EMBEDDED EXPRESSIONS OF A PEOPLE

NGĀ PAE O TE MĀRAMATANGA

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Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga
Final Report

"Embedded Expressions Of A People"

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to discuss some of the findings pertaining to the research project entitled *Embedded Expressions of a People.* The overall aim of this larger research is to investigate the various forms of oral expressions (waiata, haka, karakia and so on) used in particular events, ceremonies and/or life phases commonly conducted in Māori society. This report will focus on one particular period, that of pregnancy and childbirth.

There are many different variations for every iwi pertaining to the Māori customs and rituals for pregnancy. Pregnancy includes conception, the building of the whare kahu (spirit house) whare kōhanga or whare puhi (nest house) and the realm of tapu (sacredness) that a woman is under when she grows closer to giving birth. For most ceremonies, a tohunga (expert priest) is required to ensure good fortune of such events. This tohunga holds wisdom and mana that makes him suitable to perform chants and rituals that refer to our atua (gods) and also the divine being, Io-matua-kore or Io-matangaro, who resides at the highest realm of the 12 heavens.

C O N C E P T I O N

Māori believed that children held the wairua (spirit) of our atua hence they were seen as a gift from the atua themselves. This is why children were regarded as tapu. With this belief, Māori had that connection to the spiritual world; the home of our tīpuna (ancestors) and our atua. For this reason, the children were shown exceptional hospitality and were showered with love, guidance, and protection. When a woman wished to conceive she would inform the tohunga of her tribe of her wishes. A woman of high rank would be more valuable because if she comes from the class of an ariki (chief of the village), then she would be responsible for the continued existence of their line, of their whakapapa. Before the tohunga could commence, he would ask the woman which gender she desired. With the answer given, he would take a leaf and carve out the human figure, including the more intricate features and organs. The tohunga would then take the woman to a tapu area reserved for such sacred doings. A mat would be laid down and the woman would be instructed to lie down on it. As she did so, the tohunga would stand over her and chant his karakia (prayer) (Best, 1929).

The first part of the karakia would be a plea to rid the woman of her wrong doings from the past so that she may be purified again and no harm would come to the fetus if the outcome of the karakia was successful. He would then refer to Io-matangaro and ask for him to bestow upon the woman the mana and the power of Hine-ahu-one and that she would be fruitful. Hine-ahu-one, as the first human, is seen as the the controller of tides, the guardian of women, and the overlooker of childbirth and weaving (Best, 1929). The cloak of the woman would then be drawn to the side so as to only expose up to her navel. The tohunga would stand at the feet of the woman while facing her. With the leaf in his left hand he would chant:

Tēnei tama ka tū, he tauira nāu e Io... e!
Tō manawa ko te manawa o Hine-ahu-one
Tēnei ka tau! (Best, 1929)

Once the above karakia was recited, the tohunga would place the leaf just under the breast bone of the woman with the head of the leaf figure being at the same end as the head of the mother. He would then cover the woman up again and repeat his karakia. When the tohunga finished the ritual had come to a conclusion. The tohunga would take the leaf, place it in a piece of bark, then leave it in a sacred area until the time came for him to retrieve it again. When the time grew near for the woman to give birth, the tohunga would take the leaf from its spot, take it to the whare kahu and place it by her pillow without her knowing. This tikanga is from the Ngāti Kahungunu tribe. (Best, 1929)

It is said that there is a hīnau tree in Tūhoe that can help women conceive. This tree is said to stand at Ohaua in Te Urewera, although there is a possibility that it does not exist anymore. It is believed that this tree was named by Tāne te atua, called *Te Iho o Kataka.* Tāne te atua (Tāneatua) was the brother of Toroa, the captain of the Mataatua canoe. When Tāne's daughter, Kataka, was born he placed her iho (middle portion of the umbilical chord) on the hīnau tree. Time went by and he came across this particular tree again and sat beneath the branches to rest. As he reached out to pluck one of the fruits from the tree, a voice whispered, *"Do not eat me, for I am the iho of your daughter."* It was from that moment that Tāne declaed that tree to be tapu. He hung the iho of another one of his children from this tree and it was then that he declared that the sacredness of the tree would also help women to conceive. Another version of this story states that it was Ira-Kewa, the father of Toroa and Tāne te atua, who declared the tree as sacred. Those who embrace *Te Iho o Kataka* will fall pregnant soon after (Best, 1906).

