

Manuhiritanga (in the Manner of Being a Guest): A Methodological Framework for Indigenous Researchers on Other Indigenous Lands

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Indigenous peoples worldwide share experiences of invasion, colonialism, oppression and resistance. They share relational worldviews and are often united in their fight for human rights, Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. There are many values and principles that are shared amongst global Indigenous communities, however, most global Indigenous communities and collectives remain culturally and linguistically distinct from each other. Common assumptions of pan-Indigenous sameness can thus produce misinterpretation and harm, including within Indigenous scholarly and research communities. Manuhiritanga is a culturally grounded research framework for Indigenous researchers working on other Indigenous lands and aims to negate this harm. As a methodology, it guides Indigenous researchers who are manuhiri (guests or visitors) or settlers (invited or uninvited), to conduct ethical and responsible research beyond their ancestral homelands. Manuhiritanga is drawn from an Aotearoa Māori concept that broadly translates to “in the manner of being a guest” and it foregrounds relationships, relational accountability and humility. Drawing on Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies and methodologies, manuhiritanga affirms the sovereignty of the Indigenous (to-elsewhere) researcher, whilst prioritising and upholding the sovereignty and safety of Indigenous peoples and lands where research is proposed and undertaken. As an Indigenous-only decolonising practice, Manuhiritanga seeks to eliminate research harm and foster ethical and reciprocal engagement across global Indigenous communities.

Aim

This paper aims to provide a culturally relevant research framework for Indigenous researchers who position themselves as manuhiri (te reo Māori for guest, or variants thereof) or, as settlers (both invited and uninvited). Such a framework is a way to navigate and inform research on other Indigenous lands and waters. To be clear, this is not a framework for research of, or into Indigenous peoples, lands and waters. Rather, this article aims to guide Indigenous individuals who find themselves researching *on* other Indigenous

lands and waters. Using the Aotearoa¹ Māori² concept of Manuhiritanga, which can be translated as ‘in the manner of being a guest’, this paper intends to provide a framework that acknowledges the researchers’ Indigenous sovereignty. However, more immediately and much more importantly, this article is concerned with the safety and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, lands, waters and more-than-human relatives where research is being proposed and conducted.

Manuhiritanga as a research framework recognises the interconnections and common elements of global Indigenous communities, peoples, histories, knowledges, practices and realities whilst also acknowledging the uniqueness and distinctions of Indigenous cultures and identities. This methodology seeks to prioritise Indigenous practices of relationality and the manner of being manuhiri (visitor or guest) to eliminate actions of misunderstanding and offence that can (inadvertently, but sometimes intentionally) occur when research is undertaken by Indigenous-to-elsewhere researchers engaging with Indigenous peoples, lands and waters.

Introduction

Indigenous diaspora is a modality of Indigenous existence in the contemporary world. Indigenous diasporas are the result of the displacement of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands as a consequence of control and elimination directives from the ongoing project of colonisation (Salsano, 2024; Smith, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). Across the globe, Indigenous peoples have been subjected to violent displacement or have been forced to relocate due to direct or indirect economic and social coercion from the colonial state (Allen, 2012; Harvey & Thompson, 2017; Haua, 2024; Kauanui, 2007). Indigenous communities or collectives can be found dispersed throughout the globe, living away from their homelands and forming diasporic communities. Despite colonialism and spatial separation from their homelands, Indigenous peoples transcend time, geographical and colonial boundaries by maintaining their cultural identities, practices, and connection to their ancestral knowledges, lands and kin, (Allen, 2012; Harvey & Thompson, 2017; Haua, 2024; Kauanui, 2007). Just as Indigenous communities and individuals will often find themselves not living on their ancestral homelands, so too will Indigenous researchers.

¹ I acknowledge that there is contention around the name Aotearoa as it is a name that has emerged to signal unification following settler colonisation, but its applicability to Te Waipounamu (or what is colonially known as the South Island of New Zealand) is questioned. For these reasons, it is not used here as a term that incorporates a complete te ao Māori (Māori world) view of these lands and waters (Breen et al., 2021).

² Māori are the peoples Indigenous to Aotearoa and Kūki Āirani (the Cook Islands). Unless otherwise stated, all references to Māori in this article refer to Aotearoa Māori.

Indigenous individuals researching on other Indigenous lands can be visitors or sojourners, temporarily working upon invitation (often in higher education) by colonial institutions.

Frequently, they are members of diasporic Indigenous communities who have migrated between nation-states. For example, Aotearoa (New Zealand) Māori living on Aboriginal lands (or what is colonially referred to as Australia and Tasmania) account for one in six of the total Māori population (ABS 2022). There are various multi-generational Pacific communities (for example, from Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and Niue) thriving in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland, New Zealand) (Stats NZ, 2019). However, by far the greatest diasporic migration for Indigenous peoples across the globe is domestic relocation, or, the forced migration of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral homelands to other Indigenous lands within their colonially designated nation-state. This entails settler-invaders forcibly removing Indigenous individuals and collectives from their homelands to designated reservations or colonial institutions such as children's homes and missions, often on neighbouring Indigenous lands. Whilst still within the borders of the colonial nation-state, Indigenous peoples were nevertheless physically separated from their ancestral homelands. We can see various versions of this across the globe, including, but not limited to, the settler colonial nation-states of Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand (Carlson, 2017; Smith, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). This particular aspect of settler-colonialism – the enforced removal of Indigenous peoples – meant that they were removed from their ancestral lands and, often violently, - *forcibly thrust upon* someone else's homelands.

