THE CASE OF TE KARAKA

Ngāi Tahu print media before and after settlement

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Abstract

Treaty reparation processes are a key characteristic of postcolonial Aotearoa/New Zealand. In 1975 the New Zealand Crown established the Waitangi Tribunal designed to make recommendations on indigenous (Māori) claims regarding breaches of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi (Tiriti o Waitangi). While in the face of things, this was a politically progressive act of reconciliation, the Treaty process still entails limitations, the most important aspect being that the New Zealand Crown continues to set the agenda for addressing historical injustices. New Zealand’s mediated public sphere also helps set the agenda for understanding Treaty Claims processes. Mainstream media often frames these debates as a contestation over resource allocation and as a competition between Māori and Pākehā (people of mainly European descent). We argue that as iwi (Māori tribes) settle claims with the Crown, the country is increasingly witness to emerging articulations of identity that complicate orthodox understandings of New Zealand nationhood. Iwi media offer potential counter-publics that compete against, and negotiate with, more mainstream media outlets. Increasingly, these counter-publics focus on the post-settlement futures of iwi identity and New Zealand nationhood. Drawing upon the Treaty settlement of the predominant Māori tribe of the South Island, Ngāi Tahu, we discuss the role of the iwi’s flagship magazine Te Karaka in revitalizing Ngāi Tahu identity and we outline the challenges facing Ngāi Tahu identity in a post-settlement era.

Introduction

The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi), signed between some indigenous Māori communities and representatives of the British Crown, informs much of the cultural politics of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The Treaty, although only quasi-constitutional, provokes ongoing debates over the meaning and significance of New Zealand’s colonial past and its
possible postcolonial futures. Te Rarawa tribal leader, Nopera Panakareao, was initially optimistic about the Treaty of Waitangi’s role in safeguarding the integrity of Māori society. At the time of the Treaty’s signing, Panakareao is said to have uttered the phrase, “Ko te atakau o te whenua/I riro I te kuini/ko te tinana o te whenua/I waiho ki ngā Māori. [The shadow of the land goes to the Queen, but the substance remains with us.]” Panakareao hoped that the Treaty would protect the fabric of Māori society. If this hope had come true, then the terms for debating the cultural politics of Aotearoa/New Zealand would be radically different today. Instead, the substance of Māori society—land, mana (prestige), authority and self-determination—was dramatically transformed in the wake of the 1840 Treaty. Māori society suffered from overt practices of land alienation and the institutionalization of British legal, economic, religious and educational norms. Subsequent Treaty reparation processes have sought to heal these hurts.

The ramifications of these historical injustices continue to inflect and inform debates about contemporary New Zealand society. In 1975, through an Act of Parliament, the New Zealand Government set up the Waitangi Tribunal, a semi-judicial entity designed to assess alleged Treaty breaches committed by the New Zealand (and previously British) Crown against Māori claimants. Once adjudicated in favour of a claimant, any breaches may be remedied by the New Zealand Crown through the Office of Treaty Settlements (OTS), which makes recommendations about what it (the OTS) sees as the most appropriate form and process of redress. While the Act and the Tribunal are politically progressive, the actual process of recompense and reconciliation still entail limitations, the most important aspect arguably being the Crown’s continuing ability to set the agenda for how historical injustices are addressed. Highlighting these limitations, centre-left Labour MP Shane Jones argues that iwi (tribes) are hamstrung by a “tribal endowment thesis” where reconciliation involves endowing iwi with a critical mass of resources (2000, p. 167) that may only be received if the iwi has been “mandated” and legally constituted as a “governance entity” to receive them (Office of Treaty Settlements, n.d.). Due to the historical inequities of colonization, which have shut Māori out of much economic capitalist expansion, iwi have had to develop new management forms and expertise to look after these resources. Jones argues that, “By and large, the resources being returned to Māori lock them into the operations of the economy” (Jones, 2000, p. 168). That is to say, existing economic models and governmental norms regulate and discipline subsequent expressions of tribal authority, at least in relation to negotiations with the Crown and other legal bodies. According to Jones, Māori attempts to manage the resources returned to them via the Claims process often lead to charges of “carpet bagging” (2000, p. 170). The idea of iwi as opportunistic and speculative is also attached to academic commentator Elizabeth Rata’s term “neo-tribal capitalists”, used to describe iwi that have received, or are in the process of receiving, settlements (Rata, 2000). Accordingly, one pressing aspect of the Treaty settlement process is the seemingly contradictory idea that iwi must shape themselves as corporations in an effort to re-establish tribal tino rangatiratanga (self-determination). This apparent contradiction stems from the idea that there are fundamental differences between tribal and corporate structures. As Maria Bargh notes:

Relationships and genealogy remain of utmost importance for many tribal member interactions, while corporate structures tend on the whole to create instrumental relations among individuals for monetary dividends, rather than mutual responsibilities to other related human beings. (2007, p. 41)

