DIGITAL COLONIALISM IN THE AGE OF AI

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On behalf my tribal ancestors I want to acknowledge the Eora Nation and the Gadigal people both present and past.

E ngā rangatira, Tena koe.
MĀORI OWNERSHIP OF INFORMATION AND DATA

- Information, knowledge and data is communally looked after by the family, sub tribe and or the parent tribe for current and future generations.
- Māori belong by genealogy to a tribe not citizenship. This is an Indigenous belief.
WHAT IS DIGITAL COLONIALISM

Digital colonialism is the new deployment of a quasi-imperial power over a vast number of people, without their explicit consent, manifested in rules, designs, languages, cultures and belief systems by a vastly dominant power.

A complete definition is available at:

DIGITAL COLONIALISM RELEVANT TO AI

1. A dominant culture enforcing its power and influence onto a minority culture to digitize knowledge that is traditionally reserved for different levels of a hierarchical closed society, or information that was published with the sole intent of remaining in the one format such as radio or print.

2. A blatant disregard for the ownership of the data and the digitized format, nor the dissemination.

3. Digital data that becomes the topic of data sovereignty.

4. Digital and Knowledge workers who consult Indigenous Peoples to digitise their content and then digitise the content, but who fail to explain the power of technology and the risks including losing all Intellectual Property Rights.

5. Conglomerates and government who use their influence to digitize data without consultation.

6. Digital access where an ethnic minority are the majority digital divide stakeholders; often while their knowledge and resources are being digitised.

7. Manipulation of search engine results to hide or change Traditional Knowledge.
DATA SOVEREIGNTY

1. Māori Data is data that is held by Māori, made by Māori or contains any Māori content or association including genetic material and digitised genetic material. This includes Information such as archives, records, DNA and images.

2. Data Sovereignty typically refers to the understanding that data is subject to the laws of the nation within which it is stored.

3. Indigenous Data Sovereignty perceives data as subject to the laws of the nation from which it is collected.

4. Māori Data Sovereignty recognises that Māori data should be subject to Māori governance.

5. Māori Data Sovereignty supports tribal sovereignty and the realisation of Maori and Iwi aspirations.
UN DECELERATION OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

• Adopted in 2007 with 144 states in favour, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States)

• New Zealand signed up to it in 2010

• It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.
SECTION 31

• Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.
OTHER APPLICABLE SECTIONS FOR DATA

• In total 15 section of the UN Declaration are applicable to data and digital information
• Sections; 1,2,3,7,8,9,11,12,15,16,21, 25, 27 and 39
AI SYSTEM USING SEQUENCED GENOMES EXAMPLE

• DNA is a sacred to Māori
• The dead should not be with the living
• Digitising the data into new forms is digital colonisation
• The system with Māori data becomes a part of the people the data is about
HUMAN ISSUES WITH AI

• Due to human data input with a bias against Māori, it is likely that any AI systems in New Zealand that use genetic data and genome sequencing will naturally follow the human bias and will perpetuate negative stereotypes and colonial thinking against Māori.

• The biggest risks will remain with humans.

• An AI system built without Indigenous collaboration at all levels of the decision making process will likely impact negatively on the Indigenous Peoples way of life, their spirituality, well being and could be deemed a breach of their Human Rights.
AI SYSTEMS CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Co Designed with Indigenous Peoples
- As a responsible digital citizen recognise the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples
- As a socially responsible corporate recognise the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples
- Consider Indigenous culture and beliefs
- Māori Data is a treasure therefore recognised by the Treaty of Waitangi
- Data ownership