

The sustainability of tikanga practice and values
within toi rāanga

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Jacqueline McRae-Tarei

Abstract

This research project is made up of two distinct but related components; an exegesis and an artefact (whāriki). The art of whāriki weaving is distinctively Māori and is the legacy of an evolving traditional knowledge that spans the Pacific and the peopling of this vast region. The evidence clearly supports the theory that the art of toi rāranga (art of weaving) is clearly rooted in Polynesia. The theory and practice of whāriki weaving connects Māori philosophy and the practices of tikanga (Māori customs, obligations) to toi rāranga and the kairāranga (weaver). To link the ideology to practice requires a detailed explanation of all aspects of the weaving of an actual whāriki. Additionally the whāriki was designed as a koha to the University because this gesture is an integral aspect of the traditions associated with the weaving of whāriki. Most importantly underpinning the research is the importance of the preservation of a culturally viable living art form ensuring the sustainability of toi rāranga.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This research project explores the connection between Māori philosophy and the practices of tikanga in relation to toi rāranga and the kai rāranga (weaver). Accompanied with the written component is the practice based work, a whāriki. In accordance with Māori traditions at least two whāriki were woven at a time. For this reason a student was recruited to weave alongside me a second whāriki. Within this space, began the teaching and learning of the practical weaving of whāriki as well as full participation of tikanga practices associated. The student's whāriki will be presented to her own marae. Therefore, this aspect will be replaced by kete (woven baskets) when the initial whāriki is gifted to the university. The completed whāriki complements the exegesis and is submitted as the practical component of the Degree.

The broader context of the literature search provides a perspective that demonstrates the evolution of Māori weaving and the impact that Polynesian migration patterns in the Pacific has impacted on all facets of the weaving tradition. Thereby this literature search provides an explanation of Māori belief and value systems within the realm of Māori weaving and also examines the changes in tikanga within toi rāranga. The implications of these changes on the Māori contemporary weaving art world and its effects on the mana and mauri of the kairāranga and the art-form are considered in some detail. Most importantly underpinning the research is the importance of the preservation of a culturally viable living art form ensuring the sustainability of toi rāranga.

Traditionally, Māori communicated through the intergenerational transmission of various knowledge narratives of origins, whakapapa (genealogy), karakia (prayer, incantation), and whakatauki (proverbial sayings) (McRae, 1997; Mead & Grove, 2001). These knowledge narratives validate the ideology of Māori philosophy, traditions and values which are embedded in Māori histories of heritage. Also embedded are signposts that provide exemplars of how one should behave and behave towards others. Therefore, when Māori intrinsically acknowledge and actively participate in the traditions and values handed down by the ancestors' entails a strengthened identity and an acceptance of ones place within the ethereal and secular spaces. As such a profound understanding of ones obligation to impart these knowledge narratives to the next generation becomes apparent. A

well-known adage taonga tuku iho reminds us to pass on the treasures of the ancestors. Also, Māori toi (Māori arts) such as whakairo (carving) and rāranga are mediums from which narratives are transmitted. There are tribal variations that retell the origins of Māori weaving. Accordingly whakapapa are contextualised within narratives helping to explain natural phenomena. Whakapapa is an interconnected network, connecting each of us, to each other, to nature, to the atua (gods) and to the universe. One particular variation of whakapapa regarding the origins of harakeke is as follows:

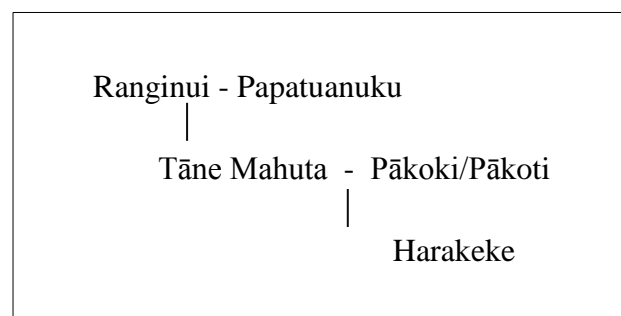


Figure 1: Whakapapa of the harakeke.

This whakapapa (as shown in Figure 1) is contextualised within Māori cosmogony through narrative. Tāne-nui-a-rangi, given this name after retrieving ngā kete o te wānanga (three vessels of knowledge) from the heavens, sought the female element to procreate the earth with mankind. He engaged in numerous procreation acts with supernatural female deities producing offspring of various plants and trees. One female deity was Pākoki also known as Pākoti and from this union begat Harakeke. Tāne then assumed the name Tane Māhuta, God of the Forest. His search eventually led him to the female element within at Kurawaka. He formed a body from sand, breathed life into her and named her Hine-ahu-one, the sand maiden. This union begat Man. Ka'ai and Higgins (2004) both correspond to the interconnected network further stating, "for Māori, this definition extends beyond human relationships into connections between humans and their universe" (p. 13).

Harakeke (*Phormium tenax*, New Zealand flax) is the most commonly used weaving material. This plant has its own whakapapa and metaphorical meaning. The fan formation of the harakeke is likened to the family (Mead, 2003; Patterson, 1992; Puketapu-Hetet, 2000). The outer leaves represent the grandparents and

embrace the inner leaves, the rito and mātua symbolise the child and parents thus forming the whanau. Surrounding formations form a clump of these families (hapū) and these families make up the extended community called the iwi or pā harakeke. Therefore, ensuring the rito and mātua are left unplucked, warrants the sustainability of the harakeke plant. This is a common tikanga practiced by weavers and is also a valued reminder to protect and nurture our children, the future generation.

The art of weaving and the traditional weaver were “sacred and interrelated with concepts of mana, mauri and tapu” (Puketapu-Hetet, 2000, p. 2). Mana relates to the prestige and respect one would be afforded by others. In terms of the kairāanga she held mana because of the skills she could provide that ensured the continuing welfare of her community. Mauri refers to the life ethos of everything. The natural materials of which the kairāanga worked with possess mauri. The kairāanga is aware of the mauri and therefore bestows respect to the materials of which she works with (Puketapu-Hetet, 2000). Within the tribal variations of narratives concerning the origins of toi rāanga, all have commonality when it comes to its celestial beginnings. Essentially because of its divine origins toi rāanga is immersed in tapu and must be observed as Best (1934) explains, “tapu represents the mana or power of the gods, and is not to be trifled with” (p. 84). Other sources of tapu derive from the natural materials used by artists because of the lineage linked directly to the Gods and “anything from the forest belonged to the God Tāne Mahuta” (Mead, 2003, p. 259). Observance of tapu is regulated by tikanga. There are many tikanga practised in toi rāanga. Karakia (prayer, incantation) is a tikanga practiced by weavers. Shirres (1996) contends that the wider purpose of karakia was to be one with the Gods, to bring their tapu and mana into operation in our world thereby carrying out our roles in creation. Tapu, mana as well as noa are concepts that frame the Māori world view (Kaai & Higgins, 2004). Noa often paired with tapu restores the balance. The perception of noa is also relevant for the weaver as one cannot always be in a state of tapu.

To initiate the weaver into te whare pora (the weaving house) incantations were used. The initiation ceremonies were based on tikanga Māori (Māori customs and rituals) bounding the weaver by the lore of tapu (Mead, 2003). Tikanga Māori not only ensured that correct behaviour was followed but also the initiation of the traditional weaver in terms of the whānau (family), hapū (extended family) and

iwi (tribe) expectations in relation to her characteristics. These characteristics involved her being an adept weaver. She provided clothing and utensils but also gave her community bargaining power, enabling bartering with other tribes to acquire tribal resources.

Traditionally weavers were supported by their community as a mutual understanding and respect (manaakitanga) existed between both parties (Puketapu-Hetet, 2000). The weaver helped provide for the economic wellbeing of the people such as trading which formed part of the Māori economy. For example, Pendergrast (1987), gives an account where “an exchange of the war canoe Te Toki a Tapiri was presented to the chief Te Waaka Perohuka of Rongowhakaata for the famous cloak Karamaene” (p. 4).

Today weavers receive monetary payment and the spirit of manaakitanga towards the artist is not so strong. The artist becomes an employee, not a person who works for the benefit of the community. Puketapu-Hetet (2000) explains that “a European concept is replacing a Māori concept” (p. 8), the concept of individualism versus collectivism, “this concept affects the mana of the art and the mana of the artist” (p.8). It is apparent that there is no longer the need for the traditional weaver as the Māori community is not reliant on her. Therefore, the care and respect diminishes the mana of the art and the artist is affected, as neither is held in great esteem.

In contemporary times, the *whare pora* is referred to as a state of being. The traditional initiation into the *whare pora* is almost non-existent. “Weavers have had to contend with a much more complex world and conflicting values” (Puketapu-Hetet, 2000, p. 25). These complexities have developed over several years since the settlement of the European missionaries. Ngarimu-Cameron (2008), explains “...very few of today’s weavers have undergone this kind of initiation. Such ceremonies were discouraged by Christian missionaries... Although the missionaries were quite mistaken about this, the result has been that the ceremonies are rarely, if ever, practiced today” (p. 7). The Māori philosophical complexities of traditional society conflicts with that of the values practiced in today’s society. The weaver is no longer required to hold fast to stringent *tikanga*, this is an option. Today, weavers choose what *tikanga* is

appropriate for them. The whole world of the traditional weaver has evolved, where now it is the contemporary weaver who exists.

