

## WHAKAPAPA – NEW ZEALAND ANTHROPOLOGY: BEGINNINGS

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### INTRODUCTION

The literal meaning of whakapapa as a verb is ‘to lay down in layers’. Maori apply it metaphorically to the tracing and interpretation of connections; connections between members of the same and successive generations, connections through time and space. But tracing whakapapa may also reveal or give rise to division, disconnection, and dead ends.

### THE FIRST GENERATION

The whakapapa of New Zealand anthropology begins with Elsdon Best and Tutakangahau, the story of whose extraordinary partnership in the late 19th century should be compulsory reading for New Zealand anthropologists in training (Holman 2009). As an ethnographer Best read and corresponded with anthropologists in Europe, but he had no formal training. He developed his own theory and methods in the field in dialogue with Tuhoe elder, Tutakangahau, who had a different agenda.

Regrettably, the partnership of Best and Tutakangahau produced no direct offspring: over the next 50-odd years, all would-be anthropologists went overseas for training and then went their separate ways. Harry Skinner returned to New Zealand after studying anthropology at Cambridge during World War I, and instituted a one-year course focused on material culture at Otago University (Sorrenson 1992: 50). Diamond Jenness and Reo Fortune stayed overseas as specialists in Arctic and Melanesian societies respectively.<sup>1</sup> Raymond Firth, Te Rangi Hiroa (Peter Buck), Harry Hawthorn, Cyril Belshaw, Derek Freeman and Catherine Berndt produced works on New Zealand and the Pacific from overseas bases. After fieldwork in Polynesia, Ernest Beaglehole returned home as Professor of Psychology in Wellington.<sup>2</sup>

The first full-scale Department of Anthropology was established at Auckland University College in 1951. As inaugural Professor, Australian Ralph Piddington developed a programme comprising physical anthropology, social anthropology and archaeology, and fought successfully to include Maori language and (later) linguistics.

#### WORKING IN THE HOME FIELD

As one of the first anthropologists to emerge from New Zealand universities, I belong to the second generation of New Zealand anthropologists. Some aspects of my experience working at home in New Zealand for more than 50 years will be strange to today's students; others will be painfully familiar.

My decision to pursue anthropology was taken in the 1940s, while I was still at school. It had several sources: an insatiable appetite for books about the peoples of the world, a faith-based belief in the equal value of all human beings, firsthand experience of the prejudice and discrimination directed against Maori in three country towns, and friendships which afforded me glimpses of a hidden Maori world (Metge 2008: 2010).

In 1948 when I enrolled at Auckland University College, anthropology was on the books but not taught. Already committed to research on 'the Maori today', I enrolled in Geography, took it to Stage 3 and embarked on a Master of Arts (4 papers and a thesis) in 1952, the year Professor Piddington offered *Stage 1 Anthropology*. The Geography Department gave me a solid grounding in research method and critical thinking. My MA thesis charted changes in the distribution of the Maori population in northern New Zealand, collated data from 1926, 1936 and 1951 Censuses, the Annual Reports of the Department of Maori Affairs, and correspondence with some of its District Officers. I began my formal study of anthropology in 1952 while Junior Lecturer in Geography, bypassing Stage 1 to enrol in Stage 2. The Anthropology Department was small and under attack in Faculty from several older departments. When I enrolled, Professor Piddington warned me to think carefully before committing myself to anthropology because he could not guarantee any future employment in it.

*Anthropology 2* was solidly based on Piddington's own *Introduction to Social Anthropology* and an eclectic range of ethnographies from Africa, China, Melanesia, Polynesia, Ireland, and urban America.<sup>3</sup> A committed Malinowskian functionalist, Piddington emphasised participant observation as the anthropological method, identified social patterns by abstraction from field observations and discussed other theorists from his own standpoint. Now 22 years old

and accustomed to thinking for myself, I adopted these functionalist ideas that made sense to me (for example, the interconnection of all aspects of social life) and dismissed those that did not (e.g. societies as bounded organisms striving for equilibrium). Piddington prepared us well for fieldwork, emphasising the importance of treating one's hosts with respect and courtesy, and recording everything said or done, whether it seems relevant or not at the time.

In 1952 there were three Maori students at Auckland University. I taught Wiremu (Bill) Tawhai of Te Whanau a Apanui in *Geography 1*, and at the end of the year he arranged for me to visit the eastern Bay of Plenty. Staying with his parents (among others) was my real introduction to the Maori world. Wiremu remained a close friend and informant until his death in 2010; I am still in touch with his family. Maori Marsden of Te Aupouri resented and clashed with me whenever we met, until we finally made peace in the 1970s. I later recorded interviews with Maori which were published in the posthumous collection of his writings (Royal 2003: xxi–xxx).

Concerned at current perceptions of the so-called 'Maori urban drift', I took up a two year research fellowship at the beginning of 1953 and plunged immediately into fieldwork. I tried to do *Anthropology 3* at the same time, but dropped it when it proved impossible to do both. Professor Piddington obtained special permission for me to do research 'at home', and accepted the role of supervisor. His own research had been done among the Karadjeri of Western Australia; he had no experience of research in a modern city and mostly approved the decisions I made.

Starting work in the city itself seemed reasonable at the time; my income was limited, I had a base at my parents' home in Orakei, and a prime contact in the Auckland office of the Department of Maori Affairs, Housing Officer Paihana Taua of Ngati Kahu, who lived close to my parents. Paihana arranged my appointment as an honorary Maori Welfare Officer helping members of the newly established Maori Women's Welfare League with a housing survey in the central city. This meant visiting women in their homes with a League member and taking notes for her. I took the opportunity to explain my research plans and ask permission to return on my own account. A number of these initial contacts agreed and once they decided I was trustworthy referred me on to others.

