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# Rangahau and Transformative Leadership

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## **Introduction**

In this paper, I will argue that for Māori - for whom time is cyclical - looking back and developing leadership models based on the leadership traits and achievements of our ancestors is imperative. Indeed, for Māori, ka mua, ka muri - we walk back into the future. However, how do we re-discover elements of our past through rangahau? McDonald (2017) argues that rangahau, informed by Māori knowledge and a Māori worldview, is a traditional Māori process of inquiry whereby new knowledge can be developed out of old knowledge. This process contains three stages: to search; to investigate; and to determine (McDonald, 2017). This paper will present a prophetic model of leadership based on the critical innovations of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki that emerge out of one of his nineteenth-century prophecies. This model was developed using the three-stage rangahau process outlined by McDonald (2017).

Rangahau is often and mistakenly defined as research; the Pākehā academy has misappropriated the word and diminished its meaning (McDonald, 2017). Referring to the teachings of renowned Tainui scholar, Pei Te Hurinui Jones, McDonald (2017) recounts the Tainui creation story, from which emerges the origins of rangahau. Within Io, the supreme being existed a

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female essence named Puna, and a male essence named Hani; these essences were given the responsibility of creating two beings, Tikiāhua and Tikiāpoa (McDonald, 2017). When Tikiāhua was complete, a heart was placed inside; the name of this heart was rangahau – the questing breath of life (McDonald, 2017). McDoanld’s (2017) three-stage rangahau methodology was used in this paper to develop a transformative leadership model in the following ways:

- **Search**
  - Information was sought and data gathered – process determined by tikanga Māori
- **Investigate**
  - Information was critically analysed and sorted – process determined by tikanga Māori
- **Determine**
  - Kairangahau (myself) determined how old knowledge would be transformed into new knowledge through critical thinking, deep contemplation and reflection, and testing out ideas through kōrero and expression in written form – process determined by tikanga Māori

### **Te Kooti**

Te Kooti’s birth in 1832 had been prophesied by Toiroa (Belich, 1986; Binney, 1995; Elsmore, 2000; Tarei, 2011). His was shrouded in darkness: “Tiwha tiwha te pō. Ko te Pakerewhā. Ko Arikirangi tenei ra te haere nei. Dark, dark is the night. There is the Pakerewhā. There is Arikirangi to come” (Te Kooti, 1866-1890, n.p.). Toiroa has admonished Te Kooti’s mother saying: “My child is within you; lightning in hell; lightning in heaven; the Lord of heaven in the man” (Tarei, 2011, p. 140). His father attempted to take his life, but a spirit appeared and saved him (Mackay, 1949). Indeed, his ability to escape death became one of his most enduring traits (Binney, 1995). Dedicated to Tūmatauenga, the Atua of war, Te Kooti gained the education

of Te Whare Wānanga; and from the Anglican Church, he learned of the Christian God and was baptised Te Kooti (Binney, 1995; Elsmore, 2000; Greenwood, 1942; Tarei, 2011). He challenged the settlers and the chiefs of Tūranga; he was accused of being a Hauhau and was imprisoned at Wharekauri (Binney, 1995). While ill with tuberculosis the Spirit said to Te Kooti: “Rise up! Come forth! You are spared to be made well, to be the founder of a new church and religion, to be the salvation of the Māori people and to release them from bondage (Ross, 1966, p. 30). This was the genesis of his Ringatū faith: The church of the Upraised Hand (Binney, 1995). Te Kooti said that we must hold on to the land this was the central point of his critical theory (Rangiwai, 2015). He proclaimed: “Ko te waka hei hoehoenga mo koutou i muri i ahau ko te Ture, ma te Ture ano te Ture e aki” (The canoe for you to paddle after me is the Law, only the Law will correct the Law) (Binney, 1995, p. 490).

### **Te Umutaoroa: Te Kooti’s Slow Cooking Earth Oven prophecy**

Patuheuheu is a *hapū* or sub-tribe of Ngāi Tūhoe located in Waiōhau in the Eastern Bay of Plenty of Aotearoa New Zealand. In 1886, following Patuheuheu’s loss of their main homeland due to the fraudulent activities of a Pākehā man named Harry Burt, the Māori prophet, Te Kooti left behind a prophecy of hope that promised the return and restoration of the land and all that was lost. The name of his prophecy was Te Umutaoroa - the slow cooking earth oven.

