

**A Kaupapa Māori study of pūrākau in enhancing understanding
of affective experience.**

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Birgit Whelan

Ngāti Awa

Tari Whakaora Hinengaro ā Whakangārahu | Department of Psychotherapy and Counselling

Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology

Supervisor: Wiremu Woodard

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Abstract

Pūrākau are ancient forms of narrative, which are “inspired from the natural, social and spiritual worlds of Māori” (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 31). This study offers an exploration of one of these pūrākau, which is the story of Hinepūkohurangi.

Hinepūkohurangi is the ariā (physical representation of an atua) of the mist, and at the heart of this pūrākau is the theme of impossible longing to hold that which is ephemeral. It is a story about love, loss, and grief.

In these themes, there was resonance with personal experiences of loss and bereavement over the years of my psychotherapy training. What emerged was a question about this pūrākau, and how narrative might assist in exploring and processing my affective experience, and offer a sense of emotional catharsis and insight.

Over the past twenty years in Aotearoa New Zealand there has been a burgeoning in the literature regarding the therapeutic use of pūrākau (Kopua, 2019; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Rameka, 2016; Rangihuna et al., 2018; Rolleston et al., 2020; Standing & Kahu, 2021; Waitoki & Levy, 2016) “in the growing kete called ‘Māori psychology’” (Cherrington, 2003, p. 117). The aim of this study is to contribute to this developing field of research, by considering the efficacy of pūrākau in enhancing understanding of affective experience. To this end, the research question being explored is, how does the pūrākau narrative of Hinepūkohurangi offer understanding of the experience of loss and grief?

The findings of this research support the therapeutic effectiveness of pūrākau narratives in exploring emotional experience. In this study, the qualities of metaphor, mythos, narrative holding and autobiographical reflection, which characterise the pūrākau and narrative inquiry process, were noteworthy in this regard. It is further established that pūrākau narrative-based models offer a culturally congruent therapeutic approach with tangata whaiora in Aotearoa New Zealand. A further contribution of this research is a methodological development of the tāniko research method, which is a form of pūrākau narrative inquiry within the Kaupapa Māori paradigm.

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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 used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), 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.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. White' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Date:

21 August 2023

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עליון אל

ישוע

הקודש רוח

לי שעזרת על לך תודה. אותך אוהב אני

Karakia

Whiti ora ki te wheiao
ki te ao marama
Whiti ki runga, whiti ki raro
E ngungu ki te kōhatu
E ngungu ki te rākau
Tītaha ki tēnei taha
Tītaha ki tērā taha
Tīhei mauri ora

Pepeha

Ko Pūtauaki te maunga
Ko Rangitaiki te awa
Ko Mātaatua te waka
Ko Ngāti Awa te iwi
Ko Ngā Maihi te hapu
Ko Tūteao te marae
Tīhei mauri ora

Introduction

It was in the sepia pages of an old book that I first encountered Hinepūkohurangi. I remember the feelings of enchantment at the ethereal scene of the kōhu (mist) through the rākau (trees), floating on the dark water of the lake before dawn, and embodied in the mystical beauty of Hinepūkohurangi, ariā (prosopopoeia of an atua) of the mist.¹

There was also the impression of her evanescence. Hinepūkohurangi, at rest with the slumbering ngahere (forest), but as the sky pales with first light, and fills with the song of the tūi and korimako (bellbirds), so she is gently embraced in the ether, evaporates, and is gone.

Over the years of my psychotherapy training, I have experienced various loss and bereavement. There was something of the ephemeral quality of Hinepūkohurangi which resonated with the emotional experience of this grief. What emerged was the question that informs this research. That question is, how does the pūrākau narrative of Hinepūkohurangi offer understanding of the experience of loss and grief?

There has been significant growth in research which explores the therapeutic use of pūrākau over the past twenty years in Aotearoa New Zealand (Cherrington, 2003; Kopua et al., 2020; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Rangihuna et al., 2018; Standing & Kahu, 2021). The aim of this study is to contribute to this developing field by considering the efficacy of pūrākau in enhancing understanding of affective experience.

Structurally, this exploration begins with the literature review which reflects on the socio-political context in Aotearoa New Zealand, within which this research question is located. In this regard, there is particular reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the second article principle of tino rangatiratanga (self-determination and authority), which guarantees Māori control over, and enjoyment of, material and cultural resources and taonga (property, treasure, that which is prized), and includes hauora (health) (Came et al., 2020), and rongoā (traditional medical and healing approaches and treatments) (Koea & Mark, 2020). In this vein, the advocacy of a distinctive Māori psychotherapy is explored (Mikahere-Hall et al., 2019; Morice & Woodard, 2011), and includes pūrākau as a therapeutic model.

¹ Translation of Māori terms is offered in the introduction (definitions) and method sections (where specialised terms are used) with the intentional use of te reo otherwise (with reference to Mikahere-Hall, 2017, p. 1).

Having provided the context for the research question, the next chapter considers the methodological approach in terms of the Kaupapa Māori research paradigm. In this context, the tāniko research method is introduced, which is a form of pūrākau narrative inquiry. This method uses the symbolism of the Māori artform of tāniko decorative weaving to illustrate three threads of the research process, which are woven together to create new patterns of meaning.

The process chapter follows, and demonstrates this method. This includes the sharing of the pūrākau text, as well as the subjective response to the narrative expressed in prose. This prose is guided by bibliotherapeutic principles such as identification with characters and narrative themes as well as emotional catharsis and insight (Shrodes, 1950). Where Kaupapa Māori research is experienced as transformative praxis (Smith, 1997), there is also reflection on the deepening of personal whakapapa knowledge (Edwards, 2009) which has informed this research process, and is constitutive of the tāniko weave.

Whakatutu refers to the weaving pattern that emerges at the intersection of the threads, and symbolises the findings of this research. These findings support the therapeutic efficacy of pūrākau narratives in exploring emotional experience. In this study, the qualities of metaphor, mythos, narrative holding and autobiographical reflection, which characterise the pūrākau and narrative inquiry process, are noteworthy in this regard.

The final chapter offers discussion on the way this study contributes to developing research promulgating pūrākau narrative-based models as a culturally congruent therapeutic approach with whaiora Māori. There is also reflection on the theoretical and therapeutic advancement of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems) endeavoured in this research, as well as methodological development regarding the tāniko research method. Where the scope of this study extends to the Aotearoa New Zealand setting, with particular reference to the experience of whaiora Māori, one possibility for further research identified in this chapter, relates to the clinical use of pūrākau as cultural taonga for Māori, by non-Māori practitioners and clients (Standing & Kahu, 2021).

At the heart of this research is the theme of story, and of the deep significance of story for Indigenous communities (Drawson et al., 2017; Lee, 2009), and in particular, for Māori (Rameka, 2016; Standing & Kahu, 2021). In this vein, the following reflection is offered as this exploration of story as healing begins:

The ancients among the People understood that all of creation - seen and unseen - tells story. In the long-ago time, from birth to earth, the People learned about their harmonious place in the order of all creation by listening to, and telling story. Their identity was inextricably interwoven in the stories they were told. For Native People, story was and continues to be essential to an individual's identity construction and development. (Francis, 2003, p. 77)²

² I wish to acknowledge Johnston (2008) where I first discovered this quotation and text.

Literature Review

The central theme of this research relates to the therapeutic use of pūrākau in enhancing the understanding of affective experience. The purpose of this part is to provide the background and context for this theme, with reference to the relevant literature in this field. The aim is to locate the research topic and question within the current socio-political setting in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the concomitant literature and theory, which advocates the efficacy of pūrākau narrative-based models as a culturally safe therapeutic approach through which whaiora might explore their experience (Rangihuna et al., 2018).

This literature review will be approached and developed in four parts. The first considers the contemporary mental health status of Māori, and recognises the disparity with non-Māori. The second establishes the legal and ethical imperatives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Aotearoa, which affirms the principle of tino rangatiratanga for Māori over our resources and taonga, which includes hauora and rongoā. The third reflects on the contemporary literature and theory which explores and advocates a Māori psychotherapy. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a survey of the research which explores the burgeoning of pūrākau in the therapeutic context with whaiora Māori, and highlights the ways in which this narrative approach is experienced as culturally congruent, effective, and transformative.

Māori and mental health in Aotearoa New Zealand

The Ministry of Health (2020) acknowledges continued “unfair and avoidable deficits in Māori health” (p. 6), with the Waitangi Tribunal (2021) referencing “the undeniably appalling Māori health statistics that still confront us” (p. 23). The significant disparities and inequity in Māori health is widely attested in the literature (Came & Tudor, 2016; Graham & Masters-Awatere, 2020; Hamley & Grice, 2021; Kopua et al., 2020; Chin et al., 2018; McKellar & Rodrigues, 2017; Morice & Woodard, 2011; Rae et al., 2023; Waitangi Tribunal, 2019; Wilson et al., 2018; Woodard, 2014), and is reflected in the incidence and prevalence of chronic and non-communicable disease (Oetzel et al., 2017), reduced life expectancy (Rolleston et al., 2020), poor access to services (Plessas et al., 2019), and in the experience of health systems in Aotearoa New Zealand (Bush et al., 2019).

There is further significant disparity in the experience of mental health for Māori (Abel et al., 2012; Clark, 2014; Jordan et al., 2021; Kvalsvig, 2018; Mikahere-Hall et al., 2023; Ministry of

Health, 2020, 2022; Plessas et al., 2019; Ruhe et al., 2023; Standing & Kahu, 2021; Theodore et al., 2022; Williams et al., 2018). The most recent report on mental health and addiction statistics in Aotearoa from the Ministry of Health (2022) indicates that Māori comprise 28.3% of all mental health service users despite representing only 17% of the population. In this regard, Rangihuna et al. (2018) describe “a larger proportion of Māori [presenting] to general practice mentally unwell” with “evidence of a larger burden of illness, underdiagnosis, [and] more frequent admission and readmission to secondary and forensic care” (p. 79). For Māori women, there is twice the consultation rate for anxiety, depression and substance abuse than non-Māori (Rangihuna et al., 2018). For Māori men, the rate of suicide has risen to its highest level in the past decade, and is more than double that of non-Māori men (RNZ, 2019), with “the world’s highest suicide rates” in Māori and Pacific Island youth (Mikahere-Hall et al., 2023, p. 328).

