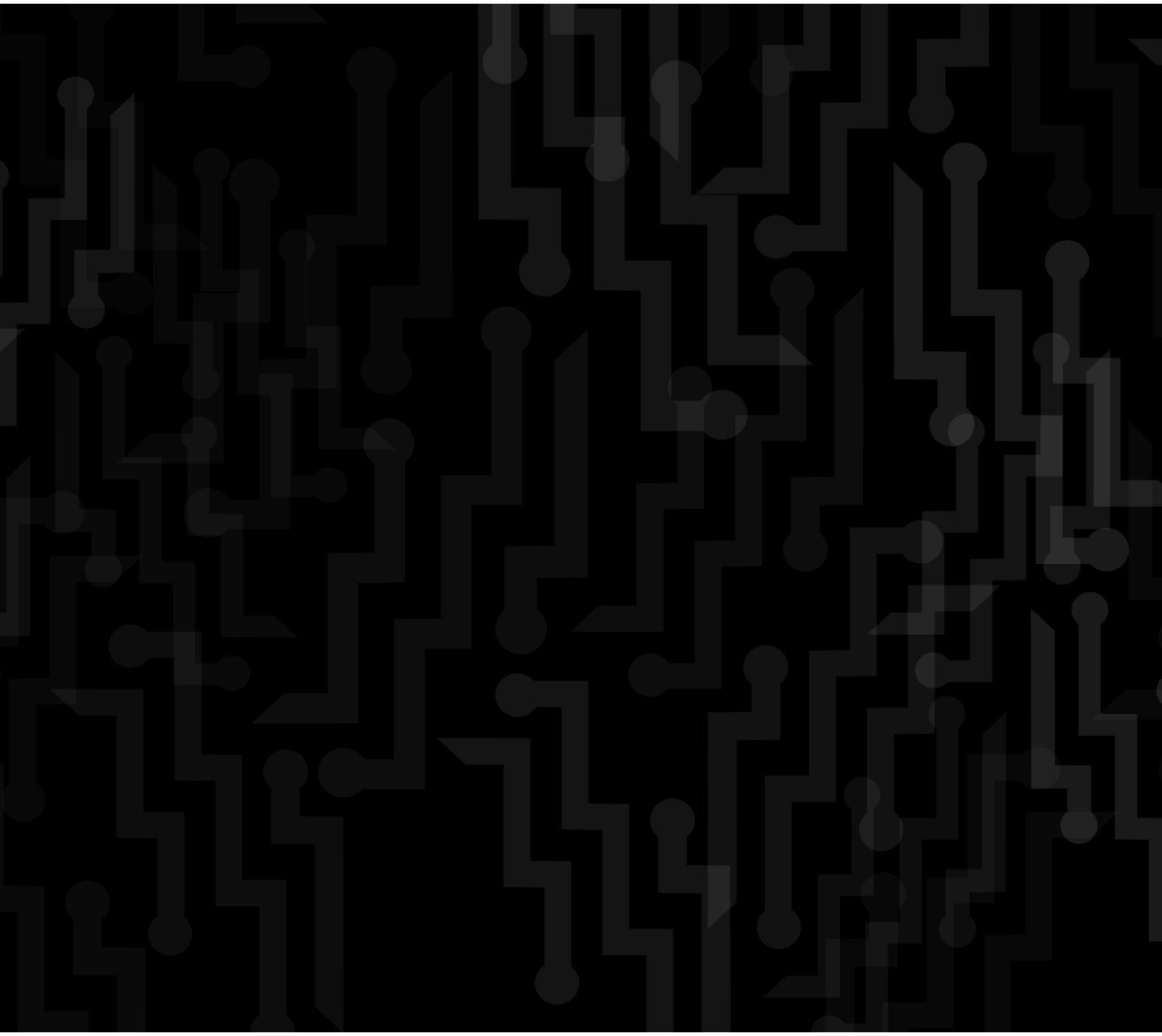


**Whare Tangata Ora: A
Whakapapa Informed Review of
Mātauranga Māori and Literature**

by
Eilensia Ransfield



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Whare Tangata Ora: A Whakapapa Informed Review of Mātauranga Māori
and Literature.

Nā Eilensia Ransfield

Mihi

I want to thank Ngā Pae for the opportunity to explore a kaupapa very close to my heart. I am especially grateful to my supervisor Deanna Haami, who has given me the freedom, trust and support to be guided by my own wairua throughout this process. I am grateful to her and the many tuakana who reclaim versions of space and time which materialise where tangata motuhake. I am grateful to my whānau and especially my Nan and Grandad who were and continue to be the kaitiaki of my wairua. I owe the depth and breadth of my relationship with te wairua to them and to our turangawaewae.



