



MAKETŪ



MAKETŪ

He kohinga kōrero nō
ngā uri o Maketū

He mea tautoko nā

WHIITIKI
WHAKATIKA
Te Ao Māori



WĀNANGA - MAKETŪ



This artwork is a whare wānanga. At the base is the whare, the tūāpapa, showing whakapapa as the foundation of Maketū.

Waharua kopito carries kawa-led leadership, the responsibility passed down through generations.

Niho taniwha shows resilience, the strength to protect whānau through change and challenge.

Haehae rārangi mark the divisions of laws like the Tohunga Suppression Act, but also the paths iwi created for themselves.

Pātiki stands for service and manaakitanga, the care that kept kaumātua and mokopuna safe.

Together the patterns show Maketū as a people grounded in tino rangatiratanga, mātauranga, and unity.

Nā Tukaroto Mahuta

Tahia te ara kia wātea, tahia te ara kia wātea.

Tahia i te pū, i te kore, i te pō, i te ao.

Ki te awatea!

Kia whiitiki whakatika—nau mai!

Clear the path, make way.

From the void, from nothingness, from darkness into light.

Into the light of day!

Prepare, rise, and step forward—welcome!

“Ko ngā mātauranga makaurangi ka kawetonutia, kia turakina ai ngā aupēhitanga o te wā. Nō roto mai i ngā tātai mātauranga makaurangi heke Iho, ko ngā hua motuhake, ngā hua whakawhanake, nō mai anō tātou e okea ururoatia nei ngā kaupareparenga o te wā. E kore rawa ēnei hekeihotanga e tau noaiho ki te rae, ka titia ki te kukū o te ngākau, e whakatangata ai te Iwi Māori.”

“Our ancestral wisdom carries proven pathways through crisis. Embedded within our inter-generational story-telling lies a profound knowledge of survival and adaptation, handed down through centuries of overcoming adversity. These traditional narratives don't just tell us who we are, they show us how to be resilient”

- Huirama Matatahi / Pou Urungi – Whiitiki Whakatika

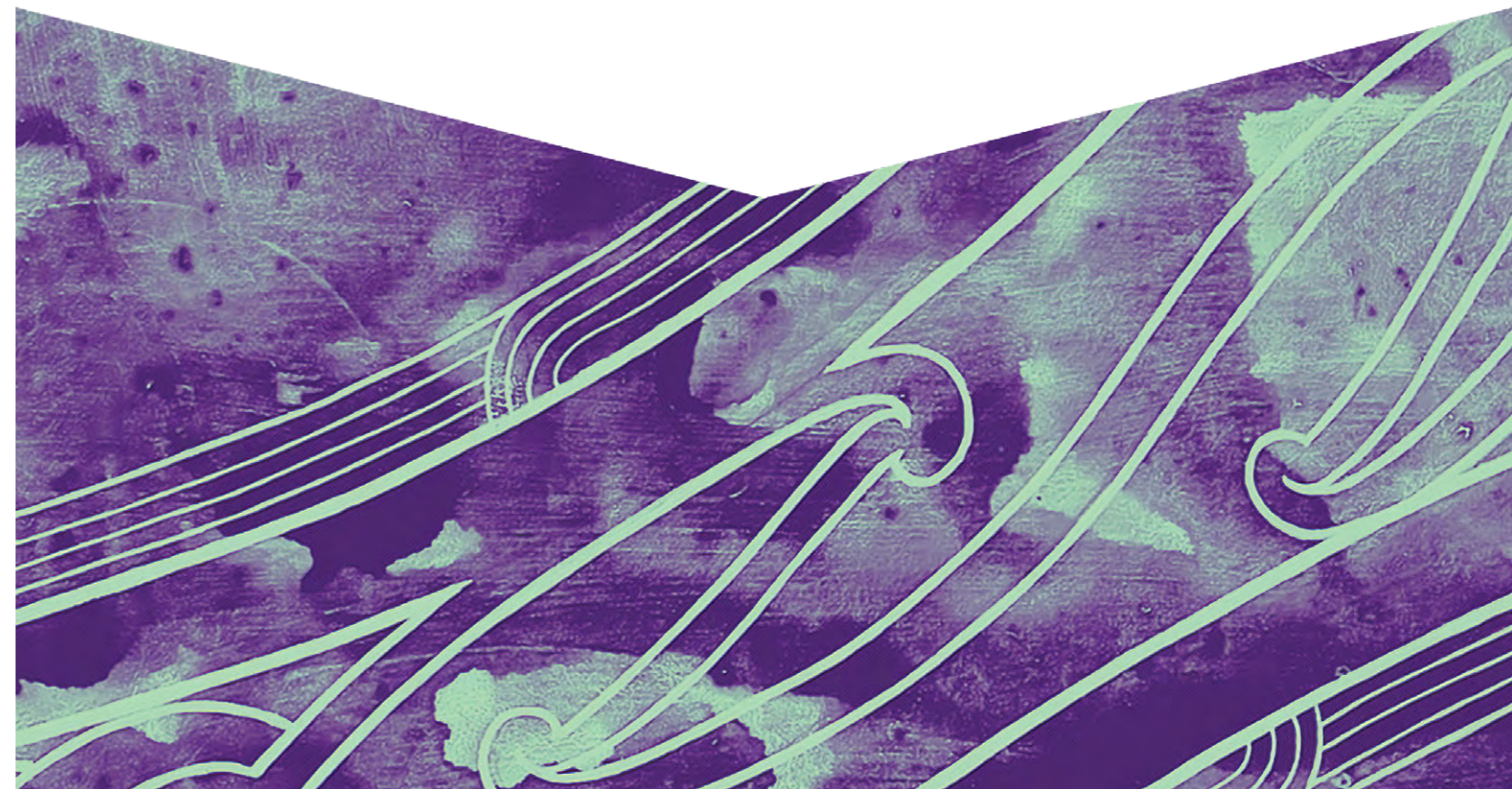
NGĀ KŌRERO O ROTO

11	WHITI 1 Whiitiki Whakatika Te Pūtake o te Kaupapa
17	WHITI 2 Ngā Tukanga o Whiitiki Whakatika Methodology
27	WHITI 3 Te Pū Te Arotake Rangahau
33	WHITI 4 Te Kore Kōrero Tuku Iho
63	WHITI 5 Te Pō Tātari ā Kōrero
137	WHITI 6 Te Ao Te Whakamātau
141	WHITI 7 Te Awatea Te Whakapūmau

WHIITIKI WHAKATIKA

Te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

WHITI 1



Māori resilience in times of adversity was guided by tikanga and mātauranga. Hei kaupare ake i ngā aituā, i ngā taumahatanga o te wā.

Today, this truth remains - the blueprint to our resilience lies within the tikanga and kōrero tuku iho from our tūpuna.

As the world increasingly turns to Indigenous knowledge for solutions, Mātauranga Māori is a puna whakaora—a healing source for those in Aotearoa seeking ways to protect whakapapa.

MĀORI HISTORY WITH PANDEMICS

Historically, Māori have been disproportionately affected by pandemics, epidemics and infectious diseases. But in recent times, the tikanga and mātauranga of te iwi Māori, including practices of isolation, rāhui and aukati became the blueprint for the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Opposite Image: Te Waata Cribb



THE PROTECTION OF MĀTAURANGA AND TĀNGATA

For te iwi Māori there is a gap in the documentation of kōrero and rangahau from whānau and hapū around their traditional ways of protecting iwi during pandemics and infectious diseases. To better prepare and protect whakapapa, Whiitiki Whakatika collectivised to provide resources and guides informed by kōrero tuku iho and to support future national responses to pandemics and infectious diseases.

TE KOTAHITANGA O AOTEAROA WHĀNUI

Whiitiki Whakatika is the first rangahau project of its kind and was established to document and integrate Mātauranga Māori practices of resilience to support future national responses to pandemics and infectious diseases.

Throughout the duration of the project a rōpū of kairangahau Māori travelled the motu, capturing kōrero of Māori knowledge systems, including tikanga, pūrākau, and kōrero tuku iho. The sharing of the mātauranga is safeguarded under the Tiaki Taonga and Intellectual Property policies that Whiitiki Whakatika operates by, ensuring taonga and Mātauranga Māori are cared for with manaakitanga, whakaute, confidentiality and privacy.

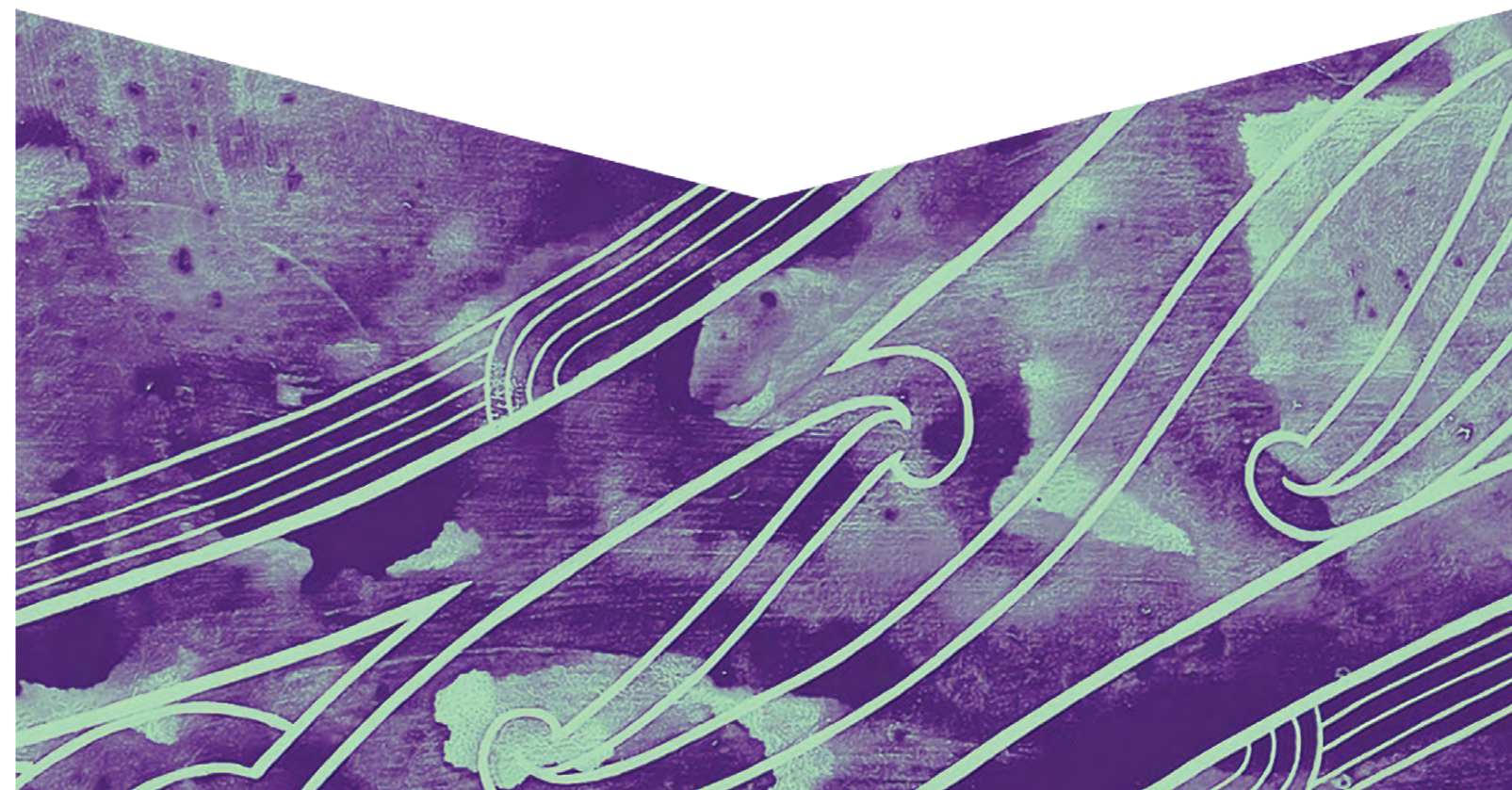
*Kia noho ko ngā kurahuna o ia iwi, o ia hapū,
o ia whānau, hei kurahuna motuhake ki a rātou mā.*

Where consent is given, and whānau, hapū and iwi allow, the mātauranga will also contribute to, and inform, an Aotearoa whānui response of kotahitanga when it comes to the context of future pandemics - ensuring that Māori voices, mātauranga and solutions are at the centre of national preparedness in the protection of uri whakatupu.

NGĀ TUKANGA RANGAHAU

Rangahau Methodology

WHITI 2



METHOD OLOGY

Whiitiki Whakatika Methodology

Whiitiki Whakatika is tikanga driven and Mātauranga Māori led. The approach to this rangahau project takes guidance from the mātauranga within the phases of Te Pū, Te Kore, Te Pō, Te Ao, and Te Awatea. Each phase in the methodology represents the unique positions this rangahau project sits in while on its haerenga to inform a foundation and guide for responses to future pandemics.

Ngā hua? What are the outcomes and what to expect?

In time, Mātauranga Māori will contribute to informing a kotahitanga approach to supporting Aotearoa whānui in pandemic responses - with the potential to influence national policy and support those on the frontlines who are responding on behalf of their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Ahead of the national approach being developed, Whiitiki Whakatika have reconnected with whānau, hapū and iwi to present the findings of the rangahau and its common themes.

TE PŪ TE KORE TE PŌ TE AO TE AWATEA

This book is shaped and guided by the Whiitiki Whakatika methodology, ensuring that its structure, tone, and flow reflect the principles and processes at the heart of the rangahau.

Each phase of the methodology provided the framework for how the kōrero was gathered, analysed, and shared in this book, allowing the reo and lived experiences of whānau, hapū and iwi from this wānanga to be presented in a way that honours both their context and their significance.

In doing so, this book embodies the methodology itself— ensuring that the stories told remain grounded in the kaupapa, uara, and tikanga that shaped their collection.

WHIITIKI WHAKATIKA METHOD OLOGY

TE PŪ
Te Arotake Rangahau



Defining research objectives
and parameters

TE KORE
Kōrero Tuku Iho



Narrative collection across
Hui, Wānanga and Uiui

TE PŌ
Tātari ā Kōrero



Analysis of narratives
Ā-rohe, Ā-takiwā and Ā-kaupapa

TE AO
Te Whakamātau



Practical application of
narratives in agency

TE AWATEA
Te Whakapūmau



Analysis of narratives
Ā-rohe, Ā-takiwā and Ā-kaupapa



Hinakitia



HEI TŪĀPAPA

From Te Pū, where all knowledge begins, the tuna moves with purpose. Te Rauiri, the unseen gates, guide its journey, shaping its path toward the hīnaki.

But the hīnaki is more than a net—it is a vessel of mātauranga, woven with intention, capturing wisdom so it can be held, nurtured, and shared.

Like the tuna, knowledge flows. It is guided, gathered, and gifted forward—a living force, forever moving, forever growing.

Taonga | Design & whakamārama by Tukaroto Mahuta

WHIITIKI WHAKATIKA NAU MAI



The Whiitiki Whakatika artwork has been woven with intention, guided by the incantation of the Whiitiki Whakatika kaupapa.

The foundation of this work is likened to the central ridgepole of a whare, or the sky above, representing the journey we follow in learning, thought, and spirit.

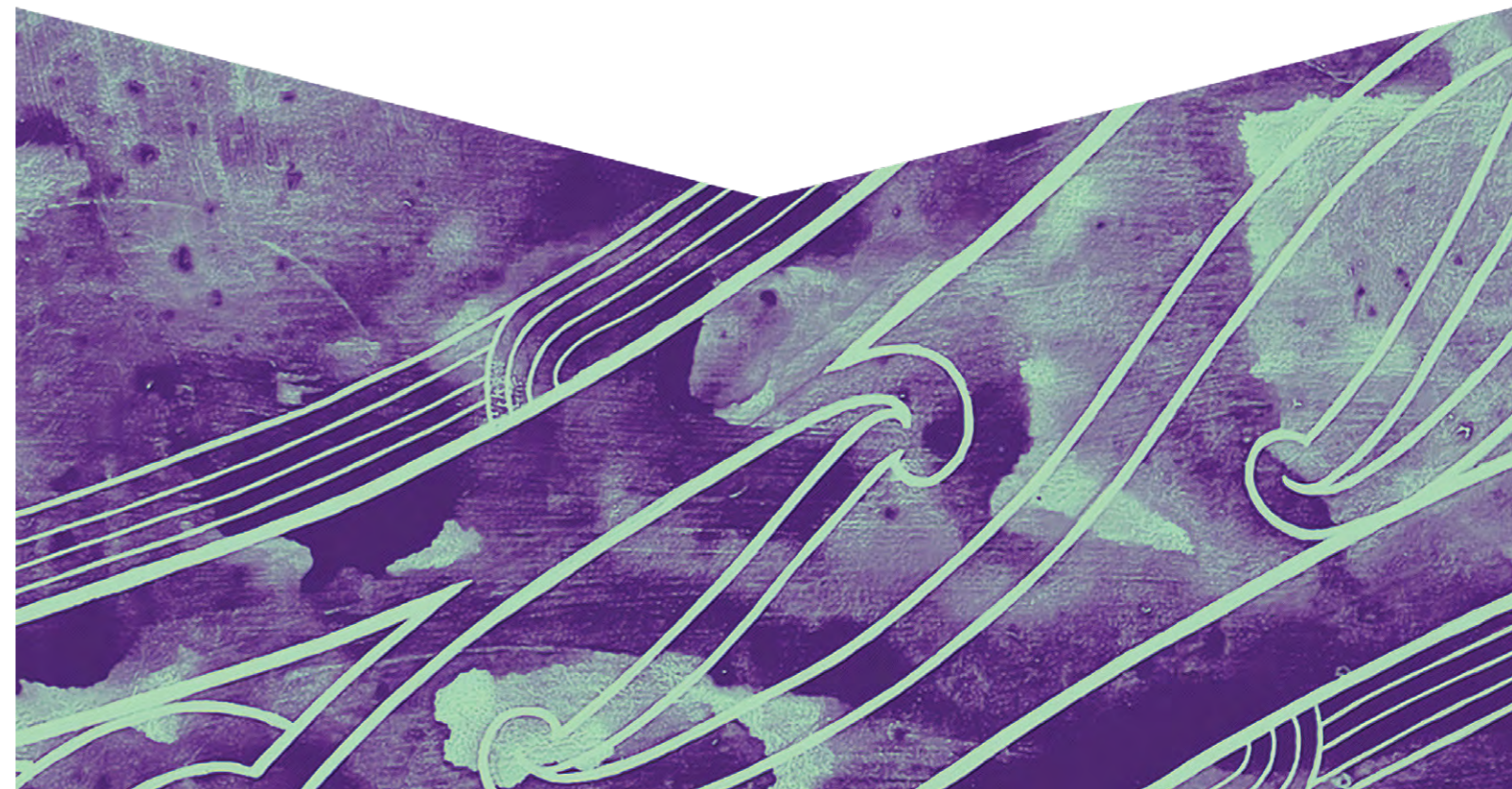
The puhoro symbolises the many pathways of this kaupapa and the mangopare represents resilience, determination, and the strength to walk this journey with integrity.

As a result, the Whiitiki Whakatika symbol stands as the central pillar of this kaupapa. A spiral or a rauru, is the portal that opens into every path that is followed.

TE PŪ

Te Arotake Rangahau

WHITI 3





TE PŪ TE RAUIRI

Te Arotake Rangahau

The tuna or eel has become the symbol of mātauranga that is carried through the many currents of life.

The tuna represents the knowledge that is collated through kōrero tuku iho and the mātauranga shared.

Te rauiri, or gates, are placed in a stream to guide and channel the tuna towards and into hīnaki, which capture the tuna. This is the initial phase of the methodology concept where necessary preparations are made in order to collate knowledge.

Te Pū, the darkness or nothingness, is likened to the initial phase of the birth of Mātauranga Māori, which represents the establishment of parameters, boundaries and the scope for rangahau to take place.

When first establishing Whiitiki Whakatika as a kaupapa, Te Pū was the preparation phase where parameters, boundaries and the scoping for rangahau to take place was established in order to collate mātauranga. There was a review of published and grey literature that was conducted to establish the extent to which Māori approaches to pandemic preparedness and infectious diseases have been documented in its exact context.

Protection of Mātauranga & Tāngata

Whiitiki Whakatika were intentional in the approach to wānanga by acknowledging that the interaction and engagement between whānau, hapū and iwi was respectful and conducted with care, and by doing so empowering local involvement where possible.

Of significance, areas where whānau, hapū and iwi involvement was key included the participation of a local facilitator, rangahau champions and mātanga panellist.

To ensure the engagement with these representatives was tikanga led, Whiitiki Whakatika developed key policies that highlighted Māori involvement along the way. These policies included:

- Rangatira & Mātanga Policy
- Intellectual Property & Tiaki Taonga Policy
- Rangatahi Rangahau Champion Policy

Each policy highlighted the importance of contribution and the means in which that contribution was protected from a tikanga and kawa perspective in accordance with the appropriate research ethics acts.

Rangatira & Mātanga Policy

The role of mātanga in the rangahau is a sacred one to acknowledge the generosity and trust in sharing generations of mātauranga tuku iho pertaining to whakapapa, te taiao, and an ā-wairua realm which they bring to the kaupapa. Intergenerational knowledge-holders carry whakapapa, stories, and a wealth of knowledge.



Intellectual Property & Tiaki Taonga Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework upon which the assurance that Mātauranga Maori and IP remains protected with mātanga. Tongikura Ltd on behalf of Whiitiki Whakatika maintain appropriate agreed kaitiaki responsibilities through the rangahau phase right through to the development of any framework.

On behalf of Tongikura and Whiitiki Whakatika, whānau, hapū and iwi as kaitiaki have the full and exclusive decision-making authority to Taonga Māori, as guaranteed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Any korero will only be shared with the consent of the appropriate kaitiaki who are sharing their mātauranga.

Whiitiki Whakatika is guided by the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance and Wai 262 Tiaki Taonga principles, recognising that data relating to Māori and other Indigenous peoples must be managed to uphold their rights, interests, and wellbeing.



Rangatahi Rangahau Champions

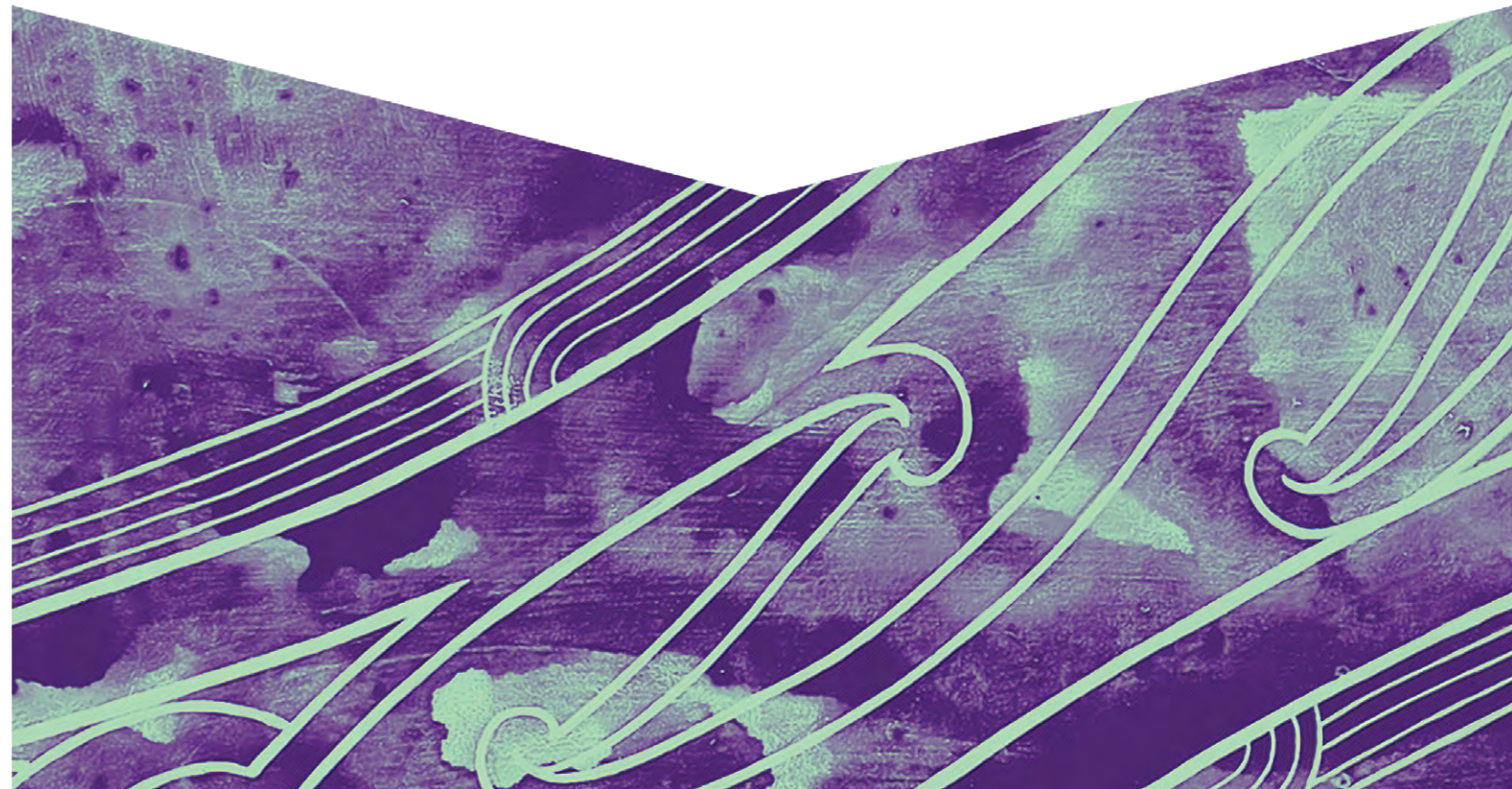
Rangatahi Rangahau Champions have participated in wānanga as a way of ensuring succession is achieved and that intergenerational transfer of knowledge is a part of the process, ensuring that a rangatahi perspective and interpretation of information was captured and understood.

Rangatahi Champions have supported the research across the Te Kore phase through wānanga engagements, data collation, data dissemination and analysis hui. This has also supported inter-generational transfer of knowledge and rangatahi perspectives on information to be included in the rangahau process.

TE KORE

Kōrero Tuku Iho

WHITI 4





TE KORE

The hīnaki represents the capturing or collating of knowledge being the net where the tuna swim into and are trapped. This second phase sees the gathering of relevant information, data, kōrero and knowledge.

Te Kore (the potential) – ngā tātai hekenga iho, wairua, mauri, whakaaro e whakatangata ai te ora – this is the code of creation in which ideation, innovation and evolution seek to conceptualise knowledge. This too is where knowledge is explored and sourced.

This second phase sees the gathering of relevant mātauranga, tikanga, information, data, kōrero and knowledge. This too is where knowledge is explored and sourced.

FORMAL ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Maketū, a place of first landfall and enduring significance to Te Arawa, was chosen as the setting for this wānanga. It was here that *Te Waata Cribb* welcomed us. His kōrero opened with whakapapa, grounding the discussion in tūpuna and whenua. Offered in humility, it reflected tikanga that honours ancestors and sets the foundation for all that followed.

Te Waata is a man deeply steeped in the tikanga, reo, history, and mātauranga of Te Arawa. Schooled by esteemed elders of the iwi, he has carried forward the old wisdoms. He takes this responsibility with great seriousness, always ensuring that tikanga is followed in ways that keep him and others safe, underpinned by a deep aroha for the people.

The wānanga drew upon deep wells of mātauranga which Te Waata carries forward to help keep his community safe, connected, and strong. Tikanga is not treated as ritual alone, but as a living guide for how to act with care and love for the people.

The kōrero emphasised that tino rangatiratanga is not an abstract concept but a lived reality: choosing to stand free of colonial constraint, and to draw strength from reo, tikanga, and tribal history. During COVID-19, this aspiration of mana motuhaketanga was upheld in Maketū through collective community effort - iwi, hapū, and whānau standing together to care for one another, empowered by the wisdoms of their ancestors.

Opposite Image: Te Waata Cribb & Huhana Rolleston



TRANSCRIPT ONE

FORMAL WĀNANGA TRANSCRIPTS - NGĀ KŌRERO Ā TE IWI

Te Waata Cribb

LOCATION	Whakaue (Tapiti) Marae, 643 Maketū Road, Maketū, Bay of Plenty 3189 Maketū
DATE	10 February 2025
START TIME	3pm
END TIME	6pm
TRANSCRIBER	Erana Kihi
REVIEWER	Julian Rolleston

Important Notice as to the Basis of Disclosure of this Information

This transcript is provided for the purposes of reporting internally to Whiitiki Whakatika only and not for wider distribution, in line with Tongikura Taonga and Mātauranga Māori Policy. This is consistent with the agreed basis on which the mahi of Whiitiki Whakatika would be shared – that the collection of views, accounts and stories regarded as taonga tuku iho in this document and associated information have been generated within the tikanga agreed and set by Tongikura Ltd. On behalf of all kaitiaki involved, all mātanga and associated whānau, hapū and iwi assert their mana motuhake and tino rangatiratanga to the information and to the circumstances under which the information may be disclosed.

ERANA KIHĪ

Oh well, i mua i tā tātou tīmata, tēnei noa te tuku mihi ki a koe, te whakawātea mai i a koe ki te kōrero ki a mātou. Me te mōhio tonu, he kaupapa anō tāu i te marae rā, e whakariterite mō te tūpāpaku e whakaeke mai ana. Very, very appreciative for the opportunity, really, to cram things in. Ko Erana ahau, nō Waikato taku nani. Nō Whatawhata, he Kihī ahau. I te taha o taku māmā, nō Ruatoki ahau, nō Ngāti Rongo, nō Ngāti Koura ki Otenuku. I pakeke tahi mai au i a Pua mā, kua waimarie ki te whakauru ki roto i ēnei mahi wānanga.

Whiitiki Whakatika — the ingoa came from the Director of Te Niwha, who are the ones who cover this research project. Yeah, e kōrero ana mō te āhua o te Māori. I don't even know what the word “resilience” is in Māori. Engari kei te kimi tauira, kōrero ōnamata, ngā kōrero tuku iho, ngā kōrero mō ngā wā o te Mate Kōwheori, ka mutu ko ngā kitenga ānamata mō ngā reanga e whakaeke mai ana. Around resilience, around what are the stories in your history that dictate the way that you respond today, and what are those things that you're gonna carry forward for your mokopuna?

We've been to Matakana, and the koroua took us around to all the wāhi motuhake on Matakana — that place Ngāi Te Rangi on Matakana. We talked about his connection to other iwi, which reaffirmed relationships. And I think from that we drew quite easily the connection between the people of today and the stories of old. Their version of resilience, their mana motuhake, how they practice it. Then he talked about the urupā that they have on the moutere. In the time of the flu, how they had mass graves and whatever kōrero he knew. We just fire away some questions — if it goes this way then cool — and then whatever our people are willing to share. Really different. All of the wānanga to date have been different as. I think in our research stuff, in our analysis, we've been saying the uniqueness of a whānau, hapū and iwi is the thing that you wanna capture the most. So while some, they start all the way back over there, some are like, “Nah, this was our COVID response and this is why we know that it was gonna work for us. This is what we'd do in the future.” Yeah, otherwise the kaupapa is Te Ao Māori so anything that falls within that e hāngai ana. Ka pai, yeah.

TE WAATA CRIBB

Chur! Tēnā koutou, tātou e noho nei i roto i te āhuatanga o tō tātou kaupapa nāna nei tātou i whakakotahi i te rā nei.

