

Developing Indigenous Infrastructure in the University: Another Era or another Error?

Te Tuhi Robust

Abstract: This paper has two interwoven parts. One is provided by a set of life experiences that led this writer to academic study from a deep Māori setting. The story and its themes are shared and linked to the second part of the study which aims to identify critical features of wānanga or the traditional Māori learning institution, and how these might inform Māori education today in a University setting. This second theme, which is a part of the writer's doctoral dissertation (Robust, 2006) also examines the responsiveness of the tertiary institution in creating an indigenous infrastructure aimed at Māori educational participation within a kaupapa Māori context. A number of 'critical events' regarding Māori educational development interventions in the 1980s are considered with the expectation that they can inform the development of better educational outcomes for access, participation, recruitment, retention and the advancement of Māori. This study of contemporary Māori academic sites, which include state-funded wānanga as well as other indigenous academic sites, includes the First Nations House of Learning at the University of British Columbia. Success markers for the University of Auckland include the arresting of declining Māori student enrolments alongside the growth of Māori participating in post-graduate study and research, therefore providing opportunity to contribute to the bank of knowledge in New Zealand society. While the regeneration of the language in New Zealand has been the driving force behind the wānanga development at the University of Auckland building further on the foundations of kohanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, whare kura and wānanga, the development of Māori as with First Nations initiatives has been in the area of education. Tertiary institutions offer a context in which kaupapa Māori theory brings together common threads of communication for people.

Keywords: Indigenous education, kaupapa Māori, tertiary education, University of Auckland, University of British Columbia.

Introduction

Whare wānanga were a key institution in traditional Māori society and represented in all regions of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The ability to travel and share each other's knowledge attested or benchmarked by others was a key part of the maintenance of the tribal lore. Expert teachers (tōhunga) were central to the entire process of controlling the knowledge and selecting to whom it was to be imparted. This raises a question of what a contemporary wānanga, as an intervention and an academic entity would look like at the University of Auckland and would it withstand international scrutiny? As a kaupapa Māori educational intervention, it is a theoretical test in the configurations of conscientization, resistance and transformative praxis.

Case studies, such as the University of Auckland, New Zealand and the University of British Columbia, Canada, provide a means for checking the evidence for the processes and the predicted outcomes for kaupapa Māori theory. The recalling of events is central to both case studies. An event such as the rugby match that took place between both countries in 1927, discussed later in this paper, combined with similar initiatives embarked upon by indigenous leaders from both tertiary communities to create a physical presence for First Nations and Māori, are identities at the core of the case studies. Cultural connection, and a style of operation that is inclusive, enact in part the values of: respect, reciprocity, relevance and

responsibility. The factors all converge to build this discussion into a series of conversations. The collaboration undertaken over long distances and periods of time has led to recording the stories of both institutions that can be added to in the future.

Precursors and Prior Experiences

Life experiences provide a base for this story about how one comes to academic study. This is an opportunity to share a small but important part of the struggle for some Māori involved in the tertiary sector, with the hope that people in the future will have an insight into the pathways of New Zealand society informed by education. A decision of this nature means that the rural town and family which in the past provided the support infrastructure to attend local schools and experience success needs to be re-created somewhere else. Personal experiences need to be redefined within another environment that would offer the same security. In the case of this study, that environment was within a tertiary institution, the University of Auckland. From the outset, a major personal motivation was to find an institution that understood and appreciate family values and commitment to providing the synergy required for the children to progress and using a single income to make it happen.

Having decided to move to Auckland, the institution had to exemplify the same commitment and values that I had been nurtured in. This approach to the selection involved the rest of the children and their parents from the same street and surrounds. However, the decision was not as easy as one might imagine as I was the first of the grandchildren from my generation intending to enrol at a tertiary institution. This meant that the hapū or sub-tribe, would in time come to know about the decision and the unseen responsibility of presenting a good example out there in the community was added pressure to succeed in that new environment. This understanding emphasised the sense of responsibility stemming from working collectively as well as individually. The opportunity to tell this story is in a sense an honour as others have not had the same opportunity. Having come from a background based on values of common sense and hard work with an underpinning desire to share with others, it is important to note that this story is only a small contribution to the many stories that may be told by others.