In addition to diasporas of violently displaced peoples and communities, Indigenous peoples seeking social and economic refuge from marginalised regions have created urban diasporic communities. For example, on Gadigal land (Sydney), “the Block” had referred to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Redfern, which comprised of many individuals and families with ancestral connections elsewhere (Foley et al., 2013). The colonial agent of modernisation and industry (Moreton-Robinson, 2015) meant that many Indigenous peoples migrated from their (often rural) homelands within the colonial nation-state. Again, there are various versions of this across the globe where Indigenous peoples have migrated to urban centres to seek out employment and economic security. For example, Kānaka Māoli (Hawai'i) have migrated to Tongva lands (within what is now known as California, USA) (K. Vaughn & Ambo, 2022); Wiradjuri, Yuin and Bundgalung Mobs have relocated to Dharug Ngurra³ (Sydney, Australia) (Irish, 2017); and for the iwi (Nation) of Ngāti Whatua (whose lands are now known as Auckland, New Zealand), this means diasporic communities from Ngāti Porou, Ngā

³ “Mob/s” is a self-determined term that refers to the collectives, Nations and Communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. See Carlson et al (2014).

Puhi and others now reside on their lands (Haami, 2018). In Aotearoa (New Zealand), there is certainly unified identity and solidarity between diasporic Māori communities and Māori who remain on their homelands (as exemplified in te reo which can be understood as a pan-Māori language); however, there are distinct differences between iwi (tribal nations) and iwi cultures. For Aboriginal Mobs, again, there is also a certain unified identity and solidarity in being Aboriginal, but there are also distinct differences in cultures and languages across the continent (Carlson 2016). This is a common reality for many Indigenous individuals – seeing, doing and being Indigenous, albeit on someone else’s ancestral lands.

I am a member of a diasporic transnational Indigenous community that has a large and established presence outside of the colonial nation-state borders from where my ancestors originated. I am an Aotearoa (New Zealand) Māori residing and working on the unceded Country of the Dharug peoples in what has been colonially renamed Sydney, Australia. I am also a researcher who has continuously wrestled with what it means to be a Māori researcher on Aboriginal lands. As a scholar in the discipline of Critical Indigenous Studies and part of a global network of Indigenous researchers, I have noted that many Indigenous researchers across the globe design and conduct research outside of their Indigenous ancestral borders (typically within tertiary education institutions). I have witnessed well-meaning Indigenous researchers who, grounded and confident in their own Indigenous values, epistemologies, ontologies and cultural identities, unintentionally conduct themselves irresponsibly on other Indigenous peoples’ lands. There can sometimes be an expectation that Indigenous practices and protocols are universal. This is not the case.

I am extremely conscious of my status as a Māori settler on Aboriginal lands (a self-identification I will explain later). I also consider myself a responsible Indigenous researcher. This raises the question then, of how I (and the many other Indigenous researchers like me) maintain my own Indigenous sovereignty and conduct responsible research. This responsibility means protecting and privileging the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, lands, waters, ancestors and more-than-human relatives I am engaging with in research. The careful and thoughtful scholarship of Te Āti Awa and Taranaki scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville (Geary & Te Punga Somerville, 2023; Te Punga Somerville, 2014, 2015, 2021) frames the conceptualisation of this methodology. Te Punga Somerville has written extensively around the complexities of Indigenous–Indigenous relationships. In addition to Te Punga Somerville’s scholarship, I draw upon the work of Mik’mau scholar Aedan Alderson (2019) and his methodological framework for research with/within Indigenous Nations, and Kānaka Māoli scholar Kēhaulani Vaughn’s (2019) scholarship on Hawai’ian diaspora and kuleana (an Ōlelo Hawai’i word that can be loosely translated as ‘responsibility and accountability with privilege’¹⁰). Building upon this intentional body of scholarship, I

incorporate the Aotearoa Māori conceptual understanding of Manuhiritanga as a way of framing and guiding Indigenous researchers conducting research on other Indigenous lands.

Context

Research continues to be capable of perpetuating sustained violence against Indigenous peoples, cultures and communities around the globe. Research conducted and disseminated by the institutions of Western knowledge production has seeded and cultivated Eurocentric narratives (Nakata, 2007; Smith, 2012). These narratives have been planted and have since grown into stone through the rhetoric and discourse of genealogical academic engagement and dissemination, which recycles and perpetuates misunderstandings, lies and fiction as fact. Academic truths are cemented through various modes of knowledge production and education. Research has been, and still can be, weaponised as a tool for colonialism (Salsano, 2024; Smith, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). There are many blatant, unintentional and insidious reasons for unethical research of and into Indigenous peoples and cultures, including, but not limited to, the dismissal of Indigenous knowledges as unscientific (McAllister, 2022); Western and Eurocentric forms of categorisation that neglect or erase Indigenous identities (Carlson, 2017; O’Sullivan, 2021); research conducted on and in communities without that community’s informed consent (Smith, 2012); the dissemination of sacred Indigenous knowledges; harmful practices in research; and the list goes on (Carlson, 2017; Rigney, 1999; Smith, 2012; Wolfe, 2006).

Indigenous academics and researchers within the academy continue to resist and eradicate this form of violence by publishing Indigenous research methodologies and providing frameworks and theories that seek to address the ways these research fictions are collected and disseminated⁴. For decades now, Indigenous researchers have provided information to ensure that research involving Indigenous peoples and cultures is conducted responsibly and ethically (see, for example, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS, 2022). Researchers can employ numerous research techniques to ensure that Indigenous peoples and communities remain safe and protected from perpetuated research violence.