For two years I travelled to and from the central city (and later suburbs) by bus and on foot, visiting a snowballing list of households and attending events at the Maori Community Centre and central city churches. In the process I

encountered responses ranging from diatribes against Pakeha snoopers and land-grabbers, to warm responses from women cooped up in crowded conditions with small children, responses which challenged me to continually reflect on what I was doing and why.

Realising that as a novice anthropologist, a Pakeha and a woman, the tapu areas of tikanga Maori were closed to me, I concentrated my attention on the migration process and its consequences, a subject I considered more urgent anyway. This had problems of its own, especially how to chart changes over time beyond the fieldwork term. Nobody in the Anthropology Department understood these problems. Instead I shared them with Paihana and his wife Bella, whom I visited regularly. I solved my main problem myself by gathering the residential, occupational, and social histories of family members; a variation of the life history popular in America.

In 1955, with the help of a Carnegie Social Science Research Fellowship, I did what I probably should have done in the first place – spent five months in a rural community seriously affected by out-migration. My entrée in to Kotare (as I called it) was facilitated by emigrants I knew in Auckland. I stayed in local homes, attended hui on local marae, and by immersion learnt more about the underpinnings of the Maori social order and the reasons for emigration than I had in two years in the city.

Early in 1955, I was invited to present my tentative conclusions about Maori urban migration at the annual meeting of the Maori Section of the National Council of Churches held on Otiria Marae in Northland. I was shaken to the core when Rev. Maharaia Winiata, recently returned from Edinburgh University with a PhD in social anthropology (Winiata 1967) attacked not only the content of my presentation, but my right to do the research at all, insisting that as a Pakeha I could never understand or accurately represent Maori culture. A kuia sitting behind me rose to my defence and others expressed sympathy: only later did I wonder if they were simply being kind to a manuhiri. Back in Auckland I spent two difficult hours with Maharaia exploring our differences. I emerged more convinced than ever of the need to bridge the gulf of misunderstanding between Maori and Pakeha.

Since it was not possible to do a doctorate in New Zealand at that time, I sailed for England in September 1955.<sup>4</sup> I spent two and a quarter years at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), turning my fieldnotes into a doctoral thesis under the supervision of Professor Raymond Firth. An expatriate New Zealander, he was the only one of my teachers with any knowledge of

the Maori. Attending seminars at LSE and other London colleges, I met most of the leading British anthropologists, added significant elements of British structural functionalism to my theoretical toolkit<sup>5</sup> and identified Max Gluckman, Mary Douglas and Victor Turner as innovators to watch.<sup>6</sup> As research assistant to Firth, I learnt invaluable lessons on referencing and indexing for publication.

When I arrived home early in 1958 with a PhD, there were no jobs in anthropology and no research monies available. I survived on casual research commissions from Professor Piddington until the Carnegie Foundation came to the rescue with a research scholarship.<sup>7</sup> For three years I struggled with doubts about the value of my work and the way ahead, filling gaps in earlier research, revising my thesis for publication (twice!), and exploring the organisation of marae and hui in the North Island.<sup>8</sup>

In 1961 I took the only job offering, Suburban Tutor-Organiser in Adult Education.<sup>9</sup> In this job half my time was spent in administration, the rest in teaching ten-week, non-examination courses on 'Maori society and culture' and assisting other staff members when asked. With a car at my disposal for the first time, I got my driving license at the age of 31. When a colleague died suddenly, I hastily boned up on sociology theory and took over his lectures in a social work diploma course. My lectures eventually morphed into cyclostyled 'box courses' posted out to rural discussion groups.

Work permitting, I attended seminars in the Anthropology Department but did not feel at home there: the research interests of the all-male staff were different from mine. I derived most enjoyment from working with the Maori Tutor-Organisers, Matiu Te Hau (Whakatohea) and Koro Dewes (Ngati Porou), giving lectures in rural centres and helping organize a dozen Young Maori Leaders Conferences.<sup>10</sup> Koro and I combined our classes on pioneering visits to Waikato marae. During these years I built up a network of Maori mentors and informants from a wide variety of iwi, a network which proved invaluable in later years. It included Maori scholars like Pei Te Hurinui Jones of Ngati Maniapoto and Wiremu Parker of Ngati Porou, an Adult Education Tutor based in Wellington.

My thesis was finally published jointly by London and Melbourne University Presses in 1964.<sup>11</sup> At the launch (generously funded by MUP), academics were outnumbered by representatives of the families who had participated in the research. The title, *A New Maori Migration*, reflected my conclusion that far from being a 'drift', Maori urban migration was purposive, adventurous, and characterised by the creative adaptation of traditional ways. In default of an-

thropological writings on urban migration, I referred to the works of American sociologists but found them of little help: the Auckland situation was much more positive and hopeful.

Though I enjoyed the community outreach aspect of adult education, I was frustrated at having no way of assessing the effectiveness of my teaching and accepted with alacrity the offer of a Senior Lectureship at Victoria University of Wellington. Fulfilling the brief I was given, Wiremu Parker (on secondment from Adult Education) and I jointly planned and taught beginning courses in Maori Studies in 1965. Over the next few years I finished turning my adult education lectures into an introductory text<sup>12</sup> and did some teaching in Maori Studies when invited by Senior Lecturer, Koro Dewes.

Anthropology at Victoria University of Wellington finally got under way when inaugural Professor Jan Pouwer started teaching *Anthropology 1* in 1967. For two years Jan did most of the lecturing himself, trusting me only with tutorials and occasional lectures. The many students who had been awaiting the advent of anthropology found his Continental structuralism novel and exciting, but I struggled to understand his radically different theoretical approach and vocabulary. Reading the works of Claude Levi-Strauss (whom Jan frequently quoted) only compounded my difficulties until I looked up key passages in the original French and realized the Levi-Strauss and Jan used the word 'structure' to refer to the structuring capacity of the human mind, not social structure. After this breakthrough I developed my own adaptation of some of Levi-Strauss' central ideas, notably those of opposition, mediation, transformation and paradigmatic structures.