Chapter 2 Literature Search

The purpose of this chapter is to locate the Māori weaving traditions in its Oceanic past. Tracing the origins of rāranga Māori provides a perspective that demonstrates its evolution from its utilitarian and functional value to an art-form in its own right. The broader context for the study is geographical encompassing the Pacific and the ancestral past of the Māori. While rāranga Māori is indigenous to Aotearoa (New Zealand), there are elements within rāranga that clearly reflect the Pacific migratory past of the ancestors. The migratory influences can be traced in relation to types of plants used in weaving, geometric designs, weaving techniques and spiritual traditions. This in turn reflects the multi-faceted or holistic approach to weaving that is characteristic of South East Asian and Polynesian cultures and their holistic worldviews. It is this holism (environmental, spiritual, economic, social and cultural components) that also frames the art of weaving. This complex philosophical approach or world view has its genesis in South-east Asia.

In terms of Māori origins there is compelling scientific evidence of the connection between Polynesians and their Southeast Asian ancestry (Anderson, 2000; Davidson, 1998; Howe, 2003; Irwin, 1992). The nomads who created Lapita pottery are of particular interest. Allen and White (1989) state “...while Lapita pottery makers were the ancestors of Polynesians, they had originally come from Asia” (pp.130-131). Lapita is the name of a place in New Caledonia where pottery shards were first discovered. McKinnon, Bradley, & Kirkpatrick, (1997); Spriggs, (2006) describe the migratory habits of the ‘Lapita People’ as travelling from Southeast Asia through Melanesia and out into the Pacific. The Lapita People settled along the coastlines of the islands. The manufacture of pottery had ultimately ceased in the Pacific and Groube (1971) attributes this to “the establishment of a viable horticulture by this period” (p. 311). This knowledge and skill of horticulture would have undoubtedly been transferred to the various weaving plants available on the islands within the Pacific. Te Rangi Hiroa Sir Peter Buck (1964) considers “the fundamental importance of the geographical distribution of raw materials” (p. 48) which sequentially determined the adaptation to innovative weaving techniques explored during early Māori settlement. The plants used in weaving across the Pacific are abundant and it is evident today that the weaving culture of Polynesia has flourished.

The most important plant for weaving in the Pacific is the pandanus. Thomson, Englberger, Guarino, Thaman, & Elevitch (2006) record over 600 different species of pandanus. The kiekie is a native variety of pandanus, but varieties used most commonly in the Pacific could not survive New Zealand's colder climate. However Harris (2001) reported that at a symposium for Pacific weavers, Māori were asked to experiment with growing pandanus in Aotearoa for weaving purposes. Lydia Smith, a weaver from Ahipara grew the pandanus plant in her conservatory from which she wove kete. While she was reluctant to grow the plant outdoors another plant was successfully grown at Awataha marae in Auckland. This showed conclusively that pandanus can be grown in the warmer regions of Aotearoa with suitable leaves for raranga. The importance of the pandanus throughout the Pacific is reflected in the fact that it is considered to have supernatural and magical properties particularly in parts of Micronesia and Hawai'i. Though the uses of Pandanus have functional purposes there are also economic, medicinal and cultural significances within its own native regions. In the Marshall Islands the male flowers are believed to be a potent aphrodisiac as well as used during ceremonies (Lanz, 2003). Williams (1996) describes how the fruit of the kiekie plant of Aotearoa is used as a laxative.

The other ubiquitous plant used in Oceanic weaving is the paper mulberry tree (*Broussonetia papyrifera*) which originates in East Asia. In Aotearoa it is known as Aute. The aute was brought over during the great migration by the Tainui waka to Aotearoa (Hiroa, 1949), but because of cooler temperatures the aute tree was unable to flourish except in the northern areas. Further evidence is given by Hiroa (1949) as follows:

Nga kahu o to matou kainga i rere mai ai i tawahi, he aute nei, he rakau aute, mahia ai te peha o taua rakau, a, ko te tinana o te rakau hei poito kupenga.

The garments of our home from where we sailed from the other side, was aute, an aute tree, the bark of that tree being manufactured, whilst, the wood of the tree was used for fishing net floats. (p. 63)

According to the renowned Māori scholar, Hiroa (1924), aute was used extensively in the early settlement phase of Māori in Aotearoa as loin cloth, wrapping for rākau atua (god sticks) and used as ear ornaments. The aute became rare and Te Rangi Hiroa describes how the missionary Colenso, sought and managed to acquire a few cuttings from one of the Ngapuhi chiefs. The rarity of the plant is reflected in Māori oral traditions related by Te Rangi Hiroa: "He aha

koa au ka mate, tena te aute i whakatokia e au ki te tara o taku whare. Although I die, there is an aute tree that has been planted by me beside the wall of my house” (p. 33).

The paper mulberry is native to Japan and Taiwan and is an ancient introduction across the Pacific as far east as Hawai’i. Although the tree is fertile in its native range, the plants carried into the Pacific were all male clones, transported and planted as rootstock or stems. Thus the female plants with flowers and consequently fruit are absent. (Whistler & Elevitch, 2006, p.2)

The transportation of this tree was utilised entirely by the early peoples of that time and dispersed throughout the Pacific for clothing, mat making and other useful purposes. The preparation of bark cloth from the aute is more or less the same process practiced throughout the Pacific Islands who practice the art of tapa. The bark is split and eased off into strips from the tree. The inner white lining is then peeled away from the outer bark. This is then soaked and beaten for a thin consistency (Robertson, 1989; Tabualevu, Uluinaceva & Raimua, 1997). Taylor (1960) describes the process for preparing tapa cloth. The tool used is a pounder or wooden mallet which in both Tonga and Fiji is called an ike and in Aotearoa is called a kuru or tā. The anvil for which the cloth is laid upon and beaten, in Tonga it is called a tutu and in Fiji a dutua. There are technological differences in preparing tapa which is considered to be more complex than weaving. However, the application of weaving pattern takes more careful consideration to that of the painted tapa cloth. Tapa dyes, like those used in weaving derive from the bark, sap, soot, berries of plants and trees.

The patterns are geometric in all of the islands that produce tapa. The patterns mostly reflect each native region’s natural environment. In Samoa the more common patterns are of the shells, starfish, and worm (MacKinven, 2006). Tonga use a stencil cut from either banana or voivoi leaves thereby creating different motifs for the border, semi-border, semi-centre and centre. Obviously, no two motifs are identical though each province is noted for its own set of motifs. The natural environment is also the inspiration for Māori patterned weaving otherwise known as whakairo. In traditional Māori society each tribe had their own pattern design according to which area they belonged to. Coastal areas were known to use the pātiki (flounder), te karu o te hāpuka (the eye of the grouper) and hera

waka (canoe sail) and in inland areas patterns used were rau putiputi (flower), and rau ponga (ponga leaf).

The Pacific origins of Māori weaving tradition are obvious. However, the oral traditions relating to the weaving traditions are unmistakably unique to each Polynesian culture. An early narrative relating to the art of Māori weaving is the pūrākau of Niwareka and Mataora related in Te Ara Hou (1965). Niwareka belonged to the underworld. She married Mataora, but returned to her people when she was beaten by Mataora. Remorseful, Mataora followed her and persuaded her to return with him to Te Ao Marama. Niwareka, a renowned weaver, agreed. As they passed through the portal to the underworld, the house of Tūwatawata, they forgot to leave a kākahu as payment; Kāore tangata rā i waiho i tētahi o ōna kākahu hei utu i te ara ki Te Pō (p.20). Insulted Tūwatawata closed the portal to the underworld to mankind forever. However it is widely acknowledged that this story explains that the art of weaving was brought into the world by Niwareka and highlights also the importance of koha (reciprocity).

It is interesting to note that the acquisition of knowledge is related to ngā kete o te wānanga. Simmonds (1986) recounts the most ubiquitous version of the ‘baskets of knowledge’ where the protagonist is Tawhaki. However in other tribal traditions it is the atua Tane who is the protagonist. Elsdon Best (1923) credits Tane as acquiring the kete.

The story of the ascent of Tane is a long one, but he succeeded in his task, being borne upwards by the offspring of Tawhirimatea, that is by the winds. He obtained from great Io of the Hidden Face the three famed kete or baskets of knowledge, which contain the knowledge of good and evil, and of sacerdotal matters connected with Rangi and Papa. (p59)

The three kete of knowledge were named te kete tuatea, te kete tuauri and te kete aronui. The knowledge of weaving is contained within te kete aronui. Because of the great tapu from where the kete came, this narrative purports that this knowledge is tapu also.

There are other association of Māori Gods, with the weaving tradition that emerge out of the cosmological narratives. These narratives were also transmitted in the art-forms of weaving and carving. In this setting the sons of Ranginui the sky father and Papatūānuku the Earth mother harness the celestial beginnings of Māori weaving. The narrative of Tāwhirimātea’s wrath to destroy his brothers over the

separation of his parents confronts Tūmatauenga, who stood alone. Tūmatauenga defeats Tāwhirimātea and is resentful by the desertion of his brothers, Tūmatauenga sought to punish them for their cowardly act. He punished Tāne by snaring the birds of the forest and consuming them. He fashioned (hinaki) nets to harvest the descendants of Tangaroa for food. Tūmatauenga made (kete) baskets out of Tāne's trees and plants and dug up the descendants of Rongomātane and Haumiatiketike for food (Alpers, 1996; Grey, 1953, 1961). Emerging from this narrative unfolds a story revealing the origins of the first weaver, the God of war, Tūmatauenga. Furthermore, the incantation, Tohi ki te wai no Tū was used in the baptism of the girl (Hiroa, 1949; Pendergrast, 1987), further verifying Tūmatauenga as the God who is offered the young girl.

