

Indigenous Women and Christ in Pacific Contexts

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This paper presents a very brief outline of the approach and some of the outcomes of my doctoral research (Callaghan 2011). For that study of indigenous women's christologies I interviewed seventeen Mihingareⁱ (Māori Anglican) womenⁱⁱ and reviewed theological literature by several Mihingare men. I have drawn on a strategy of "solidarity with" similarly colonised minority women and studied Australian Aboriginalⁱⁱⁱ and Native American theologians^{iv} writings. Thus, when I refer to "indigenous women" in this paper, I refer specifically to the Māori, Australian Aboriginal and Native American contexts. The Aboriginal and Native theologians represent indigenous christologies in three important ways, namely: a solidarity among oppressed peoples, the use of tribal epistemologies and the centrality of Christ. In conversation with postcolonial feminist theologians, this paper discusses the ways in which women's strategies and strengths have shaped understandings of Christ in an indigenous Pacific context.

Postcolonial Feminist Theology

For many indigenous and third world theologians, Jesus' question "Who do you say I am?" (Luke 9:20) has been most important for addressing understandings of Christ. The question

invites faith communities to bring new insights, meanings, and possibilities to christology (Kwok 2005: 182).^v Postcolonial theologian Kwok Pui-Lan argues that if the creative space between Jesus and Christ is left open, the richness and vibrancy of the Christian community flourishes:

Thus, an organic model allows us to encounter Christ in many ways and many cultures, without being limited to a finite, historically conditioned human figure. The importance of Jesus as one epiphany of God does not exclude other christic images that Christians have constructed because of their diverse religious experiences and cultural contexts (2005: 165).

Support for Kwok's position is found in similar arguments from African and Asian theologians. For example, Igbo theologian, Rose Uchem (2001: 191) claims that the distinction drawn between the historical Jesus and the post-Easter Jesus by contemporary christologies from below, provides an inclusive praxis and theology for women because it centres on the resurrection of Jesus. The distinction has opened up the possibility of a symbolic imaginative approach, rather than a literal factual approach to the Bible, and one in which the resurrected Jesus, Christ, is no longer restricted in time and space or limited to a particular gender, ethnicity or knowledge. Such an approach is important for Uchem's development of an inclusive christology for women, and is one with which I identify.

Kwok notes that Asian feminist theologians make several important points concerning Christ images. First, they have maintained that Christianity has never been pure and has, from its beginning, assumed elements from different cultures. Kwok asserts that "it is only when non-western churches are doing so that more established churches and theologians label such practices as 'syncretism' in a derogatory sense, to exercise control and power" (2005: 161).^{vi} In religiously pluralistic Asia there has been much fluid adaptation and interplay among the Confucian, Buddhist, Taoist, and Shinto traditions (Kim 2003).^{vii}

Like Kwok, feminist theologian Chung Hyun Kyung has challenged Asian feminist theology to move beyond doctrinal purity to risk “survival-liberation-centered syncretism” (Chung 1990: 113).^{viii} Her theological position encourages feminist christologies to go beyond their comfort zone and to listen to the voices of people.

Kwok points out that postcolonial feminist theology is still in developmental mode. Also, she warns postcolonial theologians that the creation of new narrative discourses of Christianity through the use of cultural expressions and stories “can be seen as yet another incidence of trying to fit local histories into the global design of Christianity, if it does not self-consciously challenge imperialistic impulses” (2005: 43). In this case, it would be, ironically, the colonized colonizing the mind. Further, she argues there can be “no one single postcolonial feminist theology that is adequate or comprehensive enough to cover the pluralistic postcolonial contexts, as the experiences of colonialism are far from homogeneous” (2005: 126-27). For these reasons, for my study and development of Māori christology I relied on a theoretical framework specific to the Māori context, which in reciprocation, offers back to the wider feminist discussion the strengths of a Māori framework and can be applied when considering other indigenous christologies. That framework is Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis, supported by Kaupapa Māori research.

Kaupapa Māori Theory and Praxis

Kaupapa Māori theory is the conceptualization of Māori knowledge. Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis has three important components: conscientization (which Smith defines as revealing the reality), resistance (defined as oppositional actions), and praxis (defined as reflective change)

(Smith 1997: 37-38).^{ix} The term “Kaupapa Māori” describes “the practice and philosophy of living a ‘Māori’, culturally informed life” (Smith 1997: 453).

