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RE-VISIONING PACIFIC
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RE-VISIONING PACIFIC RESEARCH METHOD/OLOGIES

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ABSTRACT: Pacific research methodologies have global relevance. As they inform research across national sectors and the training of emerging scholars in Aotearoa, their impact continues to ripple outward abroad. In this introduction to our special issue we weave genealogies of Indigenous, Māori and Pacific advocacy and epistemological inquiry to situate this growth and acknowledge the full and rich lineage of our academic predecessors. These genealogies provide necessary context to this present moment and offer us the opportunity to critically engage with and extend these conversations. Subsequently, we outline our approach to this special issue, which included developing a unique double peer-review process shaped by Indigenous Pacific values to support robust scholarship and a communal approach to building knowledge. Finally, we provide an overview of each article contribution, divided into three themes: first, a call for deeper recognition of place and context; second, critical reflection on the practicalities of existing methods and methodologies in new contexts; and third, the reinvigoration of existing or building new methodologies and methods.

Keywords: Indigenous research, Pacific research methodologies and methods, Pacific epistemologies, Indigenous knowledges, Pacific scholars, early-career researchers, peer review

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Pacific research methods and methodologies have gone global.[1] Pacific research approaches have had a wide-ranging impact as interventions that speak to foundational questions of knowledge production; the impact of world views, positionality and perspective; and how we know what it is we think we know about Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean). In Aotearoa New Zealand this can be seen in the plethora of guidelines on research with Pacific peoples produced in the previous 20 years by government ministries, councils and universities, evident in the shaping of public policy from health to education to restorative justice and beyond. The efflorescence of Pacific research methods and methodologies is part of a larger epistemic shift, and although they are well known in local research conversations (particularly in Aotearoa, Fiji and Hawai‘i), that they are increasingly being deployed elsewhere points to both their global significance and the reality of shifting frameworks of knowledge production both in Aotearoa and abroad. This shift

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is also evident in Aotearoa with the increasing centrality of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems) in the university research landscape. Although treated by some as a "new" idea, not only is it a longstanding philosophical and practical approach to knowledge in te ao Māori (the Māori world), it has been with us for decades now as a research intervention. The positioning of mātauranga Māori front and centre in the country's changing research landscape speaks to the historical moment in which we find ourselves, with universities attempting to indigenise flagship campuses and incorporate the Vision Mātauranga policy into applications and evaluations in prestigious funding bodies like the Royal Society (Hoskins and Jones 2022). These epistemic shifts in the research landscape in Aotearoa have significant implications for Pacific scholarship, heralding this point in time as one where we can and should seek to re-vision what we do as Pacific scholars and how we conduct research with and for our communities.

This special issue grows out of longstanding discussions we have had about teaching Pacific research methodologies in our programme in Pacific Studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland. To support robust and ethical research with Pacific communities, our students need to have sound training in research methods and methodologies. How do we teach students to research? Are our students familiar enough with the research landscape to navigate it successfully? Do they understand Pacific methods and methodologies enough to make informed, deliberate choices in their work without forcing methodologies to "fit"? Our students need to be confident in their understanding of how Pacific and other Indigenous approaches stand in relation to mainstream (especially qualitative) research approaches; understanding *how* and *why* they were developed is important. In engaging with this work, Pacific researchers should be aware of not only their own personal academic ancestry but also the scholarship and advocacy that influenced the development and acceptance of Pacific epistemologies as part of the academic landscape. Pacific research methods and methodologies were not created in a vacuum: they were and remain intimately connected to an era of (anticolonial, antiimperialist, antiracist, antisexist) questioning of approaches to knowledge that were based on normalised (colonial, capitalist, imperialist, patriarchal) projects and world views. The backdrop of Pacific research, and Indigenous research more broadly, is the further exploration of these challenging ideas linked to a wave of resistance against previously accepted western frameworks of knowledge and research. This wave made visible the assumptions, shortcomings and systematic silences that marginalised Indigenous thought and Indigenous communities, regrounding the significance of our own knowledge systems (Fig. 1). Do our students understand this genealogy? (Do we?) Do we share enough with them to understand the connections, contexts and ethical imperatives that shape our work today?

Figure 1. Leone Samu Tui responds to the question "Why is Pacific research important?" in this diagram she created for the University of Auckland course PACIFIC 714: Pacific Research Methodologies and Practices. Included with permission of the author.

These were the questions that occupied us as we reflected on teaching our students how to research. We also found that while there was an abundance of research models developed by Pacific peoples for Pacific communities over time, they offered an approach to research that still left many questions for emerging scholars around how to carry out research informed by these models. How might the approaches be different in island villages and metropolitan areas? What kinds of considerations around cultural protocol and adaptations were relevant? How might one navigate different hierarchies (status, rank, gender, class, education, age and so on)? Further, how might we

combine model and method in ways that suit different projects while ensuring they are philosophically and practically aligned? How might one distinguish between the use of one (talanoa, for example) as method vs. methodology? And then how might one ensure alignment with chosen analytical lenses and approaches? Finally, what kinds of embodied experience, cultural knowledge and relationships are necessary or helpful? We are not the first to ask these questions, but they are becoming increasingly important as Pacific research methodologies and methods gain momentum.

Scholarship on Pacific research methodologies and methods is mature enough at this point in time not only to ask these questions but to further probe and critique these established processes in order to identify gaps and new directions, and pursue clarity with the benefit of experience (Sanga and Reynolds 2017; Tualaulelei and McFall-McCaffery 2019). Emerging academics are at the forefront of this effort, as they are of a generation of researchers being trained in the wake of significant shifts in research methodologies and methods, including major developments in Indigenous research broadly. Emerging scholars working with Pacific communities are increasingly expected to employ Pacific research methodologies and methods in some facet of their work, particularly in Aotearoa. Yet there is much less scholarship on the experience of employing Pacific research methodologies and methods in research to inform existing knowledge today than there is scholarship delineating paradigms, theorising and drawing on philosophical tenets or metaphorical models.