In addition to inequality experienced by Māori across social and physical determinants of health including, for example, education, employment, income, and housing (Chin et al., 2018; Morice & Woodard, 2011; Oetzel, 2017; Plessas et al., 2019), the causative effects of colonisation in Aotearoa are integral to understanding the diminished experience of toiora and psychological well-being by Māori (Bartlett et al., 2012; Jordan et al., 2021; Lindsay et al., 2022; McLachlan et al., 2021; Oetzel et al., 2017; Rangihuna et al., 2018; Rolleston et al., 2020; Taitimu et al., 2018; Valentine et al., 2017; Woodard, 2008). These effects include intergenerational trauma (McLachlan et al., 2017), dispossession of land and ecological alienation (Woodard & O’Connor, 2020), epistemological suppression (Woodard, 2014), as well as the loss of culture, language, and identity (Rolleston et al., 2020). In his research on these impacts of colonisation and Indigenous selfhood, Woodard (2008) observes a disruption at the essential level of ontology for Māori. His study explores the ways that this rupture has resulted in an interior sense of division and alienation expressed in whakamā and mate Māori, and suggests this as aetiological of psychological issues experienced by Māori.

Where this part of the literature review has served to offer insight into the current position of, and experience by Māori of mental health in Aotearoa New Zealand, the following section moves to consider this in light of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the government response to redressing these disparities and inequity.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the te reo Māori text of a founding constitutional document of Aotearoa New Zealand, establishing the relationship between representatives of the British Crown and rangatira of Aotearoa, which was signed in 1840. Te Tiriti consists of the preamble, three written articles, and the Ritenga Māori declaration (also referred to as the ‘fourth article’) (Ministry of Health, 2020). These provisions established Crown governance over their settlers and reaffirmed Māori tino rangatiratanga over their affairs and resources (Came et al., 2020), conferred Māori with the same rights and privileges as British subjects (Rae et al., 2023), and protected “religious freedom and traditional spirituality and knowledge” (Ministry of Health, 2020, p. 13; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2001).

The purpose of this part is to consider this principle of tino rangatiratanga, established in the second article, which guarantees Māori control over, and enjoyment of, material and cultural resources and taonga, and includes hauora (Came et al., 2020), and rongoā (Koea & Mark, 2020). Further, to explore in the literature the ways in which this principle of self-determination and authority is being applied and evidenced in the health and disability system, particularly in light of the disparities observed in the previous section.

The Waitangi Tribunal was established by the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 (s. 4), with jurisdiction to consider claims, and investigate breaches by the Crown (s. 6:1) of both Te Tiriti o Waitangi (te reo Māori text) and the Treaty of Waitangi (English language text) (s. 5:2), and to make recommendations accordingly (s. 5:1). In 2016, the far-reaching Health Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry: WAI 2575 was inaugurated, responding to over 200 health system grievance claims (Came et al., 2020). The complexity and scale of WAI 2575 means that the tribunal are adopting a three-phased approach for hearing evidence. In 2019, the tribunal’s stage one report focusing on the primary health care sector was released, and determined that “the Crown has failed to deliver equitable health outcomes for Māori and is therefore in breach of te Tiriti” (Came et al., 2020, p. 211). The following excerpt from the Waitangi Tribunal (2021) highlights the finding of failure specifically in relation to the principle of tino rangatiratanga in the second article:

Crucially, we found that the primary health care framework has failed to recognise and properly provide for tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake of hauora Māori. This failure has manifestly contributed to the inequitable health

status of Māori, who, on average, continue to have the poorest health status of any ethnic group in New Zealand ... (p. x).

In this regard, the Waitangi Tribunal (2021) have called for Crown recognition that the principle of tino rangatiratanga gives rise to Māori governance and decision-making power of hauora Māori, facilitating the well-being of whānau, hapū, and iwi. There is the further warning that “the consequences of not doing so are grave,” with the observation that “decades of Crown resistance and hostility to the guarantee to Māori of the right to cultural continuity – embodied in the article 2 guarantee of tino rangatiratanga ... have had a direct connection with poverty and disparities in many areas, including health” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2021, p. 9).

In the year following the WAI 2575 stage one report, the Ministry of Health (2020) published *Whakamaua: Māori Health Action Plan 2020–2025*, which sets out the government’s contemporaneous strategy for Māori health advancement. A commitment to Te Tiriti foregrounds this action plan, as well as the prioritising of the Waitangi Tribunal (2019) recommendations from WAI 2575 so far (as well as the subsequent stages) (Ministry of Health, 2020). In particular, there is the priority of ensuring tino rangatiratanga in terms of “Māori self-determination and mana motuhake in the design, delivery, and monitoring of health and disability services” as well as the provision of services “in a culturally appropriate way that recognises and supports the expression of hauora Māori models of care” (Ministry of Health, 2020, p. 73).

A question emerges at this point regarding how such cultural appropriateness might be achieved in health care service provision for Māori, and in a way which embodies Māori philosophy and cultural values? Where this section has considered the legal and ethical imperatives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and in particular, the second article principle of tino rangatiratanga in the context of the wider health and disability system, the following part moves to explore the literature promulgating “by Māori, for Māori” approaches (Rolleston et al., 2020, p. 2), with particular reference to the psychotherapeutic context.

Māori psychotherapy

The previous section highlighted the Ministry of Health (2020) priority of Māori self-determination of hauora Māori and the promotion of Māori models of care. The purpose of this part is to reflect on these themes as expounded in the psychotherapeutic literature, with

particular reference to the advocacy of a distinctive “Māori psychotherapy”³ as most effective at “meeting the needs and aspirations of Maori practitioners and Maori clients” (Morice, 2003, p. 15).

Regard for the articles and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is stipulated in the constitution of Waka Oranga (2018), and required by the ethical code of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) (2018), as well as the ethical standards of the Psychotherapists’ Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (PBANZ) (2020). There is also the requirement for the development of cultural awareness, competence, and safety, and the recognition that:

Most theories of psychotherapy that are practised in New Zealand emerged from a European or Western worldview. Māori have an established an [sic] ordered structure that promotes the health and wellbeing of those within Māori society. These constructs remain relevant as a way to view and understand the human person, and the relationships between all living things, the spiritual, physical, and emotional-psychological aspects of life. (PBANZ, 2019, p. 3)

In this vein, practitioner knowledge of “the effect of dominant cultural values when these are used to diagnose, pathologise or to compare those who do not identify with or live according to these values,” as well as knowledge of “various appropriate culture-specific approaches” is required (PBANZ, 2019, p. 6). It is acknowledged in the literature that since the 1980s, such culture-specific approaches in terms of Māori health models have been introduced, and have become more familiar in Aotearoa New Zealand (McLachlan et al., 2017; Kopua, 2019; Plessas et al., 2019; Rolleston et al., 2020; Standing & Kahu, 2021). These models include, for example (and non-exhaustively), Te Wheke (Pere, 1984), Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1985), Te Pae Mahutonga (Durie, 1999), the Meihana Model (Pitama et al., 2007), and Te Ao Tūtahi (as expounded by McNeill, 2009).

Integration of such approaches has been beneficial for whaiora Māori in terms of ameliorating a sense of marginalisation and alienation experienced of the health system otherwise (McNeill, 2009; Bush et al., 2019; Graham & Masters-Awatere, 2020), expedience in responding to the needs of Māori (Plessas et al., 2019), and as facilitative of epistemological agency (Plessas et al., 2019), therapeutic rapport and alliance (NiaNia et al., 2019), and psychological outcomes (McLachlan et al., 2017). Further wider socio-cultural benefits include the challenging of

³ Notwithstanding the observation by Huata (2010) that “[t]he term Māori psychotherapy is an oxymoron” (p. 5).

monoculturalism in the health system (McLachlan et al., 2021), and the broadening of conceptualisations and understandings of health (Hall et al., 2012).

Limitations and challenges persist however in terms of the paucity of published material on the implementation of Māori therapeutic models (Kopua, 2019) for example, and the underutilisation or misuse of these models in clinical practice (McLachlan et al., 2021). A further constraint in the use of Māori health models observed in the literature is a superficiality in cultural engagement by practitioners, and the call for deeper cultural and conceptual understanding of mātauranga Māori (Pitama et al., 2007; Mclvor, 2010; McLachlan et al., 2017; McLachlan et al., 2021; Rolleston et al., 2020). In this regard, Morice & Fay (2013) describe the possibility of “a series of tick-box rituals of compliance” by practitioners in the context of cultural competence (p. 95), and similarly, Pitama et al. (2007) refer to a “cultural check list” approach where “Māori beliefs, values and experiences” are “de-Māorified” (p. 120).

A cogent illustration and exposition of this ‘de-Māorification’ is offered by Rolleston et al. (2020) with regard to the clinical use of Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1985), which (relevantly) is ubiquitous in the literature (Abel et al., 2012; Akhter & Leonard, 2014; Anderson, 2023; Bush et al., 2019; Manna, 2003; McLachlan et al., 2017; McLachlan et al., 2021; McNeill, 2009; Morice & Fay, 2013; Pitama et al., 2017; O’Connor, 2007; Plessas et al., 2019; Rolleston et al., 2020; Smith & Tinirau, 2019; Taitimu et al., 2018; Waretini-Karena, 2013; Wirihana & Smith, 2019). In their reflection on “the misrepresentation and misinterpretation of Durie’s model” in the clinical context, Rolleston et al. (2020) distinguish the approach of “many non-Māori health practitioners” in this regard, from what is “typically” observed of “Māori working with Māori” (p. 130). The authors describe:

While Durie’s model is popular and often cited, the reason for this is possibly because the four cornerstones merely reflect Western holistic models of health, and thus simplistic translations of “wairua” to “spirituality”, for example, allow for conceptual assimilation. In reality, none of these concepts are translatable to Western frameworks, especially wairua, which is akin to a sub-atomic global essence that pervades all things, both living and inanimate (hence, the belief in telekinesis, dream travel, and the visionary ability of tohunga). The point being that, although Durie’s health configuration begins with Indigenous concepts, its production within the broader medical discourse soon disfigures, disassembles and reconfigures it to fit a Western medical taxonomy, and this epistemological

disfiguration was a core component of successful colonisation. (Rolleston et al., 2020, p. 130)

In response to this epistemological vitiation, the authors proceed to reflect on the recent findings of the Waitangi Tribunal (2019) in WAI 2575, advocating for “Māori-centric health service development and delivery,” and describe a “by Māori, for Māori” approach (Rolleston et al., 2020, pp. 130;131). This orientation is further reinforced in the particular context of mental health services, with Kopua (2019) and McLachlan et al. (2017) advancing Māori focused therapeutic approaches, as well as the wider referencing, exploration, and advocacy in the literature of a distinctive Māori psychotherapy (Dillon et al., 2014; Fleming, 2016; Hall et al., 2012; McNeill, 2009; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Mikahere-Hall et al., 2019; Morice, 2003; Morice & Woodard, 2011; Plessas et el., 2019; Waitoki & Levy, 2016; Woodard, 2014).