Following Bargh’s argument, we could say that while there is no doubt that the Claims process has offered Māori communities the chance
to retrieve lost tribal histories and to rebuild mana (prestige), the Claims process has also tied communities into an existing economic logic that transforms customary resources into commodities and assets. Shane Jones suggests that the default setting for solving Treaty grievances and for understanding issues of Māori development rests on uneasy assumptions “about the effectiveness of market-led economic reforms as a basis for improving the position of Māori” (Jones, 2000, p. 172). Following this line of argument we can see how a neoliberal ethos underpins many Settlement initiatives. This close relationship between commerce and culture leads certain sections of New Zealand society to frame iwi development as “synonymous with ‘selling out’ one’s heritage” (Jones, 2000, p. 165). Yet, the increasingly visible nationwide media presence of iwi such as Ngāi Tahu invites a more complex understanding of the relations between community-oriented notions of “cultural heritage” and the more individualistic and instrumental processes of neoliberalism described by Bargh. Indeed, the accuracy of such epithets as iwi as “carpet baggers” or as “neo-tribal capitalists” needs to be tested against actual post-settlement iwi practices and understood in light of the settler-centric characteristics of New Zealand’s mediated public sphere which helps set the agenda for understanding Treaty settlements.

According to scholarship in the field, mainstream media often take a Pākehā, or settler-centric, approach to news media events and frame contemporary debates in ways that marginalize Māori points of view (Abel, 1997; Walker, 2002; Fox, 2001; Spoonley, 2005). The long struggle to establish Māori Television (the country’s first indigenous television channel) has only come about due to what broadcaster Tainui Stephens describes as “three decades of agitation by Māori” (Stephens, 2004, p. 113). Mainstream media coverage of Māori media initiatives throughout the 1990s and early 2000s helped fuel ill will from a considerable section of the non-Māori public (Walker, 2004). Writing in the context of the early years of the Ngāi Tahu Treaty claim, then tribal leader Tipene O’Regan alludes to the selective and settler-centric values and practices of news media when he notes, “If a Waitangi Tribunal case involves disturbance of, or indeed merely threatens to disturb, existing property rights of Pākehā, then that’s news” (1990, p. 109). In the early years of the Ngāi Tahu Treaty Claim great efforts were made to manage media relations and to explain the Ngāi Tahu claim to the mainstream media (O’Regan, 1990). As such, this iwi has always shown an interest in, and an understanding of, the crucial role that media technologies play in negotiating community identities and advocating for social justice. In what follows, we draw on Ngāi Tahu print media (the magazine Te Karaka and the newsletter Te Panui Rūnaka) as examples of an emerging iwi mediascape that offer up potential counter-publics to mainstream New Zealand media outlets. By discussing indigenous engagements with print media formats such as Te Karaka and Te Panui Rūnaka we consider the post-settlement achievements of Ngāi Tahu and the ways in which Treaty Claims processes, even while caught up in existing economic structures, have attempted to restore the substance of Māori society—tino rangatiratanga. In doing so, we hope to demonstrate how emerging iwi media outlets have the potential to shape the terms for debating the politics of post-settlement cultural identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Māori media and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Increased Māori access to media technologies is the result of years of political agitation to recognize the importance of te reo Māori (the Māori language) and culture and contemporary media formats such as Te Karaka must be understood in relation to this longer history. Treaty rights were mobilized in relation to broadcasting concerns in the mid 1980s when the fourth Labour Government set about deregulating media industries. Te Karere, the Māori news service
screened by State broadcaster Television New Zealand (TVNZ), was a symbolically important moment in broadcasting in te reo Māori. By the late 1980s, government funds were allocated to develop bilingual iwi radio stations. Until the advent of Māori Television in 2004, iwi radio provided the major media outlet for expressing Māori worldviews (Stuart, 2003). Prior to 2004, television content relevant to Māori was scarce. According to long-time Māori broadcaster (ex-CEO of Māori Television and editor of Mana magazine) Derek Tini Fox, in 1993 the amount of television programming with content of relevance to Māori was less than one per cent of the total broadcast time (Fox, 2001). In addition to the small volume of Māori content on air prior to 2004, those programmes that were of relevance to Māori were most often scheduled at non-commercial times. The 2004 emergence of Māori Television represents the most significant recent shift in New Zealand media culture (Smith & Abel, 2008). While Māori Television is perhaps the most noticeable contemporary Māori media outlet, the profile of Māori print culture has also increased with lifestyle and current affairs magazines such as Mana, and Tū Mai, which attract a Māori and non-Māori readership. Launched in 1992, Mana magazine is published bi-monthly and has a readership of around 124,000. It describes itself as “New Zealand’s leading Māori lifestyle, current affairs and heritage magazine” (http://www.manaonline.co.nz/profile.htm). Tū Mai emerged in 1999 and has the by-line of “NZ’s leading indigenous lifestyle magazine.” It is published monthly, with a readership of approximately 100,000. This increased access to New Zealand’s mediated public sphere demonstrates the increasingly diverse and contested nature of post-settlement iwi identity.

