

HIP HOP IN TE REO MĀORI BY A PĀKEHĀ:
DOES MAITREYA PROVIDE INSPIRATION FOR OTHER NEW ZEALANDERS?

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ABSTRACT

*This article examines the career of the Christchurch Pākehā (non-Māori New Zealander) MC Maitreya and the links between his music, te reo (Māori language) and cultural identity in Aotearoa New Zealand, in the context of the development of music in te reo over the past three decades. It also examines his music in the light of a continuing lack of sympathy or understanding for music in te reo in the New Zealand media, and the small number of Pākehā New Zealanders who are able to speak te reo. This is considered in relation to the development of minority language hip hop elsewhere in the world. Maitreya was ejected from his school class at age 15 and banished to a third form te reo Māori class as a punishment, which ironically fostered a life-long interest in te reo, and he later became the first Pākehā to graduate in a Māori graduation ceremony at the University of Auckland (TVNZ, 2010). He also began studying with Māori DJ DLT (aka Daryl Thompson), who suggested he take the Japanese name 'Maitreya', or 'emerging teacher' as his hip hop persona. He moved to the USA in 2003, absorbing influences from US hip hop and managing to crowd-fund his debut album *Closer to Home* in 2007 through Sellaband. His te reo track 'Waitaha' (which refers to an early Māori iwi (tribe) who inhabited the South Island of New Zealand) was nominated for a MAIOHA (Māori) Silver Scroll songwriting award in 2008, which he eventually won in 2010 for the te reo version of his track 'Sin City'. In 2012 he released *Āio* (Be calm, at peace), a double album with one CD in te reo, the other in English, which was funded by Māori language government body Te Māngai Pāho. Nonetheless he has struggled to gain acceptance for his hip hop in te reo in New Zealand beyond a small niche market, and his position highlights a more general lack of interest in Māori language music in New Zealand.*

Keywords: Māori popular music; hip hop; te reo; New Zealand (bi-)cultural identity

INTRODUCTION: MĀORI LANGUAGE MUSIC IN AOTEAROA

In this study of Pākehā rapper Maitreya I first provide an overview of Māori music in Aotearoa and its main protagonists, as well as examining the way that Māori music has been dealt with by the New Zealand music industry and government funding bodies such as NZ on Air and Te Māngai Pāho (Māori Broadcasting Funding Agency). I focus particularly on the indigenisation of hip hop (see Mitchell 2001), and the role that it has played as a vehicle for te reo music and language in New Zealand. Maitreya's role as a rapper in te reo has established a precedent in that he demonstrates that Māori language is no longer an exclusively Māori domain, creating the possibility for music in te reo Māori to become more widespread. In their almost forty year history, rap and hip hop have provided an important youth-based revival of te reo Māori, and of other minority languages, due to their proliferation and popularity as an oral form of communication, public address and unofficial education among youth as well as the not so young. Drawing on interviews on public record, on radio, television, in print media and on the internet, which I use as evidence in my discussion, and the texts of music tracks by Maitreya on CD container inserts, as well as music analysis, I analyse his role in creating a culture of te reo through hip hop and its potential for providing an example to others. But



Figure 1. Maitreya, aka Jamie Greenslade (courtesy, TVNZ)

despite a general perception that education in te reo is increasing, there has been a decline in the use of te reo amongst Māori, and the lack of openness to music in te reo by the New Zealand music industry and commercial radio outlets has tended to hinder its proliferation.

In Aotearoa New Zealand an estimated 21.31 percent of Māori speak te reo Māori, but only an estimated one percent of Pākehā.¹ One of Maitreya's ambitions is to encourage more Pākehā New Zealanders to take an interest in Māoritanga (Māori culture) and te reo Māori through the medium of hip hop, which has been an important idiom since 1984 for expressing both these elements. One of his main musical inspirations is the Māori language track 'Poi E', a combination of rap, break dance, poi dancing and traditional Māori waiata released by the Patea Māori Club, which reached no. 1 in the New Zealand charts in 1984 for four weeks, and remained in the charts for 22 weeks, without any radio play, but proved to be something of a 'one hit wonder'. Nonetheless it was the biggest selling single in New Zealand in 1984, went platinum (15,000 copies), became a cult classic, and was even named as 'single of the week' by UK music weekly *New Musical Express* (Mitchell 2001, 281). The song was written entirely in Māori by the educationalist and linguist (Auntie) Ngoi Pewhairangi, who died in 1985, and was a leader of the Te Hokowhitu-a-Tu Concert Party, with music by Dalvanus Prime (Tainui, Ngapuhi, Ngati Ruanui, Tuwharetoa, Nga Rauru, Pakakohi and Ngai Tahu), who died in 2002. The video of the track, which was made with donations by Taranaki businesses and used as a way of raising money for the mainly Māori freezing workers of Patea, whose source of livelihood had closed down in 1982, was the first in New Zealand to incorporate breakdancing by Māori youth, which became a common street activity and was shown on television, with TVNZ even sponsoring a national break dance competition (see Kopytko, 1986). As John Dix, in his book on New Zealand music, *Stranded in Paradise* (2005, 260), noted: "'Poi E" reached everyone, including (eventually) the nation's radio programme directors'. The track was revived and re-interpreted in Taika Waititi's film *Boy* in 2010, and Waititi launched a campaign to get the original song back into the charts, where it peaked at no. 3 (Mitchell and Waipara 2011, 5–6). 'Poi E' was also instrumental in persuading Māori elders that rap and hip hop, as well as pop music more generally, could be an important way of both expressing te reo Māori and teaching young people about Māoritanga.

Māori language music has always had a difficult path on mainstream New Zealand radio and television, despite the existence of the Māori Television channel since 2004 and 21 Iwi (tribal, Māori language community) stations around the country since the late 1980s, although none further south than Christchurch,

and only two in the South Island. Iwi stations are primarily community radio stations and they generally do not play a great deal of hip hop (see Mane 2014). The first Māori hip hop group to make a significant impact in New Zealand was Upper Hutt Posse, whose founder members were Dean Hapeta (D Word) and Darryl Thompson (DLT), later Maitreya's mentor. Their debut 12 inch single 'E Tu' (Be Strong), in te reo Māori and English, was released in 1988, and was the first rap recording in New Zealand after 'Poi E', but did not chart. Upper Hutt Posse's first album, *Against the Flow* (1989) also did not chart, but the title track (in English) reached no. 44 in 1990. Their only other track to chart was 'Ragga Girl', which the group is seen performing in the 1994 film *Once Were Warriors*, and reached no. 48 in 1992 (See Mitchell 2001). Despite being the most long-standing Māori hip hop group in the country, releasing eight albums over a 22 year period, plus a solo double album by D Word (as Te Kupu) launched on January 1st, 2000, and persisting in using te reo Māori in their lyrics, the only time the group has received a music award was when it won a Tui Award at the 2003 NZ Music Awards for 'Best Mana Māori Album' for their compilation *Te Reo Māori Remixes*. Prominent NZ music writer Graham Reid described this album in the *NZ Herald* in 2002 as '[a]n essential and, I would venture, an important album' (Reid 2002). But Upper Hutt Posse's lack of recognition suggests that Māori language music, especially hip hop, despite having been a strong cultural identity marker for Māori youth, does not sell, chart or receive significant radio or television coverage in Aotearoa. DLT and Che Fu's single 'Chains' reached no. 1 in 1996, but was entirely in English. As Reid has noted: 'Hapeta [D Word] has made some of the most challenging, uncompromising and, unfortunately, most overlooked music in this country' (Reid 2000).

