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**Te kaitārei ara tāngata whenua mo te Whare Wānanga:  
“Ēhara, he hara ranei?”**

**Developing indigenous infrastructure in the University:  
“Another Era or another Error?”**

**by  
Te Tuhi Robust**

*A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor  
of Education in Māori Education*

**The University of Auckland  
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## **Abstract/ Whakarāpoto Take**

The specific aim of this study is to identify critical features of *wānanga* or the traditional *Māori* learning institution and how these might inform *Māori* education today in a University setting. It also examines the responsiveness of the tertiary institution in creating an indigenous infrastructure aimed at *Māori* educational participation. A number of ‘critical events’ relating to *Māori* educational development interventions in the 1980’s will be considered with the expectation that they will serve to inform the development of better educational outcomes for access, participation, recruitment, retention and the advancement of *Māori* in the conventional University setting. For the purpose of this study contemporary *Māori* academic sites, which include state funded *wānanga*, as well as other indigenous academic sites will be discussed, including the First Nations House of Learning at the University of British Columbia<sup>1</sup>. There is thus an international perspective in this study.

*Whare wānanga* were a key institution in traditional *Māori* society and represented in all regions of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The ability to travel and share each other’s knowledge attested or benchmarked by others was a key part of the maintenance of the tribal lore. *Tōhunga* were central to the entire process of controlling the knowledge and selecting to whom it was to be imparted. This raises a question of what a contemporary *wānanga*, as an intervention and an academic entity would look like at the University of Auckland and would it withstand international scrutiny? As a *kaupapa Māori* educational intervention, it is a theoretical test in the configurations of conscientization, resistance and transformative praxis. The inclusive approach in using existing material and people resources to maximize the impact of the intervention is to be discussed in this thesis. Specific case studies provide a means for checking the evidence for the processes and the predicted outcomes for *kaupapa Māori* theory. The recalling of events is central to both case studies. An event such as the rugby match that took place between both countries in 1927, discussed later in

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<sup>1</sup> This site is linked by a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the University of British Columbia that provides a broad base of collaboration for staff and student exchanges; the sharing of intellectual understanding and international models of excellence for *Māori* and Indigenous peoples.

this thesis, combined with similar initiatives embarked upon by indigenous leaders from both tertiary communities to create a physical presence for First Nations and *Māori*, are identities at the core of the case studies. Cultural connection, and a style of operation that is inclusive, enact in part the values raised by Madeleine McIvor: respect, reciprocity, relevance and responsibility. The factors all converge to build this thesis into a series of conversations. The collaboration undertaken over long distances and periods of time has motivated the creation of this record of the stories of both institutions, that can be added to by others in the future.

The markers of success for the University of Auckland include the arresting of the decline of *Māori* student enrolments alongside the growth of *Māori* participating in post-graduate study and research, therefore providing opportunity to contribute to the bank of knowledge in New Zealand society. While the regeneration of the language in New Zealand has been the driving force behind the *wānanga* development at the University of Auckland building further on the foundations of *kohanga reo*, *kura kaupapa Māori*, *whare kura* and *wānanga*, the development of *Māori* as with First Nations initiatives has been in the area of education. Tertiary institutions offer a context in which *kaupapa Māori* theory brings together common threads of communication for people. Whether this is through elements of struggle within societies or just survival, the main thing is that people need each other to develop and progress.