This special issue marks this historic shift in research practice and approaches for and by Pacific peoples and is intended to contribute new knowledge about how Pacific research methodologies and methods are being used (alone and in conjunction with other research approaches and methods). The contributions in this special issue help to illuminate the mutually constitutive relationship between theory and practice by sharing critical reflections and practical adaptations by early-career researchers who are raising considerations appropriate for the contemporary moment. In building on current knowledge, some deepen our understanding while others elaborate new approaches. At the same time, the contributions illustrate the kinds of embodied knowledge and emplaced positionality that are crucial to using these methods and methodologies not just appropriately but successfully. We hope that together the contributions to this special issue will benefit established scholars and help guide emerging scholars in their work with Pacific communities. We also hope they will start new conversations about Pacific research methodologies and methods and push existing conversations further, informing how we approach knowledge production with, by and for Pacific peoples.

TRACING OUR SCHOLARLY GENEALOGIES

At the turn of the last century, a critical mass of scholars were questioning canonical approaches to research, posing epistemological questions as they began to reckon with the challenge Indigenous epistemologies presented. There are deep roots to this discussion that can be traced through early efforts to disrupt the dominance of western thought in academia, through the work of feminist, postcolonial and Indigenous scholars (see, e.g., Abu-Lughod 1991; Anzaldúa 1987; Collins 1986; Haraway 1988; Harding 1992; Mohanty 1988; Spivak 1990; Wilmer 1993). In tracing these discussions about the nature and validity of knowledges in academia, neat linear divisions are facile and insufficient, but it is important to sketch broadly some of the major shifts that provided the foundation for the scholarship we see today as context to the development of Pacific research methodologies and methods. We offer these as generative rather than definitive genealogies, and encourage others to write into these spaces.

Tualaulelei and McFall-McCaffery (2019) point to the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[2] as a bolster to the efforts of Indigenous communities to push beyond colonially oppressive ideas of knowledge and embrace nonwestern knowledge systems, but even before this Indigenous academics had been working towards this goal (Powell and Newman 2022; Sanga and Reynolds 2019; Thaman 2003; Vaioleti 2013). This push against western paradigms of knowledge production gained transnational momentum as global concerns of decolonisation, nuclear testing, war and social issues encouraged Indigenous peoples to gather, collaborate and discuss the growing demand for recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples. Research, as put so poignantly by Linda Tuhiwai-Smith (1999: 1), has been a dirty word for Indigenous peoples. The need to refocus research led our academic predecessors, faced with the issues of their time, to work toward decolonising and reindigenising research practices for the benefit of Indigenous communities.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith's book *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) is often identified as a key milestone in this conversation, and for good reason (see Fig. 2). It is one of the most cited texts on Indigenous research and has shaped generations of scholars since its publication.[3] For the co-authors of this article, its influence was profound. When Uperesa was considering doctoral work but still deeply dissatisfied from her undergraduate research experience and concerned about the history of extractive research in Oceania, *Decolonizing Methodologies* gave voice to those experiences and reservations. But it also offered a language and vision that held future potential and the possibility of empowerment. For Leenen-Young, *Decolonizing Methodologies* drew clear lines between and through her

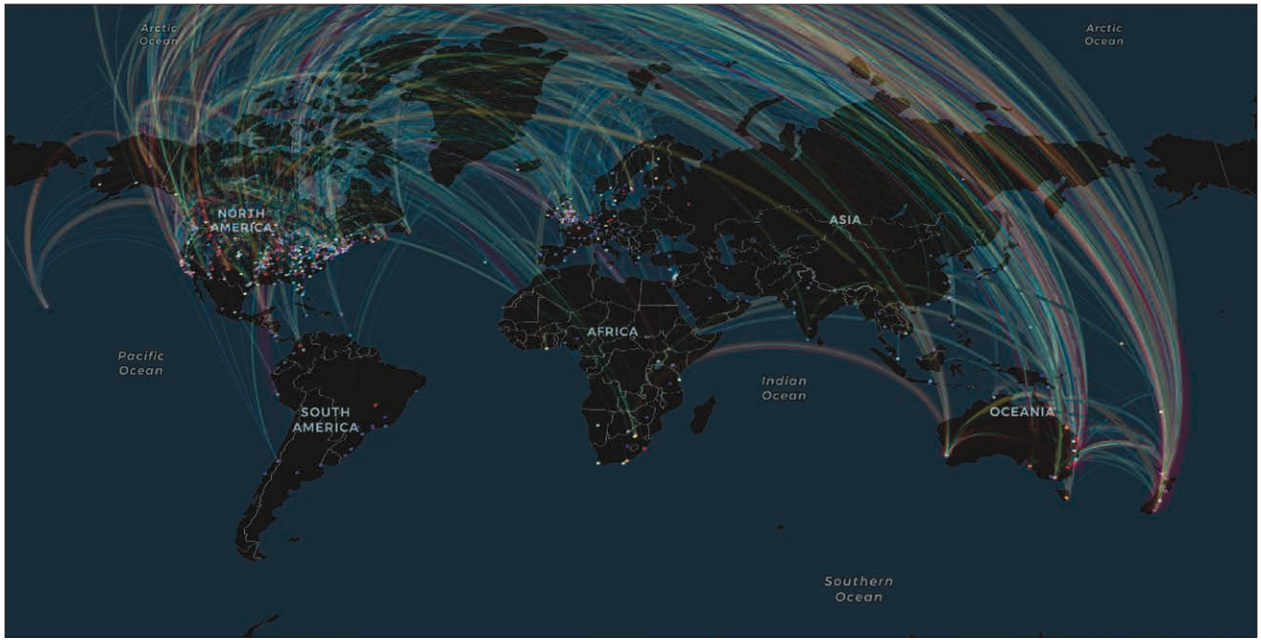

Figure 2. Developed in partnership with the University of Auckland Centre for eResearch, this graphic shows a static snapshot of the geocoding of references globally of Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* between 1999, when it was first published, and 2020. The arcs show citations between institutions, with the colours representing the number of citations. Microsoft Academic Knowledge API was used to gather this data, although it is not representative and does not capture articles that are not machine processable/accessible.

disciplinary training as a historian and the Indigenous research experiences that significantly informed her positionality as a historian and Pacific scholar.