Hapeta went on to explore hip hop's indigenous global connections in an extensive nine part 'rapumentary' film, *Ngātahi: Know The Links*, begun in 2000, and first released in two parts in 2004, when it was shown (in a shortened 55 minute version) in the Native Forum at the Sundance film festival in the USA. The film focused on hip hop as an expression of 'the similarities between the everyday circumstances of disenfranchised peoples' (Collins 2004, 95) in 22 countries, including Canada, England, France, Colombia, Hawai'i, Cuba, the USA, Jamaica, Australia, and New Zealand. Hapeta's film later explored resistance hip hop in Hungary, Serbia, China, Brazil, Palestine, Ireland and the Philippines, as well as other countries, focusing on indigenous and marginalised language groups. It runs for more than nine hours. As Collins has commented, it does not delve into the complex structural issues behind colonialism and disenfranchisement, but it is a 'holistic expression ... [which] connects all the actions of various different people to hip hop as a global resistance culture'

(2004, 96). Ngātahi translates as ‘together’. As Reid commented in 2010, ‘this [film] is about distinctive and distant voices speaking the same language of minorities under the thumb or boot of a dominant culture’ (Reid 2010).

What Hapeta attempts to do in this massive global project is to link Māori hip hop to expressions by other indigenous peoples in different languages around the world as a global phenomenon, and explore their affinities. Although one episode (part five) was screened on the Māori television channel in 2009, Hapeta has mainly hosted screenings of the film in various New Zealand cities as well as internationally, and it is, as Collins notes, ‘unlikely (and not intended) to find financial or popular success’ (2004, 95). It was reviewed in the US film trade newspaper *Variety* in 2004, where Dennis Harvey claims it

doesn’t linger anywhere long enough to convey more than a raised solidarity fist. For frequent docu viewers and the more politically aware, much content here will seem glaringly obvious ... at times [it] seem[s] like a glorified home movie ... Well-intentioned, enthusiastic but unsophisticated (Harvey 2004).

These comments typify the film’s ‘outsider’ status within the US mainstream, but Hapeta’s efforts remain important in exploring the links between rap and hip hop as an expression of its marginal status around the world, from indigenous rappers in Columbia to Australia. Hapeta has described a ‘rapumentary’ as ‘a music documentary without narration featuring rap and spoken word performance interwoven with music and images’ (Anon 2012), which follows the Māori ethos developed in the documentary films of Barry Barclay (see Murray 2008). As Shane Gilchrist noted in the *Otago Daily Times* in 2013:

Hapeta has received more than \$50,000 from Creative New Zealand to film and complete the series, which is more than nine hours long. He says more than half of that funding has been spent on airfares (Gilchrist 2013).

Another long-standing Māori recording artist is Moana Maniapoto-Jackson, who in 1991 with her group the Moa Hunters released the 12 inch single ‘A.E.I.O.U. Akona te reo’. This was directed at Māori, and combined rap with traditional Māori waiata, encouraging Māori youth to learn about their history, preserve their cultural traditions and learn the language. Moana and the Moa Hunters shared a member, Teremoana Rapley, with the Upper Hutt Posse, and have had slightly more chart success in New Zealand. Rapley was awarded Most Promising Female Vocalist at the 1992 New Zealand Music Awards, and

Best Female Vocalist at the 1996 awards, but later, as she states on her Facebook page, ‘voluntarily pulled out of Mainstream Media with her music after realising that the industry is based on looks and not artistry’ (Rapley 2013). She became a television presenter, and continues to release music on her website and perform with her partner, Samoan rapper King Kapisi.

Moana and the Moa Hunters’ ‘A.E.I.O.U.’ reached no. 31 in 1991, and an earlier track, a cover version of the 1969 Phil Spector hit ‘Black Pearl’, reached no. 2 in the same year. The song was recontextualised to apply to Māori women, and contains extended raps (in English) by Dean Hapeta. The group’s second album *Tahi* reached no. 16 in the album charts in 1993, and *Rua* reached no. 27 in 1998. But when the group received a New Zealand Music Industry award in 1992 for ‘A.E.I.O.U.’, Moana accused New Zealand radio of being racist in continuing to ignore Māori music, and commented that fewer than twenty people present at the award would have heard all three finalists in the Best Māori Recording category (Mitchell 2001, 280). In 1999 she was quoted as saying, after the release of *Rua*:

Basically, if you use Māori language you’ve blacklisted yourself off the radio anyway, anything that has a Māori style is out. ... It’s almost as if Māori music – and I’m not just talking about us – it’s underground here. ... anything that’s got Māori language in it is just so alternatively alternative it just doesn’t rate (in Russell, 1998, 22).

As Māori musician Angela Karini has commented, this was still the case in 2009:

Undeniably the pursuit of commercial success for music makers conveying a Māori worldview in te reo Māori especially in an industry that perceives the English language as a privilege and likewise a universal characteristic of a developed world ... is biased and translates as a ‘site of struggle’ for Māori producing music beyond the boundaries of mainstream consumption (2009, 21, 22).

Since forming her large group, Moana and the Tribe, in 2002, Moana has relied extensively on overseas touring. The group includes her co-songwriter in te reo, Scott Morrison, who has also worked with Maitreya, and has performed at more than 120 international festivals as well as touring Europe and Russia with great success. It also includes Richard Nunns, the main (Pākehā) performer of Taonga Puoro in New Zealand, who is perhaps a predecessor of Maitreya. In 2003 Moana won the grand prize at the one-off International Songwriting

Competition with her song ‘Moko’. She also received a New Zealand Order of Merit for services to music and Māori in the 2004 NZ Honours List (Kara 2008). Moana and the Tribe released their fifth album, *Rima*, in 2014, with songs mostly in English, produced by Pākehā electronic artist Paddy Free, who joined the group in 2013 as a keyboard player for their tour of Europe, Korea and Australia.

