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Mātauranga Māori and Therapeutic Landscapes

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Abstract

The indigenous Māori of New Zealand contend that the relationship they have with the land, shapes the ways in which the cultural, spiritual, emotional, physical and social wellbeing of people and communities are expressed. While research has explored the concepts of Māori health, few studies have explored the influence of the cultural beliefs and values on health and in particular, the intricate link between land and health. Traditional Māori knowledge regards landscape as part of a circle of life, establishing a holistic perspective with respect to the relationship to health and wellbeing. With increasing urbanisation, modern technologies and the ageing of the elders in an oral culture, traditional practices are becoming lost. This paper focuses on the Mātauranga Māori process of investigating a specific landscape relying on the past, present and future to better understand the importance and value of the therapeutic qualities imparted through different constructs pertaining Māori models of health and wellbeing. This study broadens the understanding of therapeutic landscapes through the exploration of specific dimensions in the context of everyday life. It also contributes to the expanding body of research focusing on the role of therapeutic landscapes and the importance of place to maintain physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge, Mātauranga Māori, culture, therapeutic landscapes, health, wellbeing, landscape architecture

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Introduction

Titiro whakamuri hei ārahi i ngā uaratanga kei te kimihia.

E tipu, e rea, mō ngā rā o tōu ao

Ko tō ringaringa ki ngā rākau a te

Pākehā, hei oranga mō tō tinana.

Ko tō ngākau ki ngā taonga a ō tīpuna, hei tikitiki mō tō māhunga.

Ko tō wairua ki te Atua, nāna nei ngā mea katoa.

Look to the past for guidance and seek out what is needed.

Grow and branch forth the days of the world.

Turn your hand to the tools of the Pakeha, for the wellbeing of your body.

Turn your heart to the treasures of your ancestors, as a crown for your head.

Turn your spirit to your God, from all things come.

Increased globalisation has contributed to a rapid increase in the impact of human activity. To date, the best endeavours of conservation of natural resources and values have failed. Increasing extinction rates, pressures on biodiversity and climate change are just some examples (Mace, 2014). As the costs of environmental mismanagement continue to accumulate, awareness of the consequences of habitat destruction, invasive species and loss of quality of life become overwhelmingly evident (Mace, 2014; Ruddick, 2015). The realisation that nature provides crucial goods and services that are irreplaceable has been consistently ignored by Western civilisation.

In New Zealand, where biculturalism has emerged as a viable organising national ideology, the role of landscape is highly contested. The indigenous Māori of New Zealand contend that the relationship they have with the land, shapes the ways in which the cultural, spiritual, emotional, physical and social wellbeing of people and communities are expressed. The combination of a dominant culture of New Zealanders of European descent with a highly urbanised society has resulted in the deterioration of the environment and with it a loss of the minority Māori cultural values with respect to landscape (Durie, 2004). However, in recent times there has been a growing demand towards culture and place-specific contexts affecting the health and wellbeing of populations in different environments (Panelli & Tipa, 2007).

While current ecological, social and health models still follow a westernised approach, many other cultures such as the Māori culture, embrace a more holistic approach to resource management, health and illness of our natural and built environments. This holistic approach tends to focus on the interconnectedness with landscape through the means of mind, body and spirit; which is strongly evident in indigenous cultures around the world (Mark & Lyons, 2010). The longstanding connection with land through forests, wetlands, rivers, coastal areas and mountains provides the indigenous cultures a sense of identity, belonging and wellbeing. This is cultivated by all individuals engaging in keeping the human-nature relationship in balance as part of their daily life and wellness (Prechtel, 1999), experiencing the natural environment as home (Cohn, 2011) and forming their knowledge and world-views.

This paper focuses on the Mātauranga Māori process (Māori knowledge) of investigating the natural environment relying on the past, present and future to better understand the importance of landscape and the therapeutic values imparted through different constructs pertaining Māori models of health and wellbeing. The study also

contributes to the expanding role of therapeutic landscapes in shaping physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health.