The principle of self-determination overarches Kaupapa Māori theory because the principle denotes greater autonomy of Māori through groupings such as *iwi* (tribe), *hapū* (sub-tribe), *whānau* (family), church and other groups within Māori society to contribute to the life of Māori as a minority colonized group.

Kaupapa Māori research, as developed to date, has come out of the same general need as that for Kaupapa Māori theory. The fact that indigenous “space” needs to be claimed is a direct consequence of the inability of other culturally-sensitive research models to be effective culturally-safe models. Survival, recovery, development, self-determination are the four major foci for Linda Smith (Smith 1999: 116). These “tides,” as she calls them, are the conditions and states of being through which indigenous communities are moving.

Kaupapa Māori theorists encourage Kaupapa Māori researchers to think critically, to address structural power relationships and to draw upon existing cultural values and systems. They are encouraged to offer their research back to their communities as a contribution toward transforming those communities (Smith 1999: 191). Kaupapa Māori research provides strategies that researchers can employ that will enable them to build strong research relationships with different communities (Smith 2006: 24). Educational theorist, Fiona Cram, for example, suggests a twofold role for researchers within Kaupapa Māori research. One role is to affirm the importance of Māori self-definitions and self-evaluations. Another role is to critique Pakeha/colonial constructions and definitions of Māori and to articulate solutions to Māori concerns in terms of Māori knowledge (Cram 2006: 34). Importantly, Cram reiterates that the

value of Kaupapa Māori research is that it takes a strengths-focused rather than deficit-based approach (Cram 2006: 35). The strengths-focused approach has been critical to my study of Māori christology because I have specifically searched for, and focused on, existing strengths for transformation.

Mana Wāhine Theory

Māori theorists have worked extensively on analyzing and deconstructing colonial discourses. Mana Wāhine, which speaks from the broad framework of Kaupapa Māori theory, is a means by which these analyses and deconstructions can be described.

From her study of Mana Wāhine theoretical frameworks, Mana Wāhine theorist Leonie Pihama identifies ten critical elements, which, she claims, are neither exclusive nor definitive. They are based upon *mātauranga* Māori (Māori epistemologies) and provide a foundation for the ongoing development of Mana Wāhine theory. “They provide a foundation that is both based within *mātauranga* Māori and also which challenge the imposition of colonial patriarchal structures” (Pihama 2001: 263). The ten elements are (Pihama 2001: 263):^x

1. Mana wāhine
2. Te reo me ona tikanga
3. Whakapapa
4. Whānau
5. Recognizing diverse realities
6. Wairua
7. Te tiriti o Waitangi
8. Decolonization
9. Mātauranga Wāhine
10. Reclaiming cultural space

Pihama draws on a range of writers^{xi} to provide a full explanation of each of these elements.

Mana Wāhine theory asserts that in terms of *whakapapa* (Pihama’s 3rd element) Māori women

have always held significant, central positions in Māori society, within their own *whānau* (Pihama's 4th element), *hapū* and *iwi*. In general, Pihama argues that *te reo Māori me ona tikanga* (Pihama's 2nd element) are central to Mana Wāhine theories. Within these elements are concepts and understandings that are theories in themselves. For example, where *whakapapa* is identified as an element of both Kaupapa Māori theory and Mana Wāhine theory, it is also a theoretical framework in and of itself (Pihama 2001: 309-10).

Mana Wāhine theory^{xii} aligns with postcolonial feminist theology because a critical concern of both is the impact of colonization on women and the way in which women's roles and status were denied and their knowledge marginalized. Pihama states:

Had colonisation not been our experience, or the imposition of racist, sexist, heterosexist, classist ideologies not occurred, the development of Māori women's theories to respond to colonial constructs may not have been necessary (Pihama 2001:261).

The position I have taken in relation to postcolonial theology parallels the position taken by Pihama. She aligns two theories that can inform and support each other, but are nevertheless quite separate entities in that neither relies on the other to exist (Pihama 2001: 105). In my dissertation, I aligned postcolonial feminist theology and Kaupapa Māori theory. Foundational to my own research was Linda Smith's assertion, as noted above, that however Kaupapa Māori theory is aligned with other emancipatory theories, what is of central importance is that it should make a positive difference for the researched, whether that be an individual or a community.

