

Rarotimu: Revisiting an indigenous mythology

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Abstract: For several years I have been inexplicably drawn by the esoteric mysteries in life and through these erudite journeys, I inevitably end up at the beginning; by this I mean immersed in whakapapa and creation narratives. All that exists in the Universe seems to be embedded in indigenous mythologies. Having periodically, either through personal research, through learning waiata (song), whakaoriori (lullaby) and karakia (incantation) or from tribal hui (gatherings) gained knowledge of Ngāi Tahu whakapapa (genealogy) the more interesting it becomes. The stories that can be 'read' from these narratives intrigue me, inviting me to explore them more deeply and because I am a playwright and theatre practitioner, I am prompted to ask, how can the polysemous interpretations of the ancient Southern Māori Rarotimu whakapapa and creation narrative be integrated in a staged performance, namely, Rarotimu Revisited? Therefore, this paper seeks to address this question and at the same time probes the possible interpretations, arranging them so they can be presented and 'read' by a further audience. Utilising past, current and imagined understandings of the narrative, a research whānau will hui and create a metaphoric performance that does not seek to reproduce any literal versions of the narrative. However, under the guidance of a co-ordinator they will amalgamate the versions of, and ideas generated by the whakapapa, and condense them into a public performance production.

Keywords: interpretation; metaphor; narrative; performance; whakapapa

Versions of Rarotimu

The words reached out to me across the wharenuī (ancestral house), chanted like karakia they seemed to penetrate my head, resonating; they energised my body although simultaneously calming me. These were the sensations that enveloped me the first time I experienced the Rarotimu whakapapa as it was intoned:

Raro-timu

Raro-take

Raro-pou-iho

Raro-pou-ake

Ko Takuu

Ko Takeo

Io-io-whenua

Tipu-kerekere

Tipu-anana

Kai-a-Hawaiki

Ko Matiti

Matiti-tua

Matiti-aku

Matiti-aro

Ko-teke-ehu

Te Whare-patahi

E Hui-te-rangiora

E Rongo ki waho matatahi mai te ara o tu manuhiri tuarangi kei tawhiti te kai; kai te waro te kai te kainga tu ko ko ko i tu ha.

Years later I read the text of the whakapapa in *Tikao Talks*, by Herries Beattie. Beattie was a man whose background and community spirit had led him to be entrusted with Māori knowledge and “[h]e was one of very few historians who recorded information from the southern Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha, Hāwea and Rapuwai people now known collectively as Kāi Tahu Whānui” (McCallum, 2008, p. 7). The collective term, Southern Māori, will be used in this paper. This references the particular tribal groups who traditionally occupied the area of Te Waipounamu (South Island) principally south of the Waitaki River, then known of as Murihiku.

Tikao Talks is devoted entirely to mātauranga (knowledge) Ngāi Tahu retained by kaumatua (elder) Teone Taare Tikao of Rapaki. Tikao was one of Beattie’s many informants and he defines Rarotimu as a creation whakapapa offering us a partial interpretation since he never learned it in full. According to what Tikao learned there were four main roots of creation. Rarotimu has its root in the ocean. “The recital starts in the sea and proceeds from the deep water to *Hawaiki* (the cradle of the Maori race)” (Beattie, 1990, p. 27). There is another version of Rarotimu which Henare Matua from Hawkes Bay knew.

Although not from Hawkes Bay the following Rarotimu whakapapa from Ngāti Maniapoto descends to Maui and was secured by Major Gudgeon:

Rarotimu
Rarotake
Po-tu
Po-haere
Po-whaka-taka
Po-aniwaniwa
Maheatu
Mahe-awa
Takahuriwhenua
Murirangawhenua
Taranga
Maui
(Tregear, 1891, p. 2361)

Whilst this whakapapa indicates a direct lineage to Maui, Tikao’s version indirectly locates Maui through his place of birth. Beattie (1990) notes that

Hui-te-Rangiora was a place near *Pikopiko-i-whiti* at the end of the world near where *Maui* was born. *Waro* in the recital, is the deep sea fish from which *Maui* pulled up the land. *Waro* is part of *Muri-raka-whenua* at sea and *Mahuika* is his fire on land. *Rongo-ki-waho* means a good way out in space. (p.27-8)

Tikao, in Beattie (1990, p. 27) informs us that raro refers to below and within the narrative it means below the sea. Timu and take both mean root. He further illuminates us with his account of the whakapapa:

At that time the ocean was very prominent, and the first forms of life began in the water; then the fish came and then the human body, and by my teaching all came from the water.

