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HE ĀPITI HONO, HE TĀTAI HONO: THAT WHICH *is* JOINED REMAINS *an* UNBROKEN LINE: USING WHAKAPAPA (GENEALOGY) *as the* BASIS *for an* INDIGENOUS RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

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■ Abstract

This paper explores the notion of *whakapapa* as providing a legitimate research framework for engaging in research with Māori communities. By exploring the tradition and meaning of *whakapapa*, the paper will legitimate how *whakapapa* and an understanding of *whakapapa* can be used by Māori researchers working among Māori communities. Therefore, emphasis is placed on a research methodology framed by *whakapapa* that not only authenticates Māori epistemology in comparison with Western traditions, but that also supports the notion of a *whakapapa* research methodology being transplanted across the Indigenous world; Indigenous peoples researching among their Indigenous communities. Consequently, Indigenous identity is strengthened as is the contribution of the concept of *whakapapa* to Indigenous research paradigms worldwide.

Tēnei te ara o Ranginui e tū nei, tēnei te ara o Papatūānuku e takoto nei. Tēnei te pō nau mai te ao, karangatia te ao kia ita, karangatia ko Tāne i whakairihia i āpiti ki runga i āpiti ki raro. Whano whano hara mai te mārāma; haumi e hui e taiki e! Ko Kaubehei te maunga, ko Te Roto-a-Tara te waiū, ko Te Whatu-i-āpiti te tangata, tibe mauriora ki te whaiāo, ki te ao mārāma e!

■ Introduction

I am Māori and belong to the *hapū* (sub-tribe) of Ngai Te Whatu-i-āpiti and, as an Indigenous person of Aotearoa (New Zealand), the opening address to this essay has introduced a Māori worldview; a worldview founded upon Māori narratives and oral histories of the creation of the universe. The creation account is described as a dynamic movement (Henare in Grim, 2001, p. 198) conveyed in Māori by the expression *i te kore, ki te pō, ki te ao mārāma* translated as “out of the nothingness, into the night, into the world of light”. This creation account and a Māori view that locates it as the origin of Māori thought forms the basis of *tikanga* Māori (Māori values, traditions and belief systems), accordingly my opening address essentially identifies where I am from, a place that I can call my *tūrangawaewae* (a place to “stand”). By virtue of belonging to an *iwi* (tribe) and *hapū* (sub-tribe) and through *whakapapa* (genealogical descent), all Māori have a *tūrangawaewae* although it might be fair to say that not all Māori know their *tūrangawaewae* due to the effects of colonisation and assimilative State policies. Nonetheless some Māori belong to the same *tūrangawaewae*. This belongingness is dependent on tribal affiliations as well as on *whenua* (land). *Tūrangawaewae*

Literally means a place to stand, and it indicates the rights and obligations associated with a

certain place. It is a situational identity that gives a person, through genealogy or association, the right to say humbly, "I am monarch of all that I survey". *Tūrangawaewae* enables a person to say with confidence, "I belong" (Tauroa & Tauroa, 1993, p. 153).

By referring to my *tūrangawaewae* I am establishing a connection to my ancestral mountains, my waterways and my tribal places of historical significance. My *whakapapa* enables me to do this by legitimating my relationship to these places through my kinship connections. What exactly is *whakapapa*? A Māori worldview of *whakapapa* establishes the conceptual basis for human descent from the beginning of time. Barlow (1991, p. 173), for instance, states that:

Whakapapa is the genealogical descent of all living things from the gods to the present time; *whakapapa* is a basis for the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things; it is through genealogy that kinship and economic ties are cemented. *Whakapapa* is one of the most prized forms of knowledge and great efforts are made to preserve it.

This essay explores the Māori concept of *whakapapa* as providing the foundation for a legitimate research framework that enables Māori to engage in research among Māori communities; indeed, a research framework for Indigenous peoples researching within their respective Indigenous communities. It is not the aim of this essay to define *whakapapa* and all of its meanings in a traditional Māori sense; rather, the aim of this essay is to validate the application of a traditional meaning of *whakapapa* for Indigenous (Māori) research by Indigenous (Māori) people among their Indigenous (Māori) communities in contemporary settings.

Māori and Māori communities have been the subjects of research since the colonisation of Aotearoa in the nineteenth century. Bishop and Glynn (1999, p. 17) allude to this notion and state that "Colonisation has simplified and commodified Māori knowledge for 'consumption' by people other than those whose culture generated the knowledge". Consequently, Māori conventions relating to "what counts" to Māori across the socio-economic spectrum including education, have been deprived and constrained by Western conventions that have been strongly supported by notions of epistemological racism. That is, the notion of cultural diversity is a non-descript foundation that can be used to express anything and nothing, much like globalisation is everything and anything and so political credibility is ultimately flawed because equity is non-existent.