Many of these theories, methods and methodologies provide guidelines for non-Indigenous researchers from specific localities. Several are also useful for Indigenous researchers. Mā’ohi scholars Pauline Reynolds and Vehia Wheeler (2022) have written methodologies and frameworks for conducting research in Mā’ohi Nui (French Polynesia). Whakapapa as a research framework (which I draw upon later) was designed for Māori researchers within their

⁴ See for example the Journal of Global Indigeneity, an open-access academic journal that privileges global Indigenous authorship. <https://www.journalofglobalindigeneity.com>

own communities by Ngāti Kahungunu scholar James Graham (2005). Narungga, Kaurua and Ngarrindjeri scholar Lester Iribinna Rigney (1999) designed Indigenist research specifically for research of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Masi methodology centres Pacific women in research and was designed by iTaukei scholar Sereana Naepi (2019). These Indigenous-constructed, ethical research methodologies and frameworks are often designed regionally with geographical and specific Indigenous communities in heart and mind. They are often adopted and implemented to assist with research by, and on various global Indigenous peoples, communities and cultures.

Indigenous cultures, peoples and lands often share similar histories in relation to invasion, and therefore share similar values, epistemologies, philosophies, axiologies and ontologies. These specificities provide critical elements that contribute to a sense of relationality and solidarity that is shared between Indigenous peoples across the globe. This allows many locally engineered Indigenous research methodologies and frameworks to transcend borders and cultures to inform ethical Indigenous research across regions and the globe in ways which are generally useful, safe and valid. There are, however, fundamental distinctions between Indigenous peoples and cultures that can sometimes be overlooked or misinterpreted. Distinctiveness is certainly a characteristic upheld by global Indigenous peoples as being an aspect of relationality and similarity, an aspect that founds Indigenous solidarity, yet it is also a characteristic that separates and provides distinction between and of Indigenous peoples and cultures. Ermineskin Cree scholar Matt Wildcat and Métis scholar Daniel Voth (2023, p. 477) remind us that “relational worldviews are ultimately located in specific languages, locales and intellectual traditions...”.

Language is a cultural site of distinction. For example, there are over 250 different Nations across the continent of (so-called) Australia. Whilst the people of these diverse Nations are collectively referred to as ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ peoples, they are distinct in genealogies, languages and cultural practices. In Aotearoa, there are hundreds of different iwi (Nations) and hapū (sub-tribes), again with differing mita and reo (dialects and languages) and tikanga (cultural practices). The settler nation-states of both Australia and New Zealand homogenise and label the various First Nations with the settler-imagined labels “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” and “Māori”, respectively (Enari & Haua, 2021).

Many nuances and specificities of the diverse Indigenous histories, identities and realities can be overlooked in the designs of methodological frameworks for Indigenous research. Additionally, the unique positionalities of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers can compound and confound these methodologies and ways of conducting research. Therefore, this Manuhiritanga framework is for Indigenous researchers specifically. To be

clear, Manuhiritanga as a research methodology is designed for Indigenous researchers because of the many common elements of Indigeneity between the researcher and the researched. Moreover, this framework speaks specifically to the common struggle for sovereignty that Indigenous researchers and Indigenous peoples and lands (that are the focus of research) endeavour to achieve. Non-Indigenous researchers do not share the history and struggle of colonialism and continued efforts for self-determination. This methodological framework of Manuhiritanga, therefore, is an Indigenous-only exercise in decolonising research.

Indigenous Sovereignty

Thus far, I have named and discussed Indigenous sovereignty as a principle that must be maintained and upheld for both the Indigenous researcher and Indigenous subjects. This raises the following questions: What is Indigenous sovereignty? And what are we attempting to preserve and uphold? There are multiple definitions for sovereignty across various academic disciplines from philosophy and social science to history; however, it is the *Indigenous* in Indigenous sovereignty that differentiates this from other concepts of sovereignty. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People* (United Nations General Assembly, 2007) defines Indigenous sovereignty as recognising and honouring the inherent right of Indigenous communities to govern themselves, determine their own destinies, control and manage their ancestral lands and uphold their distinct cultural, political and social identities. It requires recognition of Indigenous communities as distinct political entities and respect for Indigenous knowledges, knowledge systems and cultural practices to ensure the protection of Indigenous rights, autonomy and well-being. Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson's (2015) foundational book *The White Possessive* further elucidates Indigenous sovereignty (from a primarily Australian focus) by identifying contemporary ways in which sovereignty is deprived and stolen from Indigenous peoples and lands by whiteness and colonial structures.

Whilst the aforementioned presents a brief summary of Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous communities' resistance, activism and upholding sovereignty can present in varying ways, at different times. Preserving and ensuring sovereignty for Indigenous communities means that they are directly impacted by current colonial, political, and social supremacist aspirations. For example, actions of resistance can be dissimilar in purpose between neighbouring Indigenous Nations, and yet, as a collective, Indigenous Nations can simultaneously demonstrate against nation-state oppression. The local environment, local and state laws, local and regional populations, and histories are just a few of the conditions that influence how and why resistance can look completely different from nation to nation, community to community and family to family. Therefore, it is imperative for Indigenous

researchers to learn how invasion and colonialism historically and currently, impact local Indigenous peoples and the lands and places they are working (and residing) on. Mik'maw scholar Aedan Alderson (2019, p. 43) writes:

It is precisely because colonialism continues to operate using both legal and (internationally recognized) illegal means while claiming sovereignty over Indigenous land that it is crucial that researchers working with Indigenous people become familiar with the history of the places they intend to work in. In doing so, they can become prepared to make sure the work they do upholds Indigenous jurisdiction in Indigenous countries.