The crucial relationship between media technologies and the process of Māori cultural revitalization also echoes other indigenous movements in countries such as Australia, Canada and Norway. Scholarship in the field of global indigenous media acknowledges the complex negotiations that take place when indigenous collectivities draw on communication technologies and institutional infrastructures that have historically marginalized or domesticated indigenous voices (Langton, 1993; Ginsburg, 1992; Pietikäinen, 2008). For example, Faye Ginsburg has argued that media technologies present a kind of “Faustian dilemma” for social collectivities who have historically been the objects of a technological metropolitan gaze (1992, p. 360). Faust is a figure from German folklore who sells his soul to the Devil in exchange for knowledge and power. Accordingly, Ginsburg’s “Faustian dilemma” describes the problem of drawing upon existing structures of domination in order to enact forms of freedom – a perennial question of political agency that echoes the tensions described earlier regarding corporately structured tribes and the question of tino rangatiratanga.

Certainly, Māori media producers face the same difficult task as other indigenous media producers, of developing autonomous and sustainable media formations that fulfill the mandates set by existing institutions and their own communities. Yet, perhaps the division between good and evil that is embodied in Ginsburg’s concept is too crudely drawn when discussing the strategic and pragmatic alliances enacted by indigenous media producers. Political struggles are dynamic and ever-changing practices, requiring equally mobile and dynamic ways of understanding these struggles. For example, consider the changing face of Māori media representations. Certain aspects of the early years of indigenous political struggle in New Zealand sought to increase the media presence of (and by) Māori. In general, these political activities have historically rallied behind the umbrella term Māori. However, it is commonly understood that the term “Māori” came into existence only after the encounter between the indigenous peoples of New Zealand and British migrants. That is to say, “Māori” is an umbrella term for a society best understood as a collection of iwi, each with their own protocols, resources
and, in some cases, dialect. John Rangihau encapsulated this best when he argued that there is no such thing as Māoritanga (Māori culture), only (in Rangihau’s case), Tuhoetanga (Tuhoe culture) or those practices particular to specific iwi (Rangihau, 1992). While there are (and continue to be) strategic and pragmatic reasons for using a pan-tribal identity to instigate social and political reforms, perhaps the most significant shift in contemporary Māori media practice is the increased opportunity to express the diverse and site-specific dimensions of indigenous lives.

Commentators on the Treaty of Waitangi have long argued for recognizing the “multivo- cality” of the terms Māori and Pākehā (Urry, 1990). Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal adds to this body of work by noting how the political necessities of seeking recognition by the New Zealand Crown have led to quite rigid and prescriptive notions of Māori and Pākehā identity (Royal, 2007). Royal argues that subsequent successful Treaty claims settlements has led to “an historical threshold” for Māori communities who now have the resources to pursue cultural revitalization. These shifts in material conditions require similar shifts in ways of talking about Māori and Pākehā identity in what Royal calls a “post-settlement era” (2007). Although Royal doesn’t state his new vision of cultural identity explicitly, these new visions could involve a more iwi-centred notion of Māori identity – one that historicises the concept of “Māoritanga” as a necessary and strategic form of essentialism (Sissons, 2000) while at the same time articulating the specificities of iwi identity. Below, we discuss the iwi-specific ways of talking about cultural identity that occur when an iwi uses Treaty settlement resources to foster its media presence.

The Ngāi Tahu Claim (Te Kerēme) and Ngāi Tahu print media

In 1998 Ngāi Tahu, the largest Māori tribe of the South Island of New Zealand, was one of the first iwi to settle with the Crown. Ngāi Tahu’s history of legal action against the Crown was long and persistent – its first court case was in 1868 (The Claim History, n.d.). Against this historical context, Ngāi Tahu CEO Anake Goodall considered the Settlement success as providing, “the platform for the creation of our own future, on our own terms, and the point of transition into the next leg of the tribal journey” (Goodall, 2008, p. 3). While Goodall appears to suggest that in some ways the settlement had restored to Ngāi Tahu Noipera Panakareao’s “substance” of Māori society, his views can be contrasted with those of current and former Ngāi Tahu leaders, Mark Solomon and Tipene O’Regan. For Solomon, the 1998 agreement was about a “pragmatist approach. You cut your losses and go for it” (Ifopo, 2008, p. 23) while O’Regan commented that Ngāi Tahu had to “deliver for its own people” in a way that “meets our own expectations, not the expectations of the wider society”, also warning of Ngāi Tahu’s “weakness” in believing “its own spin” (Ifopo, 2008, p. 25). These comments suggest that Ngāi Tahu tribal leadership has a long history of balancing out the needs of the people with a pragmatic approach to existing constraints (economic, institutional and cultural).