Research by Māori, about Māori and for Māori has diversified since the development of Te Kōhanga

Reo (Early Childhood Education Māori "Language Nests") and of Te Whare Tapa Whā (the Māori health framework formulated by Professor Mason Durie about the same time that the Te Kōhanga Reo movement began). Māori people developed Te Kōhanga Reo with assistance from the Department of Māori Affairs in 1981. The first Te Kōhanga Reo, Pukeatua, was opened at Wainuiomata near Wellington in 1982 with a further 99 being established around the country by the end of 1982 (see Hohepa, 1990; Irwin, 1990). By 1994, there were 800 Te Kōhanga Reo that catered for over 14,000 children. Both of these developments marked an era of the consolidation of cultural redefinition of Māori by Māori in that "what counted as Māori" was necessitated as the norm as opposed to "inferior": "in each field Māori were taking control over discourses about Māori, thus providing the space for legitimation of the 'Māori voice' and for rejecting the validity of the 'non-Māori' gaze when it turned out merely to reflect itself" (Durie, 2002, p. 2). *Tino rangatiratanga* Māori (Māori self-determination) is both epitomised and legitimised by the development of research concerning Māori, whether it be through a *kaupapa* Māori approach, a Māori-centred approach or, through Māori research methodologies that have evolved alongside the development of these research approaches.

Within the context of research concerning Māori and Māori communities in the past, Māori aspirations for Māori were not inclusive of research methodologies. Durie (2002, p. 1) states that "Māori have been the victims of poor past research rather than its beneficiaries ... preconceptions about Māori needs as defined by non-Māori prevailed". This victimisation undoubtedly maintained the subordinate status of Māori among research communities where researchers were free to "come and go as they pleased". Consequently, the advancement of Māori across the socio-economic spectrum (as a result of such research) has been limited. Recent research by Māori researchers among Māori communities employing evolving Māori research techniques has confirmed the diminution of this (aged) research phenomenon in that the "come and go as you please" exploits are no longer appropriate, nor are they practised.

The development of research about Indigenous peoples by Indigenous peoples globally has had significant positive implications for Māori. The growth of Māori research by Māori for Māori, and Māori research that employs Māori cultural conventions has developed at a steady rate where such research is driven by critical analyses that are both transformative and political by nature "Māori researchers have thus sought to transform past subjective research positioning by redefining research frameworks to place Māori people and thought at the centre and in doing so, creating a Māori research paradigm" (Durie, 2002, p. 2). It is appropriate now in the twenty-first century that critical and transformative analyses that

stem from a Māori epistemological experience allow for diverse appearances of knowledge production when concerning research among Māori, especially now that the notion of epistemological racism has and continues to be challenged to the extent that it is recognised as a social injustice. It must be also recognised that the development of a Māori research methodological framework has simultaneously seen a number of progressive Māori approaches to Māori research evolve, thus constructing a Māori research methodological continuum.

■ *Whakapapa*: Its meaning and tradition

While *iwi* narratives and oral histories are distinctive, Indigenous Māori traditions have their foundations in the creation of the universe as retold by these oral traditions. Durie (in Te Whaiti et al., 1997, p. 144) recognises this diversity among *iwi* traditions but also alludes to the capacity to generalise to the point that narratives concerning the creation traditions are effectively “representative of the genesis of Māori thought”. Acknowledging that subtle differences exist, commonalities centre on accounts that the world is ordered by networks of kinship and alliance (Salmond, 1997). Māori oral narratives, for instance in the form of chants, described the formation of the universe in a language and framework based on *whakapapa* – genealogical descent that brought congruent forms of life together, engendering new life form. The creation account was seen as continuous in that all things of the natural world were emerging and always unfolding.

These interactions eventually materialised as a lattice of relationships connecting people and places, and were invigorated by mutual exchanges, “Tapu, or cosmic power, was the source of all creation. It brought complementary forms of life together, generating new beings” (Salmond, 1997, p. 401). Walker (1990, p. 11) expands our understanding of the creation of the universe further by explaining, “Te Kore as a state of potential, Te Pō as the celestial realm, the domain of the Gods and the source of all mana and tapu, and lastly Te Ao Mārama the world of light and reality, the dwelling place of human beings”. Although this three-phase dynamic is consistent among *iwi* traditions as mentioned, the important factor here is that within each of the three phases are a multitude of creations that are validated through *whakapapa*. Buck (1949, p. 433), for instance, refers to expressions of learning as comprising the sequential ordering of the phenomena of nature before arriving at a genealogical table of human descent and sees such action as providing an opportunity for the expert to add length and prestige to the human line of descent. *Whakapapa* recollects the past in order to establish a pathway for the present, which can then be applied and used to plan for the future.