But I was angered by Levi-Strauss' arrogant assumption that only the expert, anthropological outsider could uncover a society's deep paradigmatic structure. The way his structural analysis of myth caused the tellers of myths to disappear stimulated me to explore the process of storytelling with living Maori mentors. My first paper on the subject was called *Myths are for Telling*.<sup>13</sup> In time I came to be profoundly grateful to Jan Pouwer for enlarging my theoretical understanding and found satisfaction in developing third year courses on *Anthropology in Complex Societies* and *Contemporary Maori Society and Culture*. Jan returned to the Netherlands in 1976 and was succeeded by Professor Ann Chowning, with whom I enjoyed team teaching and an eclectic approach to anthropological theory.

Through the 1960s and 70s I maintained close relations with Maori mentors and informants outside the Anthropology Department and in and outside

Wellington. In particular, Wiremu Parker and Tawhao Tioke of Tuhoē generously shared their knowledge of Maori values, tikanga and rongoa with me and encouraged me to add chapters on these topics to *The Maoris of New Zealand: Rautahi*.<sup>14</sup> Reflection on 20 years of fieldwork, experiments with group interviews and the co-operation of colleague Patricia Kinloch (now Laining) came to fruition in a paper on cross-cultural miscommunication entitled *Talking Past Each Other* (1978). Presented in abbreviated form to a conference of preschool educators in 1978, this work aroused an unexpectedly warm response: members of the audience told us that it shed light on problems they had encountered but could not explain. Published with the subtitle *Problems of cross-cultural communication*, this little work was – and is – widely used in education and social work schools, but not (to my knowledge) in anthropology departments.

The 1970s and 80s saw marked changes in the climate of Maori-Pakeha relations as young Maori activists joined forces with leading kaumatua to seek reparation for breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi and restoration of tino rangatira. Awarded a Captain James Cook Fellowship in 1981 for research on the contemporary whanau, I tried to set up a committee of Maori mentors to direct and supervise my work, but those I approached said they were too busy but would like to hear how it was going. Once again, I had to do the best I could on my own. My freedom of movement in the field was constrained by the care of my widowed father, who was disabled by arthritis. I took him with me on two trips to Kotare, a move which increased my mana in that community, but as his condition worsened I worked mainly from his Auckland home as a base. Finding that research on the whanau necessarily included Maori methods of learning and teaching, I conducted numerous in-depth interviews on both topics at once, replacing notebook and pencil with reel tape-recorder and transcribing machine, and paid frequent visits to Hoani Waititi Marae in West Auckland.

My research was into its second year when I was confronted by a leading Maori activist who accused me of advancing my academic career, making pots of money and giving nothing back by manipulating and exploiting ‘unsophisticated Maori.’<sup>15</sup> Wounded, I retreated to Hoani Waititi Marae where the core whanau (headed by Pita Sharples) took time off to awhi me, amused at being labeled unsophisticated and exploitable. Several years later, when some of this research was published in *In and Out of Touch: Whakamaa in cross-cultural context* (1986), I received a phone call from a woman who challenged my right to discuss the subject. When I told her that her own uncle had set aside three hours to go through the draft text with me when he knew he was dying, the

line fell silent.

At the end of 1987 I took early retirement from Victoria University, bought me a cottage in Kotare and began attending meetings of Te Runanga o Te Rarawa and Te Runanga o Muriwhenua which the five Far North iwi had set up to pursue fishing and land claims with the Waitangi Tribunal. In 1991 I prepared a submission I hoped to present as an expert witness for the Tribunal itself. The Chief Judge ruled that I was too closely associated with Te Rarawa and it was presented as part of the Muriwhenua case instead. I had more than one tussle with the Muriwhenua lawyer when he wanted me to omit evidence that did not fit the case he was arguing. When this submission was scheduled to be presented at a Tribunal hearing in Kaitaia, it was rumoured that a local activist was planning to challenge my right to speak. Kotare kaumatua Haimona Snowden pre-empted the threat by telling the story of my association with Te Rarawa and announcing that Kotare kaumatua had read and approved the text (Metge 1998).

#### CONCLUSION

My experience of working as an anthropologist in New Zealand differed in significant ways from that of anthropologists trained in overseas universities at the same time. I chose to work at home in my own country, in the heart of a modern city with people in the throes of dramatic change; after minimal theoretical training I ventured into real and theoretical territory unfamiliar to my teachers. I saw it as my task to learn as much about Maori lifeways and to share that knowledge with other Pakeha, with the aim of raising their awareness and hopefully their understanding of Maori experiences and aspirations. I wove together theories from different sources chosen for their usefulness to that end.

For me, Maori were never the exotic Other. They were part of the world I inhabited as I grew up, living in general in the margins of the local communities where I lived with my family, known increasingly as personal friends and colleagues. For me fieldwork was at once a way of exploring an important part of my identity as a New Zealander and a way of helping build a fairer and more inclusive society. My fieldwork experience continually challenged me to reflect on my own beliefs and goals. I learnt to recognise the extent of the differences between Maori and Pakeha, but also the similarities and connections. And I came to recognise the impossibility of studying Maori in isolation and focused instead on the interaction, communication and miscommunication between Maori and non-Maori, individually and as groups.

When you live in the same, small national society, as I did and do, access to informants and co-workers who are also friends is relatively easy: it is also continuous, reciprocal and demanding of time and energy. In a real sense I have never left the field. The opposition and challenges I faced from a few Maori were more than outweighed by the co-operation and aroha of the many. The more I have listened and learnt, the more I have come to understand the anger and appreciate the patience and graciousness of the majority.