These experiences impacted on the wish to pursue a career in education. The choice has provided for a different lifestyle that includes travel, working with a large community of people, locally, nationally and internationally, from all facets of life. It also provided opportunities to influence the future of others through education. This paper is derived from what happened to a person who was to be the next one in the family to experience tertiary education, therefore leaving home to undertake a course of study for three years and come out of it with a diploma in teaching. There was no idea that a doctoral qualification would be completed some thirty years later. Within this context, education is considered as a 'tool' similar to the way discussed by Joan Metge. In 1961 while attending a meeting in West Auckland she heard Hoani Waititi speaking in support of the establishment of the Māori Education Foundation. The suggestion by Waititi at that time was for Māori and Pākehā to consider the opportunity of working in a co-operative manner (Metge, 2001). In graduating from North Shore Teachers Training College, I embarked on a teaching career that spanned a number of years and experiences that confirm the vision of Hoani Waititi.

There are other parts to the story prior to the departure from the small rural town that are to be recounted. For example, there was the rush to complete the filling in of the thick wad of papers received as part of the big move away from home to 'gain' an education. In visiting the courthouse for the first time in my life to request a copy of my birth certificate, it became clear that they had made a mistake in recording the birth date as the 3rd of May instead of the 5th of May. Further, there was the note that I was 'Māori *of Full Blood*' in the records. It took a lot of courage to bring the birth date to my mother's attention as it meant that the family bible, where all of the important papers such as birth certificates, death certificates, wills and

marriage certificates were kept for the family, were wrong. However, after some discussion it was agreed that the birth certificate was okay to use for this purpose, but that the birth date would continue to be celebrated on the later date. The issue was re-visited with my mother some time later and it became clear that my grandfather had registered the birth at the courthouse. Moreover, he had overseen the registration of my birth especially to ensure the insertion of 'Māori of *Full Blood*'.

Hence there was acceptance of the clerical error by my mother. Finding a Justice of the Peace was part of this history. On the day after receipt of the papers it was necessary to sign an 'oath of allegiance' to be sworn and witnessed in front of a Justice of the Peace who was Wally Lomax the local electrician and the Mayor of Kaikohe. I was helping him to install the new television aerial on the roof so that we could get reception for a second channel on the television and asked if he would sign the forms. He commented at the time that being up on the roof of our house was close enough to god who would be our witness for the oath to be taken and that I should 'drop' into the shop some time to have him 'complete the deal' and sign the forms.

Having to solve the confusion of filling out endless forms for entry into teachers college and then a hostel or halls of residence was a big step. It meant having to enter into an environment that one had never experienced. However, the opportunity to stay with others was preferred to staying with family, who lived on the other side of Auckland and would have made it more of a challenge in getting to and from training college for the three years.

After moving from the north I progressed through the various levels of the teaching profession which included being appointed as a principal at the age of twenty eight, after spending two years working at a national level in the primary teacher's union. Following on from these experiences, there was a position in the Ministry of Education, working in a policy directed and focused government agency. This work eventually led to moving out of the Auckland region to work at national office located in Wellington. The closeness of parliament and working in close proximity to decision makers for the country created an awareness that decisions made centrally, were significant to those in the regions. It brought about the need to make the crucial decision to move back to the north to develop the farm that I had purchased and work in the north amongst my own people. Having a teaching qualification and being available for relief teaching meant that I only had to work as required to cover mortgage payments and other living expenses. This allowed time to actively participate in the sharing of knowledge and advice at my discretion to others who wanted to know more about career choice and educational options in the various regions around the country. It also allowed participation in addressing community issues regarding the impact that government policies and other associated situations might have on the rural communities in the Northland region of New Zealand.

By 1996, renewed contact with two Māori academics Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Graham Hingangaroa Smith, who were enrolling students at the University of Auckland, was made. Discussions included a suggestion that Māori educationalists such as myself should consider making a contribution to the body of knowledge of Māori education. This would include real life experience such as mine that would assist Māori progress within Māori and New Zealand societies in general. This was an opportunity to legitimize, theorize and share my stories that in time would serve to inform other people considering education as a career option. Further to this was the chance to tell a personal story using academic study as the vehicle.