Io-Matua-kore created the first Atua (gods), Rangīawatea and Papatūānuku, and it is from these two that

the male and female principles originate from whence the pedigree of humanity descends. For this reason *whakapapa* concerns the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things and so legitimates Māori epistemology hence; it is this esoteric knowledge (Durie, 1998, p. 265) that is at the heart of Māori ways of knowing and knowledge. *Whakapapa* is therefore embedded within the Indigenous knowledge of Aotearoa, it is innate and accordingly interrelated with contemporary research in a number of often taken for granted ways in that Māori are related to all other living things in the world including trees, fish, animals, insects and other life forms (Mead, 1984, pp. 63-75). The embedded intrinsic nature of *whakapapa* is continually in a state of cultivation and has been as Māori have moved through the millennia from generation to generation. *Whakapapa* has underpinned Māori tradition from the beginning of time; its significance is especially pertinent today where its application as a legitimate research methodology that has its foundations in Indigenous belief systems will be explored and validated by this essay.

■ *Whakapapa* as a theoretical basis for research

The Indigenous structures and processes of the modes of learning traditionally used in Aotearoa stemmed from *ngā tikanga me ngā āhuatanga ā o tātou tīpuna* – a system of rules and principles established and applied by our ancestors (Pere, 1991). *Whakapapa* has enabled the retention of these traditions and undeniably their contemporary application too, where such rules, rights and obligations are by no means out of place in forming the basis for research among Māori communities in Aotearoa today. However, whilst *whakapapa* has facilitated the retention of *tikanga*, it is important to note that it is through narratives and oral traditions that *whakapapa* has been passed down through the generations. That is, while *whakapapa* will always exist, narratives validate these traditions.

Māori scholars of various realms including navigation, carving and *whakapapa* have validated a Māori worldview since the beginning of time where this knowledge has been retained through narratives that have been passed on to subsequent generations. More recently in the latter part of the twentieth century, the same pedigree of scholars has authenticated these views to sit alongside dominant practices and traditions albeit across a range of contexts. Smith (1999, p. 8), for instance, refers to the importance of *whakapapa* to Kaupapa Māori research in three areas, based on a range of unified matters including that:

- *whakapapa* is a way of thinking about Māori people;
- in urban settings one is not necessarily involved with kinship-based groups, and;

- in relation to the role of Māori researchers, they must not be taken for granted.

In keeping with Māori traditions, *whakapapa* therefore becomes the most fundamental aspect of the way we think about and come to know the world (Rangihau in King, 1981). It is a way of thinking, a way of storing knowledge and a way of debating knowledge (Smith, 1999). Indeed, this essay contends that *whakapapa* is a means and way to acquiring new knowledge; it is the all-important link between the past, present and future. For instance, as an Indigenous person of Aotearoa, the past qualifies (through *whakapapa*) one's place in society today. Therefore, by using the skills and traditions acquired through Indigenous (Māori) narratives, the accumulation of knowledge and the examination of this knowledge and the capacity to progress is tenable.

As a research process, a *whakapapa* research methodology exercises *tikanga* Māori to guide the research, explicating the inseparable links between the supernatural, land, humanity and the environment. The concept of *whakapapa* is therefore the all-inclusive interweaving mechanism that provides legitimate foundations from which Māori research can be performed and validated today. *Whakapapa* thus provides the space for Māori knowledge and means of considering the world thereby separating Māori-driven research from dominant research perspectives. Notably, this approach to Māori research is applicable across Indigenous contexts too where Indigenous peoples, their lands, oral histories and genealogies are implicitly connected; albeit, where some Indigenous peoples have more of a spiritual connection than a physical one today because of the adverse effects of colonisation.

Royal (1998) in developing *Te Ao Mārama – A research paradigm*, illustrated its strength as a medium from which the past is drawn upon to enthuse contemporary Māori theorising and philosophical reflection; *whakapapa* is identified as an analytical tool traditionally used by Māori to understand the “nature of phenomena, the origin of phenomena, the connections and relationships to other phenomena, describing trends in phenomena, locating phenomena and extrapolating and predicting future phenomena” (Royal, 1998, p. 4). Of particular interest is the observation that *whakapapa* as a research methodology is seen to be organic rather than deconstructive. That is, while *whakapapa* allows us to trace our descent back through the generations, *whakapapa* also permits movement and growth in the future. This essay extends on the theorising of *Te Ao Mārama* to not only utilise its design but to extend on this, for instance, to be inclusive of biological and non-biological ties between the researcher and the research community as well as to all aspects of the research community. Thus, *whakapapa* noticeably provides

the space for Indigenous theorising, philosophical reflection and research outside of a common colonial experience (Royal, 2002).

