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Title: *A Stranger to the Islands: voice, place and the self in Indigenous Studies*
Year: 2009
Item: Inaugural Professorial Lecture
Venue: University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

Inaugural Professorial Lecture

A Stranger to the Islands: voice, place and the self in Indigenous Studies

Michael P.J. Reilly

Tēnā koutou katoa, Kia orana kōtou katoatoa, Tangi kē, Welcome and Good Evening.

This lecture presents the views of someone anthropologists call a participant-observer, and Māori characterise as a Pākehā, a manuhiri (guest, visitor), or a tangata kē (stranger); the latter two terms contrast with the permanence of the indigenous people, the tangata whenua (people of the land). All of us in this auditorium affiliate to one of these two categories, tangata kē and tangata whenua; sometimes to both. We are all inheritors of a particular history of British colonisation that unfolded within these lands from the 1800s (a legacy that Hone Tuwhare describes as ‘Victoriana-Missionary fog hiding legalized land-rape / and gentlemen thugs’).¹ This legalized violation undermined the hospitality and respect assumed between tangata whenua and tangata kē. Thanks to the Pākehā New Zealand passion for empire this colonial history extended to neighbouring islands, including the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, Niue and the Tokelau Islands. I hope what I will say supports a scholarship which is the work of both strangers and the people of this land; one (to adapt Anne Salmond’s vision)

¹ Hone Tuwhare, *Something Nothing*. Dunedin: Caveman Press, 1974, p. 9 (from ‘Ron Mason’).

‘that celebrates both our common humanity and our cultural differences, drawing strength from one without detracting from the other.’²

In this lecture, I propose to make observations on the value of the voice, the ties to place, and the authority of the self in Indigenous Studies, using examples drawn from Island societies located in Te Moana nui a Kiwa (the Great Ocean of Kiwa); a renowned navigator of the Pacific ocean. Many of these societies consider themselves Māori, that is, the normal or indigenous people of the place. Thus I use the term Indigenous Studies as a universal description that encompasses such local New Zealand academic practices as Māori or Pacific Studies. Indigenous Studies highlights how much such practices share in common in terms of connections to land, maintenance of language, the value of kinship, shared histories of colonisation, and challenges to current and future development. Finally, I propose to return to the notion of the stranger as understood within the cultural worlds of Pacific Island societies. My conclusion will suggest how Indigenous and manuhiri or non-Indigenous scholars and peoples can work together in the furthering of this particular world of knowledge.

Throughout this lecture I quote from a body of Māori wisdom; namely, those pithy sayings called whakataukī. By quoting them I honour the contribution of two scholars of Māori, Neil Grove and Hirini Moko Mead. Neil was, like me, a Pākehā student of Māori Studies at Victoria University in Wellington, and Hirini or Sid was our Professor. While a student, Neil developed a passion to locate Māori sayings and to that end commenced a project that only ended with his death in 1999. The fruits of that labour, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: the sayings of the ancestors*, serves as a memorial to Neil, and to the wisdom of

² See Anne Salmond, ‘Discussion’. In Eruera Stirling as told to Anne Salmond, *Eruera: the teachings of a Maori elder*. Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 254.

generations of Māori thinkers. The achievement of Neil and Hirini suggests how we can create positive relationships that re-establish the balance between the tangata kē and the tangata whenua lost in the course of our colonial past.

Ki whea koutou; kia toa.

Wherever you go be valorous.³

*

Whaowhia te kete mātauranga.

Fill the Basket of Knowledge.⁴

Every scholar no matter what we study is aware of the many personal and professional obligations we each inherit as we progress through our working lives. There are two obligations I wish to publically acknowledge here tonight because without them I would not have become involved in the scholarly world that is the subject of my talk. First, I have much to thank my parents for, not least their intervention at a critical moment in my secondary education to ensure that I took up the study of the Māori language of Aotearoa, instead of European languages as I had intended, on the grounds that learning te reo Māori was important to my identity as a New Zealander. They also introduced me to the Cook Islands, and stories of these Pacific Islands formed a part of my growing up, so that it is perhaps not surprising that when opportunity beckoned I immersed myself in the academic study of one particular Island in the southern Cook Islands called Mangaia. Second, I want to

³ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 224 (no. 1369).

⁴ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 424 (no. 2659).

acknowledge my earliest instructors in Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) during my secondary education. Besides the formal instruction of my teacher, June Mariu, I owe a great debt to the more informal education gained from my fellow students in what proved to be the inaugural te reo Māori class at our West Auckland high school. The challenges my class mates experienced at school and at the hands of various external agencies, as well as their adherence to customary Māori practices and protocols, inducted me into a domain of which I had very little prior acquaintance. By watching what they did, and listening to what they said, I started to gain some limited understanding of what it meant to be a student of the Māori language and to operate within a Māori world.

