



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

This article was originally published in printed form. The journal began in 1973 and was titled *The Aboriginal Child at School*. In 1996 the journal was transformed to an internationally peer-reviewed publication and renamed *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*.

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An Academic Occupation: Mobilisation, Sit-In, Speaking Out and Confrontation in the Experiences of Māori Academics

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Māori and other Indigenous scholars have been calling for the Indigenisation of academic space for decades. But what is the day-to-day experience of Māori academics within Aotearoa–New Zealand universities, and how does this experience reveal or enact the commitments to claim space? We interviewed 12 Māori academics and analysed and organised their experiences in the following way: the university can be understood as a site of (1) *mobilisation* of Māori staff and students; (2) *sit-in*, or infusing the institutional system with Indigenous values; (3) *speaking out*, thereby educating not only students, but staff and the public about Indigenous issues; and (4) at which *confrontation* is part of the academic terrain. The most common outcome of *confrontation* was *negotiation* and *reclamation* of space for Māori people, norms and values. In spite of this apparent willingness of the university to compromise, we find that *capitulation* (being moulded to the norms of the academy) and (*self*)-*eviction* (reconciling difference by leaving the university) are ever-present possibilities for Māori academics. In shaping and presenting the Māori academic occupation as a 4-stage commitment to affirm Māori identity, norms and scholarship, we present a framework within which Indigenous and minority academic work may be understood.

■ **Keywords:** Māori, academics, New Zealand university, Indigenous, cultural difference

Māori have been writing about their experiences at university in various ways since at least 1925 (Ngata & Buck, 1986). The development and growth of *kaupapa* Māori research in the early 1990s coincides with an explosion of Māori students and scholars writing about their experiences in the academy (Irwin, 1992) as ‘creating’ or ‘claiming’ space for Māori, particularly from, but not limited to, the education department at the University of Auckland (Morrison, 1999; Pihama, 2001; C.W. Smith, 1994, 2002; L.T. Smith, 1993). This spatiality suggests a link to the Treaty of Waitangi land claims process that the Waitangi Tribunal and the Office of Treaty Settlements has administered continuously since 1975. This article examines the experiences of 12 Māori academics in mainstream universities. Our participants’ responses could be understood in similar ways to the Māori academics who have written their own experiences into the literature. That is, that Māori academics ‘create space in institutional settings’ (L.T. Smith, 1992) for themselves and their communities

as a reclaiming act. We discuss this in the introduction. In the main section entitled ‘An academic occupation’ we present some of the details of our participants’ academic work. The article organises and frames these experiences as elements of the commitment to reclaim academic space. This commitment is enacted in three distinct ways, which inevitably lead to a fourth phase: confrontation and/or negotiation with the academy. In the last section of this article we highlight three ways in which the individual may respond to this institutional negotiation.

New Zealand universities exist on space that is contested on physical and intellectual terms. All of the universities in New Zealand have been built on what was at one time Māori land that was, in most cases, illegally

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acquired (C.W. Smith, 2002). For example, the physical space now occupied by the University of Auckland was confiscated by the Crown from the Tainui tribal grouping in the 1860s. But the universities also inhabit and colonise an intellectual landscape. New Zealand's oldest university is the University of Otago, which opened in 1871. The youngest university is Auckland University of Technology (AUT), which emerged from the Auckland Institute of Technology in 2000. In spite of their age difference, both of these institutions were set up using the model of the British university. As a consequence their management draws neither on Māori pedagogies nor the centuries of Māori histories and discourses. Māori values, scholarship and practices are found on the periphery of these institutions. The AUT charter reveals that the institution aims to be known for 'strong engagement with Māori, Pasifika and new settler communities' (Auckland University of Technology, 2007, p. 5). This typifies university discourse about Māori as a community to be engaged with, rather than one to co-manage the university. In fact, this quote implies that Māori are to be engaged with on the same level as new settlers, rather than as the first people of Aotearoa–New Zealand. This is in contrast to the three Wānanga, tribal tertiary institutions, which balance their obligations under the Education Act 1989 with being founded upon and 'guided by Māori principles and values' (Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, 2010).

So, what are the implications for Māori who choose to inhabit the space of the university?

Our academic work has to involve a commitment to change. The alternative is to give consent to being conquered ideologically and to accept the moral authority of the dominant group. (L.T. Smith, 1992)

Linda Tuhiwai Smith's articulation of the choice before the Indigenous scholar in the tertiary institution has resonated with writers in the Indigenous world, being met by echoes from others committed to change. Perceiving the university as a site of 'cultural interface' (Nakata, 2002), of interconnecting knowledge traditions at Interstitial spaces (Turnbull, 1997), and as a place of re-imagined spaces (Battiste, Bell, Findlay, Findlay, & Henderson, 2005; McGregor, 2005) these scholars highlight the value of cultural diversity to the university. Meanwhile, calls to indigenise the academy (Deloria Jr, 2004; Ka'ai, 2005; Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004), re-distribute power in research relationships (Bishop, 1998; Irwin, 1994; L.T. Smith, 1999), and for Indigenous emancipation and liberation through research (Rigney, 1997) remind us that reclamation of institutional space for Indigenous people and discourses is not just desirable, but a matter of justice.

