A National Māori University

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Abstract: A National Māori University has been proposed for the furtherance of indigenous education in New Zealand. Justification for the establishment of such an institution resides with the articles of the Treaty of Waitangi, the history of Māori education in New Zealand, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, current international trends, as well as the needs of Māori. The claim for a National Māori University is supported by Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi whereby Māori are guaranteed te tino rangatiratanga (chieftainship) over all taonga (things of value) which includes language, culture and education. This right of Māori to control their own education is also supported by most of the nations around the world as evidenced by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Article 15). In addition, many nations have moved to establish universities for their indigenous peoples in order to help preserve their culture and language as well as overcome current impoverishment resulting from past governmental policies and practices. A National Māori University would be in keeping with those international trends and provide Māori with a powerful forum for indigenous leadership.

Keywords: Indigenous education; Māori culture; self-determination; tertiary education; Treaty of Waitangi; United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

Introduction

In a recent paper by Hook (2007a) the idea of a National Māori University was proposed. The need for a National Māori University arises naturally from the proposition that for Māori to perform well academically the dissociation that currently exists between Māori culture and Māori education should be reversed all the way to the very highest levels of academia (Hook, 2006, 2007a; O'Sullivan, 2007). For Māori to reach the highest levels of tertiary education the only pathway today is through a mainstream university, because that is the only place where students can receive the necessary training in advanced study and research. The only Māori institution that could lay claim to a very small share of advanced scholarship is Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi; however, the under-resourcing of this taonga has left the institution struggling to compete with mainstream institutions at the international level of academic scholarship.

While Māori have the ability to achieve educationally many lack the inclination because mainstream universities are viewed by many Māori as unfriendly, unsupportive and often insincere in their cultural inclusiveness (Hook, 2006; Penetito, 2005). A National Māori University built upon culturally friendly and culturally appropriate values could enhance Māori academic achievement bringing to the forefront of human knowledge an indigenous people whose minimal education in the past has prevented them from accessing the economic power base of this country.

This country is attempting to reinvent itself by moving its economy towards technology and science (Hook, 2007b). Educational strategy documents acknowledge that Māori need to be part of tomorrow's world and yet those same strategy reports make no mention of science, suggesting that subliminal diversionary policies may still be active (Hook & Raumati, 2010). Māori education has improved enormously over these last 50 years but still lags behind mainstream, especially in the sciences (Hook, 2007c, 2008b,), thus ensuring Pākehā

domination of technology for the future. Relevance seems to have been omitted thus securing the possibility of an educated but irrelevant Māori elite.

Ideally, Māori should take control of their own education; however, as long as Māori education depends on the public purse, it seems unlikely that Māori will ever have the final say with regard to what Māori education should or should not be. This does not mean that a degree of autonomy cannot be achieved through the construction of educational institutions founded on Māori culture and values. A National Māori University could be a major step towards the educational independence that Māori need in order to take their place on the world stage. Within such a university Māori could openly develop themselves in directions that ensured their educational universality and not what Pākehā perceive Māori to want or need; as a nation we need to move beyond the educational paternalism of the past.

A National Māori University could provide Māori with a degree of relevant autonomy facilitating access to both the political and economic power base of this country. A National Māori University is proposed, not as a substitute for the present system but as an addendum. The cooperation of an autonomous Māori university with the other eight mainstream universities could provide a unique opportunity for the benefit of all students. The arguments presented in support of a National Māori University are based on several aspects of Māori needs including indigenous rights, the articles of the Treaty of Waitangi, current trends within the world of international education, the control of advanced education, the impoverishment of Māori through past educational policies and practices, and the need for Māori to be able to prepare themselves for the future.

What is a National University?

According to Wikipedia (2009b):

> A 'national university' is a university created or run by a national government. However, most such universities today are autonomous from government interference. National universities are often closely associated with national cultural or political aspirations. For instance the National University of Ireland in the early days of Irish independence collected a large amount of information on the Irish language and Irish culture.

This definition of a National University misses some of the salient features that might describe a National Indigenous University especially under circumstances where the indigenous people are a minority. Therefore, in the context of this essay a national university is an autonomous government-financed institution specifically for the higher education of colonised indigenous minorities. The university would be associated with the political and cultural aspirations of that indigenous society and run according to its cultural norms.