These public acknowledgements of personal debts and obligations may seem the usual prologue to a scholarly lecture; a simple adherence to etiquette. But as many of my Māori and Pacific colleagues in Te Tumu point out in their own work, the subjective voice is the dominant one in any academic presentation in subjects such as Māori or Pacific Studies. In such societies where the oral arts are so prominent it is not surprising that the personal voice of the speaker is particularly esteemed.

He rite te kōpara e kō nei i te ata.

Like a bellbird singing at dawn.⁵

Te Kapunga Dewes describes how in the various oral arts ‘the whole body “talks” with gestures and dance movements’.⁶ In such performances, voice refers not only to the words

⁵ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 117 (no. 699).

⁶ Te Kapunga Dewes, ‘The Case for Oral Arts’. In Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1975, p. 74. This essay represents many of Dewes’ key ideas. Quoting it allows me to acknowledge the contribution he made to my early education in te reo Māori and in Māori oral literature at Victoria University. Koro, as he was called by his students, was uncompromising in his standards, expecting the same high performance from both Māori and Pākehā students. He once explained to me why he insisted on

chanted, shouted, sung, or spoken, but to the presentation of the entire self, so that an audience becomes engaged in and experiences an emotional response to the quality and perfection of the performance. In Māori terms, the ihi (vital force or personal magnetism) of the performer, expressed through the brilliance and skill of their performance, elicits a sense of wana and wehi (awe, fearsomeness) in the audience.⁷

E kawa ana tōku ki a koe, tēnā te tangata māna e whakareka.

You find what I offer sour to the taste but there is a man who can sweeten it.⁸

The prominence of the self as the transmitter of knowledge to others means that the practice of objectivity is given less significance, as the eminent tohunga and scholar, Māori Marsden, observes.

The route to Maoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end. The way can only lie through a passionate, subjective approach. ... 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

this. Coming from a Māori speaking community, he had himself experienced as a child being required by the uncompromising educational norms of the day to speak only in English at school. He understood therefore the difficulties Pākehā students found studying Māori, but believed it was important that he not compromise his standards for struggling Pākehā learners (such as myself). Such advice has influenced my own academic teaching of Māori and Pākehā students within Māori Studies. Both must achieve to the same high academic standards.

⁷ Māori Marsden, 'God, Man and Universe: A Maori View'. In Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (ed.), *The Woven Universe: selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. The estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003, pp. 3-4, 7. See also Māori Marsden, 'The Natural World and Natural Resources: Māori value systems and perspectives'. In Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (ed.), *The Woven Universe: selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. N.P.: The estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003, p. 41; Hirini Moko Mead, *Tikanga Māori: living by Māori values*. Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2003, pp. 119, 370.

⁸ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tipuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 28 (no. 123).

so-called objectivity some insist on is simply a form of arid abstraction, a model or a map. It is not the same thing as the taste of reality.⁹

Models are, as Greg Dening reminds us, a translation from such a lived reality: life in all its daily complexity is converted into a neat and tidy explanation belonging ‘to an observer’s perceptions’ where they become ‘the currency of communication amongst the observers’.¹⁰ As a result, the people frequently feel marginalized from such objectifying work; as if they have lost possession of the stories, songs or histories that belong to them.¹¹ Objective language is therefore frequently associated with non-Indigenous scholars, like me, who look in at Pacific peoples; I am not an insider, identifying with and participating in a community. By contrast, for indigenous peoples, ‘there can be no detachment of the knower from the known’: ‘knowledge is socially constructed by communities of knowledge-makers’.¹² Konai Helu Thaman describes this dichotomy in poetry:¹³

your way / objective / analytic ... / my way / subjective / gut-feeling

⁹ Māori Marsden, ‘God, Man and Universe: A Maori View’. In Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (ed.), *The Woven Universe: selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. The estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003, p. 2. This influential essay was also published in both editions of Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1975, p. 191; second ed., Auckland: Reed, 1992, p. 117. This passage was used by a former colleague of mine, Nathan Matthews, when teaching students about Māori research.

¹⁰ Greg Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land Marquesas 1774-1880*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980, p. 86.

¹¹ For example, Konai Helu Thaman, ‘Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 2-3; Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘Indigenous Knowledge and Academic Imperialism’. In Robert Borofsky (ed.), *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 82-86; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999, pp. 19-35; Epeli Hau’ofa, ‘Our Sea of Islands’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 6, no. 1 (Spring 1994), pp. 148-152.

¹² David Welchman Gegeo and Karen Ann Watson-Gegeo, ‘“How We Know”: Kwarā’ae Rural Villagers Doing Indigenous Epistemology’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 2001), p. 62.

