

Tikanga Tainui: Tikanga Whare Wānanga

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Abstract

This paper is a preliminary report on an ongoing research project begun in 1999. The project involves consultation with Waikato-Tainui, the *tangata whenua* of the Waikato region, about the construction of guidelines for University of Waikato staff (both Māori and non-Māori) who are involved in gatherings that call for adherence to Tainui protocols. Here, the emphasis is on guidelines for the conduct of *pōwhiri* (formal welcomes) on the University Marae.

Introduction

Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato (The University of Waikato) occupies a unique position in New Zealand as the only University with a Māori name – Waikato, the name of a place and a people – in its title and as the only university whose motto – *Ko te tangata* (The people) – is in the Māori language. It is, furthermore, the only New Zealand university to have all of the following: a pro-Vice Chancellor Māori position, a School dedicated to the advancement of Māori and Pacific interests (*Pua Wānanga ki te Ao*/ School of Māori and Pacific Development), an advisory body made up of representatives of local Māori people (*Te Rōpu Manukura*) and a Centre for Māori and Pacific Development research. In positioning itself in this way, the university has clearly signalled that it means to play a leading role in this country's approach to issues of citizenship and indigeneity. Associated with such a role are both benefits and responsibilities.

The University of Waikato is a place of higher learning, an institution which is involved in the preparation of New Zealanders for future leadership roles, and one which plays a part in the international arena. Of particular significance in relation to this research project is the fact that the University of Waikato has the capacity to affect attitudes not only towards the indigenous people of New Zealand, but also towards indigenous peoples more generally. Its behaviour as an institution in relation to the language, culture and cultural protocols of the indigenous people of the area in which it is located is, therefore, of very real significance. It is therefore important that the indigenous people of the area should play a role in assisting the university to act as

a model for other institutions which aim to demonstrate their respect for the indigenous people of the areas in which they are located and, in doing so, also to demonstrate that they can play an effective role as critic and conscience of society.

In order to assist the University of Waikato in this task, a number of *hui wānanga* have been held over a five year period. These *hui wānanga* have involved discussions among University of Waikato Māori staff and local *kaumātua* (elders) from Ngāti Wairere, Waikato-Maniapoto, and Tainui, the aim being to determine how the university can best demonstrate its commitment to the indigenous people of New Zealand and, in particular, to the indigenous people of the area on whose land the university is located. There is general agreement that this must involve ensuring that university protocols, when conducted within the traditional boundaries of Waikato-Tainui, are consistent with those of the Waikato-Tainui people. A first step in this process is to provide recommendations relating to the conduct of *pōwhiri* (formal welcomes) on the University Marae.

Tainui: A hospitable people

The significance of the region and its people is indicated in the following *pepeha* (tribal saying) whose significance has been stressed by those in attendance at the *hui wānanga*:

*Mōkau ki runga; Tāmaki ki raro, Mangatoatoa ki waenganui; Pare Hauraki;
Pare Waikato – Te Kaokaoroa o Pātetere ki Te Nehenehenui*
(Mōkau to the south; Tāmaki to the north; Mangatoatoa in the middle –
Waikato, Hauraki protections – the Kaokaoroa o Pātetere Range into the
Nehenehenui.)

When conducting *pōwhiri* within the traditional boundaries of the Waikato-Tainui people, the University of Waikato should adhere to Tainui protocols and give precedence to Waikato-Tainui people. In doing so, it will acknowledge the significance of locality to the indigenous people of New Zealand and also acknowledge the hospitality afforded to it by Waikato-Tainui people upon whose lands its buildings are located. Thus, several of those who attended the *hui wānanga* insisted on the significance of the following *pepeha*:

He iwi manaaki koutou Waikato
(Waikato, we are a hospitable people)

This *pepeha* has traversed generations, encouraging all descendants of Waikato people to maintain the tradition of generosity in our hosting of *manuwhiri* (visitors). The University of Waikato stands on Waikato-Tainui land. It is therefore the duty and responsibility of Waikato-Tainui people, in association with others in the university, to host *manuwhiri*. Staff, students and visitors (both Māori and non-Māori) who are not themselves Waikato-Tainui should acknowledge the fact that it is the duty and responsibility of Waikato-Tainui people, wherever possible, to lead *pōwhiri* conducted within their traditional boundaries and to ensure that their protocols (rather than those of indigenous people from other areas of New Zealand) are the ones that are adhered to.