A National Māori University is a place where Māori can achieve the highest levels of education in a Māori environment without being forced by necessity into adopting the philosophies and perspectives of their European colonisers (Hook, 2008a, 2009a). A state of philosophical independence within a National Māori University would not spring from the earth ready made, but such a state could be achieved over time as Māori and other thinkers within the university began the long evolutionary journey towards intellectual independence and the advancement of human knowledge. It must also be said that such a university would not exclude Western thought, but being a place of universal learning would give due respect to all people, all knowledge and all understandings of the world. The university would be open to all people of all races.

Such a university is a pathway by which Maori could, in their own culturally unique manner, pursue educational achievement to the highest international levels thus providing the foundations upon which Māori thinkers and researchers could create new ideas and discover new knowledge. At the present time the only pathways available to Māori are those defined by non-Māori. A National Māori University would enable Māori to validate their history, their philosophies and their traditional values, and to then place those Māori attitudes and understanding into a modern context not as a footnote to history, but as a living testimony to the cultural relevance of Māori and their intellectual worthiness. The universality of higher education would tend to counter the negative side of cultural hegemony, a hope that, from a Māori point of view, appears to have minimal influence within mainstream universities today.

While some western Europeans have historically disparaged indigenous knowledge systems (see, for example, Scott, 1995) a National Māori University would create the freedom and safety to develop and explore new avenues of thought without being subject to the constraints of traditional European perspectives. Western European-based institutions demand extensive training in the peculiarities of Western thought to the exclusion or dismissal of indigenous tradition (see for example, Hook, Waaka, & Raumati, 2007). The enhancement of creative thinking within a Māori environment could prove of value to all New Zealanders and indeed to all humanity. In addition, Māori need a place for the development of future leaders who are strong in their abilities to reason, trained in the discipline of learning, and secure in their cultural identity.

The Treaty of Waitangi

The Treaty of Waitangi, signed on 6 February, 1840, was supposed to define the relationship between Māori and Pākehā. Unfortunately, the Treaty was written in such general terms that almost everything is subject to interpretation. To make matters worse there are two versions of the Treaty, a Māori version written in te reo Māori and a Pākehā version written in English, and the two are not identical regarding intent (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2009). The Waitangi Tribunal has exclusive authority to determine the meaning of the Treaty in the two texts and to decide on issues raised by those differences (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2007); however, the Tribunal has no legislative authority and is in fact only able to make recommendations to the government (The Treaty of Waitangi Act, 1975).

The Treaty is very brief, consisting as it does of only three Articles. Articles 1 & 3 concern the right of Māori to be involved in the existing infrastructure as equals and Article 2 provides for the right of Māori to have authority over Māori issues (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2009). The English version of the Second Article of the Treaty of Waitangi says that Māori are guaranteed “exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands and estates, forests, fisheries and other properties.” The Māori version says “ki nga tangata katoa o Nu Tirani te tino rangatiratanga o o ratou wenua o ratou kainga me o ratou taonga katoa.” that “te tino rangatiratanga” or the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship over their lands, villages, and all their property and treasures. Taonga is generally translated as “treasures” or anything highly prized such as culture or language. In 1985 the Waitangi Tribunal declared the Māori language to be a “taonga” to be protected under the terms of the Treaty. Education, which subsumes language should therefore, also be recognised as “taonga” over which Māori are entitled to have full authority. In other words, the control and regulation of Māori education should reside with Māori.

Unfortunately, the usurpation of power by the Crown and its unwillingness to negotiate with Māori the full extent of tino rangatiratanga and its relationship to kawanatanga (sovereignty) have been fundamental issues of the Treaty for over 160 years and it seems unlikely that the

legitimate rights of Māori under the Treaty will ever be fully realised without the intervention of an outside body such as the United Nations. The Crown assumed full authority without recognising the negotiated partnership, thus depriving Māori of their right to self-determination.

In addition to depriving Māori of their right to self-determination Māori were denied the right to an education equal to that of Pākehā. New Zealand is an agricultural country that needed a large labour force and the only way that could be provided was by keeping the natives ignorant and available for use as cheap labour (Simon & Smith, 2001). Education of the natives would have deprived this country of that which it needed the most.

The education of Māori by Pākehā

From the beginning of the 20th century until the late 1960s Māori achievements in higher education were minimal. Few Māori achieved anything more than an elementary education and higher education was unattainable for most. It was not until the system of schooling set in place in the late 19th century was replaced in the 1960s that Māori education began to improve. The non-performance of Māori in education must be laid at the feet of those responsible and those responsible certainly were not Māori; to blame students for their educational limitations is to blame the victims.

