexed the country for Holland under the name of 'Staten Landt' (Statesland), because he took it that it was connected to a landmass of the same name at the southern tip of South America. In 1645, Dutch cartographers renamed the land 'Nova Zeelandia' after the Dutch province of Zeeland. Finally, it was explorer James Cook who anglicized the name to 'New Zealand.'

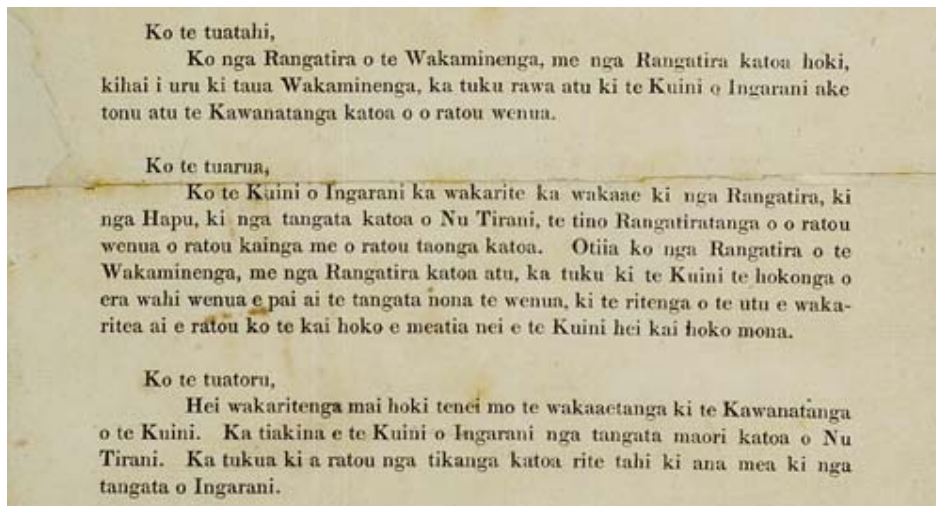
The first European contact with native New Zealanders (Māori) took place in what is now called Golden Bay, in the South Island. In the confrontation between Tasman's men and the Māori four of the explorer's men got killed. Tasman never actually set foot on New Zealand, but after sailing up the West Coast, went on to some Pacific Islands, and then back to Batavia (now Jakarta) in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). Since Tasman failed to find treasures or anything deemed profitable, his mission to New Zealand was considered to be unsuccessful by his employers, the Dutch East India Company. Captain James Cook, sent to Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus, was also tasked with the search for the great southern continent believed to exist in the southern seas. Cook successfully circumnavigated and mapped the country, and led two more expeditions to New Zealand before he was killed in Hawaii in 1779.

Prior to 1840, it was mainly whalers, sealers, and missionaries who came to New Zealand. These early European settlers had considerable contact with the Māori, especially in coastal areas. The Māori and Pakeha (Europeans) traded extensively, and some Europeans lived among the Māori. The contribution of guns to Māori intertribal warfare, along with European diseases, led to a high decline in the Māori population at that time. Being the remotest lands, Australia and New Zealand were the last territories

to receive people from Europe. Migrants sailed in four main waves. From 1788 to 1856 came the convicts with the odd runaway across the Tasman. From 1830 to 1850 came free and assisted migrants, including the systematic colonizers who built Adelaide, Wellington, Dunedin and Christchurch. The New Zealand Company dispatched nearly 10,000 settlers to New Zealand in the 1840s, among whom were more children than adult males. From 1850 to 1870 came gold-seekers to Victoria and then New Zealand. The waves created huge imbalances and expectations, the biggest being an excess of men. Fourth came the real tsunami of large families and planned migration from 1860 to 1890. New Zealand gained nearly 300,000 residents from migration between 1861 and 1890, but from the mid-1870s Pakeha society grew mainly by having children.

More and more immigrants settled permanently in New Zealand, and they were not always fair in their dealings with the Māori over land. A number of Māori chiefs sought protection from William IV, the King of England, and recognition of their special trade and missionary contacts with Britain. They feared a takeover by nations like France, and wanted to stop the lawlessness of British people in their country. On 28 October 1835, James Busby, the British official sent to the Bay of Islands to control the British expansion, called a *hui* (meeting) at Waitangi. Thirty-four northern chiefs who became known as the Confederation of United Tribes signed “A Declaration of the Independence of New Zealand” and called upon King William IV of Britain to become their “parent” and “Protector.” They also thanked the King for acknowledging their flag. The declaration asserted the independence of Nu Tirene (New Zealand) under the rule of the “United Tribes of New Zealand,” with a plan to meet in Congress at Waitangi each autumn to frame laws. By 1839, 52 chiefs had signed the declaration, which was acknowledged by the British government. Busby saw it as a significant mark of Māori national identity and believed it would prevent other countries from making formal

deals with the Māori.⁶ New Zealand was created after the hardening of British penal policy in the 1830s, which strengthened New Zealanders' belief that they could be nothing but morally superior to Australians. As British settlement increased, the British Government decided to negotiate a formal agreement with Māori chiefs to become a British Colony. Subsequently, they drew up the Treaty of Waitangi in English and translated it into Māori. The Māori version of the treaty was signed at Waitangi by 46 *raNgātira* (chiefs) on 6 February 1840. The problem was that the English version of the Treaty contained some important differences in relation to the Māori version:



Most Māori chiefs signed the Māori-language version of the treaty at Waitangi on 6 February 1840 or later in the north and at Auckland. Here is a recent translation of the articles of the Māori version:

⁶ <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/interactive/the-declaration-of-independence>

The First

The chiefs of the Confederation and all the chiefs who have not joined that Confederation give absolutely to the Queen of England for ever the complete government over their land.

The Second

The Queen of England agrees to protect the chiefs, the subtribes and all the people of New Zealand in the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship over their lands, villages and all their treasures. But on the other hand the chiefs of the Confederation and all the chiefs will sell land to the Queen at a price agreed to by the person owning it and by the person buying it (the latter being) appointed by the Queen as her purchase agent.

The Third

For this agreed arrangement therefore concerning the government of the Queen, the Queen of England will protect all the ordinary people of New Zealand and will give them the same rights and duties of citizenship as the people of England.⁷

Anglican missionaries drafted different texts of the treaty, in Māori and in English. Māori chiefs signed a Māori version, in which the Māori ceded, not *rangatiratanga* (sovereignty) or chieftainship, but *kāwanatanga* (governorship). In the English versions of the treaty the chiefs ceded all their rights and powers of sovereignty which they held over their respective territories:

Article the first

The Chiefs of the Confederation of the United Tribes of New Zealand and the separate and independent Chiefs who have not become members of the Confederation cede to her Majesty the Queen of England absolutely and without reservation all the rights and powers of Sovereignty which the said Confederation or Individual Chiefs respectively

⁷ <https://teara.govt.nz/en/document/4216/the-three-articles-of-the-treaty-of-waitangi>

exercise or possess, or may be supposed to exercise or to possess over their respective Territories as the sole sovereigns thereof.

Article the second

Her Majesty the Queen of England confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand and to the respective families and individuals thereof the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession; but the Chiefs of the United Tribes and the individual Chiefs yield to Her Majesty the exclusive right of Preemption over such lands as the proprietors thereof may be disposed to alienate at such prices as may be agreed upon between the respective Proprietors and persons appointed by Her Majesty to treat with them in that behalf.

Article the third

In consideration thereof Her Majesty the Queen of England extends to the Natives of New Zealand Her royal protection and imparts to them all the Rights and Privileges of British Subjects.⁸

Although successive governments believed the Treaty enabled complete sovereignty over the Māori, their lands and resources, the Māori believed that the treaty guaranteed their *rangatiratanga* and maintained their enjoyment of their possessions and resources. Yet, as the settler population came to outnumber the Māori population, the Treaty proved a small obstacle to the rapid alienation of Māori land, which was accomplished partly through institutions of government such as the Native Land Court. The breach of the treaty by Pakeha only sharpened Māori resolve to assert an independent and regional identity.

⁸ <https://teara.govt.nz/en/document/4216/the-three-articles-of-the-treaty-of-waitangi>

Australian and New Zealand indigenous experiences are frequently contrasted because the Waitangi treaty implies respect for Māori rights and traditions. However, the British settlers used the treaty to mask the imperial colonization of New Zealand by means of the Crown right of pre-emption to alienate Māori land through purchase. Tensions had simmered on interpreting the treaty since 1840. Most Pakeha assumed that the English version was the reliable treaty, and differences from the Māori text did not enter their narrative. In the Pakeha narrative the treaty changed from being valid and binding, to non-binding. The Britanno-Māori wars themselves violated treaty promises, as did the bitter dispossession and the ignominious descent into poverty of Māori people.

Worried about the threat to their property rights posed by European notions that right of property to land derived from working on it, the Māori protested in 1847 that their land, guaranteed in the treaty, was under threat. They perceived that the aim of British land policy was to secure land for settlers, who were growing in number and demanding land. The government did indeed have a significant interest in revenue from the sale to settlers of land bought cheaply from the Māori. The nineteenth-century Land Wars were the consequence of various abuses, and the result was the massive dispossession of ancestral land as retribution. Significantly, the Land Wars were not only about land but also the British government's determination to destroy Māori *mana motuhake*.⁹ Hence, the British army went to war in 1863 against the Kīngitanga under the pretext that some tribes opposed the sale of land. As a matter of fact, millions of acres had been sold to the crown by 1860, mostly in the South Island, and there was no more overall shortage of land for Pakeha. Effective power consequently shifted from Māori to Pakeha in the North Island through confiscations and individualized titles to land via the Native Land

⁹ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'mana motuhake': 1. (noun) separate identity, autonomy, self-government, self-determination, independence, sovereignty, authority, control over one's own destiny.

Court, which helped settler governments to seize control of land. The New Zealand Settlement Act of 1863 conferred the power to take land for public purposes. Land was forfeit and became Crown land if its owners were thought to be in rebellion.

After the wars, a Native Land Court and the Native Land Acts of 1862 and 1865 were passed with the purpose of extinguishing Native Title. While *terra nullius* marginalized Aboriginal Australians, colonial institutions encouraged extinguishment of Māori Native Title despite the supposed guarantees of the treaty. From 1865 Māori had become a minority and they had to apply to the Native Land Court to justify claims to their own land, and the court converted customary land rights into Crown title which Māori could sell or lease. The new forms of “individualized title” assigned to a list of owners, limited to a few named individuals, broke collective control on sales. With no protection of customary title in the Native Land Court, there would be no protection in the courts generally leading to the Prendergast judgement of 1877. Chief Justice Prendergast ruled in “Wi Parata vs The Bishop of Wellington” litigation that courts had no jurisdiction to entertain claims based on supposed native title. In this case, Wi Parata, one of the four Māori members of parliament, sought the return of land to his *iwi*, the Ngāti Toa, which the tribe had granted to the Anglican Bishop Selwyn for a school in 1850. Māori wished to reclaim the land because the church had not built the school. The Chief Justice not only ruled that Ngāti Toa lacked legal grounds for the claim, but also denied that native title had any basis in common law, and that the Treaty of Waitangi was not a valid instrument of cession since Māori, as a tribal society, had no legal, sovereign status. Prendergast (in Seuffert 2006: 36) asserted that “Māori law and custom” were non-existent, or outside the boundaries of the nation. Therefore, Māori did not constitute a body politic, and the Court described them as uncivilized barbarians without any form of law or civil government, in opposition to the civilized unified

nations of the world, which could be seen in parallel with the Eurocentric perception of Aborigines.

Asserted not to be a body politic, Māori therefore had no customary rights enforceable in the courts. Moreover, the court had dismissed the treaty as a nullity. Individualizing title had two purposes: to make land available for settler purchase in the North Island, outside the confiscation areas; and to civilize Māori by detribalizing them. The entrepreneurial state depended on diminishing Māori *mana*,¹⁰ that is, Māori *mana* over the land. New Zealand had one governor and a central administration but several commercial centres, each with a provincial government. Then, the colonial government abolished these provinces in order to concentrate power and resources in the centre with two houses, a General Assembly elected on the basis of one-man-one-vote from 1879, and an appointed upper house of property owners. The General Assembly included four Māori seats as a reward for the Māori tribes that had supported the British in the Britanno-Māori wars; they were named with the Māori term *kūpapa*.¹¹

The processes of acculturation and assimilation had a severe impact on Māori identity, often resulting in a great sense of unbelonging and the denial of their indigenous identity and culture. Assimilatory policies in New Zealand involved significant destruction of culture because the British government approached the Māori as a problem to be solved instead of a relationship to be nurtured. They were expected to adopt a Pakeha way of life, and this pressure led to much hurt and loss. A number of studies were carried out on the Māori, as on other indigenous people in other colonized countries, as an excuse to ‘civilize’ those same people through the adoption of the

¹⁰ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘mana’: 2. (noun) prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma – ‘mana’ is a supernatural force in a person, place or object.

¹¹ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘kūpapa’: 5. (noun) collaborator, ally, fifth column - a term that came to be applied to Māori who sided with Pakeha opposition or the Government. There has been a shift from a general meaning of neutrality to the modern use, which now sometimes has derogative connotations, similar to such terms as ‘turncoat,’ ‘traitor,’ ‘Quisling’ and ‘Uncle Tom.’

superior European culture. As a result, since the 1870s the studies of race and racially based difference became 'race science.'

Western knowledge often used indigenous traditional medicines and health practices as weapons to demean and conceptualize the 'other.' Mental health was assessed in terms of white, patriarchal hierarchies. Thus, the development of scientific racism was based on the rationalization of binaries, and rested on the notion that biology is the ultimate justification to ascribe genetic inferiority to non-white lower races. William Fox, four times Prime Minister of New Zealand between 1856 and 1873, provided some examples of the racist attitude brought to New Zealand by the colonizers. Such ideas, passed on from parents to children, are not easy to eradicate, even over a period of more than one hundred and fifty years. In *The Six Colonies of New Zealand* (1851), he writes about the natives, their number and their possible extinction due to causes that can be divided into physical and moral. As regards physical causes, he mentions the very early and general habits of depravity among women. When talking about their moral inferiority, he declares that,

It consists in a depression of spirits and energy which, in the mind of a savage, ensues upon his contact with civilized men. He soon sees his inferiority; his pride may struggle against an admission of it for a time. (1851: 56)

In the twentieth century, Māori communities also became the object of research when Pakeha scholars decided to study the indigenous world. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999: 29), to give but one example, asserts that it has been the western academy that has constructed all the rules whereby the indigenous world has been theorized, while indigenous voices have remained overwhelmingly silenced. At this point it is pertinent to bear in mind various studies undertaken by social psychologists who focused their attention on the indigenous way of thinking. These studies were mainly used to better understand the indigenous mind with a view to informing the colonial administration

and smooth the path of colonization. For instance, Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole carried out an observational psychological study of a Māori community in the mid-1940s, and their main aim was to examine the Māori character structure. Pania Te Whaiti asserts in the book *Mai I Rangiatea* (Māori Wellbeing and Development) that the conclusion of the Beagleholes “reflects a concern with abnormalizing Māori behavior patterns while at the same time linking them to deficits in character/personality” (1997: 84). This study was accomplished without taking into account Māori cultural values, because the Beagleholes knew very little about Māori customs. Thus, the logical outcome was that the Māori developed abnormal behaviours, which were directly linked to the aforementioned deficits in character/personality. Further studies (Malcolm 1951 and Ritchie 1956) were based on this idea of Māori deficiencies as an obstacle in the attempt to incorporate the Māori into Pakeha society, and provided the basis for Pakeha assimilationist policies. Malcolm, for instance, considered that the Māori would be better off abandoning their cultural beliefs and institutions and adopting a Pakeha lifestyle. Among other things, this study seems to indicate that, under certain conditions, the Māori do not need to retain their meeting houses as active institutions in their culture (1951: 171). In the late 1950s, Ernest Beaglehole supervised more studies about Māori character structure. They were called ‘the *Rākau* Māori studies’ because they obtained information on Māori character/structure in a community they named Rākau. This research collected information from a range of age groups in the Rākau community. Jane Ritchie (1957) examined children from birth to five years of age, Margaret Earle (1958) children from six to thirteen years, David Mulligan (1957) adolescents, and James Ritchie (1956) adults. The purpose of these studies was to produce an extensive analysis of the development of Māori character/structure. The same criticism that had been directed against both the Beagleholes and Malcolm in turn

questioned the *Rākau* studies, because all of these researches used western methodologies without taking into account the Māori background. Regarding indigenous peoples, western psychology has systematically based its studies on the othering of the natives, who thus became the mere object of the study. Evidently, psychology was a colonial import from the West whose main concern was the abnormalization of the Māori.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, some Māori entered in a political arena that had thus far been occupied exclusively by Pakeha. At that time, a group of young men, known as the Young Māori Party, worked in the interests of their people within the political system in order to achieve their goals. They thought that the most favorable future for the Māori laid in progressive adoption of western practices, institutions and technology. For instance, the political leader Āpirana Turupa Ngata, who entered Parliament in 1905 and was the first Māori Minister of Native Affairs since 1928, not only emphasized the importance of rural life for Māori, but also aimed at integrating both Māori traditions and western innovation. He wanted Māori to receive the “State Advances to Settlers” as well as Pakeha, created two iwi-controlled co-operative dairy factories, and sent young men, not to New Zealand’s farms and co-operatives, but to New South Wales to learn the latest methods. From 1929, State Advances extended to Māori, and its land schemes helped Māori survived the Great Depression. But Treasury scrutiny of expenditure and procedures had Ngata ousted in 1934, and control of Māori land development schemes passed increasingly onto bureaucratic Pakeha hands. Large-scale cultural revival programs, projects of research into Māori oral culture, *marae*¹² and Māori carving schools were instituted thanks to the policies fostered by Ngata. These initiatives were directed at promoting pride in Māori identity, increasing the *mana* of

¹² From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘marae’: 3. (noun) courtyard - the open area in front of the ‘wharenuī,’ where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the ‘marae.’

Māori leadership, and foregrounding the generic notion of a pan-tribal identity. On the first significant Waitangi Day, during the 1940 centennial, Ngata led the *haka*, the Māori challenge and welcome.

On September 3rd 1939, two months before the beginning of the Centennial Exhibition, New Zealand declared war on Germany, one hour after the British declaration of war on Hitler's country, thus demonstrating its loyalty. The Prime Minister, Michael Joseph Savage, announced that:

both with gratitude for the past, and with confidence in the future, we range ourselves without fear beside Britain. Where she goes, we go, where she stands, we stand. We are only a small young nation, but we are one and all a band of brothers, and we are marching forward with a union of hearts and wills to a common destiny. (1944: 69)¹³

In reality, although New Zealand was geographically distant from the fighting in Europe, it was dependent on Europe and America politically, economically and culturally. Savage promised that there would be no conscription but, when he died from cancer in 1940, his successor Peter Fraser promptly introduced conscription for men over eighteen. As Matthew Parker asserts, this was ironic because “Fraser himself had briefly been imprisoned during the First World War for his conscientious objection” (2003: 162).

At that time, the ideals of “New Education” were popularized. The myth of equality of opportunity represented a New Zealand response to theories which were widespread internationally. Repeated mantras of postwar reconstruction were: the idea that a child should be allowed to fulfill her/his potential, and the promotion of the full development of the individual. Besides, in 1939, Peter Fraser, then minister of education and later

¹³ Parliamentary Debates. Legislative Council and House of Representatives. Volume 264. New Zealand Parliament. House of Representatives.

New Zealand's prime minister, wrote a well-known statement of equality of opportunity and liberal education for all citizens:

The Government's objective, broadly expressed, is that every person, whatever his level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right, as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted and to be fullest extent of his powers. So far is this from being a mere pious platitude that the full acceptance of the principle will involve the reorientation of the education system.¹⁴

Nevertheless, such ideals of full development did not apply to indigenous children. The new Māori district high schools in rural areas emphasized practical skills and a manual education appropriate for training a manual labour force. However, when policies changed toward assimilation, indigenous children were gradually admitted to state primary schools, but this colonial system of education became a hostile environment to them on account of its mission of erasing any trace of native culture in them. They suffered the racism and discrimination of the Pakeha educational and religious discourse, which provoked a deep crisis of identity in several generations of Māori people.

The 1930s Great Depression had left Māori people in a precarious situation: economically impoverished, politically neglected, and socially marginalized. Although aboriginal people had protested the injustices of colonization ever since European settlement began, those protests intensified across the country from the 1960s onwards. Māori people were disappointed, not only with the sense of having been left on the margins of a Pakeha-dominated economy, but also with that of still being overlooked while other people were making decisions affecting their lives and properties. This

¹⁴ Department of Education Annual Report, Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives [AJHR], E1, 1939: 2-3.

context of Māori cultural deterioration prompted a process that took shape as a renaissance movement called “Māoritanga,” which meant pride in being Māori and identification with Māori culture. As was argued before, Māori integration into mainstream Pakeha culture had been insufficient to provide them with a legitimate sense of self and group identity. In her analysis of culture identity and ethnicity in the Pacific, Jocelyn Linnekin and Lin Poyer convincingly argue that:

Whether called ethnicity, nationality, or even “race,” cultural identity is a potent basis for political mobilization among peoples disenfranchised under colonial rule. Almost invariably, this identity is explicitly held to derive from common origins and a shared cultural heritage. (1990: 150)

In the 1970s, there was another economic crisis that affected notably Māori people increasing inequalities between them and Pakeha, particularly in the fields of work and housing. Thus, the Māori found themselves living in outer suburbs and working in poorly paid jobs with little security of career structure. An instance of a postwar suburb placed in Wellington could be “*Naenae*,” which in Māori means “mosquito” and “to be out of breath.” It was built according to Keynesian visions of postwar reconstruction. The upshot was that Māori had problems of identity, disavowal and belonging attributable to those new settlements where the sense of community was lost. Then, Māori took consciousness of an agenda for social justice based on the Treaty of Waitangi, which included the restoration of their autonomy and the recovery of their land and cultural resources. The attack of the state against their culture and language must be interrupted and compensation for the loss of their land must be established. This Māori political activism went along with the Māori cultural revival, and was a source of anxiety for many Pakeha because they felt that these requests threatened, not only their possessions, but also their high status in the society of New Zealand. Later

on, Patricia Grace would give her own opinion about Pakeha worries about Māori struggling for their rights:

In all the things that Māori people try to do to retain and regain language and culture, there are always barriers. As long as we were thought of only in terms of our myths and legends, arts and crafts, singing and dancing that's acceptable and fine. As soon as we are seen to move outside those boundaries, we come up against suspicion and barriers.
(in Sarti 1998: 54-55)

Another fundamental pillar to reassert Māori identity was *te reo Māori* (Māori language) as a crucial social and cultural value. Māori demanded that the government should ensure an education for their children in which they could learn their own language. At that time loss of *te reo Māori* as well as land had led to a decline of *tino rangatiratanga*,¹⁵ which constitutes the basis from which Māori-Pakeha relations are negotiated. *Tino rangatiratanga* not only refers to the authority of the *iwi* to handle their own affairs, but it may also refer to personal *mana*, status and dignity. Much of the indignation of Māori people came from frustration at the refusal by Pakeha to acknowledge the duration and proportions of the injustices suffered since 1840. Although in the 1970s there was no response from the government of New Zealand about how to compensate them for past colonial abuses and build a fairer multicultural society, the Waitangi tribunal tried to calm tensions, providing a channel for grievances and public education. For instance, the policy of language suppression, such as prohibiting *te reo Māori* on school grounds, was abandoned. Eventually, in the Māori language Act of 1987 *te reo Māori* became an official language in New Zealand. It was then that some Māori members of parliament chose to speak in Māori to make a political point. After many decades of Pakeha domination, Māori were determined to

¹⁵ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'tino rangatiratanga': 1. (noun) self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy, self-government, domination, rule, control, power.

expound the inequalities undergone and rearrange their situation in the social, political, and economic spheres.

The fight for political, social and economic equality brought to the fore the need for cultural restoration and generated a renewed pride of race. In 1975 began the Land Rights Movement, a process that clearly exposed that government assertion about the equality of Māori in New Zealand was too often mere tokenism. Disappointment over government refusal to compensate for injustices concerning land culminated in the 1975 Māori Land March, which met with tremendous support. As Philippa Mein Smith asserts, “the protesters’ slogan echoed the Kīngitanga call: ‘Not one more acre of Māori land.’” (2012: 239). Parallel to the recovery of their land was their need to advocate the quintessential link between indigenous peoples and land and nature as primary sources of identification. The Māori Land March sent a powerful message of the current Māori commitment, not just to persist with grievances over land, but to reclaim their treaty rights as *tangata whenua*.¹⁶ It was during a period of cultural discrimination and economic stagnation that Māori turned to political activism, taking as inspiration global movements, such as the black civil-rights movement in the United States. Another significant instance of this struggle was the occupation at Bastion Point in 1977-8. Ōrākei, Bastion Point’s original name, was the homeland of Ngāti Whātua, who sold Auckland to William Hobson in 1840. Bastion Point became “Crown land,” but the state was not the “real” owner because of the way the land had been acquired. This sit-in was the first outside the law, and the first to leave a mark into Pakeha consciousness through media coverage. Television viewers saw elderly people dragged away, the Riot Act read, and more than 200 people removed. After 506 days the protesters/occupiers

¹⁶ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘tangata whenua’: 3. (noun) local people, hosts, indigenous people - people born of the ‘whenua’, i.e. of the placenta and of the land where the people’s ancestors have lived and where their placenta are buried.

were violently removed by police in May 1978. In 1869 the Native Land Court vested the 700 acre Ōrākei block in 13 members of Ngāti Whātua, disinheriting the rest of the tribe.¹⁷ In 1886, the state took land under the Public Works Act, which allows the Crown to take possession of any land if the Crown says it is in the public interest, on the pretext of a Russian naval scare and named it Bastion Point. Between 1914 and 1928 the state bought all but 2.5 acres of what remained of the Ngāti Whātua *marae*. In 1951, the Crown compulsorily acquired the remaining acres in the possession of Ngāti Whātua, except one: the cemetery. Ngāti Whātua of Ōrākei were consequently landless: they were removed to state housing, and even “the *marae* and some homes were destroyed by fire. The remains of the village and *marae* were demolished by the Crown.”¹⁸ What triggered the protest was the plan to sell Ngāti Whātua’s ancestral lands to developers for high-income housing. In 1977, the Ōrākei Māori Action Committee decided to take direct action and occupy Bastion Point.

Another important landmark was the establishment of The Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 by the Treaty of Waitangi Act. In theory, it was a tribunal competent to consider actions or omissions of the Crown that potentially breached the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi. Matiu Rata, the minister of Māori affairs (1972-1975) in the third Labour government, played an essential role to pass the Treaty of Waitangi Act whose main purpose was

to provide for the observance, and confirmation, of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi by establishing a Tribunal to make recommendations on claims relating to the

¹⁷ http://www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals/waitangi-tribunal/Reports/wai0009/doc_016

¹⁸ <http://www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals/waitangi-tribunal/resources/teaching-aids/resource-kits/Ōrākei/the-loss-of-the-Ōrākei-block>

practical application of the Treaty and to determine whether certain matters are inconsistent with the principles of the Treaty.¹⁹

The tribunal explicitly derived its powers from the Treaty of Waitangi, and could consider claims dating from the passing of the Act. No longer was the treaty a nullity. Yet, the tribunal was not very effective, as the major part of Māori land had not been returned in the 1980s, which evidenced that the treaty was still being breached. Nowadays, it is openly acknowledged in New Zealand that the British government assumed sovereignty in the first place mainly to take control of the land. Colonization had become a conflict for resources and, when Māori resisted the progression of settlement, the Crown broke the treaty. Māori had been denied the opportunity to develop their own land and, as a result, they had lost their *mana*, their *rangatiranga*²⁰ and, consequently, their place in their own land.

The Māori Renaissance

We could not afford books so we made our own. In this way we were able to find ourselves in books. It is rare for us to find ourselves in books, but in our own books we were able to find and define our lives.

Roimata in Patricia Grace's *Potiki*

The Māori Renaissance is a term usually applied to the remarkable flowering that Māori culture and arts experimented in the 1970s. The second part of this chapter will be devoted to mentioning some literary works and authors who played an important role in this cultural movement. Writers such as Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera, Keri Hulme, and Alan Duff, to name but some, were able to transform Eurocentric existing genres and

¹⁹ <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1975/0114/latest/DLM435368.html>

²⁰ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'rangatiranga': 1. (noun) status, nationhood.

tell Māori experiences from the Māori perspective. Moreover, it would be important not to forget some other artists who were also involved in that cultural awakening, if only to make it clear that this was a most fruitful movement: poets like Apirana Taylor, Hone Tuwhare and Robert Sullivan; painters like Shane Cotton, Ralph Hotere and Robin Kahukiwa; and film-makers like Barry Barclay, Lee Tamahori and Merata Mita. The main concern of the Māori Renaissance artists was, above all, to situate Māori issues at the very centre of their works. One of the elements that characterized the Māori Renaissance was its ability to decolonize existing Eurocentric literary forms, such as the novel and the short story, and use them to describe and express Māori notions of culture. This movement cannot be understood without taking into account the political and historical background, New Zealand's colonial heritage, and the social and economic changes that occurred during the twenty century. All of these elements were explored from an indigenous perspective, in an attempt to articulate and denounce the implications of colonialism for indigenous peoples. Therefore, Māori employed literature, among other branches of art, to introduce an indigenous voice in the New Zealand discourse.

Māori authors took the decision to write in English for obvious reasons. In the first place, English was/is the language of novel readers, not only in New Zealand, but all over the world. In the second place, at that time there was no market for novels written in the Māori language. This being said, it is also true that writing in English had disadvantages of its own, since Māori could not express with complete accuracy their Māori universe and experience and, most importantly: how can any person describe her/his own feelings and perception of the world in the language of the people who denied her/his opinion as valid? Only when Māori political aspirations became a reality

and the relations between Māori and Pakeha began to be revised could Māori writing start to gain importance in the national and international spheres.

The fiction of Patricia Grace and other Māori writers has undoubtedly played an important role in the fight to counter the stereotypical portraits that Pakeha literature has often given of Māori. The works written by authors such as Grace, Ihimaera, Duff and Hulme have been regarded as especially significant for the consolidation of Māori literature in English and the articulation and description of Māori complex identity because, until these authors published their works, Māori appeared in New Zealand fiction, if at all, only as primitive characters. Pakeha views of Māori revolved around stereotypical Eurocentric portraits of natives, totally alien to Māori culture. Western literature included Māori as passive characters in need of civilization, and most Pakeha embraced that image because they had not had any contact with them until the postwar Māori migration to the cities. In her essay “Literature: Protest and Affirmation,” Karen P. Sinclair states that:

When Māoris appeared at all in Pakeha literature, they were represented as outsiders, as beings external to the action. These stereotypes were cruel representations of an indigenous people, objectifying them, denying them autonomy in Pakeha eyes. Moreover, such literary stereotypes reinforced boundaries that separated New Zealand’s two ethnic groups. (1992: 285)

New Zealand was a monocultural and monolingual country until the 1960s, when the Māori Renaissance emerged in favour of Māori cultural revival. From the 1970s onwards, Māori began to reawaken their own culture through political and social activism. Patricia Grace, for example, admitted that she learnt the Māori language in her adulthood, when she decided to reassert her indigenous identity and learn the language of her ancestors. Furthermore, this strong cultural movement urged Māori writers and

artists to find Māori ways to tell their own stories. The early phase of the Māori Renaissance mainly tried to put forward a positive portrait of the Māori world by upholding the traditional values of their former communal rural life in a period when many Māori had been dislocated in urban suburbs. In the 1940s and 1950s many Māori people had left the country and went to the cities. The result was the rupture of the traditional Māori community and the creation of an alienated, urban underclass. Māori writers showed that Māori urbanization was not simply a change of residence, but the journey from home to a hostile environment, which produced emotional wounds and the development of a deep sense of unbelonging. This anxiety and alienation, triggered by urbanization, made Māori low social status and precarious economic circumstances more obvious. Moreover, this Māori generation was well aware of the existence of the American civil rights movement and the United Nations advocacy of indigenous rights. The conditions that Māori undergone were depicted in novels such as Ihimaera's *The New Net Goes Fishing* (1977), Grace's *Electric City and Other Stories* (1987), and Duff's *Once Were Warriors* (1990). In Māori terms, these works advocated the importance of the past, that is, their ancestors, *whānau* and *iwi* in their search for protection. Another important change was that stories were told through the eyes of Māori people, who consequently became the owners and narrators of their own stories. In other words, the Māori community acquired new impetus as Māori cultural and spiritual issues entered the cultural, political and economic life of Aotearoa/New Zealand. To give but one example, Ihimaera wrote a compilation of short stories titled *Pounamu, Pounamu* (1972), which focuses mainly on rural Māori life, and on how strongly Māori are tied to their land and ancestors through heritage. Patricia Grace, for her part, wrote a short-story collection entitled *Waiariki* (1975), which praises the values of the traditional Māori community and their constant fight to survive in a hostile

environment. Later on, Grace published her first novel *Mutuwhenua: The Moon Sleeps* (1978), the first novel published by a Māori woman. It tells the story of the marriage between a Māori woman and a Pakeha man, who must cope with the cultural differences of their respective cultural environments. The narrator is the Māori woman, named Ripeka/Linda (Pakeha name), who writes about the development of this love relationship, and uses her Māori cultural heritage to find the answers she needs in order to overcome her deep crisis of identity and unbelonging. This was the first time that this kind of story was told from an exclusively female indigenous perspective, as was to be the case of most of Grace's subsequent novels and short stories. Moreover, the progression of the story is not linear, but circular, which shows Grace's determination to apply techniques of Māori oral storytelling onto her works from the very beginning of her career as a writer. In this novel, Grace also employs mythology and, more specifically, the myth of Rona, to represent the barrier between Pakeha and Māori cultures. Ripeka identifies herself with Rona because she feels that, like her, she is distancing herself from her *whānau* and betraying her cultural heritage by running away with her Pakeha lover to the 'white' world.

In the 1980s began a second stage of the Māori Renaissance, in which writers were more committed with social inequalities and how they affected Māori people. After so much cultural loss, Māori writing acquired an adamant political tone to react against their social, political and economic situation. Māori problems were at the core of these narratives, and Māori writers transformed their literary production into the battlefield in which they could write the Empire back. The conviction and resistance of the Māori community against colonial mistreatment was accurately described in a number of novels published in the mid-1980s, such as Hulme's *The Bone People* (1983), which explores the violence and anxiety that Māori people must face in a society controlled by

Pakeha; and Ihimaera's *The Matriarch* (1986), which goes back to the beginnings of European settlement in New Zealand and depicts how Pakeha dispossessed the Māori of their land. The most important element of these novels is the fact that the discourse about New Zealand's history and national identity is articulated by a Māori voice. Therefore, the perspective changes from Pakeha to Māori, the consequence of this being that Pakeha lose their so far privileged position of narrators in the stories. In these novels, the solutions to Māori problems as regards culture, family, land dispossession and economic deprivation were inexorably linked to the Māori autonomy from Pakeha. In other words, Māori should recover the capacity to take their own decisions, just as they did before European colonization. To sum up, the works of art produced during this period were devoted to redefining Māori social position because, as Grace explained in her essay titled "Books are Dangerous" (1985), school texts and journals in New Zealand had a strong effect upon indigenous readers because:

(1) they do not reinforce our values, actions, customs, culture and identity; (2) when they tell us only about others they are saying that we do not exist; (3) they may be writing about us but are writing things which are untrue; and (4) they are writing about us but are saying negative and insensitive things which tell us that we are no good. (in Smith 1999: 35)

Patricia Grace

I was born on *Te Upoko o Te Ika*, the head of the fish, which, a long time ago was fished up by demigod Maui from the great Ocean of Kiwa. Or, to put it another way, I was born in what is now known to most as Wellington, New Zealand.

Patricia Grace, "Influences on Writing."

Patricia Grace combines the personal and Māori mythology in this poetical description of her birth, and this becomes an excellent demonstration of the importance of Māori mythologies in her life and writing. Moreover, in an interview with Paloma Fresno Calleja (2003: 114-15), Grace defines herself as a fiction writer who possesses a double heritage that enables her to conceive of Māori identity from a multicultural point of view. In order to make this summary of Patricia Grace's life and works, some interviews made to her, together with some of her most well-known essays, have been used to better show her opinion about different issues, such as Māori culture, racial discrimination, land dispossession, literature and, last but not least, the importance of politics to tackle all of them. Patricia Grace was born in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1937. She possesses a mixed parentage because her father was Māori and her mother Pakeha. Her parents met at secondary school in Wellington. Grace descends from the Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Toa, and Te Āti Awa iwi, and is affiliated with the Ngāti Porou through marriage. In the introduction of her essay "Influences on Writing," Grace explains her condition of Māori girl in a Pakeha environment:

I was conscious of living in two family worlds, the contrasting worlds of my mother and my father's families. I became adept at moving from foot to foot between these two families and was comfortable and secure in both of these family worlds. But it was outside of my families, in the world of school, and particularly in the world of the neighborhood, that life sometimes became troublesome and unfriendly.

I was the only Māori child at the schools I attended, and though I enjoyed school and liked learning, I was often puzzled, as a small child, by my "difference" and by the low expectation that some teachers had of me as a scholar; on the other hand, they always recognized my sporting abilities. (1999: 65)

She worked hard to stand out at school, and eventually acquired a School Certificate and University Entrance without any difficulty, and this in spite of having been told in numerous reports that she was not expected to do so. She grew up in Wellington in a neighborhood where they were the only Māori family. She had a dual upbringing: the place where she lived and attended school was mainly Pakeha, but she was also in a Māori environment when she was with her father's family. She did not speak Māori at home, except for a few words, because elder people considered that speaking in English was better for the children. When she was five years old, her father went to Italy to fight with the Māori Battalion in World War Two. She lived and went to school in Wellington, but she spent school-holidays and weekends at her grandparents' home on the coastal ancestral land of the Ngāti Toa people.

Grace's literary education was based almost exclusively on the European male literary canon. As she explains, although she was a keen reader and had always liked writing when she was a child, she did not originally think of becoming a writer: "I enjoyed writing, but I didn't know that being a writer was something that you could aspire to, I suppose because I had never read anything by a New Zealand writer, and I had never read anything by a living writer when I was in school" (in Tausky 1991: 91). It was not until she was eighteen and enrolled in Wellington Teachers' College that Grace read the works by Frank Sargeson (1903-1982). He was her first literary influence and, as she goes on to explain, she realized what writing was like only after reading Frank Sargeson's works:

I realized that it started from your own personal knowledge, background and surroundings, whereas before, during my school experience, writing had been the opposite to that. It was based on other reading material. So I read the works of Frank Sargeson and started hearing the New Zealand voice for the first time in literature. And

then when I read the work of Amelia Batistich I realized that she had a different New Zealand voice. It reinforced the idea that writers had their own voices. It occurred to me when I read those works that I had a voice as well, and I thought that I would like to try that out. (in Fresno Calleja 2003: 111)

At the time she began writing fiction in the early 1970s there were very few published Māori authors to be influenced by. Grace's comments indicate that it was mainly non-Māori writers that encouraged her to become a writer. As is shown in the previous quotation, not only men but also certain women writers, such as Amelia Batistich and Janet Frame, motivated Grace to believe she had the power to write her own stories. These early influences inspired her to begin writing while she was working as a primary-school teacher. She was a twenty-five-year-old mother with a couple of children, and lived with her husband, Karehi Waiariki Grace, a descendant of the Ngāti Porou. Although they were living in a small rural area where she taught English as a second language, some neighbours encouraged her to join a woman's Writing Club in Auckland as a country member. The only way in which she could actually get involved in that society was by taking part in their competitions, because she was too far away to attend workshops and meetings. Encouraged by the judges of those competitions, she began to send short stories to journals and magazines, including the bilingual quarterly *Te Ao Hou*, published by the Māori Affairs Department. Grace's work would soon be published in magazines, such as *Te Ao Hou*, *The New World* and the *New Zealand Listener*, where David McGill described her as the "first Māori woman writer" (1975: 21). About that time, writer and critic Ian Wedde also affirmed that:

It was a time when there were suddenly a whole lot of fresh writers coming onto the scene. And in amongst a lot of the lone voices you heard that of Patricia Grace – except hers wasn't a lone voice, it was the voice of the community. (in Saker 1986: 26)

Grace was initially a short story writer, to then write children's stories and novels. In the early 1970s, Grace's early stories came to the attention of Phoebe Meikle, an editor for Longman Paul. After reading some of Grace's early short stories, Meikle contacted her to ask if she had enough stories to publish a collection. The result was Grace's first collection of short stories, *Waiariki* (1975), which won the PEN/Hubert Church Award for Best First Book of Fiction. This immediate success launched Grace's writing career, and definitely encouraged her to devote herself to writing. As the first short story collection to be published by a Māori woman writer, this work was also a landmark in the publication history of Māori fiction. In the 1970s, Grace's writing evidences the loss of Māori traditional values and ways of life as a result of colonization and modernization, especially during the period of Māori urbanization. On the one hand, Grace's early fiction tried to retrieve the communal values of the past in an attempt to undo their losses by re-learning old Māori sources, such as mythology and traditional Māori ways of life. On the other, Grace's writing aimed to describe Māori culture to non-Māori readers.

Grace's works began to deal more directly with Māori acts of resistance against Pakeha social, political and economic hegemony, as well as with issues related to Māori sovereignty. This move from the pastoral to the political in Grace's novels ran parallel to the activism fostered in the second stage of the Māori Renaissance, which dovetailed into the widespread Māori political protests of the 1970s, such as the Bastion Point and Raglan Golf Course land disputes as depicted in *Potiki* (1986), and the 1975 Land March from Te Hāpua to Parliament in Wellington as described in *Cousins* (1992). The lives of Māori characters in these later works were considerably less pure and transparent than those in her earlier works. In this phase, Māori writers' main objective was to describe how Pakeha dispossessed them of their ancestral land, and imposed

upon Māori people a law, a culture, a religion, a system of values, an education and a language completely alien to their own. Grace employs Māori storytelling techniques to retrieve the silenced voices of the Māori community, and makes use of many different voices: from those of the older generations, describing their experiences of the past, to younger voices narrating contemporary deeds. Furthermore, Māori mythologies fuse constantly within the fabric of Māori contemporary society in Grace's stories, and this becomes crucial to fully understand her fiction.

In 1985 Grace obtained the Writing fellowship at the University of Victoria in Wellington, gave up teaching and became a full-time writer. Grace has published seven volumes of short stories to date: *Waiariki* (1975), *The Dream Sleepers and Other Stories* (1980), *Collected Stories* (1984), *Electric City and Other Stories* (1987), *Selected Stories* (1991), *The Sky People* (1994), and *Small Holes in the Silence* (2006); eight novels: *Mutuwhenua: The Moon Sleeps* (1978), *Potiki* (1986), *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998), *Dogside Story* (2001), *Tu* (2004), *Ned & Katina: A True Love Story* (2009), and *Chappy* (2015); and six children's books: *The Kuia and the Spider* (1981), which won the Children's Picture Book of the Year award, *Watercress Tuna and the Children of Champion Street* (1984), *The Geranium* (1993), *Areta & the Kahawai* (1994), *Maraea and the Albatrosses* (2008), and *Whiti te Rā!* (also entitled *Haka*) (2015). She also wrote the text to accompany Robyn Kahukiwa's paintings of the women of Māori mythology for the book *Wahine Toa* (1984), and co-authored with her husband a work of non-fiction, *Earth, Sea, Sky: Images and Māori Proverbs from the Natural World of Aotearoa New Zealand* (2003), with photographs by Craig Potton. Grace's career is full of awards and recognition: she received the Queen's Service Order (1988), and the Ngā Tohu ā Kingi Ihaka/Sir Kingi Ihaka Award (2003) from Te Waka Toi (the Māori Arts Board of Creative New Zealand). In 2005, she was honored as a

“Living Icon of New Zealand Art” at the second biennial Arts Foundation of New Zealand Icon Awards. The New Zealand government gave her the Prime Minister’s Award for Literary Achievement in 2006, and she also became a Distinguished Companion of the Order of New Zealand Merit in 2007. Last but not least, she won the Neustadt International Prize for Literature in 2008. Grace’s work has obtained recognition both internationally and at home. For example, *Potiki* won the prestigious New Zealand Book Award and was also awarded the LiBeraturpreis from Frankfurt, Germany, in 1994. In 2001, *Dogside Story* won the Kiriya Pacific Rim Fiction Prize. Later on, she won the Deutz Medal for Fiction & Poetry at the 2005 Montana New Zealand Book Awards with her novel *Tu*.

In her work *Māori and Aboriginal women in the Public Eye: Representing Difference, 1950-2000* Karen Fox asserts:

While Indigenous writers were well aware that their writing might articulate messages about the social and political worlds in which they lived and wrote, such imperatives were often not as central to their work as reviewers and critics expected. (2011: 127)

In his essay “An interview with Patricia Grace,” Vilsoni Hereniko asked her about the pressure that she, as a Māori writer, had felt to write about racial tensions in New Zealand. In her answer, Grace acknowledged that she had felt some pressure to write about issues of racial conflicts, but understood this situation quite well because one is always bound to write from her/his own background and experience (1999: 80). In this interview, Grace also explains the tools that Māori, as colonized people, have at their disposal. She claims that:

We have our own communities to write about, our own interrelationships, our own view of the world, our own spirituality. We have our own ancestors, our own legacy of

stories. We have our own particular culture to draw from, but we have our own “world culture” as well. We can take what we want from the colonizing culture too, because we’re part of it. (1999: 81)

Grace confesses that her first motivation when writing is the desire to create stories, and that she has many times refused to be categorized as a political writer. Nevertheless, all of her works are inevitably concerned with Māori culture, and several of them openly depict well-known contemporary conflicts, such as land claims, domestic violence, racism and cultural subordination. Although Grace’s works could be defined as political, the distinction between representing indigenous lives in an artistic sense and representing them showing political compromise many times blurs. What seems to be Grace’s main interest is to provide readers with a faithful account of Māori people and their voices within their everyday lives. Keri Hulme stated it crystal-clear: “your Māoriness, like everything else, is intimately part of you and it will normally show through your writing as well” (in Long 1982: 5). When Grace was asked about the political dimension of her writing, she (in Fresno Calleja 2003: 113) affirmed that, if you are writing about people who are few in numbers in their own country and have become powerless as a result of the political and social events that occurred in that country, the writing is political, no matter whether you do it deliberately or not.

According to some statements that Grace has made over the years, she seems to acknowledge the interrelationships between self-identification and identification by the others as part of an ideological system that very much affects all of us without exception. This may be the reason why she has always supported the reading and discussion of texts written by Māori writers from different backgrounds, as this allows for the writing of literature in which all Māori can be accurately represented, a literature devoid of the oversimplifying and problematic stereotypes that could often be found in

works by non-Māori authors. As Grace herself put it (1999: 71), being a writer from a marginal culture, she must have the same freedom as other writers, if only to be true to what she knows and who she is. Moreover, she wants her work to be just as stringently judged as anyone else's, if judging and analyzing is what people really want to do. When Grace was asked by Paloma Fresno Calleja how she felt about her work being theoretically analyzed "from a non-Māori point of view," she answered:

Whatever people do with it in their own ways is really up to them, and I am pleased enough that my work is distributed out there in whatever way. So if that means it is studied, or talked about, or discussed, or just read I think that it's all positive. It's all part of discussion. (2003: 113)

For Grace it is very important to communicate to non-Māori who Māori are and what they feel, mainly by writing about their attitudes to life, their engagement with the land, their concept of *aroha* (love) towards the other members of the community and, most especially, the spiritual aspects of Māori culture.

Patricia Grace has been one of the key figures, not only of Māori fiction in English, but also of contemporary world literature since the 1970s. As has been shown in this brief outline, she has become a highly respected figure of the Māori community. Nowadays Grace lives with her extended family on her father's ancestral land near Plimmerton, in a *marae*-based community at Hongoeka Bay. Furthermore, she participates in the New Zealand Book Council's "Writer in School" programme and takes part in writers' workshops aimed at encouraging young Māori writers. In short, she is strongly committed with the future of Māori literature in New Zealand, because she believes that her experience can help the new Māori writers just as other Māori writers made her own writing possible years ago.

CHAPTER 2

INSIDIOUS TRAUMA, BLOOD AND THE HEALING FUNCTION OF *AROHA* AND RESILIENCE IN PATRICIA GRACE'S *COUSINS*

Insidious Trauma: Histories of Disempowerment and Denial

While the West undoubtedly might be experiencing fragmentation, the process of fragmentation known under its older guise as colonization is well known to indigenous peoples. We know what it is like to have our identities regulated by laws and our languages and customs removed from our lives. Fragmentation is not an indigenous project, it is something we are recovering from.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies:
Research and Indigenous Peoples*

The concept of trauma is a western construction that was clearly established in a particular historical and geographical context. During the late 19th century, the notion of trauma acquired additional significance with regard to symptoms, such as mutism, amnesia, tics, paralysis, and recurrent nightmares in survivors and witnesses of industrial and railroad accidents who did not present any observable physical injury. In his seminal work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), Sigmund Freud defines traumatic neurosis as “a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli” (2015: 25). One of the most important features of these neuroses was the inability of the victims to recall the episode that provoked it, together with a simultaneous sensation of its recurrence in the present. For this reason, trauma quickly became understood, not merely as a psychic injury, but also as a wound to the memory. Furthermore, Freud’s notion of *Nachträglichkeit* illustrates the belated and crippling recurrence of the traumatic experience in conscious awareness, which often resists exact knowing and may remain inaccessible to narrative or conscious thought. The latter notion of the ‘unspeakability’ of trauma is a central concept of

cultural trauma theory. To give but one example, Cathy Caruth, the well-known trauma critic, describes the nature of the traumatic experience as follows: “the most direct seeing of a violent event may occur as an absolute inability to know it; that immediacy, paradoxically, may take the form of belatedness” (1996: 91–92), and consequently claims that trauma cannot be known or made conscious. Thus, according to Caruth, trauma denies the possibility of verbalizing traumatic experiences as a therapeutic process that can lead to recovery, and this impossibility of accessing conscious knowing originates ‘unspeakability’ or *aporia* as symptoms of psychological trauma. However, some literary critics have found that, although trauma studies can be a highly useful tool in the interpretation of literary works, many of the founding texts in the field present limitations because the concept of trauma, as they initially defined it, is too western a construction. As was argued by Michael Rothberg, it is urgent to redefine the elements associated with classic trauma theory. That is the reason why he proposes sharing a more global project of trauma in order to transcend the European/ethnocentric model, because the perspective that this model offers is so biased that, rather than promoting cross-cultural solidarity, it contributes instead to the perpetuation of western beliefs, practices, and structures that only preserve existing injustices and inequalities. In tune with the critical discourse developed by postcolonial critics, such as Ashcroft et al. ([1989] 2002), Root (1992), Rothberg (2008), Craps (2013), and the defence of Māori cultural elements advocated by academics like Walker (1990) and Durie (1994), this chapter argues that classic trauma theory must be reconsidered through a decolonization process that accomplishes a fruitful analysis of trauma in non-western minority cultures from an all-embracing perspective. Accordingly, I will strive to analyze Patricia Grace’s novel *Cousins* using postcolonial and current trauma theories that question the colonial

hegemonic discourse which, as was argued before, has often been employed as a tool to undermine and traumatize Māori people in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

However, without negating the lasting, profound impact of trauma, postcolonial trauma narratives often also demonstrate that resilience and growth are possible in the aftermath of traumatic wounding. Grace's novels are examples of narratives that emphasize resilience and renewed life after traumatization. The characters of these stories rely on the rich spiritual Māori culture, in contrast to the melancholia and victimization on which early trauma theory insisted. In light of this, the present chapter will also take into account the psychology developed by Māori people in accordance with their culture, beliefs and traditions, which is also referred to in New Zealand as "*kaupapa* Māori psychology" and which, according to the *Oxford Handbook of the History of Psychology*, "emerged as a political reaction to the so-called western psychology" (Baker 2012: 389). Furthermore, it will consider Māori experience as the 'other' within their own homeland, and how their identity has been fragmented and eroded due to the discrimination endured by them as a result of the colonization of their homeland. This chapter will examine as well the way in which Grace's novel employs Māori mythology as an element that strengthens Māori identity and can come to heal through the promotion of Māori ancestral culture.

As Rothberg claims, "trauma provides the best framework for thinking about the legacies of violence in the colonized/postcolonial world" (2008: 226) but, at the same time, trauma theory must be reconstructed taking into account postcolonial ways of incorporating trauma, memory and history. Paradoxically, the dominant discourse of the western elites and their colonial descendants determines the public discourse on trauma. To give but one example, DSM-III was highly criticized because experts on the subject observed lack of inclusiveness as regards the stressors that provoked PTSD (Post

Traumatic Stress Disorder). PTSD was introduced by the American Psychiatric Association as a monocausal mental disorder requiring a recognizable traumatic stressor “that would evoke significant symptoms of distress in almost everyone” (1980: 238). Later on, the DSM-III-R described trauma as a “psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of human experience” (1987: 247). It is clear that this event-based trauma definition does not consider as traumatic chronic psychic distress produced by structural violence, such as racism, sexism, and classism. Moreover, although the DSM-IV attempted to take into consideration cultural factors, it failed to appreciate accurately the impact of culture in the definition and treatment of trauma. Aspects such as personal, political and socio-cultural values are not recognized in the narrowness of its definition of a traumatic event. However, gender, racial, political oppression and social exclusion are types of insidious trauma that indigenous people experience in their everyday lives. Eventually, this controversy around the definition of trauma as part of a hegemonic limited discourse led to a revision of DSM-IV. These attempts notwithstanding, even the latest revision of the definition of trauma accomplished in DSM-V is far too limited to account for the injustices and inequalities suffered by oppressed groups whose situation of misrecognition and misrepresentation have become something normal.