In spite of being able to claim Sir Apirana Ngata as the first New Zealander, Pākehā or Māori, to earn a double degree in 1896, Māori are currently underrepresented at (mainstream) tertiary institutions. While Māori constitute 17% of the current population, Māori students make up

10% of university enrolments, and Māori academic staff around 4%. Māori have pioneered many initiatives in the universities in spite of these small numbers. Māori Studies, for instance, emerged from anthropology as a stand-alone department in 1978. This occurred at Victoria University of Wellington under the leadership of Hirini Moko Mead, the country's first professor of Māori Studies. In 1996, Mead was instrumental in the establishment of Te Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, a tribal university in Whakatāne. Marae (meeting houses), built in traditional styles and according to traditional protocols, were first established at Victoria University of Wellington (1986) and University of Auckland (1988). Marae and/or Māori-themed spaces are now found at all of the eight universities. Again, however, these initiatives to claim and indigenise space within the university occurred at the initiation of Māori academic and general staff and students, and often occurred in spite of, rather than because of, the university.

For Māori, some of the resistance to 'accepting the moral authority of the dominant group' (L.T. Smith, 1992) has been realised through shifts in academic leadership. Seven of the eight universities in Aotearoa–New Zealand now boast Māori representation at the pro-vice chancellor level of seniority. Each of the eight universities also has a representative on Te Kāhui Amokura, or the Māori advisory arm to the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee, which was established in 2004. However, at other levels the situation looks grim. In 2006, there were a total of 482 Māori researchers in the tertiary sector, constituting 5.6% of the total population of tertiary researchers (White & Grice, 2008). The raw number increased from 448 (5.6%) in 2003, but proportionately only kept pace with the sector. Of the 482 Māori researchers, 244 were working as university academics in 2006, or just 3.6% of the university academic population (White & Grice, 2008). This disproportionately low representation is concerning, and understanding the phenomenon is a first step to redressing this imbalance.

Some understanding can be gleaned from the situation of other Indigenous scholars. According to Alfred, for instance, the Native academic, typically considered to be on the periphery of the institution anyway, has a different perception of the university from many of their non-Indigenous colleagues. Understanding this must be key to universities being able to offer support and address inequity.

contrary to what is sometimes naively assumed by us and propagated by universities themselves, universities are not safe ground. In fact, they are not even so special or different in any meaningful way from other institutions; they are microcosms of the larger societal struggle. But they are places where we as academics work — they are our sites of colonialism. And, they are our responsibility (Alfred, 2004, p. 88).

Does the Indigenous academic see the territory that they occupy within the academy as ‘not safe’? Do they see the academy as a site that is their responsibility to decolonise? If so, how does their claiming that responsibility ‘not release the coloniser from responsibility but re-claim freedom of choice beyond a “struggle without end”’ (Hokowhitu, 2010, p. 223)? How does responsibility to ‘our sites of colonialism’ (Alfred, 2004, p. 88) play itself out in Indigenous and Māori work on campus? How do Māori academics negotiate the ‘larger societal struggle’ on the ‘unsafe ground’ that is the university? In what ways does Māori academic activity reflect commitments to reclaim space, either for themselves or for future generations?

Method: Stories from the Tertiary Education Frontline

This study of Māori academic experience is a replication of a national study conducted with 23 Indigenous academics across Australia (Page & Asmar, 2008). The authors met in 2005 when Christine Asmar, a non-Indigenous Australian, was seconded to Victoria University of Wellington from The University of Sydney. We set up the research collaboration with Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s partnership model of research in mind (1999) — our team consists of a Māori woman, an Indigenous Australian woman from Queensland and a non-Indigenous Australian woman from New South Wales. Susan Page visited New Zealand in 2006 to conduct the interviews alongside Mercier. While Asmar was also in New Zealand for some of the interviews, we decided that it was potentially oppressive for participants to be interviewed by more than two people, and it was most appropriate for the Indigenous members of the research team to conduct the interviews. Nonetheless, interviewees were made aware of our tripartite partnership model, and knew that Asmar would listen to the audio recordings of the interviews later. We named the Māori academics study *Ngā Kōrero Tūpari o te Pae Tawhiti Whakamaui kia Tīna*. This loosely translates as ‘Cliff-top Narratives — Reflecting on Gained Ground’. An Indigenist approach (Rigney, 1997) was implicit in our research — we aimed to present an alternative narrative to a dominant discourse which devalues the contribution of Indigenous academics, our project was undertaken by Indigenous researchers, and we privileged the voices of our participants for emancipatory purposes.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Our study with Māori academics gained ethics approval from both The University of Sydney and Victoria University of Wellington. We followed the Australian study’s model and we treated identities with strict confidentiality. Each participant was given a double letter code (e.g., PN) as an identifier, and their interview transcript was ascribed a consequential number. Access to the audio and electronic data was restricted to the three authors