From early in the 19th century Māori understood the need for being educated in the Pākehā way and especially the need to understand their language. With education came access to technology that in Māori hands could mean the difference between life and death. Wanting to be educated in Pākehā ways did not mean that Māori were willing to give up their own culture in favour of Pākehā. Certainly, early leaders like Matene Te Whiwhi, who strongly supported the Kiingitanga movement had no intention of acceding their rangatiratanga to Pākehā. Te Whiwhi supported the education of Māori by Pākehā and accepted the need for having the English language as the medium of instruction (Williams, 2001). However, it must also be recognised that the diminishing of the Māori language in favour of English had serious long-term repercussions that helped lead to loss of culture and generations of Māori unschooled in their own ways (Hook, 2006). The advent of Pākehā-driven Māori education held the hope of equality on the one hand and the risk of losing rangatiratanga (independence) on the other.

For the missionaries who came to this country early in the 19th century, education of Māori was important because it was the cutting edge of the civilising process that their Eurocentric sensibilities demanded, and also the spread of the Christian gospel could be facilitated through the training of Māori missionaries (Penetito, 2005). The mission schools of the Church of England, the Roman Catholics and the Wesleyans were supported by the government (Williams, 2001, p.115) until the mid-to-late 1860s. The Native Schools Act of 1858 brought government subsidies for Māori education in the missionary schools (Simon & Smith, 2001). The language of instruction in the missionary schools was usually Māori but after 1847 it was moved to English in order for the schools to benefit from State subsidies. The Native Schools Act lasted for only 7 years as the Pākehā Wars forced the closing of schools in 1865 (Simon & Smith, 2001).

In 1867 the Native Schools Act was extended to include an offer of government-supported education for Māori, through the building of a schoolhouse, provided a suitable site was offered for its construction. These Native Schools were administered by the Native Department until 1877 when they were transferred to the Department of Education (Simon & Smith, 2001). The Native Schools Act of 1867 firmly established the language of instruction in Native Schools as English and the use of Māori within the schools was actively

discouraged. The assimilation of Māori into Pākehā culture was thus encouraged. The Native Schools Amendment Act of 1871 relaxed the requirement of financial contributions to the construction of buildings and the salaries of teachers, but retained the requirement of the gifting of land to the Department of Education (Simon & Smith, 2001).

From 1879 to the 1960s there were two parallel educational systems in New Zealand, the Public Schools and the Native Schools. While Native Schools were intended primarily for Māori and the Public Schools for Pākehā, the schools were not segregated since Māori could attend Public Schools and vice versa (Simon & Smith, 2001). This does not mean that Māori and Pākehā were treated equally since Māori were subject to the racial biases of Europeans and both Public and Native School systems were run by Pākehā. It is fair to say, however, that there were good teachers and there were bad and those with biases were not slow in directing Māori towards what Pākehā perceived was the appropriate place for Māori, and that place was not amongst the educated elite of this country.

According to Simon & Smith (2001) the education system was set up to:

> …facilitate the 'Europeanising' of Māori. The Native School thus was intended as a structured interface between Māori culture and European culture – a site where the two cultures would be brought into organized collision, as it were – with one culture being confronted with the other in a systematic way. Pākehā teachers appointed to these schools were expected to engage with Māori in specific ways designed to systematically undermine their culture and replace with that of Pākehā. (p. 3)

For the first 70 years the Native Schools provided only primary education although scholarships were given to the most proficient students for two years secondary education at the denominational boarding schools for Māori. In 1941 Native School secondary education was started through the establishment of the first Native District High Schools. From 1947 all Native Schools became known as Māori schools. By 1950 there were 159 Māori schools; however, from 1909 most Māori attended Public Schools. The Native School system was disestablished in 1969 (Simon & Smith, 2001).

Thus for Māori to achieve higher education they were expected to progress from a Native School primary education to a Pākehā-centred Public School secondary education and then to attend a Pākehā university. An extraordinarily difficult task in the absence of specific education designed to gain entry into a university, especially since the education provided was Eurocentric. In the absence of specific training the chances of a Māori ever getting to university, especially with only a rudimentary education, was most unlikely. A few Māori achieved higher education including Maharaia Winiata (the first Māori PhD) who was appointed to the University of Auckland in 1947, Matiu Te Hau, appointed to the University of Auckland in 1948, and Bruce Biggs appointed to the University of Auckland in 1950 (Robust, 2007).