This step required taking into consideration issues such as: the impact on personal and family situations, relocating to Auckland, securing employment and having previous qualifications from extra-mural study at Massey University credited to the University of Auckland. By the end of 1998, a Bachelor in Education degree was completed and that led to the completion of

a Masters in Education (Hons) in 2000. From 1997 to 1999 I commuted between Kaikohe in the Bay of Islands, Northland to Auckland some four hours each way once a week to attend evening lectures at the University of Auckland. This required significant funding from personal resources. Applications for general and Māori targeted scholarships and awards proved to be unsuccessful. This proved to be a significant barrier not only to myself but to other colleagues who were participating in the same programmes of study at that time.

Another key element to undertaking academic study was the selection of a tertiary institution that offered the best options for my situation. At that time the University of Auckland appeared to be the best option. Location was still an issue due to the time it took to travel to attend lectures. But the prospect of studying with a group of other Māori people who had similar experiences and were prepared to work collectively to support each other in the pursuit and sharing of knowledge was a major incentive. The proposed model of engagement based on kaupapa Māori (Māori philosophy) and practice, presented by Graham Smith (1997) suggested working together for the 'the public good' and in this case 'Māori public good'.

The University of Auckland was beginning to promote the inclusion of Māori elements in its overall organization and management, as a positive and proactive response to principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. It sought to provide a critical mass of credentialed Māori academics who would be able to offer skills based on historical, current and future forms of knowledge based on Kaupapa Māori and practice. The organization of lectures on specific days to cater for working people presented better time management options. This meant that a person could plan to attend lectures on a given day in one semester and arrange a different day in a following semester or year. Such arrangements facilitated planning and integrating the study with work and family responsibilities prior to enrolment each year. The presentation of lectures by lecturers who were predominantly of Māori descent also provided good role models from across all academic disciplines.

In 1999, the relocation to Auckland was made possible by the offer of a research contract with the International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education (IRI) along with another as a Teaching Fellow of the Woolf Fisher Research Centre. This meant that I would be able to afford to live in Auckland. This work subsequently led to the offer to assist in the establishment of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori) for the University of Auckland. The intensity of the work undertaken from 1999 to 2004 while employed at the University of Auckland was fulfilling as it sought to contribute to the knowledge economy of New Zealand society and in particular to Māori society. This emerged during the period of time spent with the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr John Hood who provided a type of leadership, courage and vision to substantiate the integrity of Māori elements across the university organization. Collective experiences gained from this work, from research, networking and travel provided a broadened experience of the wider world. However, the journey to the University of Auckland must not be seen as unusual for Māori seeking to enter into tertiary study. Joan Metge (1978) and Walker (1990) suggest that such experiences are shared by other Māori and are therefore not peculiar to one person.

This paper seeks to confirm the intention for Māori being able to name their world within the academic institution. The opportunity for Māori to participate in consultation processes for universities in New Zealand has meant that the University of Auckland is now challenged with the responsibility of aspiring to be among the best research-led environments in the world. The paper now turns to compare events at the First Nations House of Learning (University of British Columbia) with parallel developments at the University of Auckland to better understand the strategic planning of the University of Auckland model. This model brings indigenous peoples from other countries together with the key objective of sharing ideas, peer reviewing, and benchmarking through staff and student exchanges. The focus is on

further examining the processes of identifying and providing cultural space for indigenous peoples in tertiary institutions.

Developing Indigenous Infrastructure

The second purpose of this paper is to identify critical features of wānanga or the traditional Māori learning institution, and how they might inform Māori education in the current university setting. More specifically, it examines the responsiveness of a tertiary institution in creating an indigenous space to promote Māori education across the institution. The paper considers 'critical events' relating to Māori educational development interventions in the 1980s because these provide an historical context for the development of better educational outcomes in a conventional tertiary setting. These outcomes focus on the access, participation, recruitment, retention and the advancement of Māori, and a more complete treatment of these matters is found in Robust (2006).