only. Māori academics are less easily identified in Aotearoa–New Zealand, where they are proportionally more numerous than Indigenous Australian academics. Nonetheless, we suspect that promising participant confidentiality facilitated greater frankness on their part, particularly for academics in senior management positions. In this article, we distinguish participants by using their three-digit interview transcript code, along with three key attributes.

Participants, Information Sheets and Interview Schedule

In addition to a Māori project name, information sheets included a *mihimihi* (greeting) in Māori. We selected a pool of 17 academics with what we hoped was a balanced representation across gender, age, qualification, and level of seniority. The Māori researcher, Ocean Mercier, approached all 17 to see if they were interested in being interviewed for the study; 16 were willing, and 12 were available during the two-week window that Indigenous colleague Susan Page was in New Zealand to interview. The 12 participants were from three campuses of two universities in the lower North Island of New Zealand. The small group was intended as a pilot project, and the results discussed here are more indicative than representative. Under consultation with a Māori colleague, the question schedule was adapted just slightly from that used in Australia. This was possible because the questions were quite general. Questions elicited experiences related primarily to formal and informal academic staff development or institutional support for Māori academics, interactions with students, ‘extra activities or roles’, and (perceived) recognition for this work. Most of the Māori academics we interviewed mentioned the Treaty of Waitangi in relation to the issues they raised. In a future study we would consider asking how the Treaty impacts upon Māori academic work, but because of the comparative aspect of our research (discussed later) it was important to keep the question schedules as similar as possible.

Data Analysis

We transcribed the interviews and sent them back to our participants for checking. We heard back from all 12 participants, none of whom requested amendments. Then we used NVivo Version 2 software to code the interview transcripts. The nodes used were essentially the same as for the Australian study, although we expanded upon the node descriptions. The three core ‘tree branches’ related to: Individual issues (which included nodes such as workload, satisfaction, agency); Organisational issues (including nodes such as institutional responses, formal staff development); and Activity (including the nodes teaching, research, administration, community).

We were just as mindful of Indigenist (Rigney, 1997) methodologies during our data analysis phase as during our data collection. Thus, rather than a traditional, posi-

tivist interrogation of the data, we adopted an approach that allows the participant voices to speak and meaning to be inscribed by the reader. The participant narratives structure and drive the arguments presented in this article. Quotes are presented in two ways: in detail so as to self-contextualise, or as snippets within our own description of the context. Organising the data with NVivo helped to identify recurrent themes emerging from those voices and to observe how those themes related to each other around any particular piece of conversation.

As a collaborative team doing a comparative study, we briefly considered analysing the interviews from both Australian and New Zealand participants as one large group. However, in order to identify the tyrannies of comparison (someone always comes out looking the worse for wear) we ultimately decided to treat the interviews with Māori academics' as distinct, albeit related by several commonalities (Asmar, Mercier, & Page, 2009). This distinction better represents these participants and their contexts, while still potentially illuminating any generic 'Indigenous' or 'Indemic issues' (Page & Asmar, 2008). We went through the 12 coded transcripts and noted in a separate file what appeared to be the most oft-mentioned issues. We observed that the issues fell into four different types:

1. Issues related to *critical mass* (or lack thereof) of Māori academics in the academy and its incumbent impacts. Some examples of these include high teaching workloads due to low staff numbers or a lack of knowledgeable or appropriate staff;
2. Issues related to 'learning the ropes' and *negotiating the university hierarchy*, such as coming to university via non-traditional pathways (thus confronting systems that don't cater for their experience), pursuing a higher degree whilst supervising other postgraduate students, and negotiating for institutional recognition of scholarship in the Māori language;
3. Issues related to *cultural awareness raising* activity, such as giving guest lectures, public statements or presentations on Māori perspectives in diverse disciplines and fields, without necessarily having that disciplinary background; and
4. Issues related to *institutional responses* to Māori norms, values and initiatives. For example, providing a counter-narrative to the dominant discourse that politically marginalises the academic, Māori values competing with institutional values and token engagement by non-Māori with 'Māori' issues.

