



**Te Whare Wānanga
o Awanuiārangi**

TE AHI MĀNUKA: RE-IGNITING THE RITUAL FIRES OF MOKO FOR NGĀTI AWA

TURUMAKINA DULEY
2025

*A thesis presented to Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Te Whare Wānanga o
Awanuiārangi*

TE AHI MĀNUKA

REIGNITING THE RITUAL FIRES OF MOKO FOR NGĀTI AWA

For The PhD Degree in Indigenous Studies



TURUMAKINA DULEY 2024

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ABSTRACT

The art form of tā moko (tattoo) is treasured amongst the Māori people as an ancestral birthright, traditionally utilised as initiatory rituals of transition ranging from puberty to warriors of rank initiations, to graduations through whare-wānanga (schools of learning) and transitions into new societal responsibilities. Even post-mortem tattooing was undertaken as an act of veneration (Robley, 1998; Roth, 1901). Imperial colonisation interrupted these rituals, exacting generational impacts spiritually, psychologically and physically. This thesis contributes to the revitalisation and enhancement of moko as rites of passage (RoP) for Ngāti Awa and poses the question: How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa? This thesis also explores the generational impacts of the calculated removal of these rituals.

This three-tiered creative thesis (Collier, 2018, p. 122), includes tier one - exegesis, tier two - journal component which gives insight into the creative mind in gaining answers to the inquiry and tier three - creative component that narrates the chronology of the plight of moko through pūrākau. The introduction chapter explains my positionality and outlines the exegesis. The literature review spans 104 years and is organised into three key phases. A tailored methodology called the Whāriki Takapau (ritual mat) has been derived from existing moko concepts and narratives and is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori Theory; It organises seven lines of inquiry into three dimensions: physical, psychological and spiritual. A qualitative method called Whakawhāriki has also been devised to acquire the subjective opinions and experiences of six matakauri (participants) who have undergone moko as part of their academic journey. The findings reveal notable personal growth, a desire for advocacy and a strengthened cultural and personal identity because of adorning moko kanohi (facial tattoo) for transitional purposes, marking milestones.

This research has found that moko holds much worth for Māori and has an immensely positive affect on those who undertake its process. As the normalisation of moko in society is currently erupting, now is the perfect time to stabilise and structure the ritual tikanga (protocols) for moko as RoP.

The creative thesis and its three tiers.

The creative thesis adopts a three-tiered approach, integrating creative expression with scholarly inquiry to explore the cultural significance and transformative potential of moko kanohi (facial tattooing) as a rite of passage within the Ngāti Awa community. This research seeks to answer the fundamental question: How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa? This question is explored through three interconnected tiers: the exegesis, the journal component, and the creative component.

Ahi Mānuka

The exegesis offers a scholarly analysis of the research goals, contextualising them within broader cultural, historical, and theoretical frameworks. It focuses on how reinstating moko as rites of passage impacts future generations for Ngāti Awa. Through this three-tiered approach, the thesis aims to balance creative expression and academic rigor, offering a well-rounded exploration of moko kanohi as both an art form and a ceremonial practice fostering cultural revitalisation. It seeks to re-root the practice of moko as rites of passage within Ngāti Awa. The exegesis makes up 50% of the thesis.

Ahi Kōmau

Complementing the creative component, the journal component provides a reflective space for documenting the artistic and academic processes, exploring themes, capturing insights and distilling ideas into words. It also serves as a platform to solve and unravel academic challenges. The journal component constitutes 20 % of the thesis.

Ahi Pūrākau

The creative component forms the foundation of the thesis, featuring original artwork and visual representations that delve into the rich symbolism and the chronological plight of moko kanohi. The accompanying pūrākau sets the stage for the importance of pūrākau in the ceremonial space of rites of passage. These creative expressions manifest cultural identity, heritage and Kaupapa Māori principles, offering insights into the significance of moko and its ritual purpose. The creative component constitutes 30% of the thesis.

FOR THE PEOPLE OF NGĀTI AWA



TOHI WHAKATAPU

*He ngārahu tapu taku ngārahu
nāu e Io-Tikitiki-ō-Rangi
tēnei ō pia, tēnei ō taura, he iho nui, he iho roa,
he iho taketake kia koe e Io e!
puritia i te ioio nui, i te ioio roa,
i te ioio i te pūkenga, i te ioio i te hiringa
i te wānanga tipua, i te wānanga atua,
i te wānanga ariki nō runga i ngā Rangi-tū-hāhā!
Ko te uruuru tipua, ko te uruuru tawhito
ko te uruuru matua kia koe e Io Matua!
E Ruataau, e Tāne-Te-Waiora
Whano, whana, haramai te uhi
Haumi ē! Hui ē!
Tāiki ē!*

*Ō Taka, ō Hā
Tuapiko tā whaitiri
ka titiro ki te rewaha ō Tū-te-tewhatewha
e whekoki ana me he peke ngārara!
Tāia rā ki te uhi tapu a Mataora, ki te uhi tapu a Uetonga,
tākiri kō rito kōwhara he moko Tītī ki to rae, he moko Kōkiri tērā!
Mā wai rā? Mā wai rā e hara mai ki te tiki i tō moko?
Kia waihotia ake mā Hinenuitepō, mā Hinenuitepō!
E kō te uhi, ko te uhi koa
Whano, whana, hara mai te uhi,
Haumi ē!
Hui ē!
Tāiki ē!*

Nā Tame Poata.

HE MIHI

E te Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII, moe mai rā i te rangimārie! E moe me te māramatanga nei, e whakakotahi ana mātou ngā iwi Māori, nā tō tūmanako, nā tō ngākau māhaki, nā tō wairua e whakarewa ana i a mātou kia kotahi. Haere, haere, haere atu rā. Mate atu he tētē kura, hara mai rā he tētē kura! He tika hoki ka mihi ki te Arikinui hou, Kuiini Nga Wai Hono i te Pō. Te māhuri tōtara ō te Kiingitanga, arā hoki, kia tātou katoa i te ao Māori! As I bring this thesis to a conclusion, Aotearoa, New Zealand saw the passing of the Māori King Tuheitia, and the coronation of his youngest daughter Nga Wai Hono i te Pō to the throne. The Kuiini is the first monarch to wear moko kanohi since Kiingi Tāwhiao Te Wherowhero who passed in 1894. Perhaps a tohu, a sign of new beginnings for the Māori people, and indeed for Aotearoa New Zealand as a whole.



Figure 1 *Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII.* (Courtesy of the Kiingitanga)

Sometimes life has a way of guiding us onto our pathway through people who show up at the right moment, some might say those are ancestral nudges in the right direction, preordained occurrences, destiny or even fate. I have certainly felt that way many times throughout my life and especially when I consider those who have guided me on my journey into the world of tā moko, culminating in this thesis. Rāhui Cooper and Bernie Shaw both played pivotal roles.

Mark Kopua then took centre stage in my development as a moko practitioner, he has been a friend, a confidant and mentor for over 25 years. You have been like an older brother to me, your humble and proactive nature in things Māori has provided me with an example to live by! Having not grown up in Māori ways, I was very humbled that you reached out and took me under your wing. I will remain forever grateful for the knowledge you so freely gave and the guidance wisely given. I also acknowledge Dr Diana and the vital work you both do for Māori through Mahi-a-Atua, this mahi has been deeply impressive upon my pathway with moko and indeed in life. Mauri moko e ngā rangatira!

Dr Reuben Collier, this thesis would not have come to fruition without your vision and tenacity, your strategic approach and the many unique tools that you provided to our cohort to see this through to completion has been invaluable! As a supervisor you have gone the extra mile and have expected the reciprocity of such from us. Your heart for the people is very evident and your commitment to tikanga and the ways of our old people are surely observed from beyond the veil with pride. Onward! Dr Shonelle Wana too who has also offered so much value to our thesis journeys. I appreciate you both for the tireless effort you have invested into this journey, you both uphold a true example of Kaupapa Māori, thank you! Ahorangi Mera Penehira, your encouragement and timely feedback regarding my progress throughout this whole process has also been invaluable in guiding me to completion, ngā mihi miharo e te māreikura.

To my cohort, Toa Kairangahau, Ngāti Toitū! Thomas Clark, Julian Wilcox and Te Anga Nathan, what a ride! Brothers, walking this journey beside you all has built lifelong bonds and I will treasure that for the rest of my life! It has been a real pleasure to navigate Tohu Kairangi with you all, the support, encouragement, back checking, accountability, pomodoro excursions through the oldest pā site in Aotearoa (just for you Julian) the laughs, the tears and the commitment to finishing what we started as a cohort. You have all made this journey memorably enjoyable. Ka nui te mihi nui rawa atu kia koutou e ngā tuākana! Tihei mauriora!

I extend my gratitude to Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, Omataroa Rangitaiki No.2 Trust, Kapenga M Trust and Mangatawa Papamoa Blocks for their generous grants and to Ngāti Awa for awarding me the Ngāti Awa Scholarship in 2023, all of which have been instrumental in supporting my research and the completion of this thesis.

Mum and Dad, for allowing me to forge my own pathway in life. Mum, you told me to follow my heart and that has certainly guided me in the right direction and Dad for inspiring my creativity as a young boy through your art. Although we were not a wealthy whānau, the manaakitanga and generosity you both exude towards others, even strangers, is what the world is sorely in need of. Ka nui te mihi aroha kia kōrua!

To our oldest sons, Māui, Awanuiārangi and Te Awe Māpara, Akasha and Nile, I am so proud of the men you have become. The world belongs to you, work and care for the land and the land will care for you. Follow your hearts, know your roots, seek your truth. I look forward to your contributions to the world. I love you boys.

Lastly and most importantly, my beautiful wife Ify, te tau o taku ate and our youngest children, Te Toi-ō-ngā-Rangi, Te Ahi Kōmau and Sage Huia, for the sacrifices you all have made while Dad has undertaken this thesis, I could not have done this without your support! My darling, you have borne the brunt of the parenting during this journey and have done so with strength, mana and perseverance; sometimes it was super tough! There were tears, laughter, joy, stress, anger and love, thank you for having my back! I love you hun! Kids, it's so amazing that the word and notion of 'thesis' is now a natural part of your vocabulary. I have every confidence you all will impact the world in beautiful ways! I love you all from the bottom of my heart!



CONTENTS PAGE

ABSTRACT	2
TOHI WHAKATAPU	5
HE MIHI	6
LIST OF TABLES	14
PROLOGUE	15
TIER ONE – AHI MĀNUKA	17
TAHI	
1.1 Upoko Tuhingaroa – Introduction	18
Kaupapa: Purpose	18
Whāinga: Aims	19
Huanui: Approach	19
Mātakitaki Kōrero: Literature Review	19
Whāriki Takapau Methodology: The Ritual Mat	21
Whakawhāriki Method: The Interweave of Narratives	21
Tātari Raraunga: Data Analysis	21
Hua Matakauri and Urupare: Findings and Conclusion	22
Upoko Whakarāpopoto: Chapter Summary	22
RUA	
1.2 Mātātaki Kōrero - Literature Review	23
Kaupapa	23
Whāinga: Approach	23
Ngā Hua Akoranga: Objectives	24
Kawekawe Raupatu: Colonial Impacts, an Overview	24
Taunaha: A Summary of Colonisation	25
Whakaohoho: Political Awakenings: 1920 – 1970	35
Whakahaumanu: Māori Renaissance 1970 – 2010	41
Whakamāori: Normalisation 2010 – 2024	52
The Western Lens Versus Wānanga Māori	59
Pūrākau/Mythology	65
Whakaaro Māori and Ritual	67
Indigenous Rites of Passage	70
Ngā Hua: Findings	83
Kōrero: Discussion	85
Whakatepenga: Conclusion	87
TORU	
1.3 Whāriki Takapau Methodology: The Ritual Mat	89
Introduction	89
Kaupapa Māori	89
Contributions to Indigenous Theoretical Frameworks	91
Contribution to Indigenous Knowledge Systems	92
Potential Contributions to Phenomenology	93
New Knowledge in Phenomenology:	94
Te Whāriki Takapau: The Ritual Mat	95
Mātāpono: The Principles Woven into this Whāriki Takapau:	109
How the Whāriki Takapau underpins the Journal and Creative Tiers	111
WHA	
1.4 Whakawhāriki – The Interweave Method	117
Exploration of Moko as Rite of Passage	117

Research Questions for Matakauri.....	118
Matakauri Selection and Data Collection	120
Online Public Survey	127
Data Analysis	128
Ethical Considerations	129
Data Presentation	129
Significance of Method.....	129
Conclusion	129
RIMA	
1.5 Tātari Raraunga – Data Analysis and Findings	130
Paepaeroa: Physical Dimension and Communal Space.....	131
Mokopapa: A Pathway of Social Transition.....	131
Theme 1: Healing and Transformation	132
Rarohenga: Spiritual Dimension and Wellbeing	134
Moko: A Vehicle of Wellbeing.....	135
Ahi Kōmau: Psychological Dimension.....	140
Mokopapa: A Process of Empowerment	140
Generational Impacts	145
Dimensional Integration.....	149
Generational Impacts	151
Intersections and Complementarity	151
Findings	152
Conclusion	154
Online Survey	156
Online Survey General Overview	159
Journal Tier –Analysis:	161
Creative Tier – Analysis:	170
ONO	
1.6 Kai a te Rangatira – Discussion	180
Introduction.....	180
Interpretation.....	180
The Need for Wānanga: Establishing the Context.....	181
Legal and Ethical Considerations in Moko Revitalisation:	186
The Mataora Journey: A Preliminary Overview.....	189
Limitations of Study	194
Future Prospects and Conclusions	194
WHITU	
1.7 Whakakapinga – Conclusion	197
Tīmatanga: Introduction.....	197
Kaupapa: Aim and Approach.....	197
Ara Rangahau: Research Pathway	200
Ngā Tūtohu: Recommendations	204
Whakakapi: Final Conclusions	204

TIER TWO – TE AHI KŌMAU – JOURNAL	208
MŌTEATEA	210
TAHI – JOURNAL ENTRY	
2.1 Ahuahu Mataora: Discovering My Research Topic	212
Wayfinding my Thesis Question	212
Background and Context	213
Why the Change of Focus?	214
Introducing Ahi Mānuka as a Rite of Passage	215
Significance and Contribution	215
Scope and Limitations	216
Whakakapi – Conclusion	216
RUA – JOURNAL ENTRY	
2.2 Puhoro-Rangi-Nuku-Tai: Navigating the Research Process	217
Puhoro-Rangi: Stormy Skies	217
Creative Cohort and the Whetū Mārama	217
Literature Review: Seeking the Knowledge Gap	218
Whāriki Takapau: Methodology	219
Whakawhāriki: Method, Data Collection	219
Kaupapa Māori	219
Te Ahi Mānuka: Research Proposal and Ethics	220
Takitoru: The Three-Tiered Approach	221
Puhoro-tai: Limitations and Challenges Encountered	221
Whakakapi – Conclusion	222
TORU – JOURNAL ENTRY	
2.3 Ngā Tikanga ō Rarohenga: Moko and Identity	223
Tāhekeroa: The Long Rapid Descent into Rarohenga	223
Te Uhi a Mataora: Contemplations on Identity and Rites of Passage	223
Te Uhi a Toroa: Symbolism of Moko in Ngāti Awa Culture	224
He Tohu Rangatira: The Intersections of Moko and Identity	225
Ngā Matakauri: Impacts of Moko on Identity	227
He Mana tō te Moko: Future Research and Practice	229
Whakakapi: Conclusion	230
WHA – JOURNAL ENTRY	
2.4 Ahi Pūrākau: Reflections of the Creative Process	232
Tihei Mouri Moko: Introduction	232
Ahi Pūrākau: Tier Three – Creative Component	232
Hono Whakaaro: Bridging Creativity to the Research Inquiry	233
Māramatanga: Insights Gained from Creative Work	233
Ngā Whakaata: Reflections on the Creative Process	234
Ngā Ara Toi ki Mua: Future Artistic Expressions	235
Uhi Wero: Limitations and Challenges Encountered	235
Kupu Whakakapi: Conclusion	236
RIMA – JOURNAL ENTRY	
2.5 Te Ahi Kōmau: Reflections of the Journal Process	237
Ahuahu Mataora: Charting the Course Through Journaling	237
Reflections of the Journal Process	238
Insights Gained from Journaling	238
Implications for Future Research and Practice	239
Limitations and Challenges Encountered	239
Whakakapi: Conclusion	240

ONO – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.6 Ahi Mānuka: Reflections on the Exegesis.....	241
Setting the Stage for the Exegesis.....	241
Unpacking the Exegesis.....	241
Dissecting the Exegesis.....	242
Synthesising the Exegesis Journey	243
Insights Gained from the Exegesis	244
Exegesis is a Waka Huia for Research Question	244
Limitations and Challenges Encountered	245
Whakakapi: Conclusion.....	245

WHITU – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.7 Tūporeariki: A Doctrine of Recovery?	246
Pondering the Doctrine of Discoveries’ Impacts on Māori Culture	246
Cultural Disruption and Erosion of RoP	247
The Loss of RoP and its Effects on Māori Wellbeing	249
Current Approaches to Addressing Colonial Impact	249
Reinstating Moko as RoP in Cultural Revitalisation	250
Implications for Policy and Practice for Ngāti Awa.....	250
Moko as RoP: A Healing Modality, Empowerment.....	251
Whakakapi: Conclusion.....	252

WARU – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.8 Te Tatau Uruora: The Future of Tā Moko	254
Wayfinding the Path of Moko for Future Generations	254
Navigating the Currents: The Ever-Evolving Face of Tā Moko.....	255
Wayfinding New Horizons for Moko in Mataatua	255
The National Pulse of Moko: Wayfinding Our Contribution	255
Implications for the Future of Moko in a National Context	256
Navigating Moko in the Global Sphere	257
Mokopapa: Cultivating Intent in the RoP Space.....	257
Whakakapi: Conclusion.....	257

TIER THREE – AHI PŪRĀKAU – CREATIVE	259
--	------------

3.1 Toi Kōrero: A Visual Narrative

TOHI WHAKANOA	280
---------------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY	281
---------------------------	------------

APPENDICES	300
-------------------------	------------

Appendix One – Letter of approval	300
---	-----

Appendix Two – Ethics approval	301
--------------------------------------	-----

Appendix Three – Glossary	302
---------------------------------	-----

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 <i>Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII. (Courtesy of the Kiingitanga)</i>	6
Figure 2 <i>Peha by Gordon Toi on Ngarimu Blair (House of Natives).</i>	75
Figure 3 <i>Hawaiian ‘Ala Niho’ Done With Traditional Tattooing Implements</i>	77
Figure 4 <i>‘T-Kaa-Onoroh, Femme des Iles Sandwich,’ (Jacques Arago, 1822).</i>	78
Figure 5 <i>Te Whāriki Takapau: The Ritual Mat.</i>	96
Figure 6 <i>The Portal to Rarohenga.</i>	97
Figure 7 <i>Paepaeroa: Communal Support, Physical dimension.</i>	97
Figure 8 <i>Rarohenga: Spiritual Dimension.</i>	98
Figure 9 <i>Ahi-Kauri: Ceremonial Preparations</i>	99
Figure 10 <i>Ahi-Mānuka: Ceremony.</i>	100
Figure 11 <i>Ahi-Kōmau: Emotional–Psychological Dimension.</i>	101
Figure 12 <i>Ahi-Tā-Moko: Initiation.</i>	103
Figure 13 <i>Ahi-Parapara: Lifting the Tapu.</i>	105
Figure 14 <i>Manawa: Pathway of Transition.</i>	108
Figure 15 <i>Intersection of the Whāriki Takapau and the Whetū Mārama.</i>	112
Figure 16 <i>Dr Shonelle Kahupake Wana at Awanuiārangi Whakatāne 2022.</i>	121
Figure 17 <i>Turumakina and Raniera McGrath Queensland 2022.</i>	122
Figure 18 <i>Turumakina and Dr Ruihi Shortland 2022.</i>	123
Figure 19 <i>Hopere Chase, Graduation, Master’s Degree 2022.</i>	124
Figure 20 <i>Tania and Mere Faulkner at their Graduation 2022.</i>	125
Figure 21 <i>Hohepa Maclean 2022.</i>	126
Figure 22 <i>Sample of a Staged Moko Kanohi.</i>	191
Figure 23 <i>Moko Kanohi Segmented Breakdown.</i>	192
Figure 24 <i>Tomika Te Mutu, Paramount Chief of Ngāiterangi</i>	209
Figure 25 <i>Uhi Tā Moko, Bequest of Kenneth Athol Webster, 1971</i>	216
Figure 26 <i>Miringa Te Kakara (Public Domain).</i>	218
Figure 27 <i>The Whetū Mārama Framework.</i>	218
Figure 28 <i>Te Ahi Mānuka Research Proposal 2022.</i>	220
Figure 29 <i>Toa Kai-Rangahau Doctoral Candidates.</i>	221
Figure 30 <i>Mark Kopua (Painted by Matt Griffin, 2023).</i>	222
Figure 31 <i>Muriwaihou and Tāhekerora, AI-Generated.</i>	223
Figure 32 <i>The Bay of Plenty Fedarb Sheet 6 (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2023).</i>	224
Figure 33 <i>Whakaari Netana of Tūhoe (James Cowan, 1922).</i>	225
Figure 34 <i>Tyson Te Maro and His Partner Krystal Kearns.</i>	226
Figure 35 <i>Anthony Olsen of Tūhoe, Stage Two.</i>	227
Figure 36 <i>Renee, Kaiwhakahaere at Turuki Health (Muru-Barnard, 2022).</i>	228
Figure 37 <i>Harper Stewart with Kiri-Tuhi (Image from Mai FM).</i>	229
Figure 38 <i>Mr G, Graham Hoete, (2023). Kaitā: Lance Ngata.</i>	231
Figure 39 <i>Mataatua Whare Tupuna (Mataatuawharenuui.rezdy.com).</i>	234
Figure 40 <i>Initial Three-Tier Layout of the Creative Thesis.</i>	235
Figure 41 <i>Joe Harawira (E-Tangata, 2018).</i>	236
Figure 42 <i>Our Cohort Visiting Pōhaturoa with Dr Collier and Dr Wana.</i>	240
Figure 43 <i>Whetū Mārama used for Planning Word Count.</i>	241
Figure 44 <i>Mokopapa at Kokohinau Marae, Te Teko 2022.</i>	243
Figure 45 <i>AI-Generated Image Depicting Arrival of Europeans.</i>	246
Figure 46 <i>Papal Bull, Inter Caetera, issued in 1493 (Public Domain).</i>	247
Figure 47 <i>AI-Created Image Depicting “The Architecture of Colonisation”</i>	248
Figure 48 <i>Jacob Brown, Townsville 2023.</i>	251

Figure 49 <i>Tame Iti, “I Will Not Speak Māori” Exhibition</i>	253
Figure 50 <i>James Webster, Hinemoa Jones, Turumakina Duley, Diana and Mark Kopua</i>	253
Figure 51 <i>Ötzi The Tyrolean Iceman</i>	254
Figure 52 <i>Arikirau, The Ancient Site for Ritual Moko at Pōhaturua, Whakatāne</i>	257
Figure 53 <i>Ahi Kōmau</i>	261
Figure 54 <i>Ahi Tā Moko</i>	263
Figure 55 <i>Ahi Paki Mahunga</i>	266
Figure 56 <i>Ahi Raupatu</i>	267
Figure 57 <i>Ahi Tahutahu</i>	269
Figure 58 <i>Ahi Tāmau</i>	271
Figure 59 <i>Hika Ahi</i>	273
Figure 60 <i>Ahi Mānuka</i>	275
Figure 61 <i>Ahi Anamata</i>	277

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: <i>What Does Moko Mean to You?</i>	156
Table 2: <i>How has Moko Impacted your Life?</i>	157
Table 3: <i>Why did you get Moko Kanohi?</i>	157
Table 4: <i>Are Reo and Tikanga Required?</i>	158
Table 5: <i>What about Pākehā Whānau?</i>	158
Table 6: <i>Gender Dynamics?</i>	159
Table 7: <i>Concerns for the Future of Moko?</i>	159

PROLOGUE

Moko as rites of passage:

There exist three origin stories for tā moko (tattooing): the Māui narrative, the South Island narrative of Tama-nui-a-Raki, Rukutia and Tū-te-Koropanga and the Mataora and Niwareka narrative. In all three cases, the artform originated in Rarohenga, the underworld of spirits (Te Awekotuku et al., 2007), where a mysterious people, the Tūrehu reside - the knowledge holders of weaving, tattooing and its ceremonial fires. The heroic quest of Mataora to retrieve his wife from Rarohenga forced him to confront and transcend his shadows, to return with her and the crafts of tā moko and raranga (weaving) (Whatahoro & Smith, 2011). His rite of passage (RoP) a precursor for our people. Moko flourished in Aotearoa but as Māori entered the crisis of colonial invasion, the art form underwent its own liminoid RoP and was severed from its social and political utility.

The Doctrine of Discovery played a significant role in shaping the ideology of colonialism (Ngata, 2019; Jackson, 2012; Cormier, 2017; Miller 2018). The Crown of England adopted and incorporated the principles of the doctrine into its legal and political frameworks to ‘justify’ the dispossession and subjugation of Indigenous peoples. Tā moko survived only by a thread. The traditional practice of preserving heads captured the curiosity of Europe, leading to the unthinkable trade in tattooed heads: one to two heads for a musket (Palmer & Tano, 2004). The male mataora (facial tattoo) succumbed to the night from whence it came. Legislation also played a role in the artforms demise by making traditional knowledge and rituals inaccessible to the common people, as cultural degradation and the loss of land, language and mana motuhake (self-determination), strategically and inevitably led to a crisis of identity and diminished well-being (Takitimu, 2022).

The 1970s gave birth to a second revival: Tame Iti of the Tūhoe nation adorned the mataora as a response to gangs who adopted moko kanohi albeit infused with their gang iconography (Maniapoto, 2021). The Rastafarian movement also incorporated a version of mataora that reflected their belief system (N. Reuben, personal communication, June 2022). All this amidst a backdrop of cultural revitalisation, mana motuhake movements, a national moko collective and the mokopapa phenomenon (tribal moko gathering), that has dawned an age of

normalisation of moko kanohi and has inadvertently stepped into the ritual space of rites of passage. Moko has found its place again amongst the people, inevitably its revival has brought with it some modern issues.

Western research on Indigenous rites of passage is vast and reveals the ‘Archetype of initiation’ as fundamental to a mature male psyche (Moore, 2001). Van Gennep (1909), coined the term ‘rites of passage’ in 1909 while studying rituals that marked important transitions in the lives of Indigenous people and Joseph Campbells universal mythical quest of initiation or the ‘heroes’ journey’ can be observed repeatedly through Hollywood movies (Palumbo, 2014). My own personal journey with adorning mataora was one of academic accomplishment and a political statement of cultural survival and reclamation. I graduated with a bachelor’s degree through the Auckland University of Technology in 2004 adorned with mataora, a mark of transition and completion. My name is Turumakina Merritt John Duley of Mataatua descent; I am a moko practitioner of 30 years; my thesis seeks to reignite the ritual fires of moko for Ngāti Awa as tribally guided ritual initiation ceremonies for the people of Ngāti Awa. Following is my whakapapa from Rūaimoko the atua of moko, through to three eponymous Ngāti Awa tūpuna (ancestors)—Māui, Toi Kai-Rākau and Toroa.

Rūaimoko = Hinutohu, who begat (wb) Manuongaonga wb Uetonga = Manutonga wb Niwareka = Mataora wb Papahu wb Takatakaterangi wb Hinetītama II wb Murirangawhenua wb Taranga wb Māui-Tikitiki-a-Taranga wb Te Papa-Titi-Rau-Maewa wb Tiwakawaka wb Taranui wb Tararoa wb Ngainui wb Ngairoa wb Ngaiwharekikī wb Ngaiwharekakā wb Ngairohi wb Ngaiwaka wb Ngaitaketake wb Ngaiuhi wb Ngai-te-Hurumanu wb Toi-Kai-Rakau wb Rauru wb Whatonga wb Tahatiti wb Ruatapu wb Rakei-Ora wb Tamakitera wb Paerere-i-waho = Awamohurehu wb Irakewa wb Toroa wb Ruaihona wb Te-Hingaotera = Wairaka wb Awanuiārangi II (of whom Ngāti Awa is named after) wb Rongotangiawa wb Irapeke wb Tamatearehe wb Kuratāpirirangi wb Taiwhakaea I wb Te Ikapuku wb Te Rangitupukiwaho wb Te Poia wb Takekorero wb Tuamaka wb Ikauru wb Tawhiwhi wb Te Whawhai (Whaiti) wb Wikiriwhi Tauranga = Roka Te Hikurangi wb Hona Te Toko = Huhana Te Herewaka wb Wiremu Tamakoro Hona = Te Ara-Paparahi Kerara wb Koau Hona = Turumakina Harawira wb Rerekimātuku Harawira = Rawiri Duley wb Turumakina Duley.

TIER ONE – AHI MĀNUKA

EXEGESIS



TAHI

1.1 Upoko Tuhingaroa – Introduction

Kaupapa: Purpose

This thesis examines the benefits of reinstating tā moko (traditional Māori tattooing), as rites of passage (RoP) within contemporary Ngāti Awa society. Tā moko holds deep cultural significance to Māori heritage, functioning as a visual communication system that conveys identity, social status, social contribution, and belonging. Traditionally, moko marked key life transitions, beginning with coming of age ceremonies i.e., rites of puberty (girls – ikura, toto-ariki, te awa atua; boys – pūhuru hutanga, mātātahi, puke huruhuru), the next markings were given to young warriors taking their place as protectors of people and land, advancement through schools of knowledge, elevation to important community roles such as the paepae (ceremonial speech-making), kai karanga (female voice of ceremonial welcome), ruahine (an elder woman who has ceremonially cleansed a new house), elevation to the rūnanga (tribal council), and widowhood. In some cases, moko occurred post-mortem as a final veneration of the deceased (Roth, 1901; Robley 1998; L. Ngata, personal communication, March 2023).

However, the continuum of rites was disrupted by the waves of imperial colonialism, which imposed foreign ideologies and interrupted Māori customs. Other forms of body modification also existed, possibly circumcision, referenced by the name of Tamatea Ure-haea, implying a circumcision of some kind (McGrath & Young, 2001; H. Mclean, personal communication, May 2023), along with ear piercing and ceremonial hair cutting (Murphy, 2013). Rua Kenana used hair cutting at Maunga Pōhatu to lift the tapu (ceremonial restrictions) from the old ways for himself and his followers (Binney, 1983). Historical accounts also mention women self-cutting (kiri haehae) in mourning (Kingi et al., 2017; Te Awakotuku, 2009). For Māori, moko traditionally began at puberty when girls menstruated, and boys grew pubic hair and produced sperm, marking their “coming of age.”

This thesis explores the far-reaching impact of colonialism on the practice of tā moko, raising questions about the preservation of cultural heritage and the challenges faced in maintaining the integrity of this tradition. The social acceptance of tā moko within wider society serves as a vital factor in understanding its current cultural significance, its role as a cultural marker in contemporary Māori society and its place within the ever-changing social fabric of Aotearoa.

Whāinga: Aims

The thesis inquiry seeks to answer the question; How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa? This also leads into the exploration of the generational impacts of the systematic removal of these RoP rituals for Māori.

Huanui: Approach

My approach to answering these questions is three-fold; as this is a creative thesis, there are three tiers in its entirety (Collier, 2018). Tier one is this exegesis. Tier two is a journal component that opens a window into the creative mind and links tier one to tier three, that being the creative component where nine canvases narrate a new pūrākau of moko over the generations. Underpinning this research is Kaupapa Māori Theory which has informed the creation of a tailored methodology called the Whāriki Takapau, a concept that derives from within moko narratives. This qualitative theoretical framework leads into a tailored method called Whakawhāriki, also derived from moko narratives.

Mātakitaki Kōrero: Literature Review

The literature review revealed scarce information of real depth on moko as RoP, or even the general notion of rites of passage in traditional Māori society; only mere mentions of it appear within the existing literature (Caddie & Kumeroa, 2010). This is clearly the result of the architecture of colonisation employed against Indigenous peoples (Takitimu, 2022; Taonui, 2012), where the Doctrine of Discovery justified colonial oppression and suppression of Indigenous cultures (Ngata, 2019; Philip-Barbara and Takitimu, 2019; Jackson, 2021). There is ample literature and research on the colonial invasion of Aotearoa, so I will not delve deeply into that historical upheaval, but the trade in tattooed heads is relevant to this thesis and this introduction is an appropriate place to preface these events.

Pakipaki mahunga was the traditional practice of preserving decapitated heads; according to Te Rarawa leader Haami Piripi, there were two reasons for its practice, *“The first was as a trophy of war. Initially these tattooed heads were our great leaders, esteemed leaders. Sometimes they were used to negotiate peace treaties between tribes. The second reason was to mark the life of someone who was venerated, who was cherished or wept over”* (Fennel &

Ross, 2020, p. 3). The first ‘trade’ occurred in 1769 when Joseph Banks traded a pair of old white linen drawers for the head of a teenage boy albeit with the ‘encouragement’ of a pistol (Paterson, 2021), this escalated over the next decades into a trade of supply and demand. Fast forward to the early 1800s, Thomas Kendal takes Hongi Hika to England to help translate the Bible into Māori and produce a Māori dictionary. King George was so impressed with his Christian duty that he gave him a large gift of valuables. On his way home, he traded it all for several hundred muskets and ammunition in Sydney, arming his people and launching the infamous Ngā Puhi raids across the North and South Island. Muskets changed the face of traditional Māori warfare; they provided protection to other iwi (tribes) desperate to defend themselves. Chiefs started trading for muskets with flax, potatoes, slave women and tattooed heads; heads were the most valuable to the Europeans - one or two heads could be traded for a musket, as opposed to a shipload of flax (Salmond, 2015). Heads were convenient and this marked what Palmer and Tano termed the ‘desacralisation’ of the tradition of upoko whakakapowai: the preservation of heads (2004). Demand for heads saw the beginning of a head-hunting campaign for trade; a slave’s head was worth more than his life. Tā moko, especially the mataora, declined in large part due to the trade but there were other factors like loss of land, cultural degradation, assimilation, urbanisation and Christianity. Moko lost its political rationale as traditional social structure morphed into something new (ibid).

In the 1860s, there was a small revival of moko, as Māori began to assert their mana during the New Zealand Wars but this didn’t endure (Sangl, 2020). The Declaration of Independence 1835, Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840 and the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907, all contributed to the historical events that lead to the near extinction of the art form. The literature review spans 104 years of colonial assimilation to the present day. I have identified three key periods of historical relevance regarding the plight of moko and four relevant fields of research:

- **Whakaohoho: Awakenings 1920 – 1970:** first revival attempt, Māori self-determination movements and Kaupapa Māori Theory.
- **Whakahaumanu: Renaissance 1970 – 2010:** Gang culture and moko, the Tūhoe Nation’s response, Rastafarians and moko, Te Uhi a Mataora, mokopapa origins, Matatini cultural performance competitions.

- **Whakamāori: Normalisation 2010-2024:** Mokopapa, Mahi-a-Atua, Poutama Rites of Passage, media, social media.
- **Mātauranga Māori, Psychology, Mythology and Anthropology:** I will canvas Māori knowledge both recorded and oral, as well as western research on rites of passage through the fields of psychology, mythology and anthropology to see what can be gleaned. Other Indigenous RoP practices will also be touched on and the role of pūrākau (mythology) in the space of RoP.

Whāriki Takapau Methodology: The Ritual Mat

The methodology chapter will breakdown the tailored framework that has been adapted from existing moko narratives and concepts and is rooted in Kaupapa Māori Theory. The Whāriki Takapau Methodology has seven elements which equates to seven lines of enquiry, all of which will be reduced into the three synergistic dimensions of mind, body and spirit. I will also discuss how the theoretical framework underpins the creative and journal tiers of this thesis.

Whakawhāriki Method: The Interweave of Narratives

Whakawhāriki is derived from the same narrative as the Whāriki Takapau and is a method of data retrieval that is qualitative in its approach. This framework encompasses pūrākau as a fundamental Indigenous modality. It will weave together stories—the Mataora and Niwareka narrative, elements of the literature review, conversations with selected tohunga (knowledge holders) and six matakauri (participants), three male and three female who have all completed higher level degrees and have undertaken moko kanohi as a way of marking their academic milestones. I also conducted an online survey to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of tā moko in today's modern social environment.

Tātari Raraunga: Data Analysis

The findings of this research reveal strong evidence of positive benefits for the people of Ngāti Awa, all matakauri expressed growth in mental wellbeing, transformative benefits, identity retrieval and/or fortification, growth in cultural confidence and efficacy, confidence in advocacy and spiritual healing, they all indicated their intentions for moko as a meaningful marker of life's milestones.

Hua Matakauri and Urupare: Findings and Conclusion

The findings chapter shows how the data analysis exposed clear benefits for reinstating moko as RoP, opening many avenues for further research regarding the role and benefits of RoP for the people of Ngāti Awa including gradational RoP for higher education. The concluding chapter will summarise the research; it will also make note of limitations and challenges encountered throughout the duration of the thesis journey and will reveal the insights gained and make recommendations for the actualisation of RoP for Ngāti Awa and for further research avenues.

Upoko Whakarāpopoto: Chapter Summary

This research indicates extremely positive affirmations from all participants regarding the reinstatement of moko as RoP. Personal wellbeing is enhanced, cultural and personal confidence as well as identity is strengthened substantially. The significance of this research is compelling and promotes cultural preservation of a revived ritual artform - the reclamation of traditional initiation rites - that has clear benefits for Māori in general; personal growth is enhanced and community bonds are strengthened. The timing of this research is ideal as the normalisation of moko kanohi in society is exponentially increasing. There would potentially be some detrimental outcomes if moko kanohi is engaged purely as a trend, therefore now is the perfect time to guide the initiatory function of moko and its social and political relevance. In conclusion, the well-known whakatauāki, “*Whāia ngā mahi o Rarohenga*” is an apt segway into the following chapters, whereby to “*follow the ways of Rarohenga*” expresses succinctly the responsibilities that come with adorning the mark of nobility and upholding the mana of this ancestral treasure. Moko is a ritual process that has the potential to help guide and facilitate a vibrancy of wellbeing, strong identities and increased cultural efficacy. Moko now stands alongside the other cultural ‘Pou-toko-manawa’ (main support posts of an ancestral house) that have been raised by Māori academic and activist giants from out of the devastation of colonial invasion. The following chapter, literature review, will reveal just what is out there regarding moko as RoP and what can be gleaned from the global stage of western research and other cultural tattooing practices.

RUA

1.2 Mātātaki Kōrero - Literature Review

Kaupapa

This literature review serves as a scholarly foundation for exploring the topic of reinstating moko as rites of passage (RoP) and understanding the generational impacts resulting from the removal of these rituals due to colonisation. This chapter's main objective is to survey existing literature including orally held knowledge to identify gaps in the literature and emphasise the significance of initiatory rites of passage in the human experience. To achieve this, the study focuses on tā moko as RoP from both the traditional Māori perspective and through the lens of Anthropology, Mythology and Psychology.

Whāinga: Approach

There is a prelude, an introductory background to colonialism in Aotearoa, leading to the approach of this literature review which follows three key eras of relevance spanning 104 years:

1. **Whakaohoho: Awakenings (1920 to 1970):** a period marked by significant political and cultural developments.
2. **Whakahaumanu: Renaissance (1970 to 2010):** an era characterised by revitalisation and resurgence of Māori culture and identity.
3. **Whakamāori: Normalisation (2010 to 2024):** a phase representing the current context and ongoing efforts to normalise Māori practices and knowledge.

Furthermore, the review incorporates four key fields of study from both Western and Māori perspectives:

1. **Mātai Hinengaro:** Psychology
2. **Mātauranga Tikanga Tangata:** Anthropology
3. **Pūrākau:** Cultural narratives, mythology
4. **Mātauranga Māori and Iwi Taketake o te Ao:** Māori Knowledge & other Indigenous rites of passage

This chapter interweaves dialogues from various tohunga— experts who are steeped in the deep waters of traditional knowledge to supplement the glaring gap in literature regarding moko as rites of passage. These conversations span the spectrum of moko artistry to the sacred oral traditions of pūrākau, RoP from Moananui-a-Kiwa and ahi tapu (ritual fires). The intention is to elevate the voices of those tohunga who, through oral traditions, act as living libraries of ancient Māori and Polynesian wisdom. This aligns with Pūrākau as methodology, which parallels Western academia with Indigenous oral narratives as a means of knowledge transmission.

Ngā Hua Akoranga: Objectives

The primary objectives of this chapter are fourfold:

1. It aims to identify the knowledge gap in the literature regarding the use of moko as RoP.
2. This chapter seeks to explore and understand the prolonged generational impacts of the strategic eradication of ritual and religious practices to which tā moko belonged.
3. To understand the significance of pūrākau, or ‘myth’, i.e., creation, historical and hero narratives within the ritual space. These narratives are reservoirs of meaning and are essential to initiatory rituals, providing a sense of cultural identity and connection to one's origins.
4. It references Western observations of RoP and other Indigenous RoP practices, providing a glimpse into the efforts of other cultures who are reinstating rites of passage to facilitate positive development for their youth.

Kawekawe Raupatu: Colonial Impacts, an Overview

In this section of the literature review, we touch on the historical events that significantly affected the ritual rites of passage for Māori, deepening the preview offered by the creative component of this thesis. The ‘Toi Kōrero’ canvases, artistically depict the plight of moko, tracing its origins in Rarohenga (the realm of spirits) immersed in narratives that resonate with our ancestors' lived experiences. Among these narratives, the Mataora and Niwareka story stands out as the most popular and widely acknowledged account of the origins of moko. I have chosen to utilise this narrative in the creative component due to the powerful expression of transformation that it conveys. The nine canvases follow a chronological order:

1. Ahi Kōmau: Creation – 900AD: Origins of moko
2. Ahi Tā Moko: 900 – 1770: Moko in Aotearoa
3. Ahi Paki Mahunga: 1770 – 1850: The trade in tattooed heads
4. Ahi Raupatu: 1850 – 1880: Land confiscations and short revival of moko
5. Hika Ahi: 1880- 1945: Attempted revival of moko
6. Ahi Tāmau: 1945 – 1970: The lost years of moko
7. Ahi Tahutahu: 1970 – 2010: Renaissance of moko
8. Ahi Mānuka: 2010 – 2024: Normalisation of moko
9. Ahi Anamata: 2024 – 2124: Future of moko

These canvases focus on the theme of moko as a ritual initiation, visually narrating the journey of the art form and its associated rituals through different generations up to the present. They also project a visionary perspective of these rituals into future generations. There are two other origin narratives for moko - the South Island narrative of Tama-nui-a-Raki, Rukutia and Tū-te-Koropanga (Best, 2016) and Maui is also associated with the retrieval of moko (ibid). All three of these narratives acknowledge Rarohenga as the home of the people where moko was retrieved from (Te Awekotuku, 2007; Higgins, 2004; Best, 2016; Whatahoro and Smith, 2011). By delving into these mythological and historical events and tracing the evolution of moko and its rituals, we gain valuable insights into the significance of reinstating moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa and its profound implications for future generations.

Taunaha: A Summary of Colonisation

The colonisation of Aotearoa by the Crown of England has been extensively documented and researched and while this section can only provide a brief overview of the historical occurrences during this period, readers are encouraged to refer to the works of acknowledged authors and researchers for a more comprehensive understanding. Among the notable scholars in this field are Ranginui Walker (1987), Moana Jackson (2019), Anne Salmond (2018), Donna Awatere (1984), Claudia Orange (2021), Vincent O'Malley (2024), there are many others.

The religious origins of racism can be traced to The Doctrine of Discovery (DoD) (Miller, 2018), rooted in the Papal Bulls of the 15th and 16th centuries, which formed the legal basis for the Crown and European nations' justification for conquest and claiming lands. Tina Ngata describes it as a state/religious doctrine that empowered individuals like James Cook to

‘conquer and claim’ lands and exert control over Indigenous inhabitants. The doctrine considered Indigenous peoples as non-human, enabling the term ‘Terra Nullius’ to be applied, even if the land was inhabited. This notion justified the Crown's claim of Te Wai Pounamu, the South Island of New Zealand, as Terra Nullius in 1840 (Ngata, 2019; Ruru, 2010; Williams, 2011). In 2012, the United Nations recognised the DoD as the ‘shameful root’ of Indigenous peoples' marginalisation and dispossession (United Nations, 2012).

He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni, the 1835 Declaration of Independence, signed by Māori chiefs of the northern tribes, “*is one of our most significant historical documents*” (Mikaere, 2013), that utilised the legal process of England to declare the sovereign rights of the chiefs in determining their own lives. Vincent O'Malley emphasises the importance of this ‘taonga’ (treasure) which asserted Māori leaders' mana and self-determination to the world, laying a foundation that eventually led to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (2023). Claudia Orange (2021), a renowned researcher on this topic, explains that Te Tiriti was initially presented by Crown representatives and missionary translators as a partnership between two peoples - a written agreement signed by nearly 500 Māori chiefs and chieftainesses and they did so because they understood it to be an affirmation of the Declaration of Independence of 1835 and the relationship with the Crown over the previous decades. Whilst most chiefs signed the Māori version, only 39 signed the English version in Port Waikato and only because Major Thomas Bunbury ‘forgot’ to bring the Māori version, all the while the discussion that occurred there was clearly about the Māori text (Henare, 2016). Ani Mikaere (2013) argues that “*one of the greatest misconceptions currently plaguing Treaty jurisprudence is the conviction that te Tiriti and the Treaty bear some kind of relationship to each other.*” The two texts contain crucial differences, with significant implications for Crown authority and Māori sovereignty (Orange, 2021). Te Tiriti guaranteed tino rangatiratanga—self-determination, enduring relationship and trade, while the English text framed it as a treaty of cession, allowing the Crown to assert dominance. Over time the English text was used to subordinate Te Tiriti and sideline the 1835 Declaration of Independence.

Following the establishment of the first Colonial Parliament in 1854, Māori were not included in the political decision-making process, as Crown authority was imposed on all the people of Aotearoa, irrespective of whether their chiefs signed Te Tiriti or not. Various movements and responses emerged among Māori to address the political environment imposed upon them. The Kīngitanga movement, founded in 1858, aimed to unite Māori under a single ariki. Te Ua

Haumēne established the Pai Mārire religion in 1862, which influenced Māori leaders like King Tāwhiao, Titokowaru and Te Kooti. Notably, Tūhoe did not sign Te Tiriti, continuously asserting their mana motuhake (independent authority). The Parihaka people, led by the prophets Tohu Kākahi and Te Whiti-o-Rongomai, engaged in passive resistance, rallying many Māori to the political challenges of that era. Māori councils were established nationwide, voicing Māori aspirations and in 1909, The Young Māori Party was founded, featuring figures like Māui Pōmare, Apirana Ngata and James Carroll. The Rātana Faith also emerged as a major political movement in the 1920s and is commemorated annually at Rātana Pā (Orange, 2021).

The Doctrine of Discoveries Continued Legacy of Colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand

The DoD remains deeply embedded in the legal and political frameworks of Aotearoa New Zealand, sustaining the Crown's claim to sovereignty and governance over Māori lands despite the doctrine's inherently flawed and illegitimate foundations, an "imposter legal system" as it is called by Moana Jackson (Ruru, 2013). In the New Zealand context, it was used by the British Crown to usurp authority, disregarding existing Māori governance structures and customary land rights (Ruru et al., 2010). Professor Jacinta Ruru further states that at the heart of British colonisation in New Zealand was the assertion that Māori sovereignty had been ceded to the Crown through the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. However, the interpretation and implementation of the Treaty have been heavily influenced by the DoD framework, which assumes that the Crown's governance rights (kāwanatanga) override Māori authority (tinorangatiratanga) (Ruru, 2010). This assumption remains central to New Zealand's legal system today. The courts and Parliament continue to operate as if the British Crown's acquisition of sovereignty was legitimate and absolute, despite growing recognition that this transfer of sovereignty was never agreed to by Māori (Charles & Rah, 2019).

The Illegitimacy of Crown Sovereignty: The use of the DoD to justify British sovereignty in New Zealand is deeply problematic. It reflects a self-proclaimed entitlement by European powers to rule over Indigenous peoples, based on the belief that non-Christian societies lacked the capacity for self-governance and legal recognition. As Jacinta Ruru (2010) highlights, the Crown's assumption of authority over Māori land and governance was rooted in a Eurocentric worldview that ignored Māori sovereignty and their own legal systems. The Treaty of Waitangi, often referred to as the founding document of New Zealand, has been interpreted by the courts in a way that aligns with the DoD. The Court of Appeal's 1995 decision in *Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board v Director-General of Conservation* (the "Whale Watch Case")

provides a clear example. The court recognised both the Crown's governance right and Māori rights to tinorangatiranga, but it ultimately prioritised the Crown's right to govern. The court failed to consider how these rights should coexist or how Māori authority should influence governance (ibid). Instead, it reaffirmed the colonial assumption that all governance and sovereignty ultimately rest with the Crown.

In contrast, the Waitangi Tribunal, which has been a key institution in challenging the Doctrine of Discovery in New Zealand's legal framework, has challenged this interpretation by emphasising that Māori did not cede absolute sovereignty to the Crown in 1840. The Tribunal argues that the Treaty reflects a relationship of reciprocity, where Māori agreed to share governance with the Crown in return for the protection of their tino rangatiranga (ibid). However, the Tribunal's views are not binding on the courts, and judges have repeatedly chosen to maintain the colonial framework that places kāwanatanga above tino rangatiranga.

The Courts and Parliament: Protecting the Doctrine of Discovery

New Zealand's legal system continues to uphold elements of the DoD through judicial decisions and legislative acts that prioritise Crown sovereignty over Māori rights. For example, the Ngāti Apa decision (2003) recognised Māori rights to land under the sea, but it still assumed that the Crown had legitimately acquired sovereignty over New Zealand. The courts have not revisited the foundational question of whether sovereignty was ever lawfully transferred from Māori to the Crown (Ruru et al., 2010). Parliament has also played a significant role in reviving DoD principles. Despite judicial recognition of Māori property rights in the Ngāti Apa decision, Parliament responded with the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004, effectively stripping Māori of their rights to these lands. Parliament's actions demonstrate its unwillingness to recognise Māori ownership of significant areas of land such as the foreshore, seabed, and national parks, reinforcing the colonial notion that all land ultimately belongs to the Crown. This legislative approach reflects Parliamentary supremacy, a concept that allows Parliament to make or change laws as it sees fit, even if those laws violate common law principles of Native title or Treaty obligations. Since the courts cannot override Parliament's decisions, this allows the DoD to remain embedded in New Zealand's legal system, continuing to disadvantage Māori and undermine their mana motuhake (Miller et al., 2010).

The Waitangi Tribunal's Challenge to "Discovery": The Tribunal has also rejected the idea that the Crown can override Māori rights in the name of national interests such as conservation.

Instead, it argues that Māori rights to their land and resources must be protected to the fullest extent possible (Ruru, 2010). However, despite the Tribunal's progressive interpretations, New Zealand's courts have been slow to adopt these ideas. While the courts acknowledge the importance of Treaty "principles", they continue to operate within a framework that assumes Crown sovereignty is absolute and that Parliament's authority overrides any conflicting Māori rights. This reluctance to fully incorporate the Tribunal's reasoning demonstrates how deeply the colonial assumptions of the DoD remain entrenched in New Zealand's legal system.

Discovery Ideology in New Zealand Today: The DoD continues to shape New Zealand's legal and political landscape, sustaining the colonial fiction that the Crown of England has the legitimate right to govern and exercise sovereignty over Māori lands. The courts and Parliament have consistently reinforced this doctrine by prioritising Crown sovereignty over Māori mana motuhake. Judicial decisions and legislation frequently ignore or dismiss Māori claims to sovereignty, instead assuming that governance and control of land lie with the Crown. The ongoing tension between the Tribunal and the courts reflects the persistent influence of the DoD and the failure of New Zealand's legal system to fully confront its colonial origins. While New Zealand may pride itself on its race relations, the reality is that the legal system continues to operate on assumptions of Crown supremacy, which are rooted in the same colonial ideologies that justified the dispossession of Māori lands. The DoD remains alive and well in contemporary New Zealand law, legitimising the Crown's authority at the expense of Māori sovereignty.

Dayle Takitimu, an esteemed barrister and solicitor of the High Court with expertise in Māori, Indigenous rights and environmental law, spoke at the Māori Party wānanga in July 2022, reflecting on the impact of colonisation. She highlights the common strategy employed in colonisation worldwide, wherein the removal of the narrative, artists, tohunga (priestly experts) and holders of knowledge is the first step to control Indigenous peoples. Takitimu emphasises the crucial role of artists, songwriters, composers, performers and rangatahi (youth) in reconnecting to Hawaiki (the Polynesian homeland) and the importance of their narratives and intergenerational knowledge transmission in shaping Māori identity (Takitimu, 2022). Understanding the architecture of colonisation is vital as Māori rebuild from 182 years of violence and assimilation, seeking reconnection to their ancestral roots and narratives to reclaim their cultural identity and heritage. The following list provides some visual observations of moko worn by Māori during early contact and colonialism.

Early Observations of Moko: From 1769 to 1890s, a number of European artists and explorers documented moko throughout Aotearoa (New Zealand), particularly after the arrival of Captain James Cook and subsequent voyages. Some of the prominent artists and documenters of moko from this period include:

1. **Sydney Parkinson** – The artist on Captain Cook's first voyage (1768-1771), Parkinson, being Joseph Banks' botanical artist, made visual records but did not delve deeply into the anthropological or ritual significance of moko. Focusing more on the visual aspects of the people and their surroundings (Parkinson, 1773).
2. **William Hodges** – Sailed with Cook on his second voyage (1772-1775). Hodges created visual depictions but also did not provide detailed anthropological commentary about moko as rites of passage.
3. **Louis Auguste de Sainson** – The artist on Jules Dumont d'Urville's expedition (1826-1829), created detailed illustrations of Māori tattooing practices, but de Sainson did not document moko as rites of passage.
4. **Augustus Earle** (1827) – Earle travelled through New Zealand and captured Māori life in several drawings, including representations of moko. While he noted the significance of moko in Māori society, his work did not extensively explore moko as rites of passage. His writings, however, did contribute to understanding the general cultural context of tattooing (Earle, 1827).
5. **Isaac Coates** – (1840s) Coates was an artist who lived in New Zealand and drew portraits of Māori chiefs with moko during this period. Coates did not document moko as rites of passage.
6. **George French Angas** – (1840s), an English artist and ethnologist who provided some anthropological notes in his works, giving insights into the cultural and spiritual significance of moko within Māori society. He observed that moko was a marker of status, lineage, and achievements (Angas, 1847).
7. **Joseph Jenner Merrett** – (1840s), was a painter who worked for Governor Grey, he resided in New Zealand, depicted Māori and their moko, often in the context of intertribal conflicts. Merrett did not provide commentary about his visual documentations.
8. **Charles Goldie** (late 1800s) – Famous for realistic portraits of Māori chiefs and elders, often showing moko in fine detail. Goldie did not provide written details about moko, rather he felt he was documenting the last members of a dying race.

9. **Gottfried Lindauer** – (late 1800s) Created highly detailed portraits of Māori individuals, capturing the intricate designs of moko. He didn't provide detailed written commentary on moko and its connection to rites of passage.
10. **Henry Ling Roth** – (1890s) A British anthropologist who conducted research on Māori culture, including moko. Roth's work, similar to Robley's, explored the cultural and ritualistic significance of moko, contributing to the broader understanding of its role in Māori society (Roth, 1902).
11. **Horatio Gordon Robley** – (1890s) British army officer and artist, his book *Moko: or Māori Tattooing* (1896) provided the most detailed anthropological information regarding moko, where he extensively discussed the cultural significance of moko, including its role in marking life stages, such as coming-of-age ceremonies for young men and women. He noted how moko signified the transition into adulthood and the responsibilities it entailed within Māori society. Known for his studies and sketches of moko and his large collection of preserved tattooed heads (Robley, 1998).
12. **Dumont D'Urville** – (1820s-1840s) A French explorer who documented Māori life, including moko, during his voyages in the Pacific. His observations contributed to European knowledge of Māori customs, though his focus was more on exploration and ethnography rather than in-depth studies of moko as rites of passage.

Hokohoko Upoko–The Trade in Heads: Colonisation not only altered the political and territorial landscape of Aotearoa, but it also brought with it an insidious fascination for moko kanohi. The European scientific expeditions, driven by an insatiable desire to 'collect' the exotic, epitomised this obsession. This was sparked by the first ever 'transaction' between Joseph Banks and a paramount chief, Kupaia in 1769-70. The sheer audacity of trading linen underwear for the preserved head of a young boy is not just an insight to the self-perceived superiority of Europeans and their goods but also a display of the European entitlement over Indigenous artifacts, bodies and cultures (Fennel & Ross, 2020; Paterson, 2021). Banks 'showing' his pistol as an 'incentive' to trade. This 'trade' set a dangerous precedent. The commodification of Māori tattooed heads as European 'curiosities' took the noble practice of moko out of its cultural context and thrust it into the realm of the exotic and the commercially valuable. The ramifications of this are numerous. From a socio-political perspective, leaders like, Pōmare and Hongi Hika in the north, and Te Rauparaha in the south, recognising the European desire, turned the trade into a strategy, exchanging heads for muskets. Whilst this gave the chiefs an upper hand in warfare, it catalysed an arms race, whereby other tribes felt

the urgent need to acquire muskets to contend with the growing threat of those tribes who had already acquired the musket, as well as the Crown's military. The implications of this were widespread, leading to inter-tribal conflicts and a destabilisation of the region (Gabel, 2012).

The commodification of moko kanohi during the colonial era represents a poignant example of the devastating impact of colonisation on the spiritual and cultural fabric of the Māori. The reduction of this ritualistic artform to a tradeable commodity not only desecrated the rituals but also revealed a broader strategy of undermining Māori mana motuhake. The far-reaching consequences of such actions continue to have an effect, reinforcing the imperative to restore and honour moko kanohi within the cultural landscape of Aotearoa today. Historical evidence of the strategic assault on Indigenous rites of passage by colonial forces, would give much perspective to many of our people and is a worthy inquiry. However, it's clear that England removed rituals and religious practices and intended to do so even with their first port of call, Ireland (Rahman, et al., 2017; Miller, 2018; Cormier, 2017). The implications of legislation like the 1907 Tohunga Suppression Act, which targeted traditional Māori healers and by extension, the rituals entwined with moko, point towards a broader colonial agenda to dismantle the pillars of Māori society. The healing traditions played a large role in the artform of moko, bringing the recipients back to health required the ritualistic gathering of plants, so it is fair to assume that these factors also played a role in the demise of the art form. This is important for Māori to understand, it underscores the fundamental importance of these rituals to the political, spiritual and psychological autonomy and wellbeing of the people they initiate. This episode underscores the generational impacts that colonisation had on the traditional Māori rites of passage. The trade represented the undermining of Māori rituals, customs and values. The tapu art of moko kanohi, which encapsulated a significant series of RoP, was reduced to a mere tradeable item. Over time, such colonial attitudes would contribute to the erasure of these ritual rites of passage. The following is evidence of such attitudes, Marsden says *"Tooi informed us that Korrokorro wished him to be tattooed. We told him that it was a very foolish and ridiculous custom; and, as he had seen so much of civilised life, he should now lay aside the barbarous customs of his country and adopt those of civilised nations"* (Ling Roth, 1901, p. 49).

Ngāti Awa Raupatu: Land Confiscation: For Ngāti Awa, two pivotal incidents precipitated the devastating loss of Mataatua lands, culture and language. The 1865 assassination of Reverend Carl Volkner resulted in an unjust blame placed on Ngāti Awa, primarily because of

their ties with the Pai Mārire religious followers from Taranaki. Chief Mokomoko from the Whakatōhea people was falsely charged alongside four others and was executed for Volkner's murder. Subsequently, Ngāti Awa leaders placed sanctions on their tribal territories, barring access to those affiliated with the government. The subsequent killing of government agent Hemi (James) Te Mautaranui Fulloon who violated these sanctions, lead the Government to confiscate almost 100,000 hectares of Mataatua lands. Such grievous losses deeply affected the mana and well-being of Ngāti Awa, branding them as 'tangata hara' (sinful people) and ushering in over a century of adversity (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, 1999). A visit by Apirana Ngata to the region evoked profound grief regarding the Ngāti Awa people, a sorrow stemming from enduring colonial impacts (Moko-Mead, 1999).

Pōhaturoa holds immense spiritual, physical and ancestral significance for Ngāti Awa. It is a sacred site where ceremonies of birth, death, war and other important matters were performed. It served as a place for rituals of initiation into manhood and the undertaking of tā moko. The Waiewe stream which now flows beneath Pōhaturoa was used to initiate these young warriors and baptismal rituals were performed for children of high rank. Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed by Ngāti Pukeko chiefs near Pōhaturoa on the 16th of June 1840 and each year on the same date, Ngāti Awa descendants commemorate the signing with a dawn ceremony. Albert Stewart led a local effort to save Pōhaturoa, as the borough council and chamber of commerce sought to remove it for road-building purposes (Haami, 1998). In 1920, Pōhaturoa became the official war memorial for the men who fell during World War I. The rich historical and cultural significance of Pōhaturoa makes it a deeply valued site for Ngāti Awa, a symbol of our ancestral heritage, especially in the context of moko as RoP.

The Tohunga Suppression Act 1907: Early Crown legislation in Aotearoa attempted to coexist with traditional Māori laws with the expectation that Māori would eventually assimilate into the western governance system. The Tohunga Suppression Act of 1907 aimed to outlaw tohunga from operating, although it was rarely enforced (Taonui, 2012). Only 12 individuals were ever arrested under the Act, with two of those being Pākehā. However, a re-examination of the Tohunga Suppression Act by Māmari Stephens (2001), reveals the historical context of the time. Māori health was in a dire condition and non-western trained medical practitioners were causing fatalities, leading to concerns over traditional tohunga ahurewa (high priests) performing in new situations and facing foreign diseases. There were suspicions towards both Pākehā and Māori spiritual faith healers, with hypnotism being viewed as "*millennial quackery*

by politicians," (p. 443) resulting in the arrest of the two Pākehā. Some argue that the Act was primarily intended for the prosecution of Rua Kenana, a Tūhoe spiritual leader deemed dangerous to European political dominance (ibid). At the time, newspapers sensationalised the 'tohunga craze' (Carrol, 1907), although Pākehā faith healers were also prominent. The Act reflects the complexity of the time, as various experiments and scientific developments influenced its creation.