In 1997, the Māori hip hop group Dam Native won Most Promising Group at the NZ Music Awards and group leader Danny Haimona won Most Promising Male Vocalist. As Haimona commented at the time, he set himself up in opposition to US hip hop:

There is a good vibe out there for New Zealand hip hop, but it’s being poisoned by the Americanisms – the Tupacs and the Snoop Doggy Dogs. You have to have a balance, and Dam Native are trying to help kids work out that they have their own culture, they don’t have to adopt Americanisms (cited in Mitchell 2001, 295).

In 2000 the Māori soul, rap and reggae group, Iwi, who sing in te reo, won a Vodaphone NZ Music Award for Best Mana Reo album, their eponymous debut album, and they continue to exist in a somewhat niche market. The following year Porirua-based husband and wife electronica/ traditional Māori roots duo, Wai, who also perform in te reo, won the Best Mana Māori Award for their debut album *Wai 100%* (100 percent Water). Wai have also relied on overseas tours for acceptance, as was noted in 2007:

Mina Ripia from the electronica duo Wai has been touring the world for seven years on the back of a ground breaking first album that fuses kapa haka and techno beats. Ms Ripia says that while its music is embraced by international audiences, Wai struggles to get airplay in this country outside Māori radio (cited in Karini 2009, 67).

Wai 100% was nominated for two awards in the BBC World Music awards in 2002, and they were championed by BBC broadcaster and author Charlie Gillett, but their second album, *ORA*, released in 2010, and dedicated to Gillett, seemed to sink without a trace in New Zealand. It was reviewed in the UK *Guardian*, and by Graham Reid on his website ‘Elsewhere’ – both described the album as ‘worth the wait’ – while Nick Bollinger noted in the *NZ Listener* that ‘their music may be better known in Greenland or the Channel Islands than at home’ (Bollinger 2010).

By 2004 there was just one NZ Music Award for Best Māori Album, and in 2005 that was dropped as well. It took until 2008 for separate Waiata Māori Music awards to be established, when Moana was presented with a Music Industry Award. In 2009 the remaining members of the Patea Māori Club won a similar award. The only hip hop group who has won a Waiata award is the rap/R&B group Nesian Mystik (1999– 2011), who consist of members of Cook Island, Tongan, Samoan and Māori ancestry, and won no fewer than four awards in 2009, although they have only one Māori member. They also won numerous other awards, including ‘Best Urban Group’ in the 2003 NZ Music Awards, and a swag of Pacific Music Awards in 2009. In 2009 two radio airplay awards were established, one in English, the other in te reo, which has been regularly won by reggae group 1814, who specialise in te reo songs and cover versions of US and UK hits. Solo artist Tiki Tane and rapper Young Sid (formerly of Polynesian hip hop group Smashproof, who spent a record-breaking ten weeks at no. 1 in the NZ singles charts) have been regular winners of both Waiata Awards and NZ Music Awards, indicating that there is a very small pool of Māori musicians that winners are chosen from. The APRA (Australasian Performing Rights Association) MAIOHA award for Māori singer-songwriters was established in 2003, in order to provide recognition for Māori singer-songwriters who wrote lyrics in te reo and were not acknowledged in the APRA Silver Scroll Awards, which are awarded every year for outstanding singer-songwriters in New Zealand. The MAIOHA award was won in 2013 by Maisey Rika, Te Kahautu Maxwell, and Mahuia Bridgman-Cooper for ‘Ruaimoko’ by Maisey Rika, featuring Anika Moa.

NZ ON AIR – A CONTENTIOUS FUNDING BODY

In 1998, NZ on Air, a government broadcasting body set up under the 1989 NZ Broadcasting Act, established the Iwi Hit Disc, involving Māori and te reo recording artists, as a supplement to its Kiwi Hit Disc, established in July 1993, to promote commercial radio airplay for New Zealand artists. The container insert for Iwi Hit Disc, which had listings and notes in te reo and English, described the contents as ‘[a] collection of contemporary Māori language and Māori kaupapa [platform] music selected because of its potential to crossover to mainstream radio’. The Iwi Hit Disc was discontinued in September 2010, after 32 editions, along with the separate Indie Hit Disc, for independent rock music, when both were absorbed into the over-arching Kiwi Hit Disc, which became a double CD released every three months. The last Iwi Hit Disc included tracks by Wai, Moana and the Tribe and Tiki Tane, reggae group Cornerstone Roots and Upper Hutt Posse, all important groups and artists in the preservation of Māoritanga and te reo Māori, who arguably have become lost

on subsequent Kiwi Hit Discs.

There have been two academic accounts of the effects of the music policy of NZ on Air on popular music (Shuker 2008; Scott 2013), although both are contentious. Shuker claims, with little concrete evidence, that the ‘impressive growth’ of New Zealand popular music since 2000 was largely due to (Labour) government-funded initiatives such as NZ on Air, and that ‘government willingness to get behind New Zealand music has contributed to the present success of both the mainstream commercial and the indie sectors’ (2008, 282–283). The two examples he cites from the ‘indie sector’ are so-called ‘DIY [do-it-yourself] garage bands’ such as the Pākehā hard rock band D4, who had already disbanded by 2006 after six years in existence, and who never reached beyond no. 41 in the NZ singles charts, and no. 17 in the album charts, despite securing recording contracts in the US and UK. The other was metal/hard rock group the Datsuns, who have been slightly more successful in the UK, won numerous NZ Music awards, reaching no. 1 in the NZ album charts in 2002, and no. 7 in the UK charts, although they have only ever reached no. 23 once in the NZ singles charts, and have not charted since 2006. Both of these bands are considered relatively mainstream, and far from ‘DIY garage’. Shuker also conflates Auckland-based ‘urban Polynesian sounds’ such as hip hoppers Ne-sian Mystik, Che-Fu, King Kapsi and Scribe together with Wellington-based Pacific dub-reggae group Trinity Roots’ ‘love of whanua’ [sic] and Fat Freddy’s Drop, who have always prided themselves on achieving international and local success without NZ on Air subsidy, as his evidence of the successes of Māori and Pacific Island music.

Scott does not mention Māori music anywhere in *Making New Zealand’s Pop Renaissance*, in which he argues that the popular music policies of New Zealand’s fifth labour government (1999–2008) made a major contribution to a ‘New Zealand Pop renaissance’ (Scott 2013:1). Almost no examples are given as proof, apart from one on the book’s first page, citing the ‘Grammy-winning rock group Steriogram’ (2013:1), which contains two errors: the group’s name is Steriogram, and they did not win a US Grammy award, they were nominated in the Best Short Form Music Video category in 2005 for a video clip, ‘Walkie Talkie Man’, made by the prominent international director Michel Gondry, for which they received no NZ on Air funding. Steriogram disbanded in 2010. Scott claims NZ on Air is a ‘unique form of governing through popular culture’, where the ‘nationalistic element of the pop renaissance offered the subaltern petit bourgeois the temporary status as New Zealand’s “creative people”’ (2013, 143, 153). He fails to mention the considerable discussion and controversy that has occurred surrounding the relevance and appropriateness of NZ on Air’s

music funding system, which funds radio programs of local music, musicians' websites and music videos as well as singles for radio airplay.

