Master Thesis

The Representation of Māori in Contemporary New Zealand Film (1983–2010).

A Comparison of filmic Presentation of Indigenous Identity by Māori and Pākehā.

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Submitted to:	University of Rostock Faculty of Philosophy Institute for Media Research
Submitted by:	Denise Monika Schallenkammer
Student Number:	216204424
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Reviewer:	Dr. Andy Räder
Second Assessor:	Hamuera Kahi
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1 Introduction

Since *The Lord of the Rings* (2001-2003), New Zealand has received great attention on a global scale. Aotearoa has not only developed into one of the most popular holiday destinations due to its overwhelming landscape, but has also become the backdrop of huge Hollywood-Blockbusters (cf. *The Hobbit* (2012-2014), *The Chronicles of Narnia* (2005-2010), *The Last Samurai* (2003), *The Piano* (1993), etc.). Since its detachment from British colonial power, the population of the island state is mainly composed of two cultural groups: New Zealanders with European roots (Pākehā[1]) and the country's indigenous population (Māori). Due to its historical past, the 'land of the long white cloud' is still searching for a common 'New Zealand'-identity.

Māori give the country its distinctive bicultural[2] and bilingual character and, thus, are an important part of the nation's culture and history (Gauthier 2012, 39). As a post-settler nation, New Zealand still has to deal with issues resulting from the difficult relationship between Pākehā and the indigenous population. The medium film has been used as a vehicle to represent certain historical, cultural and socio-political developments ever since its invention. Until the 'Māori-Renaissance' started in the early 1970s, Māori on screen had been marginalized by the dominant image of the Pākehā-male and had been illustrated as 'The Other'; they had been mainly portrayed as primitive, uncivilized, brutal and violent people lacking in intelligence or/and as exotic, erotic, romanticized and feminized foreigners. The country's contemporary cinema has undergone a transformation and has diverged from the objectification and stereotyping by Pākehā-filmmakers from early years (Conrich/Murray 2008, 13). Especially from the 1980s onwards, film has been used as an instrument to control the image of being Māori and to develop alternatives to the dominant representation of indigenous people as 'noble savages' by Pākehā (Gauthier 2012, 39).

[1] Pākehā: is a Māori-term for the white inhabitants of New Zealand. (http://www.teara.govt.nz)

[2] In this context, the term 'bicultural' refers to two cultural backgrounds being accepted within a society, whereas 'binational' relates to citizenship. A 'bicultural nation' means a nation whose population – regardless of nationality – emanates from two different cultures and lives together as a society (Wießmeier 2000, 55).

“[t]he “explosion” of New Zealand films was more of an implosion – a bursting out within New Zealand of films searching for audiences at home, hoping to find a common awareness, a new consciousness of identity, a search to familiarize ourselves with our own image. […].” (O’Shea 28).

This paper starts with an overview of New Zealand’s film history. In order to provide a thorough understanding of its historical development, it is necessary to outline the most important events in Aotearoa’s recent past. Following this, it is necessary to explain the theoretical framework the analyses and comparisons are based on. The most important approaches of the field of research of Cultural Studies are addressed within chapter *3*. Especially certain postcolonial theories, as well as Stuart Hall’s ‘Encoding-/Decoding Model’ are to be taken into particular consideration. Explanations of the theoretical background are followed by a detailed description of the methodology used for the analysis of the four New Zealand films. Chapter *5* deals with the actual analysis of the films; every film gets examined individually and is followed by a comparison. Each a Māori-film and a film by a Pākehā-director from the same decade are discussed in comparison with each other. *Utu* (1983) is compared with *Mauri* (1988) and *Whale Rider* (2002) with *Boy* (2010). The paper concludes with a brief summary of the most significant findings and a short outlook.

Basically, it discusses the representation of indigenous identity in contemporary New Zealand-film and illuminates similarities and differences in the way Māori get portrayed by both Māori- and Pākehā-filmmakers. Further, this paper pays attention to the extent the ‘Māori-Renaissance’ has influenced the depiction of indigenous identity in film and deals with the question whether these filmic presentations of Māori are reflecting the *zeitgeist* of the country.

2 Insight into New Zealand Film History

Rudall Hayward’s feature film *Rewi’s Last Stand* (1925) as well as its remake (1940), can be seen as an appreciable starting point of New Zealand Film History. Hayward was a New Zealand filmmaker who explored the genre of ‘cross-racial romance’. His films often focus on seemingly irreconcilable differences between the British colonizers and

the indigenous population of Aotearoa[3]; a recurring distinctive feature of his films is the portrayal of hope that love might overcome political and racial differences between the British and Māori people (Martin/Edwards 1997, 10). Rudall Hayward's objective point of view on both sides (Pākehā and Māori) was quite uncommon at that time (Reid 1986, 10). In 1940, he added sound to the remake of *Rewi's Last Stand* and thus published a film in which 'Te Reo Māori'[4] could be heard for the first time. By using Māori-language on screen, Hayward set an example for the importance of preserving Māori-culture: "[…] that the historical section of the film should be reissued with the addition of sound effects and a descriptive comment so that the coming generations might have a visual impression of the heroism of the Māoris in this action." (Hayward qtd. in Martin/Edwards 1997, 50). However, although the films' narrative structures seem to emphasize the underlying consensus of the time that racial and sexual differences triumph over "ordinary people thrown together by historical happenstance", it can be argued that they do not imply being on course for a future embracing bicultural nationhood (Blythe 1994, 36): Māori are represented as the embodiment of the 'romantic savage' and at the same time contrasted with the illustration of the 'British civilized'. These films were released in times that coincide with the heyday of the 'Integration Myth' (ibid., 35); bringing the Māori into, and up to, the level of the 'civilized British' by establishing a vertical paternal model of national unity which identified Pākehā as its basis and considered Māori as 'the Other' (ibid., 191f.).

From 1940–70, director John O'Shea produced three films, which were the only films released within this period (Conrich/Murray 2007, 4). It was a time in which New Zealand has started to detach from Great Britain. O'Shea's films (*Broken Barrier* (1952), *Runaway* (1964), *Don't Let It Get You* (1966)) reflect patriotism and the willingness to support New Zealand in finding its own identity as a nation. Even though O'Shea was a Pākehā, he seriously tried to change the public opinion about intercultural couple formation as a taboo through his films (Conrich/Davy 1997, 7).
To Love a Māori (1972) was New Zealand's first colour feature film, which was made by Hayward and was also his last film (Blythe 1994, 35).

In 1977, Roger Donaldson's *Sleeping Dogs* celebrated major successes and was the first New Zealand film broadcast in the US. Thereupon, the government was convinced that it was necessary to support New Zealand film production and founded the

[3] Aotearoa: is the Māori-name for "New Zealand" (Keown 2008, 205).
[4] 'Te Reo Māori': Māori-language (Ka'ai 2015, 14).

New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) in 1978 (Conrich/Davy 1997, 4). Several successful films were released during the following years: *Smash Palace* (1981, Roger Donaldson), *Pictures* (1981, Michael Black) and *Goodbye Pork Pie* (1981), *Utu* (1983) as well as *The Quiet Earth* (1985) by Geoff Murphy. Especially Murphy's *Utu* marks some kind of a turning point in the history of filmic representation of Māori (Reid 1986, 12)[5].

At the beginning of the 1980s there was a production boom in films due to a loophole in the system of tax breaks: borrowed money from private investors had to be repaid only after the film made a profit (Roddick 2008, 37). In 1982 a law was introduced to close this tax loophole. The costs of a film had to be deducted and repaid within a time frame of two years (Conrich/Murray 2008, 6). As a result of the new tax regime, there was little investment in films, and the upswing in New Zealand film production of that time was followed by a downturn – which, however, was slowed down by the financial support of the NZFC.

Women in front of as well as behind the camera were less frequently represented in the New Zealand film up to the 80s. The road movie, which is the most popular genre in New Zealand, is a typical example of the male-dominated cinematic scene. Films like *Goodbye Pork Pie* (1980, Geoff Murphy), *Carry Me Back* (1982, John Reid) and *Shaker Run* (1986, Bruce Morrison) focus on male friendship, the importance of the vehicle and New Zealand's vast, uninhabited landscape. Merata Mita's *Patu!* (1983), which is actually a documentary but has been treated as a feature film, was the first to draw attention to female directors in New Zealand. Women directors such as Melanie Read[6] (*Trial Run*, 1984, *Send a Gorilla*, 1988) and Gaylene Preston (*Mr. Wrong*, 1985), have focused on the female character(s) in their films (Conrich/Davy 1997, 5f.). Mita's *Mauri*[7] (1988) does not only emphasize the importance of women in the cinematic landscape, but can also be identified as the first feature film made by an indigenous woman (Babington 2007, 179). One of New Zealand's best-known filmmakers is Jane Campion, who has celebrated great (inter)national success with her feature films *An Angel at My Table* (1990) and *The Piano* (1993).

Lee Tamahori's *Once Were Warriors* (1994) is one of the best-known Māori-films overseas and is based on Alan Duff's novel with the same title. Despite the tragedy of

[5] Further remarks regarding Utu are discussed in chapter 5.1.
[6] Melanie Rodriga, née Read (www.nzonscreen.com).
[7] Detailed information about *Mauri* can be found in chapter 5.1.

rugged family life experienced by so many Māori living in suburban areas, *Once Were Warriors* stimulated a public debate about those grievances and therein gave hope for change (Nast/Pile 1998, 337). *Heavenly Creatures* (1994) and especially *The Lord of the Rings-Trilogy* (2001-03) by Peter Jackson have brought New Zealand into the focus of the international film market once again. Niki Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002) can be considered another great success in New Zealand film history (Conrich/Davy 1997, 8), even though Caro's film is viewed more critically among indigenous people.[8] In contrast to Tamahori's *Once Were Warriors*, which depicts the dark sides of urbanisation and the cultural uprooting of New Zealand's indigenous population as a consequence of it, *Whale Rider* focuses on Māori-culture and -traditions intertwined into a moving coming-of-age story. Taika Waititi made his feature film debut with *Eagle vs. Shark* in 2007 and was very successful with *Boy* (2010) and *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (2016) both inside and outside the country; shortly after *Boy* was released, it became the leading film comedy ever made in the country (Lealand 2010, 5). Both his films have become the highest grossing feature films in New Zealand; *Boy* has been slightly overtaken by *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (Flicks 2016).

The history of narratives about New Zealand's indigenous people is marked by their 'powerlessness'. Even before films were produced, stories and traditions about Māori had been regarded as popular objects of illustration among Europeans. There had been numerous documentaries about the 'Māori way of life', in which New Zealand's indigenous population had been treated as objects of research. Furthermore, they had also been used as advertising media to attract visitors to the country far away from Europe. As a result, at the beginning of the 20th century, there was a glorified image of Māori and their culture (Conrich 2005, 6).

Until the 1970s, the New Zealand film industry was dominated by male whites. Māori were neither present behind the camera nor adequately represented in front of it. By then, the image of Māori corresponded to a stereotyped image constructed by Pākehā. This image "rested upon the assumption that non-European peoples were backward, primitive, quaint, sometimes even 'noble', but always different from the products of western civilisation." (Loomba 1998, 48). The process of 'stereotyping' is based on generalizations and simplifications; it can be described as an attempt to define other people or cultures from a privileged point of view that makes no difference between

[8] This issue is examined within chapter 5.2.

individuals and stereotypical categories. According to Pickering, this one-sided characterization of others result in a unilinear mode of representation and rigidifies lines of demarcation between 'Self' and 'Other' (Pickering 2006, 40ff.). Merata Mita described this mode of filmic representation as a reflection of racially discriminating politics in New Zealand (Mita 1996, 45).

Due to demographic change, Māori and Pākehā came into closer contact in the second half of the 20th century. Urbanization took place, during which many Māori moved from the countryside to the surrounding cities to find work. Most of New Zealand's institutions were European in character, which produced a lack of alternative lifestyles within larger cities. Additionally, urbanization posed intercultural challenges to both, Māori and Pākehā; the latter not only expecting Māori to somehow integrate into society, but also to assimilate and adapt to Western lifestyles through, for instance, speaking English fluently. Through urbanization, the indigenous people of New Zealand gave up much of their culture and identity and hence slipped into a vicious circle of unemployment, inadequate health standards and increased violence; these effects were also due to a lack of adequate facilities and support from Pākehā through, e.g.: adopting basic Māori-customs, -practices and -words to help them integrate (King 2003, 440ff.).

These social grievances and, as a consequence, the loss of 'Maoritanga'[9] led to the formation of protest groups that called for protest marches and actions to draw attention to the political insensitivity and social injustice towards Māori people.

The 'Treaty of Waitangi'[10] (1840) can be considered as marking the 'official' starting point of the disputes between Pākehā und Māori, which was going to last for many years. The treaty was signed by Māori with the intention to restore balance in inter-ethnic relations and to counteract certain developments initiated by Pākehā. The indigenous people understood that by ceding governorship to the British Queen, they would receive protection and the same rights of citizenship as the people from Great Britain (Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 233). Soon it became clear that the intentions and understandings of those who signed the 'Treaty of Waiting' were different.

The violations of the treaty have not been forgotten and have complicated the inter-ethnic relationship between Māori and Pākehā ever since. Even over a century later, the

[9] 'Maoritanga': Māori-culture (Hokowhitu 2008, 121).

[10] 'Treaty of Waitangi': is New Zealand's founding document. 'Waitangi' is the name of the Bay of Islands where it was first signed. It is an agreement – in Māori and English – that has been made between the British Crown and about 540 Māori-chiefs (www.nzhistory.govt.nz)

government policy involved paternal practices such as monoligualism and –culturalism. In 1961, the so called ‘Hunn-Report’ was released to describe the new policy of “integration” including certain values underlying it. When it came to details about the new policy, it became evident that the ones who were expected to do most of the changing, were Māori-people – even though “integration” implies that New Zealanders become ‘one people’ by mixing the two cultures. However, the ‘Hunn Report’ has become synonymous with the paternal attitudes towards Māori. Whereas the report is actually concerned with the issue of ‘integration’, it rather pleads for assimilating Māori into the world of Pākehā, which corresponds to the early colonial belief (Biggs 1961, 361). “The pakeha’s minimum contribution to the process of integration is a willingness to accept Māoris as Māoris [sic!], without expecting that they will conform entirely to his pakeha ways.” (Booth/Hunn 1962, 9). In order to alleviate Māori social disparity, the ‘Hunn Report’ advocates an increase in the process of assimilation into ‘European’ culture. Hence, the policy of “integration” was – in fact – ‘assimilation’ covered under a new name – what might be the report’s most controversial part. The dominant view held by the majority of the Pākehā was that the indigenous population needed to change to suit ‘tikanga-Pākehā’[11], instead of promoting a process of bicultural nation-building to establish one nation, as two peoples.

Following this, the 1970s/80s were a period of social protest including several events which put Māori-Pākehā-relations into focus and triggered debates within media and political contexts that led to certain changes in inter-ethnic relationships. During the 1970s protests escalated continuously: The 1975 Land March was a peaceful protest and the first major ‘hikoi’[12]. The indigenous people were no longer willing to remain a socially marginalized group in New Zealand (Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 234ff.); they expressed their protest by marching from Cape Reinga in the far north of the North Island to Wellington, the capital of New Zealand in the south. For the first time, a protest attracted a great deal of media attention.

Subsequently, in 1977/78, the government decided that Bastion Point, which had been the location of the main ‘marae’[13] in Auckland for years, and parts of the surrounding area should be sold. The peaceful occupation by Māori lasted 507 days

[11] ‘tikanga Pākehā’: ‘tikanga Māori’ can be described as ‘Māori-customs’ (Ka’ai 2005, 14); thus, ‘tikanga Pākehā’ means the concept of ‘Pākehā-costums’.

[12] ‘hikoi’: walk or march; especially a Māori-protest march (dictionary.com).

[13] ‘marae’: it is a sacred open meeting area, a communal meeting house and a traditional Māori-complex where particular rituals occur (Ka’ai 2005, 13).

before a violent eviction by the police took place and over 200 Māori were taken into custody. Mita traced the progress of the protest and published her recordings, information and experiences in her documentary *Bastion Point: Day 507* (1980) (Belich 2001, 477ff.).

The Raglan Golf Course was land that had been gifted to the Crown by Māori for the period of World War II and had not been returned but used as a Golf Course instead. In 1978, an occupation of the golf course led by Eva Rickard (who is the protagonist 'Kara' in Mita's *Mauri*, 1988) took place; thereupon she and 16 others were arrested. (Harris 2004, 60ff.).

Since 1954, groups of Pākehā engineering students of Auckland University had been performing a 'mock-haka'[14] each year. After complaints were made to formal channels, which "[…] consider it too trivial a matter to investigate […]." (Hazlehurst 1998, 7 qtd. in Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 238), a group of Māori students known as 'He Taua' confronted them in 1979 and were charged with various offences. Since 'The He Taua incident' took place, the 'mock-haka' has not been performed again (A'Court 1979, 4).

The South African Springbok Rugby Tour (1981) was seen as an endorsement of South Africa's system of apartheid by some New Zealanders. When calls to cancel the tour were ignored, the NZ anti-apartheid movement organized peaceful protest to change the government's decision. Once the tour started, clashes between the police and protestors escalated. Mita recorded the mass civil disobedience that took place during the winter of 1981. Her documentary *Patu!* (1983) can be seen as an act of protest against racism and a testament to the courage and faith of the marchers (Murray 2008).

Thanks to the protest-movements in the 1970s-80s, there was an increasing discussion about 'race' in New Zealand leading to changes in patterns of interaction among Māori and Pākehā. Ultimately, these changes included a decreasing acceptance of assimilationist policies and an increasing acceptance of biculturalism; which follow the initial intention for signing the 'Treaty of Waitangi', namely "partnership" through sharing the power between indigenous people and European immigrants (at least from the Māori's point of view). In order to change the inter-ethnic relationship, New Zealand's politics needed to move from a policy of 'assimilation', which is based on a dominant group–subordinate group pattern to the policy option of biculturalism, which is based on empowerment, cultural pluralism and the right for self-determination. Moreover, bicultural proposals emphasized the need for greater mutual respect and understanding

[14] 'mock-haka': 'haka' can be translated as 'posture, dance' and is a ceremonial dance performed by Māori (Ka'ai 2005, 13); thus 'mock-haka' means mocking the 'haka'.

between Māori as indigenous people of New Zealand and Pākehā as colonising and now dominant majority of immigrants. 'Biculturalism' in New Zealand sought to acknowledge Māori-history and -culture as separate and distinct from those of Pākehā. Various protest actions were effective in convincing politicians to act: since the 1980s, several bicultural developments have taken place, which have recognised the rights of the Māori community; e.g.: 'Te Reo Māori' has been one of New Zealand's official languages since 1987 and has officially been recognised as a pre-school subject in order to support bicultural education (Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 248ff.). Public funds were raised for renovations of 'maraes' and Māori who were charged with offences, were promised support in court. Moreover, the 'Waitangi Tribunal' established in 1975 as New Zealand's permanent commission of inquiry, is in charge of investigating and making recommendations on claims brought by Māori in the period since 1840. The inquiry process contributes to the resolution of Treaty-claims and to the reconciliation of outstanding issues between Māori and Pākehā. Thus, large parts of the land that had been taken by European immigrants could be returned to Māori (King 2003, 486ff.). Furthermore, biculturalism has become part of New Zealand's public service ethos by 1985 and had been promoted within the health system as a desirable objective (Durie 1994, 99).

Urbanization created a new generation of Māori because they almost entirely have lost their language, identity and culture, which in turn has led to social problems. Pākehā have been confronted with Māori and vice versa; both had to – in one way or another – deal with the other culture's way of living. Urbanization as well as social protests have been driving forces in realizing the necessity for the preservation of co-existing cultures in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Thus, the 1960s up to the 1980s were a time of radical social change in New Zealand that initiated a gradual development of bicultural policies since the 1970 (Clelland-Stokes 2007, 172f.). Especially, the 'Waitangi Tribunal' has been an important element within the development of 'Biculturalism'; the treaty admits that the cultural values of indigenous people are on an equal level as those of the majority of New Zealand's population. The idea of two cultures operating 'as partners' has come to define the agenda of 'Biculturalism' (Levine 2005, 108).

At that time, Māori cultural activism experienced a revival as part of the 'Māori-Renaissance' (Martens 2012, 5). The 'Māori-Renaissance' can be seen as a reactionary movement to years of discriminatory treatment that was triggered by certain developments within culture and society. Further, it can be described as an "ethnic

mobilization" in order to re-establish Māori-culture, -language and -identity (Byrnes 1999, 72). This cultural revival happened across a number of spheres; an important instrument to express Māori-resistance has been the production of texts: "The struggle of survival of Māori identity and culture, was paradoxically fostered by writing, by the very tool that had been used to silence them. This reached a climax […] when Māori writers started […] using the [tools] [Author's Note] of the colonisers to subvert their dominant discourse." (Della Valle 2010, 9). This act of self-determination has represented a counter-hegemonic act of media appropriation by Māori and was followed by audiovisual media products in the 1970s and 80s (Martens 2012, 6). Each filmmaker of this period found a specific way to illustrate increased identification with and respect for Māori-culture (Keown 2008, 197).