Kia ngāwari mai koutou i taku tae tūreiti mai, he nui ōku pōtae ka mau i a au, nōreira, e tuku nei i taku aroha ki a koutou me te mihi anō ki a koe tuahine kia hoki ake ngā mahara ki ngā wā e tamariki ana atu i te wāhi e noho nei tāua. Otirā ki te kura, ki ngā mahi kapa haka tatū iho nei ki tēnei kaupapa. Mihi atu ana ki a koutou, wahine mā, nō Tūhoe, otirā nō ngā kārangaranga hapū katoa tātou me ngā mātāwaka, tae atu ki ngā tamariki, e mihi atu ana.

Ok, kia timata ngā kōrero nē? ngā wānanga? Tuatahi ko wai au, ko Te Waata tōku ingoa. He uri ahau nō tētehi o ngā tino koroua o tēnei wāhi, ko Te Pōkiha tōna ingoa, i noho ia ki reira ki te kokonga rā o tēnei papa whenua. Kei runga rā tētehi wāhi kua rāhuitia e ngā tūpuna o mua, i reira ko te ingoa o tōna whare ko Kawatapuārangi, he tupuna heke iho. Me kī nā Kawatapuārangi, ko Pikiāo Tuatahi, nāna ko Tamakari, nāna ko Pikiāo Tuarua, ko Te Tākinga, nā Te Tākinga, ko Awanui, ko Te Roi-o-te-whenua, ko Te Pou-ki-ō-Rehu, heke iho, heke iho, heke iho, ki ahau, ki taku whānau e noho nei ki tēnei takiwā o Maketū. Ehara i te mea kei te whakamanamana i ahau me taku noho ki tēnei whenua, ēngari he mihi ki ōku tūpuna nō rātou anō rā te whakaaro kia whai wāhi mai ai mātou ki tēnei whenua o Maketū. Ka mutu he kāinga, e kī ana rā te kōrero a Kahumatamomoe i tana haerenga ki uta i te kitenga o Ihenga i wētahi whenua me te koa o tōna ngākau kia haria a Kahu e Ihenga ki aua whenua rā, ēngari i rongo a Kahu i te makariri ō uta kāore ia i whakaae kia noho tūturu ake i reira. Ko tana kōrero, ko Maketū taku ipukarea, koirā me kī, te whānuitanga mai o tērā kōrero, ipukarea. Nā ko te ipukarea he wāhi ki te mea ka pau katoa i a koe ōu mātauranga, ka hoki atu anō rā koe ki te mātāpuna o te kōrero. Koirā te ipu, ko te ipukarea ko te wāhi ka inumia te wai, ka inumia kia kikī anō rā te hinengaro ki ngā kōrero, ki ngā mātauranga, ki ngā wānanga, ki ngā hiahia nui o te ngākau. Nō reira “Ko Maketū taku ipukarea”, he kōrero nō ngā tūpuna heke iho, heke iho, heke iho. Ko te kupu ipukarea e hoki atu ana rā ki Rarotonga. Nō reira he kupu ka rangona ki te whānuitanga o Te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa, ki te noho atu ahau me aku kōrero ki reira, kia kōrero au mō tēnei kupu te Hawaiki. Ahakoa ki hea haere atu ai koe ki ngā moutere o Te Moananui-ā-Kiwa, ka rongo koe i tērā, ka kite koe i tērā ingoa ko Hawaiki. He aha te pūtaka o te whakatikatika i te ingoa rā Hawaiki ki ngā moutere katoa o Te moananui-ā-Kiwa. Me mōhio he tikanga nui tērā te whakatika i te ingoa Hawaiki, ko Hawaiki-nui, Hawaiki-roa, Hawaiki-pāmamao, Hawaiki-tautahi, Hawaiki-areare-ki-tawhiti, Hawaiki-hoe-pae-tawhiti, te mea, te mea, te mea. Ka mutu ēhara i te kōrero nō te iwi kotahi, he kōrero kē ka rangona ki ngā marae katoa o te motu, nō reira he tino ingoa tēnei a Hawaiki. Nā, ko taku whakapae, ko taku whakapono hoki, ko te take e pēnei ana te whakatikatika i te ingoa Hawaiki ki ngā moutere katoa ahakoa ki hea haere atu ai ngā tūpuna te whakamahara noa i ngā tikanga ā ngā tūpuna. I timata mai i a Rangī, i timata mai i ngā atua, heke iho, heke iho. Kātahi ka kawea tērā ingoa ki ngā moutere katoa, kei wareware i a tātou te pūtaketanga mai o te tangata me ōna mātāpono, me ōna tikanga, engari kaua ko ōna tikanga katoa, ko ngā tikanga pai o tēnā moutere, o tēnā moutere, nō reira he wā ka tae ki tētehi moutere, ka kitea te whenua, ka whakawhenuatia

te tangata. Ka whakatangata whenuatia anō i a ia, a ia, kātahi ka mahue ko ngā tikanga kāore e pai. Ka tiki atu i ngā kōrero, i ngā tikanga e pai ana, e whakaora ana i te tangata. Kātahi ka mahue wērā mea kino ki muri, ko ngā mea pai ka kawea ki te moutere hou, ki te whenua hou, kātahi ka whakatō i aua tikanga pai ki te whenua hōu, kātahi ka whakarāweke i ngā tikanga. Haere te wā, haere te wā, ā, nā wai ka whānau mai ngā heahea, ngā tāngata kāore e tika me ō rātou nei tikanga hē ō mahi hē, kātahi ka whai i taua āhuatanga anō. Ka tiki atu i ngā tikanga pai o tērā wāhi me ngā hangarau me ngā rauemi e tika ana hei whakaora i te tangata kātahi ka mahue ngā mea kino ki muri, ā, ka kawea ki te moutere hou, haere, haere atu ana, haere atu ana ka tae atu rā ki tēnei whenua.

Engari, kia hoki atu au ki Rarotonga, ki Tahiti, ki te wāhi i puta mai ai tātou, tāua e noho nei. I roto i te poroporoaki o Houmaitawhiti ki tana waka, ki tana iwi, me mōhio tātou ko te wā i whakarite ai ngā tūpuna i a rātou anō mo te heketanga, mo te haerenga mai o te waka, he mea nui tēnei te whakarāhaki i tō iwi ki muri nei, ki muri ki te kāinga nei koe i kī ai ko tō ao, kia noho ai rātou ki muri ko koe ka haere. Kei te whakawehewehe i a koe anō tōu iwi, kei te mea atu au ki a Huhana, Huhana e noho koe i konei. Ā tōna wā i roto i te ao wairua tāua anō kite anō ai. Nō reira, he mea nui tēnei te whakawehewehe i a koe anō rā, i tō iwi. Nō reira i tangi. Nē, i rere i ngā roimata, ngā kupu poroporoaki, ngā kupu whakamānawa, kia mā i te wairua o ngā ope e rua. Nō reira, mehemea ka hoki anō rā te whakaaro, te āhua o te hinengaro me te whakaahuatanga tērā hui, i taua wā rā, he wā tino pōuri nē, ka tino rongo i te mamae, ngā auē, ngā tangi, ngā karanga. Nō reira whakariterite ana rātou i roto i te poroporoaki a Houmaitawhiti, koia tētahi o ngā tino tūpuna nō ngā wā o mua, i roto i tana kōrero ka mea atu rā ki tana iwi, haere koutou. Haere koutou ki te wāhi hou ki te wāhi i tae mai ai te waka o Māui, haere koutou ki te wāhi i hī ake ai e tō koutou tūpuna, haere ki te ara o Kupe, haere i te kāwai ā Māui kia whai oranga koutou. Ko ngā kōrero iti, ko ngā kōrero a te hunga heahea, koi whakarongo te taringa, engari me ū tonu rā koutou ki ngā tikanga pai, ki ngā tikanga e ora ai koe ki te whenua hou. Kotahi te tupuna rongonui o Hawaiki, ko Whakataupōtiki, kotahi te tupuna rongonui o Aotearoa ko Tamaūwhiti. Nā i roto i taua kōrero rā te mea, tērā kōrero iti nei, tērā kōrero whakarāpopoto nei. Kei te mea atu rā, kotahi te tupuna rongonui o Hawaiki ko Whakataupōtiki, he tupuna mō te pakanga, mō te whawhai. Ko ngā mea e whakamate ana i te āhua, i te tangata, nē, ngā mea kino, ngā mea kai tangata, ērā mahi katoa. Nō reira he nui, koirā te pai o te reo, te wai o te reo Māori. He kōrero iti, engari ko tōna whakamārama, ko tōna hōhonutanga ka kitea nē? Ko te wāhanga tuarua o te kōrero, kotahi te tupuna rongonui o Aotearoa,

ko Tamaūwhiti e kōrero ana mō Tamanui-te-rā. Ko taua āhua rā o te kōrero, Tamaūwhiti e kōrero ana mō Tamanui te rā, he whakaritenga tērā mo te ora o te tangata, mō te hauora o te tangata, mo te pai o te tangata, mo ngā tikanga pai ka kitea ki te whenua hou, rapua, kimihia, rangahaua. Engari ngā mea o Tūmatauenga, ngā whawhai, ngā pakanga me waiho ki uta ki te wāhi ka wehe mai ai te tangata a Te Arawa nei. Nō reira he mātāpono nui kei roto i tērā kōrero. I tīmata mai ai ō tātou tikanga, me kī, mō Te Arawa i roto i tērā poroporoaki ā Houmaitawhiti. Kia tika ngā kōrero ā Huhana, kua koe e mahi teka, wērā momo, engari, me whai i te mātauranga, me whai i ngā wānanga, me ū koe ki ōu tūpuna, ki ngā tikanga a ō tūpuna kei roto rā i tērā kōrero e whakahuahuatia ana. Nō reira he nui tōna wairua, mutu ana te poroporoaki ā te koroua, ka tae ki te wā ka eke te waka ka wehe. Tētehi wāhanga nui ko te hoe atu, ko te tīmata rā o te hoe atu i te waka ki tai, kātahi ka hoe ngā waka kia tae atu rā ki waho rā i te moana, e rere ana ngā karanga ā ngā kuia, haere, haere, haere atu rā. Ko ngā kuia kei runga i te waka ka huri ka whakautu i te karanga a ngā kuia e noho tonu ana i te ākau me te kī atu “E noho ora mai rā koutou.” Nō reira kua tīmata rā te whakawhitiwhiti i ngā tangi, i ngā roimata, i ngā kuia e tū ana i te ākau me ngā kuia kei runga i te waka. Kātahi ka māharahara a Ngātoroirangi, tō tātou tupuna, ka māharahara a ia ka ruku anō rā te wahine, ka hoki atu anō rā ki uta. Mo te kore e hiahia kia haere tonu rā me te waka, me te iwi. Nō reira ka mea atu rā a Ngātoro kia tere, kia tere te hoe kei mea ngā kuia nei ka hoki ki uta i te nui o te tangi. Ka haere, ka tae atu rā, ka tae atu ki waho rā, kātahi ka tahua tētahi ahi, ko te auahi e piki piki haere ana i te rangi, he tohu tērā, ahakoa kāre te iwi o te waka e kite ana i te whenua, engari ko te kura o te ahi e piki ana o te auahi e kite tonu ana. Nō reira kua mōhio kei hea rā te iwi kei te paerangi, kei hea rā te kāinga? Kātahi ka tae atu rā, ā, kua kore e kitea, ā, kua oti te tangi. Nō reira he kōrero tēnei kia mōhio ai tātou i te hōhonutanga o tēnei mea te wehe, te wehenga mai o te waka o Te Arawa ki konei. Ehara i te mea ka piki i te waka, ka tere te whakahoe i te waka, kātahi ka tae mai, kāo. He nui ngā mahi poroporoaki, he nui ngā tangi, koinā te momo o te Māori ki tōna iwi, nē? Nōreira, i roto i tētehi kōrero nui i te poroporoaki ka mea atu rā, Houmaitawhiti, “Kei wareware koutou i a mātou ka mahue ki muri nei. Ōu iwi, ōu iwi.” Anei wētehi taonga hei hari mā koutou ki te whenua hou, kimihia tētehi wāhi kia tanu ai ngā taonga ki reira mo te wā e mate ai te tangata ka kimi tana wairua i āua tāonga hei huarahi e hoki atu ai koe ki a mātou. Nō reira ko te whenua, koinei ko ngā kōrero nei, ki te mea ka hāngai ki te āhuetanga o te kāwanatanga i wēnei rā.

Me pēhea te whakauru i wēnei momo kōrero i roto i ngā mātāpono o Te Tiriti o Waitangi, nē? E kore e tāea. Nō reira, kei tēnā

iwi tōna hononga ki te kāwanatanga, kei tēnā iwi tōna. Otirā tae atu ki a Te Arawa, kei a Te Arawa anō tōna hononga ki te iwi hou i tae mai, arā ko te iwi Pākehā tērā me wana ture. Nō reira, ka rere te wā ka tae mai te waka ka ū ki konei ki Maketū, ka haria koutou ki te wāhi i ū mai te waka me wētehi o ngā wāhi tino tapu ki a Te Arawa. I tērā wā ehara ko Te Arawa te ingoa o te waka, ko Ngā rākau tapu mātahipū ā Atua Matua, koirā te ingoa tika. Engari, nā ngā mahi heahea a te tupuna o Huhana, ka hē nei tana mahi i runga i te waka, i te mea ko te ingoa Atua Matua he ingoa tupuna tērā, he ingoa whai mana, he ingoa nui nei wana tātai heke, me kī, ko te heketanga ā Rangi tērā. Nā reira, he tapu, he nui te tapu o tērā ingoa. Nā ngā mahi takahi i te mana o te koroua nei a Tama, kātahi ka huri te ingoa, kei riro te mana o te tupuna nei o tōna ingoa i runga i te waka ki te pō, engari i whakaingoatia anōtia te waka e Ngātoro kia ū tonu ai te mana o te tupuna ki a ia anō. Kātahi ka mea atu rā, e tama, e heke koe, ko ahau te kāpene o te waka, me noho koe ki raro. Ka tae atu rā ko te wāhi ko te marae, ehara ko Maketū te wāhi tuatahi i whakamaraehia e Te Arawa, karekau, engari mehemea ka haere koe ki Tāmaki ka tae koe ki Waiheke ki te moutere o Waiheke. He tupuna nō Tama, nō Ngātoroirangi a Waiheketua ki reira ko te pūtiki nui o Kahumatamoe he marae, koirā te pā tuatahi o Te Arawa. Nā wai ka hē anō tō tātou tupuna, kāre a Tama i rongo i te kōrero, i tōna pāpā, i tōna matua. Nō reira i raru katoa a Te Arawa i a ia, nui te raru. Kātahi ka wehe i tērā kāinga, ka whai mai i tērā kia tae mai rātou ki konei ō tātou tūpuna ki Maketū. Nā, he ingoa tēnei kei roto i a Tainui, ko Maketū kei roto i a Te Arawa ko Maketū, nō ngā moutere o Te Moananui-ā-Kiwa taua ingoa. Ka mutu, i te taenga mai o te waka ki konei, kātahi ka whakaarohia me ū te waka ki uta. Nā, he rerekē anō rā te waka i tae ki tētehi wāhi ki te waka i ū mai ai, i tōia mai ai te waka ki uta. Kua mea atu rā te iwi, kua mutu rā te haerere haere o te waka me tōia ki te whenua takoto ai i tōna takotoranga. Kātahi ka tae mai te wāhanga o ngā kōrero ki a Raumati me te tahutahu i te waka o Te Arawa. Ka waiho ērā kōrero ki reira. Mā rātou anō rā wērā kōrero e kōrero. Heoi anō, nā kua mōhio tātou ki te āhuetanga o Te Arawa me tana haerenga mai ki konei. Ka noho ko Maketū te tino kāinga o Te Arawa, wētahi o ngā tūpuna ka moe wahine o whenua nei kia piri ko ngā tangata hou ki ngā tangata whenua o te kāinga nei. Nō reira, koinei pea hei tūāpapa mō te āhuetanga o te haerenga mai o Te Arawa ki konei me ōna uri tatū iho mai nei ki ahau e noho nei me te kai taku kai, pēhea? Ka pai. Nō reira, hei whakarāpopototanga i te kōrero nei, ko Hawaiki he ingoa hei whakamahara i ngā tikanga pai, kua e noho tātou i roto i ngā tikanga kino ā te tangata, engari me kimi i ngā tikanga e whakaora anō ai.

Ko tēnei kōrero ko te hauora, ko te hau aitu. Ko te hauora mo te wā e titiro ana koe ki te rākau hua rēmana, hua ārani rānei. Ki te mea ka nui ka mākurukuru te hua o ngā ārani i te rākau, kei te mea e hauora ana te rākau, ko te productivity tērā. He nui ngā ārani i tēnei tau, ehara i te tau wehe, nē? Engari ki te mea ka tae ki te tau e whiroki ana i te rā o te waru, torutoru noa iho, ruarua noa iho ngā ārani ka kī atu rā he hau aitū tērā, nē? Nā reira ko te kupu hauora ki te 'contextualise' te kupu e kōrero ana mō te productivity, nē? Ehara i te wellbeing te health nei, wērā momo kupu hei tāpiri ki te kupu, ki te wairua o te kupu hauora. Nō reira ki te mea e hauora ana te tangata, āe, pakari ana tana tū, e pakari ana, he nui wāna mahi ehara i te mea kei te noho noa i tōna kāinga takoto ai, e aha atu ana ai, engari kei waho rā te tangata e mahi ana. Ka whiti mai anō te rā, kua timata rā ōna mahi, ka tō te rā, ā, kua oti tana mahi, ka hoki atu, ka hoki atu. Mo te wā e takoto ana koe i tō whare, e whiti ana te rā, kua mea atu rā tō iwi, e, kua hau aitū koe nē. Nō reira, wēnei kupu kei roto i te ao Māori e whakaahua ana i te wairua o te Māori. Nō reira, ki te mea ka kite i te hua o te Pōhutukawa ka mea atu ana, ā, e hauora ana te moana, nē? E hauora ana te moana, i te mea ka kore e kite i te nui o te hua Pōhutukawa, ka kī atu he hau aitū. Kāre e tino pērā rawa ana te mōmona o ngā kaimoana nē.

Ko te third fourth dimensional thinking tēnei. Me huri au ki te reo Pākehā kia practice taku reo. For our tūpuna it was important to sit with nature and understand nature and observe nature and sometimes when it comes to the western world, they rely on man's own thinking when it comes to science and how it relates to the environment. But for Māori we just simply watch the environment and then it thinks for us. We don't have to think for the environment. If we see a Kingfisher, which I was just observing during Christmas period which I don't celebrate by the way, kāre au e whakapono ki ngā mahi whakanui i te Kirihimete, engari pai te hararei. And noticed that the Kingfisher was coming back to the same spot on the fence every day at the same time. So I took note of this and it reminded me of some of the kōrero that I had read and researched, which was, the Kingfisher or the Kōtare is a bird that will tell you how the water's doing, the mauri of the water. So we don't need to be out there with our little instruments and doing little I don't know, but the bird tells us, you know, the manu tells us straight away that okay, obviously something that's happening in the water is working and that just to keep paying attention. So sometimes it's best for us to just shut up and let the environment think for us, but we can only understand that if there is knowledge that is inseminated and passed down to the next generation and so, as a tohunga, that is your job to observe nature and to observe the taiao. I think when

the Tohunga Suppression Act came in they knew what they were doing with their legislations and things like that to take away the only person that really connects the people, his own people to these types of wānanga, it would make colonisation a lot faster, a lot quicker and a lot more believable and to call a tohunga. I don't know a crazy person, just the discrediting of the mana that they had as tohunga. But now we're sort of starting to see the benefits of their intellect and how we're starting to return back to those. You know, you look at Matariki, it's a huge thing regardless of iwi following the kōrero of Rangi Mātāmua, beautiful kōrero, beautiful wānanga but it's credit that it's pushed iwi around the motu to shush and listen and look up. We know every star in Matariki now, we used to call Tautoru the bottom of the pot when we were growing up, or the pot and now we're able to put it into a context that our tupuna had put it into, if that makes sense. So what it does is it's rebirthed I think, or reconnected us back to our tūpuna and that's from a tohunga. The purpose and meaning of a tohunga, they are very very instrumental and these are the qualities and the desirable qualities that our tupuna were talking about when they said, take with you the best of your culture leave behind the worst, you know, and take that which is desirable that will prove the wellbeing of our people, the wellbeing of the land and of the moana. So to take away the tohunga you're taking away the only person or the only symbol of specifics in terms of our connection to the taiao. So we rely on books written by Elsdon Best, wēnei Pākehā kāore nei ōna tino mōhio ki te ao Māori, ā wairua nei, ā kikokiko nei. Engari, ā kōrero nei, ā titiro nei, āe, engari mo te āhua o te noho o te tangata, ā wairua, ā kikokiko ki tōna ao. Karekau! So that's why colonisation I think for me personally was easy to achieve if we took out the only person, and why I talk like this is because it sets the undertone of why you have generalised mātauranga, right? So that means that it's the one shoe fits all sort of approach now. But in the days of our tupuna every hapū were diverse, the diversity within the iwi was huge. That's because cultural identity starts from the whenua, right? not from the library if you put it that way. So every iwi were able to have that mana, if you like, or the whenua have mana over the people and that's why we fight for our land, it's a lot more than occupation and it's a lot more than authority over it but it's thousands of years of DNA on a molecular level, you know? Not just on a surface level but deep, deep in the heart of our soul and wairua.

You know, before a child is born, mothers go through cravings. Some of them are pretty funny, but the cravings of certain foods of your whenua and it was a kōrero that I had read from one of the tohunga of Ngāti Awa. He talks about those two times when you

are born and when you die, you have cravings for certain foods in your own environment and even if you live here in Maketū and you were born and raised in Te Tai Tokerau. The two times that you crave is when you are born, before you're born and when you die. When you are hapū and you crave certain foods of your whenua, that is you, the mother preparing the child to be born for the journey. Right, so it's given the fruit. Before you are even born you know what the whenua tastes like, you know what the environment tastes like and then when you come time to your death, you crave certain foods from here all the way up. Tētehi o ngā koroua i mate nui ana i wētahi o ngā kai o Te Tai Tokerau. He had ordered on his death bed that oysters be brought down and so it was preparing him for his wairua journey nē? These connections, it doesn't matter how far the distance between you and the whenua of which you were raised. From the land of which the foods that you were fed before you were even born to the time you die, you still crave that whenua, you still crave that wānanga, you still crave that tupuna, you still crave the wairua of your kāinga. You know, when they say, just to put it in terms you can't write this stuff in Treaty principles aye? So when someone says I'm listening to submissions and they're going off and on and yah tah tah. And I'm thinking the key thing here is that the kōrero and the wānanga is what puts us in so much, you know the level, the depth of our connection to the whenua is kōrero like this. But, we are troubled so much by the surface stuff like, you know, arguing with politicians is like playing with the kids over there in the park, right? But for our tupuna it's much more than that, so to have this type of kōrero it's a lived Treaty Principles, if I can put it this way, is a lived principal for Māori alright, you cannot get that anywhere. I don't know why just cuz politics and what's happening at the moment I think is why it's pushing that kōrero in this kōrero. Those who will listen to this and those who will read this, watch this will understand eventually, if they don't now they will understand the context of this kōrero. And so that kōrero from the Ngāti Awa koroua Hirini Meade is something that should be observed more. I guess if you're a mother out there you know what cravings are and so some eat funny things like soap and dirt and all this other carry on, dirt is good but I don't know about the soap. But things like this, these types of nuances of our culture, it binds us to the whenua before we're even born into the whenua, ka pai? And that's why you call it whenua, kei roto tonu rā i te kōpū o te wahine. Ka whānau mai a ia, nē, ka hono atu rā te pēpi ki te whenua.

The word, ko te kupu haukāinga is another one too, is that on the death bed if say there is a north westerly wind coming and I grew up in that direction of which the windows coming. I would

“...KIA KAHA TĀTOU TE
IWI KI TE HOKI ATU KI Ō
TĀTOU MARAE, KI Ō TĀTOU
MĀTĀPONO NUI KEI ROTO I
NGĀ TIKANGA. KI Ō TĀTOU
ATUA MĀORI, AHAKOA
KARAITIANA, AHAKOA HE
AHA ATU RĀNEI TŌ HĀHI,
ENGARI KAUA E MAHUE
WHAKARAHAKI I Ō ATUA
MĀORI. KEI REIRA KA KITE
KOE I NGĀ MĀTĀPONO NUI
I WHAKAARO NUITIA E Ō
TĀTOU MĀTUA TŪPUNA.
KOIA KEI REIRA NGĀ
TAONGA PAI, TIKANGA PAI,
NGĀ KŌRERO PAI HEI KAWE
ATU KI TE HAWAIKI HOU.”

- TE WAATA CRIBB

say me aro ahau, me huri au kia aro atu rā ki te hau e haere mai ana, ko te hau o tōku kāinga tērā. And so in thought and at the moment of their passing, doesn't necessarily have to be passing, it can be just wanting you get home sick. So you had to face in the direction of your home and wait for the wind to come. Koirā te haukāinga. Haukāinga doesn't mean, home people, you know, it's referring to a place of which the wind comes from. Your home of which the wind comes from. Does that make sense? Āe, kia ora. And so I think just wanting to share that. What it means for us as Māori and these are kōrero that sentiments of kōrero that we share throughout the motu, you know, every iwi have concepts and that you cannot say one is correct or one is and the others wrong. The kōrero is based on the path on which you walk, that world, nē? And say no one is right, no one is wrong, no one is better than the other when it comes to kōrero because you cannot understand each other's point of view, when you don't walk the exact same path in terms of tikanga and so on, ka pai.

ERANA KIHĪ

I pērā ngā kōrero i te rā nei, i haria mātou ki te urupā ki reira te nuinga o ngā kōiwi, he tamariki, and up the top he was talking about - oh you fallā's like to come over here and despite the fact that you fallā's said no it didn't - told their tipuna to come here and they found Taonga that was buried up there, with their third sense radar or whatever, but kāre taua korōua i mōhio he aha te take ka tanu i ngā taonga ki reira. Mārama ana now.

TE WAATA CRIBB

Āe, he wāhi ka mate ana te tangata ko tō mahi he kimi. He waahi, ka mate ana te tangata ko tō mahi he kimi, ko tō wairua ka kimi i te wāhi i tanu ai tērā taonga. I te wā e mate ana he GPS tērā nē. Pai nga kōrero, e hāngai ana ki te kaupapa? Ka aroha atu ahau ki te iwi rā i Waitangi i te wā i tango i te maika a David Seymour, kātahi ka huri te koroua, ka whakahokia te maika, nā reira, e wehewehe rua ana te iwi, ehara i te tohu pai. Ka mutu, ka kitea taua āhua e te marea, e te hunga katoa ki wētahi o ngā Pākehā ka hari, ka koa te ngākau o te Pākehā i te wehewehenga o te tangata, engari ki a au nei ki tāku nei titiro, ehara i te tohu pai nē. He tohu o te noho wehewehe a te iwi, ka aroha atu ahau ki tērā momo. And whilst were on this big, you know the resurrecting of Kotahitanga, that wasn't kotahitanga that on the most paramount place of where tikanga is upheld the most on the marae and yet a display of disconnection took place and I think that's really sad. Yeah, e aroha atu ana ahau ki a Ngāpuhi, ki te iwi rā o Te Tai Tokerau me te hunga i tae ki tērā pōhiri. He's a clown that fella, David Seymour. I don't really deal with things like that because its just like that's child, he tamariki ana whakaaro, āna mahi. You know the calibre of our diplomacy is not at that level, it's above his pay grade as much as he does, it's sad that we buy into all of that so

easily as people but it's like a re-trigger. They see something that affected them for so long in the tupuna to currently and that we just return back to that wairua of being upset.

ERANA KIHĪ

I kaha kōrerohia taua ngāngara Colonisation. Colonisation is why we are where we are today, kua hoki āno tātou te māori ki te patu i a tātou āno, and all of them saying he mea nui me mōhio koe ki wō whenua, me hoki koe ki wō whenua, me mohio koe ki ō whakapapa, ko wai koe, nā tēra ka tū rangatira i roto i tēnei ao. In the context of COVID though and I think he nui ā tātou tamariki māori kei te pakeke mai i ngā tāone nui, kua tino tawhiti atu i wō ratou whenua, kua waerware tātou te pānui i tō tatou taiao. And I asked people, "oh, what about them? What are we do about that? How do those that are disconnected, don't have access to their Ao Māori, where do they start to get back on track?" Cause if that's a measure of te ora nui, kei te kite atu au i konei i te kura rā, ā Uncle Dan me Auntie Hiria me ā rātou mahi, mehemea he rautaki ā koutou, kua korerohia rānei, kua wānangahia rānei ētāhi huarahi?

TE WAATA CRIBB

To answer your question about what are things that we can do to help our young ones and our elders too that are mixed within urbanisation and that, not just the towns but I have family that are in Australia. Kei Ahitereiria taku tuākana, taku teina me ōku tuāhine e noho atu ana, e noho mai ana ki reira. There's about 50, 40 of them over there. And just before COVID happened, the year before COVID, I had made a plan to travel every year to Australia to take wānanga to them, and they have to pay for everything. Pay for my flights, pay for my accommodation, pick me up, drop me off, get me this, buy me that and for all of that I will come over because it was cheaper to pay for one than to pay for 50 of them to come home. So what I did was I looked at the pepehā and the structure of pepeha, the maunga, the awa, the marae. So I went to every marae that we connect to in between here and Rotorua, Te Arawa. Every maunga, every awa and I took drone shots because they couldn't look on a Google map but at least I could take them in and I flew drones around and I took them to certain places along the river. And as we were showing pictures I had this big presentation. It was a bloody million dollar Mātāwai funding this one, and like marae I was taking them in the drone, flying them into the marae so that they could actually really personalise their own connection to the marae rather than just showing photos. So you know I had the drone right up close to different whakairo, I had cameras there taking shots and I did this all on my own and I didn't steal anything from other people in terms of videography and photography, but I did it so that they knew it was the effort that I put into it and that the meaningfulness of the wānanga was personal between myself and my family.

And so I'd go over for the whole week, was a four day wānanga at my brother's house. He had to build a white board because he couldn't find one, and so I said you go and make one a big whiteboard. A TV they could connect up, you know, we could connect up to and use the technology and then gave them whakapapa with the kōrero and the pictures of the maunga and the videography of the awa and so on. And in the lake, the moana was a real David Attenborough type bloody wānanga and right down to the whakapapa. So instead of just giving them whakapapa because I worked in television before I knew what documentary making was like, and so what I did also was I took certain tupuna out of the whakapapa and some of them have names my brothers and all have some of the names. So what I did was I went, I took kōrero of this tupuna and one part was taonga a ngā korōua nei. For an example one of our koroua Te Pōkiha, he received a sword, a Highland Claymore from Queen Victoria and so I had it on the picture and so because of our connections to this tupuna rather than just know a name I gave a back story on that tupuna. And so really they could start to see, you know, their haututu-selves in some of the tupuna, like when you talk about the kōrero and then you can say that's why you're like that or you know that's why you such a hōhā or mischief and so on. Funny thing was one of the tupuna we talked about had taonga over in Paris, it left these shores and arrived in Europe and the funny thing was one of our aunties was on her way over to Paris. So I gave her the address of this museum and I said go there on behalf of the family so you can cry over our tupuna taonga but she would not have, she would've missed all of that if that had not been put into the wānanga. So when it comes to whakapapa, not just their certain disciplines that you must have, that bind kōrero. So, not just written by Pākehā historians but waiata koroua, waiata mōteatea that support kōrero, whakapapa that supports that kōrero. Tātai kōrero which is your historical events that support that kōrero so you must bind all of these different disciplines together to create a wānanga if you like, or a kōrero. So I use this process to help my brothers and now they think they're neat. They're Māori as over there, which is the objective its to help them feel who they are rather than just, I've got a marae, you know, they've probably got more than what our whānau back here get, but I knew what it took to really help them engage and understand who they were. And I said to them, one of my rules is I said, what I teach you is not for you to go out and start correcting everyone. Like, no that's not, you know, was to be mindful of how they treat wānanga and kōrero and that if we hear something that may be different to what we know, that that's kei te pai, don't use that as a chance to correct people that's not what we

do with Te Ao Māori. So I fully understand because I have family in Australia but I always think of our tupuna back in Hawaiki it's almost the same thing, but the only difference between here and Australia is that they didn't take the culture with them. They left it and just went and fully developed themselves in te ao Pākehā over there. Which they're doing well, they own their own homes, they have jobs, you know, they've got families, they don't want to come home and they're saying, "oh, you know." I said "you're lucky, you's are god damn lucky, you sever your ties to your iwi and I've gotta come back and bloody do the mahi and then yous are having a good life over there. While we're dealing with all of this." But I love it, I love that they've taken what seems to me to be their desirable qualities and being able to own and I'm not bragging but they own million dollar homes, my brothers are very, very well off. But that it took the sacrifices of culture to do that because they did feel attached to anything and then it was supposed to be annually, I was supposed to go every year to do this with my family and then COVID happened and then it just got worse. So in that time since the first wānanga I have had my nephew die and my mother died in that time. So time is important though when it comes to wānanga cos you miss these things but I could see on my mums face the importance of what I was trying to do. I could have just said, "Ea you left, agggghh eh you left home, ahhh bugya." I knew that in order for them – when they do, ka mate ana rātou e mōhio ana rātou ki te huarahi e hoki mai ai rātou ki te wā kāinga nē, so its more than just where we are now. But yeah, I hope that answered your question.