Claims have been made that NZ on Air funding often goes to inappropriate and mediocre recording artists (see Sweetman, 2010; 2013, 'The Joke that is NZ on Air Funding I–IV', for highly critical accounts, and lengthy discussion forums. See also Mayes, 2010). Since the cancellation of Iwi Hit Discs, the presence of any Māori music on Kiwi Hit Discs is often difficult, if not impossible, to detect. It is arguable that the Iwi Hit Discs were at least an appropriate outlet for airplay on Iwi radio stations.

Lorde, the phenomenally successful 18 year old NZ recording artist who won two US Grammy Awards and a Brit Award in 2013, indicated her distaste for NZ on Air funding by refusing, through her recording company Universal, to accept any funding from them for a video or to be included on a Kiwi Hit Disc. She has been quoted as indicating the funding system is an embarrassment to her generation, saying 'You know how much negative power that logo has for my generation?' (Greive 2013, 135), referring to the spinning NZ on Air logo in English and te reo which is placed at the beginning and end of the music videos they fund.

Te Māngai Pāho (Māori Broadcasting Funding Agency), administered by the Ministry of Justice, and established in 1993, provides support for Māori language television programmes, radio programmes and music CDs. It funds iwi radio stations, but also bilingual recording projects and CDs in te reo. This is now the main source of funding for Māori and te reo recording artists, including Maitreya, who in 2011 received a grant of \$60,000 for his bilingual double album *Āio*. In 1998/9 its total revenue, which mostly comes from 14.4 percent of the public broadcasting fee, was 22.5 million New Zealand dollars. In 2012 it awarded \$465,000 for 93 music tracks with 70 percent te reo content, including albums and/or compilations, EPs and Singles. It is in this general context I will consider Maitreya's highly unusual career as a Pākehā te reo recording artist.

MINORITY LANGUAGE HIP HOP

The global spread of hip hop has involved considerable linguistic expansion into minority languages in Europe and Australasia (Mitchell 2001, Terkouafi 2012), Africa (Charry 2012, Saucier 2011) and elsewhere. Space prohibits focusing on more than one example – but he is probably the world's most extreme minority language rapper. The Finnish-Inari Sámi rapper Amok raps on his 2007 album *Amok-Kaččám* (Amok Flow) in the nearly extinct language of In-

ari Sámi, spoken by about 350 people, mostly middle aged or older, as their first language, and about one-third of the total population of Inari Sámis (Embassy of Finland, 2012). Amoc has also taught Inari Sámi at the local school, where an estimated 18 students receive education in Inari Sámi in comprehensive schools, and he taught five students in secondary school. He has stated that 'More and more pupils want to study Inari Sámi with each new year group. The future looks bright' (Latinen 2005).

Amoc, (MikkâlAntti Morottaja), whose MC name is an acronym for 'Aanaar (Inari) Master of Ceremony', is the son of an author, social activist and politician in the Inari Sámi community who has worked to preserve their language and identity. His mother is Finnish, and he is bilingual. After the release of his album, he was named Finland's Young European of 2007, for 'his ability to integrate the identity of an indigenous people into global popular culture' (Ridanpää and Pasanen 2009, 222). The Inari Sámi language is loosely related to Finnish, but its difference from the other Sámi languages, North Sámi and Skolt Sámi, is so great that they cannot use the same teaching materials. The Sámi are the only minority group in Europe with the official status of an aboriginal people.

As Ridanpää and Pasanen conclude:

Amoc is doing invaluable work by maintaining and reproducing the Inari Sámi language, but his importance also lies in how he has aroused young people's interest in their own language and awoken them to understand how a small marginalised language under the threat of extinction may be an important cultural resource, something to be proud of (2009, 227).

There is also an important link between Māori and Inari Sámi, as Ridanpää and Pasanen explain:

News about the work of the Māori language nests in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and the creation of a nationwide Māori language education system ... reached Inari in the early 1990s. About ten years earlier, when the Māori language had been seriously endangered, members of the community had founded daycare places for children under school age ... *kōhanga reo* ('language nests'). ... It was from this that the idea of an Inari Sámi language nest was born, and eventually this was opened in autumn 1997 (2009, 221).

Although Maitreya never benefited from a *kōhanga reo*, comparisons can be made between Amoc and Maitreya in terms of isolation: Maitreya is, like Amoc, isolated by being a Pākehā who raps in Māori, and although they are at opposite ends of the world, they both rap in important minority languages. And both rappers are engaged in projects to encourage more young people to take an interest in their minority languages and learn to speak them as a question of pride in their culture.

MAITREYA'S BIOGRAPHY: BEGINNINGS

My interest in Maitreya's work arose from reading about him and listening to his music, and I have followed his work with interest, without having met him. What follows is based on observations made from the texts of his tracks on CD container inserts, interviews and articles about him in the NZ media and music press, and listening to his music.

Two of the most prominent New Zealand hip hop scholars, April Henderson (2006) and Kirsten Zemke (2011) have written about hip hop in the Samoan diaspora and New Zealand hip hop more generally, including Māori hip hop. Henderson has suggested that

the multi-ethnic spaces of bop and hip hop music encourage ways to think beyond destructive discourses between indigenous Māori and migrant Islanders, or between migrant communities of Tongans and Samoans, fostering current trends toward pan-Polynesian collaborative work and the counter-fertilisation of activist discourses (2006, 193).

This article extends this work in a new direction by exploring what spaces there might be for Pākehā in this pan-Polynesian collaboration.

Born in Croydon, London – which he mis-spells 'Croyden' in the text of his track 'been around' – and raised in Christchurch, MC Maitreya (aka Jamie Greenslade) describes himself in his track 'Sin City', about his dissolute days in Christchurch, as a 'broke ass kid at a middle class school'. He was kicked out of his class at St Andrews College – which he refers to in his raps as 'Hagley High' – for fighting at the age of 15, and banished to a third form *te reo Māori* class as a punishment, which he has called *whakamā*, or shaming. As he has commented: 'It was one of those moments – and epiphany is a pretty huge word to give it – but it was definitely something that I'd been looking for in my life. Something that made sense' (Kara 2012). It caused him to pursue an

interest in te reo Māori and Māoritanga (Māori culture and identity), which he studied for three years at Christchurch Polytechnic, and then went on to complete a degree in Maori and Politics at Auckland University, becoming the first ever Pākehā to graduate in a Māori ceremony, which required a lifting of a tapu (Māori taboo) for his benefit (TVNZ 2010).