When the first author presented these issues during a Māori Studies class in 2007, she illustrated the marginalised position of the Māori academic with an iconic photograph. The black and white photograph is taken in 1978, and features a young Māori boy sitting on a fence. Surrounded by police officers, he sits next to a sign that reads 'Bastion Pt: Māori Land'. Ngāti Whātua are the iwi

(tribe) local to Orākei, a coastal region in Auckland and have a centuries old customary relationship with that land. In 1886, the New Zealand government took Bastion Point in Orakei for defence purposes under the Public Works Act 1882. In 1941, rather than being returned to Ngāti Whātua, ownership was vested in the Auckland City Council. In 1974, the Crown announced its plans to develop the last 60 acres of uncommitted Bastion Point land into residential housing (Waitangi Tribunal, 1987). Outraged, representatives of Ngāti Whātua and many supporters staged a protest occupation of Bastion Point that would last a year and a half. When the inevitable confrontation between protestors and government representatives occurred on 'Day 508', Ngāti Whātua were disappointed. However, negotiations continued for some years and some of their land was returned in 1990 along with a Crown apology.

The juxtaposition of the contemporary academic experience with an image from an historic occupation led us to see the connection of these issues with the four emergent organisational notions of:

1. *Mobilisation* of Māori staff and students (in order to counter the effects of lack of *critical mass*);
2. *Sit-in* or infusing the university with Indigenous values, influencing institutional systems requires knowledge of those systems (this aligned with issues regarding *negotiating the university hierarchy*);
3. *Speaking out*, educating fellow staff, students and the general public about issues impacting upon Māori (categorised as *cultural awareness roles* in our study); and
4. *Confrontation* with the university and negotiation of space for Indigenous norms, values and initiatives (this class of issues were represented as *institutional responses* or *lack of responses* in our participants' responses).

In the next section, we will present some of the responses that contributed to the creation of this framework. We present quotes so that all of our 12 participants are represented in this article. While everyone's experience was diverse, we have focused on issues that were mentioned by two or more people. This also allowed us a choice of illuminative quotes. Again, we do not claim that this research represents all Māori academic experience. However, we have been careful to allow all of the voices that we heard to have space to speak from the page. Through these voices you will hear how the commitment to claim institutional space is enacted in different aspects of Māori academic work.

An Academic Occupation

Mobilisation

'The biggest support for Māori academics, undoubtedly, are Māori academics' (011, Male, Lecturer, MA).

Mobilising an effective work force requires a critical mass at all levels of seniority, and good leadership to nurture healthy and robust networks. While Māori academics seek and gain value from informal networks with non-Māori staff — for instance other women, those with common research interests and in recreational avenues — a Māori academic's connections with other Māori academics provided especially positive and empowering support. Some of these networks had been formalised, for instance through Toihurewa at Victoria University of Wellington, and in the more recent Te Kāhui Amokura initiative of MANU-Ao (the Māori Academic Network across Universities in Aotearoa).

Being part of the wider *whānau* [family] of Māori at university, I would see as allowing those few people who are in mainstream organisations to connect, and be strengthened and heartened by being amongst Māori, and being able to take things for granted — feeling comfortable and normal — rather than on the periphery and included when it's seen to be appropriate. (001, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

This quote and others reveal the contrast between the academics' relationships with Māori and with the university majority. In another case a *whānau* network provided a space to 'have a big moan' (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD) about a policy decision that conflicted with Māori protocols around reciprocity and gifts. Respondents shared dissatisfaction with university infringement of these networks and relationships. For example, the university's obsession with New Zealand's research quality assessment exercise — Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) — was seen to 'negate collegiality' (011, Male, Lecturer, MA). In another example, moves 'to commodify' (005, Female, Lecturer, PhD) by decentralising the cost of telephone calls, revealed the university's apathy towards the complex layering in a relationship. For many Māori (and non-Māori) academics, their social and research networks are intertwined. Ironically, the university sees value in Māori academics' community networks. But while it calls on Māori frequently, whether for establishing a formal *iwi* relationship, or for committee nomination and staffing recommendations, Māori academics found the institution's recognition of their input uneven.

Respondents talked about succession planning to increase numbers of Māori staff and foster staff-student networks, particularly in specific and localised areas of knowledge. Both emerging and established participants mentioned particular Māori leaders within the university system. The impact of founding Professor of Māori Studies, Hirini Moko Mead, was being felt years later, and aspects of his leadership style still apparent in his former staff and students. Similarly, Mason Durie's leadership had taken many forms; from dissipating Pākehā antipathy and anxiety related to the Treaty by using humour in classes, setting up a Māori postdoctoral research fellowship, modelling the appropriate way to engage a community in research, to making cups of tea for visitors. Māori leader-

ship was viewed positively, however, a recurring message was the need to train the leaders in the main stream of the university. Decision-makers are 'still white males over 50' (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD), and these senior management staff needed to be educated in *tikanga* (Māori protocol) to effect meaningful change.