Raro-pou-iho is to dig a hole and put a post in, while *Raro-pou-ake* is to turn the post up, This likely refers to *Tane* pushing *Rangi* up with a pole. *Taku* means to make the land firm like making a house firm by putting a pile under it. *Ioio-whenua* was the power given to the sons of *Rangi* and to the various gods who rule the elements and control the manifestations of nature...

Tipu kerekere means thick, dark clouds and the *mana* residing in the god of this name was given to *Ruaimoko*....

Kai a Hawaiki refers to the land coming up when *Papa* was raised out of the water.

The phrase *manuhiri-tuaraki* means a visitor, a baby from the sky or from a great distance (p. 27-28).

In offering this as a possible explanation, the Rarotimu whakapapa possesses no definitive contemporary meaning. Its true meaning is only known by those who were the original 'composers' and we can only volunteer interpretations from our own unique and individualised perspectives. Consequently, there are some things it cannot possibly mean, for example: if the research directs us toward Maui, then it would be highly improbable that the Rarotimu whakapapa was about the life and times of Marilyn Monroe for instance. This conclusion sits outside the parameters of the data collected.

Additionally, a literal translation of the text can be 'false' interpretation especially where symbolic or allegorical language has been used. However, this can open the text to further philosophical re-interpretation. For instance, Religious studies scholarship might question, God's creation of the heaven and earth in exactly six days. Is this measure of time a metaphor for something else? Was a day measured in the same way we calculate it today? In relation to the Rarotimu text a literal translation was attempted by the researcher, but due to the multiplicity of meanings that kupu (word/s) Māori possess, no absolute conclusions could be reached. This supports the notion of false interpretations because numerous answers could be posited by the placement of a different word beside another and so on, whereby manipulating the analysis to mean almost anything. I reiterate, there are some things it cannot mean.

However, many more questions arise from Tikao's description than answers. For example does he literally mean that a baby fell from the sky? It is arguably impossible to be in the mind set of our tīpuna and decode any of their finite definitions or intentions that lay hidden in their expressive but highly metaphoric language. According to Trick and Katz in Blasko, "the meaning of metaphor exists neither 'in' the metaphor nor 'in' the comprehender, but rather it involves a complex interaction involving messenger, message, and receiver all existing within a shared cultural context" (1999, p. 1676). The implication is that Tikao's view and indeed my view are juxtaposed not only in relation to each other, but indeed the composers'. We each have a shared cultural context, but the time frame from which we are viewing differs. In order for us to align the various issues and perspectives we can adopt a kaupapa Māori methodology.

Kaupapa Māori, whakapapa and Rarotimu interpretations

In the following statement, Foucault (1989, p. xx), could be referring to tikanga Māori or the customs and protocols that define Māori lifeworld practice:

The fundamental codes of culture – those governing its language, its schemas of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices – establish for every man, from the very first, the empirical orders with which he will be dealing and within which he will be at home.

The practice of these cultural codes includes kaupapa Māori as a theory or ideology. I prefer to describe kaupapa Māori as a holistic philosophical framework based on tikanga, using routine techniques that I grew up knowing and understanding from being handed down by my tīpuna (ancestors). "Thus, *kaupapa Maori* research embraces traditional beliefs and ethics" (Henry & Pene, 2001, p. 236) and is based on the paradigm of reciprocity because something

is always given back to the people from whom that knowledge came from. “You’ve got to do it the way we taught you”, was something said to me by a supervisor. She was referring to my academic learning and knowledge; conversely it was interpreted by me as taonga tuku iho (treasure/s handed down). “Taoka tuku iho are important in both a traditional and a contemporary world view, and engender Māori identity and cultural values” (McCallum, 2008, p. 23). As I grew up I was taught by my parents and wider whānau about the customary values and concepts that underpin my culture. These were handed down generationally and whakapapa is one such taonga that is deeply rooted in all these concepts.