Other iwi have similar natural features that are imbibed with supernatural conception powers. For example, a similar rock also rests in Kāwhia by the name of *Uenukutuwhatu,* and there was a tree that stood in Otaki that went by the name of *Te Puta-tieke.* Women would go to these particular places to perform something that would hopefully produce the same result as the *whakatō tamariki* rite which helped women conceive. A similar tree, called *Te Hunahuna a Pou*, stands in the Ngāti Manawa area. It is said that this tree had two big branches, one protruding on the east representing the male, one protruding from the west that signifies the female. It was the husband's duty to pluck a twig from the side that represented the desired gender, then place that twig beneath his wife before intercourse.

This tikanga is believed to have derived from the same karakia Tāne performed over Hine-tītama to help her conceive. It was also from this that Māori believe that man hold the seed of life; woman represents the shelter and nurturing bed or receptacle for that seed (Best, 1924).

The first time the wife of a chief or of someone of high rank fell pregnant, the woman was referred to as 'rapou'. This term signifies the tapu attached to women of rank. When it is known that she is pregnant, her 'turakanga' would take place. The turakanga ritual was believed to help strengthen the child. It was known amongst the Tūhoe people as 'tira ora' (Best, 1924). According to accounts, this ritual took place at a stream. The requested tohunga would mould two small mounds from the earth. One mound represented the male essence or welfare and life, the other representing the female essence or earthly matters, death and misfortune. Between the two mounds a stick would be erected which signified 'The Path of Death'. The woman would stand on the right mound first which represented

the male, then the female mound. She would then dive into the stream. It is said that the tohunga would be reciting his karakia as the woman followed the ritual as instructed (It does not state the way we can conclude results, but it is mentioned that this ritual helps to maintain balance in the baby.

PREGNANCY

A woman, especially one of higher rank, plays a big role in te ao Māori as she is responsible for the livelihood of any whakapapa. Without women, there would be no off spring, no future. Sometimes, with the fear that a family's line would end, a woman would seek out the assistance of a tohunga to help her conceive. If the conception ritual was successful, then the woman and those around her would do all that they could to care for the mother and child to ensure the safety and well being of the both of them. But on the off chance things took an unfortunate turn, a woman could have a miscarriage, and sometimes more than once. If a couple had lost all their children, this situation would be called a 'whare ngaro.'

Going to a tohunga wasn't the only way a woman could possibly conceive. Another way was for her to stand over the whenua of another child. If a woman wished for a particular gender, she would attend the labour of whomever was giving birth, waiting for her desired gender to be born. When a child of her choice of gender was born, she'd wait for the whenua to be buried and stand over it. This was also a process undertaken by barren women. This term was called 'piki whenua' (Tregear, 1926). For the barren woman to go through various processes just to be able to conceive gives us an indication of how much she yearned for a child to love, nurture and take care of. She was patient and persevered to create new life not only for herself but for her iwi. Sometimes some of these women would feel lonely and having a child was their way of resolving this issue.

The more riskier way for a woman to fall pregnant was again accompanied by a tohunga. He would take her to a particular tree without her looking. One side of the tree appeared fresh and vibrant, the other being dry and eerie. While the woman was still unable to see she would go forth and embrace the tree. If she embraced the vibrant side, she would conceive. If it were the dry side, then she would remain without child (Tregear, 1926).

There are a number of signs to tell the sex of the unborn child. For example, the tohunga would evaluate the physique of the woman. If the woman's left side of her body was wrinkled and she had discolouration in her breasts, the child would be a male. And vice versa. But this would depend on the physique of the woman (Best, 1929). Another way is sometimes depicted by the husband. If he dreams of a skull decorated with feathers, he would take that as a sign that his wife had conceived. If the feathers appeared to be those of a kōtuku then the child would be a male. If the feathers were those of a huia then the infant was a female (Tregear, 1926).

Sometimes a pregnant mother would take another's baby and feed the child her own milk. If the child in her womb would move around this was a sign that the fetus took a dislike to the infant being held in the woman's arms. When this occured and the child being held was male, the fetus was female, and vice versa. If two women were both pregnant and lived

close two each other and one of the women went into labour, the child of the other mother would feel that energy and begin to wriggle around in the womb. If the first of those children born was a male, then the other child would be female, and vice versa (Tregear, 1926).