¹³ Konai Helu Thaman, ‘Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 3-4.

The form of outsider model-making is presented in ‘an aloof, detached, and jargonistic style’ written in ‘sentences that are long, polysyllabic, tangled, and obscure’,¹⁴ whereas many Māori or Pacific scholars write with passionate commitment and in the first person since they are writing or retelling stories and other oral lore for their own communities.¹⁵ Orality returns to the centre of things, permitting an unleashing of diverse, often new forms of the arts, including innovative writing in indigenous languages, such as novels and histories.¹⁶ In addition, Indigenous scholars make use of elements of Western theory: ‘borrowing and applying postmodern discourse’ in the context of community research where it seems ‘relevant and appropriate’.¹⁷ As Vilsoni Hereniko argues: ‘Theory ought to be informed by

¹⁴ The quoted passages are from Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘Indigenous Knowledge and Academic Imperialism’. In Robert Borofsky (ed.), *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, p. 89.

¹⁵ Some good examples include, Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘Indigenous Knowledge and Academic Imperialism’. In Robert Borofsky (ed.), *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 78-91; Epeli Hau’ofa, ‘The Ocean in Us’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Fall 1998), pp. 392-410; Manulani Aluli Meyer, ‘Our Own Liberation: Reflections on Hawaiian Epistemology.’ In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 2001), pp. 124-148; John Rangihau, ‘Being Maori’. Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Auckland: Reed, 1992, pp. 183-190. Other examples found in Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i*. Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1993; works by Ranginui Walker, such as *Ngā Pepa a Ranginui: The Walker Papers*. Auckland: Penguin Books, 1996.

¹⁶ See, for example, Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘Indigenous Knowledge and Academic Imperialism’. In Robert Borofsky (ed.), *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 78-91; Albert Wendt, ‘Novelists and Historians and the Art of Remembering’. In Antony Hooper et al. (eds), *Class and Culture in the South Pacific*. Auckland and Fiji: Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland and Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1987, pp. 78-91; Subramani, ‘The Oceanic Imaginary’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 2001), pp. 149-162 (also see the responses by Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘David and Goliath: a response to “The Oceanic Imaginary”’, pp. 163-168; Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard, ‘Modeling Community: A Response to “The Oceanic Imaginary”’, pp. 169-177). For an important New Zealand history written solely in Māori, see Rangiaahuta Alan Herewini Ruka Broughton, *Ngāa Mahi Whakaari a Tiitokowaru*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1993. Ruka’s work has been unjustly neglected by New Zealand’s historians chiefly, I suspect, because almost all of them lack sufficient command of te reo Māori to read it. For example, it was never reviewed by the *New Zealand Journal of History* which is the main outlet for New Zealand history writing. This is a pity because I found that Ruka, as a teacher, was very supportive of Pākehā like myself who sought to gain some understanding of Te Ao Māori.

¹⁷ David Welchman Gegeo, ‘Cultural Rupture and Indigeneity: The Challenge of (Re)visioning “Place” in the Pacific.’ In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), p. 491; Subramani, ‘The Oceanic Imaginary’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 2001), p. 151.

practice, by which I mean a commitment to the well-being of those being researched.¹⁸ Such personal engagement and experimentation is not always well received by non-Indigenous academics, especially those who control what is accepted for academic publication. Thaman recalls how one of her articles was rejected ‘because there was too much of me in it; it was too different, too personal, and too Tongan.’¹⁹ Similarly, most academic journals prefer not to publish too much text in Indigenous languages out of consideration for their predominantly monolingual (English-speaking) non-Indigenous readership.²⁰ The refusal to engage with such languages is contrasted with requirements for scholars of European societies to possess appropriate language knowledge.²¹ In these cases, it seems some human languages are more equal than others.

The speaker or orator who is well versed in their community’s knowledge world is truly the person best equipped to speak about indigenous knowledge.

Ko te kai a te Rangatira, he kōrero.

The food of leaders is oratory.²²

¹⁸ Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘Indigenous Knowledge and Academic Imperialism’. In Robert Borofsky (ed.), *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, p. 88.

¹⁹ Konai Helu Thaman, ‘Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 10.

²⁰ I was once told by an editor of a well known history journal that they would not publish a short Māngaiian language text (all of three paragraphs) because ‘historians aren’t linguists’! An English translation was preferred. In the above case they did suggest I could publish the original on the internet; perhaps anywhere except their journal? It is interesting that scholarly works in English will include excerpts in other European languages without translation.

²¹ See, for example, Noenoe Silva, ‘Response’, to reviews of her book *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*. In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 18, no. 1 (2006), p. 168.