If you're going to really grow and learn and develop, in a good way, you need good mentors. I don't think currently we have the spread of people in Māori with those skills. That's not saying that we won't have them and it actually doesn't say that non-Māori won't be good mentors either. (007, Male, Lecturer, PhD)

While the value of non-Māori allies was acknowledged here, others observed that of those few non-Māori actively engaged in claiming space for Māori, most came from overseas.

While more Māori leadership was needed, the solution was not necessarily to prematurely accelerate Māori into leadership roles, a move that some had felt no or negative impacts from. Some Māori academics had left the university and flourished as leaders elsewhere and in their communities. This was seen as a positive thing, but at times had left Māori academics struggling to maintain momentum and needing to 'strategise differently, collaborate, plant ideas in peoples' heads' (006, Female, Senior Lecturer). Thus, while critical mass, networks and leadership among Māori were important, engagement of non-Māori allies and infusion of Māori values throughout the institution was seen as a crucial next step.

Sit-in, infusion

'Having a lot more Māori, so what?' (003, Male, Senior Lecturer, PhD).

In spite of the value gained through the mobilisation of Māori into academia, whether in the shape of academics, general staff, support staff, or students, just having more was not enough. While the university institutes policies to increase Māori participation at universities, for Māori, their motivation goes beyond mere increase of numbers. The desire to influence the academy came through in the interviews, as this quote illustrates:

In a way we were lucky, our generation of academics, doing pioneering work. When you're trying to establish things, you gotta learn the system. You don't just learn your little part of the system. You learn how the whole institution operates. Cos if you need to open these cupboards, you gotta know exactly where to go to, and how they operate. (006, Female, Senior Lecturer)

The promise of 'cupboards' or resources that can be unlocked for Māori development in and outside of the university walls motivated this person to 'learn the system'. Beyond resources, it was vital to have influence on policy and decision-making bodies or committees, thereby enabling change and transformation for Māori — whether

through increasing numbers of Māori students, or indigenising the space they inhabit.

But I think if you, especially, are sitting on ethics committees or even on assessing committees or sitting on councils, you have an input into the shape of the policy, and therefore you have an understanding of how the decisions are being made ... and especially if it's your business, you can have advanced warning of what's likely to happen. So you can prepare, you can reshape your business around what opportunities might arise. (010, Male, Researcher, PhD)

Mobilisation and sit-in are intimately related. We see this in the following discussion of *whanaungatanga* (relational networks) within the university, and the need for spaces of refuge and retreat from the battleground of policy and decision making.

There's an innate understanding, because of the marginalised space that we come from, or we occupy within the university. I wouldn't be there unless there were other people around who you could share those experiences with. (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

Infusing the university with Māori values presents a national opportunity and an international potential point of difference.

[But] I don't think that there's any point in actually having all of that happening unless it's going to make a difference to the university. Having a lot more Māori, so what? I mean having more of anything is just having more. So unless that group has an influence on the way the university is, the way the university operates, the way the university thinks, the way the university works, in the communities and on the international sphere ... I mean I think this is New Zealand's chance to influence international universities. (003, Male, Senior Lecturer, PhD)

Others were optimistic about the institutional response to Māori bringing Māori values to the university. Below, the respondent alludes to representation in 'our own voice', but implies that non-Māori can advocate for infusion of Māori values as appropriate.

I've found it to be a help in my university having people who are further up the chain of hierarchy, having that representation at the level of the Chancellors and Vice Chancellors. Having a space and a voice there allows strategies and policy documents to be written, that at the school level we can identify, highlight and use. So it's kind of our own voice, ratified by the system that can be used to justify a stronger position on more resources or more space and creative processes being recognised for Māori. (001, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

In reality, however, much of the representation came in the form of Māori leadership infused throughout the ivory tower.

That's how we formalised [the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Māori)] job, is to be a very high level adviser to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor. And I think that's now

being reflected in the responsiveness of the university to Māori. (010, Male, Researcher, PhD)

Again, the key themes of critical mass, leadership and networks are relevant in the infusion of Māori values across campus, but institutional responses to indigenising initiatives (discussed in an ensuing section) are just as crucial to Māori sense of agency in the academy.

Speaking out

'I feel like I have to do it because it's an opportunity to get that information out there'. (001, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

A substantial element of the multiple roles Māori academics play is in speaking out or 'talking out' (Barclay, 1990, p. 74): educating students, staff, public and diverse communities about Māori values, norms, society and history, as well as colonial history in Aotearoa New Zealand. It falls on the descendants of those who experienced the butt end of the settlers' forces to recount much of this history. As such, 'talking out' is often an emotionally draining task and contributes to the Māori academic's high workload.