This applies to all research conducted in the lands of other Indigenous peoples; establishing that it is crucial for the Indigenous researcher to work in collaboration with Indigenous communities. Research projects must be community-informed in all aspects. For a responsible Indigenous researcher, this positioning is non-negotiable. There are specific and localised protocols that must be adhered to. Moreover, at the forefront of any project requiring research of, and in, Indigenous communities, relationships must be established. There is much scholarship that speaks to this, and a responsible Indigenous researcher must understand the ways of creating meaningful, longstanding relationships with community and ensuring that the

research benefits Indigenous communities is the responsibility of the Indigenous researcher (Greenaway et al., 2022; Iti Prendergast, 2023; Lumby, 2023; Smith, 2012; Te Punga Somerville, 2015; K. S. Vaughn, 2019; S. Wilson, 2008). Manuhiritanga, therefore, is a framework to guide Indigenous researchers who might be working on other Indigenous lands, within institutions and universities outside of their homelands. Manuhiritanga also assumes that as an Indigenous researcher, you comprehend the harm that can be inflicted on Indigenous communities with irresponsible research practice, even if the research project is ethically cleared by the colonial institutions to directly involve Indigenous communities. Manuhiritanga requires Indigenous researchers to ensure that their behaviour and conduct are accountable to Indigenous peoples and communities.

In the case of Manuhiritanga, maintaining one's own Indigenous sovereignty, away from ancestors and homelands, is described by Indigenous scholars as embodied sovereignty (or sovereign embodiment). Indigenous scholarship that speaks to this topic includes work from Ngāti Pūkenga scholar Brendan Hokowhitu (2014), Ts'msyen and Mikisew Cree scholar Robin R. R. Gray (2015), Amangu Yamatji scholar Crystal McKinnon (2018), Kānaka Māoli scholar Kēhaulani Vaughn (2019) and Meriam and Wuthathi scholar Ali Drummond (2020). Hokowhitu (2014, p. 295) condenses the concept of embodied sovereignty by stating:

Indigenous embodied sovereignty, [then,] refers to a critical bodily practice that brings into question those subjugating forces written upon the Indigenous body, that is, the very materiality of Indigenous existence, while affirming the complexity, diversity, and multidimensional ways of being Indigenous.

McKinnon (2018, p. 9), drawing from the work of Moreton-Robinson, declares that “sovereignty lives within Indigenous bodies, and it is anchored to the land that those bodies belong to and were born of”. In describing their standpoint, Drummond (2020, p. 129) states: “...this is because my Indigenous knowledge is embodied. Enacting this embodied knowledge as a sovereign Meriam and Wuthathi man is innate”. Further, as a wahine Māori, I would explain embodied sovereignty as continuously having my Te Tairāwhiti ancestors and ancestral lands with me wherever I go; I embody their connection, existence and knowledge because they *define* me.

Maintaining one’s own Indigenous sovereignty whilst researching on/with another’s, on the surface, can present a challenge. However, utilising Indigenous knowledges and understandings of relationality provides ways to navigate these corridors of understanding others, and expressing one’s Indigenous sovereignty.

Kānaka Māoli scholars Hōkūlani K. Aikau (2010, 2015) and Kēhaulani Vaughn (2019) examine diasporic Indigenous identity, perceptions and relationships with Turtle Island Nations as part of their Kānaka Māoli diasporic experiences. Both scholars speak of the Kānaka Māoli value and principle of kuleana. Like all words that name Indigenous values and principles, the concept of kuleana is multifarious and is interdependent with various other principles of Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies and philosophies. As Aiku (2010, p. p.490) describes from an Indigenous diasporic perspective: “Kuleana can be translated as responsibility, but it also means authority and right. Within a Hawaiian worldview, everyone has kuleana and one’s kuleana is based on one’s relative position in any given context”. Vaughn (2019) asserts that kuleana is a principle of the Ōiwi Hawai‘i ways of being, seeing and becoming in the world and is a practice of responsibility and accountability through understanding privilege on other Indigenous lands. Moreover, Aikau (2010, p. 493) explains: “Kuleana is a cultural principle we can use to guide us as we continue to negotiate the relationships and power dynamics in the diaspora”. Both Aikau and Vaughn explain that kuleana is a value of respect and accountability that interweaves Kānaka Māoli relationships with their own sovereign lands and with each other. Respect and accountability, as a part of embodied sovereignty, are extended to other Indigenous peoples on other Indigenous lands. McKinnon (2018, p. 9) also states that

[this] sovereign connection to country manifests as the obligations of custodianship when we live on someone else's country, and this extends to other Indigenous people who are not necessarily our kin – to the broader, interconnected, Indigenous community.

Kuleana, although an 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawai'ian language) word, also specifies this extension of connection and obligation that Amangu Yamatji scholar Crystal McKinnon describes. For Māori, we can see kuleana in as the principle of manaakitanga (hospitality; the process of showing respect, generosity and care). Therefore, kuleana – I would argue – is a principle that can be found in global Indigenous values. The principle may have a different name – perhaps it is not named – but the concept and value originate from Indigenous peoples' genealogies and the respect, obligation, connection and love for ancestor lands. It is an innate condition of the Indigenous person and speaks directly to the universal Indigenous worldview of relationality.

The Foundation of Relationality

Indigeneity is relationality. All teachings, all Indigenous productions of knowledge across the globe are founded on Indigenous understandings of the world as being in perpetual states of relationality. Kombumerri and Wakka Wakka scholar Mary Graham (2014, p. 2) explains that for Aboriginal people “...relationality – traditionally the foundation of the Law – is an elaborate complex and refined system of social, moral, spiritual and community obligations that provided an ordered universe for people”. Of equal importance is the understanding that these relationalities are defined by lands, waters, skies, the more-than-human relatives, ancestors, and realms. Moreover, identities and the creation of identities are ancestral land, and place-based.