As in other parts of the Pacific, Māori in Aotearoa traditionally cooked food using an *umu*, or earth oven. A pit is dug in the earth, in which a fire is burned for some hours to heat stones. Once these stones are hot, food in woven baskets is placed on top, covered in leaves and then soil. After the required cooking time, the soil and leaves are removed and the food is ready to be served. Te Umutaoroa refers to this process

of cooking metaphorically and, as the name suggests, this particular *umu* requires a long cooking time.

Within this *umu* Te Kooti placed eight *mauri* (life-force) stones to be uncovered by a future leader, his child or son, to restore all that our people had lost. The late Reverend Hieke Tupe gave the following meanings of the *mauri* of Te Umutaoroa:

te mauri atua: the essence of spirituality; the belief in God

te mauri whenua: the life force of the land

te mauri tangata: the life force of the people

te mauri whakapono: the power of belief, or faith

te mauri whakaora i nga iwi: the power to heal the people

te mauri hohonu: the mauri [life force] of hidden wealth – minerals, gold, diamonds and oil (perhaps), which lie underground

te mauri arai atu i nga pakanga: the power to return war from this land to other countries

te mauri whakahoki i nga iwi: the power to return people to their land (Binney, 2001, p. 158).

The uncovering of these eight stones guarantees for our people spiritual and physical renewal, regeneration, reuniting of people and land, and economic security. In 1892 Te Kooti clarified his vision further and said:

Te kupu ki te Umutaoroa

Ka taona e ahau tenei hangi ma taku tamaiti e hura

Tenei mea te hangi, ko nga kai o roto hei ora mo te tangata

The word concerning Te Umutaoroa

I am preparing this hangi (earth oven) for my child to unearth.

The food inside this hangi will be for the salvation of the people (Binney, 2009, p. 494).

To this day Te Umutaoroa remains unfulfilled. It is, however, a discourse which is in a constant state of flux, shifting from the past to the present, subjected to discursive modification, shaping the prophecy for the particular contexts in which it is used to inspire and give hope. According to Binney (2007):

Te Umutaoroa has become an unfulfilled quest-narrative. It is unfulfilled because the land is lost; indeed, it is now drowned beneath the waters of a hydro-electric dam, built in 1980. Little islands dot the lake where Te Umutaoroa once was. Once again new meanings are being wrought from this changed landscape (p. 154).

### **Te Kooti's leadership and the transformative leadership model**

Te Kooti's legacy of prophetic leadership emerged as a response to colonisation and displacement. Like the prophets of the Old Testament Te Kooti was 'called by god' to save a dispossessed people (Binney, 1997; Elsmore, 1999; Sinclair, 2002). Stone and Patterson (2005) argue that Egyptian rulers, Greek heroes and ancient biblical prophets all had one attribute in common: that of leadership. A prophet is generally thought of as a messenger of god, or of the gods and or ancestors (Adrahtas, 2007; Kaplan, 1908; Sheppard & Herbrechtsmeier, 2005). As well as messengers, prophets are revolutionary leaders who make great changes; they are described as being predictors, preachers, teachers, political leaders, healers, miracle workers, and poets (Kaplan, 1908). Prophets give words of inspiration and prediction which become hierophanies, where the sacred is manifested in the world as 'modes of praxis', signifying the unity of 'identity and transformation' (Adrahtas, 2007). As such,

prophets can be described as ‘transformative leaders’ who can motivate their followers to engage in making the ‘dream come true’.

Burns (1978) maintains that transformative leaders ask followers to rise above their own interests for the sake of collective ones, and to focus on the development and implementation of long-term ‘future’ goals and ambitions, to work towards transformation (Gardner & Avolio, 1998, cited in Punj & Krishnan, 2006; Punj & Krishnan, 2006; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993). Transformative leaders construct the vision, while empowering their followers to hold fast to a ‘body of ideals’ (Bass, 1981, cited in Grint, 1995; Burns, 1978; Grint, 1995). Links can be drawn between charismatic transformative leaders and their followers’ levels of self-efficacy (House & Shamir, 1993; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993), or in other words, the followers’ beliefs in their collective abilities to enact the leaders’ ‘vision’ (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Jung & Sosik, 2002; Podsakoff, McKenzie, Moorman & Fetter, 1990). A powerful example of Te Kooti’s influential charisma as a transformative leader is given by the historian James Belich (1986):

Te Kooti was not a chief, he had no tribal basis of support, and his *mana* did not depend on military success. Yet his authority over his followers was very great - indeed it was more absolute than that of any Maori leader before or after him. The loyalty of his followers was virtually immutable, he was able to gain fresh adherents readily, and his resistance acquired an enormous resilience - again and again, Te Kooti rose phoenix-like from the ashes... [he] was able to control a group of powerful and independent-minded lieutenants, some of whom had far greater hereditary *mana* than their leader [... through what is sometimes called ‘charisma’ (p. 218-19).