While *Decolonizing Methodologies* has served as an important touchstone for a larger conversation on epistemology, ontology and methodology, it emerged amid a wider movement in kaupapa Māori (underlying Māori values and principles) discourse that blossomed in Aotearoa in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Russell Bishop (1998) speaks of this shift as one that "featured the revitalization of Maori cultural aspirations, preferences, and practices as a philosophical and productive educational stance and a resistance to the hegemony of the dominant discourse" (p. 201) motivated by the increasing political consciousness of the previous 20 years. Graham Smith (1992), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1991) and Russell Bishop (1994), alongside thinkers such as Ranginui Walker (1990) and Donna Awatere (1981), pioneered this push away from the idea of knowledge oriented only to the west: "We know that there is a way of knowing that is different from that which was taught to those colonized into the Western way of thought. We know about a way that is born of time, connectedness, kinship, commitment, and participation" (Bishop 1998: 215). These movements in Kaupapa Māori research fed and were fed by the discourses of Indigenous peoples worldwide. But these spaces and conversations in Aotearoa led by Māori thinkers also empowered and made room for Pacific scholars in the changing knowledge landscape of Aotearoa. One just needs to scan the references to see reflections of connectedness.

Across the globe, battles against the continued enforcement of Anglo-European notions of what constitutes knowledge were fought by Indigenous scholars, influenced by a variety of works including those by Frantz Fanon (1963), Albert Memmi (1965), Paulo Freire (1970), Edward Said (1978), Audre Lorde (1984), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) and bell hooks (1990). Indigenous peoples collectively began to meet, collaborate and publish in response to and in conversation with those who were pioneering these movements in thought and academic scholarship. For example, Ladislaus M. Semali and Joe L. Kincheloe's edited collection *What Is Indigenous Knowledge: Voices from the Academy* (1999) examined the social, cultural and political issues surrounding Indigeneity with a focus on the potential benefits of including Indigenous knowledge in the academy. In their introduction, the authors discussed recent developments at that time including consortia, working groups and conferences dedicated to the examination of Indigenous knowledges, including epistemological and practical questions surrounding the notion of Indigenous knowledges and its use and value. Their book emerged from the theoretical and practical challenges raised in these conversations and the resolution to increase and improve the study and understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems around the world.

The following year *Local Knowledge and Wisdom in Higher Education* (2000) focused on critiquing the place of universities in the increasing

rationalisation of culture, knowledge and action as well as their role in transmitting hegemonic ways of knowing. Editors G. Robert Teasdale and Zane Ma Rhea (2000) argued that the distinction between local knowledge and what was posed as universal knowledge relied upon political power and power relations in the designation of central/peripheral knowledges (see also Ma Rhea 2000). They urged an examination of academically generated ideas and their production, legitimation and circulation within universities around the globe. Some contributions to the collection provided models in practice or posed suggestions for future action (e.g., Brock-Utne 2000; Thaman 2000).

Pacific scholars were part of these emergent conversations at the turn of the century and prior, discussing and writing on Indigenous epistemologies as knowledge systems that could shift realities for our Pacific peoples, who have been ignored and disenfranchised by academic imperialism (Hereniko 2000). In some of the earliest writing into what would become Pacific studies, Albert Wendt offered "Towards a New Oceania" (1976) as a vision that refused the siren call of colonial ontologies and advocated a way of both being in and seeing the world rooted in the multiple iterations of Indigenous Oceania. Similarly, in his "Pacific Maps and Fictions" (1990) Wendt challenged cartographic knowledge of the Pacific, offering new maps for Oceania by demonstrating multiple ways of knowing the world and the Pacific by denaturalising what might appear as "normalised" ways of seeing. Haunani-Kay Trask's later text, *From a Native Daughter* (1993), powerfully asserted Hawaiian sovereignty and pushed against the commodification of culture and whitewashing of Hawaiian history. Trask was one of the first Pacific activist scholars who pushed the boundaries in her work to argue for the centring of Hawaiian ways of thinking, doing and seeing the world. Similarly in 1993, Konai Helu Thaman argued for cultural knowledges and traditions to be included within the educational curriculum in the South Pacific, arguing the potential for social change and educational success through the decentring of western priorities of education.[4]

In the same vein, only a year later, Epeli Hau'ofa (1994) in his "Our Sea of Islands" argued for a reframing of the way the Pacific is typically seen, reaching back to precolonial concepts of Pacific peoples and communities to point out that colonisation has been allowed to fracture not only the way we are seen but, more importantly, the way we see ourselves. Hau'ofa argues against the prevailing political discourses of the era of decolonisation that belittled Pacific homelands as being too small, poor and isolated to prosper or survive within the capitalist global market. Hau'ofa proposes an expansionist view of the Pacific (Oceania for Hau'ofa) that encompasses and connects, concluding with these words:

> Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still, Oceania is us. We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces that we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed places, and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again, and take away our freedom. (1994: 160)

This vision of the Pacific has been prevailing. While these thinkers were key to shifting discourses in Pacific scholarship, there were many other vital scholars who contributed to these shifts that we simply do not have space to include here—Vilsoni Hereniko, Vicente Diaz, J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, Teresia Teaiwa, to name a few—who also published key pieces in the same 1994 issue of *The Contemporary Pacific* (spring issue). Similarly in 2001, *The Contemporary Pacific* (spring issue) showcased some of this re-visioning of Pacific epistemologies with articles by David Welchman Gegeo and Karen Watson-Gegeo, Manulani Meyer and also Subramani with his essay titled "The Oceanic Imaginary" including responses by Vilsoni Hereniko, David Gegeo and Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard. Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2001) implore Pacific scholars to become involved in research on their Indigenous or Native epistemology(ies), to examine and take seriously Indigenous epistemic frameworks and to transcend the hegemony of Anglo-European scholarship.

At Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland, where both authors are currently teaching, a Pacific postgraduate symposium in September 2002 led to key contributions that examined Pacific and Indigenous epistemologies, worldviews and higher education from a collective of Pacific scholars. *Researching the Pacific and Indigenous Peoples: Issues and Perspectives* (2004), edited by Tupeni Baba, 'Okustino Māhina, Nuhisifa Williams and Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, is an important part in this genealogy of the development of Pacific thought and approaches to research. Divided into three "issues", this collection discusses Indigenous research and methodologies, language and culture, and then narrows to discuss Pacific research. While there are a number of notable contributions in this collection,[5] for the purposes of this overview, Baba's (2004) "Pacific and Indigenous Research: Beyond Bondage and Patronage" is significant in tracing the impacts of key shifts in research by Indigenous, Māori and Pacific scholars on policy in Aotearoa over the proceeding 25 years. He highlights education, health, globalisation, research, identity and Indigeneity as examples of how the shift towards culturally informed and responsive research by Indigenous, Māori and Pacific academics has shaped social conversations.

These discussions by Indigenous, Māori and Pacific[6] scholars and the shift they encouraged in conceptions of knowledges in higher education, research and beyond are a central part of the story of Pacific research methodologies and methods. Challenges to academic imperialism by Pacific scholars in an effort to advocate for Pacific ways of knowing and doing in research went hand in hand with the initial and continued development of research paradigms led by and for the benefit of Pacific communities.

PACIFIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND METHODS: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The central purpose of Pacific research methodologies and methods is to provide paradigms for ethical community-centred research with Pacific peoples framed within priorities of relationality, reciprocity and responsibility. Just as they are for other Indigenous peoples, for Pacific scholars and communities these approaches and frameworks are sites of decolonisation and reindigenisation (see, e.g., Archibald *et al*. 2019). As Naepi (2019) states,

> Pacific research methodologies are an act of decolonial resistance that recognizes the legitimacy of Pacific ontologies and epistemologies, enabling research that is truly reflective of Pacific peoples. They are a response to colonial research patterns that have framed and stereotyped Pacific peoples in problematic ways. (p. 1)

In Aotearoa and the wider Pacific we can see this flourishing of Pacific-centred research in publishing from the 1990s.[7] Although these responses by Pacific academics were a push against a system that actively sought to undermine and ignore nonwestern ways of knowing and doing, they were also in response to social concerns within our communities. In Aotearoa, for example, these efforts resulted in the development of Pacific research guidelines in key sectors to enable ethical research for Pacific peoples that made a measurable difference. The need to address key social concerns in which Pacific peoples are positioned as "problems" reflected in negative social statistics makes the connection to Pacific research *personal* for us in so many ways, an antithesis to the usual claims of objectivity in western research. As Konai Helu Thaman (2003) asserts in her poem "Our Way" (p. 3), Pacific research for Pacific peoples is intimate and subjective, but also rigorous and truth-seeking.

The intention here is not to provide an exhaustive list of Pacific research methodologies and methods, as this has already been done by a number of other scholars (see, e.g., Anae 2019; Koya-Vaka'uta 2017; Naepi 2019; Tualaulelei and McFall-McCaffery 2019). Instead, we trace some of the key strands in the genealogy of Pacific research methodologies and methods and their development over time, to understand where we find ourselves

today, with a new generation of scholars questioning, probing and pushing towards a more critical and expansive discussion. While there have been a number of frameworks or guidelines for Pacific research developed by both government ministries and agencies and by research institutions (e.g., Airini *et al*. 2010; Anae *et al*. 2001; Health Research Council 2005, 2014; Massey University 2014; University of Otago 2011), the focus here is on the development of specific methodologies or methods, largely by Pacific practitioners, researchers or educators.

Pacific research methodologies and methods can both be specific to a Pacific people or span Pacific communities; they can be centred in home islands or in the diaspora. They can be frameworks for approaching and carrying out research and theoretical paradigms and, in some cases, can be used as both a method and a methodology. Many are framed by using a cultural metaphor or process, although all are underpinned by values and structures that are intended to ensure appropriate engagement with Pacific peoples (in a variety of contexts and forms). Koya-Vaka'uta (2017) traces commonalities in Pacific research methods and methodologies to include

> the use of metaphor; an emphasis on indigenous life-philosophies conceptualised around place (land) and space (relations); cultural notions of the pedagogic self (self-concept and identity) in relation to family and community; holistic understandings of the human-in-the-world grounded in balance for continuity and survival (sustainability); and spirituality and values. (pp. 78–79)

At this point in time, there is a plethora of Pacific research methodologies and methods for aspiring Pacific scholars to use to frame their research, and even more are being developed, as we will see in this special issue. As noted above we saw the first wave of publishing on these research methodologies from the 1990s, although we know many were initially developed earlier in health and education research.[8] In recent decades, Pacific research methods and methodologies have been spaces of development, adaptation and reinterpretation as scholars have taken and built upon them in different ways. Referring to the development of the Kakala research framework, for example, Sanga and Reynolds (2017) express this in terms of not just depth and complexity but also "width", because of its applicability across "differing Pacific structures related in their decolonial intent" (p. 199). Adaptability is one of the strengths of Pacific research methodologies, and one we have embraced in this special issue.

A key example of this is the Pacific research methodology/method of talanoa, which is the most widely used Pacific research approach (Tualaulelei and McFall-McCaffery 2019). Talanoa (sharing of stories and ideas through conversation and storytelling) has been discussed as a customary practice relevant throughout the Pacific as a culturally appropriate research method

(Fa'avae *et al*. 2016; Gremillion *et al*. 2021), although it is largely used amongst researchers with Fijian (Cammock *et al*. 2021; Meo-Sewabu 2014; Nabobo-Baba 2008; Otsuka 2006), Tongan ('Otunuku 2011; Tecun *et al*. 2018; Vaioleti 2006, 2013; Vaka *et al*. 2016) and Samoan connections (Matapo and Enari 2021; Suaalii-Sauni and Fulu-Aiolupotea 2014). Talanoa has many forms and nuances dependent on context, which must be understood by the researcher (Naepi 2019; 'Otunuku 2011). While published work on talanoa first focused on providing a culturally relevant method of collective discussion and knowledge building (Halapua 2002), Timote Vaioleti (2006, 2013) developed talanoa as a research methodology. From Vaioleti's initial conceptions, scholars have extended and adapted the conception and usage of talanoa in research. At its heart, talanoa is relational and empathetic (Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba 2014; Naepi 2019); recent research has also shown that it is adaptable and dynamic in the research space (Thomsen 2023). While talanoa has become widely used, it has cognates with tok stori (Melanesia; Sanga and Reynolds 2023) and mo'olelo (Hawai'i; Oliveira and Wright 2015), both built from the foundation of relationality.

