

The Renaissance of Māori Art and The Implication for Museums : Tainui-Waikato Perspective

マオリアートと博物館の関わり タイヌイーワイカトの事例から

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要約

1987年、ニュージーランドは「テ・マオリ」という展覧会の話題で持ちきりであった。「テ・マオリ」は、アオテアロア／ニュージーランドの先住民マオリと博物館の関係の歴史のなかで、画期的な展覧会とされており、先に開催されたアメリカからニュージーランドに戻り、凱旋展示を行ったのである。

筆者は調査地のタイヌイ・マオリ集団とともにバスを連ね、会場となったオークランド・シティ・アート・ギャラリーへ向かった。そこで夜明けに行われた開会式の詠唱と儀礼に参加したこと、マオリアートのカイチャキ(守り人)である各マオリ集団のリアルな説明を受けながら見て回ったことは、「博物館の展示を見る」という行為とはまったく次元の異なる体験であった。

本論では展示する側、展示される側、見る側の相互交渉が深く印象づけられた「テ・マオリ」展をふまえ、「文化の表象」や「先住民と博物館活動」の関係性を自己決定権の観点から考察する。とりわけ、マオリ・ルネサンスやマオリアートと博物館活動の関わりについて、脱植民地化の視点から、ワイカト・タイヌイの事例を中心として概観する。

Introduction

For me 1985 marked the beginning of a long and memorable association with Aotearoa New Zealand and its Māori people, particularly the people of Tainui-Waikato. This association still continues to this day.

At the time, I was interested in researching some aspect of *Māoritanga* (Māori

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culture, Māoriness). I visited several places in the North Island, but it was not until I attended a large *hui* (meeting, gathering) at *Turangawaewae*, a *marae* (meeting house, ancestral meeting ground, the spiritual and symbolic centre of tribal affairs), situated at Ngaruawahia, that I found what I was looking for. My research would be on the *Kingitanga* (Māori King Movement).

Turangawaewae Marae is the home of the *Kingitanga*, and it is situated on the banks of the majestic Waikato River. Thus, the people have adopted the name “Waikato” from the river. There is a proverb which says, “*Waikato, he piko he taniwha, he piko he taniwha*”, “Waikato, at every bend of the river, there is a chief”, which indicated the depth of power of the tribe. This is one of several reasons why the *Kingitanga* was passed over to Potatau Te Wherowhero, the first Māori King. Although past his prime at the time, he still commanded a lot of respect and authority.

The *Turangawaewae Hui*

From the outset I was enthralled with the whole exciting atmosphere of the *hui*. The place was alive, there were hundreds of people, and it had a dynamic feeling. I was captivated by the traditional welcome accorded to visitors and distinguished guests; the speeches of welcome and response from the various *kaumatua* (elder); the supporting traditional chants from the *kuia* (elderly woman); the performing arts, comprising action songs, *poi* (ball on a string) dances and the *haka* (dance); and the carved *waka* (canoe) on the Waikato River with their full complement of tattooed paddlers, all were awe-inspiring.

It did not end there. I was also drawn to the traditional carvings that adorned *Turongo* (the formal Meeting House) and *Mahinarangi* (the formal Reception Lounge). In real life *Turongo*, a Tainui ancestor and chief married *Mahinarangi*, a woman of *ariki* (noble, high rank), from the East Coast. Thus, as in life, they are now joined together again in the form of these two very important buildings, which have hosted many local and international Dignitaries and Royalty from several Nations including Japan.

Turongo also houses its own mini-museum and on display are many of the *Kingitanga* relics and artifacts. Nearby, *Pare Waikato* and *Pare Hauraki*, which sleep hundreds of visitors, are also carved in the traditional style. In contrast, *Kimiōra* dining hall that was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1974, is adorned with a modern style carved Māori mural and other modern art works. The carvings, traditional and modern, depict the history of Tainui and Waikato.

