

## 2.0 Constructing a Model

The goal of this thesis is to develop and articulate a theory upon which a practical model for a new *whare tapere* might be constructed. The question is therefore posed, how exactly does one go about creating this model? Where does one start and how do we find a direction?

My answer to these questions was to consider, first of all, the process of my own personal history by which I came to the view that a new *whare tapere* might indeed be useful and relevant. Secondly, as we are going through a period distinguished by the creation of new Māori institutions such as *kōhanga reo* and *whare wānanga*, it seemed sensible to consider the experience of these initiatives as well. The history of these new Māori institutions, although relatively young in age, might yield some useful ideas.

To begin with, I looked back over my previous academic work firstly at Victoria University, where I completed a Bachelor of Music with Honours in 1989, and then at Massey University where I wrote a Masters thesis in Māori on *mōteatea* in 1991. I remembered that my motivation for studying *mōteatea* was based upon my desire to find a music tradition indigenous to this country, in contrast to those I had studied at Victoria. Following the completion of the Masters thesis and the publication of a book on the same topic<sup>1</sup>, I found that I had considered only the historical and literary aspects of the *mōteatea* tradition and none of the performance aspects had been considered. I decided, therefore, to investigate the performance of *mōteatea*: the movements of the body, the use of the voice, the role of men and women, the spaces and places where *mōteatea* is performed. In the course of this research, I discovered the traditional *whare tapere*.

Contiguous to this, I found that my research was mixed up with my own awakening awareness and learning about Māori culture and my own Māori identity. Whilst I had studied *mōteatea* as an academic pursuit, the underlying 'agenda' was the knowledge that the repatriation of such *taonga* to Māori people can contribute considerably to their empowerment, the raising of self-esteem and so on. This was my own experience. I found that the existence of *mōteatea* for its own sake was not the goal but rather to understand the contribution it can make to the empowerment of Māori people. By publishing a book on *mōteatea*, I wanted to create a tool that aided the repatriation of *mōteatea* to Māori people. The desire to create a new *whare tapere* is similar.

As I learnt more about *mōteatea* (and the Māori language), I became aware of the structural difficulties that exist with respect to the perpetuation and expression of Māori culture in this country. Contemporary New Zealand society is only now witnessing the rise of institutions dedicated to the perpetuation of certain aspects of Māori culture. For too long, mainstream New Zealand culture has remained hostile to the aspirations of Māori

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<sup>1</sup> Royal 1994.

creativity. Further, there was (and some would argue that there continues to be) a dearth of institutions devoted to the paradigms of our culture. Instead, Māori cultural creativity is expected to realise its aspirations within the paradigms of other cultures. The place of 'Māori' curricula within state universities is an example. In contrast to this, Whatarangi Winiata argues that one can not design and maintain management systems for one culture within the paradigm of another.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, my journey through the world of music and then of mōteatea, together with an understanding of the impact that mōteatea had upon me as a Māori person demonstrated to me the importance of creating structures devoted to the exploration of such taonga and their repatriation to Māori people. As most mainstream organisations and institutions remained indifferent to this kind of creativity, this indifference represented barriers to its expression. It was apparent that we needed to our own institutions.

A lot of Māori now share this view as a range of Māori institutions of the kind envisaged have in recent times come into being. These include, of course, kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori and whare wānanga. There are others such as Māori radio stations, health clinics/organisations and a variety of businesses.

Concerning the creation of a new whare tapere, it seemed sensible to consider the experience of one or more of these contemporary organisations to discern a number of principles or ideas which might assist the development of a 'model of Māori performance art'. The closest example (to me, that is) was Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa<sup>3</sup> and so I did a little research on this institution. What I found was that Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa was not created upon some grand philosophy but rather that, in its early years, it was designed to meet some immediate needs and give expression to a number of founding ideas. These ideas are usefully described in a document entitled 'Whakatupuranga Rua Mano', a tribal planning document written by Whatarangi Winiata for the Raukawa Trustees, the body that created Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa. Four key ideas are identified:

1. The marae is our principal home.
2. The Māori language is a deeply treasured taonga.
3. People are our wealth.
4. We will strive to govern ourselves.<sup>4</sup>

These ideas catalysed the establishment of Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa. Whilst they can be found in a published document entitled *Whakatupuranga Rua Mano*, they do not represent an exhaustive philosophy. Rather they

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<sup>2</sup> See Winiata 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa is a modern degree granting tertiary institution owned and operated by the confederation of Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Toarangatira and Te Āti Awa.