²² Te Kapunga Dewes, ‘The Case for Oral Arts’. In Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1975, p. 75.

Not surprisingly, here in Te Tumu the research of many Māori and Pacific students is centred upon the recording of the words of their elders and other experts within their families and kin-based communities. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains: ‘Intrinsic in story telling is a focus on dialogue and conversations amongst ourselves as indigenous peoples, to ourselves and for ourselves.’²³ Traditionally, knowledge in Māori and Pacific societies is transmitted by a parent or elder to a selected child in their family. They become the custodians of the knowledge, and in turn pass it on to the next generation.²⁴

He tangata i akona ki te whare, tūnga ki te marae tau ana.

One who has learned in the house [of knowledge] and on the marae stands with dignity.²⁵

As a consequence, research amongst a community, to whom the researcher is connected, is a strong feature of much Māori and Pacific scholarship.²⁶ Indigenous researchers in Aotearoa view the whānau (extended family) ‘as a supervisory and organizational structure for

²³ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999, p. 145

²⁴ Published examples of this process include Vilsoni Hereniko, ‘Indigenous Knowledge and Academic Imperialism’. In Robert Borofsky (ed.), *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 78-79; Te Uira Manihera, Ngoi Pewhairangi, John Rangihau, ‘Learning and Tapu’. In Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Auckland: Reed, 1992, pp. 9-13. In Mangaia specialist knowledge was also generally transmitted through family groups; for example, the important tribal historian, Mamae, was taught by his grandfather, Koroa.

²⁵ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 120 (no. 720).

²⁶ See, for example, David Welchman Gegeo, ‘Cultural Rupture and Indigeneity: The Challenge of (Re)visioning “Place” in the Pacific.’ In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), pp. 491-496; Sidney Moko Mead, ‘Maori Studies in the Universities: Te Kaupapa Maori i nga Whare Wananga.’ In Sidney Moko Mead (ed.), *Landmarks, Bridges and Visions: Aspects of Maori Culture*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1997, pp. 42-43, 46-47.

handling research'.²⁷ A number of theses and dissertations in Māori Studies examine the history of the student's marae, an ancestor, or other issues pertaining to their whānau, hapū (clan), or iwi (tribe). Students writing on other topics will normally use whānau networks in order to obtain interviews or information, or include case studies based on individuals or groups related to them, or draw on their friendship networks (for example, from Māori schools); the latter often resembling the intimacy of whānau connections for the student-researcher.

He whenua taimaha te whenua, he tangata māmā te tangata.

The land is heavy but people are light.²⁸

In elegant prose, Wiremu Parker explains the significance of land in Aotearoa.

For ever so long land has been central in Maori thought. The source of his physical sustenance, of his very blood from time immemorial, the object of deep emotional attachment in song, poetry and oratory, the prized heritage of tribe and family, land lay at the very core of a people's mana.²⁹

²⁷ See Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999, pp. 185, 187.

²⁸ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 138 (no. 843).

²⁹ Wiremu Parker, 'The Substance that Remains'. In Ian Wards (ed.), *Thirteen Facets: essays to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth the Second 1952-1977*. Wellington: Government Printer, 1978, p. 170. Wiremu, or Bill to his students, taught for some years in Māori Studies at Victoria University. He did not write much, but he was an elegant and impeccable speaker of Māori and English, from a generation able to appreciate the art of Shakespeare and Māori song poetry. His educational philosophy might be summarised as accepting and embracing anyone who desired to learn from him. It's a philosophy I've tried to put into practice in my own teaching. He had a fund of anecdotes that formed the basis of his pedagogy, including one about hearing someone speak in Māori, evidently a native speaker, as they walked upstairs to an adult education class in Nelson. Bill was surprised to discover the speaker was a Pākehā who he later learned had been adopted by a Māori family. As Bill told the story I had the impression he'd learned not to make judgements about who could speak Māori. For me, it suggested that the reo could and should be available to everyone willing and interested enough to learn, regardless of their ethnicity or origins.

This intimacy with the land is recognised in the very term *tangata whenua*. These ties are deepened by the identification of the earth with the founding ancestor, Papa-tūā-nuku; by the burial of the placenta, itself called *whenua*, at a location of significance to the *whānau*; and by the burial of the dead in sacred ancestral lands.³⁰ The *whakataukī* quoted at the opening of this paragraph emphasises how land is a permanent resource; it is cared for by successive generations who act as *kaitiaki* (guardians, stewards).³¹

Ma te whenua ka whai oranga ai.