Throughout the woman's pregnancy she would continue to do work around the pā. It is said that a pregnant woman was allowed to eat whatever it was that she desired because it was what the child wanted. They feared that if they interfered with the child's hunger then some supernatural inconvenience would occur because the child is still in the spirit realm (Yate, 1835). This connection between 'te ao kikokiko' and 'te ao wairua' puts the mother in a tapu state approximately six days within her given birth date.

Going onto her seventh month of pregnancy a whare puhi or whare kōhanga would be built. The area that was selected for this whare was usually somewhere distant from the pā, away from food and people, because this needed to be a wāhi tapu (Savage, 1966). The woman resided here for the remainder of the time until she was ready to deliver the child. In some cases, a whare kai would be built so that the nurses could cook whatever the mother craved (Best, 1929). Two tapuhi (midwives/nurses) would be assigned to care for the woman. Usually, these two women would be very close relatives of the mother of the unborn infant. If this was not possible, two distant relatives were assigned to the task (Best, 1929). They needed to fully understand and empathise with the mother when the time came for her to deliver the child.

When the time drew near for the woman to give birth, she would go to a section reserved just for her. This would sometimes be a whare kahu (fetus house) that was built for this specific purpose. She would usually only enter this house if she was of higher rank or the weather was miserable (Best, 1924). Otherwise, most woman would give birth out in the open air. In Australia, amongst some aboriginal cultures, their tīpuna also gave birth out in the open as this was what linked the child to the land, and the land was their most sacred element (Queensland Studies Authority, 2008).

When a woman would go into labour, word would spread and the villages of both parents who would prepare gifts and await the arrival of the infant. The woman would usually only go to the whare kahu when she was very close to giving birth. In some tribes, it is said that women would go straight to the whare kōhanga to give birth (Best, 1929). When a woman gives birth one of the expressions that is evident is the act of being strong. Referring to one of the many times esteemed Ngāti Porou scholar Dr Amster Reedy was asked to attend the birth of a particular child, the mother giving birth found strength and comfort in the karakia that he recited as she delivered new life (Best, 1924). Although these chants were carried as a precaution to keep everyone safe from any spiritual harm, they can clearly be seen as a technique to ensure courage and perserverance for the mother.

The woman about to give birth would have support from her husband so that he would be able to empathise with his spouse. In times where were labour proved to be difficult the woman may ask for the hand of her mother as she knows what the pain is like when giving birth (Tregear, 1926). Because of this the mother of the woman giving birth would also be able to give her own daughter some reassurance and guidance throughout her birth.

There are four stages of labour:
1) *Kouawai* - Discharge. The substance was almost egg-like.
2) *Ara* - Flooding. This is when the water breaks.
3) *Whānautanga mai* - The child is born.
4) *Parapara* - Discharge of blood.

If a woman was in labour for longer than four days, the assistance of a tohunga was required. This is a crucial stage for the woman giving birth. The tohunga would recite his karakia, and when he reached the end he would place his right hand on the mother's forehead. It is intended that the child would be born at this time (Best, 1929). Another way to try and encourage the child to enter this world was for the the tohunga to recite the child's whakapapa on both sides. Often the tohunga would go as far back as our Atua Māori.

This was also a way to determine whether or not the woman had been faithful or not before her pregnancy. If the woman had been unfaithful, sometimes she would not admit it until the time came to recite the child's whakapapa and the pain would be deemed too much for her, hence she would admit to her wrong doings. As well as feeling the pain of being in labour, if the mother had admitted to being unfaithful, the feeling of heartache would also be added to not only her emotions, but also her husband's. The husband would feel a lot of frustration and anger caused by the betrayal of his wife. This would then be an extremely heated moment for all. At this point, the tohunga would recite the lineage of the biological father until the child was born (Tregear, 1926).

Alternatively a tohunga would sing an oriori (lullaby) to welcome the child and by the time the oriori was done, the child should be born. One oriori for example was composed by Tuhotoariki for his grandson Tuteremoana. Tuhotoariki was a renown tohunga from Ngāi Tara. The oriori is eight verses long. But for the purpose of this report I will only refer to the first four verses as they define the main reason and explanation of the entire oriori.

The first verse speaks of the child's journey from the spirit world into the world of man. He goes from the untouched havens and is metaphorically created in a similar way to how Tāne created Hine-ahu-one, the first woman. Nearing the end of the first verse Tuhotoariki begins to introduce Tuteremoana to his final stop on his spiritual journey before entering our world.

