

Maori Sport and Cultural Identity in Australia

Paul Bergin

Maryknoll Institute of Language and Culture, Davao, Mindanao

Sport is an important aspect of cultural identity for New Zealand Maori migrants living in Australia. Maori sporting endeavours, especially at festivals such as the Taki Toa Tournament in New South Wales, often reveal distinctive Maori features of cultural performance, in the rituals prior to a game, in the spirited manner with which a game is played, and in the *whānau* (large/extended family) spirit of belonging and celebration that is encouraged after a game.

However, notwithstanding the occasional Maori tournament or festival, Maori sporting participation in Australia is not restricted to an 'ethnic ghetto'. Widespread Maori involvement in sport has provided an important avenue for Maori migrants to mix socially with Aboriginal and other Australians in their local communities, and to gain acceptance, respect and, in some cases, economic advancement.

Many first-generation Maori migrants display a keen sense of a New Zealand rather than an Australian identity when it comes to trans-Tasman international sport. Transnational links are also important for Australian Maori who visit New Zealand with sporting teams and stay on various *marae* (tribal meeting places). The experience of 'Maori culture' and hospitality offered by their New Zealand kinsfolk may have a significant influence upon the sporting visitors' subsequent development of Maori cultural identity.

Sport has become an important aspect of the cultural identity of Maori in Australia.¹ Some Australian Maori claim that their communities are more interested in sport than in 'Maori culture' (referring to the traditional Maori performing arts and the learning of heritage features such as Maori song, dance and language). However, while there is greater Maori participation in sporting activities than in cultural performance groups, sport cannot be divorced from culture. A significant feature of many Australian Maori sporting events are the traditional rituals of encounter, cultural performance and communal celebration. Maori sporting tournaments in Australia and sports visits to New Zealand provide an opportunity for some Maori to discover and experience their own cultural traditions. However, Maori

involvement in sport provides a generally positive arena for closer association with other Australians and greater involvement in local communities.

Sporting tournaments: Expressions of Maori cultural identity

Among Australian Maori there are sporting tournaments that are enshrouded with Maori rituals of encounter and at which there are distinctly Maori ways of celebrating. Two main sporting festivals are held on an annual basis: the Taki Toa Challenge Shield Tournament and the Harry Bartlett Memorial Tournament. Sport also features at the major Maori cultural festivals that are held in Australia, notably the annual Sydney Maori Easter Festival and the biennial Australian Maori Festival. Other regular cultural festivals that also include Maori sporting events are the Melbourne Maori Festival and the Queensland Polynesian Festival.

The Taki Toa Tournament, which began in 1983, was the brainchild of Manu Sutherland and other New Zealanders playing rugby in Sydney.² The tournament follows an intense 'round robin' series of games in one day, similar to the sports competitions that have been popular at Maori field days in New Zealand. The Taki Toa shield is an impressive carving, standing one metre high, and was created by Manu's father, Henare Sutherland, to portray the new migration of Maori to Australia and the coming together of Maori and Australians. Although primarily Maori in their composition, the participating rugby and netball teams usually include a few Pakeha (New Zealanders of European ancestry) and Pacific Islanders, as well as the occasional Australian. Among the six regular competing teams are clubs from Sydney (Waverley, Matraville, South Sydney New Zealand, and Sydney Kiwis), the NSW Central Coast (North Lakes) and the Canberra region (Queanbeyan).

The second of the popular Maori sporting festivals in New South Wales is the Harry Bartlett Memorial Tournament. Dedicated to the memory of a young Maori killed in a motor-vehicle accident, the Harry Bartlett Memorial attracts teams from four regions of New South Wales (from Newcastle, the Central Coast, Sydney Kiwis, and Wollongong). As is the case with the Taki Toa Tournament the participating teams take turns to host the festival. The Harry Bartlett Memorial Tournament features a range of sporting activities over several days including snooker, darts, rugby, netball and golf. The tournament also includes some athletic events and a tug-o-war to occupy the children of participating adults.