He also started using te reo in his rapping, which began as G-Dog with Christchurch ragga-rap crew Nil State in 1995, whom he refers to as ‘the family and kaupapa’ in his track ‘Te Oranga’. Nil State was mainly a live group, but contributed two tracks to a compilation of Christchurch hip hop and electronic music called *On the Beat’n’Track* (Curious Records 1996). This was an album by Christchurch label Curious Records featuring Salmonella Dub, Dark Tower, Beats and Pieces – who included Christchurch-based Samoan MC Scribe – as well as Rotor and other Christchurch-based reggae and electronic groups. One of Nil State’s tracks, ‘Most Importantly the Pacific’, locates them within a Pacific Island-based reggae and hip hop scene, stating their affinity with Pacific and Polynesian hip hop.

Greenslade’s co-rapper and co-writer in Nil State was Sean-E-Mac, who recurs in his Maitreya track ‘Harlem Streets’ more than a decade later: ‘Me and Sean-E-Mac made it to the top of the world and we still fall on our face because of these girls ... two CHCH boyz rollin with Ol’ English in Harlem world. We learned a trick or two ...’. Sean-E-Mac also joined Maitreya for his Waitaha Winter tour of New Zealand in July 2008. ‘Waitaha’ states: ‘Sean-E-Mac woke me up at a time I shoulda died/ My crew was Nilstate, my mind state was nil, we’d smoke, chill, drink, rhyme, fight, drink and chill’. In ‘Sin City’ he chronicles the deaths of a number of his friends in Christchurch, including his brother in a car accident, and others by suicide. He also refers to his best friend, the rather Dickensian Sloppy, whose name emerges through the Māori lyrics, and whose mother was Māori, schooling Maitreya in tikanga (Māori protocols): ‘Sloppy told me life don’t have any mottos, it’s you and you only, ain’t no friendly cuddles/At 12 years old I had too many troubles, so when he offered me a drink, I was like yeah a double’.

In 1996 Greenslade joined the Christchurch crew Dark Tower, who had moved to Auckland, but found that they were not accepted by the hip hop scene there because of their rapping in strong New Zealand accents. Dark Tower, led by Jody Lloyd, aka Earl Deviance, aka Trillion, was the most distinctively local of New Zealand hip hop groups, three Pākehā who refused to rap in fake US accents like the majority of Auckland-based (and largely Pacific Islander) hip hop artists on the Dawn Raid label, such as Savage, Mareko, and the Deceptikonz.

As Mareko put it at the end of one of his tracks, ‘You probably aren’t even listening to me because of my fake American accent’ (see Sweetman 2009). Andrew Gibson, in a study of three albums by the Samoan-New Zealand rappers King Kapisi, Mareko and Scribe, found an overwhelming prevalence of the US pre-vocalic /r/, or rhoticity, in their lyrics, and that a number of other features, such as the pronunciation of /ae/ in ‘bath’, are clearly influenced by American pronunciation’ (2005, 11, see also Gibson 2010, 48). Instead Dark Tower used local accents, cultural references, television themes, folk music by Lloyd’s father and excerpts from NZ political speeches, and recorded on Lloyd’s own label, She’ll Be Right Records, based in Christchurch. For this he claims they were sidelined as ‘Kiwiana kitch’. As Lloyd has written:

When Dark Tower released the album ‘Canterbury Drafts’ in 2001 through Universal, the programme director at 95bfm refused to playlist any tracks off it as ‘... the New Zealand accent doesn’t sound good in hip hop’ ... most local MCs attempt ... to emulate their American idols, right down to their accents, code of dress and even styles of phrasing. One could almost be forgiven for thinking that New Zealand was a colony of the Americas with the amount of non-local accented rhyming prevalent on our airwaves (Lloyd 2005).

Lloyd and Dark Tower subsequently received a far better response in Australia, where local accents are the norm in hip hop, and there has been considerable hostility in the hip hop scene towards rap in US accents. Lloyd is now based in Melbourne, still operating as Trillion and composing tracks about Christchurch (see Mitchell 2011, 2013). As Ziel, Greenslade featured on Dark Tower’s *Baggy Trousers Project*, an EP released in 2000, which featured a collaboration with singer Dave Dobbyn in ‘New Outlook’, a re-versioning of his song ‘Outlook for Thursday’, which was also released as a single. According to Gareth Shute in his book *Hip Hop Music in Aotearoa*, Greenslade fell out with the other two members of Dark Tower over royalties on the *Baggy Trousers Project*, which did quite well financially, as he insisted on an equal third share, whereas the other two felt they had done much more preliminary work on the EP than he had (Shute 2004, 39). Greenslade also worked at Polynesian youth radio station Mai FM in Auckland for three years, where he released his first single as Maitreya, ‘Lick-a-Lounge’, in 2002, and became a popular personality on the station’s Breakfast Show. He had begun studying both te reo and hip hop with Māori DJ DLT, the first DJ to scratch on a locally produced hip hop record (Upper Hutt Posses’ ‘E Tu’ in 1988), who suggested he take the name Maitreya, a Japanese Buddhist expression for ‘emerging teacher’. As he raps in ‘Te Oranga’, he was ‘A student of DLT, who/Taught him the ways of the warrior/ He con-

sumed the lessons/ Handed down'. Maitreya had been inspired by DLT and Che Fu's award-winning NZ no. 1 single 'Chains' in 1996 while still in Dark Tower. DLT went on to release the first New Zealand global hip hop album *Altruism* in 2000, which, beginning with a karakia (call to Māori ancestors) featured collaborations with prominent French hip hop groups Saïan Supa Crew and Sléo, Canadian group Rascalz and MC Kardinal Offishall, South African-born German MC Ono, New Yorker Shabaam Sahdeeq, Algerian-born vocalist Ryad, US rappers Channel Live, female crew Sage and Gravity, and Dave Dobbyn's song 'Madeline Avenue', about Glen Innes' 'street of shame'. Despite being described by *NZ Herald* reviewer Russell Baillie as a 'potential logistical nightmare' (Baillie 2000) due to its mixture of different cultures and languages, it went to no. 9 in the NZ Top 40 Album chart. Among the shout-outs on the CD cover, there is a thank-you to 'Jamie'.