In 2017, Aotearoa's longest river – Te Awa Tupua or Whanganui – was granted personhood. It is the first law in the world to declare a river a legal person (Mika & Scheyvens, 2022). It is also arguably the first piece of colonial legislation to recognise Indigenous identity and worldview in this sense. The *Te Awa Tupua Act 2017* recognises the uniqueness of identity for the iwi (Māori Nations) descended from and related to Te Awa Tupua / Whanganui River, which under settler- colonial law endorses their whakapapa (genealogy/ lineage) as expressed in this whakataukī (proverb/ aphorism):

E rere kau mai te Āwanui, Mai i te Kāhui maunga ki Tangaroa.
Kō au te Āwa, kō te Āwa kō au.
The great river flows from the mountains to the sea. I am the
river, the river is me.

This whakataukī reminds us just how numerous and varied relationality can operate in Indigenous worlds and, thereby, in the colonial world. Te iwi o Whanganui – the peoples who belong to the Te Awa Tupua / Whanganui

River – do not differentiate themselves from the river. They *are* the river that flows from sky-formed snow springs atop Te Kahui Maunga, the great majestic ancestor mountains, cascading through valleys and lands and out to the great ancestral ocean expanse. This is an ever-evolving, uninterrupted, fluid identity and connection which creates and sustains whole ecological and biological life cycles for billions of beings, balancing relationalities of ancestors, time, lands, waters, skies, more-than-human relatives and peoples. From this whakataukī (and with hesitancy –the colonial legal acknowledgement), we can visualise –how we can live in a world that identifies itself in relation to everything. As Opaskwayak Cree Nation scholar Alex Wilson (2021, p. 15) summarises, “... [it is] this understanding of relationality – a recognition that, as Indigenous people, we are constituted by, and responsible and accountable to our relationships with our ancestors, people here now, and future generations, with the lands, waters, and other living beings”. Wilson argues that we should not merely see ourselves *in* relation to the lands, waters and other living beings but *as* a relation.

Considering the wisdom of scholar Mary Graham and the Whanganui River, together with global Indigenous understandings of relationality, we can begin to form a way to conduct ourselves as Indigenous visitors (whether invited or uninvited). This is an important consideration in terms of Indigenous lands and relationships that have been forged and formed for millennia. For those of us from other Indigenous lands, we must work towards an understanding of the peoples and ancestral histories of the place in which we are living and working. We need to ask ourselves: What are the Indigenous histories of the place on which we are conducting research? What are the colonial histories and violence? An Indigenous world of relationality relies on obligation and accountability with the goal of balance. As Indigenous researchers, it is our responsibility to learn about these critical aspects of place where we might find ourselves. I will discuss this in more depth later, but we all have an obligation to critically reflect on our own identities, motivations and actions to create a balanced relationality. Certainly, the ubiquity of structural colonialism can impact Indigenous relationalities and contemporary realities, specifically when we think about Indigenous diasporic communities. However, the ways in which Indigenous peoples practice relationality can resist and sidestep colonial limitations and obstacles. Reclaiming Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, such as Manuhiritanga, can replace colonial practice and uphold the ethic of being, and being in, good relations.

Manuhiritanga: In the Manner of Being a Guest

Manuhiritanga is an Aotearoa Māori concept which is both a part of, and a way of, being in te ao Māori. It is an extension of the word ‘manuhiri’. The most simplified translation of manuhiri are the nouns ‘visitor’ and ‘guest’. The suffix ‘tanga’ (as in Manuhiritanga) is added to nouns to designate the quality derived from the base noun. In the scope and context of this

research framework, Manuhiritanga⁵ is translated as ‘the manner of being a visitor or guest.’ As such, from the outset, manuhiri, and therefore the noun component in Manuhiritanga, defines and explains that first and foremost, that one (or a collective) is not and cannot be connected to that place or lands. They are not tangata whenua – the people of the lands. They do not share ancestry to those lands, waters, skies. For example, one can marry into tangata whenua and bear children (who will be tangata whenua), but outsiders marrying descendants will not become tangata whenua.

Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāi Tūhoe elder and scholar Hirini Moko Mead (2016, pp. 94–102) argues that Manuhiritanga is a value within an Indigenous way of seeing and being in the world. It is part of a worldview which upholds principles that privilege and value Indigenous relationalities to each other. The practice of Manuhiritanga also belongs to ancient rituals that enable Māori to express their identities and practices reflecting the significance of cultural exchange and relationship building in Māori culture. Mead (2016, p. 94) also explains that

“relationships between and among people need to be managed and guided by some rules. In Māori society there are procedures for meeting strangers and visitors”.

However, to be clear, the noun ‘manuhiri’ – within te ao Māori and the conceptualisation, ceremonies and distinctions that define it – contains an element of guest, or at least an element of being ‘a visitor’. It is, if you will, one side of a binary where tangata whenua are the host and

manuhiri are the visitors. Manuhiritanga as a framework does not seek to assume, place or define Indigenous people in any case – as either a host or a guest. The objective here is to maintain the sovereignty of the Indigenous lands and peoples where research is being conducted. The key to differentiating manuhiri/ guest/ visitor /outsider /settler from the host is in the suffix ‘tanga’ in Manuhiritanga, meaning ‘in the manner of’. This is where Indigenous researchers consider, apply and conduct themselves “in the manner of being a guest” to tread gently and respectfully on other Indigenous lands. Additionally, whilst Manuhiritanga is a Māori word, it is not exclusively a Māori concept. Indigenous cultures – indeed, most cultures across the globe – have understandings and practices that involve meeting, greeting, accepting *and not* accepting new friends, visitors, strangers and guests. What these practices, actions and perhaps ceremonies are called and how they are viewed and practised will differ substantially between global communities. Naming and defining this methodology as Manuhiritanga,

⁵ The word “Manuhiritanga” also applies to the identity of the peoples of Ngāti Manuhiri. Manuhiritanga names their sovereignty, which encompasses land, waters, ancestors, cultures, practices, more than human and peoples of this iwi (Nation). This research framework does not come from a Ngāti Manuhiri perspective of iwi identity and sovereignty.

however, acknowledges Indigenous world views and peoples and contributes to decolonising research practices because it is created by, and for, Indigenous researchers, peoples and communities.