The Taki Toa, the Harry Bartlett Memorial and other Maori sports tournaments value a distinctive Maori style of open rugby which places an emphasis on running and passing (rather than kicking the ball). Maori spectators applaud the players who can beat opponents with clever footwork such as a side-step or a swerve, with swift and intricate passing movements such as the 'scissors', the 'double scissors', or the cut-out pass, or with feint of hand and a dummy pass. Some spectators also appreciate the players who crash their way through opposition defences as they take a direct course to the goal line, although this has traditionally been more a feature of Maori rugby league than rugby union. Consequently, brave tackling on the part of the defending side is also greatly admired.

Although both the Harry Bartlett Memorial and the Taki Toa Tournament have always had an emphasis on sporting competition rather than the Maori performing arts, they have taken on more formal cultural aspects in recent years. As these tournaments now commence with the traditional rituals of encounter, they could well be described as *hui*

(gatherings according to Maori protocol; see Salmond 1975). In the absence of traditional *marae* or sacred tribal meeting places, the rituals of encounter have to take place in car parks, on sports fields or school grounds, in rugby club-rooms or civic halls. On some occasions, a formal *wero* (challenge) may commence the rituals, but the keening cry of the women's *karanga* (formal call of welcome) is always heard as the visiting teams move forward to be welcomed by the host club. Male elders then farewell the dead and greet the living, through the medium of *whaikorero* (formal oratory) in the Maori language. There are *waiata* (songs) after each speech, followed by the *hongi* (the pressing of noses) between hosts and visiting teams. A brief offering of *karakia* (prayers) then precedes an opening meal of welcome before the sporting events commence.

Pre-match *haka* (posture dance) from both teams have also become a feature of the festivals, especially prior to the final for the Taki Toa Shield. This contrasts with the first occasion that a final team unexpectedly introduced a pre-match *haka*; the other team was unprepared, took great offence and a meeting had to be called afterwards to resolve the hurt. Nowadays, any team that thinks it has a chance of getting to the finals had better be prepared for a convincing *haka*. It is not just a token cultural performance but a dramatic statement of group solidarity and determination to battle with any opposition.³

Although some Australian-born Maori have expressed enthusiasm for locally-composed *haka* and songs that express the evolving and dynamic aspects of their new Australian environment, many prefer to learn traditional cultural items from New Zealand, clearly identifying their expression of Maori culture with their ancestral New Zealand homeland. The popularity of Maori sporting festivals was explained by Tumu,⁴ a member of the Sydney Kiwis' rugby club, and a keen supporter of the Harry Bartlett Memorial Tournament:

Maoris like to come together for sport because of their love of *whakataetae* [competition]. They take their sport very seriously when they do take the field. Also Maoris like coming together to tournaments or field days to be with other Maori and word gets round when people come back and tell their friends that they had a good time at such and such a place, and other people are attracted. People always hope that they might find someone that they are related to, so they come to a tournament, and just about always they'll meet someone to whom they can connect their *whakapapa* [family tree].

Many of those who attend Maori sporting festivals say that they enjoy the warm feelings of community and togetherness at such gatherings. One of the highlights of the weekend is when a *hangi* or huge communal meal that has been cooked in the ground for several hours is served on the Saturday evening. Rina, a young saleswoman from Sydney, was attending the Harry Bartlett Memorial at Newcastle (NSW). She described the tournament as an experience of *whanau* (extended family) and an experience of belonging:

This *hui* [gathering] is great because all these guys over here don't realise they're experiencing Maori culture. They think it's all about doing action-songs and speaking the *reo* [Maori language] but it's not. It's all about being together and experiencing *whanau* [extended family]. There's no 'aggro.' We've just been eating together, drinking together and playing sport together. Look at what they've experienced together this weekend in terms of *whanau*, even if we only come together once a year. Everyone is accepted as belonging here, including Pakeha spouses.

There are also non-competitive Maori cultural performances on the Saturday evening of both these sporting tournaments which finally conclude with *poroporoaki* (farewell speeches), Maori *waiata* (songs) and some powerful *haka*.