In terms of rangatira and rangatiratanga, I think it's mentioned in the Tiriti document about 15 times, the word rangatira. In Ngāti Pikiao, kei roto i te iwi o Ngāti Pikiao nei he kawa, so everything, every tikanga has a kawa which binds it to Atua. If I can put it that way. Yes, tikanga and the kawa is what sorta wraps the tapu around the tikanga and it binds it to Atua. And we've always been redefining definitions. So what I mean by that is that ka tae mai a Rangi, ka noho rāua ko Papa, define themselves and then ka whānau mai he atua. Te putanga mai o ngā atua, ka noho ngā atua and they had to redefine the definition of Rangi and Papa. So ka whakawehe a Tāne i a Rangi rāua ko Papa, and so that's them defining. Then Tāne takes the sun, the stars, then puts them in the sky again, he redefines definition. Ka tae mai a Māui, the next generation, then Māui redefines definition of why the sun's in the sky, why the stars in the sky. And then so on and so on, he knows that the stars are for months of the year, season's, the sun is for seasons, the stars are for navigation, thats why you get Māui now, you know, travelling on the waka. And so the redefining of definition is something that

we've always held onto that every year and that's the desirable qualities that I was talking about taking the best of our culture and re immersing it into the new land. So that redefining of definition has been something that our tupuna and Atua have always done.

ERANA KIHĪ

We've persisted from then til now, what was the kura huna there and what are the ones here, the desirable tikanga that we carry forward, cuz I think the crux of the thing is to come up with a framework of how you engage with Māori when it comes to COVID, like pandemic response. Cause what you thought you were, what you thought you knew and what you did, this is actually what works best for us and if it works well for us, well it works well for everyone.

TE WAATA CRIBB

Okay, um resilience, resilience. Me haere tonu ngā kōrero, heoi anō, kei konei tātou kei te tohu whakamaumahara i te tāenga mai o te waka o Te Arawa, ka tahi. Ka rua, ko tēnei kōhatu, he kōhatu whakamahara i te hainatanga a Te Arawa i te kawenata, i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Kia mōhio mai kāore a Te Arawa i uru ki te Tiriti o Waitangi i te tau 1840, engari 20 tau ki muri ka huri a Te Arawa ki te kawenata, te take, he mana tō Te Arawa, kāore he mana rite o te Pākehā ki tō Te Arawa mana. Nō reira ko wai mā te Pākehā anō e whakahaere i te āhuatanga o Te Arawa, engari he iwi mōhio ki tēnei mea te pakihi, they were entrepreneurs, some of our tupuna. If some of our tupuna were alive today they would be some of the best CEO's around I believe and I think the quality of those attributes, I think if our tūpuna have sorta filtered down into some of our uncles and koroua and kuia today. So Te Arawa was a business minded, entrepreneurial minded people when they arrived here on the waka and that I suppose has contributed to the whare wānanga of the time, the specifics of certain subject matters of the time that were applicable and so the transferring of that knowledge to other areas was easy for some of our tupuna. And so because of this ability to have their transferable wānanga into the Pākehā world, gave our koroua and not just Te Arawa, all iwi had some expertise in that field of entrepreneurial kaupapa and for our koroua and them they excelled in entrepreneurial. When it came to trading with Pākehā and with the world we didn't need, kāore nei he take o te ao Pākehā i roto i te ao pakihi, e ai ki te iwi Māori, te take kāore a Te Arawa i haina i Te Tiriti. Engari when Te Arawa didn't come to the table in 1840 well they felt, when you're not sitting at the table anymore and you're not participating in the trade you don't get any of the economical benefits right? And so for ages, Te Arawa was like we can fish, we can do all of this, we have the whenua, we have the resources and not coming to the parties meant we lost a seat at the table in terms of trade and one of our koroua here Te Pokiha, and the only reason why I took us not to talk about myself because it's for others here

to talk about their tupuna. So when I talk about Te Pōkiha, this and that it's not about because he did this and that and there was no other tupuna around, but it's for them and their own uri to talk about their tupuna. So our koroua Te Pōkiha along with other koroua of Maketū, there's a story of a fishing net and it was about a kilometre long, so that's quite a long net. The point of why they constructed these fishing nets and set them here at Maketū was to prove to the government of the time that they didn't need to be sustained or helped or benefited from the government in any way. But Te Arawa had the ability to look after themselves. So he was trying to prove a point, like being, not radical but like I have a sea, we have a moana, we have fishing abilities, we have fishing skills, we have resources, we are more than capable of looking after our own people. And so it was a feat in itself and it's still in maritime history one of the biggest fishing stories ever and the details of that kōrero I'll leave for others to talk about but the point is that I'm making is that even then where our tupuna tried to make statements in bold big, you know, outstanding statements that tried to make the Pākehā listen or government of the time, listen to iwi's and take note of the ability. And that if they were able to work together then we could all share in that, but when you're seen as trying to oppose the Crown in any way you are deemed a threat so then you go to jail, but our koroua he was, along with many of the Te Arawa koroua they were trying to prove a point all the way back then. In their kōrero I think ko te mea nui when you're so related and connected to your whenua, these types of skills that our tupuna learnt along the way were to be transferred from the Māori world to the Pākehā world. And I think that's the key thing here, is in Māori there's a process when there is a problem, issue or a take. When we look for solutions there is another beautiful kōrero from Sir Hirini's report, He Poutama and in that report, that document he speaks of the terminology of "i ngā rā o mua" and that in the kōrero and this is not exactly what he says but he talks about how the past hangs in front of us. What he came down to was his whakaaro was that if the past is hanging in front of us, it can only mean one thing, that we're walking backwards into the future and I took that as something to really broaden that whakaaro e tāea e koe te whakawhānui i tērā kōrero, ko te hoki whakamuri ki te ao anamata, nē? Nō reira e mea atu ana kei te hāngai tō titiro ki te ao kōhatu. Kia tiki atu ai e koe aua kōhatu rā hei taonga hari, kawē ki te ao anamata, nē? And that what that means is transferring those traditions, transferring those cultural abilities, those cultural identifications, those cultural connections and using them and transferring them into the future. That way we have some sense of predictability on what's going to happen if we have the resources from the past but if

we're continuing the way in which other cultures behave, you know, kua ngaro te iwi, kua heke te iwi and so we become disconnected and lost in our culture. So always to be mindful of what you take from the past into the future. Another terminology is what they call te mata o te tupuna, the ancestral eye, ko te mata o te tupuna, we all have this, in the Ao Pakeha they would say the third eye. Okay, the third eye, we'll call it the ancestral eye. What that is, is having the ability to look at the lawn mower guy mowing the lawns while I'm talking and hoping hes gonna turn it off soon.

That's our local counsellor doing his mahi, thats the bone collector. Yeah, yeah, koia te mea there's some bones. Koia te mea ka ring the bro, go pick them up, ring Te Waata go do the karakia, cos he's one of those ADHD kids put it to use, he'll get in there, get it out without having any fear. Nā, koia tērā. Anyway, transferable, so ko te mata o te tupuna is a concept of using our ancestral eye and it goes back to that korero, ka tiki atu anō rā ki te kōrero rā, e tiki atu ai i ngā mea pai o te ao kōhatu, kawea ki mua ki te ao hou. But having the ability through ancestral knowledge, through ancestral eyes, look back at the past on certain events or certain kaupapa and taking solutions of the past and reusing them into the future. And our tupuna were very, very good at that, they were ambiguous in the way in which they said things they were indirect. To be direct for our tupuna and what they said was it meant that it only applied to that time and that space but being indirect meant it allowed us to reinterpret things as we moved into modernisation, if that makes sense. And so, and I think they also knew the mana of the kupu, the power of word and that talking to you about someone else or what they were doing, but they knew that without offending you or belittling you or puning you or your mana in any way, kupu was always indirect. Ka pai and that's how they saw the mana of the power of the word, te mana o te kupu. Nō reira, ko te kupu anō rā e kawe atu nei i roto i ngā whakataukī, i roto i ngā whakatauāki kei roto rā te mana o ngā whakakitenga a ō tātou mātua tūpuna. It's almost a blueprint if you like, to a future understanding and koirā ko te mata o te tupuna. Kauga e wareware ki te noho ki te āta titiro ki ngā mahi ā ngā koroua, ngā kuia, a ngā mātua tūpuna, kei reira hoki rā wētahi o ngā rongoā e taea ai te ora, te whakaora rānei i ngā take o te wā, i ngā kaupapa o te wā, i ngā whakapōrearea o te wā. And so we take COVID for instance and that's been a theme throughout the conversations and so COVID because Maketū is a manageable town. It's a small town, there's only two cultures ko te ao Pākehā me te ao Te Arawa nei, he māmā noa iho. Engari ki te haere koe ki ngā tāone nui, inā kē te momo o te tangata, ka kite ngā momo ahurea o

te ao, ka kite he uaua te whakahaere, engari a Maketū nei e rua ngā huarahi. Ko te huarahi e haere mai ai koe, ko te huarahi e puta ai koe and so managing that lockdown we didn't ask anyone. I was a part of the initial group, the self appointed to do something about locking Maketū down and at that time we didn't know what was going on. We just thought there was something strange happening in the world and that obviously the first thing we brought up was the historical references to past pandemic. The history of what happened then, so kei te whakamahi i tēnei ko te mata o te tupuna, kei te titiro whakamuri ki ngā wā o mua and what were the advantages of that? What were the disadvantages and what were the misfortunes of those times and what possibilities there were in terms of the demise of our people, culture, te mea, te mea. We looked at tikanga and how do we keep the values and principles of tikanga but frame it in a way that COVID restrictions, but the value of that of that tikanga is still upheld in the sense you know when they were doing all the no hongī, no shake the hands well. The shaking of the hand actually came from the time of the first pandemic. So when we did, kia ora, the word hariru, haere ki te hariru is actually the word, the phrase, "how do you do?" And so when they say we thought it'd be "shaking the hand." Hariru ai i te ringaringa o te mea nei, but it's actually a phrase "how do you do?" So that came about from the last pandemic. So all these sort of nuances and changes that are now being accustomed and put into practice were all from the first pandemic and the influenza. Very sad times, some of the stories, that a lot of research for our people. We would zoom hui and talk about what happened in the past and it was really sad the magnitude of death, the amount of tamariki that passed away, that's an intergenerational bridge. It was a huge gap and just some of the kōrero that happened, the unmarked graves, there were so many that they couldn't find a respectful way of acknowledging them so they were put in caves, a really sad time for our people. So we took that on board and we thought if this happened to our tupuna back then, there's definitely a possibility that it could happen to us. So we locked Maketū down, we didn't wait for no council authority, we are the authorities here. We didn't wait for no directive from Parliament, we are the Parliament here, the same with Te whānau ā Apanui. It was us first and then Whānau Apanui. So these are rural, quite small villages that are manageable in the sense, our Uncle was ready to dig a hole in the middle of the thing, this was the first lockdown. The second one we're like, "You're on your own now cousin." Because it was getting to the point where some of our old people, ka hōhā rātou, he uaua when they're on their own. So we set up systems where the hauora were very, very instrumental in terms of keeping their well being and their mentality.

They kept and looked after them in many ways and some of our own whānau were like our neighbours, they were an old Pākehā couple. We were going in and doing their shopping so that they didn't have to go out and things like that and there are certain times where racial differences are put aside. That's when we are faced with grave tragic situations or situations where colour of skin doesn't matter. Twice I've seen it here in Maketū, the first time was when the oil Rena and this whole coastal line didn't care if you were Pākehā or Maori, Indian as long as you were out there cleaning the moana, you are now on our common grounds. We're all working together to fix up the moana nē? And so when we're confronted with situations like this that are a threat to the environment, and a threat to our existence, it does not matter whether he Māori koe, he Pākehā rānei, nō tauwiwi koe, nō tāwāhi koe, ko te mea nui he tangata. Ko te kōrero rā e mea ana, he aha te mea nui o tēnei ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata. Koirā te kōrero. Kāre kau te kōrero e mea ana he Pākehā, he Pākehā, he Pākehā, he Māori, he Māori, he Māori. Nē, nō reira kotahi noa iho te aronga o tērā kupu ko te tangata te mea nui. Even COVID was helping each other, ahakoa ko wai, ahakoa nō hea. Mehemea ko te oranga te kitenga nui, ko te tangata ki te tangata e tiakina ana i a ia anō.

Nō reira, there are huge values in some of the concepts of our tupuna that we must always look to. When they say science, trust the science and I just told you before about how we have third and fourth dimensional thinking, and that nature thinks for us. Sometimes we have to stop and look at that as well, we trust our instincts when it comes to the natural environment. If it looks sick, me mahi koe i o mahi, koirā te kupu mana. While we're still on this momentum of te Tiriti o Waitangi and we hear the word mana motuhake and mana wahine, mana this and that and the other. Kia hoki atu anō ahau ki tēnei kupu te mana, and mana is. Some people think that they are the source of mana that it comes from them which is a self determination of that mana is there's, but in actual fact we are not the source of mana, we're just the recipient of it, we are the agents of mana, but when you receive the mana part of that comes with responsibility. He nui ngā mahi ki tēnei mea te mana, mana is influence over your environment, influence over yourself, influence over your people, but it's a positive influence. An example is, mehemea kei te tiaki au i a koe, and you're giving me the best of your china dish, the best of your kai. That is you influencing my mana with your mana and that you would give up your best for someone else to ensure that their mana is still intact. Right? and then you fix yourself up later. But mana is about influencing. An example of being influenced is, you can go to your maunga, into a river and for some reason you are just drawn to that wāhi or that maunga, there are

hundreds of mountains but this particular one is just capturing your whole attention and there's nothing physical happening other than we know that there's a transference of mana happening between that maunga and you. We all feel that, we can feel the wairua, you can feel the mana of something and that's what mana is, for Māori we don't take the prettiest tree. There's a pretty tree, there's a pretty tree, then there's an ugly tree. But because of this feature, you know, it's not the prettiest looking tree, we will take that tree as the most influential tree because it's the one that we're all drawn to. So what I'm doing is contextualising the word mana away from what is the common sort of understanding of mana, but this is my interpretation of what it is and when you become the recipient of mana, you have to use it in a positive. An example is, you have to know your whakapapa, to know how to respect the person sitting next to you. Because you don't know the person next to you, and if you don't know your whakapapa, they might be ariki whakapapa and yet we would give more time of day to Pākehā aristocrats. Or if King Charles came who we have no connection to, but there is a carpet and there is so much degree of manaakitanga, but then we've got a cousin over here who looks hori as with his red bands on, with whakapapa we should be rolling it out for the kuzzy over here. Do you see what I mean there? With whakapapa and understanding mana then you would know how to treat the next person accordingly. We have lost that ability, our focus is now on what mana looks like and things like that. To put that into perspective mana, it's about learning how to respect each other properly but with that understanding how you connect to that thing, that person or that whenua, that wāhi or your marae. By understanding your connection then you know how to treat it properly then the mana is transferring. But if we don't know whakapapa then me pēhea e mōhio ai ki te mana o tētahi mea.

I'll leave this kōrero, the last part of the kōrero rangatira and the rangatiratanga which is connected to this in Te Arawa and I'll narrow down to my people, Ngāti Pikiao. As there's a process of kawa, ko te hakeke, ko te kawa hakeke, is a protocol, a ritual, a ceremony. A tradition that happens when the passing of a rangatira. He calls in the men or the sons and he names his successor from his death bed. There's a process that happens when we talk about the terminology of an exchange. So rangatira is the person, the agent is the one, is the successor, the rangatiratanga is what is being transferred over, the inheritance and the preserved legacy with that. You can broaden that to whatever the legacy is. Right? And so when we're talking rangatiratanga in a political sense we're sorta noting the mark properly because in order for that to happen there has to have a kawa. Earlier I said there's tikanga and then there's kawa that binds

it to Atua, and that encases it with tapu, right? And so when we create, when we think we're walking this narrative or this kaupapa or rangatiratanga there has been no kawa, process of protocol to enact that properly in terms of its process. Like when someone says, "he rangatira au?" It was a question. Nē? I whai koe i te kawa a ngā koroua, i te wā i mate ai tō Pāpā i reira koe, ka whakaingoatia koe, ko koe te mea ka kawē? I think with some of our ways that we have to return back to kawa because that's the binding agent to our Atua which means that we're not constituted by any government, any law, but through kawa we are constituted by Atua. We are obligated by Atua, we are obligated by our tupuna. When you are the rangatira who has been given the rangatiratanga, you have to use that mana in a positive way to influence the wellbeing positively of your people, the land, the whenua, the moana and so these are reasons why we're so close to our land. I listen to submissions and I think, "oh they're beautiful, very, very intelligent Māori." But sometimes we're missing key elements that sorta bring it back to a Māori lens or to even using the word Māori. I don't really like using the word māori, but obviously for the sake of other races that we have to use it. To bring it back to an iwi centric view and using these concepts to help others understand who we are, what we do and how we do things. But even if we can't get that right amongst our own selves, then how do we transfer that knowledge or that understanding on? These are underlying principles and key values that are important for us as Te Arawa and I say this because it's not my place to talk about other iwi. If there's something that they can take away then so be it that we've helped or sewn the seed within the minds of other iwi to be able to take that concept and use it. There was a time when we were all one, i wehe mai ai mātou i te moutere kotahi, engari tae mai ki konei, ā, ka wehewehe tātou. So rangatira, rangatiratanga, and these concepts that are thrown around in the political world are missing some of the fundamentals according to our tupuna, which is tikanga and its kawa. The intention of those concepts and the binding agent to the Atua so that we never ever deviate off the track. I'm glad we came to talk about that sorta kaupapa on this monument. Those are my two little five dollar notes to the kaupapa and bank that, save it up for another pandemic, I don't know. But ka nui taku aroha ki a koutou e wahine mā, koutou e hāpai nei i tēnei kaupapa e haere uiui ai i ngā heahea pēnei i a au nei?

Engari ki te whai hua i roto i wāku kōrero nei ka pai. Ki te kore ka pai, ka pai tonu. Engari ko te mea nui i hora tēnei whāriki kia whakawhārikihia ai wēnei whakaaro ki tēnei papa nā koutou, nā tātou. Ehara i te mea, kei tēnā, kei tēnā marae ōna ake kōrero, āe, engari he aho kotahi nei e tuitui ai tāua. Anā ko ō tātou tikanga,

ko ō tātou kawa, ko ō tātou tikanga, ko ō tātou here ki ngā atua. E whakakotahi nei i a tātou and I think probably my last sorta kōrero was on kotahitanga that's the new sort of kaupapa at the moment. There's only one place that ever highlights the true concept or the true whakaaro of kotahitanga and that's on the marae, because there's only one courtyard in which speeches take place. There is only one floor on which everyone sleeps together, there is only one space in which we all gather to eat and so the concept of Kotahitanga is pretty much evident when you go onto the marae. There's not one room for you in the whareniui and there's one room for you and there's one room for you. There is a big double king bed in the corner for him and mattress on the floor for you. Everyone's gotta mattress on the floor and I love that one of our kapa here and I won't mention names you'll figure that out. But they always have wānanga at the marae. There's not many kapa that would wānanga, they would have day practices but this has always been the key with our kapa is that you know you find unity but we don't spell it out for them. It just naturally unfolds. Right? And so by default, the by product of staying there is that you have created kotahitanga, but to try and create Kotahitanga under theory or an under an agenda or under a political scope that's not kotahitanga. That is my way or the high way, kotahitanga ki te mea atu ahau, ki hea kite ai koe i te kōtahitanga, tēnei mea te kotahitanga kei runga i tō marae. Even though in the physical world, kotahitanga on the marae is also in the spiritual world. You see the door and the window, ko te kūaha, mo te kuhutanga atu o te hunga ora ki te whare, ko te matapihi o te whare, ko te kuhutanga atu o te ao wairua. Ko ō tātou mate, ko ō tātou tūpuna ka kuhu mā roto i te matapihi o te whare, koirā te take ka eke koe ki runga i tētahi marae, me huaki i ngā whare, ngā tatau nei ki te whare. Tētehi mō te hunga ora, tetehi mō te hunga mate, nō reira kāore he wāhi i tua atu i te marae mō tēnei mea te kotahitanga, kua ko te kotahitanga ā tangata nei. Engari ko te kotahitanga o te ao wairua me te ao kikokiko. Nō reira, you can't write these in Treaty Principal submissions, nē? Ka aroha atu, ka aroha atu, kia kaha tātou te iwi ki te hoki atu ki ō tātou marae, ki ō tātou mātāpono nui kei roto i ngā tikanga. Ki ō tātou atua Māori, ahakoa karaitiana, ahakoa he aha atu rānei tō hāhi, engari kua e mahue whakarahaki i ō atua Māori. Kei reira ka kite koe i ngā mātāpono nui i whakaaro nuitia e ō tātou mātua tūpuna. Koia kei reira ngā taonga pai, tikanga pai, ngā kōrero pai hei kawē atu ki te Hawaiki hou. Hei te āpōpō, mehemea kei Ahitereiria tērā Hawaiki ka pai, haria, haria. Nō reira, atu i konei i tēnei kōhatu e noho nei tātou e mihi atu ana ki a koutou wahine mā, i tō koutou taenga mai i te rangi nei, me taku whakahōhā i a koutou. Ka nui aku mihi ki a koutou, tēnā koutou.

TIROHIA NGĀ WĀNANGA

Access Wānanga images, videos
& voice recordings below:

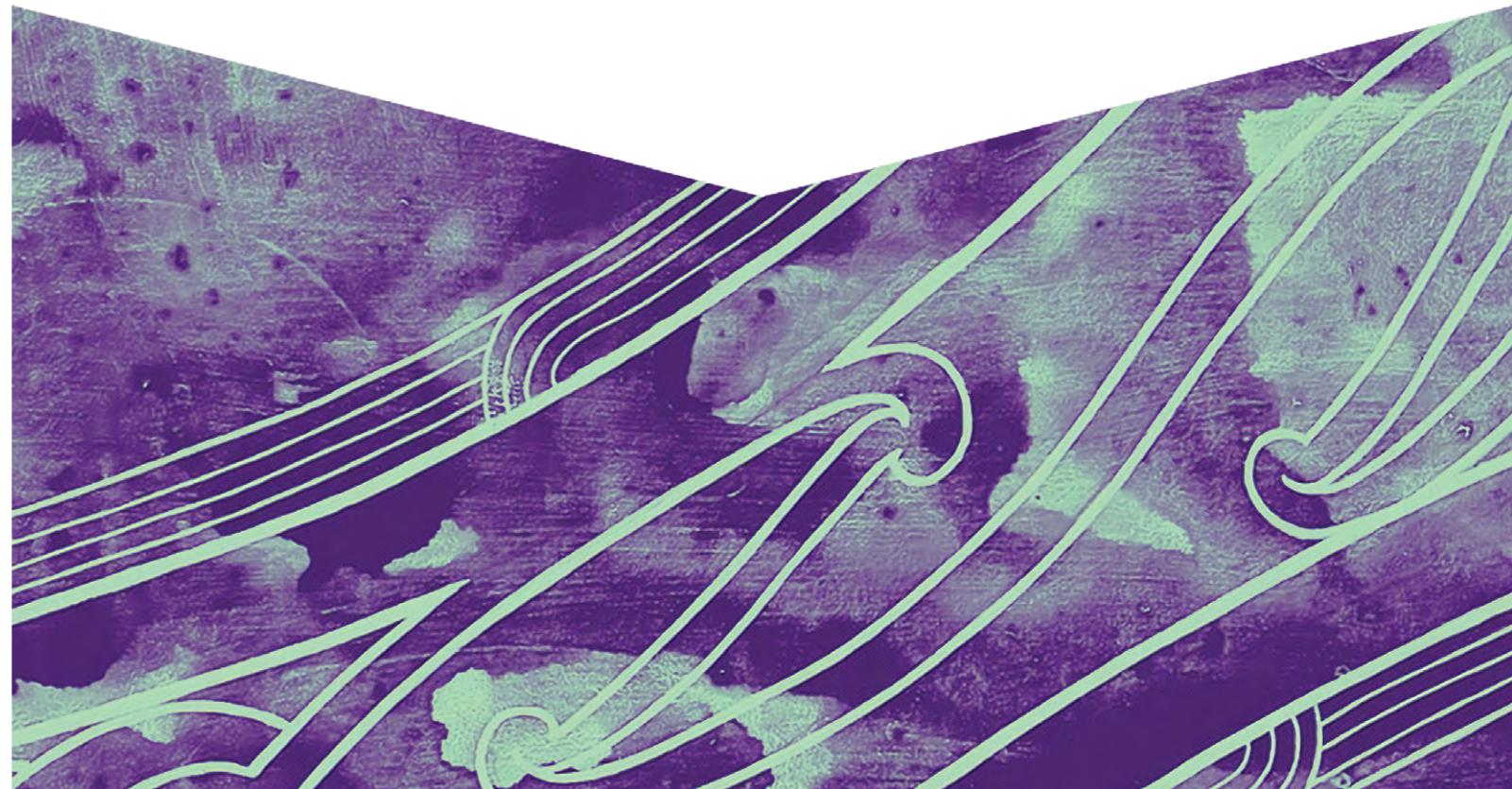


Visit www.whitikiwhakatika.com for more
information on the wānanga that took place.

TE PŌ

Tātari ā Kōrero

WHITI 5





TE PŌ

Once the tuna is captured in the hīnaki, they are harvested (te hao). This is a continuation of the phase of bringing together and sourcing knowledge.

Te Pō (the long night) – ngā tuituinga e hono ai te ora ki te taiao e ora nei ia. The code of life in which the conceptualised creation seeks to familiarise the space it occupies. This is where the sought-out knowledge begins to take shape and arise.

This is a continuation of the phase of bringing together and sourcing knowledge.

Ngā Wawata Haere Ake Nei

Whiitiki Whakatika aims to create a publication that can be handed down through generations as both a memory and a taonga, capturing how our people led pandemic responses not only during COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, but also historically through time, reflecting our intergenerational resilience as a people.

Guided by the Whiitiki Whakatika methodology, we want to honour the commitment of this kaupapa and wānanga by sharing mātauranga in ways that strengthen the future of te iwi Māori in times of pandemics and contribute to the wellbeing of the nation. Where partnerships are acknowledged, and knowledge is returned, we will seek your approval before sharing this mātauranga more widely to help inform a national response.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS:

MAKETŪ

Summary of kōrero and main themes from Te Waata Cribb

Te Waata begins his kōrero by recounting how the ancestor of Te Arawa Kahumatamomoe declared to Ihenga “Ko Maketū taku ipukarea”. This affirmation for Maketū, the first landing place of Te Arawa waka, serves to establish the idea of the *interconnectedness of hinengaro, tinana, wairua and whenua as central to ones oranga, identity and belonging*.

As Te Waata explains, ipukarea functions as a puna or wellspring of identity, of connection and wellbeing:

“Nā ko te ipukarea he wāhi ki te mea ka pau katoa i a koe ōu mātauranga, ka hoki atu anō rā koe ki te mātāpuna o te kōrero. Koirā te ipu, ko te ipukarea ko te wāhi ka inumia te wai, ka inumia kia kiki anō rā te hinengaro ki ngā kōrero, ki ngā mātauranga, ki ngā wānanga, ki ngā hiahia nui o te ngākau”.

Ipukarea then, is a place conceived as a vessel of accumulated mātauranga, a place which embodies tūpuna of the past, their deeds, and collective aspirations. It is both a repository of the past and a source for future direction, a place to which one returns to when they are exhausted so that their hinengaro and wairua may be renewed. It offers spiritual and mental sustenance to those who seek it thus replenishing ones hinengaro and wairua. In so doing, it revives a sense of belonging to place, to ones whakapapa and ancestral memories which in turn strengthens their health and wellbeing. For Kahumatamomoe this puna was Maketū, the place where he and his father Tamatekāpua landed. It was here

that the ancestral mātauranga that spanned Te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa interacted with the new whenua of Aotearoa and where the descendants of Kahumatamomoe still return to to restore their understanding of self and their oranga.

The significance of ipukarea extends beyond Maketū and Aotearoa. As Te Waata explains:

Ko te kupu ipukarea e hoki atu ana rā ki Rarotonga. Nō reira he kupu ka rangona ki te whānuitanga o Te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa [...] Ahakoa ki hea haere atu ai koe ki ngā moutere o Te Moananui-ā-Kiwa, ka rongu koe i tērā, ka kite koe i tērā ingoa ko Hawaiki. He aha te pūtake o te whakatikatika i te ingoa rā Hawaiki ki ngā moutere katoa o Te moananui-ā-Kiwa. Me mōhio he tikanga nui tērā te whakatika i te ingoa Hawaiki, ko Hawaiki-nui, Hawaiki-roa, Hawaiki-pāmamao, Hawaiki-tautahi, Hawaiki-areare-ki-tawhiti, Hawaiki-hoe-pae-tawhiti, te mea, te mea, te mea. Ka mutu ēhara i te kōrero nō te iwi kotahi, he kōrero kē ka rangona ki ngā marae katoa o te motu, nō reira he tino ingoa tēnei a Hawaiki. Nā, ko taku whakapae, ko taku whakapono hoki, ko te take e pēnei ana te whakatikatika i te ingoa Hawaiki ki ngā moutere katoa ahakoa ki hea haere atu ai ngā tūpuna te whakamahara noa i ngā tikanga ā ngā tūpuna”.

In his enumeration of Hawaiki (Hawaiki-nui, Hawaiki-roa, Hawaiki-pāmamao, Hawaiki-tautahi, Hawaiki-areare-ki-tawhiti, Hawaiki-hoe-pae-tawhiti), Te Waata highlights the cosmological whakapapa shared across Pacific peoples. Each name signifies a distinct dimension of ancestral whakapapa connection, place, and memory. These names encode navigational mātauranga. They record the mātauranga of ocean routes, the winds, the stars, and the currents that guided the likes of Tamatekāpua and Te Arawa waka to Aotearoa, Waiheketua (Waiheke Island) and Maketū.

This process of naming demonstrates how tūpuna (in this case Kahumatamomoe) maintained a connection to their place of origin whilst adapting to new environments. The descendants of the early migratory waka carried the idea of Hawaiki and its accumulation of mātauranga forward while responding to the realities and challenges in front of them. As Te Waata explained, this represents the principle of

taking “...the best of our culture and re-immersing it into the new land”.

This shows how mātauranga evolved as a conscious selection of mātauranga that has proven vital for survival and the wellbeing of the individual and the collective while expanding the knowledge base to meet new challenges. This process maintains the whakapapa of mātauranga. It ensures that each innovation in mātauranga remains connected to its original source while generating new understanding relevant to each generation’s specific place and time.