Western psychology is not appropriate for the treatment of indigenous people because its emphasis on physical harm excludes the everlasting psychological trauma suffered by indigenous communities like the Māori from the colonial period until the present moment. The therapist Maria Root coined the concept of ‘insidious trauma’ to enhance the generic qualities of trauma in people on whom the effects of oppression are not overtly violent or physically threatening. Root’s idea of ‘insidious trauma’ is extremely useful for the understanding of the long-term effects of oppression and its

psychological impact. She claims that insidious trauma “is usually associated with the social status of an individual being devalued because a characteristic intrinsic to their identity is different from what is valued by those in power” (1992: 240). As Root sees it, one of the limitations of trauma theory is that it focuses too much on the individual/psychological perspective and tends to forget the factors that enabled constant collective traumatic abuse, such as cultural, economic and political repression, and racism. This kind of racism operates at cultural and institutional levels of all kinds around the world, and is articulated through increasing aggressions directed toward people whose identities, diverge from what is valued by those in power. Stef Craps claims that “these criticisms of the individualizing, psychologizing, pathologizing, and depoliticizing tendencies of the dominant trauma model were anticipated by Frantz Fanon in his pioneering work on the psychopathology of racism and colonialism” (2013: 28). In his seminal work *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008: 82), the Martinican psychiatrist and writer Frantz Fanon conveys a clear example of the insidious trauma that isolated groups experience as a result of systematic mistreatment and discrimination by citing his own traumatic experience of encountering racial fear in a white child. He asserts that the white child’s gaze abraded his body into non-being, and then he saw himself as an object in the midst of other objects. This objectification of his in the eyes of the colonizer causes him to develop feelings of inferiority and alienation from himself. For his part, postcolonial critic Sam Durrant makes two important claims about Fanon’s work in his book *Postcolonial Narrative and the Work of Mourning: J.M. Coetzee, Wilson Harris, and Toni Morrison*. Firstly, Durrant (2004: 14) mentions the use that Fanon makes of the pronoun “I,” and points out the blurring of the distinction between individual and collective trauma resulting from the commonality of the experience that some colonized minorities undergo. In the second place, Durrant alludes

to the way in which white colonizers address the colonized as shown in Fanon's book – "Dirty Nigger!" or simply, "Look, a Negro!" (2008: 82) – and how this description refers to the colonized, not as an individual, but rather as a member of an entire race; "a race understood not as one human race among others, but as something apart, other, nonhuman" (Durrant 2004: 14). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon (1963: 249) describes insidious trauma as a mental wound to which colonized people are exposed, and that will last for long. He draws attention to the social nature of the traumas caused by racial oppression because these psychological effects are linked to the social and economic situation these people endure. Therefore, the alienated mind of the colonized cannot be relieved as long as the social and economic power structures do not change. In the same vein, Dolores Herrero and Sonia Baelo-Allué claim that "individual/psychological healing can only be fully possible when the wrong social/political/economic structures are radically questioned and transformed. Without the latter, the former is, more often than not, an impossible task" (2011: xix).

It is worth bearing in mind that, more often than not, in trauma studies the spiritual sphere has not been considered to be a relevant field of investigation. Yet, the spiritual realm is as meaningful and important to the Māori as the physical one. Māori beliefs, values and traditions ensure that both the spiritual and physical realms should be acknowledged, promoted and supported as a unit within the holistic Māori worldview. Thus, it follows that *Cousins* emphasizes the role of spiritual elements in the Māori trauma experience, recuperation and redress within the colonized context of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Likewise, it is important to mention that "The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (2007) recognises in article 24 the right that indigenous people have of passing down through generations their health practices: "Indigenous

peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals.” In the 1990s the Māori developed the “*kaupapa* Māori psychology,” which is a psychology concerned and focused on Māori people. It explores Māori experience and expression of trauma, acknowledges the loss of Māori traditional values and tries to reincorporate them. Moreover, it also denounces the existence, not only of individual, but also collective trauma in the Māori community as a result of decades of colonial abuse and mistreatment. As Craps and Buelens maintain in reference to the study of collective traumas:

A related problem explored in this issue lies in the fact that the study of trauma has traditionally tended to focus on individual psychology. Colonial trauma, however, is a collective experience, which means that its specificity cannot be recognized unless the object of trauma research shifts from the individual to larger social entities, such as communities or nations. (2008: 4)

Thus, “*kaupapa* Māori psychology” challenges hierarchical western categories based on racial terms of white superiority and the necessity to educate the noble savages, which has been the main justification for all the wrongdoing that the Māori population has borne. For their part, the Māori Women’s Welfare League crafted in 1984 the report *Rapuora*, which considered not only the specific health issues and perspectives of Māori women, but also the importance of *wairua* as a starting point for health.

To say that a person is a psychosomatic unity, a personality formed jointly by physical and mental processes, only partly embraces the Māori concept. A study of Māori health must follow more than two strands. *Tinana* is the physical element of the individual and *hinengaro* the mental state, but these do not make up the whole. *Wairua*, the spirit, and *whānau* the wider family, complete the shimmering depths of the health *pounamu*, the precious touchstone of Māoridom. (Murchie 1984: 81)

Likewise, in his seminal work *Whaiora: Māori Health Development* (1994), Mason Durie describes mental health for Māori as holistic. From the very beginning, Durie makes it clear that spirituality is an essential component of health for the Māori, and that the western division thoughts vs. feelings, mental vs. physical, and rational vs. spiritual are not so rigid in Māori cosmogony. He formulates a four-sided health system known as the *whare tapa whā* (a four-sided house) model. This model explains the concept of Māori health as an interaction of *taha wairuia* (spiritual), *taha hinengaro* (mental), *taha tinana* (physical), and *taha whānau* (extended family). In chapter 5 of his book, Durie explains his idea in the following table (1994:70):

	Taha Wairua	Taha Hinengaro	Taha Tinana	Taha Whānau
Focus	Spiritual	Mental	Physical	Extended family
Key Aspects	The capacity for faith and wider communication	The capacity to communicate, to think, and to feel	The capacity for physical growth and development	The capacity to belong, to care, and to share
Themes	Health is related to unseen and unspoken energies	Mind and body are inseparable	Good physical health is necessary for optimal development	Individuals are part of wider social systems

The first cornerstone of this Māori health system is *Taha Wairua*, which is the non-material, spiritual essence of a person. It is the life force that determines who you are, what you are and where you are going, and provides a vital link with the ancestors. It is generally felt by the Māori to be the most essential requirement for health because it implies a capacity to have faith and to be able to understand the links between the human situation and the environment. They believe that people without spiritual

awareness and *mauri*²¹ cannot be healthy and are susceptible to illness or misfortune. *Taha wairua* is also reflected in the Māori relationship with nature because land, lakes, mountains and reefs possess spiritual significance. In the second place, *Taha Hinengaro* is generally interpreted as referring to mental health. It recognizes that the mind, thoughts and feelings cannot be separated from the body. Together they determine how people feel about themselves and, consequently, their state of health. In the third place, *Taha Tinana* represents the physical body and the importance of physical health in order to achieve physical development. The fourth cornerstone of the *whare tapa whā* is *Taha Whānau*, which acknowledges the relevance of the extended family to health because it is the main support system for the Māori, as it provides care and nurturance, not only in physical terms, but also culturally and emotionally. This principle promotes not only the relationship with their common ancestor, but also the interdependence between individuals within the *whānau*. The well-being of the individual cannot be improved without her/his recognition of the importance of the *whānau* well-being. Similarly, the *whānau*'s well-being is reinforced by the individual wellness of its members. Thus, when Kai Erikson describes the collective trauma of communities affected by catastrophes, this could also be extrapolated to the sense of communal disintegration that many Māori people still feel nowadays as a result of colonization. In his essay Erikson offers, on the one hand, a description of the therapeutic effects that a community can proffer to its members. On the other hand, he also states that, when any part of this organism is damaged, any component of the community is reciprocally affected:

21 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'mauri': 1. (noun) life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions - the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity. Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located.

It is the community that offers a cushion for pain, the community that offers a context for intimacy, the community that serves as the repository for binding traditions. And when the community is profoundly affected, one can speak of a damaged social organism in almost the same way that one would speak of a damaged body. (1995: 188)

Māori culture is also based on the obligation of care for people related to your own *whānau* and *iwi*, and Māori elders, being the heads of the *whānau*, are responsible for transmitting the knowledge of *whakapapa* to the younger generations. According to Ranginui Walker, one of New Zealand's most recognizable and forceful advocates for Māori rights, the elders are "the storehouses of knowledge, the minders and mentors of children" (1990: 63). In *Cousins*, an instance of these relationships between the old and young Māori generations is the physical and spiritual bond between Makareta and Kui Hinemate, which highlights the importance of teaching Māori spiritual knowledge and traditional practices. In the novel, Kui is responsible for Makareta's education according to Māori principles. She represents the wisdom of ancient Māori culture, which includes knowledge of "the birds, babies, the relatives, the old ones, the ancestors, the *kēhua*,²² the work, the walking, the dancing and singing, the sickness, the dreams, the wars, the stars, the waiting" (Grace 1992: 137). Makareta receives from Kui a series of Māori values which are crucial to assure an indigenous pride of race for the following Māori generations. For instance, contrary to the western view, independence from the family is understood as immaturity rather than strength. In *Cousins*, to give but one example, Anihera and Gloria elope, and this action will deeply affect their well-being because they are separated from their *whānau*. *Te Whānau* is fundamental to the Māori identity because the support of the *whānau* and tribal traditions reinforce the sense of personal identity. Grace's novel emphasises that the main reason for Mata's poor mental health is

²² From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'kēhua': 2. (noun) ghost - spirits that linger on earth after death and haunt the living.

that she has been separated from her *whānau* and, as a consequence, has not been able to identify with her *iwi*. Māori individual health is integrated into a wider system, in which personal and communal identity are often one and the same thing.

The fact is that western psychological therapy is based on the individual, and does not work with people who have a tradition based on holistic principles. The British colonization of Aotearoa/New Zealand brought with it western trauma concepts, which exclude indigenous mental healing traditions on account of their lack of scientific rigour. The Tohunga Suppression Act of 1907 made traditional Māori healing practices illegal, thus forcing them into hiding. Māori traditions and their holistic ideology were denigrated, and their expert healers forbidden. The colonizers' intention was to assimilate Māori into a western-based health system, and the consequence of this decision was that Māori underwent traumatic experiences during the process of colonial assimilation. As Durie claims:

Despite a century and a half of colonization, Māori remained convinced that good health could not be gauged by simple measures such as weight, blood pressure, or visual acuity. Spiritual and emotional factors, though more difficult to measure, were equally important. (1994: 75)

Māori healing traditions are therefore based on a holistic system which looks for balance between mind, spirit and body. The acceptance of this idea can lead towards a more inclusive treatment that takes into account cultural as well as spiritual Māori beliefs. Although these Māori elements have received little attention from western trauma theory, they are quite important, because they help to understand Māori culture and idiosyncrasy. In Māori culture, a person possesses *wairua* (spiritual essence), *tinana*

(mind), and *mauri* (life force), and the *tohunga*²³ focused on the cause of affliction by trying to obtain the patient's balance of those three aspects because, if one of them is affected, the health of the person will inexorably decline. According to Durie:

[h]ealthy thinking from a Māori perspective is integrative not analytical; explanations are sought from searching outwards rather than inwards; and poor health is typically regarded as a manifestation of a breakdown in harmony between the individual and the wider environment. (1994: 72)

The main source of trauma for the Māori community has been the abuse suffered during the long process of colonization and the following veiled neo-colonization that is still imprinted in society. Michelle Keown identifies Māori “as an indigenous minority culture living within a settler colony” (2005: 5) because, while the settlers achieved political autonomy from Britain, they continued to exercise political and cultural hegemony over the indigenous populations. As was argued before, the Treaty of Waitangi theoretically represented the New Zealand Government's contractual obligation to explicitly ensure equitable welfare for the Māori. Accordingly, it was meant to prompt the legal impetus for addressing the health needs of this specific ethnic group. However, although Aotearoa/New Zealand gained political independence from Britain in 1907, the statistics demonstrate, even at present, that the inequalities between Māori and Pakeha in terms of average life expectancy, infant mortality, average income, welfare dependency, suicide rates, substance abuse and criminality are still huge. In 2016, The Ministry of Social Development launched *The Social Report 2016 – Te Pūrongo Oranga Tangata*, which informs of the population aged 15 years and over who

23 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'tohunga': 2. (noun) skilled person, chosen expert, priest, healer - a person chosen by the tribe as leader in a particular field because of signs indicating talent for a particular vocation.

reported discrimination against them by age, gender or ethnicity in the last 12 months, the outcome of which being:

Race or ethnic group was the most common reason given for discrimination by the Asian ethnic group (79.8 percent), Māori (49.0 percent) and Pacific peoples (45.5 percent), while age was the most common response from those in the European/Other group (25.4 percent).²⁴

Finally, a statement in the “*Whānau Oranga Hinengaro: Northern Region Māori Mental Health and Addictions Plan*,” issued by the Northern District Health Board Support Agency, should also be mentioned, because it helps to clarify the situation of the Māori community in the twentieth century:

Evidence shows that Māori have the highest rate of hospitalization for psychiatric disorders out of all ethnic groups. Māori are seen accessing services later and with greater severity at the point of entry. (2004: 4)

Not surprisingly, social exclusion is one of the most important factors in the everyday insidious trauma that many victims, such as the Māori, have to suffer.

Blood and the Construction of a Dark Shadow of the Self

If a trauma victim perceives herself as suffering alone, and has no sense of belonging to a community of victims, she will remain silent, imagining that her pain has no relevance to the larger society.

Kalí Tal, *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma*.

Cousins is a story about the different experiences of three female Māori cousins named Mata, Missy and Makareta. They have been brought up in different ways regarding Māori traditions, but it is the character of Mata who is most traumatized in the story, not

²⁴ <http://socialreport.msd.govt.nz/civil-and-political-rights/perceived-discrimination.html>

only because of the treatment she has received from her Pakeha background, but also due to her father's imposition of alienating her from her Māori family and culture. Mata is the daughter of Anihera Keita Pairama, who elopes with Albert, a Pakeha seaman. Anihera plans to offer her daughter a good life within the Pakeha society but, due to Albert's colonial mentality, she and Mata suffer a life of repression and misery. When Anihera unexpectedly dies, Mata is placed in a state orphanage by her father. Albert is not interested in looking after Mata but neither does he want Anihera's family to have Mata. Therefore, Mata is denied access to her *whānau* and has to live in a Pakeha social structure in which a racist and patriarchal mentality predominates. In consequence, Mata becomes traumatized due to a childhood of repression and cultural dispossession. Albert's attitude towards his Māori wife and *mestiza* daughter illustrates the unequal relationship between Māori and Pakeha in Aotearoa/New Zealand. According to Auntie Gloria, Albert's sister-in-law, he only wanted a wife as a slave for him and he did not want any brown baby too (39). Accordingly, she concludes, that relationship was built on domination and subordination. When Anihera becomes ill, Albert bestows authority on Mrs. Parkinson, a Pakeha guardian, with the intention of imbuing Mata with a western religious education devoid of any knowledge of Māori culture. Thus the legacy of her mother's abuse is passed onto Mata, as she faces racism even though she is half Pakeha. In the narrative, some Māori characters consider violence as the tool the colonizer uses to oppress and subjugate them as the inferior 'others.' An instance in the story is when Makareta describes a generation of Māori people traumatized by colonial oppression, which she calls the disinherited:

There in the streets groups of men terrorized each other, brutalized the women that lived with them and caused fear wherever they went. They were the beaten, the hollowed-out

of our people, the *rawakore*,²⁵ the truly disinherited, where nothing substantial was inbuilt and nothing was valued or marvellous – where there was no memory, where the void had been defiled by an inrushing of anger and weeping. No one had loved their hair. (208)

Pakeha, the dominant group, have defined the economic, political and cultural realities in their own terms and according to their own interests, thus subduing the indigenous community. The outcome of this is summarized by Kali Tal as follows: “If the survivor community is a marginal one, their voices will be drowned out by those with the influence and resources to silence them, and to trumpet a revised version of their trauma to the public” (1996: 7). ‘New Zealand’ is a British construct, and ‘Aotearoa’ is the original name that Māori gave to their nation, a symbol of their struggle against the imposition of the English name. Although assimilation was eventually replaced by measures of integration, this was nothing but mere tokenism. According to Te Kawehau Clea Hoskins, a researcher of the politics and ethics of Indigene-Settler relations and multicultural and bicultural education:

the processes of colonization have meant, for many Māori, an almost absolute severing from the fundamental elements of a collective identity/ies: Māori language, knowledges and cultural and community life. However, through the renaissance of Māori culture and language, and the efforts of many generations of our activists, there are a growing number of Māori who have a critical awareness about the physical loss and cultural damage colonization has perpetuated against our people [...] These are Māori who are critical and suspicious of what are viewed as corrupting Pakeha/western values, motives, and practices. Indeed, this is a sensible and logical defence and necessary form of resistance when we consider that colonization is alive and well in Aotearoa today. (1997: 26)

25 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘rawakore’: 2. (noun) poor, destitute, underprivileged.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon discussed neurosis by describing the reactions of Negro children to initial contact with European culture. Drawing upon his experience as a psychiatrist, he argues that “[a] normal Negro child, having grown up within a normal family, will become abnormal on the slightest contact with the white world” (2008: 101-102). Thus, he suggests that it is only through this contact that the Negro child becomes aware and ashamed of his blackness: “The Negro is unaware of it as long as his existence is limited to his own environment; but the first encounter with the white man oppresses him with the whole weight of his blackness” (116). Awareness of racial difference is therefore brought about by an intense awareness of the body itself an, in particular, of the colour of the skin. The metaphoric link between ‘blackness’ and ‘dirtiness, as reflected in young Mata’s traumatization through othering, is clearly shown when the adult Mata looks down at her feet at the beginning of the novel. This description of Mata’s toes associates her dirty skin to the blackness of her blood:

Eyes not looking out but looking down instead, at two feet. At two big toenails cracked, grooved, blacked, crusted and hoofed. Rusty saws. And at the next-toe toenails fluted and humpy, hooked and clawed, scratch picking at the tarry middle of the road [...].

There was blood and dirt. One could be the other, dirt or blood. (Grace 1992: 11)

The fragmentation of Mata’s mind reinforces her feeling of otherness, rendering her body not fully human because a fragmented narrative effectively represents the typical dislocation of trauma. It is underscored in the animal attributions of her body: “clawed” and “hoofed.” Furthermore, Mata is depicted in images related to deformity, such as “humpy” and “hooked.” Fanon claims that the black subject’s awareness of his racial difference leads to a sense of self-disaffection and self-objectification. Symbolically, he represents this mental division in terms of bodily mutilation and dismemberment:

Completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed,

and made myself an object. What else could it be for me but an amputation, an excision, a hemorrhage that spattered my whole body with black blood? (2008: 85)

The novel's opening is set in a time frame that is near the end of the chronological story. This first section places Mata walking barefoot on an empty road in the middle of the night with no idea where she is going. This scene is a metaphor of her life, which is like an empty road with no destination. Mata's thoughts are represented by strings of words that do not include complete sentences, which thus echo her mental breakdown. These confusing memories and words with no structure or apparent narrative function enact the chaos of Mata's traumatized mind. Judith Herman offers an accurate description of the characteristics of trauma and the events that form it, and of how traumatized people experience these events:

The traumatic event, although real, took place outside the parameters of 'normal' reality, such as causality, sequence, place and time. The trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after. [...] Trauma survivors live not with memories of the past, but with an event that could not and did not proceed through to its completion, has no ending, attained no closure, and therefore, as far as its survivors are concerned, continues into the present and is current in every respect. (1992: 69)

Grace's novel offers some examples of this timeless trauma which recurs in the present, such as the deep trauma that Bobby, Missy's father, undergoes after his return from war. There, he is saved by his cousin Rere after he is wounded in both legs and his side, and cannot get up or move. Although he hears Rere calling him, he drags himself into the bamboos so that Rere cannot find him because Bobby believes that, if Rere carries him, he will not make it back (158). However, Rere risks his own life, carries Bobby and saves him from death, even though Bobby swears he wants to be left there. Eventually, Rere dies in the war and Bobby suffers the painful recurrence of his war traumatic

experience. Bobby is psychologically shattered and has a recurrent dream which presents Rere covered in his blood: “That’s what I keep getting in my dream. Our brother covered head to toe in blood of mine. Blood moving, running, like coming out of him. My blood, him bleeding it” (159). This vision of blood as described by Bobby’s dream wonderfully illustrates the never-ending recurrence that a traumatized person suffers in the process of ‘acting out.’ Aunty Gloria describes Bobby’s mental condition as follows: “When he’s full. Only time he’s not yelling and crying in the middle of the night” (39). Bobby embodies not only the fear and destitution of war, but also the guilt of surviving the war, unlike some members of his family and friends. He has some of the usual symptoms of the trauma that affects war survivors, such as alcoholism, nightmares and dissociation. The novel connects trauma to violence and explains how the death of Māori people in war affected their whole community. Many personal traumas are connected with Rere, who is killed in action: the pain felt by his wife Polly, Keita’s grief for her son, and Bobby’s mourning for his friend.

In Mata’s case, mental dissociation from herself as a human being subverts the traditional and rational western conception of time, because this time is simply not at work in Mata’s traumatized mind. The narrative mirrors the effects of Mata’s thoughts, which move backwards and forwards, between past, present and future. This provides a sense of timelessness, a concept that is very relevant with regard to the experiencing of trauma. As a child, Mata is neglected when she only wants love and approval. Moreover, when these needs are met with rejection and intolerance, frustration ensues and she becomes a shy, introverted girl. The violence exerted against Mata is not only psychological but also physical, and it is clearly depicted in the course of the beatings and deprivations she undergoes in the children’s home and at school:

Sometimes on the way home from school, kids had hidden in wait for her, running out and attacking her with their school rulers. She would swing her back at them and try to run but there were always too many of them and they'd hold her and hit her. As soon as they saw blood they'd run away, turning every now and again to shout. (94)

The racism and hatred portrayed in the narrative are crucial to understand the adult Mata and how her mind has annihilated any hope of a whole self. What Mata suffers is not the event-based conception of trauma described in early trauma theory, but a kind of trauma connected with a long process of repression and marginalization, since after realizing that she does not belong to the culture of the society in which she has grown, Mata feels an anxiety that she cannot understand. In her life, "People went away, or they died" (87). She is not able to connect with her *whānau*, amongst other things, because her Pakeha father has denied her the possibility to know her culture of origin. Therefore, Mata's existence is characterized by alienation, and she is both personally alienated by her dual ethnicity and moreover treated as the 'other' by members of both cultures. Mata is trapped in a liminal space where she feels a deep sense of hollowness. Finally, after years of nothing, Mata put on her coat and her shoes, put the photo of her dead mother in her pocket and went out following her feet, wanting nothing and going nowhere. As Fanon argues, the colonial encounter certainly transforms the ontological position of the colonized subject and through that creates an enduring crisis of dislocation:

I wanted to be typically Negro – it was no longer possible. I wanted to be white – that was a joke. And, when I tried, on the level of ideas and intellectual activity, to reclaim my negritude, it was snatched away from me. (2008: 101)

Fanon links the concept of 'blackness' with trauma in a colonial environment. He asserts that blackness is not just a feeling of inferiority but even a feeling of nonexistence: "Sin is Negro as virtue is white. All those white men in a group, guns in

their hands, cannot be wrong. I am guilty. I do not know of what, but I know that I am no good” (2008: 106). In the collective indigenous unconscious of the majority of colonial countries, blackness stands for terms such as ugliness, sin, darkness and immorality. In the novel, Mata is an example of this ‘blackness’ understood as a negative concept. She links her blackness with dirtiness and sinfulness as a result of the education received in the orphanage. Her blackness is targeted by the oppressors in order to mistreat and traumatize her. Mata even encounters racism when her classmate Betty invites her to play at home after school and Betty’s mother expels Mata from the house because indigenous children are not allowed there:

Then the mother came and chased you out because you weren’t allowed. Betty wasn’t allowed to bring dirty, black children into the house to make bangles or necklaces for dolls. Or Home kids. Betty was a naughty, naughty girl. (17)

Another example in the novel is the description of the urban mind-set of New Zealand, which is characterized by prejudice and racism. Polly and Makareta suffer that racism when they try to find a suitable place to live in Wellington because Pakeha landlords do not want a Māori renter:

But it wasn’t easy to find a place. Makareta and I went together in answer to ‘To Let’ advertisements only to find ourselves turned away. Sometimes doors would be slammed on us before I’d had time to speak. At other times we were shown sheds, cold basements, or leaking rooms without heat or water. (117)

The result of colonization is a hegemonic structure of discrimination and inequality that persists in the present, and that hinders indigenous assertions of self and identity. Education has also been a hostile environment for the indigenous minority, which has been subjected to petty discrimination and one-sided accounts of the colonial past. Māori children received a biased religious version of history, the outcome of a Pakeha colonial education. The colonial curriculum redefined not only the global

physical boundaries but also the position that the Māori occupied within that new world. From one day to the next, the colonial religion categorized them as savages who must be civilized in order to reach salvation. In truth Māori were methodically excluded from the writing of the History of this new nation called New Zealand. Moreover, Māori children were educated to aim to resemble the good and pure Pakeha children but, at the same time, they were subliminally taught that they would never be totally good and pure due to their dark skin. This colonial strategy brings about a deep identity crisis because, on the one hand, indigenous children want to become the Pakeha ‘other’ which is their white counterpart but, on the other, they positively know that this will be never entirely possible. As Fanon put it, this is the dilemma “*turn white or disappear*” (2008: 75; emphasis in the original). The novel shows this colonial acculturation in institutions, such as the Catholic ‘Home,’ which ironically is the only home that Mata has ever known. In this place, a permanent sense of guilt and shame is imposed on Mata, as can be seen in the Matron’s mistreatment of her:

She brushed her hair, pressing the springy curls down as best she could – bad curls that had to be cut, cut, cut, Matron snapping with the scissors, pulling down hard with the comb. Bad. She had to flatten her hair down with water every morning and slide her two long clips in to try and stop it from springing.

When Matron had finished cutting her hair she would tell her to get the pan and brush and clean up the mess, so she’d sweep up all the bad curls and carry them down to the incinerator. One day James, the caretaker, had been down at the incinerator when she’d taken her hair to burn.

‘Been shearing the black sheep, have they?’ he’d said. (30-31)

Even though Mata has a dual ethnicity, she is rendered as ‘not purely white’ in that racist system. Therefore, she embodies the ‘other’ inherent in colonization, and the orphanage represents the colonial institution where Pakeha educational and religious

doctrine of domination is pervaded with a form of violence that has become institutionalized. The connection between the abuse suffered by Mata and her psychosomatic afflictions is not coincidental. Her physical sensations may be interpreted as a direct manifestation of her deep-seated anxieties about her bodily appearance. In the narrative, Mata recalls a moment in which she is beaten so intensely with a cane that she urinates on herself:

She'd been late home and had been sent into the bathroom to bare the bottom for the cane. After the caning she'd peed, so the stick had come hitting down again. For, Being, A, Dirty, Girl, Now, Clean, Up, This, Mess. (17)

This is an example of how internalized fear provoked by violence, and living with it, not only causes psychological damage but can be represented through the body in a variety of ways as well. In the orphanage, Mata is abused physically, mentally and socially, and this racist background impacts strongly on her mind.

She'd been taken to live in a children's home where there was night crying and bedwetting, and where she was always bad and strange – where she'd had a dirty skin and the kids had called her dirty. (94)

Mrs. Parkinson, who embodies the figure of Pakeha authority in the story, reinforces this idea of indigenous badness when she refers to Mata in these terms: “All these years I've been trying to make good from bad and this is the thanks I get” (81). The traumatization that Mata has developed in her childhood spreads throughout her adult life because she has internalized a racist colonial ideology, which has resulted in her developing of an inferiority complex. She represses her Māori heritage, and desires to be what she is not, and this is the source of her traumatic condition. In tune with Fanon's ideology, Mata's feelings can be compared to the attempt that many colonized people experience of simply trying themselves to be white because that is how they will compel the white man to acknowledge that they are human (2008: 73). It is clear that

one of Mata's problems of identification comes from her cross-cultural ethnicity, because she is constantly receiving cultural pressure from Pakeha and assessing and readjusting her commitment against her Māori roots.

She had never wanted to be bad so she'd scrubbed her skin, watered her hair down and prayed to be good, tried to be obedient and to work hard, yet all the time there was evidence that she was bad – other children would not walk with her to school and they didn't let her join in their games. At school she was called names that made her feel ashamed. (94)

Furthermore, Mrs. Parkinson uses religion as the most important element to control Mata's mind by means of fear to punishment of God as the consequence of sin. When Mata is only a child she receives a Bible from Mrs. Parkinson, who tells Mata that her mother is gone to heaven to be with God. Mrs. Parkinson does not allow Mata to go to pictures or talk to boys or men because "there are better things for a Christian girl to do" (62), but the reality is that she does not want Mata to become independent because she is receiving money from Mata's father while also treating her as a servant in her house. The outcome of this pressure is that Mata has internalized this fear of God so deeply that, even when being married, "she didn't like to do what men and women do" (84).

Although as a child Mata has been taught to refuse Māori elements, which are identified as bad or evil, when she is twelve, Mrs. Parkinson allows her to visit her *whānau* for the holidays, only after Mata's family has mentioned the land that Mata could claim due to her Māori heritage.

‘Stay in your seat,’ Mrs Parkinson had said, ‘Don’t talk to anyone and don’t get off at all until you get to your station. Also don’t forget that I have charge of you, May. I am the one allowing you to have this holiday and I expect you to be well behaved and obedient. Home children are brought up to love and fear the Lord. You must guard against sin while you are away and beware of bad companions. And beware of the devil,

who will whisper evil onto your ears and lead you into temptation so that the gates of hell will be open unto you.’ (16)

It is while there, when she is suddenly made aware of her racial difference, that Mata’s contradictory world-view becomes deeply affected. In her family’s *whānau*, she perceives the Māori world from an indigenous perspective for the very first time in her life, and she is made to face up her indigenous identity in contrast with her Pakeha education. This internal fight against the racial prejudices conveyed by her colonial education disrupts her fragile identity even deeper since, before her visit, she has known herself as May Palmer, and in the Māori environment she is afraid of losing what has made up her identity so far. Her Pakeha education imbues her with a sense of shame about her cultural heritage but, in her *whānau*, Mata discovers a new cultural paradigm that has nothing to do with the Pakeha education that she has received. Hence, the memory of this visit will be a turning point in Mata’s realization of her Māori ancestry, in its turn a crucial part of her identity, because this cultural awareness triggers a change that is described as follows: “she seemed to be changing into someone else, not being herself anymore, forgetting things” (45). It is during this visit that the conflict concomitant with her growing psychological problems becomes highlighted, as she struggles to comprehend and accept the cultural values of her Māori family and her own Māori identity. Significantly, Mata is forced to adapt to ‘white’ New Zealand culture and, as has been noted, she is referred to by Pakeha as May Palmer instead of Mata Pairama.

Why did her aunty keep calling her Mata, which didn’t sound like a name at all – sounded like a noise instead, or butter. She didn’t like people making up names who had cheeky brats for children and a stinken baby, but she was too shy to say anything about her name.

Now Aunty was smiling again, ‘There Bubba, your cousin Mata, see.’

‘It’s May.’

‘What is?’

‘My name. Like on my bag,’ she said, showing the label, ‘May Parker.’ (15)

At this very moment, the novel emphasizes Mata’s feeling of unbelonging and her psychological dichotomy between her desire to belong to her *whānau* and the racial hatred that she has suffered throughout her childhood. She has been kept away from her Māori relatives during her childhood because they represent ‘evil’ and ‘sin,’ and thus has learnt to deny and reject her Māori background, beginning with her Māori name. This is yet another example of how the colonizers imposed a new identity on the colonized by erasing any trace of indigenous identity, the first step of which was changing the indigenous name to a westernized one, which in Mata’s case is May Palmer. *Cousins* places the initial stage in Mata’s quest towards the regaining of her Māori identity in the *whānau*, which is also the place where Mata will become reconciled with her Māori family and ancestors at the end of the novel:

Aunty Gloria was talking at the same time as Keita, in a quiet voice as though she wanted to cover what Keita was saying. ‘Your own name from your great grandmother that died when Keita was born. Your real name. It’s all right, Mata, when you get used to it.’ (45)

In her *whānau*, Mata receives her Māori name as a *taonga* (treasure), when Gloria tells her that she has a real Māori name of her own. She now enters some kind of ‘third space,’ to rely on Homi Bhabha’s well-known term, that is, she is confronted with the liminal realm that can alone account for her hybrid identity; once there, she begins to know about her Māori roots, and suddenly realizes that the only thing that she truly owns is her Māori identity: “My name is Mata Pairama. I have a name, Mata Pairama, Mata Pairama, a name of my own” (61). As Bhabha (1990: 216) asserts, hybridity lies in the power/potential to face up to a new situation, to establish new alliances, to

translate and rethink your principles, and to enter a process of transformation where different cultural values coexist and artificial boundaries dissolve. In the novel, Mata must reconsider her previous Pakeha cultural prejudices against the Māori culture when she finally understands that, in the Pakeha society, she is nothing but an outcast.

After Mata's journey, Keita sends letters to Mrs. Parkinson informing her that Mata only will inherit the land when she "is freely our own, when she is freely our daughter and not her father's daughter or someone else's daughter. That is because the land must not be taken away. Yours sincerely, Keita Pairama, grandmother of Mata Pairama" (83-84). When Mrs. Parkinson realizes that Mata will not receive any land unless she returns to her *whānau*, communication is suspended because she does not want to lose her Māori servant without taking some profit in exchange. Thus, Mata's Māori family is silenced in response to the power of the Pakeha judicial system that has appointed Mrs. Parkinson as Mata's legal guardian. Therefore, after a lifetime of separation from her mother's family, Mata believes that nobody loves her and feels that, without love and family connections, there is only "nothing" and "nowhere." The colonizer has damaged Mata's identity to the very depths of it, having removed not only her original Māori name but also the love provided by a family, which originates Mata's trauma. As Herman asserts:

Traumatic events call into question basic human relationships. They breach the attachments of family, friendship, love, and community. They shatter the construction of the self that is formed and sustained in relation to others. They undermine the belief systems that give meaning to human experience. (1992: 51)

A central theme in *Cousins* is 'speaking the unspeakable' and giving a voice to those whom Gayatri Spivak (1994: 83) calls 'the Subaltern,' that is, those who in the historical and social context of colonial production have no history and cannot speak because they belong to the lower spheres of society. Spivak borrows the term

'subaltern' from Gramsci to refer to the unrepresented group of people in society. In Gramsci's view, "[s]ubaltern groups are always subject to the activity of ruling groups, even when they rebel and rise up: only 'permanent' victory breaks their subordination" (1971: 55). As a Māori woman, Mata belongs to the lower strata of society, and has consequently been disenfranchised of her own voice through othering and violence. She has been excluded from the social discourse, which has wounded her psyche, while denying her the possibility of a therapeutic process which includes self-definition and self-discovery. The wounding of trauma is hidden in a variety of pathologies, and 'voicelessness' is one of the most obvious symptoms of Mata's traumatic condition. Mata is depicted as experiencing symptoms of *pōhauhau*, which means fragmentation of the self and dissociation, as reactions to her trauma. *Cousins* presents Mata as the example of an entire community that has been traumatized by colonial abuse, and describes the symptoms she suffers as the cause of this awful experience.

According to the early theoretical framework of trauma theory, Mata's years of melancholia might be said to illustrate Freud's notion of *Nachträglichkeit* as reflected in the delayed recurrence of her traumatic experience and her inability to relate it to her conscious thought. Thus, Mata's numbness is shown to be the effect of the many years of psychological and physical violence undergone in her childhood. She has no coherent thoughts, and the fragmentation of grammatical expression and repetitions illustrate the condition of Mata's mind. Trauma impacts on how time is experienced; it determines what is safe or bearable to live with. From a literary point of view, the representation of the experience of trauma requires structures and techniques that simultaneously incorporate and modify those qualities of the unspeakable. Anne Whitehead identifies repetition as one of the most important literary strategies for conveying fictional trauma representations:

One of the key literary strategies in trauma fiction is the device of repetition, which can act at the levels of language, imagery or plot. Repetition mimics the effects of trauma, for it suggests the insistent return of the event and the disruption of narrative chronology or progression. (2004: 86)

Grace employs several literary strategies in the novel, such as repetition, linguistic fragmentation and internal dialogues, which represent the impact of trauma in Mata's mind. As Whitehead claims, repetition can be associated with feelings of othering and low self-esteem, emotions that the character of Mata clearly embodies, as the following quotations show:

Only wanted hands in shoes in pockets and just herself, her own ugly self, with her own big feet and big hands, her own wide face, her own bad hair, which was turning white, springing out round her big head. (13-14)

There was a photo in a frame and two feet to walk her. She was her own self, ugly. (14)

Most of the women didn't. Stared at her clothes, her shoes, her bad hair, her black face, raised their eyebrows at each other, and at mourning tea and lunchtimes didn't move over at the tables so she could sit down. (51)

She was ugly with bad hair and had a mended cardigan and ugly clothes. (73)

But who will there be? Who will there be, ugly enough to like or love me, so that I can have someone of my own? (76)

Her bad hair had been chopped with large scissors by Matron every time the curls grew and she'd had two long clips to keep the hair close to her head, but always her bad hair had loosened the clips and sprung into wrong twists and waves and curls. (94)

I hadn't said a word since we met and sat there feeling my grubbiness, my shabbiness, my dullness, my ugliness, my shyness. I'd wanted only to walk. (242)

She took the soap and a cloth and began washing me, letting the warm water run down over me. I felt ugly and shy, but there was nothing I could do or say. (243)

Likewise, the fragmentation of language, narration and structure, provide a powerful tool to convey the traumatic mental process in Mata's shattered mind and, by extension, in that of colonized indigenous peoples. Mata's particular inability to speak coherently and clearly about her trauma indicates an inner struggle between the different parts of her self, because this fragmentation is the result of the splitting of her mind into a chaotic state between her Pakeha education and her Māori roots. She has become trapped in a position in which she is dispossessed by and distanced from both Pakeha and Māori cultures, and she constructs a Māori 'other' as the dark shadow of her own self.

The beginning of the last section of the novel narrates the change that Mata has undergone: "I don't know why I had chosen to walk the middle of the road, but perhaps it was something to do with words that were going through my head – 'middle of the road, middle of the night, middle of nowhere'" (241). At this point in the story, Mata takes up the narration and control of her own story; now she is not an object anymore, but her own subject. After that, Makareta and Mata meet on the road, and it is then that Mata finds someone who has her own face and listens to her. At first, Mata continues to repress her mental pains, because she has never learned how to process them and cannot put her feelings into language, mainly because nobody has ever cared about her. According to Julia Kristeva, the psyche "represents the bond between the speaking being and the other, a bond that endows it with a therapeutic and moral value" (1995:

4). Mata realizes that Makareta is the person who will help her find her own voice, because she embodies Māori values, tradition and wisdom:

I thought Makareta would leave me but she didn't. She took the soap and a cloth and began washing me, letting the warm water run down over me. I felt ugly and shy, but there was nothing I could do or say.

Later she took me to the bedroom where I was to sleep. She turned the bed covers back for me, helped me into the bed and tucked me in the way a mother does. I didn't want to want it, and I couldn't speak. 'In the morning,' she said, 'you can tell me everything that has happened to you since last we met, or tell me very everything that has happened to you since before that.' I could feel my eyes closing. (243)

Once Makareta has washed Mata, she does not feel ugly any more; this is described as if it were some kind of baptism ritual that introduces Mata into Māori culture. At this point Mata discovers a Māori environment, and she feels that, there, she is not constrained by the racist Pakeha ideology. Mata's unique possibility for healing is re-telling and re-structuring her traumatic experiences but, first of all, she must free herself of all the inherited Pakeha cultural prejudices. Despite her traumatic condition, Mata feels comfortable in the company of her cousin and finds the confidence to reveal to Makareta her terrible life, thus beginning to understand and accept that her trauma has been perpetrated and perpetuated by colonial structures and their systematic repression of her Māoridom. This proves a turning point in her psychological condition because, in Makareta's house, Mata confronts and organizes her frightening memories and is able to talk to her cousin about her life of pain and sorrow:

I talked and talked as I had never talked before, in a way that I didn't know I could. It was as though the walking, the thinking and the not thinking, had jolted the tongue inside me. I told her all that had ever, or never, happened, wanting to talk on and on. I had come away so as not to want, so as not be sitting waiting, yet here I was reaching,

letting all that had waited inside me pour out. I had found someone, even though I hadn't looked for her, someone who treated me closely, as though I was part of who she was. (243-44)

Mata's disclosure makes the beginning of the process of healing possible thanks to the verbalization of her pain. What is remarkable at this stage is that Mata's possibility of overcoming her traumatic stagnation challenges the notion of 'unspeakability' that early trauma theory defended when claiming that traumatic processes cannot be possibly overcome. Thus, *Cousins* presents an alternative, not only to the traditional trauma theory's aporetic vision that Caruth puts forward, but also to the idea that trauma involves endless melancholia.

After Makareta's death, Mata is the one who brings her cousin's body back home; this is the reason why Mata returns to her *whānau*, which represents the end of her quest to find her place out of the hostile Pakeha society. For the first time she feels that she understands her people's ceremonies and, although she listens to a language she has never understood, she feels protected. After recognizing her mother's spirit, she realizes, not only that she has come home, which is the end of her walking, but also that the way in which she is going to manage her new world will be fundamentally inscribed by Māori culture and tradition. Mata enters a liminal space, in which she has to cross different boundaries in order to reach her final immersion into the Māori world. Mata builds up her Māori identity throughout the novel, which corroborates Stuart Hall's assertion that cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being':

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (1990: 222)

The Power of *Aroha* and Mythology: From *Te Kore* to the World of Light

I'm talking about values, which I think are the essential part of the culture.

I'm talking about

aroha (love in the highest sense)

manaakitanga (hospitality)

whānaungatanga (relationships and loyalty in the family)

ngā tīpuna (the ancestors)

te tangata (the importance of people)

te whenua (relationship to the land)

te moana (relationship to the sea)

I'm talking about *te mauri* -- the life spirit of every person.

Patricia Grace in Judith Dell Panny's "A Cultural-Historical Reading of Patricia Grace's *Cousins*."

As was argued before, knowledge of Māori culture is crucial in the analysis of Māori literature. The present section will accordingly illustrate, not only the importance of Māori elements, such as the *whānau*, *iwi*, and *whakapapa* in connection with the novel, but will also describe crucial Māori cultural values, such as ancient oral tradition, mythology, and the vital concept of *aroha* within Māori cosmogony. Oral tradition and symbolic systems of communication have been quintessential in the history of Māori people because they have transmitted among and across generations their culture through stories in *Te reo Māori*. However, when these stories were primarily told in oral, and not written, form, the western canon did not recognize them as 'literature.' In the early twentieth century, the colonizers were fascinated with native individual artistic expression and, although many colonial ethnographic scholars realized that the Māori had a rich body of oral literature, they were more interested in classifying the traditions and artworks of the indigenous population. Due to this flawed method of studying *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori world), typical of the western ethos, in which individualism is the keystone, colonial scholars failed to perceive the value of the collective Māori literary world.

Cousins' way of telling the story echoes Māori oral tradition, because every story is created within a spiral of ever-widening circles that incorporates other members of the *whānau* into each other's stories, and in which neither beginning nor ending can be defined. The narrative structure of the novel avoids the straight line that follows the beginning-middle-end pattern of western fiction. In contrast, the narration has a spiral pattern that liberates the subjugated Māori voices, and this is crucial in order to convey an idea of the way in which Māori people understand the world. The three cousins start the first three sections of the novel voiceless, although in different ways. In the first section, a third-person fragmented voice narrates Mata's story. In the second section, Makareta's first narrative is told partly in the voice of her mother, Polly, and partly in her own voice. In the third section, Missy's life is told by her (unborn) twin-brother, who speaks as if he were addressing Missy directly. Subsequently, in the last three sections there is a great narrative shift. In section four Makareta meets Mata, at a point in which Makareta is able to narrate her story directly in her own voice for the first time in the novel. In the fifth section, Missy decides to become an important member of the family and gains her own voice within the *whānau*. Thus, Missy finishes her story on her own by relating the details of her life after her marriage and, in addition to Mata and Makareta's story, gives her own perspective of Mata returning to the *whānau* after Makareta's death. In the sixth section of the novel, Mata gains her Māori voice, which represents a vital step to overcome her trauma. This final section completes the spiral that makes up the novel's narrative structure. In Mata's first narrative, memories of her visit to the *whānau* are merged with her fragmented thoughts as she walks along the road. Mata's narration depicts the moment in which she meets Makareta, who will connect Mata with Missy and the *whānau* again. The three intersecting stories unfold in

her voices and the voices of characters, such as Polly or the unborn twin brother of Missy, whose connections to the cousins are established in the telling.

In the oral transmission of Māori stories, family was very important because stories about the ancestors passed down from generation to generation and were vital to maintain the “*mana*,” meaning the power of the *iwi*. Māori oral tradition relies on memory, and chronological time is of no importance, so people tell stories of their ancestors as if they were still present in their lives. Timelessness asserts the narrative’s inherent fluidity, and speaking the stories rather than just reading them makes them closer and more intimate. In response to a question posed by Antonella Sarti, who asked Patricia Grace whether she associated herself with the figure of the oral storyteller, the author answered:

Yes, I do. I think that written stories are just an extension of our oral storytelling – not superior to, nor inferior to it; just another aspect of it. We are people of the Nineties who express our culture in many ways, in every way available – just as our ancestors did. They used everything that was available. (1998: 50)

Mythology is another vital element in Māori culture, and plays an important role in Māori health because it reinforces their identity through the recognition of Māori ancestors and their stories. An interesting work in which Māori mythology is involved in the healing of Māori people is “The Use of Māori Mythology in Clinical Settings: Training Issues and Needs” (2003), in which the clinical psychiatrist Laura Cherrington claims that the challenge for clinicians working with the Māori is the incorporation of *pūrākau*²⁶ into therapy. She asserts that the most important part of using *pūrākau* in therapy involves re-telling the story of the various *atua*²⁷ to Māori patients. The method

26 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘pūrākau’: 2. (noun) myth, ancient legend, story.

27 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘atua’: 1. (noun) ancestor with continuing influence, god, demon, supernatural being, deity, ghost, object of superstitious regard, strange being - although often

in which each story is retold is up to each member of the *whānau*, and it could include *waiata*,²⁸ *haka*, poetry, drama, sculpting, painting, drawing, story-telling, and/or writing (2003: 118). The main reason for using *pūrākau* in psychological therapy is that it promotes Māori identity through the acknowledgement of their ancestors. These stories are a crucial medium of healing for Māori because they identify themselves with these narratives, and their protagonists and the therapist can discuss patients' personal similarities and differences, or strengths and weaknesses. Hence, through using *pūrākau*, both the therapist and the patient can attempt to look at alternative stories or solutions to problems (2003: 119). The Māori have always transmitted *pūrākau*, including *aroha* and *mana*, understanding them as the main means of cultural survival. Moreover, *pūrākau* and *atua* are constantly identified by Māori in relation to natural elements, such as wind, rain, mist, land, stars, and trees.

In *Cousins*, female characters are identified with the strong women of Māori mythology and such as Papatūānuku,²⁹ Hine-ahu-one³⁰, Rona and Hine-tītama who becomes Hine-nui-te-pō.³¹ These women, like their mythological counterparts, participate in this cycle of growth through the challenges they pose to a western tradition that argues for history and rationality over spirituality and myths. Thus, Māori

translated as 'god' and now also used for the Christian God, this is a misconception of the real meaning. Many Māori trace their ancestry from *atua* in their *whakapapa* and they are regarded as ancestors with influence over particular domains. These *atua* also were a way of rationalizing and perceiving the world. Normally invisible, *atua* may have visible representations.

28 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'waiata': 2. (noun) song, chant, psalm.

29 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'Papatūānuku': 1. (personal name) Earth, Earth mother and wife of Rangi-nui - all living things originate from them.

30 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'Hine-ahu-one': 1. (personal name) also known as Hine-hau-one, she was the first woman created by Tāne-nui-a-Rangi and Io on the beach at Kurawaka.

31 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'Hine-nui-te-pō': 1. (personal name) Hine-tītama was the eldest daughter of the *atua* Tāne-nui-a-Rangi and Hine-ahu-one. She had several children to her father, but on learning that her husband was her father she fled to *te pō* (the underworld) where she receives the souls of the dead and is known as Hine-nui-te-pō.

must adapt to a new hybrid cultural space while taking into account their ancient stories, which function as a continuing source of wisdom and truth. These mythical connections offer a culturally appropriate structure for oral transmission, and place the contemporary Māori community within the context of their ancestral past because, as Grace claims in an interview by Jane McRae, mythical stories “are both contemporary and ancient and have messages for any age” (1992: 288). Furthermore, these voices assert the Māori mythological regenerative power, which is vital to the elements of *tinana* and *wairua*. The novel also emphasizes this mythological realm by offering short fragments related with Māori mythology, like this one related to the Goddess Hine-nui-te-pō, who represents both life and death, and is the nurturing space in which life begins, and also the death-trap where Māui perished in his quest for immortality. There is a clear reference to this story in the first lines of the third section:

Woman with
Obsidian eye
Made us mortal. (155)

Hine-nui-te-pō is the omnipresent Goddess of death through whose toothed vagina all must pass on the way to the underworld. In *Cousins*, Mata must die, which means that she must erase all her western prejudices in order to enter the realm of Māori culture, which many Pakeha consider to be the underworld. It is only then that Mata’s life can begin and she can start a personal quest for the healing of her insidious trauma, which will lead her towards the nurturing space of her *whānau*. Another example of Māori mythology is the connection between Missy’s unborn twin and the demigod Māui, because both of them are able to see and know everything. This omniscient wisdom is the result of their presence in a liminal space between the living and the dead that

highlights the importance of Māori spirituality and the presence of death in the everyday life of the Māori community.

Other sacred Māori elements in Māori culture are the ‘head’ and ‘hair,’ as parts of the body that hold magical powers. Therefore, they must be treated respectfully, as was the case of Makareta throughout her childhood. The novel also emphasizes Mata’s bad hair as a symbol of her great trauma and inferiority complex. An instance of this sacredness in Māori mythology is the hair of Taranga, the mother of Māui, which has magical powers. After Taranga had given birth to Māui, she believed him to be dead, so she cut off a topknot of her own hair, wrapped the baby in it in order to protect him and sent him out to sea to be cared for by the gulls and the fishes. She believed he would return to her, and he did, because he was saved by his ancestor Rangi-nui.³² Another instance of the novel’s symbolic power of hair in Māori mythology is Missy’s red hair in relation to the ancestress, Hīne-ahu-one, the first woman, who was shaped from red earth by the god of the forest, Tāne-mahuta³³. In fact, it is Missy’s red hair that identifies her as procreator and protector of the *whakapapa* by connecting her with Papatūānuku, the Earth Mother. According to Māori mythology, Tāne-mahuta could only obtain the *uha*,³⁴ or female element, from the fertile red soil on the pubic area of his mother, Papatūānuku. Furthermore, chapter forty begins with the following words:

The mists of morning sighs

Rise. (193)

32 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘Rangi-nui’: 1. (personal name) atua of the sky and husband of Papatūānuku, from which union originate all living things.

33 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘Tāne-mahuta’: 1. (personal name) atua of the forests and birds and one of the children of Rangi-nui and Papa-tū-ā-nuku.

34 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘uha’: 1. (noun) female (of birds and animals), woman, femaleness, femininity.

This is another reference to Papatūānuku, also found in Patricia Grace and Robyn Kahukiwa's book *Wahine Toa: Women of Māori Myth*: "mists of morning rise to mingle with the caressing night-dew tears of Rangi" (1991: 22). By means of the mist, the Earth Mother Papatūānuku reaches up to the Sky Father Rangi-nui. This image provides a reminder of the origin of Māori *whakapapa*, which began with the love of Rangi-nui and Papatūānuku. In *Cousins*, this relationship is mirrored by that between Missy and Hamuera, as their love will preserve Māori land and genealogy by procreation. There are more references to procreation in chapters thirty-three and thirty-eight. The first one is introduced by these words: "One who lives in the moon/Controls the blood's flow" (169). Rona is known as the mythical woman in the moon, who controls menstruation and, thereby, the fertility of women. The second one begins with the invocation: "Titama, Titama" (182). Hine-tītama is described in Māori mythology as "the mother of mankind." All of these references are related to Missy and her role as mother, contributing to the cycle of life and death.

As for Māori ancestral lands, they are not only places with great cultural and social significance because they hold the bones of the ancestors, but are also the main source of economic sustenance for the Māori community and, consequently, are crucial for the health of the community. Māori land includes the *marae*, which is a central institution in which formal greetings and discussions take place. Moreover, in the *marae* a feeling of collective identity proliferates that is almost impossible to achieve in an urban environment because this place gathers past and present, individual and community, and *tinana* and *wairua* in the presence of the ancestors. Within the *marae* is the *wharenui*, which is at the very heart of Māori culture because it symbolizes an ancestor, with its backbone, ribs, and arms outstretched in welcome. It is the meeting house where guests are accommodated and the spirits of the ancestors gather to listen

and to guide the *whānau*, and also where the gatherings, celebrations and the *tangihanga*³⁵ are carried out. Before every meeting, guests are welcomed and speeches exchanged, thus establishing *whakapapa* links. As far as Māori cultural practices are concerned, the *marae* and the *wharenuī* are particularly relevant places, not only because Māori rites, gatherings and ceremonies are represented in these areas, but also because these places tell them the story of the local *iwi* legends and ancestors, thus acknowledging the primal structure of Papatūānuku and Rangi-nui. Māori practices are at the centre of a Māori sense of indigeneity, which is based on the centrality of three quintessential concepts: the *whānau*, the *iwi* and the *whakapapa*. The *whānau* includes at least one *tīpuna*, which means not only ancestor but also grandparent, with three or four generations of direct descendants. Albeit belatedly, many psychology and psychiatry professionals in New Zealand have come to realize that traumatized Māori people cannot heal in isolation. In 1998, the Mental Health Commission developed the “Blueprint for Mental Health Services in New Zealand: How Things Need to Be”³⁶ and, in discussing families, it states that:

People with serious mental illness are not ill in isolation. Their families, extended whānau, and significant others, whatever they think about the illness, cannot escape being affected by it. The lives of people with serious mental illness are inextricably involved with the lives of those they love and care for, and the lives of those who love and care about them. Beyond the immediate family are other relatives, friends, neighbours, and

35 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘tangihanga’: 1. (noun) weeping, crying, funeral, rites for the dead, obsequies - one of the most important institutions in Māori society, with strong cultural imperatives and protocols. Most tangihanga are held on marae. The body is brought onto the marae by the whānau of the deceased and lies in state in an open coffin for about three days in a wharemate. During that time groups of visitors come onto the marae to farewell the deceased with speech making and song.

