

Te Ara Hohou Rongo (The Path to Peace): Māori Conceptualisations of Inter-group Forgiveness

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A reasonable body of psychological research focusing on forgiveness in interpersonal contexts has highlighted its benefits to psychological well-being (McCullough, 2001; Enright, 2001; Murray, 2002). However, much of the existing literature has been sampled from Western populations, and has focused on forgiveness at the individual level. As a result, the conclusions drawn from such studies may not generalise well to group-level forgiveness, and may not be equally applicable across cultures. The present study investigated an indigenous perspective on forgiveness at the individual and group levels. We conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 10 Māori (the indigenous people of New Zealand). *Rongo* (demonstration of commitment to restore relationships), *whakapapa* (interconnectedness between people, places, and events over time forming identity) and *kaupapa* (agenda set based on the costs and benefits of forgiveness) were identified as core themes using thematic analysis. Forgiveness was seen as a collective social process, and as an outcome requiring commitment from both the victim and the transgressor to maintaining their relationship. In the context of Māori-Pākehā relationships, it was felt that genuine remorse and commitment to transgress no more had not been achieved, and that honest communication was lacking. In such a context where colonization was seen as on-going, most interviewees felt that forgiveness was costly and inappropriate. The findings provided insights into the perceived usefulness of forgiveness in an ongoing conflict, and processes through which group relations could be improved.

Forgiveness has been linked with wellbeing, the relief of psychological pain, and a number of pro-social psychological traits (McCullough, 2001; Enright, 2001; Williamson & Gonzalez, 2007; Murray, 2002; Harris et al., 2006). Based on such findings, it has been used by clinicians in interventions designed to heal relationships, dispel psychological hurt, and enable clients to make gains in personality development, as an alternative to perpetuating a cycle of hatred that could place clients at risk of developing psychopathology (Murray, 2002). The adoption of such forgiveness interventions in clinical

settings has received little scrutiny, despite debate that ensues over the definition of forgiveness (Harris et al., 2006). Boleyn-Fitzgerald (2002) suggested that forgiveness is the letting go of ill feeling toward a transgressor. In addition to the release of negative emotions, Enright (2001) indicated that forgiveness requires the replacement of negative thoughts, affect and behaviours with positive ones. A variation on this theme is offered by McCullough (2001) who suggested that forgiveness involves a negative-to-positive motivational change towards the transgressor. A recent review of the literature by

Legaree, Turner, and Lollis (2007) found the dominant position was that forgiveness was of great importance, essential to healing processes, and widely applicable across a range of contexts.

But Legaree et al., 2007 also reported a more critical position towards forgiveness held by authors who argued that forgiveness entails no longer holding their abusers to blame, nor trying to seek compensation, and that forgiveness may lead to continuing abuse. These authors advocated that embracing anger can lead to healing, and can be used as a powerful motivator. For instance, Hargrave (1994) has developed a rather complex conceptualisation of forgiveness in the context of transgressions between family members. He suggests that forgiveness can occur only when the forgiver establishes that the wrongdoer accepts responsibility for their actions, promises not to commit the action again, and there is an opportunity for compensation (see also Williamson & Gonzalez, 2007). Furthermore, Kanz (2000) found that groups differed in the value they attached to forgiveness: Practicing Christians and those who had not been victimised themselves showed a greater propensity to forgive. Kanz reported that many participants indicated that forgiveness could cause emotional problems if given in an inappropriate context.

Legaree et al. concluded "forgiveness can potentially provide release from suffering, but, on the other

hand, it can exacerbate pain if it takes place in an oppressive context" (p. 200). They also noted that the positions taken reflect value assumptions, particularly influenced by Christian doctrine, and that determining the appropriateness of forgiveness interventions requires sensitive considerations of cultural context.

Such an approach was taken by Sandage, Hill, and Vang (2003) who examined Hmong American conceptualisations of forgiveness. They found that Hmong, as collectivists, regarded transgressions against an individual as detrimental to the social standing of the extended family. Hence, disputes were often settled by large family groupings. In contrast to Western based research that supposes that forgiveness is a necessary *process* on the path to reconciliation (Freedman, 1998), the Hmong placed great value on maintaining social harmony, and saw forgiveness as an *outcome* of reconciliation. Sandage et al. suggested that future research should explore cultural variation in conceptualisations of both forgiveness and *unforgiveness*, as conflict resolution processes across cultures may include notions of forgiveness, but that differences between these and Western conceptualisations may exist.

Another issue raised by Sandage et al. (2003) was the individual versus group processes used to achieve reconciliation and forgiveness. While there is a dearth of research concerned with inter-group forgiveness, findings from individual level forgiveness are often applied to group conflict (Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006). A recent report on lay perspectives of individual and group level forgiveness across cultures found that, whereas individual level forgiveness was conceived of as a simple process, at the group level forgiveness became uncertain due to variability in group members' opinions (Hanke, Liu, Fischer, & Vaclair, under review). These findings suggest limitations to our ability to generalise results obtained from studies of individual forgiveness to the group level.

Following suggested research directions of Sandage et al. (2003) and Hanke et al. (under review), the present

study explores the culturally embedded conceptualisations of forgiveness of a non-Western people, within the context of an ongoing, group level dispute concerning Māori (Polynesian, indigenous people of New Zealand) and Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent). The relationship between Māori and Pākehā was founded on the Treaty of Waitangi (Orange, 1987). This document was designed to establish partnership between Māori and the British Crown. However, within only a few years of the signing the treaty, Māori concerns in response to large scale immigration, land appropriation, and the imposition of legislation and taxation, caused many *iwi* (tribes) to unite in active opposition of the Crown, which eventually led to the eruption of full-scale war (King, 2003).

Our investigation focuses on Māori in Taranaki, where the land wars resulted in the confiscation of millions of acres of Māori lands. This period of instability saw the rise of religious movements which incorporated Christian doctrine and traditional Māori spirituality. In Taranaki, two leaders of the Pai Marire faith, Te Whiti O Rongomai and Tohu Kakahe, emerged and led the people of Parihaka in passive resistance against the Crown (Belich, 1989). The Crown responded in 1881 by sacking Parihaka in an act described as the "most heinous action of any government, in any country, in the last century" (Waitangi Tribunal, 1996). A small fraction of the confiscated land was eventually allocated to Taranaki Māori. However, Taranaki Māori were prevented from accessing most of this land, as 95% of it was leased in perpetuity to Pākehā (Waitangi Tribunal, 1996).