The amplification and refinement of mātauranga through lived experience over time created patterns for subsequent generations that followed. Each generation tested tikanga against new challenges. They kept what proved tika while modifying or abandoning what no longer served their needs. The critical test here lies in examining the whakapapa of mātauranga and tikanga back to its origin. When facing contemporary challenges, one must ask - what original purpose did this serve? What fundamental principle was it protecting or promoting? How can that essential purpose be maintained while adapting the mātauranga and its practice to the kaupapa at hand? This process of wānanga requires what Te Waata calls:

“...te mata o te tupuna [which is] is a concept of using our ancestral eye and it goes back to that kōrero, ka tiki atu anō rā ki te kōrero rā, e tiki atu ai i ngā mea pai o te ao kōhatu, kawea ki mua ki te ao hou ... [of] having the ability through ancestral knowledge, through ancestral eyes, [to] look back at the past on certain events or certain kaupapa and taking solutions of the past and reusing them into the future”.

This methodology treats history as a whakapapa-based source of insight and adaptability. As Te Waata explains, the way in which tūpuna spoke or encoded mātauranga was not always direct or literal but “...being indirect meant it allowed us to reinterpret things as we moved into modernisation...”. Te Waata provides the pūrākau of Huhana and the renaming of Te Arawa waka from its original name and Huhana as an example of irresponsible behaviour can lead to significant consequences. This narrative gave important teachings leading to the name change and contains important teachings about maintaining mana and proper conduct. To go against tikanga – the customary and right way of doing

things is to risk diminishing the mana and mauri of tūpuna who came before and to disregard the mātauranga they established.

Central to this process of observing, interpreting, and transmitting mātauranga were tohunga, who Te Waata identifies as “...the only person that really connects the people, his own people to these types of wānanga...”. As practitioners of te mata o te tupuna, tohunga were responsible for observing patterns in te taiao and determining which knowledge proved beneficial for “...the wellbeing of our people, the wellbeing of the land and of the moana.” Their role was to observe, measure and interpret “...the desirable qualities that our tūpuna were talking about when they said, take with you the best of your culture and leave behind the worst”.

The deliberate suppression of tohunga through the 1907 Tohunga Suppression Act therefore represents what he notes as an example of calculated epistemicide - “they knew what they were doing with their legislation...to take away the only person that really connects the people.” By severing this link in mātauranga transmission, colonisation disrupted the tikanga processes and mechanisms through which mātauranga evolved and adapted. This disruption and its generational impacts prompts Te Waata to instruct that Māori must not forget to:

“...noho ki te āta titiro ki ngā mahi ā ngā koroua, ngā kuia, a ngā mātua tūpuna, kei reira hoki rā wētahi o ngā rongoā e taea ai te ora, te whakaora rānei i ngā take o te wā, i ngā kaupapa o te wā, i ngā whakapōrearea o te wā”.

To illustrate this principle of drawing on mātauranga for contemporary challenges, Te Waata turns to how Maketū responded to COVID-19. When it emerged, the community immediately employed the concept of te mata o te tupuna by looking back to past crises for guidance.

Such action demonstrates the concept of ipukarea that Te Waata had elaborated on earlier. Namely, that as Kahumatamomoe had declared Maketū his ipukarea several centuries earlier, Maketū drew from that same source of accumulated mātauranga when COVID-19 presented new challenges. This deliberation was a modern form of returning to ones ipukarea to draw from the wellspring of ancestral experience until their understanding was replenished. As Te Waata

explained, “...ko te ipukarea ko te wāhi ka inumia te wai, ka inumia kia kiki anō rā te hinengaro ki ngā kōrero, ki ngā mātauranga, ki ngā wānanga...”

Their research revealed the serious toll of the 1918 influenza outbreak on Maketū. It included a high number of deaths and the loss of many tamariki. It underscored the catastrophic possibilities of what COVID-19 could do if left unchecked. It also highlighted several practical lessons that needed to be enacted to prevent similar losses from repeating.

As an example, Te Waata highlighted that practices like harirū originated from the 1918 pandemic. It wasn't from the shaking of hands in greeting but from the English phrase “how do you do?” which was adopted during the 1918 pandemic as a safer way to greet. This showed how the tikanga of acknowledgement and greeting had already been adapted to pandemic conditions.

Informed by mātauranga precedent and cognizant of the potential for renewed harm to whānau and whakapapa, Maketū exercised their mana motuhake within their rohe and implemented proactive measures to protect the hauora of the community. As he describes, “[w]e didn't wait for no council authority, we are the authorities here. We didn't wait for no directive from Parliament, we are the Parliament here”. Maketū leadership locked down their community before government directives. Alongside Te Whānau ā Apanui, they were one of the first communities to manage their pandemic response in their own way and on their own terms.

For Maketū, hauora meant more than individual wellbeing. It was about the whole community surviving and flourishing together. It supported both Māori and Pākehā whānau in recognition of the fact that wellbeing is a collective responsibility. Te Waata recalled the Rena oil spill of 2011 off the coast of Tauranga as another example where cross-cultural co-operation and responsibility came to the forefront:

“...this whole coastal line didn't care if you were Pākehā or Māori, Indian as long as you were out there cleaning the moana.” Through crises, the “...colour of skin doesn't matter... ko te mea nui he tangata, he tangata, he tangata [...] [k]āre kau te kōrero e mea ana he Pākehā, he Pākehā, he Pākehā, he Māori, he Māori, he Māori. Nē, nō reira

kotahi noa iho te aronga o tērā kupu ko te tangata te mea nui. Even COVID was helping each other, ahakoa ko wai, ahakoa nō hea. Mehemea ko te oranga te kitenga nui, ko te tangata ki te tangata e tiakina ana i a ia anō.”

His kōrero shows manaakitanga can extend beyond cultural boundaries in times of crisis. Importantly it also highlights how the whānau and hapū of Maketū were steadfast in maintaining their mana motuhake and rangatiratanga in their immediate rohe. Embedded within these core principles is a responsibility to care for all who reside within this rohe regardless of who they are or where they come from.

Central to this pedagogy is the conceptualisation of mana. Te Waata explains that “...we are not the source of mana, we're just the recipient of it, we are the agents of mana, but when you receive the mana, part of that comes with responsibility”. This frames mana as a relational responsibility where we are accountable for one another's safety and wellbeing – “...mana is influence over your environment, influence over yourself, influence over your people, but it's a positive influence”. His example of giving your best kai on your finest tableware to ensure another's mana remains intact demonstrates how manaakitanga operates through the exchange of mana. During the lockdown periods of COVID-19 where the marae kāinga of Maketū extended care to the Pākehā whānau in their community, they were exercising this principle. In other words, using their mana as tangata whenua of Maketū to positively influence and protect the mana of all within their rohe of Maketū. Te Waata emphasises that the proper exercise of mana requires the understanding of whakapapa, relationships and connections between people, te taiao and the biota within it. As he explains “[b]y understanding your connection then you know how to treat it properly then the mana is transferring”.

This understanding shows why the assertion of mana motuhake and rangatiratanga during COVID-19 included a duty of responsibility and care for all within the community. As he explains:

“I think with some of our ways that we have to return back to kawa because that's the binding agent to our Atua which means that we're

not constituted by any government, any law, but through kawa we are constituted by Atua. We are obligated by Atua, we are obligated by our tūpuna. When you are the rangatira who has been given the rangatiratanga, you have to use that mana in a positive way to influence the wellbeing positively of your people, the land, the whenua, the moana and so these are reasons why we're so close to our land.”

The mana of Ngāti Pikiao as tangata whenua of Maketū was expressed through their practice of manaakitanga. As Te Waata maintains, without understanding the underlying connections of kinship relationships between people, place, mātauranga, tikanga, kawa and recognising that oranga is a collective responsibility which includes human, environmental and spiritual dimensions, “me pēhea e mōhio ai ki te mana o tētahi mea”?

The exercise of mana motuhake and rangatiratanga also encapsulates kotahitanga. Te Waata reflects on this by emphasising that genuine kōtahitanga emerges through community-driven action. Kotahitanga is the strength and resilience of whānau standing with whānau together in both “...te ao wairua me te ao kikokiko...” in the face of adversity, be it a pandemic, environmental disasters, or political challenges. He pinpoints the marae as the authentic site where kotahitanga “...by default... just naturally unfolds.” On the marae, kotahitanga emerges from a shared physical and spiritual space.

When true kotahitanga is activated from the basis of marae kāinga communities as it did during their COVID-19 response, it nourished and enhanced both the mauri and mana of people and place. Seen in this light, marae kāinga communities, with their inherently local and specific values and mātauranga, demonstrated a capacity to respond to crises more effectively than centralised systems operating in isolation.

For Te Waata, these principles established by tūpuna (e.g., mana, rangatiratanga, tikanga, kawa, kotahitanga, manaakitanga) must continue to be the foundations Māori return to when facing contemporary challenges:

“...kia kaha tātou te iwi ki te hoki atu ki ō tātou marae, ki ō tātou mātāpono nui kei roto i ngā tikanga. Ki ō tātou atua Māori, ahakoa karaitiana, ahakoa he aha atu rānei tō hāhi, engari kua e mahue whakarahaki i ō atua Māori. Kei reira ka kite koe i ngā mātāpono nui

i whakaaro nuitia e ō tātou mātua tūpuna. Koia kei reira ngā taonga pai, tikanga pai, ngā kōrero pai hei kawe atu ki te Hawaiki hou.”

True resilience then lies in our continued relationship with mātauranga tuku iho, and our ability to adapt its practice in response to the challenges of the day.

NGĀ TIROHANGA WHĀNUI

Overarching Themes of the National Analysis

Historical Narratives in Pandemic Resilience

Kōrero Tuku Iho: Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer through Pūrākau

Rangatiratanga and Self-Determined Health Responses

International Indigenous examples of Self Determination - Indigenous-led healthcare systems
Mana Motuhake in Action - Community-Led Pandemic Responses
Mātauranga Māori-Informed Early, Proactive Responses

Te Whakatakatū mō ngā Urutā e Heke Mai Nei - Future Pandemic Preparedness

Tikanga

Rāhui
Disruption to Tikanga

Whanaungatanga – Social Connectivity as Resilience and Resource

Manaakitanga

COVID-19 Response Hubs: Marae and Manaakitanga in Action
Technology and Communication – Enhancing Connectivity and Emergency Responses
Manaakitanga is an Inclusive Framework

Kotahitanga

Aroha – Compassion and Empathy in Practice

Matemateāone – Yearning for Whenua, Whānau, and Whanaungatanga

Generational Shifts in Whānau Care Responsibilities

Meeting Kāinga Needs – Beyond Assumptions

Whakapapa – Relational Responsibility and Care

The Impact of COVID-19 on Kaimahi Māori

Leadership in Crises

Mana Wāhine Māori Leadership Through Crises

Whakapono me ngā Hāhi: Faith and Religious Movements

Disruption to Education

COVID-19 Impacts on Cultural Identity and Whanaungatanga

Vaccine Hesitancy, Attitudes and Decisions

Misinformation

Rongoā Māori

Te Taiao / Whenua
Karakia, Kapa Haka and Waiata –
Rituals and Practices of Well-being and Resilience

Tohunga / Tohungatanga

Te Reo Māori

Te Taha Wairua

NATIONAL ANALYSIS:

INTERIM REPORT ON WĀNANGA AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS: EMERGING THEMES AND INSIGHTS

Research Purpose

This research is collectively shaped by the expertise and lived experiences of pā, kāinga, whānau, hapū and iwi. The wānanga-led research is led by rangatira holding Te Tākere Nui representative roles in collaboration with the National Iwi Chairs Forum. The governance group, Te Tākere Nui, that was established, facilitated wānanga across multiple tribal regions, including Te Tai Tokerau, Waikato, Te Puku o Te Ika, Te Tai Hauāuru, Te Wai Pounamu and Te Tai Rāwhiti. These wānanga and relationships serve as essential forums for fostering relationships, building trust, and engaging in meaningful, reciprocal collaborations with kāinga communities. Furthermore, they provide a platform for expanding the mātauranga continuum through sharing knowledge, lessons, relationships and practices.

Kairangahau worked alongside nominated mātanga who held established and trusted relationships across rohe and iwi. At every opportunity, this collaboration included rangatahi rangahau champions and locally engaged facilitators to ensure community-led insights and meaningful engagement, which ensured the mahi remained grounded in the lived realities, the kōrero tuku iho, and Mātauranga Māori of the communities involved. These perspectives can reveal time-tested pathways for survival and adaptation in times of crisis.

This research weaves together individual and collective narratives of community-led solutions and intergenerational survival practices to inform pandemic planning and preparedness at both macro and micro levels.

Given the central role of Mātauranga Māori in this research and thematic analysis, establishing a clear definition is important for understanding its significance in shaping insights provided by kaikōrero. Mātauranga Māori, as defined by Sir Hirini Moko Mead, is an inclusive and evolving body of knowledge that encompasses kōrero tuku iho, values, and ethics alongside contemporary insights. Mead describes it as a term that:

“... includes all of the aspects of Māori culture... but much more. Mātauranga Māori has a past, a present and a future. Great minds of generations long gone added to the pool of Mātauranga Māori, as did many others who, in the course of their daily activities, made interesting discoveries [and] observations... Mātauranga Māori is a cultural system of knowledge about everything that is important in the lives of the people. Mātauranga Māori is thus made up of a core of inherited knowledge, plus the values and ethics that go with it, and new knowledge, some of which we’ve added as a result of our discoveries and research, and some we’ve borrowed outright from western knowledge and from our experiences of living” (Mead, 2022; see also Hikuroa, 2017).

Scope

To achieve this, Whiitiki Whakatika has brought together a diverse collective of people – including rangatira, kaumātua, mātanga, marae champions, hapū and iwi leaders, kaimahi, and technicians – to explore how best to develop pandemic resilience plans based on Mātauranga Māori. This research draws insights from marae, hapū, iwi, and Māori-led organisations, focusing on culturally grounded strategies to address infectious disease challenges.

Approach

The data collection phase includes:

- 3 national Māori engagements where respected mātanga discussed pandemic preparedness in public forums, culturally anchored to values carried at Rātana, Waitangi and Te Matatini.
- 10 regional wānanga, where collective knowledge was shared and explored.
- 21 individual interviews, capturing lived experiences and perspectives on past and present pandemic experiences and responses.

Methods

From October 2024 to May 2025, wānanga and interviews took place across Aotearoa New Zealand.¹ These locations reflect the breadth of engagement, ensuring diverse perspectives and regional insights were incorporated into the research. Wānanga-based research and methods ensured a way of determining the collective thoughts as opposed to individualistic views and provided a traditional Māori safeguard for accuracy amongst relational and trusted relationships, amongst those who were sharing, as well as

¹ Locations included – Stratford, Ruatoki, Tuahiwi, Wellington, Christchurch, Whanganui, and Omaio.

kairangahau. These qualitative, semi-structured interviews and wānanga served as the primary method for data collection, knowledge sharing, and collaborative analysis, which aligned with the Te Kore phase of the research framework.

Participant Engagement & Ethical Considerations

In line with principles of informed decision-making, respect, and reciprocity, the research upheld Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC):

- Participants were directly contacted via email and invited to contribute.
- Letters of invitation were sent out.
- Each participant received a Whakamōhio Booklet (an information sheet) and a kaikōrero consent form, which was completed before their interview.
- Interviews were conducted in person by Māori research assistants, and were audio recorded and transcribed with the support of Kaituhi, a digital transcription tool that maintains Māori Data Sovereignty principles, in line with WAI 262 Tiaki Taonga and CARE principles. Transcripts have maintained quality assurance methods that incorporate a two-tiered check, for Te Reo Māori use to consider distinct dialect variances across regions and for quality controls.

This research is tikanga Māori-centric, ensuring that tikanga, kawa, values, and mātauranga māori were upheld throughout the process. Mana motuhake was central, with mihi and whanaungatanga forming the foundation of engagement protocols as important voice-giving aspects of this process.

Furthermore, the research maintains that whānau, hapū, and iwi remain the kaitiaki of their knowledge, holding full and exclusive decision-making authority over taonga Māori, in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Analysis

The interviews were analysed by the Pou Rangahau Māori (lead researcher(s)) using reflective thematic analysis (see Braun, Clarke, Hayfield & Terry, 2019). Braun et al. (2019) outlined the six phases of reflexive thematic analysis:

- Familiarisation: Immersing oneself in the data over time to gain understanding.
- Generating codes: Identifying key patterns and assigning overarching labels.
- Constructing themes: Grouping related codes to develop meaningful themes.
- Revising themes: Ensure coherence across themes.
- Defining themes: Articulate the significance of each theme.
- Producing the report: Synthesise findings.

The Pou Rangahau Māori first read through each transcript in full as they were made available. The transcripts were revisited multiple times. The research lead team conducted a collaborative dual analysis of interview transcripts, discussing content in relation to key themes and subthemes. Notes were taken during multiple read-throughs, either by hand or using in-document comments in MS Word or Google Docs. These notes helped identify key meanings, which were captured as codes (i.e., concepts, phrases, key words, recurring ideas). Themes emerged as related codes clustered together, and patterns were then examined across transcripts, allowing for connections, comparisons, and refinements. The final themes were established through this iterative process of coding and cross-analysis.

Please note the following:

Throughout this analysis, multiple themes emerge from individual segments of kōrero. Given the interconnected nature of experiences and reflections, some insights could fit within multiple thematic categories. To ensure clarity and coherence, themes are presented within the framework that best encapsulates their dominant narrative, while acknowledging relevant areas of overlap. Additionally, subthemes are incorporated within broader thematic categories to highlight specific variations and nuances.

Across the interviews and wānanga discussions, recurring ideas and underlying patterns revealed a shared pandemic experience across Māoridom. The narratives also highlight nuanced differences shaped by regional, iwi, hapū and community-specific realities. The next section explores these key themes. The analysis acknowledges both the collective and locally distinctive dimensions of Mātauranga Māori and Māori pandemic responses.

Each thematic section begins with an introduction that establishes the theoretical and cultural foundations of the theme. This statement draws on established academic literature and Māori scholarly perspectives. This is to ensure that interview data is analysed within appropriate conceptual frameworks. It provides readers with the necessary background knowledge for understanding this analysis. It also acknowledges existing Māori scholarship in Mātauranga Māori. By grounding themes in the established literature before presenting participant voices, this methodology aims to enhance the credibility and cultural appropriateness of the thematic analysis while maintaining transparency in the analytical process.

For each theme, 2-4 representative transcript examples are presented to illustrate key concepts while avoiding repetition and redundancy. Examples were strategically selected based on their illustrative strength and ability to demonstrate different dimensions of each theme. The selection prioritised diversity across kaikōrero, regions, and experiences to showcase the breadth of each theme's manifestation. While numerous additional examples of each theme exist throughout the transcripts, the recurring nature of these concepts across different kaikōrero, geographical locations, and pandemic experiences is noted as a finding in itself that speaks to the cultural foundations that bind Māori within Te Ao Māori. This selective approach prioritised the most compelling examples while acknowledging broader patterns of cultural continuity that were evident in the data.

KEY THEMES AND FINDINGS

Historical Narratives in Pandemic Resilience

This is presented as the opening theme as many kaikōrero consistently contextualised their own or their whānau/hapū experiences within the broader continuum of Māori survival and adaptation (i.e., the 1918 influenza pandemic). This historical awareness provided the foundation from which many other themes emerged as kaikōrero drew on their own Mātauranga Māori and that of their tūpuna and the resulting survival strategies and collective memory to navigate contemporary challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This theme establishes the temporal and cultural framework within which tikanga adaptations, whanaungatanga networks, manaakitanga practices, and rongoā applications were mobilised. It demonstrates how Indigenous knowledge systems operate through intergenerational transmission and historical continuity. Beginning with historical narratives acknowledges that the myriad of Māori pandemic responses were not merely reactive innovations, but rather the activation of embedded cultural resources that have been refined through centuries of survival and resilience.

As the transcripts show, kaikōrero frequently recalled the experiences of tūpuna to contextualise the COVID-19 pandemic within broader patterns of whānau and hapū survival and adaptation. This historical consciousness was perhaps best captured in one participant's observation that:

“It's happened before... we've been here before.”

This is a reference to the devastating impact of previous pandemics, particularly the 1918 influenza outbreak that claimed disproportionate numbers of Māori lives. Rather than viewing COVID-19 as an unprecedented crisis, many kaikōrero positioned it within a continuum of historical challenges that Māori communities have faced and survived. These historical narratives functioned not merely as background context but as active resources for understanding and validating current responses as well as drawing strength from the resilience of tūpuna leadership. For example, one kaikōrero highlighted:

“When I think about infectious diseases and the control of its movements, I often think of a tupuna of ours from the central Kaipara. His name was Wātarauhi Kāwharu and during his time around the 1800s, there was an outbreak of influenza, other diseases. He informed his own people that they were not to leave their kāinga, that they were to stay within our district within our district but, more importantly, they closed off riverways so that travellers from Tāmaki, in particular, weren't coming up into the papakāinga, into the Kaipara and bringing any kino, any other diseases. So I often think of Wātarauhi, when I'm thinking about how do we control viruses and other infectious potential threats.”

Some kaikōrero invoked stories of community survival strategies, traditional healing practices, and adaptive responses that had sustained Māori through previous health crises. This serves to demonstrate how collective memory serves as both a warning and a guide. The historical consciousness reflects the intergenerational transmission of Mātauranga Māori and the enduring strength of Māori cultural identity in the face of repeated challenges that potentially threaten whakapapa, future generations, and vulnerable members of their communities. Kaikōrero also highlighted the risk of cultural knowledge loss, particularly among kaumātua knowledge holders, whose lived experiences and mātauranga are vital to preserving kōrero tuku iho.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how historical narratives were employed as tools of resilience, a warning system and sources of guidance throughout the pandemic experience. These narratives show how the collective memory of whānau/hapū operates as a form of mātauranga that shapes contemporary responses to crises.

The impact of the 1918 influenza pandemic continues to resonate through the generations. As one kaikōrero acknowledged:

“Remembering that mamae, that loss that was felt... not only a loss of people but our reo and our tikanga.”

This kōrero reveals the multidimensional nature of pandemic loss within Māori kin-communities (but also other indigenous peoples globally). Pandemic loss extends beyond individual mortality to also include the erosion of whānau/hapū cultural infrastructure itself. The reference to loss of language and tikanga demonstrates how pandemics represent an existential threat to whānau and marae. The transmission of these historical experiences across generations is not just an act of memorialising and remembering, but a form of cultural protection and preparedness.

Another warning mechanism from the past was reflected in another observation by one kaikōrero about influenza era urupā:

“He urupā anō kei reira... ngā akoako o tērā urupā ki a tātau. ‘Ko ngā akoako o tērā urupā ki a tātau...’ ”

Such kōrero illustrates how whakapapa and whenua combine to create an archive of knowledge for survival. These urupā serve as tangible reminders of the risks of inaction but also of resilience that can speak across generations. Another example notes:

“...the Second World War, all of our koroua, they went and fought in Egypt and the design of those particular graves, in my mind came from Egypt, because no other graves were like that, it was really interesting. The reason why Ōtapuwae was located there, eh? It's because most of the people in that urupā died from disease, including the ones that were in those adult graves that I'm talking about and I believe that they designed, that they copycatted the design from Egypt urupā, from the graves of Kings and Queens of the Valley and Egypt, but our tupuna used them to close off and quarantine the diseases they died of, that's my understanding of that. That was very interesting to visit that Ōtapuwae. That's why it's different to every other urupā and that's why it was located where it is [...] Because really it was about achieving distance, and isolation of those who died from disease, serious disease.”

Some historical losses due to the 1918 influenza pandemic were highlighted numerically. One kaikōrero stated:

“We had the 1918 flu pandemic... 40 of our whānau died in that flu [...] how do we maintain that whakapapa protection?”

Another kaikōrero noted on the question of immunisation attitudes and uptake in the mid-20th century in their particular tribal rohe:

“I think they were highly skeptical, they were suspicious of immunisation back then. World War Two period and 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, they were still suspicious of immunisation. I think until they had that enormous one almost wiped out every newborn at Ōtapuwae where they are buried at Ōtapuwae, you know if you go to that Ōtapuwae urupā it’s literally littered with newborn babies of one year olds, up to one years old, two years old and a lot of their graves were covered by their (in those days they used to make) tin baby baths and those were sitting on their graves from last time I visited Ōtapuwae. There were a whole lot of tin baby baths, oval shaped baby baths overturned onto their graves to signify that that was a baby. But all those babies died of tuberculosis, some died of Hepatitis B.”

This demonstrates how traumatic pandemic experiences become embedded in the collective memory of whānau/hapū and how they become quantifiable warnings for generations today. Similarly:

“So, there are a number of things that we were kind of managing over that time. From a mātauranga perspective we’d already had the histories of whether it was the flu epidemic. One of my kuia, she survived the flu epidemic. I thought her name was Demic. I thought for wow [sic]. He ingoa pai tērā. My grandfather told me it’s short for epidemic. She survived the flu epidemic. Demic wasn’t her flash Pākehā name, her whole name was Epidemic. Kia maumahara ki tērā that she had survived, as a baby, the flu epidemic. Before that we’d had the leprosy epidemic which had followed through from Ōrākau and a number of our people had perished and are still buried here at Piripekapeka, and then on the way down to Moawhango. We can follow E pā tō hau the waiata. It marks their journey. Not only to survive the war but then also the leprosy epidemic that had come with them. We have other stories of our whānau surviving the flu epidemic and having to go into the ngāhere.”

The mātauranga highlighted here creates direct parallels that frame contemporary responses of kin-communities to COVID-19. It validates present-day caution, urgency, preparedness and response efforts within whānau and wider kin-communities.

Kōrero Tuku Iho: Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer through Pūrākau

Kōrero tuku iho emerged as a significant theme throughout kaikōrero discussions. It manifested primarily through the sharing and application of pūrākau during the COVID-19 pandemic. This theme covers both the process of knowledge transmission

across generations and the traditional narratives that serve as vehicles for this transfer (see, for example, Kingi et al., 2021).

Pūrākau, as integral components of Mātauranga Māori, are narratives “containing philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes and world views” (Hikuroa, 2017, p. 6), while kōrero tuku iho represents the broader mechanism through which such wisdom is preserved, shared, and applied across generations.

Unlike the historical narratives theme, which focuses on references to specific historical events and collective memory of past pandemics, this theme centres on the transmission of timeless Mātauranga Māori and philosophical frameworks that guide appropriate responses to the challenges of the day. During the pandemic, participants demonstrated how kōrero tuku iho and pūrākau were actively recalled, shared, and applied as sources of guidance, illustrating the dynamic nature of kōrero tuku iho as both preservation and practical application of cultural knowledge.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how kōrero tuku iho operated as a system of intergenerational knowledge transfer where pūrākau were actively applied as philosophical frameworks/practical guides for navigating COVID-19 challenges. Kōrero tuku iho are repositories of adaptive Mātauranga Māori that transcend specific historical contexts to help in resilience strategies.

The foundational pūrākau of Polynesian migration emerged as a framework for understanding pandemic adaptation among kin-communities with one kaikōrero drawing direct connections between ancestral navigation to Aotearoa and contemporary crisis response.

“We left Hawaiki to come here, and we adapted. We’re rapid adaptors.”

Narratives of the migration story of how Polynesian explorers navigated the vast Pacific expanse and found their way to Aotearoa emphasise how they found ways to adapt to new environments. Throughout history, Māori have drawn upon Mātauranga Māori to navigate crises as they arise. Māori have adapted their system of knowledge to ensure survival. It reinforces the fact that whānau, hapū and marae are capable of rapid, strategic adaptation in the face of crisis. The invocation of the Hawaiki migration story validates the knowledge within pūrākau. Pūrākau presents as precedents set by tūpuna, which are drawn on in contemporary adaptive responses to present-day challenges.

This form of Mātauranga Māori positions adaptation (e.g., rapid adaptors) as a fundamental strength of Māori that has ensured survival across centuries marred challenges.

Another kaikōrero provided a further example of an account of an 1830s influenza outbreak in the Whanganui basin. According to the writings of Kere-o-Matūwhāwhākia, the epidemic was devastating, with up to thirty deaths per day across numerous kāinga along the Whanganui river. The kaikōrero highlighted a whakataukī that emerged from this experience:

“Me te mea nei ka uea ake te kōrero, Ngāti Rangi haere hoki ki ngā ture o Murimotu. Kawea te whenua ora ki a koe, waiho mai muri i te whenua mate ki a au, i Hiruhārama tēnei kōrero, i Patiarero, ka hinga te tangata. Ka kīa ngā tūpuna, ko te hunga e ora ana, piki atu ki te maunga kua rerekē te ao.”

This whakataukī can be interpreted as a mnemonic survival strategy and a directive for those who remained to move away from areas of loss to rebuild and adapt to new conditions.

Many kaikōrero drew upon pūrākau as sources of guidance, wisdom, and cultural direction which demonstrated how these narratives continue to provide pathways for kin-communities navigating contemporary crises. Other key examples include:

“Nā akoako mai i te influenza o te tapuwae i roto i te back urupā rā. I think ngā akoako that has taught our people is that it’s happened before and we’ve been here before. So there’s no excuse to not know what to do, we’re used to that and if it’s happened before to you, there’s no need to be alarmed, [we can be] shocked and frightened but no need to be alarmed because we’ve been there before. We know how to deal with it and so we’re just gonna do it. That happened a hundred years ago.”

“When I think about the lessons learnt from Te Ika Ranganui, not only from 1825, but moving through the different stages of our evolution over the last two hundred years, I hark back and am reminded of the haka, ko te puru, ko te puru kōa tokatoka. And there’s a line in there and it talks about kia ueue, kia tū tangatanga. To be firm in times of challenge. To really pull yourself and muscle up. To come tight as a people. Engari, kia tū tangatanga i ōna wā. But also to be flexible and adaptable in those times where circumstances may be changing, where there may be new challenges cropping up in front of you. So I think it’s about always being adaptable. It’s about being firm when you need to be. It’s about having a plan A, plan B and a plan C. And ensuring that there’s capability but not only capability for now, but future-proofing that capability and looking at where those needs in the future are gonna lie.”

“The story and legacy of Te Putu stems from manaakitanga, from providing manaakitanga for whaanau and for ensuring that kai is sustained for future generations. Now Te Putu was the great grandfather to the first Maaori King, Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, and in the legacy of Te Putu he saw that whaanau in Raahui Pookeka would overfish tuna and at that time, times of old, three different types of tuna that were thriving and growing here within our lakes and so with the overfishing of our whaanau, our whaanau overfishing the tuna, meant that something needed to be done about it and what Te Putu done [sic] he took a Pookeka from his cloak, a feather from the back of his cloak, and he tied it to a pou and he put that pou into the ground and he declared that no one is to go fishing until this pou is covered by dirt – thus entailing a raahui and so our ingoa Raahui Pookeka comes from that legacy, a raahui to protect our tuna and a pookeka from the cloak that he used to wear, and once the dirt covered the pou, he would bring all the fishing families back together and he would ask the fishing families to go out and get tuna and bring it back for me and in that process was equally dividing the tuna, so they went, caught all the tuna, brought it back, laid it in front of him and that process was called Wawaahitanga, which is where our Lake Waahi gets its name, which is where our marae gets its name and our stories I think to ensure that we think of the future we also have to make sure that we go back, grab our stories and bring them into the future and so one of the things that could do really well is, there is now a kind of action Tiktok

song done and it’s taught inside our Koohanga Reo, so that when those tamariki go home and they teach the story of Te Putu, they’re the teachers with that story, so they (inaudible). So I think in terms of resilience of our hapori, our marae, our people of Raahui Pookeka are resilient people.”