An examination of literature about wānanga considers the many changes taking place within New Zealand society impacting on Māori and whether or not consideration of traditional modes for the teaching and theory used in wānanga had been taken into account while planning the structural reforms in health and education at that time (McLean, 1972). This prompts consideration to be given to published literature on wānanga by both Māori and non-Māori writers earlier in New Zealand history. Gaining trust by researchers whether Māori or non-Māori, is a key element in the collecting of information from different sources. Kaupapa Māori theory provides a framework for examining developments that affect Māori and it is further informed by the educational reforms of the 1980s that included the development of kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, whare kura and more recently whare wānanga. This framework is used here to explore the concepts of indigenous space and tools used by Māori, to tell their stories.

This approach led to developing case studies incorporating discussions and interviews with indigenous informants who played key roles in developing indigenous spaces at the University of Auckland and the University of British Columbia. While the University of Auckland provides the primary site to be conscientized, the use of a second distinctly different indigenous model as a contrasting case study is explained. The development of indigenous space at the University of Auckland, integral to the re-positioning of the tertiary institution is considered alongside a case study for the University of British Columbia, Canada.

Table 1 for example, summarises the critical events at the University of Auckland and while a full discussion of that material is beyond the scope of the present paper, it is notable that the cycle of resistance, conscientization and transformative action itself re-cycles through the decades. Key early events, for example were the appointments of Dr. Winiata and Matiu Te Hau to the Department of Continuing Education. The development progressed over the decades to culminate in the formation of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori).

Similarly, Table 2 summarizes developments at the University of British Columbia; where conscientization slowly developed over the early decades to be marked by the report of 1958, followed by establishments of anthropology, continuing education and law programmes prior to significant momentum in the 1980s.

Table 1. Te Wānanga O Waipapa/University of Auckland Critical Events

Timeframe	Kaupapa Māori Model	The University of Auckland
1835 to 1949	<i>Resistance; transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action;</i> <i>conscientization</i> <i>Transformative action</i>	[1835] Declaration of Independence [1840] Treaty of Waitangi signed [1947] <i>Maharaia Winiata</i> first Māori appointment in the University – Department of Continuing Education [1948] <i>Matiu Te Hau</i> appointed in Department of Continuing Education
1950 to 1959	<i>Transformative action;</i> <i>conscientization</i> <i>Transformation action;</i> <i>resistance; conscientization</i>	[1950] Bruce Biggs appointed as Assistant Lecturer [Department of Anthropology [1951] Department of Anthropology – Māori language listed in University Calendar.
1960 to 1969	<i>Resistance</i>	[1961] Hunn Report – government policy of integration
1970 to 1979	<i>Conscientization</i> <i>Resistance; transformative action</i> <i>Resistance; transformative action</i>	[1971] Report <i>Te Reo</i> Māori (Benton) [1975] <i>Waitangi</i> Tribunal Act [1985] Protests
1980 to 1989	<i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action;</i> <i>conscientization</i> <i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action</i>	[1982] <i>Te Kohanga Reo</i> established – state funded [1987] <i>Te Reo</i> Māori recognized as an official language [1987] <i>Kura</i> Kaupapa Māori established [1987] <i>Whare Kura</i> established [1988] <i>Waipapa marae</i> established (<i>Tane Nui A Rangī</i>)
1990 to 1999	<i>Transformative action</i> <i>Conscientization</i> <i>Conscientization; resistance;</i> <i>transformative action</i> <i>Conscientization</i> <i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action</i> <i>Resistance; transformative action</i>	[Est.1991] Department of Māori Studies [1993] Review of the Department of Māori Studies [1997] G, Smith: <i>The Development of Kaupapa Māori: Theory and Praxis</i> [paper] Review of Māori in the University [1998] First State Funded Wānanga established [1998] <i>Ranginui</i> Walker appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori) [1993] <i>Mataatua</i> Declaration
2000 to present	<i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action</i>	[2000] Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori) established [2000] <i>Te Runanga Te Wānanga O Waipapa</i> established