In my research, I have emphasized the privileging of indigenous knowledge. Such a position is particularly important in regard to the interview narratives, and the privileging of the women's voices as the authority of their own experience. In this regard, the principle of *whakapapa* has provided an appropriate research framework for privileging the women's voices and

epistemologies. That is because *whakapapa* establishes the authority of the speakers and addresses the many layers of relationships that shape identity and belonging. As Pihama claims:

Whakapapa as a key element in Kaupapa Māori theory requires us to explore relationships, how they are played out, how power is constructed within those relationships, and the layers of knowledge that are a part of those relationships (2001: 135).

I have claimed Mana Wāhine theory and research as appropriate for the 21st century because Mana Wāhine involves praxis-based critical analysis of relationality and connectedness that is intentionally focussed on the strengths of women's epistemologies. Further, the two Mana Wāhine principles provide a way of addressing issues concerning religion and spirituality for Māori because they are embedded in a Māori worldview with related values, ethics, morals, and beliefs. Based on the women's experience of Christ and the two Mana Wāhine principles I have claimed a Mihingare women's "christology of Presence" as a christology appropriate for healing and reconciliation in a Mihingare context.

Kaupapa Māori theory and research, together with Mana Wāhine theory, provides culturally specific guidelines and principles. It should be noted, however, that all theorists of Kaupapa Māori strongly assert that Kaupapa Māori theory is open to further development. Likewise, postcolonial theology is still in a developmental stage. Kaupapa Māori theory and postcolonial theology can be aligned because they are concerned with sites and terrains of struggle. Together, they have provided the intellectual and ethical integrity required of research such as mine which involved working within a community. The historical analysis of theorists consulted provided a sound base for the deconstruction process and provided clear examples and guidelines on how to approach the reconstructive component of my developing christology.

Cultural Principles for a Christology of Healing and Reconciliation for the 21st Century

The Mana Wāhine principles of *whakapapa* and *whānaungatanga* (family relationship) have been central to the Mihingare women's experiences. Consequently, I claim the two principles as indispensable for understanding a Mihingare christology.

Whakapapa

Like Australian Aboriginal and Native women in their respective contexts, Māori validate what constitutes history for Māori and how such history is constructed (Pihama 2001: 134). Thus, *whakapapa* brings to my study notions of history that are located within Māori understandings in which history is not primarily linear or chronological (Pihama 2001: 134). Rather, *whakapapa* brings all aspects of the Māori world together and is the mechanism for establishing for Māori a place in the world and relationships with one another. To understand *whakapapa* is to understand the stories, the *purākau* (traditional wisdom stories), and the knowledge that comes with events, people, and relationships. *Whakapapa* informs relationships between Te Atua (God), *tipuna* (ancestors), *whenua* (land), and *tāngata* (people). *Whakapapa* can mediate between fragmented groups as long as *whakapapa* is considered “in ways that are not determined by money or colonially-imposed structures” (Pihama 2001: 134).

Whakapapa is a mechanism for making links, but without *wairua* (“spirit” - Pihama's 6th element), *whakapapa* is simply a mechanism. *Whakapapa* does more than establish identity. *Whakapapa* connects all aspects of the Māori world in a spiritual way. The Mihingare women's narratives reveal a deeply embedded spirituality that enables them to cross the barriers of time

and space to achieve an understanding of both the continuing *wairua* presence of *tipuna* and also of Christ. This, in my analysis, is one way the women express an understanding of resurrection.

Whakapapa, as a strategy for healing and reconciliation, strengthens connectedness, identity, and belonging for Māori. For christology, a *karaitianatanga* (Māori Christian) perspective embodies the deeper meanings of *whakapapa* embedded in narrative and *purākau*. The Mihingare women's narratives illustrate the connectedness of the spiritual and physical elements or realms of *whakapapa*. One possibility of this connectedness is that Christ is healing and fully participating in the reconciliation of indigenous peoples with the colonial experience. For example, in the face of divisive colonial structures, such as those found in the destructive aspects of denominationalism and ecumenism, *whakapapa*, rightly practised through *whānaungatanga*, can cement right relationship and call for appreciation of unity and difference. The spiritual and physical aspects of relationship are kept in harmony. Critical reflection upon the elders' practice of attending to *whakapapa*, I claim, has been an essential part of the strategy of Kaupapa Māori for healing and reconciliation.