Relationality or the act of relating to one another in ways culturally specific to Indigenous Pacific peoples underlies all Pacific research methodologies. Pan-Pacific research methodologies centre relationships, although they also warn that such umbrella research approaches are still dependent on the community with which the research is being conducted (Airini *et al*. 2010; Bennett *et al*. 2013; Naepi 2019). For Indigenous scholars, relationships, or the importance of them in research, is not a new revelation (Davidson 2019; Wilson 2008). However, specificity matters: the worldview or specific cultural paradigm that informs the nature and framework of such relationships will shape how relationality is conceived, enacted, valued and maintained (Anae 2019; Sanga and Reynolds 2019; Stewart-Withers *et al*. 2017). As Upolu Lumā Vaai (2017) explains:

> Pacific people are born into a multi-dimensional flow of life, enhanced and protected by relationships. We do not create relationships. Rather, we continue relationships. And through us, relationships flow. We are relational beings who are "more" than the assumed individualised self. Because we are "more" we are formed in relationality, and through this mystery we deliberately recondition and reconfigure the world around us. (p. 27)

Esteemed Samoan educationalist Airini (2010: 170) explores the significance of relationality in research with these words:

> If I am to know you then I am
> to be human.

We talk.
I can see you.
Here.
We share breath.
I can see possibilities of, in,
through relatedness.

I see that where research
connects, there is meaning.

Could it be this simple?

Here Airini speaks of genuine connection through research. When talking about relationality in research, the concept of connection or the sacred space between entities, represented for some Pacific peoples in the concept of the vā, is the most significant aspect of Pacific research. Albert Wendt (1996) explains the vā as "the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates but space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-all, the space that is context, giving meaning to things" (p. 42), while Refiti *et al.* (2021) describe it as "the attachment and feeling for place and relatedness" (p. 357). Melani Anae (2019) emphasises teu le vā (or tausi le vā; to nurture and value the relational space) as a spiritual, unifying aspect of Pacific research methodologies. Similarly, Hūfanga ʻOkusitino Māhina has theorised tā–vā (time–space) through the philosophical tenets and ontological aspects of the relationship between time and space in Tongan worldviews (2010, 2017), while Tēvita Kaʻili has explored Tongan tauhi vā (taking care of one's social space with kin or kin-like members) in transnational spaces (2005: 106; see also 2017). To teu le vā or tausi le vā is a foundational element of daily life that is reflected in research with Pacific peoples (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009; Suaalii-Sauni 2017; Tuagalu 2008).

While these guiding precepts have been crucial to shaping new approaches, Pacific research methodologies as a developing scholarship have reached the point where critical interrogation and reflection on theory, process, practice and engagement are essential to ensure continued vitality, robustness, applicability and heart. Koya-Vakaʻuta (2017) discusses the need for rethinkers to critically engage with established Pacific research methodologies and methods holistically and reflectively, calling for intellectual and critical debate on what "good research practice in Pacific indigenous contexts" (p. 79) looks like. Sanga and Reynolds (2017) encourage "careful and respectful critique of the past", stating powerfully that when faced with the strength of colonisation, "we benefit from walking forward by looking back carefully" (p. 200). Concerns about clutter as distraction in Pacific research, the claiming of Pacificness inappropriately and the choice (or need) to adhere to cultural contexts are significant in these

discussions as well (Efi 2005; Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba 2014; Sanga and Reynolds 2017; Tunufa'i 2016). Additionally, concerns about the ability of Pacific research methodologies and methods to adequately guide our Pacific postgraduate and doctoral students to carry out their own research projects have also been demonstrated, in particular with talanoa (Fa'avae *et al*. 2016; Tunufa'i 2016). Many of the contributions to this special issue move these discussions forward by considering and responding to these critiques, extending the conversations and adding new dimensions through reflection on experience as early-career Pacific researchers.

OUR SPECIAL ISSUE: PIONEERING A NEW PEER-REVIEW PROCESS

A key component in assembling this special issue was the development of a unique peer-review process that supported the contributors as emerging Pacific academics through a process that can often, unfortunately, be destructive and detrimental in the name of academic "rigour". We designed this process to simultaneously provide space for robust, critical engagement with Pacific research methods and methodologies while also centring Pacific values such as fa'aaloalo (respect; reciprocity; communal relationships), alofa/aroha (love; charity) and tautua (service) (Airini *et al*. 2010; Anae *et al*. 2001; Health Research Council 2005, 2014; Massey University 2014; University of Otago 2011). This was inspired by a similar peer-review process developed by Thomsen *et al*. (2021) that was also based on Pacific values of relationality. As editors, it was important for us to ensure this process was one that supported and enhanced the experiences of the Pacific early-career academics who contributed to this issue, with the understanding that to teu le vā was not in opposition to a double peer-review process or producing academically rigorous scholarship; it was central to it.

Building relationships with and between our contributors was foundational in order to provide wide support for the article-writing process. Peer support is recognised as an important component of success for Pacific tertiary students, and the same is true for many of us working in the academy (Chu *et al*. 2013; Kidman and Chu 2019). We initially accepted abstracts from all over Aotearoa and Australia (20 in total), so we had to find a way to start building relationships with the contributors while also providing a space for discussion on the overall philosophy of the special issue alongside individual articles. We held an optional two-day online writing retreat for contributors in June 2022 where we spent time on whakawhanaungatanga (establishing relationships), discussed article writing as a process, had guest presenters talk about writing for an audience and shared initial thoughts about our papers. To maintain this relational space, we then held weekly 2.5-hour online writing sessions prior to the initial draft submission at the beginning of August. These online sessions included an initial 30-minute

Figure 3. Participants at the end of day 1 of the closed symposium for preparation of this special issue. Back row: Inez Fainga'a-Manu Sione, Sam Iti Prendergast, Ruth Faleolo, Lisa Uperesa (editor), Joseph Bruce Tutonga Houghton, Dion Enari, Wanda Ieremia-Allan, Emma Ngakuravaru Powell, Yvonne Underhill-Sem (senior discussant), Nanise Young Okotai, Caleb Panapa Edward Marsters, Vili Nosa (senior discussant), Marcia Leenen-Young (editor). Front row: Charmaine 'Ilaiū Talei, Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga (senior discussant), Catherina Bolinga, Glenda Stanley, Sereana Naepi (senior discussant), Radilaite Cammock. Absent: Malcolm Andrews.

talanoa space for contributors to raise any issues they wanted to discuss.