The impact of colonisation on Māori has been the loss of culture, land, population, and autonomy (Durie, 2004). As is the case with indigenous populations around the world, Māori lag behind the non-indigenous population on almost every measure of well-being (Durie, 2004). As a result of historical injustice and existing disparities, Māori protests which began shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi have been ongoing. The current investigation will focus on Māori views of forgiveness, the appropriateness of forgiveness, and the processes necessary

to achieve forgiveness in the context of inter-group relations with Pākehā. The themes central to these topics will be extracted using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Those claiming a Māori ethnic identity in contemporary times are a diverse population, as their involvement in distinctly Māori cultural practices, and access to Māori cultural institutions differ (Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1999). Therefore, the results of the present study are not intended to be representative of all Māori. As Māori philosophical concepts tend to be holistic, attempts will not be made to provide rigid definitions that demarcate constructs within categories, but rather, situate them within an overall conception of interconnectedness (Liu & Temara, 1998).

Method

Participants

Seven Māori residing in Taranaki, and three Māori residing in Wellington were recruited to be interviewed using a snowball sampling method. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 75 ($M = 42$). Two participants were female and eight were male. Māori residing in Taranaki were recruited for the investigation due to the author's affiliations to Taranaki *iwi*. Efforts were made to obtain interviews expressing divergent attitudes by recruiting participants who performed different roles in the community, such as *kaumātua* (elders), Crown agents, Māori service providers, and members of resistance movements. As most interviews were done with Taranaki Māori, the views obtained are not intended to represent the opinions held by members of different *iwi* throughout New Zealand, but rather serve to introduce some of the positions taken by Māori on forgiveness. Participants were given *koha* (reimbursement) for their participation in the form of movie, petrol, or grocery vouchers.

Materials and Equipment

A semi-structured interview schedule was followed. Open ended questions related to transgressions experienced by Māori as individuals, and as members of a collective. Participants were asked how they have responded to transgressions, how relations between

parties are affected by transgressions, and processes of reconciliation required in order to improve relations. Questions directly related to the appropriateness of forgiveness in general and of forgiving Pākehā in particular were also raised. The interviews were recorded using an Olympus WS-200S Digital Voice Recorder. Sound files were transcribed using Adobe Audition software. Transcripts were then coded using NVivo software.

Procedure

Interview times were scheduled with participants, who were met either in their homes, their workplace, or the home of the interviewer, depending on their preference. The nature of the research was explained, and participants were given an opportunity to ask questions. Participants were then asked to sign a consent form if they were willing to participate in the study. Interviews were recorded for later transcription. The duration of interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 90 minutes (*M* = 63 minutes).

Analysis

Exploratory analysis was used as the attitudes of Māori towards forgiveness have yet to be canvassed in the psychological literature. Transcripts

were subjected to an inductive thematic analysis, according to recommendations outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Extracts of talk relating to the research question were selected from the corpus to form the data set to be analysed further. The data was then coded into basic elements of meaning. The 91 initial codes generated were then arranged into provisional themes, and the extracts relating to these themes were re-examined to determine whether they offered support to the extracted themes. Specifically, data were reviewed to ensure each theme was supported by numerous extracts to indicate patterned responding, coherence within themes, distinctiveness between themes, and relevance to the research question. This review allowed for a final set of main themes to be determined.

Results

Through inductive, thematic analysis, three high level themes were identified. These themes were *Rongo*, *Whakapapa* and *Kaupapa* (refer to Figure 1). The Māori words used to label these themes are broad in their meanings, and we shall not attempt to define them in a limited way here. However, definitions will be provided for the *themes* used to organise participants

talk in context of forgiveness of Pākehā by Māori. Thus, *Rongo*, *Whakapapa*, and *Kaupapa* are used in the present discussion to refer to the themes identified in the analysis, rather than the broad philosophical concepts they convey. *Rongo* in this context sets out the process necessary to establish peace following a transgression, and highlights the importance of the willingness for both parties to engage in this process for it to be successful. *Whakapapa* is used to define individual and group identities and is the basis of relationships, as it encompasses connectedness between people, places, and events. *Kaupapa* in the present discussion is the agenda that is set once the costs and benefits of forgiveness have been weighed up. A brief description of the benefits associated with forgiveness in general will be presented under the theme *Kaupapa*, followed by a treatment of the themes *Rongo* and *Whakapapa*. Finally *Kaupapa* is returned to, in the context of Māori and Pākehā relations.

Kaupapa Based on the Benefits of Forgiveness

Participants understood forgiveness to be an important value. At the individual level, consistent with previous research involving non-Māori participants (Hanke et al., 2007; McCullough, 2001; Enright,

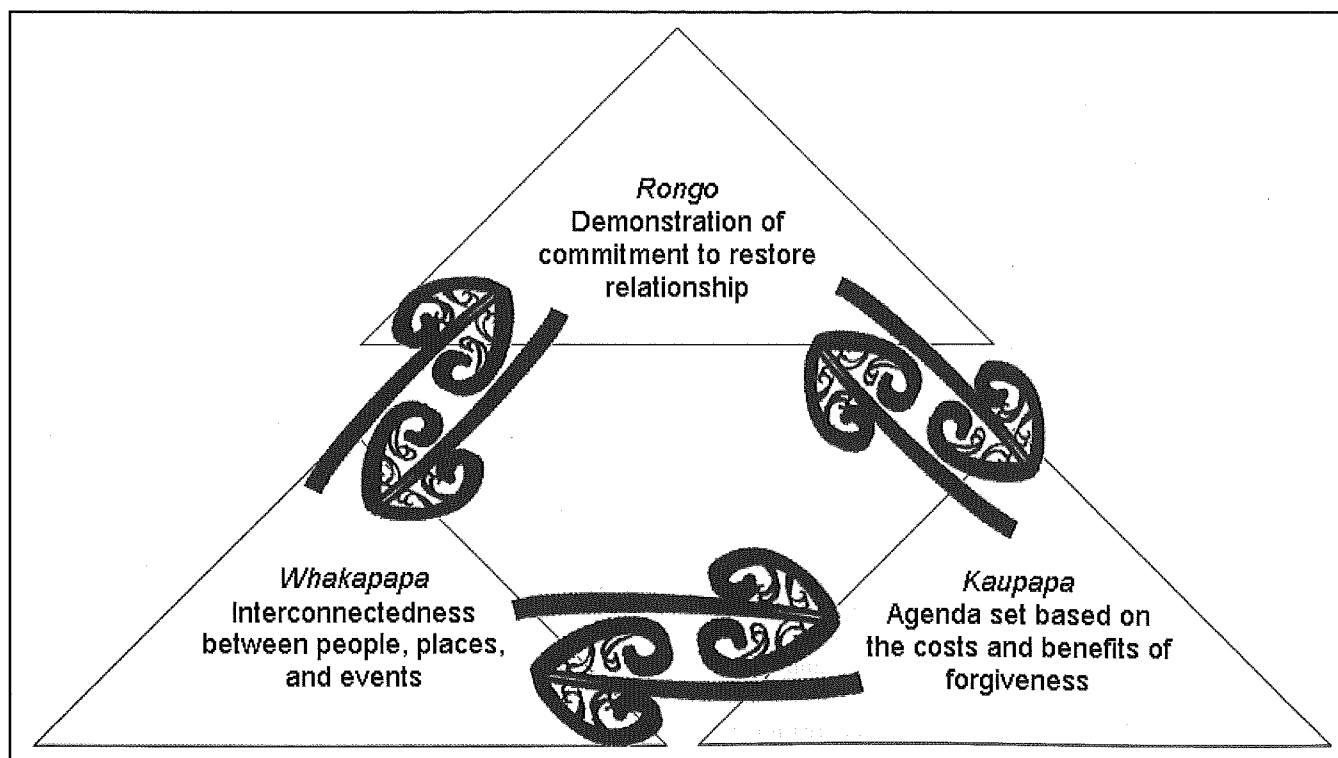


Figure 1
High level themes extracted from thematic analysis.