From the beginning I received more support and guidance from Maori mentors than I found among anthropologists. Sadly, part of my experience has been a disjunction between the Maori world in which I continue to move and the world of anthropological academia. There are valid reasons for this, some arising from the circumstances of the time, and some that were my own fault for not trying harder to bridge that particular gulf. It was my choice to write for a general rather than an anthropological audience. I can hardly complain if anthropologists find my work thin on theory because it is so deeply buried. I am, however, greatly reassured and heartened by what succeeding generations have done and are doing to tackle the problems I faced.

#### NOTES

- 1 Diamond Jenness 18??–1960; MA (UNZ) 1908, DipAnth (Oxford); fieldwork: Inuit; Chief Anthropologist National Museum of Canada.  
Reo Fortune 1903–79; MA (UNZ) 1927, DipAnth (Cambridge) 1927; *The Sorcerers of Dobu* 1932; lecturer, Cambridge University.
- 2 Raymond Firth 1901–2000; MA (UNZ) 1922, PhD (London) 1927; Professor, London School of Economics; *Economics of the New Zealand Maori* 1929, 1959.  
Te Rangi Hiroa (Peter Buck) 1877–1951; Ngati Mutunga; Visiting Professor, Yale, Director, Bishop Museum, Honolulu; *The Coming of the Maori* 1949.  
Harry Hawthorn PhD (Princeton); Professor, University of British Columbia; *The Maori: A Study in Acculturation* 1944.  
Cyril Belshaw 1921–; MA (UNZ) 1945, PhD (London) 1949; Professor, University of British Columbia; Melanesia, economic anthropology.  
Derek Freeman MA (UNZ), DipAnth (LSE) 1948, PhD (Cambridge) 1953; Professor, ANU.; Samoa, Sarawak, Borneo.  
Catherine Berndt 1918–; BA (UNZ) 1939, DipAnth (Sydney) 1954, PhD (London) 1955; lecturer, University of Western Australia; field: Aboriginal Australia.  
Ernest Beaglehole MA (UNZ) 1939, PhD (London) 1935; Professor of Psychology, Victoria University of Wellington 1948–65; *Islands of Danger* (Pukapuka) 1944, *Some Modern Maoris* (with Pearl Beaglehole) 1946.

- 3 Piddington 1950. Parts of Vol. II (published 1957) were available to us in cyclo-styled form.
- 4 New Zealand universities rarely had the staff to supervise doctoral students and assumed that overseas universities were superior. I spent 30 days on SS Rangitane catching up on the anthropology classics I had not read. Money was a worry as usual. I had secured a one-year Emslie Horniman Anthropological Studentship from Britain before I left, but was very relieved to receive a cable at sea announcing award of another one-year fellowship by the New Zealand Federation of University Women.
- 5 The most useful were Firth's pairing of 'social structure' with 'social organisation' (which recognised process and the possibility of change) and the distinction between ego-oriented kinship and ancestor-oriented descent and descent groups. Webster's allegation that I 'discovered' and later abandoned 'kindreds' functionally replacing or cross-cutting more traditional local descent-groups' (Webster 1998: 129, 131, 135) is based on a misunderstanding of my definition and use of the term 'kindred', probably because of a difference between British and American usage. In *A New Maori Migration* I made a clear distinction between the 'personal kindred' – (defined as the circle of kin recognised by each individual or *Ego*' (Metge 1964: 46–48), and *iwi*, *hapu* and 'family', which I discussed under the heading 'Descent-Groups' (ibid: 55–71). In *The Maoris of New Zealand* I dropped the word 'kindred' (having discovered it had another meaning for Americans) in favour of 'kinship universe', defined as 'a circle of cognatic and affinal kin centred on and differing with each individual EGO' (Metge 1967: 111–112), and discussed the tribe, *hapu* and 'large-family' under the heading 'Descent-Groups', maintaining the same distinction. I neither 'discovered' nor abandoned the concept of 'kindred' as I defined it.
- 6 Max Gluckman and Victor Turner were among the first to acknowledge the colonial context of their ethnographies.
- 7 After World War II the Carnegie Foundation of the USA provided finance for a limited term only to help other countries establish their social sciences.
- 8 Research done at this time appears in the chapters on 'The Marae' and 'The Hui' in *The Maoris of New Zealand* (1967: 173–201), and its revised edition (1976: 227–64).
- 9 The Adult Education Centre was administered jointly by Auckland University and the Workers' Educational Association until 1962 when the University assumed full responsibility for it as the Department of University Extension (later

renamed Continuing Education). Tutor-Organisers in University Extension ranked below lecturers in other departments, with lower salaries.

- 10 Young Maori Leaders Conferences were organised by University Extension jointly with Maori rural communities. Other university staff members were recruited as rapporteurs from English (e.g. Bill Pearson), Psychology, Political Studies and Anthropology (Jeremy Beckett).
- 11 Publication of *A New Maori Migration* was subsidised by London University and the Maori Purposes Fund Board; there were no royalties. Oxford publishers Berg recently issued a facsimile edition without my knowledge.
- 12 Victoria University of Wellington approved an Anthropology Department including the teaching of Maori in the early 1960s. The first Professor appointed withdrew and the position was re-advertised. The University Council decided to proceed with Maori Studies without waiting for a Professor. I refused an offer of a Senior Lectureship in Maori Studies, but accepted one in anthropology with temporary responsibility for establishing the teaching of Maori Studies. Professor Ernest Beaglehole of the Psychology Department was appointed Acting Head of Anthropology. I worked with him getting Faculty approval for Anthropology and Maori Studies papers, and after his death in 1965 became Acting Head until Professor Pouwer (former government anthropologist in Western Papua) arrived in 1966.
- 13 First delivered at Cambridge University in 1971, this paper was revised and published as *Time and the Art of Maori Storytelling* (Metge 2010: 29–40).
- 14 The first edition of *The Maoris of New Zealand* was commissioned by British publisher, Routledge and Kegan Paul, for their series *Peoples of the World*, with a 40,000 word limit. Despite deficiencies it sold well enough for the publisher to publish a greatly amplified and revised edition with the sub-title *Rautahi* and photographs by John Miller (Ngati Hine) in 1976. Routledge published a facsimile edition in 2004.
- 15 I felt this was unfair. From the beginning I made it a rule to work only with willing subjects and under the sponsorship of local kaumātua. My teaching and writing was based on the information and understandings gifted to me by Maori in order to be passed on – not ‘invented’. The royalties of my books are returned to source for Maori purposes through the Kotare Trust established in 1974.