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Positionality

I am a 26 year old wāhine Māori. On my father's side we whakapapa to Ngāpuhi (Mangamuka), Ngāti Awa (Whakatane) and Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga (Manakau). I was born and raised in our tūrangawaewae in Paroa, Whakatāne until moving to Australia at the age of 6. On my mother's side, we whakapapa to Australia as colonial settlers and descend from Sweden, Ireland and England. For most of my menstruating life, I have struggled with whare tangata ora. While I can't be sure, intuitively I believe that these issues predominantly whakapapa to the Pentachlorophenol (PCP) poisoning perpetrated in my tūrangawaewae. Situated adjacent to a bend on Ōhinemataroa, the sawmill opened in Whakatāne to take advantage of its proximity to the central north island's forests and ports. For half a century, toxic waste containing PCP and dioxins were dumped across 36 sites that intersect with marae, mahinga kai, wāhi tapu and residential areas where Māori have historically lived (Chase, 2017). Several of these dump sites included waterways used for bathing, drinking water and mahinga kai for Māori families living along these banks. If not directly through the water, families and community members were exposed through the domestic use of treated timber used as mulch, sawdust, bark and firewood. Largely Māori, ex-workers and their families have suffered from a vast range of obscure cancers, bone diseases, reproductive disorders, infertility, miscarriage and more (Chase, 2017). Most disturbingly, PCP is now part of our whakapapa. Children, grandchildren and great grandchildren with birth defects and disabilities connect ex-workers to a past which propels into our present. Despite innovation, hapū can no longer practice mahinga kai in the same way nor pass on place-specific mātauranga to mokopuna in the way our tūpuna envisioned (Chase, 2017). My whare tangata whakapapa has governed how I've lived my life, my relationships, strengths, weaknesses, interests, sleep, academic performance and the way I show up for and with my whānau. As is the case with others in a similar position, limited whānau knowledge regarding whare tangata ora meant my whānau deferred to the Western medical system for answers. Consistent with history, my experiences within the system led to a profound mistrust that ultimately guided me away, and eventually, closer to myself and deeper into Te Ao Māori. I have spent years experimenting with the synergy between different whare tangata mātauranga and the stories, mana and mamae that make up my tinana and whakapapa. I am guided intuitively by my whakapapa and wairua in my personal methodologies and understand that the mahi I do slowly etches out the future in which whare tangata motuhake is easy, innate and intergenerational.

Introduction

This work is driven by the absence of literature pertaining to wairua and whare tangata ora. The quality and quantity of academic outputs in whare tangata ora reflects the nature of race relations in Aotearoa and the power academia yields as a mechanism of ongoing colonisation (Smith, 2021). The idea of research for many Māori elicits the sensation of a finger sinking into a fresh bruise. Missionaries, anthropologists and colonialists alike have usurped mātauranga from our communities. Once sifted through their worldviews, the ‘research’ seldom represented its whakapapa but rather, satisfied intellectual fetishes synonymous with the expansion of their corresponding empires. Tikanga regarding wāhine Māori and gendered social harmony were particularly vulnerable to the patriarchal eye. As mainly tāne Māori were valued for commercial, political, spiritual and intellectual exchange, the infiltration of patriarchal ideology gradually assimilated into tikanga Māori (August, 2004; Mikaere, 2018; Murphy, 2014; Simmonds, 2018). This process removed the whare tangata as a central social organising framework and introduced a new system which recruited wāhine Māori into a social order bereft of mana wāhine (August, 2004; Mikaere, 2017; Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2014). The availability of literature in this field does not reflect the varied needs of whānau in their pursuit of cultural reclamation. Culture is the answer but not the entire one for the time being. It isn't always accessible in the traditional avenues. Research can offer one part to a wider solution which creates equitable solutions for whānau seeking access to this mātauranga, in or beyond medical settings. Those who fall on this side of the spectrum therefore rely partially or fully on Western health systems for their health needs and deserve care that does not consolidate or escalate colonial violence. The contents of this report respond to this karanga and outline the key forces which define our current relationships with te wairua in whare tangata ora and the ways in which despite magnitudinal violence, wāhine Māori affect mana wāhine to protect and nourish whakapapa.

Methodologies

This research has employed the use of a Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wāhine framework at every stage of its progression. Kaupapa Māori research, “is open-ended, it is ethical, systematic and accountable. It is scientific, open to existing methodologies, informed and critical. BUT, it comes from tangata whenua, from whānau, hapū and iwi. It is undertaken by Māori. It is for Māori and it is with Māori” (Smith, 2015, p.48). Kaupapa Māori in whare tangata ora research identifies the current state and location of available research hails from colonial power asymmetries which singularly privilege the ascension of a white patriarchal world order. It assumes the legitimacy of

mātauranga Māori and uses principles which may offer nuance, guidance and signal standards for what Māori research aspires to be (Smith, 2015). In practice, Kaupapa Māori required me to consider the context of the works I was reviewing. It asked me to understand my relationship with the research, how it contributes to the sovereignty of our future, who benefits and how the research can be done to support the mana motuhake of those this research is for (Smith, 2015).