Another *pepeha* to which attendants at the *hui wānanga* referred is:

Kotahi te kōwhao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro mā, te miro pango me te miro whero

(There is but one eye of the needle through which the white thread, the black thread and the red thread traverse)

This *pepeha* demonstrates the attitude of Waikato-Tainui people to the unification of peoples of all creeds and races, highlighting the fact that there are multiple pathways towards one goal. In achieving their goals, all of those associated with the University may pursue different pathways. However, so long as the University stands on Waikato-Tainui land, all of these pathways must include respect for the land, respect for the people who own the land and for their customs (for they are the *kaitiaki*/guardians of that land), respect for the traditions of the University itself, and respect for one another. Therein lies the foundation of that principle of partnership that is fundamental to the relationship between Waikato-Tainui and the University. Fundamental to that partnership are:

Te Miro Mā (non-Māori), *Te Miro Pango* (Māori in general) and *Te Miro Whero* (the *rangatira* – chiefs or leaders of Māoridom).

So far as *Te Miro Mā* is concerned, an important aspect of genuine partnership is a commitment to developing some familiarity with *te reo Māori* and *tikanga Māori* (Māori language and culture). University staff, led by senior management, should learn how to behave appropriately in contexts that require some knowledge and understanding of Waikato-Tainui language and culture. Only then can they be said to have genuine respect for the land upon which the University stands. In fact, if all staff and students were required to take at least one course in the area of Māori language and culture, the University could truly be said to be actively pursuing responsible partnership.

So far as *Te Miro Pango* is concerned, what is required is a commitment from Māori to work in partnership with non-Māori, acknowledging and respecting the fact that different cultures and traditions bring added value to the life of the University.

Te Miro Whero is fundamental to good governance. In leading their people, *rangatira* must bind the people together in a common purpose – *he ranga i te tira* (the binding of a group on a journey in pursuit of a common purpose). Where there is strong and compassionate leadership, people can work together to achieve the best for everyone.

Waikato-Tainui and responsibilities to the land

With the Raupatu Settlement on the 22nd May 1995, the lands on which the University of Waikato are situated were returned to Waikato-Tainui, making Waikato-Tainui the University's landlord. In terms of *Tikanga Tainui*, the University of Waikato is regarded as occupying an honoured place within the sphere of influence of Waikato-Tainui. Good landlords do not interfere in their tenants' business except to the extent of seeking to ensure that that which belongs to them – in this case, the land upon which university buildings stand – is treated with respect. As *tangata whenua*, Waikato-Tainui people regard it as their responsibility to advise the University of Waikato on those matters of moment in our relationship. This includes the responsibility that Waikato-Tainui has to advise the University about those aspects of *Tikanga Tainui/Tainui custom* (and its extension into *Tikanga Māori*) that impact on

the treatment of the land. This includes providing advice to *taurahere o ngā matāwaka*, that is, to those of Māori but non-Tainui descent who are stakeholders in the University whether as staff, students, members of Council, members of *Te Rōpu Manukura* or members of the many other groups associated with the University. One important aspect of respecting the land is ensuring that appropriate protocols are adhered to, including protocols relating to extending welcome and hospitality to *manuwhiri* (visitors).

Te Ao Hurihuri: The University Marae

The history of the University Marae demonstrates how easy it is to ‘talk past one another’ and yet mean well.

Staff and students of the Waikato Teachers’ Training College, which became the School of Education within the University of Waikato in 1991, agitated for a *marae* on the Training College grounds as a concrete indication of its commitment to things Māori. This would, they believed, ensure that there was a genuine, visible Māori presence, a gathering place for Māori associated with the Training College, a place where *tikanga Māori* would be adhered to at all times. The management of the Training College (subsequently the management of the University) wholeheartedly embraced the sincerely held views of the students. When the *Wharenui* (Meeting house) was completed, the Tainui Māori Trust Board was approached as *tangata whenua* to provide a name. Members of the Trust Board were somewhat taken aback. They did not respond. A second approach was made. Still they did not respond. In finally responding, the response was subtle, yet telling. Without explanation, they offered the name *Te Ao Hurihuri* (The Ever-changing World). The world had indeed changed. It had changed to such an extent that tribal Māori living within the traditional boundaries of another tribe had caused to be built an ancestral meeting-house in another’s ancestral territory. Not only that, but they had asked the *tangata whenua*, the only people with the right to build such a meeting-house in that area, to give the house a name believing that this was an honourable thing to do. In response to what they knew to be a genuine attempt to do the right thing, the Tainui Māori Trust Board not only provided a name, but also offered to conduct the appropriate opening ceremonials. Such a situation is unlikely to be repeated precisely because the University has provided staff and students with opportunities to become familiar with appropriate *tikanga*.