This “space” is what was referred to earlier in that Indigenous Māori scholars must “take up” this position and in doing so continue to develop and model Indigenous Māori perspectives and models of analysis. *Whakapapa* not only provides this “space” but it also validates the rights and obligation of Māori to utilise it. That is, the *whakapapa* “infrastructure” already exists throughout the Māori world and therefore the impetus is on knowing this knowledge and overtly expressing it in a manner that it can be used as a legitimate research methodology. A Māori (Indigenous) worldview is already valid and so it is not necessary to validate it, rather it is necessary to employ such knowledge when conducting research among Māori (Indigenous) communities today in order for its application as a research methodology to be recognised, accepted and therefore legitimised.

It is appropriate that the importance of thinking forward is also accentuated when talking about *whakapapa*. If we position our thinking within a *whānau* context, it is a common phenomenon among Māori parents of children who reach adulthood to desire *mokopuna* (grandchildren); sometimes it is even an expectation. *Whakapapa* no doubt authenticates this notion, consequently the *whakapapa* line will knowingly continue as will the family bloodlines. Mead (2003, pp. 59-60), for instance, speaks about the *kaibau-waiū* (birthrights) and how these come to fruition:

When a child is born there is a dramatic entry into the world of light, *te ao mārama*. A new person is born into the *whānau*. It is always a marvellous revelation to see the result of human creativity when a new version of *te ira tangata* is produced. There is a continuation down the descent line.

Similarly with Māori-driven research, the application of *whakapapa* as a research tool is about the retention of Māori knowledge and its application to the growth of new knowledge to meet the needs of Māori in contemporary times as well as to plan for a future where “Māori can live as Māori” (Durie, 2003, p. 7). While *whakapapa* at one level is about the retention of *whānau*, *hapū* and *iwi* bloodlines through new human life form, this essay purports the notion that at a research level today, *whakapapa* concerns the birth of new knowledge in order to maintain and develop a Māori knowledge base that is inherently Indigenous. Accordingly, this *whakapapa*-based research methodology is able to address a number of specific research questions including:

- What is the meaning of research?
- What is the research for?

- What is the relevance of the research?
- What are the benefits of the research?

Within the context of this essay, such questions can be addressed by exploring a number of explanations that have been disclosed and that culminate in the notion that *whakapapa*:

- legitimates Māori epistemology;
- is at the heart of Māori ways of knowing and knowledge;
- can establish a framework in which information can be structured in a logical and rational manner;
- provides the basis for the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things; and
- is a means and a way of acquiring new knowledge, it is the all-important link between the past, present and future.

■ *Whakapapa*: Characteristics of Indigenous thought

The commitment of *tikanga* to the concept of *whakapapa* is paramount for strengthening the kinship ties among Māori communities today. The notion of *tikanga* does not exclusively belong to Māori, only the name does. That is, every ethnicity has and observes *tikanga*; they just have a different name to Māori people. The values of Indigenous peoples throughout the world are similar in that there is a bond with the land. *Tikanga* are mutually exclusive *taonga* (cherished treasures) hence their “value” that is tangible, intangible, physical and spiritual. The following *tikanga*, while not an exhaustive list, exemplify their importance and interconnectedness with respect to the supernatural, Papatūānuku – land, the universe, all living things and therefore to the concept of *whakapapa*:

- *whenua* – land and the inherent link to Papatūānuku – Mother Earth.
- *tangata whenua* – Indigenous people and their link to the land; Papatūānuku.
- *tapu* – sacredness and the power and influence associated with the Atua.
- *kaitiakitanga* – conservation and its traditions innately linked to Papatūānuku.
- *wairua* – spiritual essence, the source of life and an essential part of the universe.
- *mauri* – life force which generates life and bonds the universe together.
- *aroha* – love that is all encompassing and expressed for all living things.

These *tikanga* emphasise the research methodological approach in that they elucidate the relevance and legitimate place of *whakapapa* as the

basis for entry into a research field that encompasses contemporary Māori communities. Like narratives and oral histories, *tikanga* will vary among *iwi* and *hapū* emphasising their importance in terms of the relationship between the researcher and the research participants. However as mentioned earlier, irrespective of *iwi*, *tikanga* embody the genesis of Māori thought. A clear elucidation of *tikanga* is of the utmost importance in order for a *whakapapa* research methodological approach to be clearly understood, recognised and accepted as being valid by both the researcher, and the research community.