The above pūrākau about the leadership of Te Putu contains multiple layers of Mātauranga Māori which are relevant to pandemic resilience. Elements include:

- Manaakitanga: The kōrero which speaks to the fair and equal distribution of kai amongst the community demonstrates manaakitanga and it provides the model for resource sharing that informed the manaakitanga efforts in the Rāhui Pōkeka rohe during the pandemic.
- Rāhui: The kōrero explains rāhui through the feather-marked pou of Te Putu which restricted fishing activities until the pou was covered in dirt. Such mātauranga relating to temporary restriction for sustained kin-community protection provides the socio-cultural precedent for understanding the instances of rāhui set during the COVID-19 pandemic that protected whānau throughout Aotearoa from virus transmission. Note – see rāhui theme section for further discussions on this kaupapa.
- The kaikōrero explicitly connects the pūrākau of Te Putu to resilience. It demonstrates how mātauranga offers practical guidance and emotional resilience during contemporary crises.

Rangatiratanga and Self-Determined Health Responses

Rangatiratanga, or self-determination, emerged as a significant theme throughout numerous transcripts, both through explicit references and implicit descriptions of community-led actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Professor Margaret Mutu explains, rangatiratanga:

“...is high-order leadership, the ability to keep the people together, that is an essential quality in a rangatira. The exercise of such leadership in order to maintain and enhance the mana of the people is rangatiratanga. Tino rangatiratanga is the exercise of paramount and spiritually sanctioned power and authority. It includes aspects of the English notions of ownership, status, influence, dignity, respect and sovereignty, and has strong spiritual connotations” (2010, p. 26).

Throughout the pandemic, kin-communities across the country activated their own solutions, leadership structures, and crisis response frameworks, with marae, hapū, iwi, and other Māori organisations demonstrating proactive, locally driven and culturally derived approaches to counteract the pandemic threat. There were numerous examples of rangatiratanga in practice shown throughout the transcripts, most notably through the marae and their kaimahi acting as first responders in community emergencies; iwi and hapū setting up inclusive health support services as well as the community-led establishment of roadside checkpoints that emerged as a response to protect regional/rural Māori

communities from virus transmission. Such initiatives exemplified community-led action grounded in tino rangatiratanga, where communities took decisive action to protect their whānau without waiting for government instructions, permission, or resources.

Instead, marae kaimahi acted swiftly according to their own tikanga and conscience. Significantly, these were not ad hoc reactions but were grounded in the longstanding belief in the principle of rangatiratanga, which entails collective care and leadership. This exercise of rangatiratanga was typically organised at the marae and hapū level and was inherently connected to the rights, duties and responsibilities of kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga, and the cultural imperative to nurture, care for, and protect their whānau and others. The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate the diverse ways rangatiratanga manifested as both principle and practice throughout the pandemic experience.

One kaikōrero reflected on the philosophical grounding of rangatiratanga:

“Tino rangatiratanga exists in your mind, if you put value to whatever your kaupapa is, that’s rangatiratanga aye?”

This kōrero suggests that autonomy is cultivated through intention, commitment, and recognition of the inherent authority within kaupapa Māori approaches.

Numerous transcripts showed that many whānau, marae, and hapū did not seek external protection but instead activated their own local, pragmatic solutions. As one kaikōrero stated:

“We can’t keep chasing their framework.”

This statement critiques external health models that may not align with Māori needs. The statement suggests that Māori communities must design and implement their own resilience frameworks. Another speaker emphasised the importance of greater Māori involvement in scientific spaces and policymaking:

“More researchers, more Māori involved in scientific spaces.”

This kōrero aligns with the wider push for Mātauranga Māori to influence health strategies to ensure that policy decisions are informed by both scientific expertise and Mātauranga Māori. Such kōrero affirms the need for long-term investment in Māori-led governance and health sovereignty. This strategic Māori direction would help ensure crisis response models reflect Māori priorities, cultural frameworks and on-the-ground realities.

International Indigenous Examples of Self Determination - Indigenous-led Healthcare Systems

The exercise of rangatiratanga extends beyond local community responses to embrace learning from and drawing inspiration from international, indigenous-led healthcare systems. In one of the wānanga, the researchers were provided with an example of successful indigenous self-determination in healthcare – specifically the Alaskan Native healthcare model, which serves as both validation of indigenous approaches to healthcare governance and a source of inspiration for what might be achieved within Aotearoa New Zealand’s healthcare system to better serve Māori communities and enhance pandemic

preparedness. A comparative perspective demonstrates that rangatiratanga operates not in isolation, but as part of a broader global indigenous movement towards self-determination and sovereignty in healthcare.

The kaikōrero illustrated how self-determined governance in their state has helped to embed cultural safety practices within the health system as well as generating stronger health outcomes and resilience for their people. The kaikōrero emphasised the power of indigenous governance in ensuring culturally appropriate care:

- “The ownership... the governance... are all Alaskan native people.”
- “Our own primary care system, we’re culturally appropriate.”
- “We have assumed the role from the federal government...”

This highlights how health sovereignty allows communities to shape systems of care that reflect their own cultural values and lived realities thus ensuring culturally safe, relevant and accessible services and long-term resilience.

Mana Motuhake in Action - Community-Led Pandemic Responses

Many Māori communities mobilised independently, developing self-determined health strategies tailored to the realities in their tribal rohe. Institutional responses were slow, leaving marae/hapū leaders to activate their own networks, engage iwi, and implement infection control measures before official directives arrived from the Government.

As one kaikōrero from Waikato stated:

“We sent emails to our iwi, look we’ve been noticing this thing’s happening in China, is anybody getting ready out there? We emailed even the MoH to say what’s happening and – crickets, nobody responded to us. We thought, okay then, what can we do within our own communities?”

Marae/hapū/iwi/other Māori organisations played a pivotal role as centralised support systems, facilitating resource coordination, funding access, and Māori-specific COVID-19 response planning. For example:

“Hui mate for us as Māori was hugely concerning to us. But then we thought we need to act on it anyway, because all of it is about the protection and well-being of our people. So through our wānanga, through our hui we say so. Whatever we got we’ve got a family down the road, we can’t accommodate them for housing shortages. So all we can do is leave them in their bubble, leave them in their little family grouping, but what would happen is we said we will try and prepare ourselves for if there was someone that became unwell [...] So we got together, we thought, well Ngāmoko’s empty. (Ngāmoko’s our Kōhanga Reo building). Okay then, let’s see what we’ve got in there, let’s see what we need to have in there, so we’ll furnish it and we’ll furnish it only on the understanding that if someone becomes unwell, that individual person and their caregiver will come and then they could care for them in there, so that was one solution. The other one was that’s possibly not enough area. So then we started looking within ourselves and we found two other caravans as well. Okay then let’s equip those caravans and let’s have them on

standby should they be needed. Should the need arise then we can at least mobilise that caravan to whichever household. So it was about doing things for ourselves, kicking ourselves off.”

Initially focusing on welfare and communications, their efforts evolved into public health mobilisation, with iwi-led immunisation and testing initiatives emerging. As the pandemic response progressed, localised actions transitioned into a coordinated regional strategy, as shown by the formation of Te Ranga Tupua – a collective of iwi working in unison to streamline resourcing and operational responses. Supported by government funding, the Te Ranga Tupua Response Hub became a mechanism for scaling up Māori-led pandemic interventions across the rohe. As one kaikōrero highlighted:

“As we moved out of that phase of just providing welfare and comms, we then moved into supporting the immunisation campaign.”

This shows the progression of marae-led initiatives – starting with direct welfare support, then expanding into public health efforts.

“... it wasn't really until phase two of lockdowns where our response moved away from an iwi-specific response to a rohe response.”

This directly reflects how localised efforts grew into coordinated regional action.

“Te Ranga Tupua, which is the collective of iwi in Whanganui tonu started to come together to say, ‘Ngāti Rangī you are doing this, Mōkai Pātea you’re doing that, Whanganui you’re doing this’.”

This kōrero illustrates the intentional, structured approach iwi took in aligning their pandemic strategies. Inter-iwi whanaungatanga likely played a key part of this. Similarly:

“Our collective iwi entities came together to support that. The Tūwharetoa responses, unlike many iwi, we don't have one kind of entity, we have four, five. And so communication was really important to try and strengthen up working together to ensure that we're all pushing back on government messaging and our whānau knew that we were here to support them and then to really deal with some bigger issues around inequity. Because whilst some marae like our whānau at Pākira, Tūtemohuta was set up right? Had Wi-Fi, had power, had a Bidfood account you could go book up ten grand worth a [sic] shopping. That is not the case for many of our marae. Some of our marae like ‘can I get some power?’, true story So there are major inequities here that over the last three years we've been addressing as a people.”

Kaikōrero discussions showed that mana motuhake manifested across multiple organisational levels with each level exercising distinct yet complementary forms of rangatira leadership. In the abovementioned examples, at the iwi level, coordinated welfare support systems and strategic resource mobilisation provided broad frameworks for pandemic support. Yet it was often at the hapū and marae level where mana motuhake was immediately and fully expressed as these entities stood up and assumed primary leadership, advocacy and engagement roles to protect their rohe and the needs of their people:

“We still have the street teams in the kaitiaki spaces in place now. We held onto that position until we morphed into an iwi space where I just walked into this tari and said to the Ariki, ‘what are you going to do for us?’ And he's like, ‘what shall we do?’, ‘This is what we're going to do’. And we practically rolled out a response amongst our marae. Which leads us to Te Kapua Whakapipi and how we do things now in terms of the response to the pandemic. We've done quite a bit actually because where we are today from the after-effects of what we implemented through a COVID[-19] response. It was just marae on the ground.”

“all of our people relied on fishing and hunting. And so when the Government very early on, said, ‘you can't go out and do these normal things that you would do to eat to survive’, actually that became problematic for us. So as an iwi, we were pushing back on government and we were able to do that with the support and advocacy of other government kaimahi within Te Puni Kōkiri and critical friends and Civil Defence just to say ‘hey this isn't going to work, particularly for rural people’. And so there was a lot of that pushback happening [...] There were places that we couldn't go to, or that Government were putting restrictions on, like puia, that have always been part of the way that we heal and look after ourselves. They were putting restrictions on these normal places of healing. And so it was really good that with the support of the Ariki, our pakeke and our hapū. That Tūwharetoa came together and said, ‘no, this is going to be our response’.”

Several kaikōrero stated that mana motuhake extends beyond healthcare. It includes self-sufficiency and economic resilience, and the need to move away from supermarket/corporate reliance and towards local sustainability models:

“Growing local, buy local, [and] returning to bartering.”

“When the food parcels came into the Recreation Centre, to Wainui School, there was a huge emphasis put on that as well. But looking at the time and probably looking at it now, you can see why our people get so dependent on stuff – it is because it's given to them. And what Anaru was talking about, like the lifestyle that he's talking about, was we grew up in that lifestyle so we grew up as hunter gatherers, we grew up as gardeners, the gardens were that huge it put you off veggies for the rest of your life. And then when you finish your little mahi at home then we go and help the neighbours with theirs. But the thing was the shopping list of those days was so, so small compared to the shopping list today. Growing up here as a child, as a young man growing up over here, if we had a funeral, a hui mate over here, very little shopping was actually bought from the store or bought from the shop. So all the preserves that Anaru was talking about, all the bread was made over here. So you know the shopping was pretty limited to flour, to sugar, to salt and stuff like that. So growing up here my dad he had cows, so every time there was a death at our door, a mate, then we would go and kill a cow and have it prepared for that hui. I don't know how you regenerate that in today's generation, it's quite a different lifestyle. So you know, you're talking about your modern technology, today you got pumps nowadays. Like we would have 40-gallon drums of water at four sides of each garden and lucky to be the little ones that you only had to have a little bucket of water

and you get this little cup that you water every plant, every tupu along the way. But the gardens were amazing, they were, but every household had a garden. Every household through the summer period had kina in their creek, wai Māori, kāngawai, kāngapiro in their creek and everyone grew like that. And then as the stores got bigger and the brands got better and the work got harder, everyone left from here to move away and then the garden slowly, slowly disappear. And that's what I'm saying you've got to grow, you've got to have that passion, you've got to have that patience for it because not everyone is a gardener, you can give seeds to every person, every person in this community. It's the fruits that come out of it. That's the result, it's about that mindset thing, it's about growing into it."

Mātauranga Māori-Informed Early, Proactive Responses

Mātauranga Māori-informed, early, proactive responses emerged as a theme from some of the kaikōrero transcripts demonstrating how some kin-communities, marae, hapū and iwi drew upon Mātauranga Māori systems and related historical responses. These systems were used to recognise and respond to the threat of COVID-19 as it spread throughout the globe and reached Aotearoa New Zealand. At the earliest signs of the highly contagious disease emerging as a potentially serious threat to Aotearoa, iwi as well as hapū and marae mobilised various degrees of response strategies – often before official government directives or public health mandates were established. This proactive approach was not reactive panic. The response strategies were a calculated foresight stemming from the memory of past health crises and the understanding of kin-community vulnerabilities and leading to rapid activation.

There were a range of measures employed such as initiating food distribution networks and implementing community safety protocols. The strategic foresight by various levels of Māori leadership represented the exercise of rangatiratanga where leaders evaluated the situation and took action based on their assessment of threats weighed against their responsibilities to protect their kin-communities. The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how early awareness translated into quick action that prioritised physical and cultural protection and preservation throughout the emerging pandemic crisis.

"I remember when Iwi Chairs first met and then the hui was held there was this disease, this virus going around Aotearoa and up north, and then we got the news that the first person was infected and that was a whanaunga in Paihia who just come back from overseas and once we knew that was in Tai Tokerau then it was like ok, it's starting to get real now. And so we're like, okay, we better do something."

"The threat was real from the experience of the past of smallpox that we see very evident in our urupā across Te Tai Tokerau, and that flip of the switch that made us move into a space of Tai Tokerau Border Control, Whangaroa Border Control across the motu because we did not know what we were dealing with. The correspondence that was coming back via international kōrero that was being had at very high levels was, 'kia rite tātou' and all in our minds all that we could think of was protect our whakapapa..."

[...]...So our job was to do our best to protect our whānau, our hapū and our iwi and that's exactly what we did. Took to the road, shut the road down and we had multiple whānau out there collecting information."

Rather than waiting for government intervention, community leaders drew on both Mātauranga Māori and western science – utilising the tools at hand as well as best-practice infection control strategies.

"We started creating little vignettes of best techniques around infection control and how do we start improving some of our practices and readiness. By March we were well and truly prepared..."

"So at the time, we weren't actually a part of the Rūnanga and so a lot of the stuff we were doing, we were already doing it automatically for ourselves. So when COVID[-19] came along we examined COVID[-19] for what it was, then we had that discussion. We had our wānanga and we raised some concerns about the well-being of our people and if we talk about the Spanish flu we never really had an epidemic in Wainui as other communities did, but we're aware of the impact that it would have on us. And I tell the Ahipara story because of Amanda's whānau from up there. Amanda's family cemetery line was full so I talked to the kaumātua up there about whether we could extend or start a new family line behind where her parents were and he said, 'no that line is actually taken' and it was there, that I learnt about Spanish flu – the flu epidemic and that whole unmarked area was an unmarked grave from the flu epidemic. And it was a really, really, tragic story. So the concern at a home level back here was about the well-being of our people. So we had family, we had whānau that were living in a seriously overcrowded position. By then, to understand what this COVID-19 was, what this pandemic was – we started to engage with the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health gave advice – they had absolutely no idea how we lived as a people. They thought everybody lived in a three bedroom house and had running water. So the question that came about was, 'if someone became ill, how would we care for them?' So, she gave me the scenario that you'd care for them by isolating them. She said 'So you'll have one member of the family that will care for them. So then when they go to the toilet or they go to bath, that whole area will be sanitised after being used.' And then you kept a smaller bubble within your own household bubble and I said to her 'but we've got an overcrowding position. We've got a family of 11 that's living in an open church, an open church where the parents are living in a tent outside'. She had no idea. There was no idea, so we came back and we thought, well let's look for our own solutions ourselves."

"The Crown knew, oh yeah, you gotta keep the infrastructure going. So who had COVID tests first? Power companies? So we were the first to jump on that to say, 'bro? How do we get some of those COVID[-19] tests? You know, and a lot of healthcare clinicians said to us, 'oh no, they're still untested, unless it gets rolled out by Ministry of Health'.

... we're like, 'if they're good enough for power companies to ensure that the shifts can still happen to supply power to Aotearoa. Now if they're good enough for them, they're good enough for us'."

Throughout Māori history, the ability to read and interpret tohu (signs) and indicators has been central to decision-making, adaptation, and resilience. It was a key factor in the migration story to Aotearoa.

One kaikōrero emphasised the importance of situational awareness, urging Māori communities to strengthen their preparedness and refine their ability to identify and respond to tohu, not only within Aotearoa but also to look internationally:

“Kia matāra ai ki ngā tohu ehara ko ngā tohu noa iho ki roto o Aotearoa, ki roto i o mātou nei whenua, engari ngā tohu puta noa i te ao hurihuri.”

Māori are a part of the global community and broad-spectrum vigilance of what is happening is vital. Another reflection challenges kin-communities to evaluate their capacity for strategic foresight, asking:

“How well are we reading tohu... as [an] early warning?”

This emphasis on reading tohu as signals rather than reactionary cues reflects a proactive model of preparedness for crises. Not all tohu are to be interpreted in the same way:

“Different perspectives on tohu signify different potentials for action.”

This kaikōrero suggests that interpretation is not singular; the meaning of tohu can shift depending on context, worldview, and experience and that how tohu are read determines the pathway kin-communities take in preparing for uncertainty. Ā-hapū, ā-iwi dialogue and refinement of their response strategies for the next crises needs to occur.

Te Whakatakatū mō ngā Urutā e Heke Mai Nei Future Pandemic Preparedness

Future pandemic preparedness emerged as a theme throughout many kaikōrero discussions. Kaikōrero reflected on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 experience. Some articulated recommendations for improved responses for future health crises. This theme covers both retrospective analysis of what worked for kin-communities during the pandemic and prospective thinking about how systems, processes and approaches could be enhanced to better serve Māori in future pandemic or emergency response situations.

Kaikōrero drew upon their lived experiences of navigating COVID-19 challenges to identify gaps in current preparedness frameworks while also recognising the strengths of Māori kin-communities that could be built on. The ideas revealed both immediate practical consideration (e.g., resource distribution) and deeper systemic issues relating to cultural responsiveness, rangatiratanga (self-determination) and integrating Mātauranga Māori into emergency planning. Some kaikōrero articulated visions for future preparedness that centered Māori ways of knowing and being – emphasising the importance of relationality, community-led responses, culturally and geographically appropriate communication strategies, and better recognition of rongoā Māori practices with the broader health framework.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate their recommendations, aspirations and lessons learned from Māori kin-community perspectives.

“Definitely bring a Māori approach to it, especially for our whānau. Personally, we had a few mate, few whānau pass away and it was quite hard to not be in attendance of things or just being together. We kinda broke the bubble a little bit on some of those things because it was really hard for us. Hopefully when there is a next pandemic [sic], I hope they do adopt a lot of Te Ao Māori, Mātauranga Māori and kaupapa Māori into it because we need it, whānau need it, everybody needs it, they just don’t know it yet.”

“From my perspective, if we’re thinking about the future of what we should be investing in – is core groups or core teams that run across kaupapa providers, public health, hospitals and each of our communities, iwi, et cetera – and they could very well be rangatahi-led that are focused on preparedness, remaining prepared, and developing the capability, capacity and networks for preparedness of any crisis that might occur. Not just pandemic but it might be cyclone, or environmental or it might be something else that might happen in any of our communities. But if you invest in that core group that keep us always prepared and keep that muscle memory strong that we created during COVID around responding to something like a pandemic, then we’ll always be prepared, but we gotta [sic] invest in our rangatahi, we gotta [sic] invest in sustaining the capability, capacity and the thinking that we developed in the early 2020s to respond to COVID.”

[when answering the question of pandemic preparedness planning for whānau for the future] “I think it’s a phone number and it’s a face because actually we don’t, you could say we’re in a pandemic at the moment right? There’s uncertainty, with a pandemic. People don’t know what the hell they’re doing with a pandemic, everybody reacts differently. There [sic] creates a whole lot of, kind of, the dynamic and the relationships go a bit wonky. And so people just need to be able to kinda, just need to be on the ground. And I think the other part for me too and I know this when we were doing our stuff, I would ring up most CEs across the country, iwi CEs. There would be a heap of us online because we were all struggling. There ain’t no silver bullet, that’s the problem. If we had the perfect map, we would’ve probably done it in a heap of different ways. We only had 24 hours. See you gotta go with your gut and you gotta learn as you go and you gotta be able to know that at the end of the line there’s somebody who’s gonna give your hand. And so I saw those relationships between ourselves. I didn’t ring up the government and say, ‘I need you to save our people’. I was looking up my mates down the road going, ‘Oi, have you got some of this that and the other? Can you go and take this over there to that one?’ Those are the ones I rang, those are the ones that I depended on, those are the ones who had my back and those are the ones who had our back. And so I think that make sure you got good relationships, make sure you’re really clear about why you’re doing things, make sure that you’re actually gonna do it.”

Other kaikōrero frame mana motuhake as a fundamental prerequisite for effective pandemic preparedness:

“Now all we need to do is start this Ruia Taitea journey, shaking off all those things not of ourselves and to reveal our true nature. Kia tū ko Tai Kākā anake. That’s what is the forward path, then we’re on as an iwi.”

This suggests that preparedness requires whānau to reconnect with their own cultural and practical resources rather than relying solely on external agency/systems. A key factor to this is that it must be built from the ground up, ensuring that each level can sustain itself before supporting broader networks:

“It begins at home” [...] “And so can you sustain your home, your household, your kāinga? Can you go on to support up your marae and your hapū? Does that unit then contribute to the wider iwi and its continuation...”

Kai sovereignty is also identified as a practical test of preparedness for pā kāinga and marae:

“Have you got food sovereignty at home? Ka taea e koe te tiaki i tō whānau te tuatahi.”

“Probably too in terms of making sure that we are ready, there are still things like continuing mahi māra and educating our people about mahi māra, what that looks like just for your own home. The rokiroki kai being able to kohikohi kai and rokiroki kai is really important.”

Such kōrero positions kai security as key element for protecting whānau. Food systems are central to future pandemic resilience.

Building on this foundation of kai sovereignty, rongoā sovereignty represents another critical component of future pandemic preparedness which if put in place could enable whānau and marae to further develop resilience and enhance hauora through rangatiratanga over traditional healing mātauranga and practices. The ideas behind this theme embody whānau, hapū and marae being (or in some instances, continuing to be) the experts of mātauranga of rongoā as well as its cultivation, preparation and application. In some way this could reduce a dependence on external healthcare systems while strengthening internal hauora systems. This approach is exemplified by innovative initiatives such as those undertaken by Rangiwaho marae near Gisborne, which has led groundbreaking clinical trials in New Zealand – exploring the therapeutic potential of traditional Mātauranga Māori psychoactive practices for addiction and mental health treatment². Such an example shows how rongoā sovereignty can operate not as a rejection of contemporary healthcare but as the integration of mātauranga around rongoā with modern research methodologies to create culturally grounded, evidence-based treatments options that serve both Māori communities and broader health systems.

As one kaikōrero described:

“...become experts and top specialists in the production of and the knowledge of rongoā [...] I want them to know where it grows, what habitat it grows in and what’s the name of it? What are its properties? What are its medicinal properties? What is its function? How do you apply it? Those are the things I think that we need revitalising as knowledge as a specialist knowledge base amongst young people. Because it’s all preventative eh.”

² e.g., <https://atmos.earth/how-maori-people-are-reclaiming-psychedelic-mushroom-medicine/>

With this in mind, by developing expertise in rongoā cultivation, preparation and application, communities could ensure immediate access to rongoā resources during health emergencies and contribute towards well-being and pandemic resilience.

Tikanga

Tikanga emerged as a central theme in kaikōrero discussions. Participants directly referenced the concept or alluded to its presence in cultural practices and thought. Sir Edward Taihakurei Durie, highlights tikanga as one of Māori society’s most ancient practices, describing it as “proper and meritorious conduct according to ancestral law... [and]...necessary for good relations with people and with the land on which they live” (Mead, 2003, foreword). Similarly, Māori Marsden conceptualises tikanga as “method, plan, reason, custom, the right way of doing things” (Royal, 2003, p. 66).

Tikanga represents the central framework of customary practices within Te Ao Māori. Core values like rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga inform and guide tikanga practices across diverse contexts and situations.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges to the practice and maintenance of tikanga. Kaikōrero recognised that certain tikanga were compromised during the pandemic by external factors and public health requirements.

Some kaikōrero drew parallels to the 1918 influenza outbreak, noting that during those times rangatira, tohunga, and their communities implemented their own protective measures – including community isolation and other traditional forms of social distancing where sick individuals were set aside until they were well before rejoining others.

Faced with the threat of COVID-19 and government mandates, some kaikōrero described the challenging process of navigating tikanga maintenance during the pandemic (e.g., tangihanga), where some practices required temporary suspension due to public health restrictions, while others were thoughtfully adapted and modified to ensure cultural integrity could be preserved within the constraints of COVID-19 safety protocols.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate the complex negotiations between maintaining cultural integrity and adapting to pandemic restrictions:

“So my nephew, he was māuiui. He was breaking bubbles. So for him we had to do a care plan. Like a whānau kaupapa and whānau tikanga kicks in. We all know what to do if something happens. Sometimes we don’t know what we do know, until something tragic happens and we realise oh we better do this and better do that. But it’s a natural thing. We know how to survive if we have to.”

“There was a whole lot of emotion and trauma that I don’t think people have gotten over to this day. With our knowings [sic] and our cultural space, tikanga and in carrying the wairua of tangihanga, we did our best to implement what we knew to protect both the whaanau pani, the wider whaanau and the mate and those were big learning [sic] and in some sense teachings to our wider whaanau. [...] We will always maintain what we know in terms of tikanga, we will always waananga what other implications may affect the kaupapa. But we will do the best in our intentions to maintain the wairua of the surroundings, paa whaanau pani, te whaanau whaanui and those who are leading the different areas in that space. Every tangihanga is different but those are

the fundamentals we carry into future experiences such as that and those come from your home, on the marae, understanding different ways of doing tangihanga and understanding the depths of tikanga and what it aligns to and being tau about the decisions you make and what whakamarama you have behind it. That's what influences or gives guidance to you."

"Rua wiki māua e noho ana ki reira i tino rerekē anō te puta atu i te kāinga o te takiwā o Whanganui, hoi anō ko tā māua anō te kawē i ngā tikanga, i ngā akoranga i whakatōngia ki roto i a māua, otirā tō mātou whānau, kia tiaki pai anō i te wairua. Hoi anō, rua wiki ki reira. Tae mai te whānau whānui, ngā hoa, taki ruruku, karakia, ērā āhuatanga, i reira i mea mai te takuta me tae atu māua ki Tāmaki Makaurā ki te Starship i taua rā tonu i maumahara, pūrangihō katoa tēnei whitiata i roto i taku hinengaro i tēnei wā i maumahara au, i mātaki au i te, you know, ia rā i tau mātou ngā announcements o Jacinda Ardern, and maumahara au i te announcement i taua wā."

Rāhui

Rāhui is a practice that operates within the broader framework of tikanga. Rāhui represents a customary restriction or prohibition placed on resources, an area or activities for spiritual, physical, conservation, safety or protective purposes (see for example Mead, 2003, p. 203; see also Maxwell & Penetito, 2007; Wheen & Ruru, 2011, p. 169). It is an established tikanga-based tool that tangata whenua communities can invoke when circumstances require protection, restriction or respect.

During COVID-19, rāhui became particularly relevant. Many iwi, hapū, marae and whānau implemented rāhui to protect their communities from direct virus transmission as well as preventing secondary risks that could endanger others or strain healthcare systems by the cascading effect of potential emergencies (e.g., diving and certain types of fishing that could put rescuers/medical staff at unnecessary exposure risk). Rāhui provided a culturally appropriate framework for restrictions rather than merely following government-imposed mandates. Rāhui also represented an exercise of rangatiratanga whereby kin communities were using their own tikanga as a tool for protection to contemporary health threats:

"Some of ours [tamariki] didn't grow up here. So we put a tapu, a rāhui on the water in case anything happened and they didn't know where to go and we couldn't go out and rescue them. So we took a different approach because a lot of them at home didn't grow up here on the water. It's not the same stroke. Some of them also don't have kāinga to come home to. So when they were wanting to send people back here from the city during COVID-19, there was a lot of kind of tūpato, with the ture of the Pākehā. That's the range of people who grew up here and those who didn't grow up here."

"We put a rāhui in the village, we shut down every fishing pool, we shut down any public space that any campervan or anyone could come into our village and park up. We sat down [by] the river and we cleared everybody out and we went fishing ourselves. We went hunting ourselves. Because it's our backyard and we had a hapū response like that."

"There are a number I think of tikanga that we re-introduced. We brought back. Rāhui was definitely one, aukati were others. You were not to go in these areas. You can only go in these areas once restrictions had been lifted. We were doing that with places able to gather kai with whānau, not to go there because, [as] Pākehā call it, we were immune-compromised. But actually, it was just about setting very clear barriers around those whānau and those parts of the papakāinga, where we knew if you have a hūpē nose whatever there is some restriction set around particular places so that we could have our babies and our old people be in safe places."

Looking back to the earlier example of rāhui in the pūrākau of Te Putu, it demonstrated how rāhui principles – grounded in whakapapa, tikanga, and collective responsibility – offer different frameworks for whānau protection that can enhance pandemic preparedness strategies. This whakapapa-based approach ensured that decisions prioritised future generations as vital decision-making consideration. This approach is an example of tikanga-based governance and localised decision-making. Decisions were made by those most affected rather than imposed externally.

Significantly for Māori, rāhui carries a different weight and meaning than government-imposed lockdowns, and its framing may be more digestible, especially for Māori communities that are more accustomed to tikanga-based management and governance.

Unlike lockdowns, rāhui embody whakapapa, manaakitanga, and kaitiakitanga principles. Rāhui position restrictions as protective measures for collective resources and hauora used for protecting resources. Crucially, rāhui are enacted and lifted through kōrero and collective agreement rather than top-down enforcement. This makes compliance inherently more local and organic rather than externally mandated.

This distinction suggests that if governments and health ministry responses had conceptualised pandemic restrictions in certain instances/areas as rāhui instead of lockdowns, public (and iwi Māori) trust might have increased, especially where government mandates faced resistance or outright opposition. Future pandemic responses that emphasise rāhui as a way of safeguarding whānau and ensuring oranga may encourage co-operation rather than resentment. While mainstream public understanding of rāhui is limited, the concept is not unprecedented, given its established use by local councils/hapū and iwi in environmental contexts, which provides a foundation for broader application in health or pandemic emergency management.

Disruption to Tikanga

While some tikanga practices were activated (e.g., rāhui), some were disrupted. Disruption to tikanga practices emerged as a key theme through several kaikōrero discussions. Some kaikōrero described how COVID-19 public health directives fundamentally changed tikanga protocols – most notably in tangihanga. The alteration of tikanga surrounding tangihanga during COVID-19 harkened back to the 1918 influenza pandemic where Māori kin-communities were forced to suspend tangihanga practices for survival.

These disruptions extended beyond practical inconvenience. It infringed upon a core tenet of Te Ao Māori – the ability to properly farewell the deceased, to gather whānau together at marae/kāinga to grieve collectively, to fulfil cultural obligations that ensure the

safe passage for the departed, the time and space for loved ones to mourn together, and to share/eat kai to lift the state of tapu.