Māori traditional knowledge and health

There has been accumulated multidisciplinary research interest in the therapeutic effects of nature since 1970s, including medical geography (Gesler, 2003), environmental psychology (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1992; Ulrich, 1984; and Ulrich, 1999), ecological psychology (Wang & Li, 2012; Moore & Cosco, 2010), and horticultural therapy (Detweiler et al., 2012). In the West, research from the mid-1980s has indicated that gardens, parks and landscape areas have beneficial effects on human health and wellbeing (Wilson, 1984; Ulrich et al., 1991; Annerstedt & Waehrborg, 2011). More recently, the term “healing garden” has been widely recognised, referring to green outdoor spaces in healthcare facilities that provide a chance of stress relief for patients, staff and families (Gharipour & Zimring, 2005; Lau & Yang, 2009; Szczygiel & Hewitt, 2000). Similarly, in the East a focus on sustainability and recent movement from pharmaceutical remedies to more natural and environmental medicine is an emerging trend, leading into the possibilities of the recuperative rehabilitative processes inherent in a landscape (Zhang, et al., 2009). Finally, in indigenous cultures the values associated to nature have been acknowledged as a powerful healing source and as a resource for rehabilitation (Marcus & Barnes, 1999; Henry & Pene, 2001; Jakobsson, 2009).

Traditional knowledge, values and concepts still shape the thinking of most of the contemporary Māori, forming the basis for indigenous perspectives and holism. The Māori world-view acknowledges a natural order and an intricate balance with the universe (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013). If a part of the whole shifts, the entire whole is out of balance. Therefore, Māori believe that the starting point for wellbeing is a strong sense of interconnectedness with the landscape. This connection is celebrated in traditions such as songs, narratives, customs as well as approaches to birthing, healing and death, which are passed down to the next generations (Durie, 2004). Human identity becomes an extension of the surrounding environment and there is an inseparable link between people and the natural world. It is from the landscape that Māori culture obtains their physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing as part of *Mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) (Mark & Lyons, 2010).

Mātauranga Māori is defined in the traditional context as all things that are linked as one, where knowledge, comprehension or understanding of everything visible and invisible exists across the universe (Marsden 1988), systematically including the ways of knowing and doing. It is the intricacies of holistic and interconnected relationships to the natural world. *Mātauranga Māori* can also be defined simply as ‘wisdom’ which descends from the predecessors through *whakapapa* (lineage) (Goodall, 2016). *Whakapapa* refers to the transmission of knowledge through generations, not just of history and those things human but also the creation and evolution of all living creatures and non-living elements (Karetu, 1992). ‘Papa’ is the concept of something flat (like the ground), where ‘whaka’ is the overlaying of layers upon another, thus building layers of spiritual, mythological and human stories of both the seen and unseen. Existence transcends through intergenerational heritage and identity, which all link back to the landscape from which life is formed by *Papatuanuku* (Earth-Mother) and *Ranginui* (Sky-Father) back to the Supreme Being Io (Garlick et al,

2010). Landscape, culture and health are thereby complexly linked (Wilson, 2003) and the significance of human-landscape specificity is clear where particular relations-with and understandings-of the wider environment affect people's life and their wellbeing (Panelli & Tipa, 2007). For Māori, illness begins in the *mauri* (life force) that surrounds the body and is ultimately expressed in the physical body (Henry & Pene, 2001; Panelli & Tipa, 2007).

Mātauranga Māori forms the central pillar of the Māori worldview encompassing all aspects of beliefs, values, language, methods, technologies and practices, which over thousands of years have been handed down by the intergenerational oral culture. Relevant understanding of traditional knowledge and beliefs continue to shape the ways Māori think and inhabit the world. Māori worldview acknowledges the need for balance or equilibrium in the order of the universe. For Māori and indigenous cultures alike, a shift in the way they think and view the world has dramatically and detrimentally shaped their health and wellbeing. Completely reliant on the landscape as a source of flora and fauna for health and wellbeing, the Māori people nurtured and cared for the landscape, living and settling in abundant ecologies. The landscape is the provider of life where humans obtain tools and basic materials; health and social relations to achieve the interdependency between human and ecosystems comprised by *manaaki whenua* (caring for the land) and *manaaki tangata* (caring for the people) (Harmsworth 2013).

In the last twenty years, there has been a powerful resurgence of Māori identity in New Zealand and with it a revival of cultural forms which had been in the verge of becoming extinct (Kolig, 2000). Post-colonial feelings of guilt and anti-colonialism sentiments have engendered intercultural equality and respect (Gellner, 1992). These combined with “fashionable New Age values such as a new admiration for traditional, or ‘tribal’, knowledge, and respect for ‘tribal’, or traditional values which are romantically admired now as healthier, sounder, environmental friendlier and truer to human nature than modern Western culture” (Kolig, 2000, p.246) have created an ideal climate for a bicultural re-connection with landscape without loss of identity.