<sup>4</sup> This is a précis of statements made in Winiata 1979.

demonstrate the power of describing 'needs' and allowing them to influence the responses to those needs.

Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa was not the only Māori organisation to commence life based upon a set of defined needs and a series of ideas. Each of the institutions of the Māori renaissance<sup>5</sup> were established to meet a set of needs such as the survival of the Māori language or the need to develop culturally appropriate services for Māori. Kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori were established to halt the decline of the language and to create new generations of native speakers. Māori radio, whilst in some cases it has been influenced by other factors, is similar. The development of new tribal structures has occurred in order to improve the management of tribal assets and affairs.

The absence of some grand philosophy appears to have been an advantage, for Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa at least. As my father<sup>6</sup> happily admits, 'we really didn't know what we were getting ourselves into'. If they had, they may not have proceeded as barriers, quickly deemed insurmountable, may have arisen.

To return to our discussion, the history of Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa and other similar Māori institutions tells us that to commence development one needs to:

- identify a set of needs
- develop and articulate a small number of key ideas
- forget about the barriers

In response, a number of key ideas and needs for a new whare tapere might be as follows:

- the need to create an authentic Māori institution in which the traditions, stories and other performance art of the Māori world can be enacted
- the need to create a range of institutions which collectively ensure the life of the Māori language
- the need to increase the number of avenues by which a person may enter the Māori world
- the need for Māori performance art to be domiciled in its own authentic and independent institution which can cater for its maintenance and development
- the need to increase the number of institutions which educate, liberate and empower Māori people

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<sup>5</sup> For a convenient summary of this 'Māori renaissance' in the years 1961 - 1991, see McKinnon 1997, Plate 99.

<sup>6</sup> Tūroa Royal, second *tumuaki* of Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa and current chairperson of the *Mana Whakahaere* or Governing Council.

These are key ideas adapted from *Whakatupuranga Rua Mano* and applied to a nascent theory of the whare tapere. A critical difference between the experience of Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa and a new whare tapere is that this thesis is concerned with developing a theory. This is the goal of the thesis. I hope that in enjoying this opportunity to develop a theory for a new whare tapere, barriers will not be discerned but rather the theory will provide inspiration through a description of what could be. The thesis has been designed to address the needs and key ideas outlined above.

Given this theoretical basis, the new whare tapere will arise in the context of other Māori institutions and their experience will undoubtedly influence and inform the whare tapere. Further, the development of a new whare tapere is dependent upon our understanding of certain aspects of Māori history. This is of particular relevance as our new model will bring together known elements of the traditional whare tapere which, unfortunately, fell into disuse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Hence, in order to construct an image of the whare tapere, one has to encounter the serious issues concerning the state of the Māori cultural continuum and those pertaining to research. In total, this concerns methodology.

## 2.1 Methodology

In exploring and determining the Te Ao Mārama world view and philosophy, I was assisted by the following statements made by Māori Marsden which have a direct bearing upon methodology.

*The route to Maoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end. The way can only lie through a passionate, subjective approach. That is more likely to lead to a goal.*<sup>7</sup>

He underlines this view with the following statement:

*Abstract rational thought and empirical methods cannot grasp the concrete act of existing which is fragmentary, paradoxical and incomplete. The only way lies through a passionate subjective approach...*<sup>8</sup>

These statements held direct relevance to the goal of identifying a central set of ideas and themes which underpin Māori culture and the use of those ideas or philosophies upon which to construct a new whare tapere. The intention is for the whare tapere to be based upon 'Māoritanga', as Marsden describes it. But if Marsden's view is true, one can not truly know Māoritanga unless one subjectively experiences it for oneself. Only then, can one hope to be able to translate it into a form that can be used in a new whare tapere. Māori Marsden challenges the inquirer first and foremost to be the manifestation of the very thing that is sought. The consequence of his views is to ensure that

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<sup>7</sup> Marsden in King 1992.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

one considers these matters not as theory alone but as an **experienced** phenomena.<sup>9</sup> This view holds further relevance for the whare tapere for in order for it to be a venue where 'Māoritanga' can be experienced at its deepest level, its processes must be of such a design so as to allow the participant to reach this experiential goal.

Marsden criticises foreign anthropologists who attempt an approximation or explanation of Māoritanga without experiencing the phenomena:

*Only an approach that sets out to explore and describe the main features of the consciousness in the experience of the Maori offers any hope of adequate coverage. For the reality we experience subjectively is incapable of rational synthesis. This is why so many Maori react against the seemingly facile approach of foreign anthropologists to their attitudes, mores and values, and the affective states of mind which produce them...<sup>10</sup>*

Marsden's comments urge that the ultimate reality of the Māori world is to be found in the mysterious complexities of the spirit. And it is the emphatic expression of these statements that, at first, influenced the process of my entry into Māoritanga. However, as I delved further and further, explored this avenue and that avenue, I found that Māori nevertheless constructed objective empirical symbols to approximate the objective, physical and intellectual experiences as well as those described as subjective and spiritual. Indeed, one enters this subjective world through the empirical symbols of the mind.

