

The TREATY of WAITANGI and Bi-Cultural Issues for Psychologists

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To address this topic we have to be able to grasp the understandings of the Maori people of the time.

Unlike much which has been written about the Maori as being savage and uneducated; historic documents show quite clearly that they were indeed quite a literate and knowledgeable race of people who traded in different countries including England and Australia, running highly successful farms of wheat, potatoes, maize and kumara. They also ran cattle, pigs and other livestock and bred horses as well. Suffice to say that the native peoples of New Zealand had some grasp of industry and since they were trading afar as well, it would be fair to assume that they also had a sound grasp of the English language both written and oral.

This being the case then for the sake of this paper, I am going to presume that the Maori people representing their various Iwi understood the TREATY and all of its implications. We also need to know that the TREATY was not forced onto the people but was deliberately requested by the Maori themselves. I quote Paul Temm; Queens Council in an edited article of a talk he delivered titled "The Treaty of Waitangi" to the council and management team at the Christchurch Polytechnic in July 1989. The edited article was titled "Settlers Discard the Treaty" with a sub heading - Biting the Hand that Feeds. I quote:

"The Treaty of Waitangi was a solemn contract between the British Crown and the Maori people. The Maori promised to grant sovereignty over the country and the Crown promised protection. The protection offered by the Crown in Article Two of the Treaty was more than just a promise - it was an explicit guarantee..."

In addition to that, the Maori version of the Treaty uses the word "ture" in the Preamble. Ture means law. Maori law was tapu, that is sacred, and never ever questioned.

Thus the Maori people appear to have understood quite clearly what the treaty was stating

- it was a promise of protection by the Crown and this was the law. The treaty itself was a blending of the two cultures. It was an attempt at trying to weave two different types of concepts together under one document. Not an easy task at all, given the time frame they were trying to work to.

Some confusion surrounds the understandings of Kawanatanga (governorship as in the concept contained in the Holy Bible) and Sovereignty (as understood by the British mind) in the Maori version Preamble and Article One. To the Maori the British Crown was promising to act as a Governor over their land who - like God - afforded them protection. At the same time they could go about their business as usual. Sovereignty however, meant complete ruling over, and this was definitely not their understanding.

In Article Two: The Maori version states very clearly that the Maori people are to retain their full Rangatiratanga - chieftainship of their lands, villages and all their possessions, i.e taonga - things which they deem to be precious. Even the English version is very clear about the Maori - as still being left in complete control over their lands etc...unless they agreed to do otherwise. Also, in Article Three the Maori people get even more protection by the Crown as it states quite clearly that they are to be given "all the same rights as those of the people of England" this in addition to maintaining their full Rangatiratanga.

As psychologists we need to ask - Do we have any understanding of the Maori psyche? What Maori psychology is included in the way we train? What research has been carried out in a Maori way to give us a better understanding of how the Maori worked their way through depression, rejection, trauma, etc...? Do we know how they coped with psychological trauma? Do we know anything at all about psychology through the Maori system?

These questions need to be addressed to comply with the concept of "tino rangatiratanga" full chieftainship or full control over the way Maori people went about their business. Do Maori have control over the way their people are treated from

a psychological point of view? Or are they forced to go along with methods and techniques not of their own culture? If we do take up Maori methods and practises are we going to do so in only a Pakeha way?

The Tohunga Suppression Act passed in 1907 was to outlaw the spiritual and educational role of the tohunga in the preservation of traditional Maori ways. This is equivalent to outlawing the roles played today by: priests, teachers, professors, lawyers, barristers, solicitors, accountants, doctors, politicians, and other professionals.

A tohunga was someone both male or female, who was taught through a process of careful selection, certain knowledge, be it in medicine, spiritual matters, education, law, building etc... Everyone of these tohunga however, included the spiritual dimension to all of their practises. This meant that a particular issue was never treated in isolation but examined in relation to the environment both intimately and on a broader scale if necessary.

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In keeping with the partnership idea of the Treaty, I sincerely believe that there is a need for psychologists to understand many Maori concepts such as Rangi and Papa, Iomatuakore, Hinengaro, Wairua, Mauri, Pakiwaitara, Purakau, Te Kore, Te Po, Te Aomarama, Matakite, Kehua, Patupaiarehe, Karakia, Moemoea, Makutu, Whanau, Whanaungatanga, Whakatikatika o te wairua me te tinana, Tapu, Waiata, Poutama, Kowhaiwhai, Whare Tupuna, Marae, Whenua, Whakapapa and, the list goes on...

All of these understandings come under the teachings of Mauri, but to deal with that here would not only be inappropriate but impossible as it needs to be experienced and experienced on a marae - the only place to learn anything Maori. To house things Maori in Pakeha universities, polytechnics, teacher training colleges and other institutions is in direct contradiction to the Treaty.

It is also worthwhile considering that according to international Law - "In any ambiguity the **contra preferentum principle** applies. This means that a provision should be interpreted against the party who drafts it and **the indigenous language text takes precedence**". Thus the Maori version of the Treaty is the only one to follow. Why then is the Government (representing the Crown) attempting to reinterpret the Treaty when according to its own law, it doesn't have the right to do so.

Under Maori rulings I would be the equivalent of a psychologist. I have learned what I have learned thus far from many different Maori elders - the equivalent of any professors in the Pakeha world. My professors and role models consisted mainly of wise women and a few men. They taught me the language of the tukutuku, kowhaiwhai etc...I have been a counsellor for many years and I call myself a Mauri Practitioner.

As a Mauri Practitioner, I adopt the stance of a kaiako - a teacher/learner. I am then able to allow clients to work through their own needs through careful and sensitive prompting. Throughout the counselling I also sow seeds of knowledge to give skills to enable clients to take charge of their own situation. This was always the way of the kaiako - to let them see the bigger picture and to let them give themselves time, space and a greater self acknowledgement, self appreciation and control through pakiwaitara and purakau, waiata, karakia, moemoea, whakangahau, taakaro and kanikani.

I believe that once we incorporate Maori methods, techniques and knowledge to the vast array of knowledge we already have at present, we can only contribute positively to the people who come to us for assistance be they Maori or non Maori.

My understating of bi-culturalism is where two cultures sit side-by-side. **They are still separate.** However, I believe the Treaty of Waitangi was an honest attempt at blending the two cultures together in what I refer to earlier as Co-culturalism which emphasises togetherness.

I close with this famous and well known whakatauaki: (proverb) in support of the Co-cultural idea:

**Nau te rourou naku te rourou ka ora te iwi.
With your basket of knowledge and my basket of knowledge (by sharing them) we all benefit.**