36 <http://www.hdc.org.nz/media/200649/blueprint%20for%20mental%20health%20services%20in%20new%20zealand,%20how%20things%20need%20to%20be%20dec%2098.pdf>

workmates who may have a role in the life of the person and need, therefore, to be part of the healing or maintenance programme. (1998: 9)

For that reason, in tune with the Māori conception of health the New Zealand Ministry of Health published in 2000 the “Involving Families Guidance Notes”³⁷ on behalf of the Royal College of Australian and New Zealand Psychiatrists, the Health Funding Authority and the Ministry of Health. The main aim of this guidance is involving families and *whānau* in care, assessment and treatment of patients with mental problems. This guidance involves people who are subject of care, assessment and treatment processes in mental health and they use the term “*tangata whai ora*” for a person seeking health. It also underscores that the members of the *whānau* want mental health staff to recognize the important principle of *whānaungatanga*³⁸ when working with *tangata whai ora*. *Whānaungatanga* does not only imply the interconnectedness and interdependence of all members of the *whānau*, including the *tangata whai ora*, but also the reciprocal relationship through culturally appropriate ways that establishes a deeper commitment to other people. The *whānau*’s health is intrinsic to the health of each member, and the health of each member is in turn integral to the health of the *whānau*. The cultural beliefs and values of any part working in the processes of care, assessment and treatment should be respected because Māori understand mental recovery to be impossible if their values are not recognized. Another important prerequisite to work effectively with a *whānau* is to establish an ongoing relationship

37 <http://www.carersvoice.com.au/assets/files/PDFS/involving-families-guidance-notes1.pdf>

38 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘whānaungatanga’: 1. (noun) relationship, kinship, sense of family connection - a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging. It develops as a result of kinship rights and obligations, which also serve to strengthen each member of the kin group. It also extends to others to whom one develops a close familial, friendship or reciprocal relationship.

with its members. This is why a *pōwhiri*³⁹ is a very important start to this process, because it is through this ritual that the members of the mental staff disclose who they are and make connections with the *whānau*. Mental health staff is responsible for ensuring the cultural, emotional, physical, and social and spiritual safety of *tangata whai ora*, families and themselves throughout the process of care, assessment and treatment. This document also suggests that mental health staff must include people who are skilled in responding to cultural and spiritual needs, since they must focus on a holistic treatment, rather than on medication management alone. As the novel makes it clear in Mata's case, the involvement of the family is crucial to the healing of trauma because, as the aforementioned document often states, traumatized indigenous people strongly need the supportive relationships of the *whānau*. With regard to the *whānau*, another key element is the *whakawhanaungatanga*,⁴⁰ a process that still exists in Māori society and culture. It acknowledges the relationships that the Māori have to one another and to the world around them. As can be seen, Māori familiar structure is at variance with the standard Pakeha notion of family, generally focused on the nuclear family.

Māori culture also considers *whakapapa* or genealogy as a quintessential element because individual and collective duties, rights and responsibilities are tied to the knowledge and comprehension of one's ancestry. Moreover, Māori philosophy promotes respect for all beings and awareness of mutual interdependence in order to maintain harmony, because caring for people and caring for the land provides them with health and well-being. *Whakapapa* is one of the most highly appreciated forms of knowledge, and great efforts have been made to preserve it, since *whakapapa* identifies

39 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'pōwhiri': 2. (noun) invitation, rituals of encounter, welcome ceremony on a marae, welcome.

40 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'whakawhanaungatanga': 1. (noun) process of establishing relationships, relating well to others.

who I am and where I come from. In *The Old-Time Māori*, Makereti Pepakura claims that:

Every Māori, especially if he came of a good family, knew his or her genealogy and exact relationship to every relative. This was most important to a Māori. If he went to a strange place, he would only need to repeat his genealogy to make himself known to any relatives whom he might have there. Though these relatives lived under the clan name of another ancestor, he and they would claim relationship through the genealogy. (1986: 37)

According to Cleve Barlow, “Everything has a *whakapapa*: birds, fish, animals, trees, and every other living thing; soil, rocks, and mountains also have a *whakapapa*” (1991: 173). *Whakapapa* is part of a dynamic complex ecosystem that interconnects Māori people with every micro-organism of the universe. This reciprocal relationship allows Māori to better understand the natural world that surrounds them, and also forces them to respect all natural beings. The Māori traditional belief is that the creation and evolution of the universe and all its living creatures is part of an active force of progression. The cosmogony implied in ancestral Māori culture is to continue with the tradition of preservation and conservation of the environment as a foundation on which future Māori generations can rely and build their own relationship with the universe.

Over the last two centuries, though, Pakeha have shown a cruel and disrespectful attitude towards Māori people, their culture and the sacred land where their ancestors are buried. As has already been argued, British settlers appropriated Māori land, mainly by force. *Cousins* also conveys to the reader the sacred nature of the land and the concept of *te whenua*. As Michelle Keown (2005: 150) asserts, the word *whenua* means, in *te reo Māori*, not only “land” but also “placenta,” which denotes a close bond between body and land. Furthermore, Māori eschatology has a specific function in

asserting the existing substantial bond between people and the particular locality they occupy. Māori are very respectful towards the sacred rituals of burying the placenta at birth and the bones at the burial because these rituals symbolize their connection with the land. As for Māori mythology, all physical and spiritual life is born from the womb of *Papatūānuku*, whose body must be nurtured and treated with respect. When Māori bury their placenta in ancestral ground, a kind of contract is established, as the land will protect the child and the child will take responsibility for the land. It is part of the epistemological Māori tradition that becomes quintessential to the formation of the Māori identification with nature, in contrast to the Pakeha notion of the physical possession of land. Thus, the burial place of the Māori or *whenua* becomes the ‘eternal home’ for the Māori child. In the novel, this tradition is described when Bobby takes the placenta of Missy and her dead twin and buries it: “The next morning, as dawn came, our father took our placenta [...] and buried it where baby blankets go” (159). Furthermore, after Missy gives birth in a hospital, she worries that the *whenua* should have been thrown away instead of being buried in the family land with *aroha* and the correct ceremony. As she complains: the old people think that the young people’s confusion is due to “their *whenua* have gone down the slush hole with all the *tūtae*⁴¹ and the rubbish, instead of being buried in the ancestral places where they belong” (235). This commentary implies a critical reflection about the way in which new generations of urban Māori people suffer identity problems because they do not understand the significance of *whakapapa*, the backbone to Māori identity.

As was explained before, one of the main Māori concerns is the ownership and protection of ancestral lands. This is achieved by raising cultural awareness and the

41 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘tūtae’: 1. (noun) dung, excrement, shit, faeces, poo, droppings, stools.

understanding of contemporary issues that affect Māori-Pakeha relations. As Patricia Grace claims, “good writing must define, expose, and comment on the concerns that people have” (in McRae 1992: 295). It is also important to bear in mind the pronouncements by international organizations about the right that indigenous peoples have over their land. For instance, “The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (2007) recognizes in its article 25 that:

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

In an interview with Paola Della Valle, Grace affirmed that another crucial element as regards Māori identity is *tūrangawaewae*,⁴² because it helps Māori people to “have an ancestry that connects them to a particular place” (2007: 132). This right is inalienable: *tūrangawaewae* is a place where one has a right to live, a right to return to, a right to speak, in short, a place one may go back to for burial at death. As was previously mentioned, this will be crucial to the change in Mata’s attitude towards life. As regards the protection of the land, Keita represents in the novel the role of the guardian and carer of land. She struggles in the courts, and follows the Māori tradition of arranging marriages in order to preserve their ancestral land. Arranged marriages can be seen as out-of-time but, as Grace explains in an interview with Barbara J. Kinnane, this was the only way that Māori had of preserving their land at that time.

42 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘tūrangawaewae’: 1. (noun) domicile, standing, place where one has the right to stand - place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa.

But it is true that in the marriage of Missy to Hamuera the land becomes safe from being taken away by the Crown or whatever and is able to be used by the family. They couldn't go ahead and use it without the marriage really. (2014: 225)

Authority required some double inheritance: land and prestigious genealogy, and these arranged marriages were crucial to hold Māori ancestral land and assure a viable future for the generations to come. Keita compares the marriage of Missy and Hamuera to her own marriage and defines it as “a marriage for the people,” where the community also has a responsibility, because “if it went wrong it meant the people were wrong” (229). Grace has described Keita as “the land,” explaining that she sees her job on earth, her task, as looking after the land and being its guardian (in Kinnane 2014: 224). Keita's position regarding the land can be explained in the words of Mason Durie:

A lack of access to tribal lands or territories is regarded by tribal elders as a sure sign of poor health since the natural environment is considered integral to identify and fundamental to a sense of well-being. (1994: 71)

A fundamental Māori strategy for the achievement of their goals and aspirations is the protection and management of their natural and cultural resources. Māori economic prosperity and a strong Māori identity are quintessential for Māori health and well-being. In the novel Keita recognizes that, as a young woman about to be married, she knew nothing about the land but had to learn (229). Later on, Makareta relates that Keita “always fought to get the land tied down hard” (142). Keita understands that the survival and well-being of the community can only be achieved by the control of ancestral land; this is vital if Māori do not want to be removed and annihilated. Therefore, Missy plays a significant role in preserving *mana* and *whakapapa*, because these elements can only be maintained by means of land. Keita is also very concerned with preserving *whakapapa*, and explains that she has an ancestral entitlement to land,

power and obligations, because she was “the weed that survived the wars, the hard times and the flu epidemic. She was the one left to inherit” (142). She tries unsuccessfully to persuade the widowed Polly to marry Aperhama, her younger son, because “that way the *whakapapa* is not upset” (102). To ensure a viable future for the generations to come, Keita considers it crucial to bring two families together in marriage to use land that has been lying unproductive and is inaccessible without the wedding. The fact is that, after the marriage of Missy and Hamuera, the land provides an economic base and employment, not only to the couple, but also to the whole *whānau*. Consequently, Keita tells Missy, “What you have to remember is that your marriage is for the people, like mine was” (229). Moreover, land benefits guarantee that young people from the next generation will receive an education to the benefit of everyone. Keita is committed to preserving and extending the *whānau*’s ownership of land in order to protect the sustenance and the *mana* of future generations. *Mana* can be maintained only if the family has land. Keita emphasizes the importance of family and land in her discussion with Polly: “We know your family. It’s a very good family, from a strong line, a family strong in the customs, but, Polly, they’ve got no land. Through no fault of theirs, they’ve got no land” (102).

When Missy offers herself as a replacement for Makareta in the arranged marriage, her decision is a choice motivated fundamentally by her *aroha* for the *whānau*. She forgets her dream of becoming a famous singer who triumphs in Pakeha society and decides to embrace Māoridom instead, thus gaining a voice in the *whānau*. From this moment onwards, she plays a significant role in her *iwi* because she assumes the role of the preserver of *whenua*, *mana* and *whakapapa* within the *whānau*.

They say that as they watched I grew taller, that my girl's body became the body of a woman, that as I waited the *korowai*⁴³ came and placed itself around my shoulders, and that after a long time of standing while visitors waited at the gate, I sang an ancient peace song in the old language. One of the *kuia*⁴⁴ saw a *moko* on my chin carved in the same pattern as the one the ancestress wore. (221)

At this very moment, Missy realizes that only the possession of their own cultural values and land will guarantee the Māori access to a clean and healthy environment in the future. Moreover, Missy is an example of the Māori resilience that will enable Māori people to maintain their Māoridom and their communal *aroha*, a Māori concept which is crucial to understand the basis of Māori obligations towards the other people of the community because, as Grace affirms in her interview with Antonella Sarti:

It has really to do with caring and sharing, having consideration for people, seeing each individual person as important, and recognizing the *mana* of each person. Sometimes *aroha* has little to do with fine or tender feelings; sometimes it's quite a difficult concept to carry out. It has a lot to do with meeting your obligations, which is not always easy. (1998: 55)

Aroha is crucial for Māori well-being, not only from an individual perspective, but especially from a communal one, and it is a necessary part of the renewal concomitant with the process of healing trauma. An example of the obligations towards the community based on *aroha* is the story of Bobby and Rere fighting in Pirgos; they embody communal *aroha* when they are on the battlefield. Both of them are determined

43 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'korowai': 2. (noun) cloak - in modern Māori this is sometimes used as a general term for cloaks made of muka (New Zealand flax fibre).

44 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'kuia': 1. (noun) elderly woman, grandmother, female elder.

to die in order to save the other's life. It is Gloria who will help Bobby to make his post-war trauma more bearable, as is conveyed in the novel through Missy's memories:

I could remember the times when I was a little girl when Dadda would wake us in the night with his crying. Mama would have to shake him and hold him. And she'd light a candle and go out into the kitchen for a cloth to wipe his face with, she'd talk to him until he'd calmed down, then he'd say things to her like, 'Where would I be without you, my Glory, what would I do?' (231)

As is shown in the novel, Mata has received the *aroha* of her mother and Auntie Gloria during a short period of time, but the real fact is that during the greater part of her life she has suffered lack of *aroha*, one of the main causes of her trauma. However, when Mata is taken and cared for by Makareta, she is reintroduced in the *aroha* of Māori culture and starts the process of working through her deep trauma. Makareta describes the moment in which she and Mata meet as follows: "Sought nothing, but our eyes found each other, which is an irony. I can give her some of what she has longed and waited for, but it now seeking not to have" (201). The novel recognizes the Māori principle of *aroha* as the most significant source of knowledge, in opposition to the concept of rationality, the backbone of western culture. This contrast is expressed through the differences between Mata and Makareta's education. Mata's Pakeha education is based on fear and rejection of the different 'other,' whereas Makareta's learning of Māori ancestral traditions is based on *aroha* and spirituality. Māori traditions preside over the whole life of the community, as when Polly is pregnant, and Kui Hinemate washes her and massages her stomach and breasts. Kui also talks about the Māori fundamental principle of *aroha* when she affirms that Polly's baby loves the good and repudiates evil: "A baby curls itself to hide from bad things" (103). Makareta uses the therapeutic power of *aroha*, which she has received from Kui, in order to take

care of Mata. Makareta realizes that she will die soon: “I’m tired. It’s burn-out time, time to go home. Perhaps I will be able to rest there for a while, but perhaps not” (217), and believes that it is time to transfer some of her cultural knowledge onto Mata. Makareta expresses the transmission of Māori cultural knowledge with the metaphor of the marble that Mata gave to Manny when they were children: “Gifts are meant to be given, and one day returned. It must be her turn, again, to hold the coloured marble” (218). The gift that Mata receives will allow her, not only to disclose and work through her traumatic experiences, but also to return to her *whānau* and occupy a place in the Māori community. Mata experiences an epiphany when she understands that the dead ancestors have, not only the right to be among the living, but also the obligation to protect them. This is evidenced in Makareta’s capacity to perceive Kui Hinemate even after her death. In her nursing career, when Makareta must deal with what, from a Māori cultural perspective, are difficult situations, she finds support in the spirit of Kui Hinemate. In Grace’s story, Makareta explains to Mata that Kui sometimes tickles her arm, letting her know that she is there and that, when she is needed back home, Kui will send her there: “I was home when Wi dies, I was home when Keita dies, because she let me know” (246). After this confession, Mata, who is still imbued with western ideology, admits that she “thought Makareta was a little strange from some things she said” (246). Nevertheless, after Makareta’s death, it is Mata who is able to recognize Kui Hinemate and the other shadowy ancestral spirits in Makareta’s bedroom and, more importantly, she feels that her life is changing (248). She discovers that, like Michael, Makareta’s son, she has been given the *mana* of seeing the ancestors. Mata experiences some spiritual cultural awareness that is quintessential to her healing process, as it will influence her subsequent attitude towards life. *Cousins* emphasizes the way in which characters like Mata and Michael embody the spiritual capacity of seeing those who

have died. Makareta tells Mata that “Michael’s the one who sees,” and then she describes how her son asks her about the spirit of Kui: ““Who’s that with the old face? I’d tell him, ‘That’s Kui Hinemate, who looked after me when I was a girl’” (246). In line with Māori cosmology, Missy also admits that she is familiar with this ability because ancestral spirits have been seen at other times in their *marae*:

I know that the old ones see the ancestors in different ways and in different places, and that they often see them in the young. This house is a place where the *tīpuna* are seen by the ones who have the gift of seeing. (221-22)

Makareta embodies the Māori culture to which Mata is entitled, and enables Mata’s possibility of achieving *aroha* within her own *whānau*. Consequently, Makareta’s death seems to be her final expression of *aroha* which, according to Māori, means “love in the highest sense,” because it forces Mata to return to her Māori roots. Mata faces an emotional crisis after her cousin’s death, to then realize that she must take care of her body because Makareta has become part of their sacred ancestors. Furthermore, Māori cosmogony helps Mata to understand that she must be the custodian of the body of her cousin until she is safe in her *whānau*; Māori spiritual concepts of life and death are part of the never-ending cycle that encapsulates the eternal return within Māori tradition and mythology. Thus, death and life could be used as metaphors regarding the old Mata, who symbolically dies after confronting and expressing her trauma, and the new Mata, who is reborn from this transformative working-through process with a specific Māori voice within her *whānau*. The novel also highlights that death is a fundamental cathartic element within Māori culture: after Makareta’s death, Mata starts to take full control of her life, which undoubtedly subverts the traditional western conception of death as unbearable tragic dissolution. As is shown in *Cousins*, death brings together all the members of the *whānau* around the one who is going to

join the ancestors. Firstly, Polly's death makes Makareta and her children return to the *whānau*, which involves their return to Māori cultural and emotional knowledge. Secondly, the novel shows how Kui Hinemate supports, even after death, Makareta in her everyday life. Moreover, Kui and the other ancestors, who are in Makareta's bedroom when she dies, are responsible for forcing Mata to stay and take Makareta to their *whānau*. As Mata admits:

I tidied the room that I'd slept in and took the photo from the windowsill, then walked out of the house and down the long drive and stood at the Gateway deciding which way I should go, waiting for my feet to walk me. But my feet stood still, then they turned me back. (247-48)

Although Mata's first reaction after discovering Makareta's corpse in her bedroom is to leave, the power of *aroha* transmitted by the Māori ancestors forces her feet to stand still and turn her back (248). As Mason Durie explains:

Spiritually, the hours immediately following death are particularly significant. As the deceased person's spirit hovers tentatively between the visible world and the world of spirits, mourners themselves are able to feel a spiritual presence and to experience a renewed sense of continuity with their own ancestors, their story, and their future. (1994: 71)

Mata undergoes a symbolic quest from *te Kore*,⁴⁵ in the darkness of the night, to her *whānau*, a secure place which provides her with *aroha* and symbolizes the world of light. Now, far from the so-called civilized western environment, she is free to reconcile herself with her past and bring together all the fragmented parts of her self. Mata's reinterpretation of her traumatic life allows her to assess her personal emotions regarding her traumatic memories. This process of self-evaluation helps Mata in her

45 From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'Te Kore': 1. (noun) realm of potential being, The Void.

search for a personal voice within the Māori culture. In her earlier novel, *Mutuwhenua* (1978), Patricia Grace makes it clear that, if an individual is well-rooted in her/his own culture, s/he can easily remain true to herself/himself and who s/he is. In *Cousins*, it is Makareta who embodies Māori traditions and beliefs, as she becomes some kind of *tohunga* who appeases Mata's emotions within a spiritual Māori environment. The more Mata learns about Māori cultural values, the more she knows about her own self. When she begins to assimilate Māori culture, she initiates a quest to find her own voice within the Māori community, which will allow her to express the 'unspeakable.' In the *whānau*'s gathering on the *marae* during Makareta's *tangihanga*, Mata finds a sense of selfhood which reinforces her Māori identity through the power of Māori traditions. In this ceremony, Mata experiences a renewal, which is nothing but the product of the *aroha* that the Māori community conveys in a moment of brokenness and suffering. When Mata sees, among the people of the *whānau*, her dead mother Anihera looking at her, she understands that the time to change has definitely come.

And then I saw a woman standing forward of the others, looking only at me. It was Anihera.

I had waited. For years I had waited. For years I had wanted. Now that I have decided that I would not want or wait, and would have only what I had already, my mother had come to me. (254)

When people start to cry more loudly and the chants begin, Mata allows her emotions to emerge, and feels that something is happening to her. This phrase is repeated several times, because at this moment she is finally able to voice her grief through tears:

My eyes were filling. Water was running from my eyes [...]. I had never cried before in all my life and now I felt that I would never stop [...]. All my tears were falling and I just letting them run. I had never cried before. Years of tears. And I heard the sounds come out of me, the crying sounds, just like the sounds of the women around me. (254)

Then, after the talking is over, Mata realizes that she has undergone a positive metamorphosis that has propelled her into a timeless realm as she cries “years of tears.” After this Māori rite, Mata explains what is happening to her with regard to her constant fears: “I didn’t know what was happening to me, but there was nothing that made me afraid” (255). At this moment, Mata is on the path to recovery from her trauma for, as Herman put it, the “reconstruction of the trauma requires immersion in a past experience of frozen time; the descent into mourning feels like a surrender to tears that are endless” (1992: 195). In this Māori ritual, Mata understands the importance of spirituality and *aroha* as differential factors that make Māori culture so distinct from the Pakeha culture that she has known in her childhood. This spiritual essence, together with the capacity to love and feel compassion for a person, is quintessential because these feelings are interrelated with the physical and mental health of all Māori people. Now, Mata has found the link with her ancestors and is able to communicate, feel and see spiritual energies like her mother Anihera and Kui Hinemate. Moreover, she has understood that she is part of a dynamic social system which possesses a holistic conception of the universe. The novel makes it clear that the therapeutic potential of the *whānau* will enable Mata to overcome her traumatic condition. She knows that this new Māori environment will help her to compensate for her previous lack of *aroha* and to redress her mental and emotional state. In contrast to the novel’s opening scene, where a solitary Mata wanders aimlessly, the novel ends in the meetinghouse with an image of the three cousins together: “I was taken by Missy to sit on the mattresses, she on one side of Makareta, I on the other. There we were the three of us” (255). As has often been said, in Māori culture the individual is understood as belonging to the *whānau*, *hapū*⁴⁶ and *iwi* because, on the contrary, the individual is lost and is “Nothing,” “No

⁴⁶ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘hapū’: 3. (noun) kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe - section of a large kinship group and the primary political unit in traditional Māori society. It consisted of

one” (14), to quote Mata’s words. The transformation that has taken place in Mata’s mind prompts her trauma healing process because, once she embraces the Māori holistic vision of the universe, she realizes that her years of isolation have ended, and feels that, now that she is free from the divisive and exclusive western conception of the world, she will be definitely able to work through her trauma.

Pride of Race through Resilience and Political Commitment

Grace’s fiction situates the curative effect of the engagement with trauma in close connection with political action as well as with the performance of ceremonial rites. In her novels, trauma is healed by the Māori rituals of burial and communal mourning, situated in the context of Māori activism.

Irene Visser, “The Trauma of Goodness in Patricia Grace’s Fiction.”

The fundamental organizing principles in Māori traditional practices are known as *kaupapa Māori*. This term encapsulates a philosophical doctrine developed over the centuries that incorporates the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society. This section will explore some of the principles that are crucial for the Māori community in order to better understand their vision of the world. *Taonga Tuku Iho* or ‘The Principle of Cultural Aspiration’ is one that claims the centrality and legitimacy of *te reo Māori* (Māori language), *matauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) and *tikanga Māori* (Māori custom) because, in acknowledging their validity and relevance, it also embraces spiritual and cultural awareness. In *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures* (1989), Ashcroft et al. point to the central role that language plays in the establishment and perpetuation of imperial oppression and hierarchical structures of power. The colonizers enforced an institutionalized education system that introduces a “‘standard’ version of the metropolitan language as the norm,

a number of whānau sharing descent from a common ancestor, usually being named after the ancestor, but sometimes from an important event in the group's history. A number of related hapū usually shared adjacent territories forming a looser tribal federation (iwi).

and marginalizes all ‘variants’ as impurities” (2002: 7). This dominant colonial discourse has been conveyed through an imposed education that has exerted control over language. As Ranginui Walker claims, in 1905 the Inspector of Native Schools instructed teachers to encourage Māori children to speak English in school grounds. This injunction was rapidly interpreted as “a general prohibition of the Māori language within school precincts.” For the next five decades, Walker asserts, this prohibition “was in some cases enforced by corporal punishment” (1990: 147). *Cousins* offers some examples of that prohibition of Māori language at schools, and the physical punishment to which indigenous children were often exposed. On Missy’s first day at school, for example, she is instructed by Makareta and Manny as follows:

‘You have to say, “Please may I leave the room,” if you want a mimi,’ Makareta said.
‘Don’t say mimi at school.’

Why because?’ you asked.

‘It’s a rule.’

‘Any kids talk Māori to you,’ Manny said coming, going, turning himself, ‘you got to run away. Headmaster hit you with a big strap.’ (160)

Therefore, control over language not only works as a tool to oppress by denying culture, but it also represents a determinant factor in indigenous disempowerment. The British government in New Zealand has used an institutionalized education system to introduce the English language as the unique language allowed in the social sphere, which clearly marginalized Māori and other indigenous languages. Since the time when the European education system was implemented, and especially during the second half of the nineteenth century, it became the practice for the younger generations to learn little or no *te reo Māori*. The colonizers’ main purpose was to maintain the established social order; they understood *te reo Māori* as a tool that could foster cultural identity and, consequently, social transgression. Therefore, speaking Māori was not to be allowed in

the public realm. In the third section of the novel, Makareta asks Kui Hinemate not to speak Māori at the gate of the primary school because only English is permitted there. At that moment, Makareta is repressing a part of her cultural and racial identity, as she has been taught by her Pakeha teachers and is affected by the Māori-Pakeha internal conflict between her Māori education and the colonial repression of Māori culture. Kui Hinemate's answer clearly reveals how the power of language can define identity: "Maybe that's right for you, Daughter, but this old woman speaks her very own language wherever she is, wherever she goes. Otherwise who is she?" (179).

As was mentioned before, the novel draws attention to a generation of Māori children whose trauma is not the individualistic articulation, but rather a cumulative trauma of long years of repression. Thus, Mata's mind is colonized because she learns a colonial language that links 'blackness' with 'badness' and 'ugliness' and, for this reason, she internalizes these concepts and attributes them to herself and her black skin. Mata shows how colonial language has imprinted on her a racist ideology that has damaged her self-esteem. This western language connects the black body with lack of abilities, and deprives Māori people of cultural pride. The fact that Mata has never learnt to speak Māori indicates that she runs the risk of losing a fundamental constituent of indigenous identification, which has crucial implications for the tackling of her problems of identity.

The survival of Māori culture requires an action plan oriented towards the safeguard of Māori principles and cultural values. The viability of this plan has been pursued through cultural movements such as the *kōhanga reo*. In *Cousins*, the struggle to recover the presence of Māori language in New Zealand's society is mainly embodied by Makareta:

It was painful to me to think that we were asking for official recognition of, equal status for, a language. How could that be? And this state of affairs, regarding the language, seemed to epitomize all that had happened to do with our land, our lives and our culture having to ask, having to fight to retain what was our own and that belonged nowhere else in the world but here. (210)

Makareta belongs in a new generation of Māori activists who reject the patronizing behaviour of the colonizer and the imposition of western culture in education. Accordingly, she discovers that, through Māori activism and the defence of *te reo Māori*, Māori people will be able to find a voice of their own and transmit the traumatic experiences denied in the official historical version of colonization and hence forward. In the early 1980s the *kōhanga reo* movement arose, and Makareta admits that:

It was an exciting time with these *kōhanga* springing up all over the country, and people having renewed hope that our language, through our own initiatives and via the little children, would revive and survive after having been suppressed for so long. (210-11)

At this point of the novel Makareta has matured and, like Kui Hinemate, can speak her very own language without learning about Aotearoa and Māori culture through distorted Pakeha eyes because, as she claims: “those who had learned to look at who they were in distorted mirrors, had seen awry reflections of themselves and had become traumatized” (208). These words clearly denounce how colonial education has been employed to impose western cultural values, deeply affecting Māori people. As part of the growing Māori activist movement of the seventies and eighties, Makareta is able to deploy the apprenticeship she received in her childhood, including her knowledge of *te reo Māori* and the consciousness of an insidious trauma that has been perpetuated, among other things, by the colonial systematic repression of their language. She recognizes the connection between loss of language and cultural depreciation, and tells of the *kōhanga reo* movement of the early 1980s as follows:

It was ten years or more since I'd heard, with some surprise, the demand, by a small group who were being labelled radical, that Māori language be taught in the schools. I was even more surprised at the anger and controversy that these demands engendered in some circles, because I couldn't think how it would hurt or harm anyone if our children learned to speak the language of their parents and grandparents. I could only think how good it would be. I could only think of the hollowed-out amongst our people, the disinherited who were the truly poor, and of what we must do to make them whole again, what we must be allowed to do for the sake, not only of ourselves, but of everyone. (210)

Makareta knows that Māori voicelessness is the result of colonial abusive policies, which often lead to the spoliation of the Māori legacy. She understands that, through Māori activism and the defense of *te reo Māori*, Māori people will be able to find a collective voice of their own that will help them to transmit their traumatic experiences and fight for the restoration of their rights. For this reason, Makareta helps her mother to establish a *kōhanga reo* at home in order to support the Māori community and counteract colonial oppression. This Māori pre-school movement was considered to be, not only a means of teaching the Māori language but, more importantly, a means of transmitting the Māori values and culture which are encoded in *te reo Māori* lexicon and syntax. The fact is that most Māori live in urban settings, and that many of them do not speak *te reo Māori*, which is a huge problem in terms of identification, because many Māori people cannot articulate their indigenous culture properly. Māori cultural heritage is based on intellectual and philosophical traditions that imply the reliance on past knowledge and the reinforcement of the Māori identity. The Waitangi tribunal recognized the Māori language as a *taonga* after the claim of the Wellington Māori Language Board. The Tribunal understood that *te reo Māori* can be as important for cultural and health reasons as land can be. As Mason Durie explains:

The Tribunal report made it very clear that there was a Treaty of Waitangi obligation on the Crown to ensure that Māori language was strengthened before it was lost altogether, and the point was made on several occasions that without language any sense of pride or cultural integrity is seriously undermined. (1994: 76-77)

Cousins reminds readers that Māori has been a forbidden language in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and that Māori characters have for long been obliged to obey the conventions of the Pakeha world:

You walked with Makareta, happy that Manny (which meant you, all of us) still had the marble. The others hurried past, Mannie after Bessie calling, ‘Keep your stink marble,’ in the language not allowed to be spoken.

‘Stick it up your bum too,’ Jacko called.

You could see Mr Davis waiting on the steps as the bell jangled. ‘Speak English, speak English,’ Makareta hissed as they went by.

‘Keep your stink marble,’ Manny yelled in English.

‘Stick it up your bum too,’ Jacko called. (182)

The language that Māori characters employ is not fully English but Māori-English. An instance can be Chummy’s pronunciation of “chogalafish” in contrast to Mata’s “chocolate fish” (40). This alteration of the colonizers’ language tries to subvert their colonial reality in an attempt to resist the superimposed colonial culture. This scene shows how personal and cultural identities are mutually dependent; these Māori children are building up their own alternative reality by means of using a hybrid language that, as Ashcroft et al. point out, constructs “difference, separation, and absence from the metropolitan norm” (2002: 44). Māori children are punished for speaking Māori, and resort to adapt English to their own Māori idioms and rhythms in revenge. Another way to subvert the Pakeha teachers’ rule against using Māori is by means of not respecting English syntax. Thus, they speak a kind of English different

from the language that will make them respectable citizens. This appropriation and deconstruction of the English language is a reminder of the ongoing fight of *te reo Māori* against the colonizer's attempt to eradicate Māori culture and civilize poor noble savages. This Māori-English is also an element that Māori characters use, not only to express their own vision of the world and resist the established hegemonic criteria, but also to regain their lost voice and rebuild their identities. Speech, whether oral or written, is a right that Māori people should attain by struggling against the dominant colonial discourse.

When Mata begins to understand Māori cultural values, she experiences a change in her way of perceiving reality, which shows in a more structured language. This shift in Mata's viewpoint is based on her disregard of Pakeha parameters and complete reliance on Māori culture instead. *Cousins* highlights the importance of *te reo Māori* for contemporary cultural and discursive practices. As Makareta sees it, the English language has been used to exclude Māori from the power structures of meaning-making; that is how this colonial language oppresses and marginalizes Māori people.

I had as a child, or at least as I saw it, kept my life at home separate from my life at school. At school I saw my first language as something to be ashamed of, something that should be kept secret, a wrong, punishable thing –even though another part of me told me that it was language, and all that went with it, that gave me to myself, made me know who I was. And I realized later that having that knowledge, that security, that sound base, allowed me to reach out and to know that I could do anything else in the world that I wanted to do. (211)

Polly also experiences an empowering transformation from her isolated position as an individual in the city to a member of the activist Māori community in support of Māori culture and values. In fact, it is Polly who informs Makareta of the Māori Land March: “the Māori people assembling at Te Hapua to begin the Land March that would bring

them from the top of the North Island to Parliament with their Memorial of Rights. ‘Not one more acre.’” (206). It is then that Makareta starts reliving her childhood memories about the Māori struggle against the Pakeha appropriation of their land:

I was beginning to hear over radio and television, and to read in the papers, some of the things I’d heard talked about as a child – Raupatu, Te Tiriti o Waitangi; also the Native Land Act, the Public Works Act, the Town and Country planning Act, the Rating Act, the Counties Amendment Act and all the laws that had been passed that gave Pakeha authorities power to seize or obtain Māori land. ‘Not one more acre’ had become the catch-cry of the land marchers. (206)

Both Polly and Makareta contribute to Māori activism from their respective urban environments; they even join the marchers near Wellington. The night when the Land March reaches the Parliament, Makareta’s house is crowded with marchers who want to tidy up, rest and eat something. This will be the first of many such nights because, since that moment, Makareta begins to be involved in the many activities organized by the Māori movement. On the other hand, she knows that this is also the beginning of what will lead to the break-up of her marriage (207). It is at this moment that her husband becomes conscious of her knowledge of Māori culture: “I remember him being really surprised when he found out, after several years of marriage, that I had this other tongue that was part of me, this other self that was also me, a whole other imprint” (211). At that time, the Māori needed people with Māori knowledge to take action against the extremely underprivileged situation that most Māori were suffering. Consequently, Makareta’s life becomes overburdened because she is needed everywhere on account of her knowledge of Māori language and culture. As she recalls: “There were issues of land, language, health and welfare, money, work, education, customs and culture to be discussed, promoted and worked on” (208-209). Among other things, Makareta

becomes a member of one of the committees that visited *marae* and communities around Aotearoa in order to check Māori living conditions and control Māori rates of poverty, bad health, underachievement, unemployability and criminality. The “Ministerial Advisory Committee,” to give an example, was in charge of drawing up a report entitled “Institutional Racism in the Department of Social Welfare” in 1984. Makareta eventually becomes a Māori symbol within the Māori activist movement, and a well-known figure outside New Zealand, as Missy acknowledges:

We needed her here. But she liked her life in the city, liked her work there. I know it was important work and we were all proud of that. She was well known all over the country, as well as in other parts of the world, for the work she did for our people – the advice, the help, the knowledge that she was able to give. (236)

The other fundamental principle for Māori people is *Tino rangatiranga*, which means Māori control of their own culture, aspirations and destiny. This notion asserts Māori sovereignty, autonomy, control, self-determination and independence, and is directly connected with *te Tiriti o Waitangi* or the principle of the Treaty of Waitangi. As was explained before, this treaty, signed in 1840, is the keystone of the relationship between Māori and Pakeha. Although it was meant to recognize both the status of *tangata whenua* and the Māori rights of citizenship in New Zealand, the sad reality is that these elements were not respected by the colonizers. The treaty therefore provides the instrument through which the Māori may critically analyze their relationship with the Pakeha majority, challenge the *status quo*, and affirm Māori rights because, in its Māori version, the Treaty of Waitangi guaranteed indigenous people the right to maintain their sovereignty. The Treaty of Waitangi has consequently been the basis on which many indigenous activists have constructed their discourses against dominant settler injustices. In *Cousins*, for example, Makareta describes the Treaty as follows:

The Treaty of Waitangi is a covenant that must reside as the base on which our society builds if there is to be a just society. I heard about the Treaty as a child, and knew it to be a treasured thing in the minds of those who spoke of it, an agreement on which the people, in spite of treachery, still based their hopes. (216)

Makareta's words indicate the veneration with which the Treaty was viewed by the Māori community. In the "Overview and Recommendations" of the Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Waiheke Island Claim, Chief Judge Durie asserted that:

For reasons later to be given, I have come to the conclusion that the Treaty obliges the Crown, in circumstances like these, to consider always the future survival of the local tribes. Given our finding that the Board itself was unable to do other than that which it did, it is the failure of the Crown to direct the Board, or furnish it with the necessary authority, that constitutes a breach of the principles of the Treaty in this case. (1989: 36)

Grace's novel describes the Aotearoa/New Zealand postwar period in which the Māori regained a sense of pride in their indigeneity in the face of the prevalent racist colonial attitudes in society. Furthermore, it shows how the Māori deal with the traumatic experience of colonization through their activist resistance and the support of their spiritual traditions to make their lives meaningful and whole, thus corroborating Irene Visser's words that "without negating the lasting, profound impact of trauma, postcolonial trauma narratives often also demonstrate that resilience and growth are possible in the aftermath of traumatic wounding" (2016: 12). Grace's novel narrates how Māori resilience defies the established Pakeha hegemony. It makes a clear reference to the intensification of Māori activism in the 1970s and early 1980s coinciding with the Māori Renaissance. As Chadwick Allen points out: "Indigenous theory's most radical move in the fight for self-determination has been and will continue to be its demand to set the terms of indigenous representation in every arena"

(2002: 219). The Māori understood that their psychological healing will only be wholly attainable when the Aotearoa social, political and economic structures are completely questioned and transformed. *Cousins* therefore offers an indigenous point of view of the Māori traumatic experience in a specific historical context. The 1975 Māori Land March led by Whina Cooper from the north of North Island to Parliament in Wellington is also depicted in the novel. It was undertaken to raise awareness about the Crown control of Māori land and demand the return of the seized ancestral land to the Māori people in addition to the end of further sales. The novel lays bare many examples of a Māori society led by women, such as Keita, Kui, Missy and Makareta. In fact, like Whina Cooper, Makareta is an instance, not only of this centrality of Māori women in the Māori political and activist arena, but also of the role of the Māori women in the preservation and transmission of Māori culture. Makareta is described as a well-educated woman who shows great commitment towards the Māori community, even though she knows that this will cause the breakdown of her marriage. She focuses on encouraging Māori people to understand their own story because the real truth is not in the official books, but in the experience of people who often remain voiceless.

There is work in the city that is important – information that needs disseminating to help people understand their story and their lives, help them to know that the position of powerlessness they find themselves in is not through any fault of theirs, because they, and those before them, have fought bravely throughout many years. They need to know that. They need to know that our truth does not appear on pages of books unless it is there between the lines. Our truths need to be revealed. But on the faces the truth is written, on the scarred and broken faces, in the sick, disabled bodies, in the dreamless, frightened eyes. (215)

The decolonization of cultural trauma theory through the analysis of postcolonial texts is a political act whose ethical object must be to counteract the colonial denial of human worth and dignity; these stories show, not only the process of negotiating a series of traumatic events and circumstances that are both personal and political, and individual and collective, but also how trauma can be transcended by fighting bravely against the imposed injustices of a hegemonic force that is always represented by a dominant rhetoric and ideology. According to Makareta:

There is work to be done because people need to know of the tactics that were used to destroy the economics base of the people, of the weight of legislation by which land and resource passed from their control. They need to know what the yardstick is that they have been measured by in schools and workplaces, which found them always wanting. They need to know there is a health system that endangers them, sometimes puts them in risk of their lives, an education system that withholds knowledge, blunts understanding, erodes self-esteem and confidence. They need to know that people have fought bravely in the past and that they can fight bravely too. (216)

In conclusion, it could be argued that Māori trauma is not the outcome of a specific event, as early trauma theory posited, but is instead intrinsically connected to the insidious trauma inflicted on the indigenous community as a consequence of colonial oppression, voicelessness and othering over a long period of time. This chapter has tried to conceptualize the reality of Māori trauma in order to show that the long-term effects of colonialism are somehow still present today in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In *Cousins*, Māori characters live in a country in which their cultural beliefs have been neglected and their past has been reshaped by the hegemonic conception of history that the colonizers have built. The colonizers constructed indigenous people as the ‘other,’ and used violence as an enforcer of difference and a way of validating colonial ideology and maintaining the social structure that they established in New Zealand.

This chapter has also described how a racist colonial education, based on physical and mental abuse, inflicted on indigenous children such as Mata what Frantz Fanon called ‘whitening,’ which leads to a constant sense of guilt, sin, and shame. Mata’s trauma has been brought about by this colonial abuse, and the novel emphasizes that only her total reliance on Māori culture and cosmogony will allow her to overcome the impact of trauma. In some way, Mata’s process of healing is an act of political resistance because Mata’s healing from the scars of colonization is constituted by her re-entry into the Māori world, an act that demands the deconstruction of the process of trauma, and the acceptance of the ‘other’ as part of her own self without the constraint of previously acquired prejudices. Mata must accomplish this task within a colonial space that Homi Bhabha calls ‘Third Space,’ an in-between space where different sorts of values and principles must be reconsidered and reassessed so that the fragmented self can undergo a process of transformation and get subsequently restored. Consequently, although early cultural trauma theory advocates the ‘unspeakability’ of trauma because the nature of trauma cannot be totally expressed, Mata’s act of telling her traumatic story to her cousin Makareta liberates Mata’s lost voice and helps her to start the process of healing and working through her insidious trauma.

The fact that crucial aspects of indigenous cultures, such as spiritual beliefs, mythology and tradition, have received little attention from cultural trauma studies has also been brought to the fore. Trauma theory must recognize the importance of indigenous cultural beliefs and traditions in order to become properly decolonized. These cultures provide traumatized indigenous peoples with the pride of race and resilience that helps them to restore their fragmented identities. *Cousins* points out Mata’s lack of the *aroha* of her *whānau* as the main reason why she cannot begin the process of recovery from her trauma because, according to Māori ideology, the *whānau*

is the place where one cares for and is cared for by one's *whānaungatanga* and, accordingly, neither mental nor physical health can be achieved in isolation. It is the integration of Māori spirituality and cultural values that triggers the start of Mata's healing process. Grace's novel conveys the Māori idea that people and the land are connected across time and space as part of a cyclical, holistic system of life and death. Makareta's funeral is the most clear instance of this Māori cyclical conception of life and death because this rite incorporates, not only the mourning of a dead member of the *whānau*, but also the Māori sacred element *aroha*, through which the Māori community fosters the renewal of the new life that this member of the *whānau* begins in the ancestors' world. The dead Māori are not extinct, but rather become part of the experience of their living relatives. Mata's story shows that Māori spirituality and *whānau* are highly beneficial in the process of trauma healing, because it is in her *whānau* that she finds a sense of belonging and a new vision of the world through Māori culture and traditions. Making trauma studies more integrative is the only way to make progress towards a decolonized modern trauma theory, since it is the latter alone that will help to diagnose and work through trauma in people who possess a non-western culture.

In short, the main aim of this chapter has been to make visible and audible the traumatic experiences of people who have no place in the official account of history. As Makareta states in *Cousins*, there is still much work to be done, because people need to know that indigenous populations fought bravely in the past to achieve their collective rights, and that they will go on fighting, now and in the future. It is only through the fight to regain every element of one's own culture that one can recover one's pride of race.

CHAPTER 3

THE TRANSGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF TRAUMA, IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE IN PATRICIA GRACE'S *BABY NO-EYES*

The Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma within Colonized Communities and the Need for the Scholar of the Future

The project of recuperating culture and identity in the wake of colonization, then, often involves confronting potentially traumatizing as well as alienating representations of the past not only because of the violence of contact but also because these depictions have been produced in literate form from the perspective of the colonizer.

Susan Y. Najita, *Decolonizing Cultures in the Pacific: Reading History and Trauma in Contemporary Fiction*

As has been stated in previous chapters, colonial trauma persists today mainly because of two reasons: some governments, controlled by white people, which impose poor living conditions upon the native populations who descend from the former colonized peoples; and an inter/transgenerational colonial trauma that has been passed on from generation to generation by the colonized native communities. If cultural trauma theory is aimed at the analysis of the traumas caused by the colonial period that are still alive nowadays, it should dare to break the limits of the earlier dominant trauma model in order to develop a new ethos which might consider some other crucial issues, such as complicity and guilt, which could better enable the study of this kind of trauma in postcolonial texts. In order to explain the transgenerational transmission of trauma it is necessary to turn to Freud's ideas about collective trauma. In *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Freud maintains that the historical trauma of the Jews is based on their murder of Moses, and that this subsequently became a secret preserved in the Jews' memory,

who consequently carried with them a feeling of guilt for generations. As far as the novel analyzed in this chapter is concerned, it mainly tackles the trauma of deprivation caused by the sense of helplessness and frustration brought about by neo-colonial abuse. This chapter will rely on, not only the ethical discourse developed by Jacques Derrida (1994) about maintaining an ongoing politics of memory, but also current postcolonial theories (Hall 1997, Smith 1999, Keown 2005, and Najita 2006, among others) in order to analyze the specific sort of cumulative trauma that is often described in postcolonial works. Furthermore, this chapter will deal with the field of trauma theory as an interdisciplinary area of study involving a broad range of academic disciplines, such as sociology, history, cultural studies and psychology, as the consideration of all of them can allow for a better understanding of the representation of ‘insidious trauma’ as defined by Maria Root.

Patricia Grace’s novel *Baby No-Eyes* cannot be studied in isolation, that is, detached from the political and socio-historical context out of which it emerged, because one of its main concerns is to bring to the fore the problems that the Māori community still suffers in contemporary New Zealand society. Michelle Keown recognizes the centrality of a political agenda in Grace’s writings, and claims that what Grace exposes in *Baby No-Eyes* is the on-going colonization of the Māori community, which becomes utterly clear in the repression of Māori culture: “Grace interprets the incident [the mutilation of Baby] as an index of various forms of cultural desecration and appropriation which have followed European colonial incursion into Aotearoa New Zealand” (2005, 149). As has already been explained, once the settlers established their political and cultural hegemony over the indigenous populations, the Māori socio-economic position became far worse than that of Pakeha as regards health, education and employment, among other things. Although the Treaty of Waitangi nominally represented the New Zealand

government's contractual obligation to explicitly ensure equitable welfare for Māori, inequality is still a fact many years after the end of the colonization period. In the mid-1980s, New Zealand accomplished large-scale structural changes in its economy, which had notably damaging consequences for Māori people. They were the ones who suffered most because they were the least skilled and most vulnerable segment of the workforce. The Māori made up forty percent of the country's unemployed although, at that time, this Polynesian minority only represented eleven percent of the population. The urban Māori accordingly became, to a large degree, entrapped in a vicious circle of unemployment, alcoholism, violence, and criminality. In 2006, the Ministry of Health and University of Otago published the report *Decades of Disparity. III, Ethnic and Socioeconomic Inequalities in Mortality, New Zealand 1981–1999*. This is the final monitoring report in a series of three dealing with health inequality in New Zealand from 1981 to 1999, a period of great social change in the country. This report analyzes, among other things, the interactions between ethnicity and the individual's socioeconomic position in shaping survival chances, and quantifies the extent to which ethnic inequalities in mortality were mediated by socioeconomic differences. In its "Executive Summary" this report shows the following results:

- Māori were disproportionately represented in lower socioeconomic strata (for example, lower income, no qualifications, no car access), however measured, which implies that Māori are disproportionately affected by the health consequence of lower socioeconomic status.
- Māori and non-Māori inequalities in mortality persist within socioeconomic strata.
- Socio-economic gradients or differences in mortality exist within both Māori and non-Māori ethnic groups.

- The different socio-economic resources or positions of Māori and non-Māori ethnic groups account for at least half of the ethnic disparities in mortality for working-age adults and one-third of the disparities in mortality for older adults.
- Widening inequalities in socio-economic resources between Māori and non-Māori during the 1980s and 1990s explain approximately half of the widening in the mortality disparity between these ethnic groups, at least for the 25–64 age group. (2006: xii)

Judging by this, the term ‘postcolonial’ is not at all accurate when referring to the current Māori situation in New Zealand, because the majority of the Māori population belongs to the lower stratum of the New Zealand social system. The colonial settlement relegated them to this position, which they are still occupying. Therefore, it can be affirmed that colonialism is still at work in New Zealand, although in a subtler way than before, and that this is due to the racist approach that Pakeha have imposed in the realms of politics, economy and society over the last two centuries. The Māori community in New Zealand has been threatened by the hegemony of Pakeha, as can be seen in the aforementioned data. Margaret Mutu, Professor of Māori Studies at the University of Auckland, points out that:

Since 2008 Māori have started clawing back a few hard-earned rights. We had hoped that the *Pakeha* majority generally supported these. But our hopes were dashed over the past year as first the media and then the government launched racist attacks on various segments of the Māori community as part of its ongoing agenda to maintain *Pakeha* hegemony, that is, the retention of control of the country’s resources, wealth, and privilege in *Pakeha* hands. (2011, 227; emphasis in original)

In tune with this situation, *Baby No-Eyes* underlies the significance of the historical events that brought about trauma in the Māori community, and shows the transgenerational transmission of it among them. Grace’s novel presents individual and

collective traumas that had rather pernicious effects upon the whole Māori community, not only at the time when these abuses actually occurred, but also afterwards. In *Unclaimed Experience*, Cathy Caruth offers a general definition of trauma as “an overwhelming experience of sudden catastrophic events” (1996: 11), and posits a new perspective of history, which questions the excessive emphasis often put on specific historical accounts in order to highlight the all-encompassing effects of timeless universal trauma. Nevertheless, she focus too much on western traumatic history, as Craps and Buelens assert in their “Introduction: Postcolonial Trauma Novels”:

If, as Caruth argues, “history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other’s traumas” [...], then Western traumatic histories must be seen to be tied up with histories of colonial trauma for trauma studies to be able to redeem its promise of ethical effectiveness. (2008: 2)

Moreover, Caruth argues that traumatic events are not directly experienced by the individual when they actually happen; it is the belated remembrance of these (non)-experiences that originates trauma. She (1995: 7-8) describes a period of latency, in which the forgetting of the traumatic event is inherent to the very experience of trauma. Nevertheless, the trauma that Māori characters bear in *Baby No-Eyes* should not be exclusively interpreted according to the Freudian interpretation of trauma as melancholy and victimization; instead, it should be seen as a trauma of impotence against the dispossession, not only of their sacred land and the bodies who rest there, but also of their culture. This is what Susan Najita says about the stories of the colonized:

The shreds and pieces of colonial history are the repressed histories of the marginalized. These histories of the indigene, of women, children, the criminalized and dispossessed are those disavowed by empire and the emergent postcolonial nation-state. (2006: 18)

This being said, it is also true that fictional trauma somehow captures and recovers the lost voice of a whole community, even though this has been articulated in the language of the colonizer. Stories about trauma address an individual and social need to express the unspeakable; the way in which trauma originates and develops as part of a repressive social context. These stories try to influence society from an ideological point of view by presenting traumatic processes to which no justice was done in the past, and which are not often overcome yet. Grace offers a framework for the understanding of the concrete, socio-historical causations of Māori trauma. Colonial oppression is the source of Māori psychological trauma, and unspeakability is one symptom of it. The ability to have a voice within the social discourse is a symbol of power and is, moreover, vital to human experience as an element that builds up our identity. In their article “Art and Trauma,” Laub and Podell claim (1995: 995) that *Baby No-Eyes* can be read as a trauma novel because its main aim is not to create an objective description of a specific event, but rather to create a protective space where the remembrance of the traumatic experience can begin.

This chapter will use the aforementioned theoretical work in order to accomplish an analysis of Patricia Grace’s *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) from the perspective of trauma in the postcolonial arena. This analysis is aimed at showing how texts produced by indigenous authors integrate narrative voices that challenge the established colonial discourse and convey a specific indigenous epistemology. Inherent to colonialism was the idea of legitimizing the colonizing mission, and one of the most powerful claims of colonizers was the progress and modernity that they would bring to those savage peoples. The colonial logic dictated that the people who were different were necessarily inferior, which implied that the colonial enterprise was absolutely necessary in order to ‘civilize’ the natives. However, this apparently sought-after equality was never attained, which

de-legitimized the very colonial purpose. One of the main concerns of Grace's novel is to denounce that the Māori physical and cultural survival has been threatened by racism and bio-colonialism, an unethical genetic practice which has become a new form of colonialism. *Baby No-Eyes* brings to light some examples of verbal abuse and humiliation committed by the Pakeha community in different governmental institutions, such as schools, courts and hospitals, in order to accomplish their 'civilizing' mission, and also describes the way in which Māori characters are bullied, teased and intimidated by the descendants of the people who colonized New Zealand. If we take it that this mistreatment has been inflicted in institutions usually associated with care rather than wounding, the Māori deep and long-lasting psychological trauma is fully understandable.

Baby No-Eyes offers a Māori perspective of historical facts by allowing some Māori characters to narrate their own traumatic experiences. This chapter will try to highlight the critical discourse that this novel conveys with a view to giving the non-western native people the social and historical visibility that they have been denied for such a long time. In this way, Māori eyes/I's are able to articulate their individual and communal identity as articulated by their own indigenous culture and free from the racist prejudices imposed by the colonizers. Besides, this chapter, in tune with Derrida's theory of mid-mourning, will examine the hauntological interpretation that can be given to Grace's novel. It will point to the need to explore the inter/transgenerational transmission of trauma throughout generations so as to show the damage that the colonial account of history has caused in the Māori community. What is more, this chapter will demonstrate that Māori have suffered a collective trauma, taking into account the studies carried out by Professor Ron Eyerman about collective memory in the formation of an African American identity. In this study, some parallels are drawn

between slavery and colonialism: both of them have prompted cultural trauma since both have inflicted pain and loss of identity upon the African American and Māori communities respectively.