Whakapākehātanga: New Zealand Education System: Traditional Māori methods of transferring knowledge and skills involved rituals marking educational progression. Education began in the womb through oriori (traditional lullabies) and birth rites dedicated children to specific deities and life paths. Access to traditional whare-wānanga was granted to those with sharp minds and acceptable lineages. Rituals of achievement marked students' progress and group learning and cooperative teaching were the norm, with extended family members playing crucial roles. In a society centred around tapu (religious restrictions), respect for tapu and knowledge of its operation were essential aspects of the education process. Oral culture relied on waiata (songs), whakataukī (proverbs), kōrero tawhito (history), pūrākau (stories) and whakapapa (genealogy) as essential educative tools to transmit the history of an iwi, as well as their values and behavioural models (Calman, 2022).

In 1816, Thomas Kendal established the first mission school in the North, followed by the establishment of many schools in the 1830s. Governor Grey introduced the Education Ordinance of 1847, aiming to assimilate Māori as a labour force for building the new colony (ibid). By the 1850s, Māori literacy rates reached about 50%. The prevailing belief at the time was that Māori should be turned into 'brown Britons'. Schools established under the Native Schools Act 1858 struggled to maintain momentum due to insufficient government funding. Native Schools from 1867 to 1969 reflected the British mentality that Māori were suited for manual labour. In 1894, schooling became compulsory for Māori, with the focus on English literacy and domestic skills. The 1930s saw the introduction of Māori arts into the curriculum, indicating a shift away from the 'hard-line assimilation agenda'. Post-war urbanisation and a rapidly growing Māori population led to the explosion of secondary education. The 1961 Hunn Report marked the final steps towards assimilating Māori into the integrated education system alongside Pākehā schools. Additionally, Māori church-based boarding schools aimed to prepare Māori for the agricultural industry, whilst Te Aute College produced prominent

academics such as Sir Māui Pōmare, Sir Apirana Ngata and Te Rangi Hiroa. The colonial view that Māori were suited for working-class occupations persisted well into the 20th century (ibid).

Whakaohoho: Political Awakenings: 1920 – 1970

This passage sheds light on the political context surrounding the resurgence of moko in Aotearoa. To understand how the art form and its rituals re-emerged in the Māori collective awareness, it is crucial to grasp the political advancements and challenges faced by leaders and activists during this period. Basil Keane's article titled 'Ngā Tau Tohetohe: Māori Protest Movements' (2012), outlines the long history of Māori protest. From Hone Heke's flagstaff-cutting incidents during colonial times to the Parihaka prophets' use of passive resistance and various Māori contingents taking petitions directly to the Monarch, the article highlights the persistent fight for rights. Notably, Ngā Tamatoa found a platform to voice their grievances during Waitangi Day celebrations, from which influential women warriors like Eva Rickard and Titewhai Harawira emerged. Whina Cooper, the inaugural president of the Māori Women's Welfare League, led the epic 'Hikoi to Parliament', culminating in the land rights movements and encompassing the Kīngitanga movement and Kotahitanga movement. Joe Hawkes' leadership during the 506-day occupation of Bastion Point marked a significant event when 800 police and military evicted over 200 occupiers from their ancestral lands. In 1987 Hawke took the Bastion Point claim to the Waitangi Tribunal, his claim was validated and the land was returned to the tribe (ibid).

During the period from 1860 to 1945, Māori land occupation significantly declined, leaving the community impoverished and vulnerable to diseases due to the loss of land and resources. The 1896 census reported a Māori population of 42,113 (Calman, 2022). Pākehā-introduced diseases combined with the impact of both World Wars further eroded the Māori language, which saw a drastic decline in speakers. By 1953, only 26% of Māori were fluent speakers, primarily because the political arena and media communications were dominated by the English language. Urbanisation also played a role as Māori moved away from the marae (ancestral complex) where the reo still held significance and daily use (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2023). Māori newspapers like Te Hōkioi, edited by Wiremu Pātara Te Tuhi, provided insights into politics and national events for Māori speakers. However, by 1975, only about five percent of Māori children could speak the reo, revealing the serious decline. Māori life expectancy was 15% lower than that of Europeans and unemployment rates were three

times higher. The Hunn report highlighted the significant under-representation of Māori at the university level (Calman, 2022).

Broader Scholarly Debates on Cultural Revitalisation: Cultural revitalisation is a complex and multi-layered response to colonisation, aiming to reclaim, restore, and renew cultural practices that colonial powers attempted to suppress. This thesis situates the revival of tā moko and its rituals within the global network of ongoing research and development, in both Western academia and oral traditions of Indigenous knowledge continuums. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's seminal work, "Decolonizing Methodologies" (2012), offers a critical theoretical framework for understanding cultural revitalisation as an act of resistance against ongoing colonial oppression. Smith emphasises the importance of "recuperating" and "reclaiming" Indigenous knowledge systems and traditions, which moko embodies, serving as a visible marker of Māori identity and mana motuhake. Grounding this discussion in Smith's framework allows us to position moko within a global resurgence of Indigenous cultural practices, asserting that artforms like moko reflect cultural revitalisation as a politically charged reclamation of identity.

The resurgence of moko can also be discussed alongside other Indigenous cultural revival movements. Comparative analyses with Native American, Sami, or Aboriginal Australian cultural revival efforts illustrate the global nature of Indigenous peoples' fight for cultural autonomy. For instance, in Sami communities, the revival of traditional clothing, joik (traditional song), and language parallels the Māori revitalisation of moko and te reo Māori, showing a shared aspiration for cultural autonomy and self-determination (Lehtola, 2015). Likewise, Native American scholars like Gerald Vizenor (2008) speak of "survivance"—the active presence of Indigenous culture in the face of colonial erasure, which mirrors Māori efforts to bring back traditional practices like moko and whaikōrero (oratory) as assertions of resilience and cultural persistence. These comparisons help to position moko within a broader framework of Indigenous revitalisation that emphasises not only identity but also rights to self-representation and cultural survival.

Furthermore, moko as a rite of passage must be understood within the theme of decolonisation. According to Jeff Corntassel (2012), decolonisation extends beyond reclaiming lost practices; it involves a deliberate process of rejecting colonial narratives and restoring Indigenous governance and knowledge. The moko revival exemplifies this process by restoring the practice's ceremonial, social, and personal significance, emphasising that moko is a part of the

Māori worldview and ontology. Theories of cultural resurgence thus stress that such practices are fundamental to Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies that are critical in resisting and transforming colonial ideologies.

Indigenous Rights and Legal/Political Contexts: To contextualise the revival of moko within the legal and political framework of Indigenous rights, we need to draw on Indigenous legal scholars like Moana Jackson, whose work on Māori autonomy and Indigenous legal philosophy asserts that cultural revitalisation must be inherently linked to the broader struggle for self-determination and political autonomy (Jackson, 2015). The resurgence of moko as a cultural and identity marker can be seen as a visual assertion of tino rangatiratanga (absolute self-determination), emphasising that the right to revive traditional practices is intrinsically tied to broader political and legal rights assured to Māori through Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Furthermore, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007) enshrines the right of Indigenous peoples to maintain, control and develop their cultural heritage and traditional practices. Article 11 affirms Indigenous peoples' rights to practice and revitalise their cultural traditions and customs, and Article 31 protects their right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, including their visual and performing arts. Situating the revival of moko within the context of UNDRIP frames it as a cultural expression and underscores its political dimension as a right recognised by international law (Lightfoot, 2016). This legal framing places the moko resurgence within a global rights-based discourse, aligning it with the international fight for cultural and political recognition for Indigenous peoples.

Contemporary Cultural Revival Projects and Theories: The cultural resurgence of moko should also be framed alongside other contemporary Māori cultural revival initiatives, such as Kōhanga Reo and the Kaupapa Māori education movement. Graham Smith (1997) has extensively written about Kaupapa Māori theory, which emphasises Māori-driven educational and social initiatives as a means of resisting assimilationist constructs. Similarly, the Kōhanga Reo movement, which aims at revitalising te reo Māori among younger generations, provides a framework for understanding how community-driven cultural projects contribute to broader aspirations of cultural self-determination. These initiatives are underpinned by the philosophy that cultural survival is fundamental to political and social empowerment, directly linking

language, education, and cultural practices like moko as forms of cultural resistance and revival (Smith, 2012).

Additionally, the resurgence of moko should be linked to scholarship on Indigenous mental health and community well-being. There is growing literature on the therapeutic effects of cultural engagement for Indigenous communities. Professor Mera Penehira's research highlights how the practice of moko serves as a form of healing, enhancing mental health and community resilience (Penehira, 2011). This aligns with recent studies indicating that cultural revitalisation activities contribute significantly to positive mental health outcomes, enhancing self-esteem, cultural pride, and a sense of belonging among Indigenous people (Gone, 2013). Such literature positions moko as an art form, an identity marker and as a significant component in Indigenous community well-being, providing a pathway for healing generational trauma

Moko Awakenings and Evidence of Moko as rites of passage: During the early 1900s, anthropological writings by European observers, such as Elsdon Best (1904), Percy Smith (1910), James Cowan (1943), Henry Ling Roth (1901) and Horatio Robley (1998), provided some insights into the traditional practice of tā moko. Though there is a risk of information being skewed, these writings have somewhat contributed to understanding this cultural art form. Sir Hirini Moko-Mead offered some information about Te Hokotahi, the Ngāti Patuheuheu tohunga tā moko of yester-year. In a handwritten note where Mead transcribed the information of Moetu Te Arawhita Mokohaerewa of Te Teko in 1949 he writes that,

“The group of women desirous of being tattooed were assembled and arranged in order of rank, supported of course by whakapapa tables, my informant was last in her lot, ‘being a stranger to the district.’ Much notice was taken of the dreams of the tohunga’s ‘patients’ prior to them being operated on. A dream of fire was a bad dream full of evil portents and considered a sign that the moko would not be completed, a dream of water gave a good omen. A person about to be done was accorded an arousing powhiri (similar to a powhiri for a manuhiri) by the women already tattooed. The actual tattooing was done at a spot next to the urupa at Kokohinau just beside the outside fence being handy to the urupa, it was no trouble to bury the blood” (H. Moko-Mead, personal communication, May 2023).

Te Ao Hou - Māori News Paper: ‘A Sign of Aristocracy’. This article describes the purpose of initiatory rites of passage very well, mentioning the notion of transitional markers from one role in society into another. The most obvious transition is that of childhood to adulthood, at puberty and although there is still no description of the actual process of those initiations, the acknowledgement of the use of moko as a transitional marker of importance in one’s life is a welcome find.

“Wearing a ‘moko’ was a way of showing that you had reached adulthood, for it was only at puberty that boys and girls were allowed to be tattooed. No girl of good birth was regarded as fit for marriage until this was done and until then no boy could consider himself a proper warrior, a person of some consequence in his village. So, they endured the pain stoically, sustained by their pride and by the knowledge that henceforth they were no longer children: they were men and women. In this way the ceremony of tattooing served as an initiation rite: as a sign of their transition from one role in society to a different role. All so-called ‘primitive’ societies had initiation rites of some kind. They served the purpose of bringing home to the boys and girls concerned and to their relatives and fellow villagers, a sense of the importance and finality of their change of status. Usually, as with the Māori, the initiation rites were accompanied by prayer and pain and by a permanent visible sign of their new place in society. We have said that boys and girls were not tattooed until adolescence and that their moko served as a sign that they were now adults. However, only a small amount of tattooing was done at one time; it was so very painful that it would have been quite impossible to do it all at once. This was particularly the case with men, who had so much more tattoo on their faces than women” (Orbell, 1963, p. 31).

There was a short-lived revival of tā moko during the land wars of the 1860s, as the old warrior class gave inspiration to the modern warrior dealing with the modern warfare technologies of Europe, but this didn’t endure (Sangl, 2020). The 1860s saw the last of the traditional moko kanohi performed on males, this was a clean break in the practice for males right up until the late 1970s a 110-year gap in the practice of male moko kanohi. The 1920-1930s witnessed a significant attempt at reviving the practice of moko kauae among women (King, 2008). Tohunga like Haimona Te Utupoto travelled the country to tattoo young women who had reached the age of maturity and were ready for marriage (Reweti, 2019). I have identified over 30 practitioners operating in this period, there is likely many more.

Tame Poata—From Ngāti Porou was a prolific tohunga, who played a significant role in continuing the practice and some ritual aspects for moko kauae in Te Tai Rāwhiti, Mataatua, Hauraki and Te Arawa regions. However, by the 1940s, the artform came to a halt, (Poata passed in 1942) and the misconception arose that only the elderly wore such traditional markings, despite most of the kuia receiving their markings whilst still young; there is a span of about 30 years where it seems no kauae was being tattooed on anyone, so that by the time Michael King travelled the nation in search of the remaining kuia who still wore the kauae, it seemed that the artform would cease (Higgins, 2013; King, 2008).

Into Antiquity: A Memory of the Māori Moko: Ngahuia Hona for example, was 105 years old at the time of this documentary, Ngā Kahikatea Wirihana was 118 years old and was the oldest Māori alive at the time. She was tattooed to commemorate the death of the daughter of King Mahuta who passed in her arms; she was 20 years old at the time. These kuia held an important place in Māori culture and were considered the last remnants of the full-blooded Māori. The film acknowledged that much of the Māori cultural heritage would disappear with their passing (Zambucka & Reynolds, 1972).

Te Kuia Moko: Harry Sangl noted that tattooing on men's faces ceased after 1865, as the last tattooed man died in 1920. In contrast, tattooing on women's lips and chins became a symbol of identity and emphasised the social importance of their families. Overall, the practice of tā moko served as RoP, marking significant transitions from childhood to adulthood and highlighting the social importance of individuals within Māori society. Despite periods of decline and revival, tā moko remains an iconic cultural expression for the Māori community. As can be observed from these women who received their kauae through this period of history, their process was mostly undertaken around puberty and marriage. What should be noted about this process, is that the decision making about these undertakings were predominantly made by the whānau and hapū (Sangl, 2020).

Mark Kopua relayed to me a story about this point where a Pākehā woman married into a Māori whānau in Ruatoria, moving there as her family disowned her for falling in love with a Māori. Her husband had then been drafted into World War I, leaving her pregnant. Sadly, he died overseas but she remained as a member of the whānau and in the later years of her life after raising many whāngai children as her own, his whānau and kaumātua insisted on giving her a kauae, of which Tame Poata did complete for her. The point of this recollection from Mark

serves to highlight that the decision-making power lay with the collective, the hapū and whānau (M. Kopua, personal communication, August 2023). It is my assertion that this tikanga plays a significant role in the sense of belonging afforded to those undergoing moko kanohi.

Whakahaumanu: Māori Renaissance 1970 – 2010

This period in New Zealand's history can be seen as a time when the cultural revitalisation efforts initiated during the awakening's era began to bear fruit, both in the realm of moko and Māori politics. The political environment of this period saw significant developments in the promotion and protection of Māori rights and cultural identity.

Political Environment: The early 1970s witnessed the revitalisation of te reo Māori (language) with the Reo Māori Petition, which garnered over 30,000 signatures and was presented to Parliament by Hana Te Hemara and many prominent Māori activists that comprised the Ngā Tamatoa activist group (Keane, 2012). Creative arts institutions, such as Toi Māori, were established and the Te Māori exhibition, organised by Sir Hirini Moko-Mead, played a crucial role in reshaping the attitudes of the new Māori generation toward their cultural heritage (Royal, 2005). During this time, Māori communities protested for their cultural rights and demanded government recognition and support. The establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 marked a significant step forward in addressing historical grievances and initiatives like Kohanga Reo and Mātua Whāngai were introduced to promote Māori language and culture (Calman, 2022). The historical Māori land march to Parliament led by Dame Whina Cooper in 1975 is now considered a defining moment in Māori self-determination, with increasing numbers of Māori leaders taking up roles in political affairs by 1980 (Derby, 2021).

In 1985, the state restructured, partially in response to Māori demands for greater autonomy, while others argued that this further marginalised Māori by reducing government involvement (ibid). The influence of modern economics from the new right, inspired by figures like Roger Douglas, led to a separation of the economy from the state, bringing New Zealand once again under the global spotlight as a 'social laboratory' (Phillips, 2014). During this period, Māori movements were influenced by global movements like the Black Power movement in the United States and decolonisation movements in Africa and Asia. Emerging thinkers, such as Ranginui Walker, Moana Jackson and Donna Awatere, became influential advocates for Māori issues and thinking. Māori academic and political leaders gained momentum and higher

education for Māori became increasingly normalised (Calman, 2022). Kaupapa Māori Theory, developed by Hingangaroa and Linda Smith, offered a new horizon for Māori academia, encouraging Māori to pursue higher knowledge through frameworks that reflected a Māori worldview and encouraged a 'ringa raupā' (hands on) approach to research (Smith, 1997).

This approach contrasted with the Western method, which demanded objectivity and detachment from the subject matter for legitimate outcomes. Furthermore, modern whare-wānanga (Māori tertiary institutions) were established during this era. Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, founded in 1983 by Rongo Wetere and Māori studies teacher Iwi Kohuru Mangu, played a pivotal role. In 1992, through the efforts of Sir Hirini Moko-Mead, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi was established and in 1993, Te Whare Wānanga o Raukawa was recognised as a wānanga by the Crown, both of which contributed to Māori academic process. Throughout the Māori renaissance, the emphasis on cultural identity, language revitalisation and academic achievements signalled a growing awareness and pride in Māori heritage, setting the stage for continued cultural resurgence and political empowerment (Keane, 2012).

Sir Hirini Moko Mead's Contributions to Māori Art: Mead's exemplary scholarship is instrumental in contextualising the revitalisation of moko within the broader discourse of Māori cultural identity, mana motuhake (self-determination) and the continuity of traditional art forms. His contributions are particularly celebrated among Ngāti Awa, especially for his pivotal roles in organising the 1984-87 Te Māori Exhibition, the establishment of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and the repatriation of the Ngāti Awa ancestral house, Mataatua, after its century-long sojourn through Europe and the South Island. Mead's critical explorations have been foundational in defining what constitutes Māori art. Building on the legacy of Sir Apirana Ngata, who laid the groundwork for the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute in Rotorua, Mead emphasises the importance of returning to traditional artforms. He posits:

"If we think for a moment about the integrity of Māori art, its wairua (spirit), ihi (psychic force), wehi (awe), and wana (exhilaration), and if we pause to think about the distinctiveness of our art, then it follows that it is necessary always to go back to traditional arts, to the traditions, to the very foundations of our culture, to the meaningful symbols, to the prime works of art created by our ancestors."

(Mead, 1996b, p. 4).

This assertion emphasises that understanding moko as a cultural practice requires recognising its synergetic connections to these foundational elements. Mead's extensive body of work has examined every aspect of Māori art, including funding, politics, cross-cultural comparisons, appropriation, economics, the roles of critics, observers and commentators, intellectual property rights, traditional versus contemporary dynamics, and the social role of traditional art forms as a tool for inspiration amidst the impacts of colonisation. His comprehensive body of work provides a robust framework for understanding the resurgence of moko, ensuring it is recognised as a valid art form rooted in the traditional practice of uhi—bone chisel tattooing—and also as a powerful symbol of cultural autonomy, resistance and resilience.

Mead's leadership in facilitating the Te Māori exhibition was significant in shaping the discourse on Māori cultural heritage, particularly regarding the authority and responsibility over taonga (cultural treasures). The exhibition itself was a powerful statement of Māori ownership, guardianship, and authority over our cultural heritage. This assertion of mana taonga—the authority and responsibility over cultural treasures—was a central theme of the exhibition's success and became a key framework in ongoing discussions of cultural autonomy. Te Māori was a significant milestone in asserting Māori control over our cultural artifacts, which arguably laid the groundwork for the principle of mana taonga, which was later institutionalised by The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in the early 1990s. Furthermore, Mead's advocacy for Māori cultural integrity, particularly through Te Māori, reinforced the idea that taonga are imbued with mana (spiritual authority) that connects them to their people and their ancestors. This perspective laid the groundwork for understanding moko and other forms of Māori art as manifestations of cultural autonomy and resistance against colonisation. Reflecting on the exhibition's impact, Meade noted, "*Undoubtedly, 'Te Maori' [sic] has made a significant contribution to our own perceptions of ourselves and hence has helped raise our self-esteem as a people*" (Mead, 1996a, p. 27).

Tā Hirini Moko Mead also provided us as Māori artists with a role model to fight the hard battles of reclamation in the face of the government's marginalisation and suppression of things Māori and access to funding. Establishing Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, while Ngāti Awa had no financial base to do so, required a determination and a set of values that enabled him to take action in spite of seeming impossible odds. Mead reflects on this idea with regard to Māori artists, he states:

"Māori Artists appear to ignore government policy. Throughout this period of rapid change (1970s-90s), the impression I have is that our artists have continued to create, to produce, to hold exhibitions, to direct some of the changes that are occurring to revive such arts as moko and raranga, to mount huge competitive events such as The Aotearoa Performing Arts Festival, to hold workshops on a variety of topics, to participate in new developments such as the new National Museum, and so on. The creative impulse of the culture remains strong. It appears to me that our artists were not deterred by changes in Government policies, and that such policies seemed to be irrelevant to their work. Or is it that artists have become astute in accessing funds from other sources, are adaptable survivors and are, in fact, in front of the fund seeking pack? " (p. 2)

Moko as a Tool for Cultural Continuity and Resistance: Mead's reflections on the role of the arts in cultural continuity despite lack of funding, provides another essential angle for contextualising the current revival of moko. His writings suggest the importance of cultural practices as a way of resisting assimilation and maintaining a distinct Māori identity (Mead, 1997). Moko kanohi, in this regard, is considered by many who adorn the facial markings as a symbol and a tool of resistance. Mead's work highlights how such traditions, when revived, can serve as powerful acts of decolonisation, enabling Māori to reclaim cultural spaces and redefine themselves outside of colonial impositions (Mead, 1997). The resurgence of tā moko aligns with Mead's broader call for cultural preservation within the Ngāti Awa community. For Ngāti Awa, who have faced historical land confiscations and the suppression of cultural practices, the revival of moko symbolises resilience, resistance and cultural regeneration. The practice is a deliberate act of reclaiming what was nearly lost—aligning with broader decolonising movements seen globally in other Indigenous communities, such as the Sami in Scandinavia or Native American tribes in the United States, where cultural expressions are being actively revived as a form of resistance and reclamation of cultural self-determination (Kuokkanen, 2007).

Interconnectedness of Māori Art Forms: Expanding on Mead's emphasis on the interconnectedness of Māori art forms, moko can be viewed as a part of a larger cultural ecosystem that includes other traditional practices such as *whakairo* (carving), *raranga* (weaving), and *kapa haka* (performing arts). Mead (1997) often emphasises that Māori art cannot be understood in isolation—it is deeply intertwined with the social, spiritual, and

environmental aspects of life. The interconnected nature of these art forms is reflected in the motifs and symbols shared across different mediums, as well as the cultural protocols and rituals that guide their practice. By positioning moko within this broader artistic framework, it becomes apparent that moko, beyond being an individual expression, is also about the transmission of cultural knowledge, rituals, values, and identity. Tā moko embodies the same symbols found in carvings on wharehau (meeting houses) and the patterns in woven cloaks—each tells a part of the story of the people, their land, and their lineage. Sir Hirini Moko Mead’s scholarship and activism in the field of the arts significantly enriches the understanding of the practice of moko as a form of cultural revitalisation and resistance. The concepts of mana taonga, cultural assessment frameworks, and the role of moko as a symbol of resilience offer a robust framework for understanding moko beyond aesthetics—it is an assertion of identity, cultural integrity, and mana motuhake.

The Renaissance of Moko: By the late 90s Māori culture is well and truly in the process of revitalisation, where national events like the Matatini kapa haka competitions carried many of the cultural artforms of Māori culture such as mau rākau (Māori weaponry), traditional garment making, traditional forms of waiata (songs) like mōteatea (lamentations), oriori (lullabies) and taonga puoro (traditional musical instruments). Māori arts were also escalating through schools like the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute in Rotorua established in 1963 and Toi Houkura, the school of Māori Visual Arts, established in 1990 by Ivan Ehu under Tairāwhiti Polytechnic. These revitalisations of Māori culture certainly laid a foundation for the emergence of a new wave of Māori tā moko artists. The first-generation revivalists included leaders in the arts like recently knighted Tā Derek Lardelli and Mark Kopua of Te Tai Rāwhiti, Riki Manuel from Te Wai Pounamu, Rangi Kipa of Taranaki, Julie Pengelly-Palmer of Tauranga, Gordon Toi from the Hokianga, Hemi Te Peeti from the Manawatū and Kaihoro Nicholas of Te Arawa. Te Uhi a Mataora was established in 2000 by Toi Māori under Tā Ahorangi Derek Lardelli, with the mandate to “*preserve, enhance and develop tā moko as a living art form that upholds the traditions of the past*” (2021). Projects like the Māori Markings Tā Moko Exhibition at the National Gallery in Canberra, Australia in (2019), highlights the strength and intentionality of Te Uhi a Mataora in giving vision and a place of belonging for the future of the art form.

Moko: Māori tattooing in the 20th century: Michael King's 1972 book gives a great glimpse into the lives of the remaining kuia living at the time of its publication by offering many stories from the kuia themselves regarding their receiving of the kauae moko. King gives some insights into the rites of passage of moko kauae, where the women of that era were undertaking the process to ritually mark their availability for marriage or, in other cases, as a part of their marriage process. King quotes the son of Tame Poata, Tom, regarding the attitudes towards the ritual process of moko in that period.

"When Tame would arrive at a community to do his mahi, he would choose a room that could be closed off completely, clear all the people out and whakatapu the space before mahi the next day. This process involved closing the doors and windows, sprinkling water about and chanting karakia. The next day, the selected women would come to the room, usually singly and lie down on mattresses... his tattooing process could take up to two hours and he often chanted karakia while he did so. These karakia would date back to traditional times. Sometimes he would sing oriori or lullabies as if singing a baby to sleep" (King, 2008, pp. 55-56).

When Tame Poata died in 1942, only one other artist was doing moko regularly (ibid). Ngākau, a Waikato elder, lived at Ōwairaka Pā near Parawera and tattooed from the 1920s until his death in the 1940s. Mehana Eru of Rotorua was instructed by Ngākau and remembers his technique. It was like that of Poata, although he did not perform any traditional Māori ritual. *"He didn't do any karakia. This had passed away with the olden times. But I did hear him ask the women in a formal sort of way 'Are you willing to take the moko and are you able to bear the pain?' "* (p. 58). Here we have some clear evidence that moko was treated ritualistically or at least understood to have been a ritualistic process by the tohunga moko of this period. One thing was assured, women were never tattooed before puberty. Tom Porter quoted his father saying,

"if you're old enough to be married you're old enough to be tattooed. Indeed, in the early days of the century, the practice still seemed to be regarded as something of an initiation ceremony indicating that a girl was ready to adopt the responsibilities of womanhood and to establish a family of their own". Again, he states that, "In some respects, the taking of 'moko' up to the 1920s was akin to an initiation ceremony. It was a mark of adulthood, an indication that women were able to beat pain and ready to take on responsibilities, domestic and public." (p. 85)

Moko as a Marker of Identity: Moko has been intricately linked with the identity of Māori throughout history. King emphasises this connection, asserting that moko fundamentally embodies Māori identity (2008). This sentiment is echoed in James Cowan's recounting of his conversation with Netana Whakaari of Waimana in 1921. The poignant reflection of Netana captures the inalienable bond between moko and its bearer: *"You may lose your valuable possessions or treasured relationships, but your 'moko' remains, a steadfast companion until the end."* (p. 83) Historical records further underscore the depth of this connection. Samuel Marsden's account from 1822 depicts a Māori named 'Tooi' (Tui) being persuaded by his brother to adopt a moko. Tooi was cautioned that he would be perceived as lacking masculinity and might be stripped of his social standing otherwise. Similarly, Dumont D'urville's 1827 interaction with 'Tuai' shed light on the exclusivity of certain moko designs, reserved for specific families. King highlights the intimate relationship between moko and warfare, with warriors often acquiring additional tattoos as badges of honour, signifying their valour in battle.

The resurgence of moko during the Māori-Pākehā conflicts of the 1840s and 1860s further evidences its deep-rooted cultural significance. Some of the last individuals to receive moko kanohi were adherents of the Pai Mārire faith, one of whom mentioned that King Tāwhiao had urged his young men to embrace the moko and the ancestral customs it represented (King, 2008).

Recent explorations by young scholars like Michaela Hart (2019), reiterate the continued relevance of moko kanohi in contemporary times, emphasising its dual role as a spiritual guide and a declaration of mana motuhake. Additionally, Ngahuia Te Awekotuku offers an invaluable perspective on the modern interplay of moko and identity in an article entitled "Tā Moko: Culture, body modification and the psychology of identity" (2003). She delves into the complexities of identity formation through moko kanohi. Ngahuia concludes her article with the statement *"For Māori, subjecting the body to such trauma is more than the recognition of adulthood and self; it is the proclamation of that self as belonging - to a particular descent line, family or kinship network, to a special and unique group, to a community. It is about being Māori in today's world and creating a visibility that will never ever fade into the tomorrow."* (p. 126) Moko was also used by chiefs during the colonial period as signatures of identification on legal documents like The Declaration of Independence 1835 and Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840. This reveals the utmost importance given to their facial markings, considered sacred because the head was known to be the most sacred part of the human body (Department of Internal

Affairs, 2017; Ellis, 2014). In summary, the role of moko as an indelible marker of Māori identity remains unquestionable, relaying sentiments of mana motuhake, spiritual connectivity and social belonging. These references emphasise the significant persistence of moko to Māori identity, serving as a canvas for historical memory, political resistance and cultural identity.

He Tānga Ngutu, he Tūhoetanga te Mana Motuhake o te Tā Moko Wahine. The Identity Politics of Moko Kauae: is a comprehensive doctoral thesis penned by Rawinia Higgins. Her work delves into the fundamental Māori philosophical concepts of tapu (restriction) and mana (power or authority). She illustrates how these concepts are intertwined, with mana tracing its roots to atua (gods), the primal source. The various facets of mana, including mana atua (godly power), mana whenua (jurisdiction), mana tangata (human authority) and mana motuhake (independent authority), are symbiotic, drawing from the overarching power of ngā atua (the gods). Higgins addresses the contemporary renaissance movement's adaptation of moko kauae customs, which allows women to proudly wear moko kauae. From her research, Higgins found that women perceive their moko as emblematic of both their mana as Māori women and their identity. This not only reinforces an individual's connection to their lineage and land but also stands as a resolute act of reclaiming a historical symbol for modern identity and future generations (Higgins, 2004).

Ngahuia Te Awekotuku – Moko as Cultural Resurgence and Pathways to Transformation: The numerous writings of Te Awekotuku have made a significant contribution to academic research which has deepened our understanding of tā moko as both a cultural expression and an assertion of identity and mana motuhake. While her scholarship addresses the emotional, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of moko, she does not directly frame it within the context of rites of passage. However, her research provides valuable insights into moko as a transformative practice that aligns with the themes of life transitions, identity formation, and cultural resurgence.

In 'Moko Māori: An Understanding of Pain' (2012), Te Awekotuku highlights the physical endurance required for moko, emphasising how pain becomes a transformative process that reinforces both personal identity and collective belonging. She describes moko as a symbol of resilience and a means of reclaiming mana in the face of colonial oppression. Although she does not explicitly frame moko as a rite of passage, her analysis of pain and transformation draws clear parallels to Indigenous initiation ceremonies, where the process of enduring

hardship marks an individual's transition into a new social or spiritual role. Her earlier work, 'More Than Skin Deep: Tā Moko Today' (2002), discusses the cultural resurgence of moko and its significance as an act of cultural reclamation. She emphasises that the colonial disruption of moko practices stripped Māori of a vital means of expressing identity and social status. In this context, moko historically marked milestones and transitions—a practice that Te Awēkotuku acknowledges is being reclaimed by contemporary Māori as a way to assert their *mana motuhake* and identity. In 'Mata Ora: Chiselling the Living Face – Dimensions of Māori Tattoo' (2006), Te Awēkotuku explores the decline of moko during colonisation and the revival of moko *kanohi* (facial tattoo) as a symbol of cultural resilience. She identifies moko as an expression of resistance against colonial erasure and as a living, evolving art form that continues to carry deep cultural narratives. This chapter highlights the contemporary relevance of moko, particularly as a political statement of identity, her focus here leans towards moko as a symbol of cultural survival and ongoing decolonisation.

In her collaboration with Nicholas in 'Uhi Tā Moko – Designs Carved in Skin' (2005), Te Awēkotuku examines moko from both aesthetic and narrative perspectives, framing it as a storytelling tool that communicates *whakapapa* (genealogy), status, and identity. This work reinforces the importance of moko as cultural memory, where the themes of identity, belonging, and transformation are central, which are all key elements of traditional rites of passage. Her article 'Wearing Moko – Māori Facial Marking in Today's World' (2005) discusses the normalisation of moko in contemporary society and its role in challenging colonial stigmas. Here, she emphasises how moko—particularly moko *kanohi*—is becoming increasingly visible in professional and public spaces, signalling cultural pride and resistance. This normalisation can be seen as a modern rite of passage, as individuals publicly assert their identity through moko, often marking personal milestones such as academic achievements, leadership roles, or cultural commitments.

Her work also touches on issues of cultural integrity and authenticity in reclaiming moko practices. In 'He Maimai Aroha: A Disgusting Traffic for Collectors' (2004), Te Awēkotuku critiques the colonial commodification of moko, particularly the trade in preserved Māori heads (*toi moko*), and stresses the importance of restoring cultural protocols in the practice of moko. Her emphasis on *tikanga* (Māori protocols) aligns with the notion that moko carries deep spiritual and cultural responsibilities, suggesting that the process of receiving moko should be treated with the same sacredness as traditional rituals. The research of Te Awēkotuku covers

a wide spectrum of the historical and contemporary significance of moko, there is limited direct engagement with the idea of moko as a series of formal rites of passage across life stages in the way that moko was traditionally used in initiatory rituals, such as coming of age, marriage, leadership roles, and mourning. Instead, her work offers a framework for understanding moko as a transformative practice that continues to carry cultural, emotional, and spiritual significance.

In summary, the research of Ngahuia Te Awekotuku provides critical insights into the revival of moko, emphasising its role in identity formation, cultural resilience, and resistance to colonial oppression. Her work addresses the symbolic power of moko as an embodiment of mana and cultural sovereignty, but like all the other researchers on tā moko, there remains a gap in explicitly linking moko to traditional rites of passage.

The Modern Adoption of Moko into Subcultures: In the early 70s, the gang culture in New Zealand began incorporating traditional looking moko kanohi with gang markings, this ‘hybrid’ form of moko was adopted by the gangs as a way of openly declaring their Māori heritage whilst making a statement of resistance (Smale, 2008). Gangs can be seen as a colonial product affected upon the Māori culture, many members of these organisations joined the gangs as an escape from the violence experienced at home and from within the welfare state of the government, where many young men and women were abused whilst under state care.

Newbold and Taonui offer a well-researched reason for the formation of gangs in history, stating that *“The modern gang is often linked to urban poverty and social exclusion on the basis of class, religion or ethnicity. Gangs usually form among groups of young men who lead otherwise uneventful lives, but are denied decent job prospects, have poor parental role models and have lacked structured adult involvement during their developmental years”* (2018, p. 1). I would extend on this by positing a theory that the diminishing rituals for RoP over generations significantly impacted the mental health of Māori, contributing to identity crises. This crisis further intensified the allure of gang affiliation, suggesting that a sense of belonging and identity, which was traditionally achieved through rituals like moko, has been sought after in gangs (Pinnock & Douglas-Hamilton, 1997).

The New Look of The Olden Days: Tanith Wirihana (2020) quotes Ms J.D. Jones from Waimiha when asked about why she received the moko kauae. *“Someone told [us that we] must retain the ways of Māoridom – moko was one way of doing it”*. He goes on to say, *“Tā moko can perhaps in this context be seen as one of the many ways that Māori rebelled against colonisation. Māori were brought into Pākehā society on Pākehā terms under the policies of racial assimilation expounded by Governor Grey and enshrined as a policy objective by consequent New Zealand Governments. At that time moko can be seen as a form of maintaining the Māori identity through a form of passive and nonviolent resistance.”* (para. 4)

Moko: Māori Tattoo: Hans Nelemen’s photographic book (1999), displays many modern moko wearers of that time from both the gangs and ‘The Dread’, a Rastafarian subculture from the Ruatoria area of the East Coast of New Zealand, where a small community of Māori adopted the Rastafarian faith and began to fuse traditional moko with symbols from the Rastafarian religion for reasons of identifying to the faith and to the tuakana (eldest) status of Mataora to that of Adam of Genesis (N. Reuben, personal communication, June 30, 2022). Providing an outsider’s perspective, Dave Robinson (2013), a Jamaican-born Englishman, captures a sentiment from Te Ahi, a Rastafarian moko artist: those without a tā moko can’t claim full commitment to the Rastafarian faith, *“If they ain’t got one of these [tā moko] on, then don’t trust them.”* (p. 187) Andrea, one of the ‘Dread’ shares her perspective on this period. *“It was a hard journey as no one understood our methodology. We came from all walks of life to find our common ground through Rastafari–Jah, without HIM [sic] there would be no culture; our Māoritanga. We were hated, hunted, persecuted for HIS [sic] name’s sake. Nowadays persecution has dwindled as the purpose of what we did was to revive the moko which was a dying culture. We fought for our whenua that was stolen by missionaries, we rebuked the tohunga suppression act, we were outcasts amongst our own and hated for what we adorned.”* (A. Heeney, personal communication, May 2024).

Despite the challenges, these Māori subcultures arguably pioneered the resurgence of modern moko, fearlessly embracing the art amidst both Māori and Pākehā judgements. Their audacity triggered reactions from activists such as Tame Iti from the Tūhoe nation. In a conversation with Moana Maniapoto (2021), Iti expressed his motivation to adorn moko as a counter-response to the gangs’ adoption of moko. He viewed moko as a cultural inheritance, akin to mōteatea (traditional Māori song). Through the influence of Iti, the younger Tūhoe generation embraced moko once more. Te Kani a Takirau Poata, the son of Tame Poata, stated in another

interview with Moana, *"It was Tame Iti who credited the gangs for keeping the notion of the moko alive. While their designs diverged from traditional patterns, the underlying idea of skin as a canvas for personal narratives remained a quintessential Māori expression"* (Maniapoto, 2018). This movement galvanised contemporary Māori artists, prompting many of our prominent figures to transition from whakairo (carving) to tā moko. In recognition of this renaissance, the national collective Te Uhi a Mataora was established in 2000.

Whakamāori: Normalisation 2010 – 2024

Ngōku whakaaro – hei maumaharatanga. Māori women facial adornment: A mark of remembrance: Dr Linda Waimarie Nikora and Hera White's (2008) publication provides a historical context for the plight of moko through colonisation, serving as a preface to a significant landmark occurrence for modern Māori. In 2006, sixteen women received moko kauae to commemorate the passing of Te Arikini Te Atairangikaahu and the ascendancy of her son Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII, during a first of its kind gathering at Tūrangawaewae, called Mokopapa. The late Te Atairangikaahu had long championed moko kauae, hosting a gathering for the remaining kuia mau moko (elder women who wore moko kauae) in the 1970s. The authors also draw parallels to Ngakahikatea Whirihana, who like wise received her kauae in the late 1890s at the passing of the daughter of King Mahuta, demonstrating the ongoing connection between moko kauae and significant life transitions within the Kīngitanga.

The book documents the personal journeys of the women who received the moko kauae on that day, sharing their stories in their own words. It also explores some of the cultural, legal and social issues that emerged during of the gathering, such as cultural and intellectual property rights—for example, who owns the concept of mokopapa, and who decides the designs worn by recipients. Questions around permission and cultural authority were raised: Is it acceptable to receive ancestral designs? Who should be consulted before receiving moko? Issues around documentation and photography were also debated, raising concerns about who has the right to capture and share these images. The book further addresses cultural and community capital, discussing the value placed on fluency in te reo Māori, ritual practices, carving, and oratory skills, and exploring who has the right to benefit from these elements of Māori culture. Interestingly, the book recounts how one of the ruruhi (elder women) chose to withdraw from receiving her moko to appease her son, who disapproved. Conversely, two other

women proceeded despite objections from their daughters, who initially felt it was presumptuous for their mothers to undertake this rite. However, both daughters ultimately offered their support after witnessing the transformative power of the ceremony. I will conclude with a quote from the book, it beautifully acknowledges the elements of the rite of passage that this mokopapa afforded these ruruhi:

“These days, people take moko for a wide range of reasons: to mark events in their lives (birthdays, going overseas, leaving home, having children); to celebrate achievements (leaving school, graduating university, winning a place in a sports team); to commit to certain pathways (to being drug free; to upholding Māori life ways); or to simply celebrate the artform as Māori art on Māori skin.” (pp. 6-7)

This period of the revival of moko birthed a new phenomenon in its modern capacity, mokopapa, which are tribal gatherings typically on ancestral marae where the people gathered to receive and wānanga about moko kanohi specifically. This was brought about by Lardelli and Kopua as a way of bringing the practice of moko kanohi back into the collective experience of modern Māori culture. It was also intended to differentiate from other wānanga moko that were happening around the nation where non-kanohi markings were being undertaken (Cooper, 2022). These mokopapa are currently exploding amongst Māori communities all over the nation and are a sure sign that moko kanohi is very quickly returning to a state of normalisation in society. There are dozens of mainstream and Māori media news stories covering a wide range of issues relating to the wearing of moko kanohi in modern society, Newshub’s story covering three generations of a Kāi Tahu whānau receiving kauae (2022) and Sally Anderson’s controversial story (Stuff.co.nz, 2018) on a Pākehā woman who was gifted kauae by her husband’s whānau, showcases media attention to moko politics.

For Ngāti Awa, Joe Harawira has taken an active role in organising and running mokopapa throughout the tribal region, where he brings his expertise as a storyteller to the ceremonial space of mokopapa. Moko kanohi is now being performed on Māori living away from Aotearoa in Australia, where the latest leg of the expansive history of Māori migration has arrived. I am currently residing in Queensland’s Gold Coast area where the largest population of Māori outside of Aotearoa lives and the prevalence of moko kanohi here both male and female is growing steadily amidst a strong cultural presence from the Māori diaspora.

Modern Politics: In 2018 and 2021 respectively, two significant events occurred when Sergeant Whiti Timutimu of Tūhoe, Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou was the first female officer to adorn moko kauae in the New Zealand Police (NZP) (Te Kani, 2018) and Senior Constable Brenda Lee became the first woman to receive moko kauae in the Queensland Police Service (QPS). Both the NZP and QPS embraced their journeys respectfully. For Whiti, the support came as a welcome surprise and while working in Auckland's women's prison she acknowledges how moko kauae *"removes barriers...People do treat you differently. There is another level of respect"*(ibid). While for Brenda, QPS acknowledged the unique experience she brings to her role as a Māori, a woman, a parent and a grandparent and her strong link to the community (2021). However, the resurgence of moko kanohi in contemporary society has also brought forth modern ethical and political issues. There have been news stories recounting instances where individuals with traditional facial markings have faced exclusion from social venues, such as bars and restaurants, both in Aotearoa and Australia including Gary Harding's encounter at a restaurant in Melbourne (Johnsen, 2019). This discrimination has often occurred as traditional markings were wrongly associated with gang markings, allowing establishments to justify their exclusionary policies. There remains a small sector of Pākehā New Zealanders who continue to attack and belittle this ancestral treasure especially on social media platforms, but it is quickly being confronted by Māori and Pākehā as it occurs.

Moko Kanohi in Parliament: Moko kanohi made its way into the halls of Parliament for the first time in 2016 when Nanaia Mahuta received her kauae at a mokopapa at Tūrangawaewae. Stuff journalist Rosanna Price stated *"the 'positive statement of self-identity' has shattered ceilings outside of Parliament - Mahuta pointed to Judge Caren Fox in the judiciary who has a moko as does Te Rita Papesch on the academic scene"* (Price, 2016). Mahuta taking the kauae in commemoration of her 20 years of service in politics, 15 years since the death of her father Sir Robert Mahuta and 20 years since he negotiated his first Tiriti Settlement. The occasion caught the attention of many international mainstream media stories and press releases including the Guardian (2016) and Al-Jazeera (2021). Since then, there have been a handful of others including Heather Te Au-Skipworth, Rawiri Waititi, Takutai Tarsh Kemp and Mariameno Kapa-Kingi. Oriini Kaipara who anchors mainstream television news is also a significant indicator of the acceptance of moko kanohi on the frontline stage of our modern society.

Moko as a Wellbeing Strategy: The doctoral thesis of Professor Mera Penehira (2011), centres on the healing potential of moko and addresses the prevailing negative perceptions associated with it, especially within New Zealand society. The thesis highlights how facial tattoos challenge prevailing social norms and dominant ethnic identities whilst asserting the continued existence and resistance of Māori. Moko is viewed as a powerful symbol of survival, pride, femininity, beauty and non-dominant ethnic identity, which questions hegemony and presents alternative ways of viewing and being, thereby becoming an acute political statement. Overall, the resurgence of moko kanohi in modern society has sparked important discussions around cultural identity, acceptance and decolonisation. As more individuals in prominent positions embrace traditional facial markings, the journey towards greater understanding and respect for Māori cultural practices and values continues.

Moko as Healer: In her exploration of moko as a healing intervention, Penehira focuses on the impact of traditional knowledge and healing practices on the wellbeing of Māori women affected by the Hepatitis C virus (HCV). She argues that cultural frameworks and practices, including tā moko, have significant restorative, therapeutic and healing values that are yet to be fully understood or researched by the health field. Penehira introduces the concept of Mana Kaitiakitanga, a Māori framework of wellbeing that naturally aligns with tā moko as a healing intervention. This framework comprises seven elements, all of which constitute wellbeing from a Māori paradigm (2011). Penehira emphasises that while the process of tā moko involves pain and blood, it leads to a deeper understanding, a reconnection to inner strength and a sense of identity. She views the pain as a pathway to joy and asserts that marking through tā moko symbolises one's history, identity and potential for wellness. Drawing on Mason Durie's work, she highlights the negative effects of colonisation on Māori health due to loss of identity, land and culture. However, she sees moko as a positive spiritual experience that aids individuals in reclaiming their identity and mana motuhake, contributing significantly to their wellbeing.

The work of tattoo anthropologist Lars Krutak also highlights the use of tattooing for therapeutic purposes. He evidences this by the tattoos that are still clearly visible on Ötzi, the Tyrolean Iceman, a 5300-year-old mummy bearing 60 plus tattoos, some of these tattoos are located on classical acupuncture points of his body suggesting they were placed there for therapeutic reasons (2015). Elsewhere Krutak offers a table of 30 cultures who practiced tattooing for therapeutic purposes (Krutak & Piombino-Mascali, 2020), his research employs “...cross cultural ethnographic evidence to help interpret the purposeful administration at

corporeal target sites to manage chronic pain and promote human well-being.” (p. 121) The research reveals that the therapeutic purpose served to treat both physical pains and ailments as well as spiritual ailments. He also goes on to speak about the therapy of going through pain in a controlled space, which was explained as the building of noble character and served to strengthen the immune system, much like a vaccine is supposed to fortify it (ibid), a notion thought possible by Dr Diana Kopua who says that T-cells in the human body work in this way (D. Kopua, personal communication, February 2024).

Mahi-a-Atua: An organisation lead by Mark and Dr Diana Kopua, also employs moko as part of their approach to Māori mental health treatment. They employ three principles; Indigenise your space, remain an active learner and embrace negative feedback, they support the use of Indigenous approaches to mental health as a viable alternative to Western psychiatry. Through celebrating the power of Indigenous deities, narratives and healing practices that were suppressed during colonisation, Mahi-a-Atua promotes positive identities for Indigenous communities and offers a framework for navigating mental health crises and difficulties (Kopua, Kopua, & Bracken, 2019). Dr ‘Di’ has often ‘prescribed’ moko to her psychiatric clients, recognising its profoundly meaningful impact on Māori individuals (D. Kopua, personal communication, 2022).

Overall, the understanding of moko as a healer in both physical, spiritual and psychological aspects reinforce its significance as an age-old cultural practice that contributes to the wellbeing and self-determination of Māori. The utilisation of Māori frameworks and traditional healing practices, foster a sense of identity, pride and resilience, offering a holistic approach to healing that aligns with Indigenous values and perspectives. Māori also have a knowledge of these meridian points throughout the human body, for example Hohepa Delamere’s vast knowledge on this topic is widely distributed amongst his many students throughout Aotearoa and although not published, these writings hold a vast library of ancient Māori understandings of the human body. His families knowledge eventually emerging from the state of kura huna - hidden knowledge, due to the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907.

Hei Tikitiki a Te Ora Hou Project: ‘Traditional Māori Rites of Passage’, Manu Caddie and his research team undertook an admirable task in documenting existing literature on traditional Māori rites of passage, despite the limited written information available on the subject. Their comprehensive thesis draws from 60 sources of core and supportive information, shedding light

on the often-overlooked topic of Māori rites of passage, with a focus on male initiation. According to the team's research, the literature available predominantly focuses on male rites of passage. However, in the 20th century, new traditions emerged for women, celebrating their gendered roles as homemakers and household cooks. Caddies' thesis explores various traditional Māori ceremonies and practices related to rites of passage. It begins with the Tohi ceremony, a dedication ceremony performed after the birth of a child. While all children experienced dedication ceremonies to certain atua (gods), children of nobility received additional ceremony (Caddie & Kumeroa, 2010).

Cultural values were transmitted through mentorship from elders, or 'Pūkengatanga.' Māori first-born mokopuna (grandchild) were often claimed by grandparents to pass on teachings and foster the characteristic of responsibility. For children with exceptional skills or memory retention, the whare-wānanga (house of learning) was a path for advanced education. Whakapapa (genealogy) was a critical aspect of knowledge, with a focus on not only reciting names but also understanding the deeds that distinguished ancestors. The research also explores the relationship between whānau (family) identity and overall Māori identity.

“In a review of the role of identity in whānau development, suggests that formation of a secure whānau identity is likely to contribute toward an overall stable Māori identity. The creation of an environment where a sense of secure well-being among members of a whānau is nurtured, leads to members constructing a whānau and Māori identity that is meaningful.” (p. 29)

Traditional Māori rites of passage faced challenges due to the influence of European churches and migration for employment purposes. However, the thesis helps shed light on the rich traditions and teachings that once shaped Māori society and contributed to the wellbeing and identity of its people. Speaking specifically about moko, Hone Taare Tikao writes:

“Tā moko, accompanied by many rites and rituals, was seen as a RoP, a step from puberty into adulthood, for both men and women. Other life skills and the acquisition of knowledge was a very common way of life for Māori.” (p. 31)

Quoting Canon James Stack, he elaborates on the fact that most Māori had a level of education equivalent to that of higher educated Europeans. In conclusion, Caddie and his research team

have provided a sizeable contribution to the understanding of traditional Māori rites of passage through their comprehensive thesis. By drawing from various sources and documenting cultural practices, they shed light on the significance of these rites and their impact on Māori identity and wellbeing. Despite the scarcity of written information on the subject, the team's work serves as an important resource for preserving and appreciating Māori rites of passage.

Poutama Rites of Passage: Founded in Whāingaroa in 2015 by Tiaki Coates (Kāi Tahu), Poutama Rites of Passage envisions a community-led initiation process for young boys transitioning into manhood, rooted in te ao Māori (the Māori world). Guided by Coates and Michael Moore, experienced youth workers with strong cultural knowledge, Poutama integrates pūrākau Māori (Māori narratives) as a core element, facilitating wānanga (learning circles) about self-awareness and relationships with others. Coates acknowledges that many men today lack proper initiation experiences, leading to a generation of uninitiated men experiencing harmful, peer-led initiations that neglect family and cultural values (Coates & Pekepo-Ratu, 2020). To address this gap, Coates and Moore emphasise that male role models must undergo initiation first, creating an authentic and genuine passage for young men.

Dr Wayne Ngata reflects on the significance of tohi, a ritual chant, as the initial step in the RoP. He stresses the challenge lies in maintaining the pathway into adulthood and highlights how colonisation disrupted traditional ways, replacing them with an educational system perpetuating institutionalised racism that oppresses Māori. Drawing insights from Hawaiian revitalisation of men's rites of passage, Dr. Ngata advocates adapting rites to maintain a specific pathway for each child, aiming for long-term positive change over generations. He underscores the importance of language as a doorway to understanding Māori philosophy, suggesting it be the initial step for children. Ngata raises concerns about the current portrayal of haka, fearing it promotes a narrow, aggressive masculinity, contrary to its historical role expressing various aspects of traditional Māori society (ibid). This brings attention to the need for RoP as a way of guiding our tamariki in healthy ways. Poutama Rites of Passage seeks to fill the void of traditional initiation experiences for young Māori men and women. Drawing on Māori narratives and community involvement, this kaupapa empowers future generations whilst preserving Māori culture and identity. Ngata offers insights that emphasise community engagement and adaptive rites to safeguard Māori heritage for years to come.

The Western Lens Versus Wānanga Māori

This passage will compare some of the foundational western literature in the fields of psychology, anthropology and mythology to their corresponding kete wānanga Māori (baskets of Māori knowledge). These are vast fields of knowledge and in the western lens, the amount of research is immense, yet the issue remains from the Indigenous perspective of the ‘objective separateness’ of that research by outsider observations without the osmosis of absorbed knowingness and cultural knowledge transmission that occurs when one is born into an Indigenous group (Smith, 1997). This is kept in mind as the seeking unfolds below. It is my assertion that much has been lost regarding the traditional knowledge of initiation rites and in the space of moko as RoP especially, we are left following breadcrumbs, albeit at times what can be gleaned through the observations of Pākehā researchers of the colonial period. Weighing up the information that comes through them, against the baskets of Māori knowledge remaining with us, we can triangulate a robust framework for RoP.

The term 'rites of passage' was introduced by Arnold Van Gennep in 1909, an ethnographer and folklorist, in his seminal book titled 'Les Rites de Passage' (2019). He systematically compared ceremonies that mark an individual's transition from one social status to another within a given society. He identified a tripartite sequence in these rituals: 'separation,' 'transition' and 'incorporation.' Van Gennep interpreted these rites as forms of social regeneration, using natural symbols like death and rebirth. Anthropology does not limit the concept of rites of passage solely to puberty rites. Instead, it considers rites of passage to encompass a wide range of life transitions and phases that mark significant changes in an individual's social status or role within their community. While puberty rites or coming-of-age ceremonies are common and well-known examples, anthropology recognises many other types of transitions as rites of passage, including:

1. **Birth and childhood rites** – ‘tohi tāngaengae’ (chord cutting ritual) and ‘tohi raukina’ (naming and dedication ritual) are examples from Māori culture, circumcision was practiced in many cultures also (Van Gennep, 2019).
2. **Initiation rites** – initiations into religious practices, becoming a warrior, or secret society membership (Turner, 1969).

3. **Marriage rites** – often seen as a significant transition from one social status to another, with rituals that formalise the bond between individuals and their roles as a couple within society. (Hiroa, 1949; Levi-Strauss, 1969).
4. **Parenthood rites** – the transition to parenthood is often marked by rituals celebrating the arrival of a child, as well as the new roles of the parents within the family and community. In many cultures, rituals mark the mother's or father's transition into these roles (LeVine, 1994).
5. **Elderhood and status rites** – these rites highlight the individual's new role as a wisdom figure or authority in the community (Fortes, 1969).
6. **Spiritual or religious initiation** – this can include rituals like baptism, confirmation, or rites of ordination. The recent succession of a new monarch to the throne of the Kiingitanga is an example within Māoridom. These practices often signify a deeper connection with the divine or spiritual order (Eliade, 1958).
7. **Death and funerary rites** – these ceremonies often involve processes of mourning, memorialisation, and the spiritual journey of the deceased (Hertz, 1960).

In anthropology and the study of rituals, rites can be classified as either sympathetic or contagious. Sympathetic rites operate on the principle of sympathetic magic, where actions or rituals are performed with the belief that they will bring about desired outcomes through a sympathetic connection. This may involve using symbolic objects or effigies representing the desired outcome. The belief is that manipulating the effigy will affect the corresponding person or object in a similar manner. Mākutu (witchcraft, sorcery) is an example from Māori culture. Contagious rites, on the other hand, are based on the idea that qualities or powers can be transferred through contact or proximity. Biting the big toe, the thumb and the crown of the head of a tohunga to receive his mauri is an example from Māori culture (Ngata, 1950). These rituals involve physical contact with objects or substances believed to possess specific properties or powers. The belief is that by encountering these items, individuals can acquire the associated qualities or powers. Both types of rites reflect cultural beliefs and practices related to connections between individuals, objects and desired outcomes. However, it is crucial to note that viewing these rituals through Western eyes may lead to skewed interpretations and assumptions. Western ideology often emphasises objective rationality and empirical evidence, even in highly subjective contexts like rituals within animistic cultures (ibid). Such an approach often overlooks the deeper connections and meanings that these rituals hold for the communities practicing them. This highlights the importance of approaching

research with cultural sensitivity and a true connected understanding of the people being studied (Archibald, 2008; Smith, 1997). Instead of relying solely on empirical evidence and scientific methods, a more holistic approach is necessary to grasp the significance and complexities of rites of passage within Indigenous cultures.

The Archetype of Initiation: The concept of initiation, as defined by Distinguished Service Professor of Psychology, Robert Moore (2001), outlines three stages of life-changing transitions that can be either intended through ritual processes (liminal) or thrust upon individuals by crises (liminoid). These stages lead one from the 'profane' space into a 'sacred' space of self-centering and regeneration and then back out into the 'profane', but with a new and matured self-awareness that generates a foundational power base for the new experience of profanity. Moore engages in a discussion on the vessel of analysis, a procedure undertaken by therapists to help individuals confront themselves as part of their transformation process. This requires three elements: submission to the therapeutic or ritualistic process and to the elder or therapist leading the process, containment, whereby the individual is held as they go through the transformation and enactment, which allows them to try out new ways of being or thinking in a safe space of maturational growth. The archetype of initiation reveals that life is a series of transformations, whether liminal or liminoid.

The process of initiation or therapy involves three phases:

1. Normal everyday life, where ordinary consciousness is challenged and restlessness or a need for change and growth arises. Van Gennep terms this space as 'separation' (2019).
2. Transitional space, where ordinary consciousness is transcended and the ritual elder guides the initiate in the required processes and rituals for self-analysis. Moore notes that some individuals may try to remain in this space, but true growth occurs when they move forward.
3. Normal everyday life resumes, but with a new level of maturity and growth, integrating the new consciousness gained. Van Gennep refers to this phase as 'incorporation' or 'aggregation'. Moore highlights Joseph Campbell's insights on the transformative process, emphasising that a real initiation will humble a person, while a failed initiation without proper containment walls may lead to a grandiose sense of self.

Addressing the shadow, Moore echoes Campbell's notion that confronting the shadow is vital in the transformation process. He criticises certain theological religions, like Christianity, for denying the shadow's power and disregarding the psychological need to confront it, favouring

an approach of 'baptising' the shadow into the light for transformation. In the transformative process, ordeals and ritual humiliation are common. Symbolic wounding, like scarification, is a way to mark the moment and show its significance. Pre-modern human beings believed that such symbolic actions could help the transformation happen. The interest in practices like vision quests and engagement in violent sports and war can be understood through the unconscious seduction of the archetype of initiation. In summary, the archetype of initiation provides valuable insights into the transformative process, revealing the significance of confronting the shadow, the importance of containment and the profound impact of marked ordeals in the journey towards self-awareness and growth (Moore, 2001).

Psychological Archetypes: 'King, Warrior, Magician, Lover - Nurturing the Male Psyche'. The authors, Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette (1992), delve into the concept of immature masculinity and its roots in weak father figures and the perpetuation of fear within patriarchal systems. They assert that true, rooted masculinity is not abusive but embodies calm responsibility. The crisis in masculine ritual processes stems from uninitiated men carrying their immaturity into manhood, appearing as grown men physically but still psychologically behaving like boys. To address this, the authors advocate for genuine masculinity that nurtures, remains calm and demonstrates clear intent. They propose an archetypal model consisting of four key characteristics: the King, the Warrior, the Magician and the Lover. A man who has undergone initiation through these archetypes embodies a humble yet powerful demeanour. If the initiation process does not occur, the archetypal aspect may stagnate, leading to negative shadowy expressions of the archetype.

The King: Derived from the 'divine child', his archetype's uninitiated shadow exhibits as either the 'weakling prince' or the 'highchair tyrant'.

The Magician: Rooted in the 'precocious child', precocious meaning a child that develops abilities or inclinations earlier than expected. The 'magician' archetype's shadow poles are the 'know-it-all trickster' and the 'naive dummy'.

The Lover: Derived from the 'oedipal child', the oedipus complex is a Freudian theory that refers to a child's subconscious feelings of attraction towards the parent of the opposite sex and feelings of rivalry with the parent of the same sex, the 'lover' archetype's shadow expresses as the 'mama's boy' or the 'dreamer'.

The Warrior: Rooted in the 'hero', the 'warrior' archetype's shadow manifests as the 'grandstand bully' or the 'coward'.

Accessing the mature masculine archetypes requires critical self-appraisal and humility. Recognising one's limitations and seeking help for areas that need improvement are key aspects of this process. Strong male role models play a crucial role in guiding young men on their path towards mature masculinity. Additionally, learning how to invoke these archetypes in their fullness within us is essential. Taking responsibility for any destructive and immature masculinity is an integral part of personal growth and transformation. Through their work, Moore and Gillette emphasise the significance of engaging in a transformative journey that involves confronting the shadows within the male psyche and striving for balanced and empowered expressions of masculinity (Moore & Gillette, 1992).

Mātauranga Tikanga Tangata/Anthropology: Anthropologist Michael Meade emphasises the crucial role of initiatory rites of passage in human development, where symbolic death and rebirth through communal rituals lead to the maturation of the human psyche. Observing Indigenous rituals, Meade highlights the adverse impact of the absence of these rituals, especially during the coming-of-age stage. Without elder-led ceremonies, young individuals may seek initiation experiences in detrimental ways, such as gang involvement, leading to a degradation of character and emotional stability in society. Meade draws a powerful correlation between life, death and the descent into the subconscious in ritual space, asserting that experiencing 'little deaths' or 'shamanic death' is essential for a healthy outlook on life, change and transition (Eliade, 2017). In Mircea Eliade's book, 'Rites and Symbols of Initiation' (2017), he explores the concept of the descent to the underworld and heroic initiations, highlighting two main elements: the hero re-entering the womb of Mother Earth; and facing perilous challenges. Eliade delves into the Māui story, where Māui enters Hinenuitapo to gain immortality for mankind, offering insights into initiatory mythology and its understanding of religious behaviours. Traditional puberty rites in various societies are seen as vital for producing responsible and active adults, as these rituals serve as sacred spaces where tribal elders transmit cosmological origins, teach about gods and their roles in creating the world and impart teachings about mythological heroes. These rituals help adolescents understand the mystical and supernatural origins of life, contrasting significantly with Western notions of human history and the belief in modern man's power to direct human destiny.

