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“Nga Kai Arahi Tuitui Maori”

**Maori Entrepreneurship:
The articulation of leadership and the
dual constituency arrangements associated with
Maori enterprise in a capitalist economy.**

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial leadership is today developing as a significant factor in efforts among tribal Maori to maximise and consolidate their resources assets. Maori have come to recognise that to attain economic viability and take advantage of marketplace opportunities requires calculated risk-taking. Individuals who can assess, manage and contain risk and have the capacity and audacity, it would seem, to turn ideas into real, tangible commercial success. The current groundswell of tribal entrepreneurship has been spurred on by the increasing number of successful localised Maori businesses; changes in government economic policy; a predominant increase in the numbers of Maori members of parliament and a review of significant legislation that has historically impeded Maori economic self-determination. As Treaty of Waitangi settlements and fisheries entitlements claims have in one sense compelled the long standing Maori Trust Boards to reconstitute themselves to provide mechanisms of controlling, managing and investing its capital, it has also necessitated the need to adapt western styles of financial and managerial accountability. This study aims to examine the significance of entrepreneurship as a level of leadership required to assist Maori, in particular tribal iwi, to move into what is widely described as the era of "neo-tribal" post-modernism. The 'tribal entrepreneurs', as distinct from those 'Maori' who happen to be entrepreneurs, are by definition individuals who simultaneously walk two distinct, complex and yet significantly complementary cultural/economic pathways. What ultimately sets such leaders apart is their distinct bicultural position, the manner in which they attempt to negotiate their 'identities' and realities and meaning and significance of a set of unique ethical considerations. Within this study the notions of network systems, stakeholders and dual constituency arrangements are addressed. The importance of these is seen in the fact that entrepreneurs work between a complex set of arrangements and engage primarily in problem-solving, identifying gaps, managing change and weighing up options. This study also takes the view that the positivist and non-positivist arguments concerning research and theory validate each other as they both require explanations and justifications of the other. It follows that even for entrepreneurs, there is reason to accept and adopt a rational positivist framework and integrate this into 'human factors' that revolve around their intuition, feelings, hunches and emotions. Entrepreneurs are seen as risk takers in an intellectual, financial and interpersonal sense who pursue opportunities when all else seems uncertain. Their very livelihoods depend on their abilities to respond quickly and positively to market gaps and to market opportunities and as such they are architects and controllers of their destinies. This study aims to capture the tensions, relationships and commercial realities of Maori entrepreneurs as they go about their activities. They, it is argued, provide the necessary tier of business leadership, complementary to that of tribal political leadership required to make economic development and commercial investments viable options.

Preface

The proclivity doing this study was inspired by an interest I have in history, in change, in the vitality of indigenous traditions and in the study of social economics. While attending the 1992 inaugural *Healing Our Spirit Worldwide* Indigenous Conference in Alberta, Canada, I became acutely and consciously aware of the profound commonality indigenous cultures shared about their own unique 'colonial' economic experience. The social transformations and political upheavals and the redefinition and redistribution of wealth precipitated by colonial quests for dominance were systematic, often ruthless and pervasive. It was during the closing session I began to critically reflect on how well we as Maori were doing. What did we mean by Maori-driven development and whether or not we had the strategic leadership required to move us from paternal Crown dependency to a true and authentic state of economic self-sufficiency? I looked critically at whether we had the capabilities to stand culturally confident and remain largely economically destitute. I began also to question my accountability as a scholar, a researcher and a practitioner.