Whakapapa is not merely a genealogical table, but encompasses creation stories, not the biblical creation as told in Genesis, but cosmological, if not mythological, narratives. Te Rito maintains that the term myth “may appear to some people as trivialising these stories” (2007, p. 5). However, according to Malcolm-Buchanan, “[w]ithin the developing rubric of contemporary indigenous parity, previously censured and rejected indigenous myths have come to be wielded as ideological historical testaments validating tribal claims of autochthony” (2008, p. 1). This statement reinforces the legitimacy of Māori myth to which Malcolm-Buchanan was referring.

Regardless of any categorisation we may place on creation and cosmological narratives, in the Māori worldview whakapapa is related to the origins of the universe and man’s intrinsic relationship to it. Anne Salmond (1997) offers a pan-tribal view that helps describe these universal relationships:

According to the cosmological accounts of Maori kin groups, the universe had emerged in genealogical stages, from a surge of energy to states of potential pattern, including thought, memory, the mind-heart desire. Once earth and sky were formed, ancestor gods generated various forms of life, including plants, animals and people (p. 33).

Therefore, in the Māori worldview all life-forms are linked through creation and cosmological whakapapa. Because the Rarotimu project seeks to examine a particular whakapapa, it is important to use a kaupapa Māori philosophical framework in which to position this investigation. The schema used is often tailored to suit the specific needs of any one project, and in this case several māori (normal, usual) methods and methodologies have been applied.

One such southern tikanga that can be used as a model for applying an alternative learning device to that of the wānanga is ‘tū taha kē ai’ (to stand at the side of or be an adjunct to). The tauria (student) accompanies the kaumatua on journeys across the land. In this way knowledge is imparted that pertains to the inherent customs, placenames, land and water based resources, including any mahinga kai (food resources). Thus, the whakapapa of the land and its creation stories are imbedded in the mind of the tauria who absorbs supplementary information on each consecutive journey. In this way together they tread the tapuwae o ngā tīpuna (footsteps of the ancestors) and in pre-colonial times learning was thereby incorporated into daily-life in place of holding separate wānanga. Life and life practice became the wānanga and the student’s placement was often with a specialist of the subject in which he or she showed an aptitude. This epitomises the underlying significance of kaupapa Māori as a way of being as opposed to a research approach. Therefore ‘tū taha kē ai’ can be viewed as a means of applying kaupapa Māori.

One interpretation of the narrative was given to me by kaumatua, navigator and native speaker of the southern Māori dialect, (Holmes, H., personal communication, 2009). From his perspective Rarotimu reveals a journey by sea-faring people who cross a vast ocean and traverse a new land. Arguably, it personifies the knowledge held by those people at that time and their quest for exploration.

Doug Ditford from the Wetere Te Kahu whānau of Otakou, Otago Peninsula, Dunedin, informed the researcher that he uses Rarotimu as a karakia (Ditford, D., personal communication, 2009). He understands it in the context of Rangi, Papatūānuku and Tangaroa, and their relationship to each other, and the bringing of māramatatanga (light) and therefore knowledge, first to the celestial realm, then into the evolutionary continuum of the terrestrial realm. His construal likely arises from the Ngāi Tahu account of these three gods, which differs from most other tribal renditions in that from a Ngāi Tahu perspective Tangaroa was Papatūānuku's husband prior to Rangi.

Interpretive meaning can unfold from the several layers emergent in the text, similar to the plurality of expression that can be drawn from an artwork. Art, akin to beauty, is in the aesthetic eye and the deductive mind of the beholder. It is open to a multiplicity of interpretation. Bourdieu, (2000, p. 1) claims:

Thus the encounter with a work of art is not 'love at first sight' as is generally supposed, and the act of empathy, *Einführung*, which is the art-lover's pleasure, presupposes an act of cognition, a decoding operation, which implies the implementation of a cognitive acquirement, a cultural code.

Bourdieu is not commenting from a Māori viewpoint, nor does this analysis take into account that like theatre, artworks including the carvings and motifs in te ao Māori (the Māori world), are also narratives that can often be read by the observer. Nevertheless, there is recognition that cognitive responses are determined by cultural paradigms.

Māori cultural codes, otherwise called tikanga, that have been discussed in this paper permeate Māori society. An example of this is Rachael Rakena, an artist of growing recognition. "Of Maori descent, she draws inspiration from close family ties, the intricacies of personal relationships within a Kai Tahu, Nga Puhi and Pākehā ancestry and their interrelated histories and narratives..." (Robins, 2006). This reflects a kaupapa Māori approach to her work and her whānau and whakapapa play a major role in the creation of her artworks.

