Extensions on Te Wheke

Catherine Love
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# Glossary

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<td>aituā</td>
<td>accident, disaster</td>
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<tr>
<td>ako</td>
<td>learn, teach</td>
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<tr>
<td>aroha</td>
<td>love, sympathise, pity</td>
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<td>atua</td>
<td>God, deity</td>
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<tr>
<td>awhi</td>
<td>aid, help, embrace</td>
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<td>hā ā koro mā ā kui mā</td>
<td>breath of the ancestors, literally means ‘that we are the embodiment of our ancestors’</td>
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<td>hapū</td>
<td>sub-tribe, pregnant</td>
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<td>hara</td>
<td>sin, crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>hinengaro</td>
<td>mind, heart, conscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>hongi</td>
<td>to greet by pressing noses</td>
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<td>hūpē</td>
<td>mucus</td>
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<tr>
<td>ihi</td>
<td>power, force</td>
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<td>iriiri</td>
<td>baptise</td>
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<td>iwi</td>
<td>tribe, bones</td>
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<td>kaiako</td>
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<td>kairarawa</td>
<td>cannibalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>kaitiaki</td>
<td>guard, guardian, caretaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>kapa haka</td>
<td>ceremonial dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>karakia</td>
<td>prayer</td>
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<tr>
<td>karanga</td>
<td>call, shout, ceremonial call by a kuia</td>
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<tr>
<td>kaumātua</td>
<td>elder</td>
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<tr>
<td>kawe mate</td>
<td>ceremony where a family take the pictures and the memories of their deceased loved one to marae that he/she were connected to</td>
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<tr>
<td>kīnaki</td>
<td>relish</td>
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<tr>
<td>kohiwi</td>
<td>bones, skeleton</td>
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<td>koroua</td>
<td>old man</td>
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<td>kuia</td>
<td>old lady</td>
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<tr>
<td>mākutu</td>
<td>bewitched, black magic</td>
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<tr>
<td>mana</td>
<td>authority, prestige, integrity, charisma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mana āhua ake</td>
<td>appreciation of one’s absolute uniqueness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mana ake</td>
<td>appreciation of one’s absolute uniqueness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manaakitanga</td>
<td>hospitality, to respect and care for</td>
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<tr>
<td>manuhiri</td>
<td>visitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marae</td>
<td>meeting area for relations and family</td>
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<tr>
<td>marae ātea</td>
<td>the area in front of a meeting house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mātāmua</td>
<td>eldest child</td>
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<tr>
<td>mate Māori</td>
<td>psychosomatic illness, sickness of spiritual origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>matua/mātua</td>
<td>father/parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>mauri</td>
<td>life principle, life force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mauri ora</td>
<td>life principle, consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mirimiri</td>
<td>massage, rub</td>
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<tr>
<td>moko</td>
<td>facial tattoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mokopuna</td>
<td>grandchild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mōku</td>
<td>for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noa</td>
<td>free from taboo/tapu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papatūānuku</td>
<td>Earth mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patu</td>
<td>hit, strike</td>
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<tr>
<td>pō</td>
<td>night, darkness</td>
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<tr>
<td>pōtiki</td>
<td>youngest</td>
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<tr>
<td>poutama</td>
<td>steps pattern in weaving symbolising Tane’s ascendancy to heaven</td>
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<td>pōwhiri</td>
<td>opening ceremony, welcome</td>
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<td>puna</td>
<td>spring, well</td>
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<td>rāhui</td>
<td>quarantine, embargo</td>
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<td>rangatahi</td>
<td>youth, teenager</td>
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<td>rangatira</td>
<td>chief</td>
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<td><strong>Term</strong></td>
<td><strong>Translation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>rangatiratanga</td>
<td>sovereignty, realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangi or Ranginui</td>
<td>Sky Father</td>
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<tr>
<td>rohe</td>
<td>region, area</td>
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<tr>
<td>rongoa</td>
<td>medicine</td>
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<td>tamariki</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tangihanga</td>
<td>funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taonga tuku iho</td>
<td>treasure or gift that has been passed down through the generations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tāpae</td>
<td>offer, to gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapu</td>
<td>sacred, forbidden, taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te Ika ā Māui</td>
<td>the North Island, literally ‘the fish of Māui’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te reo me ōna tikanga</td>
<td>the Māori language and its protocols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te Rerenga Wairua</td>
<td>the northern tip of the North Island, which Māori believe is the point where the spirits leave Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te Waipounamu</td>
<td>the South Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>teina</td>
<td>younger brother of a boy, younger sister of a girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tikanga</td>
<td>custom, protocol, meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiki</td>
<td>to fetch, neck pendant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tīnana</td>
<td>body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tīwaiwaka</td>
<td>fantail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tohi</td>
<td>purification ceremony, to purify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tohu</td>
<td>sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tohunga</td>
<td>expert, priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tohunga tā moko</td>
<td>expert tattooist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tohunga whakairo</td>
<td>expert carver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuakana</td>
<td>older brother of a boy, older sister of a girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tūpāpaku</td>
<td>corpse, cadaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tupuna/tūpuna</td>
<td>ancestor/ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tūrangawaewae</td>
<td>place to stand, home turf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urupā</td>
<td>burial ground, cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori Word</td>
<td>English Meaning</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>waewae tapu</td>
<td>stranger, newcomer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waiora</td>
<td>total well-being (traditionally, the seed of life)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wairua</td>
<td>spirit, soul, attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wairuatanga</td>
<td>spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wehi</td>
<td>fear, awe, terrible, formidable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whaikōrero</td>
<td>formal speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakahā</td>
<td>infuse, breathe, respire</td>
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<tr>
<td>whakahīhī</td>
<td>arrogant, show off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakairo</td>
<td>carve, carving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakamā</td>
<td>embarrassment, shy, withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakanoa</td>
<td>to free from taboo/tabu, to make ordinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakapā</td>
<td>to transfer, touch, affected by, infected by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakapapa</td>
<td>genealogy, family tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakautu</td>
<td>reply, answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakawhitihiti kōrero</td>
<td>converse, talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whānau</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whanaungatanga</td>
<td>kinship, relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whāngai</td>
<td>nourish, care of, adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whare tūpuna</td>
<td>ancestral meeting house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whare wānanga</td>
<td>house of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wharenui</td>
<td>meeting house, literally big house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whāriki</td>
<td>mat, rug</td>
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<td>whatumanawa</td>
<td>emotions, feelings</td>
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Extensions on Te Wheke

Foreword

Māori attitudes to knowledge can differ markedly from those espoused within academia. In the academic world, knowledge is treated as a commodity and published works are by their very nature viewed as public property. It is the role of academics to push, pull, prod and poke at narratives of knowledge laid out in publications. Academics may rightfully lay claim to knowledge, cite one another’s works and critique, remodel, redevelop and build on the work of others, and be rewarded for doing so. Traditionally, academics and social scientists have laid claim to objective truth and have sought to establish ‘the truth’, usually through disproving alternative narratives. In Māori terms, knowledge is widely viewed as a taonga, to be guarded and protected and to be passed only to those who can be entrusted with preserving and using it wisely, for group rather than individual benefit. Knowledge has spiritual as well as temporal origins and is not necessarily benign. From this perspective, the sharing of knowledge is viewed as an act of generosity; knowledge is something to respect, and not to alter or interfere with. While the pursuit of a single, objective ‘truth’ in the social science milieu has fairly recently been challenged, the notion of the validity of truths as constructions of multiple narratives has long been recognised in te ao Māori.

In presenting Te Wheke, Dr Rangimārie Rose Pere made it clear that she was sharing knowledge that came through her but not from her and that this was presented as a gift to the world. In so doing, Pere has created an unusual dilemma. For Te Wheke is a practical as well as esoteric model, presented to a non-Māori as well as a Māori public. To have value it should be used, applied, interpreted and developed across the spectrum of fields relating to Māori well-being, to which it is relevant.

I wish to thank Drs Rangimārie Rose Pere and Joe Pere for their hospitality to me, which has spanned over forty years — my lifetime thus far. In seeking permission to use and extend the published models of Te Wheke and to provide illustrations reflecting additional aspects of the model, I have been humbled by the generosity of spirit and the desire to contribute to understanding in the world that has driven and motivated the Drs Pere. The manaakitanga and
hospitality that I have known is a reflection of the caring of two educationalists through their lifetimes of sharing knowledge with the peoples of this land and the world.

Dr Catherinie Love
Introduction

*Te Wheke*, or *The Octopus* model of health, as developed and presented by Rangimärie Rose Pere (Hui Whakaoranga, 1984; Pere, as cited in Middleton, 1988; Pere, 1991), has become a central part of many training and education programmes in this country. It has been used particularly in the arenas of health and mental health, education and social services training. The model is seen to be applicable across a range of contexts and is perceived as being a holistic and fulsome model of health and well-being that is amenable to in-depth examination and development.

Pere defines healthy Mäori selfhood in terms of *waiora* or total well-being. Traditionally, waiora refers to the seed of life. It is a concept which incorporates the foundations of life and existence and the total well-being and development of people (Henare, 1988). Waiora is also the purest form of water and is used in rituals of sanctification, purification and whakanoa.¹ Thus, waiora may be described as ‘the source of life, the potential to give life, sustain well-being and counteract evil’ (Henare, 1988, p. 34).

Pere presents te wheke (the octopus) as a symbol representing the whänau (family unit) and, by extension, the hapū (sub-tribe) and/or the iwi (tribe or people). The model illustrates a Mäori view that sees healthy individual selfhood as intertwined with and inseparable from the health of the whänau; the health of the whänau as inseparable from that of the hapū, and the health and well-being of hapū as indivisible from that of iwi. Thus, the model is applicable to individuals and to small and large groups. Pere’s model, along with other models of healthy Mäori selfhood, provides a framework within which dimensions may be explored and understood in a number of ways.

On a cautionary note, it is as well to remember, when working across and between languages, that ‘in translation there is transformation’. In other words, a simple translation of Mäori terms into English cannot convey the intricacies of the webs of meaning within which the terms are embedded in te ao Mäori.

However, in order to extend the picture provided by *Te Wheke* for those unfamiliar with Mäori epistemology, this monograph illustrates the dimensions symbolised in *Te Wheke* and some of the aspects within these dimensions. In so doing, it interweaves the narratives of Pere and others who have written about selected aspects of the dimensions encompassed by *Te Wheke*. I have drawn on

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¹ The removal of tapu.
established literature relating to aspects of the dimensions, re-presenting the
narratives of recognised elders and experts, in order to provide a more detailed
view of some of the aspects of relevance to understanding of Māori health and
well-being. It is noted, however, that the very process of selecting aspects of the
various dimensions as presented by some individuals and not others does
result in the presentation of a partial picture. There will inevitably be more left
unsaid than said. It is acknowledged that the views presented here represent
some of many possible narratives around the eight dimensions of Pere’s Te
Wheke model.

Te Wheke: The model

Te Wheke, the model, presents the octopus as a symbol representing the
whānau, hapū or iwi. Each of the eight tentacles of the octopus represents a
dimension of selfhood, and the numerous suckers on each tentacle represent the
many aspects within each dimension. The tentacles of the octopus are
overlapping and intertwined to symbolise the interconnected and inseparable
nature of the dimensions. The dimensions of the octopus, represented by the
tentacles as identified by Pere are

wairua
mana ake
mauri
whānaungatanga
tīnana
hinengaro
whatumanawa
hā ā koro mā ā kuia mā

The model proposes that sustenance is required for each tentacle/dimension if
the organism is to attain waiora or total well-being. The eyes of the octopus
represent the waiora. They reflect the amount of sustenance that each tentacle
has been able to gain and contribute to the whole.

The octopus as a symbol of healthy selfhood contains a number of additional
features. When threatened, the octopus has the ability to squirt black ink to
disguise and protect itself. Unfamiliar or threatening circumstances frequently generate smokescreens, barriers and disguises in people. Like people, the octopus may be fully perceived only in its natural and unthreatened state. The octopus can survive, but not function optimally, without the use of a tentacle or individual suckers. The parallel is that individuals, whānau, hapū and iwi also need all of these dimensions if they are to develop and perform to their full potential. Lack of access to, or development of, a dimension or dimensions will result in less-than-optimum health and well-being. The octopus is able to move, adapt and change its form in a flexible and fluid manner in its own environment. When removed from this environment, however, the octopus seeks with all its tentacles the water that provides its natural medium of being. The octopus has a sharp beak hidden from view on the underside of its head. The beak can inflict a painful bite. Hence, the octopus as a symbol is not totally benign, reminding us of the need to be cautious in our dealings with people.

Pere’s model, along with other models of healthy Māori selfhood, alludes to multiple meanings. Each tentacle has numerous ‘suckers’ representing the various aspects of the dimensions. In the original model as presented, however, the suckers are not fully defined or described. Thus, there is room for the exploration and development of a multiplicity of understandings of these aspects: un-named, un-proscribed, but central to the model.
**Wairua**

**Concepts**

Translated by Pere (1988; 1991) as ‘spirituality’, *wairuatanga* literally is the flow of two waters. *Wairuatanga* may be understood as analogous to two streams merging as a flowing river, with associated ebbs, eddies and currents. Self, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, descendants, other whānau and groups, the past, present and future, our relationship with events and the environment may be understood in terms of the flow of the wairua. *Te taha wairua* or the *wairuatanga* dimension is considered by Durie (1985, p. 483) to be the most basic and essential dimension of Māori health.

Olsen (1993) cites Best (1974) in equating the term *wairua* with shadow. This is the shadow of the person that engages with the spiritual realm and that guides and warns the physical self of impending danger.

**Origin of wairua**

Māori narratives of creation begin with Te Korekore. Te Korekore is the realm between being and not being ... the realm of potential being. This is the realm of primal, elemental energy or latent being. It is here that the seed-stuff of the universe and all created things gestate. It is the womb from which all created things proceed. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, pp. 134–5)

In the beginning, Io existed alone in the realm of Te Korekore ... Nothing existed before Io for he alone was pre-existent as Io-matua-kore the parentless, as Io-matua the first parent, as Io-mau the precursor, as Io-pūkenga the first cause, as Io-taketake the foundation of all things. He held intercourse within himself, between the ihomatua of his active and positive thought, and between the ihomariri of his passive and negative self ... His essence flowed forth to fertilise Te Korekore. Then he spoke his command and the essence of the night was increased.