Methodology of Mātauranga Māori

Traditionally knowledge was obtained only by a few such as *tohunga* (experts) and *ariki* (chiefs) between the physical and spiritual realms of heaven and earth, where the methods subdued remained sacred and required protection (Mead, 2003). Mātauranga Māori has developed through the ancestral bonds linking people and environment (Harmsworth, 2013) based on values and connectedness (Perrot, 2016). For Māori, knowledge of the natural world such as earth, seas and skies provided their great success as sea voyagers, establishing and adapting to new climates and environments in the Pacific (Garlick et al, 2010). Knowledge was traditionally guarded by elders and comprised a mixture of cosmogony, cosmology, mythology, religion and anthropology (Marsden, 1988). Unlike science-based systems, Mātauranga Māori depicts ecosystems not as mechanical quantitative machines, but rather infused with spirit and life-force (*mauri*) (Perrot, 2016). Mātauranga is now making a transgressive shift into the 21st century growing from the contemporary past (cultural, historical, local and regional Māori knowledge) into a much broader appreciation. It can be viewed as a dynamic way of thinking about the evolving knowledge that is represented in the natural and cultural heritage.

The core values that underlie traditional knowledge can be summarised in seven principles (Smith, 1999), connecting the understanding of Māori wellbeing models with structure.

1. Respect for people: historical accounts validate the core values of integrity between man and nature.
2. Face-to-face: explores sharing traditional knowledge and practices passed down through the generations.
3. Look, listen, speak: challenges preconceived ideas; elaborating, reiterating and opening up to the natural order of the living world for the progression of future connections.
4. Share and care for people: following the Māori constructs of *kaitiakitanga* (guardianship) and *manaakitanga* (hospitality) to ensure land and people are treated for the betterment of human wellbeing.
5. Be generous and cautious: accepting the differences between cultures and environments, balancing this with inter-relationships to guide and support the ambitions of environmental and human measures.
6. Do not trample over: the *mana*/authority of people reminds that the spiritual connection links all together and hence stepping on someone's *mana* will affect self-*mana*.
7. Do not flaunt knowledge: it is a treasure which belongs to individuals who further knowledge growth.

These concepts that underpin Māori methodologies, provide a platform which can inform the design methodology for therapeutic landscapes as places that foster healing of the physical, mental and spiritual by reflecting the cultural and layered socio-environmental identity of the past, present and future (Williams, 1999; Wilson, 2003; Conradson, 2005; Mark & Lyons, 2010; Hatton et al, 2017).

Therapeutic landscapes: interconnectedness of traditional knowledge

The Western understanding of land and landscapes is based on a positivistic, scientific and utilitarian approach between people and land (Peet, 2000). Knowledge is seen as rational and goal oriented and the world is understood as a single layered construct of universal principles, where humans are superior to other living creatures, pursuing material assets (Jang, 2004). Similarly, restoration of natural systems has been driven by periodic fashions and has shifted significantly over the last decades. Prior to 1960s, restoration was mainly understood as 'nature for itself', prioritising natural habits and wilderness areas without people following traditional concepts related to ecology and natural history. With the rapid development of society and urban sprawl and with the depletion of natural resources and ecosystems, attention was given to conservation of protected areas and protection of species as well as the emergence of 'nature despite people', trying to reverse back the actions that devastated most of our ecosystems (Mace, 2014). By the late 1990s, a new understanding appeared accepting the benefits that nature and ecosystems can provide to the society, corroborated by the fact that former practices had failed in reducing habitat and biodiversity losses (Mace, 2014). These shifts allow movement from a utilitarian perspective to something that is more holistic and recognises the relationships between people and nature. This new thinking of 'people and nature' takes into account the importance of cultural values in the development of sustainable and resilient interactions between human societies and

the surrounding environment (Mace, 2014). It also opens the door for an exploration of what it means to develop landscape in a bi-cultural context and the potential for multi-faceted understanding of man and nature as a union (Menzies et al, 2016).

When considering therapeutic landscapes, Māori look to the natural ecological environments (forests, waterways and wetlands) as a medium for physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing. Māori strategies involve an inclusive “whole of landscape” approach known as “*ki uta ki tai*” (from the mountains to the sea). It is a philosophy that reflects on a system of environmental and resource management which celebrates guardianship and reflects the relationship of environmental heritage. As such, it encapsulates the needs to recognise and manage the interconnectedness of the whole environment celebrating culture and identity. Considering the intertwined relationship of man and environment, the idea of a therapeutic landscape is expanded to consider issues of history, culture, memory and identity in light of their symbolic and applied roles in holistic health and wellbeing. Through the reviewing of traditional cultural and therapeutic landscapes, adaptation of cognitive behaviour of therapy for Māori can be applicable for indigenous cultures through multi-systematic therapy, family therapy, motivational interviewing and narrative therapy (Te Pou, 2010). These all connect to the oral traditions laid down over generations.