Why use performance to explain the narrative?

The title of this work and of the performance piece is *Rarotimu Revisited*. The notion of revisiting encapsulates both the re-interpretation and the re-envisioning of Rarotimu as a performed narrative.

The semiotician, Bert States observes, "theater [is] a process of mediation between artist and culture, speaker and listener; theater becomes a passageway for a cargo of meanings being carried back to society (after artistic refinement) via the language of signs" (1985, p. 6). This is especially pertinent to the researching of *Rarotimu Revisited*. Apart from commenting on or analysing the whakapapa, it seeks to create a performance agenda that imparts an alternative interpretation, packaged and presented in the guise of performance intervention that takes a theoretical idea and reimagines it as performance. One of the intentions that motivates a less than literal rendition of the original narrative is to protect the integrity of the research findings and contain it within the performance korowai (cloak). At times the tikanga surrounding whakapapa is dealt with similarly and deliberately obscured or altered to protect the content, which is another reason for presenting these findings as a performance. It also embraces notions of kaupapa Māori collaboration. "Theatrical 'illusion', therefore, does not involve any hallucination; the event signals that its elements are to be read symbolically; as part of an other-place, and the audience does so in order to understand, to *interpret*, the text" (Counsell, p. 18). The narrative portrayal and the interpretation drawn from the data collection will be filtered to spectators as a metaphoric performance by presenting something "regarded as representative or symbolic of something else" (*The Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2005). Tū

taha kē ai too is highly symbolic; to stand alongside implies that no hierarchy exists between teacher and student, they each stand alongside the other, but one is always the teacher. Does however, the student also become the teacher? Conceptually and ideologically this implies that the teacher student relationship is mutual, which is perhaps the quintessence of tū taha kē ai.

The common threads that have come to light in the course of the data collection include: cosmological evolution as told by the Tikao narrative, and Maui the demi god as discussed, appears in both the Rarotimu whakapapa; Charles Royal (1998) speaks directly of Maui and his deeds as having a close association to the whare tapere, the figurative house of leisure time activities. Maui is also connected with whai (string games), storytelling and haka (dance).

Rarotimu cites Hawaiki in the narrative. Lewis Spence and Paul Tice offer a theory in their book *The Problem of Lemuria* that this lost continent once believed to reside in the Pacific Ocean may have been Hawaiki. It has been speculated by scholar James Churchwood that Lemuria also known as 'Mu' may have disappeared through a holocaust or flood analogous to Hawaiki. Pacifica, yet another name for this legendary island of Lemuria "...was a continent hypothesized from geological evidence to have lain off eastern Gondwanaland until the Triassic" (Kamp, 1980, p. 662). Furthermore, "[t]he active margin of Gondwana is presently preserved in the southwest Pacific region in the formerly continuous Gondwana fragments of Australia, Antarctica and New Zealand" (Wandres & Bradshaw, 2005, p. 179). Could this be Hawaiki?

Finally, further common strands indicate the ever present theme of water in various forms, mainly ice and floods. These two are linked surprisingly with the Old Testament in relation to the firmament or what Māori might refer to as Ranginui and/or ngā kiri o te Rangi (the layers of the sky). Seely (1991) suggests that, the firmament was "a solid dome over the earth" (p.227). This same article further intimates that there was water both above and below the solid firmament. A question of how the water remained in place seemed to foreground all else, but I discovered that the water may have been in the form of ice or was the water above, ice and the water below, the ocean covering the surface of the planet. Or did the water above become the water below and flood the surface of the planet?

Obviously to portray this event as a performance element will require some thought since we cannot submerge the theatre in water.

In dramatic representation everything is what it is or on the contrary, nothing is what it appears in theatre production and reproduction, but it can often be something else and/or represent something else. '...all that is on the stage is a sign, and that anything deliberately put there for artistic purposes becomes a sign when it enters illusionary space and time' (States, 1985, p. 19).

So, how can the milieu of threads be translated into performance? Because the interpretation is not rigidly defined, but at the same time sits within the stricture of the research, empirical workshops will be undertaken.