For decades Māori and their culture were discredited through stereotyped representations. Then New Zealand's indigenous population strove to change the negative portrayal of their people and replace it with images from their own perspectives. Barry Barclay's *Ngati* (1987) was the first feature film made by an indigenous filmmaker. *Ngati* has become a showpiece and prime example of 'Indigenous' film and has introduced Barclay's category of 'Fourth Cinema' (Martin/Edwards 1997, 128).

"[…] there is a category which can legitimately be called 'Fourth Cinema' by which I mean Indigenous Cinema – that's Indigenous with a capital 'I'." (Barclay qtd. in Martens 2012, 3). Barclay's category refers to the 'Fourth World'-model, which is an extinction of the 'Third World'-model and comprises indigenous populations in parts of the world where they are excluded from power; further it describes a process of decolonization, which is grounded in the revitalisation of indigenous practices that settler-colonisations sought to destroy (Coulthard 2009, xii). Barry Barclay has refused the existence of a 'One-People Paradigm', because it would claim extinction for indigenous people. He states that indigenous cultures exist outside the national orthodoxy because they are ancient remnant cultures that persist within the modern Nation State. Thus, Barclay proposed the existence of another category beyond the already existing framework of 'First, Second and Third Cinema'. Those three categories illustrate cinemas of the modern Nation State; compared to an indigenous perspective, these are all "Invader Cinemas". According to Barclay, the new category functions as a late addition to the 'First Cinema', which represents "American Cinema", to the 'Second Cinema', which is "Art House Cinema" and to the 'Third Cinema', which is the cinema introduced by the so-

called “Third World” (Wang n.d., 1ff.). ‘Fourth Cinema’ is narratively as well as aesthetically structured in order to offer alternatives to the three former models.

Barry Barclay referred to the conceptual theory of ‘interiority and exteriority’ to explain elements of this framework (Waititi 2008, 1). He describes ‘exteriority’ as “the surface features: the rituals, the language, the posturing, the décor, the use of elders, the presence of children, attitudes to the land, the rituals of spirit.” (Barclay qtd. in Waititi 2008, 1). ‘Interiority’ refers to “the philosophical elements, the essence of Indigenous film and is a complex ingredient to convey.” (Waititi 2008, 1).

In order to summarize this conceptual theory and how it is related to the category Barclay calls ‘Fourth Cinema’, the terms ‘Indigenous Film’ or more specifically, ‘Māori-Film’ have to be defined. Films that fall under this new category are made by indigenous filmmakers who portray the life and culture of their people from an indigenous perspective (Milligan 2017, 63f.). According to Barclay, a film is considered a ‘Māori-film’ when all aspects of a film are aligned with Māori-life and set in the Māori-community (Leotta 2011, 108). He advocates the necessity of films "from Māori for Māori" and pointed out their cultural significance within society: "Māori need to be in control of the ways in which images of Māori are produced, disseminated and stored" (Barclay 1990, 63f.). For Martin Blythe, a ‘Māori-Film’ can be defined by examining three specific areas of the film: text, context and consensus. A ‘Māori-Film’ should include dialogue or at least some excerpts in ‘Te Reo Māori’ (text), the story should address issues that are relevant to Māori-life (context) and a film is automatically declared a 'Māori-Film' when it has been made by a director who sees himself as part of the indigenous population and can therefore identify with his work on a cultural level (consensus) (Blythe 1994, 260ff.).

There is a tendency to analyse ‘Fourth Cinema’ by looking at ‘exteriority’ rather than ‘interiority’, even though it is argued that it is ‘interiority’ that separates Indigenous cinema from other categories. However, both are needed to articulate the film: ‘exteriority’ represents the basis from which ‘interiority’ is developed; they are inter-twined and often a reflection of the other and thus need to be in balance (Waititi 2008, 8f.). The question is: how can surface processes create a space beyond the physical filming process? How do external features effect and even construct the inner essence of a film? Referring to a scientific approach, the concept of ‘kaupapa Māori research’ has been initiated as a strategy to benefit Māori and their world view in order to combat notions and representations of dehumanized Māori to privilege Western ways of knowing.

The portrayal of stereotypes in past films has supported the emergence of kaupapa Māori-processes (ibid. 2008, 1ff.). “Kaupapa Maori research has been defined as research by Maori, for Maori and with Maori.” (Smith qtd. in Walker et al. 2006, 333). The concept is privileging indigenous values, attitudes and practices (Smith 1999, 125). Moreover, this Māori-centred research is connected to Māori-philosophy as well as -principles and takes for granted the importance of Māori-language and -culture (ibid., 185). As storytelling has always played an important role for the continuation of cultural values, kaupapa Māori-processes need to be applied to film. In Māori-culture, ‘whakapapa’[15] represents the connection between past and present and is essential for understanding one’s own identity as a Māori. ‘Whakapapa’ and identity are maintained through narratives and experiences that have passed down through generations. Conclusively, using processes based on ‘kaupapa Māori-research’ in film, helps to express the ‘essence’ of a narrative. Thus, ‘interiority’ is achieved when what is seen on screen sounds true to those who are depicted in the story (Waititi 2008, 3ff.).

3 Theoretical Background

The theoretical framing on which this paper is based is going to be outlined within the following remarks. Various approaches, theories and models as parts of the research field of Cultural Studies and Inter- and Transcultural Communication Research are used as guidelines for analysing four contemporary New Zealand films regarding their way of representing indigenous identity. Especially ‘Postcolonial Theories’ and Stuart Hall's ‘Encoding-/Decoding Model’ are acting as important references for this examination. At large, this chapter examines the connection between culture, communication, identity and media which is essential for further understanding.

3.1 Cultural Studies

Cultural Studies represented the basis for the analysis of the portrayal of Aotearoa’s indigenous people in New Zealand film. This field of research serves as a guidance when it comes to examining Māori-culture, as well as identity-establishing and communicative elements in feature films. Cultural Studies use inter- and transdisciplinary strategies to

[15] ‘whakapapa’: means ‘genealogy’ and is a key concept in Māori-culture; it represents the core of Māori-knowledge and is at the centre of (cultural) identity discourse (Moura-Koçoğlu 2011, 15).

deal with contemporary problems and to create a better understanding of historically-dependent cultural information (Hauser 2003, 9f.; Nünning 2005, 10ff.). This field of research draws on practical application of cultural analyses (Bromley 1999, 9). They examine cultural practices and their appropriation in everyday life; for example, the formation of new identities and 'Postcolonialism'. Analysing the emergence of new media cultures with particular attention to the viewpoint of the recipient is also included in this field of research (ibid., 22). Cultural Studies are based on the assumption that all forms of cultural production are subject to complex processes of appropriation and, thus, must be analysed with regard to the cultural discourses a recipient is situated in (Mikos 2006, 186). Understanding the interrelation between 'culture', 'communication', 'identity' and the mass medium 'film', plays an essential role for the elaboration of this complex of themes; because people always communicate in relation to their own culturally-mediated practices. Thus, without communication, there would be no culture and vice versa. Furthermore, the formation of identity would not be successful, if there would be no awareness of culture and communication (Krotz 2006, 128f.).

This statement is underpinned by G. H. Mead's 'Symbolic Interactionism' which is a concept of human action. According to Herbert Blumer, Mead's concept is based on three premises: 1) People act towards 'things' based on meanings they have assigned to them; 2) these meanings derive from social interactions with other human beings; 3) and these meanings are used and altered by people within an interpretative process while they are confronted with those 'things' (Blumer 1973, 81f.). Action is depending on someone's respective perspective and is always related to others. Hence, it is a situational expression of identity. People assign meanings to things or people on the basis of situations, experiences and values through signs and symbols which are embedded in a social framework (norms, culture, conventions) (Krotz 2008, 29; 38). Processes of interaction and communication are influencing a person's identity formation; for Mead, the formation of identity is a rather flexible construct (vom Orde 2016, 7). Each individual acts and communicates based on such assignments of meaning which can be constantly changed. Communication as individual action is culturally and socially structured and institutionalized (Krotz 2008, 29).

According to Cultural Studies, every social action is based on culture and cannot be viewed in isolation from the cultural context it is situated in (Hall 1999, 117). Culture is built upon complex social and political discourses. The term 'culture' encompasses norms and values, convictions, behaviors and power structures of a specific society.

‘Discourse’ is a store of knowledge that determines what has to be regarded as "normal" and "true" within a society. Due to constant interaction with other cultures and societies, culture is in a constant process of change; thus, all kinds of processes take place within a gemeinschaft, as well as the products resulting from these, represent ‘discourse’ and determine social actions (Jäger 2006, 331f.). In general, culture is seen as a process that leads to culture being reformed over and over again through its differentiation from other cultures (Lutter/Reisenleitner 2005, 111). The culture that dominates within society determines the discourses.

Cultural Studies examine the relationships between culture and power in a society. Due to the cultural contact in times of imperialism and colonialism, 'culture' is no longer specifically localisable; a de-territorialisation has taken place, which has resulted in a hybridisation of identity (Grossberg 2006, 27). Processes of differentiation between foreign cultures provide the base for the formation of (new) identities. Therefore, it is no longer possible to focus on a cohesive culture (Bromley 1999, 24).

The emergence of culture is one of the most important themes of Cultural Studies. This field of research deals not only with the formation of identity, but also with its connection to power relations (Lutter/Reisenleitner 2005, 83). Both the blurring of territorial boarders and the continuous differentiation to other cultures have led to a diffuse concept of identity: on the one hand, ‘identity’ describes the quality of a social group which is regarded as uniform by means of their actions and behavior, and on the other hand, it describes the feeling and knowledge of one’s own belonging to a group. These structures make it possible to distance from, as well as identify with certain patterns through processes of selection (Reinhardt 2006, 17).

New identities emerge when there is a clash between diverse identities within cultural contact (Terkessidis 2006, 312). The individual has generated meanings in the course of socialisation which is based on a store of figurative knowledge. A person makes use of this symbolic system of representation in order to attribute meanings to experiences. These systems are determined by prevailing power relations. Ultimately, one produces identity by means of constant differentiation from and in comparison with a foreign culture (Lutter/Reisenleitner 2005, 83).

The process of identity formation is an unfinished one (Ang 1999, 333). This is illustrated by minorities, having problems with their identities because for them it is difficult to live out and practice their culture due to the unequal distribution of power within a nation (Fauser 2006, 39). This frequently happened to indigenous minorities

living within a dominantly white society. They are losing their cultural identity due to constant criticism of their norms and values by people from the dominant culture. Mostly, it is accompanied by a sense of loss and results in a counter-reaction by returning to one's own culture (Thomas 2003, 47f.). This concept of assimilation and the resulting counter-reaction to revive one's indigenous identity can be exemplified by the 'Māori-Renaissance' in New Zealand within the 1970/80s.

3.1.1 Postcolonial Theories

New Zealand is a post-settler nation that can be associated with and characterized by a difficult and unsettled relationship between Pākehā and the indigenous population. Being a post-colonial nation, automatically carries with it the connotation of being defined in terms of its colonial past. Consequently, considering New Zealand as being 'younger' than the post-imperial nations, marks this country as being 'the Other' against 'the Self'. Due to the establishment of such binaries, post-colonialism always implies marginalization and subordination (Blythe 1994, 184). Referring to Edward Said, the power to represent 'Otherness' had been instrumental in reinforcing a sense of difference which also resulted into a sense of justified superiority that underpinned imperialism. However, Homi K. Bhabha noted that colonial discourse was never fixed or all-powerful, but became hybridized through the clash of different cultures within – what Mary Louise Pratt calls – the 'contact zone' (Pratt 1992, 6); thus, hybrid identities of both the colonizer and the colonized, have been the results of imperial and colonial interactions (McEwan 2009, 64ff.).

There are different approaches that define imperialism, colonialism and post-colonialism which help to separate one from another and to bring them into context. Cultural Studies develop theories based on cultural practices and experiences of people in their everyday lives. Therefore, the postcolonial approach of cultural studies is crucial for illustrating structures and dynamics of everyday life within its historical, cultural, political and economic context (Göttlich et al. 2001, 7). In the broadest sense, Postcolonial Studies deal with the history of colonialism and its effects on the present.

Some place the concept of 'Imperialism' as simply prior to 'Colonialism' (Boehmer 1995, 3); whereas Ania Loomba argues that this concept's meaning should be viewed in relation to its historical process. She states that 'Imperialism' can be seen as a

global system, as it represents the highest stage of colonialism and ‘Colonisation’ as the take-over and exploitation of territories and the intrusion into political and cultural structures of a foreign nation (Loomba 1998, 4ff.). ‘Colonialism’ describes a relationship between collectives that is based on domination. Decisions about how the ‘colonized’ is supposed to live, are made and actually enforced by a minority of colonial masters having a culturally different background. They are hardly willing to adapt to another culture and are giving priority to their own external interests (Osterhammel 1995, 21). One way of defining and distinguishing between ‘Imperialism’ and ‘Colonialism’ is to not look at them in temporal but in spatial terms: hence, the process of imperialism arises in the metropolis and leads to control and domination (Loomba 1998, 6f.); while ‘Colonialism’ is “what happens in the colonies as a consequence of imperial domination […].” (Loomba 1998, 7). Accordingly, whereas ‘Colonialism’ cannot work without formal colonies, ‘Imperialism’ can. Similar to the spatial positioning of ‘Imperialism’ as well as ‘Colonialism’, it seems to be more useful to think of ‘Postcolonialism’ not just as a process coming after ‘Colonialism’ signifying its demise, but as an examination of colonial domination and its legacies. ‘Postcolonialism’ is an academic discipline which focuses on the consequences of economic and cultural exploitation of native people and their lands and of external domination and control. ‘Postcolonial’ as a term should not be used as an evaluative but rather a descriptive term as it refers to a process of disengagement from the colonial syndrome and can take on many different forms or is even inescapable (Loomba 1998, 6ff.). ‘Postcolonial Studies’ examine the functional relations of social and political power which have sustained colonialism and analyse the imperial regime’s depictions of both the colonizer and the colonized.

In his famous work “Orientalism” (1978), Edward Said states that ‘Colonialism’ is not only a form of economic domination, but also a ‘discourse’ of domination. Said focuses on the idea that ‘knowledge’ is linked to the operations of power (McEwan 2009, 62). ‘Orientalism’ is essential in demonstrating how the power to portray other places, cultures and people has been instrumental in constructing a sense of difference between ‘the West’ and ‘the non-West’. Edward Said emphasizes that the concept of ‘Discourse’ has internalised certain ways of thinking about ‘the Other’ and therein has contributed to the exercise of colonial power. It can be argued that the illustrations of ‘the Orient’ within European writings have reinforced the production of the dichotomy ‘the West’ vs. ‘the East’ (Loomba 1998, 43ff.). The introduction of this ‘us-and-them-binary’ created a sense of superiority and therein justified actions that had reinforced ‘Imperialism’ (McEwan

2009, 64f.). This opposed relation was a central aspect in maintaining European hegemony over native lands (Loomba 1998, 47). However, Said argues that discourses about 'the Orient' are ideological representations that have less to do with reality but a lot more with how 'the Occident' presents itself. The differentiation between 'Self' and 'Other' was beneficial to colonial and imperial ambitions of western cultures and had been an ideological accompaniment of power throughout times of 'Colonialism' (McEwan 2009, 63). This opposition plays a significant role for the European 'Self'-conception: if colonized people are primitive and static, Europeans are civilised and developing. These people are always perceived being contrary to western civilisation. This 'knowledge' has led to images about colonial subjects which have become manifest in the form of stereotypes within writings and visual illustrations. He emphasizes that 'knowledge' about non-Europeans had been both an essential part for maintaining power over them and had blurred lines between the objective, as well as the ideological (Loomba 1998, 43ff.). In summary, 'Orientalism' is kind of providing "the lens through which the 'Orient' would be viewed and controlled; […]." (ibid. 1998, 44).

Even though 'the East' has been illustrated in opposition to 'the West', the portrayal of 'the noble savage' represents an exception. The image of the educated native contradicts the idea of absolute difference. On the one hand, this depiction signifies colonial achievements, but on the other hand, it is exemplary for the possibility of mixing. In terms of 'Postcolonial Theory', Homi K. Bhabha introduced the concept of 'hybridity' (Loomba 1998, 118f.). He points to the failure of colonial discourse to produce fixed identities and argues that colonial encounter has caused the 'hybridization' of identities (ibid., 105). These hybrid identities have been generated by colonialism and have to be viewed as constructed processes rather than fixed entities. Bhabha claims that both the colonizer and the colonized are dependent of each other; identity is rather a matter of 'becoming' than a matter of 'being' (ibid., 173ff.). Thus, "Colonial identities […] are unstable, agonised and in constant flux." (ibid., 178). Contrary to Said's perspective on colonial discourse focusing on homogeneity, Bhabha states that postcolonial countries are rather heterogeneous and argues for a more nuanced notion of colonial power. He has identified colonial dominance to be ambivalent at some points: as mentioned earlier, the colonizer, as well as the colonized are within a mutual dependency because the colonizer needs the colonized to be similar to a certain extent. If the latter behave exclusively in indigenous ways, the colonizer would not gain any economic profit from the colonized. Anyhow, the colonized is not allowed to change too much either; otherwise there would

be nothing left to justify the colonizers' supremacy. Homi K. Bhabha's works argue against binary relations as products of 'Colonialism'. He rather states that cultures interact and transform each other. He notes that these bipolar structures, such as 'civilized vs. 'savage' or 'enlightened vs. ignorant' do not describe the interactions between the colonizer and the colonized properly. To him, 'Imperialism' had not been a process of the colonizer transforming the colonized, but rather the creation of hybrid spaces and cultures within the colonies. 'Hybridity' took place within spaces where differences have met and has opened up the opportunity to intervene processes of domination; even though the distribution of power has always been unequal within these hybrid spaces. As a consequence, with regard to Bhabha, colonial power should be seen as the product of hybridization and not as a one-sided repression of native people (McEwan 2009, 65).

In sum, according to Edward Said's concept of 'Orientalism', the 'non-Western'-world has been portrayed as inhabited by 'the Other' and, thereby, represents a contrasted image to 'the Self'. This post-colonial image of 'the Orient' had been constructed by 'the Occident' through 'Discourse' (Said 2000, 111f.). The dialectic between 'the Self' and 'the Other' had been very influential within studies of 'Colonial Discourse' (Loomba 1998, 47ff.), whereas Homi K. Bhabha noted that colonial discourse was never fixed but became hybridized (McEwan 2009, 64ff.). The concept of 'hybridization' points to the dynamics of a disparate contact and exchange between cultures in the colonial context. Colonizers took codes and symbols of the colonized culture and incorporated them. By that, a "Third Space" or 'hybrid space' has been created which neither matches the colonizers', nor the colonized people's culture (Bhabha 1994, 38). Bhabha states that it had been a strategic necessity to combine elements from both traditional and dominant discourse to navigate between cultures; hybrid identities on both sides are the results of these interactions (Creech/Kavoori 2016, 68f.).

Hybridization describes the process of the creation of new transcultural forms within a 'contact zone' produced by colonisation. According to Mary Louise Pratt, 'contact zone' refers to "the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, […]." (Pratt 1992, 6). Pratt's concept derives from the study of 'Colonialism' and describes the space of colonial encounter. Particularly, the social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and interact with each other, while their relationship is signified by domination and subordination. She agrees with Said that European writings have produced 'the Orient' and, therein, legitimate the efforts of the colonizers' economic expansion. She describes

this process as the creation of the 'domestic subject' of Euroimperialism (ibid. 1992, 6ff.). Pratt argues that 'the West' tends to see itself as determining "the rest of the world" and did not recognize that it is also determined by 'the Other' (Pratt 1992, 5; Ferguson 1993, 481f.). The area where the colonizer and the colonized collide and interact is called 'contact zone'; with regard to Pratt, autoethnographic expression represents a phenomenon of the 'contact zone' and has become an important part in transmitting historical stories of imperial subjugation and resistance (Pratt 1992, 9). She argued that "the entity called Europe was constructed from the outside in as much as from the inside out." (ibid. 1992, 6). This refers to another phenomenon of the 'contact zone' called 'Transculturation' which overcame the process of 'Acculturation'. It describes the capacity of marginal groups to select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant culture. Even though subordinated people cannot control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do decide what they absorb or reject instead of simply adapting to the prevailing culture (MacKenzie 1995, 21f.). Within a 'contact zone', two cultures are actively in reciprocal contact and influencing each other, even though the cultural flow is asymmetrical, it works in both directions and produces new forms of cultural identities as a result of hybridization (Pratt 1992, 6f.).