Māori academic staff lead hugely busy lives. And that's not to say that others don't. But there are aspects of our work, I think, that impact on us in a way that is different for our non-Māori colleagues. (009, Female, Senior Lecturer, PhD)

Here we give a brief overview and reminder of the issues, highlighting their relationship to speaking out.

Cultural Awareness Roles

Most of our participants were engaged in increasing the cultural awareness of people in the academic community, but felt conflicted about participating in cultural awareness activity, and often frustrated afterwards if they did, especially for those working in the natural and physical sciences.

They're so culturally unaware they wouldn't know when to call it cultural awareness. (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

In spite of what seemed a deeply-held motivation to do this type of work Māori academics had experienced it as a risky activity. In the case of giving guest lectures on Māori issues in other courses, the knowledge they shared was sometimes difficult to contextualise, resulting in misunderstandings not just of information they'd shared but also of the situations of Māori students in those classrooms.

I feel like I have to do it because it's an opportunity to get that information out there, but how much does that information get appropriated or twisted or made to be a token part of the lecture? (001, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

While the university was not seen to formally recognise this activity, Māori academics were nonetheless motivated to continue it precisely in order to not 'allow people to go on being ignorant' (006, Female, Senior Lecturer).

Multiple and Diverse Roles

Much Indigenous academic work goes unrecognised because it is just a small slice of the Māori academic's

overall responsibilities. Some of those multiple roles include teaching, studying, mentoring, counselling, writing, travelling, fulfilling community obligations, research, translation, service on boards and committees, performance, *manaakitanga* (hospitality) and much more. The nationwide study of Indigenous Australian academics observed that their scholarly activity — that relates particularly to teaching and supporting Indigenous students — is like an iceberg (Page & Asmar, 2008) most of which sits below the water's surface and passes unrecognised. As seen by the quote below, multidimensionality in teaching is also an issue for Māori academics, albeit a motivating and compelling aspect of their scholarly work.

I've got an open door policy ... there's not a time when I say no, go away. And sometimes it is to my detriment, but having those kinds of conversations, having those students and staff in my office makes the job more fulfilling. If I wasn't like that then I'd be isolating myself from the very community that I profess to be supporting. (004, Female, Lecturer, MA)

Language/Culture

'Identity Work' (Mcdermott & Church, 1976)

While participants expressed frustration in relation to cultural awareness raising activity, they generally expected freedom to indigenise the space in their own classrooms.

I don't give people room to compromise my values and principles ... I started on the karakia [incantation], and a couple of the international students were talking. So I'll do things like, 'somebody please tell me why you do not speak while I'm performing the karakia?' you know and then I'll push it out to them. And then I'll get an answer. 'Because it's disrespectful' is one comment. And so immediately those students that were talking have learnt, and it's not necessarily me that's given them that lesson. (004, Female, Lecturer, MA)

Māori academics were highly motivated to share their discourses: 'when we teach Māori *kaupapa* we always go over and above' (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD). Students appeared to respond very positively to the provision of Māori spaces on campus. In turn the university also appears to value this knowledge, but is slow to reciprocate in ways that are satisfying for Māori academics.

Kaupapa Māori seems to be in very high demand ... it's interesting how we sort out those issues. Do we draw a line in the sand and say no, you have to come to us, or do we sort of be reactive and jump at every whim and demand, for us to provide that kind of genuine Māori appearance for the university. (008, Male, Lecturer, MA)

The dilemma for the Māori academic, particularly those in Māori studies units who are also charged with upholding tikanga Māori (by performing the protocols for visitors to the *marae*, for example) was in balancing those demands against the other expectations of themselves as scholars.

Confrontation

'It's been sort of like a mini guerrilla warfare'. (006, Female, Senior Lecturer)

Sometimes, the university responds quickly to stated need. At other times, the Māori academic is forced to confront and negotiate with the academy, either personally or corporately. When the university had provided professional support tailored to Māori needs (e.g., for Māori language), it usually came from:

... us [Māori academics] agitating to get it ... there is no overt support mechanism for Māori academics. (012, Male, Senior Lecturer)

While professional networks such as MANU-Ao and Toi huarewa have changed this situation substantially in the past 5 years, this opinion reflects that of a senior academic with a protracted history in the university. He went on to reflect on a recurring confrontation: the question about the place of Māori studies.

There always has been and I think there probably always will be some resentment about Māori studies. It's not seen as being a proper academic discipline. (012, Male, Senior Lecturer, MA)

So then how Māori Studies departments, what their key reason for existence is these days within an institution, is unclear for many universities. (011, Male, Lecturer, MA)

Undermining Māori Studies, what many see as the core repository of Māori knowledge in the university, has impacted the mobilisation and growth in those departments. Schools of Māori Studies remain understaffed and underfunded. Indeed, in 2009 one of the most well respected units in the country was severely restructured and its staff numbers halved.