On that day, I witnessed Māori culture, tradition, and art at its best. There was pride, esteem, and dignity in the whole proceedings. I was to again witness similar *hui* over the years and always with the same feeling of awe.

I returned to Japan happy, but apprehensive about the task I had set myself. In the end it became the most memorable project I have ever undertaken. I will never forget the very many lovely and distinguished people I met when I was doing my research. There are too many to mention. However, I must pay my respects to two people who stand out and who have passed away. They are Sir Robert Mahuta who successfully led his people through to the Settlement of the Waikato *Raupatu* (confiscation) Claim and Dr. Henare Tuwhangai, a *rangatira* (chief, leader), *tohunga* (priest, expert) and scholar, in terms of his deep and profound knowledge of *tikanga* (course, reason, meaning) Māori, as well as advisor to the *Kingitanga*.

No reira nga mihinui nui kia korua nga Rangatira kua wehe atu nei ki tua o Paerau, ki te huinga o te Kahurangi, ki nga Kingi hoki. No reira moe mai, moe mai, moe mai.

In 1987 I returned to Aotearoa on the first of a number of fieldworks.

Te Māori

My arrival in 1987 coincided with the triumphant return of the “Te Māori: Māori Arts from New Zealand Collection” from US. The Exhibition was a collection of little known in the *Pakeha* (people from Europe, European descent resident)

world, except in museum circles. Māori *taonga* (treasure, artefacts) gathered from various museums throughout Aotearoa. They were to be displayed in firstly the New York Metropolitan Museum of Arts and subsequently in St Louis, San Francisco and finally Chicago before returning to tour Aotearoa.

It was a major undertaking and required the coordinated approach from many quarters, including Māori. It took nine years of intensive planning before the Exhibition finally opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Arts. That it won international acclaim is now history. Māori art, through “Te Māori” had now taken a giant step forward and could stand on its own “*mana* (authority, prestige, power)” in the international arts arena. By time it closed in New York and, in a space of four months, over 200,000 people had viewed the exhibition.

It should be stressed that the process of bringing together the exhibition was a unique experience for Māori. Firstly, before any of the *taonga* could be released, Museums sought agreement from the descendants of the original owners not only for permission to exhibit, but also to send them to US. Thus, the role of Māori as *kaitiaki* (guardians, custodians) of the *taonga* was recognised. The other important point was that, for the first time ever, Māori played a prominent part, not only in the negotiations, but also in ensuring that Māori protocol, traditions and culture were to be an integral part of “Te Māori”.

In the case of Tainui-Waikato, their precious and ancient *taonga* “*Uenuku*” (God of Tainui, incarnation of the rainbow) had pride of place in “Te Māori”. Initially, the Te Awamutu Museum in which *Uenuku* is permanently displayed, would not release it. But *Te Arikiniui*, the late Dame Te Atairangikāhu, who was the head of the *Kingitanga*, exercised her *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination, the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship) and her right as *kaitiaki*, *kaitiakitanga* (guardianship, cultural custodianship), to ensure that *Uenuku* would be part of the Exhibition (O’Biso 1987:75).

This is mentioned to emphasise the point that the *taonga* or cultural heritage

are not just the property of the Museums or Galleries, but that there are *kaitiaki* or traditional owners of those *taonga* who should always be consulted. This is decolonising Museums, cultural property rights in action.

Although Dame Te Atairangikāhu herself was not present at the opening ceremony at New York, she was well represented by her uncle, Tumate Mahuta and other distinguished *kaumatua* including Dr. Tuwhangai who performed the rituals in the exhibition area. She attended the last exhibition in Chicago.