While Kaupapa Māori is a necessary research framework for any research completed by and for Māori, it alone is not enough to capture the intersectionality which wāhine Māori correspond to. Mana wāhine attempts to uncloak the full spectrum of wāhine Māori subjectivities as they interact with space, time and whakapapa (Simmonds, 2011). Naomi Simmonds contends that Mana Wāhine is an extension of Kaupapa Māori which, at its base, “is about making visible the narratives and experiences, in all of their diversity, of Māori women” (Simmonds, 2011, p.11). It is this uncloaking which reveals that wāhine Māori are intertwined with certain oppressions that tāne Pākehā and Māori experience differently or not at all (Simmonds, 2011). Equally, it flags the systems which institutionalise the blueprint of our oppressions. In whare tangata ora research, a mana wāhine lens is particularly salient. Ngāhuia Murphy (2013) recounts the practice of kuia being relied on to ensure whaikōrero speakers were correct in their records. When stories and records strayed, kuia were expected to gently correct the speaker. If their correction was received poorly, the speaker was publicly reprimanded. This tikanga points to the general trend in which wāhine are centred in traditions of knowledge succession as the keepers of whakapapa by virtue of housing te whare tangata. Given wāhine pertain to a unique role in the succession of whakapapa and whare tangata research requires their centralisation. I lean on the above anecdote to suggest that this is not just a theoretical standpoint but is tika. Mana wāhine for whare tangata ora is thus, a re-assertion of the full spectrum of wāhine Māori voices which house and uphold whakapapa Māori. In practice, this translated to the criteria used to identify possible sources and the critique used to engage with work that was not written by wāhine Māori.

Search method and sample

The literature review was primarily performed using: Google Scholar and Te Waharoa (Victoria University online library system). The keywords used for the searches were: *Wairua, Whare Tangata, Whare tangata ora, Māori women's health, Māori women's reproductive health, wairua in Māori health and hauora*. There was no limit on the time frame for the search. During the initial phase, the search yielded very little. Given my pre-existing relationship to the content of the

research, I aimed to improve the results by referring to citations of key works already published. To complement this, I asked good friends and tuākana of mine if they had any leads also. By this point I had collected most if not all the works cited consistently in the key literature and any new work I found citationally deferred back to authors in the ‘key literature’ pool. At this stage, I spoke with Deanna to discuss the dexterity of the original scope and raise interest in either changing the breadth of the scope to accommodate international authors or adjusting the research question. This discussion culminated in a shift away from the original research question to include equal focus on whare tangata ora in general while retaining the review locally to Aotearoa. For the sake of clarity, a singular definition of wairua was chosen to guide the review. This definition draws on wairua as the two waters given by its mātua at conception (Murphy, 2013; Smith, 2019). Wai meaning water and rua two, is located within the whare tangata. The amniotic fluids are made up of the two tapu waters: te ira atua from Ranginui and te ira tangata from Papatūānuku (Smith, 2019). Rua is known as the place where the sun sets on the horizon and the path travelled by wairua upon their return to Hawaiki and as an old word meaning something that contains (Marsden & Royal, 2003; Smith, 2019). Both expressions of wairua denote a relationship to darkness and subsequently, te whare tangata and wairua’s proximity to Te Pō (Marsden & Royal, 2003; Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2014; Smith, 2019; Sharman, 2019). Despite the singularity of this definition, its ubiquity in Te Ao Māori is explored in greater depth in the findings and discussion.

Rationale

The criteria for inclusion were: 1) literature written by a Māori author/s 2) literature whose citational credibility didn’t predominantly invoke white anthropologists and missionaries 3) literature that made reference to any terms of Māori spirituality 4) books, book chapters, reports, unpublished and published theses, journal articles published in English or Māori with an English translation accompanied. I use the term spirituality above to include any variation of mātauranga which invokes cosmological narratives. This definition does not discount any Christian or Māori religious denomination which blend, appropriate or erase traditional beliefs, although they are evaluated and critiqued. The above criteria produced a total of 3 books and 5 theses.

Procedure

Each resource was read and reviewed in depth and an excel sheet was initially created to log the type of literature, summary, author/s, relevant quotations, outstanding tasks and citations to be reviewed. After the initial review I initiated another excel sheet where I refined the sources down to

3 books, 3 theses and 1 book chapter. I then used the following themes to categorise extracted data 1) whakapapa 2) Te Kore Te Pō Te Ao Mārama 3) te ira atua and te ira tangata 4) te ira wāhine and te ira tāne 5) wairuatanga 6) te whare tangata as a fundamental social organising framework 7) mana wāhine 8) christianity and colonisation 9) 'in-betweenness', bodies resisting binaries, colonial place and time making 10) birth. At this stage each theme was assigned all relevant quotations from the sources, printed and annotated. After this point the themes were condensed to avoid repetition and maximise thematic productivity. These final themes were: 1) Te whare tangata as a fundamental social organising framework 2) wairuatanga and 3) bodies resisting binaries, colonial place and time making.