The development of Māori psychotherapy is explored by Mikahere-Hall et al. (2019) and Morice & Woodard (2011) and the authors identify as facilitative of this, the growth of Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis, the advancement of cultural competency in Māori and non-Māori practitioners, as well as the development of Māori practitioners through training programmes and collegial networks. Kopua (2019) contributes further by emphasising the significance of a confident connection with cultural heritage by Māori clinicians, which “can support them to foster or lead the development of Kaupapa Māori services and competently integrate Māori models with their daily clinical tasks” (p. 343).

So what might a Māori psychotherapy look like? What are some of the defining qualities and characteristics? In her research exploring these questions, Morice (2003) offers a comprehensive, rich, and hopeful illustration:

In light of Maori identity differences and holistic concepts of mental health, a Maori psychotherapy would be relational, inclusive, contextual and spiritual. It would reaffirm links to family and extended family, ancestors, land, social justice, economic self-sufficiency and political emancipation. It would make use of indirect, allusive, metaphorical communication as well as being literal and grounded in clients’ daily reality. It would seek to develop congruence between the client’s inner world and their actual life circumstances. It would offer hope where there is despondency, strengthen purpose where there is aimlessness, and expand awareness to include a felt sense of all that has been lost and might

be found again. It would be pro-Maori and positively value Maori relational concepts and Maori wisdom. (pp. 15-16)

This part of the literature review has explored the introduction of Māori models of health care over the past four decades, the related benefits for whaiora, as well as the ongoing hindrances to the advancement of these models. The culturally affirming attributes of an emerging Māori psychotherapy in Aotearoa have also been reflected on, with the following section building on this, by referring to a particular expression of mātauranga Māori in the clinical context in the form of pūrākau.

Pūrākau in therapeutic practice

Pūrākau might be defined as ancient, cultural forms of narrative, which embody “philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes and worldviews, that are fundamental to our identity as Māori” (Lee, 2009, p. 1). The protagonist and subject of the pūrākau might relate to our tīpuna, offering insight of their wisdom, choices, and behaviour for example, or alternatively, the pūrākau might convey creation and origin narratives, and stories of ngā atua Māori (including ariā). These narratives are passed down generationally (Rameka, 2016), and are regarded as sacred, and generative of knowledge, guidance, resiliency, and hope (Standing & Kahu, 2021).

In 2003, Cherrington identified pūrākau as a therapeutic model “in the growing kete called ‘Māori psychology’” (p. 117). She described that the therapeutic use of these is not new for Māori, however the related research and literature expounding this clinical use was sparse (Cherrington, 2003). Twenty years later, there has been a flourishing in the literature regarding pūrākau as a therapeutic model (Amopiu, 2020; Bush et al., 2019; Cherrington, 2016; Clifford, 2023; Elkington, 2011; Kopua, 2019; Lee, 2009; Lee, 2016; McLachlan et al., 2017; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Rameka, 2016; Rangihuna et al., 2018; Rolleston et al., 2020; Standing & Kahu, 2021; Swann et al., 2013; Tamanui, 2016; Te Nana, 2016; Waitoki & Levy, 2016; Wirihana & Smith, 2019). The objective of this final part is to explore this literature on the clinical use of pūrākau, to identify key strengths associated with the use of pūrākau, and further, to reflect on how these narratives are used with whaiora and whānau in terms of therapeutic process.

Where it has been observed that models of “Western academic scientific psychology” still dominate in Aotearoa New Zealand (Valentine et al., 2017, p. 64), and that such paradigms are inadequate for meeting the needs of whaiora Māori (Rangihuna et al., 2018), the therapeutic use of pūrākau demonstrates “a bold and confident way of reinstating Mātauranga Māori” and

has “immeasurable spiritual therapeutic value ... [in] gifting these ancient taonga (treasures) to those who are disconnected from them” (Kopua, 2019, p. 341).

This reinstatement and advancement of mātauranga Māori is especially significant in light of the colonial legal history of this country regarding the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907 (Florence & Mikahere-Hall, 2019; Koea & Mark, 2020; NiaNia et al., 2019; Woodard, 2014). This legislation served to bury rongoā Māori for over half a century, until the Māori Welfare Act (1962) (s. 44) repeal. This statutory preclusion (and criminalisation) of mātauranga Māori at the turn of last century, might be viewed as an example of epistemicide (as defined by Hall & Tandon, 2017). This suggestion is resonant with the findings of the Waitangi Tribunal (2011) which asserts that the Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) “symbolises the subordination of mātauranga Māori to European knowledge ... [and] represents an extreme example of the dominance of one of our founding systems of knowledge at the expense of the other” (p. 607).

The strengthening of cultural identity for whaiora Māori is also identified in the literature as a positive outcome associated with the therapeutic use of pūrākau (Cherrington, 2003; Kopua, 2020; Pihama et al., 2015; McLachlan et al., 2021; McNeill, 2009; Rameka, 2016; Standing & Kahu, 2021), and further, that strong cultural identity is a critical prerequisite for the attainment of well-being and mauri ora (Durie, 1999). An example of this reinforcement relates to the generational transmission of pūrākau (Rameka, 2016), and the potential for whakapapa kōrero, and a sense of whanaungatanga, as enhancing of cultural identity (McLachlan et al., 2017) as these narratives are shared and explored in the therapeutic space.

The question of *how* pūrākau is used in the clinical setting might be approached by first considering the context. This is collective, and includes whaiora, whānau and the practitioner team, in a wānanga process (Cherrington, 2003; Lee, 2009; Rangihuna et al., 2018). In this way, “a whānau-like relationship” and “secure, culturally safe base” is created, facilitating therapeutic exploration (Rangihuna et al., 2018, p. 80). In this environment, the pūrākau is shared. The relational themes and emotional experience which emerge in these stories (of atua pūrākau) include, for example, generational conflict, sibling rivalry, deception, incest, shame, rage, revenge, nurturing, loss and grief.

The process which then ensues is described in terms of modelling therapy (Cherrington, 2003) where the protagonists of the stories act as “therapeutic peer models,” and provide character and relational illustrations, which enable client reflection on where there is personal resonance and identification, and where there are differences (p. 118). The narratives also offer the

normalising of experience, alternative possibilities and solutions to problems (Cherrington, 2003), and can engender hope for whaiora regarding “the possibility that they too have a healthy future trajectory” (Rangihuna et al., 2018, p. 80). In this regard, Rameka (2016) refers to ideal and aspirational as well as instructional and validating qualities of such stories.

Conclusion

The aim of this part has been to reflect on the literature relating to the therapeutic use of pūrākau with whaiora Māori, and the effectiveness of this, and concludes this chapter.

This literature review has endeavoured to locate the research question within the current socio-political setting in Aotearoa New Zealand, by analysing the disparity in the mental health status of Māori, and the legal and ethical imperatives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The last two sections explored the characteristics and benefits of a distinctive Māori psychotherapy for whaiora, and specifically, the therapeutic use of pūrākau.

Where the research question informing this dissertation relates to the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi, and the way this narrative might enhance affective understanding, the next chapter moves forward to consider the methodological approach with which this question will be considered.

Methodology

At the heart of this research is the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi, and the question of how this narrative of the ariā of the mist offers understanding of the experience of loss and grief? Where it has been observed that “a Māori approach to research addresses the research issue at hand from a uniquely Māori perspective” (Ware et al., 2018, p. 46), the methodology informing this study reflects this epistemological congruence in terms of the Kaupapa Māori research paradigm.

The following chapter is structured in two parts. The aims of the first part are to reflect on the nature of Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis, define some of the key characteristics, and identify why this methodological approach is apposite for exploring this research question. The second part considers research design and method, and introduces an approach which has been developed in the context of this study. This research method is a form of pūrākau narrative inquiry, and draws on the Māori art forms of tāniko (decorative weaving) as a metaphor for the research process. Accordingly, it is called the ‘tāniko research method,’ and consists of the approaches to data collection, synthesis, and analysis⁴ in relation to the pūrākau narrative. The creation of this method responds to the possibility of methodological innovation and development of indigenous research paradigms (Porsanger, 2004).

Kaupapa Māori research

An understanding of Kaupapa Māori research, might begin with the awareness that this methodology is first grounded in a way of being. This orientation is compellingly described by Pope (2008):

Kaupapa Māori is not something that can be read up on thereby achieving a sufficient level of literacy. While a growing collection of relevant literature can be found on many library shelves, it will not provide all that you need to know ... It is not a matter of rules, conventions, tips and tricks ... This methodology is different, and perhaps more importantly, must be approached differently. Most

⁴ Where these descriptors of research method are resonant with Western systematic methodologies (Berryman et al., 2008), they are conceptually relevant in this context in terms of the processes of content generation, gathering, and reflection, derived from indigenous epistemology.

methodologies you can learn and do, Kaupapa Māori you must *be* [italics added]. (p. 69)

This way of being requires what Bishop (1996) describes as the development of “cultural consciousness” (p. 224), which is “a way of knowing that is born of time, connectedness, participation and commitment” (as cited in Pope, 2008, p. 70). This is complemented by Irwin’s (1992) reference to the concept of conscientisation (Freire, 2001) as part of this methodological process, which is a neologism conveying “the idea of developing, strengthening, and changing consciousness” socio-politically (Montero, 2014, p. 269). In this regard, Kaupapa Māori research is also conceived of as transformative praxis (Smith, 1997) where the researcher is changed by the research (Ellis, 2006), not only in terms of knowledge and awareness, but also at the level of identity and being.

It is out of this consciousness that Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis emerge, with the following characteristics identified by Smith (1992) as defining Kaupapa Māori methodology:

1. is related to ‘being Māori’;
2. is connected to Māori philosophy and principles;
3. takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori, and the importance of Māori language and culture; and
4. is concerned with ‘the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well being. (Smith, G., as cited in Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 187)

A further defining quality of Kaupapa Māori methodology is a collectivist orientation in terms of research approach and dissemination (Bishop, 1999; Irwin, 1992; Smith, 1997; Pope, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). In this regard, Pope (2008) recounts the process of obtaining iwi support in a marae context for a proposed thesis topic, Bishop (1999) describes a “whānau of interest” research group as constitutive of research strategy (p. 4), and Irwin (1992) references the mentorship of kaumātua through her research process. The theme of reciprocity regarding research outcomes is further highlighted by Smith (1997) where “individuals [have] an obligation to contribute and share this knowledge to the collective benefit of the group” (pp. 176-177).