Moreover, this chapter will examine the controversial issue of bio-colonialism and intellectual property taking as reference the Human Genome Diversity Project (HGDP). In this novel, the specter of a Māori baby requests reparation and retaliation to make up for the profanation of her body perpetrated by the colonizers. Colonial education will also be examined bearing in mind Albert Wendt's (1993: 15) analysis of colonial educational systems, which were mainly devoted to civilizing natives and erasing the roots of native cultures on account of the racist assumption that the cultures of the colonizers were superior and preferable to those of the colonized, with the resulting crisis of identity in several generations of Māori people. In contrast to what early trauma theory claims, this chapter will argue that Māori people can overcome their traumatic situation if they strive to retrieve their cultural identity and are proud of their race. *Baby No-Eyes* makes use of the transmission of Māori collective memory and the potential of the artwork to help the Māori connect with their mythical roots, honour the dead and denounce colonial oppression.

Language will also be studied as one of the main elements in the configuration of a cosmovision because, if people cannot use their own language within their community, they will not be able to define themselves, and will consequently have identity problems. As has already been stated, during the colonial period the Māori community almost lost its language, which resulted in the progressive disintegration of Māori culture and a deep crisis of Māori identity. To counter this, the Māori Renaissance rose up as a cultural movement that fostered, not only Māori art and pride of race, but also language as a keystone to bring Māori people together around their own culture. This chapter will

also take into account the revision that Stuart Hall made of Michel Foucault's theories of power/knowledge in order to show how colonial hegemonic power imposes its racist discourse on indigenous populations in Aotearoa. It will also refer to William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* in order to explain how even the language and culture of the colonizer can be employed by the colonized to rebel against the established power. The last part of the chapter will discuss the novel's description of Māori activism; its dynamics of protest and occupation, and how these movements were led by a new generation of Māori who dared to confront Pakeha hegemony without the fear that had paralyzed previous generations. Grace's novel points out that, after experiences of severe suffering and pain, renewal is somehow possible. *Baby No-Eyes* explores the way in which the Māori population has been able, not only to survive, but also to become stronger and more confident thanks to the recovery of their beliefs, traditions and pride of race. Māori resilience played an important part in the activist movement that took place in Aotearoa/New Zealand and whose main target was the Māori claim of cultural, social and political power in their own land.

In classic psychoanalytic theory, the traumatic loss must be overcome in the so-called mourning stage. In Freud's seminal article titled "Remembering, Repeating and Working Through" (1914), the concepts of "acting out" and "working through" are introduced. In Freud's view, "acting out" is the process of repetition of the traumatic events, repetition that can eventually become compulsive. Whereas the process of "acting out" often materializes in flashbacks and nightmares, that of "working through" implies, according to Freud, eventually overcoming the traumatic symptoms caused by trauma. While never-ending sorrow and "acting out" are associated with "melancholia," the individual's eventual capacity to overcome trauma, however painfully, is referred to as "mourning." In his seminal work "Mourning and Melancholia" (1915), Freud goes

on to explain the meaning and implications of these two terms/processes. As he puts it, the mourner suffers due to her or his psychological attachment to a person who has died; the goal of the mourning process is, therefore, the gradual acceptance of loss and the withdrawal of the survivor's libidinal attachments to the lost object. Mourning emanates from the love of what is mortal and, as a force, is an on-going process whereby one can integrate the other into one's consciousness, assimilating the loss or the dead, while in the process of melancholia one adamantly refuses to integrate the other into one's self. According to LaCapra (2001: 22), this "working through" stage is an articulatory practice in which:

one is able to distinguish between the past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one (or one's people) back then while realizing that one is living here and now with openings to the future.

He goes on to argue that working over and through the past counteracts the compulsive repetition put forward by Freud. LaCapra (2001: 66) also describes the process of mourning, which brings the possibility of engaging with the traumatic past in order to experience a revival and reach a *cathexis* that allows one to begin again.

In his seminal book *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (1994), Derrida states that the relevant figure of Karl Marx and the specter of communism will haunt western society and history beyond the grave, in contrast to Francis Fukuyama's optimistic belief in the defeat of Marx's theories and the final triumph of the liberal ideology. In tune with this, Derrida's conception of "hauntology" suggests that there are some specters that cannot be ontologized, and will consequently continue to problematize (haunting) some historical discourses. Derrida's theory proposes the need for an interminable mourning, which he labels as "*demi-deuil*" and was translated as "mid-mourning" (1987: 335), as a productive way to negotiate unsettled racist experiences. Just as Derrida asserts that communism is a cultural ghost

that still haunts western history, colonialism might also be seen as a ghost that has haunted indigenous populations and their histories. *Baby No-Eyes* invites some hauntological reading because it undoubtedly haunts the historical discourse of colonial power. In this novel, the haunting metaphor is the specter/spirit of an unborn Māori baby who demands justice and retribution on account of the mistreatment s/he received by the colonizers. This specter somehow haunts the official colonial version of history in Aotearoa as she discloses the awful history of cultural dispossession and colonial abuses inflicted upon the Māori community. Derrida's work has a clear ethical dimension, especially when he asserts that, in order to live in a fairer society, we should learn to dwell in a liminal stage, halfway between life and death, and that this can only happen if we learn to live with spirits/ghosts. In that stage known as "mid-mourning," people must not forget the ghosts of the past, because they are crucial in order to vindicate the injustices that caused their trauma:

First of all, mourning [...] consists always in attempting to ontologize remains, to make them present, in the first place by identifying the bodily remains and by localizing the dead [...] One has to know [...] *who* and *where*, to know whose body it really is and what place it occupies—for it must stay in its place. In a safe place. (1994: 9)

This is the case of the Māori family in *Baby No-Eyes*. They go to the hospital to retrieve the mortal remains of her unborn baby, but what they receive instead is the body of their little baby without eyes, which prevents this family from properly mourning this death. Moreover, Baby cannot go to the realm of the Māori ancestors until she recovers her sacred eyes and proves that she is a human being, neither garbage nor food. This is clearly explained by Te Paania's grandfather:

‘Course. She got to hang around for a while so we know she’s a *mokopuna*⁴⁷, not a rubbish, not a *kai*.⁴⁸ How do we know she not a fish if she don’t hang around for a while – or a blind eel or old newspaper or rat shit. Huh. You don’t expect her to go away, join her ancestors, foof, just like that,’ and he threw his hands up. ‘Not after all that business.’ (83)

As was stated in the first chapter, the Māori holistic worldview understands death as part of life. Thus, the interaction of the dead with the living in the *whānau* is something normal. This is the main reason why the novel does not need to explicitly make it clear that the ghost of Baby is a real and natural member of this Māori extended family. The presence of Baby’s spirit among the living subverts the western concept of reality, but is absolutely normal and acceptable within the Māori community. Needless to say, in Māori eschatology death is not considered to be the end of life, but rather the starting point for the following stage. For this reason, Māori communal mourning and burial rituals are so important. The Māori regard the transmission of Māori cultural knowledge through generations as quintessential, and Derrida’s theory seems to be in tune with that indigenous perspective on eschatology and genealogy, especially when he claims that “being-with-spectres” is “not only but also, a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations” (1994: xix). Whereas Freud’s traumatic process fluctuates between mourning and melancholia, Derrida’s mid-mourning is based on a constant working over and through cultural legacies that provide people with resilience based on cultural elements, such as spirituality and genealogy. The Māori academic Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes indigenous culture and spirituality as “critical sites of resistance” (1999: 74). Māori cannot be detached from their ancestors, because the latter are the core of Māori personal development and communal synergy. Besides, whereas Freud’s mourning

⁴⁷ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘mokopuna’: 2. (noun) grandchild - child or grandchild of a son, daughter, nephew, niece, etc. 3. (noun) descendant.

⁴⁸ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘kai’: 3. (noun) food, meal.

focuses on the individual, Derrida's mid-mourning is rather based on a community where the individual *per se* means nothing. Therefore, Derrida's theory seems to be quite appropriate to analyze trauma in marginalized communities where the western individual psychological approach is of no use. The character of Baby subverts the western concept of ghosts; she does not have a merely symbolic function in the story, but an active one instead. In Grace's novel, the members of this Māori family feel the ethical and cultural responsibility to provide a life for her baby. It is worth bearing in mind that Māori believe that the spirits of their ancestors will remain among the living until their final journey into the realm of death, symbolized by the mythical homeland Hawaiki.⁴⁹ In one of Te Paania's dreams, Baby is represented as a doll who asks her mother: "you have to find them for me" (72). Then, Te Paania understands that she must give her baby both: the eyes that the colonizers have taken from her, because without her sacred eyes she cannot be properly buried according to the Māori tradition; and the ancestral stories of their *whānau*, which will alone allow her to enter the Māori spiritual realm. Te Paania's melancholia is presented in the narrative as an inevitable effect of the aftermath of trauma rather than as a perpetual condition, which somehow corroborates what many postcolonial critics have said, namely, that Freudian excessive emphasis on melancholia deprives trauma theory of much of its usefulness.

Derrida also pits the 'traditional scholar,' who does not believe in ghosts, against another kind of scholar that he calls the "scholar of the future," who knows that s/he must learn justice from the ghosts because, what sense would it make to think of the possibilities of the future if we did not worry about our past ancestors? The scholar of

⁴⁹From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'Hawaiki': 1. (location) ancient homeland - the places from which Māori migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand. According to some traditions it was Io, the supreme being, who created Hawaiki-nui, Hawaiki-roa, Hawaiki-pāmamao and Hawaiki-tapu, places inhabited by atua. It is believed that the wairua returns to these places after death, and speeches at tangihanga refer to these as the final resting place of wairua.

the future must also be ready to speak about the ghosts of those ‘others’ in the name of justice because:

No justice [...] seems possible or thinkable without the principle of some *responsibility*, beyond all the living presents, within that which disjoints the living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead, be they victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence, nationalist, racist, colonialist, sexist, or other kinds of exterminations, victims of the oppressions of capitalist imperialism or any of the forms of totalitarianism. (1994: xix; emphasis in the original)

In contrast to the classic psychoanalytic approach, Derrida urges us not to forget the past, nor the generation of ghosts who are not present or living. That is why he introduces them into our everyday lives: to help us better work through trauma. Only when we have managed to incorporate this alien part of ourselves shall we be able to fully relive our own traumatizing past and continue with our lives without fear. As Dolores Herrero asserts (2015: 515):

In contrast to classic psychoanalytic accounts of mourning in which the loss of an object must be replaced and overcome, Derrida elaborates on the ‘double bind’ of mourning, which allows for an ongoing conversation with the dead and incorporates the other as an alien part of the self.

Usually, ghosts refuse to die and come back from death because they want to revisit an unfair past. In the novel, Baby’s mission is not only to make the Māori community remember colonial past injustices, but also to encourage them to fight for the achievement of a better future.

The intergenerational trauma of colonization is very present in the novel, whether in the form of unresolved grief, as in the character of Baby, or as untold stories, such as those of Gran Kura, and identity problems like Shane’s. As was mentioned before,

Professor of sociology Ron Eyerman has explored the cultural trauma of slavery as collective memory in the formation of an African American identity. He believes that there is a difference between the trauma that affects individuals and the trauma that is understood as a cultural process that affects collective memory. He points out that “slavery was traumatic in retrospect, and formed a ‘primal scene’ which could, potentially, unite all ‘African Americans’ in the United States, whether or not they had themselves been slaves or had any knowledge of or feeling for Africa” (2004: 60). The trauma of slavery in the African American community, together with the racism that still exists in the United States, show many parallels with the traumatic collective memory that the Māori community shares regarding colonialism and the racism and abuses that they have been suffering from the time of colonization till the present day. The suffering and abuses experienced by the Māori community in *Baby No-Eyes* could be related to Eyerman’s concept of “primal scene,” because Riripeti’s mistreatment and Baby’s desecration are instances of the violence that the colonizers inflicted in New Zealand. These abuses are also traumatic in retrospect and become primal scenes that act as catalytic events, the psychological outcome of which is a cultural trauma which is chronic and damages the whole Māori community. Eyerman asserts that “cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion” (2004: 61). Unarguably, the members of this Maori family are an illustration of the cultural trauma mentioned by Eyerman, because they suffer gradual psychological degradation as they verify the consequences of colonial racism in Aotearoa through the profanation of their little baby. Te Paania cannot assimilate this and goes on taking care of the ghost of her dead baby with no eyes: “I’d hold her over the water, washing her face, working my

fingers in the facecloth to clean the fatty creases and the curls of her ears. I'd squeeze water from the cloth to wet her head, then soap my hand to rub through her hair" (125).

The novel illustrates the meaning and implications of insidious trauma, which Root describes as "the transmission of unresolved trauma and attendant defensive behaviors and/or helplessness that is transmitted transgenerationally as the result of an ancestor's direct trauma" (1992: 241). The best instance of this is Tawera's reception and internalization of the intergenerational trauma of his family through Gran Kura and Te Paania's ancestor stories, which also include a sister/ghost. As LaCapra explains (2004: 108):

The intergenerational transmission of trauma refers to the way those not directly living through an event may nonetheless experience and manifest its posttraumatic symptoms, something especially prominent in the children or intimates of survivors [...] who are possessed of, and even by, the past and tend to relive what others have lived.

After Tawera's birth, Te Paania introduces Baby to him, and from that moment onwards he will bear this intergenerational trauma and come to experience a colonial trauma of his own:

When we woke up my mother sat up and looked into my face. Her first words following my special appearance were, 'I want you to know that you're not an only child.'

'I knew there was someone,' I said.

'You have a sister four years and five days older than you.'

'Now I see her,' I said, 'Shot. Two holes in her head.'

'You mean she has no eyes,' my mother said. 'You mean her eyes were stolen.' (19)

Tawera inherits colonial trauma as embodied by his ghost-sister, and carries this burden throughout the whole story. As LaCapra argues, when a victim tells his/her traumatic experience, this trauma can be partly transmitted to the listener through "empathic

unsettlement.” This term means that listeners undergo an affective response and put themselves in the victim’s position via the empathy they feel, and this modifies her/his initial vision of the events received. According to LaCapra, this is “desirable or even necessary for a certain form of understanding that is constitutively limited but significant” (2004: 125). Thus, colonial trauma has been transmitted to Tawera through the empathy he feels when he listens to the testimony of his mother, even though he did not experience the trauma directly. Tawera realizes that Te Paania’s memories of her little baby are enormously painful for her, which affects him deeply. Then, he uses this traumatic experience to capture through his art work the Māori collective memories that were excluded from social representation in the past. Tawera finds out that the best way to represent the historical gaps that Pakeha cultural hegemony has deliberately obscured is to make his sister visible through his art. He discovers in himself a strong desire to paint a portrait of his unborn sister, not only because she deserves her own story as a fully-fledged member of the Māori community, but also because her story must be told and remembered in the future so as to bear witness to the situation that the Māori still bear at present in the unfair society of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Fanon called this “representative art,” an art which is evocative, not of life, but of death:

The artist who has decided to illustrate the truths of the nation turns paradoxically toward the past and away from actual events. What he ultimately intends to embrace are in fact the castoffs of thought, its shells and corpses, a knowledge which has been stabilized once and for all. But the native intellectual who wishes to create an authentic work of art must realize that the truths of a nation are in the first place its realities. He must go on until he has found the seething pot out of which the learning of the future will emerge. (1963: 225)

At the end of the novel, Tawera embodies the scholar of the future as put forward by Derrida because, through his art, he is ready to speak in the name of the ‘others.’

Tawera seems to dwell in the realm of ‘mid-mourning,’ because he has learnt to inhabit a space in between life and death, and is now able to react against the colonial injustices that caused the Māori cultural trauma. The decolonization of the former psychoanalytic theory of mourning demands an ongoing relationship with the image of the lost loved object as a vital aspect of successful mourning. In the novel, Tawera’s mourning is described as a process whereby he has managed to reconstruct the inner world that he shared with her sister, which proves to be quintessential in the accomplishment of his sister’s painting. He has reinforced his Māori identity by restoring his previous state of internal equilibrium, which includes cultural elements, such as spirituality and *whakapapa*. He does not forget the ghosts of the past, but is constantly re-interpreting them in order to better work through his trauma.

The novel portrays both the old colonial business of taking Māori sacred land and the new colonial business of collecting indigenous genes as different forms of appropriation. *Baby No-Eyes* uses the true fact of the mutilation of a Māori baby to explore the contemporary issue of bio-piracy: the colonizers take parts of the indigenous body now just as they took Māori land in the past. As Patricia Grace affirmed:

I don’t know whether people who read the book connect with what happened to the baby in the hospital and genetic engineering, with indigenous values and the feeling of indigenous peoples around the world when it comes to intellectual property and genes. Yes, I suppose in a way *Baby No-Eyes* is like an expansion of all these issues. Genetic engineering, the mining of genes of indigenous people becomes the new frontier of colonization. (in Fresno Calleja 2003: 116)

The Human Genome Diversity Project (HGDP) aims at collecting biological samples from different population groups throughout the world with the intention of building up a representative database of human genetic diversity. This explanation could be

regarded as a mere euphemism when taking into consideration the novel's true story of the profanation of a little Māori baby. On the whole, the HGDP project has been judged as negative, because it considers indigenous peoples as no more than research objects, and worries more about the genetic material than the livelihood of the targeted populations. There is great controversy over the issue of bio-piracy; the most questionable aspect of the project is the issue of the ownership of knowledge and patents. As is implied in the novel, the main reason why Pakeha doctors remove Baby's eyes is the Human Genome Diversity Project. Thus, Grace's novel testifies to the fact that the white majority keeps on enforcing their former hegemonic practices of appropriating indigenous possessions. The only difference is that things have gone from bad to worse: whereas it was land that they took in the past, now it is parts of indigenous bodies that they appropriate and desecrate, always supported by the laws that they themselves promulgate. As a matter of fact, the people who manage this project do not care about the ethical implications of taking indigenous genes without asking for their permission, mainly because they believe that the rights of native populations are subjected to the health benefits of the more modern and educated communities. Of course, there are also some economic implications, such as the commercial use that the results of this research will be given. In 1993, the Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism issued the *Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Position Paper on the HGD "Vampire" Project*. In it they asserted that:

The Vampire Project is legalized theft. The Vampire scientists are planning to take and to own what belongs to indigenous people. [...] We must make sure that our people are not exploited once more by corporations, governments, and their scientists.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ http://www.ipcb.org/resolutions/htmls/summary_indig_opp.html

Baby No-Eyes brings to light the arrogant and patronizing attitude of the people working on the HGDP; they believe themselves to be morally and ethically superior to people of lower strata, who have a limited understanding of human genetic research. In the novel, Māori characters understand bio-piracy as a new sort of Pakeha abuse, as disrespectful and racist as those committed in the past: “They think they can experiment on us brown people. Look for cures for their own sickness” (84). Indigenous people have born oppression for a long time and, consequently, are not at all interested in donating their bodies to people who have mistreated them for so long. There are many similarities in the ways in which both the HGDP model and western psychology have been applied to indigenous peoples: both of them have been cruel impositions since nobody ever consulted those who were to suffer the consequences. The only conclusion that can be reached is that the colonizers do not negotiate with the natives but manage their lives without consultation, showing their lack of thoughtfulness as regards their needs and feelings, notwithstanding the fact that the article 31 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) puts the emphasis on the significance of the intellectual property of indigenous peoples:

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

In the novel, Te Paania shares the traumatic experience of her baby's mutilation in order to inform Māori society of the increasing abuse suffered by the indigenous population on account of genetic research: "This research interferes in a highly sacred domain of indigenous history, survival, and commitment to future generations. [...] Genes are the ancestors with us" (280). Te Paania attends forums and workshops dealing with the issue of bio-colonialism because they are crucial to make global opinion aware of the violation of Māori culture and the genetic integrity of their ancestry. *Baby No-Eyes* makes it clear that dehumanizing practices, such as bio-colonialism, are a fact in the society of Aotearoa/New Zealand. As Te Paania asserts in the conference about genetic research:

'Use your own people's genes,' she said. 'Or the genetic material of like-thinking and like-feeling people. Stop targeting remote communities just because their genes may have something different to offer. At least wait until there've been proper codes of ethical practices and legal confinements established, proper processes for consent to be obtained. [...] 'Stop pretending that indigenous people will benefit from this research.'

(280)

The medical staff who manages Baby's body shows utmost disrespect and arrogance towards Te Paania and her family, among other things because they believe that Māori possess a primitive and inferior culture. On the contrary, Te Paania shows great and clear knowledge of this specific issue in her conference:

'Which has little to do with numbers,' she said. 'It means the good of the rich, the good of wealthy nations, the good of scientists and researchers, the good of pharmaceutical companies, the good of those who have the might of states and the power of law to back them.'[. . .] 'None of it give food or clean water to dying communities, saves their land and protects their resources, helps the Hagahai to survive.' (281)

The novel shows the Pakeha racist approach towards this new field of study, and only fosters bio-ethical genetic research based on human respect. In other words, it speaks in favour of the decolonization of genetic science by pitting the political and ethical aspects of the HGDP against each other. Current bioethical protocols fail to guarantee respect for processes that involve group decision-making and cultural mindsets. Therefore, indigenous communities are further disadvantaged in this process, because they solely depend on the good will of the researcher to grasp information about the benefits and risks of the studies carried out. Indigenous people are fighting to regulate the appropriation of genetic material from their people and territories. They demand the enforcement of ethical protocols that should respect their right to be consulted and their power to decide over their own genetic resources. Needless to say, such protocols should be designed by unbiased governmental agencies. In the novel, Te Paania strives to air Māori concerns about bio-colonialism and the unethical research practices that indigenous peoples are suffering all over the world. The issue of bio-colonialism has become a main one in Grace's novel, mainly due to the great impact that this can have, and actually has, on many aspects of Māori lives, such as education, cultural identity, natural resources, and self-determination affairs.

Evil Goodness and Stories of Shame as the Main Source of Māori Fragmented

Identity

The artistic renaissance is enriching our cultures further, reinforcing our identities/self-respect/and pride, and taking us through a genuine decolonization; it is also acting as a unifying force in our region. In their individual journeys into the Void, these artists, through their work, are explaining us to ourselves, and creating a new Oceania.

Albert Wendt "*Towards a New Oceania*"

Baby No-Eyes fictionalizes the true story of a Māori unborn baby who dies in a car accident that also takes her father's life and almost kills her mother. As was said before, when the family goes to the hospital to take their baby's body, they are made to wait for a long time because the staff of the hospital does not find the body. When the remains of the baby are finally located and given to the family, the hospital staff tells them that their baby had been found in a waste care bin, and her eyes were missing. Eventually, the eyes of the baby are returned in a supermarket plastic bag. Although this would be a great affront in any culture, it is even more insulting in the Māori one, in which the head is considered to be a sacred part of the body. The circumstances related to the accident and the following events in the hospital make up a sort of axis around which the plot revolves. The mutilation that this unborn girl suffers at the hospital by Pakeha doctors before her Māori relatives can claim her for burial becomes the focus of the story. The novel's title makes clear reference to this incident, thus showing the unfair power relationships that exist in Aotearoa/New Zealand between Pakeha and Māori. Pakeha have taken by force the culture of the Māori eyes/I's and have therefore silenced and blinded them, not only during the period of colonization but also afterwards. The novel strives to get rid of the imposed colonial perspective of history and make readers see through the eyes/I's of the oppressed. This chapter questions the way in which Pakeha exert their authority in the contemporary society of New Zealand, and denounces some of the injustices that the Māori are still suffering in order to prompt some kind of reaction against the Pakeha racist way of ruling their lives. It therefore tries to achieve what Peter Beatson describes in his study of Māori literature *The Healing Tongue: Themes in Contemporary Māori Literature*:

Until recently it has been the Māori who has been the victim of the Pakeha stare. [...]

Wishing to be well regarded, they did not return the gaze and saw only their own

distorted reflections. [...] It is now Pakeha who are being watched through Māori eyes.

And what the eyes perceive, the tongue speaks and the pen records. (1989: 36-37)

Grace's novel introduces non-western focalizers in order to offer an alternative version/representation of events, and constructs a new political and social discourse aimed at giving Māori the social visibility that they were denied for such a long time. This visibility is very important for the articulation of Māori identity within the social and political sphere of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Furthermore, the novel gives priority to the I's over the eyes, thus making it clear that certain visual representations must be transcended as they are tainted with prejudices and racism. It is quintessential to give Māori people back their eyes/I's which, in a way, means allowing them to retrieve their stories and their pride of belonging to their race and community. As Grace said when she was asked about the reasons why she wrote this novel: "the story of what happened to the baby in the pathology department of the hospital was a true story and was the reason I wrote the book. My idea was to give that baby a life" (in Della Valle 2007: 138).

Baby No-Eyes outlines the historical account of Māori cultural experience by relying on one Māori family and their past and present reality. The issues it tackles range from the cultural alienation and confusion embodied by the character of Gran Kura, the eldest head of the *whānau*, to the gradual cultural renewal of the character of Tawera, who represents the youngest Māori generation. Grace's novel brings to light the reassertion of Māori legacies and the importance of cultural knowledge in the formation of a Māori identity that might dignify this oppressed and traumatized community. The Māori characters of the story eventually develop a sense of Māori collective identity, based on active resistance to colonial mistreatment and the support that the members of this community receive from one another. The novel puts the emphasis on the need to

respect and enhance Māori culture to alleviate this community's collective pain. The origin of Shane's anger, for example, is nothing but the fact that he was dispossessed of his Māori culture and identity. He was denied a Māori proper name, the Māori language and the stories of his ancestors. Thus, Shane demands that Gran Kura and the other elders of the *whānau* should help him to fill in this gap. He is frustrated because he was given the name of a white cowboy from a Hollywood movie, finds this name ridiculous, and wants to find out his Māori *tīpuna* (genealogical) name. That is why he and Te Paania, who is pregnant, go to talk with Gran Kura and the rest of the *whānau*:

‘Am I a cowboy?’ [...] ‘So why I was named after a movie?’ [...] ‘We’re getting a car.’ Whew. ‘Then we’ll go there and they’re going to tell. Me. Tell us. My name. My things. Our stuff. Those secrets. That’s that.’ (25)

‘They got my stuff, I want it.’

[...]

‘Where’s our stuff?’

‘You’re all too soft for it,’ said Gran Kura.

‘What stuff?’ Niccy asked.

‘Our names, our secrets, our stories...’

‘Our stories could kill you,’ Gran Kura said.

‘Shane. It’s a name of your own.’

‘It’s a movie name, a cowboy name.’

‘A name for today’s world.’

‘A name for Pakeha, a name for Pakeha teachers to like. To make me be like them. Where’s my *tīpuna* name?’ (26)

If, as Fanon claims, “every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation” (2008: 9), then it is with the British language and culture that the Māori have been confronted. Gran Kura regrets Shane's attitude and

explains the reasons why they gave their children non-Māori names: “We didn’t know our children would refuse to be who we were trying to make them be. We didn’t know they would demand their names, or that they would tear the place apart searching for what we had hidden from them. We didn’t know they would blame us” (148). Gran Kura is ashamed of giving their children ridiculous foreign names that can only alienate them from their own culture. Cultural expropriation is always a painful experience that involves serious identity crises, as important parts of the self get irretrievably lost. This is how Fanon ponders on the way in which the colonizers exert their power over the native populations:

Colonial domination, because it is total and tends to oversimplify, very soon manages to disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people. This cultural obliteration is made possible by the negation of national reality, by new legal relations introduced by the occupying power, by the banishment of the natives and their customs to outlying districts by colonial society, by expropriation, and by the systematic enslaving of men and women. (1963: 236)

Baby No-Eyes offers a valuable instance of the inevitable fracture that the loss of land and cultural elements provoke in people’s minds. In the novel, this personal fragmentation is especially embodied by the Māori elders of the *whānau*, who have undergone the cultural obliteration and alienation described by Fanon. Māori elders have internalized the negative images that the colonizers have projected upon them since their school days, and have therefore tried to elevate the younger Māori generations above their savagery so that they can become whiter as they renounce their blackness, that is, their own culture. The only option for Shane in this new space is, thus, to adjust to civilization, which implies the acquisition of Pakeha culture. This moment of crisis is revealed in the argument that Shane has with Gran Kura:

But what to go with it? Uh? Black, but what to go with it? Shane for a name. Shane, Shame, Blame, Tame, Lame, Pain. Nothing to go with this,' he prodded at his chest with stiff stick fingers, 'nothing to go with this. How can I be Pakeha with this colour, this body, this face, this head, this heart? How can I be Māori without...without...without what? Don't even know without what. Without what?' (27)

Although Shane's inferiority complex and identity problems are the direct outcome of the conviction that the only way to survive in this violent and racist colonial world is by becoming whiter and forgetting his former culture, he nonetheless feels that he needs his Māori culture to get rid of the anger that torments him. Moreover, at this point of the story Gran Kura understands that Shane has the right to know about his Māori culture because, if he is deprived of it, he would become a hollow and uprooted person. Therefore, she is forced to reveal that the insidious trauma that has been passed on from generation to generation originated in past colonial violence and mistreatment. She then decides to tell the secret story of how her generation was psychologically and physically punished and obliged to forget their own culture. She even tells the story of Riripeti, her younger cousin, who started attending school at the age of five and was severely punished by the Pakeha teacher for not understanding the English directions and being so black:

I knew Riripeti shouldn't smile so much. I knew she shouldn't fidget herself or roll her eyes. At that moment I didn't want her to be a girl so black that it would make the teacher angry. [...] Riripeti could speak some English. Of course. We all could. But Riripeti had not heard words like the words she was now hearing. 'Go and stand in the corner until you learn better manners,' the teacher said, but Riripeti didn't know what she was being told to do. (31)

Riripeti's plight clearly denounces racist feelings based on fear and rejection of the 'other.' Colonial teachers thought that they were the true defenders of colonial culture and identity, in their view threatened by the native communities, their 'others.'

The colonial educational system enforced by Pakeha in New Zealand was not programmed to properly educate colonized people, but rather to produce minor and inexpensive subalterns, very often reduced to a state of mere passivity, mainly as a result of the loss of confidence and self-respect that led many of them to be ashamed of their own culture. Gran Kura is traumatized because she was in charge of protecting and caring for her and, although Riripeti smiled and looked at her for guidance, she was so frightened that she could not possibly help her. Gran Kura also explains the way in which Riripeti was sent to the corner and smacked, simply for not understanding the colonial language of her teacher, even though she did not know what was wrong:

But how was she to know she was bad? She had said no words that would make her bad, spelled nothing wrong to be bad, given no answers to be wrong. 'Face the corner,' the teacher said, because Riripeti was still twisting her neck to look at me. She didn't know what she had been told to do. The teacher jolted her head round and gave her a smacking on the legs, then Riripeti stood still without moving, facing the corner. (32)

Māori children must learn that, in this process of civilization, they must adopt Pakeha culture, speak English and have English names. Māori language and names are not allowed at school and Riripeti, once there, is given a new name, like Mata in *Cousins*, so that she can comply with the Pakeha demand for proper/Christian names. However, as Gran Kura claims, "it was no good. School turned out no good for Riripeti. How did she know her name was Betty?" (33). Colonial indoctrination deeply affected the lives of the Māori community, which accepted their inferiority and submission to the white people on account of their inferior race. Racial repression was inherent to the educational system imposed by governmental institutions in New Zealand. As Walker

highlights, “The damaging aspect of this practice lay not in corporal punishment *per se*, but in the psychological effect on an individual’s sense of identity and personal worth” (1990: 147). Riripeti is killed, not as a result of physical punishment, but due to the fact that she cannot possibly comprehend the alien teacher’s expectations. Riripeti is “too good to guess what to say, too good to know what lies to tell, too good to know what to do” (33), but is repeatedly punished for not knowing enough English to understand the teacher. Although Pakeha teachers give English names to Māori children to apparently treat them as individuals, they nonetheless regard all of them as indistinct members of an inferior race. The way in which Riripeti’s teacher makes her stand in a corner for hours, treating her as if she were an animal, speaks for itself:

She remembered to speak in English, except that the teacher didn’t know it was English she was speaking because Riripeti was too afraid to make the words come out loudly. ‘Do I have to shake that language of you, do I do I?’ the teacher would say, shaking and shaking her. Then Riripeti would be smacked and sent to stand in the bad place. She did mimi⁵¹ there sometimes. [...] After a while it was only Riripeti who went to the bad corner. It became her corner. She smelled like an animal and spoke like an animal, had to go to the corner until she stopped being an animal. [...] Her spirit was out of her, gone roaming. Her hair was as dry as a horse’s tail, rough and hard, her eyes were like flat shadows, not at all like eyes. I had seen a dying dog look like that, which made me think it might be true what the teacher said, that my teina was changing into an animal.

(34)

Finally, Riripeti’s teachers, who embody the worst side of colonization when bullying defenceless children, make her and the rest of Māori children internalize that they are more animal than human. Riripeti stops going to school and waits for Gran Kura in the woods; due to all the abuses she has undergone, she prefers being in the company of

⁵¹From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on ‘mimi’: 2. (noun) urine, pee, piss.

animals to bearing colonial mistreatment any more. In the preface of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Jean-Paul Sartre meditates on the attitude that colonial soldiers usually show towards colonized people. As he explains, the colonial power strategy is

to reduce the inhabitants of the annexed country to the level of superior monkeys in order to justify the settler's treatment of them as beasts of burden. Violence in the colonies does not only have for its aim the keeping of these enslaved men at arm's length; it seeks to dehumanize them. Everything will be done to wipe out their traditions, to substitute our language for theirs and to destroy their culture without giving them ours. Sheer physical fatigue will stupefy them. Starved and ill, if they have any spirit left, fear will finish the job; guns are leveled at the peasant; civilians come to take over his land and force him by dint of flogging to till the land for them. (1963: 15)

Gran Kura's trauma also originates in her remorse that she did nothing to avoid Riripeti's mistreatment but, as a matter of fact, there was nothing that she could have done to change this terrified child's horrible situation in this hostile, racist and violent colonial environment. A terrible example of that violence is the moment when Riripeti is caned in front of all the other children: "we all had to stand in our lines and watch this caning so we would learn how bad our language was" (37). Riripeti is caned in *Baby No-Eyes* like Mata in *Cousins*, with the difference that Riripeti's physical and psychological abuse increasingly affects her health. She begins vomiting each day as she comes near to school, becomes sick because she cannot eat, and cannot get out of bed. The outcome of this is that she dies soon afterwards, and Gran Kura will recall these bitter schooldays memories for the rest of her life. At one point Gran Kura goes as far as to state that Riripeti was "killed by school" and "died of fear" (38). The school therefore becomes a hostile space that Māori children cannot understand, mainly because the people that rule it are totally insensitive to them and their culture. Gran Kura puts an end to her telling of Riripeti's tragedy by highlighting that,

psychologically speaking, Riripeti encapsulated the suffering and trauma of the whole Māori community:

My heart broke for my teina. Oh I cried, she was mine, she was me, she was all of us. She was the one who died but we were the ones affected, our shame taking generations to become our anger and our madness. (38)

Riripeti dies due to the prolonged period of heartless discipline, punishment and humiliation that colonial schools inflicted upon indigenous children. According to Gran Kura, Riripeti's story exemplifies how a whole generation of indigenous peoples got traumatized in New Zealand, and how all of this violence and suffering were silenced and relegated to oblivion. As she explains to Shane and the rest of the *whānau*:

So we children never spoke of what had happened to Riripeti. It became our secret and our shame. It's a story that has never had words, not until today. Today the words were jolted from my stomach by Shane, where they have been sitting for sixty years. [...] We keep our stories secret because we love our children, we keep our language hidden because we love our children, we disguise ourselves and hide our hearts because we love our children. We choose names because we love our children.

Shane. (39)

The colonizers' goal of devaluing Māori cultural identity was thus fully achieved: not only did the elder Māori end up believing that the eradication of their Māori culture was necessary to protect their children, but they also transmitted this colonial trauma onto the following generations, thus corroborating Laura Brown's belief (1995: 108) that post-traumatic symptoms can spread among oppressed social groups, especially when their members have been exposed to some kind of trauma for a lifetime. After Riripeti's death, Gran Kura believed that submission was absolutely necessary for Māori survival, and decided that, from that moment onwards, she would reject anything related to Māori culture, especially *te reo Māori*, "that evil language which killed my teina and which I

never spoke again” (38). Dominick LaCapra offers what might be taken as some kind of psychological explanation for Gran Kura’s resistance to working through her trauma: she does not want to forget her traumatic experience because she feels that this would betray Riripeti’s memory:

Those traumatized by extreme events [...] may resist working through because of what might almost be termed a fidelity to trauma, a feeling that one must somehow keep faith with it. Part of this feeling may be the melancholic sentiment that, in working through the past in a manner that enables survival or a reengagement in life, one is betraying those who were overwhelmed and consumed by that traumatic past. One’s bond with the dead, especially with dead intimates, may invest trauma with value and make its relieving a painful but necessary commemoration or memorial to which one remains dedicated or at least bound. This situation may create a more or less unconscious desire to remain within trauma. (2001: 22)

The ill-treatment of children at school testifies to the burden of Māori past traumatic experiences and to the ruthless colonial policies that were meant to destroy their identity. Gran Kura strives to explain to Shane and the other young members of the *whānau* that Māori people accepted colonial rules in a desperate attempt to protect their children: “We don’t want our children to be hurt at school. That’s why you have to be very good. You have to listen, you have to obey” (30). Shane’s reaction is to blame her and the rest of elders for silencing Māori stories and depriving the young of their cultural legacy without having given them any opportunity to choose. Shane cannot cope with the clash between his ridiculous Pakeha name and his Māori body; neither can he regard himself as Pakeha, considering his physical attributes, nor feel part of Māori culture, as he lacks a suitable Māori cultural background. Thus, Shane rebels against this in-betweenness, which prevents him from identifying with either Pakeha or Māori.

Another crucial element regarding the insidious trauma suffered by the Māori community is the “evil goodness” described by Gran Kura. This “goodness” goes hand in hand with the fear experienced by Māori elders, who feel, not only traumatized, but also guilty of their ‘colonizing’ role in the community. Gran Kura sees this goodness as the “sickness” that has affected all the members of the Māori community: “You hold yourself back, and by doing that you hold back others who won’t react until you have reacted” (63). In her interview with Fresno Calleja, Grace tried to explain how Māori elder generations felt: “They suffered a lot of poverty, a lot of deprivation and they always had to be ‘good’ so that they could survive, not to do things that would get them into trouble” (2003: 118). Nevertheless, it is after Baby’s incident in the hospital that Gran Kura understands that what is actually killing Māori people is not Māori culture, but rather their submission to Pakeha culture and their lack of pride for belonging to the Māori community. She finds out the origin of this “evil goodness” when going back to their Māori ancestral stories. Gran Kura’s story about her grandfather Tumanako reveals the moment when this submission took control of her family. It is when she is describing the portrait of her squint-eyed grandfather that she explains the reasons why he has his eye half-shut:

It was as I was growing up I came to understand the meaning of that half-shut eye. Yes, he was warning us that following generations would have to keep one eye unseeing, keep lips sealed in order to survive. That was his message, which I know came from goodness, love for us – but also from uncertainty because the world had changed forever. (108)

Tumanako was responsible for his Māori people and the whole territory they had inherited. However, the government did not like the land to be in the hands of whole groups of people because, as Gran Kura explains, “it was difficult for them to steal from

so many owners. So they set up a Land Court to make it easier for themselves” (115). Pakeha courts eventually granted Tumanako and two of his relatives titles to smaller pieces of land. There was nothing they could do to protest; if they had not accepted these titles, the land would have been taken away from them all the same. The Māori had to make do with whatever they were given in order to survive. Gran Kura describes the situation of Tumanako’s descendants: they lived in poverty and sickness and, to make matters even worse, also in silence.

Goodness and silence had set itself in amongst the people and even though the stories were still told they were told in whispers, kept as secrets amongst themselves, to become stories of shame. People became more and more silent, because if they spoke they would harm their children. They had stolen their grandchildren’s lives. (116)

Gran Kura wants to free her family from the “half-shut eye” that has dominated them since the time of her grandfather Tumanako, which thus functions as a signifier of cultural blindness. It seems that Baby’s enforced blindness somehow closes the cycle of cultural blindness suffered by this Māori family for so long. Gran Kura is now determined to tell the secret and long hidden stories; besides, she will never again speak in English: “I speak to you now in the language that I haven’t used since the time of Riripeti. I will never speak English again. By the time I die I hope to be again who I was born to be” (66). She then goes on to explain that, during the colonization period, Pakeha settled close to her Māori people and built up a church and a school. Little did they know then about the lethal consequences that this would eventually have for their community: “The old ones didn’t know then that a school could kill their children, that a church could shrink people’s souls into tiny knotted balls which would become wrapped and hidden in layer upon layer of windings inside them (112). The number of Pakeha kept on increasing, which made it easier for them to impose their view of property: they “believed a man could own land in the same way as he owned his coat”

(112). This was the origin of more and more Māori and Pakeha quarrels. It is then that Gran Kura explains that, to put an end to these conflicts, a treaty was signed between Māori people and the Queen of England:

Also, because of this treaty there would be a government. There would be laws. Māori would stop their warring and their grievances against each other. Pakeha would stop stealing land. Māori and Pakeha would not fight each other any more. All the trouble would end and there would be peace forever. [...]

However, after the treaty was signed there was more stealing of land, much worse than before. Pakeha were now arriving in shiploads from across the sea and they had been promised land by the settler government. And although some Māori had sold land, or given land to Pakeha, it was not enough for them. They wanted more land, they wanted the best land, they wanted all the land. (113)

This treaty, known as the Treaty of Waitangi was, without doubt, a crucial fact in Māori recent history. However, as was said before, what looked at first sight as recognition of Māori rights was, in fact, nothing but a means to deceive and rob Māori of their pride and sovereignty. Gran Kura describes the destruction of Māori life and culture that followed the settlement, and how the Treaty of Waitangi endorsed permanent inequality between Māori and Pakeha. The wars that followed almost brought about the extinction of the Māori race. The Māori were pushed onto the coastal fringe after their good land was taken. According to Gran Kura's narration, the outcome of this situation was that Māori, who were rather more vulnerable and fewer in number, led a poor existence, and kept themselves good with alcohol and the church (114).

After Shane's discussion with his family, he and Te Paania come back home and have a car accident, as a result of which both Shane and the baby they are expecting die. When Gran Kura arrives at the hospital after the car accident, she keeps on imitating colonial culture. She plans to take Shane and the baby to the hospital chapel for prayers

before taking them home for burial (59). However, when the family asks for their baby, the doctor tells them to return later in the afternoon. They refuse to do so and wait for their baby in the hospital. Although Gran Kura hides her feelings and makes excuses for them, when the hospital staff informs her that the “corpse has been mislaid temporarily,” these words cut into her like knives (61). To make matters still worse, the doctor later on refers to the baby as “disposal,” which clearly testifies to the absolute lack of respect towards the Māori community and the humiliation they must suffer. After much consternation and no explanation whatsoever, the remains of the unborn child are returned “in a container inside a supermarket plastic bag” (64). When Mahaki, a friend of Te Paania who happens to be a lawyer, asks the doctor the reason for the removal of Baby’s eyes, the doctor answers him that he does not have to give them any reason (63). Mahaki then threatens to take the hospital to court, to which the Pakeha doctor replies that they will not have a leg to stand on. Unfortunately, Mahaki knows that this is true (120). Te Paania then complains that Pakeha doctors knew they could remove the eyes of their baby without any consequences because, as the legal system considers indigenous peoples to be inferior, they can always do as they please:

Law allowed them. Power allowed them. We have no right to say no, or yes, because we weren’t people. Baby wasn’t a baby, wasn’t the family’s baby. Baby was a body, and legally belonged to the medical superintendent. (188)

Te Paania has just hit the nail on the head: Pakeha use and abuse power, and employ all the mechanisms of the state (the legal system and institutions, such as hospitals, courts and schools) for their own benefit and the subjugation of indigenous peoples. Te Paania denounces Pakeha doctors’ main target: to gain control of the genetic material of Māori people. At this moment of crisis, she dreams of a man whose blood is drunk by flocks of glassy mosquitos, and then the fading man, who wears Tawhaki’s clothes, walks towards Te Paania’s arms (208). This man represents Māori people and their ancestors,

whose genetic material is being taken away by force like that man's blood. The profanation of Baby's body becomes a turning point for this Māori family, as it prompts them to start their cultural and political fight against Pakeha hegemonic power. *Baby No-Eyes* presents Pakeha as being completely unable to understand and respect Māori people and their culture, and invites readers to put themselves in the shoes of the Māori ill-treated 'other.'

After this big affront Gran Kura, who has been subjugated to the Pakeha colonizer for her whole life, experiences a social and cultural awakening:

Our baby had been discarded, our baby had been disfigured—but we can all understand that different people have their different ways, their different reasons for what they do. What we can't know is how different we are in our feelings and understandings—until something happens. The eyes were brought to us in a container inside a plastic supermarket bag. Our baby's eyes had become food. They were pies, lollies, pickles, plums, peas. It was the swallowing of chiefly eyes. I couldn't believe it at all. It was a terrible nightmare. You think that people know, think that they are high-up people, then you discover that all they are is different. To you they are empty, and you see it. (64)

Gran Kura finally understands that Pakeha do not hesitate to profane babies' bodies for their own benefit and it is now, for the first time in the novel, that she concludes that this is by no means acceptable. Moreover, she is aware of the lack of *aroha* and the inhumane attitude that Pakeha hospital staff show towards a baby's dead body. These people deserve no respect, both from an emotional and a spiritual point of view. Last but not least, the hospital staff tells this Māori family that they need a police authorization to bring Baby's body home. Although Gran Kura first agrees to wait for police clearance, she cannot pray anymore, and feels instead the desire to call out to her ancestors to ask them for strength (64). Gran Kura's trauma is similar to that of Mata:

they have always believed they are ‘bad’ because of the color of their skin; to be good means obeying the Pakeha people in command of the situation. While in the hospital, Gran Kura realizes that this ideology has been the instrument for subjugating her people and committing horrendous crimes, such as abusing scary children and the profanation of babies’ corpses. At this moment Gran Kura experiences an epiphany; it is thanks to the loss of Baby’s eyes that she recovers a Māori perspective, to put it differently, Gran Kura recovers her lost eye/I:

It took Shane to open my mouth and it took his sister to move me. It took the two of them to stop me being this woman of evil patience and goodness, to stop me waiting there doing what I was told, to stop me sitting frightened of white coats, to stop me listening to people who gave themselves their own authority, to stop me letting them not to tell me why they’d stolen our baby’s eyes, to stop me demanding to know why they’d wrapped our baby’s eyes like food, to stop me holding on to shame. (65)

Shane functions here as a catalyst for Gran Kura’s change of perspective. In a way, Shane embodies the two sides of the novel’s coin: on the one hand, he dies due to the colonial trauma that the Māori have suffered for generations; on the other, he brings about the awakening of Gran Kura’s Māori pride, which will eventually release Māori past stories and encourage the Māori activist movement to struggle against Pakeha abuses. Gran Kura’s epiphany allows her to connect again with her spiritual Māori origins; she understands now, as her ancestors did before, that it is absolutely necessary for the community to retrieve their past stories, however painful they may be. The oral tradition is the Māori tool that Gran Kura employs to recover her voice and liberate herself from her colonial traumatic burden. She uses the metaphor of a little ball inside her to describe the traumatic dilemma about her identity that she has accumulated for years:

There is a little ball inside me, a core. Round it are layers and layers, like bandages, that I've wrapped it in over the years so that it would remain hidden. Now, because of the children's children, and because my mouth has been opened, I must unwrap the little ball, find it, let the secrets free. (66)

Gran Kura's traumatic memory links the humiliation suffered by Riripeti at school with the mutilation of Baby in the hospital; she finally realizes that she has been the accomplice of colonial hegemonic power for a long time. This is also the moment when she starts the painful process of revisiting her past and sharing it with her *whānau*. Gran Kura's trauma originates, not only in her memories of the colonial abusive treatment that she and the other Māori children received, but also in the guilt she feels on account of her own submissiveness. The concept of 'evil,' like that of 'goodness,' all of a sudden acquire a different meaning: 'to be good' basically meant speaking English and behaving as white people do. As the novel shows, the colonial discourse spoken at school forced Māori children to associate their race and culture with evil. Fanon describes this situation as follows:

When we consider the efforts made to carry out the cultural estrangement so characteristic of the colonial epoch, we realize that nothing has been left to chance and that the total result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness. (1963: 210-211)

This could only lead to long-term insidious trauma, whose main symptoms are identity crisis, low self-esteem and shame.

The characters in *Baby No-Eyes* build up their personal and collective identity out of their own experiences, and problematize the stereotypical notion of the Māori community imposed by colonial discourse. Te Paania, for example, represents the younger generation of combative Māori women, who dare to criticize the unfair *status quo* of Aotearoa/New Zealand. She complains about the working conditions of her

mother, who works from four in the afternoon until ten at night (88). She also detests the way in which Pakeha teachers make Māori pupils believe that it is there, in the freezing works, that they should work:

I now thought that if I wasn't going to be allowed to learn typing, how could I not work in the freezing works? I didn't think it would be so bad being a freezing worker like everyone else, but didn't want it to be a headmaster's chopping arm that decided it for me. (88-89)

Te Paania leaves school totally frustrated and is sent to Wellington to attend what she thinks to be a typing course. She is eager to start; however, as soon she begins it, she realizes that this but yet another way to confine rural Māori people to do the menial works the colonizers have reserved for them:

I thought it might be a typing course that I was being sent to do, but instead it was a deruralization course, an attempt at making a country frog into a city frog, an attempt at making a native frog exotic. (101)

Later on, when she shows technology skills in her workplace, she is not taken into account by her bosses because she “was too native, too froggy, too scary” (103). She is a smart girl who wants to be upgraded, but this never happens because of the racist prejudices of her boss. In spite of this, she keeps on pushing racist boundaries and, with much perseverance, manages to build up a space for herself and her family in the city. She functions in the novel as an example of how resilient Māori can open up a space for themselves in a difficult postcolonial space. The comparison between Te Paania and a frog, so often used in the story, associate her with rebellion and wildness: “It's wildness that makes my eyes bug out. It's my bugging out eyes that enable me to see wildly, according to Gran Kura” (143). Gran Kura explains to Te Paania the clear contrast that exists between them:

‘No one saved you, or made you, except yourself and what’s in you,’ Gran said.
‘There’s been nothing extracted, not at fifteen, not anytime. You were born with your kind of knowing, otherwise how would you have understood, at school, that there were lies being told, when there were others like me who were too good to understand it?’
(143)

Te Paania represents the modern Māori generation who, not only understands the modern ways of life, but is also proud of their Māori origins and point of view. On the contrary, the women of Gran Kura’s generation used Pakeha artifacts and ideas to suppress their Māori self:

When we put make up on our faces it was to cover the colour, to cover the ugly, cover the bad. We really meant it. We didn’t want to be these bad, ugly people, speaking this heathen language. (147)

Te Paania employs both her Māori wildness and Pakeha make-up to her advantage. In this imitation process Bhabha’s concept of mimicry acquires special significance. As is well known, Bhabha claims that “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite,” but also that “mimicry is at once resemblance and menace” (1994: 86). Te Paania imitates Pakeha ways, just as the colonizers want, but her imitation is by no means neutral. On the contrary, it is rather subversive: she makes the most of Pakeha elements, not because she thinks they are superior, but rather to go up in the Pakeha social ladder, to enjoy a better life. She belongs to the new generation of pro-active Māori people, in clear contrast with the passivity of Gran Kura’s generation. Te Paania’s generation possesses the ability to adapt to and transform the environment that surrounds them because, although they still have to face up to racist prejudices, they are nonetheless able to counter this repression with their Māori cosmivision and resilience. To give but one example, after the car accident Te Paania materializes the pain she feels, to the

point that “Pain” becomes another narrative voice in the story. Pain speaks to Te Paania, encouraging her to hold on to it and use it as a ladder to find her way from death to life: “I’m all you have, hold tight and move up one slow step at a time” (43). As the novel seems to suggest, it is suffering and pain that allow this new generation to start from scratch and acquire renewed strength and a better understanding of the world. Te Paania’s journey is one from the darkness of death to hearing her name in broad daylight; an example of the capacity of the Māori population to cope with their dispossession and work through pain for centuries. Like the mythological phoenix bird, the Māori community can have the power to regenerate and be born again by arising from the very ashes of their ancestors, in other words, through the recovery of their Māori heritage. At the end of the novel Te Paania has become a strong voice that is able to denounce the mistreatment suffered by the Māori community by telling her own experience of the profanation of her baby’s body. Reliance on Māori beliefs and values can help to mend fragmented identities, as the character of Te Paania shows.

After Baby’s death, Te Paania keeps her little baby alive because she is unable to overcome the profanation and loss of her daughter. When Tawera is born, he shares this burden with his mother and, later on, it is he who takes this responsibility most of the time. From a psychological point of view, Tawera’s world is considerably complex: since the spirit of his sister lives in him, he has to lead a double life, both in public and in private. Tawera somehow represents the youngest Māori generation who, although still having to deal with old-time colonial prejudices and on-going institutional racism in more subtle and modern ways, also have a very positive view of their race, in contrast with the previous generations, so often incarcerated by a number of inferiority complexes.