By creating these empirical symbols Māori were, I argue, meeting the same need found in all human beings the world over. We are all<sup>11</sup> compelled to render these subjective experiences into a form that is comprehensible to the intellect. All societies and cultures, all communities of peoples are caught in this same need and it is this marvellous feature of the human condition which

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<sup>9</sup> This accords with a view held by Joseph Campbell who states that wisdom arises when knowledge is integrated with the experience of life. Wisdom does not arise from knowledge alone but by the intermingling of knowledge with the vicissitudes of life. See Campbell 1997.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> I have used the term 'human being' carefully. Some Māori have interpreted these comments by Marsden to mean that only the Māori human being has a subjective spiritual life and that no other person except a Māori person can honestly know it. This is not so. I believe Marsden's comments really mean that the ultimate reality of any culture is one that is experienced subjectively and that all cultures have to face the problem of rendering this subjective experience comprehensible to the intellect. I believe Marsden's comment about the 'foreign anthropologist' arises from a history of racist anthropology where analysts of this kind refuse to experience reality in the way that Māori experience it, belittling it as barbaric, savage and so on. Given the colonisation agenda, it is of little wonder that the symbols of their academic work fail to translate the Māori experience of the world. For evidence of this, see the work of Elsdon Best.

gives rise to art, language, poetic metaphor, history, science and so on. These in total render comprehensible the experience of life in all its forms and planes of existence.

I found that Marsden's statements had caused me to place an emphasis upon the subjective experience and diminish the importance of the empirical symbol which connotes the subjective experience. 'Māoritanga', as Marsden has used it, is an empirical symbol for an illusory, spiritual reality. Māori created empirical symbols to account for everything in the world including those which might be described as subjective. These symbols include language whakapapa, mōteatea, pūrākau, karakia and so on.

*As a person brought up within the culture, who has absorbed the values and attitudes of the Maori, my approach to Maori things is largely subjective. The charge of lacking objectivity does not concern me: the so-called objectivity some insist on is simply a form of arid abstraction, a model or a map. It is not the same as taste of reality...<sup>12</sup>*

With these comments, one can easily be led to the view that objective symbols are not necessary. There is ample evidence, however, in Māori history to show the importance of the objective symbol. Children learn language, where wānanga students were taught whakapapa, history, literature, mōteatea, all empirical symbols used to approximate life in its various forms including the subjective. Marsden's real complaint is with those whose symbols are said to represent the Māori experience of life, but in fact do not.

It is the goal of this thesis to indeed create a theory upon which a whare tapere model might be practically constructed. An objective symbol will therefore be described in these pages (indeed this is what all theses finally are). The practical model itself will be a symbol for it will be an objective tool by which the participant will be led into the subjective experience of Māoritanga<sup>13</sup>. My hope is that the model will not become an arid abstraction, but rather it may symbolise the reality of Māoritanga so powerfully that it becomes an indispensable tool for an entry into that subjective heartland of the Māori soul. Ultimately, this is what the whare tapere must seek to do. Through its processes and activities, its artistic forms, it must lead a group of people into an inanimate, subjective world which expresses, via the symbols of the mind, the passions of the Māori soul or Māoritanga as Marsden would have it. To borrow Artaud's term, this should constitute the alchemy of the whare tapere. Further comments on Marsden's methodology are contained in Section 3.0.

## **2.2 The Methodologies employed in this thesis**

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> This indeed is a lofty goal, but one that must necessarily be set from the beginning.

In Part I, I follow Māori Marsden's advice and present a story of my own discovery of what, I think, represents the heart of Māoritanga. I found that the subjective, spiritual reality of Māoritanga is accessed by objective, empirical symbols. The outcome of my research was to discover the Te Ao Mārama world view and philosophy. I have found that the Te Ao Mārama philosophy together with its analytical tool known as whakapapa is an attempt by traditional Māori society to explain, describe and account for everything in the known universe. This includes the phenomenal world experienced on both intellectual (te taha hinengaro) and physical (te taha tinana) planes as well as those illusory and subjective experiences of the spirit (te taha wairua).<sup>14</sup>

The Te Ao Mārama world view and philosophy gave Māori people an understanding of life, an orientation to the world and the words 'Kia tiaho he māramatanga, kia tupu he uri ki te Ao' ('So that enlightenment might shine through and generations may rise.') as stated by Hūkiki Te Ahukaramū of Ngāti Raukawa, stand as a kind of mission statement about the meaning of life in the living world we inhabit.