For myself I felt very honoured and moved by the fact that I was now about to experience Te Māori in its home country. The Dawn Ceremony opened to the piercing *karanga* (ceremonial call, call of welcome) of the *kuia* outside the Auckland City Art Gallery, accompanied by the chanting of the *kaumatua* as they moved into the Gallery. It ended with powerful speeches and singing. It was a truly moving experience. It was a pleasant memory to look around the exhibition with the real explanation from each *iwi* (tribe) people. At the same time, the mutual negotiation among the display side, the displayed side and the viewers were deeply impressed on me. Also, it was a precious experience to get many suggestions of considering the "cultural symbol" and cultural property rights, and relationship between indigenous peoples and museum, in other words, decolonising Museums.

Kingitanga

Under the Treaty of Waitangi¹ signed in 1840, Māori were guaranteed among other things, possession of their lands. At first the Treaty upheld that right, but this did not last for long. The increase in the immigrant population meant an increase in the demand for land. Māori endeavored to protect their ancestral lands from being sold to the *Pakeha* and solidarity among the *iwi*, was seen to be the solution. To prevent such sales, it was proposed that Māori people would unite

under a King². Thus, the King Movement was born, and it had widespread support from the major *iwi* of Aotearoa. Potatau Te Wherowhero, the chief of Tainui confederation of *iwi*³, was eventually elected the first Māori King and Waikato became the base for the *Kingitanga*.

Kingitanga was intended to be a peaceful institution seeking equal partnership for the sharing and development of their Country. Because of its stance over land sales, war between the *Pakeha* and the *Kingitanga* broke out in 1860. Waikato lands were invaded, and *iwi* members were labeled “Rebels” for defending their homes.

As a result, the Colonial Government confiscated (*Raupatu*) 1 million acres of the most fertile and productive lands in Aotearoa under an Act of Parliament⁴. As a consequence of the confiscation Tainui’s economic base was destroyed, with the resulting dire consequences for the people of Waikato. Successive Kings made strenuous attempts to obtain justice, including delegations to the Queen of England and petitions to Parliament⁵. Lack of success from these quarters combined with the loss of land, had devastated the people of Waikato, and morale was low. It took a person like Princess Te Puea⁶ to motivate her people again. A humble woman, she had great *mana* not only among her own people but this extended to Prime Ministers, politicians, both in local and central Government, Governor Generals, tribal leaders and many other influential people. When we think of Māori cultural renaissance, for Waikato, Princess Te Puea comes to mind immediately. She became the driving force behind the cultural revival of her people and the *Kingitanga* when their spirits were at low ebb. It was her vision, which turned gorse covered swampy ground into the beautiful *Turangawaewae Marae* that so impressed me on my first visit, it was her dream that the *Kingitanga* be based there, and it was her foresight which led to the revival of the traditional arts to which I referred before.

She set up a stronghold of traditional culture around the various *marae* and

developed cultural activity at the grass roots level. *Poukai* (*Kingitanga* meeting, *hui* set in place by Tawhiao to enable him to keep in contact with his people) and the *Koroneihana* (meeting of coronation memorial day) was the backbone of the *Kingitanga*. Today, Māori cultural arts in all its forms are part and parcel of the *Poukai* and *Koroneihana*.

In other words, a kind of the renaissance of Māori art was already being practiced in the Waikato during her time. In addition, these gatherings give Māoridom the opportunity to discuss among themselves Māori politics and other wide-ranging issues affecting Māori, within the Māori context.

Coming back to the confiscation, eventually several Commissions of Inquiry were set up. The Sims Commission in the 1920's found that the people of Waikato were forced to be "Rebels", so that their lands could be confiscated. The Commission also found that the confiscation was excessive, but it could not look at the legality of the Crown's actions⁷. It took almost 20 years before the Crown agreed to pay a small compensation. The Tainui Māori Trust Board (TMTB) was established to manage the grant, which in time proved inadequate.