3.1.2 Stuart Hall: Encoding-/Decoding Model

As noted above, understanding the interrelationship between culture, communication, identity and the connection to the mass medium of film is essential for the elaboration of the subject. Hence, a brief repetition: for the field of research of Cultural Studies, the connection between culture and communication manifests itself through the assumption that a human being is situated within a symbolically-mediated world. All thinking and acting is dependent on social processes and refers to the reception and interpretation of meanings which are familiar to the individual. Thus, communication is based on culturally-mediated practices and habits. 'Culture' is a system consisting of meanings and symbols through which one perceives the world. Communication takes place through and within culture. Accordingly, without communication there would be no culture and vice versa. Cultural Studies consider the formation of identity as a cultural process. Identity formation takes place through a constant comparison of one's own with a foreign cultural arrangement. Following this argumentation: it would not be possible to form an identity without realizing culture and communication (Krotz 2006, 128f.).

Which role does media play? In order to demonstrate this connection, Cultural Studies make use of the ‘Encoding-Decoding Model’ by Stuart Hall (1980). It provides the basis for understanding the relationship between culture, communication, media and the formation of identity (Kellner 1999, 348). Furthermore, Hall's model clarifies that mass communication and its reception, as well as the interpretation of news and meanings, are subject to social and cultural habits. These habits are constituted within predominant social power constellations in the form of discourses. According to Hall, ‘Media’ takes up a dominant position: they generate messages that consist of codes and can only be decoded by the recipient if these codes fall back on cultural practices and stores of knowledge that have previously been established within social discourses. Language, sings and their meanings are generated within a specific cultural context. Consequently, the recipients can only decode the perception and interpretation of a message within their own social and cultural context. Communication takes place via signs conveyed by media to which contextual meaning has been assigned to. For the process of decoding, the recipients draw on their cognitive knowledge and the social and cultural contexts that seem to be adequate to them. Codes within a culture can be embedded in the collective knowledge to the extent that decoding is perceived as an unconscious process (Krotz 2006, 130ff.).

Hall’s ‘Encoding-Decoding Model’ is an interactive audience theory which deals with the relationship between a text and its audience. It understands communication as an interactive process that is influenced by cultural factors and need to function from the sender’s as well as the receiver’s direction. The act of encoding describes the process of producers constructing text, whereas decoding refers to the process the audience reads and interprets the text (Hall 1980, 128ff.). In order to guarantee successful communication, there must exist a common store of knowledge based on attributions of meaning: the sender encodes a message within its personal context and the recipient can decode the message solely on the basis of his/her own cultural practices, habits and cognitive experiences (Krotz 2006, 130f.).

3.2 Inter- and Transcultural Communication Research

‘Culture’ implements the basic human need for structure; it cannot be learned, but is appropriated and internalized throughout socialization. By means of processes of differentiation, the individuals can draw conclusions about themselves and are able to

identify their own cultural system of orientation (Hauser 2003, 10). ‘Culture’ offers points of reference within the subject’s environment and, thereby, fulfils a social function. Stereotypes are created in order to find one's way in this complex environment. Most of these stereotypes have negative connotations, but help to get aware of one’s own cultural values and social identity (Jonas/Schmid Mast 2007, 69). This constant process of differentiation from other people is part of the manifestation of an individual’s cultural identity. The blurring of territorial boundaries can impair the stability of identity (Markom/Weinhäupl 2007, 8); especially, media communication promotes the cross-cultural process of communication (Loenhoff 2007, 538).

Due to colonialization, intercultural contact has been intensified which has led to a mixture of cultural characteristics and mutual influence between different cultures (Lüsebrink 2005, 2). ‘Intercultural communication' is defined as the realization of contact or communication between at least two members of a social group with different cultural socialisation (Broszinsky-Schwabe 2011, 20). It is a dynamic process and its success depends on the intersection of the common context of sender and receiver of a message. Again, Stuart Hall's 'Encoding-Decoding Model' points out that communication is an interactive process that has to function within both directions (sender and receiver) and is influenced by cultural factors. (Hall 1980, 128ff.; Krotz 2006, 130f.).

Further, the success of intercultural communication depends on intercultural competence which is based on the acceptance of cultural diversity within a social system and, at the same time, increases the probability of preserving one's own cultural identity (Rosa 2007, 55). Accepting the validity of a foreign system of orientation constitutes the basis for a bicultural community (Thomas 2003, 53ff.). At the beginning of the 20th century, the dissemination of knowledge about Māori-culture rested on New Zealand’s European population almost exclusively. The Pākehā have perceived Aotearoa’s indigenous population as uncivilized and primitive; since the dominant culture has control over the distribution of media and the transmission of knowledge, the representation of indigenous identity is depending on those, who represent the cultural majority of the nation (Johnson 1999, 158).

Due to the growing pressure to adapt or to assimilate to ‘tikanga Pākehā’, there has been arising a tendency of Māori to revive their cultural values which them had given voice to through several protest actions from the 1970s onwards (Thomas 2003, 47f.; Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 235). The awareness of losing their indigenous identity has led to the revival of indigenous culture within the 1970s and 80s and is referred to as the 'Māori-

Renaissance' (King 2003, 449f.); with *Ngati* (1987), made by the indigenous filmmaker Barry Barclay, Māori have been able to make use of media as a form of protest and to portray indigenous people from their point of view for the first time (Martin/Edwards 1997, 128). From then on, they had the opportunity to present themselves and their culture on screen and contradict previous representations made by Pākehā (Keown 2008, 197). However, even features films made by Pākehā at that time, has changed their mode of representing Māori and intercultural differences: Geoff Murphy's *Utu* (1983) has been considered one of the most famous films offering an approach of reconciliation by dealing with an indigenous interpretation of the colonial history of New Zealand and promoting the vision of a bicultural national unity (Blythe 1994, 235ff.). It can be argued that the new (media) image of Māori boosted their cultural self-confidence and strengthened intercultural competence as a basis for successful intercultural communication.

In contrast to the approach of 'Intercultural Communication Research', 'Transcultural Communication Research' does not assume cultures being limited territorially but considers its transformation a process being promoted through media (Hepp/Löffelholz 2002, 16). Due to the inevitable contact of cultures, 'culture' undergoes a continuous process of identification resulting in differentiation or convergence; consequently, 'culture' is not a static construct (Hepp 2006, 77). Perpetual contact between cultures does not only result in assimilation, but also in synthesis which leads to the formation of a new hybrid cultural order. This kind of synergy is able to strengthen bicultural coexistence. 'Transcultural Communication Research' regards the mixing of different cultures as the basis for the emergence of new cultures which – at the same time – is accompanied by a return to one's own cultural values (Thomas 2003, 47ff.). This approach contrasts the assumption of 'cultures' being cohesive units defined by its geographical borders and considers them the consequence of communication crossing borders (Hepp/Löffelholz 2002, 194). According to the 'Transcultural Communication Research', there is no unilateral exchange between two cultures, but there is a synergy effect that leads to the formation of a new, hybrid culture. This hybridization creates a new identity rooted within both cultures.

Culture affects media content which – in turn – is followed by a response of media. Accordingly, mass media have a transcultural effect. The 'Māori Renaissance' has signified the necessity for mutual acceptance and convergence of both cultures within New Zealand society (Levine 2005, 108). From the 1980s onwards, mass media have

contributed to a better understanding of different social and cultural structures and, thus, have promoted intercultural competence and the development of a common national identity through focusing on biculturalism (King 2003, 104). Niki Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002) can be mentioned as an example representing this kind of development through film. It can be argued that its portrayal of New Zealand's indigenous culture by a Pākehā director symbolizes the development of a common bicultural identity to the extent that the narrative about the traditions and rites of Māori is interwoven with a coming-of-age story shaped by modern values of Western civilization. Caro created a hybrid film addressing both the indigenous community and the larger society which provides the basis of its great success (Babington 2007, 229; Gauthier 2012, 172). In doing so, she seems to promote the necessity of the emergence of a homogenous nation having bicultural roots.

Murphy's *Utu* (1983) functions as an example confirming the view of the 'Intercultural Communication Research'. It shows that contact or communication between two different cultural groups requires adequate knowledge about the cultural system of orientation of the foreign culture in order to ensure successful interaction. Thus, it can be argued, that *Utu* is implying the necessity of intercultural competence in order to guarantee a common and peaceful coexistence and is pleading for the emergence of a bicultural society.

The approach of 'Transcultural Communication Research' criticizes the view of 'Intercultural Communication Research' to the effect that it conceives cultures as being separate units which are clearly distinguishable from one another. Due to global and media developments, 'communication' must be understood as transcultural. It argues that 'culture' is not a static construct and is in constant exchange with other cultures. This interaction leads to the formation of a new culture which evolves within intercultural communication. The hybrid culture consists of several elements from different cultures without entirely disregarding the characteristics of one of the cultures.

According to the approach of 'Transcultural Communication Research', there exists a common 'New Zealand identity', even though New Zealand's society is still dominated by Western values. It can be argued that the continuous interaction between Pākehā and Māori is responsible for an increased awareness of one's own cultural values and contributes to a better understanding of the need for the convergence of cultures in order to establish a common identity composed of bicultural elements.

4 Methodology

Film, as a mass medium, has a cross-cultural and transcultural effect. Knowledge and opinion formation about foreign cultures are often generated by mass media. The medial construction of culture influences the perception of oneself and others. Consequently, media communication enables the emergence of one's own cultural identity (Loenhoff 2007, 538). With the help of reception-aesthetic film analysis, it is discussed in more detail to what extent the filmic representation of indigenous identity portrays the development of New Zealand's society and reflects the *zeitgeist* (1980s to 2010) (Mikos 2001, 326ff.; Prommer 2016, 50ff.). In order to be able to make statements about the filmic representation, contextual, i.e. historical, social, political and cultural framework conditions, must be taken into account (Liebes/Katz 2002, 586f.).

4.1 Research Objects and -Instrument

With the help of the reception-aesthetic film analysis according to Mikos and the approaches of Cultural Studies functioning as the theoretical framework, four contemporary New Zealand films are examined in order to discuss the issue of filmic representation of indigenous identity by Māori and Pākehā. For this purpose, *Utu* (1983, Geoff Murphy) and *Whale Rider* (2002, Niki Caro), films made by Pākehā directors, as well as *Mauri* (1988, Merata Mita) and *Boy* (2010, Taika Waititi) produced by Māori-filmmakers are subjected to an extensive reception-aesthetic film analysis. The aim is to illustrate how Māori are represented within films of Pākehā and – in comparison – how they are presented in Māori-films. Subsequently, the results are going to be evaluated, interpreted and compared, with regard to the theoretical framing; Murphy's *Utu* (1983) and Mita's *Mauri* (1988) will be analysed for similarities and differences and Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002) will be compared with Waititi's *Boy* (2010). In order to achieve a comparability of the bilateral filmic depiction of indigenous identity, each a Pākehā- and Māori-film from the same decade of its creation have been chosen specifically. This selection covers almost 30 years of New Zealand (film) history which allows to make statements about possible changes within the representation of Māori in film. Special consideration will be given to the 'Māori-Renaissance' of the 1970/1980s and its potential influence on the representation of indigenous identity in New Zealand film. In the course of this, it will be discussed whether and to what extent filmic representations of

indigenous identity reflect the *zeitgeist* (1983-2010) of New Zealand as a bicultural nation.

In order to answer the research questions this work is based on, an inductive approach is used. This means that 'the general' should be inferred from the individual case. Within empirical social research, the inductive method is one of the preferred approaches for qualitative (media) analyses (Blatter et al. 2018, 6). Regarding the principles of induction, repetitive generalizations are concluded on the basis of found individual examples in order to map a tendency of general validity (ibid., 2018, 37).

In the following analysis, a sequence listing is to be dispensed with. Features and specifics regarding the representation of indigenous identity found in narration, content, themes and motifs are recorded in writing throughout the course of the film and noted within chapter 5 (and 6), stating the starting time of the respective section in the films. The same procedure is used for the analysis of further aesthetic means of design, such as the filmic staging of space (mise-en-scène), the temporal arrangement of the events (montage), sound (non-/diegetic) and the conception of the characters, in case they are important for the issue of this paper. This type of analytical instrument does not follow a specific category system and could rather be compared to a time log that is not subject to a specific time division.

It allows for analysing the selected films by means of a reception-aesthetic analysis and to compile and subsequently interpret this film stylistic evidence necessary for answering the research questions. The use of the method of reception-aesthetic film analysis which has incorporated approaches of Cultural Studies into its methodology, facilitates an examination and interpretation of the findings with regard to socio-cultural, political, social and historical conditions in which the (actions of) films are embedded (Mikos 2001, 326ff.; Prommer 2016, 50ff.). Detailed explanation to this method are given within the following remarks.

4.2 Research Method: Film Analysis

Classifying 'Film' as a mass medium means that it is regarded a communication content which encounters recipients, affects them and is only getting realized within the situation of reception. To that effect, the viewers themselves, as well as their perception of the communication content need always be considered within the analysis. In order to determine which design features affect the viewers and how they do so, the context they

are situated in must be taken into account. A cinematic text has to be interpreted in relation to one's own life experiences, factors such as socialization, previous visual experiences, but also gender and education have to be considered in an examination of film (Prommer 2016, 50ff.).

According to Lothar Mikos (2001), reception-aesthetic film analysis examines the interaction between 'text' and spectator and embeds it into the broader social, cultural, historical and political context with the help of Cultural Studies.

Only through interaction with each other, the viewers and the media text assume their respective functional roles; the audience by interacting with the text and the text by providing symbolic material through interaction with the audience. As a result, a reciprocal text-viewer relationship is created. Through the dynamic process of interaction between viewer and text, a third variable emerges which is the received text and is not identical with the 'original text' on screen. The viewers only perceive themselves as such by dealing with the media text. Likewise, a film text only realizes itself as such by being watched by viewers. The relationship between media text and spectators, hence, corresponds to a communicative constellation which in turn means that the produced text interacts within the cultural and lifeworld context of the socialized viewers (Mikos 2001, 326f.).

The viewer, as part of the interaction relationship, functions as a construct in the text itself which pre-structures processes of reception. On the one hand, the text has a pre-structuring effect on the viewer activity, and on the other hand, it meets the viewer who acts as a pre-structuring element; so it can be defined as a reciprocal communicative constellation. The realization of the text depends on the viewer's knowledge (of existing texts). The text regards the viewer as an interaction partner and influences this interaction through aesthetics and narration. The nature of the text is designed to interact with the viewer. The text acts as an instruction to the viewers and since the latter themselves appear as structuring elements within the text, the activities of reception are initiated by the text in a text-viewer relationship. They are understood by the active recipient as an instruction. Films are generally regarded as media processing of reality which is why not only *what* is told is of interest, but also *how* it is told. Thus, a film is not only made up of picture narratives which can contain instructions for action, but is also aesthetically-designed to attract the viewer's attention. The composition of a film is aimed at the active recipient. Aesthetics is regarded as a structuring element within the text-viewer relationship, since it appeals to the spectator's emotional and cognitive activities. The

aesthetic design of a text takes place on both the content level (plot, characters, narrator, and dramaturgy) and the formal level (camera movement/setting, light, montage, etc.). Aesthetics is always functionally-oriented towards the reception.

'Reception' means the specific interaction between film and audience. Due to its socio-cultural and socio-political context, the viewers receive the film against the background of experiences and knowledge which they contribute to this interaction situation. They integrate this knowledge into the text and, thereby, create the received text which for them represents the concrete meaning of the 'original text' and may integrate it into their environment and contextual stock of knowledge (ibid., 327ff.).

The focus of reception-aesthetic film analysis is on the film experience and its pre-structuring through texts. The examination should show how the received text is created as a product of the interaction process between media text and audience; further, what kind of meaning the recipient ascribes to the text, and also how text and viewer influence the process of interaction. Therefore, both the content and the means of representation and design which are used to enhance and shape the narration need to be examined. First and foremost, observing a scene resembles the pure intake of information. The actual meaning of a scene results from the fact that it is situated within the context of the narration of the film. Additionally, it results from the spectators being able to generate meaning from what they see during the process of reception induced by their knowledge of social meanings. This process benefits from the fact that texts are conceptualized in a way that they can be made accessible to the viewer through emotional and cognitive activities. Media texts do not have a closed meaning; meaning is only generated within the course of reception. Part of the analysis is to work out this offer of interaction, through which texts can be functionally made accessible to the viewer. Various readings of the texts are produced on a content, as well as an aesthetic level in order to gain influence on the spectator's perception. Controlling attention represents an important aspect within the reception process, since the complexity of the film images which are subject to a constant comparison with the viewer's store of knowledge, is, thus, reduced and organized. So, the viewer is 'forced' to link images and their aspects with each other. Aesthetic means of design play a central role, as they provide the audience with clues for understanding the narrative. Furthermore, it is precisely these creative means that draw the viewers' attention to specific aspects of the film within an unconscious process and influence them emotionally during the reception. The representation of the images is based on established

patterns in order to let the knowledge of these conventions become routine, for example in order to fill gaps in the film that are subject to interpretation. The interpretation of the text takes place within the cultural discourse, by which the viewers are able to assign meaning to what they have seen or not seen (e.g. action is not depicted on screen, but to be sensed through montage). Ultimately, the diversity of the formal and aesthetic possibilities of representation of moving images is decisive for the quality of experiencing film (Mikos 2001, 331ff.).

The text is embedded in the social discourse which represents the basis for the assignment of meaning through the spectator. The text refers to both other texts and to the act of reception itself. The viewer's process of reception is grounded in lifeworld and socio-cultural discourses. Therefore, the relationship of interaction between text and spectator cannot be viewed outside historical, socio-cultural and political contexts. Processes that take place within the text-viewer interaction and resulting in the production of the received text can solely be explained by contextualization. Within the framework of Cultural Studies which deal with the role of the media and media communication, these contexts play an essential role within the analysis of the relationship of interaction between text and its user. In this way, power structures and the consequences of socio-cultural change can be revealed (ibid., 333f.).

Reception-aesthetic film analysis combines the examination of texts with the analysis of the act of reception. The focus is on the text-viewer relationship within the reception situation, taking into account lifeworld, as well as social and cultural contexts. The aesthetics of reception of audio-visual media can be justified in an action-theoretical manner, if the process of interaction between text and viewer is understood as meaningful action, taking into account various contexts of life.

Audio-visual media gains importance for the viewer only through a text-viewer interaction relationship within a reception situation. The assignment of meaning to the text depends on the viewer's knowledge. Text and viewer are socially constituted, since they act in lifeworld and socio-historical contexts. It is assumed that the interactive relationship between text and viewer produces the received text and in this regard, aesthetics function as the trigger for the dynamic text-viewer interaction process. Furthermore, aesthetics influences not only the reception, but also the appropriation of text, since it solely enters into everyday contexts through interaction with the spectator who links it to cultural discourse. Following the approach of Cultural Studies which

emphasize the connection between culture, communication and identity, it can be concluded that the analysis of the aesthetics of reception of audio-visual media is essential for the investigation of discursive practices because it illuminates the relationship of dependence of text-viewer interaction in social context (Mikos 2001, 335ff.).

What kind of aspects of the representation of film are examined through the reception-aesthetic film analysis? The staging of the filmic space provides information about how and from which point of view something is presented to the audience. The viewer's gaze is controlled and their perception influenced by the camera work and settings, as well as by the editing and montage of the individual images. Those aesthetic means of design, as well as light, equipment, sound, colour, costumes and the arrangement and elaboration of characters, create the story for the viewer. Whereas the plot presents the temporal course of the narrative, i.e. the actually visible content of the film, the story comprises the invisible part of the content which contains the viewers' reception, as well as their emotional sensitivities and cognitive knowledge. The story can be explored despite gaps in the plot, as the audience can explore them through context.

The camera directs the spectator's gaze. With the help of various settings, such as close-up, long shot, bird's-eye and frog's-eye perspective, it determines what the audience sees and what kind of aspects of an action are shown. The use of light and colours within the film creates a feeling of three-dimensionality and influences the mood of the viewer.

While the use of the camera controls the audience's gaze, editing and montage combine individual images to form sequences and, thereby, is linking them with each other to create a story. Through various editing and montage methods, such as fade-in and fade-out and hard cuts, a special combination of images is designed which creates filmic reality and, thus, evokes certain reactions in the viewer. The montage enables the film to overcome space and time. By means of flashbacks (cf. *Mauri* (1988)), the audience gets to know about the prehistory of characters and dream sequences allow an insight into the inner world of a character (cf. *Boy* (2010)). Editing and montage are responsible for the creation of filmic time.

In addition to light and colours, the use of sound also influences the mood of the audience. It makes the film an emotional experience. Joy, sadness, comedy and tension are symbolized by sound. A distinction is made between non-diegetic and diegetic sound. The former refers to sounds that are not part of the film world and have been

supplemented later on, such as the voice of a narrator or film music. Diegetic sound is the sound that has actually been recorded within film.