He spoke again and ... on succeeding commands the iho of the heavens, of light, of the rock foundation and the earth, and of the waters were increased. Thus were the essential foundations of the universe laid.

At that time, only the seed of potential being was established and there was no form or substance for this seed of creation gestated in Te Korekore. Then Io activated himself once more and he recited (tapatapa) the names of the different foundations of things: of the night and of light, of the earth and sky and waters, of the depths and
heights, of the expanse of the skies and the borders of the seas. Thus things became differentiated and took form ...

Having created the nights and Hawaiiki, Io brought into being the first atua, Rangi-āwātea and Papa-tūā-nuku, the male and female principles out of which all things derived. Awātea was the atua of space and light, and the first heaven was created by him on the foundations established by Io. It was known as the heaven of Wātea (Te Rangi A Wātea). But having completed the first heaven, he looked below him and saw the spirit of Papa-tūā-nuku (Mother Earth), and descended to cohabit with her. Out of this union sprang their firstborn, Tāne, and the other atua after him: Tangaroa, Rongo, Tūmatauenga, Haumia-tike-tike, Rūa-i-moko, and Tāwhirimātea.

... Rangi continued to cling to Papa-tūā-nuku ... By this act, he doomed his offspring to dwell in perpetual darkness. Io ... sent the spirit of rebellion to stir the children to revolt ... Tāne conceived the idea of standing on his hands and Rangi was flung into the skies.

Tāne ... descended to the borders of Hawaiiki Tapu where the sacred winds, the mouth-piece of Io, commissioned him to continue with the tasks of completing the heavens. So the heavens were completed and became known as the great heavens of Tāne (Rangi-nui-ā-Tāne) ... Awātea had been summoned by Io (prior to Tāne’s commission), deprived of his mana and banished into the night realm.

It was the mana from Awātea that was given to Tāne ... At the same time as Tāne received the mana to complete the heavens, Io delegated through Tāne various tasks for his brothers. So they became the regents of Io to continue creation in the departments of nature. Thus Tangaroa became the atua of the sea, Rongo the atua of vegetation, Rūa-i-moko² divided the land asunder (earthquakes and volcanic activity), Tāwhiri took over the meteorological department,³ and Tū took over the war office.⁴ Tāne reserved two departments for himself on earth, the forest and the birds, and the creation of man. The first human created was Hine-ahu-one (the maid that emerged out of the dust). Tāne took clay, moistened it with water, and sculptured the form of a female. He then infused the breath of his nostrils (hongi) into her and she came alive. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, pp. 130–132)

Tāne and Hine-ahu-one produced a daughter, Hine-tītama, the dawn maid. Tāne later became the husband of Hine-tītama and they produced several children. However, there came a time when Hine-tītama wanted to know who she was and where she was from. She asked her husband, and from his reply realised that he was, in fact, her father. Overcome with shame and anger she fled to the realm of the night. There she became Hine-nui-te-pō, guardian of the underworld, where she waits to welcome her children to the world of the spirit.

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² Also known as Rūāmoko.
³ That is the winds and the elements. Tāwhiri is more commonly known as Tāwhirimātea.
⁴ That is the arena of war and conflict.
It is through this shared whakapapa that Māori carry elements of the essence of Io, that they are inextricably linked into the wider and primeval spiritual system. Our common line of descent, through Ranginui and Papatūānuku, Tāne, Hine-ahu-one, and Hine-nui-te-pō is from the spiritual essence of the atua.

**Te reo Māori**

Pere refers specifically to Māori language as an aspect of wairua, as something emanating from and connected to the spiritual realm. It was through the phrase te reo Māori that Io initiated the creation of the universe and the beginning of whakapapa. The use of te reo Māori, particularly in the form of incantations, maintains a connection with and route into the spiritual system. The wailing and cries associated with death alert those who dwell in the spiritual realm to the impending arrival of the newly deceased. Similarly, the sound of the karanga (call of the woman) penetrates into the spiritual realm, invoking currents in the spiritual system to flow through the people and process to which the call pertains.

Māori language reflects the subordination of the temporal to the cosmic spiritual process. In the Māori language, time is demarcated by sequences of processes and events. Thus, time is a continuous stream with ‘the situation below ordered by an ideal determination from above, by Io, as origin of the cosmic process’ (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 136).

**Whakapapa**

The notion of whakapapa, commonly translated into the English language as genealogy, incorporates another aspect of wairua. Literally defining one in terms of one’s relationship with, descent from and return to Papatūānuku, generally rendered into English as ‘land’ or ‘earth mother’, but according to Marsden ‘rock foundation beyond expanse, the infinite’ (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 135), whakapapa embodies the essence of our relationship with our spiritual mother and other of her offspring. Whakapapa is definitive of our relationship with the mana and tapu of the atua and our tupuna; it is what constitutes us as spiritual beings. It is the foundation of mana wahine and mana tāne and it enables us to establish spiritual, as well as cognitive, emotional and physical connection with others who emanate from Papatūānuku. Durie (1985)
considers land (Papatūānuku) to be of central spiritual significance. Papatūānuku provides ‘a symbol of continuity with those who have passed on and respect for land augments one’s strength ... the health history of Māori people would confirm the central importance of land to health (Durie, 1985a, p. 483).

Whakapapa is sometimes defined primarily, even solely, in terms of ‘knowledge of’ and ‘learning about’ one’s genealogy. Such views relate to the logocentrism and privileging of cognitivism inherent in Western philosophy and epistemology and expressed in the culture concept. Cognitive knowledge and verbal expression of whakapapa is distinct from whakapapa itself. To know one’s whakapapa is to know oneself and others intimately. However, whakapapa is embodied in Māori individuals, whānau, hapū and iwi, whether or not one ‘knows’ or has ‘learnt’ it.

**Tapu**

A mixture of English words have been used in attempts to translate the meaning of *tapu*. These include sacred, holy and unclean (Marsden, as cited in King, p. 119; Barlow, 1991, p. 128). Williams (1971, p. 385) defines tapu in these ways:

1. Under religious or superstitious restriction; a condition affecting persons, places and things and arising from innumerable causes. Anyone violating tapu contracted a hara, and was certain to be overtaken by calamity.
2. Beyond one’s power, inaccessible.
3. Sacred (mod.).
4. Ceremonial restriction; quality or condition of being subject to such restriction.

Jackson (1988) sees tapu as a complex institution having two major facets. First, Jackson considers that tapu was the major cohesive force in Māori life because every person was regarded as being tapu, or sacred. Each life was a sacred gift which linked a person to the ancestors and hence the wider tribal network.

This link fostered the personal security ... of an individual because it established the belief that any harm to him (sic) was also disrespect to that network, which would ultimately be remedied. It also imposed on an individual the obligation to abide by the norms of behaviour established by the ancestors. In this respect, tapu firmly placed a person in an interdependent relationship with his whānau, hapū, and iwi.
The behavioural guidelines of the ancestors were monitored by the living relatives, and the wishes of an individual were constantly balanced against the greater mana and concerns of the group. (Jackson, 1988, p. 41)

Second, Taylor (as cited in Jackson, 1988, p. 41) considers tapu to be, ‘a religious observance established for political purposes’.

Marsden, likewise, sees tapu as having connotations which may be described in English terms as

religious and legal ... A person, place or thing is dedicated to a deity and by that act is set aside or reserved for the sole use of the deity. The person or object is thus removed from the sphere of the profane and put into the sphere of the sacred. It is untouchable, no longer to be put to common use. It is this untouchable quality that is the main element of tapu. In other words, the object is sacred and any profane use is sacrilege, breaking of the law of tapu.

From the purely legal aspect, it suggests a contractual relationship has been made between the individual and his deity, whereby a person dedicates himself or an object to the service of a deity in return for protection against malevolent forces and the power to manipulate his environment to meet needs and demands. The idea of manipulating the environment is based on the Māori view that there are three orders of reality — the physical or natural, the psychic and the spiritual.

Whilst the natural realm is normally subject to physical laws, these can be affected, modified and even changed by the application of the higher laws of the psychic and spiritual. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, pp. 119–120)

Henare (1988) distinguishes between intrinsic tapu and extensions of tapu. He sees intrinsic tapu as: ‘being-with potentiality for power ... tapu expresses that once a person, or thing is, then because of its existence, it has a real potentiality for power’ (Henare, 1988, pp. 29–30).

Like Jackson (1988), Marsden (as cited in King, 1992), and others, Henare (1988) notes the very close relationship between mana and tapu, and the fact that all people are tapu, although the degree of tapu, like the degree of mana, varies.

Extensions of tapu to things that are not intrinsically tapu, according to Henare, ‘often incorporate(s) ideas of restriction and separation. Things are tapu and therefore sacred and sometimes restricted or forbidden, not the reverse’ (Henare, 1988, p. 30).

Wai (water) plays a major part both in the consecration or dedication of people or things under the auspices of the atua, through tohi rites, and in the cleansing, removal or neutralising (whakanoa) of tapu.
Tāpae and tohi rites

Tāpae is literally to put forward or offer up, tohi is to endue (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 124). These meanings signify aspects of contractual relationship with the atua by which tapu is established and persons or objects become imbued with mana. The tohi rite is composed of two distinct but complementary processes, which may be described as the dedication and the consecration.

The act of dedication (tāpae) consisted of offering up a person, place or thing to the service of the deity, a declaration of the purpose intended and a definition of the future role of the object dedicated.

It was henceforth sacred and untouchable, the object was now tapu. It could not be put to profane use ...

The act of dedication was followed by an act of consecration — an act of praise extolling the power and virtue of the atua, who were then invoked by name and petitioned to endue the object with mana. The prayers were accompanied by a sacramental act (tohi). Whilst the tohunga might participate in prayers of consecration, the consecration was the prerogative of the atua. It was they who completed the rite, provided man fulfilled the conditions. The dedication was man’s part, the consecration the response of the atua. Since the dedication was sacrificial, in the sense that it was offering a person’s life or possession to the service of the atua, the sacrifice was accepted and consecrated by the bestowal of mana.

The bestowing of mana on people differed from that on things or places. In the former case, the spirit of the atua fell upon the person and filled or possessed him. The spirit of the atua guided and directed him, subject to his continuing assent. This was a covenant relationship which could be dissolved by either party not fulfilling the terms of the agreement. In the latter case, the atua placed guardian spirits over places or things to watch over the property dedicated to them. These guardian spirits (kaitiaki) manifested themselves by appearing in the form (ariā) of animals, birds or other natural objects. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 120)

Marsden notes elsewhere that the Māori understandings of the sacrament differ from Western Christian understandings. In Western Christendom, a sacrament is ‘an outward visible sign of setting forth and pledging an inward spiritual grace’. To the Māori a sacrament is simply, ‘the means by which mana (charisma, grace, spiritual power) is transmitted to humans’ (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 125).

There are a variety of tohi rites in relation to different purposes to be fulfilled; for instance, the iriiri or baptism rites, in which a person, usually a child, is dedicated to a particular atua or several atua and consecrated to their service, thereby being placed under the tapu and mana of those atua.
Tohi whakapā or tohi mauri (the endowment of mauri [life principle] by infusion [whakapā] of the breath) may be used by a father before death to impart the family mana, usually to the eldest son (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, pp. 125–127).

**Whakanoa**

While, according to Barlow (1991), nothing can be totally free of tapu, the condition of extreme tapu, which serves a protective function, also carries with it enormous restriction. The flip side of the sacred condition of tapu is the condition of noa. Henare (1988) describes ‘noa’ as normality and (comparative) freedom from tapu.

Noa opposes extensions of tapu, not intrinsic tapu ... it is possible to be intrinsically tapu and to be noa concurrently. Noa and tapu may be opposites but not negations, rather complementary opposites with little meaning in isolation. Both tapu and noa encompass positive and negative aspects in themselves. Both men and women have their own intrinsic tapu.

Women are especially powerful in making things and activities noa ... This is the mana and the tapu of women, in that they have the ability to free areas, things and people from restrictions imposed by tapu. Women are not noa, as is often thought, but they are agents to whakanoa — to make things noa. This is their tapu and they are tohunga because of their own specific areas of activity. (Henare, 1988, pp. 30–31)

In order to whakanoa, that is, to counteract the effects of tapu by cleansing, neutralising or propitiating the atua, the person or object was withdrawn from their immediate sphere, and a variety of ‘pure’ rites employed. Depending on the nature of the tapu to be made whakanoa, a number of practices served to negate the tapu. Water, in particular, was, and is, used to cleanse oneself after contact with tapu things. Thus, in contemporary times, there is water provided at the boundary of Māori cemeteries, so that those who enter this tapu domain may cleanse themselves on leaving.

Henare (1988) would class this as an ‘extension of tapu’ domain, that is, an extension of the intrinsic tapu of those who lie there. Similarly, anywhere there is contact with the tapu of the dead, water will be provided to cleanse and neutralise. Where there is no water immediately available, earth that is noa may be used to cleanse.

Cooked food is also used in the process of neutralising tapu. The mauri of the plant or food is released through the cooking process, thereby making the food noa. As the condition of noa, like tapu, can be transmitted by contact, contact
with cooked food neutralises tapu. In cases where an individual is afflicted through a breach of tapu, as a consequence of a direct challenge to the mana of the atua, cold cooked food (in which the mauri has already been released) passed over the head restores the condition of whakanoa.

Women are also able to whakanoa. High-born women (rangatira) are particularly powerful in neutralising tapu. The power of whakanoa is particularly associated with the vulva. Thus, that which passes between the legs and beneath the vulva of a woman, is made noa.

The balance of tapu and noa is complex and underpins many activities and implications of Māori life. Both the power of tapu and the power to whakanoa are closely associated with mana.

Marsden sees many contemporary Māori practices — such as not sitting on pillows, washing clothing separately from food-related linen, like tablecloths and tea towels, and the avoidance of placing hats on tables or passing food over the head — as precautionary practices associated with the maintenance of mana and tapu. Durie (1994) sees the foundations of tapu as having a very practical base in physical and social health practices. The separation of anything associated with bodily discharges from food, cleansing after contact with people and articles associated with death, forbidding access to dangerous areas of sea, lake, river or land, and to unfinished buildings all serve to protect physical health. Tapu may also be seen as a means of maintaining social order and balance in relationships between men and women.

*Mate Māori and mākutu*

The ultimate causes of mate Māori are spiritual, the effects are physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Mate Māori can occur through two basic channels: attacks by spiritual forces and human intervention by means of kanga (curse) and mākutu (witchcraft).