Indigenous models of practice have been developed and employed across the socio-economic spectrum of Indigenous communities worldwide including Indigenous language revitalisation programmes, Indigenous health initiatives and Indigenous environmental management. Such practices naturally assume an Indigenous worldview as their epistemological base. Despite the cultural heterogeneity among Indigenous peoples of the world, a unique spiritual relationship with the land underpins a belief commonly shared by Indigenous peoples that is an impression of unity and harmony with the environment. Based on this profound connection to the land and the surrounding environment, like Māori, Indigenous communities throughout the world are at one with their land, “People are the land and the land is the people and the tradition is reflected in song, custom, subsistence, work, approaches to healing and birthing, and the rituals associated with death” (Durie, 2003, p. 298).

Royal (2002) explores the unification of Indigenous people to the land in a report titled *Indigenous worldviews: A comparative study* and in seeking a mutual point of interest for Indigenous peoples outside of their colonial experiences, he states that “To this end, I would like to draw our attention to this theme of the divine landscape, an environment alive with conscious and benevolent energies that serve both as a model and as a point of transformation for the Indigenous individual and their community” (Royal, 2002, p. 26). The opening address to this essay for instance makes reference to my tribal homeland and to its significant landmarks. Accordingly, I was elevating its status that is adorned in *tikanga* where although a physical link may not always be practical, the spiritual connection is ongoing.

There is perhaps no better example of the importance of land and the environment and its intrinsic spiritual value among Indigenous peoples than that orated by the Suquamish and Duwamish Chief Seattle in his response to the “Great White Chief”, President Franklin Pierce’s promise of a reservation for his people in 1853. Widely described as one of the most profound statements on the environment ever made, Chief Seattle’s speech highlights the profound relationship between humans and the environment in

what Royal (2002, p. 28) describes is a “natural world kinship”. The following passage taken from his speech expresses this bond:

To us, the ashes of our ancestors are sacred, and their resting place is hallowed ground ... Our dead never forget the beautiful world that gave them being. They still love its verdant valleys, its murmuring rivers, its magnificent mountains, sequestered vales and verdant-lined lakes and bays ... Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people (Nerburn, 1999, pp. 196-198).

For Māori, reflections on land have their roots in the oral traditions that have been bound together by *whakapapa* and passed down through narratives including *watata* (chants and songs) since the beginning of time. The concept of *whakapapa* and its application as a valid research methodology therefore materialises the relationships that connect people and places. In doing so, *whakapapa* provides the basis for the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things where *whakapapa* is at the heart of the retention of Indigenous knowledge or more specifically for the aims of this essay, Māori ways of knowing and knowledge. Consequently, as a means and method of acquiring new knowledge, the concept of *whakapapa* extricates the establishment of a framework in which information can be structured in a consistent and coherent manner. In doing so, the role of a potential Indigenous (Māori) research community and its advancement both nationally and globally, can thus be examined and researched according to specific (Indigenous) research aims and an Indigenous worldview.

■ *Whakapapa*: My interpretations and thoughts

I now want to progress from the tradition and meaning of *whakapapa* to a position that encompasses and embraces a representation that fittingly focuses on a contemporary context. However, the significance of *whakapapa* and its essentialistic nature is not ignored. This view recognises that *whakapapa* can be seen as a shared illumination of the interconnections between people and their spiritual and physical connections to the land; and not just collective biological connections. For instance, the once geographically distinct Māori tribal communities live and meet together today in a variety of contexts and so Māori institutions today are not necessarily connected through blood ties; it is a common phenomena among Māori tribes today to function in a pan-tribal nature. There have been early examples of pan-tribalism movements throughout Aotearoa's history since colonisation and these include the Kotahitanga movement (nineteenth century), the Māori Battalion (World War I and II), organisations

such as the New Zealand Māori Council and the New Zealand Māori Women's Welfare League as well as other institutions that include Urban Māori Authorities, Māori boarding schools, Māori (health/education) Providers, Urban Marae, Te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori and Whare Wānanga. The majority of these institutions are based in urban settings throughout Aotearoa New Zealand where

Nowadays, the term *whānau* is used more widely. It can cover a “kin cluster”, a group of kin who regularly co-operate for common ends and accept a variety of kin or quasi-kin limits as the basis for recruitment ... However, above all, the most rapid growth in the application of the term *whānau* has been in the metaphorical use of the term to refer to collectives of people working for a common end, who are not connected by kinship, let alone descent (Bishop, 1996, p. 217).

In this day and age, the Indigenous (Māori) people, communities and social groupings are associated through a range of interconnecting attributes and dynamics that include similarities in history, experiences, ideals, services, interests and practices.