Each individual component of aesthetics supports the viewers' emotional film experience and influences their (future) visual experience. Film focuses on its story; aesthetic means of presentation are always related to narration and genre and influence how the story is shown and perceived (Prommer 2016, 55ff.).

5 Analysis and Comparison of the Representation of 'Indigenous Identity' in Films directed by Pākehā and Māori

Against the background of the approaches of Cultural Studies – which make use of various postcolonial theories – and the findings of Inter- and Transcultural Communication Research, four contemporary New Zealand films will be analysed in the following with the aid of the method of reception-aesthetic film analysis, in which approaches of the interdisciplinary field of research of Cultural Studies are embedded, and two each will be related to one another subsequently. After each film has been examined individually with regard to the representation of indigenous identity, each a Māori-film and a film by a Pākehā-filmmaker from the same decade will be compared. The focus will be on similarities and differences in the representation of Māori through their directors. By analysing the individual components of the aesthetic means of representation of the respective film and embedding them into the social, cultural and political context of its time of origin and action, statements about the cinematic representation of indigenous identity are to be made and ultimately compared with one another (Mikos 2001, 326ff.; Prommer 2016, 50ff.). The juxtaposition of two films from the same decade facilitates comparability and, thus, works out more clearly divergent patterns of representation of film as a communication content – which exerts an inter- and transcultural effect and thus affects identity formation – taking into account its socio-cultural, political and historical framing (Loenhoff 2007, 538; Liebes/Katz 2002, 586f.).

Geoff Murphy's *Utu* (1983) and *Mauri* (1988) by Merata Mita are each examined individually and then being analysed for similarities and differences. This is followed by an analysis of Niki Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002) and Taika Waititit's *Boy* (2010) which are also be compared after they have been examined on an individual basis. It illustrates and outlines about 30 years of New Zealand film history. Furthermore, the four selected films

are analysed in the context of the 'Māori-Renaissance' emerging in the 1970s and 1980s in order to find answers to the question to what extent these cinematic depictions of indigenous identity reflect the *zeitgeist* of New Zealand (1983-2010) as a bicultural nation (Durie 1994, 99).

5.1 *Utu* (1983) vs. *Mauri* (1988)

Utu had been released by the New Zealand film maker Geoff Murphy in 1983. According to Martin Blythe (1994), "Utu […] has […] been the most willing to explore a 'Maori' interpretation of last century's events." (Blythe 1994, 235). He claims that *Utu* is dealing with the ambiguities and complexities of the country's racial and cultural history. Murphy represents cultural extremes within a racially polarized conflict: at one extreme he is illustrating British Imperialism and on the other Māori Nationalism. He is eliminating the two extremes of Māori- and Pākehā Essentialism within the course of *Utu* and offers a bicultural solution which promotes the necessity of living together in harmony in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The film's main narrative conflict is addressing the assimilationist-integrationist policies of that time but is interspersed with influences of a politics of biculturalism, which drives the story. Murphy's film is implying the necessity of intercultural competence in order to guarantee a common and peaceful coexistence and is advocating mutual commitment to biculturalism. It pleads for a bicultural solution in order to bring conflicts to an end. *Utu* gives hope for national unity and therein is representing integrity (ibid., 235ff.). Harris states that "[a] hopeful spirit of united national achievement accompanied the film's production and release […]." (Harris 1990, 37).

Utu (1983) is set in New Zealand towards the end of the era of the Land Wars between Māori-tribes and European colonizers in the 1870s (Harris 1990, 38). In the beginning of the film a Māori-village in the forest is attacked by the British Army; the soldiers burn down all the huts and slaughter its Māori-inhabitants. *Utu*'s protagonist Te Wheke (Anzac Wallace), who is a Māori-soldier in the army of the British crown, comes across this village with his unit. As he recognizes that it is his own village and all of his relatives are killed in a massacre, he deserts the army and organizes a guerrilla group to take revenge on the British forces. Te Wheke and his adherents raid the house of the Williamsons, who are British farmers; Jonathan Williamson's (Bruno Lawrence) wife dies and he swears to hunt down Te Wheke in order to avenge his wife. The young British Lieutenant Scott (Kelly Johnson) is charged with catching Te Wheke to put an end to the

riots. He meets Kura (Tania Bristowe), a Māori girl whose tribe has joined Te Wheke's movement and falls in love with her. When Te Wheke kills Kura because he suspects that she has warned the British troops of an attack by his guerrilla group, Scott also wants to take revenge on him. Wiremu (Wi Kuki Kaa), who is a kūpapa-soldier[16], shoots Colonel Elliot (Tim Eliott) during a battle between the British Army and the guerrilla fighters; Elliot's order to burn down Te Wheke's village and his inherent racism and hostility to Aotearoa's indigenous population have been the cause for Te Wheke taking vengeance and all the fights it has brought with it. Finally, Te Wheke gets arrested by Scott, Williamson, Wiremu and Kura's aunt Matu (Mirata Mita) – the riots have come to an end. Each of them involved wants to kill Te Wheke him-/herself to seek 'utu' against him; Wiremu reveals that he is Te Wheke's brother and shoots him.

The film has been produced at a time when New Zealand was on the cusp of ideological change. Several acts of protests – which have already been outlined within chapter two – have marked the late 1960s up to the 1980s an era of cultural, social and political change. The civil unrest has been followed by the 'Māori-Renaissance' which has found its expression within Māori-arts from the 1970s onwards (Della Valle 2010, 9; Martens 2012, 5f.). New Zealand's policies have changed throughout the time: starting with an assimilationist approach, moving to an integrationist policy and up to a bicultural approach in the 1980s supporting the idea of a society to exist in one nation as two people (Blythe 1994, 235ff.). The early colonial belief was that Māori need to be assimilated or absorbed into the white settler world through gently methods (e.g.: teaching the indigenous population how to read and write) and sometimes by force (e.g.: prohibiting Māori from speaking 'Te Reo Māori') (Simon/Smith 2001, 154). The social policy of integration has resulted in more Māori migrating to the cities and leading to areas of Māori deprivation, which have forged a new Māori urban culture and identity (King 2003, 440ff.). Referring to the Hunn Report, which has been released in 1961, New Zealand's politics have been officially addressing an integrationist approach; even though the Report has rather pleaded for assimilation than integration, if one is reading between the lines (Biggs 1961, 361). Urbanization has created a new generation of Māori. Nationalism and civil unrest led to the advent of biculturalism within the early 1980s which sought to acknowledge Māori-history and -culture as separate and distinctive from Pākehā. Thus bicultural proposals emphasized the need for greater mutual understanding between

[16] 'kūpapa': Māori-soldiers, who fought with the British colonists side by side (Babington 2011, 237).

Māori as indigenous people of Aotearoa and Pākehā as former colonizers and now dominant majority of immigrants in New Zealand (Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 248ff.; Durie 1994, 99).

Utu is a projection of the racial tensions within New Zealand at that time and has conveyed the impression that change in the country's ethnic relations was inevitable. The film represents racial conflict between Māori and Pākehā and the struggle over claiming land (Harrison 1990, 49). The film's title illustrates its key theme and is linked to the moral ambiguity of its subject matter, which is evident in the main narrative threads of Murphy's work. *Utu* represents a traditional Māori-concept and has several meanings, which are interpreted differently by each of the characters in the film: 'utu' is often described as ritualized vengeance or revenge but the concept is better explained by describing 'utu' as reciprocity, compensation or restoration of balance, order and harmony (Babington 2011, 251). Ultimately, it is these key social issues in Murphy's film which are leading up to 'utu' and illustrating 'utu' as a useful concept in identifying issues for national and cultural agendas (Blythe 1994, 234).

Geoff Murphy's *Utu* (1983) starts with a Union Jack flying a top a British military fort in New Zealand [00:00:01]. This scene is accompanied by the sound of an oboe and a slow drumbeat. It shows Pākehā-colonials and kūpapa-soldiers wearing uniforms of the British Army, marching armed with fire guns in accordance to the military drum beat some of them are playing on their drum set. This imperial theme gets contrasted when the scene shifts to a peaceful Māori-village in the midst of the forest (Blythe 1994, 239; [00:01:05]). The scenic shift is accompanied by a change in sound: the diegetic sound of drums is shifted to the non-diegetic sound of traditional chanting in 'Te Reo Māori' and thus is used to bridge between two scenes (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 15). Here sound takes on a narrative function within the film. It serves the purpose of representation and creates a feeling of oppositeness in the viewer. Through the use of sound a contrast is created between the Pākehā and Māori: typical military sounds are set against traditional chanting of the indigenous population. Singing in Māori-language represents an additional feature influencing the formation of identity, which points to cultural belonging (Mikos 2008, 235f.). The idyllic picture of indigenous people living in huts within a small community on the countryside gets destroyed by the British Army attacking the village. The entire tribal community gets killed in the massacre. It can be argued that this scene illustrates the contrast of 'technology' invading 'nature', which causes destruction and death as a

consequence. It can be viewed as representative for the British colonizers invading Aotearoa, colonizing its indigenous people and, therein, causing the loss of identity of many Māori because they had been forced to assimilate to Western values.

As soon as Te Wheke recognizes that the village is his own, he turns his back on the British and transforms from a kūpapa-soldier to a Māori-warrior. The beginning of the protagonist's transformation is introduced by placing his hand next to one of the British soldier's; Te Wheke is comparing his skin colour with alike of one of the Pākehā and thus emphasizes that the reason for this massacre is racially motivated (Blythe 1994, 239; [00:07:34]). It can be stated, that from the very beginning *Utu* puts an emphasis on race and, thereby, represents current racial tensions pervading New Zealand's society (Harris 1990, 49). Te Wheke is transforming both mentally and physically: he is claiming to seek 'utu' in order to restore reciprocity (Te Wheke (in Māori-language): "*I must kill the white men to avenge what he has done. [...]. I cannot live this life*." [00:09:08]) and he receives a full-face 'moko' which signifies his declaration of war on the Pākehā (Blythe 1994, 240). The tattooing-process resembles a ritual transformation, which is portrayed by the use of colour, light and camera: the high-contrast close-ups of his face show how he is repeatedly penetrated by the mallet-driven tattooing chisel, leaving him with a bleeding wound all over his face. The use of light and shadow creates these high-contrasted images, which evoke a mysterious atmosphere; combined with using close-up shots of Te Wheke's face, which is making no grimaces and showing no signs of pain throughout the tattooing-procedure, the audience's attention is directed to his facial expression which conveys an impression of violent determination and aggressiveness and is associated with the Māori-image of a warrior (Harris 1990, 49f.; [00:09:47]). 'Tā moko'[17] has been used as a form of identification, rank, history and as a representation of 'whakapapa'; each 'moko' contains individual ancestral tribal messages and is seen as an expression of indigenous identity. They tell the story of one's family, tribal affiliations and social standing. As the head is believed to be the most sacred part of the body, a 'moko' represents the ultimate statement of one's identity and makes reference to genealogy. A man's 'moko' symbolizes knowledge, authority and 'mana'[18]. This scene represents the traditional rites of Māori-culture as being an important part of one's

[17] 'Tā moko': the art of Māori tattooing (Kernot 1988, 476).

[18] 'mana': as a term "[…]is used to refer to authority, power, control, influence and prestige in relation to […] people, land and the environment" (Ka'ai/Higgins 2004, 17).

indigenous identity; returning to the Māori-concept of 'utu' and getting a traditional 'moko' are signifying the connection to one's indigenous roots.

When Te Wheke attacks a Christian service after his transformation in order to acquire guerrilla fighters, a contrasting representation between Māori and Pākehā is again created by means of reception aesthetics and at the same time meaning is generated through symbolization. His way to the church is shown to the audience from the protagonist's perspective. Through the use of a handheld camera, the viewer is enabled to identify with the camera's gaze and the specific context of the action. The way the camera is operating creates shaky images which conveys a certain dynamic and authenticity to the viewers. The camera, thus, has a narrative function (Mikos 2008, 202ff.). The spectator observes what is seen from Te Wheke's perspective, who sees a church and lurks around it [00:13:16]. The sequences portraying the Christian service and those showing Te Wheke's way around the church are presented in alternating shots being strung together by hard cuts. Images are combined to stage contrast and conflict (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 80). The Christian faith which was to enter New Zealand in the course of colonization, is alien to the Māori. They were an oral people; their history and traditions retained in oral traditions. The mythology origins of Māori-society are a mix of symbolism and history and are laid out in myth cycles before European contact: creation traditions, demigod traditions, canoe traditions and tribal traditions. The stories of mythology are set in the past of the 'Hawaiki'[19] homeland somewhere in the Pacific Ocean (Walker 1990, 37). Accordingly, this perspective of 'looking from the outside to the inside' symbolizes the compulsive attempt of a Western culture to incorporate an ideology coming from the 'outside' into New Zealand's indigenous culture ('inside') that has no relation to their religion, habits and ideologies. Compared to the representation of the Māori in the small village at the beginning of the film, the Māori depicted in church singing church songs seem out of place and thus having a contrasting effect. Within this scene the theme of time is addressed symbolically. Te Wheke crashes the service and presents a pocket watch while he is saying: "*What's the time, Mr. Wolf?*" [00:17:24]. Here, the protagonist refers to a well-known children's game which is played throughout New Zealand and beyond; and even became a chart-hit of the band Southside of Bombay in

[19] 'Hawaiki': is the traditional Māori-place of origin. It is said that the first Māori came to New Zealand sailed to New Zealand from Hawaiki. In Māori-mythology, Hawaiki is the place from which each person comes and return to after death (Orbell 1985, 19).

the early 1990s as their same-titled song *What's the time Mr. Wolf*[20] had been used within a scene of the famous New Zealand Film *Once Were Warriors* (1994) by Lee Tamahori (Murray 2012, 58). With regard to Te Wheke's successful acquisition of guerrilla fighters, the symbolic allusion to *time* can be interpreted as implying that the era of colonial reign and the oppression of Māori by white Europeans must come to an end.

"In New Zealand […] the issue of race and land are inseparable." (Harris 1990, 49). This is highlighted by Te Wheke and his supporters raiding the farmhouse of the Williamson family. Jonathan Williamson and his wife are British Pākehā and living side by side with Māori on the countryside. They sympathize with the Māori, respect their culture and do not endorse the actions of the colonial troops:

> Jonathan: *"Are we obliged to import all our worst habits to this new land? Why are we here? Are we here to build monuments to civilization or to tear them [the Māori] down?"* [00:24:31].

They were urged by the British troops to pack their belongings, vacate their houses and leave the area, as rebels are on a raid. Jonathan refuses to leave his home and takes every precaution to protect himself from Te Wheke and his entourage and intends to defend himself. When Te Wheke shows up shortly afterwards, Jonathan calls out to him: "*Get off my land or I'll shoot you down!*", whereupon Te Wheke replies: "*He says it's HIS land.*" ([00:25:41]). This sequence can be interpreted as illustrating a cross-cultural allusion to the ongoing conflicts between Aotearoa's indigenous population and the British since the colonizers' arrival in New Zealand. The short dialogue can be understood as a hint at the Treaty of Waitangi and the related disputes between Māori and Pākehā over land ownership. *Utu* pays particular attention not only to the issue of racism but also to the related conflicts over land ownership (Harris 1990, 49). The combination of these two themes possibly reflects the Māori's intention to conclude the treaty with the European Pākehā; because by signing the treaty the Māori have intended to restore balance in inter-ethnic relations (Thomas/Nikora 1996, 233). It may be argued that this intention is implied by the Māori-concept of 'utu', which is the driving theme throughout the film. Furthermore, it can be said that the scene on the Williamson premises is foreshadowing the violent outbursts awaiting by Te Wheke. At this point it is shown for the first time what kind of rebellion the protagonist strives for and what means he is

[20] Southside of Bombay – What's the time Mr. Wolf (https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/whats-the-time-mr-wolf).

prepared to use to achieve his goal. Through the use of special effects, reverse shot and angle cutting, the attention of the audience is awakened, the intensity of the experience is enhanced and, thus, the viewing value of the film is increased (Mikos 2008, 244ff.). The battle between the Williamsons and Māori-rebels ends with the death of Jonathan's wife, him being wounded and the destruction of the family's possessions and valuables. This sequence depicts Te Wheke's ruthless and brutal men: they treat the family's crockery and piano –which are both iconic for Pākehā-status – with contempt and set fire to the farm house (Blythe 1994, 242; [00:32:27]). Within this scene Te Wheke and his followers are represented as brutal, primitive and uncivilized which puts them in contrast to the image of the British Pākehā. Thus, indigenous identity is represented as the oriental 'Other' compared to the western 'Self' (Said, 2000).

The Māori-girl Kura, with whom Lieutenant Scott falls in love, is also presented in a stereotyped manner. She is portrayed living with her tribe in the woods, wearing simple clothes which were presumably made of the typical Harakeke (flax) and having long black hair and dark eyes. Kura is depicted as the romanticised, exotic beauty who lives in harmony with nature. Once again, indigenous identity is represented through the stereotypical 'Other' (ibid., 2000). The first contact between Kura and Scott can be associated with the scene in the church with regard to reception aesthetics: Scott is out in the woods when Kura meets him. The viewer experiences their encounter from Kura's point of view, who notices his weapon first. A point-of-view shot (POV shot) shows the audience what the character sees as the camera assumes the position of the subject (Branigan 1984, 103); the camera lens "becomes" the eye of the character. It makes the spectator imagine him-/herself within a certain perceptual array. The POV shot does not only determine what the character sees but also how he/she sees it. The viewer identifies with the character/situation; speaking of a process of forming one's identity in comparison with or against something else. The audience identifies with the emotional predicament of Kura (ibid., 6ff.); [00:40:07]). Compared to the 'church-scene', which depicts "the outside looking in", this sequence is considering "the inside (nature, indigeneity) looking out (technology, colonialism)". It is represented that 'technology' has invaded 'nature'. Therein, a contrast is created which can be claimed as symbolically illustrating the British colonist's forcibly incursion into Aotearoa. It can be argued that both scenes classify Māori-identity as one of backward indigenous people attached to nature without any connection to industrial progress. Once again, this representation

follows Said's postcolonial theory ‘Orientalism’ which defines the relationship between ‘the East’ and ‘the West’ as a dichotomy (Said, 2000).

This dichotomy becomes blurred when Lieutenant Scott is assigned to guard a prisoner. It turns out that it is Kura with whom he had already fallen in love when they first met in the woods. She fools him and is able to escape. Kura asks why he does not let her go; if not, she will be dead soon. Scott replies that he is in a dilemma: he does not want her to die but either he keeps her in custody, whereupon she would be abused and killed by his British comrades, or he allows her to escape which would ruin his military career. She seduces him and offers to be his slave. Kura suggests that they can either make love or shoot each other – or he joins her. He confesses her that he has fallen in love with her and evaluates whether to join her or not. When he has decided to go with her, he realizes that Kura has escaped [01:05:38]. On the one hand, Kura is stereotyped as the exotic beauty who uses her feminine charms trying to ‘wrap the white man around her finger’ (Conrich/Murray 2008, 13). On the other hand, it can be argued that their mutual affection can be regarded as an attempt to overcome intercultural differences. This process is portrayed symbolically through an inter-ethnic love affair between Māori and Pākehā. Additionally, the decision whether to sleep together or shoot each other could be interpreted as a metaphorical depiction of early New Zealand (Blythe 1994, 238). Lieutenant Scott's decision in favour of Kura and against the British military can be understood as a decision for ‘biculturalism’ and for a common national identity which is based on equality. The emotional attachment of Scott and Kura is illustrated by means of a classic shot-reverse shot technique (Harris 1990, 41). By a shot-reverse shot editing sequence of close-up shots of both their interaction is shown with an emphasis on their relationship and emotions (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 83). The use of both 'Te Reo Māori' and ‘English’ can also be interpreted as the need for a reciprocal approach of cultures in order to live together peacefully. It can be said that at the beginning of this scene the motif of *time* – which has already been addressed within the ‘church-scene’ by Te Wheke ([00:13:16]) – is revisited [01:04:19]. The meshing of the gears is necessary to keep the mill running (inside which the characters are located). It can thus be said that the meshing of the gears symbolically implies the need for bicultural coexistence between Pākehā and Māori in order to guarantee a functioning New Zealand society. In addition, the need for reciprocity is represented by Kura: ‘utu’ allows her to save Lieutenant Scott’s life through luring him out of the danger zone before Te Wheke and his followers attacked the British stronghold in return for him saving her life as he let her escape from the mill (Blythe

1994, 237; [01:22:58]). Consequently, it can be argued that indigenous identity is represented in three ways: first, through a stereotypical representation of Kura as the exotic 'Other'. Secondly, by referring to the Māori-concept of ‘utu’, which allows Kura to save Scott’s life as an act of reciprocity. Thirdly, through the depiction of an inter-ethnic love affair that can be interpreted as an awareness of the necessity for an interactive and respectful relationship in order to coexist in harmony.