The landscape provides to Māori a context upon which to ground and reiterate the interconnection between human being, environment and wellbeing. As living with nature implies the guardianship of both land and people, places are seen as sacred (Menzies et al, 2016). As a consequence, Māori health and wellbeing is dependent on the surrounding environment where *wairua* (spirituality from which *mauri* is constituted) is obtained by the interconnected relationship of human experience, emotions, family and the surrounding environment. Destruction of natural ecosystems from a Māori perspective affects a person’s health and wellbeing, and leads to the loss of cultural identity which in turn leads to the decline of a person’s wellbeing. For many Māori the desecration of land has contributed to the decline of their mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing. As a result, indigenous therapists use the environment as a means to modify, occupy, control and enable the capability of people (Hopkirk & Wilson 2014).

Creating places where people can connect with landscape is crucial for the development of health and wellbeing, for both Māori and non-Māori. The therapeutic measures of Māori are based on the wellbeing of a person’s environment be it their *kāinga* (home) or *whenua* (land). While this is a core component of Māori identity, it is a spiritual component of many non-Māori. Focusing on therapeutic needs and values can combat and shape the way people and nature work and live together, similar to traditional ways. For Māori, the traditions of *tikanga* (protocols) are important as they are the customary ways in doing and acting. From this understanding practices evolved that established a tangible connection to the land, and allowed people to reflect on their own identity and belonging in the world. For example, many Māori still practice ancient birthing rituals such as *tohi* which is similar to a baptism. This involves sprinkling water from a sacred stream onto a newborn child and dedicating the child to an *atua* (god). This is followed by the burial of the placenta in the ancestral lands of the tribe, often at the base of a marker tree,

thereby linking the child to the tribal lands. Embracing these traditional values, re-instates *mana* (prestige/power) and *whenua* (land) of people and places.

Māori models for therapeutic landscapes offer new ways in which we can develop and promote people's health and wellbeing. Influenced by the traditional practices of Māori (*Mātauranga*) and frameworks for traditional and cultural landscapes that are rich for restoration and preservation of identity through *kaitiakitanga* (guardianship), *manaakitanga* (hospitality), *whanaungatanga* (kinship), *wairuatanga* (spirituality), *kotahitanga* (unity) can be incorporated in design of landscape. The core concepts of Māori healing techniques embrace spiritual healing and the use of traditional practices to support the four pillars of Māori health values: *taha hinengaro* (psychological health), *taha tinana* (physical health), *taha wairua* (spiritual health) and *taha whanau* (family health). Landscapes can aid in the re-establishment of these life incentivizing traditions and intergenerational collaboration.

Discussion

Through understanding Māori therapeutic landscapes key concepts can be integrated into, and produce, meaningful and reflective landscapes. For non-Māori, the integration of therapy into the landscape is evident in sensory gardens, healing gardens and food gardens. However for Māori, the ideals inherent in these therapeutic landscapes are not separate entities, but part of a wider holistic system that caters for people's senses, emotions and values. For this reason, practice is inherently linked with the landscape. For example, Māori therapy seeks resources from the landscape in preparation for *haumiri* (therapeutic massage), *rongoā* (herbal remedies) and *honohono* (spiritual massage). These three important performative techniques form the foundation of the Māori therapeutic landscape.

The concept of *haumiri* aims to balance the physical and mental energies (*mauri* and *wairua*) of a person's persona with the natural world. It can be induced through two forms of massage: *mirimiri* and *romiromi*. The knowledge of *haumiri* seeks to give the body freedom and increase the flow of energies to invigorate and protect (Mark & Lyons, 2010). Benefits of *haumiri* are relevant to the decline in Māori health and wellbeing where nature, people and place are enclosed as one allowing mind, body and soul to strengthen the immune system. This increases energy, releases toxins, helps with addictions (drugs and alcohol), increases circulation, stimulates the internal body, speeds the healing process and balances *mauri* and *wairua* (Mark & Lyons, 2010). Inspiration by the natural elements of water and earth are also evident in *haumiri*, where water represents the purity and cleansing of life and earth represented by heated rocks/stones in treatment. *Mirimiri* is described as the massage of soft-tissues providing therapeutic treatment for malfunctioning body systems (Mark & Lyons, 2010). *Romiromi* involves deep-tissue massage in the application of pressure, aiding the body to release and remove toxic build-up and waste which helps relief tensions, stress and pain (O'Connor, 2007). As such, *romiromi* is way of obtaining greater mobility, vitality and presence. *Haumiri* provides an active spiritual and physical process where the *Mātauranga* combines the experience of the natural environment with performative actions to achieve physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing.