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## A THORN BETWEEN TWO ROSES

Jeffrey Sissons

As a student of Joan Metge's at Victoria University between 1971 and 1975, I took her third-year course on *Contemporary Maori Society* and her Honours course on *Inter-group Relations*. I also tutored for her third-year course and initially went to Waimana, the site of my PhD research, as her and John Young's research assistant. John was at the Industrial Relations Centre and my research was a labour survey that would be used to attract a shoe factory to Waimana. In 1977 I left 'home' and enrolled as a doctoral student at Auckland University, where Anne Salmond became my primary supervisor.

Neither Joan Metge nor Anne Salmond pursued a strongly theoretical anthropology of Maori society – Joan, as she has just pointed out, chose to write for a general audience rather than an anthropological one and Anne once advised me that Maori should not become 'grist for my anthropological mill'. While I appreciate the value of Joan's and Anne's more public anthropology, I developed a strong and enduring interest in social theory encouraged initially by Jan Pouwer at Victoria University and developed in debates with fellow Ph.D. students at Auckland University, especially Keith Barber, Tom Ryan and Mike Goldsmith – all of whom are now at Waikato. In fact, I now think that Anne chose as her metaphor the wrong stage of the bread-making process. Anthropological theory is not the mill that grinds the flour, but the yeast which raises the bread. Anthropology without theory, and the comparative dimension that this brings, is to me as flat as unleavened bread.

I won't bore you with a history of my yeasty obsessions, you'll no doubt be pleased to hear. These days I'm a reluctant Bourdieuiian – reluctant, because

although his theoretical approach is relatively undeveloped as a comparative and historical framework for anthropologists, there have been few, if any, significant advances in anthropological theory since his giant strides away from the anthropology of Levi-Strauss. Anthropology is, at heart, a comparative discipline – the comparative science of cultural phenomena – and Bourdieu's work, especially his emphasis on improvisation, can serve as a useful guide for this endeavour.

The beginning of my doctoral research on the history of Waimana, a Tuhoe community near Opotiki, coincided with the occupation of Bastion Point and the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979). The completion of my research, in 1984, coincided with the election of a Labour Government and the publication of Donna Awatere's *Maori Sovereignty* (1984). Additionally, the powers of the Waitangi Tribunal were extended in 1985 to include retrospective claims back to 1840. In between, I attended a NZASA conference at Auckland University (1983, I think) at which Atareta Poananga strongly warned anthropologists to stay well clear of Maori – Maori should not be specimens under an anthropological microscope, nor (she might have added), grist for anthropological mills. I think I was the only person in the room actually doing fieldwork in a Maori community at the time, but fortunately Atareta didn't know this. I wasn't confident enough at the time to defend myself and so remained quiet, half-hidden by the large frame of Prof. Ralph Bulmer.

Local sovereignty politics and the wider 'crisis of representation' debates stimulated by Said (via Foucault) had a powerful influence on the directions I took after quietly completing my Ph.D. Between finishing my thesis and taking up a lecturing job at Otago University in 1985, I became a collaborative historian – writing, with Wiremu Wi Hongi and Patu Hohepa, a book on Nga Puhī traditions. This was one way to respond to Atareta Poananga's criticisms – especially as she was Patu Hohepa's partner at the time.

I developed two further responses after moving to Dunedin. One was to anthropologically relocate to Rarotonga, a place where the climate was much warmer than Dunedin's, and where the identity politics were a little cooler – although not much. The most significant result of this move was a book on culture and national identity, *Nation and Destination* (1999). In retrospect I can see how I should have developed a more explicit comparison with the Maori renaissance, making it a stronger work, anthropologically. My second Dunedin response was to switch from a study of Maori society to a study of what was termed at the time 'ethnic politics' – Maori-state relations into which I stirred a little bit of Habermas. By the mid-1990s, however, 'ethnic politics' would

become the politics of ‘indigeneity’ (I first came across this term in 1994). Whereas in the field of ethnic politics the anthropologist became a sort of sociologist and could maintain a certain theoretical distance, in the politics of indigeneity there could be no neutral position for an anthropologist. I sought to clarify and develop my own political and intellectual position through a comparative discussion of indigenous issues in my book, *First Peoples: Indigenous Cultures and their Futures* (2005).

The fundamental importance of a comparative vision for anthropology was most recently brought home to me when I dug out my old Waimana field-notes and re-read them for the first time in more than 20 years. I had just completed an article about the construction of churches in Rarotonga and had recently returned to Waimana to present evidence in a local meetinghouse for the Tuhoe claim before the Waitangi tribunal. I was struck by the similarities in the way churches and meetinghouses had participated in a radical re-organization of social life. I subsequently discovered an enlightening comparative and theoretical literature on ‘house societies’, a term introduced by Levi-Strauss; these are societies structured not in terms of descent but through attachments to ‘houses’.

Suddenly Te Waimana and rural Maori society in general appeared in an entirely new light. Perhaps I should have sent drafts of the resulting article (Sissons 2010) to Joan Metge and Steve Webster, since it is critical of their work, but I didn’t. After reading the published article, Joan wrote to me to say that, despite the criticisms, she enjoyed it – fears of ancestral wrath were unfounded in this case. Steve, on the other hand, chose to critique my views, firstly, at the 2010 ASAANZ conference (the one at which this address was delivered) and subsequently in a reply published in *JRAI* (Webster 2011; Sissons 2011). I found the theoretical engagement over the comparative value of the concepts of ‘houses’ and ‘cognatic descent groups’ exciting and thought-provoking; moreover, local differences of opinion had now taken on a wider disciplinary significance. And, I might add, this was not a debate over the quality of different grind-stones but over the value of different yeasts. And talking of yeasts, I cannot resist noting that Steve produces an excellent feijoa wine, a bottle of which we shared after his critique of my article at the 2010 conference.