## Acknowledgements/ *Ngā Mihi*

It seems like only yesterday that I walked into a lecture room at the then Auckland College of Education campus in Whangarei and was talked into enrolling into the University of Auckland education programme in 1996. On this note I might add I told Dr Graham Smith that if he could sign me up then I would do it. I knew he wouldn't be able to do it on the spot so I thought I was pretty safe on that one. What I did not bargain on was his wife Dr Linda *Tuhiwai* Smith being around the corner. She had the authority to sign as Dean of Education, so I was committed from that point on. This action meant having to set myself for a long journey that included graduating with a bachelor of education in 1998 and then a master of education with honours and finally to completing this thesis as part of the doctor of education programme. Putting pen to paper is easier than conveying adequately the parts that others played in the numerous events that took place. In retracing the events key people provided support in a number of ways: Denise Davies and Tommy *Perana* who organized the assessment details and paperwork to transfer from Massey University to Auckland; *Oneroa* Stewart and Tania *Tawhi* who job shared with me when I commuted over three years between *Kaikohe* and Auckland; whanau who looked after my son Te Kemara while I traveled around the country and overseas to Canada and Australia a number of times during that period; Pat and *Erana* Brown who looked after the farm; Gary and Hera Linter-Cole; Jim Peters who employed me and put up with the many trips overseas I undertook for research purposes; Aunt Mary who as a young seventy year old picked me up from lectures late at night on a regular basis as parking was an absolute nightmare at the university and very expensive with or without a ticket; and the Reverend *Wiritai Toi* who critiqued my work on pedagogy relating to Paulo Friere. All were scholars in their own right and need to be acknowledged. An important part of this story I reserve for Hilda Halkyard-*Harawira*, who commuted from *Kaitaia* on a regular basis with me to Auckland and back again to *Kaikohe*. Her *whānau* would pick her up from there and drive back to *Kaitaia* arriving well after midnight to be able to start teaching the following day like myself. At no stage throughout our study did we receive scholarships targeted for *Māori*. This will always be something that remains a mystery to me, and also for other adult students returning to study. It meant that we had to continue to work fulltime to earn the money to meet our responsibilities, especially to put food on the table.

These people and many more from home who contributed to this journey I will forever be grateful to. In 1999, I relocated finally to Auckland after being offered a Research Fellowship at the Woolf Fisher Research Centre, and became Research Associate, International Research Institute for *Māori* and Indigenous Education as part of the University of Auckland. As a result of this I took up a position as the Research Associate/ Executive Assistant to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (*Māori*), University of Auckland until 2004. The university was in my view like a big whānau, some of whom would come and go depending on whatever it was that they needed at that stage of their lives. Students had the opportunity to pick and choose courses if it suited their situation. At that time the day to day organization and *management* of the university was in the hands of Dr John Hood. Throughout his stewardship the institution undertook huge changes that in turn impacted on staff, students and its community, in particular the *Māori*. This thesis is an attempt to record this innovation and acknowledge his leadership and commitment to the *kaupapa*. The position I held provided access to people and resources that the university sought to engage at all levels and stages of development and innovation. During this time I enrolled in the education doctoral programme, which provided an opportunity to record the history of the *wānanga* development for the university as an individual case study alongside the development at the University of British Columbia, Canada, as an international comparative.

Of the innovations that emerged from the developments at the University of Auckland, the MAI/ *Māori* and Indigenous Graduate Studies Centre was key to providing ongoing support and guidance on the progression of this process to a natural conclusion. The vast body of experience that numerous participants brought to meetings held on a regular basis since its establishment on 2001 is something that I will continue to support. The reciprocity in contribution to the *Māori* Public Good is something in my view that is not given due conscientization within some circles. It is something that has been taken for granted in the past.

This note also encompasses contributions made by people who are not of *Māori* descent but who have supported *Māori* such as me to progress in their academic studies. From here it is timely to acknowledge the Department of Education, *Te*