There can be no doubt that the Treaty Claims process has contributed to the social, economic and cultural revitalization of Ngāi Tahu as an increasingly complex and multi-dimensional iwi identity. Te Karaka, as the tribe’s most publicly accessible print journal, plays a key role in reflecting, maintaining and producing this identity. According to its 2009 Rate Card, the magazine is published quarterly and has a circulation of 21,500 copies and an estimated readership of 81,000 per issue. The primary audience is Ngāi Tahu, with 44,156 formally registered with Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu in 2009. Recent years have seen an increased online presence with issues of the magazine available from as far back as Spring 2004. The emergence of Te Karaka and its subsequent
transformation in the wake of the Ngāi Tahu Settlement, offers a snapshot of the important role played by iwi media in fostering tino rangatiratanga while engaged in existing political and economic systems.

The Treaty Claims process has helped mobilize and politicize Māori communities as much as it has acted as the mechanism for redressing historical political injustices. Take, for example, the Settlement of Te Kerēme or the Ngāi Tahu Claim. Te Kerēme has a long history. According to Angela Wanhalla, around 1876 “A fighting fund called Te Kerēme (The Claim) was established and contributions were received from all Ngāi Tahu families to press for an official investigation into the land purchases. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s commissions and inquiries were conducted into the ‘land question’ in the South Island, but little was achieved.” (2007, p. 804). In many ways, Te Kerēme was that mechanism that galvanized Ngāi Tahu into reintegrating with each other and retelling their histories in ways that were wider and more focused than the usual whānau (family) or hapū (sub-tribe) groupings. Many Ngāi Tahu attended the Treaty Claims tribunals that took place over a number of years all over the South Island. (For an informative history of the claim see Te Karaka, Summer/Raumati, 1998, pp. 24–29.) The information shared at these hearings offered details and cultural knowledge unknown to many apart from those few leaders who had spear-headed the Claim. The Tribunal discussions, and the information gathered to support the subsequent claims, helped to re-ignite understandings of Ngāi Tahu tribal history and identity. This Ngāi Tahu identity distinguished itself from the national identity of “New Zealanders” as much as from other “Māori” communities. Distinctive features of Ngāi Tahu identity include (among others) a long history of intermarriage between Māori and settlers, a historically dispersed population, and a specific dialect. (For an insightful discussion of the specificities of Ngāi Tahu identity, see O’Regan, 2001).

The sense of a distinctive Ngāi Tahu identity is reflected in the name of the iwi’s first print publication Te Karaka which began in 1994. Te Kerēme was very much the tribal focus at the time of the magazine’s emergence, and Te Karaka acted as a regular communication channel between the existing tribal governance structure (the Ngāi Tahu Trust Board) and tribal members. The then leader of Ngāi Tahu, Tipene O’Regan, named the magazine Te Karaka because of its dual meaning. It not only referred to the karaka tree, cultivated by Māori for its fruit, karaka is also the South Island dialect for the term karanga, which means “to call” or “to summon”. Accordingly, Te Karaka was initially envisioned as a “call” to Ngāi Tahu people to reconnect with their community at a tribal level. Te Karaka was made as an appeal to those tribal members who knew very little about their iwi history other than their “kaumatua number” (a reference to the Ngāi Tahu census book that established who could legitimately claim to be Ngāi Tahu through descent from a kaumatua [elder]). As such, earlier versions of the magazine were prime tools for Ngāi Tahu cultural and social revitalization. Rather than address smaller hapū or whānau groupings, Te Karaka addressed Ngāi Tahu at a tribal level and gave prominence to the history and cultural practices of the tribe as well as the personal stories of Ngāi Tahu people. It also acted as an important communication medium, giving individual Ngāi Tahu members the opportunity to find out how the Treaty negotiations were being developed and to encourage tribal members to “connect” with the iwi by registering as a Ngāi Tahu descendant.

The mostly young, and almost exclusively Ngāi Tahu contributors to the earlier editions of Te Karaka were passionate about being involved in a magazine-style publication that could participate in an evolving Ngāi Tahu identity (Suzanne Ellison, personal communication, 2009). Focusing on uniquely Ngāi Tahu stories, these contributors hoped to develop a self-consciously aware Ngāi Tahu culture, as
opposed to a generic Māori culture. The architects of this strategy were a new generation of Ngāi Tahu – articulate, well-educated and well-connected within tribal groupings. Even though not all contributors had been “brought up on the pā” (a reference to those who had been brought up with their kaumatua or “old people” learning traditional practices) there was a strong desire that such traditional practices and knowledges should be made available to the wider tribal membership. Te Karaka was, as its by-line declared “The Ngāi Tahu Magazine” – for Ngāi Tahu, about Ngāi Tahu, and written by Ngāi Tahu. As such, the magazine was to be educative and reflective, conveying information about past traditions as well as reflecting on contemporary Ngāi Tahu identities and practices.