Rugby league and rugby union: Mixing with local Australians

Maori sportsmen have made an impact in Australia since 1884 when Maori players were represented in a New Zealand rugby union team that toured New South Wales (Hickie 1993:xiii). The New Zealand Maori team which toured England in 1888-1889 also played more than a dozen matches in Australia. Rugby union historian, Thomas Hickie (1983:26), suggests that a Maori tour was a promoter's dream as many of the spectators may have come out of curiosity as much as for the rugby. When a pioneering New Zealand Maori rugby league team landed in Sydney from the SS *Moana* in 1908, accompanied by four tribal elders wearing *piupiu* (flax skirts) and resplendent with the rare feathers of the native *huia* bird, they received a tumultuous local welcome, and were a favourite of the newspapers (Haynes 1996:151). Subsequent Maori league teams also made their mark on the field and were popular with Australian crowds. New Zealand Maori rugby union teams have also been invited to play top Australian sides, including the Warratahs (NSW) and the national Australian team, the Wallabies, on several occasions over the decades, and most recently in 2001.

As rugby league and rugby union are two of the main winter sporting codes in New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, Maori participation in these sports has provided a generally positive area of involvement with many local communities. To some extent, this opportunity of close sporting contact with the dominant society replicates the New Zealand experience where rugby union has been a symbol of inclusiveness for Maori, Pakeha and Pacific Islanders. Journalist and rugby historian, Spiro Zavos, considers that rugby union, perhaps more than anything else, has fostered positive race relations in New Zealand (personal communication, Sydney, 12 August 1996; see also Zavos 1995:14-15; 1996a; 1996b). Another sports historian, John Haynes (1996:14) notes that from the earliest days of New Zealand rugby, the sport was seen as a positive area of social mixing and that All Black teams were respected for their combination of 'fierce farmers and fleet-footed Maoris'. Michael King (1981:298) suggests that Maori participation in rugby union in New Zealand 'fostered a sense of identity amongst Maoris, and on the football field Pakehas could see Maoris engage in an activity that they understood and appreciated'.

The particular sporting experience of the New Zealand Maori migrant to Australia may be in contrast, however, with some migrant families from other countries who have felt that their passion for soccer has led to their being identified with the 'ethnic ghetto'.⁵ In New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, where rugby union and league are well established, many Maori prefer to play for local clubs rather than form exclusively Maori or Kiwi teams. This is partly because the local clubs are seen to offer a greater sense of permanence and reliability, and partly out of a desire to identify with the local scene. Maori support for some Australian sports' clubs has spawned some light-hearted new labels for the clubs concerned. Local Maori involvement in the Manly-Warringah rugby league club, for example, was such that I heard some people referring to the club as 'Manly-Maoringah!'

In Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory, where Australian Football League (AFL) has a much greater following, Maori and other

New Zealanders have been among a minority of enthusiasts promoting rugby league and rugby union, and have become very much identified with the latter two codes. In both Victoria and Tasmania I heard interested Australians remark that 'it was the Maoris who brought rugby league here.' Some Melbourne rugby league clubs have had a strong Maori representation and image, such as the Kia Toa (Be Brave) club, until it was banned for fighting during the 1980s. Other clubs, such as St Kilda, have been basically Maori but have also included some Australian and other players. With the more recent development of the Melbourne Storm rugby league team, a number of Maori players have been prominent in the side. Few of the predominantly Maori clubs have their own club facilities for after-match functions. Instead they support particular hotels which provide sponsorship for their teams. The St Kilda Inn, for example, provided sponsorship for the St Kilda rugby league team and used to be a popular meeting place for Melbourne Maori.

The Maori contribution to the developing sport of women's rugby in Australia has also been significant. In 1995, over half the Western Australian women's rugby team, including their captain, were Maori players. At one women's rugby tournament I attended in Perth, most of the coaches were Maori, including a *kaumatua* (elder) with a walking stick who stood on the sideline in an old *swandri* coat exhorting his team to greater efforts! The large Maori contribution to the teams was reflected in the aftermatch fare at the clubhouse, where local Maori served up a favourite Maori dish called 'boilup', consisting of stewed pork bones, watercress and potatoes.