Although these traditions are distinctively Māori there are other traditions that are practiced by Māori that clearly correlate to traditions practiced in the Pacific. Of particular relevance to this dissertation is the weaving of whāriki. The Samoan traditions relating to the art of fine mats resonates with Māori whāriki weaving traditions. The fine mats of Samoa are known as 'Ie-Toga. Ie means cloth and Toga pronounced Tonga is the place name from which it originated (Akuhata-Brown, 1966). The first 'ie toga was brought from Tonga by Fuka, the youngest sister of Tuitoga, the King of Tonga. She brought it as a gift for her sister, Lautiovogā, who was the Queen of Samoa, married to King Tuiatua. In appreciation of the gift they named the robe 'Ie Toga (MacKiven, 2006). "Used as an item of ceremonial dress or for presentation, the 'ie toga is never left to lie flat on the floor" (Mallon, 2002, p. 79). Sacred customs are associated with the weaving of this fine mat or ceremonial dress. Akuhata-Brown, (1966) describes the customs associated with the weaving of fine mats:

...only those women with exceptional skill at weaving, and with a knowledge of the sacred customs associated with it, are chosen to weave the fine mat. They work either in a guest house, out of sight of the people, or else in a house used by the older women of the family. While the mat is being woven no-one is permitted to enter the fale (house; this word is equivalent of our Māori whare). If anyone should break this age old custom, they must pay a penalty; usually this consists of a large amount of food. (p. 12)

Weaving in Aotearoa involves tikanga or rules that encompasses all aspects of weaving from the beginning process to the very end. One such similarity to Samoan weaving involving keeping the work out of sight of people correlates to tikanga practiced by Māori in relation to the patterns that were woven.

In traditional times, patterns were guarded from other people who did not belong to one's own whānau (family), hapū (extended family) or iwi (tribe). The patterns had significance and were held sacred by the whānau. These patterns were carried through the generations within the whānau and extended whānau, giving a clear reason why work would be covered when a stranger approached. Patterson (1992) explains, "weaving patterns that are handed down from generation to generation within a tribe, are regarded as tribal property, as tapu or protected knowledge" (p. 25).

It is customary in Tonga for an elderly respected woman to prepare the dye for the Ngatu ta'uli. All the preparation would have to be done at night and she could not sleep with her husband for two nights. The Ngatu ta'uli is not a common garment but was given at the weddings and funerals of the royal and nobility (Robertson, 1989). Likewise, traditional Māori custom or tikanga engaged in traditional dyeing disallows the weaver to have sex the night before and that was the reason why a spinster or widow would undertake this duty (Mead, 2003). The question why sex is not allowed when performing such tasks again for Māori culture reverts back to the principles of tapu. Mead (2003) further states that, "the sex organs of both male and female are regarded as tapu" (p. 49).

In Fiji, traditionally a deceased person was wrapped in mats or tapa for burial. Both mats and tapa symbolised warmth and protection (Tabualevu, et al., 1997). Customarily for Māori tangihanga (funerals), there was an intensity of the tapu associated with death, specialist people within a hapū would be in charge of preparing the tūpāpaku (dead body). They would smear the body with kōkōwai (red ochre) and oil, then sit it up with the knees tucked under the chin and the arms wrapped tightly around the legs. The crouched body was wrapped in fine mats and cloaks (Higgins & Moorfield, 2004). In the present day, cloaks are used to drape the coffin and even this process involves the kākahu being placed upside down, where the top of the kākahu is placed at the feet of the tūpāpaku or else if placed the right way the cloak would go down with the deceased. Some family do choose this option. Whāriki are used and placed under the coffin. The whakairo or pattern woven on the whāriki is usually associated with tangihanga. The papakirango or fly-swat pattern is one such pattern. As the name suggests, the fly-swat was used to swat the flies away, thereby symbolised protection, preservation and comfort.

Manihera (1992) conveys the anxiety associated with customary knowledge, there is also a fear that by giving things out, they could be commercialised. If this happens they lose their sacredness, their fertility (p. 9). In regards to the knowledge of tikanga practice in rāanga, this comment perhaps is irrelevant as it cannot be commercialised, however there is a fear that sharing the knowledge of weaving to those who have no true understanding or connection concerning principles such as tapu may in fact make it common. The dispersal of this knowledge integrates with the disintegration of tapu as is the Māori belief and defined by Manihera (1992), 'knowledge that is profane has lost its life, lost its tapu' (p. 9). Publications of whakairo patterns, tāniko, piupiu and kākahu and the wide use of the internet make this type of weaving knowledge, considered sacred by some, easily accessible. It is not really the issue of the dissemination of information but the possible desecration of tribal knowledge that is the issue. The aspect of tapu regarding protection is another direction to explore. According to Puketapu-Hetet (2000),

...tapu protects places, objects and people. The protection of one's work until it is finished is clearly demonstrated by the custom of putting one's creation out of sight if strangers appear. Weaving demonstrators usually have a piece kept for that purpose, so that their more meaningful creations are completed in private. (p. 4)

Pewhairangi (1992) relates an experience with harvesting and dyeing kiekie that illustrates the implications of observing customary knowledge and the consequences of breaking tapu. This gives some insight into the reservation Māori have about open access to tribal knowledge.

We were preparing kiekie and had an old lady here teaching us how to do it. She even went into the bush with us to show the men how to cut the kiekie and strip them and bring them back here. This was my first experience on the tapu placed on this type of work. We went through the whole process of boiling the kiekie and that wasn't so tapu. But the dyeing was. It was placed in the mud for two weeks and that old lady herself went on a trip to collect it. They brought the kiekie back here and found the dye hadn't gone through. The first words uttered were that something had gone wrong or somebody had done wrong. 'There's nothing we can do about it. Someone will have to suffer the consequences,' she said. 'Someone will die because the dye hasn't been done properly and whoever had placed it in the mud must have broken the law of tapu.' Two days after, the old lady died. (pp. 10-11)

While the consequences for breaking tapu are severe in Māori customary beliefs it has its inception in the Pacific where the notion of 'tabu' equates with the Māori concept of tapu.

There are other customary similarities throughout the Pacific and this is reflected in the Fijian practices relating to Fijian beliefs and practices relating to voivoi harvesting and practices. Although these are similar to Māori practices these processes start from the beginning of the harvest to the end of the weaving process. Tabualevu, et al., (1997) explains that even before the removal of the leaves the entire plantation must be cleared giving good opportunity to find and remove hornet's nests and snakes. The stripping of the thorns on leaves are done and deposited around the voivoi plants (*pandanus thurstoni*). "Such practice is believed to enhance the continuous growth of supple healthy leaves of the *pandanus* plants" (p. 89). Customarily in Māori practice the *kaikaha* or excess dead leaves of the *harakeke* or flax were returned or left with the mother plant. However, according to the Landcare Research website, it is now known, that it is better to remove the excess leaves so as to discourage unwanted insects that chew through the leaves ("Establishing a *pā harakeke*," 2012).

Fijian belief regarding stepping over a mat that is in the process of weaving is forbidden, the consequence of breaking this tabu will cause the mat to buckle (Tabualevu et al, 1997). Similarly, this is also a *tikanga* for Māori weavers but first requires further explanation of Māori principles concerning *tapu* and also *noa*. The translations of *noa* are common, balance or neutrality. The state of *noa* indicates that a state of balance has been reached (Mead, 2003). Mead (2003) further explains that thinking of *noa* as the opposite of *tapu* is wrong and gives an example explaining "a person can be very *tapu* when very ill or when there is bleeding or shedding of blood. Once these *tapu*-increasing symptoms have passed the person returns to a safe state, but still has personal *tapu*" (pp. 31-32). Indeed, the principle of *tapu* has many stratum of significance. Orbell (1995) contends that men are *tapu* and women are *noa*. Women are able to *whakanoa* or cause normality by the simple act of widening her legs, symbolic of a precedent set by *Hine-nui-i-te-po*, the Goddess of the Night. Within the Māori customary *kōrero* of Maui's final feat, he attempted to reverse the birthing process so as to secure immortality for mankind. This became his final act as he was crushed and killed between *Hine-nui-i-te-pō*'s legs. *Hine-nui-i-te-pō* maintained normality and balance. Therefore, when a woman steps over unfinished work, work that is considered still in a state of *tapu*, she would essentially make this *tapu* work *noa*.

The state of tapu when referring to the mahi or work of the weaver is again under this principle until the very end when the blessing and whakanoa of this work has been completed. Kiekie, harakeke (flax), pingao (golden sedge grass), ti kouka (cabbage tree) are all natural plant material used in weaving, all belonging to the realm of Tane Mahuta the god of the forest and son of Papatūānuku, the earth mother and Ranginui, the sky father. Tane Mahuta of godly status has great tapu therefore his children the plants and trees should also be regarded as such. Based on this notion, an understanding as to the respect afforded by the weaver towards the weaving plant material and subsequently the art of weaving is clearly perceived. Mead, (2003) stipulates four points in regard to the art and the artist:

- The source of the arts leads to the Gods, to the children of Rangi and Papa and to members of divine families.
- The source of a person's pūmanawa is a gift handed down the family line and is something to be respected and treasured. The talent is tapu.
- The materials used in creative activities all carry an element of tapu.
- Artists traditionally worked under tapu and especially (but not only) while doing creative work. There were activities that were prohibited to them while they were at work. (pp. 259-260)

Knowing these layers of tapu, one could only imagine the responsibilities felt by the traditional weaver who worked within these restrictions of principle.