Let me briefly conclude with a comment on where I think the anthropological study of Maori culture might most productively develop. I think that there is now an urgent need to move away from the binary of indigeneity and to look more broadly at Maori cultural history. In particular, a cultural history of Maori urban migration would be especially rewarding. This could poten-

tially address a huge range of issues – changing gender relations (Bourdieu has described these in relation to urbanisation in his last major work, *The Bachelor's Ball*), class and urban culture, changing urban-rural relations. And, fortunately, there is a book, published in 1964 that might serve as the perfect point of departure for such a study. This is, of course, Joan Metge's, *A New Maori Migration: Rural and Urban Relations in Northern New Zealand*. A book that, I now see, was written a whole generation before its time.

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## KA HAO TE RANGATAHI – PAYING IT FORWARD<sup>1</sup>

Lily George

### INTRODUCTION

It is a great privilege to be here with you all today and most especially, to be sharing the podium with two such illustrious anthropologists, and people I have admired from the beginnings of my career. Nga mihi mahana, nga mihi aroha, kia korua. It is truly an honour to count you among those who populate my whakapapa as an anthropologist in Aotearoa New Zealand, and of the world.

Professor Sir Mason Durie has said ‘The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create’ (2009:14). So some of the questions I want to articulate today are these – what kind of future are we helping to create? What kind of succession planning are we engaging in to ensure that the next generations of anthropologists have the theoretical, disciplinary and practical freedoms to enable them to be the best anthropologists they can be? And what are we doing to ‘pay forward’ the support and guidance that we may have received over our own careers? These may seem like impertinent questions to those of you who do so much to support the younger generations, but perhaps it is worthwhile revisiting these questions at this time.

Today I want to talk a bit about my journey as a Maori woman in Aotearoa, and my journey as an indigenous anthropologist. Each is integrally entwined with the other, and forms a great part of my current identity. But each of these journeys has been fraught with difficulty and challenge. By attempting to understand these journeys in their intersections and divergences however, I can develop an understanding of where I may go into the future. This of course, is one of the functions of whakapapa.

### JOURNEYS OF THE ‘OTHER’ [THE ACCIDENTAL ANTHROPOLOGIST<sup>2</sup>]

I came to anthropology a bit by accident really, although perhaps it was destiny. I have heard it said that anthropologists are born, not made. When I began university in 1995, it was with the goal of becoming a social worker working with abused children. But in my first year I did an anthropology paper as an elective and became hooked. I was amazed to learn just how much culture shapes who we are, and therefore just how important it is. I will be forever grateful to Eleanor Rimoldi, Graeme Macrae and Kathryn Rountree for ignit-

ing within me a passion for anthropology, culture and people.

I come from a background of cultural disconnection however, so a concurrent learning process occurred for me. As I learned the theoretical bases of culture, I also learned the internal workings of the culture that was my ancestral heritage through the whakapapa of my mother, and her father. I was raised in the Bay of Islands, near important sites such as Kororareka where the first capital of Aotearoa was situated, and Tapeka where Hone Heke cut down the flag-post four times in order to express his post-Treaty dissatisfaction. The history of Te Kapotai, Ngati Hine and Ngapuhi is rich in the telling of events and people, both ordinary and extraordinary, and is a history I claim as part of my own. However, it was a history that I knew very little of until the last 15 years.

As a young child in the 1960s, life was lived among the expansive surroundings of extended family. We as children had little knowledge of ourselves as Te Kapotai or Ngapuhi, or as Maori either. Nor were we acutely aware of the Pakeha side of our whakapapa. We were just children; connected to the people around us by birth and blood, and connected to the physical environment by our frequent excursions over it. The world we knew was extremely contained, defined mostly by our relationships with a very limited number of people and places. Although it seemed that most of our life consisted of fun and frolic, external events nevertheless were having a significant impact on our lives. Our community was quite isolated with the outside world infrequently seen, yet our lives were being directed by external forces that went a long way towards determining the continued confinement of our thoughts, our lives, and our culture.

For example, although there was a marae several paddocks walk from our home, our parents and grandparents kept us away from there as much as possible. My mother's generation suffered from 'the strap' at the local Native School, a huge deterrent on the acculturation of the next generation into Te Ao Maori. So we grew knowing little of marae protocols, knew even less of our tupuna, and perceived te reo Maori as something the adults spoke around us when they wanted to speak privately. Therefore we knew very little of the rich heritage that was ours to claim.

For most of my life then, I inhabited the conflicted terrain between worlds and cultures (Ramsden, 1993). The depth of Te Ao Maori was a mystery that filled me with trepidation upon entering its borders, rather than succouring and supporting. I and my cousins found it easier to sneak into the back of the wharekai and join in the endless washing of dishes, rather than enter the hallowed lintels

of the whare tupuna. We belonged to our whanau, to our hapu, to our people, yet the messages given directly and indirectly to us were that we didn't belong, we couldn't belong, because that wasn't in our best interests.

#### EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS

In 1995, I knew I was Maori; in fact that was the only way I identified myself although the other half of my whakapapa comes from America, Germany and Norway. As an undergraduate student I learned of colonisation, how Maori had suffered so much from what happened way back then. I learned of how much we had lost and how Maori had become victims of colonisation, which was reflected in the high incidence of negative social statistics. I learned a lot about who we were as the 'brown underclass'; the disadvantaged of Aotearoa New Zealand society.