On a personal level, some respondents felt that the institution's response, or lack of response, was a threat to their own agency and that of their students.

It's concerning, the reality of it, while at the same time we're encouraging and growing our Indigenous students into this area, because I think it's quite hostile, and it doesn't feel safe. I mean the safest I ever felt was in Māori studies ... I think tertiary institutions have got some big challenges ahead of them, because the talk that they're talking about growing students, Indigenous academics, is a load of bullshit if they're not going to open up the space to allow Indigenous academics the freedom to do what we want to do. Which is to explore our discourses, and to teach and to research and make decisions. Yeah, but it still feels like a very controlled environment, and when I'm in it I feel very controlled. (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

The disillusionment and anxiety in this quote reveal the extent to which the university's inertia is experienced as a personal confrontation.

On both a personal and corporate level, Māori academics felt the weight of expectations from many different quarters: including community, whānau, students, and the

university. Overall, participants spoke with greatest frustration about being taken for granted and being treated as the token fulfilment of the university's obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.

What we're formally expected to do is, from the best of my knowledge, to be a critic and conscience of society as an academic and teach the discipline. Those other extra-curricular activities is more about the political agendas of the university, trying to demonstrate that it upholds the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and that's the main reason why these programs are happening. (008, Male, Lecturer, MA)

And yet, in spite of this frustration, the Māori academics interviewed here demonstrated a firm commitment to working within the institution and claiming it as their own site of colonialism (Alfred, 2004). From there, they sought to enact change, and realise Māori development in tertiary education and beyond. But change in the university and to the academic space can only be achieved through the university acceptance of and engagement with issues that Māori academics bring to the negotiating table.

Discussion: Outcomes of Confrontation

Our participants have revealed that values and worldview-based confrontations with the university are a commonly experienced feature of their academic experience. This generally counters their commitment to reclaim intellectual and physical space for things Māori. We must acknowledge that the university has made allowances for increasing Māori representation (mobilisation), infusion of the system with Māori practices and values (sit-in) and education about Māori people, norms, practices and values (speaking out). However, if it cannot actively support Māori academics who carry out these activities, the logical end will be *confrontation*. So what happens next? Here, we posit that there are three outcomes to *confrontation and negotiation*: *reclamation*, *capitulation* or *(self-)eviction*. Each is discussed here separately.

Reclamation

'Despite all of these battles, [the university's] pioneered a lot of development for Māori academics across the country'. (006, Female, Senior Lecturer)

Sometimes *confrontation* is as mild as making a specific request, and *reclamation* as easy as the university saying yes. By far the most positive outcome of *confrontation* is resolving differences through negotiation. Many scenarios of this nature were reported, particularly among long-time academics. Indeed, we argue that in spite of the struggle for Māori academic space, the battles were seen as ultimately worthwhile, because most *confrontation* had resulted in some gain for Māori. This work, and subsequent negotiations with the university, had resulted in *reclamation* of Indigenous space, whether physical, intellectual or spiritual. For example, new staff positions had been created to increase and sustain Māori student

numbers. Māori-led support networks and programmes had gained traction on university grounds. Māori leadership, whether at the senior management level or amongst those with initiative, had created tailored professional development opportunities for Māori. Pākehā were seen to be acknowledging the importance of tikanga Māori (Māori protocols), and so the areas of *confrontation* and negotiation had shifted. Māori were now more expressing concerns that their Pākehā colleagues were not, on the whole, engaging as a Treaty partner on issues with Treaty relevance, and were calling on the limited resource of Māori staff to give the 'Māori lecture'. In response, some reported that they were taking steps to manage *speaking out* activity. However, unless the university recognises this tension and implements safeguards against Māori academics doing too much in this area, new and emerging academics, particularly those in departments with no Māori mentors, will be vulnerable to the 'constant requests' (005, Female, Lecturer, PhD) and resultant heavy workloads. This will negatively impact Māori academic career progression and professional development.

Capitulation:

'Just another cog in a machine'. (003, Male, Senior Lecturer, PhD)

The above quote invokes a second possible outcome, *capitulation*, for Māori academics, indeed any minority academic, in negotiation with the academy. This scenario may apply to the scholar who avoids or retreats from *confrontation*. Elements of their identification as Māori may be subsumed, and thus resonate with the idea of the 'privatised' intellectual (Graham Smith interviewed and as cited in Montes, 2006). While none of those we spoke to revealed this to be a personal experience of theirs, some spoke of colleagues who preferred to 'hide in an office and write a whole lot of papers' (011, Male, Lecturer, MA) rather than engage on a broader level with a Māori scholarly community. We find the 'hide' metaphor in this particular quote rather telling, and validation of our, arguably, strong suggestion of the term *capitulation*. *Capitulation* occurs on different scales too — a negotiator may concede defeat in some areas, while being able to reclaim ground in others.