Mead (2003) clearly articulates the complexity of balancing modern attitudes with tradition:

It is a process of rediscovery for many Māori artists, a time for experimentation, for testing, for adopting what seems to be good, sensible practice and rejecting aspects such as accountability back to the roots of the art form and to artists of generations gone by. Some artists actively reject the tapu of creative work but like the idea of the tikanga of a dawn ceremony to open an art exhibition. Others are more cautious because there is a lingering fear that the power of the Gods has not been extinguished entirely. (p. 262)

This sense of Māori trepidation has its genesis in a Polynesian past. Notwithstanding it can be argued that there was an economic element to weaving which was highly valued throughout the Pacific. The traditional Polynesian weaver has been renowned for their highly developed skill and their rigid aptitude to adhere to the customs of their native land. According to the 19th-Century historian David Malo:

This work was done by women and was a source of considerable profit; so that women who engaged in it were held to be well off, and were praised for their skill. Such arts as these were useful to the ancient Hawaiians and brought them wealth. (Malo, 1903, p. 75)

Similarly, Samoan woven articles have always been a symbol of wealth and prosperity. They embody many hours, indeed sometimes years of work put into the diligent fine weaving of the mat. It is understandable that, the intrinsic value of the work in the mat is valued so highly, and that for many years these mats were used for barter and “outrank all other goods including money” (Schoeffel, 1999, p. 119).

Masi or bark cloth production is a common activity in the villages of Fiji for women. A woman may be invited to join the kusakusa (workforce) where each will produce masi for either visitors or enable one to barter for other goods. In the late 1980s-1990s the masi became a main source of income due to the tourism industry (Tabualevu et al, 1997). Today the weavers have been commissioned by galleries and have exhibited finely woven mats where their works have demonstrated a commitment to the contemporary development of traditional textile practice ("Gallery commissions works," 2005).

It is evident that the ancestors of the Māori brought to Aotearoa the knowledge needed to develop a weaving tradition that would evolve to a stage where the articles or taonga woven are characteristically and uniquely indigenous to Aotearoa. The importance of environmental factors in shaping Māori weaving cannot be underestimated. Ideologically the art of weaving is embedded in the natural environment and a deep respect for the mauri (lifeforce) of te taiao (natural world). When the Māori voyagers arrived in Aotearoa, they found the climate to be much cooler (Donne, 1927; Puketapu-Hetet, 2000). The settlers set about adapting to the new environment and exploring the properties and uses of the new natural resources that were now available to them. The need for clothing to provide warmth and protection became a high priority for them (Brown, 2007; Evans & Ngarimu, 2005). Experimentation with the native plants eventually led the immigrant weavers to the harakeke (*Phormium tenax*) plant. The discovery of extracting muka (fibre) from the plant allowed for the production of clothing, as well as basket, mat, net and sail making from the leaves of the plant. The adept weaver became integral to the community ensuring the continued existence of the people in a new land. Not only could the weaver provide utensils and clothing for

the people but also held bargaining power, bartering with other tribes acquiring their tribal resources.

One such case was a beautifully made cloak given the name of Karamaene exchanged for a great carved war canoe now held in the Auckland Museum (Pendergrast, 1987). This exchange would not be possible if it were not for the skilfulness of the weaver. She was a major component in ensuring the economic wellbeing of the community.

The weaver was indeed essential to the people and held in great esteem (Firth, 1959). The attributes of the weaver can be further affirmed through Māori proverbial sayings (whakatauki), such as;

Aitia te wahine i roto i te pā harakeke
Marry the woman in the flax bush.

If a woman is frequently seen gathering flax, it is an indication that she is a weaver. As such she is eminently eligible and should be preferred as a spouse (Brougham, Kāretu, & Reed 2004, p. 162).

In traditional society young girls were observed to see whether she had the ‘gift’ and was keen to learn rāranga. She would learn basic rāranga work quite naturally but later in life she might be tested to see if she held a strong interest in rāranga. Once this interest was established the learner would undergo the initiation process into te whare pora. For Māori these ceremonies involved ritual of tikanga.

Tikanga not only ensures that correct behaviour is followed but also displays what the whānau, hapū and iwi expected of the weaver in relation to her characteristics. She was bound by tikanga and the lore of tapu once the rituals were completed she became “a beneficiary of divine strength and support” (Mead, 2003, p. 258). Puketapu-Hetet (2000) further states, “the ancient Polynesian belief is that the artist is a vehicle through whom the Gods create” (p. 2).

The impact of European contact also influenced the art of weaving. With the arrival of European settlers came a new level of technology and resources, introducing guns, machinery, cutlery, and European clothing. New animals and domesticated fowls were also introduced as well as materials such as wool, twine and candlewick all of which were utilised by the Māori weaver in the manufacture of kākahu (Firth, 1959; Mead, 1968). A readiness to adopt new materials showed the traditional weavers’ ability to adapt and experiment. A period of a century transpired before European clothing was fully adopted.

Two factors that affected the weaver happened at this time. The first was the demand from the European to acquire flax fibre (muka). The muka was found to have stronger qualities compared to the European rope, muka became a commodity of great demand. Woven items such as kete and kākahu alongside various other Māori taonga were also collected for specimens for the various museums abroad. All of which became essential articles of trade. The second factor led to experimentation which spearheaded a dramatic change in appearance of kākahu and tāniko becoming brighter in colour and more elaborate (Mead, 1968). The weavers' experimentation with these new materials suggests that a catalyst emerged evolving weaving as a craft that produced functional items to weaving as an art-form creating aesthetic works of art. The seeds were sown for weaving to become an art-form, but this didn't take full fruition till at least the turn of the next century. As Māori took on the full effects of European culture and technology and as woven items lost their primary function the role of the weaver gradually became under-utilised within her community. Puketapu-Hetet (2000) explains,

At one time the people were the patrons of the art. The community supported its weavers and carvers. A mutual understanding existed. Generally this does not happen today although there are still some who hold fast to the old ways. These days most carvers and weavers receive monetary payment and the spirit of manaakitanga (caring and respect) towards the artist isn't so strong. Often the artist becomes an employee, not a person with skills that are revered. A European concept is replacing a Māori concept. This affects the mana of the art and the mana of the artist. (p. 8)

Arguably, the social status of the weaver had changed in the terms of manākitanga. It is with little surprise that this perspective had eventuated. There is no need for the traditional weaver as the Māori community is no longer reliant on her, thereby the care and respect towards the weaver diminishes, the mana of the art and the artist is affected because neither is held in great esteem.

Today if one wishes to weave and specialise in the art of weaving one would only need to make the choice and find tutelage, either in a tertiary institute such as a Wānanga or from a known weaver within the community. In today's world, rāranga no longer necessitates a weaver to hold fast to stringent tikanga this regrettably is an option. However, it is not to say that weavers do not practice tikanga as many still do. It is apparent that the world of the traditional weaver has evolved where now it is the contemporary weaver who exists.

The contemporary weaving artist of today differs from the traditional weaver in the way where she no longer has to provide for the wellbeing of the community as a functional weaver, but now uses weaving as an art-form and a platform from which to voice cultural, political and even current issues. Within a contemporary world, weavers have had to adjust yet again and “transform the art of harakeke, transfer the skills to other fibres and, ultimately using all materials at hand and transcend the boundaries placed upon the tradition by orthodoxy” (Jahnke, & Ihimaera, 1996, p. 123). The change in societal structure has created a subtle and gradual change in interpretation of patterns, tikanga and media used also. The evolution of Māori art is apparent in the innovative works created today. According to Mason (2001) this evolution from the traditional into the contemporary era of Māori art has been happening for just over 150 years. Mead (1996) states that, “the primary purpose of Māori art is to give expression to the creative genius of Māori artists to satisfy Māori social, political, cultural and economic needs” (p. 3). However, weaving as an art form is not ubiquitously accepted as ‘art’ and is considered crafts because of their utilitarian or functional purpose.

The anthropological gaze directed the observation of what were typically practical objects of use to be analysed as art, analysed through a Western gaze as though it were an object created within a space specifically designated to creating art for arts’ sake. The intricacies of the kete and tāniko for example, while holding much artistic beauty and technique, were for practical purposes. However, the application of a Western gaze of artistic intent reduced it to a rudimentary level of ability and described as more primitive than ‘other’ indigenous cultures. (Pownall 1972 as cited in Wereta, 2007, pp. 3-4)

Māori weaving artists are viewed within a Western art paradigm as craftspeople. Witcombe, (1997) explains,

During the Renaissance the word Art emerges as a collective term encompassing Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, a grouping given currency by the Italian artist and biographer Giorgio Vasari in the 16th century. Subsequently, this grouping was expanded to include Music and Poetry which became known in the 18th century as the ‘Fine Arts’. These five Arts have formed an irreducible nucleus from which have been generally excluded the ‘decorative arts’ and ‘crafts’ such as pottery, weaving and metalworking and furniture making, all of which have utility as an end. (para. 5)

On the other hand, according to Danto (1983) what is defined as art is undefinable. He refers to the 1964 Andy Warhol exhibition of shipping cartons

arguing anything could be art. Warhol made art subjective making it impossible to distinguish something that is art from something that is not.