Methods and Application of Manuhiritanga

A key element of Manuhiritanga is acknowledging the principle of Indigenous sovereignty in all its forms. To begin, it is necessary for the Indigenous researcher to reflect on their positionality as an Indigenous individual (or collective) in relation to the Indigenous lands. Reflection on locating one's motivations and understandings for researchers, specifically within Indigenous realms is, as argued by many, a non-negotiable exercise (Alderson, 2019; Greenaway et al., 2022; Iti Prendergast, 2023; Smith, 2012; Te Punga Somerville, 2014). Aedan Alderson (2019, p. 40) explains the importance of this as:

Indigenous scholars often explicitly connect their work back to their national identities and teachings. Because nation-specific teachings and laws are central to Indigenous knowledge production, it is crucial for researchers to develop an understanding of the nations that the knowledge keepers they work with are a part of, even when approaching global issues.

Reflection on one's motivations and standpoint inevitably necessitate the tracing of whakapapa: the genealogies and lineages of places, peoples and research motivations. James Graham's (2005, p. 88) scholarship on whakapapa as a research framework is designed for Māori and by extension Indigenous researchers to "recollect the past in order to establish a pathway for the present, which can then be applied and used to plan the future." A simplified translation of whakapapa is genealogy, lineage or the process of layering one thing upon another. It is a principle of, and in te ao Māori, the Māori world, where Māori identity, philosophy, epistemology, ontology and knowledge/s are founded on genealogical tracking. Everything has whakapapa. Ideas, places, minerals, peoples, stories, music, organisms, events and research – everything originates from somewhere and/or someone. Moreover, whakapapa does not just encompass the past and history but also the present *and* the future (Graham, 2005; Mahuika, 2019; Rangiwai, 2018; Smith, 2012; Taani, 2022).

Graham (2005) suggests that whakapapa as an Indigenous research framework (and despite its Māori name and philosophy) is a foundation of global Indigenous cultures, where origin stories, histories and understandings of our environments found Indigenous knowledges and cultures. As such, the application of tracing of whakapapa is an inherent Indigenous practice and contributes to "the retention of [Indigenous] knowledge and its application to the growth of new knowledge to meet the need of [Indigenous peoples] in contemporary times" (Graham, 2005, p. 89), as well as plan

for an Indigenous future. Whakapapa, or tracing genealogies, allows for “diverse appearances of knowledge production, legitimates [Indigenous] epistemology’ and ensures an ‘all-important link between the past, present and future” (Graham, 2005, p. 90). Prioritising whakapapa as a research framework not only crystalises the meaning, purpose and relevance of research it will then benefit the research.

In addition to recognising the limits and potential of our standpoints in relation to research, Indigenous researchers must also consider their relationships and the genealogy of that relationality to those around them. Wildcat and Voth (2023, p. 482) remind us:

Particularly for university-based Indigenous research faculty, we call for the creation and deepening of our institutional capacity to create forms of horizontal accountability that centre relationships with, and responsibilities to, other Indigenous scholars. Doing this expands the notion of accountability while also enriching the work we are conducting by engaging the insights and brilliance of our colleagues. Our relationships with each other should also work in service of deepening our understanding of what accountability to communities looks like.

Understanding my own embodied Indigenous sovereignty together with the above, and drawing from Métis scholar Lindsay DuPré’s (2019, p.2) chapter “Being, Longing, and Belonging” and Alderson’s (2019, p. 51) work around research in Indigenous Nations, I have found the following questions helpful in understanding how I can locate my own identity and sovereignty on Aboriginal lands as an Aotearoa (New Zealand) Māori researcher:

1. What is the history of the Indigenous lands, waters and peoples where the research will be undertaken?
2. What is the colonial history of this sovereign place, including invasion and the violence that accompanies forcible occupation?
3. Am I afforded colonial privilege as manuhiri/guest/visitor/settler (invited or otherwise)? Is this privilege afforded to the local Indigenous peoples?
4. What are the local Indigenous struggles (in terms of their sovereignty) and in what ways do I support their resistance?
5. How do I practice, and be in, good relations with Indigenous peoples and know the limits of my role as manuhiri/guest/visitor?