Mate Māori may be caused through an offence against the spiritual realm. When a particular person, area or object is tapu, or when a rāhui is placed on a particular area, activity or thing, the protection and authority of the spiritual realm is invoked. If a person then breaks the tapu or violates the rāhui, he/she affronts the mana of the kaitiaki (spiritual guardians) and of those who have placed the tapu or rāhui in association with them.
Urupā (burial grounds) and anything associated with death are particularly tapu. Disrespect for these, the ultimate expression of which is to disturb the remains of those buried there, or failure to whakanoa or cleanse oneself and neutralise tapu appropriately may mean ‘infection’ with the tapu of the dead, and may bring forth wrath from the spiritual realm. Mate Māori is the consequence.

Certain taonga (treasures) have mana and tapu. This is consistent with the view that all elements and inanimate objects have mauri (a life force or essence). This is the reason that people who gain possession of certain taonga that they should not possess are likely to be afflicted with mate Māori. In addition, failure to fulfil appropriately the obligations to the atua associated with the dedication of the tapu object to them, that is, failure to protect the tapu of such an object, heralds trouble and misfortune.

Mate Māori can affect individuals in a number of ways: physical illness may result; death may ensue; there may be ‘psychological illness’; personality changes and unpleasant experiences may occur; chronic ‘bad luck’ may be experienced; accidents and injury (aituā) may afflict the individual and/or family. The effects of mate Māori may be short or long term: affliction may be acute and extreme or chronic and insidious. It can pass through the generations.

Mate Māori may relate to an attack on the mauri of the person or family, and a consequent lessening of the cohesion of the physical and spiritual dimensions of the person or family. If the cohesive force of the mauri is extinguished entirely, death results.

Tohunga

The usual understanding of the meaning of tohunga in English terms is as ‘expert’ or as ‘priest’. These understandings, however, are indicative of the tendency to attribute meaning in relation to Western interpretation of the observable behaviours, while overlooking the epistemological base of the term and the associated behaviours.

The root of tohunga is the word tohu (sign or manifestation). A tohu is a sign sent through the spiritual realm as a manifestation in the natural realm. It is a means by which the spiritual realm is in communication with those on the natural plane and has efficacy on this plane. The term tohunga, then, is more correctly understood as ‘a chosen one or appointed one ... a person chosen or appointed by the atua to be their representative and the agent by which they
manifested their operations in the natural world by signs of power’ (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, pp. 128–129).

There are many types of tohunga; a tohunga whakairo, for instance, is understood in the English medium to mean an expert carver, a tohunga tā moko to mean an expert tattooist. Within Māori webs of meaning, however, a tohunga whakairo is one chosen by the atua to express their power through carving, and a tohunga tā moko is one chosen by the atua to engage in the tapu act of tā moko (tattooing) and whose life is dedicated to this activity. Thus, tohunga are channels through which the atua express themselves through particular media on the earthly plane.

Death

There are a number of traditions and narratives around death. Presented below are some better known narratives and a summary of key features of Māori beliefs in relation to death.

Hine-tītama was the daughter of Tāne and Hine-ahu-one. She is known as the first true human, constituting ‘a fusion of atuali and earthly elements’ and ‘mother of mankind’ (Kahukiwa & Grace, 1984, p. 70). Tāne took Hine-tītama as his wife and together they had several children. When Hine-tītama realised that Tāne was her father, she left him to care for their children in life, while she travelled to the underworld. There she became known as Hine-nui-te-pō, and there she remains to care for her children and descendants in death.

Māori narratives speak of the period after death as the time when the wairua of the deceased has the opportunity to linger and to farewell people and places of significance before making the journey to Te-Rerenga-Wairua (the jumping-off place) whence he or she descends through the sea to the underworld. Once in the underworld, the wairua is reunited with tupuna and loved ones and dwells in the company of those who have passed on to this world.

Māori narratives contain numerous instances of visits back and forth between the world of the dead and the world of the living. However, those of Te Pō are more likely to visit the world of the living than vice versa. Taranga, mother of Māui, was said to live in both worlds and was occasionally followed by Māui to the underworld.

5 In some narratives, there is more than one underworld, each with distinct names and characters associated with it. However, all are associated with water.
Māui himself, although remembered for his great feats, met his demise as he attempted to cheat death and to attain immortality. Māui’s plan was to return by stealth through the birth passage of a slumbering Hine-nui-te-pō and eat her heart (Kahukiwa & Grace, 1984). In this way, he would reverse the process of birth and death and consume the mana of Hine-nui-te-pō for himself. However, Hine-nui-te-pō woke up and crushed Māui between her thighs as he began his attempt, and so, in his pursuit of immortality, Māui died.

The tangihanga is sometimes described as a bastion of Māori culture and tradition. In modern times, the deceased is usually taken to a marae to which she or he belongs. Sometimes, he or she will spend time on several marae to which he or she is connected. Sometimes, the deceased is kept at home or at a community facility.

During the three days (or thereabouts) before burial, friends, family and all those who are connected in some way with the deceased have the opportunity to cry over, talk to and touch the deceased, to resolve matters that need to be resolved, and to speak words of farewell and remembrance. Tears flow freely.

In the past, some Māori did not permit photographs to be taken of themselves because of a belief that, in making a likeness, one’s wairua or mauri could be taken or weakened. In modern times, it is customary to surround the coffin of the deceased with photographs of family members and tūpuna who have passed on. This custom has echoes of recalling the wairua of the tūpuna to share in the grieving and care for the dead. It also serves as a reminder of the position of the deceased as a part of a whakapapa and whânau, which includes the living and the dead.

In the past, the bones of the deceased were sometimes reclaimed a period after death and taken to those with whom he or she had connections, so that the deceased could be recalled and grieved over again. This action also served the function of reinforcing connections between whânau and hapū and allowing the whânau of the deceased to reciprocate for some of the generosity shown them at the time of their bereavement. In modern times, the process of kawe mate, where those who have attended the tangihanga are visited by the whânau and hapū of the deceased, who are usually carrying a photograph of him or her, may serve a similar function. Sometimes a photograph of the deceased may be presented to hang in the meeting house of particular marae.

The period around death and tangihanga and practices associated with this period are surrounded by extreme tapu, as are burial grounds. Water, food and karakia are used to cleanse the living of tapu associated with death and to remove the tapu from places and things associated with the deceased.
There are a number of themes in the narratives featured here that are worth repeating:

- Narratives and traditions around death affirm the existence of spiritual realities. They reinforce the view that the realm of the living (of Papatuānuku, the land) exists alongside the realm of the dead (of Te Pō, under the waters) and the realm of the atua (of Ranginui, the sky).

- Journeys, communication and penetration among the three realms do occur.

- Hine-nui-te-pō, as the embodiment of women, represents the beginning of life, conception and childbirth and also death. As such, her power is unassailable.

- Water is the medium of life before birth and after death.

- Death does not represent the total end of life. The deceased do not end, other than in a physical sense, but pass over into another realm. They also live on through their descendants and surviving relatives.

- Rituals around death reinforce the location of the deceased and whānau members in an interwoven string of connections and relationships between the living and the dead.

Metge summarises classical and contemporary Māori beliefs in the following way:

> Physical and spiritual reality ... are irrevocably linked in a web of reciprocal relationships in a single cosmic system. Everything that happens in this World of Men is seen as having a spiritual as well as a physical explanation, cosmic, as well as earthly significance. (Metge, 1976, p. 58)

**Christianity**

Māori adopted Christianity in large numbers during the 19th century. This is often attributed to the many parallels that existed between traditional Māori spiritual beliefs and practices and those of the Christian faith. The notion of a single, all-powerful, omnipresent and parentless creator of the universe was an initial point of similarity.

The dedication of people to the service of a god through christening and baptism, and the association of the naming process with this act, reflects
principles and practices strongly reminiscent of the traditional tohi and iriiri rites. The Christian practice of communion, incorporating the symbolic ingestion of the body and blood of Christ, has parallels with the traditional practice of kairarawa or cannibalism.

Māori practised ritual cannibalism in the belief that, in consuming certain parts of the body (particularly of those who had great mana), one ingested the life force, psychic and spiritual power, tapu, mana and ihi, thus supplementing one’s own resources (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992 p. 127).

In addition to these similarities, however, there were a number of disjunctions between the Christianity brought by the missionaries and traditional Māori spirituality. In traditional Māori spiritual understandings, spirituality and spiritual beings are embodied in the land, seas, waterways, vegetation, sea creatures, birds and animals — the natural environment. So there exists in traditional Māori spirituality a clear connection between atua and the physical environment. These connections are tangible: the spiritual elements in the physical environment can be seen and felt. In addition, Māori genealogies link all Māori people back to atua. This means that genealogies and the people who feature in them are themselves spiritual, or ‘of atua’.

The missionary Christian doctrine introduced the notion of a single God, and one who was unseen. The missionary message of free will and choices, individual responsibility and accountability conflicted with traditional Māori emphases on communal responsibility and accountability, and connection, direction and pre-determination through atua and their embodiments. Missionary attitudes also tended to define traditional Māori spiritual beliefs and practices as evil or satanic.6

A further feature of 19th century Western Christianity was the separation of the physical dimension from the spiritual dimension. This separation has been institutionalised in Aotearoa/New Zealand society through the systems and structures of Western science and medicine, which claim authority over issues of physical well-being, and by Churches, which claim authority for spiritual well-being.

There has perhaps been an incorrect assumption that, in the adoption of the Christian God, traditional atua and spiritual beliefs are rejected. In many cases, the Christian God is simply added to other aspects within the Māori spiritual realm. However, the satanisation of traditional Māori spirituality has led, in effect, to the loss of ‘voice’ of Māori spirituality.

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6 See The Family Centre (1997) for a discussion of Christianity in relation to Samoan spiritual beliefs.
That is, while Māori spirituality may persist in some form and Māori spiritual
beliefs may be held, they have been rarely spoken about openly and in public
forums. In addition, the inability of the majority of Māori to speak the Māori
language has perhaps left many with a limited vehicle for the expression of
non-Western spiritual beliefs and experiences.

In summary, for Māori, traditionally: ‘The cultural milieu is rooted both in the
temporal world and the transcendent world, [and] this brings a person into
intimate relationship with atua and his universe’ (Marsden, as cited in King,

Spiritual well-being is often considered both the most vital dimension of Māori
health and well-being and the dimension most often ignored or overlooked by
Western health professionals (Cherrington, 1994; Durie, 1984, 1985). It is clear
that

the Māori does not, and never has accepted the ... view of the universe which regards
it as a closed system into which nothing can impinge from without. The Māori
conceives of it as at least a two-world system in which the material proceeds from
the spiritual, and the spiritual (which is the higher order) interpenetrates the
material, physical world of Te Ao Mārama ... while the Māori thought of the physical
sphere as subject to natural laws, these could be affected, modified and even
changed by the application of the higher laws of the spiritual order ... In some senses
... the Māori had a three-world view, of potential being, symbolised by Te Korekore,
the world of becoming, portrayed by Te Pō, and the world of being, Te Ao Mārama.
(Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 134)

The tension between Māori and Western world views and spiritual institutions
has continued for two centuries, and has been reflected in the imposition of
Western institutions, practices and ideologies. However, many Māori continue
to perceive and respond to themselves, one another and their environments at
some level and to some extent in accordance with the tenets of traditional
spirituality.
**Mana atua ake**

In or around the year 1920, Herries Beattie conducted a series of interviews with Teone Taare Tikao, a tohunga and authority on South Island Māori lore and tradition. During the course of one interview, Tikao discussed his understandings of the nature of ‘the mana of the Māori’. His words are worth repeating here as an illustration of the consuming nature of mana.

There is a word, a short word in the Māori language, a word of four letters, yet it expresses something which is very hard to put into English. Even the interpreter in the New Zealand Parliament could not translate it into English. When I was in Wellington in 1891 the interpreter asked me to explain it to him, but I did not feel called upon to do so. I was young then, only 41 or 42 years of age, and did not see why I should reveal my learning on the matter ...

Mana is only a word but no one can wash it out. In one way I might say it is Atua — whose power no one can stop. The Power of Atua — that is the Pākehā side of mana.

But to the ancient Māori, mana was a fire that no one can put out ...

From the beginning of the world it goes on — it cannot be rubbed out ... Mana is all around the world, and Tāwhirimātea, Rūaimoko, Māui and others are in the centre of the circle and get hold of this mana and direct the elements and make the weather. The Hine family hold the winds by mana. No one can rub it out. Māui is not dead, but Hine-Nui-te-Pō (atua[ess of death) took his mana and it still exists. The atua stand back to back doing the work of the world-good or bad — and doing it by mana, which cannot be put out or overcome ... Mana holds from the beginning to the end of the world and it keeps the world going. Personal mana can be overcome and annihilated, but that of the atua cannot. (Tikao, 1990, pp. 95–96)

In reference to the dimension that she calls ‘mana ake’, or ‘mana ātua ake’, Pere (1988, 1991) emphasises the development of a positive identity and appreciation of absolute uniqueness. She sees this dimension as incorporating a balance between individual and group identity.

In attempting to translate a sense of the essence of mana into the English language, words such as ‘authority and control; influence, prestige and power; psychic force; effectual, binding, authoritative, having influence or power; vested with effective authority; be effectual, take effect; be avenged’ (Williams, 1971, p. 172); and ‘prestige, authority, control and status’ (Rolleston, 1989) are typically employed. Power in this sense should be thought of in terms of ‘empowerment’ rather than ‘power over’.

Henare (1988) considers mana to be a fundamental tenet of Māori conceptions
of self and worldview:

Without an understanding of mana and its related concepts there is no pathway into the Māori world view. In the Māori world, virtually every activity ... has a link with the maintenance of and enhancement of mana. It is central to the integrity of the person and the group.

Mana is always closely linked to the power and authority of the spiritual realm. Marsden describes mana in this way:

In the Māori sense, since authority is derived from the gods, mana as authority means 'lawful permission delegated by the gods to their human agent to act on their behalf and in accordance with their revealed will'. Since authority is a spiritual gift delegated by the gods, man remains always the agent or channel — never the source of mana. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, pp. 118–119)

There are a number of ways in which mana may be conceived, acquired and maintained.