Wānanga as a process of devising

Kaupapa Māori, "supposes all research will be conducted within a consultative framework and a mutual understanding that knowledge is not a freely exploitable commodity, but must be transmitted with trust, must be treated with respect and overall must be passed on only with the approval of iwi Māori" (Smith, A., personal communication, 2008). The continuity of the Ngāi Tahu research focus and Ngāi Tahu as research informants will be preserved throughout the wānanga process. These same people will become active collaborators in the

creation of the performance. Performing and performance is a gift that demonstrates the reciprocal nature of *tū taka kē ai* and kaupapa Māori in that it enriches its audience with a summary of the research data and allows them to be part of it. This is especially demonstrated at the conclusion of a production when in accordance with Māori theatre tradition. The practice of the *mihimihi* (greeting) based on *tikanga* Māori, is offered to the audience as an opportunity for them to respond directly to the cast and comment on the performance.

Wānanga were a traditional means for Māori to facilitate a mode of learning normally used in the *wharekura* or any one of the many schools in the *whare wānanga*. Royal attests that:

The *whare wānanga* sees and interprets the world as a *kahu*, a fabric comprising of a fabulous melange of energies. Accordingly, it was the preoccupation of the *whare wānanga* to view the world as a music, a singing, as 'rhythmical patterns of pure energy' that are woven and move with cosmological purpose and design (2003, p. xiii).

It is proposed that *wānanga* be the mechanism to embrace the performance and the methods of improvisation will be undertaken within the framework of *kaitiakitanga* (stewardship) and *tikanga* Māori. According to Barlow, "[k]aitiaki or guardian spirits are left behind by deceased ancestors to watch over their descendants and to protect sacred places. Kaitiaki are also messengers and a means of communication between the spirit realm and the human world" (1994, p. 34). Generally, in the theatre the *kaitiaki* is an advisor, sharing an equal and collaborative role to the director and functioning parallel to the other. He/she often also assumes responsibility for the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of the performance, its cast and crew and maintains their cultural awareness and safety. For this particular project the *kaitiaki* (probably myself) will act as a co-ordinator and administrator, disseminating information amongst the *whānau*.

The concept of being a human guardian either individually or as a group has become accepted in the modern world, and within Māori, and bicultural performance praxis. *Rarotimu Revisited* will challenge Western ways of devising by using indigenous frameworks in which to *wānanga* including *kaitiakitanga*. The role of the *kaitiaki* will differ only in that he/she will function alongside all of the *wānanga whānau*, not the director, and will assist in moulding the performance material into a cohesive whole.

In this way it is hoped that the performance *whānau* (family), (consisting of a maximum of four actors and four to six advisors including the *kaitiaki* or guardian) will foster a group dynamic of *whakawhānaungatanga* (relationship building) and team spirit. The concept of ensemble building is common in theatre. However, here it will be operating within a paradigm weaving together protocols from both theatrical and Māori world views. Therefore, in this case, *whakawhānaungatanga* will be mobilised through *tikanga* Māori and a different concept is at play than the ideology being imagined through Western theatre praxis.

Each person will bring to the *wānanga* their collective experiences and skills as opposed to an individual writer's viewpoint typical of a scripted play. At the same time these people have been selected for their *mātauranga Ngāi Tahu*, their acting and devising skills, their ability to choreograph dance and movement or because they bring a unique perspective that will challenge the *whānau* to broaden their perspective. This conforms to a kaupapa Māori approach rather than the hierarchy of writer, director, actor where ordinarily, the playwright crafts the work as a script. The director takes that script and places his or her creative imprint onto it by sculpting the stage, where the actors will be on that stage, how and what will be illuminated, where entrances and exits are made, what music might be added, if dance and movement might help portray the significance of a character and, his lines. Finally, the actor will refine the character and breathe life into the writer's words. Additionally, in a Māori worldview it is usually a collective voice that is heard rather than an individual's voice.

Furthermore the whakapapa in question 'belongs' to a collective group, albeit not the research whānau, as opposed to an individual.

The wānanga will consist of six to eight three-hour sessions, the first of which will be entirely devoted to information sharing in order for all the whānau to understand Rarotimu and the research material. Consecutive sessions will focus on performance improvisation as a means to create a 'work in progress' theatrical performance probably more orientated towards movement than vocal expression. This method of devising offers a wider scope for the work being created and scope for specific Māori cultural components to be incorporated. Oddey defines devising as such:

It is determined and defined by a group of people who set up an initial framework or structure to explore and experiment with ideas, images, concepts, themes, or specific stimuli that might include music, text, object, paintings, or movement (1994, p. 1).