While in this reflective state, Phil Diaz, a first nations US House of Senate representative, gave much substance to my thought. He spoke sagaciously of the need for indigenous peoples to *"get real, to forget about blaming, to accept what has happened and move on"*. His speech invigorated me spiritually, much like a god-send. He provided the insight I was looking to embark on a study in the area of indigenous leadership. From his remarks, I noted four key related themes that took into account the need to be business of indigenous people reclaiming their dignity. These have served me in my understanding of sense and purpose and provided the important guideposts for this study. First, was the understanding *"that all indigenous development; physical, spiritual and economic comes from within"* which I took to mean, we as Maori, have to move out of grievance into settlement and reconciliation. The central requirement Diaz highlighted, was the need for forgiveness. The consequences of which would be to create a psychological liberation from the baggage of the past, and a refocus on instilling in our young people instructions towards economic prosperity. This requires strategic leadership and support, two commodities Maori could use a great deal of.

The second theme, I took measure of was that of acknowledging *"without vision, there can be no development"*. That for us, vision ultimately determined destiny and if our leaders and elders had no vision of any possibility beyond now, our families and hapu would ultimately suffer. There would be little chance of developing the kinds of *"get real"* strategies needed to achieve improvements in our health and economic track records. For indigenous peoples to hold fast to their life-enhancing

traditions, culture had to reaffirm its self as *"the mother of vision"* and it was when Diaz said this, that I understood the need to (re)discover the life-preserving values left by my tipuna. Every culture contains pathways and new visions of possibility and these new visions have to be cultivated both by leaders and the "cultural" entrepreneurs and it is within this context that I aim to link vision to spiritual as well as academic and intellectual insight.

The third theme I took from Diaz' closing remarks was that *"the development of people and the development of their communities need to go hand in hand."* That the strength of 'the individual', and the strength of families and communities are in proportion and directly contribute to the healing of each other: that as people become stronger, so too do their communities.

The fourth theme, I took was that *"life-long learning is a fundamental dynamic upon which we all must develop"*, and this was the basis of human enterprise endeavours and entrepreneurship. As we learn to live and accommodate through life-enhancing, life-preserving traditions we develop confidence. Not only do we learn to become confident, but we begin to trust in ourselves and develop the success habits necessary to survive the modern world.

My interest in Maori leadership and in indigenous development manifested as much from this experience as it did from my previous research work. Central to the M.Phil thesis I completed in 1988¹, was the notion of diminishing Maori leadership and the changing nature of traditional values. As I grew up in Ruatoria, returning home as the researcher then, had its difficulties, its precious moments, its emotion and its rewards. But above all else, it provided me with the grounding I needed to constantly push the boundaries.

The early years of my life were not that untypical of the small boy, from a small rural town big thinking. Though I was not endowed with a large rugby physique of my cousins, I knew my will to survive, win and persist far exceeded my stature and place on the rugby team. I played hard and worked hard especially when competing with two brothers and five sisters for attention and whatever luxuries our parents could afford us. I grew up intensely proud of my Ngatiporou and Kahungunu heritage and often looked in awe at the sacred maunga, Hikurangi, which stood towering over the town I grew up in. Its magnificence overshadowed any inadequacies I as a young boy felt.

¹ M.Phil (sociology) thesis entitled 'An ethnographic study of alcohol consumption and drinking patterns on marae in and around Ruatoria. P.J. Mataira. Massey University. 1988.

During the early 1970s, my father took a bold and rather unusual step, perhaps out of his own frustration, or perhaps it was because he always knew he would set up his own business. He ventured out into running a mobile mechanic's workshop, servicing the local rural farmers and County Council to compete against his former employer. They were stressful times for the family as I recall, but the tough years taught us the value of being in business and in controlling our future. My father went on later to set up a trucking enterprise alongside his other business operations but this was to become threatened by the privatisation road works in the area and outside competition. It was all at a time when forestry growth, particularly during the late 1980s stalled impacting on the entire East Coast community. Today he owns and manages his waste management company and during the summer months supplies water to local residents. My mother also owns her own business - the local "KaiKart" takeaway. She has run it for 27 years and still thrives as one of the oldest family businesses in Ruatoria.