Having identified and explored some defining characteristics of Kaupapa Māori research, another question to consider is why *this* methodology for *this* research on pūrākau? The first reason is one of epistemological consistency and congruence. Tuhiwai Smith (2012) describes of Kaupapa Māori, that “we have a different epistemological tradition, one which frames the way

we see the world, the way we organize ourselves in it, the questions we ask and the solutions that we seek” (p. 190). In this regard, there is correspondence with pūrākau which emerge from this same metaphysical foundations (Nepe, 1991) and epistemological tradition (Lee, 2009).

In research which relates to Māori cosmological narratives and the atua pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi, there is further methodological congruence and amenability with Kaupapa Māori where spirituality is constitutive of mātauranga Māori (Lindsay et al., 2022; Martel et al., 2022; McNeill, 2009; Wehipeihana & McKegg, 2018). To this end, Yates-Smith (1998) describes “a spiritual dimension to Māori attitudes to knowledge which is alien to the usual Pākehā research activities” (p. 24).

Having considered why Kaupapa Māori is appropriate for this research, there is also the question of why *not* another methodological frame? The socio-political history and philosophical soil out of which Kaupapa Māori methodology has emerged in Aotearoa New Zealand offers significant insight in response to this question. In this regard, Tuhiwai Smith (2012) references the inextricable link for indigenous people between “the term ‘research’” and “the worst excesses” of “European imperialism and colonialism” (p. 1). The ideological perpetuity of this colonial hegemony in educational and social research has been observed by Bishop (1999) who defined this as “epistemological racism” (p. 1). Kaupapa Māori methodology emerged as part of the revitalisation movement of the 1970s and ‘80s in this country, where there was “an intensification of a political-consciousness among Māori communities,” as an ideological form of challenge and resistance to this “dominance of a Pakeha worldview in research” (Bishop, 1999, p. 2).

While such ideological dominance is resisted, it is important to observe that this does not preclude however, an engagement and dialogue with Western psychotherapeutic theory (see, for example, Bartlett et al., 2012; Lee, 2009; NiaNia et al., 2019; Martel et al., 2022; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Ware et al., 2018). This is expounded by McIvor (2010), who describes that “the project of decolonization does not mean a full rejection of Western influenced theory, writing, or research” (p. 140), especially where this conversation might benefit or enrich the research outcomes for Māori (Mikahere-Hall, 2017). In this regard, this research also connects and dialogues with Western psychotherapeutic theory, albeit with the “foundational Indigenous research paradigm ... [of Kaupapa Māori methodology] firmly in place” (McIvor, 2010, p. 140).

Conclusion

In this part, Kaupapa Māori methodology has been characterised in terms of social justice, where research is carried out by Māori in a way that recovers histories, ways of knowing, and resources (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). It is a research paradigm that is culturally safe for Māori and politically conscientised (Irwin, 1992). Further, it upholds the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi (Bishop, 1999; Martell et al., 2022; Oetzel et al., 2017) such as the second article principle of tino rangatiratanga in the research process (Yates-Smith, 1998). It seeks to preserve “indigenous traditions, languages and cultural practices,” and “to revitalize ... [and] regain physical, psychological and spiritual health” (Porsanger, 2004, p. 113) for whaiora Māori.

Method

Where the first part of this chapter explored the nature of Kaupapa Māori methodology, this part progresses with a description of research method and design, and introduces an approach which has been created in the context of this study. Prior to introducing this, the background and context out of which this research method has emerged, is shared.

In a group supervision hui for our research, we were exploring the Pacific methodology of Talanoa (Vaioleti, 2006). As part of this reflection, I became intrigued with a research method referenced by Vaioleti, developed by Thaman (1992), using the metaphor of kakala. The Tongan concept of kakala refers to fragrant flowers, fruit, leaves, and wood, which are gathered, woven together in a garland, and then gifted to the bearer for a particular occasion, and symbolises faka'apa'apa (respect) and 'ofa (compassion or love) (Thaman, 1992). This cultural metaphor analogises constituents of the research process for Thaman (1997)⁵ regarding the toli (gathering), tui (making), and luva (giving) of knowledge, and woven together in a garland, or “cultural synthesis,” of “the information, stories, emotions and theorising” (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 21).

The beauty and imagery of this metaphor felt evocative, and as I shared this with our research group, we considered together the cultural specificity of kakala. In this regard, there is resonance with a reflection by Thaman (1992) on the development of her kakala research metaphor where

⁵ Vaioleti (2006) references Helu-Thaman's (1997) “tui kakala (metaphor) method” (p. 21) based on an unpublished presentation, Kakala: A Pacific concept of teaching and learning. Keynote address, Australian College of Education National Conference, Cairns.

she encourages, “I suggest that we look towards the source - our cultures - for some answers to questions about teaching and learning: about content as well as method ... When I look towards my cultural source, what I find is the metaphor of kakala” (Thaman, 1992, p. 92). Our supervisor encouraged an immersion in our unique contexts and areas of study, and invited a similar kind of methodological creativity and innovation in research design, should this emerge.

The imagery of weaving stayed with me. I was reminded of my experience of raranga using harakeke as a child, and of a beautiful tāniko tīpare gifted by my father. The possibility of tāniko emerged as a metaphor for my research method.

I began to learn about Māori weaving from the writing of Puketapu-Hetet (1999), where she describes:

In Māoridom, weaving is acknowledged as having its own life force ... [it] is more than just a product of manual skills ... weaving is endowed with the very essence of the spiritual values of Māori people. The ancient Polynesian belief is that the artist is a vehicle through whom the gods create. Art is sacred and interrelated with the concepts of mauri, mana and tapu. (pp. 1-2)

In this reflection, there is the sense of the cultural richness of raranga as being imbued with spirituality, and with the epistemology and axiology of Māori. A further impression emerged from an interview with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (2012), where Puketapu-Hetet shared an anecdote of her four-year-old mokopuna being introduced to the art of tāniko:

... She thinks she’s weaving, but she’s *playing* with the tāniko ... she’s getting to know the *material*. The smell of it, the sight of it, the sound of it, the *touch* ... and the *taste*, because she’s got to put things in her mouth! ... That is all the first stages of learning. (3:44 – 3:59)

In this illustration, I was struck by the sensory descriptors and experiential nature of this introductory learning of te kaupapa tāniko. “From the beginning,” Puketapu-Hetet (1999) describes, “it must be understood that Māori weaving cannot be taught by books alone ... what the teacher conveys cannot be felt through the pages of a book” (p. 2).

As my supervisor and I reflected on this theme of learning by *experiencing* tāniko, he suggested the possibility of connecting me with a raranga group. It was with this group of weavers that I came to be introduced to Māori weaving ā-kanohi (to see in person). Through

kōrero (conversation) and kitenga (seeing, observing), I learnt aspects of tikanga (customary system of values and practices) relating to raranga (weaving), as well as methods of harvesting flax from the pā harakeke (flax bush), and bark from the ngahere (bush or forest), the process of muka (preparing flax fibre), as well as patu (striking) the bark in preparation for producing tae (dye), such as the tānekaha (brown to brick-red) and raurēkau (yellow) colours for the weaving strips. I also saw products of weaving, such as kōnae (small basket, envelope), kete whiri (plaited basket), kete whakairo (patterned basket), kākahu (clothing), and korowai (ornamented cloak). I was gifted the opportunity to photograph these kete, and share them in this research.

Figure 1:

Kete by Kiriana O'Connell



I was also introduced to the technique of tāniko, and the wairuatanga and intentionality that imbues this art form, as well as the length of time, detail, and dedication of this process. In this regard, one of the weavers shared that it had taken one year to weave a beautiful korowai as a gift for a special occasion for a family member, with an embroidered tāniko panel at the bottom. The tāniko pattern is in a diamond, or flounder fish shape, called pātiki. This is illustrative of providing for, and feeding the whole whānau. It is symbolic of abundance, hospitality, and looking after others. I was also gifted the opportunity to photograph and share this.

Figure 2:

Korowai with Tāniko woven by Kiriana O'Connell



These experiences inspired the idea of tāniko as a metaphor for my research process and method. Where Puketapu-Hetet (1999) characterises this weaving as “a living taonga” which is intended for, and passed on to others “to give pleasure, and usefulness to humankind” (pp. 2; 5), there is beauty in the possibility of such endeavour similarly inhering the research process.

It has been observed that the “methods employed within research must be usefully aligned with the chosen methodology and reflect the traditions and values found within the philosophical structure from an indigenous perspective” (Mikahere-Hall, 2017, p. 6). There is such correspondence as the wairuatanga, epistemology, axiology, and endeavour “to preserve, maintain and restore indigenous traditions ... and cultural practices” (Porsanger, 2004, p. 113) is consistent across this dissertation in Kaupapa Māori methodology, in the cultural art form of tāniko, and in the use of this metaphor for the research method that has emerged.

Taniko Research Method

The aim of this part is to introduce the tāniko research method by describing the three constitutive stages of this research process, which analogue the three threads of the tāniko weave. These are the aho tapu (sacred first line) which symbolises the process of deepening cultural consciousness; the whenu (longitudinal) thread which symbolises the selection and sharing of the pūrākau narrative; and lastly, the aho (horizontal) thread which symbolises the subjective response of the recipient to the pūrākau.

The chapter which follows is called whakatutu (weaving pattern), which is illustrative of what has emerged at point of intersection of these three strands, and symbolises the research findings.

Figure 3:

*Tāniko Weave by Jasmine Mere Te Uia*⁶



⁶ My niece, Jasmine Mere Te Uia, drew and contributed this image of the tāniko weave to illustrate the method which is based on (Mead, 2019) graphics (p. 103).

Aho tapu: Deepening cultural consciousness

The tāniko weaving technique begins with the aho tapu thread which means, sacred first line. The aho tapu is especially significant as it determines the pattern that will emerge. Puketapu-Hetet (1999) describes, “the need for privacy when the first row of tāniko weaving is being done is essential ... The row is called aho tapu and requires a great deal of concentration, as this is where the pattern is set” (p. 4).

The bearing of the aho tapu in this regard, and the ‘consecrated’ nature of this process at the outset, has metaphorical resonance with the process of the deepening of cultural consciousness which precedes and characterises the Kaupapa Māori paradigm (Bishop, 1996; Pope, 2008). As the aho tapu sets the tāniko pattern to come, this process of developing cultural consciousness is personally transformative (Ellis, 2006), and inheres and influences the form of the emerging research, where “our ideas are not separate from who we are” (Johnston, 2008, p. 214).