In this way all whānau participants can offer valuable input into the practical and functional dimensions of the performance. Collectively the group will act as script writers, directors and performers, equally sharing the responsibility of *tū taha kē ai* and standing alongside 'walking the talk' together. For example if one of the kaihoe (paddlers) on a waka (canoe) is not synchronised with the others, the waka will not steer straight. All the kaihoe must work as one to achieve maximum output.

Finally, performers who are not Ngāi Tahu will be required to sign a non-disclosure statement before the wānanga begin in order for the research interpretations to be shared where appropriate with actors, dancers and performers and further enable an intensive wānanga of the performative elements. This would effectively hermetically seal the interpretive knowledge within the boundaries of the project and thus protect any cultural and intellectual property belonging to Ngāi Tahu. In this way the meaning or meanings that have been explored in research and during wānanga are contained, protecting them from future misuse. The issue of cultural and intellectual property issues will not affect the public performance, since the *mātauranga* will be preserved within the boundaries of the rehearsal process and what is presented will be a metaphoric interpretation of all the research findings. What was of importance to those who were consulted was; the mana of the whakapapa be maintained within safe cultural boundaries.

Performance characters and repertoire

The ideas presented here for the production *Rarotimu Revisited* are explicitly conceptual and will exploit the collection of story elements that have arisen from the various interpretations. These will be incorporated into the developing wānanga, combining both Māori (traditional and contemporary) and non-Māori performance elements.

All the elements of a dramatic performance – the language of the dialogue, the setting, the gestures, costumes, make-up and voice-inflections of the actors, as well as a multitude of other signs – each in their own way contribute to the creation of the 'meaning' of the performance. A dramatic performance must, at the most basic level, be regarded as essentially a process by which information about the actions are mimetically reproduced is conveyed to the audience (Esslin, 1987, p. 16).

Even though informal preliminary wānanga have occurred it is difficult to presuppose or pre-empt the outcomes of the wānanga before they happen. Members of the Wetere Te Kahu whānau came together, having met for a shared lunch, deliberated on how next to proceed and were asked if they were in agreement with the research accumulated to date. Again this procedure adhered to a kaupapa Māori way of moving forward, by seeking affirmation from a

peer group, especially one that was familiar with the Rarotimu whakapapa. As a result an inventory of possible whispered haka, and mau rākau elements along with the research will be presented to the wider wānanga whānau.

The cast will probably contain four characters who will either be androgenous or consist of two males (Wi and Wa) and two females (Miru and Muka). In this way a balance is maintained and reflects both male-female energy. The characters' names emerge from the research except for one, Muka, which is representative of a metaphor for whakapapa. Muka is the fibre contained in harakeke (*Phormium tenax*) and is used in weaving to make aho or threads. Aho according to Williams is, "genealogy, line of descent" (1975, p. 3). Hence, the characters names have been chosen to reflect the underlying notions present in the research.

Taonga pūoro or traditional musical instruments and creation mythology are allied. Their foundation is deeply rooted in nature and the cosmos, because they are constructed from natural materials, because their voices are closely akin to the sounds of nature and because of their use in ceremonial rituals. In the mid 19th century Matiaha Tiramorehu of Moeraki told,

...the creation story in which Māori music traditions are founded. He gave a genealogy of creation that begins: 'Kei a te Pō te timatatanga o te waiatatanga mai a te Atua. Ko te Ao, ko te Ao mārama, ko te Ao tūroa.' This has been interpreted as 'It was in the night, that the Gods sang the world into existence. From the world of light into the world of music' (Flintoff, 2004, p. 12).

The musical tunes or airs come from Ranginui and the rhythms from the heartbeat of Papatūānuku. There are a number of instruments that make up the orchestral voices that speak from these taonga, including Hine Pū Te Hue or the gourds, Tāne of the forest and the karanga manu (bird calls), Tangaroa of the shell instruments, Tāwhirimātea of the wind voices and Raukatauri of flutes. The purpose of these deep traditional instruments was not only for entertainment, but healing, message transmission and in ritual ceremonials. (Flintoff, 2004, p. 12). Taonga pūoro will therefore be used both live and on soundtrack during this performance.