RAPPING IN TE REO IN NEW YORK

One of the first times Maitreya rapped in te reo Māori in New Zealand was during an open mic session when US rapper Kurtis Blow was performing in Auckland, and invited all-comers to try their hand at rapping. Maitreya felt that rapping in te reo was a way of representing indigenous New Zealand hip hop to the US rapper. Greenslade moved to New York in 2003, releasing the mixtape 'Coming 2 Amerika' to mark the occasion, eventually joining prominent New York MC Jay-Z's 'Roc-a-Fella Records' promotional street team as an intern. He honed his craft at open mic sessions and ciphers (in which rappers trade improvised lyrics), where he often rapped in te reo Māori, on one occasion alongside a Mexican rapping in Spanish and a Jamaican rapping in patois, which caused something of a sensation. Eventually he ran his own monthly hip hop show 'Illegal' in a club on the Lower East Side. He was on a standard three-month visa in the USA, after which he lived there illegally. At one point, without a visa, he ended up working as a bathroom attendant at a Manhattan club. He has said he went through a process of 'learning by osmosis' as regards being in the hip hop capital city, and in 2005 he released the mixtape 'Illegal Alien', selling 500 copies on the streets. But in his track 'American Dreamz' he raps: 'My life ain't changed since I came to the USA, I see the same Sin City gaze in every face around my way ... Cos America got so much sleez in the game we gotta burn twice as hot just to get seen in the game'. This voices a common dilemma of non-US rappers, that being noticed in the USA, especially in New York, involves working twice as hard as US rappers have to. He later released a single and a video clip, 'Harlem Streets', which describes his struggle to survive in New York: 'Livin' in Crown Heights, no job, no cash, no Greencard, so no food stamps'. He also made a video for his track 'Lotaluv' which features

Christchurch-based Icelandic singer Hera, references DLT's 1996 no. 1 album with Che Fu, *The True School*, and celebrates Pacific hip hop and greenstone. This was filmed in Mongkok in Hong Kong, one of the most congested areas in the world, with a New Zealand female dancer he met there. It was later long-listed for the APRA Silver Scroll songwriting award in 2009.

While in New York, he succeeded in financing his debut album *Close to Home* through the Sellaband website, a type of crowdfunding in which supporters contribute money to produce an album. Maitreya raised fifty thousand US dollars in seven months, only the sixth artist to do so on Sellaband, and the first hip hop artist to do so. For each ten dollars contributed, the donor, known as a 'believer', receives a limited edition CD copy of the album. In the case of *Close to Home*, this included the video for the tracks 'Harlem Streets', and remixes of 'Sin City', 'Waitaha' and 'Loose Change'. There was also a remix competition for 'Sin City'. Maitreya provided the Sellaband website with video diaries of his work and re-mixes of artists such as Puff Daddy, and managed to get 917 supporters. As he describes the project in his track 'American Dreamz': 'I hustled 50 thousand dollars off this gritty cement, so cop my shit off the indie deal so I can get my 60% and I'll cement my place in Harlem hip hop history & jet. Get outta debt and build the label back in New Zealand'. The album was produced by UK producer Mark Maclaine (aka The Silence), and mastered by veteran New York producer Vlad Meller of Universal Studios. It also featured Māori recording artists Tama Waipara and Te Awanui Reeder (Awa) of Nesian Mystik, and Maitreya set about trying to market it in New Zealand.

BACK TO NEW ZEALAND

In 2008 Greenslade produced a 15 page 'Maitreya Promotions Funding Business Plan', which is now on the internet, despite being marked 'confidential' (Maitreya/MaWa/Logical One 2009). It outlines his strategy for marketing *Close to Home* in New Zealand on a similar basis to his venture with Sellaband, the aim of which was 'to break Maitreya as an artist by the means of a promotional campaign funded by angel investors' and for the album to go Platinum in New Zealand (15,000 copies sold, a goal which it appears to have come nowhere near). According to the iTunes music chart info website, Maitreya has had only two singles in the NZ hip hop and rap music charts, 'Sin City', which has featured on five occasions, and his rap about Christchurch, 'Chur to the Chur', which reached no. 23 on 10 March 2011, while the remix of that track with King Kapisi and Che Fu reached no. 80 on 28th May, (iTunes Music Chart 2011). *Close To Home* was not released in New Zealand until 2010, on Maitreya's own label Control Freak, and was distributed through EMI.

In 2008, Maitreya toured New Zealand extensively with Samoan rappers King Kapisi and Tha Feelstyle and UK rapper Scalper. The track 'Waitaha' was nominated for the MAIOHA Silver Scroll in the same year. This is an award for Māori songwriting which translates as 'a spontaneous composition which reflects a very deep emotional understanding'. Previous winners include prominent Māori singer-songwriters Ngahiwi Apanui, Ruia Aperahama, who has won it twice, and female singer Whirimako Black. Maitreya was the first Pākehā ever to win the award in 2010. In the track Maitreya traces his whakapapa (lineage): 'Aorangi's the mountain, Waimakariri's the river, Waitaha is my peoples ... They don't teach us the truth in school, they just leave us to root and choose between reaching for loot and booze/ I spent my youth confused, smoking and reading the writing on the wall'. Aorangi refers to Mt. Cook, in the Southern Alps, the highest mountain in New Zealand. Waimakariri, which means 'river of cold rushing water', is a river in North Canterbury which flows from the Southern Alps across the Canterbury Plains to the Pacific Ocean.

When Maitreya eventually won the MAIOHA award in 2010 for 'Sin City', an almost unrecognisable R&B version of the song was performed in te reo by Māori singer Maisey Rika – also a MAIOHA award winner in 2013 – with mixed race and gender electro-pop group the Exiles, at the APRA Silver Scroll Awards at the Auckland Town Hall in September 2010 (Maisey Rika 2010). This comes across as an 'indigenisation' of the track, drawing on its R&B tendencies. Maisey Rika's 2012 album *Whitiora* is entirely in te reo Māori, and she has won Waiata Māori awards every year since 2010, after winning the Mana Reo Trophy at the NZ Music Tui Awards in 1998 at the age of 15. Maitreya's association with her was clearly a high mana Māori distinction and a boost to his te reo credibility. The song came from Maitreya's te reo EP, *Te Puna Reka* (The Sweet Flow, 2010) which contained te reo Māori versions of four tracks from *Close to Home*, and one new track, 'Whakakotahi Rangatahi' (Youth Unite), for which he had been nominated for a MAIOHA award in 2009. He gave the EP away free as an mp3 on his website. The video for both the English and te reo versions of 'Sin City', featuring AWA, and dedicated to his brother Greg and friend Cathy, who both died in Christchurch in the 1990s, shows him getting a moko tattoo. The wearing of moko, which was traditionally done with a bone uhi (chisel), by non-Māori is regarded by many Māori as a grave offence, as in the cases of overseas pop singers Robbie Williams and Ben Harper (Anon 2003), and in a Jean-Paul Gaultier fashion show in France in 2007. A culturally safe version of the Māori tattoo for non-Maori is generally known as kirituhi. The video of 'Sin City' on YouTube makes clear that Maitreya is getting a genuine moko, and has passed the requisite Māori protocols (Maitreya Sin City 2010).