The second verse of the oriori is inteded to be a karakia. The aim of this karakia is for the troubles of their parents to be removed. Sometimes if the birthing was difficult, the point of the karakia was to be sure that the delivery of the child would be safe.

Verse three is an encouragement to the child to obtain the warrior like qualities of Tūmatauenga (Tū, God of war and humans) and wield the weapons that Tū used to defeat Whiro who is the embodiment of all things evil. The fourth verse is the dedicatory naming of the child. It's his welcoming chant into this world as he is listens with ears like the gods and embraces our mother earth in all aspects. It is Tuhotoariki's way of greeting Tuteremoana's arrival on this earth (Ngata & Jones, 2006).

Oriori mo Tuteremoana

Nau mai, e tama, kia mihi atu au;
I haramai ra koe i te kunenga mai o te tangata
I roto i te ahuru mowai, ka taka te pae o Huakipouri;
Ko te whare hangahanga tena a Tanenuiarangi
I te one i Kurawaka, i tataia ai te Puhiariki,
Te Hiringa matua, te Hiringa tipua, te Hiringa tawhitorangi;
Ka karapinepine te putoto ki roto te whare wahiawa;
Ka whakawhetu tama i a ia,
Ka riro mai a Rua i te pukenga, a Rua i te horahora;
Ka hokai tama i a ia, koia hokai Raurunui,
Hokai Rauru whiwhia, hokai Rauru maruaitu,
Ka maro tama i te ara namunamu ki te taiao;
Ka kokiri tama i a ia ki te aoturoa,
E tama, e i!

2

Haramai, e tama, whakaputa i a koe
Ki runga te turanga matua;
Marama te ata i Ururangi,
Marama te ata i Taketakenui o rangi,
Ka whakawhenua nga Hiringa i konei, e tama!
Haramai, e mau to ringa ki te kete tuauri,
Ki te kete tuatea, ki te kete aronui,
I pikitia e Tanenuiarangi i te ara tauwhaiti,
I te Pumotomoto o Tikitikiorangi.
I karangatia e Taneuiarangi ki a Hurutearangi,
I noho i a Tonganuikaea, nana ko Paraweranui;
Ka noho i a Tawhirimatea, ka tukua mai tana whanau,
Titiparauri, Titimatanginui, Titimatakaka;
Ka tangi mai te hau mapu, ka tangi mai te rorohau,
Ka eketia nga rangi ngahuru ma rua i konei,
E tama, e i!

3

Haramai, e tama, i te ara ka takoto i a Tanematua;
Kia whakangungua koe nga rakau matarua na Tumatauenga;
Ko nga rakau tena i patua ai Tini o Whiro i te Paerangi;
Ka heke i Tahekeroa, koia e kume nei ki te po tangotango,
Ki te po whawha o Whakaruaumoko, e ngunguru ra i Rarohenga,
Ka waiho nei hei hoariri mo Tini o Tanematua i te aoturoa.
I konei, e tama, ka whakamau atu ki te Pitoururangi,
Ki a Tumatakaka, ki a Tumatatawera,
Ki a Tumatahuki, ki a Tumatarauwiri,
Hei whakamau i te pona whakahoro kai na Hinetitama,
Ka waiho hei tohu ki a Tanematua,
Ka whakaoti te pu manawa o Tane i konei,
E tama, e i!

4

Haramai, e tama, puritia i te aka matua,
Kia whitirere ake ko te Kauwaerunga, ko te Kauwaeraro;
Kia tawhia, kia tamaua, kia ita i roto a Ruaitepukenga,
A Ruaitehorahora, a Ruaitewanawana,
A Ruamatua taketake o Tane.
Nau mai, e Tuteremoana! Kia areare o taringa ki te whakarongo;
Ko nga taringa o Rongomaitahanui, o Rongomaitaharangi,
O Tupai whakarongo wananga.
Ka taketake i konei ki Tipuaki o rangi,
Ka rere ki Poutu i te rangi,

Ka whakaawhi i a Pukehauone;
Ka hoka Hinerauwharangi i konei i a ia,
Kia taha mai Ahuahu, ahua te Pukenui, ahua te Pukewhakaki,
Nau, e Rongomaraeroa! Koia te ngahuru tikotikoiere,
Te Maruaroa o te matahi o te tau,
Te putunga o te hinu,
E tama, e i!