An instance of this new perspective towards Māori culture can be seen in the play performed at Tawera's school, whose story has been taken from Māori mythology. The Māori legend of Tawhaki⁵² that Tawera performs at school allows him to look at Māori culture with pride. He plays the role of this Māori demigod hero, who accomplishes a series of heroic deeds. One of Tawhaki's best known stories is the legend that narrates the revenge of the murder of Tawhaki's father and the rescue from enslavement of his mother, Urutonga. It was the tribe of the Ponaturi, a race of evil beings, who killed Tawhaki's father and captured and enslaved his mother, whose task was to wake up the Ponaturi at dawn daily because the light would kill them. To destroy these evil beings Urutonga and her two sons arrange a plan: she convinces the Ponaturi that there is still a long way to go until dawn comes. Then, Tawhaki and his brother, Arihi, hide themselves with incantations that render them invisible. They wait until the Ponaturi are all asleep and, when it is broad daylight, they open the windows and the door, and then all the Ponaturi are destroyed by the sun light. Tawhaki and Arihi return then to their country, taking their mother and the bones of their father with them. The hero and his brother save their mother in the same way as Tawera and Baby help Te Paania to work through her trauma after her husband and daughter's deaths.

In the novel, Baby describes Tawhaki as the most beautiful man she has ever seen: "He had a face chiseled from dark sea rock, hair as long and as black as a deep, shadowed river alive with eels. His body was as if it had been shaped from the ochre hillside" (191), and complains about having been excluded from the school play. Then Tawera solves the problem by arguing that they can play "Tawhaki Seen" and "Tawhaki Unseen" on the stage; in this way his sister's demand to be also Tawhaki can be easily

⁵² For more information on this, see Orbell 1995.

met. Tawera's smart ploy persuades his sister that invisibility endows her with an advantage position, rather than a weak one, as in Tawhaki's story.

'Tawhaki Unseen,' I said to my sister.

'How come?'

'There are two Tawhakis?'

'That's not what I heard.'

'Two. Seen and Unseen. They have incantations to make themselves invisible and back again to visible.' [...]

'We'll be together,' I said. 'Journeying together, singing together, dancing together, saying the words together. But when it's time for Tawhaki to be unseen, then Tawhaki Visible disappears and the people see Tawhaki Invisible instead.'

She thought about it for a long time, 'That's all right then, she said. (193)

Tawera's anxiety vanishes, because the ghostly presence of Baby, though not made objectively visible, is nevertheless incorporated into his own Māori cultural background. On the one hand, the artistic representation of the Māori mythical figure of Tawhaki makes Tawera feel a very special pride of race. On the other hand, from a psychological point of view it is crucial that the spirit of his sister should be able to partake of these Māori cultural feelings, as this transformative positive experience helps him to confront and oppose colonial abuses. After this successful performance, Tawera feels very proud of his Māori culture: "The next day when I was doing my picture of Tawhaki Seen and Unseen, I painted him as brown as rocks, as dark as rivers [...] gave him wide shoulders, a big chest and the strongest arms and legs that I could do (197). Tawera's perception of the Māori mythical figure of Tawhaki celebrates the Māori mythical past, and prevents the new Māori generations from connecting Māori brown skin with evil and powerlessness, to associate them with bravery, power and goodness instead. Now, the dark protagonist of the story is not a western superhero like

Superman, but a Māori demigod like Māui. Tawera feels comfortable in his Māori environment, and enjoys a sense of cultural identity that is reinforced by Māori collective memories. Gran Kura tells him old stories in the Māori language, and he very much likes listening to them, and interpreting and sharing them with his sister, because they allow him to make sense of his present life:

All right Mum and Gran Kura and all of us, let's tell everything. Tell about ourselves, and about this sister without eyes who's already four years old. I know there's plenty of time but let's get cracking. (20)

Tawera has been taught the mutual obligations for loving, nurturing and caring that are so crucial in the traditional Māori culture. He has had the privilege to enjoy an inclusive education, reinforced by the vital experiences of Te Paania, Gran Kura, Dave and Mahaki. If Tawera passes onto the community all the Māori cultural knowledge that he has apprehended, he will help them experience some kind of cultural awakening. He is also responsible for giving his sister a full life, just as his mother wished: "We had to be a family because it was what our mother wanted. There had to be a family and a childhood" (251).

As Gran Kura approaches death, she believes that she can serenely pass away because she has accomplished her sacred task to voice those long-silenced stories and link all of her Māori family and friends with their *whānau* and *whakapapa*. At this precise moment, she is aware that death and life are not so distinct, because they are part of a complex natural process that means, not separation, but assimilation. She also realizes that it is time Baby left the family because her 'presence' is damaging Tawera's self-development. Even Baby realizes that she should leave Tawera to live his own life: "I was only on loan because Mum needed me, but it was meant to be just for a few years" (251). Baby has fulfilled her important task to dig up and air colonial abuses; that is why she can leave with Gran Kura. After crossing this mystical boundary between the

world of the living and that of the ancestors, Gran Kura and Baby will find a space in which, according to the Māori holistic worldview, they will fuse with the universe. The scene in which Tawera thinks of Baby and Gran Kura as swimmers, wave-steppers and little boats (288), could be understood as a metaphorical baptism. They have been mistreated in a racist world full of prejudices, and now they have to get rid of this contamination in order to be born again and start a new phase on their way to a spiritual world. Once Baby and Gran Kura are gone, Tawera, who has always been surrounded by his family, feels lonely, and the emptiness that he experiences is conceptualized by him as “Spaze” (275). Later on, he becomes an adult and attends university, where he studies history and realizes that Gran Kura and Te Paania’s stories can help him to explore “between the lines of history, seeking out its missing pages” (291) because they are stories that were not included in the official account of history that he is learning in this Pakeha institution. This last part of the novel bears witness to the loneliness that Māori suffer when they want to become part of the contemporary Pakeha social and educational world. “Spaze” becomes an important symbolic concept within the novel, and carries with it different meanings. In the first place, it can be related to the emptiness that Tawera experiences when Baby leaves; it is a void generated by his sister’s absence. In the second place, it can be considered to be the Māori mythological concept of *Te Kore*, which is translated as “the void” or “the nothing.” When Walker explains the creation of the universe according to Māori mythology, he defines “*Te Kore*” as a space that “contained in its vastness the seeds of the universe and was therefore a state of potential” (1990: 11). “*Te Kore*” is, then, a paradoxical idea that represents both the void and the realm of potential being. This vital and spatial paradox is also represented by the egg-shaped space that Tawera identifies in his previous painting, because it signifies, not only emptiness, inactivity and death, but also life’s

potentiality. Initially, Tawera unsuccessfully attempts to fill in the void or space that Baby and Gran Kura left and invades his paintings: “Inner space. It aches inside me, and in the evenings when I go to my room intending to work, all I can do is stare at absence” (292). Tawera’s mind is not ready yet, because he still applies Pakeha cultural parameters to his artistic work. This prevents him from opening up his mind to a Māori holistic world in which the natural elements are not isolated entities, but parts of a whole system. This Māori cosmovision and the beliefs it entails are the elements that Tawera has to remember, because they will help him to rediscover the hidden sensitive part of his own self that disappeared when his sister and Gran Kura left. One night, while he is on the streets he discovers the answer to his dilemma: “Try Opposite” (293). He then realizes that he must confront the impact of colonization on his people and search for his “own tag, own break out, own rule” (293), and begins to regard the universe and the multiplicity of its elements as a whole structure. Tawera understands that, instead of forgetting and replacing the absence of his sister, he must try the opposite, and thus begins to paint keeping the memory of her sister on his mind, making his painting connect with the main Māori concerns. He finally understands the message that he must convey to society so that Pakeha wrongdoings are never forgotten and lost in the Te Kore, the nothing:

But now, instead of trying to shrink the egg of space, I begin to enlarge it. Instead of ending with that little unbreachable gap I begin with it, embrace it, let it be there, make it be there, pushing my drawing further and further to the outskirts. I persist with this, night after night, until one night everything’s gone, fallen from the edges of the paper. Spaze.

Te Kore, the nothing. (293)

Tawera’s epiphany brings about a reformulation of space and its potential. He crosses the boundaries of his own consciousness to establish a connection with the environment

around him, and penetrates another in-between space that is beyond language, beyond culture and the boundaries they generate. In this hybrid space, Tawera, guided by his Māori cultural parameters and free from all the prejudices imposed by the Pakeha society, tries to recover again that innocent and pure part of his self by connecting to his former Māori beliefs. In this spiritual journey towards Māori culture, Tawera establishes a link with his sister in order to emerge as the other of himself in a communion with the universe. He is able to cope with chaos, the indefinable, and his own distress through art and, more specifically, through painting. As Keown claims:

In his moment of enlightenment, Tawera realizes that ‘spaze’ is not, after all, a breach in nature which must be filled. Instead it is an all-encompassing space which embraces the realms of life and death, *terra firma* and the underworld. (2005: 157)

Now, he knows that he has been given the incantations “to make visible who was invisible” (294), and is able to create the portrait of his sister and show the scars of colonization. Through the painting of his sister, Tawera makes visible the unseen abuses that the colonizers committed over decades, and somehow catches a glimpse of eternity with the help of his work. Tawera’s perception of the world has gradually changed; at this precise moment he realizes that his sister is the shamanic figure who has helped him to transcend the realm of “Te Kore” and fully embrace the Māori world. As Wendt claims in his seminal work “Towards a New Oceania” (1976): “Our quest should not be for a revival of our past cultures but for the creation of new cultures which are free of the taint of colonialism and based firmly on our own pasts” (1993: 12).

Baby No-Eyes makes use of the healing potential of the artwork to honour the dead and denounce colonial oppression. In the end, the novel illustrates the Māori spiral conception of time as it comes back to its very origins. In the prologue, Tawera describes himself bumping along inside her mother’s womb as she crosses a road (7). In the epilogue he appears in his room, which is presented as an enclosed space, similar to

Te Paania's womb. In this room, Tawera narrates all the things he has yet to discover and, again, places himself at the beginning of the road:

For now I'll work on this, my first incantation of visibility. It'll be inadequate because there's so much more for me to know, so many signs to follow, so many codes and omens to decipher [...] as I go, bumping along. [...]

Feet at the beginning of a road. (294)

This last sentence implies that, even though many colonial injustices and abuses have been aired and denounced, Tawera is only at the beginning of the road, because there are still many more battles to fight. Yet, Tawera, unlike Shane, possesses the knowledge and perspective of his Māori culture and knows their stories, which will help him to confront old and new challenges. The novel does not offer a tidy and happy ending, but leaves a trace of hope, because it clearly shows the potential that the Māori have to articulate their own powerful historical discourse.

Māori Language and Activism as Sites of Resistance

I know that it is not the English language that hurts me, but what the oppressors do with it, how they shape it to become a territory that limits and defines, how they make it a weapon that can shame, humiliate, colonize.

bell hooks "This is the oppressor's languages yet I need it to talk to you."

Language is not only the means that human beings use in order to mediate between themselves and the rest of people, but is also the signifier that all of them have to interpret so as to give meaning to the world that surrounds them. As Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine assert, "Language death is symptomatic of cultural death: a way of life disappears with the death of language. The fortunes of languages are bound up with those of its speakers" (2000: 7). As has already been argued, the loss of Māori language

resulted in the gradual dissolution of Māori culture and a serious identity crisis. Several decades ago, the Māori Renaissance emerged in order to counter this situation, dignify Māori culture and offer art as an instrument to put an end to the fragmentation of Māori identity. The people involved in this movement understood that language was quintessential in this process, and started some initiatives to recover the loss influence. To give an example, although many times the Māori writers involved in this artistic movement used English language in their works, they adapted it to their Māori cosmovision by including Māori expressions and speech patterns. Thus, these Māori authors, not only wrote back against the imposed dominant colonial culture, but also back to their own Māori roots.

It would also be interesting to take into account the revision that Stuart Hall (1997) made of Foucault's idea of discourses as systems of representation. It is important to remark that concepts such as national identity and culture are always constructed by the institutions which are holding power. As a matter of fact, power often 'generates' knowledge by means of referential discourses about politics, society and the economy. As Hall (1997: 44) goes on to argue, since discourse is mainly about the production of knowledge through language, the coexistence of multiple languages in the colonies brought about many multicultural confrontations. The analysis that he carries out in "The Work of Representation" defends the social character of language because "Things don't mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems—concepts and signs" (1997: 25). In this work, Hall mainly revises Michel Foucault's theory of the production of knowledge through what he called "discourse." As he sees it, Foucault introduces power in this equation so as to explain how institutional apparatuses use discourse and knowledge in order to coerce people. He affirms that "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge

that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations” (1977: 27). Accordingly, power produces new discourses, such as assimilation policies, which undoubtedly make a negative social, economic and political impact on the rights of indigenous peoples all over the world. Thus, hegemonic Pakeha institutions have tried to impose themselves in the name of a cultural supremacy constructed by colonial power/knowledge. They force the indigenous population to identify with colonial official culture and society and to reject their former cultural systems. The past in colonial countries was, as Fanon once and again explains, a very hard time of cultural erosion and imposed silence. The following excerpt by Fanon might be used to explain the behaviour of Gran Kura’s generation, and could even address the following Māori generations:

In underdeveloped countries the preceding generations have both resisted the work or erosion carried by colonialism and also helped on the maturing of the struggles of today. We must rid ourselves of the habit, now that we are in the thick of the fight, of minimizing the action of our fathers or of feigning incomprehension when considering their silence and passivity. They fought as well as they could, with the arms that they possessed then; and if the echoes of their struggle have not resounded in the international arena, we must realize that the reason for this silence lies less in their lack of heroism than in the fundamentally different international situation of our time. It needed more than one native to say “We’ve had enough”; more than one peasant rising crushed, more than one demonstration put down before we could today hold our own, certain in our victory. (1963: 206-207)

The novel shows how the official ideology of assimilation was imposed on Māori people in the twentieth century. To make matters worse, the supremacy of colonial discourse also relegated the Māori language—*te reo Māori*—to oblivion, as this was regarded as inferior and thus unable to transmit the superior cultural knowledge that was

imparted in colonial schools. As has been shown, this educational policy had a devastating impact on the community, because many Māori internalized the negative images of themselves that colonial language was enforcing. The following excerpt from *Baby No-Eyes* explicitly testifies to the way in which the Māori community was traumatized by a colonial discourse that utterly despised their own language. Gran Kura went as far as to believe that the Māori language was essentially wrong and hideous:

We didn't speak until we'd learned, didn't speak unless we had to because we were afraid our bad language might come out, but we became good at guessing the answers we had to give. (33)

As a child, Gran Kura feels so alienated that she even believes that it is the Māori language that killed her little cousin. Consequently, Gran Kura loses her Māori voice and finds it impossible to talk about her cousin's death for years. It is clear that her trauma partly originates in her realization that *te reo Māori*, one of the most defining elements of Māori culture and identity, has been so drastically despised and silenced. After the deaths of Shane and Baby, she understands that she must do something in order to get rid of her traumatic burden. She therefore decides to share the ancient traditional Māori stories with her community, to teach the Māori language to Māori children at school, and collaborate with the Māori activist movement. She turns towards her Māori cultural and spiritual principles in an effort to reconcile herself with her ancestors and be thus allowed into the mystical realm that, according to Māori beliefs, the members of this community enjoy after death:

It's only now I know what I should do because Riripeti died, or because of Shane and Baby. It's only now I can rid myself of this sickness, so that in the end I can have a healthy death. It'll come to you, you'll see. (148)

However, it should also be noted that all linguistic systems are constantly exposed to alterations and subversion, which means that language can also be sometimes used as a weapon against the establishment. As Robert Stam (1989: 77) asserts, although languages do not exist in hierarchies of value as abstract entities, they do operate within hierarchies of power as living entities. Fortunately, languages can serve, not only to oppress and alienate, but also to liberate. At this point, it would be interesting to mention *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare, since this is a play that deals with power and the importance of controlling it. Many similarities can be found between Prospero and Pakeha in Aotearoa/New Zealand, because they all hold power and try to impose their own version of facts as the only real and acceptable truth. The other side in this binary system would be that occupied by Caliban and Māori, because they are all lower class characters oppressed by the ruling power and represented as the dark side of their abusers. Just as Caliban lived on the island before Prospero and Miranda arrived, the land that Māori people are fighting for was inhabited by their ancestors long before the British took it by force. Since the official discourse claims that those who are different are dangerous and abnormal, the difference encapsulated by indigenous people is inexorably depicted as negative. Accordingly, all the negative elements that power represses and refuses to see in itself are systematically projected upon the 'other.' In *The Tempest*, Prospero acknowledges that Caliban is also part of himself: "Two of these fellows you/Must know and own; this thing of darkness, I/Acknowledge mine" (5. I. 272-274), but this does not prevent him from regarding Caliban as his inferior. In Grace's novel, the Pakeha institutional apparatus acts in the same way as Prospero in Shakespeare's play: they despise Baby as an indigenous person from an inferior race, just as Prospero abhors Caliban's monstrosity. Another connection between Caliban and Māori is that they all rebel against power's appropriation of language.

In her seminal work *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), Gloria Anzaldúa explains that languages play an important role in the dissemination of official ideas about the subaltern, but can also be used by the latter as a powerful weapon to subvert and undermine institutional discourses from within. Anzaldúa thinks that one of the main aims of dominant discourse is to tame ‘wild tongues’: she remembers with sadness how she was sent to the corner of the classroom for ‘talking back’ to her Anglo teacher when she was trying to tell him how to pronounce her name correctly, and the answer she got from him:

If you want to be American, speak ‘American.’ If you don’t like it, go back to Mexico where you belong.

I want you to speak English. Pa’hallar buen trabajo tienes que saber hablar el inglés bien. Qué vale toda tu educación si todavía hablas inglés con ‘accent’. (1987: 75-76)

This scene automatically brings to mind the humiliation that Riripeti suffered, and the patronizing reply that Te Paania is also given:

‘Please, there are some of us who’d like to do typing,’ I said to the teacher who was taking our names.

‘You are out of luck,’ she said.

We don’t want to do cooking, we can cook already.’

She didn’t look up from the list that she was marking, didn’t emphasize the word ‘proper’ when she spoke. ‘You’ll learn proper cooking, Paania,’ she said. ‘You’ll learn to cook proper food.’ [...]

We knew we’d have been attacked but were not equipped to fight the outstretched arm or the insinuations about not being proper. I didn’t know then that a curse was a matter of potent ill-wishing, and that if we were not to die from it we needed to turn speakings back on those who spoke them in order to make them void. (89)

At this precise moment Te Paania still lacks the appropriate tools to reply to her teacher but, with the passing of time, she will manage to rebel against Pakeha neocolonial hegemony just as Caliban dared to use Prospero's language to rebel against his power.

You taught me language, and my profit on't

Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you

For learning me your language! (I. 2. 363-365)

As a result of language politics during the British colonization of New Zealand, several generations of Māori were bereft of their language and culture, in a word, were deprived of their own identity.

In the 1970s there was increasing concern over the loss of Māori traditional values and cultural practices, mainly due to the decreasing numbers of Māori speaking *te reo Māori* as a first language. It was during this decade that Māori decided to set up schools offering courses on Māori language and culture as a way to make up for their loss. This process of introducing Māori education on the schools agenda became so popular that the pre-school language immersion program "Te Kōhanga reo" was no longer enough. The novel under analysis also points to this phenomenon: the parents of Māori children are not satisfied with their primary schools because "when their Kōhanga kids turn five they leave their Māori language behind. They go into a school that's resisting the setting up of an immersion class, or bilingual" (146). Some schools, like Tawera's, try to incorporate Māori language and culture into their curricula in order to teach the cultural beliefs and practices of the Māori community to their children: "We're keen to have a whānau class, whether it be total immersion or bilingual" (146). *Baby No-Eyes* clearly advocates the linguistic emancipation of the Māori community in the context of language politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As was argued before, Gran

Kura's rejection of the colonizers' language after Baby's incident helps her to regain her lost identity, both as an individual and as member of the Māori community. Later on, Gran Kura will be hired by the primary school that Tawera attends because they desperately need speakers of Māori to help with Māori teaching. Significantly enough, the word "kura" means "school," "education," and "to teach" in Māori, and brings to mind the name of some state schools (Kura Kaupapa Māori) established in the mid-1980s with a view to encouraging *whānau*-based Māori principles and imparting the curriculum in *te reo Māori*. These schools were originally defrayed by parents, until they finally received government recognition and funding in the 1989 Education Act. It is worth bearing in mind that, at that time, New Zealand was one of the world's most monolingual nations. According to Alan Bell and Janet Holmes: "English is the first language of 95 per cent of the 3.4 million population – and the only language of 90 per cent, most of whom are of British descent" (1991:153).

Baby No-Eyes makes use of standard English, Māori, and a variety of English inflected and altered by the Māori language that testifies to their linguistic struggle against colonial power. For instance, at some point in the novel, even though Gran Kura apparently tells her stories in English, she is nonetheless speaking in Māori; English grammar and vocabulary are openly distorted to accommodate Māori beliefs and expressions. In an interview with Liz DeLoughrey and Susan Hall, Grace explains this unusual narrative technique as follows:

One thing that interested me to do was to write the grandmother's stories in English, when really she was speaking Māori all the time. I would usually have someone like her speaking her kind of English: this time I have had to find a way of representing Māori language in English. I decided to use a balance between a reasonably standard kind of English, and an idiomatic English. I thought that this was the kind of Māori that she

would speak – standard/idiomatic. I have tried not to use Māori words because she is speaking Māori all the time. It’s been interesting to do. (1999: 13)

Although readers have access to Gran Kura’s stories in English, these stories do not lose any strength for this, nor does this prevent Gran Kura from recovering her Māori voice. As can be read in the seminal book *The Empire Writes Back*, she is undermining colonial language from within:

The crucial function of language as a medium of power demands that post-colonial writing defines itself seizing the language of the centre and re-placing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place. (Ashcroft et al. 2002: 37)

This subversion can be accomplished, among other things, by rejecting the normative standards of the colonial language, be they related to grammar, syntax, or pronunciation. The appropriation of the colonizers’ language allows the colonized to use it as a means to meet their own cultural and political ends. This kind of Māori-English, which is a non-official language, therefore encapsulates Māori collective cultural awakening. Grace’s novel explores the different elements used by the Māori to resist Pakeha cultural and political hegemony, one of which is, without doubt, language. Some characters have Māori as their first language, and their English is clearly ‘contaminated’ by Māori syntactic and grammatical structures. An example of it can be found in Mahaki’s grandfather’s words: “Us kids all know you don’t go there. You go there it’s trouble. But how can we go there anyway? No pathway and big swampland all around, and it’s far. Far to us childrens” (151). The use of linguistic strategies in the novel, such as the double articulation of *te reo Māori* and the interweaving of oral and writing modes of expression, invites readers to become aware of the different perspectives that exist in Aotearoa/New Zealand. For instance, when Mahaki’s grandfather expresses his concern about the possible desecration of his ancestral burial site at Anapuke, he uses

his own Māori words to explain the way in which the Māori population fears that some parts of their ancestors' bodies should be desecrated and reduced to dust: "...take spirit from blood, cut our dust, murder our dust because a wheua, a toto, a hupe, a makawe is all..." (186).

Baby No-Eyes introduces four narrators to describe the plight of the Māori community from the time of settlement until the present day. Gran Kura, Te Paania, Mahaki and Tawera explore the dialectical relationship between politics in society and spirituality in the *whānau* within a spiral pattern which interconnects all sorts of events so as to bring to light the multiple abuses that the Māori community has suffered in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Grace's novel speaks in favour of the *whānau*, *te reo Māori* and the oral tradition as quintessential instruments to articulate Māori identity right from the prologue. In this, Te Paania underlines that "children need a great chance in life – need a family, stories and languages" (11), thus making it clear that all of them, without exception, need to learn how to approach and love their own culture. This vital need is brought to the surface in the novel, as when Tawera asks Te Paania to tell the story of his little sister without eyes, and Te Paania answers that, if the members of their *whānau*, Tawera included, are going to tell this story, they must all give their own particular version, which might take them years (19). Tawera eagerly agrees to that collective narration, and then, the different narrators start to give their own version of Baby's incident. This is a wonderful example of how Māori people share their stories: building up a network that in turn becomes the performative collective discourse which can alone allow for the preservation of Māori traditions. Each narrator must make an effort to tell his/her own story to the rest, and no story should be understood in isolation, as they are all interrelated. As was the case in *Cousins*, this novel also presents multiple

narrations that offer interesting insights into the native perspective and the Māori oral tradition. As Te Paania claims:

There's a way the older people have of telling a story, a way where the beginning is not the beginning, the end is not the end. It starts from a centre and moves away from there in such widening circles that you don't know how you will finally arrive at the point of understanding, which becomes itself another core, a new centre. (28)

The power of the oral tradition lies in the fact that it is a communal activity, in which each member offers a different but interconnected vision of events. Māori oral tradition greatly differs from the western concept of history because, according to Māori cosmogony, it is very difficult that a single version of historical facts should contain the whole and unique truth.

Gran Kura's retrieval of the oral tradition helps the Māori community to make connections between past and present, and to better interpret the future. She becomes both the story teller and the healer of the family and the community, the two central institutions that articulate the meanings and mores of traditional Māori knowledge and language, around which the Māori identity is built up. Thanks to Gran Kura's stories of their ancestors, Māori beliefs and traditions are brought back to people's life, and therefore become an important stimulus for the members of the community, because they and their families can easily identify with these stories. The novel seeks social change through the recovery of the Māori oral tradition; telling plausible stories of Māori who bear a terrible fate but nonetheless dare to fight against colonial injustices makes Māori readers and listeners aware of colonial wrongdoings against their people in the past, and provides them with the encouragement they need to fight for a better future, for them and the following Māori generations. As Najita asserts, "orality provides a language to articulate a new mode of belonging based upon genealogy that

leads out of and beyond the traumatic past” (2006, 23). The oral tradition is, for Māori, their best way to connect past, present and future, to approach their ancestors and their sacred power, and to restore harmony and health in their community. As is stated in the *Report of The Waitangi Tribunal on The Te Reo Māori Claim*:

Māori oral literature abounds with expressions of the regard for their language by the Māori people, eg, ‘ko te reo te mauri o te mana Māori’ (The language is the heart and soul of the mana of Māoridom). This language as a separate but integral part of Māoritanga is significant—it is not reflected to the same degree in pakeha culture. Language, te reo Māori, is an asset in itself not merely a medium of communication. [...] It is sufficient for me to say that it is inconceivable that Māori people can retain any measure of (their) identity without the language. (1993: 43)

Baby No-Eyes insists on the idea that Māori can only overcome their trauma, shame and guilt through the recovery of their culture, as Gran Kura’s evolution proves. This is something that early trauma theory did not take into consideration, a conviction that contemporary trauma and postcolonial theory praxis should undoubtedly incorporate and keep in mind when dealing with indigenous traumas.

Māori mythical and historical stories inexorably merge and are imbued with a spirituality that helps to undergo the mid-mourning process fostered by Derrida, which alone allows, not only individuals, but also the whole community, to leave behind their fears and rage and start a new life, stronger than before. As regards the idiosyncratic cosmivision of indigenous peoples, Tuhiwai Smith asserts that “the values, attitudes, concepts, and language embedded in beliefs about spirituality represent, in many cases, the clearest contrast and mark of difference between indigenous peoples and the West” (1999: 74). When it comes to decolonizing western trauma theory, all the elements mentioned by Smith are important, above all spirituality, as it is the most crucial

element for the healing of indigenous trauma and insidious colonial traumas in general. An instance of the importance of spirituality in Māori rituals can be seen in the speech that Gran Kura delivers at Baby's burial. In it she introduces the Māori concept of *mana* which, among other things, refers to the spiritual sacred power received from the ancestors. This *mana*, together with the Māori *aroha*, will allow Te Paania to bring her baby back to life in a Māori ceremony. Te Paania's trauma after the mutilation of her baby materializes in the ritual of Baby's burial, in particular in the intense pain she feels, as if a blazing stone entered her body, burning her:

I was accustomed to pain, which at one stage had been my friend. Over the eight weeks that I'd been in hospital I'd not been completely free of it, but as I listened a new pain began to grow in me that was not like anything I'd felt before. It began in my head and was like a hot stone which moved down through the bones of my face, hollowing and searing them. As Gran Kura continued speaking, the burning stone dropped lodging at first in the upper part of my body until I thought my heart would burst. It dropped again, taking my heart to my stomach, where it broke and opened, reaching to every part of me. (71–72)

Once this ritual is over, Te Paania manages to work through her trauma by giving a new life to her beloved Baby: "I was breaking and opening and there was a cry that shouted through bone. After Gran's voice had stopped, after the pain had gone, I knew that my cast-out and plundered baby had been born to me" (72). The whole family believes that Baby deserves a life, which testifies to the Māori communal and spiritual belief system. For Pistacchi, the character of Baby functions as a metaphor of the many Māori battles that the Māori must still fight in the society of Aotearoa:

The battle for the rights inherent in the Treaty of Waitangi to be recognized by medical health practitioners, the battle for the Māori people's voices to be heard and recognized

in the public spaces of New Zealand, the battle for ancestral lands to be returned [...] to keep bio-pirates from plundering the genes of the ancient ancestors, and, most importantly, the battle to have Māori stories, told in their own words, become a recognized and respected part of the reality depicted in Aotearoa. (2003: 115)

This chapter suggests that *Baby's* resurrection has the potential, not only to represent colonial abuses, but also to give the Māori community the strength they need to recover their lost stories, which encapsulate their cultural knowledge, pride of race, and fight for self-determination.

Grace's novel manages to prove that trauma results, not only from a single overwhelming event, but also from the cumulative effects of 'minor' acts of social oppression and dispossession over long periods of time. *Baby No-Eyes* encourages the Māori community to shake off the inferiority complexes that they internalized during the colonization process. Furthermore, it argues that the decolonization of colonial hegemonic structures can only be achieved by questioning and undermining all colonial structures, be they political, economic or social. Grace's novel gives voice to the Māori population through Māori speech, which becomes a creative site of resistance, where the oppressed can express their disagreement with the social and political situation and talk back to the dominant culture. To quote bell hooks' words:

Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side, a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life, and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of "talking back" that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject – the liberated voice. (2015: 9)

The racist power discourse enforced by the Pakeha colonial regime was utterly paradoxical, though: whereas they in theory upheld bicultural policies to avoid abuses

against indigenous peoples, they nonetheless clearly subjugated them by their discursive exercise of power, which made Māori feel and regard themselves as ‘the others.’ The colonial expansion was presented as a struggle between civilization and barbarity, in which non-whites were an obstacle to the advance of civilization. Other measures, such as the implementation of native policy and the creation of institutions like the Native Affairs Department, also helped the colonial power to perpetuate itself. The government of New Zealand did not doubt to claim that more and more indigenous land was to be appropriated in order to provide the white people who wanted to settle there with work and stability. According to the discourse/knowledge of these institutional apparatuses, New Zealand had been created as a necessary means, firstly, to provide white settlers with security, protection, and a national identity and, secondly, to ensure the control of the land in white hands. No fair compensation was ever given to the Māori, which clearly contravened article 28 in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which reads as follows:

Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.

This denial of fundamental rights also led the Māori to internalize colonial notions about race and criminality. As is shown in the novel, the Māori people involved in the occupation of a public place called Te Ra Park think that they can be arrested at any moment because, being indigenous, they have neither rights nor legitimacy to organize any protest action in their own country. They have not committed any crime, but know they will be viewed as criminals by their nationals. Fear is yet another life-denying

consequence of the racist ideology that preaches the rejection of the ‘other.’ In the novel, the clearest demonstration of power is given by the governmental institutions, ultimate embodiment of law and order. No wonder at one point in the novel Māori conclude that, if they want to recover their sacred land, they must create their own discourse and send their message across; that is why they occupy a public park as a way to catch public attention.

Through the stories told by the elders of the Māori community, Te Paania and Mahaki’s generation can finally and fully understand the history of violence and oppression committed by the Pakeha majority against the powerless indigenous community. Their answer to their elders’ psychological traumas and fears, their dispossession of the sacred land of Anapuke and the desecration of Baby’s body can only be anger and frustration. All Māori in the community share the same frustration and pain, which ultimately pushes them to react against the Pakeha authorities that are ruthlessly depriving them of their land. When Mahaki builds the case for the return of the Anapuke, the court tries to hamper the Māori request: the Council demands that they should hold records showing how and when this property was purchased, even the certificate of title (155). However, curiously enough, a council employee claims that “although we have found no record of payment being made, we can assure you that it was policy at that time for people to be paid for their land” (153). Paradoxically, it is Māori people, the truly original inhabitants of the land, who must show proof of their ownership, even though one of the Council employees admits the government’s past injustices:

Now we’re not here to debate the pros and cons of the Māori Affairs Act that at that time made it compulsory for land not in use to be sold to the Crown. We’re not here to discuss the Public Works Act that made land available to the Crown for railways or

roads or defence or community good. Past injustices, or otherwise, are not our concern at the present time. (153)

In view of this claim, it is no wonder that Pakeha institutions should not respect Māori spiritual beliefs and what sacred land means for them. Mahaki wonders if the elders really believe that they can get this land back or, having given up this idea long before, they only want the court and the whole world to know their dispossession stories (263). If 'equality before the law' is one of the basis of a democratic state and the main regularizing principle of modern societies, then hegemonic structures of power in democratic societies only reveal that democracy is, more often than not, a mere excuse/screen to control marginal cultural groups with an appearance of justice. Nevertheless, these marginal groups can react and challenge those hegemonic structures by mobilizing their own communities and airing their stories to the press. This is what happens in *Baby No-Eyes*, when a large number of Māori occupy Te Ra Park, which is in the middle of town, in protest against the Town Council's refusal to give them back the hill of Anapuke. Collective political action is rendered necessary to decolonize this extremely unfair society.

As was argued before, the Māori characters in the novel are engaged in a harsh personal and political process to recover their Māori cultural rights. They try to recover their cultural matrix so that they can build up a stronger cultural identity. As a lawyer, Mahaki represents the highly educated minority who can use their knowledge to work at the service of Māori people in their attempt to recover land and cultural rights. His grandfather also happens to be one of the main promoters of the Anapuke movement. Mahaki's grandfather is a teller of Māori past stories, and Mahaki will be the person in charge of connecting his grandfather's Māori ancestral past with their contemporary struggle to recover Māori land in court. Mahaki could thus be considered to be a modern warrior who uses both Māori and Pakeha weapons to fight for Māori people and

their rights. As an intellectually and politically committed character, he occupies a hybrid space and uses any tool at his disposal. This younger Māori generation consequently offers alternative ways to undermine the colonial racist system from within. It is Mahaki who reflects about colonial oppression from political and philosophical perspectives. For instance, he describes the incident in the hospital as yet another everyday racist event that contributes to the consolidation of the aforementioned insidious trauma. As Mahaki is mourning Baby's death, he receives a lot of information about bio-piracy (body parts, genes, buying and selling and theft), which even includes the story of his disfigured Baby, but he is not able to bring himself to read it (121). Mahaki is depicted as quite a sensible and understanding person, who is well aware of Pakeha misdeeds and the cross cultural mismatch between members of both communities, because each of them has a different cosmovision and therefore sees things from a different perspective. The removal of Baby's eyes only corroborates that nothing has changed in this racist society, in which Māori are still regarded as disposable second-class citizens:

It was as if he, Kura, Niecy and Darcy were a bunch of oddities, waiting for a thing to take home and bury, for no good reason. It was as though they were not quite people, and therefore their lives didn't matter, as if they were not capable of suffering, had no right to suffer, no cause to feel distressed.

There was human error that was part of being human, but there were attitudes that he could only think of as being less than human.

And there you were – each group seeing the other as having something missing from being human. The trouble was that it was the little people who bore the brunt of that. To come from a background of being white, Christian and so-called 'civilized,' was to be right; was to have the power of law and state and wealth, a certain way of thinking and feeling on your side. (122)

This racist colonial attitude is brought to the surface time after time in Grace's novel. When Mahaki is tape-recording his grandfather's stories, he gets to know about the illegal expropriation by the government of Māori ancestral land and the unsuccessful efforts of some Māori elders to recover that sacred place. He then asks Te Paania to help him to gather more testimonies from other Māori elders, including Gran Kura. In the process of transcribing tapes from a meeting between the Town Council and Mahaki's people over the issue of Anapuke, Te Paania "began to understand what Mahaki meant when he said it was all becoming one—the old stories, the new stories, Anapuke and the eyes" (149). Te Paania finally understands that living in a Pakeha environment, which makes a virtue of attacking Māori land and traditions, will inevitably make all of them unhappy. Te Paania might be compared with the character of Makareta in *Cousins*, as both of them are strong women who decide to live their lives by their own principles and without accepting impositions of any kind. Both of them are involved in Māori social movements that strive to decolonize the unfair social structures still controlled by the descendants of the former colonizers. Te Paania understands what Māori elders are trying to do: they know that Māori identity will never be the same; that is why they desperately want to revisit narratives about the Māori past, because they alone can provide their difficult present life and situation with some meaning and, even more important, can throw some light on their future. Mahaki tries to sound partly optimistic when he points out that, at least, a group of Māori have been able to get together in order to recover Anapuke, which has strengthened Māori traditional bonds: "people were happy, enjoyed being together. Talk was what they wanted, which he noticed always came down to two things—*whakapapa* and *whenua*. Who, related to whom, from where. This, in turn, became, who am I and where do I fit in" (213). This movement of protest is their opportunity to build up a Māori collective identity around

their pride of race, and is crucial in their fight to redress their numerous grievances, above all their deeply rooted insidious trauma. This is how Mahaki explains what this movement was aiming at:

They'd tried to get it across that it was laws, not people, that were the enemy, that it was justice at stake; or that it was fear inside people that was the enemy, not the people themselves. Getting land entitlement to unwanted land was all they were asking for, and that couldn't hurt anyone. (214)

Although the government is not particularly interested in keeping this piece of land, they are afraid that, if they recognize the ownership of Māori people over it, this might amount to admitting all their past wrongdoings and committing themselves to gradually returning all the possessions grabbed from Māori hands. Mahaki knows that their judicial claim will not get their land back, but insists that the most important thing is what is going on outside and around the court (264). What they need is public support so that everybody acknowledges the sacred meaning that this area has for the Māori community. The judge eventually admits that it is injustice and “less than honest dealing” that have led to disinheritance (265), and states that the Treaty principles have been clearly violated by the government. As a result, the hill of Anapuke should be returned to the Māori, not only to put an end to the pressure that media coverage was putting on the Council, but over and above everything because there is written historical evidence that Māori do not want any payment but the return of their land (266). It must be noted that this Māori little victory is finally achieved within a legal system controlled by Pakeha, which is crucial to reinforce Māori cultural identity and self-confidence; now they realize how important it is to fight for a land to which they are so emotionally attached.

Baby No-Eyes illustrates the current political dynamics of a multicultural world in which western culture is no longer the one and only model to follow. As this story shows, resilience and political commitment are the only means to win important social and political battles. When the members of this Māori family get involved in the activist Māori movements, they become aware that the personal is political, and that they must struggle for their rights, not only as individuals, but as a whole community. Moreover, they realize that their fight must necessarily enter the public arena so that they can acquire the visibility they need to become stronger and thus able to counter Pakeha hegemony.

To conclude, this chapter has studied Māori transgenerational trauma and how it has affected the whole Māori community. In order to counter the cultural disintegration that Māori have suffered for generations, remembering their old mythical stories is of the utmost importance in order to create a bond on which they can focus their struggle against the hegemonic Pakeha system. This chapter has also pointed out that members of the Māori old generations often refused to react against colonial abuses because they thought that submission would somehow protect their families. *Gran Kura* is an example, not only of how the Māori community internalized the negative images that the colonial discourse projected upon them, but also of how they unconsciously contributed to the perpetuation of this oppressive system. Māori trauma therefore originated, not only in the abusive treatment that they received, but also in the guilt and shame resulting from their own submissiveness. The main aim of the power/knowledge discourse of the Pakeha government was to make Māori believe that their race and culture were synonym of 'evil' and 'badness,' and that assimilation was their one and only option. The trauma resulting from the internalization of these ideas inevitably brought about low self-esteem and countless identity problems. To illustrate this, the

novel introduces the metaphor of the core to show how Māori wildness has been wrapped up with bandages of ‘goodness’ that mask the terror, guilt and shame undergone during colonization. The outcome of all these injustices is an insidious trauma that blocks Māori minds and develops ‘cultural blindness’ as a strategy for survival.

Derrida’s notion of ‘mid-mourning’ has also been utterly useful in this analysis, as it insists on the need not to forget the ghosts of the past, Māori ancestors in this case, because this is vital to vindicate past injustices and pave the path for a better future. Memory politics are therefore of extreme importance to restore people’s pride and provide them with resilience based on tradition and spirituality. Derrida’s mid-mourning theory puts the emphasis on the conception of society as social fabric, thus minimizing the western defence of individualism as the main tool to build up a better world. Moreover, this critic introduces the figure of the ‘scholar of the future’ as an intellectual whose fundamental goal is justice and learning from the ghosts of the past. *Baby No-Eyes* points to Derrida’s principle of responsibility as the catalyzer that can encourage Māori people to fight for the redress of their grievances. In the novel under analysis, it is Tawera who becomes both Derrida’s ‘scholar of the future’ and Fanon’s ‘native intellectual’: although he has also inherited the intergenerational trauma of colonization, he is able to work it through in order to give voice to Māori collective memory and fill in the historical gaps that the Pakeha version of history has intentionally concealed. Last but not least, *Baby No-Eyes* presents Māori culture, and more specifically Māori art, as part of the cultural and spiritual process that allows Māori people to cope with their distress, as it gives voice to the Māori version of historical facts, for so long suppressed and relegated to silence. In other words, Māori art, of which this novel is but an

example, can show the dark side of the colonial process, and make visible the scars that colonization has left on the Māori population.

When analyzing *Baby No-Eyes*, this chapter has also focused on the activities that the Human Genome Diversity Project has carried out in indigenous populations. As the removal of Baby's eyes clearly denounces, the main objective of this project is no other than mapping the DNA of remote indigenous communities with the intention of owning and patenting their cells. Māori openly question this project as they regard their bodies, hair and blood as sacred elements, and consider this scientific research to be a violation of their cultural principles. Grace's novel harshly criticizes western genetic research as long as it sees indigenous peoples as mere objects, thus making it clear that this new science poses numerous challenges with regard to ethical practices. Indigenous institutions, such as the Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism (IPCB), are nowadays trying to regulate bioethical protocols to make sure they can have some control over their genetic material, and to set up an independent agency that controls, not only the research activity, but also the ownership of the patents.

The analysis carried out in this chapter also sheds light on the broader topic of identity in postcolonial societies by highlighting the ongoing power of governmental institutions to perpetuate their supremacy over indigenous populations. Foucault's ideas about the intricate connection between language, power and truth are crucial when discussing issues such as national cultures and identities, as it is undeniable that colonial governments produced knowledge in the colonies through discourse in order to control people. An illustration of this was the abolishment of *te reo Māori* as primitive and barbaric, and the subsequent imposition of English as the only tool capable of articulating modern progress and civilization. The English language was therefore concomitant with power and knowledge, and helped the colonial elite to construct an

artificial white national identity that took absolute control of the land. Discourses of discipline and punishment permeated society with fear of difference, in other words, fear of the racial 'other,' which could only generate violence, as the treatment that Māori suffered at schools, hospitals and courts clearly demonstrates.

Languages have also been regarded as powerful weapons, both to oppress and alienate and to liberate: as they are living entities, always open to historical and political changes, they can have the power to subvert and counter institutional discourses, just as the revival of *te reo Māori* is doing in the contemporary New Zealand public political arena. Grace's novel offers the story of Riripeti as an example of how linguistic racism can kill. Moreover, the vital implications that *te reo Māori* and the oral tradition have for the tackling of Māori trauma must also be taken into consideration, as potential healing and self-development is, more often than not, closely linked to cultural respect and recognition. Colonial cultural and linguistic hegemony can be disrupted and challenged by Māori ancient narratives and linguistic patterns. Māori stories, together with resilience, are crucial to raise the younger generations' awareness of the strong links between genealogy and land, to encourage them to participate in the political struggle in Aotearoa, and to accomplish the community's difficult, but not impossible, process of healing. Since early trauma theory did not take into account the importance of cultural elements, such as the oral tradition among indigenous communities, I would conclude, in tune with many postcolonial critics, that these fundamental native elements should be included in trauma studies so that the specificity of indigenous trauma is fully recognized, and the idiosyncratic tools their communities can use to work it through can be wholly integrated and valued. Taking *Gran Kura* as an example, it could be also affirmed that the oral tradition can work the miracle of mending broken hearts and eventually bringing the pieces of fragmented selves together. On the other hand, the

crimes committed by the colonizers and their descendants must also be told so that they are never forgotten.

Another impression that this novel seems to make is that Pakeha in New Zealand can still commit crimes and abuses like those described in it with almost total impunity, because the legal system is very often on their side. Many descendants of the former colonizers still seem to consider indigenous people as an inferior race who does not deserve the same rights that they themselves enjoy. To counter this, the Māori characters in the novel come to realize that, after a whole life of subjugation, the time to rebel against this and to start activist movements that vindicate their dignity and culture and try to get rid of any trace of previous inferiority complexes has definitely come. Although there are still many injustices and abuses to fight against, this battle must be fought with the help of the community's strength and spirituality, which will alone pave the path for a fairer and more egalitarian society. Different interpretations of Baby's resurrection might be given but, as I see it, the recovery of Baby's life and vision through the eyes of her *whānau* is a beautiful metaphor of the Māori community's potential for recovering their eyes/I's, that is, their cultural legacy, their pride of race, their dignity, and their sovereignty.

CHAPTER 4

TRAUMATIC LACK OF RECOGNITION, POSTWAR ANNIHILATION AND THE THERAPEUTIC EFFECT OF NARRATIVE IN PATRICIA GRACE'S *TU*

Māori Struggle for Recognition in the Fringe of the Empire

Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose his existence on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, that other will remain the theme of his actions. It is on that other being, on recognition by that other being, that his own human worth and reality depend. It is that other being in whom the meaning of his life is condensed.

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*.

The German philosopher Hegel is often regarded as the founding father of history. He made a comparison between fully human people and 'Others,' whom he regarded as non-human. According to his patriarchal concept of history, only the former, that is, human subjects, can create their own 'history.' Such a perspective in turn implies the racialization of the human subject by introducing dichotomies such as 'us' vs. 'them' or the 'other,' and determines a well-established social order. At the bottom of these western patriarchal societies were the black, the oriental, and the indigenous. Although this social category of 'the other' was not at all new in western history, new systems of classification were soon to be implemented within the ever-increasing imperialistic regime of truth, clearly supported by the sciences in the eighteenth century. The European Enlightenment project involved new conceptions of society based on the precepts of rationalism, individualism and capitalism. From that time onwards, those who created the historical account were upper-class/ruling white western men, that is, the only ones who were considered to be fully rational and therefore human. In this

way, they fortified the basis of the modern states by generating their own “History,” which was nothing but the discourse that supported the new social *status quo*.

Hegel further elaborated on the concept of self-consciousness that previous idealist philosophers had discussed. He asserted that, just as people’s consciousness of objects implies some awareness of the self as subject, humans can also perceive other subjects as objects. This idea, if extrapolated to the colonial sphere, may mean that the colonizer becomes aware of himself as an individual by seeing himself through the eyes of the colonized. Hegel speaks of the ‘struggle for recognition’ implied in self-consciousness: the self is established through the struggle for recognition and certainty, which entails recognition from others. He refers, on the one hand, to the moment in which the self and the other are confronted and, on the other, to the moment in which one is conscious of the difference (otherness) between him/her and the others. Hegel exemplifies this theory with the relationship between servant and lord, which has in turn been translated as the Master/Slave paradigm. He explains that the servant is dependent on the lord and is aware that the lord sees him as an object rather than as a subject.

The struggle for recognition between lord and servant inspired Marx’s account of how class struggle naturally arises from the exploitation of one social class by another. In short, Hegel argues that people usually perceive themselves through the image that others project of them. Regarding the colonial environment, the colonized struggle to reassert their free individuality against the objectification imposed on them by the colonizers. In Hegelian words, they fight for recognition or acknowledgement, because “self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness” (1967: 229).

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon discusses Hegel's Master/Slave dialectic and reformulates this paradigm in order to examine the relationship of domination between white masters and black slaves. According to him, colonialism causes trauma because it addresses natives by relying on a racialized social order based on the non-existence of the colonized 'others.' Recognition is essential in Fanon's analysis: he argues that Hegelian recognition cannot occur within the framework of a colonial system of oppression, and concludes that the racist structure of colonialism prevents the colonized from having any agency in their own representation. The Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic demands absolute reciprocity, all the more so within a colonial framework, in which, as Fanon explains, the colonizer reaffirms his identity by systematically denying that of the colonized:

It is in the degree to which I go beyond my own immediate being that I apprehend the existence of the other as a natural and more than natural reality. If I close the circuit, if I prevent the accomplishment of movement in two directions, I keep the other within himself. Ultimately, I deprive him even of this being-for-itself. (2008: 169)

It is also worth bearing in mind that, whereas Hegel analyzed the problem of oppression in Europe from a distanced philosophical approach, Fanon faced it from his own personal experience –being as he was a descendant of slaves– and directly through his work as a psychiatrist working with people who had suffered the tortures inflicted by European colonialism. Fanon's encounters with western racism, together with his praxis and personal experience in colonial Algeria, continually reminded him of the painful vestiges of slavery. In consequence, he regarded colonialism as yet another stage of slavery, whereby the violence suffered by the colonized enforces a colonizer/colonized relationship derivative of the Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic that refuses to recognize the humanity of the colonized. Fanon's key chapter, "The Fact of Blackness," clearly

describes the objectification felt by the colonized: “I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects” (2008: 82). Colonial subjects are thus stuck in this ‘objecthood’ depicted by Fanon: they can only recognize themselves in the eyes of a white man, but the reflection they receive is not at all rewarding. Fanon describes his own feelings as follows: “I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics; and I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetichism, racial defects” (2008: 84-85). Māori people have fought against the objectification and the inferior place to which colonization condemned them for many years. In a short period of time, they stopped being descendants of the Earth Mother Papatūānuku and the Sky Father Rangi to become instead noble savages in need of salvation so that they could become children of the western Christian God.

It is also important to highlight that the conception that the colonized populations had of history widely differed from the monolithic official historical discourse offered by the colonizers. Moreover, each colonized country had its own specific history. In the Māori case, for instance, each *whānau* has its own historical knowledge and psychological dimension of history. As has often been argued, Māori cultural heritage was seriously neglected by colonialist policies of cultural assimilation, and this precluded the possibility of the full recognition of Māori within a new multicultural society. An instance of this traumatic non-recognition can be found in Grace’s novel *Tu* (2004), which explores the psychological impact of the denial of the Māori community as equal citizens after their active participation in the Second World War.

Moreover, as has been mentioned in preceding chapters, colonial schooling was directly implicated in the process of whitening local indigenous peoples in these new

urban environments. In Grace's novel *Tu*, the young protagonist admits that he does not know much about the history of his country because "the history we studied at school was all to do with England and Europe" (Grace 2004: 214). In colonial schools, the natives learnt that the British Sovereign was the replacement of their Earth Mother and, to make matters worse, the maps of the world shown to Māori placed them on the fringe of the Empire. Consequently, they internalized that they were only peripheral actors in this new world. They were taught a history that did not mention anything about their ancestral Polynesian homeland of Hawaiki, nor about the wisdom of their ancestors, who knew how to use the stars and the ocean currents as navigational guides. Accordingly, they realized that they and their culture were being excluded from this new nation called "New Zealand." History was redefined in such a way that the myths and legends contained in the Māori oral tradition were endangered and, as has already been shown in *Cousins* and *Baby No-Eyes*, even their Māori names were erased. Within a short period of time Māori were confined to a marginalized position within urban slums, and reduced to a minority in a society dominated by a Pakeha majority.

During the last few decades, trauma studies have been increasingly exploring literature from a socio-political angle. Critics have tried to connect literary works with what actually went/goes on in the real world. As a result, trauma theory has tried to reveal some knowledge hidden in the unconscious, not only of literary characters, but also of society as a whole. One of the goals of this chapter will therefore be to demonstrate that novels such as *Tu* are in tune with Craps' claim that "breaking with Eurocentrism requires a commitment not only to broaden the usual focus of trauma theory but also to acknowledge the traumas of non-Western or minority populations for their own sake" (2013: 19). Trauma theory must necessarily expand and deal with non-Eurocentric models of psychological disorders in order to unveil the psychical wounds

of groups that have for long been oppressed or undermined. Likewise, trauma theory should foster social justice and strive to counter the discourses uttered by the establishment, which systematically refuse to acknowledge the traumatic wounds inflicted by colonialism upon non-western peoples.

The interdisciplinary links between postcolonial and trauma studies will be highlighted, as when engaging with the productive revision of the Hegelian Master/Slave paradigm that Frantz Fanon (1952; 1961) carried out, or emphasizing the importance of narrative in the process of working through trauma as put forward by critics like Judith Herman (1992), in clear contrast with the idea that trauma cannot be possibly uttered nor overcome as defended by early trauma scholars, such as Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman (1991) and Cathy Caruth (1995; 1996), among others. According to the latter, representing traumatic horrors faithfully is imply impossible, because what memory has retained is not reality but pieces of remembrance that most of the times have been distorted in our minds. This inaccessibility and impossibility to represent trauma is closely related to Derrida's concept of *aporia* which, as Luckhurst explains, encapsulates the so many "significant moments of apparent contradiction or irresolution [...] that each text tended to reveal" (2008: 6). On the other hand, this chapter will once again insist that early trauma theory, based on Freud's event-based concept of trauma, poses serious limitations when it comes to analyzing the long-term traumatic experiences of colonized people, which are thus marginalized, de-politicized and de-historicized. In particular, this reductive and biased approach will not be valid when discussing contemporary Māori problems, because it puts the emphasis on melancholia and victimization in the post-traumatic stage instead of dealing with the insidious traumas that originated in a specific socio-political framework.

The main aim of this chapter will be to use the aforementioned theoretical framework in order to accomplish an analysis of Grace's novel *Tu*, in particular the catastrophic and traumatic psychological impact that the New Zealand government's rejection of equal rights had on the Māori community after their fighting in the two World Wars. Māori were promised social equality but all they got instead was further discrimination and "othering." Although Māori soldiers, like Tu's father, were highly traumatized by those conflicts, they did not often receive any kind of psychological treatment, with the result that their families also suffered the consequences of their relatives' traumatic condition without receiving any kind of compensation. This traumatic situation is clearly denounced in *Tu*'s author's notes, which make it clear that most Māori soldiers "came home with a silence also. They had their ghosts" (284).