Of course this made sense to me, and I identified strongly with what I was learning as this related to my childhood and some of the difficult experiences I have had. By contrast, I was learning an idealistic and romanticised view of Maori culture at university. I believe this was necessary however, and Maori culture stood out as a beacon of beauty and hope at a time when the story many of us were coming to know and pass on, caused us so much pain. As my understanding grew, it gave the vague ghosts of the past shape, boundaries, and names. I was able to map them historically, intellectually, and emotionally, and see where their path would have led me to in the future. Now however, I was able to see alternative paths and new ways of being.

So at this point I was strongly Maori, becoming very politicized, somewhat angry, connected to a culture that still scared me because of thoughts of [in] authenticity. The latter was also affirmed by challenges I had from other Maori that I wasn't really one of them because I didn't know tikanga or te reo – I was a 'born-again Maori'. Coupled with many incidences of prejudice encountered, the pressures were both internal and external, and therefore I continued to experience identity conflict. What was needed was something to give meaning to the future in a present that was uncertain and insecure – not just for Maori, but for our nation as a whole.

#### AWATAHA MARAE AND CULTURAL RECLAMATION

My doctoral research was with the people of Awataha Marae in Northcote, Auckland, and I began my association with the community in 1997. Here I met kaumatua and kuia who very generously began to teach me the deeper and yet

practical facets of Maori culture that I had previously missed. Arnold and Rangitiinia Wilson in particular, became teachers, mentors, and role models. Arnold was a great storyteller, and often responded to my questions with stories from his own experience, or the exploits of his or our shared ancestors. Being culturally disconnected and then entering the academic world of objectivity and a factual search for truth, at first I could not understand the purpose of those stories. When one day my confusion won out over my patience, I asked ‘Why do you not tell me the answers to my questions?’ Arnold smiled and said ‘girl, who am I to take away your learning?’

Rangitiinia too, shared her wisdom freely. On one occasion I sat with her for over an hour, telling her what I’d learned about colonisation and what it had done to our people and others around the world. She listened patiently, acknowledging the pain and anger I expressed, then when I finally finished my story, she replied with – ‘That’s all very well dear, but what do we do now? How do we now take responsibility for ourselves?’ Those questions pointed me towards the future, to my own part in it and how I could contribute to the positive development of Maori society. From their examples, I was able to see that growth was very possible, but that it took vision, hard work and commitment in often very challenging circumstances.

As I worked, lived and researched within the Awataha community, they showed me that it was now time to celebrate what we as a people still have, instead of just mourning what we have lost. There have been many incorporations of Pakeha culture and ideas that caused change within Maori culture—some of these were willing, most were not. But through it all, much of traditional Maori culture has survived, transformed and innovated to fit the changing society around it—as a part of that society. Marae such as Awataha provide a space in which Maori culture can be maintained, reclaimed, innovated, and importantly – shared.

#### ANTHROPOLOGICAL JOURNEYS

Anthropology has a whakapapa in Aotearoa which leads back to those such as Apirana Ngata and Peter Buck, who were two of our most significant Maori leaders of the twentieth century. They both grew up in a rapidly altering social and cultural landscape, and their time at Te Aute College had a great influence on these men who were part of a new generation who sought education in the mainstream society as well as Maori society. Apirana Ngata passed the university matriculation exam in 1890, at which time his elders insisted on his return to his tribal roots in order to consolidate his cultural learning before leaving

for Canterbury University. He and Buck went on to achieve multiple degrees.

Buck was also New Zealand's first professional Maori anthropologist. Both Ngata and Buck came to be influenced heavily by international ethnologists they met, and Ngata's 1928 appointment as Native Minister, gave him 'a long awaited opportunity to put anthropology into action' (Sorrenson, 1982: 8). Over his time, Ngata created land development schemes, assisted in the building of 28 tribal meeting houses, and gathered a wealth of material in a cultural renaissance with practical outcomes. Sorrenson (1982) considered that Buck and Ngata launched 'the most substantial experiment in applied anthropology, as perceived by its two home-made Maori anthropologists, that New Zealand has ever seen' (p. 23). This was perhaps one of the first times in Te Ao Hou (the New World), that Maori had been able to bring together research and development for the betterment of Maori people and society.

As Dame Joan has mentioned, Ralph Piddington established the first department of anthropology in New Zealand at Auckland University, and it was from there that the first Maori Studies department arose in the 1950s (Henare, 2007). Some of our most prominent Maori scholars to train in anthropology in the mid to late 20th century were Bruce Biggs, Hirini Mead, Hugh Kawharu, Nga-huia Te Awekotuku, Pare Hopa, Pat Hohepa, Pita Sharples, Ranginui Walker and Robert Mahuta. But as time passed, many of those were not keen on acknowledging their anthropological beginnings.

From the late 1960s and in reflection of worldwide protests by indigenous and other marginalised peoples, Maori in Aotearoa New Zealand also highlighted continued injustices. In terms of research, Maori protests precluded non-Maori participation in research with Maori. Condemnation and exclusion of foreign and Pakeha scholars including anthropologists became increasingly the norm (Webster, 1998b), with a deeper scrutiny of past commentaries of Maori culture and society for their contribution to the lingering effects of colonization (Salmond, 1984).