(English Version)
Welcome, O son, let me greet you;
You have indeed come from the origin of mankind.
From the cosy haven emerged, out from the barrier of Darkness-ajar,
Out of the abode fashioned by the Renowned-Tane-of-the-heavens
On the sands at the Crimson Bowl, wherein the Exalted one rejoiced,
In the implanting of parenthood, sacred Implanting, heavenly Implanting in times remote;
'Twas then blood welled forth flood-like to the house exit;
Thus like the stars, O son, were you conceived,
Acquired the Recess of the mind, the Recess of the spirit;
You then strived, O son, strived for a Rauru of renown,
Strived for a self-possessed Rauru, and strived against the fate Rauru,
You, O son, remained steadfast on the narrow pathway to the wide world;
Then, O son, you leaped forth into the enduring world,
O son, ah me!
2
Come now, O son, show yourself
Upon the threshold of your parents' abode;
Bright is the morn at the Gateway of the heavens,
Bright is the morn at the Base of the heavens,
On this earth is Implanted all knowledge, O son!
Come, grasp in your hand the kit of sacred knowledge,
The kit of ancestral knowledge, the kit of life's knowledge,
Procured when the Renowned Tane of the heavens ascended by the tenuous pathway,
Thro' the Entrance to the Uppermost heaven.
Tane called upon the White glow of the heavens,
Spouse of Wayward southerly gales who begat the Mighty northerly blast,
She espoused the Wind god, and he released his family;
The Dark piercind typhoon, the Piercing hurricane, the Hot piercing blast;
Thence came the rising tempest, the piercing wind,
And 'twas thus he ascended to the twelfth heaven,
O son, ah me!
3
Come, O son, upon the pathway of Tane the parent;
To your dedication with the two-edged weapon of Tu the war god,
Those were the weapons that smote the hordes of Whiro the evil god at the Barrier of the heavens;
They fled down the Long descent, and now lure (mankind) to the night of utter darkness,
The groping night of Rua the earthquake god, who governs in the Nether-world,
Where he remains the enemy of the many offspring of Tane the parent in the enduring world.
Make your way now, O son, to the Outer gateway of the heavens,
Behold Tu of the flushed face, Tu of the burning face,
Tu of the tormented face, Tu of the angry face,
He will tie the food knot of Hine the maid deceived by the male,
Which she bequeathed unto Tane the parent,
Thus possessed of all talent was Tane thereafter,
O son, ah me!
4
Come, O son, hold fast to the parental vine,
And awaken the Celestial knowledge and the Terrestrial knowledge;

Take hold, hold fast, firmly enclose in the Recess of the mind,
The Recess of the spirit, the Recess of the deepest thought,
The Recess of the parent inherited from Tane.
Welcome, O Tuteremoana! Open wide your ears and listen;
Listen with ears of Rongo the auditor of renown, Rongo the auditor from the heavens,
And Tupai the audior of occult teachings.
Destined (you will be) for the Summit of the heavens,
Speed onward to the Mid pillar of the heavens,
There to embrace the earth mound with vitality endowed;
Hine the maid of clustered leaves will dance with joy,
Tend her with care, garner the harvest, store it until it overflows,
This is your bounty, O Rongo of the far flung fields! This the bounteous harvest time,
The long awaited snaring time of the year
When calaashes overflow with fat,
O son, ah me! (Ngata, 1928).

When the birth was proving to be difficult, the woman would be taken to the 'tūāhu' which is a sacred place where rites were conducted. She would select an assistant to help her. Even at this different location an oriori could still be sung as the child entered this world. The woman would kneel while the assistant pressed her knees against the abdomen of the woman in labour then push. As they got in to this position the tohunga would then recite another karakia to help welcome the baby (Best, 1929). If it was known that the child would be a female, all karakia that helped her would be dedicated to Hine-te-iwaiwa. All male children were dedicated to Tūmatauenga so that they may grow up to be strong warriors for their iwi.

In the event of a stillborn birth it is believed that their spirit is usually evil. It sets out only to proclaim darkness. Sometimes the spirit of the fetus was able to posses other animals and reak havoc. When this was known, a tohunga would be required to prevent anything more hazardous from happening by performing a karakia over the fetus. For obvious reasons, most people feared the spirit of a stillborn. It is thought that the spirit was evil because it sought revenge on those who did not care for it properly (Tregear, 1926).