Late in the 19th century many Māori boys had attended Te Aute Māori Boys school with remarkable success. Men like Reweti Kohere, Apirana Ngata and Tutere Wi Repa of Ngati Porou; Maui Pomare and Te Rangi Hiroa (Peter Buck) of Ngati Mutunga; and Edward Ellison of Ngai Tahu/Ngati Mutunga, all of whom became prominent politically and recognised nationally as Māori leaders demonstrating a capacity for learning and achievement that did not conform to the Pākehā idea of place. Under the guidance of John Thornton, an enlightened educator of his time, the school provided a classical curriculum for Māori boys preparing them for entrance to university. In 1906 the school was investigated by a Royal Commission that recommended the abolition of Latin, Greek, geometry and algebra and to focus on agriculture and manual labour (Barrington, 2007). Thus the academic achievements

of Te Aute were largely overcome and remained that way for over 50 years, simply because of the perceived need to prepare Māori for manual labour and the desire to repress the preparation of Māori for higher education.

The doors to Māori academic achievement were partially opened through the establishment in 1956 of the National Advisory Committee on Maori Education that recognised that the "basic educational needs of Māori and Pākehā were identical." (Royal, 1959, p. 41) thus setting the background for the Hunn Report (1960) released to the public in March of 1961. The report prepared by the Department of Māori Affairs revealed the ineffectiveness of the education system for Māori as indicated by the fact that Māori representation at university was only one eighth of what it should be. The report recommended the establishment of a Māori Education Foundation (MEF) whose endowment could be used to assist Māori students in secondary and tertiary institutions and as a further result of the report the Native Schools were ultimately disestablished. There is no doubt that between 1860 and 1960 the education system established in New Zealand had marked negative effects on Māori and their culture. Education for Māori was basic with very little chance of Māori receiving sufficient education to enable them to achieve the educational status of Pākehā.

As Ward said in his book, 'A Show of Justice':

> The 'permanent welfare' of the Māori included the abandonment by them as soon as possible of their own customs in favour of English law, and the adoption by them of such European skills as would command the respect and outweigh the prejudices of the incoming settlers. The saving of the Māori race involved the extinction of Māori culture. (1974, p. 38)

Although the assimilationist policies of New Zealand were changed in the 1980s to embrace the principles of biculturalism (Morgan, Coombes, & Campbell, 2006), 150 years of racial prejudice does not change overnight. Educational policies perpetuated by racist governments resulted in the denigration and minimalising of Māori over a period of 150 years (Hook & Raumati, 2008). Times have changed, but Māori must not forget the struggle for equal education because as the poet and philosopher George Santayana once said: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (Santayana, 1980, p. 284).

Why do Māori need a National University?

In general terms Māori need a National University in order to achieve six major goals:

1. Personal transformation

Education is transforming at all levels; education can transform a nation just as it can a person. Personal transformation results from enhancement of understanding through the gaining of knowledge. For some people personal transformation may be spiritual in nature while for others transformation is more about the acquisition of self-knowledge, but either way the growth of an individual can be profound (Gay, 2000).

2. Increase student retention and success

Student isolation appears to be one of the major causes of student drop out at university (Read, Archer, & Leathwood, 2003; Smith, 2009; Tinto, 1994). Contributing to student isolation are institutional racism and cultural insensitivity by staff, factors that lead to alienation. A culturally sensitive learning environment such as that which would exist within

a National Māori University would encourage social integration and minimise student alienation (Read, Archer, & Leathwood, 2003; Smith, 2009) in a way similar to that which has already been observed within the Māori wānanga (Hook, 2007a). The validation of shared experiences can contribute to student satisfaction and improve performance (Selman & Schiltz, 1998; The Oxford Learning Institute, 2009).

3. Cultural affirmation

The nature and value of indigenous knowledge are difficult to assess. Historically, Māori knowledge, values, skills, perspectives and experience have often been judged by mainstream as irrelevant, but today that situation is beginning to change. A government-wide policy called Vision Mātauranga speaks of value and rediscovery of Māori knowledge (Ministry of Research Science and Technology, 2005). However, in view of the fact that Māori knowledge tends to be non-technical in nature, the doorway to the technological future posited by government has yet to be opened (Hook, 2007a,b). As with all universities, a Māori university would be expected to be universal in its outlook; however, it should be prepared to discover and add to Māori knowledge as part of its research agenda.