Early versions of Te Karaka incorporated traditional Māori protocol and Ngāi Tahu language into the structure of the magazine. Issues were given Māori seasonal names such as Makariri for Winter and Köanga for Spring. The customary respect for tribal elders was often reflected by placement of their photos on the covers. The editorial of the second 1995 edition ended with a karakia (prayer), reflecting the commonly practised way of closing an event, meeting or gathering. Editions until 2004 included a Poroporoaki (Obituaries) section on the inside front cover which paralleled the cultural practices of the “poroporoaki ki nga mate” (or “farewell to the dead”). There were articles written in the Ngāi Tahu dialect, often without translation, and te reo (language) lessons featured frequently.

Complementing this deliberate referencing to Māori and Ngāi Tahu cultural practices, the magazine’s early issues covered a variety of topics, much of it centred on the progress and subsequent settlement of the tribe’s Treaty claim. For example, the Spring 1995 edition outlined the origins of the Claim, two 1997 editions gave background as to how the compensation funds which would flow from settlement would be used, while the Autumn 2002 issue revisited the history of the Claim against a backdrop of litigation from eight northern tribes who were appealing against the Ngāi Tahu settlement in what was subsequently referred to as the “Boundary Dispute”. This dispute arose when, after the passing of the 1996 Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu Act and the 1998 Ngāi Tahu Settlement Act, eight iwi to the north of the Ngāi Tahu “boundary” (as defined in the Acts) began legal proceedings in the High Court, the Waitangi Tribunal and the Court of Appeal to challenge Ngāi Tahu’s exclusive rights to resources and recognition within the boundaries. This dispute, which has been taken twice by Ngāi Tahu to the Privy Council in London, remains unresolved. Alongside other claim related issues, such as the Tribe’s claim to a share of the assets which had been given to Māori in a 1992 fisheries settlement (Summer 1999 and 2000 editions and Autumn 2002 edition) Te Karaka also documented the activities and successes of the newly formed tribal corporate and other governing structures as well as focusing on the achievements of individuals and the cultural practices of being Ngāi Tahu. This mix of tribal business – often of a historical or political nature – with stories on individuals/groups and practices is seen in the 1999 Winter edition. In this issue, articles about successful Ngāi Tahu individuals (a prominent rugby footballer and a Harkness Fellowship recipient) sit alongside an opinion piece on Māori identity, articles on re-establishing Māori customary fishery and Māori language, an explanation on how the financial settlement was being managed by the business arm, Ngāi Tahu Holdings Corporation, and information on how Ngāi Tahu was developing its 25-year strategic plan.

These early editions demonstrate Te Karaka’s function as not only informing its audience, but also as a tool to educate Ngāi Tahu readers about people, places and cultural practices. While Te Karaka has maintained this educative function, the subsequent post-settlement development of the magazine has also seen it engage more overtly with wider New Zealand society. Post-2004 editions increasingly reflect a politically
confident and economically successful tribe.

**Te Karaka after the settlement**

Ngāi Tahu settled its Treaty Claim with the Crown in 1998 and the resulting cash inflow changed the way that *Te Karaka* operated. When the Crown made a formal offer of settlement to Ngāi Tahu on 21 November 1997 the Deed of Settlement included a formal apology by the Crown, the return of the mountain Aoraki (a significant marker of iwi identity), a cash payout of NZ$170m, the right of first refusal to Crown assets, and a relativity clause related to the Government’s Fiscal Envelope (*Te Karaka*, 2008, p. 24). In 1999, the Ngāi Tahu Development Corporation (a management structure set up to distribute the social and cultural benefits of the Settlement package) oversaw the development of Ngāi Tahu Radio and Television (later changed to Ngāi Tahu Communications in 2002). This was an in-house media company designed to establish links with larger media agencies and to eventually become a commercial and profitable entity in its own right. As a consequence of this more professional approach to iwi media, moves were made to widen *Te Karaka*’s audience. This shift in focus came at the same time as the iwi established a sister publication, *Te Panui Rūnaka*.