Indigenous identity is represented throughout the film by means of Māori-practices and -rites. For instance, kūpapa-soldiers are practising the ‘haka’ in order to gain strength mentally and physically from their culture and beliefs (Clelland-Stokes 2007, 182). The kūpapa are wearing British military uniforms and using a weapon colonial troops have brought with them, instead of a traditional ‘taiaha‘[21]. This depiction creates a contrast between the two cultures and thus highlights differences and at the same time shows what is an important part of indigenous identity [00:49:54]. In this context, the scene of Henare’s funeral has to be mentioned. Henare is a kūpapa soldier who was killed by Te Wheke in a surprising attack. The scenic shift showing his ‘tangi’ is introduced by traditional Māori-chants and a ritual burial ceremony can be observed. The cultural practice ‘tangi’ is "[...] about public and ritualized performance of grief and mourning, and require the appropriate social, cultural and symbolic capital for their enactment." (Agee et al. 2012, xxii). Indigenous identity is portrayed by the representation of culturally specific practices that play a crucial role for Māori in the formation of identity. With regard to the example of the ‘tangi’, Nīkora et al. even speak of "[...] the ultimate form of Māori cultural expression." (Nīkora et al. 2013, 169; [00:55:36]). Another Māori cultural practice that influences and expresses the formation of indigenous identity is the ‘hongi’; it is the term for a New Zealand way of greeting in which the noses of both people touching to greet each other. According to Angus Macfarlane, Professor of Māori Research at the University of Canterbury, the ‘hongi’ plays an important role in Māori-mythology because it not only welcomes a person, but is a symbolic show of unity between two people. This ritual takes its origin in an oral narrative, which said that "[t]he god Tāne-nui-a-Rangi, moulded the shape of the first woman, Hine-ahu-one, from earth and breathed life into her by pressing his nose against hers." (Macfarlane qtd. in Salmons 2017). ‘Te Ao Māori’[22] is believed to be where the breath of life came from; and as Tāne

[21] ‘taiaha’: is a Māori-weapon, which is used in hand-to-hand combat (Clelland-Stokes 2007, 182).
[22] ‘Te Ao Māori’: the Māori-world (Macfarlane in Salmons 2017).

is regarded to be the progenitor of the Māori-world, the 'hongi' represents an important ritual for the indigenous people of Aotearoa. The 'hongi' is not only a physical act of greeting but also a spiritual act, explains Te Hurinui Clarke, professor at the College of Education of the University of Canterbury (Clarke qtd. in Salmons 2017). *Utu*'s final scene shows a 'hongi' between Wiremu and Te Wheke after it had been revealed that they are brothers. Following the 'hongi', Te Wheke was shot by his brother to seek 'utu' and to restore balance and equity. This sequence is presented in a close-up shot to draw attention to the characters' facial expression and to emphasize their emotions and relationship (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 52). Both their noses and foreheads touch each other and their eyes are closed. This portrays an intimate moment between brothers who are emotionally connected through their indigenous culture. Te Wheke's execution is preceded by monologues and dialogues in 'Te Reo Māori'; as 'language' acts as an identifying feature within a cultural context, the use of Māori-language represents an expression of indigenous identity (Glaser 2003, 74). Wiremu tells Te Wheke that he should prepare a place for him when he reaches 'Hawaiki' [01:53:39]. 'Hawaiki', as the traditional Māori-place of origin and place to return after death, is part of the mythological origins of Māori-society and -history (Orbell 1985, 19). Through this final scene Murphy represents indigenous identity by addressing Māori-culture and its traditional practices and rites; further he uses Māori-language and makes reference to the mythological origins of Aotearoa's indigenous population in order to put an emphasis on the importance of indigenous identity.

Mauri was the first full-length New Zealand feature film drama by an indigenous woman. Merata Mita's film was released in 1988 and was entirely produced from a Māori-perspective[23]. Because of *Mauri*'s somehow radical indigenous perspective, it represents a key moment in New Zealand film history. Together with Barry Barclay's *Ngati* (1987) and *Once Were Warriors* (1994) by Lee Tamahori, Mita's first feature film (1988) confirmed the power of Māori-filmmakers and thus set the course for a new generation of New Zealand's 'Indigenous Cinema' (Babington 2007, 230f.).

[23] *Mauri*: Mauri: Overview (www.nzonscreen.com)

> *"I was fed up with film makers putting Māori under the microscope and misrepresenting them. [...] [they] rush to the Māori area without any inkling of understanding about the dynamics of that society, its history and culture."* (Mita qtd. in Mana 2002/2003, 32).

Through her documentaries *Bastion Point: Day 507* (1980) and *Patu!* (1983), Merata Mita was the first woman drawing attention to female directors in New Zealand. Before then, New Zealand's film industry had been dominated by men (Conrich/Davy 1997, 6). Both her documentaries and her feature film *Mauri* (1988) played an important role in the growing recognition of female filmmakers (Babington 2007, 179). Mita used her filmic works to address racism and the lack of understanding about 'Maoritanga' by Pākehā. She sought to tell Māori-stories without conforming to the pressure of representation in Eurocentric terms. Mita's unique artistic vision left a mark on global cinema (Gauthier 2012, 39f.).

> *"As far as being radical, I only appear to be so because of the country's attitude towards women and Māori, and to anyone who holds a particular point of view."* (Mita qtd. in Mana 2002/2003, 31).

The 1970s/80s were a period of social protest leading to several changes in inter-ethnic relationships. This development had been accompanied by a change in representing Māori on screen. Aotearoa's indigenous people were no longer willing to remain a marginalized group in New Zealand society – neither in social, nor in medial terms (Thomas/Nīkora 1996, 235f.).

> *"My interest in social issues is a consequence of the fact that ever since I can remember [...], I've actually been on a collision course with political and social reality in this country."* (Mita qtd. in Mana 2002/2003, 31).

Both *Bastion Point: Day 507* and *Patu!* can be interpreted as an act of protest against racism and social inequity (Murray 2008). Merata Mita's documentaries and *Mauri* (1988), as well as Barry Barclay's feature film *Ngati* (1987) played an important role in the way indigenous identity has been portrayed in film from then onwards in New Zealand. To this day she is regarded as a filmmaker who broke through barriers of race, class and gender in order to reveal mistakes and grievances in society (cf. *Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen* 2018). It can be argued that her films themselves make politics. Mita's intention had been to give the audience a realistic view of Aotearoa's

indigenous people and culture. She intended to revise the medial image of Māori, which had been established within many years of misrepresentation through the dominant culture of the Pākehā. Mita used her films – such as *Mauri* – as a tool to change the stereotyped image about her people (Mita 1996, 49): "It became clear that Māori needed to be telling their own stories." (Mita qtd. in Mana 2002/2003, 32). She used her first feature film to give many young Māori the opportunity to participate in the production of film (the crew numbered 33 Māori and 20 Pākehā) in order to put an emphasis on the importance of the accuracy of the representation of indigenous people and the Māori way of life[24]. She dealt with issues around the life of New Zealand's indigenous people: Māori-history, -land, -culture, -language and -identity. Mita's films focus on injustice and racism in the country. Through her films she addressed grievances and called for more respect, tolerance and diversity. In *Mauri* (1988) she combined Māori-tradition with -modernity (i.e.: speaking of the results of urbanization) and advocated a return to indigenous values in order to strengthen Māori-culture as an important part of one's indigenous identity (cf. *Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen* 2018). Mita acquired amateur actors in order to preserve a documentary style. The film was shot over a period of one year to adapt changing seasons of history to the course of the film. This gives the film an observational component similar to that of a documentary and emphasizes the importance of a realistic representation of Māori-people and their culture (Peters 2007, 111). The famous land rights activist Eva Rickard starred the protagonist 'Kara' in Mita's film (1988). Through her choice of actor, she supported Rickard's course of protest and located herself within New Zealand's political fabric of that time.

The female Māori-director describes her feature film as "a probing enquiry into Māori cultural concepts and a parable about the schizophrenic existence of so many Māori in Pākehā society." (Mita 1996, 49). *Mauri* tells the story of several characters facing the consequences resulting from European settlement. It illustrates the feeling of being torn apart between indigenous culture and western manner, which many Māori had to face as being the marginalized group within the dominant Pākehā-culture (ibid., 49). Mita's *Mauri* (1988) is concerned with issues of birthright, racism, indigenous identity, urbanization, relationship with land and the transmission of Māori-knowledge to the next generation in a rural community. It depicts the connection between birth, life, death and land covered by the Māori-concept of 'mauri' which is expressed in the film's title itself

[24] *Mauri*: Mauri: Overview (www.nzonscreen.com)

and acts as the driving theme throughout the story. 'Mauri' can be understood as 'life force', which gives existence and holds together. Williams defines 'mauri' as "life principle" (Williams 1957, 197). A more thorough explanation is provided by Mead:

> *"The mauri is the life force that is bound to an individual and represents the active force of life which enables the heart to beat, the blood to flow, food to be eaten and digested, energy to be expended, the limbs to move, the mind to think and have some control over body systems, and the personality of the person to be vibrant, expressive and impressive. When the mauri leaves the body the activating force of life comes to a dead stop. Life systems cease work and the mauri disappears."* (Mead 2003, 54).

The story of Mita's feature film is set in the 1950s in a small country town called Te Mata (fictional) on the East Coast of New Zealand's north island (DVD blurb). *Mauri* deals with cultural tensions, the importance of indigenous identity and changing ways of life. The story pivots on Paki (Anzac Wallace), a Māori-man haunted by his past. The reasons for his emotional and spiritual suffering are revealed at the end of the film. Rewi was involved in a bank-robbery and escaped from the police in order to avoid a conviction. On his run he picked up a hitchhiker and accidentally killed him in a car crash. He took over his identity to flee from the authorities. In order to make his impersonation more convincing, Paki wears the bone carving of the dead Rewi Rapana. He arrives in Te Mata and imposes as 'Rewi', who had not been at home for quite a while. Through steeling the dead Rewi's bone carving, Paki violated the 'tapu'[25] and is haunted by spirits as a punishment (Keown 2008, 202). Kara (Eva Rickard), who is held in great esteem in her tribe, is a spiritual healer and feels 'Rewi's' (formerly Paki) mental unease. Rewi loves the headstrong Māori-woman Ramari (Susan D. Ramari Paul) but cannot from a

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[25] 'tapu': is basically defined as "sacred, set apart"; and loosely as "taboo" (Keown 2008, 202).
It is the presence of a spiritual force emanating from creation; thus it is a sacred part of everything and touches every aspect of life (Gadiki 1982, 1).
Everything in life has 'tapu' (people, buildings, places, objects). The closer something is to creation along a continuum between coming-from-creation-reality-and-returning-to-creation, the greater the degree of 'tapu'. The proximity to creation means that 'tapu'-things are variously regarded as sacred, dangerous, polluting or restricted. 'Tapu' can be imposed or reduced by things rendered 'noa'. 'Noa' can be defined as "safe, touchable […] and free from tapu." (Ballara 2003, 76f.). It counteracts 'tapu' and has the ability to reduce, neutralize or convert 'tapu'. For example, if someone/-thing has too much 'tapu', it needs to be removed through things/persons/practices considered 'noa'. However, these concepts are still complementary: what is 'tapu' is not 'noa' and vice versa. The same thing can be 'tapu' in one context and 'noa' in the other (Metge 1976, 59). It controls interactions between entities and is necessary in society to function. (Gadiki 1982, 15; ibid. 1976, 58).

relationship with her because he struggles with his identity and spirituality. Although Ramari faces rejection, she constantly tries to get through to ‘Rewi’. However, they spend a night together and she gets pregnant. Young Awatea (Rangamarie Delamere) learns a lot of Māori-tradition and -culture through the stories about their people, land and traditions told by her grandmother Kara. Her uncle Willie Rapana (Willie Raana) moved to the city and is the head of a gang. He comes to the countryside visiting his family from time to time. Kara is suspicious about his gang members and tells him to be careful about whom he trusts. Willie gets shot by one of the gang members and buried on Māori-land. Mr. Semmens (Geoff Murphy) and his son Steve (James Heyward) are living within the community. Mr. Semmens owns some of the land that previously belonged to the Māori and wants to expel them from “his” land. His son Steve tries to bring him to reason but his father turns out to be insane and dies during the attempt of ‘Rewi’ calming him down at Steve’s wedding. Ramari marries Steve because he loves her and he will take care for her and the baby. He is willing to integrate and return the land to the Māori (Babington 2007, 231). In the end Kara dies and ‘Rewi’ reclaims his spirituality and identity; in a symbolic act he apologizes to (the real) Rewi by throwing the bone carving he had taken from him into the ocean where the accident had occurred and surrendered to the police.

In *Mauri* (1988), Mita addressed Māori-history in order to illustrate the past in the context of the present (Peters 2007, 104). It can be claimed that she used the medium film to establish the idea of Māori-values offering a spiritual core to life in New Zealand. Further it can be said that representing the Māori-community as a unity bound together by their indigenous culture, puts an emphasis on both mutual respect and tolerance and evokes a positive association with values of the past. Therefore, Mita seemed to highlight the indigenous people’s special connection to nature and land: “Aotearoa had two remarkable attributes. The first was commonly described as New Zealand’s scenic attractions, the second was the Maori – and both were eminently photogenic.” (Goldson/Smith 2008, 155).

The elder Kara embodies typical characteristics of Māori-culture. She receives a phone call to assist at a birth. The pregnant woman is kneeling on the floor and seems to trust Kara’s experiences more than the doctor’s knowledge. The Pākehā-doctor is standing by uselessly and appears to be irritated by the untypical birthing position and the elder’s methods. When it comes to the ‘whenua’[26], Kara insist to cut it with a seashell because it

[26] ‘whenua‘: means ‘placenta‘, but also ‘land’ in ‘Te Reo Māori‘ (Mead 2003, 269).

has been part of their Māori-tradition for generations. She takes the placenta with her to take it back to nature in a ceremonial act because it is a practise that is linked to the notion of personal 'tapu'. The 'whenua' is very 'tapu' and has to be properly attended to (Mead 2003, 47ff.).

Kara: *"The afterbirth is part of us. It must go back to the land."* [00:02:18].

It can be argued that this scene is emphasizing the significance of Māori-tradition as being part of one's indigenous identity from the very beginning; which is incorporated into the broader concept of 'tikanga Māori' and the Māori-world view. The latter represents a framework of ideas and beliefs through which an individual interprets the world and interacts with it. "Māori worldview is holistic and cyclic.", which means that all things within a system (physical, social, spiritual, etc.) need to be in balance and cannot be determined as parts alone (Ka'ai/Higgins 2004, 13). Additionally, this scene can be interpreted as depicting the (cultural) distance between Māori and Pākehā. Especially in post-war times when lots of Māori were migrating to the cities, indigenous people were forced to deal with a policy of usurpation by Pākehā which dominated everyday life. The opening scene points to a lack of cross-cultural understanding within two different cultural realms of experience and hence represents indigenous identity by the portrayal of spiritual beliefs and cultural rituals through a Māori-elder and her special position within Māori-community (Murray 2008, 174f.). As some of the community members and Kara bury the afterbirth, the representation of what constitutes indigenous identity is highlighted by the camera-work [00:02:32]: close-up shots of Kara are used to emphasize her special position among the members of the Māori-community. At the same time, this shot enhances Kara's emotions as the focus is on her facial expression, which can be interpreted as her feeling a strong connection to spirituality as part of her indigenous culture (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 52). Furthermore, in this scene and others Mita uses long shots to portray New Zealand's landscape. Natural settings have been chosen to create a specific meaning within the context of the plot (ibid., 96): it can be claimed that by using long shots nature appears more powerful than the characters who are located in it and a feeling of harmony arises. The composition of landscape and people may highlight the importance and power of nature in Māori-culture; they are spiritually and traditionally connected to land, which constitutes a part of their indigenous identity. The alteration of long shots and close-up shots most likely intends to represent synergy between land and indigenous culture (ibid., 53ff.). Not only camera work but also the specific style of sound

represents a recurrent element that forces the audience to adopt the ideological argument addressed in *Mauri* (1988). The combination of traditional Māori-chant and alternating shots of nature and especially Kura as part of a group of Māori seems to evoke an impression of traditional habits of Aotearoa's indigenous people and simultaneously conveys a sense of mysticism and peace. It can further be argued that this kind of sound makes the viewers both emphasize and identify with the events depicted and conveys the feeling of 'tikanga Māori' being a harmonious interaction of several entities. Sound affects the audience to adopt the ideological argument of the film. These opening sequences about birth, land, tradition and spirituality give an impression of Māori-identity and illustrates the main points Mita's film deals with throughout the film.

Another characteristic which accentuates the representation of cultural values in Mauri, is the use of language (ibid., 111f.). It is noteworthy that a large amount of monologues and dialogues is spoken in 'Te Reo Māori' and not in English. Throughout the film particularly Kara but also some others speak in 'Te Reo Māori' and do not get subtitled. It can be said that this amount of untranslated language may signal the director's intention to represent the importance of preserving language as an important part of indigenous culture and identity. Language takes on a narrative function (Mikos 2008, 235f.); it acts as an identifying feature within cultural context and is an expression of indigenous identity (Glaser 2003, 74). At the same time, language can be used to present difference: the 'hui'[27] at the 'marae' portrays the cultural difference between Māori and Pākehā [00:55:30]. It reflects the traditional style of Māori-conversation. In contrast to Western cultures, Māori use the conversational style of high-context-communication. This is characterized by several facts: the recipient is at the centre of attention, many non-verbal signs are used and messages are transmitted indirectly, which makes reading between the lines a necessary condition to encode the message. Consequently, members who have been socialized in a high-context-communication-culture conceive the western conversational style of low-context-communication as being rude; as it seems that cultural competence is denied to the recipient. Vice versa: members of a low-context-communication-culture whose communication does not require a strong context-related interpretation, perceive this other style of communication as exhausting and inconvenient (Hall/Hall 1990, 23). This situation is depicted by a Pākehā-business man breaking with the 'marae'-protocol by leaving the 'hui'. According to habits in Māori-culture: the

[27] 'hui': is a special sort of gathering, which properly takes place at the 'marae' and is open to everyone (Metge 1976, 246).

course of this gathering is structured by several steps arranged in a specific order. Additionally, everyone have the opportunity to have their say, no matter how excessive and trivial it may seem (Barclay 1990, 14). It can be argued that this sequence represents the lack of understanding of indigenous traditions and the intolerance and indiscretion of Pākehā towards Māori-culture.

As mentioned previously, Mita addresses issues of land rights and racism in *Mauri* (1988). Pākehā only play marginal characters and are portrayed as insane and awkward. Old Mr. Semmens is illustrated as a white farmer who stages protest against Māori based on difference in race and dispute over land rights (e.g.: he imitates a scarecrow [00:28:25]). He wants to get them off his land and does not support the inter-racial marriage between his son Steve and the Māori-woman Ramari [00:46:15]. It can be noted that Mr. Semmes symbolizes the racist tendencies that prevailed within New Zealand society and that the Māori's dismay at the occupation and continued intrusion of the European population into Aotearoa (Martin/Edwards 1997, 138). The rather negative depiction of Pākehā can be seen as a counter-reaction to the common stereotypical portrayal of Māori in previous films. Unlike his father, Steve is not illustrated as being insane but his attempts to approach Ramari and the community seem obtrusive and stilted. For instance, he observes the burial of the whenua at close range, whereupon Ramari confronts him with his culturally inappropriate behaviour (Ramari: *"You were brought up here. You should know better!"* [00:04:30]). By creating the eccentric character Mr. Semmens in order to reverse the negative image of Māori in film, "[she] widens the inter-racial schism and inverts the power dynamics of the colonial specular encounter by making Pākehā the objects of critical scrutiny." (Keown 2008, 203). Thereby she seems to distance both cultures from each other and to highlight the importance of preserving indigenous identity.

The most obvious character representing indigenous identity is Kara. Wisdom and knowledge, which are indispensable characteristic to preserve the 'mauri', are embodied through the female elder (Martin/Edwards 1997, 138). This energy which binds and animates all things in the physical world gets presented through Kara's spiritual affinity. She seems to feel 'Rewi's' unease and struggle with his indigenous identity. It can be argued that Paki's character symbolically illustrates the director's conception of "the schizophrenic existence of [...] Māori in Pākehā society." (Mita 1996, 49). Figuratively, he seems to portray an identity which needs to subordinate itself to the dominance of another. Paki's misery is a fundamental one: he loses his identity and leads an unhappy

life for breaching the Māori-concept 'tapu'. His suffering ceases when he returns to the scene of the accident and asks for forgiveness; in a symbolic act, Paki returns the necklace. Therein, he returns to the values and norms anchored in his culture; he found his way back to his indigenous roots and freed himself from the burdens imposed on him [01:28:56]. The reasons for his suffering are portrayed in flashbacks close to the end of the film (Prommer 2016, 58). Through editing several scenes can be combined to link cause and consequence. Combining shots and images suggests ideas and maintains the continuity of the story. Using flashbacks makes Paki/'Rewi' appear in the course of his transformation. The editing deepens our understanding of the cause of his dilemma and keeps the audience in suspense until the end of the film. Mita uses flashbacks to bridge time, place and action in order to reveal information about 'Paki'/'Rewi' [01:18:11]. Thereby she offers an explanation to the audience: the narrative does not allow to understand 'Rewi's' behaviour until it is revealed in flashbacks that 'Rewi' is actually 'Paki' and that the reason for his misery is him struggling with his identity. Thus, it can be argued that the director uses editing to shape the viewer's perception of 'Rewi' and create tension throughout the film in order to emphasize the severity of identity loss (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 75ff.). It seems as if Kara is aware of him not being (the real) Rewi but instead of confronting him with her suspicion, she seems to point him into the right direction but wisely lets time pass to unburden himself. Kara helps him getting back to his indigenous roots in order to gain strength from Māori-culture to ease his emotional and mental pain.