This theme includes the immediate practical challenges of adapting tikanga Māori to pandemic restrictions but also the inherent spiritual and emotional impacts of being unable to honour the passing of a loved one and give/receive the comfort that tangihanga can provide.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate the impact the disruptions caused as well as the unavoidable adaptive measures whānau and marae developed to maintain some semblance of tikanga within the confines of public health constraints:

“The other part I wanted to touch on was our tangihanga, at first our tangihanga were 10 in that ope, then it went to 50. Well when it hit 50 we had one of our tino rangatira Matua Wiremu Wiremu, he passed away and we’re still in lockdowns with ope of 50. We have a waka moving down the road that I’m having to navigate into Rāhiri marae with hundreds of people coming, but they had to stay in the ope of 50. It changed the tikanga of the house, it really did where we still need to, you know, come out, feed our manuhiri and it went into little boxes where our manuhiri could then come out of the whare after paying their respects, grab their kai and me haere tātou. You know, the way our tikanga shifted in that space and right up to not going up to our tūpāpaku and our whānau pani but they were still able to pay their respects. But when you’re moving a cannon ball, a police contingency, an army contingency, and a waka all in the space and then having to set up three paddocks with 50 in each ope of the paddock. Those are the dynamics that change from a logistical point of view and it changed the way that were being with each other like we weren’t able to really connect and grieve with the whānau pani and help them grieve. Those were the sorta [sic] things that really touched me when there’s only 10 people, people in the urupā and the grave diggers over there. We had I think the first one at our urupā when my cousin passed away and it was only her and her immediate family and the grave diggers were over there, our minister was really far away. So that stuff hurt...”

“Ngairi talked about the kai packs, you know, because when we give - when we give our manuhiri a kai, it’s not just to feed them, it’s not to feed them because they’re hungry, it’s part of the tapu lifting process. And so that’s why we do it. Significantly one of our kaumātua died at that time. Rongopai tērā. And their whānau was distraught. They were in Whāngarei because all they could do was they could deal with the information that [they] were reading and looking at on the news. So then the need, the want, was to bring him home... through the middle of this pandemic. And so four of us went down to talk with our whānau, and hand on ngākau what our wairua was, was to bring our kaumātua home. And we did. We managed it around the well-being of our people. So then we are at an entry point as you passed up down there you had to fill out a register, wash your hands, wear a mask when you came into our whare, there was no contact, that was limited to your bubble. There was no contact with the tūpāpaku, there was no contact with the whānau pani. That was really, really hard. You know, when you grow up with that, with tikanga, with protocol and then you have to adopt something else, it’s really, really hard. But as difficult to hard as it was, it was about the survival of

our people. You know, everybody coined a phrase – ‘we got to protect our whakapapa’. And that’s all it was... and try and maintain to the best of our ability, our protocols, our tikanga within Ngāti Ruamahue.”

“You know, i a māua e tupu ana, otirā ki te whakatinana i ngā akoranga o te kāinga, o te kura, he hoki atu ki te ruruku ki te waiata, ngā mahi a Tamakōrero a Hinewaiata, e tiaki pai i te taha wairua o te whānau, nō reira ahakoa kāore i noho marae mātou i whakamaraetia taua āhuetanga, ki tōna whare, ki te Funeral Parlour, ehara i te mea i pai haere ngā mahi, engari kia Māori te haere, kia Māori tonu te kawe i aua tikanga. Hoi anō tērā wāhanga tērā. Haere ana te wā, I think he aha? Rua, toru marama, whai muri mai te tangi o tōku kuia. I heke ngā tūre lockdown. The lockdown 4,3,2,1 i ngā tai. Hoi anō i mau tonu ki ngā tukanga kōwhēori, tino whai mātou i te taha hauora, i te hygiene.”

One kaikōrero noted a specific dimension of tikanga disruption. Namely the potential for the continuance of tikanga formed during the pandemic – some of which have become normalised beyond their original need, despite pandemic restrictions ending:

“Yeah, we had to do some things that didn’t align with our kawa or our tikanga during COVID. How are we going to put those back to right? And I’m just thinking now tangihanga. Hey, what’s this whole scheduling of ope going on, right? Kei te haere tonu tērā āhuetanga. You can come at the 9 o’clock whakaeke or you can come at the one o’clock. But see these are all hangovers of something that happened to us as a result of a pandemic response. Because that’s what we had to get to in levels two and then one, which is 50, you could only have a gathering of 50 or gathering of hundred. But I don’t know if our whānau have clicked on. Oh, that’s not how it all used to roll in the past. You know, we’re still doing these things in response.”

Here, the kaikōrero suggest that the return to key pre-pandemic tikanga requires deliberate effort and choosing to restore tikanga practices deemed important to return to. It also suggests that some marae may have adopted streamlined versions of tikanga practices that are easier to maintain rather than returning to full tikanga practices.

Whanaungatanga – Social Connectivity as Resilience and Resource

Whanaungatanga emerged as a significant theme throughout kaikōrero discussions. It manifested in various forms as kaikōrero navigated the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. One component of the values associated with tikanga is whanaungatanga. “Whanaungatanga embraces whakapapa and focuses on relationships [...] whanaungatanga [extends] beyond actual whakapapa relationships and [includes] relationships to non-kin persons who [become] like kin through shared experiences” (Mead, 2016, pp. 32-33). He defines whanaungatanga as “relationship, kinship, a sense of family connection” (Mead, 2025, p. 376).

This formal understanding is enriched by Ngāi Tūhoe rangatira John Rangihau who provides a more experiential description of whanaungatanga as a deeply felt human experience, where “...kinship is the warmth of being together as a family group; what you can draw from being together and the strength of using all the resources of a family...

“...this whole coastal line didn’t care if you were Pākehā or Māori, Indian as long as you were out there cleaning the moana.” Through crises, the “...colour of skin doesn’t matter... ko te mea nui he tangata, he tangata, he tangata [...] [k]āre kau te kōrero e mea ana he Pākehā, he Pākehā, he Pākehā, he Māori, he Māori, he Māori. Nē, nō reira kotahi noa iho te aronga o tērā kupu ko te tangata te mea nui. Even COVID was helping each other, ahakoa ko wai, ahakoa nō hea. Mehemea ko te oranga te kitenga nui, ko te tangata ki te tangata e tiakina ana i a ia anō.”

- Te Waata Cribb

a strong feeling of kinship or whanaungatanga reaches out to others in hospitality” (1975, p. 166).

During the pandemic, when physical distancing measures challenged traditional expressions of connection and care, whanaungatanga took on particular significance as both a source of resilience and a practice requiring creative adaptation. Kaikōrero described how maintaining and nurturing these relationships – both within whānau networks and extending to broader community connections – became essential for well-being and survival during times of isolation and uncertainty.

In some instances, whanaungatanga relationships proved fundamental to initial pandemic responses and overall resilience. Whanaungatanga provided the relational infrastructure to meet the myriad of challenges presented by COVID-19. The strength of these established networks was evident in the confidence that support would be readily available when it was requested; in the ability to reinforce to whānau that assistance would always be provided to them because of the nature of the relationship, rather than a specific task. This pre-existing commitment to mutual/reciprocal tautoko enables rapid responses, mobilisation of resources, emotional support and practical assistance (i.e., kai mahi) in crises. This commitment shows how whanaungatanga operates as a social connector, support and active response system.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate the diverse ways whanaungatanga operated as a vital support system throughout the COVID-19 experience:

“Yes, always have been, ever since we left Hawaiki. What we do best is our relationships. Even though we have this heated debate about tino rangatiratanga, you talk to anyone indigenous overseas – they think we’ve got it. It’s a way of thinking.”

“We had no sanitisers to wipe our car down. You know, we’re told, ‘have to do this, you have to do that, these are all the things you have to do’. But with little resource and zero dollars and a marae and lots of audacity, we mobilised and the iwi reached out and asked, ‘how are you doing things, what [have] you got?’ And we actually had nothing but relationships. And those relationships enabled vans, plunket, Te Ahurei a Rangatahi, Te Kōhao Health, Waahi Whaanui – it was actually the relationships and in the time where nobody kinda knew what to do, audacity was on our side and we kinda just did and learnt...”

Manaakitanga

Throughout the transcripts, manaakitanga emerged as a guiding principle for many. Manaakitanga manifested in diverse forms as kaikōrero described their pandemic experiences and responses. Manaakitanga was exemplified by positive relationships, hospitality, and showing respect, generosity, and care for others. Manaakitanga represents a fundamental care ethic within Māori society. Hirini Moko Mead illuminates the intimate connection between whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, explaining, “a key dimension of whanaungatanga is manaakitanga meaning the ‘nurturing [of] relationships, looking after people, and being very careful about how others are treated’ (2003, p. 29).” This relationship demonstrates how the sense of kinship and belonging inherent in whanaungatanga naturally

extends into the active practices of care, hospitality, and mutual support that characterise manaakitanga.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when the usual forms of manaaki faced unprecedented challenges through physical distancing measures and lockdown restrictions, manaakitanga took on particular significance as communities sought creative ways to maintain their obligations of care and support for one another. Kaikōrero described various adaptations and innovations that allowed them to continue practicing manaakitanga while adhering to public health requirements.

Manaakitanga guided individual, whānau, pā kāinga, hapū, and iwi responses to ensure collective care and resource distribution during the pandemic. This code of conduct was in many instances extended beyond immediate whānau networks to serve all those in need.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how manaakitanga operated as both a guiding principle and practical response throughout the pandemic experience.

“...the marae kāinga whānau just jumped up, there was no money involved they just get in a van and go and do the job. This is the mana you can have over your family where you’re saying to your nieces and nephews you’re gonna take this and you’re gonna drop off to Palmer Mill Road. We operated like that for a good three, four weeks out of iwi money, there’s no transaction that happened. We just responding [sic] and getting the mahi done. Whānau who work. They locked down for one day and they needed help and they were Pākehā families, Indian families, Asia, Asian families before they were Māori families. And they couldn’t believe it by the end, they stopping us in PAK’nSAVE as we’re walking, crying, saying, ‘thank you. Thank you for caring about us. Thank you for bringing this kai, thank you’.”

Some reflections reinforce how past examples of manaakitanga in crisis shaped contemporary Māori approaches. Several kaikōrero pointed to the role of Te Puea Herangi, who championed vaccination, sanitation, and proactive health initiatives in the early 20th century at the time of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. One reflection said:

“We had this amazing role model in terms of Te Puea... she took up vaccinations, the earliest forms, she was a great promoter of that ... when she developed Tūrangawaewae in the 1920s, we had a really good sanitation system on the marae. That’s all about preventing the spread of disease... all sorts of initiatives.”

“The establishment of Tūrangawaewae came around the time of the influenza back in 1918, and so Te Puea Herangi was a part of that movement.”

The establishment of Tūrangawaewae Marae following the 1918 influenza pandemic reflects how Māori leaders like Te Puea Hērangi activated manaakitanga in ways that extended beyond immediate crisis response. Their actions embedded health sovereignty within institutional and marae-based structures.

This legacy of proactive health leadership ensured that Māori communities already had foundational models of pandemic response, allowing them to activate tikanga-driven health measures during the COVID-19 crisis.

COVID-19 Response Hubs: Marae and Manaakitanga in Action

In the COVID-19 response, manaakitanga was expressed through marae-based COVID-19 hubs. Marae functioned as the central infrastructure for community pandemic responses that combined both the physical facilities and the established whanaunga networks to deliver culturally grounded and safe care. Kaikōrero consistently identified marae and their surrounding networks as fundamental to pandemic response capacity. Many kaikōrero recognised the marae (i.e., whare tūpuna, wharekai, cooking facilities, ablutions, kāinga) itself but more importantly the embedded mātauranga around crisis response (e.g., hauora services, food distribution, and collective care) that resides within their organisational systems, practices and tikanga.

One participant reflected:

“Our communities held the bones, the infrastructure together. Unless there were no Māori communities in that little place, they were coming to our hauora, they were showing up for food parcels, they were showing up to our manaakitanga.”

Other kaikōrero highlighted:

“I sit on the marae...as a trustee... I kind of figured out what was happening there was pressure coming in around supplying demand like the wharepaku paper etc. So at that I went and ordered \$10,000 worth of products with the Bidfood card on the marae card. I got box loads of toilet paper, any product that you could use like flour beef booster, anything that could make wild pork trout and anything that we harvested of the whenua flavoursome. So the kids will eat it. I bought pasta, bought non-perishable stuff, we bought soy sauces, we bought anything that we knew we could turn into kai to add to the kai that we will catch. We bought packaging, did all of that and then I lined up at the same time the entities that have a responsibility to us to get money off them to pay for the \$10,000 worth of stuff I just bought. And then this is a marae response that’s happening. We were about three weeks ahead of the lockdown thinking and then we also created a communication arm for marae. We created street teams for our village [...] We did a number of things and then before the lockdown happened that day, up to the day, the boys went out cause we got the keys to the gates too. This is all under cover. The boys went out and did a mass cull, and we came home with thirty seven venison that we cut down and hung up. So it’s like going on to the one minute to midnight. Where myself the head chef and our immediate family and a couple of my nephews locked ourselves into the marae. So the marae shut down and then we put ourselves in there so that we could create kai packaging. We cooked kai that we sent out through our street teams and we had a response like that. We created street teams down every street and they were responsible for monitoring their street, they’ll communicate with their street, they’ll come in and we had takeaways. A pick up and takeaway system that we organised at the marae. The street team captains will come in, they’ll pick up enough kai supply for their street and they’ll take it and do the drop offs. We covered every street. But then we ended up covering like half of Taupō where our whānau were situated. At any one time there,

we’re sending out like 6,000 meals in the whole response. Every day there was over 50 meals that were going out to our people who wanted it. And as we’re operating, we had a communication thread going on just to see what was happening. We got our marae van civil defence certified so that we could roll around the streets. At that same time this is a hapū response.”

“And our Māori response whakaaro was let’s go in every marae, get a freezer, we’ll fill that freezer up with kai, we’ll get them some seeds, get little planter boxes just so that you can get ahead of your thinking, we put \$3,000 in each marae account so that you had something to draw upon if you needed to get quick shopping. We created two pātaka kai and we filled it up with supplies. We bought the freezers, we ended up filling it with mutton and pork and whatever. Organised with the rural butcher and we bought band saws, four sets of band saws. We bought the butcher sets, the knives, fridges, freezers, chillers. The sausage makers, the meat patty processors because the thinking was we’re in this for the long haul and we know how to catch kai and we just bought the tools so that we could bring it out of the bush, process it down, harvest it, package it and then send it straight out and we’re doing that now [...] That’s how we chose to kinda [sic] wrap around marae to get them ready for just kai. It was always food sovereignty, what does that look like? And if you took care of the marae, the marae has the ability to take care of the community. Didn’t matter who it was.”

“Waahi Paa were essentially the initiators for all hubs around the motu, especially the COVID response hubs. They followed our lead in terms of relationships because I had a relationship with the DHB at the time, it allowed them to look at the Paa and see that it was a good taura to follow and we need to stand up more COVID response hubs, and it allowed more employment opportunity for whānau at the marae. We were not doing this for free, the bonus was we got paid in the end. It also made relationships grow stronger and that was one of my biggest highlights that come [sic] from the Paa.”

“...the marae being recognised as the hub. Not the first distribution hub but a hub of greatness, ideas, manaakitanga. it was all centered around the marae. There were organisations that were reaching out asking, ‘how can you duplicate that?’ And unless you had the right people in it for the right reason, you couldn’t duplicate it. It was pure and authentic and responded well to not only our marae whānau, hapori and iwi, but nationally too so recognising that responding to COVID was just something that just happens here.”

Such kōrero illustrates the central role of marae in sustaining whānau and wider communities through access to essential tools and resources.

Technology and Communication – Enhancing Connectivity and Emergency Responses

Technology and communications emerged as a theme from some discussions with kaikōrero. In one kōrero session, the critical value of reliable communication technologies was highlighted for pandemic resilience. This theme recognises that effective emergency

preparedness and response in a pandemic can depend entirely on communication infrastructure that can overcome geographical barriers and maintain connectivity during crisis situations. For many Māori communities, particularly those in isolated areas, technology represents a vital link between community networks and contemporary emergency response systems whether they be hapū, iwi or government entities.

The importance of communication technology becomes highly relevant in remote tribal regions like Tūhoe, where some marae communities are accessible only by foot, horse or helicopter. These remote regions can present challenges for maintaining connection at the best of times let alone in emergency health crises. The ability to communicate (i.e. phones, cellular networks, satellite phones) become an invaluable tool for enhancing community needs assessments, resource coordination, immediate health crises, rapid response and feelings of whānau safety and resilience.

“So we had to have an emergency thing pump, respirator and we had to learn fast how to use the defibrillator. So those things are the things that helped us become resilient in high and complex need situations... You know, some of the challenge was being isolated when you had somebody that was unwell. The resilience around being isolated was our ability to use a phone and not feel isolated and not feel fearful that you might not be able to operate the machinery properly because you were it. I remember feeling fearful like that a couple of times [...] We were afraid because of both of us, because she was becoming very unwell because of the COVID making her underlying symptoms more complicated. So we were on the phone one day all day with medical professionals, assisting me to know how to resuscitate her if she had another breathing problem. That helped to build a particular resilience around fear and also just having a blimmen [sic] phone which our grandparents would not have had in their day. To be able to speak to a medical professional who guided us through the difficulties.”

Manaakitanga is an Inclusive Framework

One kaikōrero emphasised that care extended to all who needed it, without restriction or condition:

“Whoever needed a hand, got it... There were no guidelines, there were no restrictions, there were no conditions by which you had to be supported.”

Another stated:

“...some of what I know in community in my other roles, is that they’re [Government, Pākehā communities] really appreciative of the Māori community out there in rural New Zealand. Because it was our communities that held the bones, the infrastructure together. And that’s true. Unless there were no Māori communities in that little place, they were coming to our hauora, they were showing up for food parcels, they were showing up to our manaakitanga. They thank us for that period of time. Even though the national kōrero is rubbish, the community kōrero is totally different. I don’t want our people to get fixated on what a few people in Wellington are saying.”

“But I must say that our move in that space was never just about iwi Māori, it was about the entirety of the community of Whangaroa. Pākehā mā, Māori. So it was about our aunty who’s a Pākehā who’s been down in Whangaroa longer than I’ve been alive. So how can we disregard people that’ve been in our communities for that long?”

These examples show manaakitanga in action, which is to help anyone in need, no matter who they are or where they’re from.

Some kaikōrero described manaakitanga as being most effectively expressed through the marae and its combined physical infrastructure and kaimahi network as illustrated through the following kōrero:

[To] “...respond to this thing called COVID-19 and the best way we knew how to work that or the best place I guess we knew how to work this was the marae, because it had the facilities, it had the space and it had that sense of manaakitanga whenever you would come in, so that was just the right place and space for us to stand up the hub [...] That’s where it really stems from and you know, I think the heart and like Tiana said, ‘the heartbeat of the hub was the marae, is the marae and it needed marae people to ensure that’. Manaakitanga was provided not only to the people of the marae and those who live around but the whole community and so, you know, once one house was safe, everybody got looked after.”

Kotahitanga

Kotahitanga is the principle of unity, mutual responsibility, and coordinated effort. Many reflections within the transcripts emphasised this principle as a defining feature of the pandemic response among iwi and other Māori organisations. The urgency of the COVID-19 crisis saw many marae communities and Māori organisations mobilise a unified strategy. One kaikōrero highlighted the strength of communal buy-in, and the importance of honesty, commitment, and trust as integral factors in their approaches:

“Everyone bought into it, the whole community, the iwi, and there was no bullshitting, no one bullshitted [sic] anyone.”

This kōrero highlights the necessity for transparency and trust building and trust keeping. Kotahitanga is strategic as well as essential for survival and effective resource distribution. A key example of kotahitanga in practice is the formation of Kotahi Te Hoe, where all eight iwi of Te Taihū came together to establish a cohesive response framework:

“So we’re pretty proud, all eight iwi of Taihū don’t always agree and come together collectively. However, COVID was one time we really stepped up as eight iwi.”

Considering the global impact of the pandemic, its possible severity within Aotearoa, and the potential for history to repeat with effects akin to the 1918 influenza pandemic on Māori, a coordinated approach was essential.

A common theme across some reflections was the speed at which iwi-led responses outpaced mainstream or government services. This was likely due to the urgency to protect vulnerable Māori communities but also self-reliance inherent in tikanga-based crisis

frameworks (e.g., tangihanga). Māori kin-communities are well versed in crisis management and are well practiced in delivery support to their own people:

“We were quicker than all of the other services.”

This statement critiques institutional delays while highlighting how Māori-led systems/ responses – which are cultivated in collective accountability – can rapidly adapt to meet urgent needs.

Another kaikōrero acknowledged how dual whakapapa and multiple iwi affiliations shaped their approach with an inclusive and holistic model of support:

“So many of our whānau have dual whakapapa or multiple whakapapa to Tauīhu so it was better for us to work as one to meet collective needs.”

This demonstrates how whakapapa connections ensured decisions were made not in isolation but with a broad view of communal well-being. The creation of Kotahi Te Hoe also ensured streamlined co-ordination, not just within Māori communities but across institutional interfaces:

“It helped us with the political side of it, dealing with health councils, everything to be able to be a bit more streamlined so everyone knew who to go to when they needed something during the pandemic.”

It showed “...the strength of Māori providers” [they] “absolutely smashed it.”

In this light, kotahitanga enabled effective pandemic response through a unified approach based on shared cultural values, ethics and Mātauranga Māori as opposed to the co-ordination of separate efforts. One kaikōrero aptly described this principle, stating:

“...to always take the stories of the past to influence the way that you enable your heart and the care for the people moving into the future, because that’s going to be the only source you’re going to rely on. For the wider understanding of how we move forward in terms of kotahitanga or Kīngitanga, it is to be able to pull people in who align to the same values and align to the same kaupapa you decide to accomplish, whether that’s in a national scale, regional scale, hapori scale or even a marae scale. Everybody is a rangatira and everybody is a rangatahi.”

Aroha – Compassion and Empathy in Practice

Aroha emerged as a subtheme of manaakitanga. Aroha represents the emotional foundation that underpinned care practices and community support during the pandemic. While aroha functions as a distinct concept involving love, compassion and empathy, it operates as an essential component of both manaakitanga (hospitality/care) and whanaungatanga (relationship building). According to Mead, aroha is one of the valuable principles involved in whanaungatanga and manaakitanga as it includes “... affection, love, compassion, empathy, interpersonal warmth and trust” – qualities that are always important no matter what the circumstances might be” (2003, p. 29).

During the pandemic, when physical distancing measures challenged the social norms of interaction care and connection, some kaikōrero highlighted aroha as both the motivation to go above and beyond the normal care practices and the emotional quality that distinguished genuine manaakitanga from mere service provision. Some kaikōrero described how aroha guided their response to community needs and how it influenced their approach to support those that were struggling. The following examples illustrate how aroha was expressed and experienced as both a driving force behind manaakitanga practices and the emotional quality that maintained whanaungatanga connections and kotahitanga throughout the pandemic:

“So during COVID, whilst we were undertaking the activations to turn traffic around, we wanted to remind our whānau, but also manuhiri, that we were looking to cross over into Brynderwyn and further north, that this is about love, aroha. Aroha to our whānau. Aroha to our whakapapa, but also kotahitanga, working together with a common goal to ensure that the threat of any disease didn’t touch our whānau. So those were our main messages, aroha and kotahitanga.”

“So it’s about, just having a bit of compassion within yourselves – from that whānau to that whānau to that whānau – that builds this community. And you know, what Anaru is talking about, using the business sense? Well that’s another level passed where we all live, but we as whānau, as a community in Wainui, as Mahinepua, as a hapū, we developed ourselves from there. We use that model to engage with all our people and with all our hapū because hapū have always been global. But now it’s the way we can communicate with them and the support we get from our hapū today is just so amazing.”

“The most vulnerable, but valuable people was our kaumaatua and sending out one of our rangatahi Epiha Muru-Kete who is a known face to all our kaumaatua and seeing him happy to see his rūruhi by being able to deliver kai packages to them. The emotion and the atmosphere at the time, when you watched that, was fulfilling – not only for us, but for them as well. The smiles on their faces! Although we could not touch, the biggest thing was having those that they know on their doorstep to bring them what they need and to manaaki [...], having members of our team out in the community like Tukaha who was a delivery person at the time, she would do things like karanga to the people in the house to come collect their kai parcel and the beauty of it was we had no rules to follow for how we engage with our whānau. People could throw their own personality into the ring and engage with them in a way that worked for those whānau. The best thing that come [sic] out of this was we knew our community better than anyone else did and it was important that we asked the right questions to gather the right information for our whānau to better manaaki them.”

Matemateāone – Yearning for Whenua, Whānau, and Whanaungatanga

Matemateāone can be described as a profound emotional and spiritual connection and pull to tangata and whenua. Some kaikōrero described matemateāone as a feeling that became so compelling for some individuals during the pandemic that they overrode

public health restrictions to be with their loved ones or to be in touch with their whenua, maunga or awa. Such kōrero shows how cultural and emotional needs can in some cases conflict with government health restrictions based on western administrative territorial boundaries (regional borders, city limits, district council boundaries) that do not align with cultural landscapes or traditional rohe. In this light, matemateāone connect tangata to their maunga, awa, marae, pā kāinga, wāhi tūpuna and wāhi tapu that exist within cultural rather than administrative geographies. As one kaikōrero noted on the topic of government bubble restrictions and the reasons for some individuals breaking of said restrictions:

“I think it was matemateāone, that isolation was an extremely extraordinarily foreign human trait and foreign intuition for our people and I experienced that most people broke their bubbles, it wasn’t for defiance of government rule, I think the strong motivation was matemateāone, I’m not gonna stand by watching them getting that unwell because it’s the rule about a bubble. Despite what the risk might be, I’m still gonna go in and offer somehow and assist our uri’. That’s what it was more so I think, what I experienced. That’s what I say, I think it was matemateāone. Nobody was gonna sit back and watch their whanaunga suffer.”

Generational Shifts in Whānau Care Responsibilities

Generational shifts in whānau care responsibilities emerged as a subtheme to manaakitanga from some discussions with kaikōrero. One kaikōrero observed changes in how recent and current generations responded to whānau care responsibilities compared to more traditional generations. The observations suggested there may be less inclination among younger generations to:

“...immediately drop everything, drop your job, drop everything and just come home, to take care of your parents. It’s less so the case unless that was a deep cultural value instilled in the whole family [...] [some kaumātua] they were isolated on their own and they got unwell very quickly, flu, colds really quickly and it didn’t go away because they didn’t have somebody warming the house up every day.”

This observation notes a shift from traditional manaakitanga practices to present day. The lower likelihood of younger people returning home to care for elder whānau created vulnerabilities during the pandemic and especially in winter. Older people living alone were more likely to become isolated and have greater difficulty recovering from illness without immediate whānau support. This change (which was noted in the speaker’s immediate locality of Tūhoe) may reflect contemporary economic pressures, employment obligations and geographic mobility under government public health restrictions that made immediate care responses more challenging. This shift in whānau dynamics also suggest potential erosion of traditional care values and practices that have historically sustained whānau well-being.

This observation represents not only a pandemic-specific challenge but potentially a broader issue within whānau/marae/hapū that requires attention to ensure manaakitanga/whakapapa obligations can be maintained within contemporary social and economic contexts.

Meeting Kāinga Needs – Beyond Assumptions

Some kaikōrero emphasised the importance of understanding the actual needs of whānau versus the assumed needs during the pandemic. Marae hubs refined their pandemic response efforts through direct experience and whānau feedback. Initially, in some instances, there was resource wastage as response efforts operated on assumptions about whānau requirements, distributing various starter packs and different manaaki care packs that didn’t necessarily align with kāinga priorities:

“...we ended up with three different boxes or packages. We built our little empire down here and started to get them ready. We had a meat box, a kai box that contained essential cupboard items, and a hygiene box. The hygiene box was the most requested box for whaanau as they wanted to keep their house clean and sanitised, and also for the medicine or RATs (Rapid Antigen Tests) provided in the pack [...] I also gave out my reo uukaipoo packs which was a whole lot of tongikura, cards and magnets for your fridge. So we shared these out to our whaanau as activities for their tamariki at home. Because we had the database that allowed us to identify the homes with tamariki in there, how many whaanau are living there and what would be most helpful because nobody needed one of the same thing, but in the first instance we were giving the same pack because it was essentially a starter pack and also to understand what were the needs. There was a whole lot of experience of wasted resources, some whaanau had three large hand sanitizers and only needed one, but we worked on it as a team as you do.”

Notably, the recognition from whānau that hygiene resources were most valuable reflects the practical understanding by whānau of infection prevention and priorities.

Whakapapa – Relational Responsibility and Care

Whakapapa emerged as an important theme throughout several kaikōrero discussions. It did not simply represent genealogical connection between people but a broader relational framework that directed individual (i.e., leaders) and community (marae, hapū) responses. While whakapapa is often understood in terms of the methodical recitation of whānau genealogy thus enabling individuals to trace familial connections backwards through time and link themselves to their ancestry (see for example Rewi, 2010, p. 83), its function extends well beyond genealogy.

Kaikōrero demonstrated an understanding of whakapapa in terms of relationality – the relationships that people have with one another and the responsibility, mutual caretaking and mutual guardianship that comes with relationships. Kaikōrero characterised whakapapa in terms of reciprocity and trust and this shaped how leadership and kin-communities organised manaakitanga, the sharing of resources and maintaining socio-cultural connection during the pandemic.

During COVID-19, whakapapa operated both as a conceptual framework and practical system for understanding and fulfilling relational obligations that extends well beyond immediate whānau connections. Some kaikōrero described how whakapapa responsibilities guided their responses to community needs. These responsibilities influenced their decision-making processes and priorities. It also provided the foundation for networks of

“I think with some of our ways that we have to return back to kawa because that’s the binding agent to our Atua which means that we’re not constituted by any government, any law, but through kawa we are constituted by Atua. We are obligated by Atua, we are obligated by our tupuna. When you are the rangatira who has been given the rangatiratanga, you have to use that mana in a positive way to influence the wellbeing positively of your people, the land, the whenua, the moana and so these are reasons why we’re so close to our land.”

- Te Waata Cribb

support that proved essential during the lockdowns and periods of isolation that came with it. The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how whakapapa is “...simultaneously both paradigm and method” (Paki & Peters, 2015, p. 55):

“I think whakapapa to me is all about our connections to one another, and whakapapa to me is also, it’s a practice. And I can’t re-emphasise the fact that whakapapa is around how you connect to and your responsibility for others. And so when I think about the way that whakapapa influences me today and the mahi that I’m doing, it is also about making sure that you are creating a contribution of consequence for yourself, your family and those that you are a part of and I would hope that you choose professions that enable you to do that. So there is not one thing that I kind of get involved in, that I can’t see how it might help and advance others. I think also it is an inherent responsibility for us to be able to create whakapapa and ensure that that whakapapa is strong [...] What I would also say whakapapa [...] as a consequence of our colonial reality is that many of us have not been able to have access to that connection to it and or to be able to grasp that and then so I think it is a responsibility for us to be able to create environments where our young ones can learn. I’m going on 50 and the conversations I was having when I was five and the conversations our mokopuna now are having at five are really different and that tells me that we have slowly and successfully started to build the knowledge of and connection to whakapapa. I think the other part too is that it connects us not only to ourselves but it connects us to other indigenous peoples across the world and I think we’ve got a bit of work to be able to do to kinda [sic] strengthen that. The practice of love, the doing it honestly in a way that you were wanting to care for and ensure that they were safe. To me you can have all the flash strategies and iwi world that you want, but at the end of the day if you can’t get that fundamental, because even if you put it against, you know, even if you don’t really appreciate all the different ways of doing it, they knew it, the heart of it [...] You gotta be nice to one another. Even if you disagree, the question is how do you actually go forward with kindness? And that seems to put us in good stead I think.”

“So I loved that about us in terms of the way we implemented how we were gonna [sic] continue to feed our people through a time we were unsure about. Knowledge, mātauranga was important. We went way past the narrative of ‘if you’re gonna get COVID’ – it was a matter of when you do. If you are either immunised or not these are the two pathways that you can use so we have rongoā Māori supply. As well as knowledge to go with that, as well as pathways if you wanna get boosted up too, so you made your choice. Some chose to be immunised, some of us didn’t for whatever reason but we responded to all of our whānau in that space and just took the lead out on that. We rolled out campervans for whānau who didn’t have anywhere to stay. If you’re stuck and you’ve only got a small house, so we brought a caravan to your side, a campervan and you could stay in that so that you didn’t affect your whānau, we just tried anything possible.”