For those women who could not have children they would use objects that would act as dolls. They would nurse these dolls as if they were their own children. They would carry them around as they did their work and they would play with and sing to them. The mothers would sing to them the same oriori that other mothers would sing to their living children (Ngata, 1928). Some could see this as the 'mother' showing how much love she has to give and how much compassion she has for children. Other times, if a woman felt like she desired a real child, she would seek a 'whāngai' child. This rautaki was pretty common amongst Māori and still is to this day.

POST PARTURITION

For most of the rituals and ceremonies that take place after birth, love was a consistent expression. Love, respect, and all things that help a child grow into a strong individual and vigorous warrior. These signs appear when the child is encouraged by the tohunga, his parents and all his iwi that surrounded him as he/she is welcomed into this world. Although it could be argued that the only reason that our tīpuna used to go through such a fuss was because of our strong superstitions, the fact that the child was well cared for and looked after by the entire village still shows the amount of manaakitanga towards all children. If

equity can be classed as an embedded expression then that would also be an evident expression at some point. This mostly relates to all the children of the village as all the children eat, play and do most things together, the chiefs children and the commoners included. No one interfered with the children too much as doing so was seen as an act against the atua Māori.

Once the baby was born, the mother, the assistant/s, and the tohunga would return to the whare puhi. If the child unfortunately didn't survive, the woman and her attendants would stay at the whare puhi and mourn the loss of the infant. It is also believed that the mother of the child would not leave the whare until her baby was buried (Best, 1929). On very rare ocassions, the child could be born still in the caul. This would be refered to as a ‘noho kahu' and it is believed that the child would grow up to be a famous warrior (Best, 1926).

If the woman gave birth outside of the whare kōhanga she would move into the whare afterwards and remain there for several days. The whenua (placenta) was described as the first home of the child (Mead, 2003). A karakia was performed over the whenua to help make the next child born be vigorous and healthy.

The severing of the iho was usually done by the either the kuia of the infant, the midwife, a close relative or the tohunga. If the cutting of the umbilical chord was felt by the mother, it was seen as a bad omen. If the iho was knotty then it would be noted as a sign that the next child would be a boy. The act of severing the iho is called ‘waituhi’. The'pito' is the end of the umbilical cord that is connected to the child. The 'iho' is the middle of the cord. The 'rauru' is the loose end of the umbilical cord. The iho would then be taken back to the whenua, buried either in a tree or in the ground and a rock will be placed on top labelled: *Te Iho o .* (Best, 1929). The area in which it was buried had to be somewhere where no one would pass by often, such as an urupā (cemetery) or another particular area that was reserved for the 'whenua' of the children. This was because the whenua is the sacred place of growth of the newborn and if it was tampered with that could affect the upbringing of the child (Tregear, 1926).In some areas it would be placed in the pito of a honey-suckle tree or rewarewa. With the seed pod being shaped almost like a canoe, a tohunga would take this seed pod down to a river or stream and recite a karakia as it was placed in the water. If it flipped then that was seen as a bad omen (Best, 1929).

After giving birth, the mother would go down to the stream with her assistant; there she would lie in the stream on her back while the assistant used her foot to push and clean out the woman’s puku of any of the whenua or toto (blood) still remaining inside her.

Each iwi has their own order of rituals that take place after giving birth. For this report I will refer to the most common order that these rituals take place:

1) *Tua*
2) *Tohi*
3) *Te Koroingo/Maioha*
4) *Pure*

The Tua Rite or 'Tuatanga tamariki' was predominantly only performed over the first born. The reason being is that the first born is the most sacred. This rite was performed at the whare kōhanga and the purpose of this was for the tapu to be removed from the child and mother *(*Savage, 1966). The tua rite generally took place eight days after the child was born. It commonly involved a hākari to purify the whare. There were four different ovens (umu) for this ceremony:

1) *Umu Tuakaha* - Small oven with food only for the tohunga
2) Umu Potaka - Food for those who helped pray and provide for the delivery of a successful birth
3) Umu Ruahine - Food for the women involved in the rituals
4) Umu Tukupara - Food for everyone else not classed in the above sections

The umu that are refered to are different from the usual hangi pits. All preparations and everything involved, including the people preparing the hākari, were all deemed tapu. This ritual took place at the whare puhi seven days after the mother gave birth and usually before the tohi was performed. There were different forms of tua for each gender; for males - *Tua o Tū*, for females - *Tua o Rongo* (Best, 1929). Sometimes a person (of any age) was sacrificed for the tua. This person was usually selected from the lower class or was of another tribe. If the person was a child, their body would be sliced, cooked and the heart would go to the mother of the newborn baby who usually would not eat it. The body would go to the rest of the members present. Eventually, this tikanga proved to cause too many fights between families and tribes and ended in war (Best, 1929).