Some Maori women also play rugby league. Indeed, rugby league is, at times, a real family affair (see *Mana Tangata*, Hui-tanguru [February] 1993:25). Papa Koroheke, who followed in his father's footsteps as a league player, describes his family's passion for the game:

A lot of our people play league because it's physical, hard and an open game, though when I play, I play my own game. League is really a family affair for me. I have four children and all my three boys play league in the under 7s, under 9s and under 11s. My wife has played but she hurt her leg. My daughter would like to play as well. My twin brother and I play together. He tries to play harder than me.

Rugby union and rugby league have clearly been the sports in which Maori have excelled in Australia's eastern states. In Melbourne, Hobart and Perth, however, I met young Maori who were playing Australian Football League (AFL) or Tasmanian Rules Football. They admired Wayne Schwass, a rare Maori star in AFL, who has played for South Warrnambool, North Melbourne, and Sydney Swans. It appears that some Maori families, especially those of 'mixed race' parentage, have encouraged their sons to pursue the local sporting codes rather than stick to rugby union or league. Maryanne, a Melbourne mother, commented: 'The boys played AFL because I thought it was important they played what their peers played. You've gotta fit in and mix with your peers and be part of the group. You're more accepted. They were different anyhow because of their colour. Why make them more different?!'

Spiritual and cultural foundations: Touch, netball and other sports

A lot of Maori also play touch (rugby) which is claimed to be one of the fastest growing sports in Australia. It is popular with both males and females. Some teams are mixed. Many Sydney Maori women who play netball in the winter, play touch in the summer. Touch is popular because little gear is required, the games are short, and with the small

numbers in a side (seven, plus five substitutes allowed), it is easy for *whanau* and friends to organise their own teams. Furthermore, in many areas, the intensity of local competition is such that very little travelling is required.

Netball is a very popular sport for Maori women. It is also one of the most popular women's sports throughout Australia, and thus provides an important area of social contact between Maori women and other Australians. There are numerous netball teams with Maori or Kiwi appellations that reflect the cultural identity of the women who founded them. Although many of these teams are predominantly Maori they have not adopted an exclusive ethnic approach to team membership and have been happy to welcome Australian women into their ranks. The communal spirit within a lot of Maori netball clubs appeals not only to the Maori participants themselves but also to some Australians. Hiria, a Sydney artist and keen netballer, observed how young Australian women were attracted to her club:

The European girls appreciated the communal side of our teams. Then there was the excellent food aspect and the Maori singing which was a major aspect of selling tickets to our fundraising. There would be a performance and the netballers would have to sing for their supper. You had to be involved! Our Aussie friends liked to join in. Some were the girlfriends of Aussie Maoris. It was *not* a question of 'You're white, you can't play for us'. *Aroha* [warmth of love, compassion] was brought into it all.

The standard of coaching, the level of organisation and the communal spirit of some Maori netball teams have earned them respect from local netball associations. Nga Waka e Whitu (The Seven Canoes), a cultural and sporting club based at Tuggerah on the Central Coast (NSW), found that their approach to the game of netball had attracted a lot of interest from local people, as one of their *kaumatua* explained: 'We have ten teams, mostly junior and mostly Aussie kids. Our Maori coaches over the years have been very good coaches, and parents and other kids see it. The end result is that each year they want to play for the Maori group ... because of our attitudes.'

It is clear that some Maori netball clubs try to instil particular Maori cultural values among their young team members. Huhana, the manager of Hui Mai (Come Together), a Sydney club, explained that her club was based on spiritual foundations which stressed symbolic links to the unity of the primal Maori parents, Papa-tu-a-nuku and Rangi-nui. Young club members were encouraged to reflect this unity in their attitudes on the court:

We aim to develop attitudes of respect ... Our kids have a lot of aggressiveness. We try to calm this down. We tell them to smile and say, '*Kia ora*' [May you be well], when the opposition gets angry ... We're spiritually guided. Our kids understand this. Our name refers to the joining of Mother-Earth and Sky-Rangi who surrounds us. We have this design on our screen prints on our uniforms. [A priest] blessed them. Even among the Pakeha they seem to gather the spiritual sense of the club.