The loss of traditional cultural Māori values, together with the changes in the classic Māori *whānau* that came with twentieth-century urbanization, will also be considered. At that time New Zealand witnessed a major socio-demographic change, and the migration from rural communities to the suburbs in the cities created multiple traumas related to the cultural identity of indigenous populations. Furthermore, Grace's novel explores the traumatic effects of participating in warfare, and questions the traditional myth of the Māori warrior by showing the physical and psychological effects of a real military campaign in the Second World War. This chapter will also bring to light that the government of New Zealand imposed a classification based on blood quantum, which denied Māori cultural history and had a negative influence on the relation of the Māori population with their own cultural identity. This racist method was employed in the elaboration of the New Zealand Census as a means to obliterate the Māori population.

Moreover, this chapter will foreground the therapeutic effect of writing one's own traumatic story, because narrative can become a powerful tool to integrate and overcome traumatic experiences. In the novel, Tu employs his writing to rearrange and come to terms with his traumatic past in an effort to start and sustain his vital process of healing. Tu's testimony thus becomes, not only a political act that denounces the way in which Māori were cheated in the past, but also a social call to urge the next Māori generations to cultivate their pride of race.

Postwar Annihilation and the Stagnation of the Māori Collective Identity

Trauma is not the result of a group experiencing pain. It is the result of their acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity. Collective actors "decide" to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they want to go.

Alexander, Jeffrey C. "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma."

When the First World War broke out in August 1914, the British colonies were automatically engaged, but the British authorities did not allow the native colonized to take part in the European war. Notwithstanding this, the British Government decided to deploy Indian troops along the Suez Canal that same year, thus changing its perspective about non-white members of the British Empire taking part in the war. When Māori leaders such as Māui Pōmare, Member of Parliament and the Native Contingent Committee, found out that other natives from the British colonies had been sent to fight in the war, they decided to form a Pioneer Battalion, subsequently renamed the Māori Battalion. Australians and New Zealanders were Anzacs, a term which marked them off from the British. As is well known, Anzac legends became crucial landmarks in

Australian and New Zealand national narratives, because they enhanced a strong sense of identification and belonging among the citizens from those countries. Gallipoli was the Anzacs' bloodiest campaign of that war and, according to the legend, it was heroic even in failure. What makes it unique is that it was in Gallipoli that people from Australia and New Zealand found their sense of 'nationhood.' Gallipoli wonderfully illustrates how British officers let down their antipodean allies, because the Anzacs were sent to fight against the Turks with very inferior arms. As regards the Māori contingent, when they landed in Gallipoli Te Rangi Hīroa (Peter Buck) made a fervent plea to the rest of members:

Our ancestors were a warlike people. The members of this war party would be ashamed to face their people at the conclusion of the war if they were to be confined entirely to garrison duty and not given an opportunity of proving their mettle at the front. (in Condliffe 1971: 127)

At that time, Māori felt that they could restore their *mana* through their warfare tradition, a Māori source of identification and ethnic pride. Thus, Māori enthusiastically joined the Māori Battalion, formed to battle together with Pakeha and European soldiers. This could be seen as a good example of Hegel's Master/Slave dialectic within a colonial environment, in which the slave is only allowed to take an active part in the exchange of recognition when he is actually recognized by the master. In contrast to the colonial notion of the savage in need of civilization, they could show their courage and traditional warrior culture in a contemporary framework with a view to making themselves 'recognized' as equal citizens. As Fanon put it, "each consciousness of self is in quest of absoluteness. It wants to be recognized as a primal value without reference to life, as a transformation of subjective certainty (*Gewissheit*) into objective truth (*Wahrheit*)" (2008: 169).

It follows that self-consciousness accepts the risk to its life as a means to be considered and, for this reason, it struggles for the creation of a world of reciprocal recognitions. Māori strove to prove the unfairness of Pakeha racism but, when they understood that this was a futile task, they decided to create their own Battalion as their best way to claim the recognition of their Māori culture as a valuable element for their own people in their own country. It is worth bearing in mind that to die in the pursuit of Tūmatauenga was considered to be a sacred duty and a manly death in Māori culture. Men of the Young Māori Party, such as Ngata, Carrol and Pōmare dedicated their efforts to winning equality for Māori. They believed Māori identity was defined in the spirit of Article Three of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Māori heroes of the Pioneer Battalion, who proved themselves at Gallipoli, fulfilled the wish of Pōmare and other Māori members in parliament that Māori should fight once they saw that other native troops were allowed to do so. In Māui Pōmare's words:

Our people's voluntary service in the Great War gave a new and glorious tradition to the story of the Māori race. It gave the crowning touch to the sense of citizenship in the British commonwealth; it satisfied in the one fitting fashion the intense desire of the Māori to prove to the world that he was the equal of the *pakeha* in the fullest sense—physically, mentally and spiritually. (in Cowan 1926: ix: emphasis in original)

Māui Pōmare wanted to demonstrate that Māori were equal to Pakeha and that they could also show their patriotism by fighting in the war. It was a matter of racial pride that they could participate as a social and political entity in a war that affected people all over the world. He tried to defend this idea of equality by asserting that Gallipoli was

sacred ground for Māori in the same way as for Pakeha, because “their blood co-mingled in the trenches of Gallipoli.”⁵³

After the First World War, Māori were discouraged from taking any action to change their low status in the society of New Zealand. It is important to take into account that colonization and land confiscation rendered Māori culture and identity vulnerable due to the decline in their population and the isolation of Māori tribes as a consequence of their dispersion throughout the country. Subsequently, the government decided to organize a Centennial exhibition in Wellington that ran from November 8th 1939 to May 4th 1940 in order to reinforce New Zealand nationalism. Yet, although Māori believed that the centennial was a way of commemorating the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, the reality was that the exhibition signified, not just the centenary of the signing of a treaty with Māori, that is, a century of conquest and settlement, but also one hundred years of membership of the British Empire.⁵⁴ In Grace’s novel, Māori from all regions displayed their carvings and weavings at the Māori Court and performed traditional dances and songs for Māori and Pakeha. When the members of the Māori Battalion performed the *haka* in the Māori Court Building, the fourteen-year-old Tu shared the people’s pride in their own Battalion. After witnessing the ways in which the soldiers were “lauded and applauded by hundreds as they formed their guard of honour” (258), Tu remembers that the war stories of the First World War were always

on our lips, in our hearts, as we listened to news reports, or heard the stories told by friends who had been invalided home. So in my mind there was never a question of not

⁵³ New Zealand Parliamentary Debates: Hansard 177 (1916): 942.

⁵⁴ For more information, see “The Centennial Exhibition.” Ministry for Culture and Heritage. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/centennial/centennial-exhibition>

going to war, even though I knew so little of its causes, so little of what it was really about, so little of what men are capable of doing to one another. (259)

Conversely, the novel also depicts the way in which Pita, Tu's brother, lives this Centennial Exhibition, from a perspective that is very different from that expressed by Tu. Pita observes that Pakeha love Māori terrifying facial expressions and sweaty bodies, and wonders if Pakeha love them just like they love "Hitler's Horrors of Mechanized Murder." He also experiences a feeling "of not being real or of not knowing what was real. Or there was a sense that he, all of them, were being owned" (154). Keeping in mind the racism that still exists in Aotearoa, Pita believes that in this Centennial Exhibition Māori have gone from performing to being stereotyped and owned by the dominant culture in the country. Homi Bhabha indicates that colonial racism increases the problems of identification and disavowal suffered by the colonized. To take this critic's words, Pita is confronted with "his alienated image; not Self and Other but the otherness of the Self inscribed in the perverse palimpsest of colonial identity" (1994: 63). Moreover, Jess unintentionally injures Pita's sensitivity when she makes comments about Māori performances. As a result, Pita feels himself to be like "a showpiece or a clown act" (151). He does not want to be a performing monkey anymore; he believes that they are performing for people who do not understand anything about Māori culture, but rather consider Māori performances to be simply an amusement. Likewise, at the commemoration of the Treaty of Waitangi, he feels that Māori are being 'othered' again, even though Pakeha authorities proclaimed 'egalitarianism' among the New Zealand population. The worst aspect of this feeling is that he cannot understand why,

despite everything, he still had a desire to please these audiences, why there was the need to seek the acceptance and approval of those of the thousand eyes. What was it in

him that made him want the applause, look for the reports in the paper, count up the encores, just as they all did? (154-55)

This excerpt brings to the surface the paradoxical effects that the colonial encounter produced in the unconscious and desire of the colonized subjects. Pita's unconscious arouses his desire for the acceptance and approval of the colonial Master, and surreptitiously smooths his hostility towards the descendants of the colonizers. Freud pointed out that unconscious processes have "characteristics and peculiarities which seem alien to us, or even incredible, and which run directly counter to the attributes of consciousness with which we are familiar" (1915: 170). In other words, there are some impulses in our mind that are alien to our conscious sense of self-identity and that many times determine our desires and motivations. Freud goes on to argue that the unconscious is necessary because it contains all those thoughts and drives that are repressed by the mind because they are too disturbing for conscious consideration. It is believed that the unconscious is a sort of defence mechanism that isolates the desires with which the conscious side of the mind is unable to cope, thus protecting us from damage. However, these hidden impulses, located in Pita's unconscious, attempt to find their way into consciousness within his traumatized mind. In Lacan's interpretation of Freud, the concept of desire which is implicit in the unconscious is related to identity. He asserts that "Man's desire is the desire of the Other" (1998: 235), because desire is essentially a desire for recognition from this 'Other': in Pita's case, the recognition from Pakeha. Lacan explains that this dependence on the other for recognition is what controls our desires and drives, because they are "alienated in the other's desire" (2007: 343). Pita believes that Pakeha seek to possess, not only Māori people, but also Māori culture, and that this encapsulates their desire to obtain what they lack, because Māori people and their culture are the only elements that Pakeha do not own in New Zealand.

According to Lacan, in the first place there is a desire for recognition, but then it is also the desire for what we think the other desires. Thus, there is a relation between the other's desire and the other from whom recognition is desired. As Lacan himself acknowledges, this idea of our desire being the desire of the 'Other' is once again taken from Hegel's philosophy:

Man's very desire is constituted, he [Hegel] tells us, under the sign of mediation: it is the desire to have one's desire recognized. Its object is a desire, that of other people, in the sense that man has no object that is constituted for his desire without some mediation. (2007: 182)

This shows that humans are driven by forces over which they have no conscious control, and that identity is shaped by the recognition that people receive from others. Fanon wrote about the cultural and political implications of the internal struggle that the mind of the colonized fights between unconscious desire and conscious rationality. This form of neurosis, caused by the colonial contact, can be again conceptualized in Lacanian specular terms: Pita has learnt to recognize himself as the 'Other' in this urban racist environment, and in the Centennial exhibition he is afraid and enraged because the only element that helps him mitigate his feeling of unbelonging, namely, his Māori culture, is being desired by Pakeha. They want to own the only thing that can help him overcome his deep problems of identification and unbelonging. It is significant to note that, even nowadays, the New Zealand Army has institutionalized, not only the image of Māori tattooed warriors performing the *haka*, but also the name Ngāti Tūmatauenga, meaning literally 'tribe of the god of war.' This image of the native warrior is also used by the government within the tourist industry in order to meet the demands for local exoticism. It is this essentialist portrayal of Māori cultural practices during the Centennial Exhibition that Pita adamantly rejects in the novel.

Grace's novel also brings to the surface that there were opponents to Māori participation in the conflict. For instance, the well-known Māori activist Te Paea Hērangi, who in the novel appears participating in the Centennial Exhibition, refused to send her people to go away to fight for God, King and Country, because British and Pakeha had their own God and their own King. As she alleged, Māori "had their own country too, but much of their country had been stolen. Why would they want to fight for the people who had stolen their country?" (142). Te Paea's disagreement with the participation of Māori people in the war was based on the illegitimate confiscation of Waikato land by the colonial government. It is true that some Māori were not sure about joining this war, and the novel describes some discussion in the Ngāti Pōneke Club about the formation of a Māori Infantry: "It's not our war, some would say. We have already given men to one war on the other side of the world. That's enough" (89). But the truth was that the majority of Māori, including Māori politicians and authorities, were in favour of having their own Māori Battalion, as they believed that this was their opportunity to achieve equal treatment in every aspect of the political and social spheres of New Zealand.

These matters were not only being talked about but were the subject of articles, letters, having and reports which I've only read recently. They're all about being true citizens, being equal, proving worth, having a prideful place. It was nothing to do with God and King, and we were too far away for it really be about our country. (278)

Tu recounts these words invoking the memory of his uncle from parliament, saying that "once the brown man had fought in the white man's war, maybe then he'd be deemed equal" (278). The appearance of the 28th Battalion gave hope to the Māori population because it represented them and symbolized the unity of the whole community, notwithstanding their different tribal affiliations. For the first time the different Māori

tribes worked together, fostering a sense of union among them. Before the war most Māori had lived on the margins of New Zealand society, but the war gave them the possibility of feeling that they were fighting for the freedom of the whole citizenry of New Zealand. As was stated before, it was Āpirana Ngata who mainly helped to organize the formation of the Māori Battalion, as he understood participation in war as the price of citizenship. As British subjects, Ngata claimed, Māori should contribute with their men to defeating the enemies of the Empire because, if Māori wanted to have a say in the formation of a more equal nation after the war, they had to fully participate in it.

We are of one house, and if our Pakeha brothers fall, we fall with them. How can we ever hold up our heads, when the struggle is over, to the question, ‘Where were you when New Zealand was at war?’⁵⁵

The young Tu explains that different tribes encouraged their men to enlist to show the entire world who Māori were and what heights they could reach in that global conflict. They were eager to show their warrior tradition, another reason for joining the Māori Battalion. Although Tu is sent by his family to a boarding school as a way to prevent him from going to war, he sees it as a prison because he wants to become a soldier to thus escape boredom and boyhood: “off I ran of the iron gates and away to war” (23). Tu wants to escape from school because he wishes to assert his own identity in the Māori Battalion, prove his prowess and expertise in battle, and show his warrior skills to prove his manhood. He has been instructed by Uncle Ju in the “arts of the taiaha,” the “skills of weaponry that came from the olden times” (94). The recruitment office ignores the fact that he is seventeen because casualties are extremely high and they are

⁵⁵ <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/Māori-in-second-world-war/response>

desperate to fill in the gaps and so, he is able to enlist and goes to war as part of the Māori Battalion, which becomes a new *whānau* for him:

I'm quite happy about it all, pleased to be able to really test myself for the first time in my life, among the very best. It's so good to be here and to be part of such a great Battalion. (34)

Afterwards, Tu will admit that, at that time, what Māori mainly sought was “to belong to something, be part of what was going on, perhaps be important and smart in a uniform” (259-60). As a matter of fact, although they were tired of discrimination against their race in general, and of the perpetual domination of western civilization in particular, they needed to feel important, even by wearing the uniform of western soldiers. Yet, they bore a profound feeling of bitterness resulting from the colonial discourse which systematically depicted the Māori race as inferior. This sentiment is wonderfully expressed in Fanon's work, in which this critic gives vent to his rage against the so-called western civilization: “I sit down at the fire and I become aware of my uniform. I had not seen it. It is indeed ugly. I stop there, for who can tell me what beauty is?” (2008: 86). On the one hand, the uniform which Fanon recounts is his black skin, regarded as ugly in western discourse and internalized by colonized people as an absolute truth. On the other hand, Tu mentions the desire that many Māori have for wearing the same uniform as their white New Zealand counterparts; the uniform therefore becomes a metaphor for the Māori unconscious desire to have a white skin that might make them equal to Pakeha.

In fact, during the Second World War the neocolonial authorities from New Zealand allowed Māori, not only to wear the same uniform that their white comrades had on, but also to administer their own affairs. At home, Māori commanded the Māori War Effort Organization. Created in 1942, it registered Māori and co-ordinated recruitment and all

war-time activities. For instance, they were responsible for the distribution of workers in freezing works and dairy factories. The Māori War Effort Organization involved all tribes, even those most alienated by impoverishment, and produced the feeling for Māori that a postwar reconstruction under Māori leadership was possible. It gave Māori a unique opportunity to show their capacity for leadership and planning. Nevertheless, this Māori autonomy lasted only for the duration of the war, since from 1945 the control of Māori affairs finally reverted to the central government. The government controlled by Pakeha bestowed on Māori the possibility to fight and die but, after the war, it denied them agency in the creation of their own representation. The government of New Zealand did not truly recognize Māori soldiers as equals after their participation in both World Wars, even though they engaged in mortal combat to obtain more autonomy for them and their people. This was terribly traumatic, because Māori neither improved their social status nor shared anything more than a bloody experience with the western colonizer. They were exposed to extremely dangerous actions in war, but had little or no social support when they returned home. As a result, the mental condition of Māori soldiers further deteriorated since equality, both as regards themselves and the whole Māori community, was definitely denied in their own country. The legacy of collective traumatic memories after the war deeply impacted on the structure of Māori collective identity because Pakeha authorities only momentarily recognized the true self of their colonial 'Other.' The Māori's main purpose was to halt the western paternalistic approach of Pakeha institutions towards their population. They wanted equality in social, political, and economic terms, and considered their participation in the colonizers' war as their opportunity to reach their *mana motuhake*.⁵⁶ As Barbara Brookes asserts: "The Second World War had made Labour Prime Minister Michael

⁵⁶ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'mana motuhake': 1. (noun) separate identity, autonomy, self-government, self-determination, independence, sovereignty, authority - mana through self-determination and control over one's own destiny.

Savage's 1936 promise of 'economic equality with racial individuality' seem hollow" (2016: 310). Furthermore, Claudia Orange visibly explains the feeling of Māori people after the war:

 this sense of deprivation was aggravated by events after the war. Successive governments failed to meet Māori requests and needs. The first Labour government, for example, assisted Māori with its general policies and special Māori affairs programmes, but in the final reckoning it did not measure up to its 1935 promise of 'equality with racial individuality.' The problems involved were considerable and became fully apparent only when Labour held office. In its fourteen-year administration, Labour did initiate changes in housing, education and social welfare that might lead Māori towards the promised equality but, like all New Zealand governments before and since, it would not advance Māori interests at the expense of electoral support. (2015: 204)

Tu admits that in wartime Māori only paid attention to the reports of successful battles: "how tall we stood in our race, how proud we were. This Battalion was us. We were it" (259). New Zealanders helped to defeat the Italians in North Africa in 1941, were deeply involved in the failed campaigns in Greece later that year, and in 1942 fought Rommel in North Africa until they reached victory in Alamein. The Māori battalion was internationally recognized for its effort and perseverance during the war. As Michael Henderson asserts in his book *Forgiveness: Breaking the Chain of Hate*, even German General Erwin Rommel once said: "give me the Māori Battalion and I will conquer the world" (2003: 94). The success of the Battalion earned worldwide respect, but they paid a high cost in lives. "The total Māori population at the time was just under 100,000. More than 3,600 men, all volunteers, served with the Māori

Battalion. The battalion suffered 2,628 casualties (649 killed, 1,712 wounded and 267 taken prisoners or missing), almost 50% more than the New Zealand average.”⁵⁷

The members of the 28th Māori Battalion fought to have their rights recognized on social, political and cultural bases. They knew what the price of citizenship was and were prepared to pay it. Moreover, during the war Ngata admitted that Māori would lose some of their brightest young leaders and wrote the following: “we have lost a few already. But we will gain the respect of our Pakeha brothers and the future of our race as a component and respected part of the New Zealand people will be less precarious.”⁵⁸

The loss of Māori soldiers who died overseas was especially tragic for little settlements in specific areas of Aotearoa. For many *iwi* an entire generation died in the war. They never returned home, which was fatal for small, isolated Māori *whānau* because there were no leaders left to guide future generations. Consequently, Māori cultural knowledge was harshly disrupted. Tu puts the emphasis, not only on the great sacrifice that Māori made choosing to participate in a war that was far away from home, but also on the suffering of their families and communities in their own country:

but those days of waiting were bad times for the home people. Every day there was news of death. People were crying every day. Every day, in one meeting house or another under our mountain, in our village, or in a village nearby, there would be a soldier photograph displayed in a meeting house. Sometimes there would be two or three at once. People would gather, wailing and crying, and I recall how bewildered everyone was. Death in far-off lands, death without a body, was a death not fully believed. There was only a photograph as a reminder, only a photograph to touch, to stroke while the death ceremonies took place, and no burial to bring about conclusion.

Every day people were on the move, gathering at one marae or another to mourn. (95-6)

⁵⁷ <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/nga-pakanga-ki-tawahi-Māori-and-overseas-wars/page-5>

⁵⁸ <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/Māori-and-the-second-world-war/impact>

In a country dominated by Pakeha culture, the Māori Battalion encouraged their people to look for equality through their war-time boldness. In a way, the war also revitalized Māori culture because its members attained a collective identity through their connection to Māori cultural elements, such as *tīpuna*, *whānau*, *hapū* and *whakapapa*. In Grace's novel, Māori soldiers represent key elements of Māori culture, such as the performing of the *haka*, the painting of *mokos* and the reciting of their *whakapapa*, reminiscent of their military heritage: "Hemi, by the light of a candle, was drawing whorls of moko on the cleaned face of Gary with a piece of charcoal, making him into a chief from olden times" (179). Two chiefs of Māori tribes draw the old patterns of chiefly *moko* on each other's skins before going to fight against the German troops. These paintings show, not only the status and authority that men have in their tribe, but also the story of their ancestors; in other words, their *whakapapa*. The novel then depicts how the lines and spirals on the men's noses and cheeks reveal where their *tīpuna* was from, who their parents and families were, as well as their position in those families. When Tu explains to Hemi and Gary that, according to the stripes on the sleeves of their battle dress they were army sergeants, they shrug because "they know nothing of the meanings, they said, only knew these patterns they were drawing were the same as the ones chiseled into the face of their ancestors" (190). Tu finally admits that Hemi and Gary are true in their hearts, loyal and brave in spirit, and that they make all the battalion light-hearted (191).

The novel also shows that war became an escape valve for a whole generation of Māori, who felt deeply dislocated in the new oppressive urban settings. Rangi is a good example of this: he is a young Māori man who feels trapped in this new environment where Pakeha politics of exclusion erode Māori identity. He rejects both Pakeha Catholicism and their discriminatory laws, which do not allow him to enjoy a free life in

the city. Rangi does not understand why only Pakeha and Chinamen can go to the pub for a drink after work. When he asks why a Māori boy is “not allowed in the pubs with the Pakeha and the Chinaman,” Ma’s answer is: “Well it’s the law” (91). The narrative therefore offers a picture of New Zealand in the early 1940s as a country where racial prejudice and discrimination were very present, and this explains why many Māori, like Pita, Rangi and Tu, decided to join the war in order to escape that unjust environment. After Rangi goes to war, financial stress is placed on the family, and so Sophie and Moana go out to work at the woolen mills to support the family economically. Moana complains about the inequitable situation that Māori endure because they are manpowered into low-paying jobs that Pakeha do not want (185). Among other things, *Tu* brings to light the poor Māori socio-economic conditions during the war period, which meant that “some joined for a coat and a pair of boots, for food, army pay, and so as not to be another mouth to feed at a time when there was no work, no money for them” (259).

Although Uncle Dave tells Tu that one hundred years before the Centennial exhibition a treaty was signed which made Māori and Pakeha one people and Aotearoa/New Zealand one nation, Tu later on realizes that what the Treaty of Waitangi consolidated was the hegemony of one people, “Pakeha,” one language, “English,” and one country, ruled by the white descendants of the colonizers, called “New Zealand.” It is when Tu understands Māori self-deception about the Treaty of Waitangi and their participation in war that he becomes devastated. Now he acknowledges that Māori must redefine their common identity in the contemporary world and that it is essential to emphasize indigenous traditions prior to colonization in order to recover their original pride in being Māori. Only then can they achieve their goal of becoming equal to

Pakeha. In his “Māori socio-economic disparity Paper for the Ministry of Social Policy September 2000,” Simon Chapple explained the situation as follows:

the first rationale for intervention to close the gap is to suggest that Māori disparity is a Treaty of Waitangi issue. The Treaty argument hinges on an equality of market outcomes based on an interpretation of Article Three of the Treaty. Translations of Article Three suggest that Māori were given all the rights and obligations of British citizens. Since the rights of British citizens at the time or later did not confer equality of socio-economic outcomes, either for individuals or groups, it seems unlikely that those who drafted or signed the Treaty had such a concept in their minds in 1840. (2000: 9)

A clear example of this disparity concealed by the Treaty of Waitangi is that, although Māori were entitled to the old age pension under New Zealand’s Old Age Pensions Act of 1898, as Patricia Grace claims in an interview with Paola Della Valle, “a Māori widow was given less in her pension than a Pakeha widow” (2007: 138). This is denounced in the novel through the words that the Uncle from Parliament addresses to Ma: “I know your widow’s pension won’t go far. I know a Māori woman whose man has died gets only half the pension of a Pakeha widow” (74).

The family wage became the key element, not just of industrial relations, but of family and social policy. It established the basis of the welfare state, in which the protection of white workingmen’s wages and conditions became the priority. Arbitration and the ‘new’ protection, centred on the white family, appeared to be the real foundation for the formation of the new state. Māori received separate treatment from Pakeha in family wages and pensions although, in law, both were entitled to equal rights as citizens, and thus to cash benefits. As is stated in *A History of Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific*:

Māori suffered discrimination from bureaucrats who routinely exercised their discretion to pay lower pensions to Māori on the grounds that they held communal land. By the 1920s, Māori were paid 25 per cent less than Pakeha, though they had become dispossessed. (Denoon et al. 2000: 298)

At this point I think it is pertinent to introduce the critique on identity politics and the concept of justice put forward by critical theorist Nancy Fraser. In her influential book *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (2009), she discusses the way in which new social movements of difference have developed from contemporary social theory, reformulating traditional approaches to address the problem of social inequality. She maintains that the nation-state concept should be replaced with a global dimension, and focuses her argument on the need to accomplish emancipatory political struggles for economic redistribution and social recognition. Moreover, she takes it for granted that domination operates by means of material deprivation and cultural disrespect.

Just as the ability to make claims for distribution and recognition depends on relations of representation, so the ability to exercise one's political voice depends on the relations of class and status. In other words, the capacity to influence public debate and authoritative decision-making depends not only on formal decision rules but also on power relations rooted in the economic structure and the status order, a fact that is insufficiently stressed in most theories of deliberative democracy. (2009: 165)

This argument is highly significant because democratic systems are based on citizens' equality. However, many of these citizens have no political voice in their national-states, which originates injustices and inequalities. Lacking political voice, they are unable to articulate and defend their interests with respect to distribution and recognition. Therefore, as Fraser claims, "struggles against maldistribution and

misrecognition cannot succeed unless they are joined with struggles against misrepresentation and vice-versa” (2005: 50). The fact is that, although Māori are represented in Parliament, economic redistribution is not egalitarian, and social recognition has not been fully accomplished. Fraser thinks that an adequate theory of justice comprehends three dimensions: redistribution linked with an economic framework; recognition in connection with culture and society; and representation linked to a political dimension. The reality was that Māori people were ‘othered’ in the new urban environment due to the institutionalized racism existing in New Zealand at that time. Accordingly, both Pita and Rangī are unable to find well-paid permanent jobs (75) and, when Pita finally achieves a full-time position in a government office, it is merely to push a broom. To make matters worse, even though he has been an adult man for years, his boss refers to him as a “boy.”

After the Second World War Pakeha policies of assimilation threatened Māori identity and constrained the full development of the Māori community within the modern society of New Zealand. The Pakeha establishment did not allow the Māori population to have the social and economic privileges that the Pakeha community enjoyed in the aftermath of war. Postwar New Zealand society was still a neo-colonial one dominated by the white majority. The Pakeha hegemonic government undermined Māori identity and imposed a blood quantum classification based on biological ethnicity, which affected the way in which Māori people perceived and defined themselves. As Joan Metge states, The Māori Affairs Act of 1953 “defined a Māori as ‘a person belonging to the aboriginal race of New Zealand, including a half-caste and a person intermediate between half-caste and a person of pure descent from the race’, though it extended certain provisions to ‘any descendant of a Māori so defined’” (2004: 41). In this Act, Māori were classified on blood quantum for statistical purposes. The

concept of 'blood quantum' is in itself problematic, because it relies on the false assumption that races are biologically established, and thus neglects cultural processes and identities. This categorization of humans as biological races is based on the genetic differences of a number of human subspecies, which cannot be proved with any certainty nor legitimized. Among other things, it claimed that Māori feel Māori because of their biological predetermination, thus fully ignoring their cultural background. The New Zealand Census also employed blood fractions to conclude whether or not a person was Māori. It was used to enact legal identities in plain racial terms, and to maintain Pakeha control on account of a racist ideology that fostered the western cultural style of living as the best option in New Zealand. As is well known, blood quantum requirements have often been imposed by numerous colonial governments across the world, with a view to defining and subjecting the indigenous peoples that they had colonized. The purpose of this politics of blood quantum is, therefore, to divide, assimilate or extinguish the indigenous population in a country. As James Cowan explains:

the Government Statistician, in commenting on the census figures, said that already probably almost one half of the Māori community was no longer of pure Māori descent and could never again contribute to the quota of pure Māori. The pure Māori remnant must inevitably suffer attrition as members from time to time marry outside its ranks. [...] One statistician considered it very doubtful whether the race could survive the gradual infiltration of European strains. Its continuance as a separate entity for many generations was assured, but its indefinite continuance was quite another matter. In other words, there would most probably be in the future a complete blending of the two races. (1930: 8-9)

These techniques to determine the identity of Māori people clearly undermined Māori culture. It was only in 1991 that the New Zealand Census gave Māori the possibility of identifying themselves beyond the scope of blood quantum. Nevertheless, this procedure still had some limitations. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith says:

I objected to being asked to nominate a primary iwi as I take seriously my rights to claim bilineal descent and resent the state imposing definitions through census on how our identity is shaped. In brief these external measurements of identity are significant at an ideological level because they become normative, they set the norm for what it means to be Māori [...] Identity is also inextricably bound to whānau and whenua relationships, to the marae and the values system and language which holds these things together. (2015: 49)

As is well known, many social scientists have asserted that the psychological self-development of identity within an ethnic group is crucial. Social identity is constituted in accordance with the sense of belonging to a group. Group identity therefore becomes a quintessential abstraction that conditions people's mental health, as people generally assign a higher value to the group to which they belong and gain confidence from their feeling of belonging to that group. As regards minority groups, ethnic identity and group belonging are even more important, because these people rely more on each other, if only to better cope with the traumas and discrimination that they often suffer. Jeffrey C. Alexander presents a model of cultural trauma which involves paying increasing attention to the constant exposure to violence and a racist discourse that marginalizes collective minority groups. Alexander (2004: 1) infers that collective trauma happens when members of a collective feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, thus marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and

irrevocable ways. Alexander identifies the need to acknowledge cultural traumas in society in order to promote political activism, social change and individual healing as opposed to early trauma theory based on melancholia and victimization. Collective traumas are usually provoked by social, economic and political inequalities. As this critic concludes, the trauma approach to collectivities can be a powerful method of encouraging moral responsibility and political action:

It is by constructing cultural traumas that social groups, national societies, and sometimes even entire civilizations not only cognitively identify the existence and source of human suffering but ‘take on board’ some significant responsibility for it. Insofar as they identify the cause of trauma, and thereby assume such moral responsibility, members of collectivities define their solidary relationships in ways that, in principle, allow them to share the suffering of others. Is the suffering of others also our own? In thinking that it might in fact be, societies expand the circle of the we. (1)

In tune with this, traditionally in Aotearoa Māori people primarily identified themselves through their tribal structures of *whānau*, *hapū* and *iwi* because they are interwoven with Māori cultural practices, and this Māori social stratum in turn imbues them with *mana* and enriches their cultural traditions. No wonder Tu refers to Benedict and Rimini with the following words: “Please know how precious you are. [...] You are the only ones. [...] It would’ve been the end of all of us if it weren’t for the existence of the two of you” (280). Grace’s novel suggests that Tu will only start working through his trauma when he attains his responsibility of unveiling to his nephew and niece the secrets of their ancestors. They need to know who they really are, who their fathers were and where their bodies rest in order to reestablish the quintessential Māori genealogy of the family. Rimini and Benedict suffer what LaCapra calls “founding-trauma,” which is based not on physical facts but on “events that pose the problematic

question of identity” (2001: 23). Thus, Tu tries to help his nephew and niece to understand why they believed that their relationship to each other was that of half-brother and half-sister. Moreover, he claims that Rimini is really Rangi’s daughter, which uncovers her *whakapapa* and her right line of descent, so important for Māori culture. He also informs them that Pita and Rangi were killed in action while Rimini and Benedict were born in New Zealand as Pita’s children. Now that Rimini and Benedict’s true identities have been revealed, they can work through their founding trauma, retrieve their dignity and move forward with confidence and reassurance. From then on, Tu has a clear aim: to show not only Benedict and Rimini but also the whole *whānau* where Pita and Rangi’s graves are in Italy, because they have become for them sacred *whenua* and must therefore be venerated. As a matter of fact, after both World Wars many Māori soldiers were buried in foreign countries, and many of their relatives found it very difficult to visit their graves in Africa or Europe, as this required spending a lot of money and travelling long distances. This was a problem for Māori because, according to their eschatology, the sacred land where the ancestors remain must be venerated by all the members of the *whānau*. Tu also insists that Rimini and Benedict should “learn that the sacrifices of the Māori Battalion have not been forgotten in that country” (281). They will eventually realize how fondly Italian people remember Māori soldiers, and will consequently feel proud of their fathers and relatives. Like the majority of the Māori community, Tu’s family has paid a high tribute to the war but, surprisingly, Tu maintains an affectionate memory of Italy: the pages of his war notebooks offer a positive picture of this country and its citizens. He perceives similarities between Māori and Italian cultures, which strengthen his sense of belonging and make him reconsider his Māori heritage, while defining a new direction in his life after his return home. He empathizes with the Italian population because the war has

also dispossessed them of their land. Like the colonized Māori, the Italians have been murdered, raped and repressed by another culture which holds the upper hand with the help of its superior armament. Tu's affective relationship with Italian people is crucial for the articulation of the counter-discourse that he develops when he returns to Aotearoa; it is in Italy that he understands that culture cannot be destroyed by bombs and tanks. One can be dispossessed of material things, but one's cultural identity will somehow remain.

To escape the evils of blame

If historical traumas such as the Holocaust have played an important role in the extension of trauma studies in the humanities, the effects of trauma have been specially studied as a set of symptoms that specific individuals, rather than communities, suffer in their minds and bodies. This focus on an individual/psychological perspective may pose the danger of separating facts from their causes, thus blurring the importance of the historical and social context, which is particularly relevant in postcolonial trauma narratives.

Dolores Herrero and Sonia Baelo-Allué, *The Splintered Glass: Facets of Trauma in the Post-Colony and Beyond*.

In writing *Tu*, Grace drew her inspiration from her father, Sergeant Edward Gunson, who enlisted in 1944, served in Italy with the Māori Battalion, and left behind a brief diary of his experiences. Grace explains that her novel *Tu* was inspired by her own attempt to fill in the gaps left by her father's experience in the war. The idea of the novel arises from the twenty-five page diary kept by Gunson during his military service and read by Grace twenty years after his death in 1983, as she explains in the author's notes. However, the diary did not satisfy Grace's curiosity about the motives leading an entire generation of Māori young men to voluntarily enlist and be so committed to a war that, in the words of Tu, was not a Māori war (89). Grace stated that the 28th Māori

Battalion's unique story remains unknown to many people not only around the world but also in Aotearoa and this, she thought, was another good reason for writing *Tu*.

The narrative consists of a doubled plot structure with chapters that alternate with others employing the narration of Tu and a third person omniscient narrator. The main narrative, including the Italian Campaign, is told in the first person by Tu through his war diary and the second storyline of the novel deals with the accounts of the family. Grace's novel tells the story of a Māori extended family that lives within a traditional rural community. Tu's father served in the Te Hokowhitu-a-Tu Pioneer Battalion in the First World War, where he was shot and gassed. The veterans of this war were received as heroes, but they would never be the same men who had left the country. When he returns from the war, he undergoes a lengthy recuperation in a hospital in Wellington. Once he is discharged from hospital, the family realizes that he is not only physically wounded but also severely traumatized. The father of the *whānau*, once a proud soldier, is described now as an empty shell. After coming back from war he has lost his mind and seldom speaks; instead he emits grunting noises and suffers violent outbursts. His mental condition is similar to the "paralysis of mind" depicted by Robert Jay Lifton after talking with people who suffered the dropping of the nuclear bomb in Hiroshima:

I came to call this general process psychic numbing [...]. It would continue over weeks, months, or even years, and became associated with apathy, withdrawal, depression, despair, or a kind of survivor half-life with highly diminished capacity for pleasure, joy, or intense feelings in general. (1991: 101)

Moreover, Tu's father has rage attacks in which he "launched himself out of the chair to choke their mother, breaks their house to pieces and attempts to kill them all" (55). He bears no resemblance to his photos prior to joining the army and Tu and his siblings are not sure how to interact with him:

Even with the chair empty in the mornings Pita and his brother walked through the room without talking or hurrying, keeping their eyes away from this space where, later in the morning, the man who was a soldier, a hero and also their father, would sit. This man was nothing like the photograph on the mantelpiece with medals pinned into the wallpaper above it that were to do with bravery; nothing like the photograph in the album of the man in swimming togs with wet hair stuck down, laughing, holding up an octopus that he'd pulled from a rock-pool and turned inside-out so that it couldn't strangle him (52).

This unfortunate man, who was once a happy father, is greatly damaged and this trauma has severely affected his memory because, at this moment, he is unable to relate either with his spouse or his children because he cannot recognize them. He lives in a room that has become a “dead space in their house and in their lives” (51), and they all know that some part of him died in the war. In one of the father's rage attacks, Rangi knocks him down with a punch and Ma says: “Just because he come home from war don't mean he never died there, your poor father” (60).

The narrative extends the description of the trauma experienced by the Māori soldiers involved in both World Wars to that of their relatives, especially their children. The main example in the novel is Pita. He suffers high emotional stress because it is he who is sent to find his uncles, who live nearby, and can help to calm his father, when he becomes violent and strikes his mother: “Ma's face, smearing fat on her swellings and bruises. It was the first time this happened that remained in Pita's mind most clearly – waking to the shouting and smashing and his mother in the doorway” (56). Similarly, the novel conveys the intergenerational trauma that war caused through the character of Pita, since he is deeply traumatized through the terror he feels that something horrible might happen to his mother in his absence. He suffers not only the fear of his father's

violence but an overwhelming sense of helplessness due to the unpredictable nature of that violence. As a consequence, as a child Pita rarely attends school or plays with friends or siblings: “Sometimes he turned back at the school gates without even remembering that he’d done it, only finding himself on the tracks, heading homeward” (58). Soon afterwards, Pita’s uncles find employment in the city and he assumes the role of “Little Father,” as he is the one who is in charge of helping his mother and aunty to cope with his father on the bad days. When the father of the family eventually dies and a funeral ceremony is celebrated, Pita discovers that his father was only thirty-nine years old, and then “it was as though their father was now able to be the father he had never been to them [...] that is, the man in the photographs” (62). Until the father’s death, the family cannot move on because of a war trauma that affected all of them and, after his death, they feel sorrowful on account of all their sad memories. In addition, the rural environment offers no prospects for them and Ma starts to talk about a future in the city:

‘Too many sad memories,’ she said. ‘No work for the family and no college for the little one when he’s old enough. There’s no money to get the land going and no future for us here. We’re going nowhere.’ Then she told them she’d written a letter to her uncle who worked in parliament asking him to find them a house in Wellington. ‘We want our Tuboy to go to a good college, have a good job, get clean work with good pay like our uncle in parliament,’ she said.

Tu, who had been sheltered from rage, was their hope for the future. (63)

One of the main purposes of the family is to provide Tu with a Pakeha education. Accordingly, the family migrates from their rural community in the region of Taranaki to urban Wellington, with the help of the uncle who works in Parliament and relocates them in that new urban setting. In *Tu* the Māori urban *whānau* is formed by Ma, her three sons: Pita, Rangi and Tu; and her two daughters: Sophie and Moana. Pita is the

eldest and has the responsibility for holding the *whānau* together and playing the role of a father figure after the death of his father.

Grace's novel shows the effects of both World Wars on the Māori population, one of the most drastic ones being the depopulation of whole rural communities. In the Second World War, 'manpower conscription' forced people to work in a particular workplace to keep essential industries going. This speeded the first phase of Māori migration to towns; most of them were drawn by the hope of work and a better life, if not pushed by rural poverty arising from a shortage of land. The novel depicts the poverty that Tu's family must endure in the countryside when they come to Wellington: although they wear new clothes to help them belong to this new environment, the narrator reveals that, with the exception of Ma, "none of them had had shoes before" (70). Moreover, when this family arrives in Wellington, they also have to endure the Māori segregation imposed by the government. They find that they are not allowed into certain parts of theatres, restaurants and pubs. It might be concluded that this racist management of the public sphere in a colonial white context does not allow dark natives the possibility of being recognized by their Master within the Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic. Māori cannot move freely in a neocolonial space, in which physical positions are imposed due to the color of their skin as a clear simile of the *status quo* that prevails in New Zealand. The Māori participation in the conflict and the massive urbanization of the postwar period accelerated the profound transformation of Māori tribal life. The social reality that Māori people, like this family in the novel, faced in this urban setting was one of unbelonging and discrimination, because they faced several challenges when trying to integrate into an urban environment that contrasted with the community ties they were used to in their rural *whānau*. In this white urban environment, Pita feels out of place and fears public spaces, a racist setting where "thousand eyes [...] made the

colour of his skin a shame” (140). Fanon offered a powerful metaphor, not only of the intimidating gaze that non-white people have borne in public spaces of colonized territories, but also of the discrimination and segregation that they suffered in their own countries:

I move slowly in the world, accustomed now to seeking no longer for upheaval. I progress by crawling. And already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am fixed. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality. I am laid bare. I feel, I see in those white faces that it is not a new man who has come in, but a new kind of man, a new genus. Why, it's a Negro! (2008: 87)

Pita even harbours the false idea that he had felt more comfortable in the countryside, while the real fact is that the core of his trauma resides in the countryside, where he could not enjoy a free childhood due to his hyperarousal symptoms. In Wellington, Pita tries to free himself from his deep trauma of “rage, hunger, hiding in trees, waiting, lying awake and listening in the dark; from dreams of finding his mother dead, strangled, chopped in half with an axe” (139-140), and does not trust Pakeha people, who look at him “as though they thought he was lying to them even when he hadn't said anything” (170). The fact is that Pita becomes a ghostly figure throughout the narrative because he does not describe his mental pain to anyone. Pita's psychological condition precludes a good relationship with his brothers and sisters, who abhor his constant control over their lives.

Tu not only narrates a historic text firmly located in time and place but also describes the impotence and inferiority complex of the Māori community in the urban environment of New Zealand, on whose fringes they are made to dwell only on account of their race. Herman claims the trauma that these people suffer as follows:

Trauma impels people both to withdraw from close relationships and to seek them desperately. The profound disruption in basic trust, the common feelings of shame, guilt, and inferiority, and the need to avoid reminders of the trauma that might be found in social life, all foster withdrawal from close relationships. (1992: 56)

This description can be clearly linked to Pita's mental condition; he is unable to establish a successful romantic relationship with Jess, a working-class Pakeha woman with whom he has fallen in love, because he desperately tries to control their feelings so as to create some sense of safety and dominate his permanent fears. Pita consoles himself with the acceptance that Jess could never be anything but his dream, "not even when the world was free," a phrase which runs like a refrain throughout the novel (38, 119, 160, 185).

Likewise, Pita always bears in mind his uncle's words about the attitude and effort that Māori people must demonstrate in order to share some of the Pakeha privileges: "the brown man has to be twice as good as the white man in order to be equal" (105). Eventually, a turning point in the novel is reached when Pita joins the Ngāti Pōneke Club because, for the first time in the narrative, he feels comfortable and enjoys participating in Māori performances. Pita and his family are invited to become part of the Ngāti Pōneke Club by Fred, a mate of his father in the First World War. There, Pita can keep their Māori customs and traditions alive and it appears that his mental condition changes for the better. He describes his belonging to the Club as "an end to starvation" because here he feels safe and confident in contrast to the city, where he feels so ignorant, and up-in-a-tree (88). He starts to build a new personal myth, helped by his renovated pride in Māori culture and his position in it. Pita is warned by Fred of the charms and temptations that the city offers to young Māori people due to their loneliness:

With no one to befriend them they seek out unworthy companions and become captives of the unscrupulous. They become the destitute, inhabiting the vilest of quarters. The evil, liquor, becomes their companion by day and by night, and with it comes immorality, and disease of both body and mind. (42)

The prospects of Māori people in the city are very scarce, as they often end up feeling bereft and abandoned in this urban space. Pita's family becomes part of the Club's welfare committee, whose main aim is the creation of a space in Wellington where all Māori can meet and support one another in this new and hostile environment that systematically labels their culture and traditions as inferior. This organization, based on traditional *marae* concepts and whose name comes from the cultural leader and politician Āpirana Ngata, also contributes with money and services to assisting other Māori people suffering from the effects of economic depression. It is a kind of oasis in a Pakeha discriminatory Wellington; in the club Māori can practice their culture and keep their identity. The club, which still exists today, began as a way of fostering 'a pride of race' in young Māori. Eventually, emboldened by his uncle's words that "[m]aybe fighting in their war will make the brown man equal to the white man" (155-56), Pita decides to join the 28th Māori Battalion to escape his fears and traumas. He enlists against the wishes of his family, who remind him of the mental condition of his father after the First World War. Although he does not want to join this war, he internalizes the thought that this is the only way in which they can gain equality and full citizenship in this new environment.

The traumatic impact of war upon the character of Tu is also illustrated through the horrible deeds he encounters during his participation in it, which takes place approximately between August 1943 and December 1945. When Tu arrives at the Maadi Camp, in Egypt, the base and headquarters of the 2nd NZ Division where the

battalions are preparing for combat, he faces death for the first time when, during practice, something goes wrong and live ammo starts falling short. Subsequently, four men are killed and others are wounded from a barrage of live ammo, which leads Tu to confess: “that was my first sight of men gunned down. It made me sick. Our poor Battalion. No one could say what went wrong, or no one would. We couldn’t make sense of it (44). In this part of the story, Grace denounces the futility of warfare: as this four men, murdered by their own comrades in one of their exercises, clearly show, in a war innocent people can easily die for nothing. Yet, at this early stage of the conflict, Tu must cling to his belonging to the Māori Battalion and invoke the traditional concept of *mana* that warriors allegedly gained through warfare in precolonial times, if only to overcome this absurd loss. After that, the 28th Battalion set off for southern Italy, to begin the entry into the country with other Allied troops and free it from German occupation forces. Allied divisions had landed in Sicily, the Italian fascist leader Benito Mussolini had been removed from power, and the new Italian military government of General Pietro Badoglio had opened negotiations with the Allies, leading to Italy’s surrender and withdrawal from the war with the armistice signed in September 1943. Next, a new stage of the war started and the Nazis, who had been previously allied to the government of Mussolini, became enemies to be thrown out of the country. The Italians welcomed the Allied troops as liberators from a dictatorial regime whose foreign policy and war strategies had proved ruinous for the country, but were overwhelmed by the hunger and poverty resulting from the devastation of their houses under heavy bombings.

One of the first missions of the Māori Battalion will be to take a road through the mountains to Orsogna which is occupied by the Germans because they are sustaining many casualties in the Allied forces. By the end of the battle many soldiers are dead and

Tu feels proud, not because he has killed men but because “I was able to do what I was meant to do. I didn’t fall short of doing the job I set out to do, and it’s as though I’ve now passed a test, become a true soldier justified in his existence at the front” (84). Tu thinks that Māori have done their job to demonstrate their skill in the battlefield to white men, and justifies killing in war as a kind of job: “It’s what has to be done so that you can keep on living. It’s what you must do again and again. It’s real. In your own heart you have to be as resilient as your blade. What job it is” (82). Although his words seem to be uttered by a professional soldier who takes his military task as a simple job, at this moment he does not understand the brutality of war: he is already psychologically damaged, and the ghosts of war haunt him once and again: “We began talking about *kēhua* we had encountered. These were ghosts that we’d seen ourselves [...] or ones we’d been told about” (83). Tu starts hearing, even when awake, awful sounds in his head, which are “accompanied by screams and the noise as of a moaning animal being pulled from the bog by horse and chain. These are the worst sounds I’ve heard in all the sounds of war so far” (84).

In 1946, the American War Department released a psychiatric document about psychiatric disorders in the Second World War by doctors Appel and Beebe. It talked specifically about the psychiatric breakdown suffered by the American soldiers who had fought in the harsh battles at Cassino and Anzio in Italy. They concluded that the fact of these soldiers knowing that they could be killed or mutilated at any moment imposed a psychological effort so great that it caused them to break down. They found a relationship between the intensity and duration of soldiers’ exposure and the magnitude of their trauma: “men will break down in direct relation to the intensity and duration of their exposure. Thus, psychiatric casualties are as inevitable as gunshot and shrapnel wounds in warfare” (1946: 1470).

The war continues and Tu begins to question the Māori role in this war: “what little reasons there are for what we do” (110). Furthermore, two thirds of the Māori Battalion who went to this battle have been killed. In one of these raids, Tu and his cousin Matey are knocked by a blast, and thrown into a ditch where Matey lands on top of Tu, nearly drowning him:

I had to shove him off, get my face out of the bog, spitting and gasping for air and wondering how I came to be still alive. But Matey didn't move, didn't speak, and it took me a little while to realize he was a goner [...]. It took me a little while to realize the blood pouring all over me wasn't my own. I was lying in a ditch, mud-covered but unhurt, my cousin dead on top. (129-30)

After witnessing the death of his cousin and tasting the mixture of his cousin's blood and mud in that ditch, Tu experiences an intense feeling of guilt for being a survivor of this outrage. This terrible incident provokes in him psychosomatic disorders, such as nightmares and the incapacity to verbalize the situation that he and his comrades are undergoing. At this precise moment, he feels remorse for the pain he is inflicting and witnessing, and asks his mates to burn his notebooks because he does not want anyone to read what he has written in them. Above all, he realizes the sad transformation that he and his Māori comrades are suffering in this war:

We could all be dead men [...]. We should be dead after all that had happened. Yes, we could be an assembly of the dead who, if touched by the light of the sun which we had not seen for days, would melt back into earth's formations. After all, we were not now who were before. [...] Now we were pale ghosts of men whose bones were coming through to live on the outsides of our skins. [...] It wasn't the known world, so why shouldn't it have been inhabited by ghosts? Why should we not have been those ghosts? (178-79)

In this excerpt, Tu explains how these men have lost contact with reality and experience many postwar post-traumatic symptoms, such as numbing, dissociation, psychosomatic disorders, hyperarousal, unbelonging, nightmares, and the incapacity to articulate the situation they are living. In this unknown world, they have become hollow men who have lost contact with reality out of their very unwillingness to face up to so much barbarity.

In Chapter 30, titled AWOL, which means “absent without leave,” Tu’s nightmares continue, and he sees the ghost of his father with his face covered in blood calling him Te Hokowhitu-a-Tu. He thinks that his father has come to take him to the world of the dead, and is not at all surprised due to his state of numbness. In fact, it is Rangi who is calling him to tell him that their brother Pita has died. After Pita’s death, Rangi is deeply traumatized and drinks heavily in order to get dissociated from so much pain and bring about the much-desired numbing that can alone allow him to forget the loss of his brother and his very sense of helplessness. Tu wishes Rangi would go with Uncle Ju to their mountain for a while, to camp out in the quiet of the hills. However, he knows that Rangi would never leave him, nor their cousins, in that awful setting. Later on, the Māori Battalion marches out of Cassino. At this point of the war, many of the members of the Battalion “have developed nervous conditions and have been hospitalized too” (212). Most of them are woken at nights by their noisy dreams, and Tu describes the Battalion as “a pack of skeletons who could hardly recognize each other,” and asserts that they “were all a bit mad in the head as well” (213). They are unable to cope with the overwhelming experiences they are undergoing in this war. Consequently, they are deeply traumatized and develop “hyperarousal” as a result of their continuous expectation of danger. As William P. Nash explains:

arousal is necessary to adapt to threats, but arousal beyond a certain optimal point is toxic. Hyperarousal reduces the efficiency of cognition and memory [...], and may make it more difficult to make sense out of and master a given situation. Excessive arousal can also promote physical damage to certain neurons in the brain, a process known as “excitotoxicity” [...]. Excitotoxicity from excessive arousal has been implicated in the degeneration of the brain in several mental disorders. It may also be a mechanism by which traumatic stress damages neurons in the brain essential for overcoming fear and integrating traumatic experiences and memories. (in Figley and Nash 2011: 53)

As regards Māori participation in the occupation of Monte Cassino, Tu concludes that the only plan that had a chance of success in damaging the German superior defensive position there was carried out two months later, this time in suitable weather. This plan included air support, the surprise factor and soldiers on the ground to set the enemy back:

I know now that in Southern Italy, in and around Orsogna and Cassino, the New Zealand Army, and all our battalions, took part in the most stupid and meaningless sector of the whole business [...]. We were left in mid-winter with not enough of anything to do the jobs we were sent to do, abandoned on roads and snowbound ridges, on railways, in mud and on mountainsides and in the mess of a town. It wasn't until our whole force was fought to a standstill, after all this experimenting was over, that the real plan was formulated, which would take the Allied Army beyond Cassino to final victory. (277)

The commander of the New Zealand Division was Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg. It was he who ordered this frontal offensive action on the Monte Cassino monastery, in spite of the fact that he had been warned by Major-General Francis Tucker of the misconception of the plan. General Tucker opposed the frontal attack and

recommended applying blockbuster bombs from the air because Monte Cassino was “a modern fortress and must be dealt with modern means” (in Clement 2015: 172). Then, on 17 February 1944, Freyberg decided to mount a larger-scale attack on a wider front directly on the monastery and, although the commanders on the spot said that there was not enough room between the huge crevices and steps and slopes to deploy their battalion in the attack, Freyberg insisted and gave the order that at the same time the 2nd New Zealand Division should attack in the Rapido valley. The heavy rain that had fallen from 4 February onwards had only worsened the situation, with much of the valley under water rendering it quite impracticable to tanks and other armored vehicles. The force chosen to initiate this mission was the 28th Māori Battalion, but the attack proved to be ineffective and resulted in many casualties due to the better position that the Germans enjoyed on the ground. This frontal offensive included different actions and resulted in the Gurkhas soldiers from Nepal losing nearly all the commanders of the company and nearly 250 soldiers. The Māori Battalion lost 130 out of 200 soldiers during the assault on Cassino railway station. In consequence, Freyberg had no other option but to admit that the attack was over. It was the worst attack of the entire campaign, because in this offensive some of the Allies’ best troops had been murdered in vain.