As Trevor Bentley's 1999 book *Pākehā Māori: the extraordinary story of the Europeans who lived as Māori in early New Zealand* makes clear, moko were a fairly common practice amongst some Pākehā in the 19th century, who were known as Pākehā Māori, and included traders, whalers and sealers as well as runaway seamen and escaped convicts from Australia, many of whom chose to live among Māori tribes. In 1833 there were said to be about 70 Pākehā-Māori, mostly runaways, in the Hokianga area alone (Bentley 1999). Most of them were traders, and Māori found them useful for the acquisition of European goods and for negotiations with Pākehā, and some were even warriors, but these practices have long since died out. In her review of Bentley's book, Kate Riddell states:

His strategy is to assign ten 'roles' to the Pākehā Māori. These are mokai (pet), convict, taurekareka (slave), toa (warrior), tohunga (priest or healer), renegade, trader, rangatira (chief), wahine (woman), and whaler. This overly complicated categorization – the differences between some of these roles are semantic only – means an otherwise worthwhile attempt to illustrate some of these elusive characters gets lost (Riddell 2000, 175).

Maitreya may fit the role of 'renegade' but he has been generally careful not to offend. In an interview in the *NZ Herald* in 2012, he said, jokingly: 'because I'm Pākehā, I'm breaking tikanga every day by doing this, so let's go and break some more rules' (Kara 2012). Being Pākehā and having advanced within te reo Māori and Māoritanga suggests that his position within Māori culture may be somewhat rebellious.

ĀIO: A BILINGUAL COLOUR-CODED ALBUM

In 2012 Maitreya released *Āio* ('be calm, at peace') a double album with one CD in English, the other in te reo Māori, featuring Māori guest artists Anika Moa, Whirimako Black, and AWA. Jason Kerrison, a Māori member of the group Op Shop, and a friend whom Maitreya is teaching te reo, co-wrote, produced, engineered and mixed the album, which was funded by the Māori language government body Te Māngai Pāho. D Word, aka Te Kupu's 2000 double album *Ko Te Matakahi* (The Words which Penetrate), also with one album in te reo, the other in English, clearly provided a model. The English and Māori lyrics in the liner notes of *Āio* are colour-coded into nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc., as a teaching device, so the Pākehā reader is able to translate the Māori lyrics directly into English.

The opening track, 'Whakaāioio' (Making Peace), is an extended karanga (welcome call onto a marae by women), featuring Whirimako Black, invoking 'the peace of old' and Papatūānuku the earth mother. The chorus of 'Āio' is sung by Anika Moa, portraying Maitreya as a 'young warrior', a recurrent phrase throughout the album, and the track imagines 'Self-determination for all the people of Aotearoa.' 'Te Oranga' (The Life), is a detailed autobiography, like many of his tracks, but this time in the third person, referring to the 'festering racial tention' [sic] in Christchurch; 'Kei Te Pai Rā' (I Don't Really Mind), starts with a brief reprise of 'CHur to the CHur', featuring Jason Kerrison, and refers to Maitreya's crew as 'the Crusaders of our time', referencing both the Canterbury rugby team and Christchurch rapper Scribe. 'Kia Mau' (Stand Your Ground) features Cubworld, aka Jacob Kongaika, a Hawai'ian-born singer and the first US recording artist to record an album through Sellaband. The track states 'I'm troubled, to them/ My songs are similar to novels/ Speaking for the lost youth ... They don't understand our frustration', and Maitreya exhorts youth to 'stand up' and 'keep the party going.' 'Ki Te Pō' (To the night) is a melodic rap celebrating Otautahi (Christchurch) and 'The Avon gleaming through the maze' where by night 'the spirits speak to the people'; the first verse is sung in English, with a very repetitive chorus, followed by verse in te reo. 'E Hine' celebrates woman, but also encourages her to 'Shake your butt/Mind the rocks', and contains the rather odd couplet 'I originate/ Conversate in a couple of languages/ Have your girl give me her sandwiches.' It also appears to echo the boasting of Scribe's track 'Not Many' in the lines "Nobody got it like me, Tino Te Reo technician like me/Search Aotearoa katoa, he got peers out there?"

'He Mea Ātaahua' (A Beautiful Thing') features AWA, and recalls meeting a girlfriend 'where Echo Records used to be', and again 'where Galaxy [another inner city Christchurch record shop] used to be', and a subsequent trip to the Brighton Pier. These references to inner city Christchurch record shops, which either closed down before the 2010 earthquake (Echo, in High Street, was taken over by Real Groovy Records, which was badly damaged in the 2011 earthquake) or were directly affected by the earthquakes (Galaxy, also in High Street), reference important meeting points for music-oriented Christchurch youth. In an extensive survey of Christchurch record shops from the 1970s to the present, Paul Gilbert, the curator of the 'Nostalgia Black Hole' website, describes them as '[m]icrocosms of New Zealand society, changing anthropological environments full of treasures for those that care to overturn rocks' (Gilbert 2011). They are also important meeting places for music-appreciating youth, especially those who may be unemployed and have time on their hands.

‘Mārie (Peaceful)’ is a slower track, again featuring a karanga by Whirimako Black, and again invoking ‘the peace of old’, with the sound of a pūtōrino (Māori flute) in the background. The final track, again featuring Cubworld, ‘Mā Wai Te Ki?’ (Who’s To Say?), is another Christchurch narrative of drinking and ‘driving through the frozen streets’ with Sloppy, visiting a dead friend and seemingly envisaging his own death. It ends the album on a subdued note, with Cubworld singing the final chorus, ‘Who’s to say this is how it should be?’ and the response ‘Only I’m to say this is how it should be’. It is a unique album, combining house and dubstep beats with traditional Māori waiata, and a considerable achievement, although it did not gain much in the way of commercial success, especially in a climate of apparent media indifference to te reo music.

In 2012 Maitreya was one of 14 artists to receive a \$10,000 (NZ) grant from NZ on Air to make a video for his party rap track ‘Wake the Neighbours’ from the *Āio* album, probably the least interesting but most commercial and fun-oriented track. He also collaborated on tracks in English with former Christchurch cohort Kong Fooey, aka Jason Peters, for which the track ‘Let Go’, also featuring female MC Topaz, received \$6,000 NZ On Air funding for a video in 2013. Maitreya also took part in the Global Citizen Concert against extreme poverty on August 4th 2013, at the Auckland Town Hall.

CONCLUSION: COMMERCIAL SUICIDE? GETTING TE REO MĀORI INTO THE MAINSTREAM

Maitreya has said of his rapping in te reo: ‘[t]he whole goal is to get te reo Māori out in the commercial sector so everyday people are enjoying it and seeing it as a reality in their life’ (Kara 2012). This is proving to be a tough and ongoing struggle, especially as most commercial radio stations continue to be unwilling to play songs featuring Māori lyrics.