On several occasions while discussing the research with a Southern Māori kaumatua, traditional masks made from seaweed and flax fibre were mentioned as was haka and Māori puppets, both marionettes and hand puppets (Holmes, H., personal communication, 2009). These elements inform the meaning of the piece in several ways. Mask offers the ability for an actor to present more than one character and plays into the idea that metaphor obscures or hides literal meaning just as the mask obscures the literal face. Often the character or mauri (vital essence) residing in the mask remains unknown to the performer until he or she dons the mask. "... the genuine Mask actor is inhabited by a spirit" (Johnstone, 1989, p. 142). If used for *Rarotimu Revisited* the characters would need to materialise during the wānanga, otherwise they may display inappropriate personalities not suited to the underlying theme or themes. It is hoped that puppets may act as narrators to the Rarotimu themes as they apparently did in traditional performance in the South. According to Holmes, masks were either handed down generationally or buried with their companion 'owners' and kiliko or finger puppets were vehicles in which to transport stories, becoming the storytellers.

Mau rākau (Māori martial arts with weapons) will play an important and influential role in this piece. Not because of any association of weaponry with the god of war, Tūmatauenga, but, because the movements techniques associated with the use of taieha (wooden spearlike weapon) can be choreographed according to the interpretation of the narrative. The actions in kapa haka perform a similar function by telling the story that is additionally being sung. Māori martial arts are comparable with eastern martial arts in that the practitioner must be focused and disciplined. Through their practice they become connected, in tune with the land and develop an inner spiritual relationship with the self and the wider universe. There is a mind-body integration. Kauz states,

As we practice martial arts, we find that our training has a strong effect upon our minds as well as on our body. Over the months and years, we usually grow increasingly conscious of ourselves as a unit, all parts of which must work together harmoniously... (1977, p. 25).

Furthermore, the notion of ahei (movement forms) being merged with whakapapa has been attempted before by two Ngāi Tahu mau rākau practitioners. Awatea Edwin and Peter (Black) Brennan developed a series of movements that embodied an ancient whakapapa:

Pou
Poutu
Te Pō
Te Ao
Te Aoturoa
Te Aomarama

As the whakapapa proceeds to Kamaukitahito-o-te-Raki the movements become more complex with progression. This was a collaborative effort undertaken in the spirit of tū taka kē ai and is an example of a functioning model in which to engage and materialise a whakapapa in a performative manner.

The stage and its design will also reflect motifs found not only in Māori art but in mau rākau. Esslin contends that “[t]he frame makes anything in it significant” (1987, p. 38). This includes not only the stage design, but the theatre configuration. In this case the seating in Allen Hall Theatre at the University of Otago in Dunedin, will be positioned in an inverse niho taniwha (monster’s teeth) arrangement in order to accommodate at least two levels of staging. For example, that which is on the same level as the seating and the upper proscenium arch. The inverse niho taniwha configuration coupled with the converse niho taniwha, forms the shape of the patiki (flounder) or a diamond. When several toa (warriors) are arranged in this way, no matter which way they are facing they maintain the pattern. If half the toa turn and face the opposite direction and maintain the patiki shape, they form both an offensive and a defense guard that moves as one body (Edwin, A., personal communication, 1998). The intention of positioning the spectators in this way is to place them in a less confrontational traverse arrangement, where they are not directly facing each other and to endow the space with meaning. In this case, with the use of several tiers of staging, the diverse tiers of knowledge and interpretation are represented.

Programmes will be hand printed onto a mobius strip to portray the continuity of whakapapa and the evolutionary cycle as having no beginning and no end.

Conclusion

The ideas as submitted for this project are incomplete, because the project is incomplete. The data collection is incomplete on several levels, the primary reason is because the performance has not yet occurred and therefore the audience responses have not been recorded. Like the Rarotimu whakapapa, riding the evolutionary conveyor belt, the gamut of our understanding has not yet been fully played out. Nor indeed has the wānanga process been tested. As agreed to by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga this research paper will be concluded post performance production.

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
(T.S. Elliot, Extract from *Little Gidding*, No. 4 of 'Four Quartets')

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Author Notes

The use of the Ngāi Tahu dialectal 'k' has not been employed throughout this work and the standardised 'ng' has been used, e.g. Ngāi Tahu instead of Kāi Tahu. The exception however is when a word containing the 'k' was part of a quote, it remained unchanged, e.g. wānaka as opposed to wānanga.

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