In 1926, Sir Apirana Ngata established the School of Māori Arts in Rotorua an initiative that altered the dominant discourse in art and advanced a Māori discourse that challenged the western construction of art and culture. From there Māori art and artists have pushed through the boundaries within New Zealand's shores and taken Māori art into the international arena standing side by side and competing with artists from all over the world. The 1984 Te Māori exhibition was the first to show case Māori art in the international arena as works of art rather than ethnographic specimens (Butts, 2003) and also becoming the turning point in terms of bicultural museum practise internationally and within New Zealand. With few exceptions, art galleries in New Zealand had not collected or displayed Māori art before the Te Māori exhibition. Admittedly most of the art works displayed were of carvings and there was no weaving art in the exhibition, though, Te Māori exhibition did spearhead the opening in to the 'world of art' for all Māori art.

Similarly, international weaving exhibitions such as 1989 Taonga Māori, 1990 Pūmanawa and, 1992 Whatu Aho Rua, have elevated weaving as an art-form "alongside carving and incorporating contemporary work to show Māori art as a continuing dynamic force" (Tamati-Quennell, 1993, p. 6). The 2010 World Indigenous Art Market (WAM) saw four Māori artists awarded the top four awards, two of whom were Māori weavers. This event focuses on high quality traditional and contemporary indigenous art from around the globe (Kirk, 2010). Weaving artists have continued to make their mark. At the time of European contact the weaver's skills were especially sought after as her works became essential articles of trade. However, as the European culture and way of life converged with that of Māori, the weaver became obsolete. It is not until recent times that the Māori weaver has re-emerged as an accomplished and renowned artist.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

This research comprises an exegesis which is the theoretical component of the project as well as a practicum. The practical based work (artefact) is a whāriki and the exegesis provides the academic context and commentary on the artefact or taonga. The methodological approach uses kaupapa Māori as a holistic and philosophical framework for both the exegesis and the taonga. The research method involves ensuring that the production of the taonga and the exegesis are juxtaposed. The next chapter provides a detailed description of the manufacture or production of the taonga. This description is inextricable to kaupapa Māori customary practices. It is this kaupapa Māori approach that weaves the theoretical and the practical components of the project together.

Pihama (2001) describes a Kaupapa Māori methodological approach as being defined by Māori for Māori, drawing on fundamental Māori values, experiences and world views. Kaupapa Māori research is based on a number of key principles. Graham Smith (2003) identifies these principles as interventional and transformative and considers these principles “to be crucial change factors in Kaupapa Māori praxis” (p. 8).

Key principles of Kaupapa Māori considered for this research are as follows:

• Tino Rangatiratanga - The Principle of Self-determination

The concept of Tino Rangatiratanga is the underlining principle that validates Kaupapa Māori initiatives allowing Māori to have “control over one’s life and cultural well-being” (Smith, 2003, p. 8). The mana of both kairāra and toi rāra have been positioned and contextualised by the experiences of an evolving Māori society. The kairāra was once held in great esteem as her skills were instrumental ensuring the wellbeing of her community. The impacts of European settlement antiquated her skill. Yet in spite of this, the resurgence of toi rāra has progressed over recent decades. Today, negotiations of museum, gallery and other indigenous spaces both on these shores and abroad have elevated the mana of both artist and art form.

Within the context of this research, it is accepted that toi rāra is firmly entrenched in Te Ao Māori. As such, the weaving processes of the whāriki discussed in the following chapter, is reflexively informed by tikanga practice and

Māori values. This method is intentional as it provides a transformational space that implements the written components of this research into practical application of Mātauranga Māori or Māori knowledge. Furthermore, documenting these processes and practices contributes to the dissemination of Māori weaving traditions thereby contributing to its preservation.

• **Taonga Tuku Iho – The Principle of Cultural Aspiration**

This principle asserts the validation of Māori knowledge, values and tikanga. These are focal points implemented as thematic principles that permeate throughout this research. Williams (2001) describes Māori cosmological narratives as an “integral part of the corpus of fundamental knowledge” (p. 105). In the setting of toi rāranga, Māori cosmological narratives not only explain the origins and whakapapa of weaving but also provide exemplars in regards to values and tikanga practices within toi rāranga which is fundamental to this research. Knowing and understanding these narratives becomes pinnacle for the kairāranga in relation to her confidence in knowing ‘what she is doing is valid and right’.

The values and tikanga practiced during the production of the practice base-work, the whāriki is implemented at the very beginning during the harvesting or tapahi of harakeke to the end of the handing over or koha ceremony.

• **Ako Māori – The Principle of Culturally Preferred Pedagogy**

This principle acknowledges teaching and learning practices that are able to connect with the cultural background and life circumstances of Maori communities (Smith, 2003). Teaching and learning toi rāranga is best kanohi ki te kanohi or face to face between a skilled kairāranga and novice. Though there are books that portray how to weave items, books lack the philosophical teachings that can only be taught by an experienced weaver. These books are useful as supplements for those who already know how to weave. Preferred pedagogy practice is therefore conducive when teaching is disseminated in a holistic approach that promotes the retention and enhancement of toi rāranga and also when learning is fully comprehended and accepted. In regards to this research the following chapter acknowledges this pedagogy. The second whāriki is made by a student weaver. The rationale being is tikanga stipulates that two whāriki are woven at a time, this also provided an opportunity to teach and learn kanohi ki te

kanohi. To teach and learn the practical weaving processes of whāriki as well as the tikanga practices associated afforded both weavers with a sense of fulfilment and accomplishment.

• **Kaupapa – Principle of Collective Philosophy**

The Kaupapa refers to the collective vision, aspiration and purpose of Māori communities. The purpose of weaving the whāriki alongside a tauira was to pass on the knowledge of whāriki coinciding with aspirations of sustaining rāranga in all its facets. On a larger scale, weavers have opportunity to converge under an organised National body known as Te Rōpū Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa. Time and space are provided during bi-annually hui, allowing weavers to come together to weave, and share experiences thus supporting the communal objective to foster and preserve Maori weaving arts.

• **Āta – The Principle of Growing Respectful Relationships**

The principle of āta relates specifically to the building and nurturing of relationships. This principle coincides with ‘kaupapa, the principle of collective philosophy’ which provides the result through collective aspirations that occur from these relationships whereas; ‘ata’ offers the understanding and maintaining of these relationships. Also, corresponding to the artefact, the handing over ceremony of the whāriki to Auckland University of Technology symbolises the relationship between this kairāranga and AUT.

Tikanga practice and values in rāranga through the production of the practice based work, the whāriki are documented throughout Chapter 4, also offering points of references within rāranga that serve as prompts to kaupapa Māori theory principles. The following section is a cyclic framework discussing how these principles may provide a methodology approach to research and also an approach that could assist in the sustainability of toi rāranga.

Kaupapa Māori Theory and Rāranga

Pā harakeke – The principle of acknowledging whānau and whakapapa.

Pā harakeke is an assemblage of flax and used metaphorically to denote whānau and whakapapa. Pā harakeke evokes a visual description of a whānau collective. Further elaboration is given in the literature review chapter. Weavers are also a

whānau collective although not generally related through blood-lines, though some weavers are, are connected through the same values and ideals of rāranga. This is evident in rāranga rōpū or weaving groups such as Te Rōpū Rāranga Whatu o Aotearoa, a National Weaving Body that facilitate bi-annual 4 day hui or gatherings for all rāranga weavers throughout Aotearoa. Similarly, Wānanga tertiary institutes such as Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWOA) deliver rāranga specific programmes all over Aotearoa, providing opportunities to network with each other locally and nationally. The smaller collectives who affiliate to local rāranga groups of the marae are usually membered by weavers of that community.

“Whakapapa is not really a principle but has had principles imposed upon it to justify or explain underlying cultural conflicts or potential research tools and approaches in a way that has specific cultural implications” (Mahuika, 2008, p. 8). Furthermore, Royal (1998) contends, whakapapa is an analytical tool employed by Maori to understand natural phenomena, origins, connections and relationships. Rāranga incorporates whakapapa as a weaving process when starting the foundation lines or ara in whāriki and kete making. Whakapapa regarding the relationship between Māori and the Māori Gods or nga atua is also acknowledged through the implementation of prayer or karakia. According to Māori whakapapa there is direct lineage to the Māori Gods, and in particular, according to some tribes or iwi, to Tane, who is the progenitor of man and plant life. In accordance to the weavers who share this belief, homage through karakia is offered to Tane when harvesting harakeke or other natural weaving materials. Tūpuna are the earthly ancestors of Māori. The presently known weaving techniques were expounded shortly after the arrival in Aotearoa by the early ancestors. The knowledge of weaving has been passed on through the generations. This is expressed through the whakatauki ‘ngā taonga tuku iho no ngā tūpuna’ ‘treasures handed down by our ancestors’. Therefore the principle of whānau and whakapapa coherently provide validation for any weaver when undertaking ones practise and research.

Another essential point is there was a time when weaving almost became obsolete. However, it is widely recognised that weavers such as Rangimarie Hetet, Diggeress Te Kanawa, Emily Shuster, Erenora Puketapu-Hetet were the pioneers that ensured revival of toi rāranga in recent decades.