It was during the mid-1970s, that forestry was hailed as being the economic saviour of the Coast already depressed and suffering from the gradual loss of young people to the cities. It was going to be the new lifeblood, the industrial godsend that would transform lives and bring people back to the Coast. It moved farmers away from farming and land use was to change forever. The dream however, turned for the worst following the 1984 Labour government deregulation policies. Competition increased, markets strained up and on top of that, the bottom dropped out of the timber market. When the stock market crashed it effectively shut down planting, forced many onto the dole and precipitated the closure of many local businesses.

I, like others, became critical of this and economic modernisation of rural New Zealand given the negative impact this was having on Maori. Questions were raised as to whose economic modernisation were we talking about? At what price? And how must this be addressed long-term? These are questions I still continue to ask and remain passionate about as a focus for my research.

This study of Maori entrepreneurs grew as much in response to my interest in Maori economic development as it did from my views about modernisation. Maori have much to lose if their response to economic change remains passive and if its leadership is unable to meet the challenges of a modern business. Maori entrepreneurs are the leaders and managers of the future. They are those with the practical "know how" to get things done. They are the modern day "bicultural navigators" the indigenous capitalists who hone, craft and test their skills against all the odds. They constantly walk precariously between two worlds to show that they can make a difference. This study is thus dedicated to those who dare to be different.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Abstract	i
Preface	ii
Table of Content	v
Acknowledgements	x
Glossary of Terms	xi
List of Abbreviations	xiii
List of Figures	xiv

SECTION ONE: Developing the Framework

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction: Theoretical orientations,
conceptual framework and method
of investigation

Introduction	1
Science and social activity	4
Methods and theoretical underpinnings	6
Locating subjects for the study: the selection process	8
Maori based methods of research	10
Data sources: triangulation	12
The research frame of reference	15
The researcher's position	19
Cultural studies influence	21
The cultural essentialist argument:	
The inside outsider and outside insider	22
The outer layer: observations of cultural artifacts and products	24
The middle layer: perceptions of norms and values	24
The inner core: knowledge of assumptions and meanings	25
Structure of the thesis	25
Conclusion	27

CHAPTER TWO: Towards an integrated theory:
Entrepreneurship and the organic
overview of relationships, economics
and the Maori "systems " worldview

Introduction	28
Maori systems: Whakapapa and whanaungatanga worldview	29
The continuance premise	30
Direction and connection	32
The Functionalist view: towards tribal stability	34
Western functionalism: Influence of the Harvard positivists	37
Networks and systems analyses	39
Understanding interactions: social configurations and cliques	39

Leadership and decision-making: decision rules and encountering common traps	136
- anchoring	136
- sunk costs	137
- confirming evidence	138
- framing	138
- estimates and forecasts	139
- over-confidence	139
- perils of prudence	140
- recallability: balancing options	140
The "fail" option: indifference or acceptance	144
Forming coalitions: seeking public legitimacy	146
Social-political acceptance: overcoming public liability	149
What of the leadership/management debate?	150
Conclusion	151

CHAPTER FIVE: Managing Paradox: Tolerance and intolerance in managing organisational change

Introduction	153
Making sense of modern organisations	155
Strategic planning: maintaining control command	157
Managing paradox: a business reality and market necessity	157
- the sigmoid curve	158
- the doughnut principle: inside out thinking	160
Comparative views	162
Ambiguity and negotiating boundaries	163
Managing multiple loyalties	163
Transcending boundaries: cross system translations	164
The "false gods of business"	164
- goals and targets	168
- strategic knowledge	169
- learning structures	169
- learning contracts	169
- learning paradigms	169
- auditing and benchmarks	170
Checks and balances	171
The quality circle: use as an entrepreneurial tool	171
Conclusion	174

SECTION THREE: Consolidating the Framework

CHAPTER SIX: Maori and the State: A critique of capitalism and the rise of Maori enterprise

Introduction	175
Overview of the workings of capitalism	175
Beyond New Zealand's shores: global influences	179
Government's response to the nation's capitalist and entrepreneurs	180
Birth of the modern corporation	181
Ideology of the State: modernity and the rise of the capitalist order	182