Let me take the example of Māori boarding schools and a subject of my research that have been a part of Aotearoa's education system since 1854, including those that have since closed their doors. With the advent of colonisation and increased immigration, the Māori boarding schools system was established as a mechanism to educate Māori and provide Māori with the (ostensible) means to survive in a “new” world. The Education Ordinance of 1847 provided Government grants to the various missionary denominations to establish staff and run elementary schools for Māori. These schools were funded partly by land endowments with contributions from the Government and from Māori, and were supported by annual Government grants. Of the original Māori boarding schools that were gradually established, six continue to deliver an education to their students according to their respective educational philosophies.

The history of the Māori boarding schools has its criticisms, both positive and negative (see Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974; Jenkins & Matthews, 1995; Paerangi Ltd, 2002; Smith, 1996; Van Der Linden, 1990). For instance, in regards to the administration of education, all educational institutions in Aotearoa have had to comply with the changes throughout the last 30 years. Māori have been especially affected by the shift in government socio-economic policies that have seen the country move to a market-based economy. Smith (1996, p. 13) alludes to the impression of these changes stating that they have “had little impact on alleviating the Māori educational crisis related to underachievement”. Indeed, Māori boarding schools such as Te Aute College, near Hastings, have not

overcome the structural impediments contained within these educational reforms and subsequently “choices with respect to access, participation and outcomes in education and schooling are correspondingly limited” (Smith, 1996, p. 14). In terms of educational attainment and achievement, national examination results from 2002 confirm that the Māori boarding schools are making a significant educational difference for Māori students. Two of the Māori boarding schools in particular were among the top schools in Aotearoa in terms of the standards achieved by Māori students, confirming a Māori view that when things are working well, Māori students can excel within a Māori boarding school environment (Paerangi Ltd, 2002).

Māori boarding school education is unique in that it is underpinned by *tikanga* as well as distinctive religious denominational backgrounds. Bearing these characteristics in mind, it is fair to assume that Māori boarding schools hold proud rolls of successive generations within individual *whānau* attending the school that was once attended by one’s sister, brother, mother, father, uncle, auntie, grandmother, grandfather, great grandmother or great grandfather and so on. Individual *whānau* either still maintain a presence or have left these schools but regardless, still have a connection to their school that has its foundations in *whakapapa*. Each school has become intimately linked to members of a particular *whānau*. In doing so, *whakapapa* has become the unifying force and common dominator that interconnects with each individual *whānau*, the students and ex-students in their respective schools.

My position then is one that reinforces the idea that Māori boarding schools have a *whakapapa* that is interwoven with its past, present and future students. Thus the notion of *whakapapa* facilitates the promotion of a framework in which the curriculum can be structured, providing the basis for the organisation of knowledge and the means of acquiring new knowledge. Indeed *whakapapa* nurtures the social, cultural and spiritual connections of the students and their *whānau* too. In addition, a special feature of the research community of my intended research is the fact that while it reflects a pan-tribal environment, it has a special link to the *tangata whenua* of its district in that it was the *tangata whenua* who bequeathed the land for the establishment of the institution; thousands of acres. The land therefore has a physical and spiritual connection to the research community that dates back to the creation of the universe. Accordingly, this research community has a *whakapapa* connection with the local *hapū*. This connection is ongoing and underpins aspects of the institution, for instance, in the distinctive *kawa* (protocol and etiquette) that guides certain *tikanga* as opposed to those belonging to other *hapū* and *iwi* from other regions.

Aotearoa’s education system for Māori in the nineteenth century and beyond was based on

the policy of assimilation, a subject that has been significantly researched (see Simon & Smith, 1998, 2001; Walker, 1990). For example, the notion of superiority and its relationship with dominant group interests was reflected in the structure of the Māori boarding schools, the Native Schools system and in the generic monocultural framework of that period; an international trend between “colonisers” and the[ir] “colonised”. The 1867 *Native Schools Act* established a state-controlled system of village primary schools for Māori under the administration of the Native Department. This system continued up until 1969 at which time all Māori (Native) Schools were abolished and amalgamated into the mainstream education system. Similar to Native Schools on a national scale that was safely ensconced through legislation, the Māori boarding schools functioned to maintain the Government aim of assimilation. These schools were also seen to reinforce and maintain certain institutions that had been earlier initiated through the work of the first missionaries – British law, schools as a “civilising” mechanism and a form of establishing social control for Māori and Māori communities through a European regulated framework that demanded cultural surrender (Walker, 1990). The Māori boarding schools (and the State Native Schools) ironically though became mechanisms that served to maintain kinship connections among Māori *iwi*, *hapū* and *whānau* within some of these schools.