The Impact of COVID-19 on Kaimahi Māori

Some kaikōrero spoke of the emotional toll of the pandemic on their wairua or psyche due to the continuous workload, and the absence of personal recovery time for those in frontline roles. As one kaimahi noted:

“I think my personal experiences that as a group of kaimahi we probably didn’t have enough time to deal with our own emotions and ‘cause you’re on the run 24/7. Lockdown for some was chilling and baking and doing bread, making sourdough and what have you. I didn’t have any of those experiences because you’re so busy working. But you didn’t really get in a chance to, I guess, look after yourself. And so contracting COVID, okay, sweet I’ll do a week in isolation while working from home.”

Here the kaikōrero contrasts their experience with those able to slow down and engage in leisure activities during lockdown. This highlights the intensity of essential frontline work and the lack of personal downtime for some kaimahi Māori on the front line. The reference to contracting COVID-19 but continuing to carry out frontline mahi reflects the persistent demands placed on Māori kaimahi in iwi/hapū-run community care roles. This also highlights a critical gap in well-being support for Māori kaimahi whether it be professional or voluntary/ringa wera capacities – where self-care was de-prioritised in favour of collective responsibilities.

This theme speaks to the unique challenges faced by kaimahi Māori who were the backbone of many a response in rohe across the country. Some were volunteers while some were selected for their experiences as marae ringa wera, their intrinsic understanding of cultural values and their ability to provide culturally appropriate manaaki care. Many kaimahi found themselves functioning as multi-role responders. Some functioned as social workers, health advocates, kai distributors, inter iwi/hapū/whānau/government liaison – simultaneously and all while navigating traumatic situations, emotional burdens and likely taking care of their own whānau needs when returning home.

“Often, we were social workers, because you go and drop off kai, and we did have one of those with our crew. They went and did a kai delivery and kua mate tētehi, so she had passed and because of the no contact. There are a number of things that even as a workforce we needed to manage through and many of our kaimahi weren’t trained, they [were] marae ringa wera. That was the reason they were chosen for the response, was because they knew manaakitanga, kaha ki te manaaki. You can learn everything else, but if intrinsically you know how to look after people, then those were the people that we needed in the response. And kei konei tonu, e mahi ana.”

Leadership in Crises

During the COVID-19 response, in many places leadership emerged under pressure, often through re-active necessity rather than long-term pandemic-specific preparation. One kaikōrero reflects on the challenges of those in leadership roles, on the urgency of needing to build leadership, and the need to care for those who carried the weight of crisis leadership.

“...we don’t have to create leaders born of fire. Some will always be born at that time. But it doesn’t have to be every leader. And that afterwards, we’re there to look after them, to restore them. They took the hit for us. So ask yourself, what did you do to look after your COVID leader. Where are they now? Where’s their oranga now?”

This reflection calls for sustained care and proactive leadership development. The following comment extends the theme of leadership to cover the burdens placed on Māori leaders and how leadership is perceived as a service role rather than a position of authority. It challenges the normalisation of sacrifice and un-kindness in leadership. It questions the expectation that Māori leaders must simply endure hardship as part of their role:

“...leadership roles. Mentally, I see them more as service roles, but everyone goes, ‘Oh, that’s just part of what you’ve got to take, take that one on the chin, because it’s part of leadership’. I said, ‘who made unkindness a part of Maaori leadership, yeah? Who made whakaiti? Fair enough if I’ve got too big shoulders, me peeraa bring me back to the right size, yeah?’”

This kōrero suggests that leaders must be supported beyond moments of crises.

Mana Wāhine Māori Leadership Through Crises

Wāhine Māori leadership emerged as a significant theme throughout the kaikōrero discussions. This reflects the continuation of traditional roles in crisis management and contemporary expressions of female leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Historically, wāhine Māori held pivotal positions within socio-cultural, political and community structures across Aotearoa. Traditional leadership roles included decision-making processes relating to whenua, whānau, resource use and hapū/iwi well-being. Central to their influence has been the crucial role of wāhine Māori in ensuring cultural continuity and Mātauranga Māori preservation. This legacy of leadership is exemplified in influential figures such as Te Puea Hērangi who was mentioned by several kaikōrero as someone who was instrumental in the Kīngitanga movement and the Māori response to the 1918 influenza pandemic. For example:

“Often when the iwi tell stories about their heroes and heroines they talk about the captain or their canoe and all that, but for us at Tūrangawaewae our heroine is Te Puea and the whole rationale behind her re-establishing Tuurangawaewae as a centre for Kīngitanga was in response to her experience of supporting Waikato during the Spanish flu pandemic. A lot of the steps she put into place when she developed the marae was about responding to the things that she learnt through her experiences, flu pandemic, it was about a lot of initiatives around infection control and stopping the spread of disease. Our knowledge as a community in Tūrangawaewae, it’s really entrenched around how to respond to pandemics, and it was that experience that really informed how we looked after our people during the COVID pandemic. It’s a part of our marae history, it’s really the thinking. The knowledge is really entrenched for us.”

“We had this amazing role model in terms of Te Puea, one of her mentions was she took up vaccinations, the earliest forms, she was a great promoter of that including to our

older members of our community to talk about mass vaccinations on the marae. So we try to say, it’s part of our tupuna. Whaea could see the benefits of immunisation, then we fly all of her stuff, she got it, we can get it and we can do it. Just little things around infection control, when she developed Tuurangawaewae for the 1920s we had a really good sanitation system on the marae, that’s all about preventing the spread of disease, all sorts of initiatives. If we don’t learn from the lessons, then we’re doing a disservice to our tuupuna, that was at the forefront of our response.”

Other key mana wāhine Māori from the past were mentioned alongside Te Puea Hērangi:

“In 1913-14 the bird flu pandemic hit Waikato and the resilience plan or pandemic response to the bird flu hitting is that she picked up a variety of hapuu along the river on a barge and settled back here and set up at Tuurangawaewae in the banks of Ngaaruawaahia and the banks of Waikato to seek salvation for her people and she established a hospital to care [for] and nurture her people. She didn’t only use that as a sheltering place, she used the facilities and what she had to look after those who would be able to seek salvation elsewhere or build up the marae to fit more people, so she was able to shelter them. There was a whole lot of inter-generational trauma because of the separation of whaanau along the river, those who had bird flu had to remain in one space and those who did continue on the journey [went] to a place [for] safety. She also reached out through a lot of her relationships. Paakehaa being some, doctors and people that had solutions through the pandemic. So there was a working relationship that was built to the Paakehaa community and the Maaori community to better look after their people together. But in those stories I think we’d come up, we identify the role of women and the ability of the legacies that she has created, multiple leaders within our community of Waahi. The examples that she has provided that have been established, the examples of Tutata Matatahi and Ramari Maipi who established the first Māori medical centre here at Waahi Paa. So there are a lot of examples or experiences that Te Puea has left, that Piupiu Te Wherowhero has left. Piupiu Te Wherowhero was a respected lady that went across the motu to inspire, to ensure the kotahitanga continues within those pockets of people that were feeling isolated and so she shared the words of Paimarire that also built the relationships of different haahi like Raatana and Ringatuu and carry those pockets of people to bring them together to understand what kotahitanga looks like. So there are a lot of people, a lot of examples or inspirational women that have grown through those whakapapa and through our foundations of our marae and our tikanga and the history that has been left.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, kaikōrero recognised how wāhine Māori continued this tradition of leadership and drawing upon their roles as community organisers to guide pandemic responses within their whānau, hapū and wider communities. The influence of wāhine Māori was evident across multiple aspects of the pandemic response – from maintaining cultural practices and organising whānau and marae support to advocating for culturally appropriate health measures and the continuation of Mātauranga Māori transmission despite the physical restrictions in place. The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how wāhine Māori leadership manifested throughout the pandemic

experience. These examples demonstrate the strength and influence of wāhine Māori in times of crisis.

“Everybody’s got a role, there’s work enough for everybody, find your lane, do it well and make sure you look after everybody at a tangi, the key thing that we must do is manaaki. Manaaki and aroha. And so we took that idea and we did it. The first thing gotta do is gotta find out where everybody is and how everybody was going. And so to do that, and I think all it did is just made me very clear about how we were gonna lead this. I grabbed the best comms team I could possibly get and that comms team was my mother, her sister and my auntie. And I got them in a room on the day that we went into lockdown because we were all a bubble on the papakāinga. That was our kind of part of our bubble. And I made them ring every single kaumātua over the age of 60 and so they would sit down and I would be there. I’m in one room because I’m trying to organise. Have we got kai? Have we got health stuff? Is everybody okay? What happens when kids can’t go to kura, how are we gonna do that stuff?’ So you know real practical things, right? Everybody does not know what to do, who’s no longer gonna have a job? What are we gonna do for those people that aren’t working? And so you are thinking about all of that stuff. Can people eat? Can they afford things? Do they know what’s going on? Have they got struggles going on? What happens for people who are having a whole heap of hard times in their households? Where do they go? So I’m kind of in that mode and at the same time I’ve got these three wonderful comms people ringing, ringing all of their relations and what I could hear out of that was fear, what I could hear out of that was uncertainty. What I could hear out of that was nervousness and what I could hear out of that though was hope and resilience. So our old people, they didn’t ask for kai packs. Our old people didn’t ask for pūtea. Our old people asked, ‘how was such and such, what about my moko? What about my nieces and nephews? Can you go and do this, that and the other?’ That is quite a humbling, humbling good lesson around the way that they would behave, you know, of what was important [...] And so I think protecting your whakapapa is also about making sure that aroha is at the centre of your behaviour. Aroha is the centre of why you’re doing things and you will move mountains to be able to remove the noise to get the outcome that they deserve.”

By anchoring manaakitanga leadership within historical precedents (i.e., 1918 pandemic response), such kōrero as highlighted in this theme show the continuum between past and present approaches to well-being-focused leadership by mana wāhine Māori. These kōrero also show how the aroha and manaaki-based legacy of the likes of Te Puea Hērangi remain embedded in individual/whānau thinking as well as in health strategies of many marae and Māori organisations today.

Whakapono me ngā Hāhi: Faith and Religious Movements

Faith and religion emerged as a theme through the discussions. Some kaikōrero referenced Hāhi Katorika while others highlighted Māori religious movements such as Ringatū and Rātana/Mōrehu.

Some kaikōrero highlighted that whakapono can offer frameworks for understanding and coping with crisis – providing comfort and support during uncertain times and the

loss of loved ones. Karakia and other spiritual practices offered daily coping mechanisms alongside collective rituals that initiated interconnection during times of physical separation due to isolation measures. For example:

“Another aspect I think to foster in the next generation is whakapono. Ahakoa te whakapono, me he Katorika koe, he Mōrehu koe, he atua Māori tō whakapono, even if it is just whakapono to yourself, I think whakapono is huge and ehara i te mea pakeke matotorutanga o te whakapono. Hoi anō, that was helpful for us and again as you speak of mental health, that was a way that we could look after our mental state – whakapono, our whakapono. My one, whakapono atua Māori and things that we learnt at kura that we were brought up in, then we had our whānau who are hard out Katorika. You saw it across the motu, here and our rohe too. There were daily 7 pm Zooms, different hāhi, whether you were Mōrehu doing the whakamoemiti or the Katorika were doing their karakia or Atua Māori karakia tawhito. That’s a big thing that we should foster in our tamariki, is whakapono and ahakoa te whakapono not to force a whakapono but just kia morimori, kia poipoi i tērā reanga hou, kia tahuri atu ki te aha? Tō whakapono, me he atua, me he taiao, me he reo whatever. Belief that helps you get through things and when you feel taumaha, it’s easy to turn to that taha kia tiaki tō taha wairua, i tō hinengaro, i tō tinana, ērā āhuatanga katoa.”

Others highlighted Ringatū and Rātana/Mōrehu which emerged in the 19th and early 20th centuries. These religious movements represented distinctive Māori responses to colonial disruptions that blended Christian theology with traditional Māori spiritual practices and worldviews. These religions often often incorporated specific approaches to health, healing and whānau/hapū well-being.

Beyond serving as historical reference points, whakapono continue to actively shape individual, whānau and wider kin-community responses during contemporary crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. As some kaikōrero explained:

“The Rātana Faith is a big part of the Ngāti Whātua wider social landscape. It’s a major whakapono for our people. It always has been since its inception in the 1920s when T W Rātana had his vision. There have been a number of challenges because some of the teachings of the Rātana hāhi have had an impact on Ngāti Whātua but also our understanding of how we interact with our culture in the various expressions. So there has been a number of tukituki. And so one of the challenges has been to find ways for both the hāhi and its teachings to exist within a broader space where the culture and the identity of Ngāti Whātua can also flourish, without having to compromise their faith in the whakapono to Rātana. Those times aside, they’re going to make the jump over and fully adapt to a culturally driven, a tikanga driven pathway forward. However, a lot of our whānau are still practicing Rātana members, but at the same time sit on our paepae, undertake the various tikanga, whether it be in pōhiri, whether it be at tangihanga.”

Such kōrero suggests that many whānau maintain dual religious and cultural identities that would have influenced their pandemic decision-making. The kōrero suggests suggests this dual participation can be complementary, requiring ongoing negotiation about which framework to follow in different circumstances, like a pandemic. During COVID-19, whānau

would have needed to navigate the tensions – for example, balancing religious obligations with tikanga requirements and their broader cultural responsibilities.

Disruption to Education

The nationwide lockdowns and moves to online learning drastically altered the educational experiences of many rangatahi Māori. Many struggled to adjust. While solutions like iPads and Chromebooks were introduced to facilitate remote learning, the long-term effects were a concern listed by some kaikōrero. The impacts reshaped lifestyles, daily routines, social structures and social bonds that come from school/kura participation. Lasting consequences are still being felt today. One kaikōrero noted that:

“There’s almost a generation of kids whose educational experience and journeys were ruined by two to three years of lockdowns, remote learning, learning from home, online learning. And we’re still experiencing the issues now where kids just don’t go to school.”

COVID-19 Impacts on Cultural Identity and Whanaungatanga

A distinctive theme emerged from one kaikōrero in Te Tai Tokerau who reflected on the difference in effects of the 1918 Influenza and COVID-19 pandemics on cultural identity and whānau, hāpori relationships. This theme is an observation about the unintended cultural consequences of pandemic responses – particularly in the way COVID-19 restrictions and behaviours encroached on Māori values. Unlike other themes that focused on cultural resilience and adaptation, this theme highlights the creation of division within Māori kin-communities. One kaikōrero reflected on how the COVID-19 response of restrictions to some tikanga practices where necessary for physical health, they also came at a cost to cultural well-being and whānau and hapū unity.

The comparative analysis between the 1918 Influenza and COVID-19 pandemics suggests that while both were devastating health crises, the social and cultural impacts differed. As one kaikōrero stated the 1918 pandemic, while devastating for Māori, apparently strengthened collective Māori identity and reinforced tikanga values such as whanaungatanga and aroha. In contrast, COVID-19 measures – particularly government mask and vaccine mandates, social distancing and restrictions on tikanga practices – created an environment where kin-communities were policing each other, creating an atmosphere of judgement and exclusion as opposed to tautoko, aroha and inclusion. For example:

“...that pandemic [1918 influenza pandemic] taught us something. It taught us something that COVID never taught us. That pandemic of the Spanish flu taught us how to be Māori. How to come together as Māori, how to be fully Māori in everything. COVID taught us how to separate ourselves. How to become aliens towards each other. Come on, we were all going to the four square and judging anyone who didn’t have their mask on. ‘Hey uncle where’s your mask?’ [...] But this flu, this COVID, taught us about it, what taught me about all this. I don’t think it taught you about all this. But many of us lost, many of us at that time, lost who we were. My cousins were going to bury somebody at Pawarenga. They said, ‘no go away, go find another hui’. But he was from there.”

This observation represents cultural insight into the hidden costs of pandemic control – of how public health measures, when rigidly applied across rohe – iwi, hapū and whānau can create a sense of alienation within kāinga communities. Future pandemic planning must also consider the socio-cultural health of kāinga community so as to not inadvertently undermine the cultural foundations that provide resilience to these communities during crises.

It is important to note here that while this perspective emerged from one kaikōrero in a specific region and was not explicitly echoed by other kaikōrero in other rohe in this research, the instances described – such as whānau being denied access to tangihanga at their own urupā, community members policing mask-wearing, vaccinations and the general atmosphere of judgement and separation – likely occurred across multiple communities throughout Aotearoa during the pandemic. The specificity of this observation to one kaikōrero may reflect regional variations in pandemic experiences. This observation may also reflect the differences in how kin-communities and marae navigated restrictions. The reflective capacity of this kaikōrero may also express a particular cultural dynamic that may have been experienced by others but not articulated. While locally observed, as mentioned above, this should be considered in future pandemic preparedness.

Vaccine Hesitancy, Attitudes and Decisions

Vaccine hesitancy and the attitudes and decision-making processes around vaccine treatment was a theme brought up by several kaikōrero. Some kaikōrero described their own hesitancy or concern or that of their whānau within the context of broader discussions about healthcare access, historical experiences with the health system, and cultural approaches to health and well-being. These conversations highlighted the multifaceted nature of healthcare decision-making within Māori kin-communities, where individual choices intersect with whānau well-being, cultural values and kāinga responsibilities.

The following examples illustrate the range of experiences and attitudes that emerged from the pandemic.

“I wasn’t keen on it [vaccination], actually I didn’t get vaccinated at all, I was glad that when you needed the passes to be able to fly away, I was able to get the exemption from going to get tested, so not having to do it. I’m not against it, I just didn’t feel like doing it myself, I wanted my parents to get it because I never wanted them to get sick, they are a little bit sickly, I didn’t want it to affect them in case they did get affected badly, but luckily they never caught it.”

“Specifically, in my whānau we didn’t really like the fact that it [the vaccine] was sort of forced upon us. A lot of people were losing their jobs at that time, even my father, he lost his job and was at home. Losing your mahi and source of income adds a lot more stress on your shoulders especially having a whole family on your back to pay for and losing your job, [it] can be very stressful in that situation. So yes, my whānau and I ended up getting the vaccine obviously as it was enforced and we were sceptical about it, but in the end it all worked out well...”

“...but my whānau didn’t none of us [sic] got vaccinated for the COVID and in terms of did we get it or not? Yeah, I’ve had it [COVID-19 infection], like, four times whānau. I didn’t get the shot, I don’t know if it was a good move. I’m not anti-vaxxer but my mum and dad don’t believe in vaccines altogether and as a whānau collective because those are my mum and dad’s beliefs. It was only natural that me, my sister and my partner at the time followed.”

“I had a team of 170 and I made the decision that every single person in that organisation, if you wanted to be employed in there you had to be vaccinated, that was my view. And the reason why I had chosen that and our board had supported that was because they were on the front line. They were taking boxes into other people’s houses and as I said, our population’s a little bit different because we’re right in front of it, you know, if it was gonna spread all those different versions of it our lot were gonna probably get it first because we were mostly here. And so that was the call we made. What I will say to you is that I met with every single one of them and there were only a handful of them. There was only half a dozen out of 170 that said we’re not gonna be vaccinated. And I said that’s fine. But you know what they said to me, they said to me, ‘but we understand what you’re trying to do. We support what you’re trying to do and when this is finished do you think I can come back?’ I said, ‘you go hard’. So I think that part there is about understanding your position and being really tūturu to that, because this wasn’t about do it because you wanna do it, this was because, actually, you’re walking into other people’s houses. It came down to the four when we were only a week in and I had just said that to a whole lot of people who didn’t wanna be vaccinated. They had to go in the middle of Papakura and deliver some boxes to one of my aunties, and guess what, Auntie’s got Delta. And they come out to me and they say to me, ‘oh, I’m unsafe’. I said, ‘you’re on the front line, you gotta make a call. But we will be going out to that house every day and you just gotta figure it out for yourself but they never came back, you know, this wasn’t a dispute that we ended up having massive raru about. This was all about, this is where we’re heading, this is why we’re heading there and they supported that. So I think that was our privilege, eh? That’s our privileged position. Understand that other people kinda didn’t have that and I think because we went that way, honestly, we just didn’t have protests. When we turned up to kaupapa, no protest. When we turned up to kaupapa, no one getting angry [sic]. When we turned up to kaupapa, everybody smiling [sic]. Even if they were, even if they weren’t. So that’s what I think saved us...”

One kaikōrero reframed vaccine hesitancy not simply as individual reluctance or due to misinformation but rather as a symptom of systemic exclusion from healthcare research and development process. Their kōrero suggests that Māori hesitancy is reflective of being positioned as passive recipients of medicine (i.e., vaccines) rather than active participants in health research and practice. Hesitancy could be addressed by genuine participation in the health system rather than dependency on external health decisions:

“The vaccine hesitancy that existed was prevalent and really obvious in our hapori up in Kaitaia, throughout Northland, throughout all our Māori hapori. That shows that our people need to be more systematically integrated into these spaces, not just

waiting for the golden pill or the magical intervention to be offered to us at the end, at the healthcare service delivery stage. To be involved here, to be training up our young taurira in biomedical approaches and bio molecular discovery so that we can have this full connectivity into a system that I think we, rightfully, should have an element of ownership in.”

Seen in this light, vaccine hesitancy represents a rational response to historical and ongoing exclusion from the health system. Structural change is needed rather than just better messaging for future pandemic preparedness.

Misinformation

Misinformation and concerns about trust emerged as a theme in kaikōrero discussions as some kaikōrero described their views and experiences navigating the complex information environments during the pandemic. Some kaikōrero described specific instances of misleading information they observed or saw being shared, while others discussed the border challenge of maintaining information quality and trust during a period of uncertainty and rapidly evolving health guidance. Such kōrero highlights the complexity of information environments at that time of crisis when there was a need for accurate information.

“Why even the vaccination, like we got given some pūtea when I was working for the iwi-led health and social service in Whanganui. It [the funding] was to create a rangatahi response based on the vaccination data that we had received from the Government, telling us that there’s a high percentage of young people that hadn’t been vaccinated in the Whanganui, Rangitīkei, Ruapehu, Ngā Rauru, South Taranaki area. From there, what we created was a kaupapa called shock us, which was a pro-choice kaupapa. And all I wanted to understand was, why, why not? Or why are you? And that was it, you know. And then that gave us a way better understanding of this idea of misinformation, of the influx of information, of the influx of decision-making that was real intense, intense and real off the cuff and the announcements every day, the traffic light system. Like, it was just very overwhelming for our whānau. And so I reflect on that.”

Rongoā Māori

The term rongoā Māori embraces a range of healing practices. As a holistic system of traditional and contemporary Māori health treatments, rongoā includes interventions that are used to restore balance and bring oranga – well-being to a person’s hinengaro, tinana and wairua. The Waitangi Tribunal in its Wai 262, Ko Aotearoa Tēnei report characterises rongoā Māori as a ‘multi-dimensional form of care and healing’ (2011, p. 213), reflecting it as an approach that extends beyond physical treatment to include spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions of wellness. This broad characterisation recognises rongoā can involve plant-derived medicines, spiritual practices and other therapies that work in unison to treat underlying causes of physical, mental or spiritual illness and promote holistic well-being within a culturally appropriate and culturally safe framework.

Kaikōrero spoke directly about, or made reference to, various forms of rongoā that they knew of; or had either heard were utilised during historical pandemics like the 1918

influenza outbreak; or had personally found helpful throughout their experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate the role of rongoā Māori during the pandemic.

“...we’ve got the river here, we’ve got the bush at the back of us. Rongoā Māori – another huarahi we need to go down with rongoā Māori is ensuring that we can provide our own rongoā for our people. Whether it be for a maremare, whether it be a mamae, any of those things. So it’s building up those pātaka of mātauranga amongst ourselves to ensure that it would be okay. We don’t have to be reliant on what’s available in town. I know that’s a big shift, that’s a big shift for our people because I will say our kaumātua, you know, they’re used to their rongoā Pākehā. They know it inside out and outside in. And yip it absolutely supports them, it helps them.”

The following subthemes are presented as components of rongoā Māori, reflecting its holistic nature that extends far beyond plant-based remedies. Rongoā Māori integrates physical, spiritual, mental, and social dimensions of healing (see for example, Pearse, 2023, p. 16).

Te Taiao/Whenua

Te Taiao and whenua emerged as a significant sub-theme of rongoā Māori. Many kaikōrero emphasised the critical importance of their own local natural environment as a source of both physical and spiritual sustenance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Te Taiao – the natural world that contains and surrounds us, including land, water, climate, and all living beings – represents the interconnection between tangata and whenua that underpins Te Ao Māori philosophy. Te Taiao provides balance, connection and wellness. Engagement with Te Taiao helps Māori to make sense of their lives and experiences they have as Māori. This can alleviate feelings of stress and generate states of ‘mauri ora’ and positive health outcomes (Lipsham, 2023, pp 189, 190).

This foundational relationship of tangata with Te Taiao flows through to all other rongoā practices. Namely:

- karakia, kapa haka and waiata as spiritual and cultural healing methods;
- various rituals and practices as therapeutic approaches;
- kai as both sustenance and rongoā;
- and te taha wairua as the spiritual dimension that permeates the healing process.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, kaikōrero demonstrated how these interconnected practices operated together as part of a unified rongoā framework as a response to pandemic challenges in their communities.

Kaikōrero frequently reflected on their connections to specific places – their maunga, awa, and pā kāinga environments – describing how these relationships fostered emotional and spiritual connections that proved therapeutic and healing during times of stress brought about by the pandemic. Some kaikōrero spoke of meaningful places where

the practice or ritual of being present and active within Te Taiao – engaging in physical movement and everyday activities – created healing experiences and a sense of safety. These place-based practices were understood as beneficial rituals that kaikōrero believed led to enhanced physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Such kōrero demonstrates how the connection to whenua functions as an essential component of holistic Māori healing and well-being approaches.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how engagement with Te Taiao served as a vital form of rongoā during the pandemic.

“...the taiao that we were raised in and the taiao we were immersed in. That’s everything we know now and everything we don’t know, but are yet to know until we know, then we do know. So our taiao is what makes us different to everybody else because no one’s got an awa like ours, no one’s got a maunga like ours, no one knows our roads better than us because we obviously live on those roads and so if something happens to you while you’re outside in the world. One of the things that makes you you, that re-grounds you - is returning back to your kāinga, to where you grew up, to what you know best.”

“So when COVID hit Whangaroa, my family came running home. One was in Taumaranui, she just picked up her stuff and packed up and came straight home and my brother, he was in Kawerau, just packed up his stuff came straight home because we know how to look after ourselves in our own rohe and we know where all the fish is, we know where all the kai [is], the kai moana. So we knew that if anything came amiss we would, yeah. So people were still fishing, diving during COVID, yeah, but they just weren’t doing it in a big group. Yeah, and they weren’t taking big kai, a lot of kai, they were only taken up with themselves and the old people, the old or getting parcels of kai.”

Karakia, Kapa Haka and Waiata – Rituals and Practices of Well-being and Resilience

Karakia and waiata emerged as another significant sub-theme that aligns within the broader meaning of rongoā Māori. Some kaikōrero highlighted the importance of these traditional practices – both historically and during the COVID-19 pandemic – as essential aspects of healing and well-being. Karakia and waiata are core components of tikanga Māori; they can be enacted within everyday settings and used to enhance individual and/or collective well-being. Significant research has demonstrated the physiological, psychological, and social benefits of communal waiata and the ritualistic practices of karakia.³ Findings show that participants experience improved well-being and increased feelings of whanaungatanga (connectedness) to their peers. These practices function as influential collective social experiences that can draw people together, create unity, and generate lasting social cohesion and community bonds.

The therapeutic efficacy of waiata and karakia is a result of their calming effects, achieved via the melodies, rhythms, and tones that work to restore emotional and spiritual balance (Motu et al, 2023, p. 3 citing Rollo, 2013). Some kaikōrero described the use of

³ See for example Batt-Rawden & Andersen (2019); Glew, Simonds, & Williams (2021); Motu, Watson, Rātima, Karaka-Clarke, & Stevens (2023).

karakia as a means to achieve inner and outer calm. Some described it in conjunction with wai or other taiao-related taonga such as rongoā rākau (plant-derived remedies). This shows the integrated nature of traditional Māori healing approaches.

“...so I think what was interesting too, was many of our pakeke, we had marae stand-up and those marae stand-ups turned into like pō karakia. So Uncle Napa, he and some of the pakeke every night, pō karakia was happening because they were unsure right. I mean it’s not like they could just pop off to their cousins like they used to over that time. But then they didn’t know if they were gonna survive, because that was kind of the rhetoric, the world or you could watch was an update on COVID how many people had died, that was everybody tuning into the government updates at one o’clock every day to see. How many had survived today? So that was kind of happening and for many of them not being able to practice tangihanga and observe the tangihanga rituals was very difficult and so having things like pō karakia. Noho puku, noho wānanga, Zoom became our best friend. Like everybody had Zoom accounts. Even our pakeke, our kuia, they got on pretty okay with the old zoom. But pō karakia was a really good way for them to kind of see, that yes, kei te ora tonu tētehi. But then to be able to have some full and frank discussion around the way that tangihanga could be observed. We did lose a few people I think one of the first mate in the rohe was our whanaunga Nigel, he passed at Mōkai. Nobody could be there. Really important for them to have that pō karakia.”

“We practiced a lot of things that were new but we maintained the tikanga that calmed us. We had karakia every morning [...] We always had karakia, we had kai all the time [...] We had the high TV so we could Zoom everybody in. That was the wairua of the hub. Just being able to stay calm in the time of panic and making decisions to help better look after our people.”

Kapa haka also emerged as a significant cultural practice within the rongoā Māori framework (see Pearse, 2013, p. 16). Some kaikōrero highlighted its multifaceted therapeutic value during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kapa haka functioned as a vehicle for whanaungatanga – building relationships, whānau/friend networks, and connectedness that helped form a key part of community well-being. A significant aspect of the cultural value of kapa haka lies in its role as a mechanism for the use and practice of te reo Māori, tikanga, Mātauranga Māori and tribal histories which in turn strengthen individual cultural identity and continuity. Some kaikōrero emphasised its capacity for strengthening relationships, building resilience, and fostering kotahitanga belonging – outcomes that proved particularly crucial during the uncertainty and isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic period.

Kaikōrero described how group practices provided much-needed support for those experiencing despair and uncertainty during and after the pandemic. The well-being benefits of kapa haka were attributed not only to engagement with and connection to Te Ao Māori, but also to the enormous therapeutic potential that derives from kotahitanga, and the physicality in terms of exercise stemming from performing together in shared cultural expression.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how these cultural practices served as vital forms of rongoā during the pandemic.

“What I take home from haka? What do you call it? It is my life, haka is my life and my whānau believe in that, they believe in what Te Karu, Te Kapa Haka o Ruatoki, provides. It’s [kapa haka is] a healing, you know, and like Rangi said it is and it’s the best form of rongoā that I can have. Yeah, yeah, it is a huge healing. My babies see it, my parents see it and my flatmates see it and yes he mea nui, I love my kapa.”

“[Kapa Haka] it brings people home and it gathers you, gathers your thoughts personally and socially and yeah just brings you back home. Ko te ahurei. The ahurei in terms of resilience to me is that kupu again, matemateāone because matemateāone is what brings us together. It’s what makes us Tūhoe, what it looks like and what it sounds like.”

Ko te kai, he rongoā. Ko te rongoā, he kai.

The concept of he rongoā ngā kai, that food is medicine, is well established within Te Ao Māori (see for example, Wiremu et al., 2022, pp. 14, 16, 17, 66). Building on this foundation, kai as a form of rongoā emerged throughout kaikōrero discussions. It manifested in several distinct yet interconnected ways during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first centered on traditional kāinga practices of growing, gathering and sharing kai from local whenua systems. The second involved organised food provision through marae and hapū/iwi support services to address pandemic-related food availability anxieties.