Softball, rather than cricket, has been another popular summer sport for Maori in Sydney. Some young Maori say that they prefer softball to cricket because a game of softball is much shorter, usually lasting less than two hours. Another popular sport for many Maori families is indoor basketball. Golf also attracts considerable interest, especially from an older group of Maori, some of whom take part in regional Maori tournaments leading to the annual Australian Maori Golf Tournament.

Prejudice, sport and employment

Many Maori immigrants into Australia report that they have been well received by their new host society. In particular they note that their employers often comment favourably that they have a reputation as 'hard workers'. Other Maori state that they are well respected because of the bravery and commitment of Maori soldiers who have fought alongside Australian soldiers in various military campaigns over the decades. However, some Maori report cases of prejudice and discrimination against them. Many Maori immigrants state that they have had to contend with negative stereotyping, particularly the Bondi 'urban myth' that suggests that New Zealand migrants (and Maori, in particular) congregate in this Sydney beachside suburb for a lazy time on the dole, at the expense of the Australian taxpayer. If there was ever any factual basis for this stereotype, there is certainly little basis for such an allegation today. Like other international visitors to Sydney, Maori people often include Bondi Beach on their tourist itinerary but few Maori actually live or congregate in Bondi. Maori people reside in many different parts of metropolitan Sydney and have not formed enduring ethnic enclaves. Some indication of Maori dispersal throughout metropolitan Sydney is evident from the fact that I met with Maori from over 140 different suburbs during the course of my fieldwork in Sydney. Moreover, the vast majority of working-age Maori in Australia were in employment. Nevertheless the Bondi 'urban myth' still persists.

More serious hostility towards Maori, especially in some rural areas, existed during the 1980s' shearers 'wide comb' dispute, when New Zealand shearers (among whom Maori were prominent) faced the wrath of the Australian Workers Union and their supporters for not using the traditional 'narrow comb' shears. By their use of the wide comb the Maori shearers were able to process more sheep per session than their Australian counterparts. They also allegedly breached union regulations by working longer hours. Although this made them popular with many farmers, the Maori workers faced intimidation and even violence from some of their opponents.

However, Maori involvement in sport has generally provided a more positive area of relations with the dominant society. Indeed, involvement in rugby union and rugby league has helped some Maori migrants settle into a new place and has provided useful avenues for finding employment in Australia. Miri, a young mother and homemaker who had migrated to Melbourne and then Perth, recalled how she and her husband were helped by membership of sporting clubs:

When we moved to Melbourne we knew no one there. We were living in a little bed-sit, until we joined a rugby club and, next thing, different ones provided us with a TV, table and chairs, blankets and towels, and they'd even pick us up and take us to the rugby club because we had no car. If you have no money and no jobs, you'll find work through a rugby club after a few beers at the bar. Then when we moved to Perth my husband's first job was through the [rugby] league club!

Even before professional rugby union was introduced in the mid-1990s some Australian clubs were offering accommodation and work to talented Maori players who were prepared to transfer from New Zealand. As rugby league has always been a professional sport, numerous talented Maori have pursued the game as a career in Australia.⁶ During the mid-1990s' struggle for control of rugby league—between Superleague and the Australian Rugby League—Maori players signed contracts with Australian clubs worth

millions of dollars in total (see 'League's Great Money Trail'. *Daily Telegraph Mirror*, 21 October 1995:150-51).

Maori and Aboriginal sporting relations

Sport has also provided an opportunity for closer association between Maori and Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory and other parts of Australia, especially through rugby union and league, and other sports such as netball and touch rugby. There are also a number of Maori coaches and managers who have worked closely with Aboriginal people in other sports. However, tensions may easily surface in rugby matches, and when predominantly Maori teams play Aboriginal sides there sometimes appears to be a racial edge to any 'dust-ups' or heated incidents. The situation is not always helped by passionate comments from some supporters on the sidelines. On the field tension, however, is usually resolved over drinks at the after-match function.