**Mana atua**

*Mana atua* is the enduring, indestructible and sacred power of the atua. According to Barlow (1991, p. 61), mana atua is

the sacred fire that is without beginning and without end ... known as the ahi kōmāu which is given to those who conform to sacred ritual and principles. In modern times the term has taken on various meanings, including the power of the atua.

We all have potential mana atua within us and around us through our connection with the atua. Some, and in some times and situations, have a stronger connection than others.

**Mana tūpuna**

*Mana tūpuna* is mana that one is born with, and it relates to whakapapa. It is a consequence of descent from certain tūpuna and may be nurtured and sustained or weakened and minimised as a result of marriages and individual or group actions. Mana tūpuna is shared to an extent by the members of particular whānau, hapū and iwi, and forms one of the links in the relationships between members of these groups. The actions of any member of a whānau may impact on the shared mana tūpuna of the whānau, hapū and iwi.
According to Barlow (1991, p. 61), ‘This is the power and authority handed down through chiefly lineage ... those who inherit mana must carry out the various rituals and duties to maintain this power handed down from the ancient ones.’ Walker (as cited in Melbourne, 1995, p. 26) considers that ‘A rangatira ... was descended from the ancestor after whom the hapū was named and whose whakapapa could be traced back to revered ancestors and ultimately to the atua’.

**Mana whenua**

*Mana whenua* relates to the mutual relationship between the people of the land and the land of the people. According to Barlow (1991, pp. 61–62), once again:

> This is the power associated with the possession of lands; it is also the power associated with the ability of the land to produce the bounties of nature. When the world was created, the atua implanted this procreative power within the womb of Mother Earth. By the power of mana mauri all things have potential for growth and development towards maturity.

The status of mana whenua carries with it an element of power and authority in relation to the care and use of the land, the benefits of the spiritual power of the land, and the control of events and processes on the land.

While all associated with the land had mana whenua, the mana of the people and the land was most particularly held by the rangatira. According to Walker (as cited in Melbourne, 1995, p. 26), rangatira held mana whenua — sovereignty over tribal lands — and were channels to receive goods and services for redistribution amongst their hapū ... With their land base gone, the chiefs were totally disempowered and, although Māori leaders today are still referred to as rangatirā, the fundamental base for their chieftainship has gone. Land is the very basis of Māori, of mana Māori motuhake, of tribal sovereignty. So once the land goes, the mana of the chief goes with it.

The power and authority accorded people in relation to a particular rohe, or area of land, is balanced by the responsibilities and obligations of the people in regard to their rohe and those who stand within it. Barlow (1991, p. 63) divides the word manaaki as mana-a-kī, to more clearly illustrate the relationship between mana and kī or the satisfied or satiated stomach and person. For instance, as mana whenua, whānau, hapū and iwi, with the leadership of rangatira, have a responsibility to manaaki their manuhiri; that is, they must provide sustenance and hospitality to those who visit as friends within their
rohe. This may mean in various circumstances, an obligation to provide food, a place of rest, respect, stimulating conversation and entertainment for visitors to homes, marae or the general area. The resources of Papatūānuku in the rohe are expected to be employed in the process of manaaki manuhiri. Failure to provide appropriately for visitors, whether through a failure to adequately protect and utilise the resources of Papatūānuku and her offspring or through neglect of appropriate process, upsets the balance of power and undermines mana whenua status. This then provides an opportunity to disrespect or challenge the status of the iwi mana whenua. In the case of hostile incursions or challenges to the mana whenua status of the iwi, the responsibility of those who claim mana whenua status is to act as kaitiaki (guardians) to protect and defend the land and her resources for the future generations.

The relationship of people to the land is symbolically affirmed on the birth of a child by the customary practice of burying the whenua (the placenta), the source of nourishment in the womb and a living entity, within the whenua (land) to which the child belongs. This is the basis of tūrangawaewae, which ensures that the child has this place to stand as one inextricably linked with this land. On death, the relationship is once again affirmed through the return of the tūpapāku (cadaver) to Papatūānuku.

Manuka Henare has commented on the practice by Pākehā medical practitioners of burning the placenta of newborn babies. He proposes that Māori would not have done this formerly, and should not accede to this practice because it is ‘against the mana of that child, it would destroy the child’s mauri’ (Henare, 1988, p. 387). While a corpse could be burned without its mana being affected because the mauri was already gone, the placenta (whenua) of a child should be buried in the earth (whenua), so that the mana and mauri of the child will be preserved.

The indivisible and mutually dependent relationship between the people and the land is the basis on which Durie (1985) claims that violence against the land is as destructive to the mana and wairua of the people of that land, the tangata whenua, as it is to the land itself.

**Mana tangata**

*Mana tangata* relates to personal achievement and qualities. Barlow (1991, p. 62) describes mana tangata as ‘the power acquired by an individual according to his or her own ability and effort to develop skills and gain knowledge in
particular areas’. Mana tangata may be seen as contingent on personal achievement and personal qualities. However, it is not a function of the achievements themselves, rather of how the achievements of the individual contribute to the mana of the group to which he or she belongs. Concomitant with this is a recognition of the mana of the individual in relation to the group. Mana tangata is related to service to and on behalf of one’s people. Henare (1988) states: ‘The mana of individuals can only be understood if there is an appreciation of the relationship between that person and te whānau, te hapū and te iwi. Mana is a group enhanced property, it belongs to the group’. Thus, the work of the individual who regularly provides the particular foods of the area for visitors, of those who smooth the way for positive relations with others through attention to the formalities of marae process, and of those who contribute to the well-being and mana of tamariki, whānau, hapū and iwi in a variety of ways contributes to the mana of the group and to their own mana within the group. The achievement of power, status and success in a Western sense, through academic, political or financial achievements, does not in itself equate with mana tangata. Individual talents and advantages are to be returned for the benefit of one’s people; not to return them is injurious to individual mana and also reflects negatively on the mana of the whānau. The mana of individuals and the group is interdependent, and may wax or wane across time and situations according to the actions of those concerned: ‘How much mana a person or group has at any given time depends not on any precise or objective measure, but on the subjective assessments of the individuals themselves and of others around them’ (Metge, 1976, p. 64).

**Mana Māori**

**Mana Māori** is a contemporary term used to refer to the mana of Māori groups and people as a whole, as well as to individuals, in respect of their contributions to the maintenance of Māoritanga and Māori well-being. Henare (1988) translates mana Māori as Māori well-being and integrity, and describes this concept as emphasising the wholeness of social relationships and continuity through time and space. Cultural, social, political and economic systems, as well as individual actions, can enhance or detract from mana Māori.
Mana wahine: Mana tāne

The close relationship between mana, tapu and noa may be seen in the balance of mana wahine and mana tāne. Both male and female have mana, but the mana carried by women is seen by some to be of a different quality from that carried by men. The mana of men is characterised as being positive (not to be confused with good) and that of women as being negative (not to be confused with bad). Thus, according to Marsden:

the mana of a high-born female was regarded as particularly potent in ... neutralising tapu. As a consequence, the act of a woman stepping over a man instead of going around him was highly improper and reprehensible since such an action depleted the male of his mana. The customary placement of a representation of the female vulva over the doorway to the whare tūpuna is symbolic of the process of whakanoa in regard to the tapu of individuals, the tapu of the whare and associated tūpuna taking precedence. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 123; see also Te Whaiti, 1992, pp. 30–32).

Maintenance and diminution of mana

The spiritual origin of mana not only empowers but also acts as a protection against negative human and spiritual forces and the consequences of these. Thus, there is a strength and protection aspect to mana. If mana is maintained and enhanced, it is a strength for one’s self, whānau, hapū and iwi. A loss or serious diminution in mana ‘diminishes an individual’s capacity for action and hence his (sic) achievements’ (Metge, 1986, p. 171) and may mean that ‘the individual has little or no protection against the mana of others’ (Metge, 1986, p. 171) and negative spiritual forces.

A loss or diminution of mana can result from any one of a number of actions or inactions, including a violation of tapu; failure to whakautu (look after), whether in respect of a hara or hospitality and generosity, the result being an imbalance of relationships; failure to fulfill kaitiaki obligations, loss of tūrangawaewae and thus mana whenua status; disconnection from whānau, hapū and iwi; and self rather than group interest. The consequences of damage to the mana of the individual, whānau, hapū, iwi or people include vulnerability to mate Māori, loss of mauri ora, and whakamā.
Utu

The notion of balance and reciprocity is fundamental to the maintenance of mana. This is illustrated in the significance of utu and associated practices.

*Utu* is defined by Firth (1959) as the principle of reciprocity, and by Metge (1976) as the principle of reciprocity and of compensation in its widest sense. Henare sees the central thesis of utu as that of ‘reciprocal responses; obtaining equivalent value for services or gifts, and the righting of injustices for the balancing of social relationships’ (Henare, 1988).

In Māori thinking, an individual or group will endeavour to reciprocate for anything they receive, whether positive or negative, because of the challenge the act of giving and receiving represents in terms of mana. If an injustice is done, an appropriate exchange or compensation can be arranged which will, in the end, enhance the mana of both parties. The motivation for the principle of utu, then, is maintaining mana through balance.

Utu, in its compensatory sense, backed by the desire to maintain balance in social relationships and restore mana for collective health and benefit, is a driving force behind persistent Māori efforts to gain justice, or just compensation, in respect of land issues and other perceived injustices which reflect on the rangatiratanga of Māori, whānau, hapū and iwi.

Whakamā

*Whakamā* is translated by Williams (1971) as ‘shy, ashamed’. However, Metge (1986) considers the root meaning of whakamā to be ‘conscious of being at a disadvantage’ and directly related to a perceived loss of or dimunition in mana and to a consequent defencelessness because of a lack of mana in relation to another or others.

Whakamā is characterised by various forms of outward expression and inward experience. It may last minutes, hours, days, months or years; it may be passed from one generation to the next; it can afflict groups as well as individuals; and its severity can range from slight and superficial, through deep but curable, to catastrophic and beyond cure.

Whakamā has been referred to in terms of sickness (te mate whakamā) (Metge, 1986, p. 30). However, the verb most commonly used in relation to whakamā is *patu*, which means both to strike and to kill (Williams, 1971, p. 272). Thus, a person is stricken or overcome with whakamā.
Anthropologist Dame Joan Metge has conducted a comprehensive study of whakamā in the academic arena. In co-constructing, with Māori informants, a ‘typology’ of whakamā, Metge categorises and constructs whakamā according to her understandings, but uses the words and explanations of Māori as the substance of the construction.

According to Metge (1986), the behavioural patterns associated with whakamā may be divided into five groups. The first group consists of a behavioural pattern of immobility and unresponsiveness, a pattern involving the negation of normal activity and interaction: not moving or a marked reduction in movement, not fully utilising the senses, such as the senses of sight and hearing, not speaking, slow or no responses. Secondly, one afflicted with whakamā may cut off visual communication by physically covering or hiding the face. A third group of behaviours associated with whakamā consists of an array of small scale, repetitive movements which are commonly regarded as indicating unease: ‘Restless hands, shuffling feet, tapping, twiddling, ear-pulling, scratching, eyes looking from side to side, looking away, eye-rolling, blushing and giggling, stuttering’ (Metge, 1986). Fourthly, whakamā may be manifested in physical flight: running away, hiding one’s body as well as one’s feelings. The fifth group of behaviours appears opposed to the first group. These patterns, rather than reducing activity, carry it to excess. Thus, ‘boisterousness, shaking all over, talking flat out, babbling away, laughing inanely, using violent language, frantic activity, even hitting out’ (Metge, 1986) may also be behavioural manifestations of whakamā. However, expression of whakamā in this manner serves the same purpose as do other forms of expression: a withdrawal from communication and interaction with others. Whakamā behaviour may not fall neatly into one of these groups but incorporate elements of several.

Metge has also grouped English language descriptions of the feelings associated with whakamā into a number of categories. The summarising labels used by Metge are feelings of shyness, embarrassment, uncertainty, confusion, lack of self-confidence, inadequacy, incapability (feeling unable to act effectively and to cope, feeling powerless), fear, hurt, humiliation, sense of having one’s soul destroyed, depression, shame.

Although none of those who provided Metge with their description of feelings associated with whakamā mentioned anger, Metge believes that whakamā may involve anger. She surmises that the anger is usually suppressed and turned inwards, unless the whakamā person or group is pushed past a certain point, in which case violence may surface.
The English language descriptors of feelings associated with whakamā will obviously be consistent with and familiar to Pākehā experience. However, a distinguishing feature of whakamā is that it subsumes so much under a single heading, putting together feelings which speakers of English generally treat as separate and distinct. For example, shyness, shame, embarrassment and fear differ, in Western conceptions, in their causes, in the way they are valued and in being viewed as qualitatively distinct. The inclusive nature of whakamā is not due to a poverty of language but to a particular way of perceiving and ordering human experience. Under all the non-synonymous descriptions of behaviour and feeling, there is a common causal link, a theme centring on mana. Metge (1986, pp. 31–32) states: ‘Whakamāa always involves an implicit if not explicit comparison with other people in which the person who is whakamāa comes off second best ... whakamāa is bound up with the lack of or loss of mana in relation to others’.

Metge, in true Western academic tradition, continued the process of classification and categorisation by further dividing the causes of whakamā into six groups, all of which relate to perceptions of mana in relation to others. The first cause of whakamā identified by Metge is ‘perception of lower status’. Māori become whakamā when they perceive themselves to be of lower status than particular others. This perception may be in general terms or in respect of a specific and valued quality, such as descent lines, age, knowledge or status. In Metge’s (1986) analysis, it is the individual’s own perception and measurement of the situation, rather than objective facts, which is the crucial element in determining whether individuals are afflicted with whakamā.

Whakamā can result when Māori find themselves in a situation of uncertainty and confusion, when the right course of action, the tikanga, is not clear. Uncertainty and confusion can occur when Māori get caught in the conflict between old and new ways, and between Māori and Pākehā practices and values.

Metge considers that, when there is such uncertainty, many Māori become whakamā and withdraw, physically and/or metaphorically from the precipitating environment or situation (Metge, 1986).

