

GUEST ARTICLE

## Ata hāpara

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The other day I was driving through the northern part of *Rohe Pōtae o Maniapoto* (the King Country). I grew up on a farm on the edge of Aohena. It is a beautiful place if you like the bush. I had left home in the dark, just as dawn was touching the sky. At that time of day, demarcations of time are very subtle, and I was reminded of one of my nannies who would greet the beauty of such a thing with a whisper:

*Ki te whei ao* (To the glimmer of dawn)

*Ki te ao mārama* (To the bright light of day)

*Tihei mauri ora!* (There is life!)

Of all of my aunts she spoke the most softly, and there was great perception in what she said. (Although if you crossed her, you could spend the rest of the day picking the pieces of your dignity out of the long grass). My nanny knew about beginnings; about hope and strength - and the potential of the dawn as it reaches into a new day.

This Graduate Review, *Rangahau Aranga*, is like that. It speaks to beginnings and the goodness that can lie in integrity-led searching and researching. It acknowledges how things rise up in a world that must navigate shadows and light between information, misinformation and disinformation.

All of the abstracts in this first issue seek to uncover or explain. They have surfaced through a time of hardship and isolation, where people have had to operate with tenacity and dexterity. The journeys of these researchers remind me of Erik Pevernagie's discussion of his painting *Personae Looking at the Writing on the Wall*. In his reflection on the Corona virus he said: "When the whole world is entrenched in the bunker of physical and often emotional isolation, only flexibility and ingenuity can revive us to remain grounded and imbibe the bolstering sunlight piercing through the canvas of chaos" (Pevernagie, 2020, para. 1).

Sunlight. It is a wonderful thing. It enables us to see. It casts light into darkness, and with its arrival, what has been formless begins to gather form. This first edition of *Rangahau Aranga*

rises with values. It proposes an academic journal as a place where access to knowledge is not limited to those who can afford to pay a subscription, where generosity is understood to be a part of scholarship, where knowledge can take multiple forms, and thinking is shaped by critical processes of peer review and refinement. It proposes a platform for a new generation of researchers. Such an initiative speaks resonantly to a piece of legislation that I have always been proud of in New Zealand ... a piece of legislation that in 2020 was quietly updated.

In the same year that the first COVID-19 case was reported in this country, the 1989 Education Act went through a revision. There wasn't a lot of media hype about it because at the time, we were navigating lockdowns, disjunctions, and waves of uncertainty. Although the new *Education and Training Act 2020*, implemented a number of changes, it was careful to preserve the values that characterise a New Zealand university. Section 268 of the legislation still describes universities as diverse environments, concerned with maintaining, advancing, disseminating and assisting the application of knowledge. They are places that are expected to grow intellectual independence and promote community learning. Underpinning such values are necessities like meeting international standards of research and teaching, being repositories of knowledge, and the necessity for academics to accept a role as a critic and conscience of society.

I think if my nanny was still alive, she might raise an disdainful eyebrow and say, 'Tama ... sounds like a lot of words!' (She was notorious for calling a spade a spade). If her fears were true, then that would be a bad thing. I confess, aspirational documents have always been a worry to me. In times of necessity, we need more than bumper sticker slogans and tick box posturing. We need initiatives that help. But I think I could confidently turn to *Rangahau Aranga*, and say 'No Nanny. This will help.' Every person who has contributed to this Review is helping. A university is not an ivory tower. It is a place where thinking people search for light and direct it into darkness. Each voice in a university becomes precious when it is able to blend rational thought with tenacity and compassion. Although I wouldn't have dared to quote Hannah Arendt to her, I think she would have agreed with the sentiment. Back in 1958 Arendt said,

... the reality of the public realm relies on the simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives and aspects in which the common world presents itself and for which no common measurement or denominator can ever be devised. For though the common world is the common meeting ground of all, those who are present have different

locations in it, and the location of one can no more coincide with the location of another than the location of two objects. Being seen and being heard by others derive their significance from the fact that everybody sees and hears from a different position. This is the meaning of public life ... Only where things can be seen by many, in a variety of aspects, without changing their identity, so that those who are gathered around them know they see sameness in utter diversity, can worldly reality truly and reliably appear (Arendt, 1958 p. 57).

So, to everybody who has contributed to the inaugural issue of *Rangahau Aranga*; as a scholar, reviewer, organiser, or critical supporter ... thank you.

You have been part of a beginning,

A rising up.

Kia kaha.

## REFERENCES

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