A socio-political Kaupapa Māori analysis of anthropology and psychology reveals historical misuse and exploitation of Māori culture for colonial agendas. Anthropology, rooted in Eurocentric paradigms, often objectified Māori as subjects of study, reinforcing stereotypes

and undermining Indigenous knowledge systems. This discipline has historically justified colonial intentions, erasing Indigenous agency and perpetuating narratives of primitiveness and cultural inferiority (B. Smith, 1992; L. Smith, 2022; Harrison, 1997). Likewise, psychology, influenced by Western attitudes of superiority, pathologised Indigenous behaviours, framing cultural practices as deviant or dysfunctional. The imposition of Western psychological frameworks disregarded Indigenous worldviews, leading to misinterpretations and misrepresentations of Māori mental health and wellbeing, leaving lasting repercussions, undermining Indigenous self-determination and perpetuating power imbalances (Mills, 2014; Ciofalo, 2019; Katz, 2017).

The selective appropriation of Māori knowledge and practices by anthropologists and psychologists has eroded cultural autonomy and perpetuated colonial domination. Both disciplines have contributed to the marginalisation and disempowerment of Māori, highlighting the urgent need for decolonisation within academic and clinical settings (Kopua, Kopua, & Bracken, 2019). A Kaupapa Māori approach challenges these legacies by centering Indigenous perspectives, reclaiming mana motuhake and demanding reciprocal and respectful engagement that honours the complexity and resilience of Māori communities, and perpetuates cultural engagement and efficacy which plays a crucial role in fostering self-esteem and well-being, particularly within Indigenous communities.

Cultural efficacy: This significantly influences Māori self-esteem levels, with a mediating effect of rumination, according to a study published in the NZ Journal of Psychology (Matika et al., 2017). The researchers found that engaging confidently in the Māori world's cultural practices and activities, resulted in lower levels of rumination and ultimately contributing to higher self-esteem. Rumination refers to repetitive and passive thoughts focused on the causes and effects of distress, often leading to negative behavioural patterns and reduced well-being. The study collected data from Māori participants in the NZ Attitudes and Values study, highlighting the potential positive impact of cultural efficacy on mental well-being for Māori individuals. Although specific research on this connection is limited, previous studies indicate that non-Western Indigenous cultures tend to ruminate less than their Western counterparts.

Pūrākau/Mythology

Joseph Campbell: a professor of literature renowned for his works on comparative mythology and religion, delved into the significance of myth across cultures (1991). Campbell's exploration of primitive cultures' direct experiences with transcendent mysteries shaped his worldview. He discussed the hero's journey and its common themes in human societies, emphasising the hero's quest to bring a new level of consciousness to humanity. Campbell highlighted the tripartite nature of the journey: separation, initiation and return. He believed that the ultimate purpose of the hero's journey is to elevate consciousness and experience the rapture of being alive (Campbell, 2013). Eliade speaks to the separation from the mother; this part of the ritual is a symbolic break from the maternal, a symbolic death of the child and the rebirth of the man. Death and rebirth symbolism is a theme that runs through all initiatory rituals; this signifies the transition from one state of being to another, from one level of social and personal responsibility to another (Eliade, 2017).

Māori Creation Stories: Te Ahukaramū Royal reflects on this notion of the world being constantly recreated through the retelling of these stories, stating, *“Every culture has its traditions about how the world was created. Māori have many of them, but the most important stories are those that tell how darkness became light, nothing became something, earth and sky were separated and nature evolved”* (Royal, 2005, p. 1). He further notes how the atua are seen as role models for human behaviour. In rites of passage, the recounting of pūrākau such as the separation of Ranginui, the sky father and Papatūānuku, the earth mother, serves several vital functions:

1. **Pedagogical Function:** Pūrākau teach the principles of life, the laws of nature and the virtues that individuals are expected to embody as they transition to new roles in society. The atua (gods) are embodiments of certain traits and forces. By learning about the atua, individuals learn about the attributes they should aspire to, such as bravery, wisdom, service to others and respect for nature.
2. **Social Cohesion:** The retelling of creation stories during ceremonies reinforces group identity and social cohesion. As individuals undergo rites of passage, they are reminded of their shared heritage and the common values that bind the community together.
3. **Spiritual Guidance:** Pūrākau provide a spiritual roadmap, offering guidance on how to navigate the challenges of life. During rites of passage, which are inherently times of uncertainty and change, these stories offer comfort and direction.

4. Cosmological Orientation: The stories frame the individual's journey within the larger cosmological context, linking the microcosm of personal experience to the macrocosm of the universe. This connection lends a profound significance to the ritual milestone being marked.
5. Cultural Legitimation: Pūrākau legitimise the practices and rituals involved in the RoP. By connecting the ceremonies to the actions of the atua and the unfolding of the cosmos, the rituals are seen as part of the natural order of things.
6. Reaffirmation of Values: In these stories, the separation of the earth and sky is a form of maturation, a theme that is parallel to the individual's growth during a RoP. The stories reaffirm the values and principles that the individual is expected to uphold in their new role.

Considering the importance of pūrākau in the ceremonial space of rites of passage, it becomes clear that these narratives are integral to the cultural fabric. They embody deep-seated cultural and spiritual understandings, providing a framework for understanding the world, the divine and the place of humans within the cosmos. Royal's reflection about the world being 'constantly recreated' through the retelling of these stories, underscores the Māori view that creation is a continuous process. This is expressed through proverbial sayings like, "as one fern frond dies so another comes to take its place".

Dr Jenny Lee employed pūrākau as a methodology (2009) for Māori research (explored in the next chapter) and Dr Robert Pouwhare teaches on the Māui narratives (2022), revealing the importance of constructing a virtual world for the listener, whilst Joe Harawira maintains that pūrākau delivered orally and dramatically is a powerful way of engaging youth with cultural histories and narratives, he states: "*Pūrākau and the wisdoms held within them have determined our behaviours, our actions, our ways of doing things, our ways of seeing, of knowing, of understanding the taiao, our environment around us, of which 'mataora' is an incremental part, a crucial part of that whole energy, of that whole 'mauri' of the natural world*" (J. Harawira, personal communication, June 26, 2023). Joe cites the voyage of the Mataatua waka, the legacy of Wairaka and the saga of Ngā Puhi as examples of narratives ripe for reawakening the collective consciousness of our tamariki. Discussing rites of passage, he notes a generational disconnect in understanding their significance, especially in relation to moko. But Joe believes in the transformative power of stories to rekindle the connection between mind, heart and the ancient reservoir of kōrero tuku iho (knowledge handed down). The challenge lies in bridging the knowledge of the past with the present, particularly for rites involving moko.

For Joe, pūrākau becomes a starting point, a spark in the darkness to light the way for this exploration. He acknowledges the need for collective wānanga, where the wisdom of kaumātua and leaders can guide the structuring of moko as lifelong rites of passage.

Storytelling's essence, he feels, is in its oral delivery, activating both the listener's cognitive understanding and imaginative faculties, painting vivid pictures with words. Some parallels can be drawn from African American studies on RoP as a form of resistance, suggesting that our own pūrākau and RoP could similarly empower communities like gang members seeking transformation. Mahi-a-Atua has made much progress on initiating this notion among Māori and Joe's storytelling within prisons demonstrates the healing potential of personal narrative as a release for those in anguish, a way to shed the burden of generational hurts. This highlights how hip hop and poetry is a cathartic creative process and can be essential outlets for expression and release.

Whakaaro Māori and Ritual

In traditional Māori culture, spiritual forces like mana, tapu and mauri were considered pervasive, leading people to engage with the spiritual world through karakia (ritual chants) and other rituals (Shirres, 1982). These ceremonies often required the expertise of tohunga, skilled practitioners who possessed specialised knowledge in spiritual matters. The rituals served as pathways to navigate and interact with the spiritual realm and they were deeply integrated into various aspects of Māori life, maintaining balance and harmony within the community and reinforcing cultural beliefs and values (Shirres, 1986).

The Woven Universe: *"Wisdom is a thing of the heart. It has its own thought processes. It is there that knowledge is integrated for this is the centre of one's being"* (Marsden, 2003, p. 1). Māori Marsden takes a subjective approach to understanding Māori concepts. He describes ihi as a psychic force that elicits awe and respect in others, whilst mana refers to spiritual authority and power bestowed by gods, and tapu, akin to the Jewish notion of 'sacred and holy,' designates something dedicated to the service of an atua. He delves into the significance of purification rites and how tohunga employed them to cleanse from contamination, highlighting their crucial role in maintaining spiritual balance (ibid).

The Pure Rite: Water dedicated to the atua Rehua was used for the purpose of cleansing, as was cooked food, being the sacrament to do the same and ‘lift’ the tapu. To deliberately trample this tikanga, or neglect this protocol was to challenge the mana of the atua which would not be forgiven. A ‘pure whakanoa’ (cleansing ritual) would be employed by a tohunga when the mana of the atua involved was too strong to deal with. Certain types of food were cooked in the umu (earth oven) and once cooled, a portion would be placed on the head of the tohunga (being the most sacred part of the body) and karakia performed to expel the tapu (ibid).

The Tohi Rite: *“The tohi was yet another ceremony performed over a child... there was two forms of tohi, the one (tohi tamariki) being a rite performed over a child when the pito or navel string is removed; and the other (tohi taua) a ceremony gone through in order to endow a man with courage, energy etc., in battle. The latter would be performed several, possibly many times, over a fighting man during his life. The term tohi, in the case of the tohi tamariki, may have possibly originated in the verb tohi = to cut, but in every case a tohi appears to imply “sprinkling with water,” such an operation being a portion of the ritual in each of the above mentioned ceremonies.”* (p. 157)

Ahi Tapu: Tā Pou Temara discusses ‘Ahi Tapu,’ the sacred fire integral to tapu rituals. Whether opening a new house or performing ocean rituals, fire was essential. It had the dual purpose of imposing and removing tapu, a seeming contradiction that underscores its complex role in Māori culture. He raises concerns about incorporating rituals from other cultures without due care, emphasising the importance of adhering to authentic tikanga. For him, fire symbolises life and is central to survival and comfort, underscoring the primal connection between humanity and this elemental force. The connection between fire and life is evident, with fire playing a crucial role in rituals that mark significant life transitions and daily survival needs. It highlights the depth of cultural practices that sustain life, knowledge and identity, demonstrating the need to maintain these traditions whilst allowing for growth and adaptation in a changing world.

The Lore of Whare Wānanga, Te Kauwae Runga: Moihi Te Mātorohanga and Nepia Pohuhu share the ancient knowledge passed down from their ancestors of the Kahungunu peoples. Ethnologist and co-founder of the Polynesian Society, Percy Smith published this document, which explains the initiations undertaken by students of this wānanga, guided by the atua, to gain spiritual authority and understanding of customs and traditions. The tohunga

ahurewa (high priest) led the initiations inside the whare, where students underwent cleansing rituals and received teachings in complete darkness (Whatahoro & Smith, 2011). There is much debate whether this knowledge was a response to Christianity as its emergence is apparently timed with the colonisation of Aotearoa. Whatahoro, the scribe of the document, was a Christian causing further speculation.

Te Oriori o Tūteremoana: The incredible amount of esoteric knowledge that is woven into this masterpiece of ritual incantation composed by Tūhotoariki for his grandnephew Tūteremoana roughly 400 years ago, clearly negates the assertion that the Io Wānanga was a response to Christianity. It displays the role of Io and the atua and their roles in the origins of mankind and indeed all of creation, which was considered more than appropriate to be invested into the child during the RoP that is birth (Ngata and Jones, 2007). When this eight-verse lullaby is chanted in ritual welcome to the newborn baby, Dr Wayne Ngata explains this encodes its genetic and cellular memory with the immensity of divine purpose (T. Coates, personal communication, 2022).

Hohepa Delamere: A tohunga from Te Whānau a Apanui, became renowned for his knowledge of rongoā Māori, (plant medicine), romiromi (acupressure) and mirimiri (massage). He travelled the world to offer his knowledge of medicine and healing, sharing a significant number of teachings with his students until his passing in 2008. Delamere's teachings about the human body and its creation by the atua are profound and compares to Western knowledge of the anatomy. Io features centre stage in his writings, where his students convey the assertion of Delamere that the Io wānanga that he taught were over 10,000 years old (R. Perez, personal communication, December 2023).

An Initiation ceremony over a Matakite: this is a great example of a ritual ceremony of initiation, it gets very specific about the actual rites for initiating a Matakite into the role of a seer. There is a challenge for the initiate to conduct prior to their tohi, which involves a dream quest to connect with a spirit of a family member and the retrieval of a living manu to be caught before the rising sun of the same day - if these terms were not met, the tohi would not occur. The tohi is a type of baptism at a sacred site where water is present (Best, 2016).

Ceremony and Rituals at Home, Che's Channel Te Paepae Waho: Che Wilson, who has been *“the chief negotiator of his iwi, a Deputy Secretary for the Ministry for the Environment, was president of Te Pāti Māori and was initiated into his ‘iwi whare-wānanga’ prior to entering secondary school”* (Ngā Pae o te Maramatanga, 2021), offers some local knowledge regarding rites of passage. He identifies ‘Tohi Tāngaengae’ which dedicates a child to the natural world and ‘Tohi Raukina’ which commits the child to their primary ancestors, these Iriiri or Tūai rites were baptisms which were timed with appropriate moon phases. The next rite of passage was at puberty and then another defining the persons skill base a few years later, knowledge succession was another facilitating the transference of knowledge. Che finalises his discussions by stating that *“rites of passage is a way of saying you are valued, how we get our communities to say we value each other”* (Wilson, 2021). This short but significant passage is intended to convey the immensely purposeful intentions of our tūpuna when undertaking ceremonial responsibilities such as the rituals for rites of passage.

Indigenous Rites of Passage

Lars Krutak's (2007) study on the tattooing among many cultures reveals that tattooing was predominantly a female practice in most societies, with exceptions in places like Borneo and Polynesia where it became more male-dominated. Female chin tattoos as puberty rites were common from Aotearoa and Polynesia to Melanesia, Micronesia, Asia, through to North Africa, Iraq and the Balkans, all of the Americas including the Arctic. Tattooing served as a highly functional ritual of initiation, marking significant life transitions and communicating these initiations to their respective societies. Menstruation, signalling the girl's readiness to nurture life, was often the point of initiation, providing a space for transmitting knowledge, mythological and reproductive education.

These rituals were frequently timed with moon phases. In Borneo for example, “Kayan girls could not be tattooed at the onset of their menses and were instead tattooed only on the ninth day after a new moon. Among the Gran Chaco tribes of South America, however, girls were tattooed precisely at the onset of the new moon and menses” (ibid, p. 17). In many of these cultures' tattoos signified readiness for marriage; girls without tattoos were not considered marriageable. Although in Papua New Guinea (PNG), tattooing began as early as age five, with tattoos starting on the hands and forearms and later extending to other parts of their body as girls matured. By the time they were ready for marriage, their bodies were extensively tattooed.

Inland groups like the Singoro, marked girls “*with a special pattern on either side of their vulva (bunegoala) which signalled a completed transition to womanhood*” (p. 102). Another reason for tattooing on young girls (also sons and wives) of certain groups in PNG was to record the feats of their fathers, the hornbill motif was only tattooed on the family of a man who was successful in taking a head of a person from a neighbouring tribe (ibid).

Krutak approaches his research with an awareness of the "colonial gaze," and his academic discipline is commendable. However, his interpretations of cultural concepts sometimes lack the necessary context. This critique is based on my knowledge of Māori and Polynesian tattooing traditions. Given his voiced opinion to me that Māori tattooists are "too political" regarding the sharing of our knowledge in the anthropological space, it is understandable that Krutak's research on tā moko relies heavily on colonial-period anthropological and ethnographic studies. These sources often restate outsider "authoritative" opinions on cultural matters, which can lack depth. For example, Krutak correlates the Rapanui term "waha," apparently meaning vagina, to Māori terminology. In Māori, however, "waha" refers to the mouth or opening, not specifically to the vagina as far as I am aware. Furthermore, he quotes Elsdon Best, who describes the vagina as a symbol of destruction, likely referring to Hinenuitēpō in the pūrākau of Māui and his demise, whereas Māori speak of the whare tangata (house of mankind) i.e., the womb and the vagina as passageway to life.

While Krutak makes valid associations between fire and heat in the tattooing process, his attempt to explain the Māori term "ahi tā moko" through metaphors of "raw" and "cooked" may lack full cultural context. In speaking of Papuan tattooing, he writes, "*Fire cooks the flesh, definitively separating the 'raw' from the 'cooked,' as does the tattoo, separating the 'girl' from the 'woman,' when it is placed on a girl's skin after her first menstruation... it is the heat that 'cooks' the woman until she achieves maturation*" (ibid, p. 111). While this analogy may hold in Papuan linguistics, in Māori culture, ritual fire is more deeply connected to concepts of tapu (ritual restrictions) and noa (neutrality). He makes mention of "ahi tā moko" in reference to the above Papuan metaphor, and although it may carry the inference to the burning sensation of tattooing, it actually refers to the tattoo ritual, traditionally performed beside the ritual fire (further explored in the next chapter).

In Tahiti tattooing was also used to integrate adolescents (taure'are'a) into adult life and social responsibilities. Kuhuwara's (2005) Ethnographic study shows that children were considered

tapu in Tahiti and underwent tattooing as a “amo’a” which is a maturation ritual to remove the tapu from the child, signifying their availability for procreation and permitting them to participate in social activities. Kuhuwara also speaks to the modern agency of individuals to decide if and when they should be tattooed, whereas in traditional societies, those decisions were made by the social structures (tattooing for ritual maturation) and nature itself, i.e., puberty, which determines when the ritual occurs.

The Ao-Naga community in Northeast India uses tattooing as a major determinant of identity for girls, symbolising the beginning of the puberty process and membership in their community. The tattooing rite is a lengthy process, with additional puberty rites following the ritual act of tattooing, indicating the onset of puberty (Longchar, 2020).

Back in Aotearoa, Heemi Te Peeti connects menstruation to the sacredness of whakapapa and the survival of the people stating: “*Moko whakarua is terminology that comes from the Whanganui river, we don’t use the term moko kauae, we use moko tārua, or moko tāruru and it talks about the rite of passage when our young women began their menstruation, ‘ka rere te toto ariki’ (the flow of the chiefly blood). The ability to bring the spiritual world to the physical. The kaitiaki (guardian) of that whare (house) is the ruru (owl). The toto ariki refers to whakapapa (genealogy)*” (personal communication, January 2024). Dieffenbach when speaking of young girls at Banks Peninsula “*having their lips tattooed with horizontal lines; to have red lips is a great reproach to a woman. With females, in many cases, the operation ceases here, but more frequently the chin is tattooed, especially in the Waikato tribe, and the space between the eyebrows, much resembling the tattoo of the modern Egyptians...I have, indeed, seen a woman whose whole face was tattooed. The women, also, often got themselves irregularly marked on the hands, arms, breasts, and face with small crosses, short lines, and dots*” (Roth, 1902, p. 33).

Hiroa (1949) notes that once adolescence was reached in traditional Māori society and language foundations are learnt, the boy would then come under the guidance of orators. He goes on to say that when it came time to mastering a craft of any kind, whether tattooing, carving or weaving, the adolescent would become an apprentice under an expert of that field. These apprenticeships were preceded by initiation ceremonies, dedicating the student to the tutelary god of the craft they were learning. The ritual was intended to make the learner receptive to the teachings and ensure memory retention.

Eliade (2017) describes in detail the initiation ritual for boys who have reached puberty among the tribes on the east coast of Queensland, Australia. The four phases of these rituals included preparing the sacred ground, separating the boys from their mothers for male-focused initiation, imparting traditional knowledge and performing rites of ordeals such as circumcision and scarification. The sacred ground served as a significant symbol, representing the primordial world and connecting the initiates to the divine being's time on earth. The rituals aimed to make the myth of creation present for the initiates, imbuing them with its efficacy and completeness (ibid).

A step-by-step description and the religious and symbolic meanings behind each step are given and assessed against the wider data available at the time. I was able to verify first-hand, the accuracy of the description given from a very close friend (K. Slabb, personal communication, 2023), who is an elder among these tribes. Out of respect of the sacred space of 'men's business', I will not divulge the intimate details of this ritual here, although the level of detail is what I would like to bring the reader's attention to, it is typical of many of the rituals recorded in this era of anthropology and yet among the anthropological research done here in Aotearoa, it seems our rituals were simply not recorded. Perhaps the reason being, that our ancestors were dealing with the more urgent matters of survival, defending their lands and people, or could this have been the equivalent of the burning of the ancient library of Alexandria to destroy knowledge?

The Initiation of the Warrior in Te Moananui-a-Kiwa

The pe'a and malu, in the Samoan traditions of tattooing, have endured colonisation intact, preserved through a millennium by the esteemed lineage of tufuga tā tatau like the late Su'a Paulo Sulu'ape and his brother Su'a Petelo Sulu'ape. Their unwavering commitment to their craft has not only upheld their cultural heritage but also inspired many moko practitioners, setting a revered standard in the realm of traditional tattooing. In the context of Samoan culture, the pe'a (thigh and lower torso tattoo) initiation is a RoP for young men. Su'a Petelo Suluape described the pe'a as a crucial part of becoming a man, asserting that one is not fully recognised as a man until they are fully tattooed. During the process, recipients slept together on mats each night and on the final day, the pito (navel) was tattooed and the body was covered in coconut oil mixed with turmeric. The ritual concluded with the breaking of an egg on top of the head to symbolise rebirth and to 'lift' the tapu, a sacred state or condition (Pasifika, 2012). The Samoan

approach to this ceremony places a set of tools and the craft of tattooing at the centre of a ritual tradition, this process is millennia old with mythological origins, around which the cultural matrix is nurtured (Galliot, 2015).

Mark Kopua expands on the whakapapa of peha (pe'a) and the narratives it communicates (personal communication, July 2022). Rūaimoko had several whare in Rarohenga, including Puhoro-rangi, Puhoro-nuku, and Puhoro-tai, each representing visible environmental symbols; celestial, terrestrial and marine respectively, that present themselves while navigating the oceans. These 'whare' guide navigation by observing natural shifts and patterns in the sky, land, and sea. The puhoro motif itself signifies the natural flow and movement of the world, and is often seen on the under-hull of waka, symbolising water patterns created by the vessel's movement. The wearer of the puhoro becomes a manifestation of a waka, with different parts of the body symbolising sections of the canoe. Additionally, the buttock spirals (raperape) represent the oceans upon which waka hou-rua travelled, both freshwater and saltwater. Regarding the terminology of this tattoo placement he states,

“Over many years the term ‘peha’ disappeared from use in our moko vocabulary and was predominantly replaced with the term ‘puhoro’ because the puhoro is the dominant decoration in a peha. ‘Te Peha o Uetonga’ is ‘The Story of Uetonga’ which clearly relates back to the Mataora history of Uetonga being the tohunga moko of Rarohenga. The word peha also comes from the concept of ‘pee-peha’, where we share our ancestral connections that defines who we are and where we’re from” (ibid).

Te Peeti explains that for his people moko whakarua relates to the puhoro and refers not only to the history and stories that are layered on his skin but requires a man to look inwardly in order to accept himself and find the balance required to actualise the two reasons for wearing moko whakarua, namely to protect the toto ariki (whakapapa), and to protect the whenua (land).

“That’s what that right of passage is, it’s about that inner wairua of the male, to carry that on his legs and realise that his purpose in life is to protect. Puhoro was started at puberty, ka huruhuru te raho, ka tō te kākano o te poai, ka tāngia āna waewae;” when the pubic hairs sprout, the seed of the boy is implanted, then his legs are tattooed (H. Te Peeti, personal communication, January 2024).



Figure 2 *Peha* by Gordon Toi on Ngarimu Blair (House of Natives).

As can be seen, the formidable challenge of undergoing the peha, not only served to provide a space of initiation in order to force the young person to overcome extreme pain. It also served to ingrain, quite literally, their people's environmental symbols of importance, mountains, waterways, and animals. It infused in them their place of belonging in the world, as kaitiaki of people, of land and of the environment to which they belonged and traversed. It connected them to the long line of ancestral way finders who arrived on sea faring canoes, and their war canoes anchoring them into their roles in life. Where Te Peeti states that for his people puhoro began on young boys when they arrived at puberty, in Samoa this undertaking is not performed until probably late teens. Women were also seen with peha in the south island during the early voyages of Europeans, the same source also reported women with full mataora (Roth, 1901).

Other body modification practices in Te Moananui-a-Kiwa; Probably one of the rarest modifications would occur on Tomman island in Vanuatu where children aged one month would undergo two years of head binding in order to elongate their skulls (Crop, 2016). But I am unable to find any ritual motive for this practice. Differing forms of circumcision was common throughout Polynesia, Hiroa (1949) notes that although Māori did not practice it in

Aotearoa, they held the memory of it in the language, the term “tehe” refers to both the operation and the result, i.e., the exposed glans. Speaking of circumcision on Tongareva in the Cook Islands, Danielsson (1956) says it was performed on both males and females, both sexes having to undergo “defloration” by elder relatives of the opposite sex. Sexual education was also given by the same elder. For the boy, a pre stretching was performed by sealing the foreskin opening while urinating, loosening the foreskin over time. This prepared the foreskin to be stretched back over the glans in order to “snap the tie” (kia motu te sele). Apparently, this ritual and intercourse instruction ended in coitus between the two “*as the practical culmination of the ceremony*” (p. 240). Only after this was done would the boys be circumcised and from this point on the boy would no longer appear naked in public. Danielsson also states that boys were fully circumcised in the Marquesas islands beginning at age 8 or 9. The boys also underwent a period or preparational stretching of the prepuce (ibid).

Regarding the traditional Hawaiian practice, Keone Nunes shares about rites of passage integral to Hawaiian culture, such as the ‘Ipu o Lono’. This ceremony, conducted at the hale-mua or men's house, involved subincision rather than circumcision, where the skin that attached the foreskin to the head of the penis was cut, marking a young man's transition into adulthood. Reflecting on his personal experience with the ‘Ipu o Lono’ ceremony at age 18, a very late age for such a passage and a rare practice in modern times, he surmises he was likely the last person of his generation to undergo the ritual, albeit a modern version. Furthering his discussion regarding the ongoing role of rites of passage which resulted in new names being given to further commemorate the occasion, he says:

“Many look at rites of passage or coming of age as singular points of time. I have learned, at least within Hawaiian traditions which may mirror Māori thought, that these rites are with us throughout our lifetime and for those with extraordinary contributions continue into ‘pō’ (night/death). In Hawai’i, it was often marked with the continuation of ‘uhi,’ and for many a renaming. It was not unusual for an individual to have several names throughout their lifetime into death. Kamehameha as an example, started with the name Paiea, a type of crab; he was later renamed Kamehameha then had several names like ‘Ka’iwakīloumoku’ - the ‘Iwa bird that strung together islands’, ‘Kalanimehamehaikekapu,’ – ‘the lonely royal one that goes in sacredness’ and his last name given at his death was ‘Kūnuiākea’ ‘standing in the great expanse.’” (personal communication, May 2023).



Figure 3 *Hawaiian ‘Ala Niho’ Done With Traditional Tattooing Implements (Hanohano, 2021).*

Traditionally, those of high rank commenced their tattoos at the Ipu o Lono stage, beginning with the ‘ala niho’ from hip to ankle, signifying not just adulthood but a step towards divine status, “*because within the Hawaiian thought of things, is that A-symmetry was the characteristic of gods and symmetry was a characteristic of man.*” Nunes connects this to the Māori and Marquesas traditions, where despite apparent symmetries, asymmetrical details encode deeper meanings passed through generations. Keone speaks of a saying in Hawai’i that states, “*A common man who does uncommon deeds becomes an uncommon god*” paralleling modern figures like Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy, who transcended their human existence into lasting legacies (ibid).

He reveals that for certain ranks, people who were not of kahuna lines or chiefly lines, often didn’t get work done until later once they achieved something but generally tattoos signified the beginning of a journey towards greater societal relevance. For young men, the rites included learning to become adept lovers from older female relatives, emphasising the responsibility

accompanying the physical act of procreation, which is largely neglected in contemporary society. Rites for women, timed with their menstrual periods, signified their readiness for societal roles, they were taken to the ‘hale pe’a’, the women’s house, to perform the rituals and ceremonies; this is also the time when, especially women of high rank, cut their hair for the first time, a white fringe that was made by placing burnt coral on the fringe, which bleached the hair of that part (ibid).



Figure 4 ‘T-Kaa-Onoroh, Femme des Iles Sandwich,’ (Jacques Arago, 1822).

His discussion reveals the devastating impact of colonialism on Hawaiian culture, particularly on rites of passage. The dismantling of religious systems centred on the ‘kapu’ system, which was integral to these rites. The arrival of Christianity and the overthrow of traditional beliefs led to a catastrophic decline in the Hawaiian population, exacerbated not only by disease but by the psychological despair of having its cultural foundations invalidated. He outlines traditional society’s approach to religious practice as a daily acknowledgement of the deities of the environment:

“So, with that understanding, the taking away of the ‘kapu’ systems, our religious systems, really affected mainly Hawaiian males because the Hawaiian males were the keepers of the ‘kapu’ system, so that affected the rite of passage system for Hawaiian boys of course. It also affected the rite of passage for women because if you didn’t have a religious system then how could you do the rite of passages?” (ibid).

Keone presents a compelling narrative of the plight of Hawaiian rites of passage, the spiritual aspects of tattooing and the importance of mentorship and cultural exchange. The preservation of such traditions is seen not as an end in itself but as a means to prepare individuals for the wisdom and responsibilities they will assume in the future, noting that modern RoP in Hawai'i are Western: have sex, graduate high school, get your driver's license, get drunk (ibid).

Kamali'i Hanohano is an apprenticing under Keone, who has recently been initiated to the rank of Keone'ulaikapōpanopano (The sacred sands of the deep black night). Elaborating on the traditional Hawaiian rites of passage, emphasising the Kā'i Mua ceremony, where boys around ten years old transitioned into a role carrying certain kapu (sacred restrictions) for their family and gods. This transition was marked by rituals that included malo (loincloth) tying and sometimes subincision, signifying the boys' readiness to assume the responsibilities of men. He touches on the role of the 'awa'; 'Piper methysticum', (peppertree) ceremony in Hawaiian culture, which facilitates communion with the spiritual realm and honours the 'akua' (gods) by partaking in their favourite drink. Kamali'i sees ceremony as essential for human balance and ecology, serving as a necessary component for the survival of both culture and the natural world. Both Keone and Kamali'i maintain that our Polynesian roots and close connections to the people of Hawai'i offer a relationship of mutual understanding, knowledge sharing can and should be indulged in if we are to make a serious attempt at reviving the rituals for rites of passage for Ngāti Awa and indeed Māori in general.

Te Manawa o te Moko with Mark Kopua: The teachings of Mark Kopua, from whom derives the Whāriki Takapau methodology adopted in this thesis, provide a profound understanding of the moko kanohi structure and its embodiment of duality, belonging and identity. He opened our 'Kiritai' (a collective of moko practitioners) discussions with the following, *"There are two main purposes in facial symbols. One is the origins, occupations and connections of the wearer. Another is the educational pursuits of the wearer and the provision of their knowledge acquired to others"* (M. Kopua, personal communication, July 2022). Mark elucidates the concept of 'manawa,' a vital 'aho' (thread or channel) interlacing our physical and spiritual existence. Running centrally from the crown of the head (tipuaki or pūmotomoto) running through our heart, down through to the perineum and extending through our limbs to the tips of our middle fingers and toes, tethering us to the heavens above and the earth below. This invisible yet essential aho is the axis upon which the equilibrium of our matriarchal and patriarchal heritages balance, a connecting threshold of our dual whakapapa. His discussion

navigates the symbology and philosophy of moko as it intricately maps the human form, embracing the genealogies of both our mothers and fathers, embodying the mauri of our divine origins. This notion is mirrored in the whare-tipuna, where the tāhuhu (ridge pole, spine of a house) connects both sides of the house where ancestral figures reside as carved representations of genealogical connections. The Whāriki Takapau shares a spiritual alignment with the recipient through the manawa, upon which the recipient lies when the moko is applied; the manawa of the moko kanohi is also situated upon the manawa of the wearer.

“No Rangi te kauwae runga, no Papa te kauwae raro. He wairua a runga, he tinana a raro. Ehara teni mo te mātauranga anake, erangi mo te tangata hoki. He wairua, he kikokiko. The spiritual is from Rangi (Sky Father), the physical is from Papa (Earth Mother). This does not apply to education alone but also for people. Who are both; spirits in a physical being” (M. Kopua, personal communication, July 2022).

The facial landscape of mataora is divided into regions, each corresponding to one's social responsibilities and contributions to the community. This segmentation further aligns with the overarching Māori cosmology, drawing from Te Kauae Runga (celestial knowledge), pertaining to the atua and the observation of stars, planets, sun and moon, the cosmological knowledge of the atua. Whereas Te Kauae Raro (terrestrial knowledge) pertains to genealogy, tribal histories, including an account of the people of Ngāti Awa and their migrations, rituals and knowledge related to the physical world. The distinction between *Te Kauwae Raro* and *Te Kauwae Runga* reflects the balance between the earthly and the spiritual respectively, the practical and the metaphysical, within Māori thought and tradition. Both parts are integral to the holistic understanding of Māori cosmology and societal functioning.

A full mataora was a gradual transformation, unfolding over years, maybe even decades, each section inscribed upon achieving a new level of mastery or status, marking the individual's growth and contributions. The amount of 'tapawaha' descending from the nostrils to the chin increased with the development of one's skillset; the cheek spirals close to completion as service to the community is deepened; the 'tiwhana' rays on the forehead is completed as knowledge is acquired and the 'tītī' at the forehead's summit heralds one's rise to a position of Rangatira (tribal leadership). The 'tiwhana-a-rangi-tū-hāhā' reflecting the mind's rangi (dimensions), align with the celestial strata that Tāwhaki and Tāne navigated to procure the sacred knowledge. The central channel on the forehead, the manawa, represents Te Toi

Huarewa, the sacred connection to Io Matua, the supreme being. The 'epa', angled lines on the temples retreating towards the eyes, reflect the narrative of Whiro, the deity associated with the pursuit of knowledge for selfish means, suggesting a skewed or 'epa' perspective.

These markings serve as constant reminders of the wearer's responsibilities, achievements and the ever-present need for self-awareness. These symbols are narrative threads representative of one's identity, urging a balance between service to community and the potential pitfalls of service to self. Each marking is a mnemonic of growth, a call to uphold integrity and a warning to remain vigilant of one's inner shadows. Distinctive patterns within tribes, sub-tribes and families served as visual lexicons of identity, like the unique 'gaps' in the tiwhana rays of the Mataatua region or the omissions of upper cheek spirals by certain groups, examples of the role of moko in signalling a 'belonging' to a specific group or kinship group, easily visible from a distance and clearly identifying the person as from that region or class or skillset. Robley for example quotes D'Urville, "*Tuai one day was calling my attention with great pride to some curious designs cut on his forehead, and when I asked him what was remarkable about them, he answered: "Only the family of Coro-Coro in the whole of New Zealand has the right to bear these signs."*" These insights make evident the pragmatic role moko played in traditional society, a living narrative, a repository of personal and communal history and an indication of status, identity and belonging.

Revisiting Mark's teachings, the takapau framework comes into play once more; he outlines the traditional takapau and its five elements as it relates to the moko kauae: the manawa, the central aho (thread/channel) that connects everything together; paepaeroa, flanking edges of the whāriki signifying support; piihere, the lines beneath the lower lip symbolising the preferred voice of the whānau; purua, the fully coloured lips signifying a voice of the people; and ngutu-kura, the lines above the upper lip depicting the social scope of her voice (Kopua, 2018). While the takapau framework reflects the deep cultural and spiritual significance of moko as a rite of passage, the absence of such structured initiations in other contexts can lead to alternative and often harmful forms of RoP, such as those observed in youth gangs, as Don Pinnock's work in South Africa reveals.

Gangs, Rituals and Rites of Passage: Don Pinnock's work investigates the issues of youth gangs and violence in South Africa, examining the influence of the British Imperial systems inherited from Rome and imposed on various cultures worldwide. The colonial law implemented by the English was hierarchical, centralised and retributive, lacking consideration for the maturation needs of adolescent males. Pinnock explores the importance of understanding youth gang culture and its significance to adolescents, suggesting that comprehending their desires for heroic deeds and risk-taking indicates a subconscious longing for ritual initiation into a healthy, mature adult mindset. He emphasises that the role of the initiator in this process is to prove to the adolescent that they are more than just physical beings, requiring emotional, mental and physical challenges to progress into adulthood. The focus on spiritual growth throughout this journey makes heroes, performance and ritual appealing to them. Pinnock's research contributes to constructing a more relevant youth justice system in South Africa (Pinnock & Douglas-Hamilton, 1997).

Pinnock's work is encapsulated by Joseph Campbell's quote, *"Boys everywhere have a need for rituals marking their passage to manhood. If society does not provide them, they will inevitably invent their own."* (pg. 3) This highlights the subconscious longing of young men for the RoP into adulthood. In Aotearoa, gang life often embodies this notion through initiations that may harm others, a result of trauma experienced by gang members and the cycle of violence perpetuated within their communities. Understanding the importance of ritual RoP can help address these challenges and provide more constructive pathways for young males in both South Africa and Aotearoa (ibid). The correlation between youth in South Africa and Aotearoa, as well as the influence of the British Empire's legal system, is evident. The work of Western scholars like Van Gennep, Gillette, Moore, Eliade and Pinnock provides beneficial insights into the significance and relevance of coming-of-age rituals and RoP in general.

Promoting Ethnic Identity Development in African American Youth: This study explores the role of RoP interventions within the African American community, aimed at positively influencing the ethnic identity development of African American youth. These interventions involve activities that provide historical and cultural information, teach social and intellectual skills and promote values consistent with African American culture. The research introduces the Adolescent Developmental Pathways Paradigm (ADPP), a rites-of-passage model for African American youth that incorporates a developmental framework for ethnic identity development. The ADPP considers the ecological context in which adolescent-focused

interventions operate, emphasising the importance of community empowerment and social change. The implications of the ADPP for adolescent development and the need for future research in this area are discussed (Brookins, 1996).

Rites-of-Passage as Resistance to Oppression: African American psychologists focus on introducing rites of passage for African American adolescents as a means of healthy resistance to the oppressive system they are born into. They aim to empower cultural and personal knowledge to counteract issues such as educational difficulties, employment challenges, delinquency, drug use, pregnancy and suicide prevalent among African American youth. The research addresses the impact of growing up in a racist society with internalised oppression leading to identity crises and mental health problems. A structured, holistic approach to socialisation is advocated to perpetuate resistance strategies and strong coping mechanisms in the face of racism (Brookins & Robinson, 1995).

Educating our Black Children: African American Rites of Passage: (AA-RITES) is an initiative implemented in communities across the United States to instil African and African American culture, history, life skills and character development training in maturing black males. The program has been successful in increasing self-esteem and ethnic pride in these adolescents, better equipping them mentally and socially to excel academically (Alford, McKenry, & Gavazzi, 2001).

Ngā Hua: Findings

While there are allusions to moko as rites of passage in some written documentation, detailed descriptions and philosophical understandings from traditional Māori society are scarce (Caddie & Kumeroa, 2010). Much of the available information comes from the period of the kuia (elderly women), who wore moko kauae from the 1920s to the 1970s, but it remains superficial, lacking in specifics about the rituals and philosophy. Engaging orally transmitted knowledge into this review has certainly helped bridge this gap and falls within the scope of Kaupapa Māori by including the narratives of the expert knowledge holders who have freely offered their time and support to this research. It is evident that rites of passage rituals like moko and tatau along with other forms of body modifications were prolific throughout Polynesia and Indigenous cultures all over the world.

The colonial intentions of removing Indigenous people from their lands and assimilating them into industrial labour forces disrupted the continuation of traditional knowledge, and initiatory rituals like moko (Cormier, 2017). Consequently, most Māori became bereft of the spiritual and psychological connections these provided. The resurgence of moko in modern society is offering a pathway for healing by instilling cultural identity, pride and belonging, as evidenced by research conducted by Professor Penehira (2011), the work of Mark and Diana Kopua (Kopua et al., 2019) and Rawinia Higgins' thesis on the identity politics of kauae moko among Tūhoe women (2004). Initiatives like Poutama Rites of Passage are actively restoring access to rites of passage rituals for young Māori and training strong mentors within the community (Coates & Pekepo-Ratu, 2020), and mokopapa wānanga are emerging as the starting point of a viable pathway forward for tā moko, specifically moko kanohi, as rites of passage.

Through the Western lens, it is evident that these rituals play a crucial role in the physical, spiritual and psychological development of mankind. Traditionally, elders and tohunga who led these rituals conveyed cosmological and historical narratives of the people through sacred spaces of collective ceremony (Moore, 2001). These cultural narratives are a fundamental component to the function of RoP (Hakopa, 2019). A glimpse at research on African American youth indicates the beneficial effects of maintaining rites of passage, providing historical and cultural information and instilling values consistent with their culture (Brookins, 1996). Rites of passage can serve as a healthy resistance to oppression, addressing the challenges faced by adolescents during coming of age for example, as shown among African American youth, or the many Māori who have adorned moko kanohi as a reclamation of identity and cultural survival. Pinnock's research on gangs in South Africa also highlights the struggles faced by youth in the absence of such rituals, which are mirrored in New Zealand's gang culture and experienced by Māori youth.

Rites of Passage has become a foreign concept to modern Māori awareness and many are unaware of its existence as a traditional ritual. Although this review reveals limited published literature on traditional Māori rites of passage, it does highlight essential insights into the importance of reinstating moko as RoP for the people of Ngāti Awa and the generational impacts of the removal of these rituals, indicating the need for further research into this topic's significance and an ongoing gathering of data to support and contribute further to this field of knowledge.

Kōrero: Discussion

It is my assertion that understanding moko as RoP can help heal generational trauma caused by colonial invasion and foster maturation and responsibility within the people of Ngāti Awa and other Māori communities. The concept of psychological archetypes identified by Gillette and Moore (1992), parallel the numerous deities in the Māori pantheon of gods, both male and female which should be perceived and understood in the same way, as examples for human behaviour between each other and the natural world. Reinstating moko as RoP is supported by both Western observations and Māori perspectives. While written records of moko as RoP is limited in available documentation, the Western observations of Indigenous cultures operating from similar worldviews to Māori, provide windows into the functional and philosophical aspects of these rituals, so long as one can sift through the colonial worldviews and opinions on Indigeneity. Ngāti Awa unfortunately was not included in Cook's early observations of moko, David Simmons (1986) notes that because Cook did not land in the area from Cape Runaway through to the Coromandel, no sightings were recorded from the area, neither did he or his crew remark on any moko upon the men who approached them by canoes. This absence of information from the Mataatua region is significant because it would have added to the historical records of actual sightings of moko on the people of Ngāti Awa, placements and style would have been very helpful in determining Ngāti Awa processes of moko. We know moko was performed in Whakatāne because the cave where it was performed (Arikirau at Pōhaturua) is well documented and still exists in the middle of Whakatāne township. As has been noted in the beginning of this review, moko was visually well documented in other areas of Aotearoa, with some anthropological ruminations from people like Robley and Ling Roth.

Though detailed accounts of specific rites and rituals may be scarce, Māori collectively hold a wealth of cultural knowledge in various fields, such as whakairo (carving), raranga (weaving), pūrākau (storytelling), karakia (incantation), matakite/matamōhio (seers/knowers) and kaumātua who are tohunga in whakapapa (genealogy), whaikōrero (carving) and karanga (ritual call of welcome). I maintain that through triangulation, adoption and adaption we can appropriately recreate these rituals for the future generations. The current revival of moko kanohi signals the perfect opportunity to establish a more structured and deliberate approach guided by iwi, hapū, whānau leaders and elders. This resurgence of interest can be channelled into meaningful tribal wānanga that perpetuate these rituals for future generations of Ngāti Awa.

Te Peeti acknowledges that the loss of our rites of passage has resulted in Māori questioning ourselves about whether moko is the right way for us, stating that our own people would scold us for bringing the artform back to life, fearful we were meddling in things like mākutū (witchcraft), when actually it's a knowledge base that is unique to our people, speaking of RoP he states;

“It's the master key and I think that colonisation has affected our people majorly in terms of rites of passage. How many people run wānanga any more in the dark? Or go to places that are sacred and sit there and teach their people with nothing? Not many. If ever! The most important thing we need to remember is that there was balance between both male and female; one was not greater than the other; they were equal to each other. The generational thinking now, that stems from Pākehā colonisation, is that men are the dominant gender. But our culture was never like that; we knew that there was balance between both. Rites of passage create good leaders, good healers, good carvers, you know all those things according to the way our tūpuna thought at that time” (H. Te Peeti, personal communication, January 2024).

Hemi continues by stating that the loss of rites of passage has also majorly disconnected us from our ability to be one with nature, to commune with the birds, for example. His kuia would talk of these abilities that were gained through the trials of rites of passage, the ability to open up that side of our human capabilities. When asked about evolving traditional practices to meet modern realities, he stays true to his purist teachings from his elders, for example, for his people puhoro was solely a male initiation, whereas females birth our living mokopuna into life (ibid).

Furthermore, Kamal'i discussed the importance of ritual and ceremony in maturing the human psyche healthily, advocating for the reintroduction of rites of passage to foster connection and responsibility to the environment. He expressed concern about the potential rigidity of new practices becoming misaligned with traditional values and the importance of remaining adaptable and truthful in cultural evolution. He gives this pūrākau to demonstrate the assertiveness required in rebuilding rituals for our communities.

“We have a term called ‘kukulu hou’ which means to build again. One of our origin stories is about ‘Wākea;’ he gets chased out to sea and there's no ‘heiau’ (temple) for him to do ceremony; his ‘kahuna’ tells him to do the ceremony within his hand. And it was in the hand of Wākea that the first ‘aha’ or ceremony was done in that capacity.

That ‘mo’olelo’ (story) is a good reminder that even though we might only have crumbs, we start at the beginning, place the first stone down and we can always rebuild with each generation but we must be willing to dismantle and rebuild. If there is something that we put in place that may be inaccurate or not appropriate, we must be willing to take that stone out and put another one in. So, they don’t just become concrete and that’s the challenge that I see facing us today; we are writing them in stone and you don’t know how we’re affecting seven generations from now. So, let’s be transparent about it. Say that it’s something that we do not have the language for, we do not have a ceremony for, but we’d like to establish something. But we have to be clear because the general populace doesn’t know better, so that becomes fact; we write it into fact and into history” (K. Hanohano, personal communication, Nov 2023).

Whakatepenga: Conclusion

This review has explored the significance of rites of passage and their crucial role in human development. It has highlighted the impacts of their removal by colonial and religious powers during the expansion of the British Empire. The key insights gained are as follows:

1. **Rites of passage in Indigenous cultures worldwide served essential functions in human development** by marking significant life transitions, guiding entry into adulthood, community roles, and the preservation of cultural identity. Practices like moko served as visible markers of these transitions.
2. **The removal of these rituals by colonial powers dismantled many Indigenous traditions including RoP**, with often devastating effects on the spiritual, psychological, and social structures of Māori and other Indigenous cultures. As noted by Pinnock, Brookins, and Cormier and the tohunga engaged in this research, colonial systems imposed rigid, retributive laws that failed to address the developmental needs of young men, leading to the rise of gang cultures as alternative RoP arguably across many societies.
3. **Contemporary revivals of RoP are occurring globally** in many Indigenous cultures, Mark Kopua has been instrumental in the revival of tā moko in Aotearoa. Initiatives like Te Uhi a Mataora led by Tā Derek Lardelli, and Poutama Rites of Passage are contributing to Māori development, offering healing from generational trauma, and instilling a sense of belonging, identity and cultural dignity.

4. **Psychological and spiritual needs are also addressed through RoP** as supported by Western scholars like Moore, Gillette and Eliade, and by Indigenous knowledge holders like Kopua, Te Peeti, Nunes, Hanohano and Harawira who provide grass roots perspectives. Rituals, including Indigenous tattooing, bridge individuals to their genealogies, histories and their communities, enabling them to assume their roles and responsibilities within society.
5. **Cross-cultural studies**, such as those on African America RoP programs, **demonstrate how these rituals help counteract the damaging effects of oppression**, restoring cultural pride and building a foundation for positive identity development. Similarly, for Māori, the reinstatement of moko as rites of passage has similar potential as a resistance to cultural erasure, contributing to cultural resilience.

Overall, this review underscores the importance of reinstating moko as RoP to nurture cultural identity, strengthen environmental connections, heal generational trauma and empower future generations of Ngāti Awa by marking life's transitions through ritual moko. By synthesising ancestral knowledge with Indigenous methodologies, transformative pathways can be created for the community, aligning with the spiritual, psychological and physical development of its members (Archibald, 2008). The forthcoming chapter will outline the methodological framework guiding the data retrieval from six matakauri (participants) who have undertaken moko kanohi to mark important life milestones, all of whom have pursued higher education. This framework aims to explore the revival of rites of passage among the people of Ngāti Awa.

TORU

1.3 Whāriki Takapau Methodology: The Ritual Mat

Introduction

This chapter introduces the Whāriki Takapau methodology, a uniquely Māori theoretical framework adapted to meet the specific objectives of this study. Rooted in the complimentary traditions of tā moko and weaving, this methodology continues the trajectory of Indigenous scholarship that centres Māori worldviews and values. Building on Smith's (1997) Kaupapa Māori Theory, which contributed significantly to revolutionising Indigenous research by challenging Western notions of objectivity and the 'outsider' perspective, this framework explores and affirms Indigenous methodologies.

Within the broad field of international Indigenous studies, the Whāriki Takapau methodology aligns with and extends the work of Jenny Lee's *Pūrākau as Method* (2009) and Archibald's *Indigenous Storywork* (2008), this chapter situates the whāriki within the broader context, of Indigenous knowledge systems. It highlights the framework's contributions to these methodologies, particularly in its use of storytelling as a culturally meaningful research approach. Additionally, the chapter will explore how the Whāriki Takapau framework intersects with phenomenology, a tradition established by Edmund Husserl (2012) that seeks to understand the structures of consciousness. Finally, the discussion will demonstrate how this framework guided the creative and journal components of this thesis, ensuring that the research remained rooted in Indigenous epistemologies.

Kaupapa Māori

In recent decades Indigenous academics have formulated Indigenous research methodologies that reflect Indigenous world views and the underlying values and principles to undertake their research. Mason Durie reflects on the emergence of Kaupapa Māori Theory (KMT) in the 1980s as a desire to reposition Māori within New Zealand's societal environment. The Waitangi Tribunal and the 1984 Labour government both played pivotal roles in its emergence, introducing Te Tiriti o Waitangi into legislation. KMT emerged alongside of other reviving Māori cultural aspects. Durie further addresses the issue, saying at first there was a need to critique colonialism, but eventually the focus became aimed at seeing Māori flourish, rather than squander in victimisation (Durie, 2017). This chapter will endeavour to further that legacy

of Indigenous research ingenuity. Kaupapa Māori Theory will therefore be the underlying approach to this research methodology. Professor Graham Hingangaroa Smith embarked on the ultimate quest as an Indigenous academic in laying the foundations of a uniquely Māori pedagogy based on frameworks derived from within Māori cultural concepts (Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2021).

Smith developed KMT as a resistance to western notions of academic rigour, which endeavoured to suppress Māori knowledge and approaches to education, based on an inherently racist world view and a privileged attitude towards indigeneity in general (Miller, 2018; Ngata, 2019). Smith noted that much knowledge and cultural practices have been watered down or even lost over many years of cultural degradation due to the influx of European ideologies and dominance. He acknowledges that what has been recorded as research is interpreted through the world views of the western researcher looking in on the Māori world (Smith, 1997).

Many others have and continue to contribute to the development and critical thinking of KMT. Durie asks the critical question, “Has KMT made a difference in Māori lives?” This is the ultimate proof of relevance and is the question that must continually be addressed for Kaupapa Māori Theory to maintain its place in Māori society, where a sense of fairness is held and identity affirmed (Durie, 2017). This research perpetuates praxis, active participation by tribal elders, leaders and people who will help to direct the ritual process and the future development of the tikanga (tribal protocols) and the kawa (ritual protocols) of the ceremonial rituals that will emerge from this thesis. Paulo Freire’s notions of ‘praxis,’ or active participation in the research and critical pedagogy was experimented with by Smith in the initial conceptualisation of KMT. Brad Coombes (2017), states that *“in the absence of participatory action, the transformative power of research is weakened and that is significant because transformation is central to the promise of ‘Kaupapa Māori Theory’ research.”* (pg.56) Certainly, KMT has been very successful in certain situations like Iron Māori, where the focus was on health and wellbeing and not on winning the race. In broad terms, the current kaupapa Māori emphasis is on gaining a stronger sense of being Māori (Pihama, et al., 2021; Smith, 2012).

Connecting the Takapau to the Research Question: The Whāriki Takapau framework directly addresses the overarching research question by offering a structured, culturally grounded methodology to explore moko as rites of passage (RoP) in both historical and contemporary contexts. This framework weaves together key elements of the ritual practice of

tā moko, such as tapu (ritual restrictions) and noa (normality), community involvement, emotional and psychological preparation and personal development. By organising the research around these dimensions, the framework ensures that each stage of the moko process is examined as a meaningful cultural practice and as a robust initiatory process. The Whāriki Takapau framework also highlights the intersection of moko with identity, maturity and personal transformation—aligning these traditional markers with the developmental needs of modern Māori, particularly those seeking to reclaim cultural identity or assert their achievements in academia. This methodology illustrates the way moko can serve as a restorative practice for Ngāti Awa and as a modern pathway for healing and growth, thereby providing a comprehensive response to the research question regarding the relevance and benefits of reviving moko as RoP.

Contributions to Indigenous Theoretical Frameworks

Narrative Integration: The Whāriki Takapau Framework offers some significant contributions to Indigenous theoretical frameworks. It aligns with and expands upon methodologies like Jenny Lee's (2009) 'Pūrākau as Method' and Archibald's (2008) 'Indigenous Storywork'. These methodologies emphasise the importance of narrative in conveying cultural knowledge. Just as Pūrākau uses storytelling to encapsulate and transmit Māori history, values and lessons, the Whāriki Takapau embeds cultural narratives within the structure of its theoretical approach. Rooted in the pūrākau of Mataora and Niwareka; the origins of tā moko and weaving (Whatahoro & Smith, 2011), the framework structures its inquiry around the lived experiences (personal pūrākau) of six matakauri (participants). It also preserves the legacy of Tame Poata and the story of tā moko surviving the crisis of colonisation, expressed artistically through the creative component. The whāriki weaves together the narratives of oral knowledge keepers through discussions with tohunga (cultural experts) in the literature review, which is treated as a collection of stories, along with my own personal reflections from my doctoral journey through the journal, the whāriki weaves all these elements together into a coherent narrative.

Symbolism and Cultural Artifacts: While Pūrākau and Storywork focus on oral narratives, the Whāriki Takapau framework also uniquely incorporates tangible cultural artifacts and rituals. The ritual mat (whāriki) is central to this methodology, it contains the concepts of paepaeroa (communal support), manawa (the threshold of transition) and ahi tapu (ritual fires).

This approach not only preserves narratives but also embodies physical practices like tattooing, healing (rongoā) and traditional ritual fire ceremonies. The Whāriki preserves symbols integral to Māori identity and cultural continuity.

Ritual as Methodology: The emphasis on ritual within the Whāriki Takapau framework adds a distinctive dimension to Indigenous methodologies, positioning ritual as a methodological tool that facilitates deeper understanding and connection to cultural identity. Ritual initiation, once central to traditional Māori society, were targeted and undermined during colonisation, replaced with the education system and Christianity. Shawn Wilson's 'Research is Ceremony' (2008) describes Indigenous researchers as seekers of traditional knowledge with aims to progress Indigenous culture in this ever-evolving modern world. This concept is embodied in the Whāriki Takapau framework, which seeks to re-establish structured ritual processes for moko as rites of passage, learning from the past to inform the future.

Contribution to Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Embodiment and Spirituality: The *Whāriki Takapau* framework emphasises the embodied experience of moko and its connection to the spiritual realm and ancestral traditions, reflecting a holistic approach to knowledge that is central to Indigenous epistemologies. This deepens the conversation around Indigenous methodologies by foregrounding the interplay between the physical, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions. This will affirm and develop cultural and personal identity for future generations. Restoring these rituals as community driven ceremonies, conducted by kaumātua (elders) and guided by iwi (tribal) and hapū (kinship) leadership will nurture strongly rooted individuals, validating the artforms potential for identity retrieval and identity fortification, therefore, validating the research and its methodology.

Intergenerational Transmission of Knowledge: By drawing on the lineage of moko practitioners beginning with Tame Poata and the moko knowledge that survived colonisation, this framework contributes to Indigenous knowledge systems by demonstrating how these rituals and narratives are essential contributors for cultural survival and revitalisation. It demonstrates the dynamic and living nature of Indigenous knowledge, transmitted and adapted across generations. Although much has been lost regarding traditional moko knowledge, the Whāriki Takapau framework provides future generations with a culturally legitimate foundation to rebuild from, to evolve and expand on what has been reclaimed, whilst adhering

to a culturally meaningful tradition. The Mataora and Niwareka narrative is nested in ‘The Lore of the Whare Wānanga’ of the Kahungunu peoples (Whatahoro & Smith, 2011), this cosmological body of knowledge embodies a comprehensive delineation of creation and a place-based Māori world view, a knowledge system that parallels the academic rigor of modern doctoral research.

Potential Contributions to Phenomenology

Lived Experience and Embodiment: The *Whāriki Takapau* framework’s focus on the embodied experience of moko as rites of passage offers new insights into phenomenology, particularly the study of lived experience. It provides an Indigenous lens to understand how cultural practices shape and are shaped by individual and collective experiences, emphasising the significance of the physical body as a site for ritual knowledge (mind) and transformation (spirit). The ordeal of moko, like many rites of initiation, requires one to consciously overcome the challenge of extreme pain. This framework synergises these dimensions and embodies pūrākau in the endeavour to reconcile traditional ritual functionality with the modern predicament of uninitiated human beings.

Intersection of Culture and Phenomenology: By integrating cultural rituals and embodied practices into the research process, this framework enriches phenomenological approaches by introducing a culturally specific perspective that highlights how Indigenous peoples experience and interpret the world. This challenges and expands the typically Eurocentric focus of phenomenology, offering a more inclusive understanding of human experience. As previously mentioned, Tūhotoariki, who composed “Te Oriori o Tūteremoana” (a traditional chant) for the birth of his grandnephew some 400 years ago, reveals Māori knowledge about “te hiringa i te mahara” (the energy of the mind) that conveyed the atua (deity) Tāne to the uppermost heavens to retrieve the baskets of knowledge (Ngata & Jones, 2007). This narrative perpetuates the notion of consciousness from a Māori perspective and is embodied in the Whāriki Takapau framework’s function of nurturing mature human beings (knowledge of self) through ritual initiation (Moore, 2001; Van Gennep, 1919; Moore & Gillette, 1992).

Temporal and Spatial Dimensions: The Whāriki Takapau framework’s emphasis on rituals that transcend ordinary time and space corresponds with phenomenological concerns about the temporality and spatiality of experience. It introduces the concept of sacred time and space through an Indigenous lens, where past, present, and future intersects, as does the spiritual

realm and the physical world. This offers a novel contribution to phenomenology by exploring how these dimensions are experienced within Indigenous contexts. The Marae (communal ancestral facility) in itself provides a space for such occasions, the whole complex set up to accommodate ceremonial occasions like tangihanga (funerals), pōhiri (welcoming ceremonies) and now mokopapa. One could say the Māori world is predicated on the notion of tapu (ritual restrictions) and noa (unrestricted) and therefore the consciousness of ceremony is second nature to many Māori who have grown up around the marae.

New Knowledge in Phenomenology:

Cultural Embodiment of Knowledge: The integration of ritual, narrative, and embodiment in the Whāriki Takapau framework could contribute to new knowledge in phenomenology, particularly in understanding how cultural and spiritual practices shape the way knowledge is embodied and experienced. For example, Mokopapa (facial moko ceremonies) provides the ritual space for pūrākau, where both recipients and supporters become privy to appropriate cosmological, historical and personal narratives. Where ceremony heightens the experience for all present. This expands the scope of phenomenology to include Indigenous ways of knowing and being, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the human condition.

In summary, the Whāriki Takapau framework not only aligns with existing Indigenous methodologies but also contributes to their evolution by emphasising ritual, embodiment, and the integration of spiritual and physical dimensions. It also offers significant contributions to phenomenology, particularly in understanding the lived experience, the intersection of culture and experience, and the temporal and spatial dimensions of human existence, positioning this research as a bridge between Indigenous knowledge systems and broader academic discourses, offering new pathways for understanding and revitalising cultural practices.

Framework Preface: To preface this methodology, Krutak (2007) presents compelling evidence that tattooing and weaving are interconnected art forms across numerous Indigenous cultures, perhaps suggesting a common origin. In many cultures where tattooing is primarily a male practice, often linked to warfare and/or headhunting, women participate indirectly by weaving garments and ritual items designed to protect their men during combat. For instance, in Māori culture, the kaitaka (a finely woven cloak) was wrapped around warriors' forearms as a whakapurutao (shield) during hand-to-hand combat (M. Kopua, personal communication, February 2023). In Taiwanese and Bornean traditions, garments are woven with ritualistic

intent, the motifs used in weaving are the same as those tattooed on men when they return from headhunting expeditions. Dayak male tattoos were given as a spiritual camouflage, and their women wove the same patterns into ritual garments for the same reason. The baskets woven to carry the heads back are revered and are highly ritualistic. The anthropomorphic iconography often features protective patterns, intended to ward off evil spirits or prevent the spirits of animals and ancestors represented in the garments from escaping and causing harm. Among the Atayal people of Taiwan, women would receive cheek tattoos only after proving themselves as expert weavers, further reinforcing the symbolic relationship between tattooing and weaving in these cultures (Krutak, 2007).