Whakamā will ensue when a Māori person recognises, or is told, that they have done something wrong, whether the fault concerns a breach of social convention, moral code, law/lore, or the individual’s own standards. Even when the fault or breach is not known to others, whakamā can result because the individual has placed him/herself at a moral disadvantage. When outside censure is anticipated, adults and children may confine themselves to their homes or go away temporarily or permanently.
When a person is insulted, belittled or trampled on, intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly, through a failure to recognise status (or that of those whose mana is intertwined with theirs) or through criticism of them or something they have done (or in relation to those whose mana is intertwined with theirs), whakamā may ensue. The whakamā is intensified if the charges are just or repeated and if the recipient cannot retaliate. A ‘put-down’ experience can occur when a Māori individual is placed in a position where he or she cannot respond appropriately. The context in which whakamā may occur need not be overtly negative; for instance, providing lavish hospitality or over-generous gifts for which individuals or groups are unable to reciprocate can induce whakamā (Metge, 1986).

Being singled out, separated from peers and placed in a special category, whether inferior, superior or just different, can cause whakamā. Praise can produce whakamā, particularly if the individual thinks that the praise is undeserved and is scared that their inadequacy will be exposed or that he or she will be considered whakahihi (arrogant).

Whakamā can also be felt on behalf of others: on behalf of those with whom the individual identifies on the basis of common hapū, tribal, gender or ethnic group membership, and in particular on behalf of those with whom the individual is closely linked.

Groups can be whakamaa for the same reasons as individuals. In addition, however, mistakes and offences committed by individual members, living or dead, and a poor performance by the group compared with those of other groups, can cause whakamā:

Iwi and hapū who were defeated in battle over 100 years ago remain whakamaa in relation to the victors to this day. They keep the memory alive and are continually looking for opportunities to improve their relative standing. Since physical combat is outlawed, they seek to redeem their ... mana, by achievements in sport, Māori cultural competitions and the arts and hospitality of the marae. (Metge, 1986, p. 59)

Tribes who have lost most of their land in battle, by confiscation and sale, may experience whakamā in relation to those who have retained theirs. Tribes whose members have lost facility in te reo Māori and the ability to manaaki manuhiri (these and other things often relating to the loss of a land base) experience whakamā in relation to others more proficient in these areas. Finally, Māori as a group may experience whakamā in relation to Pākehā because they feel that Pākehā look down on them and/or because they feel incompetent in Pākehā situations: ‘There is a general consensus among Māori that the whakamaa experienced in relation to Pākehā and especially in Pākehā dominated settings ... is particularly deep and damaging’ (Metge, 1986, p. 35).
Chronic whakamā may affect the Māori person living and working with Pākehā in a Pākehā situation laden with Pākehā values and perceptions. However, chronic whakamā may also be manifested by Māori who have lost touch with their roots.

Those who have lost their land and/or who have no contact with their tūrangawaewae, marae, whānau, hapū, iwi, who do not speak te reo Māori, who do not know their own traditions, or who find themselves unable to make a contribution to the well-being of the group are likely to be aware of a mana deficit in relation to others. Whakamā, and/or another consequence of diminished mana may result. This description applies to many urban Māori in particular, in whom whakamā can be overwhelming and debilitating, in both Māori and non-Māori contexts.

It is not necessary for a person to know te reo me ōna tikanga Māori to experience whakamā.
Mauri

‘The mauri enters and leaves at the veil which separates the human world from the spirit realm’ (Barlow, 1991, p. 83).

Everything has mauri — birds, trees, rivers, stones, people — individually and collectively. Barlow (1991, p. 83) describes mauri in the following way:

A special power possessed by Io which makes it possible for everything to move and live in accordance with the conditions and limits of its existence ... the mauri is that power which permits ... living things to exist within their own realm and sphere. When a person is born, the atua bind the two parts of body and spirit of his (sic) being together. Only the mauri or power of Io can join them together ... When a person dies, the mauri is no longer able to bind those parts together and thereby give life — and the physical and spiritual parts of a person’s being are separated.

Marsden considers that, while mauri may be regarded as an elemental energy derived from the realm of Te Korekore, and out of which the stuff of the universe was created ... there was a clear distinction between the essence (mauri) of a person or object and the distinct realm of the spirit which stood over the realm of the natural order and was indwelt by spiritual beings. Since the natural order was not a closed system it could be infiltrated and interpenetrated by the higher order of the spirit. In fact the Māori further distinguished between the essence of inanimate and animate objects. Whilst all the created partook of mauri (life force, ethos), by which all things cohere in nature, in human beings this essence was of a higher order and was called mauriora. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992)

Some would say that the binding force of the mauriora can become weakened, allowing a disjunction between the physical and spiritual dimensions of self. In this case, the person may be seen as kohiwi or like bare bones or the hollow trunk of a tree; in effect, the physical self, the bones, may be present, but the spiritual essence or life force is absent. The mauri of a person leaves on death, allowing the spirit to travel to Te Rerenga Wairua and thence to the domain of Hine-nui-te-pō. Physical sickness or trauma may result in a weakening of the cohesive power of the mauri, perhaps resulting in death.

A loss or diminution of mana, and the protective power and authority this implies, may also contribute to the vulnerability of the cohesive power of the mauri. The mauri of a person may startle, it may become weak or jumpy, as a result of panic or trauma. This provides an opening for negative forces to enter and to further weaken or disrupt the mauri. In these instances, a person may experience a disjunction between his/her physical and spiritual beings: the spirit may wander. If it reaches a point of no return, the physical self will follow.
The mauri of elements of the natural world may likewise be weakened through actions affecting their physical being: the pollution of a river, the destruction of forests, for example. In these cases, a rāhui may be used to enforce conservation and allow the rejuvenation of physical health and the return of the mauri. Marsden (in King, 1992) describes the ‘pure’ rites whereby particular rites were employed to propitiate the atua in particular circumstances.

The ‘pure rākau’ was used to propitiate Tāne, atua of the forest, before a tree was felled for canoe-making or house-building. A fire was lit under the tree and the first chip together with mauku fern was burnt. The scent, representing the essence of the tree, was offered up to propitiate Tāne for the slaying of this forest child of Tāne. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 123)

In this case, the binding force of the mauri is broken by the act of burning and the spiritual essence of the tree set free to return to Tāne. Similarly, with the cooking of food. The cooked food, whilst it was steaming hot,

was elevated in the hands and waved to and fro before the atua so that the essence symbolised by the rising steam could return to the atua. They were then petitioned to accept the essence while man consumed the substance. (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992, p. 123)

A mauri may be established for a creation. In this way the substance of the creation is bound in with the spirit. Barlow describes the establishment of a mauri for a house:

When a house is built, the mauri is established as the sacred heart of a building. This mauri is the power obtained through a covenant with the atua to take care of the house and to fulfil the wishes, desires and hopes of the people who will use it. (Barlow, 1991, p. 83).

The mauri of a building or place is felt as the cohesion between the physical and spiritual essences of the place. The mauri is the force which binds the essence of the atua to the substance of the building or other creation, as the case may be.

Similarly with te reo Māori. Reference to the mauri of the reo is an acknowledgement of that which binds the substance of the words with the realm of the spirit. The mauri of the word is that which enables the penetration of the spiritual realm by the spoken word and the direction of the word by the spirit.

People can gain sustenance from the mauri of other people and things. This is why merely being with an appropriate person or people or at an appropriate place can be healing. It can provide strength and nourishment from the association of one mauri with another. The land has its own mauri. Different rohe (areas associated with the mana whenua of particular hapū and iwi) have their own mauri in association with the people of that rohe.
The centre shoot of the flax is the source of new growth and rejuvenation. It is the life source of the plant, and the plant provides sustenance for the bell-bird. The whānau may be thought of as the centre shoot of Māori society. The centre shoots of the flax bush are sheltered and protected by the middle and outer shoots. If the centre shoots, representing the children and youth of the whānau, are removed, the whānau loses its source of life, rejuvenation and creativity.

*Whanaungatanga* is commonly translated as family-ness; its root, the word *whānau*, is the extended family. Whanaungatanga refers to kinship and social roles and bonds, continuity of the whānau from the past, through whakapapa, to the preparation and nurturing of future generations. Links are vitally important, and the health and well-being of the individual and the whānau are indivisible.

Rangihau (1992, pp. 183–184) describes his perceptions of whanaungatanga in this way:

> Kinship is the warmth of being together as a family group: what you can draw from being together and the strength of using all the resources of a family. And a strong feeling of kinship or whanaungatanga reaches out to others in hospitality ... Whanaungatanga also means to me that when a person feels lonely, he (sic) will go round and visit some of his kin and it is just as enjoyable for the kin to receive a visit as it is for the person to go.

The whanaungatanga dimension relates to seeing, and defining, oneself as part of a system. This dimension relates also to nuances of appropriate social behaviour, rights and responsibilities, and group dynamics and development. Aspects of whanaungatanga may be identified through the names associated with particular stages, relationships and roles within the whānau.
The term whānau is relative. Most commonly, it refers to an extended version of the nuclear family. At least three or four generations of descendants from a common ancestor or ancestral union may be included in the whānau unit. Thus, from a shared great-grandparent or set of great-grandparents, the whānau may include several sets of grandparents (the kaumātua), their children (the mātua), and all their children (the tamariki-mokopuna). Thus, in English terms, the whānau includes sibling relationships, cousin relationships (of several degrees), parent: child, aunty/uncle: niece/nephew relationships and great-aunt/uncle: grand-niece/nephew and grandparent: grandchildren relationships as well as great-grandparent: great-grandchild and great-great-aunt/uncle: great-great-niece/nephew relationships. However, the members of a single hapū may refer to each other as whānau in relation to the members of other hapū. Similarly, the members of an iwi may refer to each other as whānau in comparison to or in the rohe of other iwi. Māori sometimes refer to each other as a whole as whānau in relation to the wider Pākehā society and context.

The terms parent and grandparent will be used here in the Māori sense, where mātua refers to all kin of one’s parents’ generation, and kuia (female), koroua (male), and kaumātua (male and female) refer to all kin of one’s grandparents’ generation. Māori traditionally lived a communal lifestyle, where the care and education of children was shared amongst the whānau and hapū.

Whānau provide the centre shoot of hapū and iwi. A number of whānau, descended from a common ancestor, make up a hapū (sub-tribe). The term hapū refers both to sub-tribe and to the condition of pregnancy. Hapū typically number several hundred kin. A number of hapū, again descended from a further distant eponymous ancestor, make up an iwi (tribe).

Whānau, hapū and iwi are usually identified by the name of the common ancestor from whom they descend, although this is not inevitably the case (Barlow, 1991, p. 21).

Whānau, hapū and iwi represent relatively stable kinship and political units, although they may reconstitute and redefine themselves over time. Thus, a whānau which becomes too large or conflicts with the hapū may leave the hapū to form its own, based on descent from a common ancestor. Similarly, a hapū which, perhaps through its leader, finds itself at serious odds with the bulk of the iwi, may seek to establish its own status as iwi. In order to achieve such independence, however, the whānau or hapū needs to be numerous, strong, and in possession of strong leadership. Kinship links with the original whānau, hapū and iwi are usually retained and remembered. The new body will be seen as the teina or younger offshoot of the original body, not just because of its comparatively recent formation, but also because of the status of the common
ancestor as junior to the common ancestor of the iwi. Similarly, iwi may seek to re-form themselves into a single grouping or confederation. Hapū and whānau are headed by kaumātua and rangatira. Iwi may be led by a single ariki (paramount chief) or by a formal or informally constituted group or council of rangatira.

**Tupuna**

The word *tupuna* literally describes an upstanding, continuous stream of water. The whānau originates in the whakapapa, flowing through the tūpuna to the living generations. Both ancestors, and living grandparents (including whānau elders of the third and fourth generations), who represent the closest link between the living generations and those who have gone before, may be referred to as tūpuna.

Ancestral tūpuna dwell within the spiritual realm. They may return to direct and influence people and events within the temporal realm, particularly in relation to those who form part of the ongoing stream of which they are a part. Sometimes they relate to a natural form, as birds, fish or insects, and act as kaitiaki for the whānau or particular parts of the natural realm. In this way, they may provide for the transmission of information, through tohu, from the spiritual realm to the temporal realm.

Hapū are formed of the offspring of certain tūpuna, and are typically named after them. Similarly, iwi relationships consist of the connection of a number of hapū through descent from an eponymous ancestor, from whom the iwi derives its name.

Thus, when I identify my hapū as Ngāti Te Whiti, I am identifying myself as of Te Whiti O Rongomai, the founding ancestor of the hapū. Similarly, as we of Ngāti Te Whiti are of Te Atiawa iwi, we identify ourselves as of (descendants of, bones of) our common ancestor, Awanui-ā-rangi.

Crown actions contributing to the alienation of Māori land; the destruction of traditional whānau, hapū and iwi-based systems of land tenure; the undermining of the authority of rangatira; the undermining of the authority of whānau, hapū and iwi-derived systems of education, child care and protection; and the imposition of Western systems of education, adoption, foster care and ‘child protection’ have contributed in large measure to the current fragmentation of many whānau, hapū and iwi. Tens of thousands of Māori
children have been removed from their families and placed in Social Welfare homes or foster care, often with unrelated Pākehā families. The rights and responsibilities of kaumātua and rangatira within the whānau and hapū have been disregarded in social welfare, education and adoption legislation over the last century. These and other elements in the raft of whānau-hostile state interventions have resulted in the disconnection of numbers of Māori from their whānau. Additional numbers of Māori, often in the middle-aged and younger age groups, have been alienated from traditional kin-based whānau systems and methods of social organisation.

The large-scale loss of a land base, urban migration, and associated fragmentation of traditional systems based on whānau, hapū and iwi have, however, found parallels in large numbers of pan-tribal groups and organisations. There are now hundreds or thousands of groups of Māori, who come together for everything from educational purposes (kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, whare wananga, Māori units in mainstream schools, secondary school Māori classes and culture groups, University Māori student associations, Māori in psychology groups) to shared sporting interests (rugby and rugby league clubs, netball, softball and touch rugby), to specific work arenas (Māori Medical Association, Te Whāriki Tautoko, Organisation of Māori Counsellors, and so on.) These groups organise themselves and relate to each other along whānau lines, regardless of whether there are, in fact, kinship links.

Wherever Māori have congregated and related to each other, whānau relational systems and roles within these have emerged (Durie, as cited in Te Whaiti, McCarthy & Durie., 1997, pp. 1–24; Metge, 1995).