In conversation with Te Awanui Reeder (AWA) in 2012, Maitreya discussed the ‘commercial suicide’ of rapping in te reo Māori, and the lack of vision of radio presenters in New Zealand who will play a track by US rapper Pitbull in Spanish, which they don’t understand, but are unwilling to play anything in Māori, as it may say something subversive that they are unaware of. Reeder suggested there was still a need to ‘normalise the language’, while Maitreya suggested there was still not enough respect for taha Māori (the Māori perspective) within mainstream New Zealand for that to happen (Wicks 2012). Both agreed that it was much easier to gain acceptance for music in te reo Māori outside New Zealand, where it was perceived as something ‘fresh’.

Maitreya has also stated that he thinks te reo Māori should be compulsory in New Zealand schools, as it embodies a far deeper understanding of the country and the land than English does, and it is also a strong expression of identity. As he states in 'Waitaha', referring to his early days in Christchurch with Nil State: 'But all the time I felt something deep and still in my soul that would rumble every time I spoke Te Reo'. The idea of 'keeping it real' in hip hop translates for Maitreya into a dedication to truth, of which te reo is an important aspect, especially in relation to understanding the land. As he said of *Aio*:

I wanted to see whether or not I could do a Te Mangai Paho (Māori music funding body) album, meaning 70%-plus Te Reo Māori as the guideline [funding of \$50,000]. I set myself a challenge to write 15-to-20 Maori songs in a month just to see if I could handle it. After a month I was right into it, loved it and I was, 'Right I'm going to go for the grant' (Pease 2012).

He also received Māori language tutoring for the lyrics, which he claims he finds easier to rhyme in than English as there are never consonants following a vowel at the end of a word:

I would send Scotty [Morrison of Māori TV] the songs, and he would send them back with [grammatical] corrections. He's also a songwriter and an artist, so he was able to give the language meter and tempo. I was learning stuff [about sentence construction] that I didn't know. I didn't get precious about flow, because I knew he was always going to change it. Early on in the process, when I realised that was what I was going to have to do, it was a letting go, 'cause I love flows, and I love the way Te Reo Māori flows. Letting go was one of the greatest experiences and the fruits of it are immense, in terms of originality (Pease 2012).

The fact that people can now see and hear a Pākehā rapper who is fluent in Māori will hopefully provide an impetus for more young Pākehā to learn the language, a plea now made by Maitreya more than 20 years after Moana and the Moa Hunters sang 'A.E.I.O.U. Akona te reo' (Learn the language). That it is now a Pākehā rapper making the same plea, to both Māori and Pākehā youth, indicates there has been some progression. But it appears that he is being heard by very few.

Many journalists in New Zealand use a smattering of Māori words such as whakapapa, mana, tikanga, kaupapa, te reo etc., and most educated Pākehā

know the important concepts that these words represent. But the gap between knowledge of these words and concepts and fluency in te reo is still enormous (Māori words 2014). Bilingualism in New Zealand is still rather an elusive concept. In her 2010 study 'Attitudes of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the use of Māori in New Zealand', Julia de Bres of the University of Luxembourg conducted a survey amongst eighty white collar Pākehā workers in Wellington of their attitudes towards the use of Māori words and phrases in New Zealand English: 56.3 per cent were supportive, 38.8 per cent uninterested, and only 5 per cent wanted English only. A number of the 'supportives' admitted that their knowledge of Māori words was 'very basic', and expressed shyness and diffidence about using Māori expressions in their speech, especially in the company of Māori, as de Bres observed:

Using Māori words and phrases did not come naturally to most participants and, while several had positive attitudes towards engaging in this behaviour, the sense of artificiality or discomfort they experienced in actually doing so could easily derail their intentions (2010, 8).

Drawing on the work of Macalister (2007), and estimating that there are now five or six Māori words per 1000 in the New Zealand lexicon, de Bres outlines six probable reasons for a Pākehā speaker to choose a Māori word: economy ('pa' rather than 'fortified village'); identity ('Aotearoa' rather than 'New Zealand'); impact (a joke such as 'pa wars'); cultural reference ('kaumatua' rather than 'elder'); and clarity ('Ngati Capuccino' rather than 'Capuccino community'). She concludes that her

results suggest a general awareness that the use and pronunciation of Māori words currently play an important symbolic role in reflecting – albeit in various complicated ways – the attitudes of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the Māori language (2010, 12).

This has yet to translate into a general acceptance of Māori language within the broader community, or of music in te reo in mainstream media. There also seems to be a general perception that Māori language education is increasing considerably, but according to the report 'Māori Language in Education', by July 2013, just 2.3 percent of the population were eligible for Māori medium (51 percent of te reo learning), and 97 percent of these identified as Māori. Māori medium existed in only 111 schools of a total of 283; 1,030 schools offered Māori language in English medium, (Māori language as a language subject, or up to 50 percent of te reo learning); and a rather staggering 78.8 percent of those

eligible for Māori language programme (MLP) funding were not enrolled in Māori language in education (Māori language 2013).

In an article in the *Dominion Post* responding to the decline in the number of Māori who speak te reo in the 2013 census, Rawinia Higgins, Associate Professor of Māori Studies at Victoria University in Wellington, and co-editor of *The value of the Māori language: Te hua o te reo Māori* (2014), suggested that ‘Te Reo Māori should define all New Zealanders’, and that despite 26 years of official language status and more than 30 years of efforts to revitalise the language, it was in danger of being reduced to ‘mere ritualised gestures rather than as a language that defines us as a nation’. She pointed out that the decline was too frequently identified as a ‘Māori-only problem, not a national issue’. She also acknowledged that ‘Maori, too, have loaded the language with cultural, spiritual and political baggage that continues to impact on the use of the language as a form of communication’ (Higgins 2013). Maitreya and others like him, such as Te Kupu, clearly have an important role to play in this situation, using rap and hip hop as a vehicle for regenerating knowledge and awareness of te reo among youth of the country. This may not translate into a general knowledge and awareness, but it is a good start. Rap and hip hop are providing an important youth-based revival of te reo Māori and other minority languages around the world in an unofficial capacity, often outside of education systems (see Terkouafi 2012). But in New Zealand, te reo hip hop appears to be having an uncertain journey through available media channels to New Zealand youth.

NOTES

1. According to ‘2013 Census QuickStats About Māori’, [i]n 2013, 125,352 Māori (21.3 percent) could hold a conversation about a lot of everyday things in te reo Māori, a 4.8 percent decrease from the 2006 Census:
 - 26.3 percent were aged under 15 years – down 6.2 percent from 2006
 - 23.3 percent were aged 15 to 29 years – down 8.2 percent
 - 40.6 percent were aged 30 to 64 years – down 5.0 percent
 - 9.8 percent were aged 65 years and over – up 11.0 percent

(<http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-about-maori-english/maori-language.aspx>.)

No figures are given for Pākehā speakers of te reo, and TVNZ’s estimated 1% may be over-generous.

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