A giant Aboriginal forward and president of a rugby club in the Northern Territory, who carries the nick-name 'Big Bird', felt that his sport was a great way to deepen cultural understanding between Maori and Aboriginal youth. 'Big Bird' had only one regret, 'When I hear the young Aboriginal players singing Maori songs at after-match parties, it seems they know Maori better than their own Aboriginal languages!' Indeed, songs such as 'Pokarekare Ana' and the *haka*, 'Ka Mate, Ka Mate' (made famous by the All Blacks' rugby team) are familiar to Aboriginal sporting enthusiasts in many parts of Australia. Young Maori also speak of their friendship with Aboriginal children where they attend Australian schools together. Maori students mentioned, in particular, how they enjoyed participating with Aboriginal students in various school football and netball teams. Overall, sporting contact is seen as a largely positive area of Maori-Aboriginal relations.

Young people and sport: Multiple identities

Although not all Maori children are interested in competitive sport, many are keen to participate in sports organised by schools or clubs. Some commentators have cited the clash of values seen in some migrant children to Australia, who find that their reverence for scholarship and aesthetic pursuits comes into sharp confrontation with Australian society's alleged demands that children concentrate primarily on outdoor sports and development of physical prowess (see, for example, Kern 1966:39). In the case of many Maori children, however, their interest in outdoor activities generally finds a ready welcome in Australia. Moreover, Maori families often express delight with the sporting facilities and opportunities that Australia has provided for their children, as Rongomai, a Sydney mother, explained:

Australia provides a huge amount of opportunity. The sporting facilities here are fantastic. The kids can come here and for a very reasonable amount of money, really, do any sport that you can imagine. Skiing might be a bit expensive but there is just about every sort of sport available in Australia. I mean it's a great climate for swimming, water polo, surfing and all those kinds of things.

The living rooms of Maori homes in Australia are often adorned with a variety of sporting trophies that have been won by family members. Multiple successes in rugby union and rugby league, netball and basketball, athletics, tennis, hockey, golf and snooker are all proudly displayed in a range of trophies across the lounge mantelpiece. Each of

these sporting successes may also reflect a different context of identity for the individuals and families concerned.

The various sporting seasons are reflected in membership of different local clubs, each of which provides families with a unique sense of belonging. In Alice Springs, for example, Maori sportsmen might play for rugby union clubs in the summer and rugby league clubs in the winter, and for basketball and indoor cricket teams on different weekday evenings, while supporting other members of the family at netball during other times of the week. As Jeremy MacClancy (1996:3) suggests, 'these sport-based identities are not necessarily exclusive...for people may have multiple identities either simultaneously, seasonally or consecutively'.

National sporting identities: Trans-Tasman rivalry

Although Maori and other Australians generally mix well together through sport, international fixtures between Australia and New Zealand usually arouse a passionate sense of Kiwi identification on the part of Maori migrants to Australia. Even those first generation Maori migrants who have taken out Australian citizenship are likely to be loud in their support of New Zealand teams, especially in the Bledisloe Cup rugby competition between the All Blacks and the Wallabies. Maori and other New Zealand supporters will snap up tickets for these rugby internationals, providing tremendous local support when New Zealand plays in Australia. The ardent rivalry between the trans-Tasman neighbours is often portrayed in media advertising as though the two nations were about to go to war. In particular, images associated with the Maori as warrior are often portrayed as symbols of New Zealand's determination to challenge Australia. Maori cultural performances in front of Australian audiences are a feature of such trans-Tasman sporting battles.

Australian television commercials, advertising coverage of Bledisloe Cup rugby union internationals have not only suggested a spirit of trans-Tasman conflict but have also run with the stereotype of the Maori warrior. Thus a Channel 7 advertisement in July 1996 featured images of the second world war, video footage of a New Zealand volcano erupting, and images of a Maori *haka* or war dance:

Ninety-three years of ferocious competition ... In times of war they were even prepared to die for one another [images of war], yet face to face, in times of peace, their friendship goes the way of Mount Ruapehu [images of this volcano erupting]. '*Ka mate, ka mate, ka ora, ka ora*' [images of a *haka*] ...Translated, the *haka* goes, 'It is life, it is life. It is death, it is death!'... Today another chapter in our short yet wondrous history: Australia and New Zealand. The tradition lives.⁷