Table 2. First Nations historical events at the University of British Columbia

Timeframe	Kaupapa Māori Intervention model	The University of British Columbia Historical Events
1877 to 1949	<i>Conscientization</i>	[1877] University proposed. [1948] Reclaiming of the naming of the 'Thunderbird' Stadium (Alfred Scow and others) [1949] Department of Anthropology established.
1950 to 1959	<i>Conscientization</i>	[1958] Report - The Indians of British Columbia: A Study of contemporary Social Adjustment (Hawthorn – Department of Anthropology)
1960 to 1969	<i>Conscientization</i> <i>Conscientization; transformative action</i>	[1966 & 1967] A Survey of The Contemporary Indians of Canada (Vols 1&2 Department of Anthropology) [1969] Summer Leadership Programme – Continuing Education
1970 to 1979	<i>Transformative action</i> <i>Transformative action</i>	[1973] Native Law Programme – Faculty of Law [1974] Native Indian Teacher Education Programme
1980 to 1989	<i>Conscientization</i> <i>Conscientization; transformative action</i> <i>Conscientization</i> <i>Conscientization; transformative action</i> <i>Conscientization; transformation action</i>	[1981] Report – Establishment of a Special Institute 'Synala Institute' [1982] New Canadian Constitution – recognition of the aboriginal rights of Canada's aboriginal peoples [1983] First Honorary Doctorate – First Nations awarded to George Manuel [January 1984] Berger & Kirkness Report of the President's Ad Hoc committee on British Columbia Native Indian People and Communities [September 1986] National Review of Indian Education Committee of Enquiry
1990 to 1999	<i>Conscientization; transformative action</i>	[1998] First Visiting Indigenous Scholar– Professor Graham H Smith
2000 to present	<i>Conscientization; transformative action</i>	[2004] First Distinguished Chair of Indigenous Education – Professor Graham H Smith

Table 3. Comparison of Significant Events for The University of British Columbia and The University of Auckland

The University of British Columbia	The University of Auckland
<p>[1877] University proposed</p> <p>[1927] <i>International Rugby Canada V's NZ Māori team</i></p> <p>[1948] Reclaiming of the naming of the 'Thunderbird' Stadium (Alfred Scow and others)</p> <p>[1949] Department of Anthropology established.</p>	<p>[1835] Declaration of Independence</p> <p>[1840] Treaty of Waitangi signed</p> <p>[1927] <i>International Rugby Canada V's NZ Māori team</i></p> <p>[1947] Maharaia Winiata first Māori appointment in the University – Department of Continuing Education</p> <p>[1948] Matiu Te Hau appointed in Department of Continuing Education</p>
<p>[1958] Report - The Indians of British Columbia: A Study of contemporary Social Adjustment (Hawthorn – Department of Anthropology)</p>	<p>[1950] Bruce Biggs appointed as Assistant Lecturer Department of Anthropology</p> <p>[1951] Department of Anthropology – Māori language listed in University Calendar.</p>
<p>[1966 & 1967] A Survey of The Contemporary Indians of Canada (Vols 1&2 Department of Anthropology)</p> <p>[1969] Summer Leadership Programme – Continuing Education</p>	<p>[1961] Hunn Report – government policy of assimilation</p>
<p>[1973] Native Law Programme: Faculty of Law</p> <p>[1974] Native Indian Teacher Education Programme</p>	<p>[1971] Report <i>Te reo</i> Māori (Benton)</p> <p>[1975] Waitangi Tribunal Act</p> <p>[1985] Protests</p>
<p>[1981] Report – Establishment of a Special Institute 'Synala Institute'</p> <p>[1982] New Canadian Constitution – recognition of the aboriginal rights of Canada's aboriginal peoples</p> <p>[1983] First Honorary Doctorate – First Nations awarded to George Manuel</p> <p>[1984] Berger & Kirkness Report of the President's Ad Hoc committee on British Columbia Native Indian People and Communities</p> <p>[1986] National Review of Indian Education Committee of Enquiry</p>	<p>[1982] <i>Te Kohanga reo</i> established – state funded</p> <p>[1987] <i>Te reo</i> Māori recognized as an official language</p> <p>[1987] <i>Kura</i> Kaupapa Māori established</p> <p>[1987] <i>Whare Kura</i> established</p> <p>[1988] Waipapa <i>marae</i> established – <i>Tane Nui A Rangi</i></p>
<p>[1998] First Visiting Indigenous Scholar – Professor Graham H Smith</p>	<p>[1991] Department of Māori Studies est.</p> <p>[1993] Review of the Department of Māori Studies</p> <p>[1993] Mataatua Declaration</p> <p>[1997] G, Smith: The Development of Kaupapa Māori: Theory and Praxis [paper]</p> <p>Review of Māori in the University</p> <p>[1998] First State Funded Wānanga established</p> <p>[1998] <i>Ranginui</i> Walker appointed as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori)</p>