Te Whāriki Takapau: The Ritual Mat

The methodology constructed for this thesis was adapted from an existing framework associated with tā moko. The concept of the whāriki takapau was handed down to me by my tutor and mentor Mark Kopua. I have adapted what Mark has taught me about the whāriki to give relevance to this thesis. This methodology is associated with a finely woven ritual mat called a Whāriki Takapau. There are three overarching dimensions: ‘Paepaeroa’ - physical, ‘Ahi Kōmau’ – emotional/psychological and ‘Rarohenga’ - spiritual. These overarching dimensions encompass the following seven elements.

1. Paepaeroa – whānau and community support
2. Ahi Kauri – the fire of preparation
3. Ahi Mānuka – the fire of ceremony
4. Ahi Kōmau – the fire of emotion and mind
5. Ahi Tā Moko – the fire of initiation
6. Ahi Parapara – the fire of clearing
7. Manawa – the pathway of transition

This structure is deeply rooted in the historical and philosophical context of moko, it also serves as a cultural blueprint to revitalise its practice within the Ngāti Awa community, marking pivotal life transitions. This framework holds broad applicability, offering potential for future exploration into various significant life stages and transitions within Māori society, from early education to the rites of passages associated with graduations at modern whare-wānanga, to elderhood and transformative rituals for social reintegration.



Figure 5 *Te Whāriki Takapau: The Ritual Mat.*

The whāriki is the unifying motif of this methodology. It is significant because the artform of weaving also originates in Rarohenga with Te Whare Pora o Hineteiwaiwa (the house of weaving), Hineteiwaiwa being the atua of the feminine arts of childbirth, weaving and lunar cycles. Moko was mostly a male occupied art form; weaving was mostly female occupied and therefore offers the balance to the ritual space. This integrative approach recognises the contributions of Niwareka and the restorative practices within the wharepora to bring healing to the recipient. There are five parts to the traditional takapau as it relates to moko. However, for the purposes of this thesis I will only be utilising two: paepaeroa which will be described in element one and the manawa, which will be described in element seven. An additional five elements are derived from ritual ‘ahi’, the ceremonial fires associated with moko. The diamond shape of our whāriki symbolises ‘Te Ara Puapua a Hinenuitepō’, the vulva of Hinenuitepō (Best 1996, p. 995), acknowledging Māui and his attempt to enter through her whare-tangata (womb) to kill the goddess by piercing her heart with the intention to bestow immortality upon humanity. This symbolism is etched into the chins of Tūhoe women, a powerful emblem of female authority and a poignant reminder of the deity's mana. (C. Doherty, personal communication, 2004).



Figure 6 *The Portal to Rarohenga.*

The symbolism of this diamond is an apt representation of the portal to Rarohenga. Now I will proceed to breakdown the Whāriki Takapau for this thesis and outline each element's role and how it will relate to the data collection process and analysis of that data.

Paepaeroa: Communal Support, Physical Dimension



Figure 7 *Paepaeroa: Communal Support, Physical dimension.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry centred around community participation.

The whānau/supporters would sit on the decorated edge of the ritual mat called the paepaeroa and therefore the people are also referred to as the paepaeroa. This concept is then transferred over to specific parts of moko kanohi, for both kauae and mataora, where the two outer most

edges of the kauae are called paepaeroa. There are placements among these elements of the moko kanohi to show the status of the supporters: an upward facing koru denotes tuakana (oldest) status, while a downward facing koru denotes teina (younger) status (M. Kopua, personal communication, May 2018). This element relates to the whānau and community and their role of support for those who are adorning moko kanohi.

Rarohenga: Te Ao Wairua, Spiritual Dimension



Figure 8 *Rarohenga: Spiritual Dimension.*

The next five elements are housed in the centre of our whāriki takapau and symbolise the five ritual ‘ahi’ outlined above. Sacred fires or ovens were prolific in Māori rituals and specifically generated (ahi pāhikahika) using incantations to make things and occasions tapu, and also to remove tapu (Best, 1996, p. 1116). This is te ao wairua, the spiritual world, the state of tapu, or restriction, under the protection of the atua Rūaimoko, Whiro, Hinenuitepō and Hineteiwaiwa. Rarohenga is their home and the place of origins for tā moko and its rituals; the values and principles of this methodology are derived from the teachings about the people of Rarohenga, a peaceful, non-violent people, where everyone looks after one another (ibid; Whatahoro and Smith, 2011).

Ahi Kauri: The Ritual Fire of Preparation



Figure 9 *Ahi-Kauri: Ceremonial Preparations.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry centred around ritual preparation.

In traditional times, the use of ahi as a sacred ritual element was commonplace, especially among the priestly echelons of society (P. Temara, personal communication, 2023). The use of ahi for the purpose of material preparations such as tattooing ink was always done under tapu or ritual restrictions (Best, 1904; M. Kopua, personal communication). Spiritually speaking, rituals are a way of communicating with the environment, our ancestors and to our subconscious mind (Williams, 1998). Ritual preparation for the recipient of the moko is an important part of the process; the incantations and purification rites are performed by the moko practitioner or a tohunga from the community. Either way, it's recommended that the receiver approaches their moko kanohi in a ceremonial manner. This prepares the person in various ways: mentally by anticipating the endurance of much pain; on a spiritual level, many visit their urupā (cemetery) on route to the appointment and many dream of their tupuna smiling at them and giving messages of support for their coming initiation.

Ritual preparations fortify the receiver and the tohunga to enter the ritual space of tapu. Ahi Kauri seeks to ascertain if these preparational rituals are being engaged with sufficiently in today's moko practices. This will obviously vary from kaitā to kaitā (tattooist). The purpose of this element is to ascertain the appropriate tikanga for this stage of the moko process and to compose, if needed, the required karakia and ahi rites for Ngāti Awa. There would be a need to wānanga with our tohunga and kaumātua to ensure this part of the moko tikanga is put in place as with all the rites of the moko process for rites of passage.

Ahi Mānuka: The Ritual Fire of Ceremony–Mokopapa

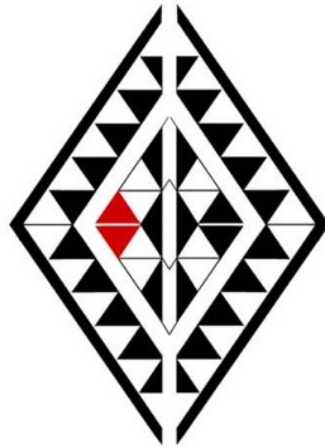


Figure 10 *Ahi-Mānuka: Ceremony.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry centred around the ceremony.

Ahi Mānuka was one name given to the traditional ceremony of tattooing (Best, 1924), while Te Mānuka Tūtahi (lone standing mānuka tree), which originally stood at Wairaka in front of the old courthouse on Toroa street near Tūpāpakurau, was a traditional Ngāti Awa school of learning. This was the place that the high priestess Muriwai buried the mauri (talismans) that arrived on board the Mataatua canoe (Ngaropo, 2000). For me, this name Ahi Mānuka is a commemoration of that wāhi tapu and refers to the ceremony of Mokopapa.

Ceremony is a sacred undertaking and has many psychological benefits, as markers of growth and transition (Moore, 2001). In many cultures, going through these rites of passage was fundamental to becoming an accepted member of the community, seeding within the mind and spirits of the people a sense of belonging and identity (Moore, 2001; Van Gennepe, 2019). Dr Wayne Ngata explains that ritual karakia and mōteatea were a form of ‘tohi’; devices that engage the release of potential from within our DNA (Coates & Pekepo-Ratu, 2020). Professor Mera Penhira in her (2011) thesis shows the relationship between moko and ‘mouri’ (life force), explaining that mouri is perhaps a more spiritually human essence rather than the mauri of inanimate objects; she quotes Māori Marsden (2003) who gives ‘mauriora’ in the same way. She observes how moko is such a positive spiritual experience that it helps people to reclaim their identity and sovereignty which categorically contributes to wellbeing. This element and its line of enquiry will seek to ensure that Mokopapa will fulfill the ceremonial functions for the people of Ngāti Awa into the future.

Ahi Kōmau: The Ritual Fire of Emotion, Psychological Dimension



Figure 11 *Ahi-Kōmau: Emotional–Psychological Dimension.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry that is centred around the psychological significance of ceremony.

Rūaimoko is the youngest child of Rangi and Papa and it was decided that he would stay with his mother in her grief and therefore was turned under to Rarohenga during the separation of the primal parents. Ahi Kōmau, the sacred fire of Rūaimoko, is deeply entangled with the psychological dimension of rites of passage by embodying the emotional undercurrents that accompany significant life transitions. The narrative speaks to the process of transformation and the inner turmoil that can be as tumultuous as volcanic eruptions. When Rangi and Papa were separated, it was not just a physical rending but also an emotional cataclysm. Rūaimoko, receiving the fire from the neck of Ranginui - Sky Father, symbolises the maintenance of life and comfort - a metaphor for the nurturing aspects of psychological growth during rites of passage.

The atua is positioned in Rarohenga, the under-world, whose role is that of a guardian of the volcanic fire at Earth's core. This reflects the internalisation of experiences and emotions during transitional phases. The atua rages, resulting in tectonic shifts and eruptions, mirroring the psycho-emotional upheavals that individuals may undergo during life's critical thresholds. Just as volcanic eruptions reshape the land, rites of passage reshape the individual. These events can be disorienting and challenging, much like being turned under to Rarohenga, but they also have the potential to forge new psycho-emotional landscapes within the individual. But when the Ahi Kōmau is calm and settled, it sustains and nourishes the life of our planet.

The extended name: Whakarūaimoko reflects the internal struggles associated with great change, 'Whaka-' (to cause), 'rū-' (shaking, trembling), 'ai' – (regular, habitual, consequently) and 'moko-' (the markings or scars left behind) encapsulates the transformative effect of rites of passage on the psyche. Whaka-rū-'au'-moko is a variation, where 'au' means both current (of lava) and smoke. The scars left by the fiery rage of Rūaimoko can be seen as symbols of the lasting changes that these psychological processes imprint on one's identity. This resonates with the idea that rites of passage are both external ceremonies embodying critical internal processes that leave conscious and subconscious impressions on our psycho-emotional being, helping us to emerge with a new sense of self, much like the new topography that is born from the earth's seismic activities. Hohepa Delamere describes the stomach as a second brain, the two-way communication between the two resulting in the psycho-emotional consciousness of the human being, what you feed one, is digested by both (R. Perez, personal communication, 2012).

Ahi Kōmau represents the core of the moko process and the atua to which this artform is dedicated to. The story of Rūaimoko shows us the rage that is generated when the 'divine child' is separated from the father and older siblings and also from feeling his mother's anguish. For Rūaimoko, this is a RoP in the liminoid sense, because the passage was brought about through crisis, regardless of the intentions of his tuākana (elder siblings) who made a conscious decision to keep him with his mother. Usually, in the context of coming of age, separation from the mother is a fundamental function of that particular RoP, to bring about a mature state of mind in the boy.

When Mataora arrived to Rarohenga on his quest to win back Niwareka he came across her father Uetonga tattooing by a ritual fire, it was here that he was initiated into the ways of moko and where he had to confront his shortfalls as a human being; the moko process laid him out flat and opened up his flesh and his blood flowed. It was an epic ordeal, forever etched in his mind and spirit that he would never return to being the jealous violent man that led him to Rarohenga seeking forgiveness and acceptance (Whatahoro & Smith, 2011). In the South Island account of the origins of moko, Tamanui-ā-raki was directed to visit Taka and Ha in the place of the dread spirits at the deepest region of Rarohenga (Best, 2016). These dreaded beings again speak to the need of venturing into the shadowy depths of human consciousness to retrieve the 'boon for mankind'.

Many who approach moko kanohi, experience the spiritual realm in the lead up to their own ordeals; this suggests that our ancestors encourage its return from beyond the veil. This is truly an Indigenous paradigm and certainly falls outside the scope of Western academia. But these RoP rituals offer Māori a pathway to wellbeing, spiritually, mentally and physically. This element will ensure that the correct tikanga is established and put in place by Ngāti Awa tohunga and kaumātua with the intention to nurture and guide the spiritual growth of our people into the future, to maintain the spiritual fires of the soul for the descendants of Ngāti Awa.

Ahi Tā Moko: The Ritual Fire of Initiation



Figure 12 *Ahi-Tā-Moko: Initiation.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry that is centred around the procedure of moko as a facilitator of growth and development.

Scholar, Te Rangi Hīroa, defined ritual as ‘the form of conducting the whole rite relating to one subject and it may include various ceremonial acts in addition to the chanting of appropriate karakia (Keane, 2011). The rites of tā moko are many when you consider this definition; from the welcoming ceremony to the ritual incantations, to the actual tattooing, the incantations to lift ritual restrictions and even the kai (food). These are all rites within the ceremony. The actual tattooing is what we are going to focus on in this element. Tattooing, like many of the world’s initiatory rituals, can be extremely painful and pain or extreme feats are a necessary element in the process of transitions. This has been identified by many researchers on the topic of rites of passage (Van Gennep, 2019; Moore and Gillette, 1992; Campbell, 2013; Eliade, 2017; Pinnock, 1997).

Again, in the context of coming of age, the ordeal is the vehicle that allows the child to cross the threshold of adolescence into that of an adult. The initiation is the catalyst for change, the seed that quickly germinates and flourishes. Graduation rites of passage, on the other hand, are the completion of a journey. Life is a series of transitions and rites like that of moko, literally mark the important transitions in one's life. The mataora journey is a symbol of transformation; its staged process served to enact these transitional markers in life. I maintain the process should be spread out over time as achievements and milestones are met. Although this is not always the case, as many of our leaders in te ao Māori are more than 'overdue' for their markings. In my 30 years of carrying the artform of moko, it has proven to be a powerful and meaningful healing modality for our people with the ability to connect people to their wairua, to their identity, to their whakapapa and to their mana, helping people process grief and instil pride in their cultural roots therefore raising their self-confidence.

Practices like tattooing were used to push people past their usual mental, physical and spiritual capacities. There will come a time during the process of moko that will require a person to find the resolve and determination to push through the pain barrier. This is the point of the initiation, to bring the person to the threshold of their pain tolerance and usher them through the barrier. They must connect to their hau (breath) to keep the mind from stressing over the excruciating ordeal and calm the 'mouri', a notion captured by the framework employed by Penehira (2011). Many will want to 'tap out', which could possibly have a detrimental effect on the person's mental resolve, especially if the moko is not completed at all. The process will require the kaiwhiwhi (recipient) to dig deep and not quit, even when the mind and body is screaming out for conclusion. Once completed successfully, the psyche will bank this experience in its conscious and subconscious awareness (Jung, 1990) and you realise you can handle the challenges of life.

Women on the other hand, are afforded rites of passage from nature; their bodies are designed to incubate life and life initiates them in due time (Campbell & Moyers, 1991). This is traditionally the time that moko kauae began for them. Tattooed lips (ngutu purua) would generally be grown into also as they became a voice for their whānau, or a ceremonial voice of welcome, tattooed lines over the lips (ngutu kura) would also be grown into as the woman grew in her leadership to hapū (clan) and iwi (tribal) roles (H. Te Peeti, personal communication 2024). The kauae is relatively painless on the tattoo pain scale, but the lips are probably one of the most excruciating parts of the body to tattoo. In Samoa, when the young men are put

through the pe'a tattoo ceremony, Su'a Petelo Suluape states that the purpose of this ritual is to reflect the ordeal women go through when giving birth (2012). As mentioned, Māori warriors of rank in traditional society also undertook the peha, (puhoro/taurapa) (M. Kopua, personal communication, 2004). A six to seven-day ordeal which certainly brings a person to the brink of their capacity to endure such things. This initiation should be undertaken by our young men ideally between the ages of 18-21.

This element will seek to ensure that this knowledge and understanding of these rituals and rites is taught to the next generation, where excellence is the standard not just in the artistic and technical abilities of the kaitā, but also their knowledge of the ceremonial practice that they carry. We must ensure that what we have managed to retain and understand will be built upon and ensure that the next generation are fully equipped to do the same. It's said that pain is the greatest teacher and that wisdom can only be gained through lived experiences. The rite of tā moko is born from spirit, the journey of Mataora; feats of endurance, facing one's shadows and transforming the old to the new, the dark to the light, the seed to the tree. One's identity is strengthened in the process; life's purpose becomes clearer and growth occurs.

Ahi Parapara: The Ritual Fire of Clearing



Figure 13 *Ahi-Parapara: Lifting the Tapu.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry that is centred around ritual cleansing, lifting the tapu and re-entry back into the community.

In some areas of the country, ahi, or rather smoke was used to lift the tapu of rituals, ahi parapara was one such ritual fire specific to tattooing and death, ahi tute and ahi rokia (Best, 1924; Best, 1996, p.1117) were others. Ahipara in the north, was named for this reason; it was a place of ritual smoke purification (R. McGrath, personal communication, June 2022). Noa is a state of normality, or the ‘mundane world’, everyday life where no restrictions (tapu) are in place. Waerea (protective incantation) and whakahoro (to free from tapu), are some of the rites employed to lift the tapu from ritual occasions. Ocean water is also used for whakanoa rites, whereas rainwater that has not touched the ground, is used to sanctify. In traditional times, branches of certain trees were dipped in the water which was then sprinkled over the person being cleansed. These days spray bottles are used for this purpose. Whether water or fire and smoke, the purpose was to clear the way.

Although the modern world has brought about massive changes to tikanga like the tapu system, tapu is still observed within occasions like moko, especially as the procedure brings about the spilling of blood and brings the kaitā into contact with what is considered the most tapu part of the human body, the head. Over the course of my 30-year journey with moko I have encountered spiritual entities that caused a certain amount of discomfort physically and mentally, bad dreams and even depression. This was due to a lack of discipline regarding maintaining these protective karakia and tohi practices and I have had to seek out tohunga with the tools to help me move those entities on. Ahi Parapara, like ngā iwi Moemoeā (Australian Dreamtime people groups) and Native American shamanic practices, use smoke to clear away and cleanse during ceremonial rituals, or to carry prayers up to creator on the smoke of a ritual fire. Takutaku and karakia were also engaged to make clear acknowledgements and statements to the spiritual realm and secure the verbal affirmation and spiritual unity of those present, both living and of those who have passed through the veil. Its purpose, to ward off unwarranted and unwanted entities and black magic (mākutu).

When Tāne was chosen by Io Matua to ascend ngā rangi (heavens) to retrieve the baskets of knowledge, he also had to undergo purification rituals before and after he could travel into and through each rangi (Smith, 1913). The purification rituals shifted his vibrational frequency allowing him to move harmoniously into the next rangi (M. Kopua, personal communications, May 2022). As previously mentioned, Te Oriori o Tūteremoana, reveals that it was “*te hiringa i te mahara*”, the ‘energy of the mind’, that enabled Tāne to ascend the heavens and the purifying waters of Hine-kau-orohia were used to clear his pathway into and out of the source

of creation. (Ngata & Jones, 2007). I bring this to the reader's attention to show our ancestors understanding of the world. Whiro was the great nemesis of Tāne in these stories, the seventh eldest of the atua who rules the shadows and fears of mankind. There is, as Royal says, light and dark in the world (2005), not all beings are kind. Mākutu for instance, is still practiced in today's world and can be enacted upon anyone if the knowledge of its 'rites' are known. So, there is a responsibility to ensure safety for everyone throughout the ritual process.

There are some further tasks for the tohunga tā in completing the process responsibly.

1. Ensuring the blood remains from the tattooing process are disposed of appropriately. As has been mentioned by Tā Hirini Moko-Mead, the tohunga tā moko Hokotahi of Tūhoe would perform his moko just outside the fence line of a cemetery, so that the blood and materials used could be buried straight away (H. Moko-Mead, personal communication, May 2023).
2. Ensuring the person/s are informed about after care procedures to avoid infections and disease. Most infections occur outside of the studio, assuming the kaitā has been properly trained in cross contamination and blood born viruses. In either event, it is the responsibility of the tohunga to ensure the correct healing information has been given to the kaiwhiwhi (recipient).
3. Ensuring that the person/s are prepared for unsolicited negative attention directed at them out of arrogance, ignorance or racism. Our women receive more of this attention than our men and I can only assume it's because of a stereotypical fear factor associated with the Māori male as violent and angry. These attitudes say a lot more about the person generating the hatred than the person it's directed at and these are the types of discussion that should take place as our whānau are re-entering society with moko kanohi.

This element seeks to ensure that the process of ritual cleansing and re-entry into society occurs smoothly and responsibly, maintaining safe practices for all involved.

Manawa: The Pathway of Transition

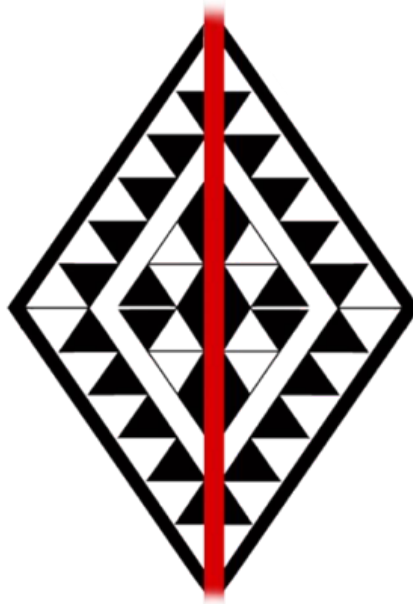


Figure 14 *Manawa: Pathway of Transition.*

This element will inform a line of enquiry that is centred around transition, transformation and reintegration.

“The manawa is a very important and intangible ‘aho’ (chord) that ties everything together, spiritually and physically. For example, humans have a ‘manawa’ that runs from the ‘tipuaki’ or ‘pūmotomoto’ at the top of the head, through the heart, lungs, pito (navel) and sexual organs, journeying down the torso and limbs, through the middle fingers and toes. It is the cord that connects all those things together with the sky and the earth. Another example is the main ridge beam in a whare (house), known as the ‘taahuhu’ (spine), it has a ‘manawa’ that travels down each ‘heke’ (rafter) and through the pūmotomoto of each pou (post). That’s why there is a ‘pou-toko-manawa’ (main support post), to hold that manawa up. A manawa can also be an ‘awa’ (river) that connects the inland at its source to the sea and connects all the villages and people along it, from one end to the other. The mat, the ‘whāriki’ or ‘takapau’, also has a manawa upon which the recipient lies when the moko is applied and even the manawa of the moko kauae lies on the manawa of the wearer. Traditionally the recipient lay upon the manawa and the tohunga sat at the head. The whānau support sat on either side of the takapau upon the paepaeroa of the mat” (M. Kopua, personal communication, May 22, 2018).

The manawa of this methodology expresses this channel of movement in that it represents the pathway of transition for the initiate of the ritual, beginning in the state of noa, (normal

mundane life) entering the state of tapu (restriction, separation a sacred liminal space) for the initiation rites and then on completion of the ritual, re-entering back into the mundane world. The manawa is a way of expressing the notion of a successful initiation, marking the important occasion in one's life, marking te mana o te wā! (the power of the moment). Its function will be measured by what has been gained through the ceremonial experience, i.e., the beginning of a new journey in life and/or an ascent into a new social platform for the individual and what has been left behind, adolescence for example. Usually, there is a period of integration that occurs; this may take a few weeks to a few months for a person to adjust comfortably into their new social role and their new markings on their face.

We have outlined previously the difference between a 'liminal' initiation (controlled and intended) and a 'liminoid' initiation (crisis). According to Campbell, a liminal initiation can fail and therefore leave the person in a worst-off position than when they started (1991). This is the reason that clear tikanga need to be in place for these rituals; protocols should be followed to ensure successful transitions for all who lay on the whāriki. Moko kanohi has a way of holding us accountable to our pathways; we are reminded of it every morning when we look in the mirror. For many, their moko has literally become a friend for life because of that daily reminder. Hopere Chase states that he talks to his mataora every morning, calling it his 'buddy for life'; his story as you will see in the following chapters, is one of immense transformation. Our communities are there to support our pathways, but it's our personal responsibility to ensure that we travel that pathway with excellence and dedication, these are some of the values and principles that moko kanohi compels in us as we move forward in life.

Mātāpono: The Principles Woven into this Whāriki Takapau:

The values and principles that I have adopted and embodied over the last 30 years of my work with tā moko have proven to be very valuable in terms of gaining and maintaining the integrity that this taonga requires, of course, we all make mistakes in life, but these principles have been gleaned and instilled through my lived experiences and the teachings and character of others, either consciously intended or through osmosis.

Whāia Ngā Mahi o Rarohenga – Be a Good Person: As a tā moko practitioner, this principle underlies my kaupapa as a whole, "*Whāia ngā mahi o Rarohenga*" is the underpinning value that compels my work ethic and my philosophical approach to moko. Mahi-a-Atua translates this whakatauhāki as 'strive to be better than average' (Kopua & Kopua, 2023), it is most

understood as ‘follow the ways of Rarohenga’ and comes with the understanding that the people of Rarohenga are a peaceful and caring people who look after each other. There is a ‘cause no harm’ undertone in the character of the people of Rarohenga. I have certainly adopted this principle in my personal life with the intention to model this way of being as a carrier of the knowledge basket of moko. Respect and integrity go a very long way in community relationships and the responsibilities that unfold in life are what will be remembered about us when we take that RoP ourselves into the afterlife. Given that moko originates from Rarohenga, it makes absolute sense that this be the first and primary principle for this research.

When Mataora sought the blessing of Uetonga to return to the upper world along with Niwareka at his side, Uetonga and Tauwehe (brother of Niwareka) sought to ensure that Mataora would respect their ways and their daughter/sister and love her and look after her. Mataora replied, *"I will in future adopt the methods of Rarohenga in the upper world."* Then Ue-tonga [sic] said to him, *"Mataora! Do not let a repetition of the evil repute of the upper world, reach here below. You must see that the upper world has its works of darkness, whilst the under-world is really the 'world of light,' together with its work."* To which Mataora replied, *"Look on my moko; if it had been painted it might be washed off, but as it is a moko cut in the flesh by you it is permanent and cannot be washed out. I will adopt in future the ways of this [lower] world and its works"* (Whatahoro & Smith, 2011, p. 189). This principle ensured that no harm either physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually came to any of the participants included in the process of this research and it will certainly remain the overarching principle in my life and mahi until my passage to Rarohenga and I hope it will be carried on by those who pick up this ritual taonga in the following generations.

Manaakitanga – Elevate Others: Manaakitanga is a ‘staple’ principle for Ngāti Awa and a value that I have learnt through osmosis growing up in Whakatāne. My parents and extended whānau simply personified this value and it wasn’t until later in life that I fully understood why they would go to so much trouble to look after people, even strangers in need! My parents exude manaakitanga. When people rise from the mat, reborn in many ways and then ‘float’ on out into the world, it is such a fulfilling thing for me to see their spirits elevated. This principle ensured that participants were looked after and were not left feeling like they had been taken advantage of in any way.

Kotahi te Kī: Do What You Say: Integrity to me is a fundamental element of mana, being absolutely disciplined in completing what you declare you will do for others and should occurrences arise that impede on your delivery, then clear and timely communication should be enacted. This principle ensured that things were delivered and appointments met to the best of my ability and should hindrances arise that I communicated efficiently and effectively to those who were affected by the change.

Māhakitanga – Humility: Another fundamental value for Ngāti Awa is humility; it is a signal that one's character is in check and is evidence that there is no grandiose sense of self. Humility and knowing one's place in the world doesn't mean you bow down to ignorance and arrogance, but it certainly influences your response to those occasions; it would not be a reactionary response but a mature and considered response to challenging situations. This principle ensured that interactions with participants were of a humble nature.

How the Whāriki Takapau underpins the Journal and Creative Tiers

Journal Tier–Ahi Kōmau: The journal component of this thesis is guided by the Whāriki Takapau framework, where reflective practice is fundamental. My personal reflections and documentation of the research process are woven together creating a dynamic narrative that interweaves the strands of research, cultural knowledge and identity, and personal experience, much like the threads of a whāriki (woven mat). This approach aligns the journal with the broader principles of the Whāriki Takapau framework, where reflections and insights contribute to the overall structure and purpose of the research.

The Whāriki also intersects with Dr Reuben Colliers (2018) Whetū Mārama framework which he devised for strategic storytelling for television, (discussed in chapter five of the journal). The diagram opposite illustrates this intersection, with supporting chapters (Paepaeroa) like conversations with tohunga, and reflections on journaling serving as the central transitional chapter (manawa) between reflections on the exegesis and the creative component respectively. Preparational processes (Ahi Kauri) were employed utilising Colliers Whetū Mārama framework to plan and write each chapter.

Research journaling, viewed as a form of pūrākau, embodies a ceremonial nature, (Ahi Mānuka), it became ritualistic in its functionality, purposeful, habitual and transformational in that it provided a space to seek solutions and insights, translating to a clearing away of obstacles (Ahi Parapara). Finally, the journal captures those challenges and reflections throughout the doctoral journey, making it often emotive (Ahi Kōmau).

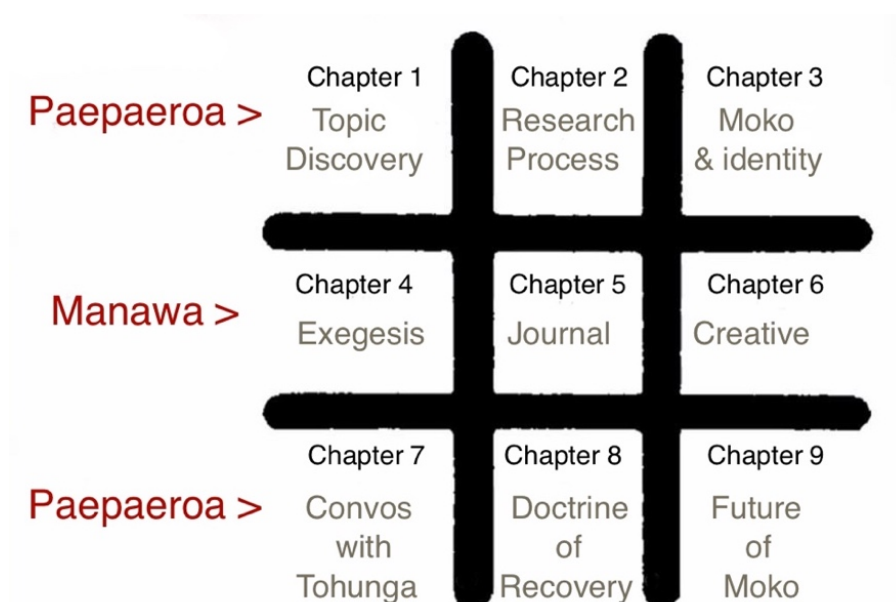


Figure 15 Intersection of the Whāriki Takapau and the Whetū Mārama.

The concept of Pūrākau is employed as a supporting methodology, by viewing my reflections as an ongoing narrative—a dynamic pūrākau that captures the evolving story of the research journey. Pūrākau, like Indigenous Storywork is dynamic and can be adapted to suit various purposes, with its philosophical underpinnings constantly evolving (Lee-Morgan et al., 2019; Thomas, 2005; Wilson, 2008; Archibald, 2008). The journal became a space to engage with pūrākau as a methodological tool, shaping understanding of the research topic and my own positionality within it. The journaling tier can also be viewed through the lens of Storywork, where reflections serve as a narrative tool that connects the research with broader cultural and historical contexts. Archibald (2008) discusses how storytelling in research allows for a deep engagement with the material, providing insights beyond conventional academic analysis. Similarly, Archibald (2019) emphasises the journals role in reflection, stating “*The meaning-making process continues when the researcher searches for ideas, seeking an interrelated understanding of historical, political, cultural, social, or other contextual impacts upon Indigenous peoples, their stories, and their communities*” (p. 4).

The journal, therefore, became a site of Storywork, where the process of meaning-making was ongoing and intimately connected to cultural identity, personal misgivings about the removal of ritual rites of passage in my own life and the research journey. This is where phenomenology intersects pūrākau as methodology, by reflecting on my own experiences and the experiences of the tohunga that were engaged through discussions, particularly around the impacts of the removal of these rituals in our lives and the lives of previous generations. By documenting these reflections, a rich, phenomenological account of the cultural and personal significance of moko as rites of passage was provided, contributing to a deeper understanding of how this practice shapes and is shaped by individual consciousness.

The Journals Contribution to the Research Question: The use of the journal as a methodological tool is rooted in the principles of Pūrākau and Indigenous Storywork, allowing for an ongoing narrative that documents this research journey and the key reflections that emerge from engaging with moko as rites of passage (RoP). This journaling process certainly captures personal insights and serves as a dynamic method for uncovering the nuances of how moko functions as a RoP. By reflecting on the research journey, personal experiences with moko, and the broader research findings, the journal provides a space for synthesising cultural knowledge and lived experiences. These reflections directly contribute to answering the research question by offering a phenomenological and narrative-driven perspective on how moko as RoP can influence identity, cultural revival, and spiritual growth. Thus, the journal not only supports the research by documenting the process but also helps articulate the evolving understanding of moko as a transformative, ritualistic practice.

Creative Tier–Ahi Pūrākau: Each canvas underwent many hours of digital painting on my iPad utilising an app called Procreate. Each embodies the seven elements of the Whāriki Takapau framework, for instance each underwent the collection of supporting narratives and components (Paepaeroa), preparational processes for composition and deep consideration of symbolic elements (Ahi Kauri). They convey the notion of ceremony (Ahi Mānuka) or highlights its absence, (karakia was also engaged every time I worked on the thesis). Each contains strong emotional aspects (Ahi Kōmau), both compositionally and sentimentally. Initiation (Ahi Tā moko) is central to the thesis inquiry, making it the focal point of each canvas. All canvases went through a stage of clearing away (Ahi Parapara) unnecessary compositional elements and kōrero (dialogue) and finally transitioned (Manawa) from initial conceptualisations to final compositions.

Lee-Morgan (2019) emphasises that for pūrākau narratives to endure, each generation must reshape these stories to reflect their circumstances, issues and priorities. Pūrākau as research is about crafting stories, remembering and connecting critical past events to present concerns and future possibilities. The creative tier of this thesis aligns in a meaningful way with pūrākau as methodology, starting with the pūrākau of Mataora and Niwareka (origins), and weaving together the research by integrating the personal stories of the characters depicted in the canvases. This approach underscores the importance of storytelling in preserving and transmitting Māori cultural knowledge and history and future aspirations.

Embedding pūrākau within the creative component through the Whāriki Takapau framework, preserves the narratives of the characters, and utilises them to explore the cultural significance of moko as rites of passage. It also examines the impacts of its loss, its revival and its potential for future generations. The pūrākau concludes with an open-ended question about what Ngāti Awa moko symbology might become, inviting future inquiry. Archibald's Storywork (2008) complements this approach by providing a framework for understanding how Indigenous stories in research reinforces cultural identity, teaches values, and transmits knowledge. The creative tiers artistic expression, through visual art and storytelling, serves as a form of Storywork, adapting these narratives to contemporary contexts and ensuring their relevance to modern Māori identity and cultural practices.

The creative tier was primarily shaped by my phenomenological perspective on the significance and function of moko as rites of passage. Phenomenology, as developed by Edmund Husserl, emphasises understanding experiences from the first-person perspective. My experience of receiving moko kanohi as a mark of academic achievement, intimately feeling its loss as though a part of myself was missing, and being actively involved in the revival of this artform—including its physical and spiritual aspects—provided a phenomenological basis to explore how these experiences shape one's consciousness, identity, and ancestral connection. The artistic expression of the Toi Kōrero canvases (Ahi Pūrākau) and its accompanying pūrākau, seeks to capture the profound, embodied experience of this cultural practice.

The Creative Components Contribution to the Research Question: The nine digitally hand painted canvases and accompanying pūrākau, serves as a storytelling method for visually and narratively exploring the origins, decline, revival and future of moko as RoP. The current generation of Māori are growing up in a digital age, everything is accessible through hand-held

technologies, these digital images and their accompanying pūrākau will certainly appeal to the millennial generation and the new alpha generation, providing what Dr Robert Pouwhare envisioned about constructing a virtual world for the listener. Each canvas aligns with the Whāriki Takapau framework, they embody the physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of moko, illustrating the cultural significance and impact of these rituals, as well as their removal over the last four to five generations. This artistic tier functions both visually and through narrative to provide documentation of how moko as RoP nurtures cultural identity, strengthens connections to whakapapa, and facilitates spiritual growth. By conveying complex themes in a visual format, the creative tier directly addresses the research question, presenting moko as a historical practice nearly extinguished by colonisation while also opening a discussion about its potential as a future-oriented pathway for Ngāti Awa. Like many traditional mythological stories, the final canvas is intentionally left open-ended (Archibald, 2008) with only impressions of moko depicted to prompt further inquiry. Together, the canvases and pūrākau offer creative representations of how moko can serve as a tool for personal transformation and cultural continuity.

Viewed as a whole, the canvases not only trace the historical trajectory of moko as RoP—from its origins, pre-colonial flourishing, and near extinction, to its revival—but also mirror the personal journey of individuals affected by the loss of identity, language, and land due to colonisation. The disruption of moko as a practice reflects the broader erasure of cultural markers for Māori, and its revival offers a pathway for healing and reconnection. By approaching moko as RoP, individuals have the opportunity to reclaim their sense of identity and belonging, restore their connection to whakapapa, and heal the intergenerational trauma caused by the loss of these vital cultural practices. Through this parallel, the creative component illustrates how moko can facilitate not only cultural continuity but also personal transformation and recovery.

Whakahirahiratanga: The Significance of this Framework

The creation of this methodology was conceived through a Kaupapa Māori lens which adds to the basket of knowledge for frameworks within te ao Māori. It attempts to add a positive impact on Māori pedagogy. It is derived from within an existing tā moko ritual framework for moko kauae. I have adapted that existing concept in a way that embodies the elements and principles required to investigate and answer the research enquiry. I feel it meaningfully weaves together a series of enquiries aimed at giving thesis to my theory, that moko rituals can

be extremely beneficial for Māori in the modern world; it goes a long way to restore and preserve this cultural taonga, the artform and rituals of moko that have been stolen by colonial invasion. It serves to give adequate evidence of the need to reinstate these rituals as a collective pathway for Ngāti Awa and highlights the importance of cultural markers and their role in identity development and a sense of belonging. This framework could easily be adopted by other iwi and researchers and redeveloped to suit their research inquiries.

The introduction of Ahi Mānuka (mokopapa) into academia for example, would set a new benchmark for Māori education and the graduation ceremonies that mark the successful pathway of excellence and discipline for those who graduate. I believe this reclamation will go a long way to engage Māori into higher learning pathways and promote excellence and the advancement of Ngāti Awa-tanga into the future. It is a reclamation of ceremonial rites and harkens us back to traditional whare-wānanga where moko was conducted upon initiates of the wānanga as markers of those important transitions (M. Kopua, personal communication, 2018).

This methodology provides the evidence for the need to reinstate rites of passage for Ngāti Awa. It's my assertion that moko as RoP encourages accomplishment in the context of academia. I acknowledge western academia for its robust structures and disciplines that Awanuiārangi proudly promotes and I'm confident that this methodology and the findings that are revealed in the coming chapters support my endeavour of reigniting the ritual fires of moko and rites of passage for Ngāti Awa. Finally, the Whāriki Takapau methodology honours the legacy of Tame Poata, from whom this framework originates, by bringing it into the academic arena. This approach revitalises its purpose as a valued ancestral treasure, connecting back through time and space to Rarohenga, to Niwareka and Te Whare Pora o Hineteiwaiwa, the sacred house of weaving, and to Uetonga, the tohunga tā moko, and to Mataora, the cultural hero who acquired the artform for us in the upper world. The next chapter will outline the method constructed for this research.

WHA

1.4 Whakawhāriki – The Interweave Method

Exploration of Moko as Rite of Passage

This chapter outlines the approach and procedures utilised to investigate the revival of moko as rites of passage (RoP). This chapter aims to provide a clear framework for the research design, data collection and presentation and analysis methods employed in the study. Various research methods could be applied to study the revival of moko as RoP ritual, including qualitative interviews, focus groups, surveys and ethnographic observations. The four main quantitative methods were also considered. However, due to the nature of the research, the chosen method will employ a uniquely designed approach to delve into the lived experiences and perspectives of six matakauri (participants), the public is also engaged in an online survey and tohunga discussions add valuable knowledge to the research. A qualitative approach to the data retrieval also supports the Kaupapa Māori construct of this research.

Kaupapa Māori underpins Whakawhāriki (interweave of narratives) which employs a variety of methods (interviews, surveys, interpreting pūrākau, ethnographic observations and wānanga) in ascertaining insights and perceptions from multiple narrative sources including the six matakauri, academic literature, orally transmitted knowledge, personal reflections and ethnographic experience as the insider conducting the research. Whakawhāriki allows for an in-depth exploration of individuals' experiences, uncovering the underlying meanings and essences of those experiences. Whakawhāriki is a culturally grounded approach that aligns well with the Māori worldview, emphasising the connection between people, ancestors and the environment. Whakawhāriki is derived from the same Whāriki Takapau narrative that was employed to design the methodological framework of this thesis; its meaning is connected to the mokopapa gathering, when two or more people undertake their moko kanohi at the same mokopapa ritual, this is termed whakawhāriki. All the recipients are woven together through the ritual of moko; their lives and journey are now intertwined into a collective whāriki. The whakawhāriki method also weaves together the experiences, stories and data in the accomplishment of this thesis.

Research Questions for Matakauri

The matakauri were presented with a series of qualitative questions, informed by the seven elements of the Whāriki Takapau Framework. The questions for the matakauri are designed to encourage discussion and thought about this topic; it may seem like some questions are repetitive, but careful thought was given to restating certain ideas with slightly different wording, with the aim of sparking unconsidered dialogue from the matakauri. The matakauri questions are as follows:

Paepaeroa: Physical Dimension: It Takes a Village

This line of enquiry will be centred around community. Communal ceremonial space, mokopapa.

1. Can you speak about your moko kanohi experience? Did you receive your moko as part of a mokopapa, surrounded by your whānau, hapū and colleagues or did you receive it in a more intimate and private manner?
2. Have you experienced a tribally initiated mokopapa inside a whare-tupuna? What are your observations of the collective impact a mokopapa has on communities?
3. In your opinion, how has the absence of collective rites of passage affected the sense of belonging for Māori over the last 6-7 generations?

Ahi-Kauri: Ceremonial Preparation

This line of enquiry will be centred around ritual preparation.

1. What are your thoughts on how ritual preparations contribute to the overall process of moko kanohi? Did you feel prepared for your moko ritual?
2. How should practitioners ensure that the ritual preparations are conducted respectfully and in accordance with cultural protocols?
3. In what ways do the ritual preparations contribute to the spiritual and emotional significance of receiving a moko kanohi?
4. What role do kaumātua play in ensuring that the ritual preparations for tā moko are conducted in a culturally appropriate way?

Ahi-Mānuka: Ceremony

This line of enquiry will be centred around ceremony, tapu, sacred ceremonial space, liminal space.

1. Drawing on your experience of receiving your moko kanohi, do you have any thoughts about how ceremony influences human consciousness; what is the relationship between the two?
2. What understanding do you have regarding the purpose of rites of passage rituals?
3. Do you think that discussions about RoP should be engaged with more as a part of the process of mokopapa? Y/N? Why?
4. Are you aware of any of your family members past and present that went through a traditional or non-traditional RoP?

Ahi-Kōmau: Emotional/Psychological Dimension

This line of enquiry will be centred around the psychological function of ritual ceremony.

1. Were there any tohu (signs), dreams, visions, knowing's, synchronicities leading up-to receiving your moko? How did these phenomena affect you?
2. While under the needle did you experience te ao wairua (spirit world)? Describe the mauri/energy in the room?
3. Did you experience the shadow world, dark thoughts, subconscious fears? If so, what kind of growth did they afford you, if any?
4. Do you feel like you hold yourself differently since receiving your moko? How do you perceive yourself now?

Ahi-Tā-Moko: Initiation Rite

This line of enquiry will be centred around the rite or procedure of moko as a facilitator and a symbolic marker of growth.

1. Did you get to the point of wanting to 'tap out'? Did you have to dig deep to push through to completion of the moko? If so, how has that affected your overall resolve?
2. Has your moko experience deepened your sense of identity and purpose in any way?
3. How do you think gradational RoP rituals can benefit te iwi Māori into the future?

Ahi-Parapara: Lifting the Tapu, Noa

This line of enquiry is centred around ritual cleansing and re-entry into society after ritual initiation.

1. Do you feel the process of whakanoa (lifting the tapu) following your moko ritual resettled your wairua and emotional state as you re-entered normal daily living?
2. Can you express the emotions and thoughts that emerged upon completion of your moko process?
3. How has the journey affected your life since?
4. Are there any further observations regarding your experience of, or thoughts about ritual cleansing at the completion of your moko ritual?

Manawa: The Pathway of Transition

This line of enquiry will be centred around transition and transformation.

1. Was moko intentionally engaged as an incentive for you to complete your academic journey? If yes what lead you to approach your journey in this way? If not, would you consider this as an option for future study or transitions to new roles in your community?
2. Has this experience and process affected your sense of identity, your self-confidence your sense of belonging in any way?

Matakauri Selection and Data Collection

For this study, I selected six matakauri, comprising an equal representation of three females and three males to ensure a fair gender balance and to reflect the experiences of both male and female participants in the process of receiving moko as a milestone marker. While the gender split aims to provide equity, it is acknowledged that this does not necessarily represent a full cross-section of the community; however, it allows for an exploration of moko experiences across both genders in a meaningful and balanced way. These specific matakauri were chosen because the original research question was centered on how reinstating moko would benefit graduates of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. All selected participants had either completed or were currently undertaking higher-level studies, making them particularly well-suited to contribute insights related to the impact of moko within an academic and cultural context. The initial contact with each matakauri occurred through face-to-face interactions or online exchanges, where their potential involvement was discussed. Following these

interactions, formal approval for their participation was secured through the ethics proposal process. Data collection was conducted via three wānanga sessions facilitated through the online platform Google Meets, which provided the capability to record, store, and transcribe the discussions. All data is securely stored within the researcher's personal account on the platform's admin console.

Matakauri 1: Dr Shonelle Te Kahupake Wana

Born 1974. Tribal affiliations: Ngāti Awa, Tūhoe, Whakatōhea, Ngā Puhi, Mataatua. Postdoctoral studies at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi (TWWOA).

Academic history:

- Doctor of Indigenous Development and Advancement, TWWOA
- Master of Indigenous Studies, TWWOA
- Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori, TWWOA
- Te Rōnakitanga: Te Pōkairua Reo – New Zealand Diploma in te reo (*Rumaki*) level 5, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWOA)



Figure 16 *Dr Shonelle Kahupake Wana at Awanuiārangi Whakatāne 2022.*

Kaitā: (Tattooist): Tyler Jade (kauae/chin) and Turumakina Duley (ngutu/lips). Ngutu work undertaken at Whakatāne, August 2022 following the submission of her Doctoral Thesis. Dr Wana is a dedicated academic and states *“I always knew that I would one day wear the symbol of ‘te mana o te wahine, moko kauae’, the symbol of my ancestors. However, I didn’t know when that would be, until my doctoral journey”* (personal communication, September 2022).

Matakauri 2: Raniera McGrath

Born 1984. Tribal affiliations: Te Rarawa, Muriwhenua, Ngāti Hine, Ngāpuhi. Tā moko practitioner, carver, iwi consultant.

Academic history:

- Currently a doctoral student at TWWOA
- Masters in Te Reo at The University of Waikato
- Bachelor of Arts in Māori, Māori Pacific Development at The University of Waikato
- Te Panekiretanga o Te Reo at TWOA
- Bachelor of Māori Visual Arts: Toihoukura
- Postgraduate Diploma Teaching: Auckland University



Figure 17 *Turumakina and Raniera McGrath Queensland 2022.*

Kaitā: Turumakina Duley. Mataora undertaken at his home in Cable Bay, in August 2022 with many whānau and friends in attendance for support. Raniera aims to continue his Mataora journey following the completion of his thesis. He is an expert practitioner of moko and whakairo and excels in te reo, the recitation of whakapapa (genealogy) and karakia (incantation).

Matakauri 3: Dr Ruihi Shortland

Born 1970. Tribal affiliations: Ngāti Awa, Ngā Puhi. Teacher at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Oriini ki Ngāti Awa and Whakatāne High School, Te Kura Tuarua o Te Mānuka Tūtahi.

Academic history:

- Doctorate of Indigenous Studies, TWWOA
- Master of Māori Studies (Hons), TWWOA
- Diploma of Secondary Teaching, Palmerston North College of Education
- Diploma of Māori Development, Massey
- Bachelor of Arts Science and Te Reo Māori, Massey



Figure 18 *Turumakina and Dr Ruihi Shortland 2022.*

Kaitā: Turumakina Duley. Moko work undertaken at a Mōtiti Island mokopapa in January 2017 and Tāneatua in August 2022. Dr Shortland's thesis gives a Māori interpretation of the scientific periodic table, drawing from mātauranga Māori, Kaupapa Māori and te reo Māori, she believes *“a Māori interpretation of the periodic table has the potential to enhance Māori participation in the pursuit of science education mastery and lead to an effective ‘pūtaiao’ (science) discourse, as well as affirm Indigenous pedagogical theories”* (Toi Ako, 2021).

Matakauri 4: Hopere Kapareira Chase

Born 1962. Tribal affiliations: Ngāti Awa. Works in Māori Mental Health.

Academic history:

- Currently a Doctoral Student at TWOA
- Master of Applied Indigenous Knowledge, TWOA
- Bachelor of Bicultural Social Work Degree, TWOA



Figure 19 *Hopere Chase, Graduation, Master's Degree 2022.*

Kaitā: Turumakina Duley. Complete mataora over two sessions undertaken at Ruaihona Marae, Te Teko in 2019 and Orewa in 2020. Hopere is a reformed gang member and was the president of the Te Teko Chapter of the Mongrel Mob, spending a total of 40 years in the gangs since he was 14 years old. When speaking of his academic journey he states, “*My kaupapa when I came in here was me looking for answers to why gangs behave like they do, but through my study it turned on to myself and asked, why did I join the gang? I was suffering but I didn’t know I was suffering*” (Chase, 2018).

Matakauri 5: Tania Faulkner - Gear

Born 1972. Tribal affiliations: Ngāti Awa. Works at Te Kāhui Tūhono, the Māori strategy unit within Inland Revenue.

Academic history:

- Currently a doctoral candidate at TWWOA
- Master of Indigenous studies, TWWOA
- Bachelor of Arts Mātauranga Māori,
- Diploma in Policy and Māori Management



Figure 20 *Tania and Mere Faulkner at their Graduation 2022.*

Kaitā: Turumakina Duley. Moko work undertaken at Toroa Marae, August 2022, a total of five of the Faulkner women were completed on this occasion, three of them having completed master's degrees at TWWOA.

Matakauri 6: Hohepa Joseph Henare Maclean

Born 1979. Tribal affiliations: Ngā Puhi, Te Rarawa. Employment: Teacher.

Academic history:

- Te Panekiretanga o Te Reo, TWA
- Master of Te Reo - Te Paerua Te Reo Māori at Auckland University of Technology
- Bachelor of Māori Immersion Teaching-Tai Pakeke, TWWOA
- Pōkaitahi and Pōkairewa a Te Ataarangi at Pōkaitahi a Te Ataarangi



Figure 21 *Hohepa Maclean 2022.*

Kaitā: Raniera Mcgrath. His moko work was undertaken at Auckland in 2020 and Cable Bay in 2022. I first met Hohepa when I travelled north to tattoo the mataora for Raniera and quickly realised his depth of character and knowledge of things Māori, we also held a connection through the teachings of Papa Hohepa Delamere of whom we both knew and respected as a healer and mystic.

Online Public Survey

An online public survey was conducted to explore the perceptions of moko kanohi within the general population. Over the course of seven days, a single daily question was posted on my personal Facebook and Instagram profiles, which has a combined network of 36,000 followers. The aim was to gain insight into modern society's perspective on moko kanohi. Each question was carefully designed to foster a comprehensive understanding of public perceptions, emphasising that there were no right or wrong answers and participants were encouraged to engage with a sense of aroha and mutual respect. Those who engaged in the survey will remain anonymous in the research, regardless of their cultural background. Both Māori and non-Māori individuals were invited to participate; 99% were Māori. Notably, the survey questions intentionally omitted references to 'rites of passage', intending to gauge awareness and knowledge about this aspect of moko kanohi. The survey questions were as follows:

1. What does moko mean to you?
2. How has moko impacted your life?
3. What made you decide to get a mataora/kauae? I'm also interested in why people won't take it up.
4. What about having the reo and knowledge of tikanga Māori when considering mataora and kauae? Are they a must when it comes to moko kanohi?
5. Should Pākehā whānau members be allowed to wear mataora and kauae? Should we be able to gift it to those who have become whānau?
6. Should transgender or gay men be able to wear moko kauae? And conversely should wahine be able to wear mataora?
7. Where do you see the artform of moko heading into the future? Do you have any concerns?

The diverse responses collected through this survey offer valuable insights into contemporary perspectives on moko kanohi and will contribute to a deeper understanding of its significance within the broader community and more importantly for this research, it reveals just how little is known about moko as RoP in modern society. When compared to the matakauri interviews, the survey reveals the stark gap in understanding of the original social function of moko as a marker of life's milestones.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data from the six matakauri in the research involves several steps to derive meaningful insights and patterns. The following data analysis process was derived from Braun and Clarke's article on Thematic Analysis in Psychology (2008), an article on Qualitative Thematic Analysis Based on Descriptive Phenomenology (Sundler et al., 2019) and Grounded Theory.

1. **Data Pre-processing and Familiarisation:** The responses from the six matakauri, was processed to ensure consistency and readability; it was then read through several times.
2. **Code book Creation and Initial Coding:** Codes were identified and defined; relevant codes were assigned to segments of text that correspond to specific themes reflecting key concepts and the dimensions of the methodology.
3. **Code Grouping:** Similar codes were grouped together to form broader categories. The relationships between categories and subcategories were analysed, exploring connections and differences in matakauri perspectives.
4. **Data Reduction:** Concise summaries for each category, highlighting the key points and insights conveyed by the matakauri, providing a clear overview of the main themes that emerged from the data.
5. **Theme Development:** The distribution of themes across matakauri responses were examined. Identifying commonalities and differences in viewpoints and any outliers or unique perspectives.
6. **Quotation Extraction:** Noteworthy quotes and passages that exemplified the themes were sought out.
7. **Contextual Interpretation:** The context of each response to understand the underlying meanings behind matakauri statements was interpreted, considering tribal nuances, emotions and personal experiences that shape their perspectives.
8. **Synthesis and Conclusion:** The analysed data to generate insights were synthesised, highlighting overarching trends, noteworthy observations and unique viewpoints. Connecting these insights to the research objectives and broader context.
9. **Member Checking:** The findings were then shared with the matakauri to ensure their statements were interpreted accurately, before the final report was written.

Overall, the data analysis process ensures a thorough examination of matakauri and their responses, extracting meaningful insights to enrich the research's depth and relevance.

Ethical Considerations

I have diligently followed the established ethical protocols by obtaining approval from the Ethics Committee at TWWOA before initiating official communication with the matakauri. Each matakauri received a comprehensive information sheet detailing the research project's purpose, a consent form for their endorsement and a copy of the proposed questions. Opting for non-anonymity, the decisions of the matakauri were rooted in the researcher's belief that public recognition of their involvement would serve as a potent source of inspiration especially for aspiring Māori scholars.

Data Presentation

The data is outlined in the data analysis chapter and discussed in the findings chapter. Presented through the three dimensions of the Whāriki Takapau and a fourth dimension that covers generational impacts. The themes identified through the analysis process gives structure to the data presented.

Significance of Method

The selected method for data retrieval in this thesis is rooted in a relevant Kaupapa Māori framework that resonates with the cultural values and narratives of tā moko and the rituals that accompany the art form. The Whakawhāriki method further enhances this by offering a familiar wānanga setting and dialogical process. This approach not only allows the matakauri to engage comfortably with the researcher and each other but also fosters a meaningful exploration of moko as RoP within the context of their own lived experiences. Each matakauri has many threads to their stories and experiences; the Whakawhāriki method brings all the threads together to weave a whāriki of narratives.

Conclusion

The evolution of the Whāriki Takapau methodology into the Whakawhāriki method has resulted in a research approach that aligns appropriately with the Kaupapa Māori paradigm. This distinctive method has effectively facilitated in-depth wānanga (discussions) among the matakauri, enabling a comprehensive exploration of moko as RoP.

RIMA

1.5 Tātari Raraunga – Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter offers an in-depth exploration of the benefits of reinstating moko as rites of passage (RoP) for Ngāti Awa. These ceremonies hold immense cultural and personal meaning and their incorporation into tribal tikanga will be profound. Through a series of wānanga and discussions with matakauri, individuals who have undergone moko kanohi ceremonies, this chapter aims to shed light on the impact of these ceremonies on identity, belonging, confidence and academic motivation. Our exploration centres around the defining research question: **How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa?**

To unravel this question, our inquiry takes a comprehensive approach, building upon insights gained from the literature review, the matakauri interviews, responses from an online survey and insightful conversations with various tohunga. Through these varied threads, we aim to weave an integrated narrative, rich with both personal experiences and collective wisdom. There is also an exploration of the generational impacts of the calculated removal of these rites of passage due to imperial colonisation. A cornerstone of this study is its Kaupapa Māori emphasis. Grounded in the principles of self-determination, cultural reclamation and the pursuit of knowledge from within, our investigation remains firmly rooted in the cultural and epistemological foundations of the Māori worldview. By prioritising the perspectives, voices and narratives of Māori individuals and communities, we ensure that the research emanates from and contributes to the well-being of the people it seeks to understand.

The Whāriki Takapau methodology is a culturally nuanced approach derived from the ritual mat upon which recipients of moko lay, forming the structural framework of this inquiry. This method encompasses three interconnected dimensions: the physical, the spiritual and the psychological. Each dimension provides a unique perspective on the experiences of matakauri who have undertaken this journey. Moreover, we embrace grounded theory as our overarching analysis approach, permitting the emergence of themes and insights directly from the participants' narratives. This helps mitigate an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon from preconceived notions, fostering genuine Indigenous perspectives rooted in the voices of those who have walked this path.

Whakawhāriki, a concept that emerged from the methodology, weaves the narratives into a robust presentation of data. In doing so, we endeavour to create a whāriki of understanding that honours the complexity, depth and function of moko as a transitional RoP. As we unravel the data analysis, we not only seek to address our research questions but to provide a cultural mirror that reflects the transformative potential of moko within the lives of Māori graduates and their communities. In the upcoming sections, we delve into the physical, spiritual and psychological dimensions of moko. We also examine the repercussions of the removal of these rituals, as well as its future generational impacts, with the intention of revitalising moko as a tribally recognised RoP tikanga for Ngāti Awa.

Paepaeroa: Physical Dimension and Communal Space

Within the whāriki takapau framework, the physical dimension of moko as RoP encompasses both individual and collective experiences. This dimension explores how the physical act of receiving and integrating moko impacts the person and the community to which one belongs. It delves into themes of:

1. Healing and transformation.
2. Identity and connection to environment, whānau and friends.
3. Bi-cultural integration into daily life.
4. Advocacy of moko to the wider community.

Through the narratives of our participants, we weave the first strands of our whāriki, beginning with the communal space known as paepaeroa.

Mokopapa: A Pathway of Social Transition

Reinstating moko as RoP was viewed as a strong mechanism for cultural revival. The matakauri highlighted its role in bridging generational gaps and revitalising the artform within their families and communities. Moko ceremonies were seen as not only personal achievements but also as markers of important life transitions, acts of cultural preservation and continuity. The matakauri expressed their commitment to passing on the knowledge and traditions associated with moko to future generations, emphasising its potential to help fortify personal and cultural resilience.

Theme 1: Healing and Transformation

Shonelle: *"As my lips neared completion and the kaitā recited karakia, I felt overwhelming emotions, a profound sense of wairua (spirit), ancestral presence and approval. It was a healing, a removal of challenges and mamae I'd faced. I felt whole and deeply humbled. This was my tohu, my graduation!"*

Hopere: *"This pilgrimage was a genuine rebirth for me, an authentic metamorphosis. It opened my eyes to the magnitude of the mahi (work) that lay ahead. The journey became my primary concern. By embracing my roots and undergoing the transformative ritual (moko), I embarked on a path of healing, reconnection and self-discovery."*

Shonelle's heartfelt emotions and connection to wairua and those present in the room at this occasion which occurred after her doctoral thesis submission, reveals how moko impacts deeply on the wearer, impacting her overall wellbeing, she 'felt whole', signifying a harmony of mind, body and spirit. Her story reveals the shifting of the weight of a journey completed and the connections made with those present. This emotional and spiritual high is a beautiful thing to behold and can stay with the person for some months following, as the person floats on that proverbial cloud, as their uplifted 'mouri' settles. Hopere exemplifies the transformative potential of moko through his journey. His profound transformation, sparked by the birth of his first grandchild and his determination to leave a life of gangs, led him to pursue education to help others heal from the violence that leads to gang involvement. His lived experience now serves as his greatest tool for aiding others on their paths to healing and transformation, his mataora process playing a significant role in his 'rebirth' and 'metamorphosis'.

Theme 2: Identity and Connection to Whānau and Iwi

Tania: *"I had a strong relationship and connections to my whānau, hapū and iwi. I was taught at a young age about who I was and where I came from and who my people are. For me, it was about bringing moko kauae back into the space of our whānau. It was about identity. Having the collective of the hapū wrapped around you while you're receiving your tā (moko), the wairua (spirit), is a real emotional experience. It's not just spiritual in terms of receiving the tā, but in the whare-tupuna (ancestral house), with all the photos around you of your nannies who wore moko, it's a lot."*

Raniera: *“I wasn’t expecting that moment with my mum and my nan showing up to support, which makes it even more special now, knowing they were next to me during that part of it (upper lip and nose), especially now that my nans not here anymore!”*

These excerpts highlight the role of moko in strengthening cultural identity and connections to whānau, hapū and iwi. Moko provides a powerful space to bring people together. Tania's immensely bonding experience in her whare-tūpuna was enriched by four family members taking the kauae alongside her and her close relatives embracing her and her cohort of whānau members, reinforcing her whānau identity, through a wairua infused ceremony that certainly strengthened their relationships. While for Raniera the unexpected arrivals of his mother and grandmother during his moko process left a lasting impression on his heart and wairua. Both were not expected to attend for religious reasons, so when they arrived during probably the most trying part of his process, the upper lip and nose, their presence brought him to tears, revealing his elation and his heart felt gratitude for their support of this occasion.