Literature review summary

Title	Author/s	Type of resource	Brief summary
The Balance Destroyed	Ani Mikaere	Book	Ani reclaims the realities of mana wāhine through her exploration of Māori women at the centre of cosmologies, tikanga, mana motuhake and social organising.
Mana Wāhine and Atua Wāhine	Ataria Rangipikitia Sharman	Unpublished Thesis	Ataria explores in depth the pūrākau relating to atua wāhine. In doing so she parallels the ways in which wāhine reproduce the roles and characteristics which atua wāhine initially set as a socio-cultural precedent upholding our cosmological ties.
Me aro ki te ha o hineahuone. Women, Miscarriage Stories and Midwifery: Towards a contextually relevant research methodology	Christine Kenney	Unpublished Thesis	Christine's research makes a significant contribution, if not the first of its kind that builds a research methodology which parallels a Māori world view with Western midwifery theory. Her methodology is applied focusing on the Māori and Pākehā experiences of first trimester miscarriage in Aotearoa. Christine's research mainly confronts the cultural and institutional discourse that produces uneven maternity geographies.
The Woven Universe: Selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden	Māori Marsden Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal	Book	Marsden draws on his relationship to Te Ao Māori through his positions as a tohunga and reverend to illustrate the theologies within the Māori worldview.

Tū te turuturu nō Hine-te-iwaiwa: Mana wahine geographies of birth in Aotearoa New Zealand	Naomi Simmonds	Unpublished Thesis	In Naomi's groundbreaking application of Mana Wāhine, Mana Wahine geographies of birth in Aotearoa New Zealand, Naomi re-maps our experience of place using Māori maternity stories.
Te Awa Atua Menstruation in the pre-colonial Māori world	Ngāhuia Murphy	Published Thesis	Ngāhuia explores the full spectrum of whare tangata practices to uncover the extent of pre-colonial mana wāhine realities.
The Māori Female - Her Body, Spirituality, Sacredness and Mana	Wikitoria Theresa August	Unpublished Thesis	Wikitoria uses qualitative work to evaluate what wāhine Māori experience at the intersection of tikanga and their bodies and how their whakāro contest prevailing social discourses.
He Ara Uru Ora: Traditional Māori Understandings of trauma and well-being	Tākirirangi Smith	Book	He Ara Uru Ora draws on pre-colonial stories and mātauranga from te ao Māori to provide a nuanced contribution to Māori paradigms regarding trauma. Smith unpacks the role and function of memory as an ingredient of patu ngākau, pouritanga and intergenerational trauma. His conception of Māori trauma points to specific tikanga required in rehabilitative processes for individuals, whānau, hapū and iwi suffering from pōuritanga.

Summary of the findings

There is very little literature about te whare tangata and much less on the role of wairua in whare tangata ora with the criteria used for this review. Wairua may be included in kōrero but is often not named as such or simply implied. It is only explored in greater depth in literature relating to other schools of thought (i.e. Māori health and Indigenous mental health therapy) that don't necessarily coincide with its relationship to te whare tangata despite their theoretical proximity (Marsden & Royal, 2003; NiaNia, 2017). Surviving mātauranga is mostly safekept in tribal institutions regulated by tikanga. For those who don't feel connected to those institutions or are in the very early days of their cultural reclamation journey, individual agency appears to double as both a symptom of colonisation and a path towards reclamation. I frame individual agency as a meaningful ingredient for cultural reclamation using Māori Marsdens' explanation of Te Korekore. Marsden attests, "...When the root of a word is doubled in Māori, it intensifies its meaning. For example kai is to eat, kaikai is greedy. How is it possible to intensify that which is already absolute? By means of a thorough-going negativity, that which is negative proceeds beyond its limits assumes the characteristics of the positive. While it does not entirely emancipate itself from the negative, it does become relatively positive...Thus Te KoreKore is the realm between non-being and being: that is, the realm of primal, elemental energy or latent being" (Marsden & Royal, 2003, p. 20). Individual agency as a symptom of colonisation, can be framed as intrinsically inhibitive to Māori collective identities characterised by microcosms of socio-cultural homogeneity regulated by tikanga. In the context of cultural reclamation, individualisation 'thorough-goes' its singularity as inhibitive to offer a strengths-based approach to cultural re-integration. I highlight that this is particularly salient while tikanga cannot embrace the full spectrum of cultural fragmentation as it externalises across and in tandem with varying oppressions. Diverse in nature, these oppressions can only be known in detail to the individual. As such, it is the individual who is best equipped to repatriate their positionality home. Accordingly, home may not be within our traditional cosmologies and our corresponding collective identities but rather to oneself and their immediate family, which by virtue of being Māori, exists in continuity within the latter. Te wairua presents as overwhelmingly elusive (Sharman, 2019; Simmonds, 2011, 2014). This research suggests that exploration and reclamation of wairuatanga is often catalysed and guided by whare tangata experiences relating to whakapapa, birth and ikura (Mikaere, 2017; Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2011). Wairua is inherently ubiquitous to Māori life. This rangahau builds on

the direction illuminated by tuakana that our relationships with te wairua and subsequently, its role in whare tangata ora, predominantly reside within our physical experience as it relates to water bodies and the female body. While the physical experiences intrinsically contain the capacity to convey our cosmological lexicon, they are reduced to vessels in the absence of a reclamation tongue. Despite this, there are key sites of cosmological continuity which reside within the karanga and hapūtanga. The karanga demonstrates that by virtue of whakapapa to Hineahuone and Papatūānuku, wāhine administer wairua in their conjugation of the ‘unseen’ (cosmological), with the ‘seen’ socio-political context (August, 2014; Murphy, 2013). Hapūtanga and particularly childbirth convey a similar sense of metaphysical authority. Leading up to and during birth wāhine bypass this conjugation and temporarily actualise a complete procession of Te Kore, Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama as they bring life into the world of light. This actualisation is characterised by experiences which demonstrate a proximity to Te Pō through the re-emergence of whānau passed on. A total relationship with te wairua which converges with our cosmological narratives depends upon the accessibility and depth of our relationships to ngā atua as prescribed through our hapū and iwi identities. Reclamation is another source of fragmentation. The intersectional oppressions we experience entrench our individualisation whilst simultaneously providing third spaces we innovate and reclaim tikanga that historically pertained exclusively to hapū and iwi collectives.