In 1981, another Commission of Enquiry, the Bentinck-Stokes Commission deemed the confiscation to be illegal. Then in 1989 the New Zealand Court of Appeal, when hearing Waikato's claim to call, confirmed that the compensation under the 1946 Agreement was inadequate. Earlier in 1985, the Waitangi Tribunal hearing on the Manukau stated that the *Raupatu* problems should be fixed. After all, the Crown eventually agreed to enter direct negotiation to resolve the *Raupatu* Claim

Following negotiations during 1994-95, the Crown agreed to settle the claim and that the signing of the historic Deed of Settlement would take place at *Turangawaewae Marae* on 22 May 1995. This coincided with the *Koroneihana* of Queen Dame Te Atairangikāhu. *Kingitanga* followers would be *masse* for the celebrations. Representatives of the *iwi* of Aotearoa, visitors and dignitaries

would also be present. The signing of this historic document was witnessed by the descendants of those who were directly affected by the *Raupatu* as well the hundreds of visitors.

Former Prime Minister, The Rt. Hon. J. Bolger and *Te Arikinui*, Dame Te Atairangikāhu signed the Deed. The witnesses were the chief negotiator of the Raupatu Claim, Sir Robert Mahuta and the Minister of Justice who was also the Minister in Charge of Treaty Negotiations, The Hon. D. Graham.

After consideration by Parliament, the Settlement Deed was ratified on 19 October 1995 and signed by Queen Elizabeth II. Official apology from the Crown was also part of the Settlement. The Settlement marked the beginning of a new era for the *Kingitanga*, the stigma of being labelled rebellions was removed and their stance in protecting their lands was vindicated. They could stand tall again; their mana had been restored.

The Settlement package was based on the principle: -

I riro whenua atu, me hoki whenua mai

As land was taken, so land should be returned.

Ko te moni hei utu mo te hara

Compensation should be made for past wrongs.

The return of the land was the ultimate but in reality, a mixed package of land, resources and economic opportunities made up the Settlement. With the proceeds from the Settlement, Tainui has provided scholarships for its tertiary students both at the graduate and post-graduate level, it has supported the many *marae* within its *rohe* (area) and it has invested in sports teams and in business ventures. While some of the investments and business ventures have not been as successful as they should have been, the Settlement package itself has remained intact.

Sir Robert Mahuta dedicated himself fully to the *Raupatu* cause. In the end it took his toll on his health, and he died of illness on 31 January 2001. He has been buried in the grounds of his beloved Endowment College, modelled on similar Colleges at Oxford University. His untimely death means his dreams for the college have yet to be fulfilled.

Māori Renaissance

In spite of the *Kingitanga* though, Māori land was still being alienated and the position of Māori in society had not improved. Urbanization had uprooted Māori from their grass roots and they (particularly the young), no longer deferred to the traditional Māori institutions. As a consequence, the 1960's saw a rise in the number of young people involved in political movements and protest (e.g. *Nga Tama Toa*). During the 1970s-80s there were demands for the recognition of the Māori language. Land rights and loss of Māori land became an issue again, culminating in the Māori Land March to Parliament led by Dame Whina Cooper. Then there was the Bastion Point protest led by Joe Hawke, who was a Member of Parliament later. The Crown intended selling prime real estate, which Joe Hawke and his tribe claimed had been taken in breach of the Treaty. As well, claims to the Waitangi Tribunal over breaches of the Treaty by the Crown were growing in numbers due to the fact that Claims could now be made for breaches dating from 1840. Prior to that, claims could only be made for breaches dating from 1975. All this unrest was because Māori were exercising their *tino rangatiratanga* and seeking recognition of their Treaty rights.

It would also be fair to say that another reason for Māori exerting their *mana* was due to the fact that there was proliferation of other indigenous cultures settling in Aotearoa. This gave rise to the Government giving more emphasis to multiculturalism rather than biculturalism as understood under the Treaty of

Waitangi. The Government was perceived to be undermining these rights and yet under the policy of biculturalism it officially recognized the Māori text of the Treaty of Waitangi, accepted the Māori language as the official language of Aotearoa and established the Waitangi Tribunal.