Having established these connections, we held a 1.5-day compulsory, in-person closed symposium for the double peer-review process (Fig. 3). In this symposium, held at the Fale Pasifika in Auckland, we facilitated the first peer review on day 1 through in-person talanoa between groups of contributors (three papers per group) and a more senior academic discussant who had already reviewed their articles (four in total). Senior discussants were vital to the success of this peer-review initiative, but we recognise it is also a significant ask to review four papers and spend a day in talanoa with the authors. We were lucky to have four accomplished and committed Pacific academics agree to do this: Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Associate Professor Vili Nosa, Dr Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga and Dr Sereana Naepi. Each of our senior discussants were generous with their time and were fully invested in the process as we had designed it, enhancing and invigorating, but also directing and critiquing, through their reviews.

It was vital that this process be in person to allow for meaningful relationship building between the discussants and contributors, kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face), to enable our unique approach to the peer-review process to be culturally appropriate, safe and supportive. The intentional pairing of senior knowledge holders and early-career scholars also reflected Pacific ways of sharing knowledge across generations, incorporating a tuakana–teina (older person–younger person) support model. Throughout the day there were multiple communal peer-review sessions and spaces for reflection where contributors were taken through their articles and given space to ask questions and discuss comments from senior discussants. This was not only a two-way peer review, since each person in a group had reviewed all of the articles from that group and were encouraged to comment and discuss the articles collectively. In order to support attendance from all of the contributors and our senior discussants, we secured funding from the Faculty of Arts at Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland to cover travel and accommodation, and ensured each of our contributors was able to attend.

After the peer-review sessions, our senior discussants were invited to be part of a panel to discuss future directions in Pacific research methods and methodologies (Fig. 4). While our discussants and contributors had been together for the day, this was an opportunity for the senior discussants to discuss Pacific research methods and methodologies collaboratively and for our contributors to pose questions. Unsurprisingly, this was a space that invited reflection on experience and hopes for the future of Pacific scholarship and for scholars in Aotearoa and beyond. It was at times raw, emotional, uplifting and hopeful. To close the first day and extend the web of connection, we held a reception to introduce our contributors to other Pacific scholars at local universities.

The second peer review took place on day 2. For this session, each contributor had been assigned another's article to review, and similarly to day 1, this was done in person through discussion. We encouraged contributors to focus on supporting their fellow early-career researchers to develop their scholarship through their reviews—and, for the most part, contributors

Figure 4. Panel with our senior discussants and contributors focused on the past and future of Pacific research methodologies and methods. From left to right: Dr Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga, Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Associate Professor Vili Nosa, Dr Sereana Naepi. The cover picture of this special issue of the lalava (traditional lashing) in the Fale Pasifika where we held our symposium is significant to connect to this moment in time.

thoroughly engaged with the process. For some, this was both their first time receiving and giving a review, made more familiar by the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and suggestions as part of a reciprocal process of development in person, instead of a blind one-way review.

The reflection at the end of the symposium demonstrated the success of the process. Contributors were invigorated and enthusiastic and appreciated the ability to engage in a process that centres Pacific peoples, values and ways of doing. One contributor raised the question of academic rigour, deciding that this process was more rigorous than the standard double-blind peer review because of the ability to discuss, argue, adapt and understand more fully the perspective and opinions of the reviewers, and in turn for the reviewers to understand the perspectives and motivations of the authors. While this unique peer-review process was a significant investment in time and funding, it allowed us to develop a process that reflected our ethical commitments, cultural priorities and ways of interacting with the world as Pacific peoples in order to support and develop Pacific academic excellence. We hope the contributors take this experience as an example of how to do academia differently and feel empowered to intervene in and reframe processes to create space for Indigenous approaches more broadly. For us, never having had the opportunity to work in this way as emerging scholars, it was a memorable experience to work in collective brilliance and a good reminder that you can create the space you wish to see.

OUR SPECIAL ISSUE: SURVEY OF CONTRIBUTIONS

The articles in this special issue engage in reflective critique based on the realities of incorporating Pacific research methods and methodologies in research today. In this, the pieces make three key contributions: they issue a call for deeper recognition of place and context ("on the ground"), provide critical reflection on practicalities that reckon with the need to adapt existing methods and methodologies to new contexts, and reinvigorate existing frameworks and methods or provide new ones.

The first section in the special issue calls for deeper recognition of place and context. In reflections on the use of metaphor, Emma Ngakuravaru Powell raises important critiques about how we deploy Pacific metaphors in research, and whether we are understanding and fully conveying in our work the lived experiences and labour on which they are based. Powell argues that grounding our understanding of these metaphors in Indigenous knowledges and practices in context is important, and cautions against the use of Pacific metaphors that are increasingly disconnected from the realities from which they are drawn. Engaging with recent work (Wright-Koteka 2006) and classic work in Pacific studies by Teresia Teaiwa and Epeli Hau'ofa, Powell delves

into the metaphor of te akau roa (the long reef) as both a feature of the social imaginary and fundamental part of everyday life for Cook Islands people.

In a different call to recognise more deeply place and context in the approach to research with Pacific peoples, Sam Iti Prendergast grapples with Pacific theorising and settler colonial realities. In reflections on the Māori diaspora, she delves into the ways Pacific theorising is sometimes not only insufficient but also problematic when paradigms of movement and diaspora either elide the role and impact of the state in a focus on trans-Indigeneity or fail to reckon with Indigenous relations and how Indigenous peoples in movement enter into and maintain relations with other Indigenous peoples on whose land they have come to reside (often through the mechanisms of the settler state). In its call for engaging Indigenous studies and settler colonial realities in the Pacific more explicitly, this article speaks to methodological approaches in research, considering depth of analysis and what is brought into the frame of vision for analysis.