Thus, those associated with a particular kōhanga reo will often refer to themselves as a whānau and have at least one kaumātua, who fulfils many of the traditional roles of the kaumātua, a number of mātua, rangatahi and tamariki-mokopuna. The group inter-relates as a whānau, with the kaupapa in a sense generating the joint interest, endeavour and well-being that ancestral land and the kaupapa of food production and survival did traditionally. Metge refers to these non-kin-based whānau systems as metaphorical whānau.

Although some Māori have been separated from close links with ancestral lands, marae, iwi, hapū and whānau, most retain the links to varying degrees.
Kaumātua

According to Williams (1971), the term *kaumātua* means adult, and old man or woman. In modern usage, kaumātua refers to an older man (koroua) or woman (kuia), those of the senior living generation. However, the alternative meaning of adult given by Williams is an indication that the full uptake or pinnacle of one’s adult role and responsibilities is concurrent with kaumātua status. One interpretation of the term *kau-mātua*, when dismantled, is ‘no parents’ and thus ‘elder’.

Barlow (1991) considers the modern meaning of kaumātua to be ‘male tribal leaders who act as spokesmen on the marae, and who are the keepers of the knowledge and traditions of the family, sub-tribe or tribe’. Not all would concur with this analysis, particularly in relation to Barlow’s limited application of the term to ‘male leaders’. In my understanding and observation, older women are also kaumātua and perform the functions described above, with their voices on the marae being in the form of karanga and kīnaki or waiata.

It has been a feature of post-colonial constructions of gender relationships that the patriarchal framework of Victorian English colonisers, and in particular that associated with Judaeo-Christian discourse, has led to an emphasis within anthropological and ethnographic studies of traditional Māori society on the leadership roles of men. In particular, the speaking role of male elders within the domain of the marae ātea has been seen as primary, with the role of women in kaikaranga and waiata defined as secondary.

Thus, the interdependence of the two forms of power, authority and leadership has been overlooked. These colonial constructions have sometimes been adopted and incorporated into contemporary Māori analyses of Māori society, tradition and culture.

Kaumātua traditionally have a special role in the care and education of the young. They are generally considered to have the final word or ultimate authority in decisions affecting the whānau, and their relationship with the mokopuna has primacy over parental relationships (Waldegrave, Tamasese, & Campbell, 1990). It was common practice for firstborn grandchildren to be raised by the grandparents. In this way, they were given a degree of attention that the ‘worker’ parents may not have been able to provide and were also exposed to the deeper levels of Māori tradition and protocol. It is still relatively common for grandparents to whāngai (care for) firstborn grandchildren, either on a full-time or a part-time basis.
The role of kaumātua is one of guardianship: of family and marae, and sometimes of specific areas of the natural environment. This, along with the wisdom and experience kaumātua have accumulated, means that they often have a prominent role to play in formalising contractual arrangements between the spiritual and temporal realms (for example, through the establishment of tapu and rāhui, the direction of whakanoa and tohi rites).

In terms of the temporal matters of everyday living and whānau functioning, kaumātua provide the guidance and direction, while the next generation is largely responsible for the doing of that which is laid down. The health of a whānau is apparent, in part, by the care and respect accorded kaumātua. Kaumātua carry the mana of the whānau, while rangatira carry the mana of the whānau and hapū.

As the older generation passes on, some of their mauri and mana passes to those who will take their place. That is why a person of the younger generation will not usually take their full adult place until their senior is gone, even though they may have knowledge, age and experience. They also need the mana and the mauri.

John Rangihau explains:

I often speak of the mauri or life force which Māoris give to many different things. We believe that every time you give of yourself you are starting to lose some of the aura, some of the life force, which you have for yourself. In the case of my son, if he starts to get up then he’s drawing something from me and eventually I will be left an empty hulk. This is the real reason behind not allowing the young man to speak before the father dies. Because it is possible that he will take some of the mauri which rightly belongs to his father. And immediately you do this you start to take away all sorts of things from the father. Strange as it seems, I’ve seen it happen: a young man, a very aggressive young man, has carried on doing this in spite of cautions. And you can see the father dwindling in stature. Now the father seems to be hanging around at the back of the marae. He seems to be a person without any purpose: his son is taking the place the father should have. (Rangihau, as cited in King, 1992, p. 12)
**Mātua**

*Mātua* refers to parents or other relatives of the parents’ generation. Thus, ones parents’ brothers, sister and cousins in varying degrees may be referred to as mātua.

Like other roles relating to the structure of, and position within, Māori whānau, the mātua role is defined primarily in relation to other roles and stages within the whānau rather than in relation to age. The role is also not exclusive: one may be mātua in one context and rangatahi in another. Thus, 17- or 37-year-old parents may be mātua in relation to their children, but remain rangatahi in relation to their parents and grandparents.

In modern times, all kin, and sometimes non-kin, of one’s parents’ generation may be referred to as aunty and uncle.

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**Rangatahi**

*Rangatahi* is a general term applied to youth. Individuals and groups of people are referred to as rangatahi in relation to the roles and status of the speaker. Thus, a group of children may be referred to as rangatahi by an older person, while a forty-year-old may be rangatahi to those of older generations.

Use of the term rangatahi conveys that those referred to are in the process of learning and exploring the world, and have not yet reached the point of uptake of an adult role. They are expected to make mistakes and to be learners in relation to their seniors. Provided they do not attempt to usurp or degrade the role of their elders, a degree of tolerance is commonly allowed them to grow into their roles over time.

The rangatahi have an important role to play within whānau, hapū and iwi, as they are seen as the future leaders. Ideally, the old people watch them carefully from an early age to gauge their particular talents and affinities. Kaumātua then attempt to guide them into training for the roles most suited to them. The role of the whānau, and the place of rangatahi within that whānau, has a bearing on the future roles it is hoped the young people will grow into.
**Tamariki**

Tamariki fall within the rubric of rangatahi. They are the children. However, once again, the term is relative. One will always be the child of one’s parents, and will be known as such as long as one’s parents are remembered. Thus, the 70-year-old child of a well-known prophet is known as (the prophet’s) son. This does not detract from, but rather adds to, his status, as he is seen as having acquired the mana of his father. His status as (the prophet’s) child enhances his kaumātua and rangatira status.

**Mokopuna**

The moko is the traditional Māori art of tattoo. Moko were visual representations of the flow of the wairua into the temporal realm, as represented in the physical body. Moko were engraved into the face and sometimes other body parts of men and women. They were unique to them and incorporated symbolic representations of their whakapapa and other elements of their identity. The term moko may also be used figuratively to refer to the person. One’s moko was one’s sign; to see the sign was to know the person. A puna, as previously noted, is a spring of water. Thus, the two concepts of moko (the person) and puna (the spring) combine as the representation of mokopuna. Our mokopuna, then, represent the ongoing spring of the people. They are the surface representations of the spring that originates within Ranginui and Papatūānauku and flows through life until it reaches and becomes one with the sea. Mokopuna are the temporal signs or manifestations of the tūpuna.

Once again, in relational terms, mokopuna are the grandchildren. One’s own grandchildren, and those of one’s siblings and cousins are mokopuna, but the term is often used in relation to all the children of te iwi Māori or various subsets thereof.

The importance of rangatahi, the need for careful preparation of rangatahi by the older generations, and the cycle of life, are illustrated in the well-known saying:

Ka pū te rūhā,
Ka hao te rangatahi.

The old net wears out,
The new net goes fishing.
As the old net wears out, the survival of the people becomes dependent on the ability of the new net to perform its role: to catch fish to feed the people.

This, in turn, is dependent on the care and wisdom involved in selecting the materials from which to make the net, the care and precision with which it has been constructed, the timing and location of its eventual placement at sea, and the strength of its tie back to shore, so that it does not become lost to the sea. This saying also refers to the need for change and innovation as new ways and new blood take over from old.

As whānau are the centre shoots of Māori society, so rangatahi, and in particular tamariki-mokopuna, are the centre shoots of the whānau. The kaumātua are the outer leaves, protecting the delicate centre from exposure to the elements too early. The mātua stand between the kaumātua and the tamariki, providing further protection for the centre and benefiting also from the protection from the elements provided by the kaumātua.

\textbf{Mātāmua}

The first-born/eldest child within a whānau is known as the \textit{mātāmua}. The position of mātāmua is a special one and carries with it certain expectations concerning the role of the mātāmua in the receipt of knowledge, in the care of younger children, in the binding together of the whānau and in the representation of the whānau in the wider context, as through speaking rights.

The role and responsibilities of the mātāmua are recognised from birth, and training begins early. Mātāmua may be privy to adult discussions, responsibility for performing small tasks may be delegated to them, and specific knowledge may be passed to them from older members of the whānau. Mātāmua are accorded some responsibility for the care of younger children within the whānau, the mātāmua typically having the authority to make decisions about the appropriate distribution of resources amongst younger siblings and the appropriate course of action for younger siblings to take in a given situation. The expectations placed on the mātāmua in childhood form the training ground for the leadership and whānau representative roles he/she will be expected to take throughout life. Younger siblings may be trained to look to the mātāmua for guidance and leadership.

Distinctions are made in some whānau between the firstborn son and the firstborn daughter. It is usually the responsibility of firstborn sons to speak on behalf of the whānau, particularly when male mātua are deceased or
unavailable, and the responsibility of the first-born daughter to initiate the karanga and waiata when female mātua are deceased or unavailable. Younger siblings may not choose to speak or karanga in deference to their older siblings in some situations.

Not all firstborn children are suited, able or willing to take on upfront leadership roles. In this case, younger siblings may perform some of the roles usually reserved for mātāmua. However, this is typically with the permission of the mātāmua, and the final deference is to him or her.

For example, one well-known leader was a fifth child and fourth son. The eldest living son of his family chose not to take up an upfront leadership role, preferring a background role. Nevertheless, as mātāmua, he was always accorded the right to speak first and last at formal and informal hui. The children of the eldest child, in particular the eldest of his offspring, are looked to for the final word when it comes to matters concerning the whānau.

**Pōtiki**

Pō is the night and the underworld where the spirits of the dead reside, presided over by Hine-nui-te-pō. Tiki has a number of interrelated meanings, including the personification of primeval man, representation of ongoing life and fertility, to fetch or bring forth, and a marker of that which is tapu (Williams, 1971). Thus, the term pōtiki, applied to the youngest child of the whānau signifies the personification of the close relationship between the dark and the light, death and life, the primeval and the progressive.

The story of Māui-pōtiki, the youngest child of Taranga, illustrates the unique characteristics associated with youngest children, and those often admired in Māoridom. The story also indicates the flexibility of Māori society in respect of the primogeniture imperative. In essence, Māui’s initial life was inauspicious and precarious.

He was born prematurely, and his mother, Taranga, thinking he was dead, wrapped him in her top-knot and cast him into the sea. However, through special care and protection, Māui lived. Māui proved himself determined and inventive and eventually succeeded in reuniting himself with his mother (who had given him up for dead) and his older brothers (who did not know of his existence). He became the favoured son of his mother and aroused the jealousy of his older brothers. However, Māui was full of bright and ambitious ideas, cunning, determined, creative, charming, prepared to take risks and make
mistakes, and he was mischievous. With these qualities and with the special gifts he had received as a favourite of the atua, Māui-potiki fished up the North Island of New Zealand (Te Ika a Māui). He also left behind his anchor stone, the South Island (Te Wai Pounamu). Māui had many adventures and took many risks. However, most of his adventure resulted in benefits for the people. Eventually, he had provided longer days and more hours of sunshine and fire for the people. Māui’s adventures ended, however, when he tried to conquer death and achieve immortality. He had conceived the plan of conquering Hine-nui-te-pō by entering her vagina. While she slept, he crept between her legs and attempted to enter her vagina. However, a tiwaiwaka saw him and began laughing. The laughter awoke Hine-nui-te-pō, who crushed Māui between her thighs. Thus Māui died.

**Tuakana-Teina**

The *tuakana* is the older sister of a female or the older brother of a male. Today, the term is sometimes used to refer to an older sibling. *Teina* is the younger sister of a female or the younger brother of a male. Once again, the term is sometimes used now in reference to younger siblings of either gender. Like other roles within the whanau, the condition of tuakana and teina is relational and life-long. Tuakana are often given a role in the care of younger siblings. In this way, a strong bond may be formed, and the unrealistic expectation of sole parental or adult attention, with the resultant risk of competition and jealousy, avoided. Ideally, the tuakana-teina relationship is one in which care and responsibility for the younger child is promoted in the older sibling and the growth of affection and respect from the younger to the older child is fostered.

In metaphorical whanau, tuakana also have the role of care and awhi for younger or less experienced whanau members. So, in a kapa haka group, for instance, an experienced member may take a new member under his/her wing and provide extra teaching, friendship and support. In the kōhanga reo and school settings, tuakana-teina relationships are promoted and form an important part of the learning and teaching system (see Glynn et al., 1996; Tangaere, as cited in Webber, 1996).
**Whāngai**

The term whāngai can mean to feed and to provide foster-care. Thus a foster parent is a mātua-whāngai, and a foster-child a tamaiti-whāngai. The role of mātua-whāngai is to feed, to provide sustenance for the growth of the child.

As previously noted, it is common for grandparents to rear their mokopuna. However, whāngai within families, through the giving of children to other members of the whānau to raise, is also common. In some cases, children are given as whāngai because the mātua whāngai are unable to have children or want more children themselves; in other cases the birth parents and family are not in a position to care for the child. Sometimes, a child represents a particular whakapapa line and is especially desired because of this. This child may be given to those best able to provide for him/her. Sometimes, the institution of whāngai is a way of promoting bonds between whānau, the child later having an important role to play in binding the whānau together.

In the Māori institution of whāngai, unlike the Western system of adoption, the tamaiti-whāngai is encouraged to know and interact with his/her immediate whānau. Also, unlike the Western system, none of the rights and privileges, such as land rights and status, arising from the birth parents are lost, but are increased by the inclusion of the child in the whāngai environment. In effect, the tamaiti whāngai is an integral part of both the immediate and extended families.