This was not helped by Alan Hanson's 1989 article on the supposed invention of Maori culture. Hanson proposed two 'distinct forms' in which Maori culture was *invented* by 'anthropological interpretations and misinterpretations ... contributions of other scholars, government officials, and Maoris themselves (including some Maori anthropologists)' (Hanson, 1989: 890). At a time when race relations in Aotearoa New Zealand were hotly contested, this created considerable anger amongst Maori. A *New York Times* article covering the debate caused by Hanson, recognized Maori anger, while considering that the contro-

versy was striking ‘at the very heart of anthropology’ (cited in Linnekin, 1991: 447). As noted by Hal Levine (1991):

By using the logic of a ‘strong’ version of the invention paradigm, it seems possible to now draw the puzzling conclusion that anthropology is inventing, not only Maori culture, but the backlash against it. (p.446)

It is amazing that Hanson could not at the time perceive that his critique of Maori ‘cultural invention’ would be incredibly insulting and hurtful to Maori and other indigenous peoples. Our work as anthropologists is about people, and the many facets of their lives in relationships with themselves and others, and the institutions within their societies. Our work is also about our lives, and our relationships with others, including those we research with. The prevalence of the cultural invention theory in the 1980s and 1990s is perhaps an example of the danger of ‘premature foreclosure’ in an ‘experimental moment’ (Marcus & Fischer, 1986: 41), whereby theories themselves become reified and objectified models embraced by academic mimics. Engari – he aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.<sup>3</sup>

#### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As an indigenous anthropologist I cannot escape the obligations and responsibilities of fieldwork with my own people. There is no ‘other’ in indigenous anthropology, although we are the traditional ‘other’ that many anthropologists from the early days of the discipline sought in new and exotic places. Just as ‘Maori’ can be translated as ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’, for indigenous anthropologists, those we research with are ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’. Yet in the process of our task, we find the extraordinary in the ordinary, and ‘being native’ can be seen as a positive factor when working with one’s own people. ‘Going native’ (i.e. being personally committed to the goals and aspirations of the community) is often a necessary part of the rules of engagement in the construction of an anthropology that is ‘a model for critical engagement *with* the world, rather than a distanced and magisterial explanation *of* the world’ (Herzfeld, in Knauff, 2006: 413; my emphasis).

Today however, very little social anthropology by and about Maori now occurs, even though research ‘with Maori by Maori for Maori’ (see Tuhiwai Smith, 1999) has increased exponentially. Kaupapa Maori theory and methodologies signalled the strong desire of Maori to develop research in ways that make sense to us. But the separation of Maori Studies from the discipline of anthro-

pology during the latter Maori Renaissance has meant that there are few Maori employed in our anthropology departments, for example (Henare, 2007).

There have also been many times as a student and a practicing anthropologist, when I have had to justify and defend my choice of discipline to Maori and other indigenous people. My search for Maori leadership within anthropology and pathways to follow has entailed a search of non-Maori ethnographies and scholarship, rather than the immediacy of leaders who are 'firmly within the group', identifiable and accessible (Reeves, n.d. para 18). While the research projects I've been involved in have helped me to know who I am and where I stand, they have at times also highlighted the loneliness of the space within which I stand.

But what I know now is that there are many anthropological heroes populating my anthropological whakapapa – Maori and non-Maori. *Ka pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi* – the old net is set aside while the new net goes fishing. This whakatauki signifies what can be known as 'succession planning' today, when knowledge is passed from one generation to the other in a judicious manner. The 'old nets' (past generations) are not simply cast aside in a belief that they have outlived their usefulness however; rather, they provide the guidance of achieved experience and connections to the wisdoms of old. So there is much wisdom to draw from, and to take what we have learned and pay it forward to the next generations, anthropological and otherwise.

Durie (n.d.) writes of the common view of leadership in Maori society as 'essentially confrontational', a 'defensive leadership' model where focus and energy was trained towards protecting a slice of ground, or as in the old days, literally 'defending the paa' (para. 2). It was a model of some necessity in the past where Maori were fighting to reclaim those slices of ground lost during colonisation. It was probably also necessary in the 1980s and 90s to pull away, in order to regroup and rebuild in an academic sense. But what Durie also says, is that in the contemporary world 'the goal is not to put up the palisades but to open doorways' (n.d., para. 10). By being open, innovative and 'real', we can take advantage of a variety of opportunities that arise from working collaboratively. I know now that the time to just defend is past, and the time to encourage growth is here. Imagine what we can learn by supporting each other; imagine what we can understand, by talking to (instead of past) each other.

## CONCLUSION

A few years ago I was walking on the beach with my young niece and she was

having fun walking in the footprints I left on the sand. She said to me—‘look Aunty, I’m following in your footsteps!’ That earned her a gentle lecture on the importance of finding her own path rather than just following someone else’s. I still believe that is important, yet I know also that while my path is unique, the foundations were laid many generations ago by my ancestors. I add to those foundations in the work I do, the way I live my life, and so on.

So where do we (as anthropologists in Aotearoa/New Zealand) go from here? How do we create an anthropology in which we are free to work together without uneasiness? How do we trust, and ensure that we no longer ‘talk past each other’ (see Metge & Kinloch, 1978)? How do we ‘pay forward’ the support and nurturing that some of us have been fortunate to receive? I don’t have the answers (although I have some), but I’m willing to talk and listen and learn, and consciously create.

At the beginning of the 21st century, it seems to me that the burgeoning of Maori research from within a Maori cultural paradigm, enables an anthropology that can be innovated to suit Maori and indigenous needs, despite the negative reputation anthropology has had in the past. Anthropology provides advantages as a research paradigm in the methods such as fieldwork and participant observation – methods that can parallel those of kaupapa Maori research – and in the huge body of literature (ethnography) that can be drawn from. Its international and comparative perspectives can contribute to contextualising Maori within the wider world, and in connection to other peoples – te iwi whanui. By having our ‘backs to the future and [our] eyes firmly on the past’ (Williams, 1990:14), it is possible to weave together in creative and imaginative ways the whakapapa of all our ancestral heritages, and to create a future where research is no longer a ‘dirty word’ (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

#### NOTES

- 1 This presentation was drawn from my doctoral thesis, *Tradition, Invention and Innovation: Multiple Reflections of an Urban Marae* (2010), Massey University.
- 2 Borrowed from Michael Jackson’s 2006 book, ‘The accidental anthropologist: A memoir’.
- 3 Part of a whakatauki that translates as ‘What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.’

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