*Te Panui Rūnaka (TPR)* was aimed at the 18 papatipu rūnaka (governing bodies) that had been legislatively formalized in the Ngāi Tahu Act of 1996. Rūnaka are located largely in either costal or rural areas of the South Island (Canterbury, Otago, Southland and the West Coast), and are small family-linked communities. The history of rūnaka as a political force dates back to the 19th century under Governor Grey’s attempt to collectivize Māori political power. Contemporary versions of rūnaka are in some cases a result of the Treaty Claims process which requires iwi to organize in politically recognizable ways. These communities are considered to be the “heartland” of Ngāi Tahu peoples, where traditional practices and ways of being are able to be enacted, particularly in relation to whakapapa (genealogy), marae customs and mahika kai (food-gathering). In their collective form – as the 19 papatipu rūnaka – they constitute the overarching Tribal Council: Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT). TPR was aimed at this “heartland” as both an information vehicle from a peculiarly regional and local perspective, but also as a way to share gossip, weddings, funerals, births and the general goings-on of a kinship-linked group of people. Its focus was, and continues to be, Ngāi Tahu individuals located in their local environment. While *Te Karaka* began to position itself as an opinion leader within the national media context, TPR took over the role of communication mediator between the local and individual whānau and hapū communities. Whereas earlier, staff from the centralized office would often write stories on behalf of rūnaka for *Te Karaka*, these stories were now exclusively written by rūnaka themselves for TPR. With TPR taking on the role of keeping hapū, whānau and rūnaka informed about more internal iwi affairs, *Te Karaka* could now address itself to a broader audience, and participate in discussion and debate at a national level.

In 2004, 10 years after it first began, the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Board, at the behest of the Office of TRoNT decided that *Te Karaka* should become more commercially focused. Ngāi Tahu Communications Ltd was now responsible for the publication and its mission was “to keep Ngāi Tahu whānaui [families] well informed and engaged” and “to grow and develop as the leading Māori publication informing and influencing the minds of all New Zealanders” (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Statement of Strategic Intent, 2006–2007). This intent was apparent in the new Spring 2004 edition of *Te Karaka* which included a feature article on the newly formed Māori Party and extensive interviews with Māori Party members Pita Sharples, Tariana Turia and Whatarangi Winiata. The Māori Party had been launched as
a result of legislation that deprived Māori claimants to test in court whether they had the right to lay claim to customary title of the foreshore or seabed. This edition also included features on Māori entrepreneurs and Māori in the media, including a Ngāi Tahu television journalist and was published in a glossy A3 format instead of the previous A4 matte print, a format which the magazine has kept until the present time. The length of articles also changed, in line with the magazine’s aim of “influencing the minds” of all New Zealanders. Pre-2004, most articles were under 2000 words. Post-2004, issues such as Māori and Ngāi Tahu criminal offending, traditional and contemporary art, health, education, environmental issues, cooking, climate change and water allocation have been dealt with in an in-depth fashion in articles of 5000 words or more. (Online versions can be accessed at http://www.tekaraka.co.nz/Issues.)

This more professional, industry-oriented approach to Te Karaka was also reflected in the staffing of the magazine. The 2004 editorial team of four now included only one Ngāi Tahu staff member, and professional non-Ngāi Tahu writers – including noted columnist Rosemary McLeod and Wellington lawyer Tom Bennion – contributed stories and opinion pieces. The post-2004 versions of Te Karaka also featured paid advertisements from a variety of Māori and non-Māori businesses – primarily tertiary education institutions and health organizations, but also corporate organizations such as Meridian Energy, New Zealand’s largest state-owned energy generator, with which Ngāi Tahu has sponsorship and other commercial arrangements. Such businesses are interested in addressing not only the (as of January 2009) 44,156 registered Ngāi Tahu, but also a more national audience. Such content, article lengths, advertising, editorial staff and design signalled that Te Karaka’s target audience was now a broad section of New Zealand society interested in gaining insight into and accessing – either through paid advertisement or through the price of the magazine – Ngāi Tahu perspectives.

In 2008, the post-settlement era of Ngāi Tahu identity was decisively signalled by the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the Ngāi Tahu Settlement and there were subsequent shifts in Te Karaka’s by-line. Where earlier versions of the magazine carried the by-line “The Ngāi Tahu Magazine”, the 2008 anniversary edition by-line declares Te Karaka to be “About Ngāi Tahu. About New Zealand”. This mode of address emphasizes the connection between Ngāi Tahu culture and a general New Zealand national culture. With non-Māori contributors and editors now a naturalized part of the staffing team, Te Karaka no longer appears to prioritize the task of revitalizing Ngāi Tahu identity; rather, current versions of Te Karaka assume that Ngāi Tahu now has a recognizable history and a substantial role to play in contributing to New Zealand national culture.

As Tom Bennion states when asked to comment on the ways in which Ngāi Tahu have been successful:

What speaks of overwhelming success is the fact the iwi no longer sits in the corner of our national picture. It’s front and centre, a big corporate player holding a large chunk of the nation’s natural resources. (Te Karaka, 2008, Issue 40, p. 35)

Where earlier versions of Te Karaka focused on regenerating the links within Ngāi Tahu, post-2004 editions feature an open-ended mode of address that seeks to inform and influence “the minds of all New Zealanders”; a mode of address that raises questions about the nature of post-settlement national identity and iwi media’s role in shaping this identity.