The **Tohi Rite** took place at a stream. The infant was baptised by the tohunga of the village. If there was no tohunga available then a messenger would be sent to require the assistance of a tohunga from the nearest village. Either parent would be responsible for carrying the infant from the whare to the stream. The tohunga would poke five holes in the ground at the stream then place a rākau upright in a sixth hole. Six is a significant number because it represents the amount of nights it took for Papatūānuku to give birth to our primal atua Māori (Best, 1929). With the stick having been prepared, the child would be held up by the tohunga and should there be any disturbances that occured as he did so, such as a lighting strike or any kind of unpleasant change of weather, this would be seen as a bad sign. If nothing happened then the child would be deemed to live the life of a strong, courageous warrior and the child would be well taken care of by his/her parents (Savage, 1966).

There are different kinds of tohi that could be performed. It was common in most iwi for the tohunga to go straight into reciting his karakia over the child. However, Ngāti Kahungunu have a slightly different version stating that the tohunga himself is performed on prior to the baptism (Best, 1929). There were also different karakia that the tohunga would perform for each gender. If the child were male, the tohunga would dedicate the karakia to Tūmatauenga, the god of war and humans. If the infant were female, the karakia would be dedicated to Hine-te-iwaiwa (Best, 1924).

The tohunga would have a branch of 'mapua' or 'tawhiri' and six leaves. The tohunga said his karakia as he walked towards the mother and child at the water edge. He would touch the child with the greenery, dip it in the water, then sprinkle it on the infant at a certain part

of the karakia. Water is everything. "Te ora o ngā mea katoa ko te wai; ki te kore he wai kāore he painga o ngā mea katoa." Once the karakia was done, the tohunga would place the leaves in the river and watch as they floated downstream. If they stayed close together the child would live a prosperous life. If the leaves scattered and separated then that would be taken as a bad sign (Best, 1929). This would only occur for the tohi of a child of high rank.

Often tohunga would make mention of Io, the supreme being. As Io is such a majestical being, the tohunga must stand in the river if he wishes to refer to his name in his karakia. The water of the river is the purest element on earth. If anything wished to pollute the waters or the priest's karakia it would be automatically purified, and thus have no affect on the karakia (Tregear, 1926). The **Tohi Ariki** was for those of high rank. For those not of high rank it was refered to as the **Tohi Kura**. This term means the ceremony is mroe flexible and could possibly be postponed. The **Tohi Raupara** involved the sacrificing of a human for his mana, however, this tikanga was abolished as it caused a lot of wars between tribes. Also, according to Yates, once the child had been named and the karakia was done, small pebbles would be shoved down the child's throat so that his heart may be hardened and he would not take pity on others. When the child had swallowed the pebbles the party would return to the main whare (Yate, 1835).

Next was the **koroingo/maioha** which was also usually only reserved for the first born. News should have already spread throughout the region that the child had been born and usually only the closest family members from both sides of the family would gather in front of the whare kōhanga. This ceremony would take place before the burial of the pito which was generally buried eight days after the birth. Out on the front porch of the whare kōhanga lay the takapau wharanui (ceremonial mat) which the mother would sit on with the infant in her arms. The husband would be seated next to her. If the child was a male then the husband's family would give gifts first and then the mother's family would proceed. Selected kaikōrero (speakers) would stand, deliver their whaikōrero (speech) pertaining to the welcoming of the newborn and acknowledge both sides fo the family. Once the whaikōrero commenced, the tohunga would address the child and welcome him with a maioha.

An example of a maioha is presented below. This item was performed by Opotiki Mai Tawhiti, a group from the Eastern Bay of Plenty region. It is a type of oriori for the grandson Hikairo, of the Māori King, Tūheitia. I have only refered to the first half of the waiata, where it introduces Hikairo to this world and also introduces the world to Hikairo. The first two lines are the same as the first two lines as the oriori for Tuteremoana. This is evidence of the tradition of oriori still living.