2001), forgiveness was seen to promote individual well-being by allowing the release of negative emotions, as this participant describes: "You forgive, and you then kind of release all that hurt, all the anger, all the emotion and um, then you can be at peace with yourself" [P1]. The detriment to well-being caused by not forgiving is expressed by this participant: "It's easy to be angry all the time, but if you keep that up you're gonna be twisted" [P2].

Forgiveness was also seen as beneficial in that it could be offered to others, in the hopes that it might be reciprocated. The following extract presents forgiveness as the appropriate response to unintentional conflict that can be caused by both parties in a relationship: "If you're just going to keep judging everyone, and not acknowledging the fact that they've made a mistake [. . .] it's going to come back on you if you ever make a mistake. And you will. Cause everyone does" [P3].

Participants in Hanke et al.'s (under review) study stressed the value of forgiveness as a unilateral process, where the hurt party forgives without the transgressor's involvement in the process. The value of this unilateral forgiveness is that it allows the aggrieved party to release their hurt, and move on. However, broadly consistent with research on restorative justice (Jackson, 1988), Māori interviewed in the present study emphasised the importance of forgiveness as a social process, requiring the involvement of both the victim and the transgressor. Bilateral aspects of forgiveness were seen as beneficial, and indeed fundamental in maintaining relationships between individuals. The following piece of talk acknowledges this benefit, and highlights that in order for relationships to be healed, both the transgressor and the transgressed must work together to achieve forgiveness. "If you want the relationship to continue then it's gotta come from both sides" [P4]. In the following extract, a participant developed this idea further, as he explained that without a commitment of both parties to the relationship, forgiveness is meaningless:

"If they do something bad and you're never going to see them again, there's no point in forgiving

them or even contemplating forgiveness if you not going to see them so it's like the relationship is already over so there's nothing to salvage." [P3]

Rongo

Rongo incorporates a complex of concepts that Māori consider related. The meaning of rongo includes sensory perception, the act of informing, peace, and balance (Williams, 1988). When communicating, the perceptual element of rongo is achieved when a cognitive and affective awareness is gained. In situations of conflict, rongo is restored when the parties involved agree to commit to enduring peace (Mead, 2003). Following transgressions, rongo is achieved when balance in the relationship is restored through compensation or reciprocity. In the context of forgiveness, the theme identified as **Rongo** here was defined as willingness to engage in restoring balance.

Rather than using the term 'forgiveness' as such, some participants discussed the process of relinquishing ill feeling in the context of achieving rongo. In line with the Hmong American conceptualisation of forgiveness reported by Sandage et al. (2003), forgiveness was not seen by these participants as a *process* for achieving reconciliation but as an *outcome* of relationship restoration. Rongo was described here as the equilibrium between forces that exists in nature, and the source of Māori tikanga (law): "The natural elements of the universe, they are the indicators of rongo, natural universe of rongo, and that's where Māori tikanga comes from" [P5].

As can occur in the physical domain, forces may upset the balance in inter-group relations, resulting in conflict and ill feeling, in which case laws to restore balance are necessary (Jackson, 1988). In order for the conflict to be resolved, balance to be restored, and ill feelings relinquished, a rongoa (balancing potential) must be applied. This participant describes rongoa as "the remedy, the medication, the therapy" [P5].

Participants gave descriptions of processes that could be used when attempting to restore balance in

relationships. In the following extract a participant emphasised the importance of both parties meeting, and coming to an agreement on the appropriate rongoa necessary for balance to be restored. He also emphasised the importance of protocols, the marae (Māori meeting house), and of the spaces between parties in this process. Marae are considered the most essential and enduring of Māori cultural institutions (Walker, 1975; Durie, 2001), and it is here that groups come together and marae protocols are followed. One such protocol is the physical separation of members of different parties. The space between parties has the deeper meaning of representing the boundaries between the groups, whilst acknowledging the relationship between the groups (Durie, 2001):

"Part of the process is coming together to talk about it, and that's what the marae is for. The marae provides the forum for groups to come together to resolve the conflict, and to do that, both parties have to accept it has to be dealt with. They both have to accept. So the two parties come together on the marae, through the same protocols of going onto any marae. But then the space is there, there is always that space in between, so you have that space, nē? And the talk will begin. They know what the issue is, but it's what they can find that will help to reduce that, they can agree to a do-able, doesn't matter where it comes from, then do it. That's part of the resolution. Part of the unravelling. So there might be two, or three, or four, or five, might be ten things they have to do to bring it about. So you do that by interaction, by counselling and so on. So the processes are fairly simple processes, but it requires agreement." [P5]

A number of prerequisites to granting forgiveness were identified by participants. These prerequisites tended not to be related to the offence itself, but to the sincerity in the emotions and behaviours of the perpetrator following the transgression. The emphasis placed on the perpetrators conduct identified in the interviews is consistent with Māori

justice processes that focus on the causes or motives of offences, rather than the acts themselves (Jackson, 1988). Participants expressed that in order for forgiveness to occur, there is a need for both parties to engage in the forgiveness process, and hold a desire to maintain the relationship, as expressed in the following excerpt. *"I think they need to show that they really do feel sorry for what they've done. Um and just an overall want to preserve the relationship"* [P1].

Once the forgiveness process had been entered into, many prerequisites centred on honest communication. These prerequisites are included in the *rongo* concepts; to sense, to inform, and to obey (Williams, 1988). The importance of truthful communication was expressed by this participant in the following extract:

"That's the only way you can get on, you know, spill out the truth. You know. Might hurt for a little bit, but spill it out [. . .] it's just getting back to the truth that's all. You know, you can work with one another, play with one another, but be honest with one another." [P6]

Participants articulated that to achieve honest communication, the transgressor also needed to gain understanding through careful listening and registering the information emotionally. Having sensed what was at the heart of the issue, the transgressor then needed to accept responsibility for the transgression, feel remorse, apologise to the victims, and demonstrate a commitment to obey *tikanga* in future, as this participant affirms: *"You're remorseful because you understand the error of your ways, kinda thing, and you understand that you shouldn't do it, and you're not going to do it in the future"* [P3].