Balancing culture with commerce: The anniversary edition of Te Karaka

Bennion’s reference to Ngāi Tahu as “a big corporate player” on the national playing field speaks to the tensions between culture
and commerce generated by the institutional arrangements which iwi have had to accept if they wish to receive Crown compensation. As stated at the outset of this discussion, on the one hand settlements have redressed historical wrongs and offered Māori communities the chance to rebuild their economic and cultural fabric in a way that has shaped emerging notions of “New Zealand” identity. On the other hand, these tools of regeneration (most often offered in the form of a monetary “endowment”) weave Māori communities more fully into current state-recognized governance and management structures. Ngāi Tahu, like other iwi that have received Treaty settlements, has also had to acquiesce to this restructuring, from a Trust Board to a Charitable Trust with a clear separation between its governance, social and cultural functions and its commercial functions and operating entities. While Maria Bargh notes the dangers of tribe’s shaping themselves in a corporate fashion (2007), we would argue that Ngāi Tahu is aware of such risks and that Te Karaka plays a significant role in reminding tribal leaders of the larger collective that they work for. According to Tipene O'Regan, tribal leadership can be defined in the following manner:

My dream is that our marae and the life of the marae will be funded by our own assets, our own resources. Tino rangatiratanga at the end of the day means basically owning your own assets and paying for your own kai [food]. Until we are our own owners, we are denying the rangatiratanga that our tūpuna [ancestors] placed upon us to protect or recover. We have to strengthen the confidence of the flaxroots people. If they are strong, the people are strong. If the cooks are happy the marae is happy. (1994, p. 53)

Recalling the original meaning of the term “te karaka” (to call, and to gather together), we could say that the Ngāi Tahu magazine provides a forum for expressing the visions of the iwi’s governance structures as much as it conforms to publishing industry norms. That is to say, the editorial team must negotiate with, and seek to encapsulate, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu’s corporate strategic intent at the same time as produce a quality magazine. On the other hand, Te Karaka also offers a forum for whānau members to debate issues of the day as well as provide feedback on how the “flagship” magazine is performing. For example, when the 2004 Spring issue of Te Karaka declared a new direction and a new look, it sought to extend readership beyond Ngāi Tahu in order “to reach Government and business” (p. 2). The editors of this issue framed the changes as a deliberate provocation to make readers “stop and think” in the hope that the magazine might spark debates. In subsequent issues, some whānau members used the Letters to the Editor section of the magazine to criticize these shifts in focus away from Ngāi Tahu whānau as the prime audience. Nonetheless, the commercial focus of the magazine has prevailed and other mechanisms of feedback (in particular, online forums) express satisfaction and pleasure in the professional look of the magazine and the work of the editorial team (see, for instance, http://mars2earth.blogspot.com/2009/04/te-karaka-about-ngai-tahu-about-new.html. Accessed 12 May 2010). These divergent opinions about the look and “feel” of the magazine gesture to the potential for iwi media to produce forums for debate and contestation – much like the structure of a hui (gathering).

There continues to be some contestation with the New Zealand Crown over certain historic matters such as the boundaries guaranteed to Ngāi Tahu under a 1990 Māori Appellate Court decision and more recent issues. For example, Ngāi Tahu has lodged a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal in relation to the New Zealand Government’s emissions trading scheme. However, by and large, with the settlement of Te Kerēme, Ngāi Tahu has moved from a grievance mode of tribal identity to one that frames Ngāi Tahu as an important
contributor to New Zealand’s economic and cultural landscape. Where Te Kerëme focused on the Crown and on developing a strong case for receiving compensation, post-settlement Ngäi Tahu now debate the shape and future direction of the tribe – and, via Te Karaka, the nation – based upon the resources endowed by the Treaty Claims process. While Goodall has suggested that Ngäi Tahu now have “the platform for the creation of our own future” (Te Karaka, 2008, p. 3), we would argue that the “our” in Goodall’s statement is one that is increasingly interconnected and influential in relation to a wider non-Ngäi Tahu future. In a post-settlement era, the basis for asserting tino rangatiratanga involves the use of media representations to assert the necessarily vexed relationship between a corporately-shaped iwi organization and its “flax-roots” constituents. As such, we need more nuanced and localized representations of iwi identity that not only refute mainstream settler-centric representations of things Mäori, but also narratives and images that offer a space for the perpetual negotiations that occur within iwi communities. A print medium such as Te Panui Rünaka seeks to represent this more divergent and localized intra-iwi community with its focus on environmental and social enhancement programmes, local body engagements and cultural and family rebuilding, while Te Karaka’s shift to a more national agenda also expresses discussions of New Zealand nationhood framed through iwi eyes. New Zealand media – as seen through iwi eyes – will be an increasingly characteristic feature of post-settlement Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Conclusions