> Awatea to Kara: *"Here's uncle Rewi, Nan."*
> Kara (in a dying condition): *"No."*
> 'Rewi'/Paki: *"I'm not Rewi Rapana."* [01:17:10].

It can also be noted that Kara foresees Willie's fate. Willie left the rural community to live in the city and became the head of a gang. As he comes to visit her, he brings his gang members with him and Kara seems to know that something is wrong. She warns him to be careful whom to trust. She tells him stories of his childhood to probably try to convince him to return to the Māori-community and gives him a 'hei-tiki'[28] which is supposed to protect him [00:36:50]. At the time he gets shot by a gang member, she seems to sense this tragedy, too. This is indicated and symbolized by a ticking clock standing on

[28] 'hei-tiki': necklace with pendant. It goes back to 'Tiki', who – according to some legends – was the first man to be created. This image is symbolic of protection and ancestors (Gemori 2018, 79).

a shelf in Kara's kitchen. At his visit, Kara tells Willi that his father gave this clock to his mother the day Willi was born and it will not stop running until his heart stops beating. In this scene Kara is sleeping in a chair in her cottage and gives the impression of struggling with something she dreams while the audience can hear the clock ticking. This uneasy atmosphere foreshadows a tragic sequence following and is emphasized by stormy weather and gritty non-diegetic sound (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 111). The cause of Kara's anxiety is explained to the audience by connecting two sequences through editing. Mita combines the scene presenting Willie's death in the city with the scene showing Kara's inner struggle in the countryside and ends her struggle by the breaking of a window and the clock stopping to tick [00:40:05]. The director switches between those scenes to connect cause and consequence. It can be argued, that she contrasts the image of the rural area with the urban city and thereby symbolically emphasized the downsides of urbanization many Māori had to face: lots of indigenous people lost their identity and culture and slipped into a vicious circle of unemployment and increased violence (King 2003, 440ff.). It can be interpreted that Kara is represented as the 'cultural authentic' opposed to Willie as the 'cultural degenerate' in order to represent indigenous identity and the consequences of its loss. The negative portrayal of Willie automatically leads to a positive association with values Kara embodies. It can further be noted that this scene highlights Kara's spirituality and the importance of the rural environment for Māori-culture and -identity. This cause-effect editing creates contrast and, thus, implies a moral purpose (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 75).

Whereas 'Rewi' and Willie are used to illustrate problems Māori are forced to deal with in post-colonial times, the young girl Awatea embodies hope to overcome such issues. Through Awatea, Mita seems to highlight the importance of passing down Māori-knowledge and cultural awareness to the younger generation as part preserving indigenous identity. This portrayal restores optimism in times of change and associates Awatea with an increasing cultural assurance in a restrictive society (Babington 2007, 193). Kara hands down her knowledge and skills to Awatea to provide a basis for a collective identity in order to save Māori-culture for future generations. Thus, Awatea represents the recipient of the community's cultural knowledge and impersonates a guardian for the future. However, using a Māori-solution to Māori-problems stresses the ability of the community to come along with its own affairs by making recourse to the values of their culture (Murray 2008, 175f.). Close to the beginning of the film the meaning of 'Hawaiki' and gets explained to Awatea by Kara.

Awatea to Kara: *"Is going to Hawaiki the same as dying?"*

Kara: *"Yes, that's what the Pākehā calls it.* [00:14:00]

Thus, the overall topic (i.e.: 'mauri') and the film's driving theme gets introduced and represented by a white heron flying over New Zealand's North Coast. Its flight is accompanied by a recurrent sound-pattern of harmonic melodies each time the white heron can be seen on screen. Sound acts an identifying feature (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 110f.; [00:14:22]. In Māori-mythology the 'kōtuku'[29] is significant: it guided the god Tāne to three baskets of knowledge. Tāne separated the Sky (Rangi) and Earth (Papa) to create the world of light. With three baskets of knowledge from the sky, he returned to the earth and created humankind. The white heron stands for grace, beauty and uniqueness and is some kind of a messenger between the spiritual world and earth; it symbolizes the connection between life and the afterlife (C. 1990). This motive is taken up again at the end of the film when Kara dies – and the white heron returns. In a long shot the flight over the land of the ancestors is shown. Awatea is depicted waving behind her grandmother's 'mauri' symbolized by the 'kōtuku'. This sequence is presented to the audience from the point of view of Kara's 'mauri', i.e. from the perspective of the heron, which allegorically represents the return of her 'mauri' to 'Hawaiki' [01:32:41]. This scene illustrates the power of nature and connects it to the idea of freedom and lightness (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 53). 'Kara' looks down to her land through the eyes of the white 'kōtuku' where she leaves her granddaughter behind. Before her death she tried to transmit knowledge and values to her and thus stresses the importance of preserving what constitutes indigenous identity for future generations. The analogy between the flight of the heron and Kara's 'mauri' leaving her body is represented by sound. The sequences are accompanied by the recurrent sound-pattern plus typical Māori-chant, which make them appear more mystical and emphasizes spirituality as a part of indigenous belief. It can be claimed that these images refer to the spiritual bond between Kara and Awatea and define their relationship as existing far from material life (Peters 2007, 111). Further, it can be argued that by picking up on the image of the white 'kōtuku' again, the director brings her thematic focus to full circle. The issues of racism, land rights, urbanization and indigenous identity run like a continuous thread throughout the film. Likewise does the representation of the Māori-concept 'mauri' by starting the film with birth and ending it with death. The flight of the bird can be interpreted as an allegorical representation of

[29] 'kōtuku': is the Māori-word for white heron (Peters 2007, 113).

Mita's argument for the necessity of breaking free of colonial repression and asserting to one's true Māori-identity in order to ever gain real freedom (Mita 1996, 49).

In sum, the Māori-director's feature film represents the importance of cultural values and concepts (such as 'mauri') in times of post-colonialism and illustrates outlines of Māori-community that contain challenges to the social and cultural formation of Pākehā-society. Mita places issues of Māori-identity at the centre of *Mauri*'s respective narratives (Murray 2008, 174f.). Especially the female characters in the film are illustrating stability in times of land loss, cultural displacement and the break-up of rural communities through exodus to the city. They gained strength through their bonds to Māori-culture and indigenous identity (Babington 2007, 231f.).

"MAURI starts with birth, ends with death, and is about life." (DVD blurb).

A comparison between Geoff Murphy's *Utu* (1983) and Merata Mita's *Mauri* (1988) – taking into account socio-cultural conditions at the time of their release – reveals various similarities but also differences in their representation of indigenous identity.

Both films were shot at a time of cultural change within New Zealand's society. Since the end of the 1960s, the following years were marked by political unrest through Māori who wanted to draw attention to the existing racism and injustice against Aotearoa's indigenous population by means of several protest actions. The 1970s and 1980s went down in history as the so-called 'Māori-Renaissance'. Due to the political and social unequal treatment of Māori and Pākehā, a cultural movement emerged that advocated equal rights for all residents of New Zealand and focused on the revival of Māori-culture and the regaining of indigenous identity. This movement can be seen as a reactionary movement to years of discriminatory treatment that was triggered by certain developments within culture and society; the 'Māori-Renaissance' found expression in various forms of art (e.g.: film, literature, arts). With the help of the media, grievances and demands were brought to the fore and measures were taken to make New Zealand a country with bicultural character. For instance, the transformation towards a bicultural nation had been promoted within New Zealand's health system as a desirable objective (Durie 1994, 99). 'Te Reo Māori' has been one of the nation's official languages and has been recognised as a pre-school subject to support bicultural education. Language is an important part of identity formation within cultural context; Māori-language represents an expression of indigenous identity. After a long period of socio-political assimilation

by the colonial power of the British Pākehā, the indigenous population was constrained to integrate into Pākehā-society, which turned out to be another form of assimilation policy. As a result of urbanization, many Māori lost their indigenous identity and connection to their cultural roots. In most cases integration remained unsuccessful and led to the isolation of Māori. Many of them ended up in expelled Māori-communities in suburbs, characterized by unemployment and violence. Due to constant criticism of their norms and values by Pākehā representing the dominant culture in society, many Māori lost their cultural identity. The sense of loss resulted in a counter-reaction and led to a return to one's own culture and a revival of identity. This movement found a voice in society through films by Pākehā- and – for the first time – by Māori-directors. Both Murphy's *Utu* and Mita's *Mauri* serve as examples of the resurgence of Māori-culture within a society dominated by Pākehā.

A similarity that can be found in both films are the topics they deal with: the projection of current racial tensions, issues about land, birth right, Māori-culture and indigenous identity. *Utu* and *Mauri* are both named after Māori-concepts which can be recognized as driving forces throughout each of the films. Thus they emphasize the importance of Māori-concepts for indigenous culture and identity. Murphy and Mita focus on the accurate representation of traditional rites, clarify the complexity of the concepts and relate them to traditional beliefs. 'Te Reo Māori' as a complement to monologues and dialogues in English can be recognised in each of the films. One difference, however, is that in *Mauri* conversations in 'Te Reo Māori' are sometimes not subtitled, i.e. not translated at all [e.g.: 00:13:28]. Language assumes a narrative function and generates meaning; language acts as an identity feature that experiences a somewhat greater significance in Mita's *Mauri* than in Murphy's *Utu*. Another common feature is the depiction of an inter-racial relationship. Whereas in *Utu* the inter-ethnic love affair tragically ends because Kura gets killed, the inter-racial marriage in *Mauri* is followed by the couple expecting a baby. Both films argue for strengthening the cultural nation and depict indigenous identity as positive and desirable. They represent the recognition and celebration of Māori-culture and -identity as an important component for harmonious coexistence within New Zealand's society.

Differences between the films can be found regarding their narrative structures: both dialogues and monologues, as well as, the increased use of non-verbal signs in Mita's *Mauri* correspond to the style of high-context communication; whereas *Utu* follows a typically western, linear narrative structure through the use of low-context

communication (Martin/Edwards 1997, 138). *Utu* shows strong affinities to the American Western and is regarded the NZ-equivalent of the genre of American Western (Harris 1990, 37ff.). It is striking that Mita is consistently portraying Māori in a positive way; neither Willie, who is the head of a gang, nor Paki/'Rewi', who fails to entirely fit into the Māori-community, are depicted negatively. Additionally, Pākehā are hardly visible in *Mauri*. In a few cases where they can be seen, they function as marginal figures, illustrated as rather unpleasant characters. In contrast, Murphy's *Utu* often features stereotypical images of Māori. Especially Te Wheke is portrayed as a Māori-anti-hero and corresponds to the clichéd illustration of a barbarian savage. He is defined as the racial 'Other'.

However, it cannot simply be assumed that *Mauri* is pursuing a realistic depiction of the indigenous population and *Utu* seem to simply stereotyping Māori. Otherwise, it could be concluded that Murphy's portrayal of indigenous identity is in line with almost all images of Māori previously represented by Pākehā-filmmakers; the 'Māori-Renaissance' would have had no effect on Murphy's representation of the indigenous population. To the contrary, Murphy intends to pave the way for a bicultural approach by creating extremes that he eliminates throughout the film. At one end of the cultural continuum is Colonel Elliot, who is illustrated as pompous, effeminate, classist and racist. His only interest is to exploit the Māori and keep them under control. On the other end, there is Te Wheke, who has become obsessed and bloodthirsty throughout the film. The aggressiveness he comes to embody is targeted not only against the British army but also against other Māori and women. Both extremes are eliminated by Wiremu in the course of the film. He harmoniously combines the qualities most admirable both in Europeans (cultivation) and Māori (spirituality) and at the same time extirpates embodiments of qualities that are the most undesirable in Europeans (i.e. Colonel Elliot's effeminate cruelty) and in Māori (i.e. Te Wheke's homicidal aggressiveness). Summarily, Wiremu gets represented as a European who is Māori and a Māori who is European. Thus, Wiremu acts to obfuscate racial and cultural differences and is a projection of a New Zealand following the idea of bicultural nation. His bicultural approach becomes visible within several dialogues. For instance [01:13:17]:

> Lieutenant Scott: *"Which side are you on, Wiremu?"*
> Wiremu: *"Same side as you, Sir. I was born here, too."*

Wiremu shot Colonel Elliot first and decided that he himself has to kill Te Wheke because he is the only one without prejudice and understands that Māori and Pākehā must live together in a commitment to biculturalism. Murphy uses a stereotypical representation of Māori in order to point to a bicultural approach as the only option for successful and harmonic nation building in New Zealand. Thus, he addresses the socio-cultural and political conflicts in the country at that time and presents a solution (i.e.: the absence of extremes on both sides of the cultural continuum) in an allegorical manner. Despite the influences of a politics of biculturalism spiralling underneath the main narrative conflict in *Utu*, the failure of the inter-racial love affair between Kura and Lieutenant Scott could symbolize the failure of a bicultural nation-building. The representation of an inter-ethnic relationship differs in Mita's *Mauri;* the relationship succeeds. It can only be found a few hints in *Mauri* which directly argue for a bicultural solution. The focus is on the realistic representation of indigenous identity and its importance for Māori-culture situated in a society dominated by Pākehā. It can be claimed that the film celebrates the importance and autonomy of indigenous identity, which – at the same time – does not mean that the absence of Pākehā is synonymous with the rejection of their culture.

5. 2 *Whale Rider* (2002) vs. *Boy* (2010)

Niki Caro's *Whale Rider* is a New Zealand family-drama released in 2002. It is based on the successful novel *The Whale Rider* (1987) by Māori-writer Witi Ihimaera (Ka'ai 2005, 14). The film's title points back to an ancient indigenous legend about the ancestor Paikea, who rode on a whale's back across the ocean and found the first Māori-settlement in Aotearoa (Gauthier 2012, 169f.). The female director reduced some magical elements of Ihimaera's novel to make it appear more authentic. However, *Whale Rider* (2002) involves certain characteristics of magical realism which romanticize the story set in present times (Babington 2007, 228). The coming-of-age film is one of New Zealand's greatest successes nationally, as well as internationally (Conrich/Murray 2008, 1). The major aspect providing the basis of *Whale Rider*'s great success is its readability in terms of both the indigenous community and the larger society. Caro's mainstream cinematic created a 'hybrid' film that addresses the global audience (Gauthier 2012, 172).

Whale Rider portrays the coming of age of a girl situated in a rural Māori-community. Its story addresses Māori-culture and -traditions in the course of time. Caro depicts the female protagonist as a young girl struggling with her indigenous identity in

terms of Eurocentric feminist ideals and patriarchal structures. It can be argued that by combining these two cultural approaches, the director created a film representing a hybridized form of culture. Thus, the culture illustrated in *Whale Rider* neither entirely fits Māori-culture, nor any European-culture. It can rather be described as a 'third (hybrid) culture', which is created to appeal to the global market (Hokowhitu 2008, 119ff.). On the one hand, it can be noted that this kind of representation promotes and celebrates a bicultural approach in New Zealand society. It can be regarded as a form of biculturalism that Māori and Pākehā alike could embrace. This approach of bicultural nation-building is created through cultural distance:

> *"This is a universal story, these themes of inherited power and the clash between the contemporary and the traditional [...], the role of a women in society – those were things that it didn't matter where you came from in the world, you were familiar with."* (John Barnett qtd. in Welch 2003, 21).

On the other hand, it is stated that Caro's presentation of Māori-culture runs the risk of being accepted as an authentic representation by the Western audience (Hokowhitu 2008, 129). Despite the film's major success on both an international and national basis, it seems as if opinions about Caro's representation of indigenous identity in *Whale Rider* (2002) and its perception by the audience differ among New Zealand's population. According to several indigenous academics (cf. Hokowhitu 2008; Ka'ai 2005; Mahuika 1992), Whale Rider presents various tribal traditions but also misrepresents them (Ka'ai 2005, 1). This challenged the discussion whether or not non-Māori should make films about Māori.

Whale Rider (2002) tells the story of the twelve-year old girl Paikea (called Pai) Apirana (Keisha Castle-Hughes) who lives in Whangarā, which is a small village located on the east coast of New Zealand's north island. Pai's mother and twin brother died during birth. Her grandfather and tribal chief of Ngāti Porou[30], Koro Apirana (called Old Paka) (Rawiri Paratene), is shocked about her twin brother's death. According to tribal tradition, Paikea is a prominent ancestor in Ngāti Porou-history (ibid., 6). It is believed that Paikea lived in the homeland of Hawaiki and got rescued by a whale as his waka[31] sank. Paikea escaped death and was riding on the back of a whale to Aotearoa, where he first arrived at Whangarā. In *Whale Rider*, the hereditary leader of the iwi is supposed to be the first-

[30] 'Ngāti Porou': is an iwi located in the East Cape regions of the North Island (Hokowhitu 2008, 126).
[31] 'waka': means 'canoe' (Hokowhitu 2008, 132).

born son of a direct descendent of Paikea. As Porourangi Apirana (Cliff Curtis) refuses to assume his role as the traditional leader, Pai's dead twin brother would have been the legal heir. Porourangi moves to Europe to become an artist and Pai gets raised by her grandparents Koro and Nanny Flowers (Vicky Haughton). After visiting his family in Whangarā, Pai's father wants her to live with him in Germany. At first, she agrees because Old Paka blames her for the iwi struggling and not having a tribal leader following Koro. On their way to the airport, Paikea suddenly decides to stay because the whales seem to call her back. Although she is interested in her Māori-traditions, her grandfather does not encourage her ambitions. Instead, he opens a whare wānanga[32] for first-born boys to teach them in indigenous culture in order to find a new tribal leader. Pai secretly attends these lessons and learns how to use a 'taiaha' from her uncle Rawiri (Grant Roa). Koro is shocked as none of the boys succeed in diving for the 'rei puta'[33]. After several lessons in Māori-culture, picking up the pendant from the bottom of the ocean represented the ultimate task to figure out who will be Ngāti Porou's true leader. However, Paikea invites Koro to a school concert of hers, where she dedicates a speech to him and Māori-culture. On his way, her grandfather realizes several beached whales. The entire community tries to pull the whales back into the water in order to save their lives. Pai wants to help but Koro blames her for the catastrophe and forbids her to help. As the people walk away to get some rest, Paikea climbs on the back of the largest whale and leads all of them back into the ocean. Nanny Flowers gives Koro his whale tooth he wanted the boys to dive for. He realizes that Paikea is the hereditary tribal leader he had denied for so long. She almost drowned by saving the whale but survived. After she has recovered, the village celebrates its new female tribal chief by launching a waka into the sea.

Indigenous identity is represented right at the beginning of Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002): the audience gets introduced to one of the 'creation narratives' of Aotearoa's indigenous people. It starts with whales swimming under water, as Pai tells the legend about 'Paikea', the great ancestor who came to Whangarā from Hawaiki on the back of a whale. She tells the story about her name giver from her point of view in voice-over narration. The viewers are introduced to the film from her point of view and, thus, shapes their meaning about the course of the film. It gets clear that the young girl is the protagonist of the story set within Māori-culture. This sequence is accompanied by non-diegetic sound, which seems

[32] 'whare wānanga': is a traditional Māori-school of learning (Ka'ai 2005, 14).
[33] 'rei puta': is a sperm whale tooth pendant (https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz).

to imitate whale songs and creates a magical atmosphere (Gauthier 2012, 170f.). The indigenous origin narrative is combined with the image of whales and mystical sound influencing the mood of the audience and making them empathize and connect with the notion of Māori-culture representing a spiritual, as well as romanticized world behind visible reality. It is a recurrent sound-pattern throughout the film which acts as an identifying feature and makes the audience adopt to the ideological argument of the film (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 110f.) This first sequence is interlinked with the sequence of Pai's mother giving birth to her at a hospital [00:01:41]. Caro uses hard cuts to switch between these sequences within seconds. This kind of editing might be used to establish thematic parallels and metaphoric associations between these two actions, which highlights the connection between the legend about the ancestor 'Paikea' and the young girl Pai. After her mother and twin brother died during birth, a shot-reverse-shot editing sequence of close-up shots of Koro and Porourangi illustrate the importance of tribal leadership in Māori-community. Koro wants his son to take a new start and having another son in order to provide an heir leader for the preservation of Ngāti Porou and indigenous traditions. Porourangi tells his father that her daughter is named Paikea. Koro is devastated about his decision and forbids him to name his daughter after their ancestor, as he states that it is reserved for men only [00:05:10]. Their interaction is portrayed by the use of close-up shots, which highlight their emotional reactions, thus, provide information about the importance of tribal leadership (ibid., 83ff.). These filmic examples give the impression of Māori-culture insisting on inherited male-leadership and being led by despotic patriarchy (Hokowhitu 2008, 127f.).