The importance of honesty and sincere emotional apologies in reaching forgiveness was reported by Zechmeister, Garcia, Romero, and Vas (2004). Furthermore, Nadler and Liviatan (2006) noted that apologies facilitated forgiveness only when those who were apologising were considered trustworthy. They concluded that apologies from untrustworthy sources are interpreted as deceitful attempts to manipulate others and avoid

punishment.

The importance of establishing trust by making a commitment to avoid future offences was captured by this participant, who expressed that without trust, apologies were meaningless: *"If they're remorseful but they would do it again then, kind of, the remorse doesn't weigh much"* [P3]. To ensure remorse is genuine, the giving of gifts as enduring symbols of commitment to the relationship was seen as appropriate by this participant: *"If it's something that's really damaging [. . .] a token could be- or a gesture of something to hand back to say, you know, this is just a small token to say I'm sorry for what I've said or done"* [P4]. For more serious transgressions, participants expressed that it was necessary for balance to be restored through sanctioned *utu* (compensation; Pratt, 1991). The need for *utu* stems from the loss of control and social standing suffered by the victim and their extended family as a result of the transgression. *Utu* is then carried out as a means of achieving social justice. Traditionally *utu* included gift giving, the transfer of land, as well as violent acts (Hanson & Hanson, 1983), whereas today *utu* commonly takes the form of compensation paid to the aggrieved party (Mead, 2003). This is consistent with the Hmong understanding of transgressions described by Sandage et al. 2003.

Throughout this process of restoring balance, the empowerment of the victim is vital (Pratt, 1991). This was explained by a participant as follows. *"In the Māori way it's the victim that has the power and the perpetrator [is] just there"* [P2]. As well as empowering the victim, the perpetrator was expected to demonstrate a capacity to be generous, as this participant expresses: *"If I infringe on you, you and your family come to my place. Take what you want. I stand back and say, well I made a mistake. Sorry"* [P7].

The importance participants placed on generosity in keeping with the Māori value of *manaakitanga* (kindness, hospitality) and *koha* (gift giving), which when demonstrated increase the *mana* (social standing) of an individual or a group (Mead, 2003):

"Whatever you give out is more abundant. So if someone infringes

on us we would re-address that balance. If I make a mistake and infringe on someone in some way, I must more than address the balance, and be generous so that they're fully satisfied, that there's no animosity or grievance here." [P7]

In the extract that follows, a participant describes the process of reaching an agreement on the *rongoa*. Here she describes the perpetrator's willingness to endure a worse punishment than is necessary as commonplace, and perhaps vital to achieving harmony.

"They [the perpetrators] will be the ones that will suggest a punishment. And nine times out of ten it's worse than what they [the victims] would've done. Sometime they [the victims] will jump in and say "oh kaore [no], don't do that." [P2]

Rongo in the Context of Māori-Pākehā Relations

Despite expressing deep desires to restore a balanced relationship with Pākehā, there was widespread agreement amongst participants that it would be inappropriate for Māori to forgive Pākehā at this stage in their joint history (Liu, Wilson, McClure, & Higgins, 1999). When offering reasons for this conclusion, participants gave examples of how the prerequisites to forgiveness, outlined above, had not been met. Many participants felt that communication problems existed between Māori and Pākehā, which were preventing progress towards reconciliation and forgiveness. Participants expressed that even when Māori were given an opportunity to be heard, their concerns were not taken seriously, and were not taken to heart. They felt that their issues were instead grouped together as inconsequential concerns produced from an inferior knowledge system, and largely ignored (see Sibley, Liu, Duckitt, & Khan, 2008). The devaluation of Māori knowledge is expressed by one participant as follows.

"White is right still here. White is powerful. Māori are wrong. Māori are dumb. Their [Māori] systems, their inter-relationship systems, how they relate to each other, as well is how their social

order and whatever, it's inferior still. They [Pākehā] are still superior and by their superior law they're trying to instil upon Māori living in their order. So Māori law, Māori tikanga, Māori kawa [protocol] is still inferior to this [Pākehā] one." [P7]

On occasions when a shared conceptualisation of the issues is gained, participants felt that honest communication was still not achieved, as Pākehā remained emotionally detached. These sentiments are outlined in the following passage as this participant expresses what he feels would be necessary in order for balance to be restored.

"One, get them to listen, get them to feel. They have great difficulty in listening and feeling. They can listen but it doesn't go anywhere. It doesn't go here [points to his chest], it doesn't go here [points to head], because their conceptualisation has not identified the real problem. And the other one is, to be open and honest. And it's very difficult sometimes when they are in positions of power [. . .] So there's several things that have to happen, then listening, then respect, honesty, integrity must come in to play to address it." [P5]

Participants felt that this communication problem was not limited to Government representatives, but was common throughout society, as expressed by this participant:

"To be able to communicate with each other and sort of listen to each other; there's none of that in both- in any forum; local government, regional government, regional council, um ah- in a conversation across the fence with a farmer." [P7]

The talk between the interviewer and a participant that follows illustrates many of the unmet prerequisites of forgiveness that were discussed by participants in the interviews. These include acknowledging, accepting responsibility for, expressing a genuine apology for, and attempting to redress the injustices of the past.

[I] What do you think needs to happen in order for Māori to forgive non-Māori?

[P2] Ok. Pākehā needs to own up, to the injustices that has occurred without Māori having to beg. Cause at the moment [. . .] Māori still have to put their cases forward to the Treaty of Waitangi tribunal to say why they are entitled to this. And the only reason why they have the go-ahead is because it's being done through Pākehā systems [. . .] just say "yes, I have done you wrong and I'm sorry" that's all that needs to happen. But it hasn't come across as that yet [. . .]

[I] Ah, is there anything else that would need to happen in order for Māori to be ready to forgive? Or is that all?

[P2] I think, just to be humble and say "we're sorry"

[I] Yeh

[P2] You see a lot of people I've talked to, and Pākehā, they normally say, "but I didn't do that back then. It was my ancestors". I said, "Ok so if I came and got that land over there, because your ancestor took it off my ancestor; how would you feel about that?" "Oh you can't do that!" I said, "why not? You said it was your ancestor who did. So why can't I come and just take it, because he took it off my ancestor?" They are willing to say sorry, but they are not willing to give it.

[I] So do you think that a lot of Pākehā maybe don't appreciate their position in New Zealand? How that came about?

[P2] I think they know how it came about. I think they choose not to remember how they got it.

In the extract above, the participant also indicated duality in Pākehā thought and actions, in that injustices were known, yet attempts to restore justice were not made. This distinction between what is believed to be fair *in principle* and what should be done to restore justice *in practice* is consistent with Sibley and Liu's (2004) finding that Pākehā endorse *symbolic biculturalism* (the principles of partnership, as outlined in the Treaty

of Waitangi), but that they tended to oppose *resource-specific biculturalism* (the allocation of resources to Māori in order to achieve a balanced partnership, see Kirkwood, Liu, & Weatherall, 2005 for Pākehā perspectives on this issue). The frustration felt by participants due to the barriers facing Māori in their attempt to gain justice is expressed in the following extracts.