The second section in the special issue also prioritises research context, but emphasises adaptations in the contributors' critical reflections on the practicalities of employing Pacific research methodologies and methods in research with Pacific communities. Caleb Panapa Marsters's article argues that the cultural frameworks for research that have been elaborated in previous scholarship need to be adapted to contemporary contexts. He offers a thoughtful exploration of how we stay true to core values of relationality, ethics and care in our work with Pacific communities but also reckon with place and shifting realities. This article provides insights into practical adaptations when using talanoa and concern with what this negotiation means for Indigenous research and diasporic and transnational realities. Those insights have implications for research far beyond the shores of Aotearoa.

Also taking up talanoa, but extending it into the digital space, is Ruth (Lute) Faleolo's article. With the benefit of reflection over a period of time, Faleolo discusses cultural protocols for her research first as a daughter of Tonga in the Pacific and then later in the online space. She helpfully illustrates key shifts in communication preferences for Pacific communities in Australia and Aotearoa over the course of the past two decades. Her discussion of e-talanoa is particularly relevant given the restrictions on research in person due to COVID-19 protocols, but it is also helpful for people using digital platforms for research, those focused on migration and transnationalism, and anyone engaging in research with communities in different geographical locations. With attention to principles, practices and adaptations, the article explores how we enact cultural values and sensibilities in research that respects participants' preferred modes of communication and shares power with participants in research design.

Nanise Young Okotai offers another critical reflection on the practicalities of Pacific research methodologies and methods today, focusing on the Fijian Vanua Research Framework (FVRF) and navigating research in Fijian village settings as an anthropology doctoral student with family ties to the village. The article offers insights into employing FVRF as a methodological approach combined with more mainstream qualitative methods. As both a visiting academic and someone genealogically connected to the community that hosted her research, she discusses navigating local protocols, permissions and relationalities. Her reflection on negotiating vanua (land) politics complicates simplistic views on insider/outsider positionality for Pacific researchers doing research with Pacific communities. It also raises questions about how legacies of colonialism shape recognition of our genealogical links to place and community, and how that affects our own sense of identity.

In their article, Radilaite Cammock and Malcolm Andrews revisit the Vanua research framework together with iTaukei philosophical viewpoints to present a conceptual base aligned with local knowledge to support research with Fijian communities. They delve into the structure of iTaukei society as well as key philosophical concepts such as sautu (wellbeing), gauna (conceptions of time), maliwa (space) and veiweikani (relationships) to map a proposed Fijian value research system (FVRS) that provides key considerations for undertaking research successfully.

Drawing on the research methods of talanoa and tīvaevae in his education research, Joseph Bruce Tutonga Houghton offers a critical reflection on practicalities of research using existing frameworks. Houghton elaborates on the synergy between tīvaevae as a research model connected to his own ancestry and talanoa as method appropriate for his school-based participatory action research on empowering Pasifika voice, with largely Samoan and Tongan students and stakeholders. His piece offers useful insights on successfully combining Pacific research methods and methodologies along with mainstream methodologies.

Picking up the threads of research with diasporic and transnational communities outside of the islands, Inez Fainga'a-Manu Sione, Glenda Stanley and Dion Enari detail their doctoral journeys and share insights from reckoning with the position of Pacific communities in Australia and what they were able to offer the communities they worked with while balancing collective obligation and individual responsibility. Guided by Spirituality, rooted in Service, activating Agency, developing Vision and engaging in Innovation, the trio elaborate the SSAVI framework that enabled them together to study for their own and the greater good while maintaining commitments to community. This article speaks to the many difficulties Pacific scholars often face, particularly as early-career researchers, as they try to balance the heavy workload of study and community needs.

The last key section in this special issue pushes our understanding of existing frameworks further by introducing new dimensions or providing new frameworks altogether. Wanda Ieremia-Allan's article offers a new conceptualisation of talanoa in archival research that in some ways departs from, and in other ways deepens, existing knowledge. Unlike the more common use of talanoa in social science research, Ieremia-Allan deploys talanoa as both a Samoan philosophical paradigm or methodology and as a method in work with archival material. Working in the archives of the London Missionary Society Samoa newspaper *O le Sulu Samoa*, Ieremia-Allan grapples with the embodied experience of connection to family over time and space, whose lives and work she discovered preserved in the writing in the newspaper. Alongside sharing a moving engagement with ancestors through archival discovery, Ieremia-Allan's reconceptualisation of talanoa as historical research methodology and method as read through specific Samoan philosophical notions and practices significantly develops our understanding of talanoa in research.

Working with a different method, Catherina Bolinga builds on existing elaborations of tok stori (storytelling sessions through conversation) in Melanesia to provide a different iteration in yumi tok stori. Based on her experience in Papua New Guinea and research with diasporic PNG communities in Aotearoa and those located in the Pacific, Bolinga outlines the elements of yumi tok stori employed in her doctoral research. Her critical discussion focuses on the importance of centring Indigenous communication frameworks and adapting to specific place and community contexts, of considering key elements of relationality and protocol that are culturally and circumstantially appropriate, and of developing research methods with Melanesian communities. In the scholarship on Pacific research methods and methodologies Melanesian approaches are significantly underrepresented, and this article helps to address that gap while expanding the tok stori framework.

Drawing on existing scholarship on vā and her experience with a variety of architectural projects in Aotearoa, Australia and the wider moana, Charmaine 'Ilaiū Talei conceptualises vā as relational principle as well as research and design praxis. She writes, "nurturing vā as a design professional means being mindful about, but not limited to, the delivery of services and how to enable Pacific stakeholders' full participation, alongside identifying their sociospatial perceptions of vā for the actual design of the project" (p. 164). For 'Ilaiū Talei, "[v]ā, then, becomes a praxis that concurrently is the driving design principle and frames the design process and the project delivery, alongside being the approach to nurture the project relationships" (p. 164). In this piece 'Ilaiū Talei helpfully bridges the gap between the theoretical and the practical, from considering vā as a conceptual description of connection to a discussion of how it manifests tangibly in architectural practice and research.