Theme 3: Bi-cultural Integration Potential: Academic Achievement

Shonelle: *“Kauae has just confirmed who I was born to be and the academic pathway, although it's a Pākehā thing, what we are obtaining in that journey is our Māori knowledge because all our studies are about Māori, te ao Māori, or Indigeneity.”*

Hopere: *“The mataora, for me, symbolises the completion of my academic journey. It inspired me to reflect on the challenges and pain I endured throughout my education, work and personal life. Putting on the mataora was an expression of that journey, encapsulating all the pain and growth I experienced. It settled deep within my wairua and I now find myself in a good space.”*

These quotes emphasise the benefits of the integration of moko into daily life. Shonelle's kauae experience affirms her identity and life's purpose, recognising academia as a western institution she intentionally Indigenises her academic experience. Hopere reported improvement in his overall well-being, rooted in his wairua, highlighting the positive impacts of moko kanohi, especially for those who have experienced traumatic upbringings. Moko kanohi yields tangible benefits in academic and cultural pursuits for these matakauri, showing how it becomes an invested part of their life's purpose.

Theme 4: Advocacy and Cultural Revival/Continuity

Raniera: *"...it really does act as a waka (vehicle) to open the doorways for other people so that they can enter into this whare (house), that belongs to them. Start that decolonising for them."*

Tania: *"I feel accountable, like being a mentor, carrying the kauae for our whānau and advocating for moko kauae to our hapū, especially for our rangatahi. But for our older ones in the lost generation, they're still struggling with the notion of carrying kauae moko, so I feel accountable to them. In terms of the wider community, I feel proud to carry it in the community."*

These quotes reveal a clear sense of representation and mentorship and lead to discussions about how the presence of moko kanohi affects individuals' roles as mentors, influencers and community members. Moko is seen to break down barriers, to encourage other Māori into cultural spaces and ignite the process of reclaiming mana motuhake (separate authority). The physical dimension of moko as RoP thus holds potential for profound community bonding experiences, touching upon healing, identity, integration and cultural continuity. It not only transforms individuals but also nurtures a sense of collective well-being within Māori communities, through wānanga, song, spirit, storytelling, history and environmental connection.

Rarohenga: Spiritual Dimension and Wellbeing

Rarohenga is the home of the artforms of moko and weaving, this dual relationship symbolised by the spiritual woman Niwareka and the physical man Mataora, embodies the cultural significance of moko. From the matakauri stories, four themes emerge:

1. Emotional healing and personal growth.
2. Connection to roots.
3. Identity and purpose.
4. Spiritual guidance.

Our whāriki grows fuller with the stories and experiences of our matakauri as we venture into their spiritual experiences with moko kanohi highlighting the spiritual benefits of undertaking moko as RoP.

Moko: A Vehicle of Wellbeing

Moko is the physical marking on the body, that reflects the emergence of the character growing inside the person. It is, therefore, a framework that carries a wealth of ancestral values and the purpose of ritual. Moko kanohi serves as a unifying ritual, drawing Māori from various backgrounds and levels of cultural efficacy. It offers a transformative journey that encourages self-reflection and inner alignment. As we delve into the experiences of the matakauri, we'll witness how this process can foster spiritual well-being by guiding individuals inward, allowing them to recalibrate and focus on personal growth and development.

Theme 1: Emotional Healing and Personal Growth

Shonelle: (Since receiving her kauae) *"I am a lot more confident in myself and my self-worth. I have a no care factor of what others think of me as I am not here to impress anyone but to live my life according to the divine plan. I feel I have drawn nearer to wairua (spirit)."*

Hopere: *"Wearing mataora has brought about profound changes in my life. I find myself stepping into a priestly role for my whānau. It has positively transformed my perspective and how I interact with others. In the past, gang culture dictated violence and harm towards anyone. However, now I approach people with empathy. My entire persona has shifted. Embracing mataora has turned me into a responsible leader, committed to a safer, more compassionate world for my family and community."*

Shonelle's experience illustrates a significant boost in self-confidence and self-worth. Her newfound self-assuredness is evident in her disregard for others' judgements and her commitment to living her life in alignment with purpose. This transformation suggests that moko kanohi has played a role in helping her overcome emotional hurdles, providing emotional healing and strengthening personal growth. Her increased connection to spirit, also indicates a deepening of her sense of self, whilst this narrative from Hopere highlights a remarkable shift in perspective due to his mataora. His previous involvement in gang culture, characterised by violence and harm, has been replaced by empathy and a commitment to creating a safer and more compassionate world for his family and community. This transformation underscores the potential of moko kanohi to facilitate personal growth, here signified by a transition from a harmful lifestyle to one of responsibility and leadership. Hopere exemplifies the transformational potential of mataora.

These stories suggest that the reinstatement of moko as RoP could offer similar opportunities for emotional healing, personal growth and positive transformation. It implies that moko kanohi can serve as a catalyst to overcome personal challenges, develop self-confidence and adopt more compassionate and responsible roles within their communities.

Theme 2: Connection to Ancestry and Cultural Roots

Note: These two quotes have been paraphrased due to the length of the dialogue:

Hopere: *“At my work we had practitioners of traditional Māori massage, visiting our office. One invited me for a session. Initially hesitant, I eventually agreed. During the massage, she observed the presence of my nanny Rūia and another tipuna (ancestor) with a tā moko who revealed that a curse had been placed on my family by Te Kooti, which initiated much violence in my lineage, the curse was placed because my tipuna was mistaken for a colonial informant. After the mirimiri, I discussed this with my mother, who confirmed it. My tipuna, Hinekōpu, was present at Waikirikiri Marae when Te Kooti sought refuge there. I researched further, finding a relevant local saying, “Hāmua Bang, Bang,” which foretold violence within the hapū (clan) due to the curse. This experience inspired me to consider wearing mataora to honour my spiritual journey and the message to lift the mākutu (curse) from my lineage during the mirimiri session.”*

Hohepa: *“When I was sixteen, I dreamt I had a moko kanohi while growing up in Beach Haven. At that time knowing little about our Māori heritage, the dream lingered and in 2001, after learning te reo Māori and becoming involved in teaching the reo, I went to Ōwae Marae in Taranaki. During my whaikōrero (oration) there, I felt a burning sensation on my face, where my mataora spirals now reside, as if the moko was imprinting on my skin, I delivered my speech and immediately forgot what I said! Later the elders explained the pou (posts) in the whare-tupuna and one represented my great-great-grandfather, I felt later that he was speaking through me.”*

For Hopere, the mākutu placed by Te Kooti, a well-known resistance fighter and religious leader of the colonial period, had played out in the real world. The message is then further confirmed by the discovery of the saying, ‘Hāmua bang, bang,’ referencing a cycle of violence in his lineage where his immediate relatives fought and killed each other through opposing

gangs. This ancestor planted the seed for Hopere to adorn mataora to honour his healing journey and in turn healing the curse of his lineage, while actively seeking transformation for himself and his descendants. Hohepa recounts a dream he had as a teenager, where the idea of a moko first entered his consciousness. This dream of wearing a mataora symbolises the seed of his cultural awakening and the beginning of his quest to understand and embrace his Māori heritage. These kinds of encounters are very common leading up to adorning moko, revealing how meaningful these spiritual experiences can be; the regularity of these experiences and the impressionable impacts they have on the matakauri suggests that moko often emerges as a spiritual calling. Opening to the spiritual and harmonising all dimensions of oneself surely contributes to holistic well-being.

Theme 3: Sense of Identity and Purpose

Hopere: *“It was challenging for me to change my ways after 40 years in one of the country's most notorious gangs. Education played a crucial role in helping me overcome those challenges and reconnect me with the Māori world. I lived as a fearless and ruthless gang member, earning a terrible reputation. Changing deeply ingrained habits at 60 years old was no easy task. My journey has involved confronting trauma, changing my behaviours and embracing cultural healing. It has not been without its difficulties, but through adorning mataora and reconnecting with my Māori roots, I have undergone a remarkable transformation.”*

Shonelle: *“In a physical sense, the moko kauae I proudly wear is my stance against colonisation. Wearing moko kauae or mataora is, to me, a declaration that we're breaking free from the coloniser's expectations. It's an affirmation of our right to proudly wear our ancestral markings, driven by courage and unwavering determination. With a deep spiritual connection, I carry the presence of my ancestors alongside me on this journey.”*

Ruihi: *“Since receiving moko kauae I do hold myself differently. The responsibility of moko kauae was huge. At the time, I was in a place where I wanted to do the work with moko kauae, at home, at the marae and in my workplace. I placed more expectations on myself; I'm still working on them. There was huge personal growth. I had to become immune to people staring, as I came to a point in my life that having moko kauae was already a part of me, was ingrained in me, was already in all of my being since before I was born. I am still learning.”*

Hopere and his purpose-led transformation required overcoming deeply ingrained habits, informing himself about why gangs develop and acknowledging his suffering. Adorning mataora and a return to his roots played a pivotal contribution to his exceptional personal journey of returning to his cultural identity and his purpose i.e., to help others do the same. Shonelle staunchly wears her moko as a symbol of resistance to colonisation and societal expectations. She unapologetically asserts her right to embrace these traditional markings. Revealing an emboldened sense of identity and purpose and a strong spirit fortified through her trials. Ruihi speaks of a change in how she holds herself, the high expectations that she placed on herself to feel validated to wear kauae were resolved through the realisation of her birth right, a revealing impact of colonisation. Her resolution is also indicated by her mention of getting used to people staring at her, an indication the moko has integrated completely into the being-ness of the person. This is an important phase as it signifies the completion of the integration period, or what Van Gennep called reincorporation, it signals the integration of a new social identity, marking a new beginning in life (2019).

Theme 4: Guidance from Wairua

Shonelle: *“So, there was a lot of toing and froing, internal struggles for me at the time. For me to avoid that self-doubt, it was a process of talking to Koro Tutua and I didn't feel I needed permission from anybody. I just needed to feel that I could and I was worthy in myself. That was my own doubt. And so, I spoke to him and he spoke to wairua and they said, if you want it, go get it. I also had dreams and received tohu. They were of a positive nature and at times when I felt anxious about my worth of receiving moko kauae, the tohu and dreams would help to settle my anxiety or doubt.”*

Raniera: In speaking about his mataora journey, *“Yes, heaps of dreams, tohu, visions all of these kinds of things, I believe challenges arise to test us and as you arise to meet those challenges and depending on how you react to them will show whether you are ready or not for a certain kind of task or mahi, or the growth that will come upon you.”*

Shonelle's account illustrates the internal struggles and self-doubt she experienced in her journey toward receiving moko kauae. She highlights the importance of seeking guidance from Koro Tutua, a spiritual elder and her interaction with spirit. This process not only helped her overcome self-doubt but also provided her with the confidence to reclaim moko kauae. The dreams and signs served as pivotal elements in confirming her sense of worthiness and

alleviating anxiety, which are clearly symptoms of colonisation. This shows that moko kanohi can act as a medium through which individuals establish a connection with the spiritual realm, obtaining guidance and affirmation, especially during moments of personal challenges and uncertainty. Raniera sees the experiences that arise as challenges to test individuals and determine their readiness for certain tasks or personal growth. This perspective aligns with the idea that moko kanohi can be a transformative and spiritually guided process. It implies that the reinstatement of moko as RoP could provide a means of deepening one's spiritual awareness and affirming one's pathway forward. Subconscious seeds are planted, inner guidance and spiritual messaging is engaged. Moko is rooted in the spirit world; it makes complete sense from a Māori perspective that adorning it will bring a deeper connection to its place of origin and our ancestors that await us there.

These narratives highlight the deeply spiritual connections that can occur when approaching moko kanohi. Guidance from ancestors can play a significant role in their preparation, emphasising its significance within human experience and rites of passage. Revealing how the reinstatement of moko as RoP benefits Māori from the spiritual perspective, contributing to emotional well-being and sense of purpose, by reclaiming identity and therefore, belonging and worth. Moreover, these experiences of guidance from the spirit world contribute to understanding the generational impacts of the loss of rites of passage for Māori. If spirit is leading people to moko kanohi, this indicates the potential of moko kanohi as a bridge to greater self-awareness and the historical context that brought us to this predicament of questioning our value and worthiness. This reclamation of cultural practices and the resulting benefits will surely have a positive ripple effect on future generations, rekindling cultural continuity and well-being.

The insightful exploration of the spiritual dimension and its influence on well-being, identity and cultural reclamation in the matakauri experiences illustrates the heart of moko kanohi today. The four key themes underscore how moko serves as a holistic journey, promoting emotional healing, self-growth, reconnection to ancestral roots and guidance from the spirit world. These narratives demonstrate that moko goes beyond the physical, it is a spiritual calling, moko as RoP can help to restore that spiritual sense of belonging. The significance of reviving cultural practices extends far beyond the individual, impacting future generations and cultivating cultural continuity and well-being. While academia has mostly disowned

spirituality, favouring a more positivist approach, the Indigenous perspective recognises the fundamental role of spirituality in the human experience, Rarohenga, the home of tā moko, is rekindling that connection for many who are reclaiming moko kanohi, healing not only those who adorn moko, but healing their lineages both ancestrally and for their descendants yet to emerge into the world.

Ahi Kōmau: Psychological Dimension

The journey Mataora undertook to retrieve his wife Niwareka from Rarohenga provided an odyssey that resulted in two treasured artforms being gifted to our ancestors. This multifaceted journey lifted a mirror of self-reflection for Mataora, confronting his wrongs and committing to upholding the values and customs of Uetonga and his people. He modelled a process of self-improvement. From this dimension emerges four main themes:

1. Self-confidence and empowerment.
2. Resilience and coping.
3. Emotional expression and catharsis.
4. Identity and belonging.

Mokopapa: A Process of Empowerment

Mokopapa provides a distinct ritual space, whether within the sacred ancestral house or in more intimate private settings. This ceremonial moko process significantly impacted our matakauri. The effects vary among individuals, but the impacts are positive and empowering, ranging from modelling mana and rangatiratanga in the wider community, to complete paradigm shifts.

Theme 1: Self-confidence and Empowerment

Raniera: *“Mā te hiringa i te mahara ka taea ngā mea katoa - [Through the power of the mind, all things can be achieved]. Upon completion of puhoro, a formal ritual process is followed using karakia whakahoro and tohi. I believe that they emerge a different man, who has proven to himself that despite the pain, the trials and tests, with the power of the mind, dedication and self-belief and self-empowerment, he can achieve anything. Tū mai he kura tangata nō te awe māpara ki te wheiao ki te ao marama. Stand forth as a valued person, tattooed in the twilight, into the world of enlightenment.”*

Hopere: *“My journey has been really challenging over the last 10 years. But I can tell you mataora has actually helped me with this, with my recovery, looking in the mirror every morning at this beautiful work on me and feeling really proud about it. The ceremony surrounding the moko kanohi has not only influenced my consciousness but has also provided me with strength, confidence and a sense of connection to my ancestors. It serves as a daily reminder of my identity and purpose, empowering me to face the challenges in my work and life.”*

Raniera gives insight to the power of the mind and how moko, albeit here in the context of puhoro, provides the space and occasion to challenge a person’s current state of mind through an extreme ordeal like being tattooed over a weeklong journey. He reveals the depth of knowledge that is embodied in these ritual spaces, the underlying dimensional threads, the spiritual and the psychological, impacting the physical through the workings of the mind, forming a person’s character and maturation. The formal process he speaks of gives insight into how ritual moko can be of great benefit to our people. For Hopere, the moko ceremony’s influence on his consciousness is evident in the pride he feels each morning as he sees his image in the mirror contributing to his recovery and overall sense of strength. Hopere was initially reluctant to show his face in public, fearing his response to any negative reactions that might occur, this went on for two weeks and reveals a resistance to reintegration, a close colleague of his helped him transition back into society by dragging him by the hand to go out to lunch, where he encountered smiles and encouragement. Both narratives emphasise how moko serves as a daily reminder of identity and purpose, empowering individuals to confront life’s challenges with resilience, accountability and confidence.

Theme 2: Resilience and Coping

Shonelle: *“Wearing my moko is a powerful statement of resilience. It’s a way of saying, I survived colonisation and oppression and I’m still here, proud of my heritage. It’s a daily reminder of the strength and resilience of our people.”*

Hopere: *“It reminds me to hold my head high and embark on the day’s journey, facing the challenges with resilience and determination. My mataora has become a lifelong friend, supporting me in navigating my path and ensuring I return home safely.”*

These quotes underscore how moko serves as a symbol that reinforces resilience. Shonelle views her moko as an unspoken declaration of mana motuhake—surviving colonisation and oppression—a daily reminder of the enduring strength and resilience of the Māori people. Hopere reveals his moko functions as a constant source of guidance, encouraging him to face each day with resolve, becoming a daily supportive companion. Both narratives emphasise how moko kanohi became a source of inner strength and determination, helping to navigate life's challenges with resilience and fortitude. The resilience born from moko manifests in two ways: first, through enduring the painful ordeal of the tattooing process, and second, through a deeper realisation of the historical and ongoing colonial oppression that our people have survived. For those born into a culture that has been heavily assimilated into an Imperial regime, this understanding may remain obscured until they engage with conscientising and decolonising information that are taught through higher education facilities and wānanga like mokopapa. Adorning moko kanohi is a defiant symbol of that resistance and survival, it elevates one's perception of self as a survivor, as toa (protector) and as someone who is self-determined, reclaiming identity that colonial forces sought to erase.

Theme 3: Emotional Expression and Catharsis

Tania: *“Getting my moko was a deeply emotional experience. It was a way of reclaiming my identity and expressing the pain and anger that colonisation has caused. It's like wearing my heart on my face and it's a beautiful release of all those suppressed emotions.”*

Hohepa: *“I used to keep my emotions bottled up, but my moko has taught me the importance of emotional expression. It's a way of healing and letting go of the past. Through wearing my moko, I feel like I can fully embrace my emotions and release them in a healthy way.”*

These responses highlight the emotional dimension of moko kanohi, illustrating how it serves as a form of catharsis and emotional expression. Tania views her moko as a means of reclaiming her identity and channelling the pain and anger caused by colonisation, transforming these suppressed emotions into a powerful outward statement that reflects an inward realisation. Hohepa emphasises the importance of emotional expression as a healing process. His moko has enabled him to embrace and release his emotions healthily, shifting from his past practice of bottling them up. These narratives depict moko as a conduit for emotional release and healing, leading individuals to release their emotions openly. Letting go of the suppressed

hurts of colonisation and accepting the past for what it is, is a powerful cathartic process. Ritual moko creates space for this process, where new potentials can seed and grow. This healing process will be strengthened even further when performed at wāhi tapu (sacred sites) during optimal lunar phases where pure and tohi (cleansing rituals) add to the profundity of the letting go. Hohepa Delamere maintains that holding on to anger and resentment, festers into dis-ease until released (R. Perez, personal communication, Dec 2023), revealing the immense healing potential of adorning moko as a cathartic process.

Theme 4: Identity and Belonging

Hopere: *“Before I got my mataora, I felt like I was living in two worlds. I was a gang member, but I also had a deep connection to my Māori heritage. My moko helped me bridge those worlds and find a sense of identity and belonging. It's a symbol of who I am and where I come from.”*

Hohepa: *“I think just because you ‘can’ get it done, should you get it done? I'm not saying you need to be fluent in te reo Māori, or you need to be the pou waru (master of weaponry) or the tohunga ahurewa (high priest), but I think there should still be a RoP that you need to go through to earn it, other than just, oh, I can get it, I can afford to get it... I definitely think that the rites of passage and the impact on the growth of the person should be a big part of that... I've seen people get koroaha and the pāwahawaha and are not a speaker for their people, they might not even have the reo (language) and I think those integral parts of moko need to maintain their integrity and mana! Because, now what I see happening is it's just getting plastered all over and the essence and meaning of moko is eroding, because there is a meaning and importance of each piece of the moko, for instance, if you're not the spokesperson for your people, you shouldn't get that part of your moko until you are.”*

The quote from Hopere exemplifies the theme of identity and belonging within the context of moko kanohi. His experience reflects the transformative potential of mataora, as it enabled him to reconcile his dual identity as a gang member and a Māori with a deep connection to his heritage. The moko served as a symbolic bridge between these two worlds, offering him a reconnection to his sense of identity and belonging, whilst drawing on his lived experience to help others. This is not a superficial transformation; it penetrated his self-perception, influencing how he perceives himself and his place in society. The dialogue from Hohepa presents a thought-provoking perspective on the contemporary practice of moko kanohi. He

raises essential questions about the significance of maintaining the mana of each section of the mataora, especially in the context of identity and the functionality of moko kanohi. His concern is that convenience and the accessibility of moko may dilute its cultural and spiritual significance. He emphasises the importance of preserving the rites of passage and the indication they have of an individual's growth. This insight from Hohepa outlines how moko kanohi should be a journey deeply connected to one's growth through their cultural identity, language, lineage and values, this reinstates the traditional social relevance of moko. His perspective offers a framework of actualisation in the reinstatement of moko as RoP. It highlights the need to maintain the integrity of moko as a culturally rich and spiritually significant practice and provides a starting point from which Ngāti Awa can re-establish moko as a collectively guided and upheld process.

Both Hopere and Hohepa give narratives that underscore how moko kanohi serves as a powerful cultural marker, a tangible link to one's heritage and a means of reaffirming identity within the Māori community. Their experiences contribute valuable insights to the dimensions of the mind where moko is concerned, demonstrating its ability to implant confidence, resilience, a profound sense of cultural belonging and induces emotional releases. These realisations often arise after the moko has settled and become part of the individual. In either case, moko kanohi leads the person to deep introspection and self-examination, much like the mythological journey into the underworld, where one bravely confronts their inner shadows and demons, ultimately in an effort to transcending them.

The matakauri experiences offer significant insights towards answering our research question, emphasising the multifaceted benefits of moko kanohi as a marker of growth, reclamation and transformation. The three-dimensional benefits are dynamic and affect everyone differently depending on their states of being at the time of adornment, their intentions and understanding of moko as a ritual marker of growth and their point of origin in terms of their cultural efficacy, i.e., are they rooted in, or severed from their culture?

Generational Impacts

In this section we will delve into the matakauri experiences to ascertain their observations of the generational impacts of the removal of moko as RoP. Four key themes emerge:

1. Cultural disconnection.
2. loss of identity and culture.
3. Intergenerational well-being.
4. Cultural revival and reconnection.

Hūtia te Rito o te Harakeke, Kei Hea te Kōmako e Kō? This proverb poignantly raises the question of where the bellbird will sing if the central shoot of the flax plant, symbolising new growth, is cut out, as it would ultimately lead to the demise of the entire plant. It serves as a profound metaphor for the intergenerational impact of moko kanohi. Just as the bellbird's song resonates when it drinks from the nectar of a thriving flax plant, the vitality of Māori culture and heritage hinges on the preservation and transmission of its cultural practices, including the sacred rituals of moko, across successive generations.

Theme 1: Cultural Disconnection and Degradation

Tania: *"I just think it was this huge gap caused by colonisation or the loss of kauae moko and the way that we tell our stories. In the native way. You know, beneath the kauae there's pūrākau, karakia, waiata, all those other things that are attached to it, moko is just the visual display of it, but there's a whole heap of kōrero that sits behind it, that's lost knowledge. My family lost touch with our Māori heritage for generations. We were disconnected from our culture and traditions and it felt like a piece of our identity was missing. When I got my moko, it was a way of reclaiming what was lost, of reconnecting with my roots."*

Shonelle: *"There is no traditional passage now, no official passage. It's up to the person to feel a sense of self-worth, are you worthy to receive moko? That's what it's become. Rather than, you are entitled to it. It's part of who you are and your identity. My grandparents were discouraged from practicing their Māori customs, including moko. So, there was a sense of cultural loss. I wear my moko as a tribute to them and as a way of reclaiming what was taken from them."*

Ruihi: *“The search for our nannies that had tā moko, being able to find who in my whakapapa had moko kauae, well, it missed my nan's generation and my mum's generation before the moko kauae came back.”*

Raniera: *“Without that rite of passage, it has actually created a divide between the individual and their tribe, they haven't grown up in this Māori world, if they haven't felt the heat of the fire, the heat of battle, the challenge of reaching the summit, all those experiences of our ancestor's and how they grew up and developed in this world as a man. One way to experience this, is through experiencing pain, when you have that journey, you'll see your family that support you, a reliable pillar that helps you through those tough times. The RoP is immensely important and for us in the North, we talk about the ascent to the higher realms, not outside physically but within the individual, the ascensions within oneself.”*

Hopere: *“Colonisation tried to take this away from us by putting it up on the market for sale and after losing it at that stage. Yeah, it's good seeing our markings around everywhere, I'm really proud to see that and be a part of that journey of bringing it back.”*

Hohepa: *“I think that's all tied up in that whole loss of identity and that stems back from the loss of culture and the rites of passage are part of the culture, aren't they!? it's really a cultural pillar. Whether it be tohi, pūre, moko, even the hair cutting practices. I think those are the first things that go with colonisation, these key points to mark out where you stand in your society. So, at what point are you a man? what point are you a woman? when you start removing those, then those lines start to become blurred. We've got the 21st key, lets drink a yardy, get pissed and you're now a man.”*

These quotes illustrate the theme of cultural disconnection and loss within families. The matakauri experiences highlight how their families had been denied their Māori heritage over generations due the impacts of colonisation. For Tania and Shonelle, adorning their moko kauae served as a means of reclaiming and reconnecting with this ancestral treasure, bridging the chasm left by the disconnections of previous generations. Shonelle pinpoints our modern predicament regarding RoP, where traditionally these transitional milestones were determined and processed by tribal elders as a tribal tikanga, today these important life transitions are engaged with as a personal decision, where many ruminate on their worthiness and question their mana in undertaking the ancestral mark of transition. Tania accordingly recognises the

function of symbolic communication via moko, highlighting its social function and the wealth of knowledge that underpinned the ritual artform. Ruihi simply yet powerfully reveals the loss of moko kauae in her whakapapa (genealogy) over two generations. Raniera begins to touch on some of the ancient knowledge that was passed on through the ancient whare-wānanga and the potential of the human being to raise one's consciousness through ritual and meditative practices; this highlights a fraction of the knowledge lost to most Māori that would have been taught through ritual spaces and whare wānanga. Hopere refers to the trade in ancestral heads as an example of colonial impacts, the trade being largely responsible for bringing about the end of male mataora by the 1860s. Finally, Hohepa clearly understands the purpose of traditional rites of passage and makes the connection to moko as transitional markers in life; he contrasts moko with the modern adult responsibility RoP whereby one drinks as much beer through a yard glass as fast as possible, ushering you into your adulthood in an often comatose or unconscious state of mind!

Theme 2: Erosion of Identity, Language, Customs and Knowledge

Tania: *“So, back in the day we had our tohunga who were our directors and leaders to our iwi, hapū, whānau, marae. Then with the introduction of western systems, the loss of all of that, as well as our moko kauae, for me, it's a tohu, a form of communication, it's just another symbolic way of how we express ourselves as being Māori and how we tell our stories and how we identify in terms of who we are. Not just as a people, but as an iwi, a hapū and as a whānau.”*

Hohepa: *“I think in terms of the rite of passage that was one of the biggest things that has probably disappeared because most of the time people are getting kanohi, they're getting it later in life, where they feel a lot more confident and comfortable in the space that they're in. Whether it's a sense of achievement or they've attained a certain rank or whatever that might look like. What we don't consider is the arduous and intense process of traditional moko, the trauma from the incisions and the healing process dictated a slow, deliberate and drawn-out process, along with the meaning of the different sections of moko, some through whakapapa and being you, others through your abilities and responsibilities to your people. So, I see it as being another part of you that grows with you. Because of the ease, convenience and technology now, we can cover a whole face in a matter of hours with little to no issues in healing. This has inevitably led to the ability to easily adorn someone with all the parts and trimmings without the process of RoP and without the need to necessarily earn the relevant*

parts to the moko. I think the kōrero surrounding moko and the prerequisite to get one, i.e., you're Māori, your whakapapa is enough, is a double-edged sword, yes you have a right to your moko through whakapapa alone, but what parts of the moko you get and expand into really depend on your achievements and ultimately your service and standing within your people."

These quotes emphasise the theme of the loss of ritual initiation and the erosion of identity, language, customs and knowledge. Tania speaks of moko as a form of communication, a language that was transmitted through the generations up until colonisation. Tania's thoughts are confirmed through the traditional use of moko as an identifier of status and standing that could be determined from a distance; one of the roles of the matataki, i.e., the most accomplished warriors of the hapū, was to decipher this type of information during the wero (challenge) of a welcoming ceremony, especially if a group arrives un-announced, s/he would ascertain who was arriving from a distance by identifying moko placements, they would then convey that information back to the chief to determine what their next step is (M. Kopua, personal communication, Aug 2021).

Hohepa sees the loss of rites of passage as one of the greatest losses for Māori; he alludes to the current trends in moko kanohi of Māori receiving their moko later in life for many different reasons; he is rightly suggesting that rites of passage should mark definite times of transitions in a staged manner. This highlights the great loss of human dignity and self-determination where these rituals have been vacant for generations. However, it also underscores the potential available to us now due to the resurgence of moko kanohi as RoP. These narratives underscore the profound psychological and cultural benefits of moko kanohi, not only as a personal journey of rediscovery but also as a means of transmitting cultural identity and knowledge to future generations, and intentionally and consciously cultivating human maturity and life transitions.

Generational impacts from the loss of initiatory rituals are evident in these narratives. Hohepa and Raniera grasp the RoP function well, due to their involvement with moko and other wānanga. Tania also shares the experiences of her whānau with the transference of karanga rites amongst her siblings. The loss of identity, belonging, land, rituals, language and customs leaves a nation bereft of its cultural pillars for the collective and the individual to flourish and thrive in self-determined ways. This was an intended strategy of colonial oppression and assimilation evidenced by the numerous Indigenous cultures who have lost their rituals

(Rahman et al., 2017; Cormier, 2017), but in the end, as the saying goes, “mate atu he tētē kura, hara mai ra he tētē kura”, in nature things die and return again in the next springtime. This is echoed in the prophetic words of Patuone from the Ngā Puhi people when speaking about his hopes for his people, *“It is only in the time of my great-great grandchildren, that the dreams I have for my people will start to come to fruition. Now you chase me away, but in the time of my grandchildren’s grandchildren you will come looking for me again”* (Pittman, 2017) and so it is now in our time regarding tā moko.

Dimensional Integration

This section explores the dimensional integration of the holistic benefits of moko, considering the physical, spiritual, psychological and generational dimensions. The experiences of the matakauri individuals highlight the multifaceted nature of moko and its transformative impact.

Phenomenological Experiences and Holistic Benefits: Moko kanohi embodies holistic wellbeing within its philosophy. Mataora literally means the face of wellbeing, or the living face. The matakauri narratives reveal how moko affects the physical, the spiritual and the psychological dimensions, which will have inter-generational impacts. The term ‘moko’ is the root word for ‘mokopuna’, grandchild, or literally, a ‘wellspring of grandchildren.’ Additionally, ‘tā’ signifies to ‘ignite’ through the action of ‘striking’ the mallet on the chisel. Therefore, ‘tā moko’ signifies the initiation of our grandchildren throughout their lives.

Paepaeroa: Physical Dimension: The physical dimension of moko represents not only a transformation in appearance and in well-being, but a symbol of colonial resistance and mana motuhake. The Matakauri describe the tangible changes in their physical selves, Raniera and Hohepa both conscious of presenting themselves in a positive manner, advocating for moko as a symbol of mana and social responsibility, intentionally modelling rangatiratanga to the wider community and correcting stigmatic perceptions. This emphasises the importance of the physical dimension in their holistic experience. The utilisation of physical locations, especially wāhi tapu such as Pōhaturoa, Arikirau and Te Wairere Falls in Whakatāne also foster a huge connection to environment and the historical locations where these rituals were traditionally performed. The integration of the physical dimension is seen in the physical appearance of the matakauri, the head held higher, the overall demeanour of the person and the impacts on the community. There is also the therapeutic aspect of moko and the intriguing notion that tattooing in ancient times was a form of immunity strengthening (Krutak & Piombino-Mascali, 2020;

Lynn, 2019). The skin is the largest organ of the human body; embedding ink into this organ with ritual intention impacts the body on cellular and consciousness levels. Dr Masaru Emoto's experiments with water demonstrates this scientifically (2011). Finally, in my 30 years of observations sex appeal is greatly enhanced having further impacts on confidence and self-esteem.

Rarohenga: Spiritual Dimension: Adorning moko kanohi honours and connects us to our ancestors who wore moko kanohi when it thrived amongst our people. It also honours all those who were left bereft of its profound way of marking growth and inducing a sense of belonging through its ceremonial process. All the matakauri recount a healing in some form or another, whether a deeper connection to wairua, an improved measure of self-confidence, mending the perceptions of the wider community, stepping into spiritual leadership for their whānau and community and fortifying a desire to serve the people. It's clear that moko kanohi serves as spiritual healing and the integration of that healing becomes evident in the renewed and empowered spirits of the matakauri. Māori embrace the spiritual world; moko reflects this notion whole heartedly.

Ahi Kōmau: Emotional/Psychological Dimension: Moko also serves as a catalyst for psychological growth, fostering self-identity and confidence. Our matakauri share how moko empowers them, building and portraying resilience and a deep sense of belonging. Pūrākau should be a foundational component of these rituals, as they place us as individuals within the story of creation as Te Ahukaramū Royal wisely outlines (2005). Our atua and their mythological experiences hold the archetypal values and principles that our ancestors upheld and maintained and deemed important enough to be conveyed from generation to generation. Likewise, Jo-Ann Archibald's outstanding (2008) book 'Indigenous Storywork' reveals the holistic power of working with Indigenous narratives for Indigenous peoples. It's important to note here that this represents the authentic definition of the term 'myth.' The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) gives its meaning as "*A traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of a people or explaining some natural or social phenomenon and typically involving supernatural beings or events*" (OED, n.d.). Any connection to fantasy likely stems from scientific attitudes dismissing the unseen, positivism being a prime example and the 'bowdlerisation' or sanitation of traditional *pūrākau* due to colonial attitudes towards Indigenous narratives (Pouwhare, 2022).

Mataora sojourned in Rarohenga for approximately ten months before their return to the upper world; this was a time of ‘containment,’ ‘integration,’ ‘self-reflection,’ ‘apprenticeship’ and a settling of his newly adorned markings within him, a time to show Niwareka and her family that he had indeed made the necessary internal changes that ensured the safety of their loved one. Hopere accordingly embodies the transformative potential of mataora on the psyche and mirrors in many ways the story of Mataora, revealing just how impactful moko kanohi is upon our people. The purpose of ritual RoP initially being the maturation of the psyche at coming of age, personal growth through a controlled means (Van Gennep, 2019; Moore and Gillette, 1992; Campbell, 1988; Eliade, 2017).

Generational Impacts

The removal of initiatory rituals has left a significant void within the lives of most Māori, impacting the three dimensions that make up the whole human being. But as can be seen, moko, even without an intended RoP, when embraced appropriately, serves as a path to identity reclamation and/or reinforcement, confidence, strengthening connections to language, customs, environment and community. It empowers individuals and signifies resilience in the face of ongoing colonial systems and suppression. I’m confident that the generational impacts of moko into the future are potentially profound. These impacts span across families, across generations past, living and yet to emerge. Moko conveys values, knowledge and whakapapa; it nurtures growth and cultural heritage and can be a strong, meaningful cultural component in fostering intergenerational well-being for Māori in all modern social arenas.

Intersections and Complementarity

The three dimensions of Paepaeroa, Rarohenga and Ahi-Kōmau interweave to foster well-being and harmony, establishing a symbiotic and complementary synergy. For instance, the theme of identity manifests through each dimension: our collective identity provides a sense of belonging, our spiritual identity instils a connection to divinity and life’s purpose and our psychological identity serves as an archetypal arena for character development. This aligns seamlessly with Mason Durie's Whare Tapa-whā model of well-being (1988), except for Paepaeroa representing both taha tinana (body) and taha whānau (family) from Durie's model. Hohepa Delamere's discussions on well-being (R.Perez, personal communication, May 2015), offer valuable insights into understanding the intersections of these dimensions, emphasising the awareness of these dimensions within oneself and their symbiotic interconnectedness.

Neglecting one dimension can lead to overall imbalance, echoing Delamere's understanding of maintaining centrality and neutrality. The (2011) doctoral thesis of professor Penchira, also expands on the use of moko kanohi as a process that enhances the 'mouri' of a person, contributing to overall well-being. These notions of life force and consciousness are universal and are contemplated by many cultures. Moko, as a RoP provides the rituals of transition and is in my opinion a natural progression for mana motuhake (self-determination) for Māori.

This section underscores the multifaceted transformative potential of moko kanohi as experienced by the matakauri. Their narratives bring to light the merging of dimensions, showcasing how moko exceeds aesthetics to embody holistic well-being. The intersections and complementarity of these dimensions paint a vivid picture of the comprehensive nature of the benefits of moko especially when used as ritual rites of passage.

Findings

This section outlines the significance of the research findings, highlighting their implications in various dimensions. The findings go beyond individual experiences, emanating on a collective level and extending to intergenerational well-being.

Bridging Cultural Identity and Revitalisation: One of the most significant aspects of these findings is the role of moko kanohi in bridging cultural identity and revitalising the social context and purpose of moko as a transitional marker. The narratives of the matakauri vividly illustrate how moko acts as a bridge between the past and the present, helping individuals reconnect with their roots. In a world marked by colonial influences and cultural displacement, moko surfaces as a powerful tool for cultural revival particularly in those who have been culturally uprooted. It is a statement of pride, resilience and survival, signalling a reclamation of Māori identity. Its significance lies in its potential to preserve and pass down cultural knowledge, customs and language to future generations. As Māori culture thrives through the experiences of these individuals, it has the potential to flourish in the broader community, contributing to a vibrant and culturally rich society, where the staged processes of moko would nurture growth. If the assertions of researchers like Gillette and Moore are valid, in that rites of passage serve as a ritual initiation for male psychological archetypes by providing a controlled ceremonial space to nurture maturation, then moko certainly provides a viable framework for these rituals to be reinstated among Ngāti Awa in a collectively guided manner.

Impact on Graduates: The significance of these findings also extends to the impact on graduates of higher learning. Graduates emerge not only with socially functionable ancestral markings but also with an enhanced sense of purpose that permeates their lives. All six matakauri undertook moko kanohi as a part of their academic journeys; their experiences speak to the empowering agency of moko in that context, fostering self-identity, confidence, transformation and resilience. It naturally became a marker of completion and transition for all of them. The significant psychological and spiritual growth observed in the narratives reflects the potential for moko to positively influence individuals' lives. This newfound strength and self-assuredness emanate through their personal and professional spheres, empowering them to navigate life's challenges with grace and determination. The significance lies in the function for moko as RoP to act as a catalyst for personal growth, encouraging individuals to thrive and contribute to their communities and society at large.

Intergenerational Well-Being: Perhaps the most profound significance lies in the potential for intergenerational well-being. The removal of initiatory rituals created a void in the psyche of the Māori people, leaving subsequent generations disconnected from this cultural treasure, their place in creation and a sense of worth. Moko kanohi emerges as medicine in the shamanic sense, bridging this gap and strengthening connections between generations. The narratives reveal how moko nurtures cultural knowledge, values and whakapapa, passing them down to children and grandchildren. This intergenerational transmission contributes to the continuity of Māori culture and fosters a sense of belonging and identity in younger generations. The significance lies in the potential for moko to heal the wounds of the past and root our people firmly as tangata whenua (people of the land), even in the modern landscape of merged worlds, where Māori thrive and well-being perpetuates the coming generations.

In summary, the significance of these findings is potentially profound and far-reaching. They highlight the meaningful role of moko kanohi in helping to restore identities and revitalising Māori heritage, impacting people on a personal and professional level and fostering intergenerational well-being. These discoveries hold the potential to transform lives and communities; socially, moko is certainly transforming the face of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Moko kanohi has become a symbol of resistance, resilience, strength and mana motuhake (self-determination). Struggle is a necessary element to human growth; moko narrates those struggles and accomplishments one step at a time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has ventured into the multifaceted dimensions of moko kanohi as experienced by the matakauri. Key findings highlight the holistic benefits of moko, extending through future generations revitalising traditional practices. In preface to answering the research question, an exploration of the impacts of the calculated removal of RoP due to colonisation on Māori over the last six to seven generations reveals:

1. A significant identity disconnection among Māori over several generations, an uprooting of identity.
2. The erosion of cultural identity, of a visual language, ritual customs and knowledge.
3. A loss of well-being, including spiritual, emotional and psychological impacts, a serious decrease in cultural efficacy, leaving many Māori feeling unworthy and devoid of purpose and belonging.
4. The absence has left a void in intergenerational cultural transmission and continuity of values, knowledge and identity.

Research question: How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa?

1. **Cultural Reclamation and Identity Restoration:** Moko is profoundly transformative, helping to restore cultural identity. Participants, such as Tania, Hopere and Shonelle, expressed that moko served as a reclamation of what was lost due to colonisation, restoring the ritual artform to their families. The narratives highlight how moko helps those who feel disconnected from their culture due to colonisation and generational loss of traditions, as noted by Raniera and Ruihi, who emphasised the profound disconnection in their whakapapa and iwi. Finally, moko fortifies those already rooted in their Māori culture, enhancing their sense of belonging and identity. The visual and symbolic presence of moko acts as a means of identifying and marking significant transitions in life.
2. **Emotional Healing and Psychological Empowerment:** All six matakauri highlighted the emotional healing benefits of moko, where it provided personal catharsis and the release of suppressed emotions, including colonial trauma and generational grievances. The emotional resilience cultivated by moko allows Māori to heal from historical and personal wounds. Moko kanohi offers profound psychological benefits. Hopere transitioned from a

gang lifestyle to a leader in his whānau (family) demonstrating how moko can empower Māori through self-confidence, resilience, and emotional expression. It helped him see himself in a new light, restoring his mana (authority, power) and purpose. Some of the matakauri revealed that moko helps reconnect them with their ancestral stories and spiritual paths, providing them with a sense of accountability, responsibility, and social role models.

3. **Spiritual Connection and Guidance:** Moko serves as a bridge to spiritual belonging and ancestral guidance. Shonelle's spiritual experience illustrates how moko reinforces the connection to wairua (spirit) and ancestral knowledge. Moko serves as a ritual homecoming, a way of spiritual alignment that encourages healing and reflection. Raniera discussed the importance of experiencing spiritual growth through rites of passage, marking psychological and spiritual milestones that anchor individuals to their ancestors and whānau. The narratives highlight how moko often gives rise to spiritual signs and dreams, offering reassurance, guidance, and validation, thus fulfilling an important spiritual function for both the individual and their community.
4. **Cultural Continuity and Intergenerational Well-being:** Moko kanohi nurtures intergenerational well-being by reconnecting families and reviving cultural practices. Raniera and Hohepa underscored that the generational loss of moko left a void in identity and cultural transmission. The reinstatement of moko serves to mend this rupture, cultivating continuity of values, language, and whakapapa. Through the transmission of moko as a visual and ritual language, younger generations can inherit a more solidified sense of identity and cultural pride. Tania and Hopere both believe in the potential for moko to heal past wounds and guide future generations. Moko, as a form of resistance against colonial erasure, embodies the strength and survival of Māori culture and stands as a symbol of mana motuhake. Both Tania and Shonelle see moko as a way to restore pride and resist the pressures of colonial society.
5. **Social Responsibility and Leadership:** Moko reinforces social roles and responsibilities within the community. Both Raniera and Tania spoke about the accountability that moko brings to the wearer, as a visual marker of cultural authority and social responsibility. Moko serves as a means of embodying rangatiratanga (leadership) and advocating for Māori values, language, and cultural revival. Hopere and Shonelle have demonstrated how wearing moko elevates their sense of duty to guide their people and uphold tikanga.

In conclusion, the reinstatement of moko as a rite of passage benefits the people of Ngāti Awa through the meaningful restoration of cultural identity, emotional and psychological healing,

and the reconnection to spiritual roots and ancestral guidance. Moko offers transformative benefits in the lives of individuals and communities, nurturing resilience, purpose, and belonging. It revives intergenerational transmission of cultural practices and reinforces leadership and social responsibility within the community. The narratives reveal that moko serves as a tool of mana motuhake, healing both the individual and the collective from the historical traumas of colonisation and ensuring the well-being of future generations.

Online Survey

This survey investigates the perceptions of moko in Aotearoa today. Seven questions were posed over my personal Facebook and Instagram profiles. One question a day regarding tā moko, the questions were intended to gain a better understanding of the public's perception of moko. The term 'rite of passage' was intentionally left out of the questions to gauge people's awareness of moko as RoP, indicating the inevitable lack of knowledge of the RoP in modern society. This analysis is by no means comprehensive; it merely serves to provide a glimpse at modern perceptions of moko as RoP. The questions and their main themes are as follows.

1. What Does Moko Mean to You?

216 people responded, one person mentioned RoP, although 37 people touched on the notion, mentioning life's journey or experiences, 17 people mentioned the role of moko in personal development and growth.

Themes:	Mentions:
Whakapapa	89
Identity	56
Culture and heritage	51
Connection to land, nature, ancestors	48
Pride and honour	42
Artistic/visual representation of a person's life	38
Journey or life's experiences	37
Resistance or activism towards colonial oppression	22
Spiritual connections	21
Commitment/duty to pass knowledge down	19
Personal development of growth	17

Table 1: *What Does Moko Mean to You?*

2. How has Moko Impacted Your Life?

Received 80 responses, none of which mentioned rites of passage.

Themes:	Mentions:
Reclamation of cultural Identity and heritage	30
Pride and self-acceptance	28
Connection to ancestors	23
Empowerment and strength	24
Healing and growth	20
Connection to whānau and community	19
Reclamation and resistance	15
Education and learning	12

Table 2: *How has Moko Impacted your Life?*

3. Why Did You Get a Moko Kanohi?

A total of 69 responses, none of which mentioned rites of passage.

Themes:	Mentions:
Identity and belonging	26
Honouring ancestors	17
Influence of family and friends	16
Personal transformation	15
Spiritual and personal connections	15
Overcoming personal doubts	12
Reclamation and empowerment	12
Future aspirations	9
Educational and inspirational aspects	6

Table 3: *Why did you get Moko Kanohi?*

4. Are Reo and Tikanga Māori Required?

A total of 64 responses, rites of passage was mentioned twice, although continued learning and personal growth was mentioned 14 times.

Themes:	Mentions:
Personal journey and choice	16
Continued learning and personal growth	14
Tikanga and responsibility	13
Cultural reclamation and rejuvenation	11
Connection with identity and whakapapa	10
Diverse perspectives influenced by upbringing	10
Spiritual significance	9
Potential challenges	8
Moko as teacher and catalyst for reclamation	7
Modern perspectives and evolution	6

Table 4: *Are Reo and Tikanga Required?*

5. What About Pākehā Whānau?

Should we be able to gift it to those who have become whānau? Out of 100 responses, ‘rites of passage’ was mentioned eight times. The increased association of moko with RoP in the context of potential Pākehā inclusion might indicate the weight and importance of moko to Māori as a cultural ‘rite,’ only being identified as such when presented with the challenging notion of including those who belong to the race who oppressed our people. It’s also possible that people were introduced to the terminology from previous questions.

Themes:	Mentions:
Deep respect and understanding required	28
Cultural appropriation	28
Spiritual and personal journey	22
Historical context and colonisation	13
Consultation with elders/community required	11
Cultural rite of passage	8

Table 5: *What about Pākehā Whānau?*

6. Gender Dynamics?

Should Transgender or gay men be able to wear moko kauae and conversely should wahine be able to wear mataora? There was a total of 49 responses, with no mentions of rites of passage.

Themes:	Mentions:
Traditional significance and tikanga adherence	21
Self-identity and authenticity of a personal journey	19
Respect and acceptance of choices and identity	17
Evolution and adaptation in modern times	14
Physical aspects of gender, giving birth for example	7
Historic role and importance of takatāpui	3

Table 6: *Gender Dynamics?*

7. Do you Have any Concerns for the Future of Moko?

Where do you see the artform of moko heading? There were 31 total responses with no mentions of rites of passage.

Themes:	Mentions:
Evolution and growth of moko is positive	12
Holding true to traditional values and tikanga	9
Embracing modern changes	8
Emphasis on learning and education around moko	7
Influence on future generations	7
Concerns about misunderstanding or misconception	6
Moko as tool for identity and healing	6

Table 7: *Concerns for the Future of Moko?*

Online Survey General Overview

Across the board, it's evident from the survey responses that there's a strong connection and some understanding of the artform of moko among the respondents. The resurgence of moko, its growth and its importance in expressing and embracing Māori identity are frequently

highlighted themes. Respondents appreciate the artform's history, value and potential future trajectories, which signifies the meaningful role moko plays in their lives and the broader Māori community.

Evolution of Identity and Culture: The absence of moko as rites of passage, has left a void among our people; the language or concept of RoP is not present in the general public's awareness, or perhaps the connection between moko and RoP has not been made. However, the rejuvenation of moko strongly indicates a renewed commitment among Māori to reclaim and re-energise these traditions. What evolves from here on out will be a synthesis of tradition and modernity, although we must be vigilant of moko being adorned as a trend.

Healing and Empowerment: For many, moko is a means of healing, empowerment and reconnection. Its resurgence, in my experience does help mend the generational disconnect caused by its absence, serving as a conduit to available pathways of cultural efficacy, language, cultural performance, martial arts etc.

Modern Adaptations: Whilst there is a strong emphasis on respecting and understanding tradition, there also exists an openness to modern interpretations and applications. This demonstrates a willingness to adapt and a resilience within the Māori community. It is possible that a factor contributing to this openness is the lack of historical attachment to moko as rites of passage among modern Māori, resulting from generations of its absence. This absence may have led to a more flexible approach to the concept of moko, allowing for contemporary interpretations to emerge. Nevertheless, the new generation's receptiveness to adaptability ensures the tradition remains relevant and meaningful across generations.

Use of the Term 'Rites of Passage': The specific term 'rites of passage' was not prominently used in the responses to the questions. This might suggest that while respondents inherently understand moko within the context of rites of passage, they may not explicitly label it as such. It indicates a gap in public awareness or their vocabulary when discussing moko in the context of its original social function. However, the underlying principles of rites of passage: transition, growth, identity affirmation, are echoed in many responses

Survey Conclusion: The findings from the online survey contribute to answering the research question by highlighting the deep connection and recognition of the cultural significance of

moko among respondents. While the explicit term "rites of passage" was not widely used, the underlying concepts of growth, transition, and identity affirmation are present in their understanding of moko. The resurgence of moko signifies a commitment to healing, empowerment, and cultural revitalisation. This reflects the potential for moko to restore and strengthen cultural identity and continuity for Ngāti Awa, even as modern adaptations evolve. Raising direct awareness of moko as rites of passage will further enhance this reclamation, ensuring its essential values are understood and celebrated.

Journal Tier –Analysis:

In addressing the research question, *"How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa?"* each chapter of the journal covers different aspects of this topic and is intended to leave a roadmap of the research process undertaken. Here, I will analyse the journal as a single tier, drawing out the key points from each chapter, and then I will give a short analysis of each chapter's contribution before the final conclusion. The journal within these pages is a representation of the journals kept from the beginning of the research and serves as an in-depth exploration of moko as RoP, weaving together cultural, personal, collective, and academic narratives. Each chapter contributes a unique perspective to form a comprehensive analysis of this cultural revival. The use of journaling is central to this investigation, not just as a reflective tool, but as a methodological approach that informs both the process and the findings of the research. This unified examination explores the value, challenges, and transformative potential of moko while interrogating the complexities and contradictions of its reinstatement.

Purpose and Contribution of Journaling: The role of journaling in this research serves multiple interconnected purposes. It functions as both a reflective and an analytical tool that documents my evolving understanding of moko as RoP. Journaling provides an ongoing and dynamic record of the research journey, capturing personal reflections, methodological adjustments, and emergent insights, all of which contribute to the depth of analysis. The journal allows for a comprehensive exploration of the research question. By documenting my perceptions, observations, and personal experiences, the journals facilitate a critical engagement with the subject matter. They also serve as a bridge between lived experience and scholarly inquiry, integrating insider knowledge as both a practitioner and an academic. This duality enables a more complex and embodied analysis of moko as RoP, addressing the socio-

cultural, spiritual, and emotional dimensions of this practice. Additionally, journaling helps situate me within the cultural context of the study, acknowledging both the benefits and the challenges that arise from being deeply embedded in the practice. This reflexive approach not only enhances the validity of the findings by making explicit my biases and influences as the researcher but also highlights the importance of insider knowledge in culturally specific research. Thus, the journals contribute significantly by offering a holistic understanding of moko as RoP, while allowing the research to remain transparent and self-critical.

Moko as a Multifaceted Tool for Reclamation and Resilience: The journal entries explore the potential of moko as a multifaceted cultural tool, emphasising its role in identity formation, cultural reclamation, and healing. The analysis demonstrates that moko, when reinstated as RoP across life milestones, can help Ngāti Awa reclaim many cultural practices associated with moko (like ahi tapu, tool making, ink making, ritual rites and the social function of moko), that have been removed through colonisation, cultivating human potential, belonging and resilience. The act of receiving moko kanohi (facial moko), serves as both an individual affirmation of identity and a collective assertion of cultural resilience. The importance of moko as a symbol of mana (authority, power) and a tangible connection to whakapapa (genealogy) emerges consistently throughout the journal. As explored in Chapter One, my extensive experience as a moko practitioner offers direct insight into the psychosocial impacts of moko, revealing its capacity to strengthen individuals' connections to their cultural heritage and provide a sense of empowerment. This transformative aspect of moko is positioned as a potentially significant contribution to the socio-cultural revival of Ngāti Awa, offering a means for individuals to embody and express their cultural identity, often after years of suppression or alienation from their heritage.

However, the journal also highlights the inherent challenges in such a revival. The complexity of reintroducing moko in contemporary contexts requires addressing modern perceptions that are often ill-informed, influenced by outdated Western anthropological attitudes—even among Māori communities. The journals acknowledge the potential resistance to moko from within Ngāti Awa, influenced by factors such as modern colonialised attitudes, religious beliefs, identity politics, and gender dynamics. This resistance is not viewed negatively but as an expected part of the artforms revival. By engaging with these differing perspectives, the journal captures the evolving nature of moko and the necessity for it to be adaptable, reflecting the diversity of tikanga Māori.

Reflexivity, Bias, and Insider Knowledge: The journal provides a critical space for the researcher to reflect on their dual role as both a practitioner and a researcher. This reflexivity is crucial in managing potential biases and ensuring that the research remains balanced. The emotional investment in the revival of moko could easily colour my perspective, particularly given the generational trauma of colonisation and the desire for cultural restoration. The journals document this tension, reflecting on the need to critically examine the data from multiple viewpoints, including those that challenge my preconceptions. This reflective practice also extends to the methodological choices made during the research. For instance, the use of member checking—where participants were invited to review and amend interpretations of their dialogues—demonstrates a commitment to ensuring that the findings reflect a collective voice rather than being dominated by my perspective. This collaborative approach aligns with the principles of Kaupapa Māori research, emphasising the importance of community engagement and shared authority in knowledge creation. The journals thus contribute to the research by highlighting how the personal, cultural, and academic dimensions of moko intersect, providing a rich, multifaceted understanding of its significance. They also reveal the challenges inherent in navigating these intersecting roles, offering a transparent account of the research process that enhances the credibility and depth of the analysis.

Tools, Frameworks, and Methodological Insights: The methodologies and frameworks employed in the research are explored in depth through the journals, revealing how they shaped the study's approach to understanding moko as RoP. The Whetū Mārama framework, introduced by Dr. Reuben Collier, and the Whāriki Takapau framework, developed by myself, provided structured, culturally informed methodologies that guided the research process. These frameworks were crucial in transitioning from an abstract idea to a systematic exploration of moko as RoP. The journals document the practical application of these frameworks, detailing how they facilitated the research's organisation and ensured that it remained grounded in tikanga Māori. For instance, the Whetū Mārama framework helped structure the research proposal and the three tiered thesis, breaking down each tier and chapter and segment into manageable parts. This structured approach was particularly important given the complexity of researching moko, a practice with deep spiritual, cultural, and personal dimensions.

The Whāriki Takapau framework was instrumental in connecting the spiritual, physical, and psychological aspects of moko. The journals reflect on the intensity of developing this framework, highlighting the need for sustained reflection and journaling to ensure it could

withstand academic scrutiny. This process underscores the importance of blending traditional Māori knowledge with contemporary research practices, engineering a synergistic approach to understanding moko as RoP. The Whakawhāriki method, which symbolises the weaving of participants' lives into a cohesive narrative, further exemplifies the relational nature of Indigenous knowledge systems. The journals illustrate how this method allowed for an exploration of moko that was meaningfully contextualised, emphasising the interconnectedness of individual experiences and cultural practices. By documenting these methodological insights, the journals provide a detailed account of how the research was conducted, offering transparency and a deeper understanding of the processes involved.

Creativity and the Intellectual-Spiritual Nexus: The creative process is positioned within the journals as a supplementary aspect of the research and as an essential method of inquiry. The creative outputs, including visual art and storytelling, serve as cultural Storywork (Archibald, 2008), that connect modern audiences with ancestral knowledge, bridging academic inquiry with cultural narrative. This approach emphasises that cultural knowledge is best transmitted through multiple forms, including artistic expressions that resonate with both the mind and the spirit. The emphasis on pūrākau (storytelling) as a vehicle for transmitting cultural knowledge reinforces the significance of narratives in rites of passage. By engaging with the visual representations of the historical journey of moko, the creative components of the research act as a form of cultural preservation. The journals reflect on the power of creativity to convey complex cultural concepts in ways that are accessible and engaging, highlighting the role of the artist-researcher as a conduit for transmitting traditional stories, values, and lessons to future generations.

The inclusion of Māori epistemologies, such as Hohepa Delamere's concept of the three manawa (hearts)—whatumanawa (the mind's eye), manawa (heart), and pūmanawa (emotions) (R. Perez, personal communication, May 2015)—adds a nuanced layer to understanding moko as RoP. By engaging these dimensions, the creative process becomes a Māori expression of being, aligning with Kaupapa Māori research methodologies that emphasise the interconnectedness of knowledge, emotion, and action. The journals illustrate how this approach allowed me to explore moko in a way that was both intellectually rigorous and spiritually harmonious, contributing to a more meaningful understanding of its role as a RoP.

Journaling as a Reflexive Methodological Tool: Journaling in this research serves multiple functions that contribute to the overall analysis of moko as RoP. It provides a space for the researcher to document the journey of crafting the thesis, offering an iterative process of reflection and refinement that is essential for navigating the complexities of the topic. The journals capture the challenges, transformations, and insights that emerged throughout the research, highlighting the importance of resilience and adaptability in academic work. One of the key contributions of journaling is its role in integrating personal and scholarly insights. The journals allowed me to reflect on my experiences, draw connections between theory and practice, and develop a nuanced understanding of moko as RoP. This process of writing, reflecting, and revisiting thoughts facilitated the integration of different intellectual and emotional faculties—heart, mind, intuition, and intellect—resulting in a more Indigenous approach to the research question.

The journals also served as a structured repository for ideas, reflections, and discoveries, providing a chronological account of the research journey. This structured approach ensured that the research remained focused and cohesive, while also allowing for flexibility and creative exploration. By documenting the evolution of ideas and the methodological adjustments made throughout the study, the journals contribute to the overall transparency and credibility of the research. The limitations and challenges of journaling are also acknowledged in the journals, particularly its subjective nature and the potential for bias. To address these challenges, I employed strategies such as triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking, ensuring that the findings were informed by multiple perspectives and that the research process remained rigorous and accountable. The journals reflect on the importance of these strategies in mitigating bias and enhancing the validity of the research, demonstrating a commitment to maintaining a balanced and critical approach.

Moko as a Continuum and Vehicle for Cultural Revival: The journals position moko as a continuum, an ongoing process of cultural negotiation and adaptation that reflects the changing needs and contexts of Ngāti Awa. This perspective is crucial in understanding moko as RoP, as it emphasises that moko is not a fixed tradition but one that evolves in response to the realities of the people engaging with it. The journals document how moko, as a cultural marker, can be both a tool for reclaiming lost practices and a means of navigating the complexities of modern Māori identity. The revival of moko as RoP is framed within the broader context of Māori cultural resurgence, with the journals exploring its potential to contribute to a range of

cultural recovery projects. By reinstating moko, Ngāti Awa can cultivate a sense of belonging, resilience, and empowerment that extends beyond the individual to the community and the iwi as a whole. The journals highlight how moko, when positioned as RoP, can serve as a stepping stone toward more comprehensive initiatives, such as language revival, environmental stewardship, and the development of culturally informed leadership.

The role of moko in the Māori diaspora is also considered, with the journals raising questions about how moko practices might evolve among Ngāti Awa living outside Aotearoa. This consideration expands the analysis to include the broader Māori community, suggesting that the diaspora may develop new interpretations of moko that reflect their unique experiences. This highlights the potential for a more inclusive understanding of moko that transcends geographical boundaries, adding complexity to the discussion of cultural authenticity and ownership.

Short Analysis of each Chapters Contribution

Chapter One: Discovering the Research Topic: The opening chapter establishes my personal connection to moko and the dual role as both practitioner and scholar. This chapter highlights the tension between insider knowledge and academic objectivity, illustrating the challenges of balancing personal passion with research rigor. My firsthand insights into the transformative power of moko—particularly its role in collectively reawakening cultural identity and reclaiming personal mana—demonstrate how deeply integrated and impactful this practice is. This foundational chapter describes the evolution of my research focus, it also positions moko as an ongoing RoP, distinct from other ceremonial markers, due to its lifelong process and dynamic nature, and explores the relevance of the pūrākau that are associated with moko. It is the combination of visual symbolism, ancestral narrative, and personal transformation that gives moko its profound power as a RoP and as a tool for cultural survival.

Chapter Two: Navigating the Research Process: This chapter chronicles the methodological journey, emphasising how support from key mentors, a creative cohort and the use of specific tools such as private Facebook groups for data management and Dr Colliers Whetū Mārama framework (2018), helped structure the research. The adaptation to digital tools such as Google Meets due to geographical distance and participant availability, demonstrates the resilience required and highlights the flexibility of Indigenous research methods in modern contexts. The

Whāriki Takapau framework became central to the methodology, reflecting traditional values while aligning with academic requirements, thereby serving as a bridge between Māori and Western research paradigms. This methodological narrative provides clarity on the use of journaling as an essential element in developing and implementing a culturally grounded approach to the research question.