In today’s (State) Māori boarding schools this kinship continues to be validated by both biological and non-biological (surrogate) affiliations. For instance, the connections within Indigenous Māori community institutions today are strengthened by the notion of *whanaungatanga* where relationships are fostered and nurtured according to *tikanga*. Pere alludes to the practice of *whanaungatanga* when she states that it is “Based on ancestral, historical, traditional and spiritual ties. It forms that strong bond that influences the way one lives and reacts to his/her kinship groups, people, the world, the universe. The kinship network as far as family is concerned, is one that gives a feeling of belonging, value and security” (1991, p. 26). *Whanaungatanga* expounds the firm links between the cosmology, land, people and their environment, which is strongly embedded in *tikanga* and validated through *whakapapa*.

■ *Whakapapa*: Snapshots of my research

At the onset of my research, it was evident that the proposed research community had a *whakapapa*; indeed, there were many identifiable threads and levels of *whakapapa* throughout this institution. Ultimately, this led the researcher down the pathway of exploring *whakapapa* as a valid research tool. While this research community had its physical foundations in nineteenth century Aotearoa history, this research community

also had a cosmological and spiritual genealogical descent that linked it to the beginning of time and that extended beyond the shores of Aotearoa to Hawaiki. Hawaiki is the name of the spiritual homeland that Māori explorers such as Kupe first left over 1000 years ago on exploration journeys. Consequently, he arrived at Aotearoa (place of the long white cloud) where others soon followed him in the ensuing centuries. The research community is a living entity that is linked to Māori traditions, and it is a contemporary setting that has been nurtured by *tikanga* since its inception. Indeed, it is the *mana* (power, prestige) of this research community that is innately inherited by those who are linked through *whakapapa*, Papatūānuku, kinship, *whanaungatanga* and fellowship that reaches out and impacts upon the rest of Aotearoa, and globally.

Within the specific context of this research community, *whakapapa* is multiple layered. That is, at one level *whakapapa* is reflected by the concept of *whanaungatanga*, a Māori ethos tied to family links and kinship whose Western equivalent is "brotherhood". While at another level, the research community is built on *whenua* Māori (Māori land) and so has a physical and spiritual link to Papatūānuku founded on *whakapapa*. For these reasons, *whakapapa* is a unifying force guided by *tikanga* that innately weaves through all who enter the portal of this research community. Another aspect of the forthcoming research is the connection between my position as the researcher with the research community: "For Māori, genealogy and connection gives access, however there is a vulnerability and a responsibility that goes with such success" (Mataira, 2000, pp. 11-12). *Whakapapa* is therefore a common denominator that links this researcher with the proposed research community. However, the obligations and responsibilities incurred through this research process position the research community to the forefront of the research; from the beginning through to its completion. Indeed, at the research's completion, such is the nature of a *whakapapa* methodological approach that the acquisition of further knowledge can occur; be it by myself or by some other researcher in order to challenge, debate and or acquire further knowledge. Thus, a *whakapapa* research methodological approach is continual, developmental and contextual.

As introduced earlier, this paper reinforces the notion that when working with Māori communities, *whakapapa* can be viewed as a shared illumination of the relationships between Māori people and not just collective biological connections. While an essentialist viewpoint might diverge on this discourse that supports a contemporary perspective on *whakapapa* as being inclusive of non-biological relationships, the reality for the proposed research community is that there are a number of biological and non-biological connections that have their pedigree grounded in *whakapapa*. These spiritual and physical connections include:

- The proposed research community is built on *whenua* Māori that was provided by the *tangata whenua (bapū)* of the area, accordingly, there are *bapū* and *whenua* connections.
- There is a special link to Papatūānuku that is bound by Māori narratives.
- The *whānau* who have entered the portals of the institution throughout the generations since the nineteenth century have a connection to this place which is validated through traditions, experiences and narratives.
- The *whānau* have a connection to everyone else who has been a part of this community.
- The researcher has connections to the land (as *tangata whenua*), has been a part of this community in the past where this presence is maintained today and so *whakapapa* validates my (the researcher's) position while also incurring rights, responsibilities and obligations.

The significance of *whakapapa* is therefore especially applicable today where contemporary meaning and purpose is shaped by the passage of time, history and experiences. Future pathways of Māori will also be guided by *whakapapa*, and so it is appropriate that a *whakapapa* research methodology is acknowledged as being legitimate too in order that new knowledge regarding Māori ways of knowing, doing and being may accompany the movement of Māori into the twenty-first century. For instance, a more knowledgeable perspective of the positive role that the proposed research community can perform in contributing to Māori advancement in Aotearoa will not only be of benefit to Māori but to the whole country. Indeed the methodological approach that will guide this research will not only be relevant to this specific research community but will be useful to Indigenous communities worldwide.