Finally, in her research on Pasifika perspectives on wellness in Australia, Inez Fainga'a-Manu Sione offers a Tongan-centred methodology for research, following ten stages of the process for making a fala (traditional mat). "Fofola e fala, kae talanoa 'a e kāinga" is a Tongan proverb that means "to respectfully unravel the fala for the family to talk". In her approach to research with three generations of participants (elders, parents and youth), Sione adopted the fala methodology to guide her work; here she outlines the different phases and also discusses the integration of the methodology with talanoa as a method and grounded theory as an analytical approach. Importantly, she addresses the importance of time in the analytical process. In this she drew on a phase of fala making (tuku 'i tahi or soaking in the ocean) and inspiration from dadirri (inner deep listening and quiet still awareness) (Ungunmerr 2017; West *et al*. 2012: 1584), an Indigenous practice of the Ngangikurungkurr people of Australia's Northern Territory, where she grew up. In the stillness of waiting, listening and "soaking" the leaves (data) she was able to return to the analysis with a new perspective. This pause is worth flagging as it highlights a useful divergence from expected research analysis activities and timeframes according to mainstream academic approaches, one that allowed her understanding to mature with distance from the research.

HONOURING THE PAST AND MOVING FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE

In Aotearoa New Zealand we (generally) have the privilege of not needing to focus on arguing for the significance and place of Pacific research methods and methodologies in scholarship and so have the opportunity to step back to consider how to move forward, and how to share these innovations in a way that enables emerging scholars to continue to build. We have benefited from those who fought these academic battles before us, and recognise their work with great respect. Where to from here? We hope that collections like this one both highlight the emerging innovations and provide teaching tools toward greater understanding, clarity and intentionality with Pacific research methods and methodologies. As scholars engage in deep learning toward ethical research, we also hope greater discussion and transparency does not facilitate appropriation of these approaches by others. As a feature of Pacific Indigenous thought, engagement with these research approaches commands careful consideration of embodied knowledge, positionality, commitment and accountability to our communities.

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NOTES

1. The term “Pacific” has been used in this introduction to align with common usage, although we recognise that this term is steeped in colonial tradition and that it is contested (Airini *et al*. 2010; Māhina 2008). In this special issue, contributors were encouraged to use their preferred terminology.
2. Aotearoa New Zealand did not sign this nonbinding declaration until April 2010.
3. As of May 2023 the text had garnered over 24,000 citations in Google Scholar. Its impact on Indigenous peoples can be seen through publications such as the edited book *Indigenous Women’s Voices: 20 Years on from Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s Decolonizing Methodologies* (*Tebrakunna* country and Lee and Evans 2022).
4. The Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative was formed with this vision in 2001 (Pene *et al*. 2002).
5. For example, in addition to the editors, Margaret Mutu, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Kabini Sanga, Kolokesa Māhina and Melenaite Taumoefolau made contributions.
6. In this special issue our conception of the Pacific as Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa includes Māori, but writing from Aotearoa we also recognise local terminology that often separates out Māori as tangata whenua (the local Indigenous people).
7. Melani Anae (2019) refers to this as a renaissance based on recognition of Pacific peoples’ precolonial epistemological traditions.
8. As far as can be traced through the published literature, there were four methodologies initially developed prior to the first publication of *Decolonizing Methodologies*: the Fonofale model of health by Karl Pulotu-Endemann was first used in the mid 1980s and developed further over the following two decades (Pulotu-Endemann 2009; Koya-Vaka‘uta 2017); the Kakala research framework was initially conceived by Konai Helu Thaman in 1992 (Koya-Vaka‘uta 2017), initially published in 1993 (Thaman 1993) and further developed by Thaman with ‘Ana Taufe‘ulungaki and Seu‘ula Johansson Fua and with the support of Linitā Manu‘atu into the framework as it is today (Johansson Fua 2014); the Fa‘afaletui framework of Kiwi Tamasese, Carmel Peteru and Charles Waldegrave emerged in a report in 1997 on Samoan perspectives of mental health (Tamasese *et al.* 1997); and Na‘auao was developed in 1998 by Manulani Aluli Meyer and published in 2001 (Meyer 2001; Koya-Vaka‘uta 2017).

GLOSSARY

alofa	love (Samoan)
aroha	love; charity (Māori)
dadirri	inner deep listening and quiet still awareness (Ngangikurungkurr (Aboriginal Australian, Northern Territory))

fa‘aaloalo	respect; reciprocity; communal relationships (Samoan)
fala	traditional mat (Tongan, Samoan)
gauna	conceptions of time (Fijian)
kanohi ki te kanohi	face to face (Māori)
Kaupapa Māori	underlying Māori values and principles; the Māori way
lalava	traditional lashing
maliwa	space (Fijian)
mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge systems (Māori)
sautu	wellbeing (Fijian)
tā–vā	time–space (Tongan)
talanoa	sharing of stories and ideas through conversation and storytelling (Fijian, Tongan, Samoan)
tangata whenua	lit. people of the land; Māori, Aotearoa’s Indigenous people (Māori)
tauhi vā	“to take care of one’s social (relationship) space with kin or kin-like members via reciprocal exchanges of food, goods, and services” (Ka‘ili 2005: 106) (Tongan)
tausi le vā	to nurture and value relational space (Samoan)
tautua	service (Samoan)
te akau roa	the long reef (southern Cook Islands Māori)
te ao Māori	the Māori world (Māori)
Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa	the Pacific Ocean (Māori)
teu le vā	to nurture and value relational space (Samoan)
tok stori	storytelling session through conversation (Tok Pisin)
tuakana–teina	relationship between an older and a younger person that promotes a reciprocal learning process (Māori)
tuku ‘i tahi	soaking in the ocean (Tongan)
vā	relational space that gives meaning to things (Samoan, Tongan)
vanua	land (Fijian)
veiweikani	relationships (Fijian)
whakawhanaungatanga	establishing relationships (Māori)

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