In many ways Te Karaka acts as a showcase for the strategic alliances and tactics invented by indigenous cultural producers in light of a longer history of political and cultural marginalization. At one time a mechanism that helped to galvanize a people in support of Te Kerëme, Te Karaka now turns its attention to a nationwide audience while Te Panui Rünaka takes on the role of keeping hapū, whänau and rünaka informed about more internal iwi affairs. Where once an enthusiastic team of largely Ngäi Tahu amateurs took on the task of editing and contributing content, the magazine now includes regular columns by professional and non-Mäori writers. The current editor of Te Karaka, Felolini Maria Ifopo, declares her commitment to the vision of Te Karaka in the following manner:

Ko ahau te kaihautu hou o tenei waka, o Te Karaka. So now I stand at the prow of Te Karaka and although I share no Ngäi Tahu blood, I share the ties of Polynesia with my Samoan heritage. I am honoured and humbled to produce a magazine that echoes the values and reflects the people of Ngäi Tahu, of Aotearoa. (2008, p. 5)

The dynamic dimensions of Ngäi Tahu culture owe much to the iwi’s interaction with outside forces. As such, Ifopo’s editorial leadership can be seen as a strategy that ensures professionalism and as a continuing act of hospitality to those who are committed to a Ngäi Tahu vision. The edition of Te Karaka that showcased the 10th anniversary of Te Kerëme reflects an iwi at ease with its identity and focused on setting the national agenda in ways that reflect Ngäi Tahu interests. Yet, as we hope to have demonstrated, the terms upon which Ngäi Tahu must forge a future involve a necessary engagement with existing structures of governance, management and economics as much as a perpetual assertion and exploration of Ngäi Tahu cultural heritage. The Treaty settlement may have restored some of the “substance” of Ngäi Tahu culture destroyed by the processes of colonization, yet it is also a process that required Ngäi Tahu to shape their iwi identity in corporate terms. As the iwi knows, the fine balance between corporate structures and tribal values must be constantly adjusted, weighed and debated. The
iwi’s flagship publication *Te Karaka* demonstrates this uneasy balancing act. The stories told in the pages of this magazine – along with its glossy advertisements – tell a story of post-settlement iwi identity and the ongoing struggle to affirm, extend and maintain the cultural integrity of a community while dealing with the economic logic underpinning the Treaty reparations process. When Labour MP Shane Jones (2000) argues that the Treaty Settlement process locks Māori into the “operations of the economy”, he overlooks the ways in which iwi have made strategic and pragmatic responses to these constraints. Given the overwhelmingly settler-centric nature of much mainstream New Zealand media, *Te Karaka* is a remarkable achievement. It deftly negotiates the norms of the publishing industry, provides a forum for its tribal members and is increasingly well positioned to contribute to debates at a national level. Yet, to understand these achievements, as well as the ongoing tensions and challenges for post-settlement Ngāi Tahu identity, one must begin to see through iwi eyes. *Te Karaka* provides this opportunity.

### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Te reo Māori*</th>
<th>English translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hapū</td>
<td>sub-tribe</td>
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<tr>
<td>hui</td>
<td>gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwi</td>
<td>tribes</td>
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<tr>
<td>kai</td>
<td>food</td>
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<tr>
<td>karaka, karanga</td>
<td>to call, to summon</td>
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<tr>
<td>karakia</td>
<td>prayer</td>
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<tr>
<td>kaumatua</td>
<td>elder</td>
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<tr>
<td>mahika kai</td>
<td>food-gathering</td>
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<tr>
<td>mana</td>
<td>prestige</td>
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<tr>
<td>Māoritanga</td>
<td>Māori culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngāi Tahu</td>
<td>the predominant Māori tribe of the South Island, New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>people of mainly European descent</td>
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<tr>
<td>papatipu rūnaka</td>
<td>governing bodies</td>
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<tr>
<td>poroporoaki</td>
<td>obituaries</td>
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<td>te kerēme</td>
<td>the claim</td>
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<td>the language</td>
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<tr>
<td>tino rangatiratanga</td>
<td>the Māori language</td>
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<td>Tiriti o Waitangi</td>
<td>self-determination</td>
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<td>Tuhoetanga</td>
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<td>Tuhoe culture</td>
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<td>ancestors</td>
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<tr>
<td>whānau, whānui</td>
<td>genealogy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Ngāi Tahu language has dialectical variations on standard te reo Māori. The authors have, for the main part, used standard te reo Māori except where these words are key referents. For example, a defining Ngāi Tahu variant is the transposition of the standard Māori “ng” for the Ngāi Tahu variant “k” as in “karaka” for “karanga”; “rūnaka” for “rūnanga”.
References


Goodall, A. (2008). From the Chief Executive Officer, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Te Karaka, 40, 3.