Maxist and Schumpeterian critiques of capitalism	184
Capitalism's demise: its social consequences	187
Capitalism's expanding reproduction	188
'Worldviews' and 'communities'	189
The central enigma of capitalism	190
Capital, profit and recompense of risk	181
Environmental impacts	192
Capitalism reprieved: creating welfareism	194
Ethics in the marketplace: corporate responsibility	195
What good is doing "good" business?	199
Values in the marketplace	203
The capitalist pursuit towards social responsibility	204
Conclusion	208

CHAPTER SEVEN: The advent of public and private models
of Maori entrepreneurship: Towards a
political-economic reconstitution of
Maori development

Introduction	210
Historical developments	211
Traditional leadership usurped	216
The Urban Rise	217
Claims to the tribunal	220
- historical grievances	221
- ownership of resources	221
- regulatory interests	222
Maori leadership in a claims driven economic paradigm	224
Contemporary emergent Maori leadership	226
The environment of modern	
Maori economic development	227
Towards a consolidated Maori economic development strategy	229
Inhibitors to Maori investment	230
- current climate of Maori development	231
- Maori fisheries	232
Government's approach to the resolution of tribal claims	235
- deficiencies of Trust Boards in a modern business environment	237
Towards the corporate model	239
Ngai Tahu's transformation	240
Tainui corporate and the Kauhanganui	241
Calling leaders to account	241
Assistance available for economic development	244
- Poutama trust	
- Maori Development Corporation	245
- Mana Enterprise Scheme	245
Towards Maori-driven entrepreneurial development	249
Conclusion	250

CHAPTER EIGHT:	Discussion: Reflections of entrepreneurship - The fieldwork findings	
Introduction		251
Section One: Entrepreneurial skills and key attributes		251
- on being business smart		254
- leading with confidence		255
- fair and honest in one's dealings		258
- creating opportunities and "making things happen"		261
Section Two: Application - the key to success		261
- practicality, perception and persistence		266
Section Three: entrepreneurial lessons		268
- whanau endorsement and sense of place		271
- the business-minded Maori entrepreneur		
Conclusions		
CHAPTER NINE:	Conclusion	
Conclusion		273
BIBLIOGRAPHY		279
APPENDICES		
Information sheet		
Participant consent form		
The Questionnaire schedule		

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Glossary of Terms

ahua	shape form
ao	world
Ariki	chief
aroha	love, respect, affection
Atua	god
awhi	to help
hakahaki	scabies, sores
hiko	walk
hinengaro	emotional intellect
hue	'the gourd' used as a carrying utensil
hui	ceremonial, formal meeting
iwi	tribe
kaiawhina	helper
kaitiaki	a guide
kanohi kitea	a known or familiar face
karakia	prayer/chant
karanga	a call of welcome
katoa	all present
kaumatua/koroua	male elder
kaumatua/kuia	female elder
kaupapa	topic, agenda
kawa	protocol
kete wananga	baskets of knowledge brought to earth by Tane
koha	a reciprocated gift
kohanga reo	pre-school 'language nest'
kore	unorganised potential, nothingness
korero	to speak, talk
koretake	useless
koru	spiral design
kura	school
kura kaupapa	primary school with total immersion Maori language
kura wananga	tradition house of learning, university
mamae	sadness/pain
mana Atua	the power of the gods
mana tangata	the power given to people through god
mana whenua	a link to the land based on whakapapa
marae	traditional, ceremonial meeting place
matauranga	secular knowledge
mata waka	Maori who live in one area but whakapapa to another
mate	illness, death, the dead
maunga	mountain
mauri	the life force
mihi	formal introduction of oneself
mokopuna	grandchild
ngaro	lost
noa	free of tapu, a state of normality
Pakeha	New Zealanders of European, Caucasian descent
pakeke	adult person
panui	notice
Papatuanuku	Mother Earth