"They won't accept our processes of addressing balance. They won't accept our process of aroha [love, compassion], of koha [giving], or um utu [reciprocity, compensation], or muru [sanctioned raids to punish offenders] [. . .] there's no process. They haven't got the process of forgiveness. And they won't engage us on our process." [P7]

"For stealing a pin a man would be taken to jail, and yet for taking ones land nothing has ever been done about it, aye? Yeah, it's simple things like that and yet deeper and harder things have been done the government turns a blind eye, even today aye it's still the same." [P6]

Whakapapa

"Anei ngā mea i whakataukitia ai e ngā tūpuna,
ko te kaha, ko te uaua, ko te pakiri"

Here are the things valued by the ancestors, it is the strength, the vigour, and the sturdiness

- Māori Proverb

Whakapapa is a concept that encompasses the interconnectedness between people, places, and events over time, and is a source of Māori identity (Durie, 2001; Jackson, 1988). Shared genealogy and heritage unite group members, while historical interactions affirm relationships with outgroups. When discussing forgiveness in the context of Māori-Pākehā relations, talk relating to connectedness versus separation was prominent throughout the interviews. Many participants expressed their connectedness through *whakapapa* to the land, their ancestors and descendants, the past, present and future, and historical injustices. As these aspects of *whakapapa* are sources

of identity, many participants spoke of identity as being intimately related with forgiveness in this context.

Whakapapa is an important concept with regard to conflict resolution, as conflict is seen to create imbalance not only between individuals, but also between their extended families (Jackson, 1988). When conflict arises, protocols around *whanaungatanga* (support provided by members of an extended family for one another) and *manaakitanga* (showing generosity and nurturing others) must be observed (Mead, 2003). The importance of establishing *whakapapa* in the process of restoring balance is evident in the traditional process of unification through arranged marriages between prominent members of each group (Hanson & Hanson, 1983), as this participant recounts. "The old people used to say "oh well if you can't beat them, marry them" [P4]. This act not only marked peace between the parties, but sealed it in the future by uniting the groups' *whakapapa*, making them one: "They forgave them through intermarriage, and it's through their *mokopunas* [grandchildren]. Because for [one *iwi*] to continue hating [another *iwi*], then they might as well kill their own grandchildren" [P2].

Following the principle of *whanaungatanga*, some of the participants suggested that disputes should be settled between groups, even when the conflict was a result of the actions of individuals. The following extract is an example of this sentiment. "If someone needed forgiveness from me for what occurred then I would like it done in a way that I had my family behind me to support me and vice versa" [P2]. Although Hanke et al. (under review) reported that forgiveness was seen as being easier to achieve between individuals than between groups, this attitude was not shared by all the participants in the present study, as they tended not to distinguish between individual and group level forgiveness.

"In a group sense it's probably, a little bit more easy. Primarily because if you get people into one room all talking about an issue, is that whilst you may come with a particular view, because you're now hearing other people's views,

your view then becomes- starts to evolve and you start picking up all these other things [. . .] whereas if its one on one, if its just me and you, and we're just knocking heads with one another, we don't have the ability to pick up other people's perspectives." [P8]

Consistent with Jackson's (1988) analysis of Māori justice practices, participants in the present study identified that group processes of conflict resolution were necessary in many situations, as not only the direct victim but also their family would take offence to transgressions and seek justice, while the family of the perpetrators were expected to assume collective responsibility for the transgression: "It's not only the perpetrator it's the whole *whānau*, *hapū*, and *iwi* that becomes the perpetrators" [P2]. The connectedness between extended family members through *whakapapa* was also seen as enduring through time and manifesting itself in the present:

*"We're bought up in a way when what happened before is also a part of us, so we remember all those things that happened before [. . .] when you listen to some of our *kaumātua* talk, when they give their *whaikōrero* [formal speech], they always go back to way-back to the ancient times and they talk about the way their *tūpuna* [ancestors] acted, reacted, sayings, and all that sort of stuff. That's our footing. And I think for Māori- for us to move forward, we've got to take the past with us."* [P8]

This connection between family members over generations is intimately linked to issues of justice, as it is through *whakapapa* that Māori rights are determined, based on their histories of interactions, for example with land and other groups (Jackson, 1988).

Whakapapa in the Context of Māori-Pākehā Relations

When speaking of the relationship between Māori and Pākehā, many participants distinguished between dealing with Pākehā as individuals, and dealing with Pākehā as a group, as expressed by this participant when asked how he would describe the relationship

between Māori and Pākehā: "Um individually ok. Like everyone has Pākehā and Māori friends, kinda thing. But, um, when it comes to a nation level it's a bit more separated" [P9]. This extract demonstrates how the identities and relationships established through *whakapapa* that guide interactions will be susceptible to contextual factors, in a manner broadly consistent with contemporary theorizing about social identities (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Many participants suggested that understanding between Māori and Pākehā was hard to achieve, as Māori and Pākehā did not share views on connectedness and separation.

In addition to the prerequisites to forgiveness that arose when participants were discussing forgiveness on general terms, when referring specifically to forgiving Pākehā, a more fundamental prerequisite was identified. This prerequisite was the acknowledgement of Māori as a *people*. There were widespread sentiments from participants that the relationship between Māori and Pākehā was inhibited by a lack of recognition and acceptance that Māori are a distinct people, with a unique cultural identity. This struggle is echoed by indigenous populations around the globe (United Nations, 2006). The failure of Pākehā to acknowledge and engage with Māori as a distinct people was expressed by this participant as a barrier to improving the relationship between the groups: "Māori have their own processes but Pākehā have ignored them, and um they're not willing to engage, even except Māori as an identity, they won't even accept ya as a nation, as a people" [P7].

Participants explained that much of the damage done to Māori through colonisation was in the form of insults to cultural identity. The following extract provides an example:

*"They virtually did wipe us out, but not quite cause we still had our pas and there was still a bit of Māori there. But they took the *rewa* [state of elevation] and all of that off us. Um, made us not so proud to be Māori, you know, bottom of the line people."* [P10]

An illustration of the insults to cultural identity caused by the processes of separation used to colonise Māori is

given in the following extract. In his account, the participant compares the Māori views of connectedness, with Pākehā processes of separation.

"These other people have the opposite process, to separate from nature, to separate us from each other; to divide up these little blocks of land and to put fences up between people, and between cultures, and to try to dominate, and subjugate, and oppress." [P7]

In the extract above, this participant alluded to connections people have with each other and with the land. In the following extract, he goes on to establish the connection between the past and the present, as he gives an account of the present situation in Ngāmotu (New Plymouth), which is very much connected to the history of the area.