In *Monte Cassino: the Story of One of the Hardest-Fought Battles of World War Two*, Matthew Parker explains that the officer James Aikman Cochrane, always called Peter, was there on the day of the allied bombing and assault on Monte Cassino monastery, and claimed that “Cassino was our first experience of an ‘allied’ battle and we did not like it. We could and did respect our fellow soldiers of all nationalities, but the command structure and staff work seemed to us below par” (2003: 195-96). These accusations of flawed tactical decisions are relevant because, before the plan to combine

an aerial bombardment with an infantry offensive, General Tucker had suggested an attack through the French position to flank the monastery from the mountains. However, Tucker became sick and Freyberg made the mistake of believing that the apparently short distance between the established allied position and the monastery could be covered with a single decisive attack. It was this misconception that explained his decision to implement a frontal assault at Cassino, which was easily defended by the Germans thanks to their well-established position there. *Tu* depicts the terrible conditions that soldiers from colonized territories endured:

Then we noticed the steel helmets at the head of each grave and the small boots at each end, and realized that they were the graves of Gurkha soldiers. Many of them died on ol' man's chest after eight days and nights in cruel conditions, and when it came time to withdraw they were so beggared that they had to be pushed and hit and shoved to get them down off the mountain. (221)

This quote testifies to the sad end of many Nepalese soldiers of the Gurkha battalions who were fighting for western democracies, in spite of the fact that democracy meant nothing to them, since Nepal was a feudal autocracy closed off from the outside world, where education was forbidden. In Parker's work there is also an interview with a Gurkha veteran, in which he clearly states that no one told him that a war had started and, "astonishingly, nearly a year passed before his British commanding officer let him know that a war was happening, and that he was on his way to fight in it" (2003: 158-59).

The fact that Freyberg is recognized as a war hero in New Zealand is considered to be a serious offence by many Māori in the light of the decisions he made regarding them. Although it is true that Freyberg ordered the bombing of the monastery, he did so after having sent the Māori Battalion on a suicidal mission. The ultimate consequences

were the many unnecessary deaths that the Māori community suffered. Tu tells Rimini and Benedict that the more he reads and discovers, the more he understands “how ad hoc our battles round Cassino were, how ill-conceived, and how much to do with the whim and fancy and desiderata of politicians – as well as the blundering, indecision, failure and ego of high command” (277).

Eventually, the Germans leave Monte Cassino and the 28th Battalion marches to their ‘pick-up’ place practically unopposed. After the recovering of Monte Cassino Rangi has the possibility of returning back home, but refuses to have his name in the ballot to come back because he wants to protect Tu. In Chapter 35, titled “Bleed,” the reader discovers how Rangi manages to take Tu out of combat. Subsequently, Tu wakes up in the hospital of Senigallia and tries to make sense of what happened to him to end up in there. He remembers a German Tank and Rangi running off and destroying it with a grenade. Later, he hears his brother Rangi calling his name Te Hokowhitu-a-Tu and, when he is running towards Rangi’s call, Tu is shot by a Luger, a German pistol that his brother also possesses. Tu falls down and someone carefully removes his clothes and cuts him precisely with a bayonet, making a sufficient wound to take him out of battle. In hospital, Tu continues to suffer the recurrent nightmares in which he sees blood everywhere:

There are mountains which bleed, bleeding rivers, bloody snow like markings on sheep’s backs, red flowers that push themselves up out of bloodiest fields. There’s ruby mud. There are rusting hill-slopes, cities of garnet and ruddy angels, where men are meat that low and bellow and bray. All this I see. Blood inhabits my dreams. There are tourniquets made with gun barrels, olive boughs, arm-bones of the dead. (235)

These nightmares, evocative of the fear and destitution of war, depict aspects of psychological trauma, such as intense fear, helplessness and loss of control. He has

witnessed too much suffering and blood in this military campaign and feels guilty because he cannot forget the fate of his cousins and brothers, as this has become a huge psychological burden. He suffers post-war trauma and is haunted by the images of the bloodstained relatives whom they could not rescue, as was the case of Bobby in *Cousins*. Furthermore, in Senigallia Tu writes in his war diary that Rangi wounded him to take him out of the fighting, and feels lost now that he is not a warrior and is far from the Māori Battalion: “who am I now that I cannot be Te Hokowhitu-a-Tu?” (236). Here, Tu asks himself the question that for Fanon is symptomatic of the trauma of colonial non-being: “because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: ‘In reality, who am I?’” (1963: 250). Now, Tu feels despondent because he thinks he is a fraud and will no longer have the pride of his Battalion; he feels ashamed because his wounds are dishonest and is in hospital with many men that actually have serious injuries: “Now I’m an impostor. Being removed from my job by dishonest wounds bears heavily on me [...]. I envy the true wounds of the men around me, most of which are much worse than my own. There are times when I envy them their deaths” (237). Tu is ashamed because he wrongly assumes that his brothers have decided that he is not ‘man enough’ to fight, and is furious that Rangi’s actions have deprived him of being a member of his Battalion. Later on, though, Tu admits that he has forgiven his brothers, because they had no choice in what they did. They had to return Tu to Ma, just as Pita had returned a German soldier boy to his mother. Months later, Tu remains in hospital and suffers pneumonia and hepatitis, but his major fear is to go back home and be treated like a hero. He also tells about his mental condition: “I don’t want anyone to know of the clamour that goes on in my head, the places that thought and remembering take me to,

for fear of where I'll end up" (238-39). The war ends while Tu is in a convalescent home in Santo Spirito. At that time, although he still has headaches and giddiness from time to time, his main problem is the effect of jaundice on his mood: "I must say I'm not in a frame of mind to go home either" (241). The last blow, however, comes later when he learns that Rangi has been found dead on the road to Rimini. Tu will later rejoin his Battalion in Florence, meet a girl called Maddalena and consider staying in Italy, but knows that he cannot leave his cousin Anzac to return home without him "taking so many backhome deaths with him" (255). The war has deeply damaged Tu, who feels a profound sense of unbelonging: "A feeling of impermanence inhabits me" (256).

The Māori Battalion arrived in Wellington on 23 January 1946 and they were welcomed as returning heroes, not only by their *iwi* and *whānau*, but also by the Ngāti Pōneke Club and welcome parties. *Tapu*-lifting and mourning ceremonies were then held, such as the Māori custom of *kawe mate*, which consists of taking the deceased person's memory home. As is described in the novel:

The calls that brought us forward were coming from the crowd from all directions – from the old women of all tribes as we made our way in. They were calling the ancestors to accompany the spirits of the dead, as we, the men of Tūmatauenga, bore these deaths home to them [...]. All around was the calling and crying, the keening and wailing, and the pouring forth of sorrow for the faces not among us [...]. Following this time of lamentation were the ceremonies, prayer and incantation that freed us from the tapu of war and brought us out from under the mantle of Tūmatauenga, handing the men of the Māori Battalion back to the people. There were speeches and songs. There were actioned songs and haka by costumed groups that had come from all over the country, foremost being performances by our Ngāti Pōneke Club, their voices as fine as ever. (263-64)

When describing this welcome ceremony celebrated in the wharf, Tu sadly states: “Of the men of my generation there were none there to greet us at our home-place” (266). The amount of Māori casualties in war was extraordinary, and the majority of Māori soldiers were not only psychologically traumatized and physically injured, but also lost many of their friends and relatives. To cap it all, they came to realize that they were still regarded as second-class citizens in Aotearoa. Lieutenant-Colonel James Henare, the commander of the Māori Battalion bid farewell to his men with these words: “Go back to our mountains, go back to our people, go back to our *marae*. But this is my last command to you all; stand as Māori, stand as Māori, stand as Māori.”⁵⁹ Many Māori soldiers found it very testing to settle back into civilian life because they felt people could not understand the things they had seen and lived through in that terrible war. Tu cannot think of a life without his Battalion, because only these men know what this awful war was like.

When Tu arrives in Wellington, he believes that someone should have warned them of the loss and death they were going to undergo because, in his mind, there was never a question of not going to war, even though he knew so little of its causes. Janet Wilson (2008: 94) affirms that, after returning to New Zealand, Tu is in a maimed and deracinated condition, just as his father was after coming back from the First World War. The novel shows twenty year-old Tu returning from war after having lost his elder brothers and many comrades as a devastated man who has realized that there is no reward for all of his tremendous sacrifices. One of the central questions of the novel is now posed: how has the initial feeling of pride and honor turn into a trauma of violence and loss? Tu’s father returned from the First World War deeply damaged and traumatized, and now it is Tu who mirrors his father’s story of mental fragmentation

59 <http://28maoribattalion.org.nz/story-of-the-28th/after-the-war>

and must face the trauma of having lost his brothers and cousins on the battlefield of the Second World War. This character denounces the sad reality that Māori soldiers had to experience when they returned to Aotearoa only to realize that the equality that had hoped for during the war had been quickly forgotten by the Pakeha authorities. And yet, the main source of Tu's trauma is no other than his feeling that his brothers and comrades have died for a falsehood, in vain. All of them expected to be treated as equals after the war but, when Tu returns to Aotearoa, he sadly realizes that all the prejudices and discrimination that Māori bore in New Zealand before the war are still alive and kicking, and are there to stay:

On the way down the gangway after the berthing of the *Dominion Monarch*, just as the last of our Battalion disembarked, a voice drifted down to us from up on deck, 'Back to the pā⁶⁰ now boys?' it called –which I think about sums it up: Now that you're home, know your place Māori boy. Yet during our time away the other Kiwi battalions had been more than pleased to have us at their side. These things were quickly forgotten.
(279)

Tu is deeply traumatized because he can no longer recognize himself within Master/Slave structures. On the one hand, he cannot identify with the white descendants of the colonizers with whom he has fought in the war and, on the other, he cannot stay in his Māori *whānau* because of his feeling of guilt as the only survivor of his brothers. Tu's mind has drastically changed in relation to the Māori participation in the war; he wonders whether Māori people will ever be able to benefit from their sacrifice, as Māori authorities and elders had argued. He also understands that 'history' is controlled by the white people in command, because it is they who actually construct the historic discourse in order to maintain themselves in a position of power while keeping the

⁶⁰ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry on 'pā': 2. (noun) fortified village, fort, stockade, screen, blockade, city.

colonized 'others' subjugated. At this point of the novel, Tu understands, like Shane in *Baby No-Eyes*, that they have been damaged by a colonial structure that has stripped their past stories off. They are thus lost as Fanon described in "The Fact of Blackness": "Without a Negro Past, without a Negro future, it was impossible for me to live my Negrohood. Not yet white, no longer wholly black, I was damned" (2008: 106). When Tu comprehends the Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic at work in New Zealand, he is able to better understand the trauma that it has generated, not only in himself, but in the whole Māori community.

The white establishment failed to keep its welfare promises, and many Māori who had fought in the war consequently lost themselves in alcohol, far from their families, wondering what they had actually fought for. That is the case of Tu; he and his cousin Anzac decide to stay for two months under their everlasting mountain. As Tu complains, there were very few of them by then, since many had died or had gone to the cities in search of work: "there was no work and we didn't want to be a burden on the home people" (266). They eventually return to Wellington, and Tu stays at Ma's house, where he finishes his last notebook and thinks of the traumatic legacy that the war has left him: "a few scars, some reconstructed teeth and a mended jaw, a gammy arm that is good enough to get by with, a troublesome stomach, exploding dreams, sometimes tremors, and a kind of madness in his heart and legs that won't allow him to be still" (266-67). It is due to this severe physical and mental condition that he decides not to stay there for long. Tu does not want his family to be the victim of his mental condition, as his father had previously been: "I knew I was no good to anyone and didn't want to upset a peaceful household with my drunkenness, or to allow others to suffer the consequences of a choice I have made. I'd rather be dead than to do that. I move on" (271). Thus, he decides to leave the city and retire back in his rural *marae*. He is once

again in search of his Māori roots, after having fought a Pakeha war thousands of miles away. When he returns to his *marae* in the mountain, his bloody nightmares continue, and feel as if those traumatic events were happening in the very moment of the dream. It is then that Tu attempts to repress and avoid re-living those traumatic memories with the help of alcohol, a common strategy to prompt the periods of numbness and dissociation that, according to Herman, “keep the traumatic experience walled off from ordinary consciousness” and “prevent the integration necessary for healing” (1992: 45). As was mentioned before, Tu’s mental condition is similar to Bobby’s in *Cousins*. His memories inevitably push him into a painful liminal space; for the next couple of years, he wanders from place to place looking for the company of Battalion pals, as they are the only men who can understand his traumatic state:

These were the men whose eyes I could look into and find understanding, where I could detect a kind of knowing reflected back to me [...]. Also, these were the men who understood how misshapen we had become, and how unable most of us were to manoeuvre back into places where we had once belonged. This had become our belonging now, with each other. (272)

Tu cannot carry out a normal life nor keep a permanent job, because now and then he must go to hospital on account of his damaged psychological and physical condition.

To make matters even worse, Tu has a relationship with a girl called Doreen, but he treats her badly, just as his father had mistreated his mother, thus wonderfully encapsulating the contradictory nature of traumatized survivors’ relationships.

Because of their difficulty in modulating intense anger, survivors oscillate between uncontrolled expressions of rage and intolerance of aggression in any form. Thus, on the one hand, this man felt compassionate and protective toward others and could not stand the thought of anyone being harmed, while on the other hand, he was explosively angry

and irritable toward his family. His own inconsistency was one of the sources of his torment. (Herman 1992: 56)

Furthermore, due to the long-term effects of his severe trauma Tu, like his father, has violent impulses and suicidal drives: “One morning I woke up, sick and stinking, on the kitchen floor with blood up my arm, broken glass scattered and a hole in the wall. I wanted to be dead” (272). He suffers emotional numbing and often feels anger, irritability and depression. Once the war is over, Tu feels that an important part of himself has died, and consequently wishes that he were dead. Besides, he feels detached from the others and can only experience a very restricted range of emotions; he thinks that he is unable to love and feels utterly powerless. Inexorably trapped in his acting-out process, he keeps on reliving his war traumatic experiences. The reason why he unconsciously refuses to work through his trauma is his feeling that, if he overcomes his past in a manner that allows him to connect again with his present life and an open future, he is betraying the memory of his brothers and mates and breaking the psychological bond that keeps all of them together. His blockage is very similar to those experienced by Kura in relation to her cousin Riripeti and Te Paania with the spirit of her little Baby. When Tu acknowledges his suicidal drives and understands that, unable to come to terms with his feelings, he might gravely wound Doreen, he decides to confine himself in a lunatic asylum to protect the ones he loves: “If I wanted to beat on walls there were walls there that I could beat on. Any shouting that I did was easily drowned out by the noise of others. My shakes, my blues, my raving dreams were mine and mine alone [...]. I had put myself in a war, in a place, in a time. There had to be a legacy” (274). This asylum will become some kind of refuge for Tu, a transitional space halfway between his acting-out and working-through processes. Once there, he receives the visit of his nephew and niece, whom he last saw long time ago. Ma tries to sign him

out, but he refuses to leave the asylum, as he is still afraid of a traumatic condition that he cannot possibly control:

I laugh now, having read through the notebooks, regarding my boy's impressions of what it would be like to be scared, and of the ideas that I had of fear being simply a physical thing. [...] However I've discovered terror to be a lonely and awful state, little to do with day-to-day business of war as far as I'm concerned. (274)

Rimini and Benedict go to the sanatorium to visit him, and Tu is given a shock when seeing them; now he knows that he will live with the ghosts of the past for ever: "You are your fathers' memorials, the likeness being so strong that I thought I was being visited by ghosts – which wouldn't be the first time" (13). It is some time after the visit from Ma, Rimini and Benedict that Tu understands that, if he wants to work through his trauma, he must place himself in an environment of peace and spirituality that can allow him to turn his traumatic memories into some kind of coherent narrative, and thus come to terms with the ghosts of the past. As Herrero explains:

If the traumatized individual wants to work through his/her trauma, s/he must be able to articulate/verbalize what happened, that is, must establish some critical distance between him/herself, the traumatic event and its loss so that these phantoms can finally be specified and mastered. (2016:102)

Accordingly, Tu decides to leave the asylum and move back to his *whenua* under his Mount Taranaki, because it is there that he can find the inner peace necessary to reconnect with his roots and work through his trauma with the help of his ancestors and ancient Māori cosmology. This desire to be again under the protection of the mother land that made Tu so happy in the past chimes with Stuart Hall's description of the feeling that "returning to 'lost origins,' to be once again with the mother, to go back to the beginning" (1990: 236) inevitably brings about.

As was mentioned in previous chapters, Māori identify and introduce themselves as *tangata whenua*, that is, people of the land, and their names often convey some information about their origin, such as the canoe that brought their ancestors to Aotearoa and any landmark of their region, like a river or a mountain. Moreover, Māori believe they come from Papatūānuku, the earth mother, which receives them upon their death. When, after the burial of their brother, Tu and Rangi talk about life after death and the Māori and Christian religions, Tu finally imagines his homeland and family reunions there full of signing and laughter. These thoughts console him as he concludes that, at that time, the only thing in which he believes is ‘earth’:

one day, if I live long enough, I might decide that this here on earth is all we get, that there is no afterlife – no God on high with a long grey beard putting ticks and crosses in a book. I may also decide that the ancestors have gone no further than the earth who is called Papatūānuku. Earth is something I believe in (whatever that means). (203-204)

This paragraph testifies to the fact that Māori emotional and spiritual connection to the land has a central place in Māori identity. For instance, Mount Taranaki, a cone-shaped peak that stands alone in the far west of New Zealand’s North Island, is an intrinsic part of Tu’s spirit, because Māori identity is closely associated with the physical location of tribal boundaries. For Tu, this mount stands for the past he is entitled to, and for what he can potentially become in the future. Italy is a long way from Aotearoa. Yet, it is there that Tu refers to the Taranaki Mountain as his *whānau*, that is, he carries a living entity within him which also conveys where his roots are located. He links himself to his ancestral *whenua* through his mountain, which helps him to identify with his ancestors:

I am my mountain because my mountain is my ancestor, and by my mountain I am identified. My mountain too has his colours, his contours, has imposing presence. He is ever-present in my life. As though painted inside me, he is with me wherever I go. (112)

Māori connection with nature is also shown in the way in which Māori soldiers refer to the mountain near the village of Cassino as “Ol’ man” (114) or “ol’ fella” (110). They respect *whenua* everywhere and admire other people’s mountains, as they remind them of their own mountains in Aotearoa. The reason why Māori venerate *whenua* is that it provides food and resources to sustain people. This concept of *whenua* is crucial in Grace’s novel, also as regards the Maori presence in Italy: in the Second World War many Italians lost everything they possessed, and many of them died of starvation, which led Māori soldiers to empathize with them and regard the recovery of these people’s *whenua* as a vital must.

After spending some time in his ancestral land, Tu’s hands lose their shakes. He describes himself living the life of an old man –although he is only 38 years old– who writes when he feels like being alone. Nonetheless, it is in this situation of isolation that Tu can explore his own self and discover parts of it that he did not know before. In this liminal space he is not constrained by the prejudices of New Zealand’s society and now, close to his ancestral roots, he is free to reconcile himself with his past and bring together all the fragmented parts of his former self. It is in this environment that he understands that any individual of the community is a vital part of their collective cultural traumatic legacy, and that the only way to overcome his trauma is by telling his story, not only to his family, but to the whole Māori community. Tu realizes that only when the Māori community is fully aware of what happened in the war and its consequences will they be able to assimilate and work through their collective trauma. He consequently encapsulates the Derridean stage of mid-mourning, as he feels the need to incorporate to his life the ghosts of Rangi, Pita and his cousins, knowing that these absences cannot be forgotten. Following LaCapra’s words that “absence, along with the anxiety it brings, could be worked through only in the sense that one may learn better to

live with it and not convert it into a loss or lack that one believes could be made good” (2001: 65), Tu has finally understood that the first stage of his mourning process is to ontologize the ghosts of his relatives, to make them present in his life and thus be able to start the healing process that can alone smooth his mental scars. He must do away with his previous Pakeha vision of the world and go back to a primal Māori stage where he can encounter his ghosts/ancestors. Only in this realm will he be able to integrate the ghosts of all of his relatives and comrades into his life, and thus maintain an ongoing conversation with them that will prevent him from forgetting the reasons why Māori fought in that war and, more importantly, that the promise of equality that they received from the Pakeha government was nothing but a lie. Once he acquires the resilience necessary to work through his trauma more effectively, he will be able to come back to his family, without fear and with enough strength to try and build a better future for them. For many years, Tu believed that living far from his *whānau* would protect his family from his rage and mental instability, but he finally realizes that, if he really wants to retrieve his mental and spiritual health, he must become part of the *whānau*, of his Maori roots and culture.

The Therapeutic Effect of Narrative

Equally as powerful as the desire to deny atrocities is the conviction that denial does not work. Folk wisdom is filled with ghosts who refuse to rest in their graves until their stories are told. Murder will out. Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims. The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma.

Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*.

As Irene Visser aptly reminds us, “a crucial concern in the decolonizing project has been the debate about early trauma theory’s deconstructionist approach to narrative, in particular its aesthetics of the indeterminacy or impossibility of meaning” (2016: 13). This is important because it refers to literature’s potential to prompt recovery in the post-traumatic stage. As has often been stated, early trauma theorists, in particular scholars such as Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, posed the theory of “undecidability” or “unspeakability,” which clearly questioned narrative’s power to represent trauma. To give but some examples, events such as the Holocaust and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are regarded as simply impossible to verbalize and articulate. As Shoshana Felman put it:

Testimony seems to be composed of bits and pieces of a memory that has been overwhelmed by occurrences that have not settled into understanding or remembrance, acts that cannot be construed as knowledge nor assimilated into full cognition, events in excess of our frames of reference. (1995: 16)

Moreover, although Caruth claimed that “trauma [...] requires integration, both for the sake of testimony and for the sake of cure,” she also asserted that “the transformation of the trauma into a narrative memory that allows the story to be verbalized and communicated, to be integrated into one’s own and others’ knowledge of the past, may lose both the precision and the force that characterizes traumatic recall” (1995: 153). As this critic saw it, narrative reinforces an indefinite state, thus neglecting the possibility of improvement and recovery. Nonetheless, from the mid-1990s onwards, this theory began to be seriously questioned, among others by psychiatrist Judith Herman who, in her book *Trauma and Recovery*, offered an interesting alternative to the former trauma proposal. Herman regards narrative as an empowering and productive therapeutic tool in the treatment of trauma victims because, as she argues, the reconstruction of the trauma

story undoubtedly contributes to healing and recovery: “This exploration provides a context within which the particular meaning of the trauma can be understood” (1992: 176). Therefore, trauma narrative enables the reconstruction of psychic fragmentation and the immersion in the process of trauma resolution. In tune with Herman’s ideas, Luckhurst claims that “trauma, in effect, issues a challenge to the capacities of narrative knowledge. In its shock impact trauma is anti-narrative, but it also generates the manic production of retrospective narratives that seek to explicate the trauma” (2008: 79). Thus, it could be asserted that the first step in order to overcome the traumatic condition is the capacity to articulate trauma experience, because it ensures that the traumatized person has gained control over her/his own narrative, thus paving the way for the healing of that trauma. Previous chapters have shown how oral tradition is quintessential to transmit the traces of Māori culture and start the process of trauma healing. Now, the focus will be on the potential that writing gives to trauma victims for recovering the control of their lives. Suzette A. Henke considers the writing of trauma as follows: “the act of life-writing serves as its own testimony and, in so doing, carries through the work of reinventing the shattered self as a coherent subject capable of meaningful resistance to received ideologies and effective agency in the world” (2000: xix).

Literature can actually be used, not only to express trauma, but also to analyze it. Even Caruth claimed that Freud employed literature to describe traumatic experiences. She concluded that

literature, like psychoanalysis, is interested in the complex relation between knowing and not knowing. And it is at the specific point at which knowing and not knowing intersect that the language of literature and the psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience precisely meet. (1996: 3)

LaCapra's distinction between writing trauma and writing about trauma must also be taken into consideration. According to this critic, "writing about trauma is an aspect of historiography related to the project of reconstructing the past as objectively as possible," while writing trauma "involves processes of acting-out, working over, and to some extent working through in analyzing and 'giving voice' to the past – processes of coming to terms with traumatic 'experiences'" (2001: 186). *Tu* might be given as an example of writing trauma, since the traumatic events of Tu's story fully determine and affect the process of working through the characters' trauma. In this novel, Grace accomplishes a critical revision of the western official version of the Second World War, and mixes the factual field of history with the field of narrative fiction so as to empower a peripheral Māori character who did not have the opportunity to convey his own perspective of the terrible facts that happened in that war. Thus, Grace gives Tu the chance to offer his own version of the war and the situation of Māori people in New Zealand at that time. Tu starts writing with the purpose of better understanding himself and what is happening around him, and introduces himself as an author who writes his war experiences in a diary that he put to paper while he was at the front.

When I first began the notes I intended them to be simple recordings of times and places, jottings to do with my journeys and experiences of war, which for me took place in Southern Italy. [...] But the notebooks came to mean much more to me than just somewhere where I could doodle a few dates and places names. (12-13)

Tu writes a war diary in which he bears testimony to the terrible loss of human lives, and offers his own version of what happened in the military campaign he was involved in, which keeps on haunting him to date. As LaCapra claims, in traumatic memory, the past can be "uncontrollably relived, it is as if there were no difference between it and the present" (2001: 89). One possible way to overcome trauma and make a clear

distinction between past and present is by expressing it in the form of narration. Telling a story gives the victim the opportunity to arrange the traumatic events in chronological order, thus breaking the circularity of trauma. Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman explain this circularity of trauma as follows:

the traumatic event, although real, took place outside the parameters of “normal reality,” such as causality, sequence, place and time. The trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after. This absence of categories that define it lends it a quality of “otherness,” a salience, a timelessness and a ubiquity that puts it outside the range of associatively linked experiences, outside the range of comprehension, of recounting and of mastery. Trauma survivors live not with memories of the past, but with an event that could not and did not proceed through its completion, has no ending, attained no closure, and therefore, as far as its survivors are concerned, continues into the present and is current in every respect. (1991: 69)

They also regard the telling of trauma as the best way to free trauma victims from their awful memories. Testimony is also seen as an essential element to begin the process of healing, because traumatized people “need to tell their stories in order to survive. There is, in each survivor, an imperative need to tell and thus to come to know one’s story” (Laub 1995: 63).

Trauma victims usually have no possibility to act owing to their situation of powerlessness. However, the act of writing is an intentional task that works to undo the psychological pain caused by the traumatic events. This act of narrating, writing in this case, allows survivors of trauma to claim and demand the ownership of their troublesome experiences instead of being just passive sufferers. It is resilience that allows trauma victims to become active agents in the planning of their future lives. In

the hospital of Senigallia, Tu writes about what happened in the past in order to discover how he has ended up in this place:

Today I'll write. I'll write because it'll help me sort out what took place and how it all happened. Now that I've begun to remember, there's nothing I can do to keep half-formed recollections from making their way into my head, and nothing to prevent these scraps from gathering themselves together and becoming whole memories. It's too late to forget. (232)

After some time putting the atrocities he experienced in war into words, he begins to give meaning and historical context to his formerly meaningless fragmented memories and understands that, although he cannot control past events, he can now define his present narrative. This retrospective effort allows for the reconstruction of the chaotic parts of his traumatic memory, and he goes as far as to admit that writing has put him in the narrator's position, with all the power that this entails, because now he is able to create and define reality through his own words: "I know what happened to me. Once I write it I know it will be true" (235). Now Tu must unwrap the bandages of violence and othering that cover up his trauma, just as Gran Kura removes the layers from the little ball which encapsulates her insidious trauma.

Writing is vital for groups of people that have been silenced due to their peripheral position in society. The open verbalization of painful events can help them to accept what happened and trigger the working through of their traumas as an ongoing process which provides them with mental stability. Herman describes the process of trauma recovery as having three major stages: "establishing safety, reconstructing the trauma story, and restoring the connection between survivors and their community" (1992: 3). According to this critic, after the re-establishment of safety, the traumatized person who desperately wants to recover must strive to reorganize the traumatic events, giving voice

to her/his shattering emotions and trying to integrate the fragmented episodes into a historical context. She asserts that the recounting of trauma is an essential stage in this recovery process, because post-traumatic refusal and dissociation can be counteracted by the “restorative power of truth-telling” (1992: 181). When traumatized people give public testimony of their trauma, the trauma story is transmuted from being shameful and embarrassing to an affirmation of the survivor’s self-respect and confidence. Thus, this public testimony, as Herman goes on to argue, is crucial because it triggers the last stage of trauma recovery, namely, the reestablishment of the social ties between traumatized people and their communities.

After coming back to Aotearoa from war, Tu is at the first stage of Herman’s classification; his physical safety has now been re-established. Now he can enter the second stage, that is, he can revise his war diaries, rearrange facts and rewrite what according to him happened so that he can finally reach the third stage, whereby he and his Māori community can become one and start working through their traumatic situation.

Never mind. I’ll write.

I’ll write to occupy time. I’ll write to keep fear and madness out of my heart. Writing will settle me, then I’ll rejoin my friends. Maybe there are words that I can find that will help me untangle the jumble of questions and contradictions to do with my experiences of the past two and a half years. (257-58)

The revision of his war diary functions as a catalyst for Tu’s change of attitude towards his traumatic condition. As Maria Root asserts:

The disorganization created by this upheaval motivates the individual to attempt to find meaning in the experience so that she or he can reorganize the experience and integrate

it into her or his perception of self, and self in relationship to others and the world. The greater the number of dimensions of security that are shattered, the bigger the task of reorganization. (1992: 260)

Tu discovers that, by creating a coherent story, he can adjust his traumatic memories within his present life, thereby mitigating the stagnation and fragmentation of his mind since he is now able to analyze them in a more objective way. Furthermore, he reads his own texts as a means to explore his inner self, in a desperate attempt to comprehend his feelings and fears more clearly. As Fanon put it: “It is through the effort to recapture the self and to scrutinize the self, it is through the lasting tension of their freedom that men will be able to create the ideal conditions of existence for a human world” (2008: 181). By carefully examining himself and his past he realizes that the colonial discourse of war glory and full citizenship for the Māori population has only caused untold harm to him and his people.

Tu’s thorough analysis of past events triggers his awareness of the Māori tendency to adapt to colonial narratives which neither represent them nor are beneficial for them. This new viewpoint frees Tu and gives him the necessary liberty to revise his past memories in a more accurate way. Now he begins to feel that he is the creator of his own present life, no longer the embodiment of an identity built up by colonial discourse. This new ability of Tu to create and develop a healing narrative subsequently allows for the revision of his colonial identity, which has caused him so much pain. Once Tu has freed himself from the colonial version of war, his narrative becomes more powerful.

The active role that Tu plays in the narration brings him to the last stage of Herman’s classification, as his testimony involves the recovery of both confidence and self-esteem. By the same token, his feelings of guilt and shame gradually disappear. In this process, Tu is enduring what Caruth believes is at the core of many traumatic narratives:

“a kind of double telling, the oscillation between a crisis of death and the correlative crisis of life: between the story of the unbearable nature of an event and the story of the unbearable nature of its survival” (1996: 7). Eventually, Tu is able to overcome this double crisis of life and death through the articulation of the public testimony of his trauma, which allows him to restore his connections with the Māori community and start the process of recovery. Laub claims that “repossessing one’s life story through giving testimony is itself a form of action, of change which one has to actually pass through, in order to continue and complete the process of survival” (1995: 70). In Tu’s case, it is only when he is able to utter the painful deeds of war and confront the loss of his brothers and cousins that he can actually face the mid-mourning stage and become a useful member of the Māori community.

John H. Harvey proposes a story-action model which includes the following set of events: “A major loss leads to the development of a story about or understanding of the loss, which leads to identifying possibilities for change, which leads to some sort of action that addresses the loss in some constructive way” (2002: 260). In tune with this, Tu’s narrative changes and evolves as his experiences transform and change him, as he struggles, is blasted, wounded and traumatized. Moreover, in this process Tu also learns how to disengage from the colonial narrative told to him as the one and only true story, which he submissively accepted at school in the absence of other options. He understands their traumatic legacy and actual neo-colonial situation, and feels entitled to write his story in order to inform his family and the whole Māori community of the lies spread by Pakeha in the past. Significantly, although the events told are especially painful to him, acknowledging them in his new narrative is less psychologically harmful than preserving the dominant colonial narrative. In the course of his self-reflection, Tu

realizes that the colonial discourse about equality that he learnt in his childhood was a falsehood emanated from an unethical government.

For a long time Tu has been unable to tackle his traumatic memories, but he eventually realizes that writing allows him to be honest with himself and his family. Exhausted as he was from the negative emotional energy that he accumulated by way of his desire to be alone and away from others, he now feels powerful enough to regain his own story through writing, and feels that he has recuperated his sense of agency, that he can be useful for his people. In his introduction to *Trauma a Social Theory* (2012), Alexander admits that the cultural construction of collective trauma is supported by individual experiences of pain and suffering, and that the victims of a collectivity react to traumatic events through the creation of stories: “A ‘we’ must be constructed via narrative and coding, and it is this collective identity that experiences and confronts the danger” (2012: 3). Tu’s current narrative allows him to discern what were the causes and effects that brought him to his traumatic situation. Subsequently, by acknowledging the terrible actions he committed in war, he will be forced to acknowledge fragmented parts of himself that he did not want to admit. When he shares his narrative with Rimini and Benedict, he undoubtedly has to remember events he is trying to overcome and, although this obviously causes him pain, it will eventually help him to work through his traumatic condition.

This therapeutic process enables Tu to distance himself from his traumatic memories, while coping with them at the same time. This new perspective changes his thoughts, his feelings, and the way in which he defines himself in relation to others and the personal tragedies he has lived through. For their part, Rimini and Benedict become quintessential in Tu’s process of healing: on the one hand, they function as witnesses of their uncle’s traumatic memories; on the other, this sharing contributes to granting their

uncle's story the external validation that can alone pave the way for his recovery. After having meditated on the purpose of Māori participation in the war, he concludes that there should never have been a Māori Battalion, as they were used by politicians and high command to achieve their own purposes.

No wonder it has taken Tu a long time to reach this conclusion. All the events that have happened, not only in war but also after the war, have been so overwhelming that Tu could not consciously acknowledge them as they occurred. After revising his notebooks he realizes that Māori were used by the high command as if they were playing marbles. They thought they were fighting for the pride of their race and for being equal citizens in their own country once and for all, but this proved to be a great mistake. The main reason why they went to war was an extended thought in the Māori community that, if their Battalion did not fight in that war, Māori would be shamed to death and never worthy of a good life. As Tu claims: "we would be doomed, scrapwood, unable to be citizens in our own land" (279). Afterwards he has to face up to a new situation, reconsider his previous thoughts about war, and enter a harsh process of transformation when he explains to his family and community that the men of the Māori Battalion were nothing but puppets in the hands of white people who sent them to an unnecessary death. By sharing his notebooks with his niece and nephew, Tu not only indicates that he needs to explain to future Māori generations how futile those battles were, but also that he has contributed to creating something useful for his community out of the destruction of that awful war.

They had gone to Europe to fight Nazism and the treatment they received upon their return was, paradoxically, the racial discrimination that the Allies side had confronted. The reality was that, after the war, they were not "able to take full part in peace" (279). In the light of this, Tu wants Rimini and Benedict not to commit the same mistakes that

he and his brothers made; that is why he decides to give them his war notebooks. In his final letter to them, he makes it clear that he is against all kinds of wars and that Māori young generations should not perpetuate their past mistakes, because the price paid was too high. The next Māori generations must on the contrary cherish their Māori culture and heritage as the only way to survive in the unfair white society of New Zealand. Tu pleads with them not to follow in the footsteps of their fathers or himself; if they concur with his plea, if they listen to his story of their *whakapapa*, this will ultimately endow his life with meaning.

If you agree I'll know there's a reason why I am alive, and even if I did not need words from me to persuade you, just knowing that I have lived to speak becomes worthwhile. Having kept the stories, which tell of your fathers, and having lived long enough to hand them over to you. I am now able to feel that I may not be an entirely useless piece of rubbish taking up space on the planet. (281)

In the end, Tu has understood that the *whakapapa* of his family is the key to the recovery from the trauma that war has left in them. He plans a trip to Italy with his family to pay homage to their dead relatives who were buried there, because this is another vital responsibility within Māori culture. Now, Tu is sure that the lives of his brothers cannot be forgotten, because their stories have been told. In tune with Herman's theory, we can affirm that the story that Tu has built "actually transforms the traumatic memory, so that it can be integrated into the survivor's life story" (1992: 175). Thus, traumatic narratives possess not only a personal therapeutic value, but a public and collective one as well, because Tu's personal testimony is inherently political and also involves the Māori collective memory of the war trauma. In his article "Culture, Trauma, Morality and Solidarity: The Social Construction of 'Holocaust' and Other Mass Murders," Alexander defends that some of the most important

developments in the post-World War II world had to do with the tackling of traumas, which expanded solidarity and broadened social criticism:

If traumas can be re-imagined and re-presented, the collective identity will shift. There will be a searching re-remembering of the collective past, solidarity can be expanded, and much needed civil repairs can be made. Only such a full enunciated trauma process can prevent the same terrors from ever happening again. (2016: 14)

Tu ends his last letter of the novel with a positive message of hope; he has become an author-narrator-reader who will keep on writing as a means to transform the world that surrounds him for the better:

It's good to be alive as I end this letter with a warmed-up pen, which I now mean to keep on using. I had forgotten my pen. In between planning and making a journey, and no matter what else happens, writing is what I'll do from now on. There are more stories to tell, more to pass on. When we return I'll rebuild the herd. I'll renovate the house and keep it warm for family. There's much to do as I end this letter with a warmed-up heart – and a new dream. I hope I have honoured my brothers. (281-82)

The final image of Tu returning to his *whānau* and rebuilding the herd and house is convincing evidence that he is on the path to recovery. Tu has come back to the community and shared the knowledge he has acquired through writing.

In conclusion, Grace's novel describes that Māori people fought in both World Wars not only to gain social, economic and political equality in their country, but also to free themselves from the objectification imposed on them by the descendants of the colonizers. It could be argued that the denial of Māori recognition after the war originated the trauma and alienation of their community, which testified to their impossibility to break the Master/Slave dialectic, posed initially by Hegel and later developed by Fanon in colonial terms. As *Tu* suggests, recognition was not achieved

because it can never occur within a racist structure that denies the colonized the right to be the agents of their own history.

This chapter has criticized the way in which the government of New Zealand imposed their false discourse of equality, transmitted from the time of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi onwards. Māori were used to bearing prejudice and discrimination in their own land, but were devastated when they realized that their relatives and friends had died for a lie, that they were neither socially nor politically recognized, which contributed to worsening Māori collective trauma. *Tu* depicts how the trauma of war transcends individuals to end up affecting the whole community; collective trauma impacts not only on the structures of the *whānau* but also on the future of Māori society.

This chapter has also brought to light the way in which Māori experienced problems of disavowal as a result of urbanization, and how they suffered discrimination and received a different treatment from Pakeha as regards family wages and pension, notwithstanding the fact that the Treaty of Waitangi theoretically made Māori and Pakeha equal before the law. *Tu* comprehends that the Māori community must fight in order to preserve and transfer to the next generations a reevaluated Māori identity which can foster the pride of their race. Only then will the Treaty of Waitangi be respected and Māori will enjoy the same socioeconomic rights of the Pakeha citizens in Aotearoa. Māori need to improve their economic situation, be recognized on social and cultural grounds, and be truly represented politically in order to be treated as fairly as they deserve.

Māori created their own Battalion to demonstrate that Māori culture was a valuable element, to show the world that they were equal to white people in any aspect, not just noble savages in need of civilization. Many Māori volunteers, like the three brothers of

the novel, sought a new identity by joining the 28th Māori Battalion; they thought that they could restore their *mana* by relying on their warfare tradition, a Māori source of identification and ethnic pride for centuries. They wanted to show the pride of their race and accepted risking their lives and paying the price supposedly needed to achieve full equality. When the men of the 28th Battalion came back to Aotearoa, they demanded equal citizenship by claiming that they had bled together with Pakeha in the trenches of Africa and Europe, but sadly realized that nothing had changed about their social status, that they were still regarded as second-class citizens, which worsened their traumatic mental condition as they realized they had been fighting in vain. Consequently, Māori collective identity stagnated, and Māori soldiers were psychologically annihilated on account of their trauma.

Pakeha authorities also neglected the Māori cultural background and deprived Māori of their cultural identity by imposing a blood quantum categorization exclusively based on biological ethnicity. This racist methodology of blood quantum was used in the New Zealand Census as a way, not only to maintain the colonial control over the indigenous populations, but also to assimilate and wipe them out as time went by. The legal discrimination imposed by the descendants of the colonizers caused serious identity problems and distress among Māori, because ethnic identity is quintessential to the healthy emotional evolution, not only of individual identity, but also of the collective identity in relation with an ethnic group. This sense of belonging to a group becomes even more important in colonized people who are oppressed, as reliance on one another becomes vital in their everyday life. As has been shown, the disclosure of Rimini and Benedict's genealogy is crucial to Tu's process of trauma healing, because this allows him to demonstrate that he is able to carry out his cultural responsibilities. After the unveiling of their true identities, Rimini and Benedict know precisely what their

ancestral line of descent is, and can embrace their cultural roots and feel the pride of their race. By the end of the story, Tu, like Mata in *Cousins*, has understood that healing is impossible in isolation, and decides to join his *whānau* and go to Italy to honor the graves of their relatives so as to restore their collective cultural identity.

This chapter has also explored the psychological therapeutic effects that narrative has on traumatized people because, if mental fragmentation is usually one of the main consequences of trauma, the reorganization and confrontation of painful memories becomes quintessential in working them through and providing psychological balance. Populations that have been rendered powerless by traumatic events and silenced by oppressive regimes need to find a way to feel newly empowered, and narrative can grant these people the confidence and pride of race they so desperately need to recover. *Tu* points out that the Māori version of what happened in both World Wars has not been included in the New Zealand official version of history. Hence, the Māori traumatic story regarding these wars has been systematically suppressed in the collective memory of the country. Tu realizes that he must integrate and reconstruct the story of his trauma in order to honor his brothers and become a useful member of the Māori community once again. Accordingly, he plays an active part in the retrieval of his traumatic past as a way to achieve the control of his life. It is this new attitude that triggers a healing process which allows Tu to move from anger and pain to the understanding and acceptance of past events. The novel's closure emphasizes that Tu has been able to honor the memory of his brothers and cousins, who are now part of his ancestors, and this is highly beneficial for the *whānau*, because it means that their *whakapapa* will not go to waste.

Tu does not evade his responsibility to preserve Māori culture and pride of race. The main legacy that Tu leaves is his narrative, his personal anti-war discourse that he

transmits to Rimini and Benedict, who will henceforth be free from uncertainty thanks to their uncle. They will probably fight for the recognition of Māori rights in Aotearoa. After all, they will reach maturity during the 1970s Māori Renaissance, the cultural movement that fostered Māori rights, Māori consciousness and Māori cultural identity, unceasingly undermined by Pakeha authorities during and after colonial times.

CONCLUSION

In the final part of this dissertation, it seems not only advisable but also necessary to try and make a comprehensive summary of the main issues which have been raised, especially those related to the analysis of Grace's novels, in order to draw some conclusions. I must confess that, being a Spaniard, I have often felt like an intruder when researching on the Māori political, social and economic conditions in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and their relationship with Pakeha, all the more so when considering Spain's shameful practices in some of its colonies in the past. Nowadays, global conflicts and the suffering they inexorably bring about are being reported almost instantaneously in the media. People are used to witnessing horrible things. However, many of them seem to be unaware of the long-term traumatic effects that they can have on the survivors of such events. The widespread visibility of violence and its consequences has resulted in certain passivity as regards the questioning of power structures and their responsibility for numerous injustices around the globe. My analysis of Patricia Grace's novels has tried to address such delicate matters; in particular, it has aimed to denounce how colonial power generates trauma, not only through oppression and marginalization, but also through the erasing of indigenous cultures and traditions, thus making it clear that the prefix 'post' in the term 'postcolonial' does not mean that colonial policies are over, as colonial domination still lingers in these places, although in subtler ways.

On the one hand, I take it that some Māori academics might oppose my analysis of Māori culture and literature; given my European background, they might conclude that my use of western critical theories when studying Grace's novels is nothing but yet another neocolonial attempt to keep their culture under western control. On the other

hand, it could be argued that, as a Spanish scholar who belongs to neither British nor Māori culture, I can offer a rather more independent perspective, which might somehow contribute to granting the Māori community more visibility across national borders, and thus to bringing to the surface their present-day grievances, still to be redressed. It is only when the remaining racist social, political and economic structures in Aotearoa/New Zealand are definitely done away with that the way for a more equitable future can be paved.

As was argued in the introduction, the history of the colonization of Aotearoa/New Zealand is a traumatic one, especially as regards its effects on the Māori community. This Thesis has tried to explain and denounce the long-term traumatic experiences that Māori have suffered, both during the colonization period and afterwards, as reflected in the three novels by Patricia Grace that most overtly deal with this issue. Although this author could be said to partake of both Māori and Pakeha cultures, she writes her novels from the worldview of the Māori community, which was silenced by colonial authorities for so many decades. Māori literature can undoubtedly help people to better understand the traumatic effects of colonialism and its aftermath on the colonized, as these novels contain testimonies that remind us of those of real colonial survivors.

The first chapter of this Thesis was dedicated to offering a brief summary of the history of the Māori that came to Aotearoa, the subsequent colonization of this territory by westerners and the creation of a new nation called New Zealand, so that the specific socio-historical factors that originated Māori trauma can be better understood. It also offered a brief outline of the Māori Renaissance that took place in New Zealand in the 1970s, and a final section on Patricia Grace, her life and work. In the following chapters, an analysis of Māori trauma as reflected in *Cousins*, *Baby-No-Eyes* and *Tu* was carried out. In order to do that, Michael Rothberg's notion of the decolonization of

trauma theory, among other things, was introduced and taken into consideration to question the scope and usefulness of Eurocentric approaches in the analysis of non-western traumas. As Rothberg (2008) argues, early trauma theory must be reevaluated through a decolonization process that tackles a productive investigation of trauma in non-western peripheral cultures from an inclusive and culturally sensitive perspective. Other scholars such as Judith Herman (1992), Stef Craps and Gert Buelens (2008), Herrero and Baelo-Allué (2011) and Irene Visser (2016), have also acknowledged the complexity of trauma which, on the one hand, can seriously damage individuals and whole groups but, on the other, can dovetail into resilience and the consolidation of a collective sense of cultural pride and identity when being accurately faced. The decolonized model put forward by Rothberg tends to incorporate other non-western beliefs and practices, and strives to question and expand the current western trauma canon. Accordingly, Caruth's well-known event-based model of trauma, according to which trauma results from a single, extraordinary, catastrophic event, such as the Holocaust, is discarded in favour of the introduction of what Maria Root (1992) defined as 'insidious trauma,' a concept rather more useful and pertinent when it comes to analyzing the trauma suffered by non-western populations in colonial and postcolonial contexts. As was explained before, this new model describes a prolonged traumatic situation resulting from long periods of injustices suffered by individuals and whole communities. In tune with this, Grace's novels show the insidious trauma that the Māori community has undergone as a result of British colonization; a trauma which transcends individuals in order to become a cultural collective trauma, as Māori have preserved the memories of these events and passed them on to the next generations. The decolonization of trauma theory is thus a complex issue, which requires the acknowledgement of the culture and identity of indigenous communities, and by

extension of their idiosyncratic epistemologies and ontologies, many times in conflict with mainstream western interpretations and approaches to trauma. This Thesis has analyzed *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) and *Tu* (2004) in order to explain how British colonial policies have systematically impoverished colonized peoples; how the laws passed by colonial power have oppressed non-western members of society; and how education systems have been used to damage the confidence and self-esteem of non-white peoples in New Zealand's society.

A decolonized trauma theory must explore not only the mental condition of people, but also the sources of their specific traumas. As has been shown in this Thesis, Grace's narratives denounce how colonial institutions operate by means of othering, oppressing and silencing Māori, by infringing upon their physical and mental health and, last but not least, by depriving them of a space of their own. Māori readers can connect their own experiences with those of the protagonists of these novels, and non-Māori readers can empathize with these people by feeling the pain they have suffered for such a long time. This Thesis has employed trauma theory to denounce the atrocities resulting from the imposition of colonial religion and policies in New Zealand, and also to study the different techniques used by the Māori community to heal and empower their people, which can alone pave the way for renewed life and expectations in the community. This analysis has therefore questioned the validity of Eurocentric trauma theories, to focus instead on Māori cultural values and tools, such as Māori language, rituals and traditions, as the best means to provide alternative and effective solutions to the characters' traumas. This Māori cultural approach has therefore been extremely important for the analysis of these novels, as it is fundamental, not only to acknowledge and represent Māori fragmented identities, but also the process of working through their traumatic condition.

In Michael King's *Tihe Mauri Ora: Aspects of Māoritanga*, Grace highlights the importance of conveying the Māori perspective:

I think it is important for me and other Māori writers to write about us in all our variousness, our feelings and aspirations and values; attitudes to life and death, affinity for land and land issues, about kinship and social orders and status; about the concept of aroha embracing āwhina⁶¹ and manaaki⁶²; attitudes towards learning and work [...]. And most especially about the spiritual aspect of all these things. (1978: 81)

Grace's work denounces that the colonial government of New Zealand brought about Māori cultural trauma and problematized Māori identity through its power/knowledge and discourse, which forced Māori to believe that their race and culture were synonym of 'evil' and 'wickedness.' No wonder her work has been analyzed in tune with Fanon's harsh critique of the colonialist belief that colonialism came to 'lighten' the native darkness. Grace's narratives are paradigmatic of the Māori situation because, not only do they illustrate how Māori have been forced to wear the 'mask' of hegemonic Pakeha culture for so long, but they also demonstrate that Māori people can counter this racist colonial discourse against them and their culture by recovering their cultural fabric, that is, by strengthening the links between Māori generations, their genealogy, their land and their ancient *te reo Māori*, with the help of which they can work through their transgenerational insidious trauma. As Irene Visser asserts in her article "Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects":

A response to trauma from a respectful cognition of culturally specific spiritual and religious perspectives, analogous to the recognition of historical, national, and ethnic

⁶¹ From the Māori Dictionary Online entry for 'āwhina': 1. (verb) to assist, help, support, benefit.

⁶² From the Māori Dictionary Online entry for 'manaaki': 1. (verb) to support, take care of, give hospitality to, protect, look out for - show respect, generosity and care for others.

diversification, is necessary for a postcolonial theory of trauma to be truly decolonized.

(2016: 16)

Māori spiritual beliefs, mythology and traditions are key concepts on which Patricia Grace relies in order to raise awareness of crucial aspects of Māori culture that can be used as therapeutic means of healing. The exploration and conceptualization of all of these Māori cultural issues accordingly acquire special significance when trying to decolonize western trauma theories. As was argued before, spiritual and cultural Māori beliefs have received little or no attention on the part of early trauma scholars, who failed to realize how helpful such an approach can be in order to help us better understand non-western epistemologies vis-à-vis western modernity.

The importance of the past and tradition in Māori lives and stories is seen, for instance, in the carvings of their *wharenui*, which testify to the proximity of their ancestors and the relevance of maintaining the *whānau* and *whakapapa* at the core of the community. This idea is clearly embodied by Hemi and Gary in *Tu*, when they draw moko on their faces while reciting their *whakapapa*, or by the carver that appears in the prologue of *Potiki*, in which Grace describes the role of the carver in Māori society as an example of what Māori people traditionally represented in their community:

When the carver dies he leaves behind him a house for the people. He leaves also, part of himself – shavings of heart and being, hunger and anger, love, mischief, hope, desire, elation or despair. He has given the people himself, and he has given the people his ancestors and their own. (1995: 8)

As has been previously stated, genealogy influences the life and philosophy of the Māori community because, according to their cosmology, everything is interconnected. As their belief system claims, spiritually speaking, we are part of God because we are all one within the oneness of the universe, which in turn implies that healing and ethical decisions can only be taken by connecting with that oneness. The need to protect and

worship genealogy and the ancestors is quintessential in Māori culture, as *Ned & Katina: A True Love Story* (2009), another novel by Grace, shows. This novel takes place during the Second World War, and relates the true story of a Māori Battalion soldier, who fell in love with a young woman from Crete after he was sheltered by her family. This story highlights, not only the strong comradeship between the soldiers of the 28th Māori Battalion, but also the pride of race and *whakapapa* that prevails in the Māori community:

They were young men like Ned, from chiefly or leading families, expected now to keep up the mana of their families and their groups. Because of his genealogy a man could not fail his brothers. He could not fail his family or his ancestry or his warrior tradition. (2009: 41)

This Thesis has also showed literature's potential to help people work through their traumas and initiate the healing process that will eventually enable them to reach some psychological balance. In tune with this, it has also proved that stories can contribute to reorganizing and facing the painful memories of colonial wounding. Grace's characters regain their voices through the telling of their traumatic experiences, which eventually allow them to find their place in their *whānau* and integrate the fragmented parts of their own traumatized selves. In Grace's works, characters such as Mata, Gran Kura and Tu articulate their own on-going narratives of their painful traumas, which bestow the necessary confidence and pride of race on them. Narrative has therapeutic effects, as it alone allows them to eventually articulate and verbalize the events that caused their trauma. It could therefore be argued that these novels, in clear contrast to Felman, Laub and Caruth's aporetic theory of 'undecidability,' foster Herman and Visser's model of telling because, as they seem to suggest, narration empowers trauma victims because it

helps them to cope with their traumas, and this, together with individual and collective memory, is crucial for Māori cultural survival.