4. Empowerment

In all mainstream universities of New Zealand, Māori are subordinate with the power of the university being vested by Pākehā in Pākehā. The hegemony of Pākehā is all pervasive especially within the major universities of New Zealand. For example, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, New Zealand's Centre for Māori Research Excellence, while essentially Māori, resides under the auspices of Pākehā authority at the University of Auckland (see Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, 2009). In other words, within the institutional hierarchy of the University of Auckland those things that are essentially Māori are subject to Pākehā authority regardless of whether or not such authority is manifested on a daily basis. Such hierarchy negates concepts of cultural equality, thus diminishing the essential principle of rangatiratanga, a principle that lies at the heart of being Māori. Māori might be better served if Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga resided within a Māori institution subject to Māori authority.

With knowledge comes empowerment and a sense of freedom; freedom to choose what Maori eat, what Maori spend, how Māori raise their children, what and who to worship, where Māori live, whose company Māori keep, what work Māori do and how Māori comport and define themselves (Hook, 2009a,b). While empowerment of Māori through education seems positive and appropriate, it could be argued that perhaps the end product might come to simply resemble that which already exists within the mainstream universities today. That the hegemony of Western thought might simply be replaced with the hegemony of Māori thought. An idea that seems unlikely, but if achievable, might not be entirely inappropriate within the context of a National Māori University.

5. Employment

One of the major motivating factors for students is to get a better job. It is recognised that the better the education, the better the job and the bigger the pay. In 2005 the then Minister of Education, Steve Maharey (2005) pointed out that:

> People with no qualifications have high unemployment rates when compared with those with school or tertiary qualifications. In New Zealand in 2005, people with no qualifications had an unemployment rate of 6.4 percent, considerably higher than that for people with qualifications (4.2 percent for those with school qualifications and 2.2 percent for those with bachelor degrees or higher). (2005, p. 19)

Such numbers confirm that education is the path to economic well-being. However, socio-economic well-being is only part of being well-educated, especially in the Māori sense. Well-educated in the Māori sense also involves deep knowledge of tikanga Māori, history and whakapapa, all of which would come naturally within a National Māori University. Education is "practically central to the propagation and implementation of the knowledge economy" (Sellers, 2001, p. 1) and a National Māori University could ensure that Māori are part of that future.

6. Research

For a university to be active in the creation of new knowledge, a university must be a research institution. One of the most important functions of a National Māori University must be to train students in the methodology of research and at the present time the only place that provides in-depth training in research are the mainstream universities. The term "Māori research" has become part of the lexicon with connotations that "Māori research" is somehow different from "Pākehā research". Research is a process common to all peoples (Solomon, 2007) and the only valid research is that which is based upon scientific principles and a Māori scholar is not necessarily a person who dedicates his/her scholarly pursuits to the study of Māori things. To restrain the pursuit of knowledge to only those things directly relating to Māori would be to handicap and not help Māori scholarship.

Indigenous universities around the world

Many indigenous peoples around the world have national universities dedicated to their learning and advancement. The approach taken, while varied, all speak to indigenous pride and the preservation of cultures threatened by non-indigenous ruling majorities. A National Māori University must go beyond just preservation of an ethnic culture; it must be a university in the universal sense of the word including all topics and all disciplines such as business and science. A university cannot pick and choose to teach only topics that align with the cultural sensitivities of individuals whose belief structures recognise only traditional ways. A National Māori University must prepare Māori students to compete internationally and the only way that can be achieved is if the curriculum is international in scope and of the highest quality.

In 1962 Samoa was the first Pacific Island nation to gain independence and one of the first things they did was to lay the foundations for a university of their own. The National University of Samoa took almost 20 years to achieve but, in 1984, the university was established by an act of parliament. To begin, the university was a bachelor level institution teaching a very broad curriculum that included science, nursing, technology, Samoan studies, education and the arts. In 2006 the first masters programme in Samoan studies was established.

Australia does not currently have a National Aboriginal University although there is much discussion regarding the establishment of such an institution. All of the major universities in Australia provide support for their indigenous students through what are known as indigenous centres (White, 2002). The Higher Education Council, a federal advisory body, has called for government funds to explore how a national aboriginal university could and should be developed.

Indigenous peoples account for 10% of Mexico's 106 million people. Mexico does not have a single National Indigenous university per se, but it does have seven intercultural universities

dedicated to "promoting alternatives for the development and integration of Mexico's 62 native ethnic groups." The universities are distinctly appropriate for the indigenous people they serve. The intercultural universities oppose racism and discrimination while also serving as centres for the preservation of native languages (Reyes, 2005, ¶ 2).