Chapter Three: Moko and Identity: This chapter ties historical narratives with contemporary examples and ruminates on how moko serves as a powerful tool for navigating identity, both in historical and contemporary contexts. The use of the journey of Mataora as a metaphor demonstrates the significance of moko in marking transformations and life stages, the discussion of his transformation offers insights into how these rites function as tools for personal growth, community development and integration within the broader Māori cosmology. By integrating client testimonials, this chapter emphasises how moko acts as a healing and identity-reclaiming mechanism for Māori today. The chapter also explores the nuances of identity politics, including debates on gender-specific moko practices and cultural appropriation. These discussions underline the evolving role of moko and the importance of ensuring it remains an empowering and culturally respectful practice.

Chapter Four: Reflections on the Creative Process: This chapter delves into the creative process as a vital element in the exploration of moko as rites of passage for Ngāti Awa. The connection between creative output and cultural dignity is a central theme, reflecting the assertion that moko, as both art and ritual, can contribute significantly in the cultural resurgence and identity reclamation of the Ngāti Awa people. Through visual art, pūrākau (narratives), and traditional knowledge, the creative process bridges the gap between academic inquiry and modern cultural expression. This chapter underscores that creativity is a core methodology for engaging with moko as RoP. It illustrates how artistic expression deepens understanding of the spiritual, psychological, and emotional aspects of moko, providing a platform for dialogue about cultural resilience and continuity, through an art medium that reflects the technological world of millennials and generation alpha–digital art.

Chapter Five: Reflections on the Journal Process: This chapter outlines the crucial role journaling played as a methodological tool for reflection, analysis, and intellectual growth. Journaling served as a structured repository for thoughts, challenges, and insights, facilitating both personal and scholarly exploration. The analogies to the journey of Mataora highlight how

the journal guided me through the complexities of the thesis. By documenting evolving thoughts, journaling allowed for iterative development of ideas, ensuring a nuanced exploration of moko as RoP. The chapter also addresses the potential biases of subjective journaling and the methods employed to mitigate these, including triangulation and member checking.

Chapter Six: Reflections on the Exegesis: The chapter provides an in-depth reflection on the critical role the exegesis plays within the thesis, highlighting its centrality in connecting all research components and reinforcing the academic rigor required for a doctoral-level inquiry. It connects historical, methodological, and creative elements to argue for the revival of moko as RoP. The exegesis draws on the Kaupapa Māori framework to establish a culturally embedded analysis, underscoring the struggle for Indigenous knowledge systems within academic contexts. This reflection reaffirms the exegesis's dual role as both a scholarly endeavour and a practical guide for revitalising moko as rites of passage for Ngāti Awa. Moving forward, the insights gained from the exegesis pave the way for future research, wānanga, and practical applications that will continue to shape and sustain this important cultural practice.

Chapter Seven: A Doctrine of Recovery? This chapter delves into the historical impact of Imperial colonisation on Māori cultural practices, particularly through the lens of the Doctrine of Discovery (DoD). The dialogue illustrates how colonial policies led to the erosion of traditional RoP and how this has impacted Māori wellbeing. By examining contemporary initiatives aimed at cultural revival, this chapter presents moko as a cornerstone for collective healing and social responsibility. The discussion on moko as a healing modality, supported by personal anecdotes, reinforces its role as a practical and symbolic RoP for Ngāti Awa, positioning it as a key element in overcoming intergenerational trauma. The chapter links the resurgence of moko to the concept of a 'Doctrine of Recovery,' suggesting that while the term 'doctrine' may not fully encapsulate the essence of what moko represents, it underscores the restorative power of this practice in the recovery of Māori identity and social belonging.

Chapter Eight: The Future of Tā Moko: The final chapter explores the ongoing evolution of moko as a cultural practice, emphasising its adaptability and relevance in the modern world. By engaging with influences such as technology, globalisation, and cross-cultural exchanges, this chapter highlights both the opportunities and challenges faced in reinstating moko as RoP. The chapter underscores the importance of education, community collaboration, and cultural

property rights in ensuring the longevity of moko. Ultimately, it presents a vision of moko thriving as a living tradition, adaptable yet deeply rooted in its spiritual and cultural origins, encapsulating the potential of moko to act as a powerful modality for healing, empowerment, and the revitalisation of cultural identity, ensuring its relevance and vitality for the coming generations.

Concluding Analysis: The Journal Tier offers a comprehensive examination of moko as rites of passage for Ngāti Awa, highlighting its cultural, personal, and communal aspects. The analysis reveals that moko is a potentially powerful tool for identity formation, cultural reclamation, and healing, offering Ngāti Awa a means to reclaim practices lost through colonisation while building a renewed sense of belonging and resilience. The journals provide a rich, reflexive account of the research journey, capturing my evolving understanding of moko and demonstrating how the use of journaling contributes to the depth and transparency of the study. However, the conclusion remains intentionally open-ended, avoiding a simplistic or overly plausible narrative of revival. The challenges associated with reinstating moko as RoP—including modern colonised perceptions, internal resistance, and identity politics—are complex and require ongoing negotiation. These contradictions emphasise that cultural practices are dynamic and subject to the realities of those engaging with them.

The journals raise important questions about sustainability, generational transmission, and the role of the diaspora, indicating that the future of moko is neither guaranteed nor predetermined. It will be shaped by the communities that choose to engage with it, by the frameworks they establish, and by the dialogue they cultivate. Moko as RoP reaches beyond being a marker of individual milestones; it is potentially a vehicle for cultural transformation able to contribute to a broader Māori revival encompassing language, identity, and environmental stewardship. In conclusion, the journal tier analysis provides a reflective exploration of moko as RoP, demonstrating its value as both a cultural practice and a tool for maturation and resilience. By framing moko as a living, evolving tradition, the analysis acknowledges the complexities and challenges inherent in cultural resurgence, while also highlighting the transformative potential of moko for Ngāti Awa. As a researcher and practitioner, the hope is that this study serves as a platform for ongoing conversation, reflection, and adaptation, ensuring that moko remains a vital and thriving part of Ngāti Awa culture.

Creative Tier – Analysis:

In addressing the research question each canvas provides visual and narrative evidence of how moko can restore identity, belonging, and cultural continuity. Before we analyse each canvas, I will evaluate three recurring elements, The Whāriki Takapau, the use of wheku (masks) and ahi tapu (ritual fires).

The Whāriki Takapau (the ritual mat) is a foundational element that embodies the ritual space of tapu (restricted, sacred) and the space of noa (unrestricted, ordinary). The paepaeroa, or bordered edges of the mat, signify the demarcation of these two spaces. The use of the whāriki takapau across the canvases reinforces the significance of ritual as a space where cultural protocols, values, identity, and spiritual growth are performed. The paepaeroa across the canvases represents this boundary, visually and conceptually illustrating the spatial importance of tapu during the moko process and their eventual return to normality, but in a renewed, transformed and spiritually fortified state.

Across the nine canvases, the evolving nature of the paepaeroa reflects the changing societal and cultural contexts within which moko is practiced. As traditional ways of life were altered through colonisation, the symbolism of the paepaeroa shifts accordingly. This evolution in the design and symbolism of the whāriki reflects how tikanga (customary practices) must adapt to serve the needs of modern life. For instance, modern mokopapa allows the wider community to participate reinforcing collective identity. As Ngāti Awa contemplates reinstating moko as RoP, it is essential to recognise this adaptability of tikanga is a reflection of the resilience of Ngāti Awa culture itself, it speaks to the need of fluidity for cultural survival, spiritual growth and identity formation into the future. This shift highlights the benefit for the people by making the ritual space more accessible and relevant to contemporary society. In doing so, Ngāti Awa creates a new consciousness around moko, one that acknowledges that moko as a community-based practice signals a powerful means of identity reclamation, connection to whakapapa (ancestry), and a marker of life milestones. Just as the paepaeroa has shifted to accommodate modern realities, so too must the tikanga surrounding moko be recalibrated to ensure that it remains relevant and beneficial for future generations.

The use of Wheku to represent specific characters in the pūrākau is another recurring element in each canvas. Wheku, carved mask-like representations of human faces, are often seen

as kōruru at the gable of a whareniui, symbolising the head of the ancestor that the house represents. Joseph Campbell (1991) viewed masks in ritual spaces as symbolic tools that allow individuals to transcend their personal identity and embody universal archetypes or mythic figures. In this research, the first two canvases particularly convey the mythical personas of Uetonga, Niwareka, Mataora, and Hineteāangi. Although these wheku are more human-like than traditional kōruru, their purpose remains the same: to connect Māori with the mythological and spiritual origins of tā moko and affirm moko as a deeply spiritual experience that both marks and induces personal growth.

The recurring use of wheku in the canvases underscores the idea of representing moko as a collective identity that one can reconnect to by ritually adorning moko kanohi in the context of RoP. The connection to the research question can be outlined as follows: The wheku illustrate a connection to collective Māori identities; kinship, tribal and pan tribal. They are intended to plant seeds of reclamation in the hearts and spirits of Ngāti Awa today, embodying such values as identity, mana motuhake, Indigeneity, reclamation, transformation, healing, and collective consciousness. They symbolise the process of RoP. Each canvas's wheku represent stages of the plight of moko, whilst simultaneously representing milestones in an individual's life, from rites of birth and origins (Ahi Kōmau) to puberty rites (Ahi Tā Moko), warrior initiations (Ahi Paki Mahunga), leadership rites (Ahi Raupatu), marriage and childbirth rites (Ahi Tahutahu), rites of death and widowhood (Ahi Tāmau), rites of reclamation of identity (Hika Ahi), rites of succession (Ahi Mānuka), and rites of academic achievement (Ahi Anamata).

From a psychological perspective, the term "the masks we wear" refers to the various roles, personas, or identities that individuals adopt in different social, professional, or personal contexts (Jung, 1953). These "masks" are metaphorical representations of how people present themselves to others, often to fit societal expectations, hide vulnerabilities, or manage their emotions and behaviour in specific situations. While these masks can be adaptive, helping individuals navigate complex social environments, they may also lead to feelings of inauthenticity or emotional conflict if worn too frequently or rigidly. Over time, the continuous use of certain masks may create distance from one's authentic self, leading to psychological distress or identity confusion. This serves as a caution to Māori to approach moko kanohi with authenticity, self-awareness and an understanding of the deeper purpose of moko as RoP, focussed on maturation, growth, belonging and responsibility. For example, if moko kanohi is used to intimidate, thus hiding behind a perceived notion of the warrior as someone to be feared,

rather than as a role model of protection, then moko becomes detrimental, not only for the individual's sense of self, but it also risks distorting the broader societal perception of moko. These are considerations for Ngāti Awa to consider when reinstating moko as RoP. The use of *whēku* and the notion of “the masks we wear” in the canvases invites such philosophical ruminations, this directly aligns with the research's goal of using moko as a positive cultural marker. This deeper understanding ensures that moko serves its intended purpose as a tool for cultural revival and identity reclamation.

Ahi Tapu is the third recurring element in the Toi Kōrero canvases. Its role in ritual and ceremony is central to this discussion. Tā Pou Temara touches on the profound cultural significance of fire within Māori traditions, highlighting its dual role in both everyday life and sacred rituals. He discusses ‘Ahi Tapu,’ the sacred fire integral to tapu rituals, whether it's opening a new house or performing ocean rituals, fire has a dual function of imposing and removing tapu. This apparent contradiction underscores fire's complex role in Māori culture, where it symbolises both life and the primal connection between spirit and matter. Fire plays an important role in rituals that mark significant life transitions such as RoP (personal communication, Nov 2023).

‘Te Ahi Kāroa’ (the long-burning fires of occupation) is a metaphor for the enduring presence and connection of people to their ancestral land. In the canvases, this *tikanga* underscores the importance of preserving cultural rituals such as moko, which symbolically connect people to the land (the earth's skin). In this context, the “land” also metaphorically refers to the skin. The presence of ahi in each canvas highlights the need to rekindle these ritual fires of moko as RoP. Each canvas incorporates fire as a metaphor for the state of moko during the period it portrays. I will now provide a brief description of each canvas and its connection to a specific life milestone, followed by the extraction of key elements from the canvases, and/or statements from the *pūrākau* that most directly relates to the potential benefits of moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa.

Ahi Kōmau, Creation to 900AD: Rites of origins and birth. This image (p. 256) depicts Uetonga and his daughter Niwareka, with the overall blue tone symbolising the spirit world. The tools of Uetonga are tattooing implements, the tools of Niwareka are ‘*turuturu*’— weaving posts, the *whāriki takapau* defines the ritual space. As noted by Whatahoro (2011) the markings of Niwareka were simple crosses on each cheek and her forehead, this served as inspiration for the depictions in this image. The lava pool at the bottom is the sacred fire given to Rūaimoko,

Ahi Kōmau. *“Their markings, scarred into their skin, reflect the surface of the earth, shaped by my (Rūaimoko) seismic upheavals.”* This reflects the connection between moko, the natural world, and the persons inner self, revealing that moko and RoP is a physical act and a spiritual, earth-bound transformation that can often stir an upheaval of emotions. This canvas highlights the role of pūrākau in the transmission of knowledge and practice, illustrating how moko can serve as a cultural anchor that reinforces ancestral identity and personal growth. By reinstating moko as RoP along with its origin narratives, cultural pūrākau are revitalised, strengthening the people of Ngāti Awa by providing a deep-rooted understanding of their place within these narratives, and the significance of moko as RoP in building communal cohesion by reestablishing traditional rituals that mark significant life milestones.

Ahi Tā Moko, 900AD – 1770: Puberty rites. This image (p. 258) depicts Hineteārangī with her father Mataora. The overall green tone symbolises the natural world of the Māori, and the image portrays the flourishing art form during traditional times, the whāriki is vibrant, the tattooing implements have evolved, the ahi tapu is present, and the ink bowl is full. The moko on the face of Mataora aligns to what he returned with from Rarohenga (Whatahoro, 2011), and the markings on Hineteārangī reflect her dual heritage. *“He (Mataora) undergoes the gruelling ordeal of tā moko, as he is forced to confront himself, his shadows exposed by the sacred fires of Rarohenga.”* Like all myths, the hero of the story has flaws that are resolved through the odyssey laid out before him. The silhouettes on either side of Mataora reveal the transformation that was affected through his epic trial of retrieving his wife and his dignity, which was permanently embedded in his body and soul through the ordeal of tā moko, it could be said that Mataora underwent a belated coming of age initiation. This emphasises moko as a transformative process, marking the personal and social growth of the wearer. Reinstating moko as RoP can cultivate a pathway to transformation, benefiting the people of Ngāti Awa by perpetuating resilience, self-reflection, responsibility and dignity.

Ahi Paki Māhunga, 1770 – 1850: Warrior initiations. There is no female representation in this canvas (p. 260) as the focus is on the predominantly male heads that were traded, which played a significant part in the removal of male moko kanohi from the nation. The Doctrine of Discovery and the signatures of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are embedded beneath the Union Jack, symbolising the subversive intentions of our ‘treaty partners’ to assimilate Māori into an imperial system through colonisation. The Bible and blankets are symbols of control and deceit, while the skull and cross bones layout is a deliberate depiction of the piracy inherent

in the trade of heads, a convenient payment for muskets. The whāriki burns in the flames of exploitation. *“The sacred fires of ritual moko were all but extinguished while a different fire began to blaze.”* The ritual fire is now fuelled by the imperial industry of war. This image can be used to teach younger generations about the historical consequences of colonial exploitation. Reviving moko, alongside an honest retelling of its historical plight, helps to contextualise our modern social predicaments—loss of land, language, culture and rituals and the impacts that has had on Māori. It sparks discussions about war, ethics, power, control, and the impact of the industrial revolution on humanity and the earth. The image is intentionally turned on its side to represent how colonialism flipped the world of our ancestor’s upside down. Reintroducing moko as RoP serves as a counter-narrative to the devastation of colonialism, reclaiming mana motuhake (self-determination) for Ngāti Awa. It transforms the act of tattooing into a form of resistance, by marking our skins and heads as spaces to communicate our self-determination. This revitalisation benefits the people of Ngāti Awa by affirming our survival as a people, while also providing lessons about the nature of imperial colonisation and its ongoing presence in our lives.

Ahi Raupatu, 1850 – 1880: Leadership initiations. Chief Mokomoko and my ancestress Rangitetaea takes centre stage in this image (p. 262), their lands and resources annexed, as fire is weaponised through scorched earth policies. Maps of the North Island depict the significant loss of land during this period, which also saw the last remaining moko kanohi upon the faces of males. Rangitetaea has her bottom lip partially tattooed, signalling the survival of female moko. The colonial noose that took the life of Mokomoko is symbolically cut, conveying his innocence and eventual redemption. In this image the whāriki is now utilised only by women, emphasising their role in preserving moko. The Union Jack looms intensely signifying England’s colonial annexation of Aotearoa. *“It was in these tumultuous times that the last of the male moko kanohi was adorned.”* The reinstitution of mataora as male RoP directly addresses the historical interruption of cultural practices. Restoring mataora provides Ngāti Awa men with a structured framework for life transitions, guided by elders and community. The internal awareness of self, cultivated through the moko kanohi process, creates accountability to both the individual and the community, which is made visible by the presence of moko on the face. Restoring mana to Ngāti Awa men will certainly benefit the community by cultivating strong leaders, fathers, academics, and protectors of environment and people. The connection between the story of Mokomoko and modern Ngāti Awa men who receive moko kanohi today, will benefit from deeper engagement and analysis through psychological

and sociocultural theories about identity reconciliation and cultural trauma (Erikson, 1959; Fanon, 1986), exploring the role of moko in restoring coherence to Māori identity amid the pressures of assimilation and modernity.

The statement “...*symbolically removing the noose from his neck, Mokokoko finally sings his song of freedom*” speaks directly to the lingering impacts of colonisation on Māori, with the chains of colonialism still binding the hearts and minds of many. Moko kanohi can serve as a bridge, connecting the injustices of imperial assimilation through colonisation with the inherent right to life and prosperity. As individuals, Māori must reconcile these two opposing ways of being—Indigenous and colonial—and moko can guide this reconciliation for the people of Ngāti Awa.

Ahi Tahutahu, 1880 – 1945: Rites of marriage and childbirth. This image (p. 264) reveals the stark contrast from the previous canvas. Tame Poata, depicted without moko kanohi, began tattooing in 1920, at a time when male moko kanohi had not been practiced for over 50 years. His passing in 1942 coincided with the eruption of World War II, further disrupting the practice. The tools of moko were evolving into steel implements, and the invention of the tattoo machine paralleled the development of modern weaponry, like the atomic bomb depicted. Ahi Tahutahu—the intermittent fires of moko—reflects this era of significant change. Māori society now existed in a rapidly modernising, industrial world, survivors of immense cultural and societal shifts.

The *whēku* representations in this image begin to look more human-like, symbolising the progression toward recent times, where photographs of those depicted exist. The *Whāriki Takapau* is described as being “*warm with the presence of women who carried the artform into modernity.*” The elderly women of this period were often tattooed in their youth to signify their readiness for marriage and their capacity to bear children. This image, therefore, speaks to the critical role women played in preserving both moko and whakapapa (genealogy) through this era of significant societal change. In traditional Māori contexts, the Whāriki Takapau was also integral to childbirth and marriage rites. Women’s involvement in moko kauae connects them with maintaining the continuity of future generations, feminine responsibilities and identity, roles traditionally tied to these rites of passage. This highlights the need to acknowledge the roles of women in society, harkening back to the sacred traditional house of feminine arts (Wharepora), and reflecting the expanded roles they embody in today’s society. Reintroducing

moko as RoP for women will benefit Ngāti Awa by celebrating and uplifting our women, affirming their divine roles in birthing and nurturing future generations. Moreover, it will reinforce the value of whakapapa and cultural identity, ensuring that the sacred responsibilities women hold in both traditional and modern contexts are honoured and revitalised for generations to come.

Ahi Tāmau, 1945 – 1970: Rites of death and widowhood. This canvas (p. 266) features my great-grandparents Wiremu and Te Ara-Paparahi Hona during, the period of cessation of the art form. Her kauae, possibly grooved by Tame Poata, symbolises the persistence of moko through the use of steel, represented by the implement lying face down, which in turn symbolises the chisel being laid to rest. The moon phases reference the Maramataka which they followed to plant crops in harmony with the cycles of nature. Her tobacco pipe represents Ahi Tāmau, the practice of keeping embers smouldering by burying them, so they can be reignited again the next day, much like the personal ceremony of smoking a pipe. This canvas encapsulates themes of assimilation and dispossession, symbolising the death of the ‘mataora’, survived only by the widowed ‘kauae’ – the death of traditional society, with its remnants left in mourning.

The statement “...*the ritual fires of rites of passage pass away with these matriarchs of yesteryear,*” underscores death as natural part of life and a powerful symbolic experience in the ritual space. Pūrākau, with their multi-layered meanings, often use death metaphorically. Just as puberty rites mark the death of adolescence and the birth of adulthood, the death of traditional tā moko practices gave rise to the modern art form we see today. Similarly, the death of a life partner marks the transition to a new phase in life: widowhood. Reintroducing moko as RoP revives those buried embers, yet it is not the same fire as yesterday—it evolves. This understanding of death giving birth to something new is not unfamiliar to Māori, exemplified in the well-known proverb “*as one fern frond dies, so another comes to take its place.*” Rekindling the art form in contemporary contexts benefits the people of Ngāti Awa in numerous ways, such as helping those who have lost a life partner commemorate their passing or marking the death of complacency toward learning the Māori language and committing to reviving the language for future generations. This canvas holds a powerful message of death and renewal for the people of Ngāti Awa.

Hika Ahi, 1970 – 2010: Rites of identity reclamation. The personas in this canvas (p. 268) represent two Māori sub-cultures: gangs and Rastafarians. The home-made tattoo machine symbolises Māori ingenuity, whether in gangs, in prison, or in the rural towns where Rastas resided. Meanwhile, the professional tattoo machine symbolises the transitional period for Māori artists entering the professional craft of tattooing during this era. The traditional fire ignition implements signal the reignition of tā moko in society, while the pile of tinder represents the Māori people's desire to embrace and normalise moko again. The Whāriki Takapau has morphed, illustrating the shifting thresholds of rituals engaged by these subcultures. Red and blue representing opposing gang colours, each with its own initiation rites, while green represents the Rastafarian lifestyle and the sacrament of marijuana.

“The ‘Dread’ likewise incorporates moko into their identities, narrating their lives through a fusion of symbols, portraying the identities and religious beliefs of the Māori Rastafarian.” This subculture adopted moko into their facial markings, blending it with iconography of the Rastafarian faith. Similarly, Mobsters and Black Power members fused moko with their gang symbols. This fusion phenomenon reflects the reclamation of Māori identity and the proclamation of belonging – one to a faith and the other to a gang. Both groups present a face of defiance to the system. These subcultures played a significant role in the reignition of moko by defiantly adorning it. This reflects the power of moko as an act of “rebellion” and Indigenous survival, leading to the eventual revival of moko, which consequently inspired other Indigenous cultures to revive their tattoo traditions. As formal RoP, moko kanohi could empower Ngāti Awa individuals to channel this defiance into a positive personal and collective cultural reawakening. Reinstating moko as RoP reclaims its power to assert identity and belonging, it corrects negative associations and restores its rightful place as a symbol of personal and cultural integrity.

Ahi Mānuka, 2010 – 2023: Rites of succession. Represented in this canvas (p. 270) is Mark Kopua and one of his students, Joni Brooking. Like Uetonga and Niwareka in the first canvas, the tohunga tā moko sits at the bottom of the composition to symbolise proximity to the source of ritual and knowledge for tā moko: Rarohenga (the underworld). The kumara symbolises Joni's place of belonging, where she cultivates the vegetable around the ancestral house – Kauaetangohia– built by Tame Poata, where kumara gardens once flourished. Mark is depicted with an obsidian pekapeka (bat) in his hair symbolising the re-emergence of tā moko from the “underworld” into the world of light. In the Mataora and Niwareka narrative, the bat was

brought up from the underworld upon their return to the world of light. Beside Mark, are the tools of Tame Poata, symbolising the passing of his knowledge from Tame to Mark. The inclusion of the modern rotary tattoo machine signifies the evolution of technology and the shift in how moko is practiced today. The ritual fire of mokopapa is now blazing with many people gathered around it — signifying a departure from the traditionally restricted settings of moko ceremonies. The paepaeroa of the whāriki reflects this evolution; the threshold expanding inwards reflecting how mokopapa has evolved to invite broader community participation in the ritual.

This image captures the current generation where moko has surged into the national consciousness. The tools of Tame Poata along with the phrase, “...drawing from the legacy of Poata, he (Mark) forged a strong Whāriki Takapau, passing down his knowledge to his many tauira (students),” highlight the importance of transferring knowledge from tohunga (master) to tauira. This underscores the need for strategic and proactive succession planning to ensure the artform, its rituals and its accompanying body of knowledge are passed on to the next generation, the future of moko kanohi for Ngāti Awa will be built upon the foundations we establish today. In traditional times, rites of succession included symbolic acts such as biting the big toe, thumb, and crown of the head (tipuaki) of the tohunga before or after his passing, transferring his mauri (life force) to the student (Ngata, 1950). Today, moko can mark this succession of knowledge. Reintroducing a formal succession ritual will benefit Ngāti Awa by providing a framework for passing on and ensuring the preservation of the mauri of Rūaimoko, the knowledge and traditions that anchor moko as rites of passage.

Ahi Anamata, 2024 – 2124: Rites of academic achievement. This canvas (p. 272) features Māui, my eldest child, and Sage, my youngest. Sage wears the pekapeka indicating the continuation of the moko tradition into the future. Māui wears a Bowler hat which was worn historically by theatre comedians like Charlie Chaplin, his use of the bowler became iconic and was a parody of the respectable, middle-class businessmen who also commonly wore it. He critiqued societal norms and class distinctions in a playful yet pointed manner (Robinson, 1986). While the faces of Māui and Sage may appear unmarked, upon closer inspection the impression of moko rests beneath the surface, suggesting that the aesthetics and symbolism of moko for Ngāti Awa in the future should determinately evolve. Perhaps embodying the proverbial saying, “Ngāti Awa is the lashing that binds the adze (toki) to its handle and is not perishable even by the sun or the rain,” highlighting the permanence and resilience of Ngāti

Awa. The toki *Pou-tangata* stands beside Māui in the image. In the background, Mount Pūtauaki—dormant for centuries—erupts, symbolising the reawakening of Rūaimoko and the revival of moko as rites of passage for Ngāti Awa. Toi Kairākau, the eponymous ancestor of Ngāti Awa, stands carved and vigilant over the lands, symbolising “ahi kā” (fire of occupation) and the enduring connection of Ngāti Awa to the region.

Above Māui the albatross (Toroa) soars through the cosmos, symbolic of acquisition of knowledge and recalling the journeys of Tāne and Tāwhaki to retrieve the baskets of knowledge and share them on earth. *“Tomorrow’s children navigate new realities, like Toroa – the Albatross – traversing vast celestial realms of human potential while staying firmly rooted in their ancestral heritage.”* This phrase from the pūrākau encapsulates this intention, reflecting how future generations will build on the knowledge we leave them. I argue that reinstating moko as rites of passage for academic achievement will offer a powerful framework for acknowledging scholarly success. An example of this will be outlined in the next chapter. Suffice it to say, it is clear that using moko kanohi to honour academic milestones would greatly benefit Ngāti Awa. It would encourage educational excellence, especially through institutions like Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. If Ngāti Awa are to take the social significance of moko kanohi seriously, reinstating moko as a visible marker of achievement and excellence will provide both a meaningful and pragmatic way to celebrate and acknowledge these milestones within the iwi.

Conclusion: The selected excerpts from each canvas, paired with analysis, contributes to answering the research question by highlighting the cultural, psychological, and communal benefits that can be derived from reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones for Ngāti Awa. Ahi Pūrākau (the creative tier) serves the thesis by succinctly storyboarding the historical chronological order of events that lead to its near-complete cessation due to colonisation. The digital painting style is intended to connect with the preferences of modern youth. The tier’s role is also to highlight the vital importance of pūrākau in the ritual space of rites of passage. Pūrākau are vessels that convey values, ethics, and origins of a people. Colonisation is now a major part of our historical narrative, which adds to the ever evolving pūrākau of the Ngāti Awa people, and indeed all Māori, providing new lessons for future generations.

ONO

1.6 Kai a te Rangatira – Discussion

“The nourishment of chiefs is dialogue.”

Introduction

Reinstating a structured Rites of Passage (RoP) pathway based on traditional practice and purpose in the modern world will be no small undertaking. We now live in a globalised age, where customs and language face the continued threat of erosion. There remains a fundamental need to re-anchor ourselves in the rituals of our tūpuna (ancestors), the rituals between birth and death. This discussion seeks to highlight the significance of rejuvenating traditional RoP, particularly in the context of moko, into modern Māori life. It is a journey that urges us to consolidate the ‘breadcrumbs’ of the past with the aspirations of the present, ensuring a vibrant ritual protocol for future generations. Like the journey of Mataora, the challenges will be many, it required bravery and determination and was fuelled by his regret, his love for Niwareka and his hope for her forgiveness.

Interpretation

The findings suggest that the potential of reinstating moko as RoP is meaningful, dynamic and offers benefits to all Māori regardless of their level of cultural efficacy. Impacting positively on identity: spiritually, mentally and emotionally. It bridges those who are disconnected from whakapapa, reo and tikanga, while strengthening and affirming those who are rooted in te ao Māori. As a RoP, moko signifies a pivotal moment of transition, marking milestones in one's life journey. Whether it's puberty rites or a rite of academic graduation, moko conveys the growth of both the individual's story and the collective narrative of their lineage, moko then carries the potential for the growth of the bearer: physically, mentally and spiritually. It's a confluence of the past and the present, making it a powerful symbol of continuity and adaptability. Through this interpretation, it's evident that the implications of moko are far-reaching and helps to shape not only individual identity but also the cultural fabric of the Māori community. It will ‘take a village’ to weave together the many diverse strands required to reignite the fires of moko as RoP.

The Need for Wānanga: Establishing the Context

Wānanga, at its core, embodies the notion of ‘ko te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero: the nourishment of chiefs is dialogue’. It represents a space of collective learning, a place where knowledge is shared, expanded upon and critically examined. These spaces of dialogue are paramount in decision-making, especially when it comes to reinstating traditions and practices deeply rooted in Māori culture and identity. To reignite moko as RoP, two distinctive types of wānanga emerge as necessary.

Te Ahi Mānuka: Lay the first stone: the mauri stone. The first series of wānanga would be focused on organising and structuring the RoP process. To successfully reintegrate moko as RoP into modern Ngāti Awa culture, a structured process that synthesises known traditional rituals with contemporary realities is needed. This requires the expertise and guidance of learned kaumātua and tohunga from various domains - genealogy, pūrākau, carving, protocol, ritual and ceremony, incantation and others - to collaboratively structure a process that reflects both the traditional knowledge baskets of Mataatua and the present modern worlds context, ensuring the integrity and purpose of the rituals are upheld, the mana of the pragmatic social relevance of moko is revitalised whilst making it relevant and accessible to the people of Ngāti Awa. Delineating a RoP pathway, identifying what milestones should be marked, attributing appropriate protocols, incantations, challenges and sacred sites and weaving Mataatua narratives into the moko/RoP rituals, will be the goal of these initial wānanga. One of our matakauri, Hohepa offers an insightful understanding of the function of the coming-of-age phase of a person’s life and its connection to the pūrākau of the separation of Rangi and Papa.

Hohepa: *“The separation of Rangi and Papa. Most people think that's the parents separating, for me that story actually highlights the importance of the child leaving the nest, that's the child leaving the comfort of his parents and their home to go out and stand in the world on his own, become his own man, not a separation with them all together. From a youth, you emerge as a man and all the responsibility that comes with being a man, as part of the community. There's definitely been a loss of those deeper identities or whatever you call those [archetypes]. You've got ‘Māori,’ you've got ‘male’ but then you need ‘toa’, then you've got ‘tohunga’ or whatever those categories are in there.”*

This shows how the deeper archetypes of the Māori mind that require ritual initiation to progress through life with the necessary resilience and skills to be a sustainable and generative member of society (Van Gennep, 2019; Eliade, 2017). His narrative parallels the thinking of Gillette and Moore when outlining the functions and fundamentality of ritual initiation to nurture growth in the psyche of males. Hohepa eloquently indicates how Māori narratives remain relevant in the modern world. These 'Te Ahi Mānuka Wānanga' are envisioned to cover the full spectrum of moko rites of passage in between birth and death. It's essential, however, that each of these rites closely align with the teachings and principles of Mataatua kōrero and wānanga, ensuring both authenticity and tribal relevance.

Wānanga Poutama: The second wānanga type is educational in nature, particularly focusing on 'kōrero only' (discussion) wānanga, a concept seeded by one of our Mataatua carvers, Hohua Kereama when presented with this kaupapa. He recommended community wānanga involving close collaboration between hapū (clans) and kaitoi (artists), emphasising the importance of dialogue in understanding and reviving moko. It was suggested that this discussion-only wānanga moko span across Ngāti Awa, offering a space where shared experiences and history can be revisited and the significance of every stage can be explored in depth (H. Kereama, personal communication, October 2023). It seeks to enlighten the broader community about the re-established RoP process, the significance of moko as RoP and its multi-dimensional implications. This is an arena where concerns, apprehensions and questions can be addressed. They will become platforms to re-educate, re-connect and re-invigorate the Māori community's ties to the cultural practice of moko as RoP.

The role of wānanga in community education cannot be overstated. By cultivating these spaces of dialogue, the community is given an active voice, ensuring that the journey of reinstating moko as RoP is a shared one. It is through these discussions that cultural narratives are re-told, values are re-affirmed and a communal vision for the future of moko is carved. Such discourse ensures that the revival is not just surface level, but rooted in collective consciousness, making the tradition's resurgence robust and enduring. In essence, wānanga, with its dual emphasis on structuring the RoP and educating the community, becomes the heart of this revival effort, ensuring that reinstatement of moko is both authentic and encompassing.

Elements to Consider for Reinstating Moko as RoP: Modern attitudes towards moko kanohi seem to be following and perpetuating trends, albeit unconsciously and whilst this may be a natural phase in the revival of the art form, we should remain vigilant of discouraging the people of Ngāti Awa to adorn moko kanohi for such shallow reasons, leading to a diminishment of the ritualistic purpose of moko and risking, as Joseph Campbell says, self-aggrandisement due to a failed or incompetent rite of passage (Campbell & Moyers, 1991).

Pūrākau: Integration of Traditional Narratives: Pūrākau, traditional narratives, creation stories, stories of demigods, heroes and heroines with the lessons contained within that are deemed worthy and necessary, form the foundation of any RoP. Our narratives now include the advent of colonisation and what could be termed a dark night of the soul for our people; the deepest lessons are often found in the shadows and colonialism is a very dark collective shadow. These stories provide the cultural, historical and spiritual context necessary for meaningful rites. By understanding and integrating pūrākau, the rituals gain meaningful significance that accesses the collective memory of the Māori. Te Ahukaramū Royal who is a musician, academic and Māori music revivalist, dialogues about rituals providing initiates with a safe and controlled opportunity to anchor themselves into creation through the re-enactment of these creation narratives, solidifying their sense of belonging in the world. He states, *“Every culture has its traditions about how the world was created. Māori have many of them. Through the spoken repetition of these stories, the world is constantly being recreated”* (2005, p. 1). How these narratives are integrated into the rituals would be through the ‘performing’ of pūrākau, selective narratives that convey wisdoms and teach our youth ‘how’ to think not ‘what’ to think (Archibald, 2008; Lee, 2009; Pouwhare, 2022) and the use of ritual elements that portray these narratives. The ritual fire for example, is a representation of Ahi Kōmau and traditional ritual fire-starting practices could be revitalised for these occasions.

Social Infrastructures: Role of Communal Spaces and Institutions: RoP should be deeply intertwined with communal spaces such as marae and institutions like TWWOA. These spaces serve as venues for rituals and function as cultural repositories, preserving and caring for the collective knowledge, history and values of a community. One of the foundational strengths of these ceremonies is their capacity to foster collective unity and instil a deep sense of belonging among initiates and attendees. The importance of such venues is accentuated when they serve not just as locations but as historical touchpoints. For instance, the significance of locations like Pōhaturoa and Wairere Falls is amplified given their historical usage for rites, serving as

traditional locations for these ceremonies in the past. The ancestral house Mataatua would be an ideal space for Ahi Mānuka (mokopapa) for Ngāti Awa, given its location and historical symbolism of a taonga returned to our people. It is particularly suited for mokopapa, especially during pivotal moments such as academic transitions or shifts in tribal leadership. However, every marae in the region presents itself as a viable venue.

Whakapapa Experts: Bridging Connections to Genealogy: Whakapapa, or genealogy, is a bridge to one's ancestors, a connection to history and the roots of identity. Experts in whakapapa fortify these connections, ensuring that RoP intimately tether participants to their lineage, tohi raukina was used for this purpose (Wilson, 2021). This not only strengthens an individual's sense of place within the wider iwi context but also infuses the rituals with deeper significance. Take, for instance, the term for the artform of moko in Mataatua, known as 'Te Uhi a Toroa' or 'The Chisel of Toroa' (Best, 1904), named after the albatross' wing bone, the material used to fashion the blade of the instrument. But even more profoundly, it bears a connection to Toroa, the navigator of the Mataatua canoe. Like the majestic bird that soars the skies, Toroa navigated the vast oceans. This parallel is a metaphor for those who are adept at navigating life's complexities, or the spiritual navigator offering guidance to others. Such narratives, guided by the knowledge of whakapapa experts, can be woven into the moko, endowing each adornment rich with history, identity, collective values and purpose.

Our ancestors' historical voyage aboard the Mataatua canoe is a foundational narrative that informs the Ngāti Awa identity. As they settled amongst our cousins, also the descendants of Māui and Toi, already rooted in the region (Ngaropo, 2000), they established a flourishing society. This migration story serves to anchor every Ngāti Awa individual to the environment, encapsulated in the concept of 'ahi kāroa'— the home fires of occupation – grounding Ngāti Awa people to the land, forest, oceans, rivers and mountains of the Mataatua region.

Tohunga Involvement: Tapping into Expertise for Authentic Rites: Tohunga, specialists across diverse fields, are indispensable for the revitalisation of RoP. Their vast knowledge and experience ensure that rituals are constructed with utmost authenticity, upholding the spiritual, cultural and practical facets of these rites. Māori mental health practitioners, as an example, might play a pivotal role in determining the appropriate pūrākau for distinct situations, especially when moko serves as a therapeutic medium to assist individuals in navigating mamae like violence, sexual abuse, incest, abortion and still births for example. The efficacy

of this approach is manifest in initiatives like Mahi-a-Atua, steered by Mark Kopua and his wife Dr Diana, where pūrākau is central to their principle of ‘re-indigenising’ the space of Māori mental health. Another noteworthy endeavour is Poutama Rites of Passage under the leadership of Tiaki Coates. Forging partnerships with such organisations will not only augment the kaupapa but can be launched through invitations to wānanga, fostering the genesis of these invaluable relationships.

Community Engagement: Collective Commitment: The success of reinstating this RoP initiative hinges on the active participation and support of the broader community. It's imperative to liaise with diverse societal segments, cementing collective support and cultivating unity, comprehension and mutual dedication to the endeavour. That proverbial saying ‘it takes a village’ finds its place here. Educational wānanga serve as platforms that enlighten the community and facilitate open discussions. With the renaissance of moko becoming increasingly prevalent across Aotearoa, community resistance should be minimal. However, it's prudent to acknowledge and respect certain sectors, like those with religious reservations, who might choose non-participation.

Modern Relevance: Adapting Rituals for a Modern World: Whilst it's essential to create and maintain cultural authenticity for moko as RoP, adapting rituals to reflect modern culture ensures their relevance and ongoing purpose. This adaptation makes the rituals relevant and meaningful for younger generations while aligning with traditional values. Puberty rites, for example, was a forum where sex education was traditionally handed down from elders, whereas today it is left mostly to the education system. Kava (kawakawa – ‘Piper excelsum’) ceremony is an adaption that I would look at for tool making, or ink making, as this is the tikanga in Samoa and Hawaii, which is the lineage that I have engaged to learn traditional tools.

Prioritising Holistic Well-being of Kaiwhiwhi: The physical, mental and spiritual safety of kaiwhiwhi (recipients) is paramount. To safeguard individuals and ensure the community's overall health, aspiring moko practitioners must meet hygiene and safety regulations, alongside traditional ritual requirements. It's essential that they understand how to manage tapu (ritual restrictions) and noa (the lifting of these restrictions). Mentoring in these areas’ points to the need for a succession plan, encompassing mentorship, continuous education and the preservation of pertinent knowledge. Overseeing these standards and the overall direction of the initiative perhaps necessitates the establishment of a guiding body of elders, even if only as advisors.

Documentation: Record keeping for Future Generations: Documentation preserves the knowledge, experiences and nuances of RoP for future generations, enabling understanding, learning and continuity of traditions. Thomas Clarks' Hawaiki-hou blockchain metaverse project provides an ideal platform to host and safeguard this data, ensuring all wānanga are documented reliably and safely.

Collaboration with Other Cultures: Learning from Indigenous communities around the world which have also grappled with colonial invasion and embarked on paths of cultural renaissance can offer relationships of mutual learning. One illustrative example is the relationship we could foster with Samoan tattooists. Their 1000 plus years tradition of tatau (tattoo) is an enduring RoP and mirrors the deep-rooted significance of traditional moko. Likewise, Hawaiian tattooists Keone Nunes and Kamali'i Hanohano have much to offer in the field of traditional tool making and application. Through initiatives like exchange programmes or shared cultural events, we can draw inspiration, gain insights and strengthen our commitment to preserving and rejuvenating our shared cultural heritage.

Legal and Ethical Considerations in Moko Revitalisation:

The modern landscape presents a range of legal and ethical considerations, particularly in relation to the sensitive nature of moko as an art form. Navigating these complexities ensures that the reintroduction of moko as rites of passage (RoP) is carried out responsibly, respecting both traditional values and contemporary legal frameworks.

As mentioned, the proposal to reinstate moko as a marker of puberty requires thorough discussion within the community. It is essential to ensure that all members are informed and have the opportunity to express concerns about the tattooing of adolescents as they come of age. This process will be facilitated through the wānanga mentioned previously, establishing clear tikanga (protocols) for artists and elders involved in the tattooing process will be critical to maintaining the integrity and discipline required for this practice. Tattooing, which involves breaking the skin and potential exposure to blood, raises health and safety considerations. Artists must be trained in cross-contamination prevention and hygiene practices. If traditional tools are reintroduced, involving a scarification process, stricter protocols must be established to ensure the highest standards of care are met. In either case, a duty of care must be adhered to by all practitioners to safeguard the physical well-being of the recipients.

Moko is a uniquely iconic symbol of Māori identity, carrying significant cultural, spiritual, and political weight. Researchers working in this space must navigate cultural protocols, intellectual property rights, and the protection of this tradition's integrity. The reclamation of moko as RoP raises critical ethical questions about eligibility, governance, and participation, which must be approached through both an Indigenous lens and within a Western legal framework. As Mead (1997) and Smith (1999) have noted, cultural practices like moko are deeply embedded in historical, social, and political contexts, and must be treated with respect and care to preserve their meaning and significance. Importantly, any research on moko must be conducted in partnership with the communities involved, recognising the importance of cultural sovereignty and avoiding exploitation or appropriation of Māori traditions for academic gain.

Intellectual Property, Indigenous Rights, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Moko, as a form of Māori intellectual property, raises critical issues around cultural ownership, appropriation, and the safeguarding of traditional knowledge. The commercialisation of moko in the global tattoo industry, often stripped of its cultural context and meaning, has been a source of tension and controversy. It is therefore crucial that any research or initiatives related to moko adhere to principles that protect Indigenous intellectual property, aligning with both national and international legal frameworks.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840), as the foundational contract between Māori and the Crown, plays a pivotal role in informing the legal and ethical considerations surrounding moko as a rite of passage (RoP). Article 2 of Te Tiriti guarantees tino rangatiratanga (absolute chiefly autonomy) over taonga, which includes not only lands and natural resources but also intangible cultural heritage such as moko. This provision affirms the rights of Māori to maintain, control, and protect their cultural practices and intellectual property. By anchoring the discussion of moko within the framework of Te Tiriti, any research or initiative must prioritise the protection of these rights and ensure that Māori retain control over how moko is practiced and represented.

In addition to Te Tiriti, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) provides a broader international framework to guide the legal and ethical treatment of moko. Article 31 of UNDRIP asserts the right of Indigenous peoples to maintain, control, protect, and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and cultural expressions (United Nations, 2007). This includes the right to prevent the misappropriation and

commodification of significant cultural symbols like moko. Therefore, any research or public engagement with moko must uphold these rights, ensuring that the practice is treated with the respect it deserves and that Māori communities remain the guardians of this unique ancestral tradition.

The Role of Cultural Protocols (Tikanga): In Māori culture, tikanga guide how certain practices, such as moko, should be conducted. Ethical research into moko must respect these protocols. This involves engaging with tohunga tā moko and other knowledge holders to understand the specific cultural guidelines that govern the practice. For example, tikanga dictates who is permitted to receive moko, who can apply it, and the ceremonial procedures that should accompany its application. Failing to adhere to these protocols would not only be ethically problematic but could also undermine the cultural integrity of the research itself.

Protecting Cultural Mana and Avoiding Harm: One of the most critical ethical considerations in researching moko is ensuring that the mana (authority, prestige) of the practice is upheld. Mead's (1997) scholarship underscores the importance of cultural practices in maintaining mana motuhake (self-determination) for Māori communities. Researchers must be vigilant not to cause cultural harm by misrepresenting moko or reducing it to a purely aesthetic or academic exercise. This requires ongoing consultation with Māori communities to ensure that the research outcomes reflect their aspirations and perspectives. Furthermore, researchers must avoid perpetuating colonial narratives that position Indigenous practices as 'other,' which can diminish the cultural significance of moko in the international arena.

Ethical Reflexivity and Researcher Responsibility: Finally, ethical reflexivity is crucial for researchers working in this field. Researchers must continually reflect on their positionality, acknowledging the power dynamics at play in their research. As a researcher, especially one who may not belong to the community being studied, it is imperative to adopt a stance of humility, prioritising Māori voices and perspectives in every aspect of the research. This includes ensuring that any research outputs, such as publications or presentations, are shared with and benefit the Māori communities involved. Furthermore, researchers should be willing to revise their approaches in response to feedback from the community, ensuring that the research remains accountable to those it seeks to study.

In conclusion, the revitalisation of moko as rites of passage involves navigating ethical and legal landscapes. Upholding the integrity of the practice requires respecting traditional values and cultural protocols while ensuring that contemporary legal frameworks around intellectual property and Indigenous rights are upheld. By engaging with these ethical considerations, the research contributes not only to the academic understanding of moko but also to its preservation and revitalisation as a living, dynamic cultural tradition.

The Future: Evolution of Moko in Modern Contexts: With the current surge among Māori towards embracing moko for many reasons including identity reclamation, there's a palpable shift in its perception and significance. As more Ngāti Awa descendants seek this rite, for many, it becomes a pathway of resurgence, bridging traditional knowledge with present aspirations, ensuring that moko remains a vibrant and relevant RoP in contemporary times. We should be planning seven generations ahead, regardless of the ebbs and flows of the governmental political rhetoric. 1000 years from now moko will be thriving! We will become a part of the narratives, just as Tame Poata is to us now.

Moko as a Modern Rite of Passage: The Mataora Example: The artform of moko, is evolving to reflect our modern world and circumstances. Its potency lies in our narratives, our lineage and in its adaptability to contemporary contexts. In the proposed moko process, every stage encapsulates both the ancient history of Mataatua, our wānanga (knowledge) and the dissemination of pūrākau, values and proverbial sayings.

The Mataora Journey: A Preliminary Overview

In the context of this thesis, the mataora serves as a prime example of how the moko process mirrors the progression of life. The process starts with the recognition of one's lineage; each stage should include the incorporation of pūrākau, lessons and challenges. By doing so, mataora becomes a personal narrative, documenting an individual's connection to their heritage and their evolving position within the tribe, based in their skillset. In the context of the academic pathway, the early stages, for example are milestones one encounters before entering higher education. The journey, however, goes beyond academia; it ingeniously blends personal growth, whānau and tribal roles as well as professional accomplishments. The following is a sample framework for a staged moko kanohi process.

1. **Mana Tāne:** Puberty or coming of age signify the first initiation stage, distinguished by the first markings near each nostril, heralding the start of the moko kanohi and acknowledging the lifegiving mauriora exchanged between Tāne and Hineahuone at her creation. The saying “*He manu hou ahau, he pī ka rere—I am but a fledgling bird, about to take flight!*” comes to mind with this stage, reflecting the idea of new beginnings and potential. Pūrākau that could be explored here include Tāne's creation of Hine-ahu-one and the transition of their daughter Hinetītama to Hinenuitēpō, highlighting themes of healthy sexuality, the responsibility of parenthood and the consequences of sexual violence.
2. **Mana Toa:** Between the ages of 18 to 21, individuals undergo the taurapa/puhoro/peha, a challenging six-day ritual to fortify their resilience. The saying, “*Ko Ngāti Awa te toki tē tangatanga i te rā, tē ngohengohe i te wai,*” is a perfect analogy to underlie this stage. The stories of Māui, along with the separation of Rangi and Papa, could serve as appropriate pūrākau here. The Mataora narrative will hold deeper insights and placements like tapawaha, tuaheke, pūtaringa and kauae can be tattooed.
3. **Mana Paetahi:** Two to three years dedicated to acquiring foundational higher academic understanding (bachelor's degree), with pūrākau about Tāwhaki and his ascent to the heavens, to Tāne and the three baskets of knowledge and the origins of tattooing with Mataora and Niwareka. First tīwhana ray, koroaha stage one and pūtaringa can be tattooed.
4. **Mana Paerua:** An additional two to three years for master's level academic study. The story of Tāwhaki regarding the baskets of knowledge, coupled with deeper understandings of Mataora and Niwareka, further emphasises the depth of this stage. Top tīwhana, ngunga, rerehūpē and koroaha stage two can be tattooed.
5. **Mana Kairangi:** Doctoral studies spanning three to seven years, Te Aka a Tāwhaki and Te Aratiatia a Tāne are applicable pūrākau, also the histories and wisdom of famous tohunga like Te Tahingaoterā. Paepae, rerepi, tauwhiro and koroaha stage three can be tattooed.
6. **Mana Ahorangi:** Five years dedicated to the embodiment of knowledge and becoming a beacon for others as a professor and teacher of profound knowledge. Perhaps the stories of Toroa, Muriwai, Puhi and Tāneatua who each held specialised knowledge. First stage of tīwhana rays two and three can be tattooed.
7. **Mana Tohunga:** Expertise is attained in chosen fields. Here, the establishment of whare-wānanga on earth by the atua could serve as a pūrākau. Second stage of tīwhana rays two and three, complete all spirals and Te Pae-o-Rehua can be tattooed.

8. **Mana Rangatira/Ariki:** Stepping into tribal leadership roles, the stories of Toroa and Toi Kai Rākau or other tales of revered Mataatua leaders could be revisited, also for the benefit of the general community present at such an event. Tītī would be tattooed.
9. **Mana Atua:** Achieving a pinnacle in mātauranga Māori, exemplified by figures like Tā Hirini Moko-Mead. The new names of Tāne conferred after his ascension could be integrated as pūrākau. Pūmotomoto can be tattooed.

The pūrākau mentioned are merely indicative of the possibilities, illustrating how Ngāti Awa narratives can be appropriately woven into the journey. The following image depicts this progression visually. While this journey might span as much as 25-35 years, accelerated paths could see it completed in as little as 15 years, factoring in early rites of passage, a condensed higher education timeline and achieving mastery in a field. It's important to acknowledge that while the academic pathway is one avenue, the mataora process would also embrace other arenas like the sports, arts, the military, trades and traditional healing.



Figure 22 *Sample of a Staged Moko Kanohi.*

The following image depicts the completion of the mana atua stage of mataora. In this section, we delve into the segmentation of the mataora process, understanding the significance of each

placement. Once again, much of this knowledge has been bequeathed to me by my mentor, Mark Kopua of Te Tai Rāwhiti. He acquired this knowledge from various sources including the sons of Tame Poata. Their teachings furnish us, as Mātaatua, with a foundational framework for crafting our moko kanohi process. Tame Poata was also married to a Ngāti Awa woman named Ao Kapua Chase from Te Teko, granting us a whakapapa connection to this knowledge.

Taha Wahine – Mothers Lineage

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Taha Tāne – Fathers Lineage

Manawa/Te Toi Huarewa

The sacred channel that connects taha tāne to taha wahine, locating the central nervous systems flow of mauri in the body.

Ipurangi/Te Pūmotomoto

the fontanelle is the entry point of our wairua when we are being born, it connects to the heavens.

Tīwhana – signifies the 12 celestial heavens in cosmological narratives.

Ngunga – completion of Kauae Runga syllabus.

Kauae Runga – celestial basket of knowledge, ‘the upper jaw’.

Kauae Raro – terrestrial basket of knowledge, ‘the lower jaw’.

Pūtaringa – to capture knowledge through the ears.

Pōniana – completion of Kauae Raro syllabus.

Tapawaha-tuaheke-rerepi-tauwhiro – expertise levels.

Rerehūpē – acknowledges the breath of life.

Mana whakatipu – status among male siblings

Tītī – the family of winds that conveyed Tāne to the heavens. Here represented as a toroa showcasing the stepped pathway of the pursuit of knowledge.

Tohu Kairangi – these gaps are unique to Mātaatua moko. At this stage I am unaware of its original name and meaning.

Paepae – Whaikōrero, leadership responsibilities

Pihere – connects celestial to terrestrial.

Koroaha whānau growth that occurs from your contributions, knowledge transferred to others.

Ngutu purua – Speaking rights, oration.

Kauae – Mana whenua, birth right, responsibility.

Te Pae ō Rehua – An important atua associated with kindness, enjoyment, entertainment and healing.



Figure 23 Moko Kanohi Segmented Breakdown.

Recapping Mark's teaching, there are two primary objectives of mataora. The first pertains to the wearer's origins, occupation and tribal affiliations. The second emphasises one's educational endeavours and the dissemination of knowledge to others. The interplay between the positive and negative spaces in the moko reflects the duality of one's spiritual and physical embodiments; the spiritual stemming from Ranginui, the Sky Father and the physical from Papa, the Earth Mother. This intricate crafting of moko primarily reflects one's life journey, it delineates life's major milestones, underscoring whānau as the essential nucleus of one's life and activities within the wider community (M. Kopua, personal communication, July 2022).

In conclusion, this mataora example offers a clear insight into identity negotiation, cultural reclamation and community cohesion. It speaks to the enduring spirit of Ngāti Awa evolving, yet firmly rooted in our narratives and history. When moko is engaged, there's a shift in consciousness. The person resonates at a new frequency, transformed by ritual, rites and intention. The vast knowledge of Hohepa Delamere (personal communication, 2015), pinpoints this notion through his wānanga about 'Ngā Rongomau', where every cell in the body is a receiver and transmitter of 'mauri', impacted upon by 'takutaku' (the recitation of incantations) and rituals of purification (Shirres, 1982; Coates & Pekepo-Ratu, 2020). By refining rites of passage based on Ngāti Awa narratives and their relation to natural cycles and by utilising purposeful oriori and karakia, we can intentionally set a 'base frequency'. This opens a fascinating field of enquiry for future research on this notion of ritual moko and frequency shifting. Rupert Sheldrakes research of what he calls 'Morphic Resonance' offers valuable insights into the natural phenomenon of biological memory and the transmissible function of genes (Sheldrake, 2024).

Implications and Recommendations: I believe introducing rites of passage into contemporary society is a commendable initiative, with a potential of grounding individuals in their cultural heritage and cultivating stronger community bonds. However, there are several implications to be considered:

Potential Challenges of Reintroducing RoP:

- 1. Cultural Authenticity:** Ensuring that the reinstated rites remain true to their cultural roots and don't become commercialised or superficial, remaining alert for error in the foundations and ongoing evolution of the rites.

2. **Perception:** There's a risk of misunderstanding or misinterpretation by those outside the culture, leading to unintended negative stereotypes or misconceptions. It is paramount for Ngāti Awa to control our narratives around moko and rites of passage. Informing and educating local schools if we were to reintroduce tattooing at the coming-of-age passage is an example of curbing negative perceptions.
3. **Determining Appropriate Koha:** In the initial Ahi Kauri wānanga, discussions about appropriate koha (gift or contribution) for such tasks will be necessary. Determining this with cultural experts and Ngāti Awa artists will ensure mutual respect and uphold the intrinsic value of the rites. These ceremonies are essential aspects of life and therefore, koha should appropriately reflect the taonga offered by the kaitā, tohunga, kaumātua and the marae or venue. This underscores the 'ritual challenge' for the initiate, teaching reciprocity and cultural value.

Limitations of Study

This study, while comprehensive in its approach, is not without its limitations: The inherent gap between the written documentation and the lived experiences of our ancestors, the tragic absence of Ngāti Awa specific knowledge about moko and living abroad meant very limited access to local libraries and records held at land courts and museums. Physical distance from Aotearoa limited direct engagement with tribal experts and the Ngāti Awa community. While digital communication tools helped bridge this gap to some extent, they could not fully replicate the richness of presence of a face-to-face interaction. Despite these challenges, this study has endeavoured to remain faithful to the spirit and intent of the journey of moko kanoahi and its re-inception into the broader Ngāti Awa narrative.

Future Prospects and Conclusions

By understanding the significance of the moko RoP journey, Ngāti Awa can better integrate these practices into communal rites of passage for younger generations to internalise and comprehend over time. Embracing the process of moko as RoP provides Ngāti Awa with a distinctive perspective to delve deeper into the traditional practice of moko. This understanding could guide us towards education curricula that resonates more harmoniously with the Māori community it serves. In terms of actionable recommendations, the short term can focus on organising community-based wānanga to deepen the understanding and appreciation of the RoP journey. Long-term initiatives might revolve around policy adjustments within

educational institutions to be aware and informed of moko as RoP along with its teachings and principles. Collaborative community initiatives can further root these practices in daily life and major life events. For example, adding mokopapa to the graduation celebrations for TWWOA would create a gathering of bonding for community and the higher education facility. In conclusion, while challenges are inevitable, the potential for profound positive change for the people of Ngāti Awa and cultural preservation remains promising and this study hopes to serve as a catalyst for these transformative shifts among our people.

Future Research and Recommendations: In this final section of the discussion chapter, we outline some future research avenues and recommendations stemming from the implications of our findings. The following topics offer recommendations for further exploration and understanding of the holistic benefits of moko kanohi:

1. **Long-Term Psychological Effects:** Investigating the long-term psychological effects of moko kanohi on individuals, including its role in shaping identity, post moko effects on rumination, resilience and mental well-being over time, including negatively impacted wearers of moko kanohi.
2. **Cultural Revitalisation Initiatives:** Exploring how the revival of moko as RoP can be integrated into broader cultural revitalisation initiatives within Māori communities such as regular moko puhoro wānanga for transitions to adult responsibilities between the ages of 18 to 25, reinstating puberty rites at coming of age, Awanuiārangi graduations and tribal leadership roles.
3. **Comparative Studies:** Conducting in-depth comparative studies between different Māori communities and other Indigenous cultures who maintain traditional RoP, to glean insights from commonalities and differences in the experiences and outcomes of moko as RoP.
4. **Gender Dynamics in Moko Kanohi:** Exploring the expression and symbolism of moko in the context of gender dynamics. What is culturally appropriate?
5. **Tribal Tikanga and Policy:** Exploring the role of tikanga in reinstating moko kanohi in Ngāti Awa and its implications for policy, practices and education.
6. **Academic Success and Moko Kanohi:** Examining the influence on educational aspirations and achievements among Māori students.
7. **Influence on Identity Formation:** Investigating deeper on how the ritual of moko influences the formation of Māori identity, particularly among younger generations growing up in a contemporary context.

8. **Healing and Well-Being:** Further examining the role of moko as a healing practice and its effects on overall well-being, both at the individual and community levels. This includes investigating moko as a therapeutic modality. Case studies should be undertaken. Knowledge bases like that of Hohepa Delamere's wānanga have much to offer the artform of moko.
9. **Failed Initiations and How to Correct:** Understanding instances of failed moko kanohi initiations and developing strategies for correcting and supporting individuals who may not have had a successful experience.
10. **Moko RoP and Gangs:** Examining moko as a transformational process for gang members.
11. **The Role of Local Pūrākau in RoP:** Reinterpreting Mātaatua narratives to convey Ngāti Awa values in the ritual structure of moko as RoP.
12. **Ongoing research into Mataatua Moko:** Continuing research on Mataatua moko would be prudent for our future generations to have a solid 'repertoire' of patterns and proverbial utterances from Mataatua associated to them. This will anchor the art form in historical knowledge and understandings and lay a firm foundation to evolve the artform. Mataatua carvers will be consulted for any relevant knowledge also.
13. **Moko and the Human Energy Field:** Exploring the effects of ritual moko on the recipients measurable 'human aura', its impacts on the body's energetic frequencies through Kirlian photography for example (Rubik, 2004).

These areas of future research hold the potential to deepen our understanding of the holistic benefits of moko kanohi, its cultural significance and its impact on the well-being of Māori individuals and communities. They also offer valuable insights into how cultural practices like moko kanohi can contribute to the revitalisation of Indigenous cultures and the promotion of holistic well-being. The following conclusion chapter will provide an in-depth analysis and synthesis of the findings, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of their implications. Embarking on this thesis journey has revealed new dimensions of understanding and realisation for me. The process underscored the invaluable weaving of preservation and adaptation, illuminating the myriad holistic benefits of rites of passage. It is clear to me that we are obliged to reignite the ritual fires of moko, ensuring they continue to blaze brightly for generations to come. The ritual fire of Ahi Mānuka has already been reignited within the boundaries of Ngāti Awa, Joe Harawira has been regularly organising them throughout the region. This pathway before us is promising and with collaboration and purpose, we will rebuild a strong foundation of ritual rites of passage for our future generations.