"They're ignorant people because they think this is England. They think this is New Plymouth. They think this suburb is Fitzroy, after the General. That's what they think! They don't see Ngāmotu, they don't see Waiwhakaiho. This region here, this land here, they don't see 'wai' the waters, or the movement of 'whaka', the processes of 'iho', connection, 'iho'. Beautiful place, this is a place of connection." [P7]

This extract challenges Pākehā claims that colonisation is located in the past. The participant achieves this by suggesting that the colonial regime that gained power in Taranaki, maintains power over Taranaki. The names used by Pākehā to describe the places within Taranaki still celebrate Taranaki's colonial past and demonstrate that the world view that colonialism brought with it still predominates, while the Māori world view is marginalised.

Participants expressed a desire to see the differences between Māori and Pākehā acknowledged, and for the colonial processes that have led to the suppression of Māori cultural expression to be reversed. The longing for the right of cultural expression was emphasised, as this participant lamented: *"Let us have our cultural way- the way we are, the way we live, the way we think, let it come back, let us have that right back"* [P4]. In order to heal the relationship, participants saw

it necessary for Pākehā to acknowledge that there is a relationship, rather than denying the groups' distinct identities, as this participant describes:

"I think with Pākehā they haven't yet understood the way that Māori think and the way that we view the treaty. And um- like the whole issue now about unity, where, kind of, the Māori view of the treaty was a partnership. So Pākehā are thinking let's all just be one. I think [...] we should just acknowledge our differences and realise that we're Māori. You're Pākehā. That's ok. And let's just live like that. So um, just like- that's like a fundamental misunderstanding between Māori and Pākehā that kind of, I don't know, needs to be corrected before any kind of forgiveness can even be contemplated really." [P3]

In the preceding extract, the participant has outlined that viewing all Māori and Pākehā people as united denies the connection Māori share, and the relationship they have with Pākehā as a distinct group, thereby denying the separate *whakapapa* (the distinct ancestry, history, and indeed reality) of these groups. This interpretation resonates with the findings of Kirkwood et al.'s (2005) study which found that those who adopted the Pākehā, or *Tauīwi* (foreigner) identity label, acknowledged the ongoing process of colonisation and their position as members of the dominant social group within New Zealand, whereas those who self-identified as "New Zealanders" made no such acknowledgements.

Kaupapa Based on the Costs of Forgiveness

Kaupapa (agenda) was identified as a major theme of participants' talk regarding forgiveness. Although forgiveness was viewed as a virtue, participants set their agenda as to whether or not forgiveness could be offered by considering the costs and benefits associated with forgiveness. Participants agreed that the relationship between Māori and Pākehā was not balanced, and shared their aspirations to see balance restored. However, they held divergent views on how balance could be achieved. Opinions on the course of action to achieve balance ranged

from stoic benevolence, to working through existing power structures to affect change, to overthrowing Pākehā power structures, displayed by followers of the teaching of Te Whiti, agents of the Crown, and political activists respectively.

Despite many expressions from participants of their willingness to offer forgiveness regardless of the transgression, when situated in the context of Māori-Pākehā relations, almost unanimously, participants believed that forgiveness was not appropriate. In the following extract this participant attempts to reconcile her belief that there is always a place for forgiveness, with her belief that Māori are not in a position to forgive:

"If it's like emotional harm um I don't think there's a benefit in not forgiving. But if it's a harm [...] that causes people to be displaced or put in a position where they're physically disadvantaged then [...] you can see how [...] it would be easier to just to be against them still." [P1]

As indicated in the extract above, many participants emphasised that transgressions against Māori were not isolated to events in history, but were rather part of an ongoing process of oppression. The assertions that forgiveness is inappropriate while transgressions are ongoing are consistent with literature concerning victims of ongoing abuse (Legaree et al., 2007). The desire of Māori to reach a state of forgiveness, as well as the frustration felt by Māori as a result of the ongoing oppressive process of colonisation were expressed by a participant as follows.

"It's the Pākehā too that has to recognise it too. We already know the damage. We're the ones who've been damaged and you still want us to forgive you at the same time for damaging us? I mean, that's fine we will. We will forgive. But don't damage anymore. You know that's not for real. We know it's gonna keep on doing it." [P4]

The ongoing nature of the oppression made it hard for the following participant to foresee trust being established, or forgiveness offered: *"It's gonna be hard. Cause forgiving is about trusting that*

you won't get hurt again. Cause Māori have been hurt too many times over generations, generations, generations. Too many generations" [P2].

Although Pākehā discourses tend to locate colonisation and injustices against Māori in the past (Kirkwood et al., 2005; Sibley et al., 2008), for Māori in the present study, injustice and the effects of colonisation are part of daily experience. Participants described that the legacy of colonisation is evident in all that they experienced. The following two extracts illustrate the historical reminders of the early period of colonisation, and the contemporary injustice experienced by Māori on a daily basis.

"They still carry the history, still standing and staring at them, that's why. The buildings are still there. Old concrete things where the colonials used to be are still standing there. The hill where the canon [was] is still standing there. So you know, I think waking up to that every morning and going to bed with the last- is something that's continuously gonna make you feel a little bit cautious." [P4]

"See I know where our land is [. . .] and I'm thinking, hmm we should have the right to use it. We should have the right to live under our own laws with it. Keep it, share it. We should be connected to it. Simple things." [P7]

As the situation described by participants was one of oppression, many concluded that work to restore equality was the necessary agenda. Before balance was restored, many participants felt that forgiveness was either trivial, or detrimental. Consistent with suggestions that *unforgiveness* can be used as a powerful motivator (Legaree et al., 2007), one of the reasons offered by participants for forgiveness inhibiting the attainment of balance was that it would weaken Māori resolve to achieve balance, and send a message to non-Māori that no action was necessary.

"If you kind of hold-out on not giving the forgiveness then it's [. . .] making it obvious that there are issues to be discussed [. . .] and if you give forgiveness kind of prematurely then those issues aren't gonna be resolved." [P3]

This argument is in keeping with Legaree et al.'s (2007) definition of forgiveness, which can be detrimental as the victim no longer holds the perpetrator to blame, is no longer attempting to seek compensation, and is vulnerable to continued abuse.

Participants also expressed that to forgive would mean giving up their struggle to defend their cultural traditions, which would lead to the loss of identity. The harm done to Māori cultural identity by forced assimilation was mentioned repeatedly by participants as a source of conflict, and many of the participants believed that to forgive before balance was achieved would lead to more identity loss. In the following extract the participant considers the detrimental psychological effect that not forgiving has on Māori, in that it can manifest as anger and aggression. The participant then proceeds to weigh those costs of not forgiving with the costs to identity of offering forgiveness. *"It's probably better that they haven't forgiven cause it's better to have like the traditions there than- and even with the delinquency and violence and stuff- then have nothing or no identity" [P9].* The same participant then establishes that once Māori have gained the autonomy to maintain their cultural practices, they would be able to forgive without the associated costs to identity.