Analytical and storying framework

Early into the research, I was encountering what were to me at the time, ‘in-between spaces’. They were whakāro that didn’t fit into singular thematic codes but rather folded across several and contested the boundaries of others. Te whare tangata itself is emblematic of ‘in-between’ processes, it gives whakapapa tangibility in Te Ao Mārama as pepī coming from one world to the next and ikura the medium. It repatriates and summons atua from one space to another and organises a Māori conception of the past, present and future through te whare tangata’s whakapapa to Hineahuone. It is from this source which wāhine affect the metaphysical terrains we experience in our everyday lives, “as she expresses her mana atua, the mana of the atua in everyday life” (Sharman, 2019, p.46). In the resources I selected for the final scope, Te Kore, Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama were a consistent theme throughout. Intuitively, in the beginning stages of the review, I was using Te Kore, Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama as a way of interpreting the data. This drew me to the idea of using Te Kore, Te Pō

and Te Ao Mārama (TPM) as a theoretical framework to story the findings. Māori Marsden defines Te Kore as, “the realm between non-being and being: that is, the realm of primal elemental energy or latent being. It is here that the seed stuff of the universe and all created things gestate. It is the womb from which all things proceed” (Marsden & Royal, 2003, p.20). Smith notes there are two major whakapapa narratives defining Te Pō, the creation time story of Ranginui and Papatūānuku and Hinetitama. For the sake of analytical consistency, I will focus on the latter given its demonstrative capacity to illuminate a wider scope of wairua and whare tangata ora. Pō can be defined as “darkness or night”, and ‘uri’, “generative energy or progeny” (Smith, 2019, p.26). Te Pō is understood as the realm of Hine-nui-te-pō. Daughter of Tāne and Hineahuone, Hinetitama was the atua presiding over dawn. Upon learning of her fathers relationship to her, she claimed Te Pō as her new dwelling enabling her to reside over the protection of her children’s wairua. Mana wāhine researchers have long resisted patriarchal definitions of Hinenuitepō as the evil goddess of death and destruction (Murphy, 2013; Sharman, 2019). This epistemological censorship removes the mana she exercised in re-asserting her destiny and becoming the whare tangata we return to in death (Mikaere, 2019; Murphy, 2013; Sharman, 2019, Simmonds, 2014). Te Ao Mārama is considered the world of light and living. As a central pou to my application of the TPM framework, I weave in Māori Marsden’s definition of the three as, “Te Korekore is the realm of potential being, Te Pō is the realm of becoming and Te Ao Mārama is the realm of being” (Marsden & Royal, 2003, p.21). To convey the operation of this framework, I expand briefly on each stage and its characteristics. Te Kore, Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama sit on a spectrum. They are interdependent in their succession, each ruled by endemic qualities and cosmological processes. Te Kore refers to areas of study which most merit attention due to underrepresentation. Te Pō refers to areas which are in the process of becoming and Te Ao Mārama, to areas which are well understood. Te Ao Mārama discusses the influence and effects of Christianity and colonialism. Te Pō explores (1) Te whare tangata as a social organising framework, (3) wairuatanga and (4) bodies resisting binaries, colonial place and time making. Te Kore discusses the most urgent sites of research through the whakamutunga.

Te Ao Mārama

Themes included in Te Ao Mārama point to rangahau that exists in the light, it is information that is well-known. The themes included here are not new but are discussed distinctly as they pertain to this particular rangahau.