An important example of growing cultural consciousness, where possible, is the engagement with whakapapa.⁷ As “the most sacred of Māori knowledge” (Paenga & Paenga, 2008, p. 238), and an important contextual and conceptual part of Māori learning process (Bishop, 1996), the following definition of whakapapa is offered by Rameka (2016):

Whakapapa is a continuous lifeline from those who existed before to those living today, encompassing everything that is passed from one generation to the next ... it is one’s whakapapa that makes one who one is, literally ... Whakapapa, therefore, is fundamental to Māori understandings and is at the very core of what it means to be Māori. (p. 389)

What is conveyed in this definition is that whakapapa is essential, relational, epistemological, and defining of ontology and identity. In these ways, the deepening understanding of this knowledge informs the process of developing cultural consciousness, and is personally transformative. The form or approach that this exploration might take includes for example, whakapapa kōrero with whānau and whanaunga (Wirihana & Smith, 2019), and returning to our whenua tupuna (McLachlan et al., 2021). In terms of research method, this experience of

⁷ There is acknowledgement however, of the experience of alienation from whakapapa for some Māori (McIntosh, 2005; Rameka, 2018). As McLachlan et al. (2017) observe, “it cannot be assumed that those who identify as Māori will have access to their whakapapa (genealogical) connections” (p. 47).

deepening of “whakapapa knowledge” (Edwards, 2009, p. i) is expressed in reflective prose and photography.

Whenu (longitudinal) thread: The pūrākau narrative

Where the tāniko pattern emerges at the crossing of the whenu (longitudinal) thread and the aho (horizontal) thread, the whenu symbolises the pūrākau narrative. This research stage involves the selection and sharing of the particular pūrākau narrative, which is the focus for reflection.

This research stage is modelled on the selection and sharing of the pūrākau in the therapeutic setting (Cherrington, 2003; Rangihuna et al., 2018; Kopua et al., 2020). This unfolds in a recitation of the pūrākau narrative (or the relevant parts) in a wānanga context enabling whaiora familiarisation, and identification with particular characters and narrative themes. Cherrington (2003) identifies this wānanga process as an “essential element when using pūrākau in assessment and therapy” (p. 118).

In terms of identifying limitations of research method, one is that this process of pūrākau sharing is not in a wānanga format in a dissertation context. In this regard, the pūrākau reflection in text form is more analogous with a bibliotherapeutic approach (as defined by Shrodes, 1950). Bibliotherapy is “synonymous with reading therapy, book therapy, and litera-therapy” (McCulliss, 2012, p. 23), and refers to “the use of reading to produce affective change and to promote personality growth and development” (Lenkowsky, 1987, p. 123).

This whenu stage of the research method involves the sharing of the relevant parts of the pūrākau narrative in the form of a written excerpt. Cherrington (2003) identifies that this “re-telling [of] the story” is “the most important part of using pūrākau,” and can also include other creative expressions such as “waiata, haka, poetry, drama, sculpting, painting, drawing” (p. 118), and in this vein, the research method also includes photography.

Aho (horizontal) thread: Subjective response

As the aho thread is brought forward, and wrapped around the whenu, so this symbolises the subjective response and affective process in relation to the pūrākau narrative.

In this regard, in the therapeutic setting, the use of pūrākau is viewed as a form of narrative therapy (Aguilera et al., 2020; Bush et al., 2009; Cherrington, 2003; Clifford, 2023; Kopua, 2019; Standing & Kahu, 2021; Rangihuna et al., 2018). This process involves the “trusted cultural narrative,” the “collaborative positioning of the therapist,” and takes the form of “externalising the problem,” and “excavating unique outcomes,” providing “a ‘way forward’ that is not based on the prevailing psycho-medical model” (citing Carr, 1998, Rangihuna et al., 2018, p. 81).

These qualities correspond with bibliotherapy, which informs this stage of the tāniko research method. In this vein, McCulliss (2012) considers the seminal work of Schrodes (1950) on bibliotherapeutic process and describes:

[Shrodes] used a psychodynamic model with imaginative literature to elicit an original response from the reader. This included: identification (client alignment with information, storyline or characters), catharsis (client experience of emotional release), and insight (client understanding of own processes). (p. 27)

A further observation from bibliotherapeutic models is that the “feelings and thoughts generated by the material [for the client] were thus integrated and directed toward personal growth” (McCulliss, 2012, p. 27).

These qualities of identification, catharsis, and emotional insight, characterise the subjective response to the pūrākau narrative. They are explored in personal reflections, expressive writing, and photos recorded over the course of this dissertation process.

Conclusion

At the outset of this chapter, Kaupapa Māori research was expounded as the methodological paradigm for this research. This part has progressed with description of the research method. This method has been created as part of this research process as a form pūrākau narrative inquiry, and is called the tāniko research method. The three constitutive stages of this process,

which analogise the three threads of the tāniko weave have been detailed. The following chapter illustrates these aho tapu, whenu, and aho processes.

Figure 4:

Tāniko Weave and Design by Jasmine Mere Te Uia⁸



⁸ Based on (Mead, 2019) graphics (p. 103).

Process

The question being asked in this research is how the pūrākau narrative of Hinepūkohurangi offers understanding of the experience of loss and grief? In the previous chapter, the tāniko research method was introduced as the way in which this question will be explored. The aim of this part is to move into this process. This will be approached in the three stages analogous with the three-thread process of tāniko embroidering: the aho tapu (deepening cultural consciousness), the whenu (the pūrākau narrative), and the aho (subjective response). Each part offers personal reflection, prose, and photography recorded throughout this process, which endeavour to illustrate my associations, and aspects of my emotional experience and learning. It is the objective of the next chapter to consider the meaning of these responses in terms of research findings. This is symbolised as the whakatutu (weaving pattern) which emerges at the intersection of the three tāniko strands.

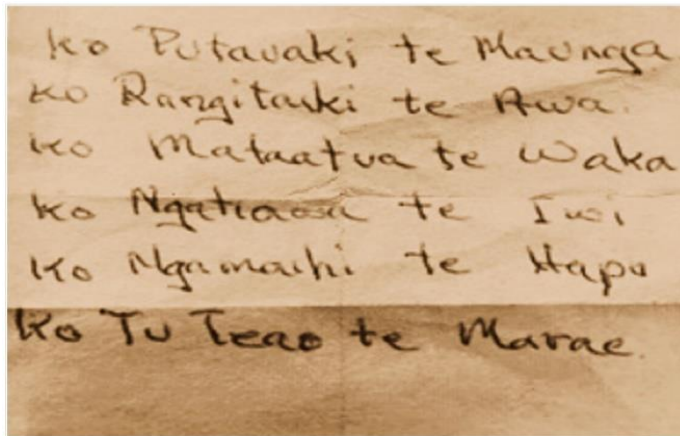
Aho Tapu: Deepening cultural consciousness

Where Kaupapa Māori research emerges out of a deepening of cultural consciousness (Pope, 2008), and the deepening apprehension of whakapapa as an expression of this (Bishop, 1996), my own dissertation process reflects this. This desire to grow in the understanding of my whakapapa had its roots in experiences of my first year of psychotherapy training. The following prose begins with an example of this, which was a personally confronting experience in a first-year class where we were each invited to share our pepeha. The prose reflections and photography then progress with impressions and stories of this journey of growing my whakapapa knowledge (Edwards, 2009), which was the soil out of which I rediscovered the atua pūrākau narratives.

Pepeha

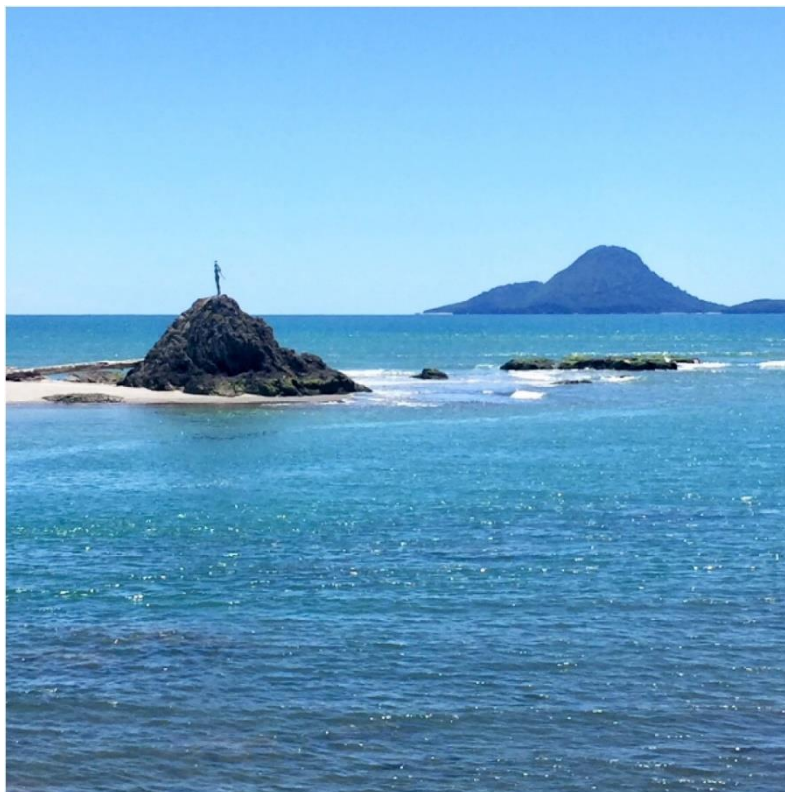
My hands were shaking as I stood before our class, and looked down to read my pepeha ... I felt the betrayal of my words ... Words of my tūrangawaewae - my place to stand - in a place I have never stood ... Words of my maunga and awa and marae as if they were so familiar, and yet they were so unfamiliar on my lips ... And in this dissonance, there was invitation ... a call to the whenua which holds the bones and blood of my tīpuna ...

Figure 5: *Pepeha in Koro's Hand*



Whenua

Figure 6: *Wairaka at Whakatāne Heads*



Note. 'The Lady on the Rock' bronze statue by Jim Allen, 1965, Turuturu Roimata Rock, Whakatāne Heads

I gathered my mother and my aunt and we travelled together to the whenua of our iwi, Ngāti Awa, in Whakatāne. We were met by Wairaka, the daughter of Toroa, who captained the waka from which we descend, the Mātaatua.

There was Te Teko, and the gravel carpark of the local shop, and the warm, weather-beaten smile of whanaunga pointing us on our way to Tū Te Ao (the marae from which we descend) ... There were the laughs and shrieks of tamariki on the banks of the Rangitaiki (our awa) on a hot summer afternoon ... and the field of long grass and sunflowers in the valley of Pūtauaki (our maunga), standing in the ancient steps of our tīpuna ...