E TAMA HIKAIRO
Nau mai e tama kia mihi atu au
I haere mai koe i te kunenga mai o te tangata
Te tai ki Hawaiki, ki te whai ao
Ki te ao mārama

(chorus)
E tama Hikairo
Haere mai rā
Nō runga rawa koe tō te mana

O te Kīngi Tūheitia...

The purpose of the maioha is to welcome the child from the 'untouched havens' of the spirit world into the world of the living. It speaks of the stages the child goes through being guided by our atua into this world. In most of his karakia that the tohunga does at this particular ceremony, he refers to *'Te hōkai rauru nui, te hōkai rauru whiwhia, te hōkai maruaitu'.* He uses these three different definitions to acknowledge all aspects of the child entering our world (Best, 1929). By addressing all aspects of all kinds of births, we maintain balance.

> Te hōkai rauru nui = normal birth.
> Te hōkai rauru whiwhia = prolonged labour/difficult birth
> Te hōkai maruaitu (marua aitu) = longer labour and still born child that could possibly result in the mother also losing her life.

The tohunga would repeat the maioha again to secure good intentions and good fortune for the child. Reciting it only once was frowned upon and would upset the whānau of the child. The family would give their gifts which were placed next to the head of the infant, the whānau would say more words of acknowledgment, then the speaking rights would go back to the tohunga. He would stand in front of the mother facing the audience and then recite the whakaaraara pā, a type of waiata to alert people to the happenings in the village. This was to hopefully bring some manaakitanga (hospitality) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) to the child (Best, 1929). The tohunga would face the child and repeat the maioha. At this point in time anyone could now go up and greet the infant.

The pure rite would usually take place at the whare of the family. This was the hākari where all common areas that were a part of the previous rituals were made noa again by the tohunga which meant that these areas were no longer sacred and safe to go about like any other day. All that were involved in all rituals were to attend this so that the tapu may be lifted from them (Best, 1924).

Once all things returned to normal, the family would proceed with their everyday lives. It was from the birth of the children that oriori were composed. Most of these oriori were sung to children to welcome them to the world, to remind them where they come from, to encourage them to strive to be successful, to be humble, to be all things good and provide for his/her iwi (Ngata, 1928). The child was usually carried everywhere the mother went as to make sure that the child is safe, warm and loved. This would continue for many years so that the child may watch everyone in the village doing all the duties they need to in order to keep their village alive and thriving. The child learned all these duties and did what he/she needed to do to contribute to his iwi. Time was also reserved for the child to play and enjoy some entertainment with other children of the village.

CONCLUSION

This research has shown the richness of our tikanga around birthing practices and how valuable our rituals were to ensure that the child, the parents and the wider whānau were protected and guided throughout the entire prenatal and antenatal period. Embedded oral expressions (karakia, oriori, maioha, whakaaraara pā) were attached to all of the events and

rites presented in this report. They were an integral part of this particular life cycle. Due to a number of reasons most of these practices now cease to exist. However, there is a growing interest in recent years to reintroduce some of these rituals and we are reconnecting to our tīpuna, to our awa, to our atua in a much stronger manner than ever beffore. The effect of which is to create a brighter and more stable future for our tamariki, mokopuna.

There are a number of personal learnings I have taken from conducting this research:

- I have learnt there a lot of different emotions that not only the pregnant mother used to go through, but also those around her and the responsibilities that they continued to carry out for their village, iwi, as well as the unborn children.
- I learnt of the array of emotions that a woman goes through if she yearned for a child but could not be able to have one.
- I learnt about the spiritual journey that the infant goes through as they enter this world.
- I have a deeper understanding of how important a tohunga is and how crucial he is to ensuring the safety of everyone.
- I learnt about the love and respect that an entire iwi can have for a child.
- I learnt about the values we carry of our atua Māori and how we maintain balance by acknowledging our connections to our taiāo (environment).

Having a better understanding of our past, our rituals, our history and the teachings of of our tīpuna makes it easier for us to create a better future for our children. Conducting this research has ignited a passion within me to research more in this area and carry out these tikanga, to take these lessons home with me and encourage others to explore how we can create that same environment for our people. It is important to maintain these tikanga as they are a part of our identity and a part of our future. They were conducted for particular reasons and for a number of reasons they were stopped. The effects of which are detrimental to our whānau, hapū, and iwi. But more importantly the calming effect of the oral expressions that are embedded in every aspect of pregnancy and birth are more significant and profound than they are given credit for.

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