Pnina Werbner's (1996) observations on sporting contests are relevant here. She suggests that sports 'both objectify social divisions and nationalist sentiments and point to an alliance between testesters, a shared fanaticism'. She also discerns an element of friendship and fun in the competing loyalties, and observes: 'Sporting contests are, it would seem, like *moka* in Melanesia, a *substitute* for war, a domain of symbolic agonism, a token not of hatred and disloyalty but of friendly rivalry in the midst of peace' (Werbner 1996:104). Nevertheless, some Australians are infuriated by the level of New Zealand support evident at international rugby matches in Australia. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (3 April 1989) reported that Bob Dwyer, then coach of the Wallabies, was only half joking when he suggested that immigration laws should be changed to even up the crowds at home test matches: 'The team is very pissed off at playing in front of vocal New Zealand

supporters who want to adopt this country, but who maintain ties with their own country.' Dwyer's complaints about New Zealand migrants, echo views expressed in the United Kingdom by Norman Tebbit, the Conservative Cabinet minister. Tebbit complained that certain ethnic minorities had not passed the 'cricket test', because when England played international fixtures against teams such as Pakistan and India, many people who claimed British nationality supported the Asian land of their families' origins (see Banks 1996:184; Werbner 1996:104).

Many Maori migrants identify passionately with New Zealand sporting sides in competition with Australia, and for this reason alone some were not prepared to contemplate applying for Australian citizenship, no matter how long they had lived in Australia. The issue of national sporting sides and citizenship can thus become a source for debate in a number of households, as Raina, a Sydney prison officer and grandmother, explained:

I support New Zealand first and foremost. But I've thought about Australian citizenship. Why not? We will always be New Zealand Maori by birth but we should go along with the Aussies. Up until now I've thought of it as Kiwi betrayal, and that I'd lose my New Zealand citizenship.... There are four of us live here now. The boys are very anti-Australian and I say to them, 'But you live in this country'. Sport between us is like a mutual encounter between enemies. The rivalries are really on!

In some cases, Maori spouses take opposing sides over the question of Australian citizenship. Several Maori women stated that they wanted to become Australian citizens but had declined to do so because of their husbands' determined opposition to 'disowning New Zealand' and the land of their ancestors. However, it is apparent that with the development of professional sport, the attitudes of some Maori males to identification as Australians may be changing. By the late 1990s, several New Zealand-born Maori migrants (Jeremy Paul, Glenn Panoho and Manuel Edmonds) were representing top Australian State sides and had been chosen to represent the Wallabies rugby union team. For the second and subsequent generations of Australian-Maori, self-identification as Australians may well become the norm. Some prominent young Australian-born Maori rugby league players, such as Tamana Tahu of the Newcastle Knights, have made it clear to New Zealand selectors that their national representative ambitions lie with the Kangaroos rather than with the Kiwis (*Evening Post*, 30 April 2001). Jai Taurima, the Queensland-born long-jumper who starred at the Sydney Olympic Games, has also stated his preference to represent Australia rather than New Zealand. Although immensely proud of his Maori heritage, Taurima has declared: 'Obviously I have some feeling for New Zealand, but I'm an Australian through and through'. (*Dominion*, 8 May 2001)

Transnationalism: Reclaiming Maori cultural heritage

Sport has also proved to be a significant influence in the formation of cultural identity among Australian-Maori who visit New Zealand with sporting teams and stay at various *marae* (tribal meeting grounds). The experience of 'Maori culture' and hospitality offered by their New Zealand kinsfolk may have a significant influence upon the sporting visitors' subsequent development of Maori cultural identity. Kere, a Sydney *kaumatua*, described how Australian-Maori sports enthusiasts sometimes feel ashamed for their lack of knowledge of the Maori language and are determined to reclaim their ancestral heritage:

You sometimes get [Maori] sports people in Australia who don't want to have anything to do with Maoris ... who might accompany their children on a sports' trip back to New Zealand. Then they discover that one of the particular visits is to a *marae*. All of a sudden they realise, 'Oh, I'm the senior Maori'. Then they're requested to reply to the *mihis* [formal Maori speeches on the *marae*], and suddenly they're found wanting and they become very embarrassed. And then that's when they come back to us [elders in Australia] and they say, 'Well, I've suddenly reached the point where I am the senior member of the group...wow, what do I do?'