In May 1976, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations formed an agreement with the University of Regina, creating the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC). The mission of the college is to serve the academic, cultural and spiritual needs of First Nations' students. On 21 June, 2003, the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College officially changed its name to the First Nations University of Canada. Their vision statement is especially revealing:

> We, the First Nations, are children of the Earth, placed here by the Creator to live in harmony with each other, the land, animals and other living beings. All beings are interconnected in the Great Circle of Life. (First Nations University of Canada website, 2009, p. 1)

In northern Europe the Sámi University College (Sámi allaskuvla) established in 1989 is 1 of 25 Norwegian state university colleges and is located in Kautokeino. The curriculum of the college is being developed to meet the needs of Sámi including the preservation of language. Students come from all four countries covered by Sápmi (Wikipedia, 2009a).

In South America the University of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon, UNIDAE is the only indigenous university in the Amazon basin. Its bachelor level programmes have been recognised by the Ecuadorian government. Bolivia is in the process of establishing three new indigenous universities where degree programmes will be given in native languages such as Aymara, Quechua and Guarani (Rahul, 2009). The Deputy Minister for Post-Secondary Education and Professional Training Diego Rodriguez says:

> The universities will offer degrees in Andean plateau agriculture, food industry, forestry, fish farming, tropical agriculture, hydrocarbons, veterinary medicine, and animal breeding. Curricula will be proposed and built by those social organizations and representatives of the original peasant and indigenous nations and peoples, therefore responding to their stated needs. (Rodriguez, 2009, ¶ 5)

Of the 36 tribal colleges and universities listed on the White House Tribal Colleges and Universities website, only 2 are listed as universities (US Department of Education, 2009). Thirty-four are community colleges generally offering associate degrees and other pre-university studies. Of the two universities listed, the Sinte Gleska University which serves the Lakota people and is located on the Rosebud Reservation, South Dakota, was specifically established to meet the higher education needs of the tribes (Sinte Gleska University website, 2009). The Sinte Gleska University may be, in fact, the only university in the United States that was created by native people for the express purpose of pursuing self-determination and higher education. The Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas, is for American Indians and Alaska Native Nations students and supports sovereignty and self-determination, but does not appear to result from an indigenous initiative (Haskell Indian Nations University website, 2009). Thus, somewhat surprisingly perhaps, the United States can probably boast at most only two Indigenous universities and suggests that much work remains to be done for the uplifting of indigenous education in the United States of America.

This brief outline of what other countries are doing for the higher education of their indigenous people is by no means exhaustive. However, it serves to point out that there are many nations developing universities for their indigenous peoples as well as highlighting the

unusual approach of the New Zealand government.

The *wānanga* approach

While New Zealand does not have a National Māori University, it does have three wānanga which are tertiary level education institutions that can confer degrees usually to the bachelor level. However, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, a Māori wānanga in Whakatane, even has a PhD programme as well as several masters level degree programmes. None of these wānanga are recognised as universities by the government of New Zealand. In fact, it has even been legislated that the wānanga cannot use terms such as "vice-chancellor" or "chancellor" to describe its top executives, nor are they permitted to use the term "university" to describe themselves; these terms have been reserved for use only by the universities. The "wānanga" system of tertiary education was introduced by government in the Education Act 1989. According to the Act:

> A wānanga is characterised by teaching and research that maintains, advances and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence, and assists the application of knowledge regarding ahuatanga Māori (Māori tradition) according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom). (The Education Act,1989, Section 162(4)(b)(iv))

This definition under the Act distinguishes wānanga from universities in spite of the fact that every university in New Zealand describes itself as a wānanga.

> A university is characterised by a wide diversity of teaching and research, especially at a higher level, that maintains, advances, disseminates, and assists the application of, knowledge, develops intellectual independence, and promotes community learning. (The Education Act,1989, Section 162(4)(b)(iii))

Thus wānanga are distinguished from universities primarily by the variety of teaching and research and through the focus of wānanga on things Māori. A National Māori University would essentially combine the two definitions as listed above, to form a university in every sense of the word, but founded on Māori principles and revealed according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom, code, condition).