Te Ara Tika – The principle of tikanga

Maintaining the ara in weaving reassures the weaver that all is right consequently ensuring successful completion of woven works. The principle of te ara tika (the right path) regards tikanga practice as crucial when weaving as is crucial when conducting research. Though tikanga in itself is broad, the underlying purpose of this principle is its maintenance and preservation thus acknowledging the responsibility and obligation of the weaver-researcher to conduct research and practice based work in the correct manner.

Te Karu o te Whenua – The principle of kaitiakitanga/guardianship

All whakairo patterns have symbolic meaning. Te karu o te whenua can be literally translated as the eye of the land. It can be expected that there is an indication to observance...to what exactly, is determined by the context. Kaitiakitanga in regards to weaving knowledge and practise are fundamentally important concerning the guardianship of the natural plants and materials used, the maintenance and preservation of te ara tika and the dissemination of knowledge. The principle of kaitiakitanga is specific to the nurturing of all these aspects in so doing, taking responsibility in upholding the mana and mauri of Māori weaving and respectively, kairāanga.

Hiki – The principle in the continuing advancement of toi rāanga

This principle recognises the necessity to continue the progression of toi rāanga and the kairāanga. The principle seeks to disembowel preconceptions of rāanga as a ‘craft’ to an art-form in its own right, from kairāanga regarded as a ‘hobbyist’ to art practitioners of excellence. The kairāanga become active receptacles positioned in the aspiration to perpetuate the transmission of weaving knowledge and practice that is accurate, authentic and consequently mana enhancing. Likened to the whāriki, extension and progress is made through the application of the hiki.

Tāpiki – The principle of resolution

The tāpiki is termed as a cast off technique that is used to ensure the weaving does not come undone, holding each strand steadfast. The principle of resolution refers to the adherence of practices and beliefs in toi rāanga holding steadfast to all that

is mātauranga Māori pertaining to the art-form and rangahau. Thereby, the weaver-researcher or kairāanga-kairangahau can engage confidently not only within the community but also be empowered to represent throughout and beyond the boundaries of this country. The active pursuit of excellence in the production of toi rāanga and Māori ways of knowing and doing are viable.

Koha – The principle of reciprocity

Koha is the final process regarding the tikanga practice implemented during the production of the whāriki. It is normal practice to make and give whāriki to the wharehau or meeting house of a marae. The primary purpose of the completed whāriki was always intended to be koha to Te Pūrengi. This is the wharehau of Ngā Wai o Horotiu marae which is situated at the AUT campus in the Central City. The koha of the whāriki was considered for Te Pūrengi because of the shelter it provided and its familiarity as a Māori meeting house. Situated amongst a high density, multi-cultural concrete city setting was unaccustomed by the weaver-researcher who resides four hours away in a green natural environment and high Māori populace community, Te Pūrengi offered a sense of solace. With respect to the approach of this research, reciprocity involves the learning and transmission of knowledge. The knowledge concerning toi rāanga is disseminated between the teacher and the learner. As described in the production of whāriki chapter, weaving knowledge has always been gained through learner observation and practise. Acquiring the knowledge of weaving cannot be truly engaged with in its entirety without a teacher/learner relationship. The principle of koha in effect sustains the whakapapa of kairāanga who maintain and preserve the tikanga practice of rāanga, who understands the unique symbolic language of rāanga whakairo, who actively strive to progress and enhance the mana of weaving and its weavers and who pursue excellence in its entirety. There in turn, ensures that the teaching and learning is reciprocated and passed on to the next generation of weavers.

Chapter 4 Whāriki Weaving Processes

Kia heke iho rā i ngā tūpuna, kātahi ka tika.
If handed down by the ancestors, then it would be correct
(Mead & Grove, 2001, p. 210).

The chapter describes in some detail the weaving of the whāriki and tikanga associated. It would be reasonable to expect that this would be a straightforward exercise. However, tikanga complicates the process. According to my learning at least two whāriki are woven at a time. Some may say two or more whāriki are woven so they are not mokemoke or lonely. Others say it is simply to reinforce and retain the learning and knowledge. To retain this 'tikanga' a student weaver volunteered to weave a separate whāriki alongside. This approach converges together what I have been taught and my present developing creative thought process as a contemporary weaver. The student whāriki was presented to her marae after completion. This process actively transmits knowledge ensuring that epistemology and theory, that is the practical application and the tikanga associated with whāriki making was seamlessly incorporated into the process accordingly. The student whāriki was not included in the final presentation. Instead four kete were completed to represent the student whāriki which were to be part of final presentation. However this did not come to pass. Each kete were presented to four Pou who supported me each in different ways during this journey.

The fan formation of the harakeke shown in Figure 2 is likened to the family (Mead, 2003; Patterson, 1992; Puketapu-Hetet, 2000). The outer leaves or rau represent the grandparents and embrace the inner leaves. The rito and mātua symbolises the child and parents thus forming the whānau. Surrounding formations form a clump of these families or hapū and these families make up the extended community called the iwi or pā harakeke. Therefore, ensuring the rito and mātua are left unplucked, warrants the sustainability of the harakeke plant. Not cutting the centre shoot is a common tikanga practiced by weavers. It is a valued reminder to protect and nurture our children, the future generation. This value is echoed within whakatauki.



Figure 2: Lentfer, N. (2009) Harakeke fan formation.

Hutia te rito o te harakeke, kei hea te kōmako
 Kī mai ki ahau, he aha te mea nui o te ao?
 Māku e kī atu, he tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata.

If the tender shoot of the plant is plucked, where will the bellbird sit? You say to me what is more important today, I will answer, it is people, it is people, it is people (Puketapu-Hetet, 2000, p. vi).

Whāriki

Whāriki were traditionally used in ritual and ceremony. A ceremonial whāriki is named takapau. The takapau wharanui were employed during the paparoa, pure and tohi ceremonies. Takapau was also used during the initiation into te whare pora the weaving house also known as te whare parapara and whare takutaku in other districts (Mead, 2003). The whakairo pattern on takapau such as turi whati meaning bent knee of the weaver while weaving also refers to the stance of the warrior. When ready to go to war the warrior would stand crouched on the takapau, karakia would be recited and he would be endowed with psychological and spiritual strength (Te Kanawa, 2009). Presently, takapau are used during wedding ceremonies and tangihanga funerals. Usually, takapau are placed under the coffin to honour the tupāpaku or deceased (Puketapu-Hetet 2000), however there has been a resurgence of the old ways being practised in Parihaka, Taranaki where the coffin is no longer used and the tupāpaku is wrapped in takapau.

There are other types of whāriki. Puketapu-Hetet (2000) names and describes each variety;

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| • Tuwhara | A coarse mat placed under a fine mat |
| • Tienga, tianga, or porera | A fine kiekie mat usually patterned |
| • Tapora | A mat spread over the hangi |
| • Pokepoke | Coarse fire mat usually only one width wide |
| • Hipora | A coarse mat made from untreated harakeke |
| • Porapora | Plain mat |
| • Tapau or Tapou | Small mat to lie on |
| • Takapapa | Mat to spread food on |

The word whāriki has been expounded as meaning whā - ā - āriki meaning the four āriki or atua. The four atua are Tane, Tū, Rongo and Whiro. They sit at each corner of the whāriki and are a reminder to us of the attributes that we share with these atua (Rose Te Ratana, personal communication, May 5, 2005).

Mahi Tapahi



Figure 3: Lentfer, N. (2009) Correct cutting of harakeke.

The cut must be made from the inside of the rau outwards (as shown in Figure 3). This ensures the right angle of the cut is achieved, allowing rain to run off so that no rot occurs at the base or pūtake of the plant.

Takatu Harakeke

Takatu harakeke or flax preparation involves a lot of work. Weaving work is done away from food as food is associated with noa.



Figure 4: Tarei, R. (2011) Splitting midrib.



Figure 5: Tarei, R. (2011) Splitting margin.

Figures 4 and 5 show the first midrib and margin being removed. The margin contains less fibre and is weaker compared to the rest of the rau. The rau naturally tapers so removing the margin also aids in the next process.



Figure 6: Tarei, R. (2011) Marked widths.



Figure 7: Tarei, R. (2011) Splitting widths.

This process is called toetoe and involves splitting the rau into even widths (as shown in Figure 5 and 6). The rau now becomes whenu or strips.



Figure 8: Tarei, R. (2011) Cutting butts off.

Figure 8 shows the pūtake or butt-end being cut off. The pūtake is very hard and is not needed to weave whāriki.



Figure 9: Tarei, R. (2011) Hāpine of widths.

The hāpine technique softens the harakeke, making it pliable. This process usually occurs before and after boiling. After boiling the whenu dries to a slight curl, this is the right time to do the second hāpine. This takes out the excess moisture and helps to lighten the colour of the whenu.



Figure 10: Te Pou, M. (2011) Boiling harakeke.

The whenu are boiled in boiling hot water for approximately 4 minutes (as shown in Figure 10). The water will turn green at this stage. It is then hang out to dry in the sun. The sun also causes whenu to lighten in colour. Boiling occurs usually outside or at a ngāwhā or natural spa and not in a kitchen, again, this is because tapu is negated by cooked food.

The process of preparing harakeke can vary slightly but essentially every weaver will experiment, practice and develop a method that will achieve good quality prepared whenu ready for weaving. Further information regarding the preparation of harakeke is accessible on numerous online sites and books.