pohara	stupid
poroporoaki	farewell speech
potiki	youngest child
poutama	stairway towards enlightenment
rangatira	chief
rangatiratanga	chiefly control, sovereignty
Ranginui	Sky Father
ropu	group
runanga	tribal council
Taiopuru	highest ranking of all chief titles
take	issue, topic for discussion
tane	male, man
tangata whenua	indigenous people, 'people of the land'
tangi	to cry
tangihana	funeral
taonga tuku iho	gifts passed down to the present generation from the ancestors
taonga	gifts including land, language, natural resources, technology
tapu	sacred, to be treated with respect
tatai	to layer
tauwi	foreigner
tautoko	to support, encourage
teina/taina	younger siblings
Te reo	Maori language
tiaki	to watch over, look after
tika	correct, right actions
tikanga	truth, correct principles
tinana	body, physical dimension
tipuna/tupuna	ancestor
titiro	look
tohunga	expert
tono	to guide
tuakana	older sibling
tukutuku	carved panels
uri	descendant
urupa	cemetery
wahine	woman
waiata	song, to sing
wairua	spiritual dimension
waka	canoe
wehi	awe, respect
whakakotahitanga	unification, to make as one
whakama	shyness, ashamed
whakapapa	genealogy
whakarongo	to listen
whakatauaki	proverb
whakatinanatia	to "make things happen"
whakawatea	to bless
whakawhanaungatanga	establishing and acknowledging relationships
whanau	family
whare/nui	ancestral meeting house
whariki	woven mat

List of Abbreviations

CCCBU	Centre for Cultural Studies Birmingham University
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
GM	General Motors
ICPE	International Centre for Public Enterprises in Developing Countries
ILO	International Labour Office
MMP	Mixed-member Proportional representation
NBR	National Business Review
NPM	New Public Management
NZBRT	New Zealand Business Roundtable
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPTIMA	Optimal Performance through Internal Management Action
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
TNC	Trans National Corporations
TPK	Te Puni Kokiri
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States

List of Figures

Figure 1:1 Entrepreneurial events, formation and process	6
Figure 1:2 Schematic view of core determinants of Maori tribal entrepreneurship	14
Figure 1:3 The cultural layers and systemic interactions of Maori tribal entrepreneurship	24
Figure 2:1 The company and its primary stakeholders	50
Figure 2:2 Typical stakeholder roles and demarcations of influence	50
Figure 2:3 A traditional stakeholder constituent map	53
Figure 2:4 An expanded view of stakeholders and constituents	54
Figure 2:5 The stakeholder quadrants	56
Figure 2:6 Organisational Ideal types and the Jungian dimensions of personality	65
Figure 3:1 The Causal link between LOC beliefs and entrepreneurship	79
Figure 3:2 Examples of situational paradox	81
Figure 3:3 The whanaungatanga concentric dualism model	81
Figure 3:4 Van de Ven and Garud's components of an industrial infrastructure for entrepreneurship	101
Figure 3:5 Decision-making activities and the qualities required	106
Figure 3:6 Alternative forms of entrepreneurship	107
Figure 3:7 Entrepreneurial culture versus administrative culture	112
Figure 4:1 Dramatic personae of change	126
Figure 4:2 Some leadership activities	133
Figure 5:1 The sigmoid curve (business cycle)	158
Figure 5:2 The sigmoid curve and the new curve at 'A'	159
Figure 5:3 The doughnut principle	160
Figure 5:4 The "false gods" of business	165
Figure 5:5 External variables influencing business future	167
Figure 5:6 Changing organisational patterns in US industry	170
Figure 5:7 A summary of Deming's 14-point quality controls	172

Figure 6.1 Forms of profit maximisation	178
Figure 6.2 Trade-offs and profit maximisation	178
Figure 6.3 Weber's ideal-type of bureaucratic organisations	182
Figure 6.4 Needs analysis and ethical behaviour	197