In addition, there can be found other instances representing indigenous identity as patriarchal and encumbered by tradition.

> *"The movie reveals a sexist Maori culture in which knowledge and lineage passed down only along the male line."* (Stukin qtd. in Hokowhitu, 2008, 129).

Old Paka opens a 'whare wānanga' to find a suitable leader of the Māori-tribe in order to prevent indigenous cultural traditions and -values from assimilation (Gauthier 2012, 169f.). Due to Pai being a girl, she is excluded from class hours. However, she secretly attends Koro's lessons about Māori-traditions, -concepts and cultural origins. As her grandfather teaches those first-born boys the chant of 'Paikea', she is standing outside the building and listens how to call for the ancient ones for strength. As the boys do not seem

to be very enthusiastically about learning the chant, Old Paka says: *"You're going to learn that chant [...]. And if you break the chant, you will suffer the 'utu'."* [00:36:12]. One of the boys asks if someone will die as a result of breaking the chant. Koro responds to this provocation through playing on the boy's castration anxieties by telling them that their penises will fall off. It can be argued that this sequence emphasizes that the traditional origin narrative relates differently to Pai than to the boys and, thus, allegorizes her exclusion as a female (Dodd 2012, 3f.).

In the course of the film, indigenous identity is not only portrayed by Māori-concepts such as 'utu', 'mana' and 'tapu', but also through several traditional rites connected to them. When Koro opens the 'whare wānanga', the boys are welcomed through a traditional ceremony on the 'marae'. According to the 'marae'-protocol, part of the 'pōwhiri'[34] is the 'karanga'[35] which is carried out by a 'kuia'[36]. Nanny Flowers invited her granddaughter to perform the 'karanga' with her in 'Te Reo Māori'. Language acts as an identifying feature and expression of indigenous identity. It has a distinctive character and helps constituting a cultural identity (Glaser 2003, 74). After this part of the ceremony, Pai wants to stay and takes a seat in the first row. But Old Paka tells her that she is not allowed to stay there (Koro: *"Pai, you're a girl, go to the back!"*) [00:34:53]. Another part of the 'pōwhiri' is the whaikōrero, which comes some time after the 'karanga' and describes speeches performed by men. Pai refuses Koro's order by remaining seated. This sequence is arranged by shot-reverse-shot editing including a change in camera positioning. Koro stands, whereas Pai is sitting on a bench. He gets portrayed from Pai's perspective in a low-angle shot. Thus, he occupies the upper half of the screen. The camera-angle, plus the composition within the frame, represent the power relation between them and point to Koro's superior position (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 37ff.; [00:35:19]). Once again, the portrayal of Māori-traditions as an important part of indigenous identity is used to illustrate patriarchal hierarchy and gender-based discrimination.

Pai learns how to use a 'taiaha' from her uncle Rawiri, who used to be a champion when he was younger. However, according to Koro's idea about tribal leadership in Māori-community, it would be out of question that Rawiri – as the second-born son –

[34] 'pōwhiri': is a ritual welcoming-ceremony that brings together different human groups on the 'marae' and to show hospitality in an appropriate manner (Smith 1992, 51; Mead 2003, 117).

[35] 'karanga': means 'call' and welcomes visitors as part of the 'pōwhiri'. It is performed by a woman from both sides (visitor and host) as the visiting group moves onto the 'marae' (Mead 2002, 122).

[36] 'kuia': is an elderly woman (Ka'ai 2005, 8).

would become the leader of Ngāti Porou. It seems as if Rawiri could never be good enough for his father. As a consequence, he increased in weight and lives a life without ambitions. It can be noted that with the help of his niece, he reconnects his indigenous roots and gains strength and motivation from Māori-culture (cf. 'taiaha') (Dodd 2012, 4; [00:44:16]). Koro recognizes Pai using a 'taiaha' at the 'whare wānanga'. He accused her of paying no respect to him and their culture, as using the 'taiaha' is reserved for males only:

> Koro to Pai: *"You don't mess around with sacred things!"* [00:39:51] *"[...] You have broken the 'tapu' of this school."* [00:51:03].

When Koro asks her whether she wants him to fail, she denies. But when he asks whether she wants the boys to fail, she remains silent. Pai's reaction can be interpreted as an implicit confession that she wants the boy to fail to make Koro understand that she is the heir and merit tribal leader [00:51:37]. On the one hand, indigenous identity is represented as a source of strength, which creates a feeling of belonging. But on the other hand, with regard to the example of using a 'taiaha', Māori-culture is illustrated as discriminatory and male-dominated.

Caro's *Whale Rider* focuses on family and community set in an idyllic rural area on New Zealand's north island. Whangarā is depicted as an isolated area on the countryside amidst a beautiful landscape. It can be claimed that the community's strong ties are highlighted by being located within the expanse of nature far from any other town or even the city. This kind of isolation forces people to move closer together and take care of each other. Further it can be said that they are connected through their indigenous culture. Past generations of Māori are connected to present, as well as to future generations through 'whakapapa'. Genealogy also links these generations to the gods and, thus, to the environment. In order to function, they have to form a collective. Therefore, the community also played an important part in the upbringing of children. These connections are not only due to 'whakapapa', but were a more economical way helping each other (Herewini 2018, 10). The importance of communal/tribal ties, as part of one's indigenous identity, is illustrated by saving the beached whales with united forces [01:13:48]. Their connectedness to land through 'whakapapa' is portrayed by the camera work. Long shots portray Aotearoa's overwhelming landscape making the nature appear powerful [00:09:55; 00:53:40]. The composition of land and people creates a feeling of harmony among the audience (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 53). Thus, it can be argued that

indigenous identity is represented in terms of its link to genealogy. However, *Whale Rider* also illustrates issues of parental neglect and family dysfunction, which have been common features in New Zealand media and society over the last few decades (Perrott 2010, 51). Pai's father Porourangi cannot take the pain of losing his beloved wife and son. Besides, he is being put under pressure by his father to become the tribal leader or having another son. He escaped to Europe und left his daughter behind, who grows up at her grandparents' house within the Māori-community. Pai's grandfather, Old Paka, takes care of his granddaughter, but when it comes to tribal cultural practices and Māori-leadership, he excludes her and is very strict with her. It may be claimed that through combining approaches regarding Māori-culture, Eurocentric feminism and modern New Zealand society dominated by Pākehā, Caro created something like a new hybridized culture. Following this argument, it seems as if Caro highlights the existence and importance of indigenous identity in contemporary New Zealand society and, thus, promotes a progress of bicultural nation-building.

Even though indigenous identity is illustrated by several references to Māori-traditions, -rites, -concepts and -language, some academics criticize Caro's kind of presentation. Ka'ai classifies *Whale Rider* as:

> *"[…] an example of the Eurocentric feminist belief that women can challenge a supposed male hegemonic practice that appears to discriminate against Māori women and* […] *relegates them to lesser positions in Māori-society."* (Ka'ai 2005, 8).

It is claimed that various tribal traditions are misrepresented in order to make it more appealing to the global market. It seems as if it was necessary to intervene on tribal cultural reproduction in order to align the character Pai, as well as the role of the Māori-elders with the division of Eurocentric feminism and patriarchy. It is argued that Caro enlists these issues through portraying a young girl's struggle for leadership within her 'iwi' (Ka'ai 2005, 1ff.). Hokowhitu argues that *Whale Rider*'s distortion of indigenous cultural practices marks this film as being problematic: firstly, it implies indigenous people to seek emancipation by conforming to Western values; and secondly, it makes the Western audience accept this kind of representation as authentic (2008, 129ff.).

> *"[...] the re-authentication of Māori patriarchy and the alignment of Māori emancipation with European enlightenment marks Whale Rider as [...] [a] dangerous film for the project of Māori decolonization."* (Hokowhitu 2008, 133).

Even though Caro's story is fictional, she infuses it with elements marking it as 'authentic'. She locates *Whale Rider* in the local area of the 'iwi' Ngāti Porou (Hokowithu 2008, 126). Although she sought guidance from a Māori-community, it purports as if the realistic representation of Māori-cultural practises had to give way to Caro's Eurocentric feminist ideals (Ka'ai 2005, 3). Ka'ai figured out several examples illustrating the corruption of cultural tribal practices – especially within Ngāti Porou:

For instance, Nanny Flowers invites Pai to perform the 'karanga' [00:33:51]. In traditional Māori-society this role would not be given to a girl. It is executed by a 'kuia' to avoid that a 'kanga'[37] would be placed on the young female's womb, which leaves her barren. Furthermore, the reason for men sitting at the front row originates from the cultural importance of the 'marae'. It is regarded the domain of the God of Warfare and people. Thus, the cultural habit of men sitting at the front row stems from the idea of them being expandable in conflict. As 'speech' is recognized as a form of conflict, it does not mean to discriminate women but protect them. In *Whale Rider*, this notion becomes distorted by Eurocentric feminist challenges. The transmission of knowledge is handed down through generations regardless of age and gender is another example. Whereas it is not unusual for older siblings to reject the hereditary position (cf. Porourangi), it is quite uncommon that a respected tribal leader (cf. Koro) does not recognize leadership qualities (Ka'ai 2005, 5ff.). Besides, traditional leadership is either inherited through 'whakapapa' or ascribed based on certain qualities and achievements. Especially in the case of Ngāti Porou, female leadership was not uncommon. Inherited leadership was not gender oriented; many of these female leaders were not first-born children but achieved leadership due to their outstanding qualities (Mahuika 1992, 44ff.). Thus, Caro failed to acknowledge the importance of women in Ngāti Porou. Additionally, the 'haka' performed in the film is called 'ka mate' [01:31:18]. It is not the form of 'haka' famous for Ngāti Porou but it is used by the 'All Blacks' and, thus, gained international reputation. It can be claimed that 'ka mate' is used by Caro to make the global mass identify with it, even though it opposes the 'iwi's' tribal identity (Ka'ai 2005, 6ff.).

[37] 'kanga': means 'curse' (Ka'ai 2005, 13).

However, it can be presumed that the representation of Māori-culture is filtered through a Western world view by Caro. As all people carry with them their own sub-conscious filters to make sense of the world, it may be argued that she is not able to provide an authentic portrayal of indigenous identity based on cultural reality due to her specific "set of cultural filters" (Ka'ai 2005, 8; 12). Once again, it raises the question, whether Pākehā should make films about Māori? Although Merata Mita supported Barclay's (1990) position that indigenous people need to be in control of their portrayal in media, she stated that "[…] the very positive aspects that come out of it [Whale Rider] for Māori people is what's important to us. […]. Whether or not a Pākehā is behind the camera […]." (Mita qtd. in Mana 2002/2003, 33). In contrast, Hokowhitu warns that this kind of portrayal of indigenous identity can make people confuse representation with reality (2008, 133).

On the one hand, it can be argued that *Whale Rider* offers a utopian promise of harmony inside the nation-state within a bicultural framework. Further it can be said that Caro's film was advanced as a form of biculturalism that Māori and Pākehā alike could embrace and, thus, makes it more appealing to the global market. On the other hand, a more positive approach towards Caro's *Whale Rider* in terms of its bicultural character has already been mentioned within *chapter 3.2*. A Pākehā-director illustrating indigenous culture may symbolize the development of a common bicultural identity to the extent that the narrative about Māori-culture is interwoven with a coming-of-age story shaped by modern Western values. Even though not all of the representations of Māori cultural practices correspond to reality, it can be argued that Caro created a hybrid film addressing both the indigenous community and the larger society (Babington 2007, 229; Gauthier 2012, 172).

Taika Waititi's *Boy* (2010) has been the first feature film made by an indigenous filmmaker in Aotearoa since *Once Were Warriors* (Lee Tamahori, 1994). Only a few weeks after its release, it became the highest-grossing New Zealand film (Perrott 2010, 49). After winning in its section at the Berlinale in 2010, *Boy* has stayed the most successful local release at the New Zealand box office for six years. Only Waititi's film *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (2016) has overtaken *Boy*'s position at the top list of highest-grossing local feature films (Gardiner 2016). His coming-of-age film is not a typical Māori-film: it reflects the multicultural *zeitgeist* of contemporary New Zealand, even though it is set in a 1980s rural and Māori-centric Aotearoa. The audience response to

Boy had been tremendously positive and it has been received as a celebration of the New Zealand way of life (Perrott 2010, 49; Lealand 2010, 5). *Boy*'s portrayal of the 1980s is generally idyllic but does not shy away from the depiction of darker aspects of the era. Waititi's film displays themes such as parental neglect, self-delusion, family dysfunction, child welfare, upbringing, economic hardship and cultural hybridity. He uses nostalgia for the 80s, magical realism and idiosyncratic humour to challenge attitudes towards these issues and shed a somehow different light upon them. This special idiosyncratic humour, as well as tonal-complexity throughout the film, can be identified as something like a "Waititi-motif" (Perrott 2010, 49ff.). In the course of the 20th century, a progress in portraying Māori can be observed: it moved from one-sided storytelling in which stereotyped Māori acting as minor characters illustrating 'the Other' to a more differentiated way of portraying New Zealand's indigenous people. Murphy's *Utu* (1983) is regarded as the cinematic starting point, advocating a bicultural nation-building. Following this, Mita's *Mauri* (1988) is the second feature film ever made by an indigenous filmmaker and is celebrated for highlighting indigenous culture as an important part of living together in a bicultural nationhood. Waititi's *Boy* (2010) seems to follow a more contemporary approach, although it is set within a period considered 'Māori-Renaissance'. The director's focus is not exclusively on Māori-culture but infused with what is part of 1980s-New Zealand. Thus, it can be argued that *Boy* (2010) is encouraging a progress of bicultural nation-building through both, emphasising the importance of indigenous identity, and depicting stages of cultural hybridity. Waititi himself does not want to be seen as "a Māori who makes art" but rather as an 'artist' dealing with universal themes that are accessible by all people "while being distinctly New Zealand in presentation." (Waititi qtd. in Lealand 2010, 6).

> *"I think all of my films will be a mixture of comedy and drama. It's truer to life. It's more human."* (Waititi qtd. in Lealand 2010, 7).

In 1984, Alamein, known as 'Boy' (James Rolleston), is an eleven-year-old Māori-boy living in Waihau Bay on the east coast of New Zealand's north island. The protagonist lives with his grandmother, several cousins and his six-year-old brother Rocky (Te Aho Eketone-Whitu) on a small farm. He spends most of his days with his friends, trying to impress a girl from school, talking to his goat, having daydreams of Michael Jackson and making up spectacular stories about his estranged father Alamein (Taika Waititi). His brother Rocky is believing that he has dangerous superpowers that killed his mother when

she gave birth to him. Their grandmother starts out for a ‘tangi’, leaving Boy in charge of the house and taking care of the other children. Shortly after Nanny has left, the boys’ father Alamein arrived at the farm after many years of absence. Boy is convinced that his father broke out of jail to stay with him and Rocky. It soon becomes clear that Alamein came back to find a bag of money he had buried on the farm before being arrested. He and his gang (Crazy Horses) digging up the field for treasure and the boys offer their help. Alamein starts to spend time with his children, trying to be a father. He wants them to call him ‘Shōgun’, as he is feeling uncomfortable with being called ‘Dad’. Boy brings his father marijuana from a crop grown by his friends’ father, who is a member of a local gang. Boy starts seeing himself as a member of the ‘Crazy Horses’ and stops taking care of his brother and cousins. Boy finds the money, hides it in his goat’s enclosure and buys ice blocks for him and his friends. Alamein recognizes that Boy has stolen his gang-jacket and is aggressively pulling it down, leaving his son behind being humiliated in front of all his friends. As Alamein apologizes to him, Boy decides to hand the money bag to his father. But all the money has been eaten by his goat. Instead of telling his father about it, he decides to lead him to the marijuana crop. Alamein steels the entire crop and soon gets beaten up by the local gang, while Boy is waiting outside the pub watching the brawl. On their way home, Alamein accidentally hits and kills Boy’s goat. The next day Alamein gets betrayed by his gang members, who steal all the marijuana and the car. Boy realizes that his memories and ideas about his father are far from reality, while Alamein is sitting in the shed being drunk and depressed about not finding the money, Boy starts punching his father and screaming that he knows, why he has not been there when their mother died and returns to the house to take care of the children. When Nanny returns home the next day, Alamein is gone. Boy and Rocky find him sitting at their mother’s grave and join him.

Taika Waititi is known for his distinctive kind of humour: his humour has an idiosyncratic character, which he uses to represent emotional complexities of people. In *Boy* (2010), Waititi’s humour enables the audience to laugh at themselves, whereas the comedic elements he uses seem to be more resonant for New Zealanders (Perrott 2010, 50).

> *“It [Boy] was made, first and foremost, for New Zealanders. They get it and understand all the subtle nuances, lingo, historical references. However, […] I wanted to make something that everyone could appreciate, […] could make them laugh and cry and connect with.”* (Waititi qtd. in Lealand 2010, 6).

Throughout *Boy*, Waititi makes use of language, phrases and non-verbal communication in order to represent indigenous identity in a mid-1980s New Zealand cultural environment. The characters use terms such as ‘egg’ or ‘cher bro’ which is strongly associated with 1980s youth-culture particularly experienced within the Māori-community. For instance, calling each other ‘egg’ signaled acceptance. Further, it had been used as a term of endearment, as well as in terms of ridicule.

> Boy to Rocky: *“Say ‘Hello’, egg!”*
> Rocky to Alamein: *“Hello, egg.”* [00:14:12].

It shows that humour is used to trigger memories to set the viewer back in time. This sequence illustrates that realizing humour is depending on the spectator’s capacity of and ability to access shared meanings specific to time and place. Additionally, Waititi illustrates a particular form of ‘greeting’ in *Boy*: seeing another person and raising the eyebrows represent a meaningful greeting in the communication of ‘bro Camaraderie’ [00:04:38]. This use of specific phrases and non-verbal expressions represents culturally specific humour (Perrott 2010, 50f.). It represents what constitutes indigenous identity at a particular time and place. This assumption gets emphasized by Waititi’s statement about the young cast members, who “were definitely questioning why they were calling each other ‘egg’.” (Waititi qtd. in Agnew 2010). It can be argued that humour is used in *Boy* (2010) as an aesthetic ‘tool’ to illustrate what (among other things) had constituted indigenous identity living in a Māori-community in rural New Zealand in the mid-1980s. On the one hand, indigenous identity is portrayed through its connection to Māori-culture. The use of words and phrases in ‘Te Reo Māori’, such as ‘tangi’ [00:13:44] and ‘kia ora’[38] [00:01:21], as well as the depiction of traditional rites of Māori-culture, represent indigenous identity by means of typical aspects being associated with Aotearoa’s indigenous people’s cultural belief-system. This is shown through Nanny being away for a ‘tangi’ for several days (Smallman 2013). This duration of a funeral is rather uncommon within Western societies. Another example is portrayed by Boy picking up Rocky from the communal cemetery where he is visiting their mother’s grave. Boy opens a bottle of water and helps his brother washing hands after he has left the cemetery. It is a ‘tapu’ place and people are expected to wash their hands with water to reduce the ‘tapu’ to become ‘noa’ (Walker 1990, 68; [00:10:21]). Furthermore, Boy imagines his father being

[38] ‘kia ora‘: is a traditional Māori-greeting.

a master carver; Māori-carving is of legendary origin and has been practised for hundreds of years. Boy himself tries to carve but is not able to finish a carving. The night before Boy and Rocky finding Alamein sitting at their mother's grave and mourning, Boy had a huge conflict with his father. In the morning, Boy found his carving finished on the chair Alamein has used to sit as the head of the Crazy Horses [01:15:04]. As the art of carving is related to creation traditions, it represents a part of a Māori's identity (Mead 1961, 13ff.). Thus, it can be interpreted that Alamein returns to his indigenous roots through the art of carving and finally allows himself to start grieving about his wife he lost years ago [01:17:24].