Kaikōrero reflected on mahinga kai practices, describing the growing and gathering of kai from different sources including māra, the ngāhere and waterways as occasions that were in some way integral to healing and maintaining connection and well-being. These practices represented an exercise of rangatiratanga over food sources, enabling kāinga to determine what they could provide for themselves with some kaikōrero describing healing and transformation through traditional kai that could uplift the hauora tinana, and hauora wairua (physical, mental well-being) of someone if they were unwell. In this light, some traditional forms of kai were prized over others as they carried deeper cultural significance due to them being more intrinsically connected to whenua, awa or mātauranga practices.

Complementing these traditional practices, the pandemic response saw extensive kai provision initiatives through marae, hapū and iwi support services where kaimahi teams worked collectively to lift the hauora tinana and hauora wairua of those who came into contact with these services.

These efforts centered whanaungatanga that helped to bring well-being into focus. Kaikōrero described how manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga formed the foundation of their kai-sharing initiatives.

Together these expressions of kai as rongoā illustrate how traditional food practices centred around wholesome and nutritionally-balanced kai and contemporary kin-community care converged to provide both physical nourishment and improved mental well-being during the pandemic.

The following examples from kaikōrero demonstrate how kai functioned as rongoā, cultural connector/connection and a focal point of community resilience throughout the pandemic.

“Our body is a preservative. But when it grows old, [it] starts breaking up and then it opens up those things. That’s what I believe is our pandemic. It’s our kai. You know I gave my dog an old burger. I said, ‘here, have this burger’. That was four days ago. And it’s still there. The dog eats all these kai around it. But he wouldn’t touch that burger. And I said ‘man you must be a clever dog’. You’re telling me if he wouldn’t touch it, but I think that Anaru was right, it’s what we eat. How do you change that? Almost three generations of eating wrong. I suppose we can only start with ourselves and our own whānau. Well that was one of the rongoā, was the mullet juice, the watercress juice. Pūhā, pūhā and all that. Those were all rongoā.”

“... te kōrero o ōku kaumātua i te rewharewhanui tuarua ā muri i te pakanga tuatahi, 1918, ko tētehi o ngā rongoā nui ko te pūhā, ko te pūhā juice, kaua ko te hinu o te miti me te pūhā, engari ka waiwaitia te pūhā hei inu i te mea ko te pūhā juice he immunity booster. Nā reira koirā te tohu nui ā ngā tūpuna kia whakapiki ake i te ora o te tangata, kia tāea te tinana te ārai atu i ngā kino, i ngā mate.”

[Healthy kai/Rongoā] “... it’s all preventative eh. Promoting rongoā as a kai, if you can eat rongoā in your kai or it becomes your daily kai then you’re eating rongoā every day as a preventative measure. It builds the resilience of the cells of your body. But we need to seek building a resilient team of young people, of young folk who are experts in rongoā. You know, and it’s not just rongoā, physical rongoā, the rongoā would carry or cover things like karakia, takutaku pure, those forms of wellness and rongoā intervention. Includes all those things, all our cultural rituals. Māra kai, organic māra ka [...] I’m talking about that because of organic, the organic element of it, how imperative it was to grow clean kai, kai that was non-toxic, had no poisonous elements in them and it was considered a rongoā because it was clean [...] And that was all preventative, all that kind of thing, organic food, rongoā, eating rongoā as food every day was really about growing the stamina and the resilience of your cellular body, the cells of your body, it was preventative. It was to help prevent disease.... if you were assailed by a disease, your body could cope with it better. You know, I remember my grandparents doing these...”

Tohunga/Tohungatanga

Tohunga (priestly expert) and tohungatanga (the practice and knowledge system of tohunga derived from Mātauranga Māori) emerged as key concepts described by some kaikōrero. In traditional Māori society, tohunga served as spiritual intermediaries who maintained communication with atua and upheld the fundamental principles of tapu and noa that governed community life within pā and kāinga.

Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal provides some insight into the deeper meaning of tohunga, explaining that the term derives from ‘tohu,’ which describes “the arrival of mana within a person” (2005, p. 12). Drawing on teachings from the late Rev. Māori Marsden, Royal emphasises that a tohunga is fundamentally “a vessel of mana” – not merely a knowledgeable person, but also “a creative person, illuminated with an essential authority which allows them to bring new understandings and knowledge for the benefit of their community” (ibid, p. 13).

Some kaikōrero distinguished between tohunga of earlier eras and those of more recent times, emphasising that regardless of the period, tohunga held responsibility for maintaining essential cultural practices, particularly tikanga around rongoā Māori use and healing and disease prevention. Some participants recalled individuals recognised as tohunga who possessed specific abilities and specialised knowledge that proved valuable during times of community crisis.

The following detailed narrative example is provided in full rather than segmented into shorter quotes:

“When we look at a historical backdrop, a backdrop of diseases and interventions used for diseases, well because all diseases were foreign at a particular point in time. It didn’t start at disease, the history of Te Māhurehure as with the entire whārua didn’t start at disease, it started at wellness. There were wellness practices and interventions and they were preventative. They were exercising and when I talk about historical timelines, I’m talking about the time of Kuramihirangi which would’ve been around about the 15-1600s. So that was all part of the mana motuhake period where she was a tohunga rongoā, a tāpuhi. He tohunga aho tapu, so she was like a senior senior tohunga. Her work was around a deep, deep dive study into ngā rongoā, ngā momo rongoā katoa o tēnā takiwā, i roto i a Ruatoki me te rohe pōtae. She serviced the whole rohe and then she was also to my understanding, she was also often asked to heal the sick in other iwi as far as Ngāpuhi. So she shared a lot of her knowledge beyond and then she would also heal from a distance, so there would be messengers who would come from other iwi, ride to her and seek her healing from afar. So she would provide healing interventions for people who were desperately unwell in other iwi, they were often high ranking people. And she would do the healing from Ruatoki. Now the reason I raised that is because all of that was preventative, it was to prevent the prevalence of disease and its entry into the whārua. It was her period of time, and then I think the next, then we come into the 1900s which was World War One, 1915. World War One had a terrible effect on our whārua – that was the beginning of the introduction of small pox, the flu influenza, the Spanish flu... [...] Same thing happened in World War Two, the same diseases were contracted and then brought home into the whārua. By World War Two, what I understand from some of our research at an iwi level and a hapū level is that there were specific tohunga who were specialists, every hapū had specialist tohunga who had already studied from World War One. The rongoā that did or did not work and was or was not effective for the countering of tuberculosis and in particular syphilis. You know, some of the most famous, famously well-known tohunga of that time of the World War One, World War Two was Te Oti Hororiri [...] Te Oti was buried something like eight or nine foot down deliberately and then when they dig a hole they put little mounds of dirt, so they can pull the ropes back up, there’s a little gap they could pull the ropes back up. But in Te Oti’s when they had to kind of exhume her, number one to check out the stability of her coffin because she died in the sixties and then put a plank on top if she deteriorated, so mama Leena could go on top. The moment they did that, they went down and cleared away all the dirt around her remaining parts of her coffin, they identified that there were caverns dug into the side. There were caverns that one of the boys could fit into, dug into the

side, both sides of the the hole, of the rua. And then when they went in, one of them was my nephew, and when he went in, and I asked them what he saw, and then he said he saw cauldrons. Black cauldrons. All different sizes of cauldrons. And that was Te Oti's rongoā pots [...] Nehua atu ana because koira tana rongonui nē. So she had cauldrons on either side in those caverns that were buried with her and that's why I speak about her because we did a significant amount of research for the settlement, for the iwi settlement around oral traditional history and one big section we wrote about was on Te Oti's expertise and specialist ability to concoct, to develop to test different blends and what they call recipes of rongoā that had the ability to cure syphilis [...] But you know that's an example of the innovative and scientific technicality of some of our tohunga. You know, so it was clear to me through that research that our tohunga, traditional tohunga, they struggled to find ways to combat foreign disease [...] Sometimes they were successful in finding a blend that did, that had a strong impact on foreign diseases and sometimes they didn't. Sometimes they couldn't. Sometimes it wasn't the rongoā that could reverse that or cure that. I understood according to my mother who is now 85 that the rongoā was not effective with the tuberculosis and see with TB and smallpox, it was rampant, took people out, the rongoā was ineffective.”

Te Reo Māori

Te Reo Māori emerged as a subtheme of rongoā Māori with kaikōrero describing how the use, practice and learning of Te Reo Māori during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic functioned as a form of healing and spiritual nourishment. In this light, Te Reo Māori is not only a mode of communication but also embodies cultural identity, spiritual connection and the vehicle for Mātauranga Māori transmission. Moe Milne emphasises the therapeutic nature of Te Reo Māori noting that there are pepehā and whakataukī that have psychological, emotional and spiritual influence for Māori and that the interaction and communication of Te Reo Māori play an important role in maintaining the mana of people, their whānau, hapū and iwi. She states, “there is healing within our language. It is in the way we speak and spirit in which it is spoken” (Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui, 2010, p. 3).

This understanding positions Te Reo Māori as inherently therapeutic where the act of speaking, hearing and engaging with the language carries healing properties that extend beyond mere communication. The pandemic period characterised by physical isolation and restricted movement saw many participants turning to online platforms and digital resources to engage with Te Reo Māori and other cultural practices like kapa haka and tangihanga. Many discovered that this engagement provided not only language learning opportunities but also built and rebuilt connection (see for example, Wepa et al, 2023, p. 878) and aided in nurturing spirituality (see for example Finiki & Maclean, 2020) and maintaining traditional practices and protocols of which Te Reo Māori is a vital component (see for example Rangiwai & Sciascia, 2021).

For some kaikōrero, engaging with Te Reo Māori online during the lockdowns became a means of maintaining cultural connection that contributed to a sense of hauora well-being. The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate how Te Reo Māori functioned as both cultural practice and rongoā throughout the COVID-19 experience.

“...education for the tamaiti but for the whaanau too, there was a whole lot of barriers that came down and it opened a lot of doors of communication for others to learn. There was a [sic] Te Poporo waiata sessions that Reiora would do, bringing back old Taniwharau songs and kura songs that we've sung since we were 6 years old and just normalising it on social media. There was a whole shift and focus on social media not just having tangihanga on there, but the whole education connection aspect of social media [...] Matehaere Clark and I ran a karanga waananga during COVID with our pakeke. We had Nanaia Mahuta, Moeroa Raihe, Moanaroa Matatahi, Ngairi Paki and two other members and the purpose of it was so that they would never have a dull moment in their marae life. So they never forgot how to do a karanga, and we were also able to better waananga about their reo and understand what their whakaaro is around karanga. The evidence was when we had poukai they was [sic] able to carry it with their mana and mauri and their alignment of what they understood. It was fulfilling knowing that methodology worked during the COVID pandemic.”

Te Taha Wairua

Te Taha Wairua emerged as a distinctive theme throughout kaikōrero discussions. Some kaikōrero spoke to the importance of maintaining spiritual well-being and connection during the pandemic. As one of the four foundational dimensions of hauora within Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā model, te taha wairua includes spiritual health, cultural identity and the connection that links individuals to their tūpuna, whenua, whanaunga and the wider universe. During the pandemic, when physical restrictions limited traditional forms of spiritual practices and cultural connection, maintaining wairua became both more challenging and more essential for overall oranga.

Some kaikōrero described how the disruption to normal spiritual practices (i.e., reduced access to marae, restriction on tangihanga and limitation on collective cultural activities like kapa haka) created particular vulnerabilities that required conscious attention, effort and an adaptive response.

Some kaikōrero who were able to experience lockdown within their home kāinga close to their marae described being able to appreciate this time on their whenua/papakāinga and enjoy the opportunity to fully embody the opportunity to be tangata whenua for an extended period of time without the distractions of urban life, work obligation and other external pressures. Ultimately, the lockdown became a moment of regeneration of wairua, of mātauranga, and of connection characteristics that always existed within the whānau but were felt with greater appreciation due to the impact of COVID-19.

Some kaikōrero articulated various ways they worked to nurture and protect their spiritual well-being during the pandemic. Some alluded to te taha wairua as fundamental to their ability to cope with pandemic stressors and maintain cultural identity during times of isolation and uncertainty. The theme includes both individual and spiritual practices and collective efforts to maintain spiritual connection within whānau and kin-communities.

This theme demonstrates that kaikōrero understood that spiritual health is integral to their pandemic resilience. Some described innovative approaches to maintain spiritual practices, sustaining connections, learning mātauranga – all despite physical restrictions. This shows how te taha wairua operated as both a source of strength and an area that required active care and protection.

The following examples from kaikōrero illustrate the ways spiritual well-being was understood, maintained and prioritised throughout the pandemic.

“Whakapapa, again whānau time was just special. You could be intimate with your whānau. You know, you never get to do that on a daily basis Monday to Friday. Parents are working, tauira tamariki at Kura, Kōhanga Reo, but that time that particular lockdown time was just a time for us to regenerate as a whānau first and foremost and then we did that as a hapū. We think about that too because our old people did that all the time because they need to go to town for anything. Mahi was home. Everything that we needed was here. The kōhi kai was home. For many of our families here on the marae, that’s what we had to put into place. That’s what we had to do. As sad as what was happening around the motu, it was beautiful to be able to reconnect with the whenua, to become that manawhenua as we always say we are. But truly be home and enjoy the luxuries of home. Regardless that you couldn’t go to town. Many of us loved it. You worked on your own whenua. So you could just imagine we needed that for six weeks. Our tūpuna did it, day in and day out, month in and month out, year in and year out. You understand just how plentiful things were, you were able to do that as a whānau or as a hapū, as a community, just being able to rebuild the wairua. That’s what it was for a lot of us. To be able to rebuild the wairua, ensure we had beautiful whakaaro, thinking of everybody around the motu and across the world. And again we managed to do that, online.”

“He nui ngā akoranga o taua wā, tētahi akoranga nui kia hoki atu ki ngā mahi tuku iho, ngā taonga tuku iho, pēnei i te ruruku i te waiata, te taha tiaki i te wairua, hoi anō e puta hoki i te whare i ētahi wā, ngā wā i whakaaetia kia hoki atu ki ngā mahi māra, i pērā i taua wā me te mōhio uaua te haere ki te toa hoko maha, hoko kai, ēra āhuatanga katoa. Ko tā māua mahi i taua wā he hangahanga i ngā pouaka māra, he whakatupu kai, he whakaako i a māua tamariki ahakoa kōhungahunga tonu rāua i taua wā, pēpi tonu tētahi, piripoho tētahi, whakaako i a rāua ki ngā āhuatanga o te māra, te whakapapa o te māra, ki ngā atua Māori, kia Haumie, kia Rongo ēra āhuatanga. I roto i te nuīngā o ngā ruruku o te kāiinga nei, ngā ruruku ka tākina i te kāiinga e kōrero ana mō ngā atua Māori katoa. So he hoki atu ki ērā o ngā akoranga me ērā kōrero tuku iho e ora ai tō mātou whānau, oti noa tō mātou whānau whānui [...] He whakapikinga ora, whakapikinga wairua tērā te hoki atu ki te awa ki te pā i te wai, e ora anō ai te hinengaro, tinana te wairua, nō reira te puta atu ki te taiao tētahi mea nui, tērā momo te māra hoki ki te te awa oti noa ki te moana, e kite ai i a Tangaroa, mea atu au kōrero ana ngā ruruku mō ngā atua Māori, e rongo anō i te wairua, i te mahanatanga o ngā atua i taua wā taumaha tonu. He nui ngā wheako, ngā akoranga i roto i te noho Kōwhēori. Kaore mo te kī i hoki ki ngā mahi a ngā tūpuna, engari hoki ki ngā akoranga a kui mā, a koro mā, e ora ai mātou i taua wā. I mea mai a Rongo, i panoni ngā tikanga e whakapono ana au ki terā o ngā kōrero me mate te tikanga e ora ai te tikanga koia te āhua o te ao ināianeī. Me mate tētahi tikanga e ora ai tētahi atu tikanga, me pērā rawa, he rerekē te ao i ngā rā o mua i mōhio he nui ngā pandemics, engari he rerekē te pandemic ki taua wā, ki tēnei o ngā pandemics he hoki ki ngā akoranga, tuku iho a kui mā, a koro mā, ngā taonga tuku iho, kōrero tuku iho.”

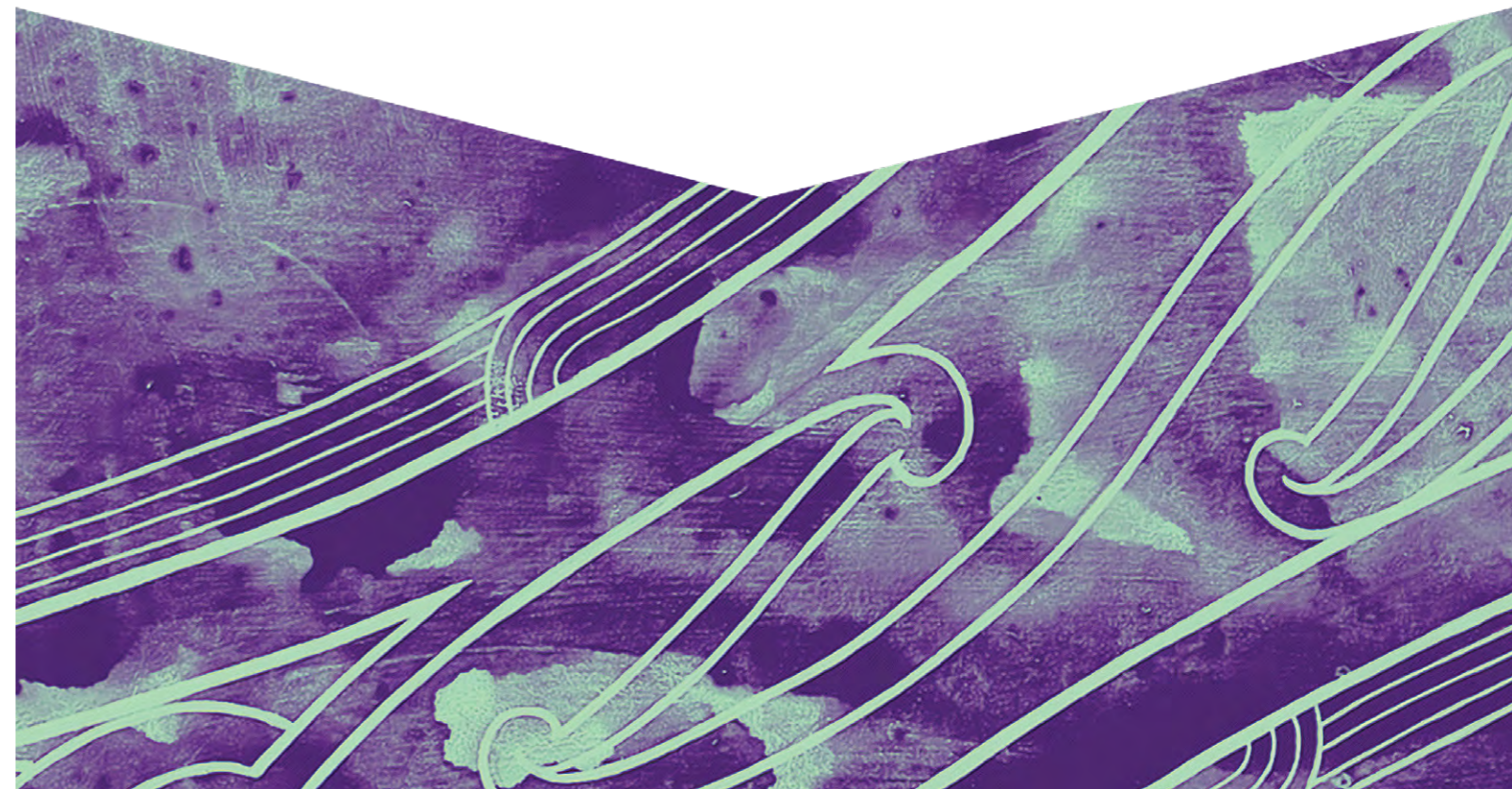
References

- Batt-Rawden, K., & Andersen, S. (2019). “Singing Has Empowered, Enchanted and Enthralled Me” – Choirs for Well-being? *Health Promotion International*, 35(1), 140–150.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N. & Terry, G. (2019). Thematic Analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences* (pp. 843–860). Singapore: Springer Nature.
- Finiki, A., & Maclean, K. (2020). Spiritual Care Services Nurture Well-Being in a Clinical Setting During COVID-19: Aotearoa New Zealand. *Health & Social Care Chaplaincy*, 8(2), 231–239. <https://doi.org/10.1558/hsc.42129>
- Glew, S. G., Simonds, L. M., & Williams, E. I. (2021). The Effects of Group Singing on the Well-being and Psychosocial Outcomes of Children and Young People: A Systematic Integrative Review. *Arts & Health*, 13(3), 240–262.
- Hikuroa, D. (2017). Mātauranga Māori - The Ūkaipō of Knowledge in New Zealand. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* 47 (1): 5–10.
- Kingi, T., Russell, L., Ashby, W., & The Youth Well-being Study team. (2021). Mā te Mātau, Ka Ora: The Use of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge to Support Contemporary Rangatahi Māori Who Self-Injure. *Journal of Indigenous Well-being*, 6(2), 45-62.
- Lipsham, M. (2023). Taiao and Mauri Ora. Māori Understandings of the Environment and its Connection to Well-being. *MAI Journal*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2023.12.2.7>
- Maxwell, K. H., & Penetito, W. (2007). How the use of rāhui for protecting taonga has evolved over time. *MAI Review*, (2), 1–15, <https://www.journal.mai.ac.nz/maireview/article/686>
- Mead, H. M. (2003). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori Values*. Huia Publishers.
- Mead, H. M. (2016). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori values* (Revised ed.). Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi & Huia Publishers.
- Mead, H. M. (2022). Understanding Mātauranga Māori. E-Tangata. <https://e-tangata.co.nz/comment-and-analysis/understanding-matauranga-maori/>.
- Mead, H. M. (2025). *Mātauranga Māori*. Huia Publishers.
- Motu, E., Watson, M., Rātima, M. T., Karaka-Clarke, T. H., & Stevens, S. R. (2023). Tūrou Hawaiki: Morning karakia and waiata as culturally responsive pedagogy. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 52(1). DOI 10.55146/ajie.v52i1.326.
- Mutu, M. (2010). Constitutional Intentions: The Treaty of Waitangi Texts. In M. Mulholland & V. Tawhai (eds.), *Weeping Waters. The Treaty of Waitangi and Constitutional Change* (pp. 13–40). Wellington, New Zealand: Huia Publishers.
- Paki, V & Peters, S 2015, ‘Exploring Whakapapa (genealogy) as a Cultural Concept to Mapping Transition Journeys, Understanding What is Happening and Discovering New Insights’, *Waikato Journal of Education Te Hautaka Mātauranga o Waikato*, 20 (2), pp. 49-60.
- Pearse, T. A. (2023). “Rongoā Brings Peace. Toi is rongoā. Art is Healing.” Transferability of the Hine Te Rēhia Framework to Understand Whānau Wellness [Unpublished master’s thesis]. University of Auckland.
- Rangihau, J 1975, ‘Being Māori’, in King, M (ed), *Te Ao Hurihuri: The World Moves on: Aspects of Māoritanga*, Longman Paul, Auckland, pp. 165-175.
- Rangiwai, B., & Sciascia, A. (2021). The Impacts of COVID19 on Tangihanga. *Journal of Global Indigeneity*, 9, 1–14. <https://hdl.handle.net/10652/5359>
- Rewi, P 2010, *Whaikōrero – The World of Māori Oratory*. Auckland University Press, Auckland.
- Royal, T. A. C. (Ed.). (2003). *The Woven Universe: Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. Estate of Rev. Maori Marsden.
- Royal, T. A. C. (2005). Indigenous Worldviews: A Comparative Study. The Indigenous Knowledges Conference - Reconciling Academic Priorities with Indigenous Realities, Victoria University, Wellington, 25 June 2005, 1-20.
- Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui. (2010). *He Rongoā kei te Kōrero: Talking Therapies for Māori – Wise Practice Guide for Mental Health and Addiction Services*. Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui, The National Centre of Mental Health Research, Information and Workforce Development.
- Waitangi Tribunal. (2011). *Ko Aotearoa Tēnei: A report into claims concerning New Zealand law and policy affecting Māori culture and identity*. Te Taumata Tuatahi (Report No. Wai 262). Waitangi Tribunal.
- Wepa, D., Smith, R., & Gemmell, L. (2023). Reconnecting Māori in a post-COVID-19 World: A Blessing in Disguise. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 19(4), 873-881. <https://doi.org/10.1177/11771801231198131> (Original work published 2023)
- Wheen, N., & Ruru, J. (2011). Providing For Rāhui in the Law of Aotearoa New Zealand. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 120(2), 169–182. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23041467>
- Wiremu, F. K., Tinirau, R., Gillies, A., Smith, G. H., Heitia, M., Smith, C. W., ... O’Sullivan, C. (2022). *He Moumou Kai, He Moumou Tāngata: Kai Governance, Kai Sovereignty and the (Re)Production of Kai - Enhancing Culturally Matched Outcomes*. A Research Report Prepared for Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga. Te Atawhai o Te Ao Charitable Trust. https://teatawhai.maori.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Kai-Sovereignty_FINAL-WEB.pdf

TE AO

Te Whakamātau

WHITI 6





TE AO WĀWĀHI

Following the harvesting of tuna, they are separated and those that are of size and useful are retained, those that are not are returned to the wai.

This phase represents the analysis of information and the sifting through of what is relevant and what is not and is the process whereby the knowledge is analysed.

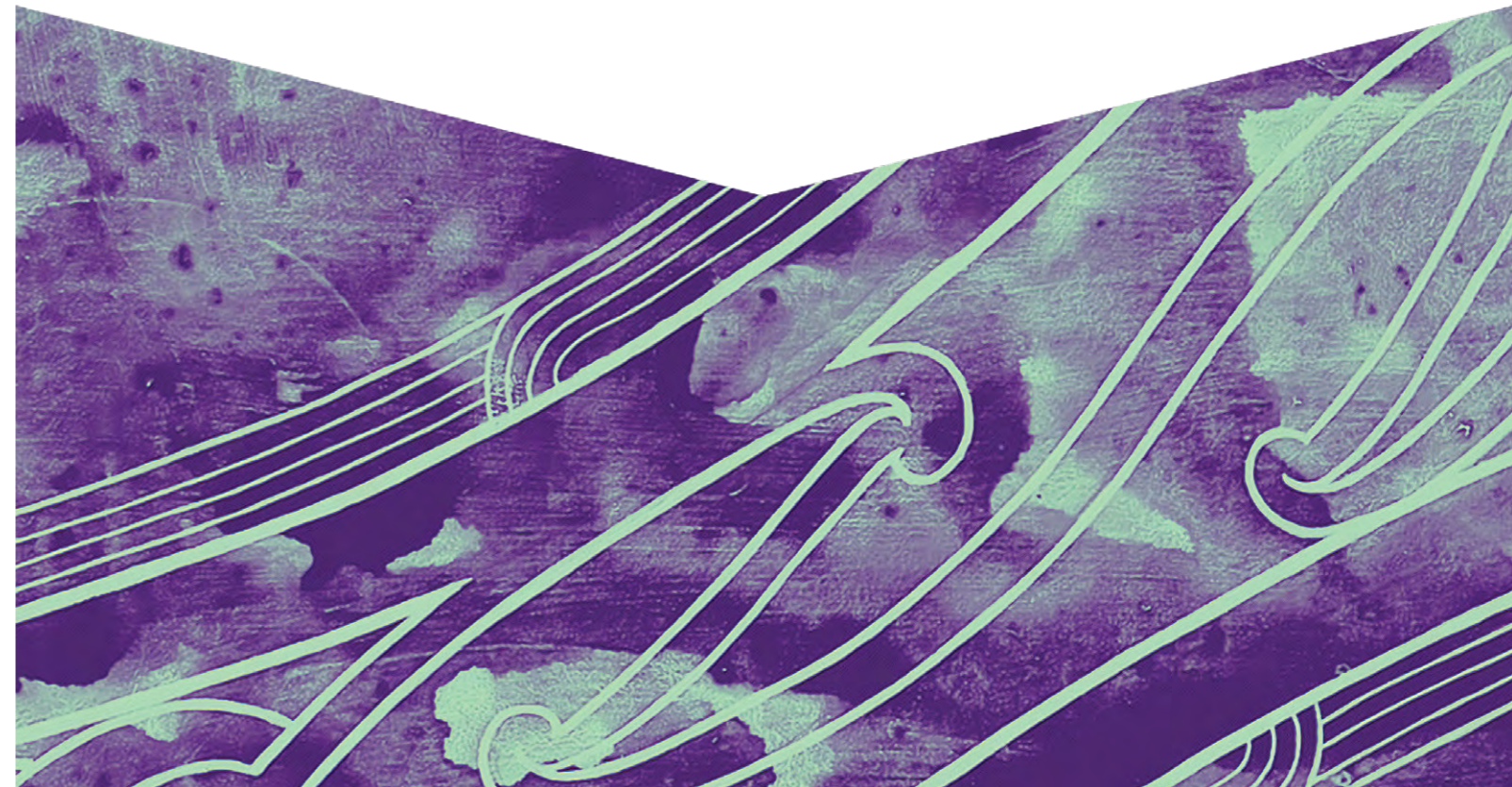
Te Ao (the coming into light) – ko te tukuihotanga o roto i te ora, e āio te aorangi. This is the code of balance that allows creation and life to work in binary universal balance. The manifestation of mātauranga.

This phase represents the analysis of information and how mātauranga can inform future responses based on the narratives that have been shared.

TE AWATEA

Te Whakapūmau

WHITI 7





TE AWATEA TE HĀKARI

The hākari – feast – the consumption of the tuna represents the by-product of the process – the end result.

This is where the creation of a new body of knowledge/mātauranga is created and disseminated for consumption. Te Awatea (the breaking of dawn) brings light, normality, the coming into being, the constant. Mātauranga has been created and is in existence.

This is where the creation of a new body of knowledge or mātauranga is created and disseminated for consumption.

To ensure taonga and Mātauranga Māori are protected from the outset our research team holds fast to ensuring that upon first engagement there is transparency with whānau, the protection of mātauranga and access to it.

NGĀ HUA | WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES AND WHAT TO EXPECT?

As we near the end of the engagement phase of Whiitiki Whakatika we acknowledge the whānau, hapū and iwi who took part in this process and shared their kōrero tuku iho and mātauranga around their unique experiences, historical and current, in response to pandemics and infectious diseases.

With your contribution, we hope to inform a framework that supports Aotearoa whānui, assisting those on the frontlines of responding on behalf of their hāpori and people during challenging times.

We thank whānau, hapū and iwi who were engaged from Te Pū through to Te Pō, and the opportunity you allowed for our rōpū of kairangahau to hear your kōrero and share in your mātauranga. Upon the final presentation of the findings, we hope that each rōpū band together in sharing your kōrero and mātauranga on a national platform for all.

Hei taonga mō te katoa.

Ka tuia te rangi e tuu nei.
Ka tuia te papa e hora nei.
Ka tuia ngaa iwi kua wehe ki te poo.
Ka tuituia mai te poo ki te ao maarama.

E ngaa kaarangatanga maha, koutou i whai waahi ki te whaangai i te koorero, ki te whaangai i te waananga, ki te whaangai i te aroha, nei raa te mihi.

Anei raa o koutou koorero, anei o koutou waananga, anei raa to koutou aroha kua whakahoki mai ki a koutou.

Kei roto i o ringaringa te tikanga ki eenei kupu, ki eenei whakamaarama, ki eenei whakaputanga.

E te whaanau, teena koutou katoa.



Huirama Matatahi (Waahi Paa, Waikato)
Pou Urungi, Whiitiki Whakatika