In addition, Derrida's notion of mid-mourning has also been used as a fruitful weapon to understand Grace's work, which shows the multiple ways in which the ghosts of the past can help the Māori community to denounce colonial injustices and maintain alive the collective memory that will help them regain their pride of race and foster a resilience based on their own cultural beliefs. As has often been stated, Grace's novels put the emphasis on the way in which Māori acknowledge the presence of their ancestors in the *whānau*, and on how Māori fight in order not to leave their losses behind. Besides, the process of mid-mourning is considered to be never-ending, to such an extent that the living must learn how to live with their dead, which in turn enhances transgenerational relationships based on responsibility and respect between the mourners and the mourned. In this sense, mid-mourning fosters the conception of community as a social fabric, which can improve people's lives, and rejects the western dominant philosophy of individualism as the supreme mantra. In *Cousins*, Mata must cope with the loss of her mother first, and then with Makareta's death, till she eventually meets up with the spirit of her mother in Makareta's burial ceremony. This relationship/connection with the ancestors might be said to wonderfully encapsulate Derrida's mid-mourning stage, because it permits Mata to reconcile herself with her past and become a valuable member of her community.

In *Baby No-Eyes*, Te Paania is able to better cope with the death of Shane and their little baby by living for a while with the spirit of her daughter; this coexistence is yet another example of mid-mourning and connection with the ghosts of the past. The acceptance of Baby's presence in the *whānau* is rooted in the Māori traditional belief in the afterlife of the human spirit, an essential part of Māori culture. As was stated in the

second chapter of this Thesis, *Te Wairua* is the spiritual essence of a person, the cornerstone of the Māori health system. Furthermore, it determines who and what you are, where you come from and where you are going, and provides a vital link with the ancestors. Gran Kura realizes that Pakeha are responsible, not only for the painful death of her cousin Riripeti, but also for the profanation of Baby's body, which will paradoxically prompt her reconciliation with her Māori roots. She can now confront the loss of her relatives and become a relevant member of her community. In *Tu*, Tu is affected by many traumatic symptoms, such as numbing, dissociation, hyperarousal and nightmares, which account for the war-combatant-condition that Māori soldiers developed as a consequence of their participation in the Second World War. Furthermore, as was the case of the Māori soldiers who fought in the North of Africa and Italy, the death of his relatives at war and his physical and psychological incapacity, together with the denial of Māori recognition after the war, contribute to emphasizing his anger and disillusionment towards the Pakeha government and the British Empire. Tu then tries to smooth his rage and cope with the suffering he has experienced at war by taking refuge in his ancestral *whenua* under Mount Taranaki. In this environment he is able to build up a narrative that helps him to understand the horrible facts of war and the pitiful situation of Māori soldiers and their families after these combatants came back home. He can now assimilate the loss of his brothers, which allows him to become a beneficial figure in the Māori community; he will transmit his anti-war discourse to Rimini and Benedict, and finally honor and connect with his ancestors. In *Potiki*, Pakeha burn Hemi and Roimata's house and murder Toko in order to intimidate them and grab their land. Nonetheless, Roimata explains that what torments her is not death but the way in which the white people committed the crime: "it was not easy to turn to the living [...]. Not easy even though there was exhaustion, and acceptance of death.

Because although our child's death had been with us a long time [...] and although it is true that there is much that is right in death, it was the manner of the death that gave, gives pain" (1995: 162). She is able to confront the loss of her child but, like Te Paania and her family, she is not able to forget the crime, because they know that there will be no punishment for the white criminals who dare to kill or profane a little Māori child. The characters of Baby and Toko fulfill the essential task of binding their people together, linking not only the past and the present, but also the spiritual and physical worlds.

In keeping with Derrida, who introduces the figure of the 'scholar of the future' as an intellectual whose fundamental goal is learning from the ghosts of the past in order to build up a more ethical and fairer society, Grace's novels point to this principle of responsibility as the catalyzer that can mainly encourage Māori to fight for their rights in their own country. Thus, characters such as Makareta, Gran Kura, Te Paania, Tawera and Tu become both Derrida's 'scholars of the future' and Fanon's 'native intellectuals,' because they inherit the intergenerational trauma of colonization, but are nonetheless able to work it through in order to give voice to Māori collective memory and fill in the historical gaps that the Pakeha version of history has intentionally obscured.

The study undertaken in this Thesis has also shed light on the broader topic of identity problems in indigenous populations during and after the colonization of their lands. Needless to say, in the aftermath of colonization, with the establishment not only of the colonial power in Aotearoa but also of its unfair liberal democracy, many indigenous values and traditions were eroded, and the people who practised them suffered a harsh fragmentation of their selves and a serious alteration of their lives. In his theory about the discourses of discipline and punishment, Foucault (1975) states the

complex connections between language, power and truth, and their effects as regards the handling of psychological trauma and identity problems. Grace's narratives also establish connections between trauma, identity problems, and the ongoing power of governmental institutions that perpetuate their supremacy over indigenous populations by means of violence. One example of this neocolonial attitude is the genetic research project, as shown in *Baby No-Eyes*, whose main intention is no other than owning and patenting the indigenous DNA. Grace's work denounces Pakeha abuse on account of the fact that this dominant white community sees indigenous peoples as mere objects. One of the main lessons that Grace's novels teach readers is that colonial national identities are nothing but the outcome of the knowledge generated by hegemonic governments that strive to dominate indigenous populations. Moreover, they show that two of the most traumatic effects of colonialism upon the Māori population were: their participation in the two World Wars in the belief that they would obtain rights and freedoms on an equal standing to Pakeha, which eventually turned out to be a fallacy; and their migration to urban centers and subsequent loss of the *whānau* traditional structures and *te reo Māori*. As was argued before, their participation in the war did not contribute to their socio-economic development and the acknowledgement of their rights, but to the social deterioration of the Māori-Pakeha relationships instead. Grace's texts clearly denounce the falsity of the colonial power discourse that asserts that Māori have the same rights as Pakeha with slogans such as "we are not Maori, we are not European; we are all New Zealanders" (1974: 2326) or "We are one People," (in Walker 1990: 96) which were systematically used to imprint on Māori people a sense of national identity and mask the reality of a violent history of unfinished oppression and dispossession. The Pakeha government has never acknowledged the ongoing impact of both World Wars upon the Māori population, which has worsened Māori collective

trauma. The great loss of Māori men during both World Wars was the source of great grief in the Māori community, as they felt that all their sacrifices had not been acknowledged by the very people with whom they had shed blood in battle.

Tu puts the emphasis on the utmost significance that being recognized as full citizens –with the same rights as Pakeha– had for the Māori community after the Second World War. Likewise, Grace’s novel makes it clear that, without this recognition, the *whānau* and *whakapapa* remain incomplete; that is why *Tu*’s main concern is to honor his relatives and the legacy of his family. As Hegel’s Master/Slave paradigm claims, Masters will always deny social and economic equality to Slaves because they might empower them, which could in turn lead Slaves towards self-determination. In the Māori case, as has already been stated, the recognition of their rights was never granted, because the colonizers and their descendants feared that it might trigger Māori emancipation from Pakeha domination and objectification. Masters want to maintain their position of power, and therefore cannot even think of the Slaves’ rights to be regarded as equals. Consequently, Grace’s fiction shows that the only way to achieve this social, economic and political equality is through the struggle against the very structures of colonial institutions.

One of the main colonial techniques employed to accomplish the dissolution of Māori culture was the imposition of the English language as the one and only means to define the current reality. English was, therefore, the tool used by Pakeha power/knowledge to reach their colonial aspirations of building another white nation in the Pacific. The colonial establishment tried to erase *te reo Māori* and its oral tradition, as they were crucial elements of Māori culture. As has been shown in this analysis, Grace’s novels denounce that Māori children were not allowed to speak Māori, which inexorably means that some generations lost a fundamental mark of their indigenous

identity (this was the case of Patricia Grace herself, who did not learn Māori at school). Her fiction shows that the hostile linguistic politics of colonial authorities can even kill, as is the case of Riripeti in *Baby No-Eyes*.

Although Grace writes in standard English, she is nonetheless fond of introducing in her novels a combination of English and Māori. She employs the English language to reach a greater number of readers, and thus more effectively counter the racist discourse enforced by colonial power. Furthermore, she uses a colloquial language register that is very close to oral discourse, and very frequently introduces untranslated words, expressions, chants and short dialogues in Māori. This appropriation of English for Māori purposes is, quoting Salman Rushdie (1982), a way of ‘writing back against the empire’ because, from that moment onwards, the English language will not exclusively belong to the colonizers’ descendants, but will become instead yet another weapon to struggle against colonial established institutions. In a word, in her novels Grace uses the language of the colonizer to undermine hegemonic settler culture from within; not only does this strategy become a form of resistance against the imposed Pakeha culture, but it also propitiates the return of her Māori characters to their own roots, which will alone help them to develop their personal Māori identity and find their own true voices. At one point, Grace claimed that she uses this affected English language in order to imprint reality upon her work: “I use Māori language in my work where I believe it is right and natural to do so, where the people that I’ve created demand that I do so because the words are their words” (in Hereniko and Wilson 1999: 72). From the publication of her second novel *Potiki* in 1986, Grace’s work has not included glossaries with translations of Māori words and concepts. She decided not to provide these translations on account of the ever-growing wave of self-assertion prompted by the Māori Renaissance. In fact, in 1987, Māori became an official language in Aotearoa/New Zealand, which meant an

essential step towards the promotion of Māori culture. Grace has defined her linguistic choices and political views regarding writing and literature as follows:

writers of small population cultures must have the same freedom as other writers to be true to what they know and true to who they are. I need to be free to write in the way that I judge best for the stories I want to tell. I want my writing to be able to stand with the rest of the writing of the world without encumbrances such as glossaries, italics, footnotes, asides, sentences in brackets, introductory notes, or explanatory paragraphs disguised as plot. (in Hereniko and Wilson 1999: 71)

Grace's narrative techniques are clearly inherited from the Māori oral tradition. Thus, the circularity of her novels and short stories and the variety of narrators and points of view that they contain are the direct outcome of the Māori way of telling ancestral stories. The never-ending cyclical conception of life and death shared by Polynesian peoples symbolizes the continuity between the Māori past, present and future; a Māori idea which is difficult to understand from a western perspective because, in our worldview, the past is gone and does not necessarily affect present events. *Potiki* ends up with a final "ka huri," which means "I have finished and now it is over to you." This is a phrase used to mark the end of a speech or a letter; now readers know that it is their turn to raise their voice against indigenous mistreatment. In the final part of *Cousins*, it is Makareta who gives Mata the floor so that she can finally occupy a prominent position in her *whānau* and be able to utter her own voice without fear. At the end of *Baby No-Eyes*, Tawera takes control of the narrative after Kura's death and, from that moment onwards, he is in charge of upgrading Māori culture in Aotearoa. In the conclusion of *Tu*, Tu feels that he has honored the memory of his relatives, who have finally joined his ancestors, and that he can now transmit the responsibility to preserve the family *whakapapa* to Rimini and Benedict.

This Thesis has also shown how Grace retrieves the silenced voices of Māori characters of different ages and gender in order to illustrate and uphold both traditional and modern Māori worldviews. Young female characters, such as Tangimoana, Makareta and Te Paania, to mention but a few, are in charge of preserving and continuing the cultural traditions of their *whānau*. They find the way to incorporate ancestral Māori culture into modern white society, so often hostile to them. They find their voice in resilience, and are able to become passionate leaders who strive to provide their people with the hope they need. Grace's novels claim that there is always a chance for people to believe that there is hope for the future and reasons to struggle. Grace's characters end up feeling proud of their Māori cultural identity; they understand that their cultural roots define and protect them and that only by cementing the unity of their community will their grievances be eventually redressed.

Patricia Grace's novels also put the emphasis on the social and political consequences of the expropriation of Māori land by British settlers, as they emphasize the strong spiritual link that exists between the land and the Māori community. The outcome of these disputes over land claims was the establishment in 1975 of the Waitangi Tribunal, in charge of protecting their ancestral ground. This being said, this problem has not been solved yet. In her essay "Influences on Writing," Grace tells about her tribal land and denounces the land dispossession that Māori suffered at the hands of the British:

The place where we live is a remnant of tribal land that was not confiscated, deviously purchased, or legally stolen through Public Works acts or government legislation, and it is still in our ownership, a situation that has become more and more unique since the signing of the treaty of Waitangi in 1840. (1999: 65-66)

What Grace makes clear is that the recovery of Māori land implies the recovery of one crucial part of their identity. Similarly, as is shown in her novels, the permanence of

Māori families in their land is continuously threatened by Pakeha land developers with the connivance of the government's institutions and police. To achieve their aim, Pakeha developers have no other recourse but violence and the use of a highly biased judicial system. In *Cousins*, it is Keita who represents the role of guardian and carer of the land, while in *Potiki* it is Hemi who maintains his attachment to the land and feels that the land is all that he and his people need in order to survive. He expresses this crucial connection as follows:

And people were looking to their land again. They knew that they belonged to the land, had known all along that there had to be a foothold, otherwise you were dust blowing here, there and anywhere - you were lost, gone. It was good there was more focus on it now, and more hope. (1995: 61)

One of the ideas that Grace's novels insist upon is this belief in the reciprocity and communion between Māori and Nature; as direct descendants of Mother Earth, they see themselves as one with the natural environment. Governments all over the world should learn from this reciprocal relationship, which should be respected and worshipped by all humans if we want to survive the current disastrous effects of climate change and global warming. The dominant material global philosophy which dictates that the earth and natural resources are only something that we can use and abuse will only lead to our final destruction.

Patricia Grace's fiction evidences that the loss of Māori traditional values and ways of life came, firstly with colonization in the early nineteenth century, and secondly with modernization in the mid-twentieth century, especially with the forced move to the cities by many members of their community. The traumatic circumstances of urban migration have been abundantly described in Grace's novels and short stories, such as *Mutuwhenua: The Moon Sleeps* (1978), *The Dream Sleepers* (1980), *Electric city and Others Stories* (1987), *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) and *Tu* (2004). They all

portray the move of Māori people to the city in search of a better life, only to soon afterwards realize that Pakeha individualism only brings about alienation. This exodus meant the rupture of the traditional Māori community and the creation of an increasingly alienated urban underclass. *Cousins* masterfully illustrates this feeling in the character of Mata walking on an empty road with no destination; in this new environment the Māori concept of *whānau* disappears and, as Māori see it, without a familiar network, there is only 'nothing' and 'nowhere.' Many of those who went to the cities did not find what they sought, only poverty and discrimination. Māori were aliens in a hostile environment that was troublesome, impersonal, and unfriendly. Moreover, although in theory the Treaty of Waitangi make Māori and Pakeha equal before the law, Māori people kept on suffering discrimination and receiving a different treatment, especially as regards family wages and pensions. Grace's fiction provides many examples of the racist environment that Māori encountered when they moved to the cities. In *Cousins*, Makareta and Polly suffer the discrimination and prejudice of Pakeha landlords, who do not want to rent their houses to them because they are Māori women. Besides, this patriarchal urban racist society questions Te Paania because she is a single mother and, to make matters even worse, her chief undermines her skills because she is a Māori woman. In this urban neocolonial space, the traditional *whānau*, as Māori knew it, was not at all possible. To counter this, Māori created new ways of being together in a desperate attempt to preserve their culture. As is depicted in *Tu*, Māori set up clubs like the Ngāti Pōneke Club in order to escape the unfamiliar and threatening environment of the cities. As Walker claims:

In the alien and hostile environment of impersonal cities, kinship bonds were formalized by the formation of family clubs, adoption of a constitution, and election of an executive for the collection of subscriptions and disbursement of funds against the contingencies

of illness, unemployment and the underwriting of expenses incurred in returning the bodies of deceased persons to their home marae. (1990: 199)

In sum, Grace's novels, through various means and in varying degrees, provide different representations of Māori strength and resilience in the face of adversity, and the communal strategies they developed to work through their traumas, which undoubtedly contributes to questioning many ideas posed by early western trauma theories, according to which trauma is a quintessentially individual phenomenon which cannot be fully overcome. Although indigenous people are still considered to be inferior races in the twenty-first century, and Māori do not enjoy the same privileges as Pakeha in Aotearoa/New Zealand, they have developed a sense of subjective agency as regards their collective identity, and this clearly shows in their adamant reappraisal of Māori culture and their activist resistance to on-going colonial mistreatment. Grace's novels show, not only the complexity of the trauma suffered by the Māori community in its specific cultural, political and historical context, but also how the old and young Māori generations, despite the temporal and cultural distance between them, demand political, social and cultural reparation from the colonial power that humiliated them for so long.

This Thesis has brought to the surface the impunity with which Pakeha people committed their abuses in New Zealand, always supported by the laws passed by a parliament they always controlled. As Thema Bryant-Davis asserts in the introduction to her book *Thriving in the Wake of Trauma: A Multicultural Guide*:

There is a need to give ear to the hardships endured by many and the ways in which they have coped with their experiences. The stories these survivors tell highlight the remarkable recovery of many and simultaneously give attention to the pitfalls that impede the progress of others. (2005:1)

Political activism is their only means to pave the way for a fairer and more egalitarian society. In *Cousins*, Makareta shows great commitment towards the Māori community;

she wants Māori people to understand that they have to fight in order to regain their rights in this neocolonial space. Similarly, *Dogside Story* (2001) tackles the deterioration of Māori tradition and culture due to Pakeha cultural and economic influence. In this novel, Dion, a young Māori man, embodies the distrust of younger generations towards Pakeha lifestyle and their materialistic worldview. This is what he thinks about the celebration of the year 2000 in his community:

All this 2000 business. What is it anyway? It's a Christian celebration, that's what. So why are we celebrating it. What's "New Year" to us—nothing to do with our people, our culture. If we want to be celebrating then we should celebrate our own survival in our own Matariki star time. Never mind all this other rubbish dumped on us by missionaries and colonizers—all eyes to heaven while they take the land from under your feet. We got to decolonize ourselves, unpick our brains because they been stitched up too long. We need politicization and decolonization if we're going to claim tino rangatiratanga, otherwise nothing's gunna change, gunna keep on being bad statistics, our kids are gunna keep being kicked out of school, keep going to jail, keep killing themselves. Babies are gunna keep on dying, people are gunna keep on being sick, poor, kicked around. Shit-all happens unless we get rid of this shit out of our heads. We been messed with long enough. (2001: 146)

The conclusion is that the whole Māori community must fight for their own self-determination and recognition in their own land. Dion is yet another instance of Grace's characters: he is not a passive victim of colonial oppression, but makes his own decisions to preserve the Māori cultural system and their ancestral way of life. The main concern of this Thesis has therefore been to make visible and audible the traumatic experiences of people who have no place in official history accounts. As Makareta states in *Cousins*, there is still much work to be done, because people need to know that

indigenous populations fought bravely in the past to achieve their collective rights, and that they will go on fighting, now and in the future.

As has often been stated, the decolonization of trauma theory must begin by acknowledging the insidious trauma that colonization caused in the indigenous populations because, if not, this field of study will never be able to deal with the structural and historical traumas that have been transmitted from the colonial period till the present moment and, consequently, will never be the inclusive theoretical paradigm necessary to analyze the diverse traumas of our globalized world. Another purpose of the decolonization of trauma must be the eradication of the blatant paternalism of western theories towards indigenous knowledge. This Thesis has defended, not only that a decolonized trauma theory can be a useful tool to denounce contemporary injustices in societies in which a richer minority dominates the majority of the population, but it has also tried to bring to the fore the potential power of fiction to challenge established hegemonies and prompt the social recognition of the subaltern, silenced for such a long time. Furthermore, this Thesis has shown that Grace's novels encourage the Māori fight for the rights inherent in the Treaty of Waitangi, thus creating a context where Māori can struggle for recognition in the social, political and economic arena of New Zealand. It is high time that a politics of negotiation that articulates and brings together a real multicultural society in Aotearoa/New Zealand was enforced. The racist reminiscences of New Zealand's society should therefore be done away with so that a multicultural country, which redistributes the resources equally between all of its citizens, can be possible. For sure, this task will be not easy to accomplish, but it is absolutely necessary in order to amend all the physical and psychological suffering undergone by the colonized.

The neocolonialism that has been institutionalized in Aotearoa/New Zealand prioritizes individualism and freedom of choice over group allegiance, and this clearly disrupts Māori traditional and cultural communitarian concerns. An exclusively individual conception of existence is certainly not desirable, given that interpersonal relationships are quintessential to encourage everybody's psychological and personal development, not only as individuals, but also as a global community. A decolonized trauma theory must tackle this thorny issue and explore the ways in which atomized individualism is discarded in favor of communal ways of thinking and feeling; the nationalistic obsession with building barriers and frontiers between humans should be replaced by global dynamics that strive to make them disappear. In this respect, my analysis of Grace's novels suggests that communities like the Māori must be respected and cared for, since they are in possession of knowledge that can help humanity question their materialistic approach to life. Western culture should learn from the sense of collectivity developed in indigenous communities, which think of past, present and future as wholly interdependent on one another. The characters of Grace's novels understand that embracing Pakeha greed and consumerism will definitely damage their lives and values; if they forget that they depend on nature and its sustainability for their own survival, they will become part of the system that fosters social and environmental injustices. Grace's narratives are, therefore, a warning to the Māori community against them being trapped by modern materialistic culture and individualism, which can only lead to intense feelings of unbelonging and acute mental distress. Instead, the so-called 'developed' cultures must look forward to a collaborative world that can bring together different modes of living in contemporary societies with a view to guaranteeing a future for ourselves and our planet. I take it that human beings must enhance a family-centered lifestyle because our contemporary philosophy of consumerism and materialism will do

away with essential values such as love, tolerance, solidarity and commitment to nature. Western cultures should question their Eurocentric attitudes so that they can open themselves up to other cultures, more based on communal ties and spirituality. As Onega (2014: 500) asserts, we must assume an ethical position in order to change present dynamics and promote a world ruled by love for the Other and nature as a life-enhancing alternative to our violent, greedy and traumatized world. If we do nothing against present-day injustices, we are somehow responsible for them. As Rothberg argues, it is necessary to conceive of alternative ways to approach colonial traumas in order to better fight racial and political violence: “The essays in “Postcolonial Trauma Novels” offer many of the tools we will need in the simultaneously intellectual, ethical, and political task of standing against ongoing forms of racial and colonial violence” (2008: 232). As this Thesis has tried to demonstrate by analyzing Grace’s novels, a truly decolonized trauma theory is the best weapon whereby indigenous minorities can become audible and visible in their demand that past –and present– injustices should be redressed and, last but not least, in their fight for equality, freedom and recognition as strategic action on behalf of a radical social transformation.

APPENDIX: RESUMEN Y CONCLUSIONES

Esta Tesis Doctoral pretende contribuir al proyecto de descolonización de los estudios de trauma llevando a cabo un análisis de las novelas de la escritora neozelandesa Patricia Grace, a saber, *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) y *Tu* (2004), teniendo en cuenta las condiciones culturales, sociales, políticas e históricas que han hecho posible el trauma colectivo existente en la comunidad maorí, y denunciando así los abusos que han perpetuado el dolor y las injusticias de esta comunidad hasta el día de hoy. Las novelas de Grace elegidas en esta Tesis son un paradigma de la situación maorí en su país porque muestran como las instituciones coloniales han oprimido, alienado y silenciado a esta comunidad, dañando su salud mental y física y negándole incluso un espacio propio digno dentro de la sociedad neozelandesa.

Dicho de otra manera, esta Tesis intenta contribuir al proyecto de descolonización de los estudios de trauma ya iniciado por Michael Rothberg (2008), en el que se explora, no solo el estado mental de la gente, sino también el origen de sus traumas, porque es necesario concebir maneras alternativas de analizar el trauma causado por la colonización si queremos erradicar el racismo y la violencia en los territorios colonizados.

Como explico en el capítulo introductorio de mi Tesis, el proceso de colonización de Nueva Zelanda por parte de británicos y franceses forzó a un grupo de jefes maoríes a buscar la protección del rey de Inglaterra, Guillermo IV. El 28 de octubre de 1835 James Busby, uno de los oficiales británicos enviados a Nueva Zelanda para controlar la expansión, convocó una reunión en Waitangi con muchos de los jefes de las comunidades maoríes. Allí se firmó la Declaración de Independencia de Nueva Zelanda bajo la protección del rey Guillermo IV. Posteriormente, el gobierno británico decidió

negociar un acuerdo formal con los jefes maoríes con el objetivo principal de convertir Nueva Zelanda en una colonia británica. La firma del Tratado de Waitangi es uno de los hitos de la historia neozelandesa y ha suscitado gran debate en el país desde su firma hasta el día de hoy, ya que la comunidad maorí pensó que tendrían los mismos derechos que los británicos y que podrían mantener la soberanía sobre su tierra. Se realizaron dos versiones, una redactada en maorí y otra en inglés, que contenían algunas diferencias sustanciales que posteriormente determinarían el futuro del pueblo maorí. La versión maorí fue firmada por 46 jefes el 6 de febrero de 1840 y en ella estos pensaron que no cedían la soberanía de sus posesiones y recursos. Aceptaban la permanencia de los británicos en su territorio a cambio de protección permanente por parte de la corona. Sin embargo, en la versión redactada en inglés, los maoríes cedían su soberanía a la corona británica a cambio de su protección. A su modo de ver, el artículo tres del tratado aseguraba que ellos tendrían los mismos derechos y obligaciones que los ciudadanos británicos. Sin embargo, los ciudadanos maoríes nunca disfrutaron los mismos derechos y beneficios económicos, sociales y políticos que los colonizadores y sus descendientes.

Posteriormente, los maoríes vieron amenazado su derecho a la propiedad de sus tierras por la corona británica, que argumentó que el derecho a la propiedad de la tierra estaba ligado a trabajarla. El objetivo de la política británica de propiedad era, claramente, asegurar más tierra para los colonizadores. El gobierno de la corona compraba los terrenos a los maoríes por poco dinero y obtenía grandes beneficios de la venta de la tierra a los colonizadores. La consecuencia final de esta necesidad de tierras por parte del imperio británico fueron las llamadas “Land Wars” del siglo XIX. En 1863, el ejército británico declaró la guerra a los maoríes con el pretexto de que algunas tribus se oponían a la venta de tierras, si bien en realidad millones de acres ya habían sido vendidos a la corona, mayormente en la isla sur, y ya no había necesidad de más

tierras para los colonizadores. El resultado fue la expropiación masiva de las tierras ancestrales de los maoríes, también en la isla norte. En 1863, con la ayuda del “New Zealand Settlement Act,” el gobierno hizo efectiva su capacidad de confiscar tierra para uso público siempre que quisiera. Además, la propiedad de la tierra se perdía y pasaba a ser patrimonio de la corona si el propietario era declarado rebelde al gobierno británico. Asimismo, estas guerras no se produjeron únicamente para despojar a los maoríes de sus tierras, sino que el gobierno británico estaba también decidido a destruir cualquier ápice de autonomía e independencia por parte de esta comunidad. Mientras que en Australia los aborígenes eran marginados a cuenta de la idea de *terra nullius*, que otorgaba a los colonizadores blancos y sus descendientes el derecho a establecerse y poseer la tierra dado que esta no era de nadie, en Nueva Zelanda las instituciones coloniales fomentaban la supresión del “Māori Native Title” (derecho de propiedad de los maoríes) a pesar de las supuestas garantías del Tratado de Waitangi. Desde 1865, los maoríes se habían convertido en una minoría dentro de su propio país y tenían que apelar a la Native Land Court (Corte/Tribunal de Tierras Indígenas) para justificar la propiedad de sus tierras.

El proceso de aculturación y asimilación llevado a cabo por las autoridades coloniales en Nueva Zelanda tuvo un impacto terrible en la identidad cultural de los maoríes, a menudo provocando en estos un hondo sentimiento de desarraigo y negación de su identidad y cultura. Las políticas de asimilación en Nueva Zelanda han ocasionado en gran parte la destrucción de la cultura indígena, ya que el gobierno abordó la relación con esta comunidad más como un problema que debía ser resuelto que como una relación que debía ser favorecida y preservada. Los maoríes fueron forzados a adoptar el modo de vida de los blancos descendientes de los colonizadores europeos, y esta presión causó mucho dolor y trauma debido a la pérdida de cultura y valores esenciales

para ellos. Hoy en día la mayor parte de la comunidad maorí sigue engrosando los sectores más desfavorecidos de la sociedad.

En los años setenta, la cultura y artes maoríes experimentaron un extraordinario florecimiento conocido como 'el Renacimiento Maorí.' Dentro de la narrativa maorí, escritores como Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera, Keri Hulme, y Alan Duff fueron capaces de transformar los géneros occidentales imperantes y narrar así experiencias maoríes desde su propia perspectiva. El propósito principal de los artistas del Renacimiento Maorí fue dar prioridad en sus obras a los temas y preocupaciones de su comunidad. Uno de los elementos que caracterizó este movimiento fue su habilidad para descolonizar los géneros literarios que provenían de occidente, como la novela y el relato corto, y usar estas formas literarias para describir y expresar las nociones culturales del pueblo y la cultura maoríes. Dicho movimiento no podría entenderse sin tener en cuenta su contexto histórico y político, así como las desigualdades sociales y económicas emanadas de las decisiones de gobiernos continuistas con las políticas del imperio. La literatura fue sin duda una de las manifestaciones culturales utilizadas por estos artistas para introducir voces indígenas en el discurso del *establishment* neozelandés. Estas obras ahondan, no solo en los traumas individuales, sino también en el trauma colectivo y cultural derivado del proceso de colonización y su posterior consolidación. La literatura maorí puede sin duda ayudar a la gente a entender mejor los efectos traumáticos del colonialismo y su repercusión en las comunidades colonizadas, ya que estas obras contienen testimonios que denuncian los abusos y las injusticias cometidas durante todo ese tiempo.

Patricia Grace ha desarrollado una prolífica obra en la que examina una gran variedad de temas: la pérdida de valores culturales de la comunidad maorí; la expropiación violenta de su tierra ancestral, no solo durante el periodo de colonización

sino también posteriormente; el racismo existente en Nueva Zelanda y las desigualdades sociales que este propicia, etc. De entre todos ellos, sin duda alguna la pérdida, ya sea de sus seres queridos, sus raíces culturales o las tierras de sus ancestros, así como el trauma que estas pérdidas conllevan, podrían ser considerados como los temas principales en las tres novelas analizadas en esta Tesis. La obra de Patricia Grace y en concreto sus novelas *Cousins* (1992), *Baby No-Eyes* (1998) y *Tu* (2004), tratan no solo el trauma individual y colectivo acumulado por la comunidad maorí desde que se iniciara el proceso de colonización en Nueva Zelanda, sino también cómo los maoríes son capaces de apoyarse en la fuerza que les da su propia cultura para reparar sus identidades fragmentadas e iniciar un proceso de recuperación con el apoyo y amor de sus familias y comunidades. El objetivo de esta Tesis es denunciar cómo el poder hegemónico de los descendientes de los colonizadores genera aún hoy en día traumas, no solo a causa de la opresión y marginalización a la que se somete a los colonizados, sino también de la aniquilación de las culturas y tradiciones de estos pueblos.

Como es bien sabido, los primeros estudios de trauma se centraron principalmente en el trauma del holocausto judío. Por este motivo, estos estudios han sido a menudo acusados de ofrecer una versión exclusivamente eurocéntrica del trauma, que tiende a despreciar la memoria y el estudio de otros genocidios y situaciones traumáticas, tales como los abusos y maltrato perpetrados en los diferentes territorios colonizados y el trauma colectivo que originaron. La visión parcial que este modelo ofrece contribuye a la perpetuación del pensamiento y prácticas occidentales, que en muchas ocasiones perpetúan las injusticias y desigualdades que en un principio se querían evitar. Críticos como Judith Herman (1992), Michael Rothberg (2008), Stef Craps y Gert Buelens (2008), Dolores Herrero (2011) e Irene Visser (2016) han reconocido la complejidad del trauma ya que, por una parte, puede dañar enormemente a individuos y colectivos pero,

por otra, puede generar resiliencia y la consolidación de un sentimiento colectivo de orgullo e identidad cuando se afronta correctamente. La resiliencia maorí ha jugado un papel primordial en los movimientos activistas y dinámicas de protesta y ocupación que tuvieron lugar en Nueva Zelanda, y cuyo objetivo principal era demandar protagonismo cultural, social y político. Las novelas de Grace dejan claro que la resiliencia y el compromiso político son los únicos medios para conseguir objetivos sociales y políticos.

El modelo de descolonización establecido por Rothberg tiende a incorporar creencias y prácticas culturales no occidentales con el fin de expandir el marco del canon de los estudios de trauma clásicos. Se plantea así un proceso de descolonización de la teoría del trauma inicial, que invita a explorar los traumas de las comunidades así llamadas periféricas. Esta transformación, afirma Rothberg, permitirá crear un modelo transnacional más inclusivo y solidario, que trascienda el modelo europeo etnocéntrico y desde el que se pueda analizar e interpretar el trauma cultural y colectivo de diversas comunidades, ofreciendo así una alternativa al legado de violencia existente a día de hoy en los territorios colonizados. Conseguir implementar unos estudios de trauma más integradores es la única manera de descolonizar el trauma y conseguir una teoría más acorde con la globalización actual.

La descolonización de los estudios de trauma es un proceso complejo que requiere el conocimiento de la cultura e identidad de las comunidades que se están analizando, ya que en muchas ocasiones estas están en conflicto con las interpretaciones y enfoques que la corriente occidental dominante ofrece. El trauma tiene lugar en un contexto social, histórico y político específico. Por ello, un enfoque cultural resulta necesario para conseguir la verdadera descolonización de las teorías iniciales de trauma. Esta Tesis pone de manifiesto que los estudios de trauma deben reconocer la importancia del

ámbito espiritual como campo relevante para conseguir la deseada descolonización, ya que la parte espiritual del ser humano es tan importante y significativa para muchas culturas como lo es la parte física. Las creencias, valores y tradiciones maoríes aseguran que tanto el ámbito físico como el espiritual son reconocidos, promovidos y apoyados como un único elemento dentro de su cosmovisión holística. Por ello, las novelas de Grace ponen de relieve la espiritualidad como herramienta fundamental para generar resiliencia, ayudar a restaurar identidades fragmentadas y superar experiencias traumáticas.

Esta Tesis insiste en que el trauma experimentado por los maoríes no es el trauma entendido exclusivamente por Freud (1915) como duelo y melancolía, o el trauma resultante de un único, insólito y catastrófico evento según Caruth (1995; 1996), sino el ‘trauma insidioso,’ tal y como lo definió Maria Root (1992). Este último resulta mucho más pertinente a la hora de analizar los traumas de poblaciones colonizadas, ya que incluye experiencias traumáticas prolongadas en el tiempo y sufridas, no solo por individuos, sino también por comunidades enteras. En el caso de los maoríes, las injusticias sufridas han sido continuas y han generado impotencia ante el racismo blanco dominante que les ha desposeído de su cultura, sus tierras y sus seres queridos enterrados en ellas. Esta aflicción psíquica es normalmente sufrida por los miembros más débiles y desfavorecidos de la sociedad, víctimas de numerosas injusticias sociales y políticas. Los maoríes han sido alienados, silenciados y oprimidos durante demasiado tiempo y los efectos del colonialismo están todavía muy presentes en la sociedad neozelandesa. En las novelas de Grace, los descendientes de los colonizadores no dudan en usar la violencia para validar y reforzar la ideología colonial y mantener el tipo de sociedad que ellos establecieron en Nueva Zelanda. Por ello, en esa sociedad las creencias religiosas y culturales de los maoríes han sido socavadas, y en la concepción

hegemónica de la historia construida por los colonizadores, los indígenas son descritos como los ‘otros’ en su propia tierra. Como Dolores Herrero y Sonia Baelo-Allué (2011) afirman, la recuperación psicológica es solo posible cuando las injustas estructuras sociales, políticas y económicas son radicalmente cuestionadas y transformadas. Sin esa lucha por la igualdad, libertad y reconocimiento, la superación del trauma se antoja imposible.

El primer capítulo, titulado “Patricia Grace and the Rise of the Māori Renaissance in the Land of the Long White Cloud” (“Patricia Grace y el resurgir del renacimiento maorí en la tierra de la gran nube blanca”), proporciona una breve descripción histórica de los momentos clave que tuvieron lugar en Aotearoa/Nueva Zelanda. Esta visión de conjunto permite entender mejor las razones que desencadenaron el ‘trauma insidioso’ que trasciende a los individuos y se ha convertido en un trauma cultural colectivo, debido a que los maoríes han preservado los recuerdos de esos sucesos traumáticos y los han transmitido a través de generaciones. Estas experiencias traumáticas se transmiten como una angustia latente a través del inconsciente colectivo, traspasando así las generaciones y los límites de la consciencia individual. La segunda parte de este capítulo se centra en el Renacimiento Maorí que tuvo lugar en los años setenta y en el contexto histórico, político y social en el que este movimiento artístico se originó. El Renacimiento Maorí trató de ofrecer una versión propia de los acontecimientos históricos, muy diferente a la ofrecida por el gobierno neozelandés. Para ello utilizó las voces y experiencias del pueblo maorí, que había permanecido silenciado durante tanto tiempo. Este movimiento recreó una epistemología maorí en la que su propia cultura ocupa un puesto central. De esta forma proclama la necesidad de dar una respuesta política y social al maltrato sufrido durante tantos años.

El segundo capítulo, “Insidious Trauma, Blood and the Healing Function of *Aroha* and Resilience in Patricia Grace’s *Cousins*” (“El trauma insidioso, la sangre y la función sanadora del *Aroha* y la resiliencia en la novela *Cousins*, de Patricia Grace”), analiza el tratamiento que esta novela da al trauma prolongado de la comunidad maorí, dejando claro que dicho trauma no es el resultado de un único evento horrible, sino la consecuencia de una vida repleta de abusos y maltrato. Además, este capítulo explica cómo los colonizadores trataron de erradicar la cultura y tradiciones maoríes mediante la imposición de una educación colonial racista, basada en el abuso físico y psicológico y cuyo único objetivo era preservar la posición privilegiada de los blancos dentro del *status quo* de la sociedad neozelandesa. Frantz Fanon (1952) afirmó que la civilización occidental y su cultura impusieron su racismo en los territorios colonizados, e insistió en que el continuo desempoderamiento y negación de autonomía hacen que los grupos más desfavorecidos desarrollen e internalicen un proceso psicológico autodestructivo que acarrea numerosos problemas de identidad. *Cousins* nos muestra cómo las víctimas del trauma generado por las élites colonizadoras internalizan la culpa de no ser blancos en este nuevo contexto colonial. Kalí Tal (1996) llegó incluso a afirmar que estas víctimas acaban creyendo que son ellos los culpables de su sufrimiento.

El tercer capítulo, “The Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma, Identity and Language in Patricia Grace’s *Baby No-Eyes*” (“La transmisión transgeneracional del trauma, identidad y lenguaje en *Baby No-Eyes*, de Patricia Grace”) denuncia el controvertido tema del bio-colonialismo en el mundo contemporáneo. La historia está basada en un hecho real, y trata de la apropiación de los ojos de un bebé maorí por parte de los blancos en un hospital de Nueva Zelanda. Estos no se preocupan por las implicaciones morales de sus actos, y se apropian en el presente de partes del cuerpo de los indígenas, al igual que en el pasado saquearon sus tierras y los recursos del país. La

novela denuncia el hecho de que la comunidad blanca en Nueva Zelanda considera a los nativos como simples objetos. Además, *Baby No-Eyes* hace referencia a las teorías de Freud y LaCapra con el fin de entender mejor el concepto de *demi-dévil* creado por Derrida, que insiste en la necesidad de no olvidar los fantasmas del pasado. Por otra parte, este capítulo incluye la perspectiva de Stuart Hall sobre las teorías de Michel Foucault acerca de la estrecha conexión entre el discurso, el poder y la verdad, con la intención de explicar cómo las instituciones coloniales impusieron su discurso sobre identidad nacional y cultural basado en el supremacismo blanco, para poder así controlar a las poblaciones que colonizaban. Este discurso hegemónico describe a los indígenas y sus culturas como símbolos de maldad y señala que la única opción para estas comunidades inferiores es la asimilación de la cultura occidental. El trauma resultante de la internalización de estas ideas inevitablemente trajo consigo problemas de autoestima e identidad. El resultado de todas estas injusticias es un trauma insidioso que bloquea la mente de los maoríes y les empuja a desarrollar ceguera cultural como estrategia para sobrevivir.

Una de las principales estrategias de las autoridades coloniales para perpetuar su supremacía sobre las poblaciones indígenas fue prohibir la lengua nativa. En el caso de Nueva Zelanda se prohibió el *te reo Maori* (la lengua maorí) con la excusa de que este lenguaje primitivo no podía transmitir de modo fehaciente el conocimiento propio de la cultura occidental impartida en las escuelas establecidas en el país. Esta prohibición implicó que algunas generaciones de maoríes perdieran un elemento fundamental de su identidad indígena. Este fue, por ejemplo, el caso de Patricia Grace, que no pudo aprender maorí en la escuela. La técnica utilizada para conseguir la disolución de la cultura maorí fue la imposición del inglés como único medio para definir la nueva realidad de Nueva Zelanda. El inglés fue, por lo tanto, la herramienta usada por los

blancos como lengua de poder y conocimiento, que les permitiera así alcanzar sus aspiraciones coloniales de construir una identidad nacional blanca que ejerciera control absoluto sobre la población indígena. Además, el discurso de disciplina y castigo que todo esto implicaba impregnó a la sociedad de miedo al diferente, en otras palabras, a los indígenas, lo que a su vez generó violencia, tal y como constata el tratamiento que los maoríes recibían en escuelas, hospitales y juzgados.

Sin embargo, este capítulo también analiza el papel de las lenguas como herramientas de resistencia en contra del poder establecido. Las lenguas tienen el poder no solo de oprimir y alienar sino también de liberar. Como entidades vivas y siempre abiertas a cambios históricos y políticos, las lenguas tienen el poder de subvertir y contrarrestar el discurso de los tiranos. *Baby No-Eyes* nos muestra la política lingüística hostil desplegada por los colonizadores en Aotearoa a través de la historia de Riripeti, para dejar de manifiesto que las lenguas pueden incluso matar. Con la ayuda de las teorías ofrecidas por críticos como bell hooks (1989, 1994), Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) y Bill Ashcroft (1989), y obras literarias tan conocidas como *The Tempest* (1610-11) de William Shakespeare, este capítulo demuestra que incluso los más débiles y desfavorecidos pueden utilizar la lengua de los tiranos para socavar el orden establecido desde dentro. Esta Tesis analiza el lenguaje como un elemento primordial en la configuración de una cosmovisión propia, porque si un individuo no puede usar su lengua materna, no podrá definirse y en consecuencia tendrá problemas de identidad. Como ya se ha dicho anteriormente, la comunidad maorí casi llegó a perder su lengua a resultas de los continuos ataques contra su cultura por parte de los colonizadores y sus descendientes, lo que derivó en una profunda crisis de identidad. Sin embargo, *Baby No-Eyes* muestra cómo a través de la recuperación y transmisión de la tradición oral se crea un vínculo alrededor del cual la comunidad puede focalizar su lucha contra el

sistema hegemónico opresor. Asimismo, la lengua maorí y su tradición oral tienen implicaciones esenciales a la hora de afrontar el trauma. Estos elementos deben ser tomados en consideración debido a su potencial curativo, estrechamente ligado al reconocimiento y respeto de su cultura. Esta novela demuestra que la hegemonía lingüística y cultural puede ser desafiada por la tradición oral maorí, porque sus historias, junto con la resiliencia que estas potencian, son cruciales para que las nuevas generaciones tomen conciencia de la lucha que han de llevar a cabo para que los crímenes cometidos por los colonizadores y sus descendientes sean recordados y no se vuelvan a repetir. En la novela, los protagonistas parecen darse cuenta de que, después de un largo periodo de subyugación, ha llegado la hora de revelarse contra el poder establecido, reivindicar su dignidad y cultura, y quitarse cualquier resquicio de complejo de inferioridad. Aunque todavía quedan muchas injusticias y abusos contra los que luchar, la batalla debe ser realizada con la ayuda del poder y el espíritu de toda la comunidad maorí, lo que dará lugar a una sociedad más justa e igualitaria. *Baby No-Eyes* explora el modo en el que la población maorí ha sido capaz, no solo de sobrevivir a la represión y abusos de los colonizadores, sino también de resurgir más fuerte y segura de sí misma gracias a la confianza en su legado cultural, su dignidad, sus tradiciones y su orgullo de raza.

Por último, el cuarto capítulo, “Traumatic Lack of Recognition, Postwar Annihilation and the Therapeutic Effect of Narrative in Patricia Grace’s *Tu*” (“El trauma de la falta de reconocimiento, la devastación de posguerra y el efecto terapéutico de la narración en *Tu*, de Patricia Grace”) analiza el impacto psicológico sufrido por la comunidad maorí después de negársele el derecho a la igualdad recogido en el artículo tres del Tratado de Waitangi después de su participación, no en una, sino en dos sangrientas y horribles guerras. El capítulo analiza el trauma de Tu y sus hermanos

teniendo en cuenta la dialéctica ‘amo contra esclavo’ postulada inicialmente por Hegel y posteriormente desarrollada por Fanon y Lacan con respecto a los problemas de identidad que los sujetos colonizados sufren como consecuencia de su deseo de ser reconocidos por los colonizadores. El paradigma del amo y el esclavo afirma que el amo niega el reconocimiento social y económico al esclavo, ya que esto podría animarle a demandar su derecho de autodeterminación. En el caso de los maoríes, el reconocimiento real de sus derechos nunca ha tenido lugar, porque los colonizadores y sus descendientes han temido que esto pudiera desencadenar la emancipación maorí del dominio ejercido por los blancos en Nueva Zelanda. Las novelas de Grace muestran que la única manera de lograr la igualdad social, económica y política es a través de la lucha contra las propias estructuras e instituciones del sistema colonial. Asimismo, este capítulo introduce las teorías de Nancy Fraser (2005; 2009), que describen un proyecto de justicia social en el que destacan los conceptos de redistribución (de los recursos económicos), reconocimiento (de la cultura y los derechos sociales de los más desfavorecidos), y representación (política de todos los individuos de la sociedad). De acuerdo con el estudio de las novelas llevado a cabo, se puede afirmar que solo a través del activismo político será la comunidad maorí capaz de cambiar las relaciones de poder existentes en Nueva Zelanda.

Este capítulo también muestra cómo la comunidad maorí creó su propio batallón para demostrarle al mundo entero que no eran nobles salvajes necesitados de civilización, ya que la cultura maorí era tan valiosa como cualquier otra cultura occidental. Ellos pensaron que a través de su tradición como guerreros podrían restaurar su soberanía y autonomía en la tierra donde yacían sus ancestros. El batallón maorí se convirtió en una potente fuente de identificación y orgullo étnico para la mayor parte de la comunidad. Querían mostrar el orgullo de su raza, y aceptaron arriesgar sus vidas y

pagar un precio supuestamente necesario para alcanzar finalmente el reconocimiento social y cultural que les asegurara la igualdad. Sin embargo, cuando los hombres del 28 Batallón regresaron a su país y demandaron esta igualdad social, afirmando que ellos habían derramado su sangre junto a los blancos en las trincheras de África y Europa, se dieron cuenta de que todas las promesas de igualdad por parte de los descendientes de los colonizadores no eran más que una mentira, y que ellos seguían siendo ciudadanos de segunda clase en Nueva Zelanda. Darse cuenta de que habían perdido familiares y amigos en vano empeoró su maltrecha condición mental aún más después de la guerra encarnizada y horrible que padecieron.

Estas novelas analizan también el potencial terapéutico que la narración ofrece a los individuos y comunidades traumatizadas, según Judith Herman (1992) e Irene Visser (2016), que argumentan que la verbalización de los recuerdos traumáticos puede ayudar a las víctimas a superar sus traumas. Teniendo en cuenta que la fragmentación de la mente es normalmente una de las principales consecuencias del trauma, la reorganización de los recuerdos dolorosos y su confrontación resultan cruciales para superarlos y conseguir equilibrio psicológico. Poblaciones como la maorí, silenciadas y desprovistas de su soberanía por regímenes opresores, necesitan encontrar la manera de sentirse nuevamente empoderadas, y solo la narración de las injusticias sufridas puede conferirles de nuevo la voz que pueda ser escuchada dentro y fuera del país, lo que les otorgaría la confianza y el orgullo de pertenencia a su comunidad que tan desesperadamente necesitan recuperar. Los personajes de estas novelas articulan y verbalizan los sucesos que causaron sus dolorosos traumas, lo que les confiere la confianza necesaria para iniciar el proceso de sanación de sus mentes fragmentadas. Como muestra la Tesis, estas novelas contrastan con las teorías aporéticas de Caruth (1995; 1996) y Felman y Laub (1991) en los estudios iniciales de trauma. Según estos

críticos, el evento traumático no es experimentado directamente por el individuo cuando este ocurre, sino que se rememora más tarde de forma inconsciente, ocasionando así el trauma. El caso de Tu es un buen ejemplo del poder sanador de la narración, ya que las experiencias traumáticas narradas por las víctimas de un trauma contribuyen sin duda alguna a potenciar el proceso de recuperación de su estado mental. El legado principal que Tu deja es su narración, defensora de un discurso antibelicista que él quiere transmitir a sus sobrinos Rimini y Benedict. Como Herman y Visser sugieren, la narración empodera a las víctimas del trauma porque les ayuda a hacerle frente y esto, junto con la memoria individual y colectiva, es crucial para la supervivencia maorí.

Como ya se ha dicho, las novelas analizadas en la Tesis hacen uso del paradigma de *demi-deuil*, ya que los ancestros resultan vitales en la cultura maorí para reivindicar las injusticias del pasado y sentar las bases de un futuro mejor. Además, este proceso es considerado inextinguible, de modo que los vivos deben aprender a convivir con sus muertos, manteniendo así un vínculo transgeneracional, basado en la responsabilidad y el respeto. Este proceso es una herramienta muy útil para entender el trabajo de Grace, que muestra de múltiples maneras cómo los fantasmas del pasado (ancestros) pueden ayudar a la comunidad maorí a denunciar las injusticias de la colonización y a mantener viva la memoria colectiva que ayudará a recuperar el orgullo perdido. Las novelas analizadas en esta Tesis subrayan la manera en la que los maorís reconocen la presencia de sus ancestros en sus vidas cotidianas, y cómo luchan para no dejar atrás los fantasmas del pasado. Hay que resaltar que, en la cultura maorí, los fantasmas no tienen la concepción negativa que se les da en la occidental, sino que son figuras positivas que pueden enseñar a la comunidad a corregir los errores que se cometieron en el pasado. En este sentido, el *demi-deuil* fomenta la idea de comunidad como una estructura social que puede mejorar la vida, y rechaza la filosofía occidental dominante que tiene al

individualismo como mantra supremo. En *Cousins*, Mata debe hacer frente a la pérdida de su madre primero, y después a la muerte de Makareta. Es en el funeral de Makareta donde Mata se encuentra con el espíritu de su madre; esto le permite reconciliarse con su pasado y convertirse en un miembro valioso de su comunidad. Del mismo modo, es solo cuando Tu asimila la muerte de sus hermanos y decide honrarles, cuando puede por fin conectar con sus ancestros y convertirse en un miembro útil y beneficioso para su comunidad. En *Baby No-Eyes*, Te Paania es capaz de afrontar la muerte de su pareja y su bebé gracias a la comunión con el espíritu de su hija. Esta coexistencia es otro ejemplo del proceso de duelo ideado por Derrida. La aceptación de la presencia de Baby en la familia está enraizada en la creencia tradicional de que existe vida después de la muerte, un elemento esencial de la cultura maorí. En el caso de Tawera, él hereda el trauma intergeneracional derivado de los abusos coloniales a su familia, pero consigue superar este trauma dando voz a la memoria colectiva de los maoríes y cuestionando la versión colonial ofrecida por los blancos a través de su arte. Tawera ha sido capaz de incorporar a su vida el fantasma de su hermana desde el mismo momento de su nacimiento, y esto le ayuda a desvelar públicamente los abusos sufridos en el pasado por su comunidad.

En suma, mi análisis ha mostrado las estrategias de la comunidad maorí para superar su trauma insidioso por medio de la resiliencia y la reafirmación de sus creencias y cultura, en contraposición a la afirmación realizada por los estudios de trauma iniciales sobre la imposibilidad de superar el trauma, entendido este como un fenómeno singular e individual. Aunque a día de hoy los maoríes son todavía considerados como una raza inferior por los blancos y no comparten sus mismos derechos y privilegios, la comunidad maorí ha desarrollado un sentimiento de identidad colectiva que claramente fomenta confianza renovada en su cultura, así como la necesidad de fomentar un

activismo político que demande algún tipo de reparación social, cultural y política por parte del gobierno neozelandés.

La descolonización de los estudios de trauma debe comenzar por reconocer el trauma insidioso causado a muchas poblaciones por los procesos colonizadores porque, si no lo hacemos, este campo de estudio nunca será capaz de encargarse de los traumas estructurales transmitidos a través de generaciones y, consecuentemente, nunca sería el paradigma teórico inclusivo necesario para analizar los diversos tramas del mundo globalizado actual. Solo unos estudios de trauma descolonizados podrían cambiar las dinámicas occidentales existentes en el presente, basadas en el individualismo y el materialismo, para fomentar en su lugar un mundo regido por los afectos y el respeto a la naturaleza. Si no hacemos nada para detener las injusticias existentes en el presente somos de algún modo también responsables. Por ello, esta tesis ha querido demostrar que una verdadera descolonización de la teoría de trauma es la mejor arma para que las minorías colonizadas puedan ser oídas y visibilizadas en su demanda de reparación a cuenta de las injusticias sufridas, tanto presentes como pasadas.

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