The followers' self-efficacy informs their thinking, feelings and behaviours (Bandura, 1997), so if they are inspired by their leader, and have an adamant belief in the vision, transformation can be the result (Bottum & Lenz, 1998; Clawson, 1999; Field & Van Seters, 1988), and in Te Kooti's case, the fact that some of his followers 'outranked' him genealogically, did not inhibit his ability to inspire them to follow him (Belich, 1986).

Transformative leaders need to be 'forward-facing' and committed to 'renewal' (Bhindi & Duignan, 1996, cited in Preece, 2003), but they must also 'look back' to engage with the narratives and histories which tie a community together, and through this activity, create new stories and interpretations (Karpiak, 2000; Preece, 2003). To do this they must know the social, political, spiritual, and geographical landscapes of the people (Karpiak, 2000; Preece, 2003), and "[b]y using the strategies of visioning... transformative leaders... motivat[e] group members to remain attracted to the group, make personal sacrifices and work towards a common goal" (Pillai & Williams, 2003, p. 147). Hence, if the leader's vision is internalised by the followers, they become dedicated to the collective interests of the group and to achieving the objectives set by the leader (Ackoff, 1999; Avolio, Waldman & Einstein, 1988; Bass, 1990; Bennis, 1989; Hunt, 1991; Keely, 1995; Keller, 1995; Miles, 1997; Morris & Staggenborg, 2004; Pillai & Williams, 2003; Sosik, 1997; Yukl, 1998).

The following model reinterprets Te Kooti's mauri into essential aspects of transformative leadership in a Māori or indigenous context.

**Figure 1: Transformative Leadership Model****Atua: Spirit**

A transformative leader must acknowledge and negotiate the spiritual dimension through *karakia* (prayer) and other appropriate spiritual and cultural customs and protocols.

**Tangata: People**

A transformative leader must acknowledge and honour *whakapapa* (genealogical connections) regarding people in Aotearoa New Zealand and across the world. A transformative leader must practice *manaakitanga* (kindness, hospitality and generosity) to people.

**Whenua: Land**

A transformative leader must acknowledge the absolute centrality of land and belonging. *Whenua* is both a word for land and also for placenta and therefore refers to our connections to and emergence from Papatūānuku - Earth Mother.



***Whakapono: Faith***

*Pono* is a word that refers to honesty, integrity and faith. Transformative leaders must be trusted. The people must be able to believe in their leader and have faith in their leadership and direction.

***Whakaora: Healing***

*Whakaora* is a word that refers to healing, salvation, and restoration. A transformative leader must be able to bring life, vitality and healing to the people

***Hōhonu: Deep reflection***

A transformative leader must be able to reflect deeply, critically and esoterically to find solutions and inspire positive transformation.

***Pakanga: Struggle***

*Pakanga* is a word that refers to battle or war. A transformative leader is courageous and does not hesitate to struggle along with the people with regard to organisational challenges that threaten to hinder progress.

***Whakahoki: Restoration***

*Whakahoki* is a word that refers to returning. In the context of transformative leadership, this is about restoring our people to their rightful places as indigenous leaders by empowering them to access the knowledge, skills and qualifications to make positive and lasting transformational change.

This paper has argued that Te Kooti's prophecy can be reinterpreted in a transformative leadership context. It is imperative that we continue to look back to our past leaders and use their experiences as templates for contemporary leadership. Indeed we must walk back into the future - *ka mua, ka muri!*

**Conclusion**

This article has shown that rangahau provides an authentically Māori process of inquiry that can be used to develop new knowledge out of old knowledge. In this case, rangahau, which emerges from the creation of the universe, has been used to essentially collapse the time and space that is perceived to be between Io and the creation, Te Kooti and his prophecy, and my writing of this paper in 2018. For Māori time is indeed cyclical, and in this sense, we really do walk back into the future.

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