In the christologies of both the Mihingare writers and the interview participants human response was essential for healing and reconciliation. Similarly, in *purākau* human response for healing and reconciliation is required. Belief in Jesus as "representative" in Mihingare Christology, I contend, is strengthened by *purākau*. The saviour figures in *purākau* strive for the well-being of the people. They represent human values and goals, and illustrate the possibility for authentic humanity to find expression in every human person. In *purākau* and other *whānau* stories, action by a person or persons is necessary to enable improved conditions. Embedded in the stories are narratives about individuals who had responded to the *atua* (gods), had received knowledge, and had brought about survival and improved conditions for their people. Such persons themselves

had achieved the status of *atua*. The Jesus story would have been, in that way, familiar to early mission converts. Notably, it is through *purākau* that the human endeavour to overcome death is most expressed. Thus, importantly for the Christian Māori, Jesus Christ becomes the one person that can complete the gap sought to be filled in *purākau*, that is, the one who overcame death.

An ascending christology and the argument for saviour figures as agents of the Logos in history, in my opinion, support the relevance of such stories for healing and reconciliation. Further, the saviour figures in *purākau*, albeit accorded deity status later, were human. Concerns that saviour figures must be historical figures, is thus alleviated. They are *tipuna*. Nevertheless, *purākau* can be understood as essentially metaphorical and symbolic. I maintain that the Māori worldview has influenced the participants' and the writers' preference for familial images of Jesus Christ.

Significantly, the gender of Jesus is not a problem for either the participants or the writers. Since *purākau* can be understood as metaphorical, the argument that the term Son of God (for example) is used metaphorically to reveal a close relationship to God, and arguments for the use of symbolism as a way ahead for the 21st century concur well with Māori theology.

Whānaungatanga

Whānaungatanga, the second principle, stems from the word *whānau*. *Whānau* symbolizes creation, birth, and the extended family and provides the basis upon which Māori society is built. *Whānau* encompasses support mechanisms such as the obligation to care for one another and collective obligations and responsibilities for the wellbeing of one another (Pihama 2001: 136). Thus, the *whānau* is an important cultural structure which allows for *whānaungatanga* - Māori cultural practices, values and thinking (Smith 1997: 471). *Whānaungatanga* as an expression of forms of relationships provides opportunities to explore relationships that exist both within

whānau, *hapū*, and *iwi*, and beyond into metaphorical *whānau* or *kaupapa* (purpose oriented) *whānau* (Pihama 2001: 135).

Whānaungatanga has been expressed in the writings of Mihingare theologians and practised in the lives of Mihingare women. The Mihingare women's narratives show how *whānaungatanga* relates directly to a process for socio-economic health, a process that is referred to in Kaupapa Māori theory as *kia piki ake i nga raruraru i te kainga* – the socio-economic mediation principle. During the early missionary period obligations to mission activity seriously threatened *whānau* responsibilities and well-being through missionary attempts to prioritize mission growth over *whānau* obligations. Australian Aboriginal theologians have reported and analyzed the same. These situations are critical in providing analysis of the individualistic drive of colonial ideologies. The principle of *whānaungatanga* can be invoked in the fragmentation caused by continuing colonizing activity. Likewise, deeply embedded in the women's *whānau* narratives are precedents for the ways in which *whānaungatanga* can heal the fragmentation of relationships caused by continuing divisive denominationalism and ecumenism through collective *whānau* resources and support. Mihingare women's narratives have demonstrated how the practice of *whānaungatanga* has provided support by *whānau* for *whānau* socially, religiously, and economically.