Similarly, because Māori Works was not seen as “real art” in the Art circles, Māori artists were pushing for recognition of Traditional Māori Arts as being a valid Art form. As well as they were seeking to protect cultural property rights of Māori Art. In this sense they were exerting their *kaitiakitanga* and *tino rangatiratanga*. Their works even reflected dissatisfaction with the existing situation.

In 1973 Māori Artists and Writers society (later *Nga Puna Waihanga*) was formed. Dame Te Atairangikāhu who has hosted *Nga Puna Waihanga* workshops supported the movement.

Though Māori Art may have been influenced from either *Pakeha* or Polynesian art forms, and despite the use of modern tools and aids, it is still inherently based on *kaupapa* (theme) Māori. It still relies on traditional images derived from Māori myths, Gods, lands, *whakapapa* (genealogy) and *tupuna* (ancestors). All of these are familiar symbols of Māori Cosmology. The sad fact of the matter is that the authentic precious *taonga* of their ancestors have passed through the hands of *Pakeha* collectors into the ownership of Museums.

The question to be asked is; how do the Museums view their collection of *taonga*? Do they consider they have exclusive ownership rights, and what role do Māori have in relation to those collections?

In answer to this question it is worth mentioning that Hauraki Māori who are part of the Tainui confederation of *iwi*, under a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal (WAI 100), raised concerns about the “acquisition by the Crown of their *taonga* and cultural property of Hauraki and the holding of these *taonga* in Museums and galleries throughout NZ and the World” and further “the continued desecration

in those institutions of such *taonga* through neglect and disrespect”. So, the Museums and Galleries should take note of this claim and be continually mindful of the fact that Māori still have a vested interest in and are still the *kaitiaki* of their ancestors *taonga*.

Waikato – Tainui’s relationship with the Museum:

The Waikato Museum of Art and History in Hamilton was founded in 1972. It came about through the amalgamation of the Waikato Art Gallery founded in the 1940’s and the Waikato Museum founded in 1965.

Tainui’s traditional *Waka taua* (canoe), “*Te Winika*” was gifted by Dame Te Atairangikāhu in 1973. “*Te Winika*” had been completed in 1845 but during the hostilities in 1863 it was dismantled by Gustavus von Tempsky of the Forest Rangers and buried in the sands of Port Waikato. It was in a poor state of repairs when Princess Te Puea had the hull lifted and brought back to *Turangawaewae Marae* by truck. She had the canoe rebuilt and renovations were completed in time for the *Turangawaewae Poukai* in March 1938. Because of the activities of groups like *Nga Puna Waihangā*, there was now a general awareness that Māori *taonga* should be displayed in a more authentic manner and setting. With this in mind Tainui entered into discussions with the Waikato Museum. The Museum recognised the advantages of change. As a result, the Museum was renovated and renamed *Te Whare Taonga o Waikato*, and it was opened at a dawn ceremony by His Excellency Governor General, The Most Reverend Sir Paul Reeves and *Te Arikinui*, Dame Te Atairangikāhu, on the 3rd October 1987. The new building now faces the Waikato River in a symbolic gesture of respect for the cultural and spiritual significance of the river and the outside facade is built in a shape of *marae*. Contemporary Tainui carving and *tukutuku* (woven panels for a meeting house) were commissioned and now have pride of place with “*Te Winika*” and

Princess Te Puea's photograph in a gallery which has been set aside exclusively for Tainui. It is called "*Te Winika Gallery*".

The commissioned carving depicts the 13th century history of Tainui *waka*, its navigation along the coastline of Aotearoa, until it finally landed on the west coast of the North Island at Maketu Kawhia

When it celebrated its 10th Anniversary in October 1997, *Te Whare Taonga o Waikato* held an exhibition called "*Te Aranui o Tainui*" (Tainui's journey). This was in honour of Tainui, its people and the *Kingitanga*. The exhibition ran until May 1998. It brought together for display all of Tainui's artifacts and *taonga* from the collections held by various Museums around the country. Significantly, Tainui personnel took part in the negotiations, the planning, the setting up of the exhibition and were guides during the exhibition. This again is an example of *tino rangatiratanga* and *kaitiakitanga* in action, i.e. decolonising museums. The outcome was that mutual respect developed between the Museum and the Tainui people.