(Self-)Eviction:

'I'm ready to walk away'. (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD)

A third possible outcome of *confrontation* is analogous with forcible *eviction* of occupying protestors. In this scenario, the institution thrusts the occupiers off what it sees as its territory. Fortunately, no one that we spoke to had personally experienced *eviction* from the university, and indeed, 11 of our 12 respondents are still working at the institution we interviewed them at, 5 years later; (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD), however, spoke of her frustration with the system, her inability to make inroads for Māori-

knowledge in the sciences, and the potential for her to self-evict as a result of these failures to negotiate a satisfactory outcome from *confrontations*. The same respondent was pessimistic about the university's ability to create 'proactive space' (002, Female, Lecturer, PhD). On a personal scale other academics we spoke to had *self-evicted* from a number of local spaces within the university. For example, some decided against giving guest lectures because the request was inconsiderate or inappropriate. Thus, both *self-eviction* and *capitulation* are experienced to varying degrees alongside *reclamation*. On a corporate scale, the creation and growth of external spaces, such as wānanga, is a symptom of the generally poor responsiveness of universities to Māori.

While our key respondents generally spoke with satisfaction about the gains achieved through their own occupation, we are compelled to reveal that 3 of the 18 Māori academic colleagues who were associated with the project have since *self-evicted* or been *evicted* from their university. In a climate in which the university is looking for ways to recruit and retain Māori students and academics, we feel that these experiences must be heeded. Universities risk alienating themselves from the growing demographic of young Māori if they ignore the experiences of Māori academics.

So, how do universities avoid the (*self-*)*eviction* scenario for their Māori staff and maintain and increase their numbers of Māori academics, and thus Māori students? If universities value the unique worldview, discourses and *tikanga* that Māori staff bring to the campus, they must also avoid assimilation and integrating practices that lead to the *capitulation* scenario.

... 'indigenising the academy' means to make the academy both responsive and responsible to Indigenous people's goals of self-determination and well-being. This requires a huge effort by Indigenous scholars to be committed to transforming the academy. To engage in this work, requires a redefining of the academy from an agent of colonialism to a platform for decolonisation. (Ka'ai, 2005)

Universities must allow the *reclamation* of physical and intellectual space that is part and parcel of many Māori battles in the academy. The academy can be 'a platform for decolonisation', but only if the academic occupation results in *negotiation* and *reclamation*; not *capitulation* and (*self-*)*eviction*.

Conclusion

In this article we shared our participants' academic experiences, and through these reveal their commitment to transformation of their institutional spaces. If 'change' and 'transformation' are goals for Māori, can the university become a space in which change is possible and, even further, 'a platform for decolonisation'? Those we interviewed spoke and acted in a way consistent with a belief that it could. They were committed to 'their site of colo-

nialism'. As we saw, however, there are professional and emotional implications of their occupation. By presenting some of the realities of the Māori academic occupation here, we hope to influence university policy related to one of its most unique resources — Māori staff.

The occupation framework has resonated with audiences in other national and professional contexts. The findings of this article have been shared in Saskatchewan, Alaska, New Zealand and Australia, and the notion of four key movements — *mobilisation* or increasing representation, *sit-in* or the cultural exchange of values and norms between occupied and occupier, *speaking out* or educating and, finally, *confrontation* — may describe the experience of other Indigenous academics. What would this framework reveal if considered in other minority academic contexts? Could it be applied to marginal schools or departments or in other professional spheres where minority groups feel their identity and sovereignty challenged by a powerful majority? We argue that the model may be useful in all of these areas, and perhaps more.

Can the indigenisation of the university keep pace with the indigenisation taking place in other areas of education? Will our children's identities be affirmed by the space they grow to occupy in the university of today and of the future? Will Māori occupation of the university realise it as a site of negotiation, not confrontation? We have shown here that the Māori academic's commitment to occupy the western institution is evidence of their belief that, yes, the Aotearoa–New Zealand university of tomorrow can be all these things. It is also a space that may respond to and learn from Māori redefining of academic norms and performing new roles as Indigenous scholars. In spite of the challenges that Māori academics have faced, and continue to face, the university is a space in which gains are made for Māori. However, while committed to their sites of colonialism for the potential gains, these convictions came at an emotional and physical cost to the academics interviewed. In what should ideally be one of the most satisfying and fulfilling of careers, for Māori academics, this path was one of seeking the vocation from within the occupation.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful, first and foremost, to those who shared their experiences with us. We thank the editors and two anonymous referees of this article for their feedback and editorial suggestions. We would also like to acknowledge funding support from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Committee, Toi huarewa and MANU-Ao.

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