Tainui’s Protocol: Guidelines for conduct of *pōwhiri* on the University Marae

The basis of all well-intentioned human interaction is what Māori term ‘*manaakitanga*’, that is, demonstrating respect for all things (living, dead, non-human), nurturing relationships and treating the other with care. At the very heart of *manaakitanga* is *manaaki*, derived from *mana* and *aki*. ‘*Mana*’ refers to one’s power, influence, authority and control. To ‘*aki*’ is to encourage and to support, and at appropriate times to challenge! Thus, the term ‘*manaakitanga*’ which involves encouraging and supporting the *mana* of others irrespective of their status. At the base of this is *tikanga* – the correct and proper ways of behaving. Although *tikanga* is founded on centuries of practice, it is always flexible, it always returns to *manaakitanga*. Together, *tikanga* and *manaakitanga* underpin all Tainui-Waikato protocols which are manifest in all gatherings where Māori meet on Waikato-Tainui

land. All of Māoridom places great value on *manaakitanga* and on the hosting of *manuwhiri*.

With reference to all of those things discussed earlier, those present at the *hui wānanga* established the following guidelines for *pōwhiri* (formal welcomes) on the University Marae:

- *Pōwhiri* will be conducted following Tainui protocols.
- *Manuwhiri* will gather at the gate/in the nearby parking lot.
- Wherever possible, a steward from the host side shall liaise with visitors before the *pōwhiri* starts to ensure that Tainui protocols are clearly understood.
- Women play important roles within *Tikanga Tainui*.
- The first voice heard by the *manuwhiri* as they approach will be that of a woman in the *karanga* (wailing call of welcome performed solely by women).
- The language of the *karanga* will be Māori.
- Waikato-Tainui women as hosts will start and conclude the *karanga*. However, if no Waikato-Tainui women are present, Tainui would be grateful if these protocols were conducted by other capable women with appropriate expertise.
- Māori will be the language of ‘*mana*’ on the *marae-ātea* (the open courtyard in front of the *whareniui*).
- In approaching the marae, women of status among the *manuwhiri* will be at the forefront leading the approach. One of those women should respond appropriately with a *karanga* in Māori.
- The *manuwhiri* will come onto the *marae-ātea* and pause.
- Upon being invited to take their seats, those men of status taking part in the *whaikōrero* (speech-making protocols) will sit in the front row.
- Waikato-Tainui men as hosts will start and conclude the *whaikōrero* during a *pōwhiri*. If no Waikato-Tainui men are present, Tainui would be grateful if these protocols were conducted by other capable men with appropriate expertise.
- Provision for English-speaking visitors will be made through interpreters (if they are available) who will sit amongst the visitors; and provision will be made for English to be used, if necessary, following the *pōwhiri*.
- It is preferred that *waiata koroua* (traditional chants) are selected to be sung in support of speakers.
- Singers will sit following the song to allow the speaker to conclude.
- Upon the offering of a *koha* (donation), a female from the host side shall acknowledge this token with a *karanga* and the *koha* will be retrieved by a male from amongst the hosts.
- Speakers are encouraged to restrict their comments to the *kaupapa* (theme/topic) of the *hui* (gathering).
- If skilled exponents of the *wero* (challenge) are present and able, they are encouraged to participate in the *pōwhiri* as directed by the elders.
- Provision for women to speak will be made, as necessary, following the *pōwhiri*.
- Both men and women shall wear appropriate attire.

These protocols will be observed by Tainui members of staff. In the absence of such staff, the invitation has been extended to others who use the University Marae to consider these protocols as guides in their conducting of *hui* involving *pōwhiri* on the marae.

Further protocols involving *tangihanga* and other marae activities will be included in a future report. The advice offered to the University by Waikato-Tainui is provided in a spirit of partnership: the University community occupies an honoured place within our traditional sphere of influence.

Conclusion

The Founding Document of New Zealand, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi/ The Treaty of Waitangi* established a partnership between Māori and non-Māori in this country. Partnership involves mutual understanding. It therefore follows that everyone who lives in this country should have some understanding of things Māori. Given the fact that *Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato/ The University of Waikato* has clearly indicated its commitment to Treaty-based partnership, it is particularly important that its staff and students should lead the way in building that bicultural foundation which should underpin multi-cultural awareness in this country.

We have come a long way but there is still some way to go.

We at *Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato/ The University of Waikato* have an opportunity to make our university truly distinctive in line with our name, our motto and our *pao* (anthem):

*Ko Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato e tū nei
‘Ko te Tangata’ te tohu
Tihei mauri ora!
Waikato te iwi; Waikato te awa;
Taupiri te maunga;
Tainui te waka.
Ko Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato e tū nei
Ko te tino kaupapa
He hora mātauranga ki te ao ...*

KŌKIRI!

Here stands The University of Waikato
Whose motto is ‘People’
Tihei mauri ora!
The people are Waikato; the river is Waikato
The mountain is Taupiri
The waka, Tainui.
Here stands The University of Waikato
Whose primary purpose
Is to spread knowledge and understandings ...

- ONWARDS!