On the other hand, being Māori is reflected in terms of certain socio-cultural developments of that time. New Zealand's society is composed of a majority of Pākehā and a minority of Māori, who are living together in one nation mutually influencing each other. It is claimed that certain sequences in *Boy* represent and celebrate cultural hybridity as the product of interactions between Māori and Pākehā. The film depicts a locating memory trigger through illustrating a famous 'Goodnight Kiwi-Cartoon' [00:53:55]. In order to create a semantic connection, Waititi ends his film by showing the cast doing the 'haka' being interspersed with elements from Michael Jackson's famous music-video *Thriller* (1982) (Perrott 2010, 51; [01:18:28]). Additionally, the female actors do poi spinning, which is a form of dance, having its roots in Māori-culture. Poi dancers twirl one or more poi (ball on chord) in unison with the other dancers (Kahn 2002, 58f.). This hybrid 'haka'-*Thriller* is accompanied by *Poi E* of the Patea Maori Club, which had been a Number-one hit of New Zealand's Pop-Charts in 1984. *Poi E* has been the first song made by a Māori-singer celebrating international success. The hit had been quite a sensation as the song is inspired by Māori-traditions and sung in 'Te Reo Māori'. However, it can be argued that *Poi E*'s success created a better awareness of Māori and their culture overseas, as well as on a national basis. In this scene, sound is used as an identifying feature and memory trigger. It makes the audience emphasize and identify with what is illustrated on screen (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 110f.). Moreover, this hybrid performance leaves the viewers with remembering this song in a new way. Through the use of irony and satire, Waititi hilariously expresses cultural hybridity through mixing typical Māori-traditions with contemporary pop-art of the 1980s. It can be said that indigenous identity is represented in terms of New Zealand-mid-80s pop-/youth culture. It conveys a feeling of Māori-culture not being somewhat outdated or obsolete but lasting and timeless.

By using humour and irony, the director makes it easier for the audience to engage with 'tikanga Māori' but also with issues such as family dysfunction, upbringing, child welfare and parental-neglect. Through a sudden shift in tone, Waititi emphasizes Boy's crash with reality as, for instance, his father is harshly pulling of the jacket of his body [00:51:42]. This multi-tonality becomes obvious through its sudden shifts. It can be said that the director uses this technique in order to highlight the crash of the characters' imagination with reality and, thus, create contrast. On the one hand, Boy's family circumstances represent a common way of upbringing in Māori-community on the countryside; i.e.: being brought up together with many other siblings/cousins by their grandmother. "I think that's normal in a lot of indigenous communities outside of cities, poor places. I think it's actually a rich upbringing." (Waititi qtd. in Perrott 2010, 51). It emphasizes the importance of community, family and generations. But on the other hand, it also depicts issues of family dysfunction and parental neglect, which have been common features in New Zealand media over several decades (Perrott 2010, 51f.). *Boy* triggers the audience's memory and confronts them with their memories about similar situations. Incidents of abuse among Māori-children were regarded six times higher than among Pākehā since the earliest data recorded in 1967 (Dalley 2004, 182ff.). According to the report of Family First New Zealand (2016, 13), in the period up to the mid-1970s (i.e.: the first period over which consistent data was published) cases of child abuse more than tripled. Following this, "[t]he number of child abuse and neglect investigations soared in the late 1980s." (Dalley 1998, 342). Partly due to media coverage, the public awareness of child abuse in New Zealand rose significantly in the 1990s (e.g., cf. *Once Were Warriors* (1994); Garlick 2012, 17). It can be argued that the more accurate and continuous the recording of cases of child abuse had started to be, the greater the public interest in these abuses became, which created an increased awareness and concern about these social injustices within society. The Associate Professor of the Waikato University, Leonie Pihama, regards the disconnection from iwi and cultural identity – as a consequence of 'Colonisation' – as reasons for these developments:

> *"Colonisation impacts on our children through the removal of [...] our cultural framework that enables us to keep our children safe. [...] I think that model of the nuclear family, the domestic unit, is [...] an unhealthy model for [...] people who are used to having a collective relationship. [...] Historical trauma caused by colonisation is the root cause of [...] child abuse within Maori families. [...]. Loss*

of culture and language left Maori looking for an escape." (Pihama qtd. in Kerr 2016).

Perrott claims that family dysfunction and parental neglect can be regarded a "New Zealand obsession" (Perrott 2010, 52). Issues like that can be found in media coverage over past decades and have been prominent themes of New Zealand films such as Waititi's first feature film *Eagle vs. Shark* (2007) or *Smash Palace* by Roger Donaldson as early as 1981. However, *Boy* emphasizes the significance of 'community' and 'family' as part of their indigenous identity by representing how the children themselves work together in order to fix and clean their house after Alamein has destroyed it in rage [01:14:18]. Thus, this scene implies function along the dysfunction and highlights the importance of community in Māori-culture.

Even though *Boy* illustrates economic hardship in the rural area, which is regarded a consequence of urbanization, it celebrates the family's and community's connection to the natural environment (ibid., 2010, 52). Their connectedness to land through their cultural belief is portrayed by the camera work. Waititi uses long shots to depict New Zealand's beautiful landscape. Right at the beginning, a long shot of Aotearoa's nature/coast and a sign saying 'entering tribal land' is used to thematically introduce the audience to *Boy*. This sequence is accompanied by *Poi E*, which influences the mood of the viewers and makes them empathize with a specific cultural context (Prommer 2016, 59; [00:01:00]). Similar to Mita in *Mauri* (1988), the director seems to create a specific meaning by his camera work (Ryan/Lenos 2012, 96): it can be noted that portraying the natural setting through long shots make the land appear powerful. Several long shots of nature can be found in the course of the film. The composition of nature and people creates a harmonic relationship and may emphasize the importance of land to the indigenous people (ibid., 53). As they are spiritually and traditionally linked to nature, it represents a part of their Māori-identity. These impressions get highlighted through contrast, as Boy tells Rocky about his dream to escape the coast and live in the city together with their dad [00:35:15]. The protagonist imagines the city as a place of wealth and glamour. He thinks of riding a dolphin, wearing an expensive suit while enjoying fancy drinks. He creates a contrast between the countryside and the city and, thus, establishes the dichotomy 'bad' vs. 'good'. While Boy associates living in the rural environment with poverty, he thinks of the city as a place where life is better:

Boy: *"[…] trying to get out of this dump!"* [00:44:49].

The irony of this scene, however, is represented by the fact that they are living at the edge of the ocean amidst an overwhelming landscape.

Waititi uses magical realism and animation as an 'aesthetical vehicle' to depict Boy's, as well as Rocky's fantasies and express their imagination; for instance, as Boy imagines life in the city (i.e.: riding on a dolphin). This sequence is presented by dolphins and figures, which look like magazine cuttings. The figures are given the faces of Boy and Alamein which seem to be clipped from a photograph and Boy holding a cocktail that has been drawn [00:47:37]. These methods are used to slip between alternating states of reality and fantasy. Further, they enable the viewers to connect to the character's inner states and identify with them. Both are used to not only to express the characters' imaginations but also allow the drawing of conclusions about their feelings and thoughts that probably could not have been expressed by narration. Using animation and magical realism contradicts the conventions of Western cinema but allows the director to open up an inter-diegetic space. This space puts an emphasis on aspects which are usually regarded as background information (Perrott 2010, 51f.). It may be argued that Waititi avoids the conventions of classical narrative cinema in order to challenge the audience's imaginative capacity and trigger their memory about their youth and life in 1980s-New Zealand. According to Perrott, these methods enable him to open "a space in between the realms of reality and fantasy." (ibid., 51f.). In this context, she refers to Bhabha, who states that "liminal space operates in between cultures and worldviews […] with potential for new ways of perceiving the world (Bhabha 1996 qtd. in Perrott 2010, 53). Following this argumentation, it can be said that this 'space in between' allows to create cultural hybridity and promotes a bicultural approach. However, due to the absence of Pākehā in *Boy*, the focus is on Māori (i.e.: cast, setting, references to indigenous culture). Especially on a Māori-boy struggling with coming of age situated in a rural Māori-community in times of socio-cultural change.

> *"If we keep making our own work then we survive as a culture, we grow. […] our voice continues to be heard."* (Waititi qtd. in Lealand 2010, 7).

Both films were shot more or less 30 years after the era called 'Māori-Renaissance' (1970/80s). Inequality in political and social treatment of Aotearoa's indigenous people and Pākehā was responsible for the emergence of this cultural movement, which advocated social equality for the entire population of New Zealand. Its focus was on the

revival of indigenous culture and the progress of bicultural nation-building. Protest actions, media and different forms of art helped Māori and their culture to come to the fore and to promote the country's transformation towards a bicultural nation. Niki Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002), as well as Taika Waititi's *Boy* (2010) serve as filmic examples representing the bicultural transformation of a nation in modern times. A comparison of these two films reveals not only various similarities but also differences in their representation of indigenous identity.

Whale Rider and *Boy* represent Māori-identity in terms of its relation to land and nature. Both films use various long shots of New Zealand's landscape to portray its powerful and ubiquitous meaning for Māori. Additionally, locating them amidst nature as part of their everyday life creates a synergetic effect and emphasizes the importance of land for indigenous people due to their 'whakapapa'.

> *"[The] appeal to Māori lies in the cinematography, which captures the beautiful landscape of the east coast of the North Island [...]."* (Ka'ai 2005, 12).

Another similarity depicted in the films is the portrayal of community and family. Indigenous identity is linked to Māori-community and its culture. Both children are raised by their grandparent(s), who represent the backbone of the family/community. In this regard, each film deals with the issues of parental neglect and family dysfunction. Pai's and Boy's mother both died during birth. Alamein is in prison and Porourangi moves to Europe to sell his art and start a new life in Germany. Both fathers are young when the tragedy befalls the family and are absent for an extended period of their children's lives. They are depicted as the prodigal sons and start to learn to embrace their role as a father. The job of raising these children falls to the paternal grandmothers. They are fulfilling the role of nurturing the next generation: Pai's Nanny Flowers provides her with support and strength against Koro (*"Just say the word bub, and I'll get a divorce."* [00:06:56]). Boy's Nanny is raising children from at least two other lines of her 'whānau'[39] and has faith that the children will be fine while she is absent for several days. This does not represent an uncommon way of upbringing in (rural) indigenous communities.

> *"[...], it is a reminder to many Māori of their own upbringing in rural Māori communities [...]."* (Ka'ai 2005, 13).

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[39] 'whānau': means 'family' (Ka'ai 2005, 14)

Besides depicting communal and familial circumstances, each story of the films illustrate the coming-of-age of a child. Located in rural areas, Boy and Pai are struggling with their (indigenous) identity. Boy carries the burden of being responsible for his younger brother and cousins. He usually provides dinner for them, takes care of the household and brings them to bed. When Shōgun has a get together at the garage and wants his son to be involved, Boy believes it to be his rite-of-passage into being considered a man and can shirk his responsibilities relating to the welfare of his 'whānau'. His coming-of-age moment is represented by Boy recognizing that this would make him the same as his father. He continuous to take care of the children and they work hand in hand to keep the family function instead [01:14:18]. Pai's burden is to transcend her traditional gender role: she must not only adopt the traditional male position (i.e.: 'taiaha', 'haka', diving for Koro's 'rei puta') but must be better at these activities than any other male in order to prove that she is the true hereditary leader of the 'iwi'. Her coming-of-age is illustrated by overcoming her grandfather's denial of her birth right through 'dying' and being 'reborn' as the next rightful chiefly heir by surviving the ride on the whale's back [01:22:28].

Even though both films portray indigenous cultural practices (e.g.: 'haka'), Māori-concepts (e.g.: 'tapu') and using 'Te Reo Māori' (e.g.: 'kia ora', 'waka'), they differ in the way they are representing these aspects related to Māori-identity. Whereas in *Boy* cultural Māori-practices are illustrated more subtle but precise and realistic, the representation of traditional tribal practices in *Whale Rider* lacks in authenticity due to ideas of Eurocentric feminism. *Boy*'s portrayal of indigenous identity is infused with several references to New Zealand's 1980s-pop/youth culture. In contrast to that, Caro illustrates people living in Whangarā as isolated from modernity and stuck in 'obsolete' traditions embodied through the encoded character Koro. *Whale Rider*'s reference to contemporary New Zealand is represented by addressing essential social issues such as patriarchy, gender roles and feminism.

Another difference can be found in the films' use of magical realism. Waititi uses magical realism to illustrate Alamein's sons' fantasies and inner world (i.e. animated scenes and dream sequences), whilst Niki Caro makes use of mystical elements (e.g.: sound and fictitious elements like riding on a whale) to romanticize her story and make it appear more spiritual.

It can be argued that both films put an emphasis on the illustration of Māori-culture in order to address the importance of indigenous identity. This is highlighted by

the absence of Pākehā and the portrayal of traditional cultural practices and concepts. As *Boy*'s and *Whale Rider*'s stories are infused with cultural elements of contemporary New Zealand, it can be claimed that they are promoting cultural hybridity; both films represent some kind of a 'third (hybrid) culture'. The two films are aimed at a global audience. Whilst Waititi states that *Boy* (2010) is distinctively 'New Zealand', he uses humour and irony to make the story accessible to everyone. Caro deals with current issues about feminism and uses idyllic and romanticized images of Aotearoa's countryside and indigenous people to make *Whale Rider* (2002) appealing to the global market. Following this, it can be interpreted that both films are promoting the progress of nation-building within a bicultural framework by highlighting indigenous culture as an important part of New Zealand.

6 Conclusion and Outlook

In sum, it can be argued that the Pākehā-directors Murphy (1983) and Caro (2002), as well as the Māori-filmmakers Mita (1988) and Waititi (2010) represent indigenous identity in a positive, respectful and appealing way in their respective films. Each of them depict aspects related to Māori-culture in order to portray indigenous identity. The illustration of Aotearoa's indigenous people has changed in the course of time. Certain events in history are responsible for social, cultural and political changes within New Zealand. These events had a huge impact on how Māori are treated in society and effected the way indigenous people are represented through media. Especially 'film' played an important role in the portrayal of indigenous identity in contemporary New Zealand. The 1970/80s are known as a period called 'Māori-Renaissance'; it can be described as a reactionary movement to years of discriminatory treatment triggered by socio-cultural and political developments. Byrnes characterizes this development as a period of "ethnic mobilization" in order to re-establish Maori-culture (Byrnes 1999, 72). Several protest actions by Māori changed the public awareness about Aotearoa's indigenous population and its culture.

> *"Television made us invisible."* (Mita 1996, 45).

In order to express resistance against an assimilationist-integrationst policy, people used the production of texts (Della Valle 2010, 9). Film was one of the most effective

instruments in representing the struggle of the survival of Māori-identity and -culture (Martens 2012, 6).

> *"Stereotyped images of Māori have distorted the cultural basis of Māori identities."* (Fleras/Spoonley 1999, 65)

Barry Barclay established a new cinematic category ('Fourth Cinema') considering films made by indigenous filmmakers about indigenous people. Not only Māori-filmmakers but also Pākehā-directors have started to deal with these social issues. It can be claimed that in 1970/80s-New Zealand, film has been used to make bicultural proposals emphasizing the necessity for greater mutual respect and understanding between Māori and Pākehā. Not only New Zealand-films made within this period, but also those released in the following years are reflecting the *zeitgeist* of the nation.

Utu (1983), *Mauri* (1988), *Whale Rider* (2002) and *Boy* (2010) function as examples illustrating, as well as promoting the progress of a bicultural nation-building. As Māori and Pākehā had been affected by these developments differently, it can be presumed that their representation of indigenous identity in film differs, too. Even though all of the directors seem to celebrate indigenous culture as an important part of Aotearoa's national identity represented by their portrayal of various elements related to Māori-culture (i.e.: beliefs, traditions, concepts, language, etc.), it can be said that those made by Pākehā payed greater attention to the idea of a bicultural New Zealand than 'Māori-films'. Whilst *Utu* is highlighting the necessity of the progress of bicultural nation-building in the country, *Mauri* focuses on a realistic approach of representing indigenous identity. Murphy establishes contrasts between Māori and Pākehā through stereotyping, eliminates extremes on both ends of the cultural continuum (i.e.: characters personifying Māori Nationalism vs. British Imperialism) to emphasize the need for bicultural nation-building as the basis of a harmonic coexistence of Māori and Pākehā in New Zealand society. Mita focuses on an authentic portrayal of indigenous identity. She highlights the importance of Maori-culture in Aotearoa by excluding Pākehā-characters from *Mauri*'s storyline or creating contrasts between these two cultures. Bicultural approaches in the female director's film are portrayed through a successful inter-ethnic marriage but seem not to be actively promoted within the film. This might be due to socio-political changes the time *Mauri* (1988) was released: Mita was the first female indigenous woman making a feature film. Māori-filmmakers did not have the possibility to influence and rectify the image of their people in media up to then. Celebrating what had been denied for many

years, seems to be a good reason for highlighting a realistic depiction of indigenous culture. Finally, it can be noted that both films are reflecting the *zeitgeist* of New Zealand in times of socio-cultural and political change by emphasizing the revival of Māori-culture and promoting a harmonic coexistence in a bicultural nation.

As time has passed and the idea of a bicultural nationhood took roots in society, it can be said that New Zealand-film has differed a little in its portrayal of indigenous identity. In both films, *Whale Rider* and *Boy*, the directors make reference to traditional indigenous beliefs, concepts, rites and language but seem to illustrate a rather 'third (hybrid) culture' than Māori- or Pākehā-culture. It may be argued that the representation of indigenous identity is infused with elements portraying a contemporary national identity framed by coming-of-age-stories. This 'New Zealand-identity' is composed of characteristics relating to both Māori- and Pākehā-culture. *Boy* depicts aspects of New Zealand's 1980s-youth/pop culture and *Whale Rider* is dealing with feminism and patriarchy, which made them appealing to Māori, as well as Pākehā. It can be interpreted that both films are portraying the current issue of a bicultural nationhood through representing cultural hybridity and classifying it as distinctively New Zealand by locating it within an indigenous framework. Thus, it can be stated that Caro's *Whale Rider* (2002) and Waititi's *Boy* (2010) represent the *zeitgeist* of contemporary New Zealand. However, it needs to be mentioned that the authentic and realistic depiction of Māori-culture is still an important issue. Whilst Waititi illustrates indigenous traditions as they really are, Caro sacrifices authenticity for Eurocentric feminist ideals and, thus, represents Māori-culture as patriarchal. *Whale Rider*'s distorted depiction of indigenous identity may run the risk of getting accepted as authentic by the Western audience.

Conclusively, the results and interpretations outlined need to be regarded as tendencies based on exemplary analyses and comparisons of four New Zealand films covering the period from 1983 to 2010. These remarks may give rise to questions about the way indigenous identity is represented in present times or about the significance of 'Indigenous Film' on the global market today? Personal experiences made on the 'Berlinale'-film festival in 2019 may provide a brief outlook about 'Indigenous Cinema' on an international basis and about first impressions of the representation of indigenous identity nowadays. According to the large program of 'native films' and especially of 'Polynesian-Films', it can be argued that such filmic projects are enjoying growing popularity on an international level. For instance, Hepi Mita's *Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen* (2018) celebrated huge successes at home and overseas. The

portrayal of indigenous identity seemed to be similar to the results outlined in this paper: the focus is on traditions, cultural rites, language, land, nature, religious beliefs and community/family. It can be claimed that Hepi Mita's film and other contemporary 'Indigenous Film'-projects help to increase the global awareness for indigenous cultures and advocate the importance of cultural identity in modern days.

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8 Declaration of Authorship

Hiermit erkläre ich,

Denise Monika Schallenkammer,
Matrikel-Nummer: 216204424,

dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbständig und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe. Die aus fremden Quellen direkt oder indirekt übernommenen Gedanken sind als solche kenntlich gemacht. Die Arbeit wurde bisher in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form keiner anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt.

Rostock, den 31. August 2019 ....

(Unterschrift)

9 Affidavit

Hiermit versichere ich, Denise Monika Schallenkammer, Matrikel-Nr.: 216204424, Studiengang: Master of Arts, Studienfächer: Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft (1. Fach)/British and American Transcultural Studies (2. Fach), dass ich mich als Studierende der Universität Rostock den „Regeln zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis und zur Vermeidung wissenschaftlichen Fehlverhaltens an der Universität Rostock“ verpflichtet fühle. Zu diesen Regeln gehört auch die Vermeidung von Plagiaten als einer schwerwiegenden Form geistigen Diebstahls.

Unter einem Plagiat versteht man die ungekennzeichnete oder nicht angemessen gekennzeichnete Übernahme von fremdem geistigem Eigentum unabhängig von dessen Herkunft (d.h. auch aus dem Internet) in eigene Arbeiten. Eine unbefugte Verwertung unter Anmaßung der Autorschaft liegt vor, wenn Fakten, Argumente oder spezifische Formulierungen ohne Quellenangabe übernommen, paraphrasiert oder übersetzt werden.

Mir ist bekannt, dass eine Prüfungsleistung, die nachweislich ein Plagiat darstellt, mit „nicht ausreichend“ (5,0) bewertet wird. Ich bin mir dessen bewusst, dass die Aufdeckung eines Plagiatsfalles dem Prüfungsamt gemeldet wird und mit dem Ausschluss von der Erbringung weiterer Prüfungsleistungen geahndet werden kann.

Rostock,

	(Abgabedatum)	(Vollständige Unterschrift)