The methodology employed in Part II sought to create a picture of the traditional whare tapere. It was less complex than that employed in Part I. I was able to use Mervyn McLean's *An Annotated Bibliography of Oceanic Music and Dance*<sup>15</sup> where a large number of written sources are listed which contain information about the traditional whare tapere. Through it I was able to compile a range of material that could be divided into the following categories:

- original manuscript material written by primarily 19<sup>th</sup> century Māori, in Māori, within which are items and information about the whare tapere e.g. a manuscript written by Mātene Te Whiwhi at the dictation of Te Rangihaeata of Ngāti Toa
- material written by Pākehā at the dictation of Māori, e.g. material written by George Grey and John White
- material written by Pākehā upon their research into the Māori world, e.g. Edward Tregear
- material written and published by Māori, e.g. Pei Te Hurinui and Apirana Ngata
- material by Pākehā describing events of which they had no understanding, e.g. early missionary and government agent accounts

Further work can be researched in this area, particularly as there also exists a supplement to the *Annotated Bibliography of Oceanic Music and Dance*<sup>16</sup>. However, sufficient material has been gathered to generate a good description of the traditional whare tapere. A summary of findings on the

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<sup>14</sup> The three planes of reality were taught by Rev. Māori Marsden in various immersion seminars at Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa.

<sup>15</sup> McLean 1977.

<sup>16</sup> See McLean 1981.

traditional whare tapere is also included. Part II represents the first reconnaissance of sources concerning the traditional whare tapere.

Finally, Part III contains a theory upon which a model might be constructed. The methodology employed was to bring together the substantial ideas described in Part I concerning Te Ao Mārama as a framework within which to construct a theory for a new whare tapere. Each substantive issue is addressed by reference to the Te Ao Mārama world view and philosophy. For example, locating a whare tapere within the region of Ngāti Raukawa (as described in Part III) is done so via the use of the *whare* as symbolic of the Te Ao Mārama world view<sup>17</sup>. Having stated that the whare tapere should be created out of the Te Ao Mārama world view, Part III then moves to describe two possible performances. The first is based upon the story of Tinirau and Kae and the second upon the life of Hūkiki Te Ahukaramū, a Ngāti Raukawa chief. Again, the thesis proposes that the Te Ao Mārama world view and its subsequent societal philosophy (a fuller understanding is to be discovered through analysis of subsequent Māori history and culture) should be employed to influence the design and construction of performances. From its architecture to its rituals to the design and execution of performances, it is proposed that the whare tapere be a 'Te Ao Mārama' institution. In short, the Te Ao Mārama philosophy is applied to the reconstruction of the artistic forms found in the traditional whare tapere.

### **2.3 Use of the Māori Language**

The Māori language is employed in each part of the thesis for the reason that it is this language which is indigenous to the continuum of Māori culture. As the proposed theory contained in Part III is reliant upon an understanding of both the foundations of Māori culture and the activities and forms of the traditional whare tapere, it is critical that the thesis employ and make reference to the language within which these cultural forms were created and maintained.

Hence, Parts I and II contain summaries in the Māori language. These parts were written in English first and a summary in the Māori language concludes each. Please note that these sections are summaries only and are not direct translations of the preceding passages that appear in English. Whilst the bulk of the material may have appeared in English in the first instance, the Māori language summaries are nevertheless created within the Māori language and are not direct translations. Part III, on the other hand, was written in Māori first, in keeping with the notion that from the very beginning a new whare tapere needs to be grounded firmly in the Māori language.

It is important to note that this is done not for the sake of the language itself but rather because the Te Ao Mārama world view and philosophy requires it. Thus far we have made passing reference to the notion that Māori created symbols to explain their experience of life. All communities of peoples create

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<sup>17</sup> See Sections 5.2.1 - 3 and 5.7.1 - 3.

symbols to explain their experience of life and this is referred to, in general, as knowledge. I argue in Part I that these Māori symbols, this Māori knowledge system, which includes whakapapa, karakia, technology and so on, in their totality can be referred to as the Te Ao Mārama world view and philosophy. The Māori language is an extricable part of this knowledge system, being not only an important part of the knowledge symbols of Māori culture but also a key tool by which all other symbols of the knowledge tradition were created.