Colonisation & Christianity

As a result of the fragmentation of various collective identities (whānau, hapū, iwi), a collective understanding of wairua representative of those identities has largely been forfeited. Those who remain kaitiaki of intimate conceptions of wairua typically occupy roles such as tohunga, ruahine and respected religious authorities. These people tend to be of our grandparents' generation, have been selected or included in sacred teachings passed down from their elders and have their own tikanga pertaining to the dissemination of this mātauranga. Contemporary understandings of wairua in the collective are largely hybrid and intimately connected to place and whānau. Wairua as a central component to whare tangata epistemologies continues to be obfuscated and policed as an actor in patriarchal violence. Literature and embodied experiences of tangata whenua contend with internalised patriarchal organising which perpetrates the idea that wāhine did not pertain to roles accorded such mātauranga. A mana wāhine perspective asserts this tikanga as culturally aligned if wāhine were hapū or experiencing their ikura. In this case the tapu nature of their bodies as open gateways to ngā atua and their realms may risk blurring the terms of socio-spiritual hierarchies given the powerful nature of their bodies during these times. Synergies with christianity however have perpetrated a singular generalisation that a role of this stature could not correspond to wāhine. Accordingly, there is a significant cultural underbelly which assigns wāhine Māori spectatorship roles as third parties to the mana and sanctity of their own bodies. The meaning of the kupu for women re-affirms the colonial violence Māori experience when wāhine are erased from social systems. 'Wā' meaning space and time and 'hine' the female essence denotes the very real role wāhine Māori were given as kaitiaki of space and time (Murphy, 2013). Surviving kōrero surrounding wairua can come with conflation with and proximity to Christianity. While Māori theology faced both uptake and erasure in Christianity, it was also woven and appropriated into Māori faiths, Rātana and Ringatū (Binney & Chaplin, 1986). Today reclamation of wairuatanga involves complex processes which prompt individuals to confront tikanga as it organises distinctly in microclimates of Māori faiths, Christianity and settler-colonial society. Because Christian patriarchal values persist even in these microclimates, wāhine are charged with renegotiating their understanding and applications of wairuatanga. This process has been

exacerbated by the decimation of *whare puni* (whānau meeting house) in which multiple generations convened to pass down teachings unique to wāhine and tāne. These *whare puni* demonstrate Māori didn't intrinsically belong to patriarchal conceptions of gender roles that diminish the mana of wāhine but rather *used* te *whare tangata* as a key social organising system to ensure that mana was upheld (Murphy, 2013). While the imposition of individualism is legitimately positioned as an ongoing cause of the fragmentation of *whakapapa*, there is certain agency endemic to their individualism which allows individuals to reclaim and appropriate *wairuatanga* in ways which simultaneously subvert this oppression and overcome the challenges experienced by individuals attempting to practice their collective identities (Mikaere, 2017; Simmonds, 2014). This subversion is particularly salient in compensating for the perceived inaccessibility of *tikanga* as a prescription for the full and unique spectrum of oppressions experienced by the individual (Mikaere, 2017; Murphy, 2013; Sharman, 2019; Simmonds, 2014).

Conflicting definitions

The influence of Christianity in Te Ao Māori continues to splinter and blur pre-colonial understandings of what *wairua* means. Tākirangi Smith outlines the tensions between pre and post-colonial understandings of *wairuatanga* are and how those tensions came about, “pre-colonial understandings of *wairua* differ from the biblical concept of spirit, because of its connection to the earth and the sky through *whakapapa kōrero* manuscripts, this connection is traditionally an important living and sacred relationship. *Wairua* has *wai* (water, fluid, liquid-related essence) as its source and basis...it is this relationship and connectivity to everything in the world that separates *wairua* from the biblical concept of spirit and soul” (Smith, 2019, p.19). The point which Smith defines as a major distinction between the two understandings is the connection which the Māori worldview maintains *with Papatūānuku* through its presence as the water bodies we experience today (Sharman, 2019; Smith, 2019).

Te Pō

As indicated earlier, the themes included in Te Pō reflect *whakāro* that are ‘in the process of becoming’, they occupy the space between the light and the dark, they aren't completely seen yet not invisible.

Contemporary understandings of wairua

Wairua is seldom written about at length and in relation to te whare tangata in academic literature. Most of this mātauranga remains prolific within oratory traditions and is likely preferred over the power asymmetries synonymous with academic research. There are two main conceptions of wairua consistent across the literature. While they can be mentioned exclusively to one another, they are intrinsically intertwined. The first locates wairua within the physical, wai as waterbodies and a tūpuna to ikura. The second is wairua as the ‘spiritual’, “the element or essence that permeates the sky, the earth, and everything created from it” (Smith, 2019, p. 20). As it pertains to human wairua, several accounts consider wairua to whakapapa to Hineahuone (Mikaere, 2017, Smith, 2019). Tākīrirangi elaborates, “at conception, the union that takes place within the darkness of the womb is the union of tapu waters which contain te ira atua and te ira tangata. Te ira atua is derived from Ranginui and te ira tangata from Papatūānuku. The wairua is always related to darkness and night. The components of wairua are wai and rua. Rua means the number two but the rua is also the place where the sun descends on the horizon.” (Smith, p. 19-20, 2019). I turn now to Takīrirangi’s reference to Te Matorohanga’s discussion on human wairua as a whakapapa framework for unpacking contemporary understandings of wairua.

*Ko te ira tangata he toto, he hinu, he wai.
Na ena mea e toru te tangata me nga mea o
ia ahua o te whenua nei. Ko etahi he wai he
hinu anake te kaiwhakatupu, ko etahi he wai,
he hinu, he toto te kaiwhakatipu. Mā era mea e
whakatinana ka tinana.*

*The human aspect is created from flesh, blood
and water. By these three elements people exist
and everything of the land. Some are created with
water and flesh only, and some by water, flesh and
blood. By these there is growth and then a body.*

Te Matorohanga, 1910, as cited in Smith, 2019, p. 20

Across the literature, understandings and references to wairua typically fall within these three realms. I have positioned wai as a tūpuna mātua given the consistent inferences that wai (as water) predates human existence as a primordial element belonging to Papatūānuku and her initial offspring in varying accounts of creation time narratives (Sharman, 2019; Smith 2019). Wai's first child (in this framework) is the ikura. Made predominantly of water, it is the element which connects wāhine back to Papatūānuku expressing the first primordial force (Ngahuaia, 2013; Sharman, 2019). Last is that which belongs to a complete succession of the above, flesh.