It is possible that the briefs of the three wānanga could be broadened by government decree to fit the definition of university, although it seems unlikely that this would be attractive to all of them because of regional associations with specific tribes and their focus on actually getting Māori into tertiary education. It may be necessary to begin afresh and allow the development of the Māori university to be built from the ground up or to convert one of the already established mainstream universities to the purpose.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On September 13, 2007 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (International Workgroup for Indigenous Affairs, 2007). The final vote count consisted of 143 in favour, 4 negative, (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United States) and 11 abstentions ("NZ indigenous rights stance 'shameful", 2007). Having taken 20 years to put together, the Declaration was not an impulsive construct by any means and those nations that voted against the declaration had plenty of time to consider their positions. The arguments made by the New Zealand government for not supporting the Declaration appeared specious and disingenuous.

The New Zealand government feared that the right to self-determination under Articles 19 and 32(2) of the Declaration might make it possible for indigenous people to secede and that the Articles imply different classes of citizens which makes the Declaration incompatible with the Treaty of Waitangi. According to Solomon:

> ...the right to secede is only possible in very specific circumstances, and the right to self-determination should not be interpreted as only meaning secession. In 2007, when the Government gave their explanations to the UNGA, this objection was finally dropped. This is probably because of the concessions made by indigenous peoples in Article 46, following New Zealand's constant objections. Article 46 ensures States of their territorial integrity and political unity. However, it is also arguable that the Government dropped their stance because it did not want to be seen as objecting to Māori self-determination – when they would be facing a general election the following year, and the previous election (2005) was hugely focused around New Zealand's race relations. (2008, p. 4)

In view of the fact that the Articles of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People are non-binding, the spectres raised by New Zealand and its three negative companions seem fictitious and hardly plausible. However, since the vote in 2007 both Australia and New Zealand have changed their positions and endorsed the Declaration ("Australia backs UN", 2009; Young, 2010). Australia changed its position in 2009 and New Zealand in April 2010; however, one must be cautious in attributing altruistic motives to any decisions of the government especially because the non-binding nature of the Declaration appears to have played a part in changing the government's mind (Young, 2010, April 21 & 22)

Article 15 of the Declaration says:

> Indigenous children have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State. All indigenous peoples also have this right and the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. (International Workgroup for Indigenous Affairs, 2007)

Quite clearly the United Nations supports the idea that Māori should control their own educational system and to decide whether or not a National Māori University is what they want.

Summary and conclusions

In New Zealand Pākehā have been very cautious as to what they allow Māori, especially in education. The articles of the Treaty of Waitangi, the Declaration of Indigenous Rights by the United Nations, the history of education in New Zealand, and the deficiencies that Māori have in their tertiary education all point to the need for a National Māori University. To become a reality this appeal for a National Māori University might have to begin with Māori assuming control of their education because, as Penetito (2005) has pointed out, all government-funded education facilities come under the Education Act of 1989 and, therefore, there is only one education system in this country and within that system Māori have been permitted a small space in which to succeed or fail. This argument for educational autonomy is based on the premise that Māori cannot achieve the education that they believe they are entitled to within "existing philosophies, policies, structures and practices" (Penetito, 2005, p. 6). The embarrassing paternalism so evident in the Education Act of 1989 that established the Māori

wānanga as being less than a mainstream university needs to be replaced with a clear recognition of Māori equality.

While the purpose of this paper has been to simply consider the possibility of a National Māori University, it does not address the issue of whether or not Māori might actually want one nor does it consider the long and arduous pathway to its achievement; however, the idea has been offered and there is no doubt that this topic will be revisited. Even assuming that such a university was to be established the shape and form of that enterprise would take many years to define, especially when it came to resolving disagreements regarding cultural preeminence, operational policies, and philosophical approaches to learning; however, that is the business of a university, both Māori and Pākehā.

Te Whiti-o-Rongomai once said, "E kore e piri te uku ki te rino, ka whitia e te rā", (clay will not cling to iron when the sun shines). This was in reference to the use of bribery as a means of facilitating land acquisition in Taranaki in the 1870s. There iron was the Pākehā, clay the Māori, and the bond between land-buyer and land-seller was moisture or money (Scott, 1975, p. 48). This saying has just as much relevance today as it did then, but in a different context. If education is the bond that ties Māori to Pākehā then quite clearly the dependence that Māori have on Pākehā will be diminished substantially if and when Maori are able to control and administer their own education. The tino rangatiratanga promised in the Treaty of Waitangi will never be achieved while Māori remain dependent on Pākehā for their education.

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