An interesting element in this investigation is that the parallels and linkages between institutions provide a whakapapa (genealogy) of development. Indigenous links are also discussed between the New Zealand and Canadian case studies.

As seen in Table 3, this begins when the University of British Columbia hosted the New Zealand Māori rugby team in 1927. The rugby team was the first international team to play against Canada at the Thunderbird Stadium located at the university. Descendants of that team presently attending the University of Auckland, include the author. I have also travelled to meet with the descendants of the Canadian team since that historic event took place. The genealogical links discussed throughout this paper provide a natural connection between the institutions. Further, the University of Auckland development of indigenous space has been modelled on parts of the University of British Columbia initiative. Staff, community and students continue to visit and share information and experiences from both universities, and this relationship that has been informed by a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions.

Therefore this study concludes by commenting on whether or not the development at the Universities of Auckland and British Columbia can meet the needs of Māori and indigenous tertiary students. The author has attempted to provide a snapshot in time of the creative intent of two internationally recognized universities that have continued to seek to improve the delivery of their business. In this case, we have described a transformative strategy within existing resources and infrastructure. The work has been influenced by the wish to seek efficiency and effectiveness in providing opportunity for others to pursue the interrogation of the education system and having numerous options or choices in the field of tertiary education. These case studies illustrate the potential tertiary institutions have for re-positioning themselves to meet the present and projected needs of Māori enrolled in courses of study.

Finally, it needs to be noted that limitations of the present approach include gaining direct evidence of effectiveness. An early indicator was the acknowledgement of te reo Māori as an academic course of study in 1952, providing a starting point for the process and in this sense an indication of potential success. Subsequent to the conscientization process started within the university, enrolment and pass rates of Māori indicate success. Further evaluations of the model are possible from studying the fluctuation of Māori student enrolments over a period of time, and more specifically how that appears to be influenced by a number of variables such as: policy, funding, university profile, credentialing, profile teachers and community effects. However, the methodology and theory of kaupapa Māori provide an opportunity to engage in the ongoing debate alongside critical theory. As a result, this paper acknowledges the courage of people who have sought to create indigenous space and to make changes in their institutions. Further acknowledgement is to the courage of the University of British Columbia and the University of Auckland in seeking to provide a 'home away from home' for indigenous peoples, for which we should be grateful.

References

Bishop, R. (1998). Freeing ourselves from neo-colonial domination in research: a Māori approach to creating knowledge. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11 (2), 199-219.

McLean, P. (1972). *Te Whare Wānanga Māori*. Victoria University, Wellington.

Metge, J. (2001). *Kōrero Tahi Talking Together*. Auckland University Press, New Zealand.

Metge, J. (1986). *In and Out of Touch: Whakamaa in Cross-Cultural Context*. Victoria University Press, Wellington.

Robust, T.T. (2006). *Te kaitārei ara tāngata whenua mo te Whare Wānanga: “Ēhara, he hara ranei?”/ Developing indigenous infrastructure in the University: “Another Era or another Error?”*. Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Smith, G. (1997). *The Development of Kaupapa Māori Theory and Praxis*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Walker, R.J. (1990). *Ka Whawahi Tonu Mātou: Struggle Without End*. Penguin, Auckland: Penguin Books.

Author Notes

A paper based on this work was presented at the MAI Doctoral Conference, Orākei Marae, Auckland, 26-28 October, 2006.

Te Tuhi Robust (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou) is Executive Director of the James Henare Māori Research Centre at the University of Auckland.

E-mail: t.robust@auckland.ac.nz