**Rangatiratanga**

The root of rangatiratanga is rangatira. Rangatira is usually translated into English as chief, but there is concern that Western understandings relating to a chief and chieftainship do not adequately convey, and indeed misrepresent, the essence of the rangatira and rangatiratanga: ‘The word ‘chief’, as understood by Europeans, leads to false conclusions in reference to the application of that name’ (Cook, as cited in Te Whaiti, 1995, p. 23). Te Whaiti believes:

> The personal power of a rangatira cannot be understood in isolation from mana which was in itself both handed down from the ancestors and the result of successive and successful human achievement and thus could be increased through such things as the wise administration of the iwi or decreased if the iwi suffered defeat in war, for example. However, the mana of a chief was integrated with the strength of the tribe. (Te Whaiti, 1995, pp. 23–24)

See also Te Rangi Hiroa, 1982.
Those born of a rangatira line were provided with specialist knowledge and training from a young age. The hereditary status of rangatira applied from birth, although this does not imply that any notions of individual ambition or covetousness were fostered. In contrast, the rangatira child was taught that he or she was ‘just one thread in a patterned weave of relationships’ (Jackson, 1988, p. 5). While those born of a rangatira line would not lose the mana of their genealogical status (mana tūpuna, mana atua), their placement in a leadership role was dependent on their personal qualities and the decision of the people to follow them (mana tangata, mana atua).

Thus, there were, and are, a number of factors contributing to the exercise of rangatiratanga on a personal level. These include hereditary descent and the maintenance of mana associated with this; the abilities of the individual concerned; the support of the hapū and iwi (Te Whaiti, 1995, p. 24); the use of power and abilities in the interests of their people; wise administration (Pere, 1982, p. 21); and the maintenance of authority in the face of challenges and challengers (Cleave, 1989, p. 56).

These factors in the exercise and maintenance of individual rangatiratanga meant that a rangatira, in representing the interests of the group and in sustaining the allegiance of the whānau and hapū, ‘was bound to the commands of his or her people more so than the iwi or hapū were bound to follow the decisions of their rangatira’ (Te Whaiti, 1995, p. 26). In effect, the rangatira, while acting as repository and representative of the mana of the whānau, hapū and iwi, was also the servant of the people. It was in this role that the power of the rangatira really lay. ‘While Western secular and religious cultures combine to depict authority as imposed from ‘the top’ as from Atua, Kings and Princes ... in Māori society, authority belongs to the people, with chiefs as leaders, not rulers’ (Waitangi Tribunal, 1987, p. 132). In describing the situation of Wiremu Kingi Te Rangitāke, senior Te Atiawa rangatira, the Waitangi Tribunal noted that, as a rangatira, all he had was the peoples; he owned nothing individually for himself (Waitangi Tribunal, 1996).

*Rangatiratanga* is commonly translated as chieftainship, with an emphasis on explicitly political notions, including political authority and power, and the right to self-determination and self-government. Understandings of rangatiratanga which focus solely on the management of political and economic power are based on the interpretations of Pākehā colonisers and reflect Pākehā patriarchy and conceptions of power and politics.

Pākehā interpretations perpetuate the Victorian view that Māori society was hierarchical, sexist, and elitist. Within the ‘top down’ interpretation of leadership and rangatiratanga is the assumption that any work that Māori women do which is
not concerned with politics and allocating power cannot be mahi rangatira; that children do not possess rangatiratanga and mana because they, like their whaea and kuia, are possessed (sic) ... and that whānau is simply family, which is of course the woman’s domain and therefore irrelevant to politics, law and power. As if whānau can be isolated from hapū and iwi and the internal decisions which are made. (Te Whaiti, 1995)

In contrast to pervasive Pākehā interpretations of rangatiratanga, Māori interpretations are founded on principles like mana and respect for other people and their position but not ... position in terms of being above other people but their position in terms of what ... their role was in the whānau, hapū and iwi ... It’s respect for people and also for all the elements that allow us to live. (Andrews, 1992; see also Jackson, 1992; Kawharu, 1983, p. 5; Te Whaiti, 1995)

Te Whaiti argues that rangatiratanga is also a way of living and interacting, a process based on shared philosophy, whakapapa and whanaungatanga. She contends: ‘Whānau responsibility is where the practice of rangatiratanga began and ended. This meant that an individual did not do anything for his/her own gain, but instead thought of the welfare of the group’ (Te Whaiti, 1995, p. 44). This position is, of course, located in a narrative of self and whānau in which the individual is absorbed in the whānau, just as the whānau is absorbed in the hapū and the hapū in the iwi (Pere, as cited in Te Whaiti, 1995).

It is the rangatiratanga of the whānau, hapū and iwi that provides the authority for them to construct their own narratives, tell their own stories and practice their own tikanga. It is also the rangatiratanga of the whānau, hapū and iwi which provides the authority to maintain their narratives as truth and negates any assumption of the right to judge, correct, modify or add to whānau, hapū and iwi narratives from a position outside the whānau, hapū or iwi. Thus, whānau, hapū and iwi narratives are closely guarded. They are not for outside discussion and dissemination.

**Aroha**

Aroha is the force which binds whānau together and provides the oil which keeps the machinery of whanaungatanga operating smoothly. Translated into English, the word *aroha* encompasses the three separate English language concepts of love, sympathy and charity. It is not just a deep feeling of care for and communion with others, but a practical, physical expression of this.
Barlow considers aroha to be ‘a creative power that emanates from the atua ... It is the act of love that adds quality and meaning to life’ (1991, p. 8). Pere (1994, p. 26) states that whanaungatanga deals with the practices that bond and strengthen the kinship ties of a whänau. The commitment of ‘arioha’ is vital to whanaungatanga and the survival of what the group sees as important. Loyalty, obligation, commitment, an inbuilt support system made the whänau a strong stable unit, within the hapū, and consequently the tribe.

Aroha is the power behind the creation of new life, new hope and new meaning.

Both literal and metaphoric whänau are governed by a web of principles and processes which provide the means for the construction of narratives, within which occur the telling of stories, provision of support, resolution of conflict, addressing of contentious personal, political and economic issues and modification of practices, if not principles, over time and in response to a changing environment (Bishop, as cited in Webber, 1996).

The whänau remains the fundamental unit of Mäori society. While traditional residential ties between whänau have been considerably weakened through urbanisation and the large-scale removal of tamariki Mäori from their whänau contexts, the whänau structure and patterns of relating have survived and been transplanted into many modern Mäori settings.
**Tinana**

Sustenance is required for the meeting of physical needs and development of the body. Aspects of this dimension include adequate nutrition, shelter, clothing, exercise, experience of physical contact, pleasure and pain. Māori society provides a number of avenues for physical expression of the spiritual, emotional and cognitive aspects of people and situations. Haka and waiata provide for the physical expression of a range of emotions, thoughts and desires. Karanga and whaikōrero provide for the physical and verbal expression of wairua, acknowledgement of whakapapa connections, the pain of losses, and the kaupapa that brings people together. In performing karanga and whaikōrero, men and women are physically connected to, and stand between, Papatūānuku and Ranginui. They stand on the earth that their ancestors stood on, breathe the air and view the skies that their ancestors knew. Alternatively, inside a wharenui, people are surrounded by physical representations of the ancestors and the history of the home people. The spirit of those who have gone on may be felt and acknowledged within the ancestral house. The house itself is often the embodiment of a tupuna, so people are symbolically contained within the body of the ancestor.

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**Marae ātea and whare tupuna**

The marae may be seen as the focal point and centre for Māori learning and spirituality. The central meeting house, or whare tupuna, is the symbolic embodiment of the identity of the whānau, hapū and iwi. Spiritual expression within the bounds of the marae complex ranges from traditional Māori expression to a variety of church-related expressions. Inter-denominational services (including expressions relating to traditional Māori atua) are common on marae. The important thing is the acknowledgement and inclusion of the spiritual dimension. The whare tupuna is also sometimes known as whare whakairo, whare puni, whare hui, or meeting house.

The term marae is now commonly used to refer to all the land and buildings associated with a community facility which includes a meeting house. However, in traditional terms, and still current and correct, the marae ātea is the marae proper. A number of commentators see the marae ātea as the domain of Tūmatauenga, spirit of conflict, unresolved injustices, war; and the whare tupuna as the domain of Rongo, spirit of peace, co-operation and productivity.  

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8 See Irwin, as cited in Du Plessis, 1992, pp. 1–21, for an exposition of the marae ātea and gender roles and functions associated with this institution.
In ancient times, the destruction of the meeting house, usually by burning, was synonymous with the destruction of the tribe (Walker, 1993). Contemporary Māori responses to the destruction of meeting houses by fire indicate that meeting houses still provide a physically and spiritually significant part of Māori identity.

Most whānau and hapū are related to at least one marae, although attendance at marae functions varies. Many whānau now live at a great distance from their ancestral marae; some have been unable to return regularly, or at all, for generations. However, urban marae, constructed and organised along similar lines to ancestral marae, attempt to provide for the needs of many of those separated from their ancestral homelands. In these cases, the wharenui may be named for a far distant eponymous ancestor to whom all may connect, or it may be named in a symbolic representation of the kaupapa of linkage and unity. Where practicalities make it impossible for numbers of whānau or hapū to attend hui, it is important that at least one person provides ‘he kanohi kitea’, a face that is seen, a physical presence representing the whānau or hapū.

**Tapu**

There is some tapu attached to the physical self through relationship with the atua, and some bodily parts are more tapu than others. The head, for example, is traditionally considered very tapu because the crown, the fontanel area, is believed to be the spiritual mouth of the body and the place through which the mauri enters and leaves the body (Marsden, as cited in King, 1992). In addition, there is tapu or restriction associated with particular physical events, including childbirth, menstruation and death.

**Waewae tapu**

Literally ‘sacred feet’, the expression waewae tapu refers to those who have not been to a particular place before and thus have not undergone the process of the neutralising of any tapu associated with them, in respect of the place they are entering. This is particularly so in relation to the first visit to a marae ātea and whare tupuna. The whole pōwhiri process is designed to neutralise tapu and thereby enable safe relations to take place.
On entry into a particular rohe (domain or area of land under the mana of a certain group) for the first time, one is also ‘waewae tapu’. Steps should be taken to ensure that the tapu of one’s person does not offend the tapu of the place one is entering. Once a process of whakanoa or propitiation is completed, one may move with relative safety in the area. Once again, the words of Rangihau (as cited in King, 1992, p. 187) provide perhaps the most apt description of what this means in the modern world:

In the Māori world ... you would be aware of the spirit of the land you are going to, and of the mauri or life force of this land. You are aware of this through a number of ways. When I take strangers into Ruatāhuna I stop and we get out of the car and I say to them, ‘This is an old Māori custom’. These days, what I ask people to do is stand in silence for a little while and pray in their own way. It doesn’t matter what sort of person I take into the area, I do it. There was a young Australian boy who came in from Rotorua and became very sick so they had to rush him back. He had come in with my wife and as soon as he became sick she said, ‘Oh that was my fault, I didn’t do the right thing by him’. And I knew exactly what she meant.

**Hongi**

On meeting and greeting visitors both in the marae context and in other contexts, it is customary to hongi. The hongi is the physical act of pressing noses. Often described as a greeting, the hongi is a connection of the physical and spiritual selves.

One aspect of the meaning of the hongi is the symbolism of the atua breathing life into humans, and specifically of Tāne breathing life into Hine-ahu-one. Thus, the hongi signifies the life force that comes from the atua. It is a mingling of the essence carried within the breath of the participants and an acknowledgement of a common ultimate source.

**Mirimiri and rongoā**

The art of massage, mirimiri was practiced in particular during pregnancy and in infancy and childhood, to help the bones grow straight and firm. Mirimiri is currently experiencing a revival and is receiving some support from health authorities. Rongoā refers to the application of natural medicines in both curative and preventative contexts. Rongoā may include poultices, herbal steam baths and externally applied substances, as well as substances for ingestion.
There is some protection of traditional rongoā knowledge owing to fears that national or international companies may seek to claim natural and intellectual properties associated with traditional health and healing knowledge.
**Hinengaro**

The literal meaning of *hinengaro* is the hidden lady or female element. The term is commonly understood as referring to the mind, intuition and source of thoughts, perceptions and some emotions. Pere (1988, 1991) associates this dimension with cognitive activities, lighter level emotion and intuition.

The hidden state of the female element refers to its private and unseen nature. It is regarded as intrusive to delve into the mind, thoughts and emotions. To intrude into the hinengaro through direct questioning and to expect one to expose one’s private thoughts and feelings is akin to an expectation in Western terms that the lady expose her naked form for your examination. The modesty of thoughts and feelings is therefore typically protected through indirect or metaphorical speech or through non-verbal expression (Durie, 1985). At the same time, indirect or metaphorical speech serves to convey meaning without assaulting the hinengaro of the recipient. In the context of psychological practice, counselling, or mental health work, these understandings about, and attitudes towards, the hinengaro can lead to misunderstanding and conflict. Clinical practitioners may expect to gain access to the hinengaro as a function of their position; Māori protection of this dimension of themselves may be seen as obstructive of, or resistant to, clinicians’ practices. The concept of mental or emotional illness as phenomena able to be examined apart from the other dimensions of self and health is often foreign to Māori ways of thinking, and of perceiving and understanding human functioning.

**Tapu**

Māori attitudes to certain areas of knowledge and learning reflect a view that certain knowledge is sacred and precious and that the act of learning has long-term implications and is to be taken seriously. Knowledge and learning can be strongly associated with tapu. This is particularly true of knowledge and learning about taonga tuku iho, the treasures handed down by the ancestors. Te Uira Manihera tells a story of his position regarding the tapu nature of some forms of learning and knowledge:

> When you are dealing with the knowledge of the past, you have to take it seriously. Otherwise you don’t get inspiration or spiritual fertility from that knowledge. And if you ignore the tapu of sacred things, it can lead to sickness or even death.
I remember a boy stood up at a seminar I was at. He said he had in his possession books that had belonged to his ancestors and that had been handed down through his father to him. He didn’t know how he should handle them. I stood up and replied to the speeches and I said to him, ‘These books are valuable, they hold your whakapapa and your tapu. If you want to learn from them, take them away from food and clothing that belongs to women, to somewhere surrounded by nature. When there is just you and your books and nature, you can recite and learn all those things. That way you can preserve the tapu that your ancestors have placed on these books. In time, you will find you will be inspired to carry on what they have left for you.’

The handing down of knowledge by old people is a very difficult thing now. They have a look at their own children, perhaps the eldest son. If he is mature enough or interested enough in his Māori, he might become the repository. But a lot of people say no. They would sooner take a knowledge of their own traditions with them than pass them on to the present generation. They believe that if it goes out to another person outside the family, in a short time it will have dissolved, absorbed by all the people who have access to it.