Whānaungatanga, as an element of Mana Wāhine Māori theory, calls for a critical engagement with the way that relationships are constructed and positioned within a given situation. In my judgement, the indigenous practice of being in solidarity with other marginalized groups is an expression of *whānaungatanga*. *Whānaungatanga*, broadened to include the metaphorical *whānau*, has the potential to heal and reconcile in many situations and groupings and has limitless potential for a christology of healing and reconciliation. A reconciliatory aspect of

whānaungatanga is exemplified in the participants' experience of sharing work and resources, the basis of economic survival and equity for all families in their communities.

Whānaungatanga promotes a christology of inclusiveness and reconciliation. First, a *whānaungatanga* understanding of unity and difference accommodates varying theological views within the Mihingare context, while beyond the Mihingare context it has the potential to strengthen ecumenical and interfaith relationships. I contend that the participants and the writers present both unity and difference as elements of reconciliation. Second, *whānaungatanga* generates familial themes for understanding Christ which embody the value of kinship-style relationship and identity.

The experiences of participants' in my thesis research and the familial emphasis upon the image of Jesus's importance for them leave little doubt of the value of *whānaungatanga* as a model for economic equity and survival. Nevertheless, further research on the model of *whānaungatanga* for healing and reconciliation is needed. My study uncovered the negative effects of the loss of language brought about in just two generations. The loss of a proper understanding of cultural principles (along with language), and, consequently, a loss of identity is escalating into dependence on drugs, alcohol and violence. Inevitably, the breakdown of healthy family relationships follows. This is the very situation that the elders had tried so carefully to avoid. The situation is exacerbated by denominational and interfaith competitiveness, by dogmatic exclusivity, and by the apparent rejection of Christianity. The maintaining and applying of cultural principles alongside Gospel principles and understandings of Christ within the Māori experience and context are the tasks of postcolonial Mihingare christology.

Practised correctly, the Kaupapa Māori principles of *whakapapa* and *whānaungatanga* offer a practical mechanism for healing and reconciliation. I contend that in the Mihingare context the language of reconciliation replaces the missionary language of atonement; the language of daily safety, protection and renewal replaces the missionary language of salvation in the afterlife; the language of making mistakes replaces the missionary over-emphasis on sin; and the resurrection language of presence replaces the missionary language of heaven and afterlife. A lack of emphasis on being saved and on heaven and hell, for example, indicates that the internalizing of sinfulness (so prevalent among the Māori converts of the 19th century) is replaced by a strengths-focused christology that enhances human agency. Such an approach, I argue, is a resistance strategy aligned with postcolonial theology and Kaupapa Māori.

Reclaiming and Embracing Tribal Epistemologies

Indigenous colonized minority peoples have suffered similar colonial church experiences. An important part of my study has been the search for strategies and christologies of contemporary indigenous women from Australian Aboriginal and Native American theologians for building a robust indigenous christology of healing and reconciliation.

As in the Mihingare context, in the Aboriginal and Native contexts the cultural principles passed on from ancestors concerning the connectedness and kinship of all of creation are central to an indigenous christology.

The indigenous view of time as non-linear is essential to understanding Christ in indigenous contexts. Time imaged as circular, or in the case of Māori, imaged as spiral, provides the basis for Christ being present in relationship everywhere and at all times, just as ancestors are seen to

exist and to be in relationship. The view of the spiritual and temporal as distinctive realms within one reality explains how this is possible. Within this worldview, Christ is understood as “one-with” throughout time and space. I suggest this is an indigenous women’s way of expressing atonement. This at-one-ment is non-hierarchical, and is continuing spiritually and historically.

Further, I suggest the experience of Christ as Presence is the most explicit way that the women express salvation, not in traditional salvation language, but in their own way. They experience Christ’s presence in a saving way and as daily renewal.

Identifying parallels between traditional cultural concepts and biblical concepts, and applying a postcolonial reading to the Bible is an important way of reclaiming and applying indigenous epistemologies. Consequently, some traditional Christian themes for Jesus Christ are rarely used. Rather, Christ is understood, even shaped, according to traditional tribal images and themes. Privileging cultural/tribal values has enabled the reinterpretation of classical western and missionary understandings of Christ, sin, salvation and atonement in ways that build up a sense of identity and belonging. Thus, survival and recovery is sustained in relevant and empowering ways. Further, the re-evaluation of classical christology through a postcolonial lens reveals that the use of cultural symbols (inculturation) was a christological strategy employed centuries ago. Christology in the past was reliant on cultural codes and symbols that were meaningful and relevant for particular times and contexts. Thus, the re-evaluation of classical christology actually validates today the use of contemporary indigenous language and symbols for indigenous christology.