Land alone gives man his sustenance.³²

These values continue today in Aotearoa, and elsewhere in the Pacific. In some Islands, such as Mangaia, customary tenure of land by families remains the bulwark of the Indigenous social structure. Even when people live elsewhere, they retain their connections to these ancestral lands; hence identification with place ‘is portable’ enabling individuals to live elsewhere and remain connected to their homelands.³³ Many, for example, will periodically return to their communities for holidays or for important community events, send a relative to live with family on their lands, and maintain ties with kin who may live in the same location away from home (such as in urban settings). By contrast, *tangata kē* as a general rule are less connected to place. Te Kapunga Dewes liked to quote his father’s opinion that ‘Pakeha live

³⁰ Jim Williams, ‘Papa-tūā-nuku: Attitudes to land’. In Tānia M. Ka`ai, John C. Moorfield, Michael P.J. Reilly, Sharon Mosley (eds.), *Ki te Whaiiao: An Introduction to Māori Culture and Society*. Auckland: Pearson Education, 2004, p. 50.

³¹ Jim Williams, ‘Papa-tūā-nuku: Attitudes to land’. In In Tānia M. Ka`ai, John C. Moorfield, Michael P.J. Reilly, Sharon Mosley (eds.), *Ki te Whaiiao: An Introduction to Māori Culture and Society*. Auckland: Pearson Education, 2004, p. 50.

³² Douglas Sinclair, ‘Land: Maori view and European response.’ In Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Auckland: Reed, 1992, p. 64.

³³ See David Welchman Gegeo, ‘Cultural Rupture and Indigeneity: The Challenge of (Re)visioning “Place” in the Pacific.’ In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), pp. 494-496.

under their hats’,³⁴ meaning that they moved from one location to another because they did not experience the land’s weighty claims upon them. David Gegeo contrasts ‘Anglo-European’ scholars focused on their careers, and interested in addressing some currently fashionable topic, with scholarship that participates in and continually refers back to the community. For him, the former rarely focused upon one community beyond the completion of a particular project or research topic. Hence they were also less committed to the community’s welfare.³⁵

The work of the New Zealand historian, Michael King, is an example of the way a tangata kē can identify with a sense of place. He himself saw Pākehā as a ‘second indigenous culture’ or as ‘the teina or younger-sibling culture’ who respected the priority of the tuakana (the elder sibling), the tangata whenua. For him, a ‘confident Pakeha culture,’ one that valued its own heritage as part of Aotearoa, would be able to respect the place of Māori, and so contribute to a society based on ‘a mutuality of respect between the two major cultures.’³⁶ Despite King’s optimism, even he had to admit that at the time of writing in 2000 at least some other Pākehā did not embrace this vision.³⁷ As yet, I think it is still too soon to suggest that the majority of tangata kē in Aotearoa have achieved a deep sense of place, or would feel comfortable defining themselves as the ‘teina culture’ of this land. Amongst those who have embraced it, I venture to suggest, would be the anthropologist, Anne Salmond, the historians, Ann Parsonson and Judith Binney, and the poet, James K. Baxter.

³⁴ Te Kapunga Dewes, ‘The Case for Oral Arts’. In Michael King (ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri: aspects of Māoritanga*. Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1975, p. 81 n. 2. He used this proverbial utterance in class as well.

³⁵ See David Welchman Gegeo, ‘Cultural Rupture and Indigeneity: The Challenge of (Re)visioning “Place” in the Pacific.’ In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), p. 492.

³⁶ Michael King, ‘A Vision for the New Millennium.’ In Michael King (ed.), *Tread Softly For You Tread On My Life: New and Collected Writings*. Auckland: Cape Catley, 2001, pp. 103-104.

³⁷ Michael King, ‘A Vision for the New Millennium.’ In Michael King (ed.), *Tread Softly For You Tread On My Life: New and Collected Writings*. Auckland: Cape Catley, 2001, p. 103.

Non-indigenous historians are the subject of particular critique by their indigenous counterparts. For the latter, learning local languages is the key first step in providing ‘a timely remedy for a common problem dominating Pacific historiography—the absence of indigenous voices’.³⁸ Every historian needs to understand ancestral histories through the words and values of the people themselves (many of whom wrote voluminous amounts of textual material). Outsider scholars, as Denning reminds us, must attempt ‘to cross the beach, not remake the island’, and to write of indigenous societies ‘in terms of their own metaphors and their own particularity’.³⁹ Otherwise, indigenous memories risk erasure, replacement and reordering by historians of the majority society; the dominated group becoming ‘trapped in a reality dictated by others’.⁴⁰ In Haunani-Kay Trask’s words: ‘If it is truly our history Western historians desire to know, they must put down their books, and take up our practices.’⁴¹

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Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua.

The permanence of the language, prestige and land.⁴²

³⁸ The passage is quoted from Lyn Carter’s review of Noenoe Silva’s *Aloha Betrayed* (see *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 18, no. 1 (2006), p. 154).