■ *Whakapapa*: A summary

This essay has supported and indeed encouraged the legitimate position of *whakapapa* as a basis for research methodology when engaging in Māori-driven research where Māori are in control at all levels of the research; at the core and at the periphery. Today, an increase in the magnitude of (Māori) autonomy has paved the progression of Māori and *twi* Authorities and (Education and Health) Providers as well as for other pan-tribal institutions that Māori are in control of. The multiple layered nature of *whakapapa* permits its application across specific contexts within these organisations including research, education, health, enterprise and politicisation. This contemporary function of *whakapapa* is legitimated by the notion of a shared illumination of the relationships between Māori people and their natural environment and not just of collective biological connections. For instance,

there is a constant link between the past that extends back to the beginning of time and to Io-Matua-kore, to the present where Māori remain an *iwi*-based people but now with pan-tribal affiliations and to the future.

Today, Māori people and their traditions are guided by ancestral precepts and examples that have been passed on from one generation to the next. Therefore there is a reaffirmation in the joining of the living with their departed ancestors. This reaffirmation is sustained and undeniably strengthened by *whakapapa* and a lattice of relationships connecting people with their environment where such interactions are revitalised by mutual exchanges involving *karakia* (prayer), *waiata*, *whakataukī* (proverbs) and other narrative traditions. The concept of *whakapapa* legitimises relationships among Māori that are ordered by networks of kinship and alliance. These networks extend beyond a biological filter today in that the notion of pan-tribalism is very much a part of contemporary Māori society.

It is through *whakapapa* that the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things legitimates a Māori worldview, which is at the heart of Māori knowledge, Māori ways of knowing and Māori ways of acquiring new knowledge. The concept of *whakapapa* is innately woven throughout the fabric of Māori society and accordingly interrelates with contemporary society in a number of often taken for granted ways where the embedded nature of *whakapapa* continually reproduces itself as it is the most fundamental aspect of the way Māori think about and come to know the world.

Therefore, just as the creation of human life undergoes a process of development through the three phase dynamic mentioned earlier from *te kore* (nothing; but the potentiality for life) to *te pō* (a sacred *hapū* [pregnant] state) and to *te ao mārama* (birth; entry into the world of light) where the descent (blood) line continues, so too does the procurement of new knowledge where Māori ways of knowing and doing continually develop and are applied to contemporary settings. We the living are guided by our traditions and so preserve our connections to the past in our quest for advancement, advancing the descent line and advancing our understanding of the world.

In conclusion, a *whakapapa* research methodology approach to my research will guide the birth of new knowledge relative to my research community where this approach can also be applied across other Māori community contexts. Indeed, this research approach also has potential application across Indigenous communities worldwide despite our cultural heterogeneity, where Indigenous values relative to each respective Indigenous community including those associated with land, humanity and the supernatural can be used to guide our research. Land, humanity and the supernatural are co-dependent entities among the Indigenous and so do not exist independently exclusive of one and another; they co-exist and do so

by sequenced networks of relationships linking each entity that are maintained by respective Indigenous narratives and traditions. *Whakapapa* is a method for acquiring new knowledge in that it is the all important and sustainable link between the past, present and future. In the traditions of our ancestors "*that which is joined together becomes an unbroken line – He āpiti hono, he tātai hono*".

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Appendix A: Glossary of Māori words

ao mārama	the world of light
Aotearoa	land of the long white cloud – New Zealand
aroha	love, care for others
hapū	pregnant; sub-tribe with a common ancestor
Hawaiki	the name of the original homeland of the Māori
Io-Matua-kore	Supreme Being (God of all Gods)
iwi	tribe who have a common ancestor
kaihau-waiū	birthright
kaitiakitanga	conservation
karakia	prayer
kaupapa Māori	Māori perspective, point of view
kore	potential; nothing
kotahitanga	unity
Kupe	early Māori explorer c.AD 900

Kura Kaupapa Māori	Māori immersion primary school
mana	power, status or prestige
Māori	the name of the Indigenous people of Aotearoa
marae	traditional meeting place of Māori
mauri	life force
ngā āhuatanga	principles
Ngai Te Whatu-i-āpiti	a sub-tribe of the Hawkes Bay region of Aotearoa
Papatūānuku	Mother Earth
pō	darkness, night
Rangi-awatea	Sky Father
taonga	things of value to people
tapu	sacred
Te Kōhanga Reo	Māori immersion preschools
Te Whare Tapa Whā	model of Māori health
tikanga	value, custom; the way things are done
tipuna	ancestor
waiata	song; to sing
wairua	spirit; spirituality
whakapapa	genealogy
whakataukī	proverbial saying
whānau	family
whanaungatanga	family relationships
Whare Wānanga	specialised school of learning; university
whenua	land

About the author

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