In light of my recent study, I make three claims for indigenous christology. First, the classical debates concerning the unity and interrelationship of Christ’s humanity and divinity are recast

toward the web of relationships in which indigenous people are involved. The position of Christ within those relationships is of greater interest to the indigenous theologians surveyed. Indigenous women's questions are aimed more specifically at Christian practice rather than theoretical christological issues.

Second, the locating of Christ in the physical and spiritual realms also challenges the more recent emphasis on the historical Jesus, and a christology from below. For indigenous people, the emphasis on Christ's presence throughout space and time, and Christ's being One with the Creator, creation, and people, represent unity and interrelationship not only historically and incarnationally, but also metaphysically.

Third, an understanding of Christ as "one-with," and of Christ as "spirit," means that Christ's gender is not an issue for indigenous women. Of greater importance is that Christ brings peace, nurture, and empowerment and is grounded historically and spiritually.

Parallels can in some cases be found between tribal concepts and classical concepts. Christ as present at all times in all places, for example, resonates with the classical concept that the title of the Word represents. The eternal Word enters time and is God present with creation. The difference lies in worldview and the language used to describe such an understanding. Nevertheless, the poetic nature of indigenous women's courageous attempts to explain their experience of Christ represents a significant break from the technical theological language of the past.

The spiritual and physical healing aspects of Christ are deeply embedded in the women's christologies. The women are attracted to Christ because somehow he offers them a symbol of healing and reconciliation of the whole person and the whole community. Their courageous

yearning for the wholeness that their traditions offer has resonance in the Christ figure. They have struggled for wholeness and they have struggled with their questions about the benefits of Christianity. In their struggles they have drawn on emotion, reason, and tribal spirituality to identify and attempt to articulate how Christ may lead to healing and reconciliation. This is the ongoing postcolonial task of indigenous women.

At the heart of christology in the three indigenous traditions: Australian Aboriginal, Native American, and Māori, is a collective impetus towards healing and reconciliation in the face of suffering and loss. While there are differences in tribal contexts, there are commonalities that provide common strategies for indigenous postcolonial christologies of healing and reconciliation. Empowerment, recovery, belonging, and the building up of self esteem have become elements of the common undertaking for indigenous christology. For Australian Aboriginal and Native American women this undertaking involves the formation of a christology from indigenous experience and the postcolonial condition, a position with which I agree. The formation of such a christology involves first, historical, social, religious and/or cultural analysis. Second, it involves using a style of language more suited to the context. Third, and most importantly, it involves reclaiming and embracing tribal epistemologies and inculturating Christ into indigenous spirituality. The strategies affirm indigenous women's epistemologies for the empowerment and subversion of continuing colonial hegemonies in social, political, economic, and religious praxis.

Conclusion

The two theoretical frameworks I have drawn on have supported each other and have strengthened my development of a Mihingare christology. Postcolonial theology has drawn on

the postcolonial scholarship necessary to assist with a vigorous analysis of christology for indigenous people. Kaupapa Māori theory and within that theory, Mana Wāhine, has provided culturally specific epistemologies. I have found that such theory has worked collectively with many disciplines towards transformation of both colonizer and colonized. Most importantly, the theory has worked for the benefit of the researched. Kaupapa Māori emphasis on relationship building has been one of the principal elements of this project. In that endeavour, Kaupapa Māori theory and Mana Wāhine theory acknowledge and value the power of passionate, subjective, “matters of the heart” approaches to theoretical frameworks. Such an approach has been validated in my study of the Mihingare women’s narratives. Postcolonial feminist theology aligns well with Mana Wāhine theory since both inform the development of a robust, passionate christology for Māori and indigenous women. However, while it was the task of my study to approach postcolonial theology with both aspects in mind there were times when one has taken priority over the other. For example, in my development of an indigenous women’s christology I have found it necessary to give attention to indigenous epistemologies specifically, over and above general feminist epistemologies.