Tīpuna

I like to think of it as meeting our tīpuna there ... One of these meetings was an unexpected encounter in the Mātaatua wharenui ... My mother and aunt and I were told stories of this majestic meeting house of 1875 ... constructed in the aftermath of the raupatu (land confiscation) ... like a standard raised by our tīpuna ... a statement to the pertinaciousness of our people ... and as my whānau and I are welcomed in this place, our whanaunga who is guiding us, beckons me over to one of the pou-tūā-rongo (internal wharenui post) ... I am standing there beneath a carving of one who is formidable,⁹ a mere of pounamu in his hand ... And there, I am introduced to my grandfather, with a century between us ... Ariki Tikitu I ... His name means 'unconquered' and he stands in that whare, the Mātaatua, in the company of the other chiefs of Ngāti Awa ... the pillars of our people ... I am standing there beneath him, in person, and in the generations of our whakapapa.

⁹ (Mead et al., 2017, pp. 200-203).

As the aho tapu is laid with these experiences of journeying with my whānau to our awa and maunga, encountering our tīpuna, and engaging in whakapapa kōrero with whanaunga, there is the awareness that this learning about whakapapa is “a never-ending beginning” (Jackson, 2008, p. 27). As the baskets of knowledge of Maui were boundless in the possibilities for insight and understanding, there is the sense of this with whakapapa knowledge as well (Jackson, 2008), as a life-long endeavour “with no end to the questions that can be asked” (p. 29). This is the ‘sacred first thread.’

Whenu: The pūrākau

As the whenu meets the aho tapu in the tāniko weave, this next thread symbolises the selection and sharing of the pūrākau. This selection emerged as the whakapapa kōrero continued with my whānau beyond Whakatāne, as my mother shared memories of being drawn to her Māoritanga as a child. This found expression in a book she was gifted at this time, which has since been passed on to me. The story of Hinepūkohurangi was chosen from this book, as the following prose conveys:

The scent of pūrākau

On my mother’s tenth birthday, my grandparents gifted her a book. She describes an instinctive draw to her Māoritanga as a child, and the way that she treasured this gift as the chance to read these stories of Māui, Tānemahuta, and Tangaroa, and the voyage of the Mātaatua from Hawaiki, from which she descends ... These stories were so treasured by my mother, that many years later she passed them on to me. It is in these sepia pages, that I first encountered Hinepūkohurangi and Uenuku, and their love ... I remember my early readings of this pūrākau and the feelings of enchantment at the ethereal scene of the kohu through the rākau, floating on the dark water of the lake before dawn, and embodied in the mystical, Hinepūkohurangi. I wondered at the beauty of this allegory. What had been taonga for my mother, was now taonga for me ... I open the book, and there is the scent of a century (almost) in these pages ... From my grandparents, to my mother, to me ... Whakapapa here in these words ...

The book is called *Myths and Legends of Maoriland*, and was written by A. W. Reed, and published in 1946. Although Reed's rendition of these pūrākau has come under important critique contemporarily (see, for example, Calman, 2004; Lee, 2009; Pohatu, 2011), in the context of a "monolingual and monocultural" educational setting in 1950s New Zealand" (Tocker, 2017, p. 115), where my mother did not have access to atua pūrākau otherwise, the opportunity to experience these narratives in this way was valued and meaningful. It is also the way that I first came to learn about these pūrākau, which is redolent of meaning and memories for me, captured even in bibliosmia;¹⁰ in the scent of these pages. It is this relationship with this text that inspires its use here.

Of the many pūrākau narratives, the story of Hinepūkohurangi and Uenuku was chosen for this study. As I reflect on the reasons for this choice, it is because of a strong emotional resonance between the quality of the kohu and my own experience of loss and grief over the years of my training. There is also resonance in the themes of this narrative of love, the treasuring of moments together, and an inevitability of the end. The following page offers an excerpt of this story of Hinepūkohurangi and Uenuku (Reed, 1946).¹¹

¹⁰ Where bibliosmia refers to the "nostalgic attachment to print books that invokes a (possibly imagined) olfactory memory" (Driscoll & Squires, 2018, p. 2).

¹¹ Parentheses throughout this excerpt which offer further description or summary of the plot narrative, are mine.

Hinepūkohurangi and Uenuku

As he walked along the narrow path between the trees, Uenuku stared at the column of mist hovering over the lake. He had often seen mist lying low on the water ... He quickened his step, overcome with curiosity. At the edge of the forest he stopped ... Two young women were bathing in the still water ... Veils of mist were wrapped around them like a cloud ... These two women were Hine-pūkohu-rangi [ariā of the mist] ... and Hine-wai [ariā of the rain] ... They had come down from the sky to bathe in the clear water of the lake. [Uenuku invites Hine-pūkohu-rangi into “the world of light” to be with him. She responds], “... you do not understand ... though I might spend the night with you, I should have to return to my home in the heavens as soon as the sky grew light” ... [The two become makau (lovers, spouses)] ... In the morning, before the sun had risen over the hills, [the ariā of] the Mist ... met her sister. They seemed to mingle like two clouds and drifted upwards before the sun’s rays could pierce them ... There was only a little time between the sinking of the sun and his rising again. During the long hours of daylight Uenuku missed the laughter of [Hine-pūkohu-rangi], and longed to hear voice lifted up in song ... [Uenuku ploys, and deceives Hine-pūkohu-rangi to remain with him in their whare beyond the dawn. The piercing of the morning sun is her demise] ... She began to sing. It was a sad song, there was pain in it ... and love for Uenuku ... Out of a clear sky a tiny cloud drifted down. It wreathed itself around her, fold on fold, until she could no longer be seen. Only her voice could be heard coming from the tiny cloud. Then the song stopped and there was silence. The cloud drifted away ... Uenuku was heart-broken ... His whare was cold and cheerless. Night after night he waited for [Hine-pūkohu-rangi] to return, but she never came back ... One day he left his home and set out on a long search for [Hine-pūkohu-rangi] ... As his search went on, year after year... he grew old and bent and toothless, and at last, lonely and disappointed (Reed, 1946, pp. 100-105)

Aho: Subjective response

As the aho thread is brought forward, so are the subjective responses and emotionally resonant themes to the pūrākau narrative. The following part identifies themes that emerged for me from the story of Hinepūkohurangi and Uenuku, and then develops these with associations and reflections relating to my emotional experience. The bibliotherapeutic processes of “identification (client alignment with information, storyline or characters), catharsis (client experience of emotional release), and insight (client understanding of own processes)” (Shrodes, 1950, as summarised by McCulliss, 2012, p. 27) inhere these responses and creative reflections.

Presence, absence, and the ephemeral

Figure 7: *Hinepūkohurangi at the Lake*



It was as if Hinepūkohurangi was making her presence felt over the time of this research, evoked at the words of her story. The first light of those winter mornings was imbued with her gentle etherealness, and an invitation to be with her for a while. Not only in words on a page, but around me, before my eyes, on my skin, in the silence.

I found her at the lake before the dawn.

The atmosphere, immersed with her stillness and beauty.

I wanted these moments to last, and felt the question, how can I hold onto this?

And then I was confronted by the futility of this longing. Of Uenuku's longing. As if the mist can be grasped.

The ephemeral is inevitable, and in this awareness another question emerges. If she can't be held, then how can I make the most of our time?

And eventually I was confronted by the futility and pain in this longing too. As if there is more that could be given to *being* in these moments.

Hinepūkohurangi is elusive, and the treasure of these moments together is as well.

Absence is felt in her presence.

The simultaneity and paradox of this experience, speaks to other experiences of mine at this time.

One of these is the tender companioning of my mother in the slow and cruel decline of a neurological disease. She was hospitalised at the time of writing, and the following prose are impressions of this experience. This writing endeavours to reflect something of these themes of presence and absence, the desire to hold onto what is loved as it is being lost, and the ephemerality and evanescence of loved ones, and eras, and experience.

She is in hospital at the time of writing ... She sleeps, limply ... I am with her in a chair by her bed, holding her hand ... Hours pass, and she barely stirs ... I lift the blue, plastic pillow and lay my head down beside her ... I am woken sometime later by her tender touches, like feathers to my face, and to my hair ... The years ebb away, and we are as we were ... Only it was her who sat by my bed, as I drifted to sleep to her songs ... Her affection, though frailer here on this hospital pillow, is as it always was ... Safe. Warm. Love. Home.

It is dark and cold outside, and quiet now on the ward.

I am looking at her, as she is looking intently above.

I follow her gaze up to a beige hospital ceiling.

'What are you looking at?' I whisper.

She is quiet, still gazing intently.

'What can you see?' I whisper again, leaning closer.

Then she says something she never has before.

'God is near.'

It takes my breath away for a moment, and it feels as if all the life is seeping away from me ... Perhaps I should feel comfort at His presence for her, but all I feel is panic ... Why is He near? Is He going to take her from me? ... I want to say something to pull her back to the land of the living (as if I could), but I don't. The impulse is somehow arrested in me, and I sit here with her in silence at this burning bush, on this holy ground.¹² I am scared, sad, and helpless, and I hold onto her hand.

Remembrance

The response of Uenuku in his loss, also felt evocative for me. The imagery of his desolation and heart-break in the atmosphere of his cold, empty whare, stayed with me. The contrast of this bleakness with the warmth and intimacy of the connection and love he had known before, felt painful.

I was struck too by the expression of this pain in Uenuku, as his life beyond Hinepūkohurangi became defined by this grief. His existence temporally, became a search for what would always elude him. A reaching for what could no longer be held. The companioning of memories and ghosts.

In the futility of this longing, Uenuku was made bitter.

¹² Allusion to the Chumash (Exodus 3) where YHWH is encountered.

Of the different forms of loss I have encountered over these years, I am able to relate to this futility of longing for what was. The experience of Uenuku saddens and scares me though, of grief ossifying into wretchedness.

For now, my losses are liminal. The memories and ghosts are near, and I sit with them and listen to their stories. It is comforting and painful.

Some of these stories are of the times with my step-father, who died recently during these years of my training. The following prose endeavours to express something of this loss, and these memories, and my search for comfort, spiritually, in the shadow of death. It feels important to precede this with an acknowledgement of a shift in aesthetic and epistemology with this prose, as it connects with the ambience and experiences of my childhood, early family life, and spirituality.