"But when they've regained themselves and the Māori have pulled themselves out- up and have land and have some sort of power in the political arena then that's when they can- it won't matter because the ones on top can be the like, the um the chiefs and look after and monitor the Māori tikanga and the ways." [P9]

The following extract continues the discussion of identity, but here the participant presents the cost of forgiveness in terms of the perception that other Māori may have of those who forgive.

"The cost of giving forgiveness before it's really earned is probably that, as Māori, you'll probably lose your identity really. Um, there's mana in standing up for what you know is right and you know is yours. And if you

don't then you've kind of lost that mana. And so if you don't stand up for being Māori and what Māori deserve then, you know, some could argue that you're not really Māori. You're- you have the lineage, you have the blood, but you don't have um, the wairua [spirit] really. So there's a definite cost there. And there's probably going to be a cost if some did it [forgave] and some didn't. Then obviously the bloody mana motuhake hard-out flag-raisers and things like that will look down on you and say "you might say you're Māori, but you're not" kinda thing. So I think, from the Māori perspective, there's a huge obvious cost to not, oh yeah, to giving forgiveness too early. But in terms of not forgiving, it's just the lost opportunity in terms of integrating with Pākehā." [P3]

The extract above is loaded with costs and benefits Māori associate with forgiving Pākehā. Foremost, the participant highlights the importance of *mana* (social standing, authority) lost when a transgression occurs. In order to restore *mana*, a reciprocal act must be carried out (Jackson, 1988). If no such act is performed, and forgiveness is offered instead, autonomy, and social standing have been sacrificed. The interplay identified by participants between identity, autonomy, and the drive to attain equality are summed up in the Taranaki Report as follows. "If the drive for autonomy is no longer there, then Māori have either ceased to exist as a people or ceased to be free," (Waitangi Tribunal, 2006).

The participant quoted above also identifies that pressure to withhold forgiveness may come from other Māori, who see offering forgiveness as failing to defend their group. This extract also alludes to the different positions Māori take on issues to do with Māori-Pākehā relations, as the participant refers to the "hard-out" or extreme position taken by "flag-raisers" who protest for their right to *Mana Motuhake* (absolute autonomy), described below.

Staunch Positions

"Kaua e mate wheke, me mate ururoa"

*Don't die like the octopus
(passively),
die like the hammerhead shark
(fighting)
- Māori proverb*

Participants of the present investigation advocated for divergent courses of action in response to the situation of oppression experienced by Māori. The following extract is from a participant who believed in eliminating colonial oppression by establishing a Māori state.

"We think within five years Māori will be a separate nation. And our other task is to eliminate colonialism. That's an objective to the UN. So, eliminate colonialism and all its structures, so that means eliminate the Crown. And so we'll be enemy number one within six months. In Hawai'i, we want the Yanks out of there, Chile, we want the Chileans out of Rapanui, French out of Tahiti, English out of here, and their systems out of here. We'll keep the people if they respect the Māori nation, but we'll end their systems of alienation." [P7]

While Pākehā discourse often positions Māori who challenge the authority of the state as *radicals* or *trouble-makers* (McCreanor, 2005), this view-point is challenged in the following exchange between the interviewer and the participant.

[I] *Do you think there would be a cost of forgiving Pākehā?*

[P7] *Cost? Cost of forgiving?*

[I] *Yeah, if- say if Māori just stopped fighting-*

[P7] *Stopped fighting?*

[I] *Yeah*

[P7] *Nah it's defending!*

[I] *Defending.*

[P7] *Stop defending their rights? If they gave up that? Well, accept they have no identity. Accept they have no right here at all mmm. So I would say that would be asking a bit much, really. That's actually putting them as a non-people. So I think someone would be asking too much to expect someone to be as, worse than a dog. See*

dogs have rights, see even tuna and these little ika, tiny little fish. They've got rights. Māori have a life cycle and they're allowed to live in peace and freedom in their own land. So you're asking, do they want to give away that right? Doubt it.

This position of a defender of rights is established further as the participant expresses, *"they think I'm wild for expecting peace here. They call it radical!" [P7].*

Middle Positions

"E ngaki ana a mua, e tōtō mai ana a muri"

*The first group clear the weeds,
the second group sow the seeds
- Māori proverb*

Alternative courses of actions were offered by participants who believed that progress could be made through existing institutions and power structures. The following extract is from a participant who worked with *iwi* (tribes) on behalf of the Government. He positions his work in context of ongoing resistance by Taranaki Māori against colonial oppression.

"If you know your Taranaki history, when we had the raupatu [land confiscation] down here, the reactions then back when our Tīpuna [ancestors] were around, they reacted the only way they knew, which was to go out and fight for their lands and their property and their people. We still do it. But we do it in a different way [. . .]. The Māori Party are using the system which is the way I do it. I'm doing exactly the same. You use the system to help you." [P8]

Another participant who adopted this middle position advocated that Māori progression could be achieved if a better understanding of injustices was achieved by Pākehā.

"They just straight-out ripped us off. And now it's come around that there are Pākehā out there that think that we're trying to rip them off. By giving our land back or something. And not even. It may be 1% of what's been taken.

And they're cracking up about it! But it's lack of education, and generations of running Māori down, you know. So it's about properly educating people to the rip-offs that happened, and the travesties to whānau and everything. Yeah there was just so much that's lost. That information, no one wants to know it properly. But if you get right down to it, that's what needs to happen for any sort of forgiveness to happen." [P10]

Rangimarie (peaceful) positions

"He toa taumata rau"

The many resting places of courage

(Refers to the bravery of a chief who is willing to sacrifice his life for peace)

- Māori proverb

A minority position was held by one participant, who advocated that the relationship between Māori and Pākehā could be restored by offering Pākehā unconditional forgiveness. This participant drew on the teachings of Te Whiti O Rongomai, the religious leader who orchestrated a passive resistance against the Crown at Parihaka. Te Whiti advocated treating transgressors with abundant kindness, so as not to propagate hate, and to highlight to the transgressor group the error of their ways: *"Te Whiti is already spoken about. Utuhia te kino ki te pai. Yeah. Pay the bad with the good" [P6].* The willingness of this participant to offer unconditional forgiveness is consistent with Kanz's (2000) finding that followers of Christian faiths have a higher propensity to forgive than others. In this conceptualisation of unconditional forgiveness, the transgression itself is seen not as an assault on the victim so much as a sign that the perpetrator is damaged, as expressed in the following extract by a participant who did not hold such views, but was familiar with the teachings of Te Whiti.

"Te Whiti said, when soldiers walked in and he was getting dragged off to jail, "This is not of my doing, it comes from the heart of Pākehā". What he was saying is that they are unhealed people

and it comes from their heart.”
[P7]

The participant who advocated for unconditional forgiveness saw transgressions as more harmful to the perpetrators than to the victims, as demonstrated in the following excerpt.