*Aratiatia* at the University of Auckland. *Kuni Jenkins*, *Margie Hohepa*, *Trish Johnson*, *Leonie Pihama* and of course *Graham Hingangaroa* and *Linda Tuhiwai Smith*. In returning to study the availability of office *space*, advice, *kai* and ongoing support to the present is appreciated. Within any organization of the size of the University of Auckland the essential element in making it a ‘home away from home’ is people. *Rangimarie Rawiri*, *Wiremu Doherty* and *Lee Cooper* epitomize this same element in creating and maintaining *space* for someone like me for which I will always be grateful. However, an important part of this story is to acknowledge the integrity, humility and endless patience of *Stuart McNaughton*. He provided tremendous support and advice whether I wanted it or not and made this thesis a reality for a kid from the ‘backstreets of Hollywood’ in *Kaikohe*. It seems unfair to write such a short piece about someone who has given so much to many. He has lived the same stories and given opportunity to me to tell my story. The extent of my gratitude to him, *Trudie* and the rest of their *whānau* is endless. And as the journey continues into the future I hope that someone else will be inspired to add their story to this thesis, building further banks of knowledge for others to share debate and interrogate.

Finally I acknowledge *Paul Murphy* who in 1983 told me that this was the path that I would be traveling and who is one who does understand the meaning of integrity, respect, responsibility and reciprocity in preparing a way for the generations to follow. To my wife *Rosalind* and the rest of the *whānau* who put up with the odd work habits of mine, *he mihi aroha ki a koutou*. The many *kaumatua* and *kuia* from *Te Hikutu* in *Hokianga* and *Ngāti Whakaeke*; *Ngāti Tautahi*; *Ngāti Ue* and *Te Uri Taniwha ara me Ngāti Hineira*, *Ngapuhi*. Thank you. To *Suzanne Hargreaves*, *Uncle Mac Taylor* and especially my parents *Ana* and *Charlie Robust* who have passed on since I started this journey but will always be alongside of me. This thesis in my view is part of that wonderful history they passed on to me, which has made me who I am. There is no greater gift than knowing where one is from and where I one day will also return in years to come.

**Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi  
Engari he toa takitahi**

*My strength is comes from many people and not myself as an individual.  
No one can survive alone*



## He kōrero whakawatea

### *Te Whare o Ngāpuhi*

*He mea hanga  
Ko papa-tuanuku te papa-rahi  
Ko ngā maunga ngā poupou  
Ko te Rangi e titiro iho nei te tuanui:*

*Puhanga-tohora titiro ki Te Rama-roa  
Te Rama-roa titiro ki Whiria  
Ki te paiaka o te riri, ki te kawa o Rahiri  
Whiria titiro ki Pa-nguru, ki Papata  
Ki te rakau tu Papata i tu ki te Tai-ha-uru  
Pa-nguru Papata titiro ki Maunga-  
taniwha  
Maunga-taniwha titiro ki Tokerau  
Tokerau titiro ki Rakau-mangamanga  
Rakau-mangamanga titiro ki Manaia  
Manaia titiro ki Tuta-moe  
Tuta-moe titiro ki Manga-Nui  
Manga-Nui titiro ki Puhanga-tohora  
Ko te whare ia tenei o Ngāpuhi*

*(Nā Eru Moka Pou, Kaikohe  
tōku tupuna )*

### *The House of Ngāpuhi*

This is how it is made:  
The earth is the floor,  
The mountains the supports,  
The sky we see above is the roof:

From Puhanga-tohora look toward *Te Rama-roa*:  
*Te Rama-roa* look toward *Whiria*:  
The seat of our war-like prowess, the ancestral line of *Rahiri*:  
*Whiria* look toward *Pa-nguru*, to *Papata*:  
To the thickly growing trees which extend to the western sea:  
From *Pa-nguru* and *Papata* look toward *Maunga-taniwha*:  
From *Maunga-taniwha* look toward Tokerau:  
From Tokerau look toward the Bay of Islands – Cape Brett:  
From the Bay of Islands – Cape Brett look toward *Manaia*:  
From *Manaia* look toward *Tuta-moe*:  
From *Tuta-moe* look toward *Manga-Nui* Bluff:  
From *Manga-Nui* Bluff look toward *Puhanga-tohora*.  
This is the house of *Ngāpuhi*.

*(Written by Eru Moka Pou, Kaikohe  
my grandfather )*