My step-father was a priest. He died, suddenly, during this time of my studies, and he has been in my thoughts, and even visited my dreams, as I have reflected on these themes of death, loss, grief, and remembrance ... I grew up in a vicarage, waking to the steeple song of bells on a Sunday, and to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in portrait on my wall, burning and bleeding with the boundlessness of His love ... I grew up in a vicarage, where those without food would call at our door, and those without hope, on our phone ... I remember that sometimes, after school, I would walk across the stone path, beside the white blossoms of the magnolia tree, and up the stairs to the vestry where I would find him ... He had the keys to the church, and would always open the door for me on those early evenings ... My heart swells at the memory of that place ... At the incomparable solace ... The atmosphere, on occasion, thick with incense ... The fragrance of our prayers ascending to the throne room of God ... and I wonder at beauty of this ... I sit on the scarlet carpet of the sanctuary, and look up at the altar, and above to the stained glass ... Jesus, the good shepherd, embracing His sheep, luminous in the twilight ... The song of King David resonant in the silence ... "The Eternal is my shepherd, He cares for me always ... Even in the unending shadows of death's darkness, I am not overcome by fear. Because You are with me in those dark moments ... I am comforted" (Psalm 23:1;4, The voice, 2012).

Conclusion

As a thread of the tāniko weave is brought forward, so this part has brought forward the narrative themes from the pūrākau which have felt emotionally resonant. These included the ephemerality and elusiveness of Hinepūkohurangi, and the quality of her presence and absence, as well as the experience of loss by Uenuku, and the expression of his grief in desolateness. As the bibliotherapeutic process (Shrodes, 1950) begins with this identification and alignment with themes and characters, and moves to catharsis and insight of emotional response, this has been reflected in the associations with my personal and current experiences of loss in the degenerative process of disease in a loved one, and in the shadow of bereavement.

Whakatutu: Research Findings

The tāniko whakatutu (weaving pattern) emerges at the intersection of the whenu and aho threads, as each “is defined by its opposite and takes its meaning from it” (Valcarenghi, 1994, p. 9). In this way, the tāniko pattern symbolises the findings of this research. The questions being explored in this part are, what has emerged from this process? What meaning has been made? How has engagement with the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi enhanced my understanding of loss and grief?

The key finding of this research affirms the efficacy of the therapeutic use of pūrākau (Cherrington, 2003; Kopua, 2019; Standing & Kahu, 2021). This chapter identifies particular characteristics of the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi, as well as qualities of the narrative inquiry process which employs bibliotherapeutic principles (Shrodes, 1950), that have assisted the exploration and understanding of my affective experience. This analysis also engages with Western psychotherapeutic theory (McIvor, 2010) as a way of further enriching the research outcomes, and scope of findings (O’Reilly et al., 2021, p. 67).¹³

Metaphor

The engagement with the figure of Hinepūkohurangi in the narrative has provided an indelible metaphor for my emotional experience of loss. With regard to psychotherapeutic theory, Martin et al. (1992) observe that the interest in metaphor has its antecedents in Freud (1901) and Jung (1961) as a means by which clients might be assisted “to access intuitive, unconscious processes and material” (p. 143). For Freud (1901), metaphor characterised the “dream-thoughts” which, he describes, “are not clothed in the prosaic language usually employed by our thoughts, but are on the contrary represented symbolically by means of similes and metaphors, in images resembling those of poetic speech” (p. 659). The objective of the dream interpretation process is to uncover the deeper thoughts, feelings, and impulses of the unconscious obfuscated by this symbolism (Freud, 1901). In this way, metaphor is conceived of as a bridge to the unconscious (Siegelman, 1993), “connecting conscious and unconscious, abstract with concrete, affective with cognitive” (Mackay, 2008, p. 191).

¹³ O’Reilly et al. (2021) cite the inter-paradigmatic mixed method approach of Bazeley (2018) in this regard.

As I consider this with reference to my own process, it is that in the evanescence of Hinepūkohurangi I recognised the ephemeral quality of treasured experiences; with loved ones, and with eras that have passed. To the extent that we can know our deeper unconscious feelings and impulses, varied insights have emerged for me from this. These range from an anxious reckoning with mortality, my own, and others', resistance to the searing pain as relationship is lost, and the vulnerability of the uncertainty of what will come of this loss "as soon as the sky [grows] light" (Reed, 1946, p. 101). The imaginal and poetical qualities of metaphor enabled access to new, and more visceral, dimensions of these emotional experiences. In this regard, there is resonance with the observation of Bachelard (1994) who "sees the poetic as a primary way of knowing" where "image comes before thoughts" (MacKay, 2008, p. 192). As Bachelard (1994) describes, "poetry, rather than being a phenomenology of the mind is a phenomenology of the soul" (pp. xx).

Mythos

To further this experience of 'knowing' in a different way through engagement with this pūrākau, this difference has been conceived of as a shift in apprehension from *logos* to *mythos* (Armstrong, 2005; MacKay, 2008; Shann & Cunneen, 2011). The following description conveys the nature of this distinction:

In the pre-modern world, particularly for the Greeks, it was generally understood that there were two largely complementary ways of pursuing thought in order to come to truth. These were called mythos and logos. Logos (reason; science) was exact, practical and essential to human life. It was validated by its so-called testable correspondence to external reality. Myth expressed the more mysterious aspects of human experience and corresponded to the human desire to make sense of a world in which humans are often out of control. (Armstrong, 2005, p. 43)

Where atua pūrākau are sometimes referred to in terms of myth by Māori (see, for example, Cherrington, 2003; Kahukiwa & Grace, 1984; Ihimaera, 2020; Marsden & Royal, 2003; McLachlan et al., 2017; Rameka, 2016; Te Awekotuku, 2003; Te Kanawa, 1997), other authors such as Lee (2009) challenge this synonymity due to the potential reduction (and possible condescension) of pūrākau being "rendered as mere fantasy" (p. 5). The approach by Standing & Kahu (2021) offers an alternative by considering rather, the corresponding characteristics of story, myth and

pūrākau, and the “luminescent power of archetype” in the tradition of Jung (1961) and May (1991) (p. 35).¹⁴ This approach has assisted in the exploration of my experience of ‘mythos knowing’ in this process.

Story, myth and pūrākau provide “a gateway ... beyond the cognitive realm, to places where other senses and/or spirituality ... [can] play a role in the therapeutic process” (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 34). An example of this from my process relates to the somatic and experiential encountering of the kohu at the lake. The ethereal, mystical quality of Hinepūkohurangi was described in this regard, as well as the sensory experiencing of the mist. A sense of wonder at the beauty of the scene, and the desire to be more fully immersed in it was also described. This sentiment is resonant with a description by MacKay (2008) in the context of mythopoesis (where psychology, spirituality, and mythology meet), “of the dissolving of a separate sense of self that occurs in moments of beauty, creativity, or deep connection with nature or with another person” (p. 199).

Holding

It has been observed that the therapeutic use of pūrākau can provide a sense of “safety in distance” as the narrative acts “as a container or a place of suspension,” where the client is able to “situate their emotional distress until they [feel] secure and safe enough to accept the presenting issue as a reflection of themselves” (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 33). This sense of the narrative providing a holding structure (Roberts, 1999) is reflective of my process, and this distance enabled exploration of the constituents of my emotional experience of loss and grief. This narrative holding is redolent of Bion’s (1962) concept of containment as he describes:

The infant projects a part of its psyche, namely its bad feelings, into a good breast. Thence in due course they are removed and re-introjected. During their sojourn in the good breast they are felt to have been modified in such a way that the object that is re-introjected has become tolerable to the infant psyche.
(p. 90)

An example of my emotional projection into the narrative, relates to Uenuku and his response to bereavement. This was described as his interminable search for what was lost, a chasing after phantoms, and then, “[a]s his search went on, year after year, he grew old and bent and

¹⁴ Notwithstanding “the importance of treating pūrākau differently than story and myth with a need to use care and sensitivity when using these taonga in practice” (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 34).

toothless, and at last, lonely and disappointed” (Reed, 1946, p. 105). There was a sense of personal identification and resonance with Uenuku (Cherrington, 2003) in the longing for what was, and in the painful void when a loved one is gone. Where my experience differed however, was in the aspiration for an alternative way of responding to my grief. A way that is ameliorative of the wretched, desolateness that eventually befell Uenuku. As I “detached” from the “character’s traits” in this regard (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 33), and re-introjected my feelings of grief, I experienced my personal spirituality as offering an alternative to this desolateness, in the sense of being lovingly companioned in my pain.

These findings support those identified in the literature review regarding the therapeutic benefits of pūrākau. These include the normalising of experience, alternative possibilities and solutions to problems (Cherrington, 2003), as well as the instructional value of these narratives (Rameka, 2016). There has also been stimulus for reflective thinking (Ware et al., 2018), and “a shift in awareness” (Kopua et al., 2020, p. 378).

Autobiography

The autobiographical feature characterising the subjective responses to the pūrākau, was also experienced as assistive in the apprehension of my affective experience. The relationship between autobiography and Kaupapa Māori research is considered by Lee (2009) for example, who contends for a methodological space inclusive of “researching and representing our stories” (p. 8). It is also reflected in Elder (2013) in her reference to “noho puku” as a self-reflective research method (p. 408). There is further connection with autoethnography, which has been defined as a “form of story-telling in which autobiography (stories about ourselves) and ethnography (stories about culture) are combined” (Drawson et al., 2017, p. 5).

The reason this autobiographical element was experienced as personally enhancing is due to the creative enjoyment and cathartic effect of expressive writing, and the sharing of these personal reflections (Valtonen, 2021). Further, this anecdotal sharing assisted my ability to process and find meaning in my experiences. This is understood to relate to a connection between narrative and cognition where, “the primary human mechanism for attaching meaning to particular experiences is to tell stories about them” (Brody, 2002, as cited in Valtonen, 2021, p. 711).

Conclusion

The key finding of this research reinforces the effectiveness of pūrākau as a therapeutic approach. This chapter has expounded particular characteristics of the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi, as well as qualities of the narrative inquiry process which have assisted the apprehension of my affective experience, and have included themes of metaphor, mythos, narrative holding and autobiographical reflection. The findings of this research resonate with the qualities of a Māori psychotherapy envisioned by Morice (2003) at the outset. These include the use of the “allusive and metaphorical,” the development of “congruence between the client’s inner world and their actual life circumstances,” and the treasuring of Māori wisdom (p. 16).

Discussion

As the previous section expounded the findings from this research, the purpose of this part is to consider the implications of this research for the psychotherapeutic field of practice in Aotearoa, the development of theory, and for the client community. This will be approached by first providing an overview of the progression of this dissertation and summary of the findings, before identifying key contributions that this research has made, the limitations of this study, as well as areas for further research, as this section draws the dissertation to its conclusion.