“They know it within themselves too. They know it’s wrong, because if you go to school, we do something wrong you’ll be told off, get strapped, or you know be put on detention, and it must hurt them more than us. They must know that. The place has been stolen- confiscated, you know.”
[P6]

This conceptualisation of forgiveness fits with benevolent forgiveness, which is offered in the best interests of the perpetrator, in the hopes that it will affect positive change in the perpetrator (Freedman, 1998).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate Māori conceptualisations of individual and group-level forgiveness, and develop indigenous perspectives on forgiveness. The findings suggest that the concept of forgiveness, as perceived by the participants, can be organised according to three core themes: *Rongo* (demonstration of commitment to restore relationships), *Whakapapa* (interconnectedness between people, places, and events over time, forming identity) and *Kaupapa* (agenda set based on the costs and benefits of forgiveness).

The findings were consistent with existing literature in which forgiveness is portrayed as a means to enhance well-being by releasing negative emotions linked to a transgression (Enright, 2001), and the prerequisites to forgiveness outlined by Hargrave (1994), such as the transgressor’s acceptance of responsibility, commitment not to transgress in future, and offering of compensation. Furthermore, in line with Legaree et al.’s (2007) review of the therapeutic outcomes of forgiveness, our findings concur that offering forgiveness can be psychologically harmful in oppressive contexts where abuses continue.

Although literature suggests that

forgiveness is a *process* to achieve reconciliation, participants in the present study stressed that in addition, forgiveness was an *outcome* of reconciliation. This finding paralleled the findings of Sandage et al.’s (2003) study of Hmong Americans’ conceptualisations of forgiveness. Furthermore, the participants in both the present study and Sandage et al.’s study described transgressions as impacting on the social status of the extended families of the parties involved, and therefore advocated that the involvement of these large family groups was necessary in settling disputes.

Perhaps due to the impact of transgressions on extended families, the participants in the present study tended not to distinguish between individual and group level forgiveness, in contrast to the findings of Hanke et al. (under review). The disparities between this and Hanke et al.’s study suggest it is necessary to consider contextual factors when investigating forgiveness at the group level. These contextual factors could include the nature of the relationship between groups, the individualism/collectivism orientations of the groups involved, whether or not transgressions are ongoing, and the political backdrop. Through examining the *whakapapa* of the groups, these contextual factors would be incorporated into the investigation. When attempting to treat individuals in clinical practice, the consideration of *whakapapa* is also likely to be helpful in formulating a *kaupapa*, or treatment plan.

The relatively high level of integration of Māori and Pākehā in New Zealand has implications on the nature of the relationship between these groups. While integration allows individuals from groups to develop understanding and affection for one another that facilitate healing after group conflict (Hewstone et al., 2006), good relations at the individual level may also prevent Pākehā from accepting the raw wound of injustice and oppression felt by Māori (Sibley et al., 2008; Kirkwood et al., 2005).

Māori-Pākehā relations can appear, at least on the surface, to be peaceful. This may lead to the conclusion that reconciliation has been achieved, and groups have been integrated. However,

as indicated by Freedman (1998), a type of superficial reconciliation can occur when a victim in a relationship has no choice but to engage with a perpetrator that has not been forgiven. Many of the Māori interviewed for the present study shared a sense of injustice, had not forgiven Pākehā for the transgressions of the past, and were acutely aware of the position of Pākehā today as beneficiaries of colonial processes, in contrast to the position they saw Māori occupying as the oppressed. The New Zealand Government’s move to deny Māori traditional rights to the seabed and foreshore in 2004 served as a poignant display of the sense of injustice felt by Māori. This political event united Māori, and mobilised tens of thousands to march on parliament in protest (United Nations, 2006).

The conceptualisations of forgiveness presented in the present study were extracted from interviews conducted predominantly with Taranaki Māori. Therefore, the results do not attempt to reflect the opinions of Māori of other *iwi*. Even within Taranaki, the interpretation of Māori concepts relating to forgiveness may be inadequate, as interviews were conducted in English, which is likely to have restricted the interviewees’ abilities to express uniquely Māori concepts. Further, the implementation of Western research techniques by a primary researcher with both Māori and Pākehā lineage, who was not raised in *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori world) limits the richness of analyses presented. Due to these limitations, the results of the present investigation should be seen as an introductory glimpse into Māori conceptualisations of forgiveness in the context of Māori-Pākehā relations.

Insights gained from Māori regarding processes that are important in reaching forgiveness could be used to inform restorative justice practices in New Zealand (Maxwell & Liu, 2007). The over-representation of incarcerated Māori in New Zealand presents a snapshot of a justice system that is failing Māori (Perret, 1999). Involving extended *whānau* in justice proceedings, and incorporating *marae* protocols that are focused on victim and perpetrator, would be likely to enable justice that is more effective for victims

and rehabilitative for perpetrators.

The processes of conflict resolution indicated by our participants also have the potential to be used as a means of improving the relationship between Māori and Pākehā. Most fundamental in this process is the acknowledgement of *whakapapa*. Emphasising *whakapapa* would allow for the creation of meeting places, where group members acknowledge their own group's identity, and their relationship with the outgroup, so that a dialogue between groups can occur. For this meeting to take place, it is fundamental that Pākehā acknowledge Māori as a people, with distinct heritage, values, and aspirations.

Beyond recognising the *whakapapa* of the group they are engaging with, the success of Pākehā in negotiations may be improved by the consideration of their own unique *whakapapa*. As the legitimacy of Pākehā presence in Aotearoa/New Zealand is based on the Treaty of Waitangi, Pākehā are in a partnership with Māori. However, there is a history of Pākehā breaches of the treaty, which casts doubt on the legitimacy of many of the Government's actions. Not only does this burden Pākehā, and all crown representatives of today with the baggage of being associated with those actions, it often places them in a negotiating position where they are politically motivated to defend their Government's actions. It is important to recognize that it is the acknowledgement of the breaches, the expression of remorse, the commitment not to transgress further, and the will to establish and maintain group-based processes to redress the state of imbalance that affirms the legitimacy of their presence in Aotearoa, not a denial or defense of those unjust actions.

The processes described to achieve balance by Māori participants in this study were predominantly small group processes, wherein community members meet, are given a chance to voice their opinions, relate to one another on a personal basis, and negotiate agreements. The level of intimacy necessary to achieve the sincere involvement and shared understanding would be difficult, if not impossible to achieve at the national level. However, local governments and communities

throughout New Zealand can apply these processes of restoring balance in their negotiations with Māori (see Maxwell & Liu, 2007 for a restorative society approach). In addition, those involved with policy making and governance are in positions where the acknowledgement of their relationship with Māori could create *whakapapa*, so that the *kaupapa* to achieve *rongo* might emerge.

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