Rongoā as a form of Māori healing that uses medicinal properties of plants, is involved often as a way to connect to the elements. *Rongoā* it is not just about the manufacture of medicine, it is about the respect of the relationship between nature and man (McGowan, 2015). Drawing upon natural plants from the forest, waterways (wetlands and lakes), coastlines and oceans; Māori developed processes and created medicines to help a person's wellbeing whether it be damaged or ill. The bark, leaves, roots, berries and branches were carefully harvested removing only what was needed, and ensuring that nature could continue to accommodate harvesting in the future. If anything was left it would return back to the earth to begin a new cycle of life. In this way sustainability is a core component of traditional ways of thinking. The properties of *rongoā* healing extend beyond the physical and chemical properties to the connection of *mauri* of person, plant and healer which are destined to be immersed together (Jones, 2000). Therapeutic landscapes therefore encompass a deeper meaning in reverence to *rongoā* as the encapsulation of ones being with nature and the transgression of healing one another.

Honohono establishes and uses the aura of people and environment for healing, representing the healing of a person's inner spirit and connecting them to the universe. It reflects on the change in a person's persona and environment, clearing and assisting in the transition of a person's mind, body and soul with placement in the world (notion of place) (Te Pou, 2010). *Honohono* or spiritual healing may incorporate the use of the elements, earth, water, air and fire to offer the body release and healing through spiritual visualization and non-physical immersion. Therapeutic landscape therefore transforms into a cosmological realm reconnecting people and landscape while acquiring the necessities to comply in the physical world. It has been compared with traditional Japanese and Chinese healing methods such as Reiki and Chi Kung (Qi Kong), which use vibrational energy techniques to balance the bodies' energy system. *Honohono* aims to balance the *mauri* and *wairua* where inner-self becomes important in revealing the sense of place and belonging (TuiOra, 2017).

Therapeutic landscapes benefit the health and wellbeing of people. Māori contend that landscape is therapeutic, cultural and ancestral representing the works between man and nature, and containing the values of indigenous knowledge. Māori strategies for health and wellbeing transverse well beyond the caring of the landscape and its conservation, to relating them to peoples' inner self and being (the *mauri* or life force of the world). For Māori, healing is an active process conceived from the landscape though such practices of *haumiri*, *rongoā* and *honohono*, stimulating the body to heal itself and valuing the landscape as a key factor for its fulfilment. Although there are several Māori models of health and wellbeing, three have been particularly influential in the previous decades: *Te Whare Tapa Wha* (four-sided house), *Te Wheke* (the octopus) and *Te Pae Mahutonga* (Southern Cross constellation). These models related to the four pillars of physical, mental, spiritual and social (*whanaungatanga*) wellbeing.

Future Directions: Māori Health and Wellbeing Models

The rapid progression and development of social and cultural change today, lacks an ideology around people and place. 'The term '*taonga tuku iho*' articulates the desire of intergenerational equity with nature's resources passing from one generation to the next (Harmsworth, 2013). The idea is that the transfer of knowledge and nature

should be passed on in a better or the same state in which it was left. Containment of identity is obtained through the spiritual and tangible dimensions of life. Māori's intuitive nature harnesses holistic views where 'using nature' and 'nurturing nature' is central to therapeutic landscapes. For Māori, the ideals inherent in therapeutic landscapes are not separate entities. Exploration of solutions can be found in cultural and therapeutic landscapes, which should be seen as a part of modern ways of living (Gesler, 1992). By incorporating beliefs of stewardship and kinship with the land, both people and place can better identify in unison, offering new insights into living with nature in urban and rural cities.

Mātauranga Māori offers a broad and deep collaboration of traditional methods, practices and values. Incorporating Mātauranga by learning of traditional ways of thinking about self and place endeavours to reconnect people from urban centres to the landscape. This may be achievable using three models: *Te Whare Tapa Wha*, *Te Wheke* and *Te Pae Mahutonga*. These concepts traditionally express the inner emotions of indigenous culture and proffer a way which can inform the makeup of therapeutic landscapes that reflect the cultural and layered identity of past, present and future adaptations.