Wai

Across the literature, surviving and appropriated practices relating to whare tangata ora consistently implicate wai. I refer to wai in two parts. The first relating to te puna roimata and the second, water used to wash away and whakahokia ikura up the whakapapa line to Papatūānuku. Both are conceptualised as mediums, which in their repatriation, reaffirm primordial whakapapa ties. Anecdotal evidence provided in August (2014) and Murphy (2013) demonstrate the role of puna roimata as a medium of wairua. Upon the arrival of an ikura, family members would release roimata to rejoice the continuation of whakapapa and mourn the death of an ancestor, a child that was not yet meant for the light of Te Ao Mārama (August, 2014). Roimata are also implicated as a central figure in tangihanga. A participant in August's (2014) work notes, "when women grieve, the hupe me ngā roimata, this is the release women have coming from their wairua, the nurturer's instincts for life so we provide the balance for our tāne, thus the whānau in letting go" (August, 2014, p. 56). I draw attention here to the specific ways the female body, which holds te whare tangata is centralised in negotiations which conjugate the socio-cultural with the cosmological and as previously stated, time-making (August, 2014; Murphy, 2013). In these instances, wai is consistently implicated to facilitate traditions. This is reiterated in the monthly arrival of ikura, ritualised by using wai to wash the blood out of menstrual wear (August, 2014; Sharman, 2019). In most instances, this ritual is followed with karakia as the water is returned back to Papatūānuku. I posit that the consistency of roimata and wai in cornerstone cultural practices convey the role wāhine exercise in using their bodies to reaffirm whakapapa to tūpuna mātua of wai, roimata and ikura, *te wairua*.

Blood

The origins of blood in Te Ao Māori are relatively well-known, or at least accessible. Māui, in awe of Hinateiwaiwa's world which waxed and waned sought to emulate her by achieving immortality like the moon (Murphy 2013; Sharman 2019). Māui ascended Hinenuitepō's womb where his wish was ultimately granted as he was crushed and made the first menstruation to enter the world (Murphy, 2013). It is on these red tides of wāhine Māori that Māui communicates his immortality (Murphy, 2013; Sharman 2019). In Murphy's (2013) account of the origins of menstrual blood she shares that prevailing accounts of Tāne's exploration of Hineahuone accounts for all bodily fluids (ear wax, sweat, mucus, fecal matter) except menstrual blood. The assumption then, is that menstrual blood predated this exchange, already pertaining to Hineahuone. In all accounts, menstrual blood is understood as a primordial force endemic to wāhine. It is this force, which is exclusively capable of facilitating life in its cyclic procession from Te Kore and Te Pō into the world of light. There are two sub-themes from this narrative that I wish to draw attention to, ruahine and te whare tangata as a healing conduit.

“Hinenitepōteao is not the 'goddess of death' but the originator of the blood that ensures the continuity of humanity. The 'awa atua' refers to the divinity of Māui from his mother Hinenuitepōteao and our whakapapa to this divinity through the menstrual blood of women.”

Murphy, 2013, p. 62-63.

Ruahine

Wāhine consistently pertain to roles which demonstrate a corporeal dexterity that, “is not limited to the terrestrial”, but rather defined by cosmological responsibilities inherited by our primordial ancestors, Papatūānuku and Hineahuone (Murphy, 2013, p. 88). One chronically underrepresented faction of the whakapapa of wairua and successively in whare tangata ora is Hinenuitepō as the Māmā of wairua and how her assumption of the ruahine role may have influenced her successive qualities. I refer to the following connections to demonstrate this relationship and its implications for our understanding of wairuatanga. Upon Hinenuitepō's descent to Te Pō she instructed Tāne to stay in Te Ao Mārama to protect their children's toiora as she would remain in Te Pō to kaitiaki their wairua (Murphy, 2013, Sharman, 2019; Smith 2019). Part of her transformation required her succession into a ruahine. Sharman (2019) and Murphy (2013) note that the drying up of the puna (menopause) was marked as a segway into the second phase of womanhood, 'rua'

two and ‘hine’ the female essence. As a ruahine to Māui, Hinenuitēpō “gifts her moko Māui not with ‘the gift he seeks, not the gift that he thinks he wants - but the gift that she knows he needs’”(Mikaere, 2017 p.34 as cited in Sharman 2019). In this instance, Hinenuitēpō grants Māui immortality through his monthly reappearance in the ikura of wāhine (Murphy, 2013; Sharman, 2019). Murphy (2013) suggests that ruahine took on salient roles in pre-colonial society as kaitiaki of te whare tangata. It was only at arriving at this point of transition were wāhine opened up to distinctly tapu roles pertaining to whare tangata ora. Hinenuitēpō became Māmā of wairua in her assumption of the role of ruahine in Te Pō and expressed her authority as ruahine to grant Māui’s wish bringing menstruation into this world. I draw attention then, to the distinct ways contemporary kuia as ruahine correspond to the reproduction of wairuatanga through their cosmological authority and the implications this has in whare tangata ora presently. This role ripples across the sum of evidence that particularly kuia were consistently at the forefront of knowledge succession traditions and the broader cultural consensus that such authority was not arbitrary but rather, influenced by whakapapa and cosmologically ordained (Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2019).