WHITU

1.7 Whakakapinga – Conclusion

Timatanga: Introduction

Arriving at the threshold of this exegesis, it's important to restate the purpose of our exploration: the potentially profound impacts of the return of moko as rites of passage (RoP) to Ngāti Awa and indeed the Māori nation. It marks the transition of an Indigenous nation affected greatly by the English empire's ambition for land, resources and power. As a people we now stand at a crucial junction, continually transitioning into a new way of being in the world. Our collective experiences and knowledge have guided this narrative. We must go about ensuring the foundations are soundly established, contributing to a resilient and purpose-guided future for Ngāti Awa descendants through the revival of structured RoP. This conclusion seeks to solidify these notions, outlining a way forward for Ngāti Awa by cultivating a collective vision for moko as RoP.

Kaupapa: Aim and Approach

At the heart of this kaupapa, the primary aim was to unearth the significance and implications of the return of moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa. Drawing from both historical records and the lived experiences of contemporary Māori, this thesis sought to delineate the intersections of generational challenges, cultural revival and present-day interpretations of moko as a transitional RoP. My approach was multifaceted. Rooted in a Kaupapa Māori methodology, it centred the voices of the Māori community, ensuring that the narrative was both 'by' and 'for' the people.

This methodology, complemented with interdisciplinary research techniques, painted a comprehensive portrait of the return of moko in social, cultural and personal spheres. Whilst this research has illuminated several facets of the kaupapa, it also highlighted areas that obligate deeper inquiry. Additionally, there's potential to go deeper with comparative studies and what can be gleaned from other cultures who are reinstating RoP. In essence, this mahi is but one chapter in a larger journey of understanding, preserving and evolving these rites for our modern existence. A vast body of work awaits further exploration and this thesis opens the discussion for such future endeavours.

Arotake Uiui–Review of Research Question: Central to this research was the fundamental question: How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa? This question also leads to an exploration of the generational impacts of the intentional removal of these rites of passage for Māori.

To address the research question, an intensive qualitative approach was employed, focusing on the narratives of graduates of higher education who have adorned moko kanohi in conjunction with their academic journeys. Although these were mostly unintended as rites of passage, their narratives offered insights into the personal, cultural and academic advantages of reinvigorating moko as RoP. By connecting contemporary practices with age-old traditions, the study revealed the personal empowerment, identity affirmation and sense of belonging moko bestows upon Māori. We investigated the impact on Māori resulting from the removal of these RoP by engaging the matakaui, utilising community engagement, historical records, oral histories and personal narratives to understand the depth of the void left by the removal of traditional RoP. Contemporary Māori perspectives were gathered, revealing long-term effects like cultural disconnection, identity crises and fractured community bonds.

Mātātaki Mātauranga: Literature Review: A comprehensive literature review has underscored the universality of rites of passage across various cultures, from the Indigenous tribes in Australia to the African American communities in the U.S. These rites play a pivotal role in signifying an individual's growth, marking transformations and connecting participants with their cultural, spiritual and ancestral roots. Despite the diversity in rituals, there are recurrent themes, such as the necessity for purification, the undertaking of challenges and the significance of societal acknowledgment.

The Gap in Literature Concerning Moko as rites of passage: One of the most notable gaps identified in the literature pertains to the Māori practice of moko as RoP. While the detailed literature review provided insights into other rites of passage across the globe, there is a conspicuous absence of ‘in-depth’ exploration of the use of moko as RoP. The latter stages of the 19th century, particularly during the land wars of the 1860s, marked the last decade of the male moko kanohi. Given the profound significance of moko as a symbolic embodiment of Māori identity, the omission of moko as RoP in the broader anthropological discourse is glaring. This gap perhaps suggests a wider issue of the selective nature of anthropological studies, which may have prioritised, or neglected certain cultural rituals based on external

factors, such as political or societal shifts. Given the historical strategy of colonial expansion and its purposeful deconstruction of Indigenous rituals, it is likely this was a determinant from the colonial office (Cormier, 2017; Rahman et al., 2017). It may also signify our ancestors struggle for survival and self-determination during the colonial period, shifting the priorities of such rituals to the background whilst contending with military invasion.

Generational Impacts and Modern Societal Challenges: The erasure of traditional rites of passage, including tā moko, impacts through generations. From a Kaupapa Māori perspective, these rituals are personal and communal threads weaving the fabric of society (Collier, 2018, p. 38). Their absence has led to cultural vacuums within individuals, surely contributing to contemporary societal challenges like gang affiliations, cycles of violence and identity crises. During the colonial invasion period of Aotearoa (New Zealand), the British Empire's approach to Indigenous cultures worldwide strategically involved suppression of local customs, rituals and traditions (Takitimu, 2022; Miller, 2018). This was seen in many colonies, not just in Aotearoa. The main motive was to assimilate Indigenous populations into European customs and Christian beliefs, seen as 'civilising' them.

The Modern Need for Traditional Rites: Modern societies have witnessed a dilution or even loss of many traditional rites of passage. Don Pinnock's work illuminates the repercussions of this void, emphasising that in the absence of formal rites, young men will create alternatives, leading to outcomes like the establishment of gangs. Pinnock's insights parallel with observations in Aotearoa, where gang initiation for 'prospects' has replaced rites of passage, manifesting cycles of violence and harm (1997). These observations accentuate the contemporary relevance and urgency for structured rites of passage. Pinnock's observations and the study on African American youth both underscore the potential of RoP in positively shaping youth identity and reducing harmful behaviours. The Adolescent Developmental Pathways Paradigm, as proposed by Brookins, conveys the potential benefits of RoP interventions, effecting community empowerment and social change (1996). Such findings suggest that understanding and reintegrating moko as RoP could offer healthier pathways for our youth, providing them with a sense of belonging, identity, purpose and value, setting them up for social responsibility and contribution.

Recommendations for Future Research: Considering the gap in the literature concerning moko as RoP, there is a pressing need for Kaupapa Māori based anthropological and sociological research to delve deeper into this cultural practice. Such studies could shed light on the nuances of moko as RoP and its potential role in the modern-day as a transformative process.

In Summary: Rites of passage, though varied across cultures, serve fundamental human needs. The oversight of moko in the broader discourse of modern Māori society highlights both a gap in understanding and an opportunity for future exploration. As societies grapple with evolving identities and challenges, revisiting, understanding and integrating these rites would offer pathways to resilience, social cohesion and holistic well-being.

Ara Rangahau: Research Pathway

Kaupapa Māori Theory: This research is rooted in the Kaupapa Māori Theory, which prioritises Māori ways of knowing, being and doing. It provides a culturally appropriate lens through which the significance of moko in Māori society is examined, ensuring the research is relevant and sensitive to the community's needs of which it is studying.

Te Whāriki Takapau: Methodology

This methodological approach is derived from a traditional woven mat (whāriki) that reflects interconnectedness. Using the Whāriki Takapau ensures that the research integrates multiple layers of knowledge and narratives and doesn't study moko in isolation, but as an interwoven part of the broader Māori culture and its history. This methodology is derived from an existing framework for moko kauae.

Seven Lines of Enquiry: Seven elements were identified as pertinent to ensuring all facets of the subject matter are thoroughly explored.

Three Dimensions of the Whāriki: The seven elements were then condensed into three dimensions which further emphasised the interconnected nature of the Māori worldview and how each aspect is integral to understanding the complete picture.

Qualitative Method: The study employs a qualitative approach, prioritising lived experiences, narratives and subjective interpretations over numerical data. This approach offers deeper insights into the personal and cultural significance of moko.

Whakawhāriki: The Interweave of Narratives: The research seeks to understand the essence of participants' experiences with moko kanohi. This method delves into individual perspectives, uncovering the underlying emotions, beliefs and motivations surrounding their moko journeys. This method also allows for the interweave of other strands of information like the literature review, the online survey and oral knowledge through 'Conversations with Tohunga'.

Matakauri Journeys: The study methodologically seeks understanding through the personal journeys of six matakauri (facial tattoo wearers), three males and three females who have undergone moko, understanding the spiritual, cultural and personal significance it holds for them in the context of their personal development.

Ngā Hua Kai Rangatira, Data Analysis and Findings

Chapter Overview – Data Analysis: In these chapters, our Whāriki Takapau framework weaves together the narratives of our six matakauri, alongside input from an online survey gauging public perceptions of moko. The data analysis chapter adopts a thematic analysis approach to interpret and analyse the narratives and experiences of the matakauri. We present our findings within the three dimensions of Paepaeroa (physical), Rarohenga (spiritual) and Ahi Kōmau (psychological). The chapter delves into key themes that have emerged within each dimension and explores the generational impacts stemming from the cessation of moko as RoP, whilst incorporating direct participant quotes to seed the analysis and discussions.

Paepaeroa – Physical Dimension: The exploration of the physical aspects of moko kanohi, including the communal space of mokopapa as a pathway of social transition and the role of moko in marking milestones and transitions in life. Themes include healing and transformation, identity reclamation/retrieval, Bi-cultural integration into daily life and advocacy.

Rarohenga – Spiritual Dimension: An analysis of their spiritual experiences gives insight to moko as a vehicle of wellbeing, the themes that emerged include emotional healing and

personal growth, connection to ancestors and cultural roots, sense of identity and purpose and guidance from the spirit world through ‘dreams’, ‘visions’, ‘seers’ and ‘knowers’.

Ahi Kōmau – Psychological Dimension: An examination of the psychological benefits of moko kanohi. Emerging themes include self-confidence, empowerment, resilience, emotional expression, catharsis, identity and belonging.

Generational Impacts: A revelatory window of how the loss of moko rituals impacted on previous generations right up to our current day. Themes include cultural disconnection and loss, intergenerational well-being, erosion of identity, language, customs and knowledge; caused by the need for Māori knowledge holders to go into hiding due to colonial intentions to eliminate Māori narratives and insert their own (Takitimu, 2022), and cultural revival and reconnection.

Dimensional Integration: These dimensions intersect and complement each other in a symbiotic way, weaving the holistic benefits of moko kanohi as a RoP. Social bonds are strengthened, physical transformations are evident by how one carries themselves because of the adornment of moko kanohi, a closer connection to spirit is evident as is psychological growth and intergenerational bonds are strengthened, fostering overall wellbeing.

Significance of Findings: The findings of this research reveal many benefits of reinstating moko as RoP, these benefits vary depending on individual situations, ranging from complete transformation and/or a restoring of identity, to an expected and intended RoP due to high cultural efficacy of the matakauri with a more consequential attitude towards moko kanohi. Moko as RoP leads to cultural reclamation and identity restoration, emotional healing and psychological empowerment, spiritual connection and guidance, cultural continuity and intergenerational well-being and finally, social responsibility and leadership.

Conclusion: The benefits of moko as RoP in the context of a tribal tikanga are as dynamic and varied as the people who approach moko kanohi, but it is my conclusion that the benefits are of a holistic nature and can be extremely positive on all three dimensions of human experience, so long as an established, guided process is in place. Regarding the impacts of the loss of these rituals for Māori, cultural disconnection, identity erosion - both culturally and personally, unworthiness, loss of wellbeing and a great void in terms of cultural efficacy.

Future Research and Recommendations: This investigation certainly opens up the discussion into many other threads of inquiry including comprehensive intersectional research, long term psychological effects, comparative studies, gender dynamics, tribal tikanga and policy implications, impacts on academic success, influence on identity formation, healing and well-being, how to correct failed rites where moko is concerned, moko as a transformational process for gang members, post moko effects on rumination interpretations on pūrākau as a fundamental element of RoP and even how moko as RoP affects the energetic field of humans. It is my recommendation that a series of foundational wānanga would begin the process of structuring a RoP pathway for Ngāti Awa, as well as wānanga to educate and gain the support of the community.

Hua Matakauri – Findings and Discussion: This chapter focuses on the need for two types of wānanga to move this kaupapa forward for Ngāti Awa and gives a mataora as an example of a nine staged process for males in the context of academia and how each stage could connect to Mataatua kōrero. The second type of wānanga would take the kaupapa to all the marae around the area to educate on the kaupapa and gain community engagement.

Implications: There are of course potential consequences of reintroducing rites of passage, including concerns over cultural authenticity, generational knowledge gaps leading to potential misconceptions, ‘cowboy’ practitioners emerging with no official training could be disastrous for recipients and finally adopting and adapting from other practices and cultures should be considered cautiously before implementing.

Study Limitations: There is an admission of the inherent gaps between written accounts of traditional RoP and the modern lived experiences regarding moko as RoP. Living abroad also presented some challenges as the researcher, not having face-to-face interactions can often be seen as detrimental by knowledge holders who prefer those interactions, access to local records, libraries and museums was also limited to return visits to Whakatāne. My early childhood disconnection from te ao Māori also creates a limitation because not having undergone rites of passage from puberty, left me bereft of the experience, the sense of belonging and the worthiness that my research seeks to restore.

Ngā Tūtohu: Recommendations

The chapter offers recommendations put forth for community and institutional support to ensure the successful and respectful revitalisation of these rites, these include education measures, the engagement of elders, open dialogue and the need for flexibility. My recommendations point to the need for two types of wānanga as an iwi initiative to move this kaupapa forward. The first set of wānanga would gather a collective of tribal experts in many fields and elders who would come together to structure a RoP pathway for the future, creating a modern tikanga that centres around holistic development of the individual and the collective. The second set of wānanga would travel from marae to marae (ancestral house) around the Ngāti Awa region to educate the people on the kaupapa and gain collective support or conversely invite all marae to a series of wānanga.

Whakakapi: Final Conclusions

Dr Shonelle Wana precisely expressed our modern predicament.

“There is no traditional passage now, no official passage. It's up to the person to feel a sense of self-worth, are you worthy to receive moko? That's what it's become. Rather than, you are entitled to it. It's part of who you are and your identity” (S. Wana, personal communication, April 2023).

Hemi Te Peeti likewise offered some profound insights on the enduring relevance of RoP.

“It's the master key and I think that colonisation has affected our people majorly in terms of rites of passage... Rites of passage create good leaders, good healers, good carvers you know all those things according to the way our tūpuna thought at that time” (H. Te Peeti, personal communication, January 2024).

At its core, the return of moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa can be likened to the retrieval of a lost ‘basket of knowledge’. The profound implications of reinstating moko as RoP have been evident throughout this thesis. The absence of these rites has contributed to cultural disconnections, identity crises, gangs and fragmented community ties. For those who embark on the journey of moko, there is potential for deep personal transformation, a strengthened connection to heritage, and a heightened sense of purpose, belonging and value. This revitalisation, however, also casts a light on the significant void left by the removal of these rites over generations.

The reinstatement of moko as RoP serves as a cultural anchor that holds immense potential for Ngāti Awa, and by extension, other Indigenous communities. As Māori continue to reclaim and adapt traditional practices in the wake of colonial disruptions, moko contributes to cultural regeneration, decolonisation, and healing. For Ngāti Awa, this research highlights how moko can restore collective and personal mana motuhake, it can cultivate values of responsibility and service, and build resilience, ensuring the transmission of values and identity through generations. This transformation extends beyond individuals to the entire community, helping Ngāti Awa regain a stronger sense of unity, purpose, and cultural coherence.

Broader Implications for Indigenous Communities: The insights from this research extend beyond Ngāti Awa to other Indigenous communities grappling with similar impacts of colonisation, the loss of culture, belonging and identity. Moko as RoP will inspire other Indigenous peoples engaged in cultural revitalisation efforts to reimagine their own practices as tools for healing and self-determination. In many Indigenous communities worldwide, rites of passage play a central role in shaping identity, social cohesion, and cultural continuity. Moko, in this sense, serves as a symbolic reclamation of power, autonomy, and the right to determine one's cultural efficacy. By examining the revitalisation of moko, this research contributes to broader discussions about Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and cultural resurgence. It offers a tangible example of how traditional practices can be revitalised to meet contemporary needs, while still retaining their deep historical and spiritual significance. Moko as RoP provides a framework for understanding how cultural resurgence can act as a form of resistance, healing, and empowerment, with implications for global Indigenous movements seeking to reclaim their cultural practices, lands, and identities.

Challenges and Future Directions: There will undoubtedly be challenges in reinstating moko as RoP, especially regarding its acceptance and practice within a modern Māori context. Concerns may arise about how to engage youth in this practice, the pressures of mainstream education systems, and the potential resistance from within Māori communities due to religious or cultural differences. However, these challenges are not obstacles but opportunities to engage in deeper dialogue about the evolving role of moko. It is essential to remember that tikanga Māori is fluid and varies between communities, allowing for diverse expressions of these rites. Moreover, the question of how moko as RoP will be sustained across generations is crucial. Younger generations, such as those from the Kōhanga Reo movement, who are linguistically and culturally fluent, will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of moko. As cultural trauma

continues to heal, future generations will engage with moko from a position of strength and ownership rather than recovery. What might moko as RoP look like in 100 years? How will Māori living abroad engage with or adapt moko practices? These are ongoing questions that must be considered as part of the long-term vision for moko.

For Ngāti Awa, the revival of moko as RoP could serve as a stepping stone toward more comprehensive cultural recovery projects, such as increased efforts in language revitalisation, environmental stewardship, and the reclamation of ancestral knowledge systems. Moko has the potential to be a living tradition once again, one that adapts to different life stages, historical contexts, and future realities.

Sir Hirini Moko Mead once observed that cultural practices such as moko have the power to raise self-esteem and restore collective pride: *"Undoubtedly, Te Māori has made a significant contribution to our own perceptions of ourselves and hence has helped raise our self-esteem as a people"* (Mead, 1996). In this way, moko can be seen as both a marker of personal transformation and a collective assertion of identity. As moko transitions back into the realm of everyday practice, its future remains open, shaped by the generations that choose to engage with it. This research does not present moko as a fixed tradition, but as a continuum—a living practice that must be flexible and responsive to the needs of its people while retaining its core spiritual and cultural elements. For Ngāti Awa and beyond, moko as RoP is not only a return to the past but a bold step toward a future rooted firmly in Indigenous identity and self-determination. I will conclude this thesis with the wise words of Che Wilson:

"Rites of passage is a way of saying you are valued! Your community values you!"

Tihei Mauriora! Tihei Mouri Moko!

TIER TWO - JOURNAL

AHI KŌMAU





Figure 24 *Tomika Te Mutu, Paramount Chief of Ngāiterangi*
(Te Papa Tongarewa, Museum of New Zealand, 1860).

MŌTEATEA

*Kāore te atāhua o te kiri kauri o te ahi mānuka i takina mai e
Te-Kani-a-Takirau whāia ngā mahi o Rarohenga o te Muriwaihou
I totokia kino te kanohi mōnene tāia ki te uhi kite toroa nui...*

*Piki ake e tama i a Poutererangi i Te Kuuwatawata i kapia to ara
I te Tatau-urutahi i te Tatau-uruora nā Te Rangikahupapa i mahue ki muri
hei tohu tauira ki te ao mārama...*

*Ka riro koe e hika i ngā mahi harakino, nā te Uekura koe i hari ki te ora
ki te whare-pora naa i Aroarotea kia ora tonu koe i a Niwareka...*

*Niwareka... kāore te purotu o te pākākā i warea a Mataora kia minamina ai
ki o nui tonu rā i a Hineraumati i a Hineraukatauri i a Hineraukatamea
ka hura ngā niho taratara a Kae ka riro a Kae i te motutapu o Tinirau e...*

*Niwareka.... Nā Hinutohu koe no te aotūroa ō ringa raumiri ō ringa rauora
i te pia harakeke tātai hono ai, i a Ruatēpupuke, i a Ruatēhotahota,
i a Tuawaihangā kākahutia ai, kī Tūporenuku kī Tūporerangi e...
tāwhia Rongomatāne...*

*Tiwaiwaka.... nāhau te kupu whakatūpato i waha, i takitakina te riri o ngā atua
mā te rongānui o te tau ka tere, nā Patatai, a Popōia, a Peka,
i tuku hei tira e hoki ana mai ki te ao mārama me te uhi tapu a Uetonga e ...
Tihei mauri koko!*

Nā Mark Kopua



TAHI – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.1 Ahuahu Mataora: Discovering My Research Topic

Wayfinding my Thesis Question

Matarehurehu te huanui a mua; whāia ngā ahuahu Mataora, ka hura te huarahi!

The pathway forward is often obscured; follow the islands of Mataora and the way will be revealed.



I vividly remember the first time I saw a photo of my great-grandmother, Te Ara-Paparahi Hona, in the 1980s, adorned with moko kauae. She seemed like a matriarch from a bygone era, her chin tattoo evoking a connection to a time long past. By the time I returned from Australia to my hometown of Whakatāne for high school in 1985, moko had re-emerged into the collective consciousness of Aotearoa. This resurgence was significantly influenced by Tame Iti, who I only knew then through media portrayals as a controversial Māori activist. His moko stood as a bold response to its adoption by gang members, challenging the stigma that had developed around moko kanohi due to its association with criminality (Maniapoto, 2018).

Today, in 2024, I tattoo from Te Mira, the studio of Tame Iti, near the homestead of my koro, Wiremu Hona— husband of Te Ara-Paparahi—where my parents continue to reside. My journey with moko, which began over 30 years ago, has led me here, and more recently, it has led me to explore moko as rites of passage (RoP). This thesis was born from that exploration. While my initial focus was on reinstating the coming-of-age RoP for young men, I decided to expand this scope to encompass a broader question: "How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa?"

The generational impacts of the colonial suppression of this RoP also became an important part of my inquiry. Over the years, I have had the privilege of tattooing around 150 men with moko kanohi and at least ten times that number of women with moko kauae. I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact this has on their well-being and sense of belonging.

Background and Context

My journey with moko began in 1993, naively attempting my first moko with a homemade machine. This initial fascination evolved into a lifelong dedication, leading to my involvement in the revival of moko. My mentorship from Mark Kopua, a master carver from Ūawa who transitioned to tā moko, was invaluable. His knowledge was passed down from esteemed tohunga like Ruka Broughton, Moni Taumāunu, Porourangi and Te Kani-a-Takirau Poata, the sons of the famous tohunga tā moko of the 1920s, 30s and early 40s, Tame Poata. The early years of the modern moko revival was chaotic; there was no clear and set practice for moko. The knowledge about male moko kanohi especially had been tragically lost for generations and although our wahine maintained the tradition of kauae, it was only by a thread. By the time Michael King photographed all the old women still alive with the markings in the 1970s, it was feared that the artform would disappear altogether (King, 2008).

In 2005, as my third son, Te Awe Māpara, was born and just before my graduation from AUT with a degree in Māori business development, I received my mataora from Mark. I considered it to be a natural progression in my career as a moko artist. Beyond an academic milestone, wearing mataora was a profound political statement. It was my assertive declaration of identity in the modern world. After thirty years of practicing moko, I decided to embark on research at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. This research, I believed, would not only reconnect me with my iwi, Ngāti Awa, but also serve as a foundational manuscript for future generations of Ngāti Awa kaitā to build upon.

Western Research and Mātauranga Māori

Over the past 15 years, I've delved into traditional Māori healing, greatly influenced by Hohepa Delamere. His wānanga and ceremonial teachings profoundly shaped my moko practice, integrating new knowledge of pressure points and the flow of mauri (life force) through the human body. These exposures deepened the spiritual dimensions of my work, aligning moko with both healing and transformation. At the same time, I began exploring Western research

on rites of passage and psychological male archetypes (Moore & Gillette, 1991). This helped me understand that moko served as a rite of passage, marking significant life transitions and influencing consciousness, maturity and identity. I initially considered focusing my thesis on male coming-of-age rites but eventually chose to broaden the scope to look at the significance moko as rites of passage across various life stages. The suppression of our rituals and knowledge by colonial forces is undeniable. The mission schools in the far north were used to strip Māori of their traditions and mould them into labourers (Calman, 2022; Walker, 2016; Barrington, 2006). This context shapes my research.

Why the Change of Focus?

In contemporary Aotearoa, there is no formal ‘rite of passage’ for our youth—no ceremony to mark their transition into adulthood. Instead, the ‘ritual’ often involves downing a yard glass of beer. The loss of our traditional RoP, along with the loss of land, language, and identity, has led to a profound disconnection for many Māori. Indigenous cultures across the globe guided adolescent development through ritual, led by elders (Van Gennep, 2019). Reflecting on my own life, I can see there were moments that served as unintended rites of passage: returning to Aotearoa at age 12 after growing up in Sydney, my first ocean night dive in Hawai’i, and a journey into the Amazon jungle to help a tribe lift a ‘curse’ that the Shaman feared would end his people. All these certainly impacted on my character, even though these events were unintended as rites of passage. In hindsight, I can clearly see the growth that occurred within me.

Initially, my interest was in researching the coming-of-age RoP, which I believe will equip our youth to face life with resilience. After some playful discussion with my cohort at Awanuiārangi about the idea of marking their graduation with mataora, my supervisor suggested shifting my focus, it was his way of keeping me open minded and not locked into my research question. While it took me a few months to settle with that idea, I soon realised that focusing more broadly on how moko as RoP benefits Ngāti Awa—across various life milestones—would offer more meaningful insights for this research. Academic achievement could remain one important arena, but the broader focus would capture the full scope of the potential of moko to restore identity, belonging, and continuity for our people.

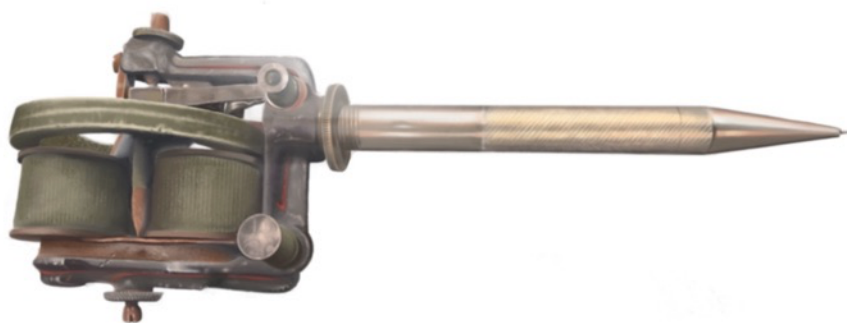
Introducing Ahi Mānuka as a Rite of Passage

I have come to believe that introducing Ahi Mānuka as a formal rite of passage could be a powerful pathway for healing and recovery. Moko kanohi, as a graduation rite, has the potential to incentivise academic excellence and symbolise resilience and achievement. Moreover, the concept of belated rites of passage—providing ceremonies for adults who missed such rituals in their youth—could have profound impacts, especially on those struggling with trauma, like gang members. Throughout my career, I’ve witnessed how moko helps individuals heal from suffering and grief, allowing them to begin a new journey of self-acceptance and community belonging.

Significance and Contribution

This research has been conducted using a Kaupapa Māori approach, rooted in mātauranga Māori and informed by tikanga. In the process, I developed the Whāriki Takapau methodology, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. It took many months of reflection and refinement to create a framework that aligns with both traditional and modern contexts. I believe this methodology will provide a valuable foundation for future generations of Ngāti Awa kaitā and help create new ceremonies and frameworks for reintegrating moko as RoP in our community.

Beyond the academic sphere, I hope this research will help inspire a collective Ngāti Awa movement to reinstate moko ceremonies, guided by our kaumātua and tohunga. These rituals, from birth to death, hold the potential to heal intergenerational trauma and restore our cultural integrity. Ultimately, this thesis offers a foundational manuscript for future generations to build upon, with its inception through wānanga with Ngāti Awa kaumātua and tohunga to consolidate the tikanga for these rituals that have long been lost to our people.



Scope and Limitations

The scope of this research is focused on understanding moko as rites of passage and its potential benefits for both individuals and the wider Ngāti Awa community. The aim is to establish a foundational manuscript that future generations can build upon, combining mātauranga Māori with insights from Western research on rites of passage. However, there are limitations, particularly due to the loss of traditional knowledge and practices within Mataatua. The degradation of cultural memory due to colonisation presents a significant challenge, but this can be remedied through collective wānanga and the involvement of tohunga from other iwi and cultures.

Whakakapi – Conclusion

This chapter outlines my personal and professional journey with moko, leading me to the research question: How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa? It frames the exploration of moko not just as a cultural art form, but as a framework for healing, identity reclamation, and community revitalisation. This journey serves as a foundation for understanding the broader implications of moko as RoP and sets the stage for further inquiry into its potential to transform Ngāti Awa into the future.

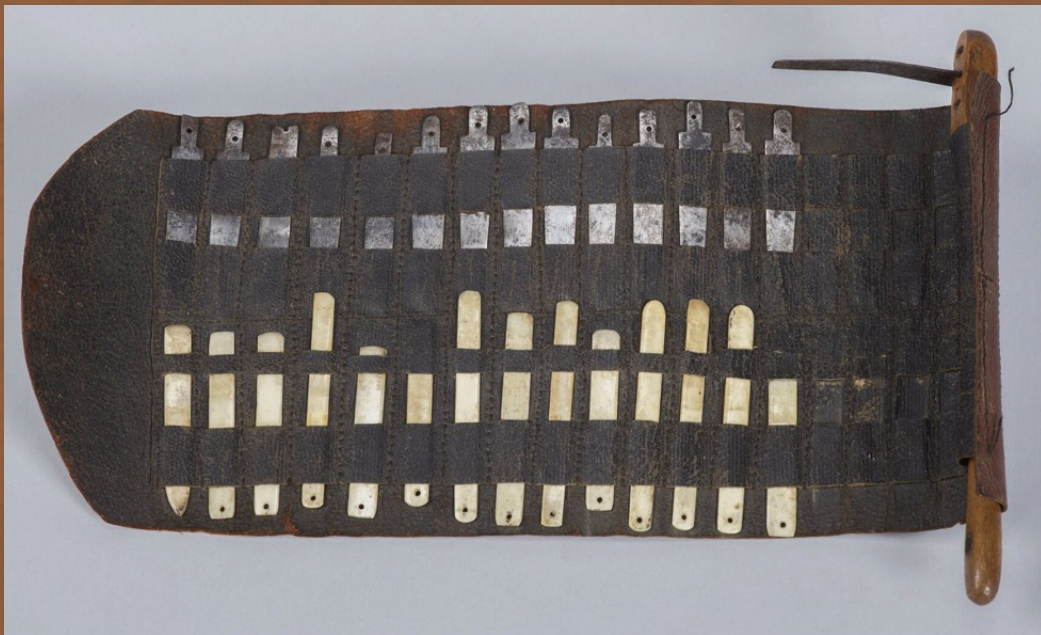


Figure 25 *Uhi Tā Moko, Bequest of Kenneth Athol Webster, 1971 (Te Papa Tongarewa, Museum of New Zealand).*

2.2 Puhoro-Rangi-Nuku-Tai: Navigating the Research Process

Puhoro-Rangi: Stormy Skies

‘Puhoro’ means to be stormy and tempestuous but literally refers to an ‘abundance of speed’. It is also a kowhaiwhai pattern that, when tattooed onto the thighs of a warrior, denotes speed and agility. ‘Puhoro-Rangi’ symbolises the mental and emotional tempests I faced while crafting this thesis. This chapter highlights the methodologies that facilitated completion: a supportive creative cohort, the grounding exercise of penning an autobiography, the study buddy system, and the Whetū Mārama framework (Collier, 2018). These helped structure my research and provided a clear roadmap through the process.

Creative Cohort and the Whetū Mārama

At the beginning of 2022, my long-time colleague Dr Reuben Collier gathered a diverse group of creatives to weave our artistic kaupapa into doctoral theses. This assembly of 13 artists spanning music, visual arts, television, and dance sparked inspiration and dispelled much of my anxiety. Dr Collier's strategic approach, particularly the Whetū Mārama framework, became instrumental in my process.

His first assignment for us was to write an abstract of our topic for the Doctoral Committee. This set the foundation for gauging the viability of our thesis questions. Following this, we penned autobiographies, which allowed us to reflect on our personal journeys, an important exercise in grounding ourselves within our research topics. The Whetū Mārama framework, inspired by the cross-shaped whare-wānanga Miringa Te Kakara, provided a structural map for our thesis. Dividing the exegesis into nine segments, it created a clear structure that organised the journey into manageable sections, from the literature review to methodology, and through to findings and conclusion. This framework was pivotal, helping me break down complex tasks into achievable steps. Dr Collier's analogy of “making it through the gorge from Whakatāne to Gisborne” gave us a vivid roadmap to guide our work.

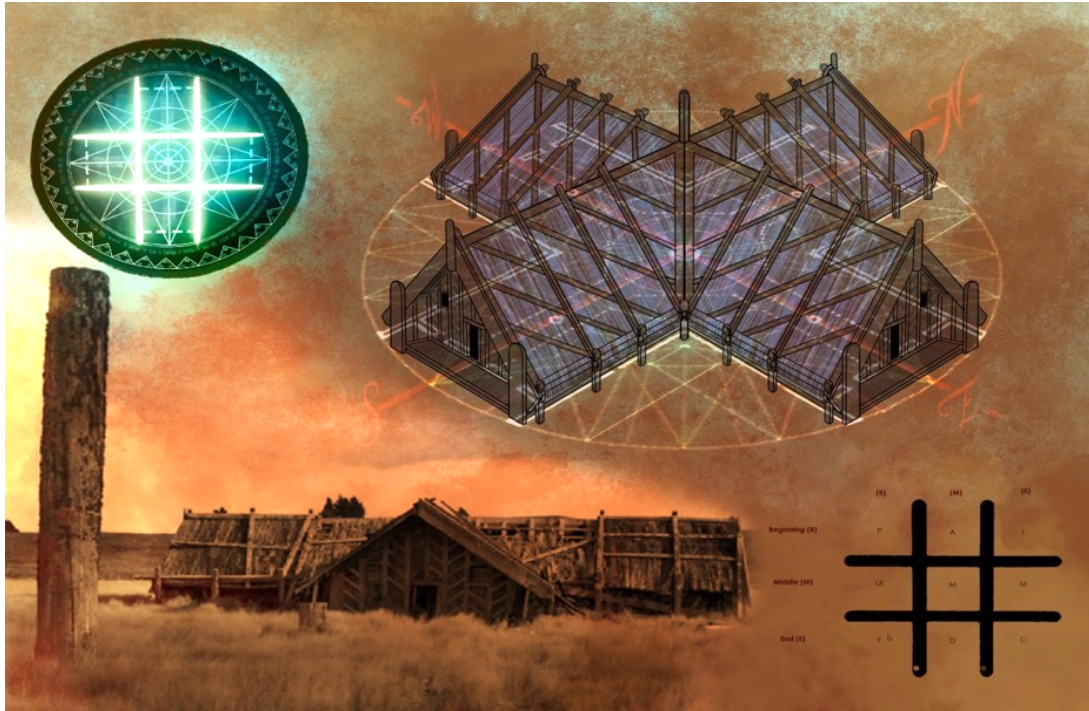


Figure 26 *Miringa Te Kakara* (Public Domain).

Literature Review: Seeking the Knowledge Gap

We approached the literature review by dividing it into three sections: origins, colonisation, and decolonisation. We had a month for each section, with the goal of identifying the knowledge gap within the existing research. Dr Collier introduced the Whetū Mārama Tohu (Collier, 2018, p. 122), a management tool that helped structure the literature review and other tasks. By breaking down each chapter into introductory, main body, and concluding segments, the framework ensured that our thesis would remain coherent and manageable.

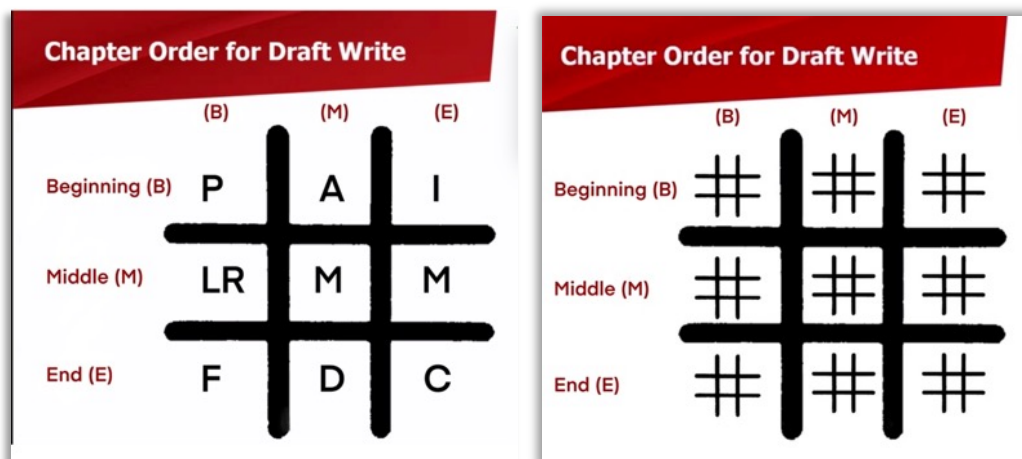


Figure 27 *The Whetū Mārama Framework*.

The Plan to Write (P2W) system became an important part of this process. We would spend time planning each chapter, writing quickly once the plan was solidified, and then engaging in an iterative review process to refine and strengthen the work. This cycle of planning, writing, and reviewing has been critical in ensuring the progress and quality of my thesis.

Whāriki Takapau: Methodology

My methodology, anchored in the Whāriki Takapau framework, is steeped in the tradition of moko, imparted to me by my mentor Mark Kopua. Crafting this framework involved extensive journaling and reflection. Journaling became an invaluable tool in shaping my thoughts and ensuring that my methodology was both rigorous and adaptable. The Whāriki Takapau framework weaves together the physical, spiritual, and psychological dimensions of moko as rites of passage. Drawing from historical uses of sacred fires during the moko process, such as ahi mānuka and ahi parapara (Best, 1924), I incorporated these elements into my methodology to symbolise transformation and transition. The diamond motif in the framework acknowledges the journey of Māui and the portal to Rarohenga, reflecting the deep symbolic connections between moko and the spiritual realm.

Whakawhāriki: Method, Data Collection

For data collection, I developed the whakawhāriki method, which draws from the same methodological framework. It evokes the act of weaving together the lives and experiences of the six matakauri (participants), integrating them into a cohesive narrative. Initially, I was inclined to use the term ‘paepaeroa,’ reflective of the supporting role of the whāriki in rituals, but I later settled on whakawhāriki as it better symbolised the ‘interweave’ of matakauri (participant) experiences for this research.

Kaupapa Māori

Developing a Kaupapa Māori framework was a captivating challenge. My aim was to create an inventive and relevant framework that was methodologically sound and firmly rooted in Māori traditions. Conducting research from an insider’s perspective was both logical and natural, as I have spent over 30 years practicing moko. This approach aligns with the notion of ‘Ringa Raupā’—the seasoned hands of a diligent worker—and recognises that expertise is best

gained through direct, persistent involvement. This research process has underscored the need for flexibility across all facets—writing, designing, planning, and revising. Crafting the methodology and method for this thesis has been an enlightening experience, granting me a newfound appreciation for academic rigour, while maintaining a strong connection to traditional practices.

Te Ahi Mānuka: Research Proposal and Ethics

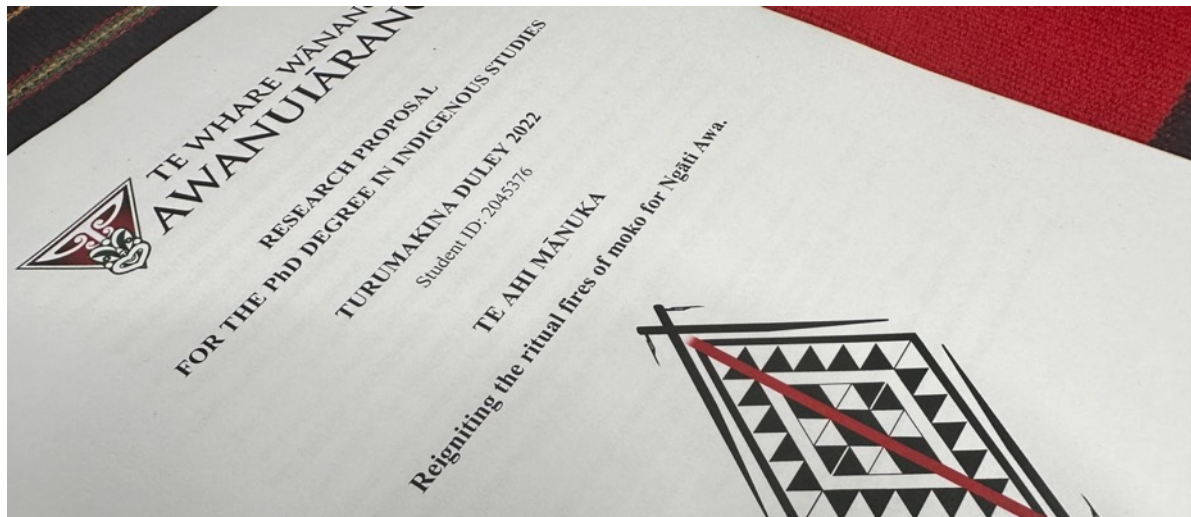


Figure 28 *Te Ahi Mānuka Research Proposal 2022.*

The culmination of our first year saw six of us transition from Doctoral Candidates to Doctoral Students after submitting our research proposals to the Doctoral Committee. Collaboration was key to this process, particularly the study buddy system, which cultivated accountability and support. I partnered with Thomas Clark, and we worked together to ensure the completion of our respective research proposals. This partnership was invaluable in navigating the challenges of the research process, particularly the last-minute hurdles of submission. Following the research proposal, the ethics proposal was the next critical step. Ensuring that my research questions aligned with the values of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāranui was a priority. This part of the thesis development process felt pretty invigorating, as it contrasted with historical approaches where Indigenous cultures were scrutinised through a Western lens. Embracing an Indigenous paradigm was empowering and affirming.





Figure 29 *Toa Kai-Rangahau Doctoral Candidates.*

Takitoru: The Three-Tiered Approach

A creative thesis, as outlined by Dr Collier (2018, p. 122), consists of three tiers: the exegesis, the journal, and the creative work. For my project, the creative tier embodies the story of moko, while the journal serves as a reflective conduit, connecting the creative process with the scholarly exegesis. This journal entry, as part of tier two, offers insight into the challenges and revelations that arose during the research process. Realising the importance of all three components of the creative thesis was an eye-opening moment. The journal has provided an essential bridge between the creative and academic aspects of my research, while also documenting the evolution of my thesis question and the strategies employed to answer it.

Puhoro-tai: Limitations and Challenges Encountered

Completing this thesis while living in Australia presented certain limitations, particularly in accessing physical libraries and engaging with Māori experts who hold critical oral histories. Video conferencing helped bridge this gap, but the geographical distance added a layer of complexity to the research process. Additionally, the literature on Māori rites of passage remains scarce, making it challenging to find comprehensive resources. This lack of documentation underscores the importance of this research, as moko as rites of passage remains an understudied topic.

Whakakapi – Conclusion

Navigating the thesis process has been immensely educational, cultivating both personal and professional growth. The creative and academic components of this thesis have worked in tandem, reflecting the complementary nature of creativity and scholarship. Journaling has proven invaluable, enabling me to synthesise my creative impulses with intellectual exploration. This journey has provided a foundation for future explorations of Māori rites of passage, particularly through the lens of moko. I hope that this work contributes to the ongoing revival of cultural practices and serves as a foundation for future generations of Ngāti Awa to build upon.



Figure 30 *Mark Kopua* (Painted by Matt Griffin, 2023).

TORU – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.3 Ngā Tikanga ō Rarohenga: Moko and Identity

Exploring the Significance of Rites of Passage

Tāhekeroa: The Long Rapid Descent into Rarohenga

This chapter examines the transformative impact of moko kanohi as a cultural rite of passage (RoP) on Māori identity. I reflect on insights from the matakauri (participants) and responses from an online survey, focusing on how these rites facilitate identity reclamation, personal maturation, and self-empowerment. The chapter also explores how RoP through moko enhances self-esteem and cultivates a lasting sense of belonging and purpose.



Figure 31 *Muriwaihou and Tāhekeroa, AI-Generated.*

Te Uhi a Mataora: Contemplations on Identity and Rites of Passage

The odyssey of Mataora to Rarohenga was an epic journey to retrieve his wife and subsequently the art form of moko; it was surely a quest to restore his mana and his dignity. His journey represents the importance of rites of passage, where identity and values are re-anchored through transformative experiences. For Māori, RoP once served this purpose, but they were systematically erased during colonisation (Walker, 2016). The pain and process of moko are not just physical trials but psychological tools for building resilience, especially during the

critical ages of 18 to 25. Just as Mataora endured his trial to be reintegrated into the community, moko also serves to mark significant life transitions. The act of receiving moko—be it a puhoro or mataora—becomes a personal and communal rite that reinforces the individual’s identity within the ever evolving Māori cosmology.

Te Uhi a Uetonga: Historical and Cultural Context of Moko as RoP

Rites of passage had surely long been integral to Māori life, with moko acting as one of the most potent symbols of these transitions. Moko was often received at various life stages, each representing a different chapter of growth. The elderly women who received kauae in preparation for marriage or the young men tattooed as they entered adulthood all exemplify how moko marked critical life transitions. The gradual acquisition of moko, which unfolded over decades, mirrored an individual’s personal growth. Specific moko designs—like the ‘tīti’ on the forehead or blackened lips—symbolised significant social roles and tribal leadership. This research deepened my appreciation for how moko affirms both individual and collective identity within Māori society, creating a lifelong series of rites that continually anchor a person to their whakapapa and cultural identity.

Te Uhi a Toroa: Symbolism of Moko in Ngāti Awa Culture

In Ngāti Awa culture, the history of moko is largely fragmented. I’ve only uncovered glimpses of its past—such as an anecdotal story of Tautari, a Ngāti Awa rangatira who was tattooed from head to toe, and was reportedly the last cannibal of the tribe, he signed Te Tiriti at Pōhaturoa in 1840, these are but rare glimpses into the past; his name appears here as a signatory of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

13	Warau	Te Wharau	Te Whānau-a-Apanui	Te Whānau-a-Te Ehutu	Te Kaha, 14 June 1840
14	Na Taku	Nā Taku	Ngāi Tai?		Tōrere, 14 June 1840
15	Tautari	Tautari	Ngāti Awa	Ngāti Pūkeko, Ngāti Tonu	Whakatāne, 16 June 1840
16	Mokai	Mōkai	Ngāti Awa?	Ngāti Pūkeko?	Whakatāne, 16 June 1840

Figure 32 *The Bay of Plenty Fedarb Sheet 6* (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2023).

The gaps in the historical record make it challenging to fully reconstruct the symbolism of moko in our iwi. There is a distinguishable marking in the 'tīwhana' of Mātaatua rangatira of old—the "Mataatua gaps" as I have come to call them, are still shrouded in mystery. Some Tūhoe artists associate them with the prestige of retrieving a bird's tail feather, likely connected to Te Manu a Rehua, an atua (deity) of birds and flying insects and associated with healing, kindness and joy. Further insight comes through a Tūhoe moko artist Whare Turnbull, he gave the gaps symbolism as humility. Hōhua Kereama gives the gaps as representing the elbows of the toroa. These stories add layers to the legacy of moko, connecting it to spiritual symbols and figures such as Tāwhaki, whose ascent to the heavens to retrieve sacred knowledge parallels the moko recipient's spiritual journey. Te Arawa is also known to have employed these gaps at least in carving form, the pou tokomanawa (carved base figure) of Ngatoroirangi being the most notable example in the house Tamatekaupa at Te Papaouru marae.



Figure 33 *Whakaari Netana of Tūhoe* (James Cowan, 1922).

He Tohu Rangatira: The Intersections of Moko and Identity

In the past, our ancestors used their moko as signatures on important documents such as Te Tiriti o Waitangi and various land sale deeds with impressions of their moko kanohi. Ellis (2014) illuminates this practice as a declaration of identity, as moko served as the "*primary identity marker for Māori at the time*" (p. 30). Such representations also held legal weight in

courts of law. The earliest recorded instance dates to 1831 when 13 chiefs from Te Tai Tokerau petitioned King William IV for protection from Pākehā (Europeans) wanting their lands; their moko serving as sacred, binding seals. Ellis quotes Henare articulating the profound sanctity of these marks, drawn from the most revered part of the body; the head. The transformative potential of moko extends beyond historical documents; it's evident in the lives of my clients. One client, Tyson, was left a paraplegic after an accident. His self-worth and confidence were significantly affected by his condition. After receiving his first stage of a mataora, I was very heartened by his report of a remarkable surge in self-esteem and confidence – one of many testaments to the restorative agency of moko.



Figure 34 *Tyson Te Maro and his Partner Krystal Kearns.*

When reviewing Rawinia Higgins' (2004) thesis on Tūhoe women who wear moko as emblems of identity and political sovereignty, Higgins' work connects Tūhoe women's identity to tangata (tribal affiliations) and whenua (intrinsic bond with the land and atua). This framework certainly confirms my understanding of moko as a complex identity marker. I've seen a similar pattern in my own practice, with clients frequently describing their moko as "revealing" a deeper part of themselves. A common phrase I hear from women adorning kauae, attributes a kind of personification to their moko. '*She is revealed*' or their inference of 'her' when speaking about their kauae, is a notable development in the modern artform and clearly

signifies a connection to moko kauae and their femininity. I assume this is derived from the notion of kauae being a symbol of mana wahine (feminine authority, or divinity). This connection to mana wahine (female authority) and spiritual empowerment is deeply embedded in the experience of receiving moko. The moko is a bridge to deeper self-recognition, a seed that can blossom into a robust expression of identity.



Figure 35 *Anthony Olsen of Tūhoe, Stage Two.*

Beyond aesthetics, pepehā (tribal sayings) weaves the individual's narrative into their moko, anchoring them to their environment and lineage. The connection to specific atua overseeing their skills or kaitiaki motifs as guardians adds layers of meaning. Each moko kanohi is a 'publication' of personal and tribal history, a living testament to one's place within the broader whakapapa. It's a constant reminder of how identity is multifaceted, it includes physical genealogy, spiritual genealogy, morals and ethics, aspirations and skill sets. So, undertaking these marks in the sacred space of ritual and beautifully demonstrates the collective identity of Māori as we gather once again around the sacred fires of Rūaimoko.

Ngā Matakauri: Impacts of Moko on Identity

I've gathered countless testimonials from clients who have experienced profound shifts in their identity after receiving moko. Renee's testimonial is powerful: *"Kauae, I'm gonna keep saying this, mine has changed my life—not in small ways, in ways that are hard to describe cause it's so deep. It woke something deep in my soul, my ngākau, my DNA. Lately I've heard so many*

wāhine say - I'm not good enough, I'm too white, not Māori enough, fluent enough, strong enough, I haven't done XYZ yet. I also told myself those things for years. Well, that shit is just rhetoric to stop you doing what we are born to do—be us, be wāhine, be Māori, be beautiful, be seen, be sensual, be free.” (R. Muru-Barnard, personal communication, 2023).



Figure 36 Renee, Kaiwhakahaere at Turuki Health (Muru-Barnard, 2022).

The online survey responses echoed these narratives, revealing the deep connection between moko and whakapapa (genealogy). Moko, for many respondents, symbolised a birthright. The survey also sparked important discussions on gender and moko, with some participants debating the appropriateness of kauae for men or the gifting of moko kanohi to Pākehā. Opinions varied widely. Whilst some leaders staunchly believe that moko kanohi is a privilege only for those with Māori blood, I've personally considered the perspective of honouring long-serving Pākehā members of our Māori communities with this gift, albeit with collective agreement.

Thirty years in the practice has shown me countless instances of what I would call 'identity retrieval' with marked improvements in self-esteem and acceptance among those who receive moko kanohi. It's often like flipping a switch that ignites a journey of self-discovery. But the effectiveness depends on the practitioner's skill and the depth of their cultural understanding. An inexperienced artist can do more harm than good - a lesson underscored by the tale of Mataora and his first 'client' Tu Tangata. Renamed Tu Tangata Kino because he was left badly tattooed, therefore earning him his new name implying his 'ugliness.' This reinforces the notion of ensuring moko practitioners reach a certain level of capability before even attempting a moko kanohi (G. Toi, personal communication, October 2023). The collective explosion of moko kanohi that is currently erupting in our midst signifies a pivotal moment to further explore rites of passage that use moko as a marker of life transitions.

He Mana tō te Moko: Future Research and Practice

The journey of this thesis has unearthed some interesting pathways, revealing numerous potential research avenues that can springboard off this research. One particularly compelling direction is exploring the potential of mataora as a transformative rite of passage for our whānau entrenched in gang life. The story of Hopere Chase, one of our matakauri (participants) is a prime example, showing the profound shifts that moko kanohi can initiate, provided there's a solid support network for those on this path to ensure the path is maintained. Another is Kohanga Reo, the connectiveness of moko is already known by the youngest generation; they understand that it's uniquely Māori through the introduction of kiri-tuhi. This would seek to nurture the seed of identity from the earliest years.



Figure 37 *Harper Stewart with Kiri-Tuhi* (Image from Mai FM).

I am also interested in exploring belated rites of passage, particularly for Māori adults who have rediscovered moko as a tool for identity recovery. The modern resurgence of moko, as a reflection of both cultural pride and personal transformation, positions it as a critical tool for contemporary rites of passage, not just a reflection of the past.

Whakakapi: Conclusion

Moko is a pathway to reclaiming and reinforcing identity, a symbol resistance to the ongoing impacts of colonisation. The empowerment and sense of belonging that moko kanohi offers, as I've seen in both my clients and myself, affirm its significance in today's world. The artistry and wisdom of our ancestors, who marked their moko as declarations of identity, continue to inspire us to use this art form to heal, grow, and represent our heritage with dignity. Moko remains a powerful marker of transformation, commitment, and resilience, ensuring that future generations carry its legacy forward.





Figure 38 Mr G, Graham Hoete, (2023). *Kaitā: Lance Ngata*.



WHA – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.4 Ahi Pūrākau: Reflections of the Creative Process

Where there is artistic excellence, there is human dignity!

Tihei Mouri Moko: Introduction

He toi whakairo, he mana tangata! This whakatauki encapsulates the core of my thesis journey, acknowledging that the integrity and dignity of a people is reflected in their creative outputs. Creativity engages both hemispheres of the brain, a notion that embodies our whakapapa back to Rangi and Papa the primal parents of our world. This chapter reflects on the processes behind the creative component of my thesis—comprising nine canvases that form the third tier of my work—designed to narrate moko as rites of passage (RoP) and its significance for Ngāti Awa. Spending over 300 hours conceptualising and painting these canvases, I have crafted visual narratives that depict the chronological journey of moko: from its ancient roots through colonisation, its demise and revival, to its future as a vital cultural practice. These canvases serve as visual counterparts to the thesis’ inquiry, highlighting the impacts of moko on identity, well-being, and collective belonging.

Ahi Pūrākau: Tier Three – Creative Component

Advocating for creativity in academic research; in conceptualising this tier, I could not help but ruminate on the necessity for Māori academia to embrace creativity as a partner to scholarly pursuit. Art is not a supplementary aspect but a vital partner to in research, artists brains function in differing ways, opening to a wider scope of knowledge insights. In line with Kaupapa Māori theory, I quote from Josie Roberts’ (2021) Editorial, *“The arts develop the artistic and aesthetic dimensions of human experience. They contribute to our intellectual ability and to our social, cultural and spiritual understandings. They are an essential element of daily living and of lifelong learning.”* (p. 9) The pūrākau I have drawn from are foundational to understanding moko as RoP. Stories, such as those of Mataora and Niwareka, reflect the transformative journey of moko, connecting to both historical context and its contemporary resurgence. The creative tier therefore grounds academic analysis in cultural storytelling, offering a visual and imaginative medium that resonates with Māori communities who often prefer visual narratives to written words.

Hono Whakaaro: Bridging Creativity to the Research Inquiry

The nine canvases are essential in answering the research inquiry: "How does reinstating moko as rites of passage across various life milestones benefit the people of Ngāti Awa?" Each canvas explores a different phase of the chronological plight of moko over time—its origins, its near-eradication through colonisation, its revival, and its future. Simultaneously, these canvases serve as a visual narrative that highlights the stages of moko as a cultural RoP. The visual storytelling approach provides a necessary counterbalance to the academic inquiry, it is designed to harness the imagination, providing a narrative both visual and scribed to catalyse discussion and deepen the understanding regarding moko as RoP. These canvases make tangible the abstract notions of cultural loss, recovery, and resilience. By visualising the journey that the artform has endured, I aim to create a catalyst for discussion and a deeper understanding of its ongoing significance among the people of Ngāti Awa.

Māramatanga: Insights Gained from Creative Work

In 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, I had the opportunity to develop my visual storytelling approach through Mahi-a-Atua wānanga sessions with Mark and Dr Diana Kopua. Painting pūrākau in real-time while they narrated ancestral stories engaged my creative process and led to the development of the art style seen in my canvases. For me, painting these narratives engages the three manawa (hearts) spoken of by Hohepa Delamere: the whatumanawa (mind's eye), in the envisioning of the pūrākau; the manawa (heart) in the intention of bringing healing through them and the pūmanawa (emotions), invoked through the story they unfold. Delamere would say that to engage all three is the Māori way of knowing and being. This experience affirmed that storytelling, combined with visual representation, is a powerful method for transmitting cultural knowledge. The importance of pūrākau in conveying values, lessons, and histories became one of the greatest epiphanies of my thesis work. Narratives such as the journey of Mataora to retrieve moko are more than stories—they are psychological tools that offer moral and cultural teachings (Campbell, 1988). My canvases aim to continue this tradition by visually portraying the plight of moko through historical events and the knowledge it holds. Narratives are vital to the coherent and successful transmission of values, lessons and histories of a people. Pūrākau in the future will likely be delivered through animated movies and our narratives will be accessible across 'blockchain' technologies, protected in Māori-owned and controlled 'metaverses' like that of Thomas Clark's 'Hawaiki Hou' (personal communication, March 2024).

Ngā Whakaata: Reflections on the Creative Process

The modern Māori word for art is *toi*, “this term was first used in the mid 1980s during the Te Māori exhibition, up until then, other terms were used like ‘huatau’ (Rangimarie Hetet) and ‘puna whaihanga/waihanga’ (Rangiuia & Mataira). Specialists like Wiremu Te Rangikaheke and Te Matorohanga had no specific term; in their time art was like breath. Everywhere!” (N. Te Awekotuku, personal communication, Dec 2024). The word ‘*toi*’ conveys many other meanings also, for example, summit or pinnacle, origin, Indigenous, source, knowledge and excellence! It is also associated to the vine that is suspended from the heavens (*rangi*), known as Te Toi Huarewa, which refers to the way that Tāne and Tāwhaki ascended the heavens. It invokes the pinnacle of human potential. It takes an informed triangulation to correlate this vine to the nervous system that is suspended from our brains, especially considering a traditional word for ‘mind’ being ‘*rangi*’. The Tiwhana-a-Rangi designs that resemble rays over the forehead also represent the ‘be-spaced’ heavens, Ngā Rangitūhāhā (M. Kopua, personal communication, July 2021). These are in reference to Tāne’s ascension through them to retrieve the baskets of knowledge, a narrative steeped in the quest for enlightenment. It is through this lens that the creative component of my thesis takes shape. Through *moko*, we reconnect with the cosmogony of our ancestors, and the creative process itself becomes a vessel for preserving this wisdom.



Figure 39 *Mataatua Whare Tupuna* (Mataatuawharenuirezdy.com).

The creative tier aligns with the idea that ‘*toi*’ represents the pinnacle of human potential—both physically and spiritually. By linking the act of artistic creation to narratives like Tāne’s ascension to retrieve the baskets of knowledge, I demonstrate that the process of creating art from an Indigenous perspective, is far beyond aesthetics, *toi* Māori is a form of publication, of documentation, of cultural and intellectual engagement. One only needs to experience a *whare tupuna* to grasp this notion of art as a conveyor of knowledge.

Ngā Ara Toi ki Mua: Future Artistic Expressions

The research undertaken for this thesis has opened new pathways for my artistic practice, particularly in exploring rites of passage through visual storytelling. I plan to continue interpreting pūrākau and historical accounts, using them to guide the development of artwork specific to Mataatua and Ngāti Awa. Visual mediums can encode values and lessons that transcend written language, offering a powerful platform for cultural education. I also envision future works that reignite the ritual fires of moko for Ngāti Awa, connecting moko to its ceremonial origins. The creation of rites of passage pathways for Ngāti Awa will involve conceptualising moko placements that reflect our cultural narratives, genealogies, and histories. This ongoing exploration highlights the dynamic nature of moko as both a cultural tradition and a modern practice.

Uhi Wero: Limitations and Challenges Encountered

Completing this thesis in three years posed significant challenges, from time constraints to physical strain from long hours of work. Balancing family responsibilities and managing the creative, academic, and personal demands was a constant challenge. Ensuring coherence between the three tiers—creative, journal, and exegesis—required meticulous planning and constant reviewing to ensure alignment. Dr. Collier’s Whetū Mārama framework (2018, p. 42) was invaluable, providing a bird’s-eye view that allowed me to see the whole thesis in one image and ensured that each tier communicated effectively with the others.

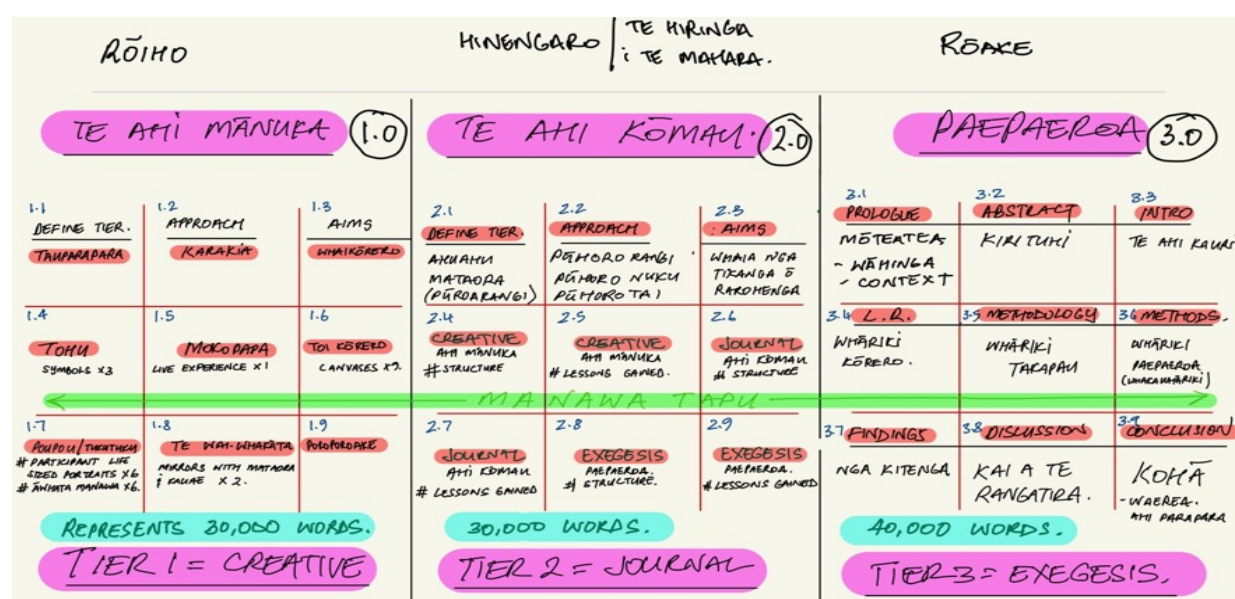


Figure 40 Initial Three-Tier Layout of the Creative Thesis.