Indigenous women claim their own language, culturally, symbolically, and metaphorically for expressing their experiences of Christ. The indigenous women’s writings surveyed present similar spiritual understandings to the Mihingare women. Aboriginal women experience Christ in the spiritual realm, as “one-with” them in the Spirit. Native American women experience Christ as “in communion” with them in the same way that ancestors are in communion with them. Indigenous christologies are alike in many ways when tribal epistemologies are the foundation and thus they have the potential to shape strategies in common for healing and reconciliation in the twenty-first century.

Glossary

<i>atua</i>	<i>tipuna</i> god
<i>Atua</i>	Christian God
<i>hapū</i>	subtribe
<i>iwi</i>	tribe
<i>karaitianatanga</i>	christology from a Māori perspective
<i>karakia</i>	prayer, worship service
<i>kaupapa</i>	concept/ doctrine/ statement/ values/purpose
<i>Kaupapa Māori theory</i>	theoretical framework of the philosophy and practice for Māori conscientization, resistance and transformative praxis
<i>mana Wāhine</i>	Māori women's empowerment
<i>Mana Wāhine theory</i>	theoretical framework for and by women
<i>mātauranga</i>	knowledge
<i>mātauranga Māori</i>	Māori epistemology
<i>mātauranga Wāhine</i>	Māori women's epistemology
<i>Mihingare</i>	Anglican
<i>purākau</i>	traditional stories
<i>tāngata</i>	human being
<i>Te Karaiti</i>	Christ
<i>te reo me ona tikanga</i>	Māori language and customs
<i>Te Tiriti o Waitangi</i>	The Treaty of Waitangi
<i>tipuna</i>	ancestor
<i>wāhine</i>	women
<i>waiata</i>	song

<i>wairua</i>	spirit/physical and spirit interconnected
<i>whakapapa</i>	genealogy/cultural identity/layers
<i>whānau</i>	family
<i>whānaungatanga</i>	family relationship
<i>whenua</i>	land/natural environment

Endnotes

ⁱ There is a glossary of indigenous terms at the end of the essay.

ⁱⁱ All women interviewed were Māori.

ⁱⁱⁱ I have drawn on the writings of Lee Miena Skye, Ann Pattel-Gray, and Di Langham.

^{iv} I have drawn on the writings of Laura Donaldson, Ginny Doctor, Clara Sue Kidwell, and Debbie Royals.

^v According to Kwok (2005: 182) there is no original or privileged understanding of Christ that can be claimed as pure and foundational and not subject to the limitations of culture and history. In other words, for Kwok, it is a futile exercise to search for the “real” or historical Jesus in order to reconstruct a pure Christian origin.

^{vi} Kwok (2005: 68-69, 145, 161-162) presents a strong argument for the practice of “syncretism.” In her argument she critiques the way in which western Christianity has adopted many cultural elements to make it a viable tradition. She notes that in spite of the history of Christianity, some western theologians continue to condemn the practice of syncretism by indigenous peoples.

^{vii} Heup Young Kim (2003) provides an example of such an approach.

^{viii} Chung (1990: 113) criticizes the way in which western theologians treat syncretism as dangerous.

^{ix} Smith outlines his argument for Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis in the first chapter of his thesis.

^x See glossary. Note that Pihama does not italicize Maori words. I have not italicized when quoting Pihama.

^{xi} Pihama draws on, for example, Rangimarie Turuki Pere, Manuka Henare, Maori Marsden, Hine-tu-Whiria-O-Te-Rangi Waitere-Ang and Linda Tuhiwai Smith.

^{xii} Although Mana Wāhine theory is specific to Māori contexts and particularities I have extended my application of the theory beyond *whānau*, *hapū*, and *iwi* boundaries to engage with relationships in broader Christian contexts. I am aware of concerns about applying *whakapapa* beyond the *whānau*, *hapū*, and *iwi*. Pihama, for example, notes that some Māori leaders are concerned that collectivizing *whānau*, *hapū*, and *iwi* beyond the latter, might deny *whānau*, *hapū*, and *iwi*. I have relied on Kaupapa Māori theory and Kaupapa Māori codes of conduct to negotiate my way carefully in regards to applying the principle of *whakapapa* beyond the Māori church context.

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