³⁹ Quotes from Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land Marquesas 1774-1880*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980, p. 281.

⁴⁰ Albert Wendt, ‘Novelists and Historians and the Art of Remembering’. In Antony Hooper et al. (eds), *Class and Culture in the South Pacific*. Auckland and Fiji: Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland and Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1987, pp. 87-88.

⁴¹ Haunani-Kay Trask, ‘From a Native Daughter’. In Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai`i*. Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1993, p. 157.

⁴² Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 405 (no. 2536).

How can strangers to the islands respect the people of these lands and find a place for themselves in the scholarship of Indigenous peoples? Practices such as Māori and Pacific Studies stress the importance of immersion in the language and cultural values of the people whose place this is. Learning any language instils in the learner a fundamental respect for the artistry of that language and its speakers. On its own however this is clearly not enough since many British colonisers were able speakers of Māori and other Pacific languages, at home in the observance of Indigenous cultural practices. What is critical to avoiding the subordination of such practices seems to be the maintenance of two co-equal worlds operating in relationship to the other, but neither dominating the other. This was I suspect the original expectation of many rangatira who signed the Treaty of Waitangi: two peoples *as equal partners* in one country under one God and one Law.⁴³ While the tangata kē respected the language and culture of the tangata whenua, then the balance between them was maintained. But when it became unbalanced, through population growth and the development of intellectual ideas supporting the superiority of one group or race of people over another, then the relationship was put under threat, and eventually destroyed through the holocaust of war and dispossession from the land base that sustained the tangata whenua. And yet, not all the strands of those ties between the two categories were completely cut. There remained individuals who sustained hope even in the darkest days. More importantly, the very categories of stranger and people of the land sustained potential for a positive relationship to be reestablished, and a balance to be achieved once more. To understand how this might develop, some historical examples may prove useful guides.

⁴³ See, for example, Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*. Wellington: Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1987, pp. 56-57, 89. See also Bill Dacker, Michael Reilly and Leo Watson, 'Te Mamae me te Taumaha: A Report on Māori Representation and the Authority of Māori Bodies'. Waitangi Tribunal Special Research Commission SC 04, [ca. 1996], pp. 4-5, 70, 72-73, 86-87, 141. These statements and conclusions are based upon reports of particular chiefs who discussed the Treaty and the relationship between Māori and the Crown at various major nineteenth century hui (meetings).

A famous example is found in the writings of the Te Arawa rangatira and scholar, Te Rangikāheke. In describing how the natural world came into being, Te Rangikāheke explained that the sons of the two original parents of humanity, Rangī-nui and Papa-tūā-nuku, debated on the proper course of action in order to emerge from the darkness in which they lived. Eventually, Tāne-mahuta proposed to separate the tightly entwined parents; in Te Rangikāheke's words: 'kia kotahi hei tangata ke ki a tatou, kia kotahi hei matua ki a tatou'.⁴⁴ The New Zealand Governor, Sir George Grey, for whom this narrative was written, translated this text: 'Let the sky become as a stranger to us, but the earth remain close to us as our nursing mother'.⁴⁵ The sky is a translation for Rangī-nui, while Papa-tūā-nuku is the nurturing mother earth. Although humanity is nurtured by Papa, the sky domain of Rangī remains an important dimension of the natural world. In fact, Te Rangikāheke describes how the sky's elements buffet humanity in a kind of eternal war, although neither gains dominance over the other. The domain of Rangī-nui, the tangata kē or stranger, remains connected with humanity and the earth.

In the Island of Mangaia, the missionary historian, William Wyatt Gill, and the tribal historian, Mamae, recounted how in the early days of chiefly government, the local people had to fight against groups who came off ocean-going ships from other lands. One group is described as coming from Rarotonga and taking up residence in Mangaia. They lived quite peaceably until they slew one of Mangaia's high priests who were intensely tapu. Clearly, this was a challenge to the authority of the tangata `enua (the people of the land). A Mangaian leader, Mōkē, tricked these 'strangers' who were then massacred by local

⁴⁴ Sir George Grey, *Nga Mahi a nga Tupuna*. Edited by H.W. Williams. Fourth ed. Wellington: A.H. and A.W. Reed, 1971, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology and ancient traditional history of the Maori as told by their priests and chiefs*. Edited by W.W. Bird. Illustrated New Zealand edition. [Christchurch]: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1956, p. 2.

warriors.⁴⁶ A second group who arrived later were described as, ‘‘E manu`iri ... nō te pa`i (manu`iri ... from an ocean-going boat).⁴⁷ In Mangaia, manu`iri were guests, usually from distant places, who came and lived for some time with a tribe.⁴⁸ This group, led by Matatia, lived for a while in Mangaia, before attempting to challenge the ruling high chief of the day. In the subsequent battle, the challengers were defeated, and the local people retained control over the island.⁴⁹ In both these cases, manu`iri had been welcomed and allowed to live in particular places on the island. But their serious breaches of customary laws of hospitality and respect towards the tangata `enua, including murder, prompted armed retaliation to reestablish the balance between the parties.