In conclusion, it is clear that Australian-Maori involvement in sport is an important aspect of their cultural life. Maori sporting endeavours, especially at festivals such as the Taki Toa and Harry Bartlett Memorial in New South Wales, often reveal distinctive Maori features of cultural performance, in the rituals prior to a game, in the spirited manner with which a game is played, and in the *whanau* or extended family spirit of belonging and celebration that is encouraged after a game. One can also observe that there are particular ways in which Maori men and women approach their sport. Ideally, in rugby, for example, the players are encouraged to pursue a free-flowing, open style of game, with speed and vitality, imaginative moves, and with strength.

However, notwithstanding the occasional Maori tournament or festival, Maori sporting participation in Australia is not restricted to an 'ethnic ghetto'. Widespread Maori involvement in sport has provided an important avenue for Maori migrants to mix socially with Aboriginal and other Australians in their local communities, and to gain acceptance, respect and, in some cases, economic advancement. Although one can discern some distinctive expressions of Maori identity in Australian-Maori sport, Maori have tended to belong to a variety of local sports' clubs and teams such that one can speak of Maori individuals and families with multiple sporting identities. Although many first-generation Maori migrants to Australia display a keen sense of a New Zealand identity when it comes to trans-Tasman international sport, a change to an Australian identity is becoming apparent with the second-generation Australian-Maori. Nevertheless, transnational links are important for Australian Maori who visit New Zealand with sporting teams and stay among New Zealand Maori relatives on various *marae* and in tribal meeting houses. The experience of 'Maori culture' and hospitality offered by their New Zealand kinsfolk may have a significant influence upon the sporting visitors' subsequent development of their Maori cultural identity.

Notes

1. This paper is based on fieldwork conducted among Maori communities in Australia (between late 1994 and late 1996) and from subsequent research into Maori cultural identity in Australia. Analysis of the 1986 Australian Census revealed that there were nearly 27,000 people of New Zealand Maori descent in Australia (see Lowe 1990, 1992:97, 1993). The much-awaited return of the ethnic ancestry question in the 2001 Australian Census is likely to reveal a significant increase in the Maori descent group population in Australia.
2. Taki Toa is an abbreviation of Te Roopu Toa O Te Takitini Iwi Maori (The Brave Group of the Many Maori People. See Waverley Rugby Football and Sporting Club Inc. 1990).
3. Increasingly, Australian-Maori teams travelling to Maori tournaments in New Zealand have also felt the need to be well prepared for the performance of their *haka*, to prove that they have retained a sense of '*mana* Maori' or Maori pride and identity.

4. Where I have used first names alone to introduce statements recorded in interviews, they are pseudonyms to respect a person's privacy. In all instances where I have not sourced quotations, they are excerpts from fieldwork interviews in Australia. I am grateful to the many Australian-Maori people who participated in this research.
5. Mark Bosnich, the outstanding Aston Villa and Australian goal-keeper, told the *Observer* (1 February 1998: Sport 5) of his Australian upbringing: 'My parents are Croatian, and it was always football, football, football in our house ... Everywhere else in Sydney it was rugby, rugby, rugby. I took it up once but Mum stopped me ...'
6. Several players with Maori ancestry have represented Australia at rugby league, including 'Lord' Ted Goodwin, who was born in Sydney of a Maori mother; he played for the Kangaroos in 1972-73. Arthur Beetson, who was born of Aboriginal parents in Queensland, had a Maori grandfather, and represented Australia from 1966-1974 (see George 1988, and French n.d.).
7. As with rugby union, Australian television commercials, for rugby league matches involving New Zealand teams, have often centred on the combative aspects of the *haka*. Thus, in 1995-96, television commercials featured tattooed men from a Sydney Maori culture group, armed with taiaha (long, hand-held, wooden weapons) and performing dramatic pukana (facial gestures) close-up to the camera.

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