There is also a fear that by giving things out, they could be commercialised. If this happens, they lose their sacredness, their fertility. They just become common. And knowledge that is profane has lost its life, lost its tapu. (Manihera, as cited in King, 1992, p. 9)

Thus, an aspect of the hinengaro dimension concerns the tapu nature of some areas of knowledge and the associated responsibilities of both learner and teacher.

**Kaiako**

The term *kaiako* may be rendered as teacher and as learner, thus conveying the duality in terms of process and position of learning and teaching. It is acceptable practice in the Māori world for the learner to become teacher and the teacher to become learner (Tangaere, as cited in Webber, 1996, p. 114).

**Poutama**

*Poutama* represent the journey of Tāne as he ascended to the twelfth heaven to retrieve the three kete mātauranga (baskets of knowledge) for the edification of the people. The poutama design symbolises the steps to reach the twelfth heaven. Tangaere describes the meaning of poutama to her:
When I look at the ... poutama it clarifies for me what learning and development is for Māori. For me there are many messages held in that one image or concept. The layered design of steps ascending upwards tells me of Tāne’s climb to gain knowledge and the challenges he faced during his journey. It reminds me of the many challenges that I face in my learning and development, and that in finding answers for these challenges I am able to grow. It tells me that it is through continuous practice and through continuously working towards becoming more competent, not only in my intellectual pursuits, but also my physical, emotional, social, spiritual and cultural dimensions, that I can hope to ascend those steps ... Within te ira tangata a Māori person held many facets or dimensions ... The layered steps represent the many dimensions ... They tell me that it is important to ensure a balanced development for each.

The poutama tell me that learning is a process which involves a period of time for the task or activity to be understood. This is represented by the steps and plateaus in the poutama ... Once this is accomplished, then the learner ascends, like Tāne, to the next step.

The (many intersecting points in the) poutama depicts the importance of the whānau assisting one another in that learning.

Therefore, the poutama can be interpreted from a physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual perspective as well as reminding te iwi Māori of the specialness of knowledge. It reminds us of the responsibility we have in imparting that knowledge. It is a taonga, a gift to us, through Tāne-nui-ā-Rangi. (Tangaere, as cited in Webber, 1996, pp. 111–112)

The poutama pattern is a frequent feature of the tukutuku (lattice weaving) found in whare-hui. The poutama design also features in many Māori contexts. It provides the principles of learning across the different dimensions (and I emphasise that the term learning, as it is used here, extends beyond cognitive or intellectual learning). The poutama principle is an aspect within each of the dimensions of Te Wheke.

Whānau

As previously noted the whānau will ideally provide a primary and positive context of learning in the Māori world. The elders of the whānau have a special role in the education of the young, with observational learning, modelling, repetition and, finally, doing as key features of the learning process. Much learning is done without formalised instruction; the mere fact of being there is enough to begin the learning by absorption process.

There are certain qualities about you that are recognised by elders. They don’t actually teach you. They select you and place you in a situation where you absorb
knowledge. When you’re asleep on your own, they’re singing waiatas or reciting genealogies in the next room. As you’re lying in the dark, you absorb everything that’s going on.

And before you realise what you’re doing, you’ve learned how to recite too, or you’ve learned the words of a certain song. And this can go on for ... years. But you don’t realise that they’re putting you in that situation to learn ... (Pewhairangi, as cited in King, 1992, p. 10)

The tuakana/teina concept is derived from two principles: whānaungatanga and ako (learn/teach). It may be seen in practice in the responsibility of tuakana to play a role in the learning and development of their teina. Several studies have affirmed the role of tuakana in facilitating the learning processes of teina. This is true within metaphorical and literal whānau contexts within and outside designated ‘educational’ arenas (Tangaere, as cited in Webber, 1996, p. 113).

*Whakawhitihiti kōrero*

*Whakawhitihiti kōrero* refers to the process of discussion leading to the creation of enlightenment. Discussion, particularly marae-based discussion, is based on certain principles. On the marae ātea, dangerous issues should be sounded out prior to the coming together and entry into the house. The process is that the kaikōrero (formal speakers) conduct themselves in accordance with protocol in order that the wairua is acknowledged and the mauri of the hui is put in place and bound in well. Speakers have a right to speak without interruption providing that they conduct themselves appropriately. After the formal words of acknowledgement and appeasement, the speaker may possibly raise the issue to be addressed before the hui proper begins. It is a feature of good oratory that there is liberal use of metaphor, storytelling and passion, in order to convey points powerfully without resort to overly direct speech that may offend. Thus, the initial speaker, from the host side, may provide reference to the contentious issue, with subsequent speakers contributing to the development of a position from which it is safe to enter the domain of Rongo. In this way, the forceful expression of anger over highly contentious issues is provided for on the marae ātea because, once discussions have moved inside the house, care must be taken in the expression of angry feelings, so as not to offend Rongo. The final speakers on each side are usually the best informed and the most experienced.

It is their job to tie up the discussions in such a way that the process may move from the domain of Tūmatauenga to that of Rongo.
One important principle of whakawhitiwhiti kōrero inside the whare is that everyone has a chance to speak uninterrupted. Speaking from the heart is encouraged, with purely ‘objective’ contributions often seen as less skilled or effective. As discussion proceeds, a range of perspectives on the position in question are put forward and should be listened to with respect. Perspectives incorporate intellectual/cognitive, emotional, spiritual and systemic dimensions. Once again, stories are told and links are made between the situation at hand and similar situations in recent or ancient times, which may provide lessons or illuminations in the present. Gradually, the various strands of discussion are interwoven, until eventually a metaphorical whāriki (woven mat) takes shape. Kaumātua and rangatira are primarily responsible for the intricacies of the weaving process. It is through the careful negotiation and construction of shared meanings in relation to the kaupapa of the hui that a new and shared way of looking at things and proceeding forward is illuminated.

**Whare wānanga**

*Whare wānanga* are places of higher learning. In the modern context, the term is often used to refer to tertiary educational settings as well as to concentrated teaching and learning sessions in the marae environment. In the past, specialised knowledge and training in a variety of arenas was provided to selected people through the institution of whare wānanga. The laws of tapu and a variety of aspects of the wairua dimension were integral to the process, in addition to physical requirements and hinengaro or intellectual learning.

**Ihi**

Barlow (1991) relates the ihi aspect to the notion of vitality and the quality of excellence. He sees ihi as the potential in all things and as encompassing every part of one’s being: the physical, spiritual, mental, emotional, and interactive group facets.

Barlow defines *ihi* as ‘the power of living things to develop and grow to their full maturity and state of excellence ... each living thing has a unique degree of excellence and develops within the bounds of its species’ (1991, p. 31). Other commentators (Williams, 1971; Ryan, 1983) describe ihi in terms of psychic or essential force, power and authority, while Marsden defines ihi as the ‘vital
force or personal magnetism which, radiating from a person, elicits in the holder a response of awe and respect’ (1992, p. 118). All of the above are accurate.

Ihi may be expressed individually or combined with that of a group. An example of an individual manifestation of ihi may be seen in a speaker, singer or performer at the pinnacle of excellence rendering the audience spellbound, enraptured and in awe of the charisma or full force of personality he/she exudes. It should be noted that ihi does not equate with loudness or putting oneself forward, but is rather a manifestation of an inner power and achievement of excellence under the authority of the atua. Ihi in people may be observed in a variety of contexts, from the awe-inspiring performances of sportspeople on the sports field to the utmost use of all faculties of a child determined to successfully scale a high fence, to the careful and creative oratory of a wonderful speaker, to the successful completion by a paraplegic girl of a painting, using her mouth to hold the paintbrush.

The biannual New Zealand Polynesian Festival of the Performing Arts provides examples of ihi as expressed through the group. Groups selected to perform at the festival have been training and preparing for the event for months or years. As the time draws closer preparation becomes increasingly intense. All members of the group are pushed towards their individual peaks of spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, cognitive and group readiness. In other words, the whatumanawa, wairuatanga, mauri, mana, hā ā koro mā ā kui mā, tinana, hinengaro and whanaungatanga dimensions have been exercised and provided with sustenance to bursting point. At their performance in the festival, the ihi of the group will ideally converge to create an overpowering sense of the ihi and its counterpart response, wehi, in the audience.

Wehi

Wehi may be rendered as fear, awe, respect, being terrified (Barlow, 1991; Williams, 1971; Ryan, 1983). It is the feeling of awe, respect or fear in the presence of the ihi of a person or the mana and tapu of the atua. ‘It is the emotion of fear generated by anxiety or apprehension in case one gives offence to the atua, or a response of awe at a manifestation of divine power’ (Marsden, 1992, p. 121). When the hairs on the back of one’s neck stand up, one is struck speechless or left breathless by the excellence or power of the being or performance of another, this is wehi. However, people respond to the dual aspects of the ihi and the wehi in different ways. Some people feel at a disadvantage, translate this as threat and respond accordingly.
Whatumanawa refers to the emotional dimension and the need to experience and express emotions fully. In particular, deeply felt emotions such as grief, joy, anger and jealousy need full expression. Sustenance for the whatumanawa is provided in the acceptance and full expression of various emotions. There are a number of formalised means of expressing emotion; haka, waiata tangi, karanga, whaikōrere, tears, hūpē, and practices associated with tangihanga provide for the full expression of a range of emotions. Many of these have been discussed previously in relation to other dimensions of Te Wheke. In Māori terms, whatumanawa expression has as much validity as hinengaro or cognitive expressions. Ideally, speakers can integrate the two and performers of traditional arts likewise. In daily communications, the ability to ‘speak from the heart’ is also highly valued.

The separation of feelings and expressions of emotion may be viewed as unhealthy. Durie has been critical of the Western tendency to require a ‘validation’ of whatumanawa expression through its translation into the hinengaro dimension. This is particularly demonstrated in common expectations in a counselling context that the expression of emotion should involve the cognitive process of ‘putting feelings into words’, ‘naming’ one’s feelings, and ‘talking about’ how one feels. Such expectations effectively invalidate expression through the whatumanawa and indicate a logocentric and cognitivist orientation.

For the full development of this dimension, emotions should be able to be fully felt and expressed over time. Thus, the ‘unveiling’ and kawe mate processes provide, amongst other things, for the revisiting and re-expression of the pain associated with the loss of loved ones, as well as the joys and strains that occur when families come together. This is also why groups meeting after periods of time or revisiting places with past associations will sometimes begin their encounters with prolonged weeping and sometimes passionate, angry or humorous remembrances of past connections, losses, triumphs and events.
"Hā ā koro mā ā kuia mā"

Literally, ‘the breath of life from forebears’, this dimension recognises the continuity — and aspects of oneness — between the present individual, whānau and hapū and those who have gone before. Thus, the living generation represents the ongoing breath of life passed to us from our tūpuna. Aspects of the ongoing breath of life may be traced through whakapapa. The breath of life from forebears continues in our genes, in our inherited talents and predispositions, and in our whānau roles and missions, which have been passed down in our kawa and, most particularly, in our tikanga.

Pere emphasises the heritage aspect of this dimension and knowledge of one’s heritage, in particular. Sustenance for this dimension may be gained through learning about, experiencing and revisiting aspects of one’s heritage. Kaupapa Māori units and programmes in educational institutions and prisons aim to provide sustenance for this dimension. Assistance may be given where necessary for people to learn about their whakapapa and whānau, hapū and iwi histories and connections. Through learning about these and through learning te reo Māori, waiata and karakia, people are made aware of their heritage, and their oneness with those who have gone before and with those with whom they share a common genealogy and metaphorical breath of life.

In therapeutic contexts, hā ā koro mā ā kuia mā provides an instant connection that serves to remind people that they are not simply individuals living on this planet but are a part of something much bigger than themselves. Disrespecting themselves is also disrespecting their tūpuna, who gave them life, and the following generations. In effect, we are all responsible for maintaining the communal life breath of our whānau, hapū and iwi. Hence, the ‘hā ā koro mā ā kuia mā’ dimension also serves to confirm the value of our existence by virtue of our ongoing connection with those who have gone before.

There is a true story of a young girl whose life began surrounded by tragedy and whānau upheaval. She had barely any knowledge of or contact with her father or mother. In her mid-teens, the young woman decided that she had had enough of her difficult life. She attempted suicide but was found and survived. Withdrawing more into herself and her pain, the young woman made a second attempt some months later. This time she was very nearly successful. The whānau informed the birth father of the events. The father paid a visit to his daughter, bringing with him an old picture of the girl’s great-great grandmother. This kuia was one of the last with a traditional moko.
The father took his daughter to a relative who was a tattoo artist. The father instructed the young woman to submit to the tattoo artist, and she was given a tattoo on her chin replicating that of her kuia. Her father's action may be condemned by some on the grounds that a moko is permanent, the girl was young, not even 16 at the time, and she was not provided with freedom of choice in regard to the moko. Some years later, however, in speaking of this period of her life, the young woman credited her father’s actions with saving her life. Wearing the moko reminded her of who she was and where she came from. It connected her instantly to this kuia, who had through the generations provided life for her and her whānau. She wore her moko with pride, realising that it was visible confirmation that she was a vital part of a whānau, hapū and iwi and a whakapapa that was sacred. The young woman realised her own sacredness and place in the flow of the wairua. She went on to study Māori language and performing arts, becoming a ‘star’ in this area, marrying and having several children of her own.
Māori narratives, grounded in Pere’s *Te Wheke* model of healthy selfhood, the nature of self, other and well-being, have been presented. These narratives do not constitute an exhaustive analysis of aspects of Māori epistemology; nor is there any way of knowing how many Māori hold to the beliefs and values expressed here. However, these narratives provide a context within which Māori mental health issues may be productively considered.

In some ways the dimensions presented here conflict with dominant approaches to psychology, counselling and mental health work. In particular, the separation of mental health from other dimensions of being is untenable within this model. Additionally the place of wairua as central is vital.

The priority value given to a number of attributes within much psychological and counselling theory and practice is directly challenged within several of the dimensions of *Te Wheke*. These attributes include the

- ability of the individual to be relatively independent of his/her history and environment
- verbalisation of thoughts and feelings
- emphasis on individual self-esteem and self-efficacy
- right to personal choice.

Instead, *Te Wheke* as a model emphasises

- collectivity over individualism
- the intimate connection of past, present and future rather than an ability to ‘put things behind us and look to the future’
- our health and well-being as being profoundly and primarily spiritual rather than secular in nature
- the concept of sustenance for dimensions as opposed to correction of dysfunction as key to therapeutic processes.
References