6. How will gratitude and reciprocity be practiced?

Earlier in this paper, I stated that I am a settler, albeit an Indigenous settler, on this continent of (so-called) Australia. I occupy a position of privilege. I am a beneficiary of historical privilege that Aotearoa Māori have received from colonial governments and the broader public that has not been extended to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I am a cisgender wahine Māori (a Māori woman), and I both embody and am the descendant of the lands, waters and peoples of Ngāti Porou, Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, Rongowhakaata and Ngāti Kahungunu, which are iwi of Aotearoa, New Zealand. I am one of four generations that have now resided on Aboriginal lands, and I am part of the Māori diaspora living on this continent. My parents, who sought social and economic opportunities to escape the marginalisation they experienced from settler colonialism of our ancestral homelands, relocated to Gadigal Country with my brother and me. The fact that my parents were able to accumulate the means to migrate internationally, including joining other family on Dharug Ngurra, means our journey began with privilege. We arrived at Sydney Airport in 1987, and because of our New Zealand passports, we were granted automatic residency the moment we ticked the appropriate boxes on our arrival cards. Had we arrived prior to 1981, no international travel document or passport would have been required to travel between New Zealand and Australia (Haua, 2017). The colonial relationship between the nation-states of New Zealand and Australia has afforded Māori immense privilege in contrast to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Ngāpuhi scholar Jo Maarama Kāmira (2023; 2016), New Zealand Pākehā scholar Paul Hamer (2007, 2014, 2018), Alice Te Punga Somerville (2014, 2015) and my earlier research (Haua, 2017, 2024) examine the colonial history of Māori presence and privilege in Australia. Following the invasion of this continent, the British empire had earmarked newly colonised New Zealand as an additional state or territory of the newly renamed lands, Australia. Subsequently, legally instated political and social concessions for “the natives of New Zealand” in the federation of Australia meant that Māori had constitutional recognition in the colonisation of Aboriginal lands. For example, Māori were exempt from the *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901*, which enabled them to move freely throughout Australia, unlike their Pacific whanaunga or relations, and were ‘entitled to have his name on the electoral roll’ according to the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*. Māori ‘were granted automatic residency through the Naturalization Act of 1903’ (Hamer, 2014, 2018). To put this in the perspective of privilege and those whom it undermines, these documented entitlements for Māori were sealed in common law sixty years before Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples had the right to vote in federal elections, and sixty-five years before the 1967 referendum where Australians voted to amend the Australian Constitution so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would be

counted as part of the human population in the upcoming 1971 census. Much of this political rhetoric of the “deserving natives” from New Zealand permeated into social discourse of and around Māori, legitimising them as a more deserving “native” than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Hamer, 2014, 2018; Haua, 2017; J. M. Kāmira, 2023; M. Kāmira, 2016; Te Punga Somerville, 2015).

I argue that the privileges established in the Federation of Australia, in both policy and mind, have founded attitudes in Australian perceptions which continue today to place Māori towards the summit of the social hierarchy. In addition to my Indigenous sovereignty and its role in the colonisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Country and peoples, I am provided with further privilege as a cisgender woman. Wiradjuri trans scholar Sandy O’Sullivan (2021, p. 1) reminds us that “the gender binary, like many colonial acts, remains trapped within socio-religious ideals of colonisation that then frame ongoing relationships and restrict the existence of Indigenous peoples”. Certainly, Indigenous people who identify as gender diverse, queer or trans (or the multiple ways we ourselves name gender diversity) suffer significant discrimination and violence (Carlson & Day, 2023; Day et al., 2023).

Acknowledging the various ways in which I am privileged as a guest on this continent as a New Zealand citizen and wahine Māori, my position in terms of power, privilege and belonging is, therefore, that of a settler. Certainly, my situation is not intentional, yet I am complicit in the colonisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and peoples. Embodying my Indigenous sovereignty and my position as a settler results in a constant state of discomfort for me. However, I am also aware that this state of discomfort is a consequence of truth-telling, a process that is necessary for recognising harm and working towards healing. This provides me with some consolation; I can be honest with where I stand, which means my actions and words evolve from a place of honesty, and it also ensures that I regularly contemplate how I practice gratitude and reciprocity.

Gratitude and Reciprocity

There is a large slate of Indigenous scholarship that speaks to ways in which gratitude and reciprocity can be expressed to Indigenous peoples and communities, all requiring a relationship (Aikau, 2015; Coburn et al., 2013; Smith, 2012; Te Punga Somerville, 2015; K. S. Vaughn, 2019; S. Wilson, 2008). Aboriginal scholar Bronwyn Carlson (2020, pp. 107–108) notes:

The concept of reciprocity describes our ancient practice that draws from our interconnectedness with all our physical and social structures. The concept of reciprocity in its modern, neoliberal materialist formation is often watered down as a concept that suggests “give and take” relationship rather than an obligation of sharing, not necessarily implicated by repayment.

Reciprocity has been a social adhesive for Indigenous people; it is the glue that has ensured our survival. Reciprocity is about sharing, about understanding that our survival depends on the dissemination of knowledge, of food, shelter, songs, art and stories.

...Reciprocity lies in the understanding that “give and take” at times translates to “give”, and that sharing is a cultural practice rather than a benevolent or altruistic act of morality.

Removed from any religious or moral code, reciprocity is simply about our interdependence as a people, and our capacity for the continued existence of our lands, our people and our relationship to non-human kin.

If an Indigenous researcher works within an institution, they are obligated to make themselves known and connect with the Indigenous communities and peoples within the institution to establish a relationship that is dictated by those Indigenous communities. Carlson’s insight, above, reminds us that as Indigenous peoples who work within colonial institutions, we can find ways to express our Indigenous relationalities and bypass colonial conventions of relationships and transaction. The following is by no means a complete or absolute list of the ways Indigenous relationality and reciprocity can be observed. However, I have watched examples of meaningful relationship building between global relatives within my Indigenous research networks and have noted the following:

1. Indigenous peoples and/or researchers who know of the history and stories of the Indigenous peoples and lands they are on, can recognise places of shared struggles and speak to solidarity.
2. Indigenous researchers who exhibit genuine gratitude, transparency and humility are often received warmly.
3. Offering and sharing food (which usually has particularly meaningful implications for various Indigenous cultures) provides a way to share traditional ways of Indigenous connection and creates a space for story sharing.
4. Offering services to the Indigenous communities within an institution (and, of course, outside of the institution) is a gesture of support and solidarity.
5. Amplifying and illuminating Indigenous voices and visibility in the workplace you are working in, which includes (paid) Indigenous consultation in research projects, ensures Indigenous presence and centres Indigenous relationships.