Today, several prophecies referring to the coming of strangers are cited by Mangaian scholars when recounting the events leading up to the arrival of Christianity to their shores.⁵⁰

Vaevae kē tē ka `aere / ... nā te aka i te rangi.

Different feet which are walking / ... [are] at the horizon.

Vaevae kekē, ka `aere ... / Nā te aka o te rangi.

Strangers' feet will be walking ... / From the horizon.

⁴⁶ William Wyatt Gill, *From Darkness to Light in Polynesia*. Reprint ed., Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1984 [originally published 1894], pp. 34-35.

⁴⁷ Michael P.J. Reilly, *War and Succession in Mangaia from Mamae's texts*. Memoir no. 52. Auckland: The Polynesian Society, 2003, p. 35.

⁴⁸ Jasper Buse with Raututi Taringa, *Cook Islands Maori Dictionary*. Edited by Bruce Biggs and Rangi Moeka`a. Rarotonga: Ministry of Education, Government of the Cook Islands, 1995, p. 223.

⁴⁹ Michael P.J. Reilly, *War and Succession in Mangaia from Mamae's texts*. Memoir no. 52. Auckland: The Polynesian Society, 2003, p. 35.

⁵⁰ See Michael P.J. Reilly, *Ancestral Voices from Mangaia: a history of the ancient gods and chiefs*. Memoir no. 54. Auckland: The Polynesian Society, (in press), pp. 123-124.

The vaevae kē or vaevae kekē are terms for strangers. They are described as approaching from the domain of the rangi; here conceived of as that space from horizon to horizon surrounding the island. For those Māngaians who later accepted Christianity, these predictions became a key part of their history showing how their own chiefs and priests had known all along that this religion would come to the island, and become accepted as part of their own society. In this case, the strangers arrived in peace, and received the protection of the ruling chiefs as an expression of their hospitality.

Ka ora pea i a koe, ka ora koe i au.

Perhaps I survive because of you, and you survive because of me.⁵¹

Finally, the rituals of encounter on New Zealand marae highlight how strangers and hosts are initially separated from each other, with much formality in evidence as befits meetings between parties with unknown intentions. But at the end of the ceremony, the two groups come together to hongi before repairing to eat together. With these acts the visitors 'have been given honorary local status by the ceremony, and are no longer threatened by tapu qualities on [the] marae.'⁵²

As each of these examples demonstrates, how relationships unfold between tangata kē and tangata whenua depend on the intentions and the particular context of the human relationship formed between the two parties. If the canons of hospitality and mutual respect are adhered to by both parties, then both can live amicably side by side. If disrespect is

⁵¹ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 173 (no. 1056).

⁵² Anne Salmond, *Hui: a study of Maori ceremonial gatherings*. Second edition. Auckland: Reed Methuen, 1987, pp. 118, 127-128.

shown by one or other party, then the relationship collapses into hostility, with its potential for the subordination, even destruction, of one or other group.

Transposed to the domain of scholarship, these narratives concerning the tangata kē and tangata whenua, suggest there is potential for mutual benefit to both sides, especially if both cooperate together. As Konai Helu Thaman observes, the valuing of ‘indigenous ways of knowing’ results not only in mutually beneficial collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, but improves ‘their treatment of each other as equals.’⁵³

Ki a koe tētehi kīwai, ki a au tētehi kīwai.

For you one handle of the basket and for me the other.⁵⁴

Such cooperation presumes not only goodwill but an appropriate grounding in language and other cultural practices on the part of non-Indigenous scholars such as myself. In addition, there must be a consciousness of a relatedness and responsibility to indigenous scholarship and communities. A distinctive element of academic subjects, such as Māori and Pacific Studies, is their strong affiliations to larger indigenous communities, through shared genealogical ties and participation in community activities and cultural practices. David Gegeo stresses how Pacific scholars now approach their research ‘from a *communitarian perspective*, that is, research that is not only applied (targeted to making positive changes) but

⁵³ Konai Helu Thaman, ‘Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education’. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 11.