While the exhibition was on, the Hamilton Public Library and the University of Waikato staged complementary programmes with a *Tainui* theme. Various education programmes were developed about the history, the social outlook and the cosmological views of Tainui. For example, at the Hamilton Public Library, Info Kits as follows, were available to the public:

Tainui te waka / Tainui is the canoe (the journey and arrival of the Tainui canoe)

Taupiri te maunga / Taupiri is the mountain (mountains and other geographical features of the Waikato)

Waikato te awa / Waikato is the river (the significance and environmental issues of the Waikato River)

Nga iwi o Tainui / The Tainui people (the settlement of the Tainui people at Kawhia and their expansion throughout the Waikato region)

Te Puawaitanga o Waikato / The blossoming of the Waikato (The Tainui history

from 1840's to 1860's)

From Raupatu to Settlement (from the Waikato land confiscation to the 1995 Settlement)

Kirikiriroa / Hamilton (the settlement and history of Kirikiriroa/Hamilton)

Mahi Whakairo / Tainui carvings (Fred and Brett Graham and Mahi Whakairo)

Mahi Raranga / Tainui weaving (Diggeress Te Kanawa and Mahi Raranga) etc.

During this, "*Uenuku*" and other Māori carvings were on display at the Waikato University campus.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to mention that after the historical signing of the *Raupatu* Settlement agreement, as a gesture of goodwill the Prime Minister, The Rt. Hon. J. Bolger, presented the "*Korotangi*", one of Tainui's most treasured *taonga*, to Dame Te Atairangikahu. It was presented on behalf of the Government.

The *Korotangi* is the bird that guided *Tainui waka* on its journey from *Hawaiiiki* (the ancestral homeland of Māori) across the Pacific, to Aotearoa. After it arrived in Aotearoa, the *Korotangi* turned to stone. It had been lost for centuries and when it was eventually found in Kawhia where the *Tainui waka* landed, the *Korotangi* ended up in the National Museum. Waikato's strenuous efforts over the years, to have their *taonga* returned met with refusal each time. Thus, the return of *Korotangi* was like the return of a long lost *tupuna*. It was a very emotional moment for the people of Tainui; its *Raupatu* Claim had been settled and a long "lost" *taonga* had been restored to its rightful owners.

Although Waikato still has no political autonomy, its *mana*, its *tinorangatiratanga* generally and its *kaitiaki* role over its *taonga* has been recognised in the whole Settlement process.

**This is a revised version of the paper originally written in the mid-2010s.

¹ New Zealand was founded with the Treaty of Waitangi that was concluded by Queen of England and Māori's chiefs on February 6th 1840. There are two texts (English and Māori) of the Treaty of Waitangi that the contents are different. In Māori version, it is written that the England government guarantees Māori chiefs' rights, so it is the source of the conflict till now.

² "Lands where king's *mana* extends is *tapu* (under spiritual restriction, sacred, holy rule). Nobody can sell or buy and borrow or lend the lands". Such recognition peculiar to Māori works.

³ *Tainui* Confederation comprises the tribes of Waikato, Maniapoto, Hauraki and Raukawa, all followers of the *Kingitanga*.

⁴ Over 300,000 acres was later returned, but not to the original owners.

⁵ The second king Tawhiao in 1884 and the fourth king Te Rata in 1914, appealed to the British government about the unfairness of the land confiscation. Also, the third king Mahuta became a member of the legislature to recover their lost lands..

⁶ Te Paea was born in 1883, and her mother was Tawhiao's daughter.

⁷ Several historians have since agreed that there was no rebellion. British troops had invaded Waikato.

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