6. Commitment to advocacy for Indigenous rights and self-determination are imperative. Researchers and institutions should actively support and engage in efforts that amplify Indigenous voices, protect their land rights and advocate for policies that respect and strengthen Indigenous sovereignty.
7. Establishing, maintaining and sustaining relationships with the Indigenous peoples and communities in your institution and where you reside

Manuhiritanga as a theoretical framework is not intended to be a standalone, fix-all and one-size-fits-all research framework for Indigenous research by Indigenous researchers. It is not intended to oversimplify the Indigenous worldview and concept of Manuhiritanga and is certainly not intended to oversimplify Indigenous relationality and Indigenous research. Manuhiritanga is a way to remind us, as Te Punga Somerville (2014, p. 664) does, that *"if we are not on our own ancestral homelands, then we are on someone else's"*, and further "there is no such thing as a neutral or 'unentangled' position on someone else's land", particularly if we are in a position of privilege. Moreover, I would insist that Manuhiritanga is considered with additional Indigenous research methodologies when conducting Indigenous research. A collective foundation of Indigenous understandings of Indigenous worlds and research can and will negate the risk of harming Indigenous peoples and (at a minimum) not only work towards providing a robust and rigorous research practice but also, and more importantly, seek to ensure that the safety and sovereignty of Indigenous communities and peoples remain intact. Compounding this, and as a matter that requires paramount attention, is the necessity of establishing and nurturing enduring and meaningful relationships between manuhiri/visitor/guest and Indigenous lands, waters, more-than-human relatives, ancestors and peoples. This framework does not address this specifically; it does not quantify and define what inter-Indigenous relationships should look like. I do not believe that a framework or methodology can nor should do this as it would restrict the possibilities and potential to just one culture, imagination and research. Additionally, defining inter-Indigenous relationships here, would require colonial evidence and categorisations which typically dismiss Indigenous worldviews and understandings of relationships. *Indigeneity is relationality*, and the many ways this can be manifested do not need to be documented.

Conclusion

Indigenous researchers will often find themselves researching on and with other Indigenous peoples and lands. Manuhiritanga as a research framework proposes that research is a privilege for Indigenous peoples in institutions, and as an extension of embodied Indigenous sovereignty, the Indigenous researcher must understand their position within colonial and cultural

histories and relations. To preserve the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples and lands, a framework of Manuhiritanga guides diasporic or visiting researchers to consider Indigenous world views on relationality and the colonial impact of identity and relationality. It is imperative that steps are taken by Indigenous researchers from elsewhere to create, maintain and sustain relationships with the Indigenous peoples and lands where they reside. Indigenous researchers should work and present themselves as a good relation - in good relations. This encourages research and conduct on other Indigenous lands and waters that are appropriate and respectful, and provides cultural safety, for all. Ultimately, by evading colonial expectations of relationalities, Indigenous-Indigenous relationships can be reciprocal in nurturing, care and ultimately will serve to enhance Indigenous sovereignties and global solidarity.

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Glossary

Term	Language	Meaning
Hapū	Māori	Divisions of groups within iwi that are determined by whakapapa; pregnant
Kānaka Māoli	Hawai'i	Indigenous peoples of the islands of Hawai'i
Kaumatua	Māori	Elder / Elders
Kōrero	Māori	To tell; address; talk; story; narrative
Kupu	Māori	Word; to speak
Loloma	iTaukei Fiji	Love; affection
Manaakitanga	Māori	Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support - the process of showing respect
Manuhiri	Māori	Guest; visitor
Manuhiritanga	Māori	In the manner of being a guest
Māori	Māori	Indigenous to Aotearoa; normal; natural
Marae	Māori	A space where formal reception and discussion take place. Often used to include a building or complex of buildings in the space
Mātauranga	Māori	Knowledges; wisdoms; skills
Masi	iTaukei	Richly patterned textile made from iTaukei Fiji knowledges
Mita	Māori	Dialect
Moana	Māori	Ocean
Ngurra	Dharug	Country
Papakāinga	Māori	Original home; home base; homestead
Rangatira	Māori	Chief; noble; esteemed
Reo	Māori	Language
Rohe	Māori	Region; boundary; territory
Taha Māori	Māori	Māori identity, Māori character, Māori side, Māori heritage, Māori ancestry, Māori descent.
Tangata whenua	Māori	People of the land
Te ao	Māori	World; the world; worldview
Te Reo	Māori	Māori language
Tipuna / Tipuna	Māori	Ancestor/s (Eastern dialect)
Tūrangawaewae	Māori	Place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa
Wahine / Wāhine	Māori	Woman / Women
Waiata	Māori	Song
Waka	Māori	Canoe; sea vessel
Whakairo	Māori	Carving; carved piece
Whakapapa	Māori	Genealogy; lineage; the process of layering one thing upon another
Whakamaa	Māori	Shame; to be ashamed; shy; embarrassed.
Whakataukī	Māori	Proverb; aphorism
Whānau	Māori	Family, kinship
Whanaunga	Māori	Extended family, kinship
Whanaungatanga	Māori	Establishing relationships; fellowship
Whāngai	Māori	To nourish; bring up; nurture
Whare	Māori	House; residence
Whenua	Māori	Land; lands; placenta; afterbirth; earth



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