Whakapapa

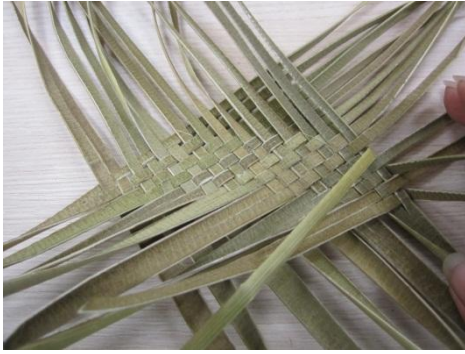


Figure 11: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Start of whakapapa.



Figure 12: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Continuing whakapapa.

Layering the whakapapa (as shown in Figures 11 and 12) sets the pattern and the tension. Tikanga states that once the whakapapa is started you cannot leave the weaving until the row is completed.

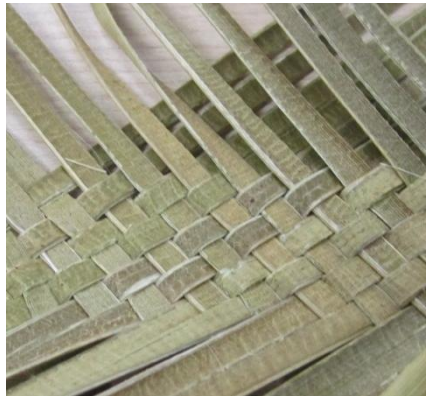


Figure 13: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Close up of takitahi weave.

The pattern shown is the takitahi, the over 1, under 1 twill (as shown in Figure 13). It is the strongest of all the weaving patterns. It is a reminder of values associated with working in the collective;

Ehara taku toa i te takitahi, engari he toa takitini.

My valour is not that of the individual, but that of the multitude. No one can survive alone (Brougham & Reed, 2004, p. 135).
My strength does not lie in working alone, rather my strength lies in working with others.



Figure 14: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Inserting the colours.

Figure 14 shows the inserting of colours into the whakapapa. Contemporary teri dye were used to achieve these colours. When weaving with colour on the whāriki it is said that one cannot stop work, the whakairo pattern must be completed. An instruction given was one must come back into the light referring to the white of the whāriki and referring to the colours or patterned area as the dark, te pō (Eddie Maxwell, personal communication, August 25, 2005).

The black (pouri, mangu and pango) represents the infinite void, the ultimate of possibilities also signifying the possibility of change and growth. Rangi and Papa, the first celestial parents came into being at this time.

Red conveys vitality and energy. It initiates activity and is the colour of clarity and purpose. Reverting to customary korero it is symbolic of te wehenga o Rangi me Papa, the separation of Rangi and Papa and the blood that spilled when Tane forced the separation of his parents. Te wehenga informs us of our Māori worldview on how creation began, how the atua behaved, thereby informing us of the origins of our own behaviour (Te Makarini Temara, personal communication, 2005).

The white symbolises te ao mārama, the world of light, the world in which we humankind live in.



Figure 15: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) First block of pattern Te Karu o te Whenua.

The pattern woven is called Te Karu o te Whenua literally translated as The Eye of the Land (as shown in Figures 15 and 16). The pattern symbolises kaitiakitanga. The pattern is shaped as a tapawhā square, with a negative and positive colour composition through the application of mathematical configuration.



Figure 16: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Whakapapa completed.



Figure 17: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) First papa.

One width is called a papa. Figure 17 show the papa nearly completed.

The intention of the whakairo is to weave four lots of pattern (te karu o te whenua) per row, and have four rows within four papa, a play on the *kupu* or word whā.

Hiki

The hiki is a technique used to add extensions of new whenu. Other names used are morua, maurua and hono. The following images show the step by step processes for replacing the dextrals hiki matau and the sinistrals hiki mauī. This technique was taught to me by whāriki weaver Kutiwera Te Maipi.

Hiki Matau



Figure 18: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki matau step 1.

1. Pull back whenu that needs to be replaced (as shown in Figure 18).



Figure 19: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki matau step 2.

2. Insert new whenu matau. It is called this is because the tip of the whenu points to the right (as shown in Figure 19).

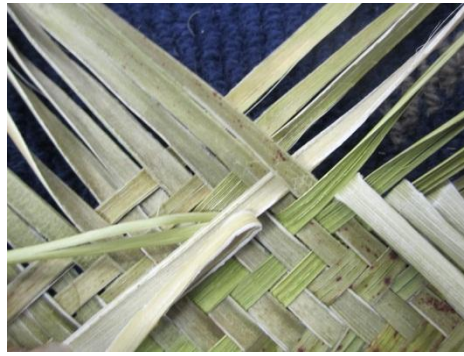


Figure 20: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki matau step 3.

3. Weave whenu maui (as shown in Figure 20).



Figure 21: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki matau step 4.

4. Pull back the next whenu matau that will be need to be replaced (as shown in Figure 21).

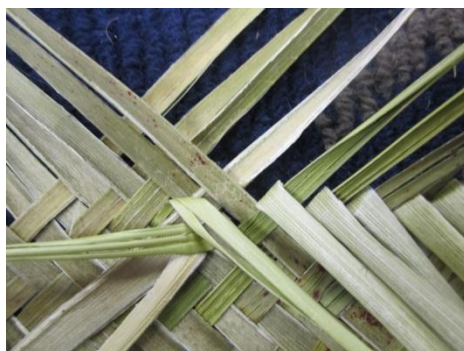


Figure 22: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki matau step 5.

5. Tuitui first whenu matau that needed replacing (as shown in Figure 21).

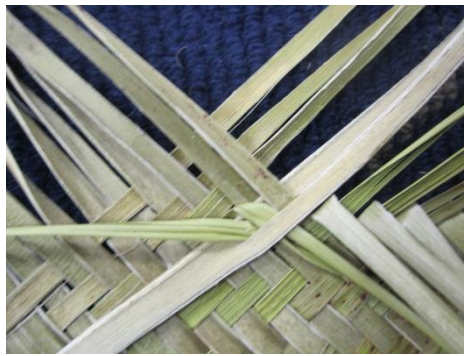


Figure 23: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki matau step 6.

6. Figure 23 shows the placement of a new whenu matau. The process starts again back at step 2 (as shown in Figure 19).

Hiki Maui

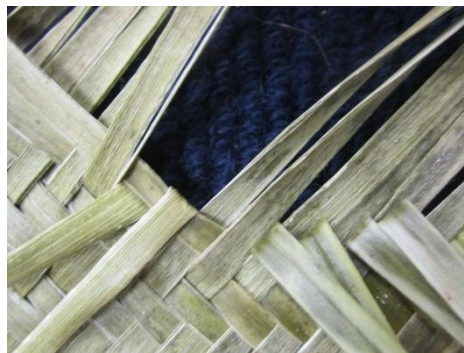


Figure 24: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki maui step 1.

1. Set up the takirua weave, 2 up, 2 down (as shown in Figure 24).



Figure 25: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki maui step 2.

2. Place new whenu maui (as shown in Figure 25).



Figure 26: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki maui step 3.

3. Lay whenu maui that needs to be replaced directly on top of new whenu maui (as shown in Figure 26).

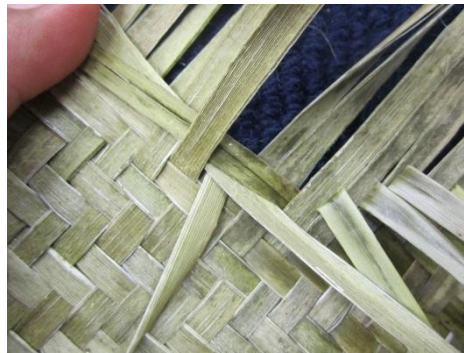


Figure 27: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki maui step 4.

4. Lock in with down whenu which now becomes an up (as shown in Figure 27).



Figure 28: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki maui step 5.

5. Bend over old strand (as shown in Figure 28).



Figure 29: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki maui step 6.

6. Figure 29 shows the pull down of the next ‘up’ making 2 downs and 2 ups. Go back to step 1 (as shown in Figure 24).

Nga Taha

When weaving the sides or nga taha the weave must be consistent. Note: the 1 / 3, 1/ 3 going into the takirua (as shown in Figure 30). This weave should occur on both sides of the whāriki.

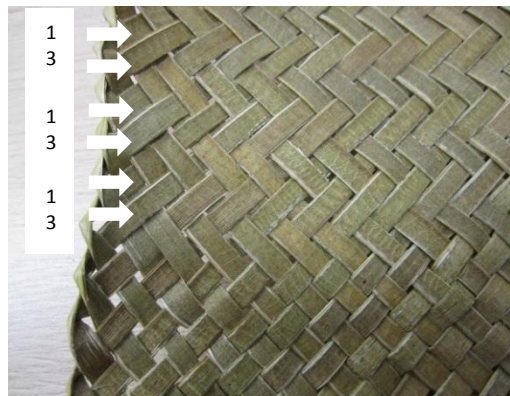


Figure 30: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Underside view of whāriki showing 1/3 side weave.

Hiki Iti

The long hiki is not woven to the very edge of the whāriki because of bulkiness. Figures 31 and 32 show small hiki or hiki iti woven just above the main hiki to extend those whenu left over.