⁵⁴ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 212 (no. 1295).

is firmly anchored in Indigenous or Native epistemologies and methodologies' in order to benefit a whole community.⁵⁵

However, any stranger who ventures to learn and to research indigenous knowledge must accept that the legacy of colonisation means such tangata kē (and their ideas) are often subject to critical scrutiny by Indigenous colleagues and other members of the tangata whenua. Subjects such as Māori Studies are concerned to reintegrate past and present knowledges belonging to the people, in order to create a coherent and living whole, in place of colonialism's alienation and fragmentation of knowledge.⁵⁶ As a result, Indigenous scholars share a critical consciousness aimed at interrogating the words of those experts or commentators who presume to understand or to authoritatively describe Indigenous communities.

Strangers working within Indigenous contexts will sometimes be reminded of how temporary and superficial their affiliations remain. After all, tangata kē have the luxury of opting out of relationships with Indigenous communities at the end of a work day, while the lack of genealogical connections circumvents the criticisms and expectations of relations and elders that Indigenous colleagues can experience. That privileged position highlights the level of trust that strangers like me have been extended over many years by colleagues and by various Indigenous communities. Consequently, I believe there is a reciprocal duty or obligation incumbent upon the stranger who ventures to research, teach and write about Indigenous knowledge. There are the obligations to those many tangata whenua who gave

⁵⁵ David Welchman Gegeo, 'Cultural Rupture and Indigeneity: The Challenge of (Re)visioning "Place" in the Pacific.' In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), p. 492.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Sidney Moko Mead, 'Maori Studies Tomorrow: Te Wananga i te Matauranga Maori'. In Sidney Moko Mead (ed.), *Landmarks, Bridges and Visions: Aspects of Maori Culture*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1997, p. 26.

freely of their learning, and a responsibility to handle that knowledge with the utmost circumspection, humility and respect, ever conscious that it is a taonga (treasure, heirloom) that the stranger has been given the temporary privilege of handling, aware that it belongs to others.⁵⁷

For those of us who labour to fill our baskets of knowledge, and so benefit our wider communities, the pursuit of learning should be an activity that enhances everyone, whether they descend from the tangata kē or belong to the tangata whenua.

Whāia te mātauranga hei oranga mō koutou.

Seek after learning for the sake of your well-being.⁵⁸

This oranga (well-being) is not intended to advance the career prospects of an autonomous individual scholar (the focus of European thinking), but to enhance the oranga of all, scholars included.⁵⁹ Epeli Hau'ofa imagined an Oceanic identity that connected everyone who lived in the Islands of the Pacific; the heritage of living with the sea linked us together, and created the potential for everyone to share a 'more accommodating, inclusive and flexible' identity as Oceanians.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ See the useful guidelines in Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999, p. 120. These guidelines emphasise various ethical practices including respect, generosity, humility, circumspection, and a willingness to listen and talk face-to-face with members of Indigenous communities.

⁵⁸ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 422 (no. 2645).

⁵⁹ See David Welchman Gegeo, 'Cultural Rupture and Indigeneity: The Challenge of (Re)visioning "Place" in the Pacific.' In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), p. 492.

⁶⁰ Epeli Hau'ofa, 'The Ocean in Us.' In *The Contemporary Pacific* vol. 10, no. 2 (Fall 1998), pp. 401-402, also see pp. 404-409.

We live in one land, and have become through time bound together by marriage, friendship, and shared passion for scholarship. As the poet, Robert Sullivan, writes:

... New Zealand is still our child.

We made her with our mixed history and blood.

We will always be joined by her.⁶¹

Those who descend from both tangata whenua and manuhiri have a key role to play, as taharua (related to both sides),⁶² in ensuring the parties sustain these connections. While the two categories of stranger and host remain, the existence of taharua show how together we have created out of this complex of relationships a society that ought to be conscious of the achievements (and failings) of all our ancestors, while recognising that as with any human relationship it remains imperfect, subject at times to discord, disagreement, and even distrust. In James K. Baxter's words:

Like dreamers that struggle to wake,

Longing for the poet's truth

And the lover's pride.⁶³

We are rather like two canoes, lashed together to achieve greater stability in the open seas. Although subject to strains that sometimes threaten to sunder us, yet we must work together

⁶¹ Robert Sullivan, *Voice carried my family*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2005, p. 65 (from 'Our Country').

⁶² See J. Prytz Johansen, *The Maori and his Religion in its non-ritualistic aspects*. [Copenhagen]: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954, pp. 31-32.

⁶³ John Weir (ed.), *The Collected Poems of James K. Baxter*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2004 [first published 1980], p. 276 (from 'New Zealand (for Monte Holcroft)').

to ensure our ship keeps pointing towards calmer waters and to a future that benefits subsequent generations of tangata whenua and tangata kē.

He waka kōtuia kāhore e tukutukua ngā mimira.

A canoe that is interlaced will not become separated at the bow.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Hirini Moko Mead rāua ko Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 136 (no. 828).