Research progression

This dissertation has offered a Kaupapa Māori study of the topic of pūrākau in assisting apprehension of affective experience. The question explored in this regard has been, how does the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi offer understanding of the experience of loss and grief? At the outset, the literature review provided the socio-political context for this question, with particular reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the article two principle of tino rangatiratanga for Māori in relation to hauora. There was also promulgation of a distinctive Māori psychotherapy for whaiora (Morice, 2003), reflected in the therapeutic use of pūrākau “as a culturally appropriate modality when working with Māori” (Mikahere-Hall, 2017, p. 7).

The methodology section followed, and introduced the tāniko research method within the Kaupapa Māori paradigm. This method is a form of pūrākau narrative inquiry, integrative of bibliotherapeutic elements. The subsequent section employed this approach to explore affective process, and offered excerpts of expressive writing and photographs as illustrative of my emotional experience. The findings section followed and affirmed the efficacy of the therapeutic use of pūrākau. It was established that my understanding of loss and grief has been enhanced by way of particular qualities which inhere the pūrākau and narrative inquiry process, such as metaphor, mythos, narrative containment and autobiography.

Having summarised the progression and findings of this research, the following sections identify and discuss the implications, limitations, and contributions of this research.

Contribution to developing theory

The need for further research on the therapeutic use of narrative in Aotearoa, including story, myth, and pūrākau, has been identified in the literature (Aguilera et al., 2020; Kopua, 2019; McLachlan et al., 2017; Standing & Kahu, 2021). In particular, it has been observed that “the *application* [italics added] of these theories in clinical practice continues to remain limited” (McLachlan et al., 2017, p. 47), and that “further research and the development of a clearer evidence base to inform practice” on the use of narrative therapeutically, is needed (Aguilera et al., 2020, p. 47).

One aim of this research has been to respond to this limitation identified in the literature, and specifically, to contribute research which demonstrates such application of the therapeutic use of a pūrākau narrative. This has been endeavoured by developing and applying a method which includes bibliotherapeutic principles in approaching the text of Hinepūkohurangi as a way of enhancing understanding of emotional experience. It is intended that such research “may provide further evidence for the efficacy of this [story, myth, and pūrākau] approach,” and also, may potentially contribute to the “direction for story-based training programmes” in Aotearoa (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 36).

Research method development

A unique experience in this research process has been the opportunity to be creative within the Kaupapa Māori frame, and respond to the possibility of methodological development of indigenous research paradigms (Porsanger, 2004). Helu-Thaman’s (1997) “tui kakala (metaphor) method” (as cited in Vaioleti, 2006, p. 21), provided further inspiration in the encouragement to draw on our unique cultural context for methodological answers (Thaman, 1992). To this end, the Māori cultural artform of tāniko was studied, and employed as a metaphor for the research process in relation to the therapeutic use of pūrākau.

The aho tapu thread symbolised the personal process of the deepening of cultural consciousness (Pope, 2008) as the ground out of which Kaupapa Māori research emerges (Bishop, 1997). The whenu thread symbolised the selection and sharing of the purakau narrative, and the creative means by which the story might be expressed (Cherrington, 2003). The aho thread represented the recipient’s subjective response to the text, and drew on bibliotherapeutic processes to explore affective experience and insights (Shrodes, 1950). The whakatutu pattern to emerge at

the intersection of these threads symbolised the findings of this process, and the meaning that has been made.

In terms of the implications and contribution of this research, this method may contribute to the development of theory where Porsanger (2004) contends that the “process of decolonization [in research] requires new, critically evaluated methodologies and new, ethically and culturally acceptable approaches to the study of indigenous issues” (p. 107). There is also relevance that the tāniko research method relates to the exploration of pūrākau, and integrates bibliotherapeutic themes, where “narrative-based inquiry has attracted the attention of Indigenous scholars seeking research methodologies that complement Indigenous research principles and methods of knowledge transmission” (Ware et al., 2018, p. 46). In this regard, this method may offer a helpful approach.

Advancement of mātauranga Māori

A further objective of this research relates to the advancement of mātauranga Māori, in methodological terms as detailed in the previous section, and also in the promulgation of a distinctive Māori psychotherapy for whaiora in terms of the therapeutic use of pūrākau. In this regard, it has been observed that “Māori experiences in the therapeutic space should not be at odds with te ao Māori worldview, instead experiences should be familiar, responsive, flexible, and accommodating, to enhance psychological health” (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 35).

The significance of this research which aims to reinforce mātauranga Māori in the psychotherapeutic field of practice in Aotearoa, is to contribute to the amelioration of alienation often experienced by Māori within the health system otherwise (Graham & Masters-Awatere, 2020), to facilitate epistemological congruency (Plessas et al., 2019) and cultural identity (Standing & Kahu, 2021), as well as improved psychological outcomes for Māori (McLachlan et al., 2017).

Limitations and recommendations

This research has engaged with the requirement for the development of cultural awareness and safety, as well as regard for Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles, by *all* practitioners of psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand. The scale of this study however, has enabled particular focus on “a by Māori, for Māori” (Rolleston et al., 2020, p. 2) approach regarding models of care, in the

endeavour of contributing to research prioritising Māori self-determination of hauora Māori (Ministry of Health, 2020; Waitangi Tribunal, 2021).

One limitation of this scope and emphasis however, has been not furthering reflection on the clinical use of pūrākau by non-Māori practitioners and clients. With regard to recommendations for further research, this topic presents such possibility. Where pūrākau are taonga for Māori, important questions emerge regarding “the protection of traditional Māori knowledge and culture” in the clinical setting, and the risk of misappropriation by non-Māori practitioners (Standing & Kahu, 2021, p. 35).

Story as healing

Where this discussion has offered analysis of the ways that this research might inform and contribute to theoretical development, and the psychotherapeutic field of practice with whaiora, there is the sense of returning to the soul of this study as this discussion draws to its end.

The meaning of *psychotherapy* etymologically, refers to *the healing of the soul* (Johnson & Sandage, 1999). The question explored in this study has been about story, and about how story might offer something of this soul-healing. What was discovered is that pūrākau (approached therapeutically) is able to facilitate this, in the exploration, expression, deeper apprehension, and integration of emotional experience. Hinepūkohurangi drifts in the liminal space, and she gave expression to the liminality of my experience of loss and grief. Where “liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between” (Turner, 1969, as cited in MacKay, 2008, p. 197), they might helpfully symbolise “those spaces in our lives where the old self narrative does not fit any longer, and the new has not yet emerged” (MacKay, 2008, p. 197). As Hinepūkohurangi provided this, and other, metaphor for my emotional experience, such findings might inform and encourage the therapeutic use of pūrākau, and the possibility of story as soul-healing.

Conclusion

This chapter has reflected on the implications and contributions of this research for the psychotherapeutic field of practice with whaiora Māori in Aotearoa, as well as the development of Kaupapa Māori research theory. To this end, the theme of responding to the need for more research on the therapeutic application of pūrākau narratives has been identified, as well as the

development and illustration of the tāniko research method as way of exploring the story and attendant emotional experience. The aim of advancing mātauranga Māori, both methodologically and therapeutically, was also discussed, before the recommendation of further research considering the use of pūrākau by non-Māori in the clinical setting, and final reflection on story as healing.

Conclusion

This dissertation began with an old book, and an old pūrākau. In the story of Hinepūkohurangi found in those pages, there was emotional resonance with personal bereavement experience. Out of this emerged the question that informed this research, which is, how does the pūrākau of Hinepūkohurangi offer understanding of the experience of loss and grief?

Structurally, this exploration began with a literature review on the socio-political context in Aotearoa New Zealand within which this research question is located, with exploration of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the article two principle of tino rangatiratanga for Māori in relation to hauora. There was also promulgation of a distinctive Māori psychotherapy (Morice, 2003) as an expression of this, characterised by the therapeutic use of pūrākau with whaiora (Mikahere-Hall, 2017).

The research progressed with the methodology section, and introduced the tāniko research method within the Kaupapa Māori paradigm. This method is a form of pūrākau narrative inquiry, integrative of bibliotherapeutic principles. These were illustrated in the exploration of subjective response and affective process in relation to the pūrākau text in the subsequent process chapter.

The findings which emerged through this process were expounded in the following chapter, and concluded with the effectiveness of pūrākau as a therapeutic model, assisting deeper awareness of affective experience. The final chapter offered discussion on the way this research might inform and contribute to the psychotherapeutic field of practice with whaiora Māori in Aotearoa, as well as the development of Kaupapa Māori theory, both therapeutically and methodologically. There was particular reference to the introduction of tāniko research method in this regard, as a way of exploring pūrākau and attendant emotional experience.

It is with reference to this tāniko method, that this research might arrive at its end. As the tāniko weave begins with the aho tapu, so this 'sacred first thread' symbolises the deepening of cultural consciousness (Bishop, 1996) and whakapapa knowledge (Edwards, 2009) as the soil out of which Kaupapa Māori research emerges. This is also illustrative of this methodology as personally transformative (Smith, 1997). With regard to my own experience of this whakapapa peregrination, what is offered here at the end are words that were offered to me at the beginning.

Within these words, I discovered the maunga of my whakapapa, and also an invitation.

What is shared in the pages of this dissertation, has been my heart response.

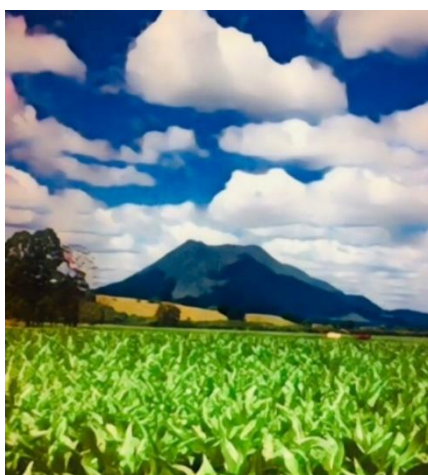
Ka tu au ka wawata
Ko wai ra taku iwi?
Taku wana taku tu?
Ka hoki nga mahara
Ki te pane o Pūtauaki
Kei tua ko te papa
E aroha nei au

I stand for a moment and think
Who am I?
Where am I and why have I drifted from home?
My thoughts like a cloud
Settle on the peak of Pūtauaki
On the other side is
The land I love so well.
I stand for a moment and think.

(Ponika, K., n.d., as cited in O'Connor, 1997, p. 10)

Figure 8:

Clouds of Pūtauaki



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