Figure 31: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Hiki iti matau is woven on the left side of the whāriki.



Figure 32: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) The hiki iti mauī is woven on the right side of the whāriki.



Figure 33: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Second papa completed.

Figure 33 shows the second papa completed with all hiki processes completed.



Figure 34: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Weaving the third papa.

The third papa is started. Note: the mat pictured is used for sitting on the whāriki (as shown in Figure 34). The weaver is the only one allowed to be on the mat. If the weaver is in her menstrual cycle she is unable to sit on the whāriki. Mead (2003) explains “...a woman is especially tapu because of the flow of blood” (p. 49).



Figure 35: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Bent knee position.

Weaving the last papa in the bent knee position (as shown in Figure 35) is admittedly very uncomfortable. This weaving position was incorporated by early whāriki weavers and is known to have been a popular stance as the naming of a whakairo pattern ‘turi whatī’ suggests this. The position of the bent leg on the whāriki was used as a third hand to help keep the tension.

Tāpiki



Figure 36: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Beginning of tāpiki / cast off.

Figure 36 shows the tāpiki or cast off finishes off the woven part of the whāriki. This image shows the first papa with the butt ends. It is the harder part of the rau. If you cut most of it off and hāpine properly then the tāpiki is much easier to do.



Figure 37: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Whiri finish.

This is the completed tāpiki on the fourth papa. The last papa will always have a softer edge and because of this a whiri or plait (as shown in Figure 37) was implemented to ensure each whenu stays in place. The remaining whenu are plaited in two 4 ply whiri, tied off and secured firmly to the back of the whāriki.



Figure 38: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Tāpiki has been completed on both sides of the whāriki.

Whakapaingia te whāriki



Figure 39: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Blessing of whāriki.

The blessing of the whāriki commences with a karakia (as shown in Figure 39). At this time the name of the whāriki is given by one of our kuia from Kawerau, Katerina (Kaa) Te Pou. The name given is Whāmanawa. The four chambers in the heart. It's about the heart, the blood, the whakapapa, to you, to your tūpuna, to the atua (Katerina Kaa Te Pou, personal communication, January 30, 2012).

Te tapahitanga o Whamanawa



Figure 40: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) First cut of the whāriki.

Figure 40 is an image of the first tapahi or cut. Tapahi is done at the completion of the weaving and straight after the blessing.



Figure 41: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) The cut underside.

Figure 41 shows the tapahi completed, the whāriki is then turned over (as shown in Figure 42).



Figure 42: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) The topside of whāriki

There are certain ways to lay a whāriki when used at tangihanga and ceremonies such as weddings, blessings and births.

Te takahi o Whāmanawa



Figure 43: Te Pou, M. (2011) The first walk over the whāriki

At the conclusion, the whāriki is walked upon (as shown in Figure 43). This process is takahi whāriki, a tikanga practiced in Hauraki. This process clears away any remaining tapu. By women walking over the whāriki ensures that the state of noa/balance is attained.

Te tākoha i a Whāmanawa

The final purpose of weaving Whāmanawa was to tākoha or gift it (as shown in Figures 44 and 45). The handing over of taonga involves the underlying principle of tākoha or reciprocity. Whāmanawa is handed over and will lay at Te Pūrengi for providing safety and sheltering for me. The pattern te karu o te whenua denoting kaitiakitanga or guardianship seems very fitting in this sense, though I acknowledge that this term ‘kaitiakitanga’ has multiple stratum within this dissertation.



Figure 44: Fitzpatrick, H. (September 28, 2012)
Pōwhiri onto Te Pūrengi.



Figure 45: Fitzpatrick, H. (September 28, 2012)
Presenting the whāriki.

Dissemination of Knowledge

As a practitioner of weaving it is important that all characteristics of weaving are shared. This includes both the philosophical and practical aspects. Tikanga is very much a part of my teaching. This is what was taught to me by my teachers Rose Te Ratana and Kutiwera Te Maipi and this is what I am sharing with my taura or students. I believe that if you do not know the foundations which include tikanga, values and principles of weaving then the true essence of weaving is lost.

The preeminent approach for a weaver to acquire skills is through the teaching of another. This knowledge has been passed down through the ages, somebody taught you and somebody else taught them and so on. It can be discerned as a whakapapa of weavers.

The culture of weaving has always been disseminated through observation and practice. Well known weaver Kahu Te Kanawa aptly describes the innate learning style for the Māori weaver as being “the observable knowledge is the frequency of our consciousness” (Kahu Te Kanawa, personal communication, April 19, 2012). There is no such thing as a book weaver. This is especially relevant when learning te whare pora tikanga. Āhurutanga meaning safe place needs to be integrated within the learning environment to provide a learning space that enables best practices. A learning environment that allows both student and teacher to freely participate in kōrero or discussions pertaining to the deeper spiritual traditions and values of rāranga is necessary. This you cannot get from a book.

The following snapshots capture the journey of one of my students Nicky Gates. Figures 46-51 demonstrates Nicky Gates learning whāriki and fulfilling tikanga associated in the making of her whāriki.



Figure 46: Te Pou, M. (2011)
Knowledge sharing.



Figure 47: Aramoana, L. (2011) Te Waraki Te Ruki reciting the karakia or blessing for the student whāriki



Figure 48: Fitzpatrick, H. (2011) The cutting ceremony or tapahitanga o te whāriki.



Figure 49: Fitzpatrick, H. (2011) The turning over of the whāriki.



Figure 50: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) The walk over of student whāriki.



Figure 51: McRae-Tarei, J. (2011) Nicky Gates exhibiting her student whāriki.

Ngā Kete e Whā



Figure 52: McRae-Tarei, J. (2012) Kete series.

These four kete (as shown in Figure 52) were created as an extension of work alongside the whāriki. Kete are vessels as are weavers who are receptacles of knowledge. The pattern on each of the kete is ‘te karu o te whenua’ denoting kaitiakitanga or guardianship. As practitioners of Māori weaving it is our

responsibility to adhere to and ensure that the knowledge of weaving and maybe more important the spiritual traditions associated to weaving such as ritual of tikanga, Māori values and principles are nurtured and disseminated for our future generations.

Ko koe ki tena, ko ahau ki tenei, kiwai o te kete.
You have that handle of the basket, I'll have this handle of the basket, let us
together uphold the mana of weaving (Puketapu-Hetet, 2000, p. 53).

Chapter 5 Conclusion

At the time of early settlement, weavers fulfilled an integral role within the community as their skills were a necessity in their community's everyday activities. In fulfilling duties they undertook rituals that circumscribed each weaver through tikanga and the lore of tapu. European contact and settlement caused significant changes to Māori society, culture and way of living. The introduction of new materials allowed weavers to experiment, spearheading products of functional weaving items to an art-form as previously mentioned in the literature search. This also could provide an explanation in the breakdown of tikanga in toi rāranga. If we were to examine the simple substitution of wool over harakeke we could identify a further effect on the wairuatanga or spiritual side of rāranga. There would be no need to harvest, therefore no karakia or acknowledgement to the atua would be necessary, without this direct linkage to the atua causes an obstruction of oneness felt between the atua and the weaver. This simple seemingly innocent introduced material in effect diminishes tikanga and the mana, mauri and tapu of the weaver.

The theory and practice of the woven whāriki, Whāmanawa establishes that there are strong associations between Māori philosophy and the practices of tikanga to toi rāranga and the kairāranga. The traditions associated with toi rāranga has been established as being imperative to its preservation as a viable living art form therefore this research identifies that toi rāranga is sustainable and also validates space for the kairāranga as an indigenous artist. Furthermore, the handing over of the whāriki Whāmanawa to AUT is an exemplar that substantiates this space. In the making of Whāmanawa I adhered to the tikanga taught to me and have acknowledged and recorded both the practice of tikanga and the values that are associated. In doing so, I feel that I have contributed to the sustainability of tikanga practice in toi rāranga.

Finally the following waiata was composed by Reremoana Pitau and Hinetiki Karaitiana. It is the waiata that was sung during my final presentation and the hand-over of Whāmanawa to AUT. It succinctly speaks of the physical and spiritual preparation and production of Whāmanawa.

Taku whakataurite, taku whākinga

Nga Tanemāhuta raua ko Pākoki

Ka puta ko Harakeke

Hutia te rito o te harakeke

Kei hear a te korimako e ko

Ko taku whakahiwa

Kia kōtuituia te whenu whitoki

Kia hūtoto te wairua

Anō te rerenga waiwhero mai ngā atua

Ko taku tutoko

E whā ngā kete

E whā ngā ariki

Kia whiri ā rārangi

Kia whiri ā tukurua

E haumi ai ngā kōtuitui

Te tauira o taku whāriki

He tini ngā utiuti ā wairua ā hinengaro

Kua tutuki ngā Maruāpō

Ka tupu he ingoa

Ko Whāmanawa

My preparatory, my acknowledgements

Tane and Pākoki

Begat the Harakeke

When the heart is lacerated from the harakeke

Where will the bell bird sing

My aspirations are to intertwine the strands of the flax

And to unite the life force
Resembling the true bloodlines of our creator

My yearning is the four baskets of acknowledgement
The four guardians
To weave them in direct lines
And to repeat them
To form a network of weaves
This is the structure of my whāriki

The journey was spiritual and emotional
As my vision became complete a name emerges
Whāmanawa

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