“The female reproductive organs are often conceptualised as a door way to te whare tangata, therefore, hinting at women’s ability to enable or restrict movement across and through space. Māori maternal bodies exist within and have the potential to facilitate movement between space and place in both spiritual and physical terms.”

Simmonds, 2014, p. 177.

Te whare tangata as a healing conduit

The darkness endemic to Te Pō is associated with wairua and symbolic of the same darkness experienced in the womb where the two tapu waters of te ira tangata and te ira atua create wairua (Smith, 2019). Hinenuitēpō’s crushing of Māui signalled the beginning of menstruation but also marked the formal opening of the portal back to Te Pō institutionalised within the monthly bleeding of our cycles. Its capacity for repatriation is what defines te whare tangata as a vessel for atua and their corresponding realms. While there is significant work demonstrating this vessel used ceremoniously as a pathway to repatriate atua, I wish to extend the focus more generally to its nature as a portal and how wāhine negotiate the tensions between Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama to fulfill terms of healing, connection and childbirth (Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2019). Referencing pōuritanga having lost a pepī to an ectopic pregnancy, a couple states that they were advised against

trying to get hapū again but felt strongly that the only way to restore their hauora was to go against this advice (Simmonds, 2014). I parallel this with Chloe Hartstone's whakāro in Murphy's (2013) work sharing that, "Tainui's existence, as a stillborn child, as a medium between one world and another is synonymous with waka...They represent a space in-between and move between realities" (Murphy, 2013, p.119). These examples point towards the suggestion that still born children, miscarriages and any other hapū related pōuri occupy the 'in-between' space which te whare tangata houses. Waka need ample space to manoeuvre. It is possible that these kinds of pōuri inhibit such movement without intervention and risk a coalescing of sorts which promotes further pōuritanga. In the absence of pre-colonial ceremonies, I tautoko the frequent intuition experienced by wāhine Māori in wanting to bring life through the doorway as a means of restoring the clear passage between Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama (Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2014). I suggest that a complete absence of any rituals would be relevant to research regarding the manifestation of whare tangata mate.

"...the bodies of our ancestors, of whānau past and of babies unborn are intimately entangled with the maternal bodies of women presently."

Simmonds, 2014, p.167.

Wāhine frequently refer to hapūtanga as a key site of connection to whānau both living and passed (Simmonds, 2014; Kenney, 2009). Wāhine who edge closer to birth voice this need more immediately. I posit that this need becomes exponentially apparent as wāhine progressively emulate the 'doorway' at its most open point. Seeking proximity to whānau passed on may then be framed as a natural need given passed on family members who now reside in Te Pō may actually be able to offer a proximity to a birthing Māmā that others in Te Ao Mārama cannot. I suggest that whether this be the case, their unique position in Te Pō does offer wāhine important support as their bodies reach an embodied climax between the two realms.

Flesh

I refer to flesh as the wairua experiences which pertain to our nature in the flesh in Te Ao Mārama. I reaffirm this inheritance through that which is also reserved for wāhine, karanga. Karanga derives its power from the whare tangata which holds that which is responsible for traversing realms and discerning the cosmological and socio-political parameters of life, the

ikura. The karanga, like the ikura, possesses the same quality in its Wāhine shadow Papatūānuku's role to perform cosmo-spatial regulation through the same source (August, 2014; Murphy 2013).

Te Kore

I have placed the whakamutunga under Te Kore as this corresponds to the most underrepresented areas of study. What is mentioned here are sites of discourse which are consistently neglected in terms of the frequency of their appearance across literature and depth of their analysis.

Whakamutunga

The majority of academic literature which details and locates the role of wairua in hauora presides in more traditional health fields such as Indigenous Mental Health (NiaNia et al, 2017). This work is helpful but fails to locate wairua within the whare tangata and consequently falls short in explicitly including te whare tangata within diagnosis and prescription. This kind of epistemological censorship narrows the path of cultural reclamation. Wāhine who require whare tangata care or seek meaningful engagement with this kōrero will frequently have their oppression consolidated in the absence of culturally safe care. Wairua's activity outside the body during night time is connected to the nights' relationship with the womb state and the womb state as the place where "all created things gestate" (Marsden & Royal, 2003, p. 20). Given wairua's role to whakahokia back to the primordial source, whare tangata māuiui should consult the well-being of te wairua as a key term of diagnosis. Additionally, the role the female body has in conveying time and cosmological processes points to its conscription as a key site of whānau well-being. Any relational asymmetries within the whānau (past, present and emerging) may manifest in an unbalanced disposition between Te Pō and Te Ao Mārama which ultimately present as te whare tangata māuiui.

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