Te Whare Tapa Wha represented by the *marae* (meeting house), acknowledges that designing for health and wellbeing can be more holistically seen through the four pillars of Māori health: *taha tinana*, physical health and the capacity for physical growth and development; *taha hinengaro*, mental health and the capacity to communicate, feel and think that body and mind are inseparable; *taha wairua*, spiritual health and the capacity for faith and wider communication; and *taha whanau*, family health and the communal response (belonging self and place). At the heart of these pillars is the notion that culture is central to the practice of Māori health and wellbeing (Hopkirk & Wilson, 2014). The pillars can maintain symmetry and balance by treating the 'whole' of the person and achieve wellbeing.

Te Wheke is symbolised by the octopus and encompasses the notion of belonging through *mana ake* (unique identity of self and family); *mauri* (life-force); *haa a koro ma kui ma* (breath and knowledge from ancestors); *whatumanawa* (healthy expression of emotion) (Durie, 1998). The head is formed as the *whanau* (family) and *waiora* (the total wellbeing of individuals and family).

Te Pae Mahutonga is represented through the constellation known as the Southern Cross. This model expresses the cosmic energy in relation to the inner wellbeing (the spiritual and physical). Each star of the constellation represents a different aspect of health promotion. The first is *mauriora* (cultural identity of place); the second *waiora* (physical environment); the third *toiora* (healthy living with environment and people); and the fourth is *te oranga* (participation in society). Together these express the health and wellbeing where *nga manukura* (community leadership) and *mana whakahaere* (autonomy) encompass the notions of self, worth, identity and place (Durie, 1999).

Similarly, the therapeutic qualities of landscape are centralised around the cycle of life. If people and all things are related, then the requirements to consider care and emotions mark the notion of *mauri*, the essence of matter. These holistic perspectives allow ways in which to review traditional practices as a means to create and re-establish therapeutic landscapes. Mātauranga Māori encapsulates the perspectives of

oratory healing through traditions of *whanau* (family) and *hapu* (sub-tribe) and have meaningful roles in supporting, protecting, informing and healing within Māori society (Te Pou, 2010). These customs can thereby be regarded as essential in servicing Māori and Non-Māori health and wellbeing, having an adaptive integrity that is as valid to current generations as it was in the past.

Conclusion

The creation of a therapeutic landscape in a bicultural or multicultural country will inevitably result in a highly contested role for landscape. A dominant culture can suppress alternative ways of knowing and healing; a dominant form of inhabitation can similarly suppress other ways of living. Therapeutic practices may continue but often without the underlying values that facilitate sustainable practice. Arguably sustainability recognises the importance of interconnectedness. Introducing holistic values of therapy from Māori to a wider community as well as revising current practices and developing stronger (re)connections to the landscape are achievable goals and can offer a framework for the future. By understanding different ways of knowing such as that of *Māturanga* Māori, the landscape architect can better comprehend the relationship between people and landscape and how the landscape can function holistically. Landscapes should reflect cultural and ancestral traces, embedding and embodying these holistic concepts. The therapeutic landscape can enable people to feel a sense of security and safety with place. These feelings of belonging allow for the making of *whakapapa* with the landscape while healing self and place.

Similarly, through the exploration of Māori culture and practice the meaning of landscape can be expanded beyond traditional therapeutic landscape ideas. For Māori, the whole natural environment is seen as therapeutic and is another layer developed upon cultural and ancestral landscapes. Within the last few decades, renewed interest in the role of designed natural environments and health have inspired new ways for people to live and communicate with greater quality of life, wellbeing and healing. These new concepts incorporate culture in a symbiotic model where caring landscapes are placed within the framework of landscape authenticity and caring people heal the landscape that nurtures them. Such experiences entice strong partnerships with the common goal of learning to embrace *Mātauranga* Māori (Māori knowledge) as a way of bringing the community and the landscape together and simultaneously generating a hub in which to share and understand the beauty of the indigenous culture and its connection to nature.

This paper examined the collision of two different cultures and their respective values. It posits a bicultural approach that can lead to new ways of thinking about landscape, health and wellbeing to aid in therapeutic landscape design. Indigenous knowledge extends well beyond the environment and it expresses values and principles about human behaviour, ethics, experiences and relationships as it examines the connections between landscape, treatment, health and wellbeing.

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