Kupu Whakakapi: Conclusion

Creativity brings me into a space of deep thought and contemplation. When I paint, I am in wānanga with my subject matter; all of my art is based in pūrākau and whakaaro Māori (Māori thought). Through the visual narratives of my canvases, I engage at depth with Māori cultural narratives and concepts, using art as a tool for cultural recovery, identity reclamation, and healing. The proverb "He toi whakairo, he mana tangata" encapsulates this journey—where there is artistic excellence, there is human dignity. By reimagining moko as rites of passage and presenting its transformative power visually, this work seeks to foster a renaissance of cultural identity and empowerment for Ngāti Awa and beyond.

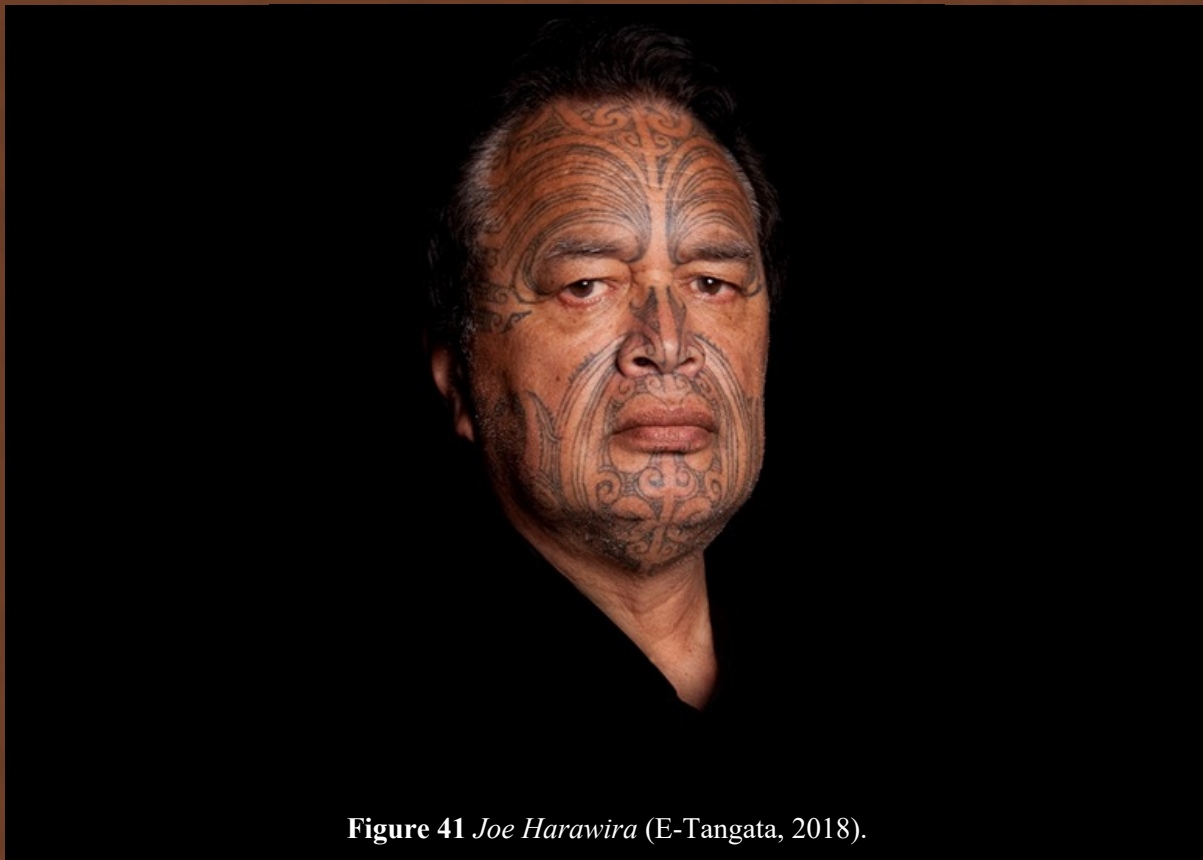


Figure 41 *Joe Harawira* (E-Tangata, 2018).

I conclude with a Navajo proverb: "Walk in Beauty." This philosophy aligns with the Māori worldview that art, in its many forms, is a vital part of maintaining balance, well-being, and harmony within ourselves and with the wider world. Through creativity, we walk in beauty, reconnecting to our whakapapa both human and environmental, we communicate our mana motuhake from spaces of inspiration and help to shape a future grounded in critical thinking, resilience and aspiration.

RIMA – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.5 Te Ahi Kōmau: Reflections of the Journal Process

Ahuahu Mataora: Charting the Course Through Journaling

The process of journaling has been like a voyage through uncharted waters, guiding the scholarly exploration of my thesis. The journal has been a compass, a tangible manual that forges connections between my creative insights and the academic rigour of the exegesis. The moko pattern ‘Ahuahu Mataora’, symbolising navigation, has been particularly emblematic of my journey. It narrates the voyage of Mataora to Rarohenga, a path revealed step by step, island by island; each leg of the journey requiring new guidance, much like my own research process. Just as Mataora sought direction at each island enroute to the underworld, my journal entries have been critical waypoints, guiding me through the intricate landscape of moko as rites of passage. This analogy captures my research process in general; each entry a mound, an island of thought and discovery, leading me closer to the ultimate understanding I seek. In this sense, the journal is the ‘Corpus Collosum’ (Pū-ioio or Amo-ā-Ruarua) of my entire thesis, facilitating communication between the creative insights and the academic rigour of the exegesis.

Te Rua i te Mahara: Crafting the Repository of Thoughts

At the outset, Dr. Collier directed us to establish journals within a shared Facebook group, ‘Toa Kai-Rangahau’, creating a collective repository of literature, reflections, and peer engagement. This digital space became a vital resource during the first year, allowing us to track progress, offer support, and share ideas. In the second year, after completing the research proposal and ethics submissions, we transitioned into individual private Facebook hubs. My personal hub, Ahi Mānuka, became my office, where I meticulously organised the findings and insights collected from the first year. This allowed me to streamline the tripartite execution of my thesis, efficiently organising my reflections and materials.

Reflections of the Journal Process

Journaling became a daily routine, documenting thesis concepts and contextualising my work. Facebook's functional layout facilitated the tracking of ideas, simplifying the evolution of complex concepts, especially during key phases like methodology design and data analysis. Journaling also served as a form of data collection, recording intellectual steps taken throughout the research. This process provided clarity during moments of doubt and kept my focus sharp, particularly during the more abstract stages of the thesis. Revisiting old entries evokes a deep sense of aroha and pride in our shared accomplishments as a cohort, each entry a milestone in our journey from PhD candidates to PhD students.

Insights Gained from Journaling

Journaling proved invaluable in tracing breadcrumbs during my search for literature on moko as RoP. As I organised private hubs in year two, I created an album for each chapter of the exegesis, helping me link journal entries to specific research chapters. This process helped me transition abstract thoughts into coherent ideas, offering a sense of accomplishment in an otherwise demanding research journey. It also provided respite from heavy academic modes, offering a more personalised and relaxed approach that allowed answers to surface naturally. Writing in a journal encouraged patience, reflection, and the maturation of ideas over time. One significant insight gained is the use of journaling as a methodological tool. By giving thoughts time to marinate, the journal allowed for the integration of heart, mind, intuition, and intellect. This iterative process of journaling was integral to my creative process, allowing space for the slow development of the *Toi Kōrero* canvases over weeks and months. As ideas rested and matured, journaling became essential in refining concepts and ensuring that each element of the thesis aligned cohesively. Image often lingered in intermediary states for days, permitting me to shift focus to other canvases, only to return with fresh eyes and renewed perspective. Often, many weeks passed before I returned to finalise an image, even many months later they were still developing and open to refinement before the final submission.

Relationship Between Journal and Research Question

The journal played a straightforward yet essential role in addressing the research question. It provided a dedicated space for my thoughts, offering time to reflect and allowing my ideas to develop gradually. This was particularly important during the data analysis process, where

journaling became instrumental in keeping track of key findings and insights. The cyclical process of writing, reflecting, and writing again helped me develop a more nuanced understanding of moko as RoP, weaving together personal experience, scholarly insights, and new knowledge gained from the research.

Jordan Peterson's Insights on Writing

As Canadian psychologist Jordan Peterson notes, *"It isn't enough to read; you also have to write and if you're going to graduate school, you should write every day, it's a good idea for anyone who wants to develop themselves intellectually. Even half an hour a day, that's 180 hours a year. That's a lot of thinking because writing is thinking"* (2018). This philosophy became a cornerstone of my research process. Writing daily, even for short periods, allowed me to articulate complex ideas and reflect deeply on the issues of reintegrating moko as RoP. The act of journaling not only clarified my thoughts but also enabled me to interlace personal experience with academic inquiry, enhancing the overall discourse of my research. Writing, in this research journey, is intrinsically linked to the life of the thesis. It is through this practice that I've managed to translate hours of contemplation into what I hope will be a significant contribution to this kaupapa.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

The lifelong investigation into moko and rites of passage is an ongoing journey, with no defined endpoint. My journal will continue to serve as a vital tool, documenting the gradual unfolding of new understandings and serving as a guide for future research. As I delve deeper into areas such as pūrākau, regional variations of moko, and the psychological impacts of moko as RoP, journaling will remain essential in capturing the evolution of these ideas. Additionally, Thomas Clark's Hawaiiki Hou Blockchain project offers an innovative space to protect and share mātauranga Māori, ensuring that these insights can be safeguarded for future generations.

Limitations and Challenges Encountered

The subjective nature of journaling presents challenges, particularly given my personal connection to moko as a kaupapa. To mitigate bias, I employed triangulation, integrating diverse information sources and peer feedback. Regular peer debriefing within my community of moko practitioners, led by Mark Kopua, fostered invaluable critique. Additionally, member

checking with the matakauri (participants) ensured their voices were authentically represented in the findings. Using Facebook as a repository had limitations, including potential data security issues, platform limitations like daily constraints on the number of posts, and community standards censorship. To mitigate these risks, I captured screenshots of key posts and journal entries, ensuring that my work is preserved beyond the confines of the platform.

Whakakapi: Conclusion

The journal process, Ahi Kōmau, has been an integral part of my thesis journey, offering a reflective mirror to my evolving research. It has fostered intellectual growth, creativity, and methodological transparency, helping me navigate the complexities of moko as rites of passage. Despite its inherent subjectivity and the challenges posed by technological reliance, strategies like triangulation and reflexivity have ensured the journal's value as a research tool. Moving forward, this journal will stand as both a roadmap of the research process and a guide for future exploration into moko as a cultural RoP.



Figure 42 *Our Cohort Visiting Pōhaturoa with Dr Collier and Dr Wana.*

ONO – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.6 Ahi Mānuka: Reflections on the Exegesis

Setting the Stage for the Exegesis

The exegesis forms the academic backbone of this thesis, accounting for 45-50% of its total content. As a significant element of the doctoral research, it must meet rigorous scholarly standards while also serving as a vessel for the findings of the research. The exegesis embodies the culmination of the thesis, dissecting and presenting the research's core conclusions, while upholding the academic and intellectual integrity of the study.

Unpacking the Exegesis

The exegesis is structured into nine chapters, mirroring Dr Collier's Whetū Mārama model, referred to as 'Tohu' (2018, p. 122). This framework has guided this thesis, ensuring that each chapter contributes to answering the research question on the revitalisation of moko as RoP and the generational impacts of its removal. The elegance of the tohu lies in its straightforwardness, guiding the plan-write-review cycle with definite simplicity. Each 'cell' of the tohu, as depicted below, correlates with a chapter, providing a visual blueprint for distributing content and managing word counts, though these figures remained flexible and responsive to the research's evolution.



Figure 43 Whetū Mārama used for Planning Word Count.

The exegesis explores the cultural and historical significance of moko, starting with a personal introduction that frames my own connection to the kaupapa. This is followed by the literature review, which examines existing research on moko and rites of passage across cultures, identifying gaps in knowledge specific to moko as RoP. The architectural framework of the Whāriki Takapau methodology and the Whakawhāriki method for data collection are outlined in subsequent chapters, followed by thematic analysis and findings that highlight the contemporary relevance of moko.

Dissecting the Exegesis

The exegesis presents a broad range of discussions, from moko's historical role as a RoP to its suppression during colonialism and its current resurgence as a symbol of identity and transition. The introductory chapter provides an overview of moko's past, while subsequent chapters delve into the research methodology, literature review, and findings, synthesising data from the matakauri (participants) and public survey. The literature review identifies and addresses the lack of documented research on moko as rites of passage, placing it within broader anthropological and psychological frameworks. The research fills this gap by examining the role of moko in marking life transitions for Māori and offering new insights into its contemporary relevance. The deficit of documentation is mitigated through conversations with various tohunga and knowledge holders.

The Methodology draws on theoretical frameworks like Pūrākau as methodology (Lee, 2009), Storywork (Archibald, 2008) and Phenomenology. The Whāriki Takapau framework, developed from traditional moko teachings, anchors the study in a Māori worldview. It provides a culturally meaningful methodology that integrates spirituality, physicality, and psychology, reflecting the holistic nature of moko as RoP. The Whakawhāriki method weaves together the experiences of the matakauri, data from an online survey, oral knowledge and published documentation, and analyses of the creative and journal tiers, offering a nuanced understanding of how moko is perceived and practiced today.

The concluding chapters synthesise the findings, weaving together the data from the many strands just mentioned into themes that directly address the research question on the reinstatement of moko as rites of passage. These chapters not only highlight the key insights from the study but also frame them within the larger conversation on cultural revival and self-

determination for Ngāti Awa. They emphasise the collective responsibility to shape future rites of passage, while offering practical recommendations for integrating moko into the contemporary lives of Ngāti Awa whānau.

Synthesising the Exegesis Journey

The exegesis journey began with the research proposal, which laid the foundation for the thesis. Early chapters, such as the prologue and introduction, introduced the research question and contextualised moko within Māori history. The literature review provided a brief colonial history and a deep dive into the documented accounts of moko and rites of passage, identifying gaps that this research aims to fill. Developing the Whāriki Takapau framework was a demanding but rewarding process, rooted in Māori traditions of moko and weaving. This framework guided the research methodology, providing a structured approach that honours both cultural and academic standards. The findings and discussion chapters reveal the importance of moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa, emphasising the need for wānanga to collectively shape future rites of passage.



Figure 44 *Mokopapa at Kokohinau Marae, Te Teko 2022.*

Insights Gained from the Exegesis

Integrating Kaupapa Māori into the exegesis has been a meaningful journey, highlighting the intrinsic value of Indigenous methodologies within academic research. The necessity to validate such approaches within Western-dominated academic institutions underscores the enduring legacy of colonial ideologies. Kaupapa Māori, alongside mātauranga Māori, emerges as a necessary response to such pedagogies, carving a space where Māori knowledge systems can be recognised and respected.

Royal's insights (2012), into the juxtaposition of mātauranga Māori with the arrival of biblical worldviews illuminate the challenges faced by Indigenous epistemologies in gaining legitimate standing in academia. He advocates for Kaupapa Māori as an avenue for Māori knowledge to thrive within educational frameworks whilst maintaining its roots in a Māori worldview. However, this exploration leads me to ponder the potential of Kaupapa Māori flourishing autonomously, beyond Western academia, not solely as a reactionary measure seeking validation but as a self-sustaining expression of mana motuhake Māori. What would it mean for Māori frameworks to develop and prosper unfettered by the need for external affirmation, driven purely by the vitality of Māori philosophy and practice? I wonder if this reflection opens new avenues for envisioning the future of Kaupapa Māori to not be confined to the walls of the academy but as a living, breathing part of modern Māori life and mana motuhake.

Through the research, it has become clear that moko holds significant healing potential for Māori, serving as a rongoā (medicine) for the intergenerational trauma caused by colonisation. The data collected from the matakauri demonstrates the profound impact of moko on personal identity, resilience, and cultural belonging. The findings affirm the importance of reintroducing moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa, offering a pathway to cultural revival and individual empowerment.

Exegesis is a Waka Huia for Research Question

The exegesis acts as a waka huia (treasure box) for addressing the research question, meticulously analysing each component of moko as RoP and how its revival can benefit Ngāti Awa. By identifying and addressing the knowledge gaps, the exegesis lays the groundwork for future research and practical implementation, initiating community-led wānanga to re-establish moko as a central cultural practice for marking life transitions will significantly strengthen

Ngāti Awa into the future. These envisioned wānanga for Ngāti Awa is a significant undertaking, requiring planning to interlace the appropriate moko, pūrākau, karakia and protocols for each life transition. This will not only reawaken traditional pathways but also necessitate a focused contemporary inquest, applying the methodologies honed during this exegesis. This work is a calling for me, one that I am eager to respond to - one that I am committed to seeing flourish.

Limitations and Challenges Encountered

A key limitation encountered during the exegesis process was the lack of documented knowledge specific to Ngāti Awa moko traditions. This gap highlighted the need for creative solutions and collaboration with cultural experts to rebuild the practice. Despite the challenges, the exegesis outlines a clear path forward for revitalising moko as RoP, drawing on the expertise of kaumātua and moko practitioners to guide the process. This excites me! It's creative, it holds modern relevance yet is founded in tradition and would be guided by kaumātua and leaders with the expertise to ensure a safe and trusted pathway for our people.

Whakakapi: Conclusion

All three components of this thesis: creative + journal + exegesis = A kaupapa Māori approach to this research endeavour (Collier, 2018, p.122). The exegesis has been an intellectually and culturally enriching journey, synthesising two and a half years of research into a coherent argument for the revival of moko as rites of passage for Ngāti Awa. The process has balanced academic rigor with cultural authenticity, contributing both to the academic field and the practical revival of moko. By integrating creative, journal, and exegesis components, the thesis reflects a Kaupapa Māori approach to research, grounded in Māori knowledge and practices while addressing contemporary issues.

WHITU – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.7 Tūporeariki: A Doctrine of Recovery?

Pondering the Doctrine of Discoveries' Impacts on Māori Culture

The Doctrine of Discovery has long been a subject of contention and scrutiny due to its historical role in the colonisation and dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Its principles were used to justify the European monarchies' claims to lands and territories during the 'Age of Discovery.' The *Wi Parata vs The Bishop of Wellington* case in 1877, where Judge James Prendergast referenced the doctrine, is a notable example within New Zealand's legal history, particularly for its dismissal of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a 'nullity' (Ngata, 2019).



Figure 45 *AI-Generated Image Depicting Arrival of Europeans.*

As Tina Ngata critiques, the doctrine has ongoing repercussions for Indigenous mana motuhake and governance, mirrored in modern geopolitics, like the Palestinian crisis. Moana Jackson (2021) also described the doctrine as an instrument of dispossession and cultural domination. The removal of Māori governance and land rights through this inhumane colonial doctrine calls for both personal and collective empowerment, a reclamation addressed in reintroducing traditional rites of passage, including moko. In Moana Jackson's address to the United Nations in 2012, (p. 1) the broader implications of the Doctrine of Discovery are underscored as not just a “genocidal legal magic” for land seizure but also as an instrument that enabled the subjugation and potential eradication of Indigenous cultures and systems of governance. These ponderings serve to sever the doctrines long-term consequences on Indigenous peoples and to challenge the legal and moral underpinnings of colonial legacy that continue to affect Indigenous rights and authority. Therefore, restoring rites of passage to my thinking, is both a collective empowerment and a personal one.

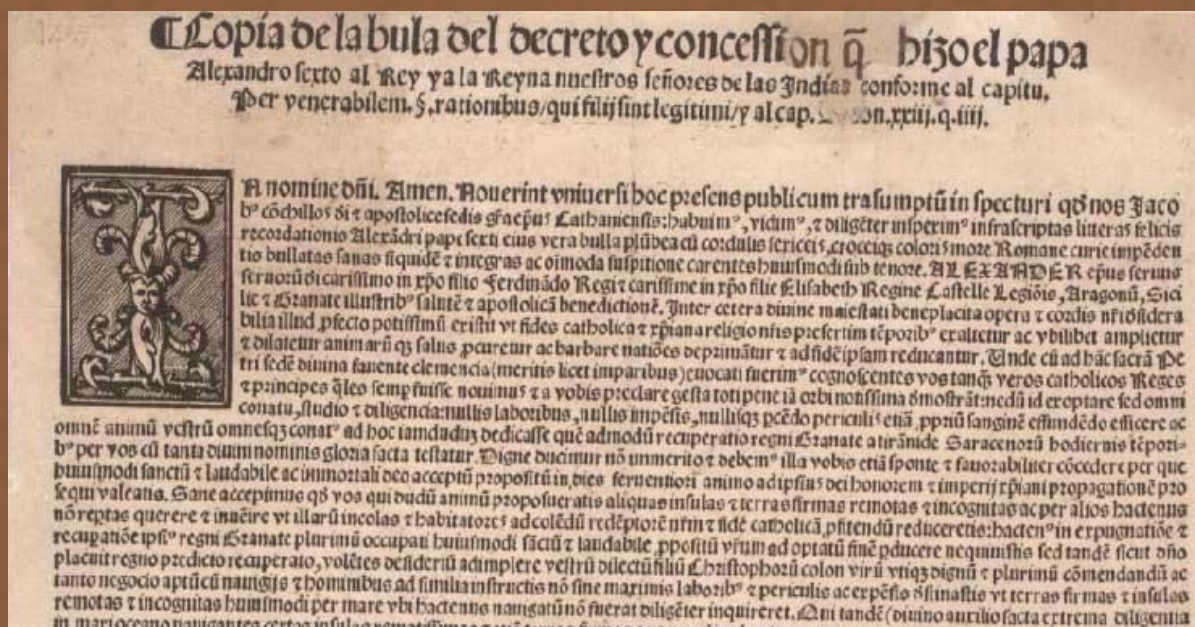


Figure 46 Papal Bull, *Inter Caetera*, issued in 1493 (Public Domain).

Cultural Disruption and Erosion of RoP

When Dayle Takitimu gave her presentation about the ‘Architecture of Colonisation’ at the inaugural Māori Party Wānanga in (2022), she shed light on the calculated methods employed by the British Crown during its imperial expansions. Also detailed in the article ‘The Art of Breaking People Down: The British Colonial Model in Ireland and Canada’ (Rahman et al., 2017), it becomes evident that the strategies of cultural disruption and assimilation were not

incidental but a deliberate blueprint for colonisation. The British colonial model, initially exercised during the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169, was refined over centuries and replicated in subsequent colonies, including Canada from 1576 onwards. Each conquered territory provided the British with further experience and insight, allowing them to perfect their approach to undermining and absorbing Indigenous societies.



Figure 47 *AI-Created Image Depicting “The Architecture of Colonisation”.*

By the time British interests turned towards Aotearoa, they were well adept in the ‘art’ of cultural dismantling. The ramifications of this can be seen in the erosion of traditional rites of passage (RoP) among Māori, as colonial policies actively suppressed native customs and languages in favour of British norms and education systems. This calculated disruption has led to a significant loss of cultural knowledge and practice, with traditional RoP often being replaced by those imposed or deemed acceptable by colonial authorities. The recognition of

this historical strategy underscores the importance of revitalising Indigenous practices and reaffirms the need for re-indigenisation efforts to reclaim and restore traditional RoP as a means of cultural survival, resistance and flourishing.



The Loss of RoP and its Effects on Māori Wellbeing

It's evident that rites of passage play an important role in the wellbeing of humans. The literature review underscores its importance for identity formation. With their decline, Māori communities have faced severe consequences, such as loss of identity, disempowerment, homelessness, and substance abuse. Papa Hohepa Delamere's philosophy on living with centrality and neutrality teaches us that such a stance confers personal authority and resilience to fulfill one's destiny in the world, revealing the kind of wisdom taught in Māori RoP, where initiates were taught essential life skills and resilience. The absence of such teachings has left many Māori without the critical guidance traditionally provided by these rites. Michael Shirres (1986) similarly noted that rituals connect individuals with their people, ancestors, and the cosmos, affirming identity and belonging, he states, *"It is true that the formalisation of ritual leaves little room for individual creativity but when Māori take part in the rituals of his people, he is participating in the creativity of his people. And far from losing himself and his own identity in identifying himself with his people he finds himself"* (1986, p. 28). Restoring RoP can help individuals navigate life's complexities with a sense of purpose and connection.

Current Approaches to Addressing Colonial Impact

Māori resilience in the face of colonisation is reflected in the 1972 Reo Māori Bill and other cultural revivals. Māori culture stands at a thrilling juncture, we are being born again as a people, rising from the ashes of Imperial colonisation. The trials faced over nearly two centuries have served as a collective rite of passage, transforming Māori identity in the face of ideologies intent on claiming ownership over the natural world. Today, Māori arts such as carving, kapa haka, and moko thrive. Initiatives like Poutama RoP under Tiaki Coates and Mahi-a-Atua, led by Mark and Dr Diana Kopua, use traditional narratives to address Māori

mental health. These efforts aim to reconnect Māori with their heritage and offer culturally grounded methods for healing and growth. Our ‘village’ today is vast, stretching across seas to places like Australia, home to nearly 200,000 Māori. Where the Māori diaspora continue to engage with their culture through language workshops, kapa haka, martial arts and moko, demonstrating the ongoing relevance of these practices in modern contexts. We are navigating the complexities of the modern world whilst steadfastly upholding our identity. As these initiatives grow, so too does the opportunity for moko to reclaim its place as a rite of passage within Māori life.

Reinstating Moko as RoP in Cultural Revitalisation

Moko provides a framework for social responsibility and personal growth, deeply rooted in the collective identity of whānau, hapū, and iwi. If we establish RoP wisely, future generations will look back with the same gratitude we feel toward those who revived te reo Māori. Moko’s resurgence offers a compelling opportunity to serve as a cornerstone for cultural engagement, helping many individuals reconnect with their heritage. For others, more deeply rooted in Māoritanga, moko becomes a natural expression of their identity and marker of growth.

The mentoring of skilled moko practitioners will be key to this revival, ensuring that the practice maintains its integrity and deep cultural significance. As Kamali’i Hanohano has emphasised, we must begin with a solid foundation and build with transparency, involving leaders and cultural experts in shaping RoP for future generations. It will require collective effort and leadership to integrate moko into everyday life and cultural milestones. *“Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini”* Success is not the work of an individual, but the work of many. I am confident that re-engaging moko as RoP as an iwi will go a long way in bolstering cultural revitalisation for Ngāti Awa. It spiritually uplifts us; it psychologically strengthens us and physically beautifies our people.

Implications for Policy and Practice for Ngāti Awa

It takes a village! The reinstatement of moko as RoP must be a collective effort, drawing upon the wisdom and leadership of those well-versed in the traditions and contemporary needs of our people; as another proverb says, ‘Mā mangu (black), mā whereo (red), ka oti ai te mahi!’ By working together, the task will be completed. Moko is an icon of Māori identity, a visual language that identifies our unique place in the world. It’s my hope that Ngāti Awa embraces

this kaupapa as a collective, crafting iwi (tribal)-specific tikanga (protocols) and policies that reintegrate these rituals into our community. Moko holds immense potential for enhancing spiritual, psychological, and physical wellbeing, reconnecting individuals with their roots. The benefits of this initiative will ripple through the community, fortifying our Ngāti Awa identity and resilience.

Moko as RoP: A Healing Modality, Empowerment

Over three decades of moko practice, I have witnessed its healing and empowering effects. Moko kanohi, in particular, serves as a journey of self-discovery and emotional release. For example, Jacob Brown received his moko kanohi to process the grief of losing his sister. Through the moko process, he found closure, illustrating how this art form can facilitate healing and restoration of mauri.



Figure 48 *Jacob Brown, Townsville 2023.*

For wāhine who choose to receive moko kauae, the experience is equally transformative. It's a spiritual ascension, a tangible connection to their ancestors and an embodiment of their mana, but all moko, tied to personal milestones, hold therapeutic value. Approaching moko ceremonially allows individuals to process the profoundest of human experiences: loss,

mourning, celebration and change. The ritual process offers a sacred space for introspection and healing. The psychological benefits appear to be intrinsic to the art form, making moko a natural extension of our cultural practices to navigate life's trials and tribulations, making moko an essential component of Māori healing practices.

Moko and RoP: A Marker of Transition for Ngāti Awa

Reflecting on the last three years of research, I see moko playing a role in the development of Ngāti Awa and its people. It can guide individuals from early childhood to leadership, serving as markers of life's significant transitions. Moko, in its broader social context of RoP, can nurture potential, fortify resilience, and honour achievements, acting as a cultural compass that points to a life of purpose and rootedness. In a world filled with conflict and division, there is a great need to grow critical thinkers with hearts full of manaaki and spirits soaring the heights of potential. I feel that moko has a role to play by offering its traditional framework in imbuing our future visionaries, thinkers, leaders, creatives and healers with a sense of purpose, rootedness and aspiration.

Whakakapi: Conclusion

The imposition of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery by European powers brought a devastating disruption to the cultural integrity of our people. Yet, in the face of this, there has emerged a resurgence of an ancient and venerable practice - moko. Reflecting on the Doctrine, my supervisor inquired whether we might consider this resurgence as a 'Doctrine of Recovery'. Whilst the term 'doctrine' typically denotes a set of beliefs imposed from an authoritative entity and may not entirely encapsulate the essence of what moko represents, the underlying thought holds merit. Moko indeed offers a pathway to the recovery of identity - it is a philosophy that carefully steers the journey of reclamation, an ethos that captures the communal spirit fuelling this restorative process. It stands as a praxis of healing, embodying the action and practice of recovery. Moreover, it is a methodology, a pathway, a framework and a strategy that underpins the utilisation of moko as a powerful modality of recovery. Each term brings its own depth and perspective to the multifaceted nature of moko, celebrating its role in the cultural revival and personal empowerment of our people.

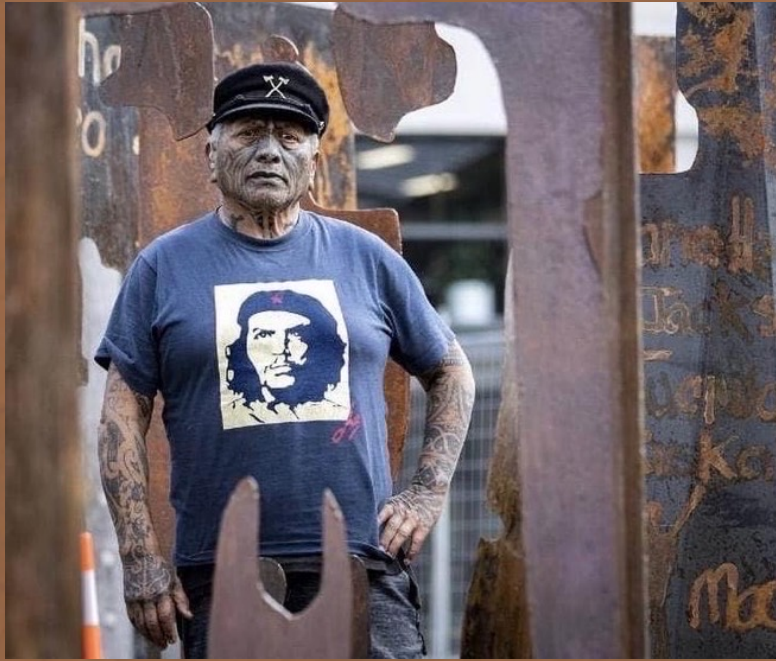


Figure 49 *Tame Iti, “I Will Not Speak Māori” Exhibition (Te Papa Tongarewa Museum, 2022).*

I entitled this chapter Tūporeariki, a name generously loaned to me by Mark and Diana Kopua from their Mahi-a-Atua Wānanga. They describe it as an Indigenous approach to healing. It is derived from the narrative of Mataora and Niwareka and two healing cloaks of Rongomātāne, (the deity of peace) called Tūporenuku and Tūporerangi. Moko kanohi has certainly become a modality of healing and recovery for Māori the nation over.



Figure 50 *James Webster, Hinemoa Jones, Turumakina Duley, Diana and Mark Kopua.*

WARU – JOURNAL ENTRY

2.8 Te Tatau Uruora: The Future of Tā Moko

Envisioning its Relevance for Future Generations

Wayfinding the Path of Moko for Future Generations

There are potentially multiple applications for moko and rites of passage (RoP) into the future for Ngāti Awa. It has been discovered that tattooing has historically served as a therapeutic modality for both physical ailments and for spiritual and psychological healing, as Krutak (2015) outlines regarding iceman Ötzi. Of Ötzi's 60 or so tattoos still visible on his mummified skin, many are precisely located on traditional pressure points.

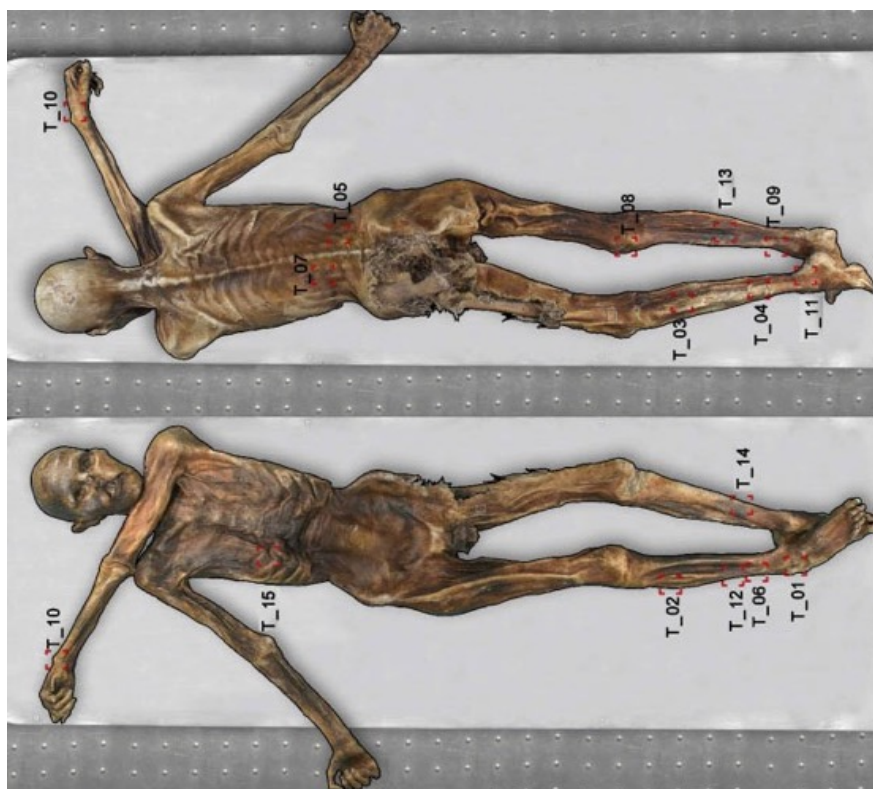


Figure 51 *Ötzi The Tyrolean Iceman* (South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology, n.d.).

Moko can serve as a guiding framework from adolescence through to elderhood, encouraging cultural grounding and leadership. It's a cultural vessel that carries the commitment of personal and communal upliftment, shaping trajectories that draws on traditional practices, while consciously fostering personal and communal growth.

Navigating the Currents: The Ever-Evolving Face of Tā Moko

In the ever-shifting tides of the modern world, the perceptions and practice of tā moko are being influenced by technology, cultural shifts and globalisation. The resurgence of kapahaka has been instrumental in weaving moko back into the fabric of Māori identity, while social media has granted open access to tohunga tā moko, allowing for immediate and widespread discourse. Films like 'Utu', 'The River Queen', 'Once Were Warriors' and the inclusion of a Māori goddess wearing moko kauae in a Marvel movie spotlighting its global presence. These portrayals, whilst significant, require careful reflection to ensure the mana of moko is upheld. The dynamic relationship of moko with gender, identity, and modern globalisation poses opportunities and challenges, such as the risk of cultural appropriation. To ensure the vitality of moko for future generations, we must balance respect for traditional customs with modern adaptability.

Wayfinding New Horizons for Moko in Mataatua

The revival of moko as RoP for Ngāti Awa involves collaboration through wānanga, symbolising the first step in reintroducing these rituals. Education will be pivotal, necessitating a blend of school curricula, community workshops and mokopapa gatherings. The knowledge and techniques of moko, including traditional tools like Ngā Uhi a Toroa, must be preserved and passed on to younger artisans. My forays into learning tool crafting and usage under the guidance of Keone Nunes in Hawai'i mark the first strides toward this goal. Venturing into the practices of other cultures, such as Hawai'i, Samoa, Native America and Asia, offers valuable insights into restoring rites of passage. The synergy between tā moko, romiromi and mirimiri presents an exciting frontier, one that correlates to the teachings of Papa Hohepa Delamere on the human body, mauri and pressure point therapies. And then there is the whare tapere, (house of entertainment) where pūrākau can be nurtured and performances practiced through theatre and the spoken word and then delivered to the community at mokopapa gatherings.

The National Pulse of Moko: Wayfinding Our Contribution

As moko experiences a national resurgence, wānanga across the country have been instrumental in rekindling the practice. Initiatives like Te Uhi a Mataora have nurtured new generations of moko practitioners. In more recent times Hōhua Mohi and Te Wehi Preston continue this initiative, nurturing the next wave of talent through collaborative wānanga. This

sets a precedent for Mataatua artists to come together to consolidate our knowledge on moko, enabling us to present a cohesive representation of moko on a national level, in turn strengthening inter-tribal bonds. Moko also plays a role in addressing social issues, such as gang tattoo removal initiatives, showing the potential of moko as a transformative and restorative cultural tool. These would assist individuals in their personal transformation and address broader social issues, such as employability. The readiness of Ngāti Awa to consider such initiatives, evidenced by inquiries from gang members seeking moko kanohi, demonstrates the practical and transformative pull of moko

Implications for the Future of Moko in a National Context

As moko reclaims its place in New Zealand society, it is essential to reshape public narratives, counter negative associations, and highlight the true significance of moko as RoP. The emergence of moko in the public sphere is prompting society to re-evaluate its preconceptions, which were often formed through racist perceptions. This re-evaluation phase is pivotal; it requires strong leadership and education to guide the discourse and reaffirm moko as rites of passage. Efforts to reshape perceptions have gained traction, for example, media advocacy has led to policy revisions within businesses that once barred individuals with facial tattoos. To maintain this momentum, continuous, clear communication is essential, emphasising the significance of moko as rites of passage and its place within the cultural landscape of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Collaborative wānanga can strengthen understanding and cooperation among iwi, and other Indigenous cultures now residing in Aotearoa. Partnering with organisations like Poutama Rites of Passage are crucial. By collaborating with groups already growing into the nuances of RoP, moko practitioners can deepen their comprehension and application of these culturally significant processes. This collaboration not only enriches the practitioners' expertise but also ensures that the evolution of moko remains respectful, informed and true to its roots. The implications for moko on a national scale are far-reaching. Endorsing cultural identity, influencing policy and nurturing a multicultural dialogue that respects and honours the diverse kaleidoscope of traditions that constitute the national identity of Aotearoa.

Navigating Moko in the Global Sphere

Balancing tradition and modernity in the era of rapid globalisation: Māori have emerged as leaders of cultural resurgence globally. Initiating cross-cultural relationships will deepen the global understanding of moko and ensure that it remains respected internationally. By guiding the narrative and fostering global education on moko, we embolden Māori, especially those who wear moko kanohi, to navigate international interactions with confidence and pride. Combatting cultural appropriation requires education, advocacy, and collaboration with other cultures to foster reciprocal understanding. Turning to the Māori diaspora in Australia, the existing network of moko practitioners, though disparate, holds potential for collective action.

Mokopapa: Cultivating Intent in the RoP Space

The mokopapa gatherings sweeping across Aotearoa offer an organic platform for moko to function as RoP. These gatherings must also serve as conduits for sharing pūrākau, our foundational stories, tying the physical act of tattooing to the spiritual and communal rebirth it signifies. Once again, the establishment of a whare tapere for Ngāti Awa could serve at these gatherings to deliver pūrākau as theatre.

Whakakapi: Conclusion

The proverb "Mate atu he tētē kura, haramai rā he tētē kura" encapsulates the cyclical nature of life; as one fern frond dies, so, another comes to take its place. As moko continues to evolve, it must be grounded in intentional adaptation, reflecting both our heritage and our future. By embracing the initiative of mokopapa under "Ahi Mānuka", we ensure that moko continues to thrive as a key cultural practice, empowering future generations and strengthening the community's sense of belonging. Tihei mauri moko, behold the life force of moko!



Figure 52 *Arikirau, The Ancient Site for Ritual Moko at Pōhaturoa, Whakatāne.*

TIER THREE – AHI PŪRĀKAU

CREATIVE



3.1 Toi Kōrero: A Visual Narrative



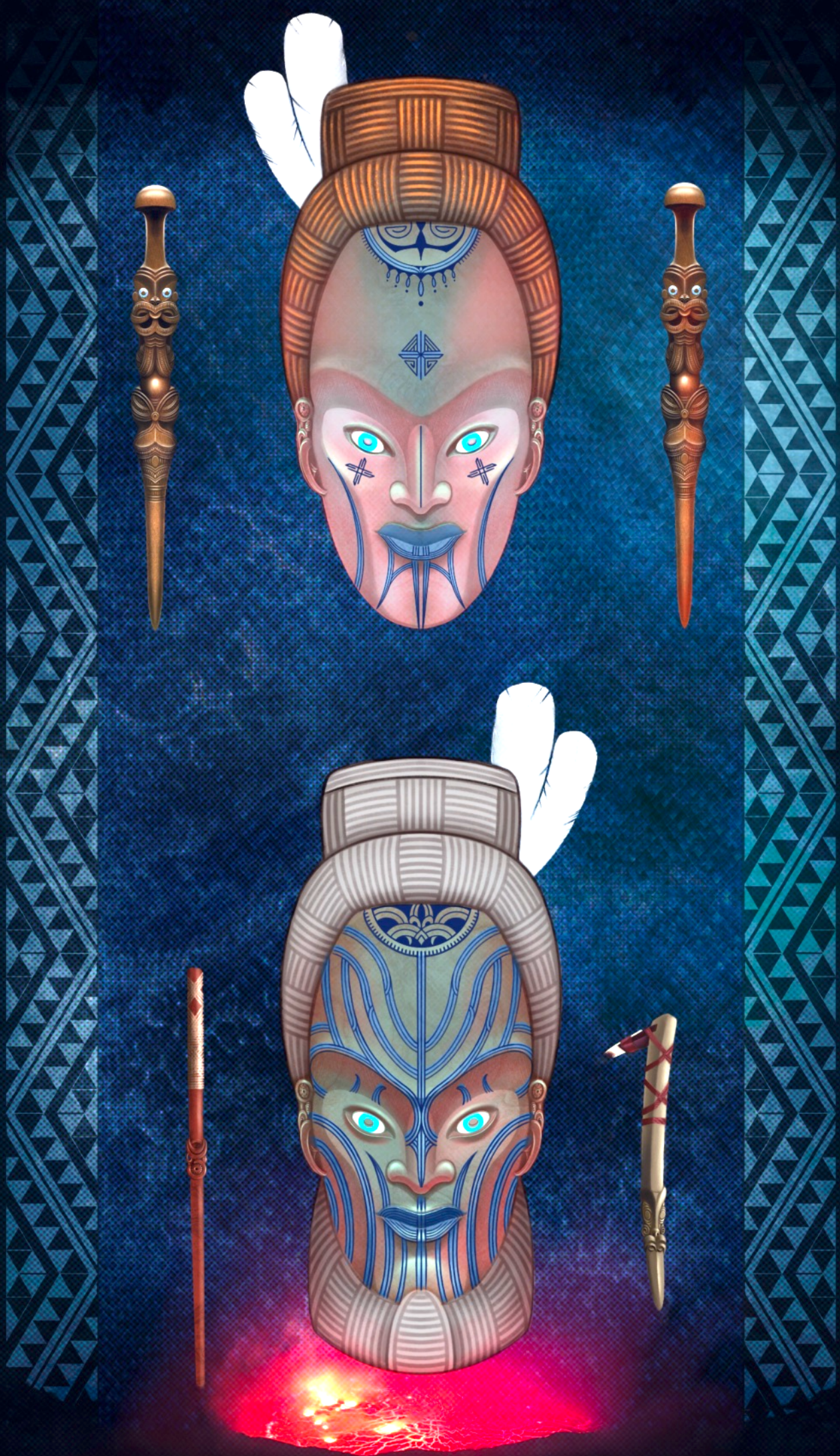
Ahi Kōmau: Creation - 900 AD

In the primordial dawn, when time was yet unmeasured and Papa and Rangi held an enduring embrace, the elder gods performed a great act of creation, they parted our Mother Earth, Papatūānuku, from our Father Sky, Ranginui, so that the children might have a place to flourish. As the youngest of the divine pantheon, I, Rūaimoko, was entrusted to the inner sanctum of the world tasked with comforting our sorrowful mother. Bestowed with a volcanic fire - Ahi Kōmau - I dwell enduringly in Rarohenga, the realm of spirits, where my children, the peaceful Tūrehu, thrive. Among them is my grandson, the esteemed priestly tattooist, Uetonga and his beautiful daughter, Niwareka, a priestess of the House of Weaving and Childbirth devoted to the goddess Hineteiwaiwa. The woven Paepaeroa pattern on both edges of her whāriki, embraces the ritual space and symbolises the threshold between the worlds of light and night.

This fair-skinned people, with azure eyes and flaxen hair, are custodians of the sacred knowledge of the rituals of tā moko. By his chisel and malet, Uetonga initiated the people throughout their lives, beginning at puberty, laying them down beside the sacred fire and upon the ritual mat of Hineteiwaiwa, woven by the hands of Niwareka. Their markings, scarred into their skin, reflect the surface of the earth, shaped by my seismic upheavals.

It is here, within this realm of harmony and peace, that our story unfolds, as Niwareka ventures into the enduring world of light, in the time when the doorway between the world of spirits and the world of the living was left ajar. Setting the stage for a tale of love, transformation and the intertwining of two worlds. And so, it is I, Rūaimoko, guardian of the inner fires and child of Papa and Rangi, who will guide you through this tale — a journey from darkness to light, from flesh to spirit, and back again.

Figure 53 *Ahi Kōmau.*



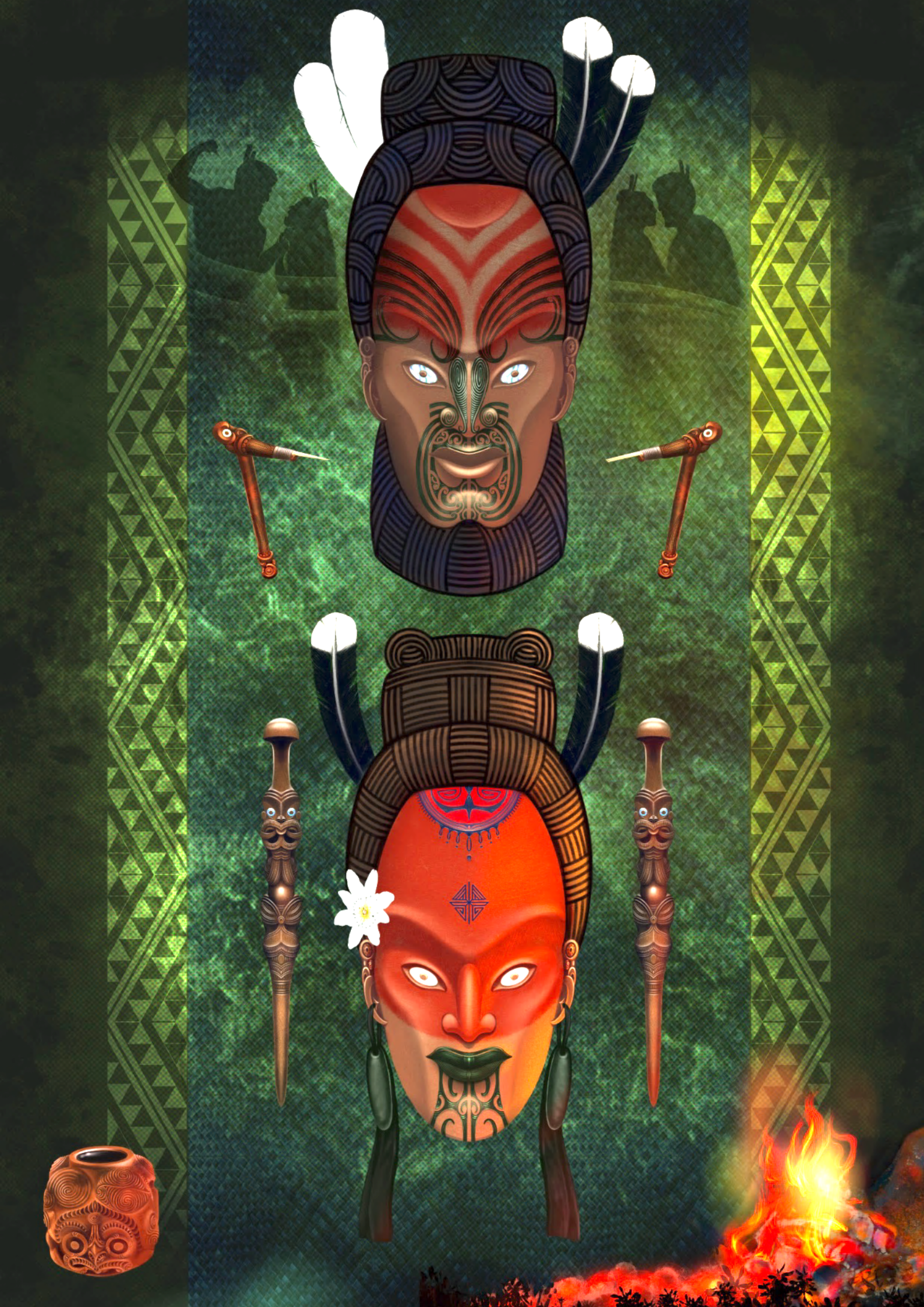
Ahi Tā Moko: 900 AD - 1770

Mataora was an ariki of his people – a man of noble stature, dark complexion and tight knit black hair. He contrasted Niwareka in many ways, nevertheless, they did fall deeply in love. Niwareka was revered by his people for her radiant benevolence and nurturing spirit, she was a beacon of light amongst the people. Until a shadow came over Mataora and in a fit of uncontrollable jealousy, he beat his wife. Heartbroken, Niwareka fled to the sanctuary of Rarohenga, returning to the embrace of her ancestral home.

Consumed by remorse, Mataora embarked on a perilous journey to seek her forgiveness. His path led him to the mystical realm of Rarohenga; granted passage, he undergoes the gruelling ordeal of tā moko, as he is forced to confront himself, his shadows exposed by the sacred fires of Rarohenga his darkness laid bare before the gods. His rite of passage completed, transformed and reborn, his spirit marked and his soul cleansed, he returned with Niwareka to the upper world, bearing the sacred gift of moko as rites of passage for his people and a vow to honour the mana of Rarohenga.

The union of Mataora and Niwareka bears fruit, their daughter Hineteārangī blossoms like the celestial puawānanga, a flower born of the stars Rēhua and Puanga, heralding a new generation of growth. Hineteārangī bares the tattoos of her dual heritage and adorns the crimson kōkōwai as tribute to the cosmic rending of Papa and Rangi. Continuing her mother's artform of weaving, the Whāriki Takapau takes its place among the people of the upper world. The ritual fire, Ahi Tā Moko, burns fervently, whilst the ipu ngarahu - the sacred ink bowl - welcomed the chisels of Mataora in this time before great change loomed over the land of Aotearoa.

Figure 54 *Ahi Tā Moko.*



Ahi Paki Māhunga: 1770 - 1850

Indeed, that great change stole onto your shores on strange sea faring vessels bearing the colours of the Crown of England, laden with the word of the ‘one true God’, proclamations of his great love and promises of partnership and prosperity cloaked in the pretence of compassion: “smoothing down the dying pillow of the Māori race” (Buck, 1924). However, true intentions soon surfaced through land theft, murder and oppression; all validated by doctrines of theology and law, thrusting my descendants into the crisis of colonisation. These false flag strategies of pirates, robbers and merchants of hidden Reich’s sowed chaos and suffering. The sacred fires of ritual moko were all but extinguished while a different fire began to blaze.



Ahi Paki Māhunga, the sacred practice of preserving the heads of fallen warriors, captivated the minds of men hungry for such ‘curiosities’; hundreds acquired by private collectors and the academies of Europe. The white man arrived armed with strange weapons capable of ending a man’s life from a distance. Desperate to defend themselves, the chiefs sought to gain the musket for their people; they laid down their feathers of mana and peace, initiating the morbid trade of tattooed heads for weapons of war. The ominous spectre of losing one’s head for the sake of a musket cast a shadow on the mind of the Māori warrior. The noble mark of male initiation would soon vanish from sight, as the people entered a dark night of the soul. The Whāriki Takapau cast aside... for a time...

Figure 55 *Ahi Paki Mahunga.*



Ahi Raupatu: 1850 – 1880

The Crown's relentless pursuit of imperial expansion and their insatiable lust for territorial domination ignited the Musket Wars and Land Wars in the Land of the Long White Cloud. This left a trail of destruction and desolation as the flames of Ahi Raupatu - confiscation - scorched the earth consuming lands, people and customs.

It was in these tumultuous times that the last of the male moko kanohi was adorned, a time where innocence meant naught, as my descendant Mekomoko was wrongfully hanged for the killing of the Reverend Carl Volkner, a suspected spy for the Crown of England. The death of another descendant of Mataatua, James Fulloon, at the hands of his clansmen for breaching tribal sanctions, further fuelled the Crown's retribution. These two killings provided the Crown with the pretext needed to confiscate prime Mataatua land. More than a century passed before his descendants brought his bones home to rest, symbolically removing the noose from his neck, Mekomoko finally sings his song of freedom.

Rangitetaea Te Maitaranui Koa, an aunty to James Te Maitaranui Fulloon, would adorn her visage with kōkōwai, here, a tribute to the innocent blood spilt in this time of great change.

Her partially tattooed lip reveals the interrupted custom of ritual initiation; her pounamu adornment holds the mana of the land, while her shark teeth pendants signify the ongoing battle of the Māori people, for it is better to die fighting like the shark than to surrender like the octopus!

The Whāriki Takapau will now be relinquished to the women who continue to carry the ancient mark.

Figure 56 *Ahi Raupatu.*



Ahi Tahutahu: 1880 – 1945

The wars of mankind reflect the wars of the gods, for what has been given to humans originated with us. But man's ambitions for power and knowledge is not all wasted on weapons of war. Ahi Tahutahu - the intermittent fires of occupation - captures the plight of moko as it faces the ebbs and flows of the modern world, where new technologies and manufactured materials offers opportunities of synthesis for crafts like tattooing.

Before Oppenheimer harnessed the fires of the atom, Thomas Edison inadvertently invented the modern tattoo machine, heralding an evolved creative process that took root in Europe and the Americas. Although this innovation would not reach the shores of Aotearoa until well after the World Wars, the day would come when the Māori people would embrace the new technology.

My mokopuna Tame Poata embraced new technologies, employing steel and needles, forged in the fires of industry, keeping the flame of moko alive and the Whāriki Takapau warm with the presence of women who carried the artform into modernity. Moerangi Ratahi was one such woman who took the moko kauae in her youth, tattooed with needles was this matriarch of the old world, the last living person to have personally known that great Māori patriot Te Kooti Rikirangi, his flag 'Te Wepu' revealed below her.

The craft of moko hangs on by a thread, while my mokopuna begin to wander the world uninitiated, lost in modernity often with severe consequences...

Figure 57 *Ahi Tahutahu.*



Ahi Tāmau: 1945 – 1970

Ahi Tāmau– a custom that ensured fire was preserved by covering the embers with ash and soil to be unearthed with the break of the new dawn. My mokopuna Te Ara-Paparahi, known affectionately as Pare Hona, is an elder acquaintance of Moerangi Ratahi and the great-grandmother of Turumakina, who also received her kauae from Tame Poata in her youth. She and all the kuia moko - the elderly woman of this era who bore the ancient mark of Rarohenga - were the last living connections to the ancient ritual practice of moko.

For a moment in time, the chisel is laid down, as the artform of moko slumbers. Her tobacco pipe represents a personal ritual, repeatedly reignited like Ahi Tāmau, whilst the ritual fires of rites of passage pass away with these matriarchs of yesteryear.

The Whāriki Takapau lays lonely, yearning for the warmth of the people.

Her husband Wiremu Tamakore Hona also bares the barren face of Māori men, uninitiated by my sacred fire Ahi Kōmau. Instead, he toils the swampy quagmire left to his people, poisoned by chemicals of the board mill, whilst the white man prospers on their stolen lands. Yet, he maintains his traditional knowledge of Maramataka, planting and harvesting by the cycles of the moon. He clings to that ancient basket of knowledge, Te Kauae Runga, where the secrets of the celestial realms guide those taught in its ways. The cycles of the moon and stars determining the best times for the rituals and activities of man.

Figure 58 *Ahi Tāmau.*



Hika Ahi: 1970 – 2010

Whilst the ancient rituals wane in the collective consciousness of the people, the modern world has posed significant challenges to my mokopuna. Identities are scrambled and their once-strong sense of belonging now wavers in the storms of globalisation and capitalism.

Many of my mokopuna struggle to maintain their dignity, descending into poverty and violence. Their subconscious need for ritual initiation manifests in a shadowy form as gangs arise among a divided people, fierce with anguish and rage, harmfully initiated into subcultures of ‘rebellion.’

Modern prisons are filled with my mokopuna, where their ingenuity echoes the brilliance of their ancestors. Crafting tattoo machines out of spare parts and batteries, they tattoo each other to reveal their allegiance to a patch, the colours of their movements and the memories of their once-thriving ancestors. The Whāriki Takapau has morphed into something new, warmed by the return of my mokopuna, yet mourning the loss of its original purpose, as opposing gangs, identified by red and blue, initiate new prospects into their ranks.

As the world arrived to your shores, ideologies and beliefs are adopted and adapted. The ‘Dread’ likewise incorporates moko into their identities, narrating their lives through a fusion of symbols, portraying the identities and religious beliefs of the Māori Rastafarian.

Modern tattoo machines begin to find their place among a soon to be thriving artform, as the sacred ritual fires are rekindled with Te Kaunoti and Te Mātai Tū, the traditional implements for generating fire.

Figure 59 *Hika Ahi.*



Ahi Mānuka: 2010 – 2023

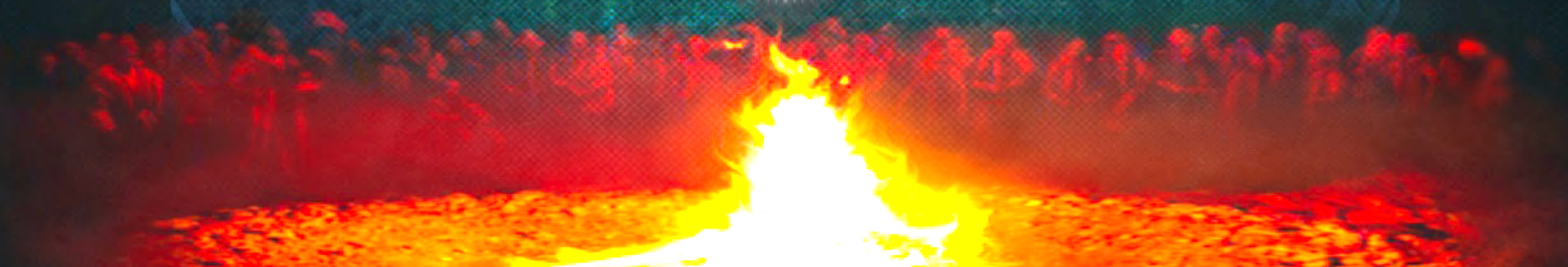
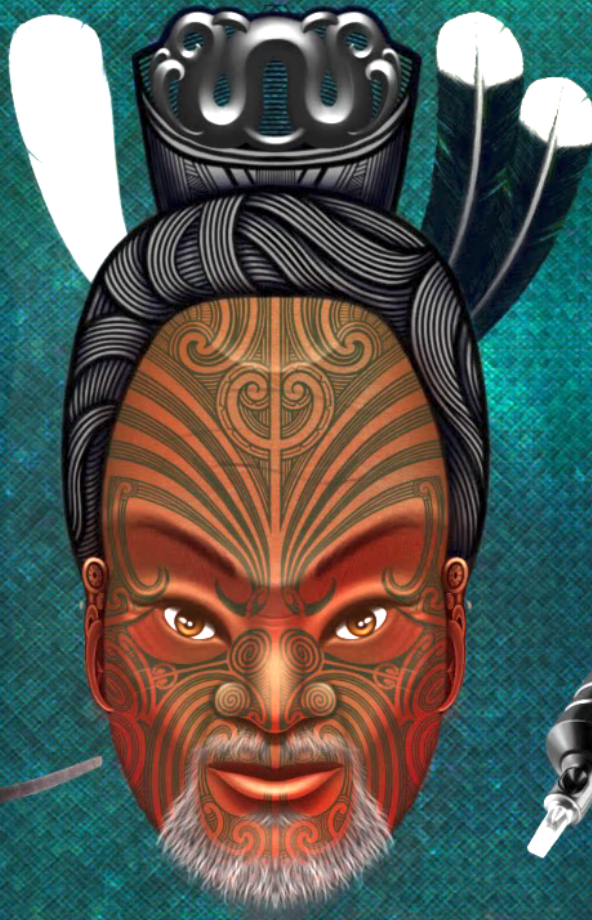
The years of renaissance heralded the return of tā moko as the iconic emblem of Māori identity, led by pioneers like Mark Kopua. Having gained knowledge from the sons of Tame Poata, he actively sought out young protégés to pass on this ancient wisdom, inspiring a new generation of tohunga moko and the reignition of Ahi Mānuka, the ceremonial fire of moko among the Māori people.

Mark embraced new technologies and championed the cause of moko in the modern world. Drawing from the legacy of Poata, he forged a strong Whāriki Takapau, passing down his knowledge to his many tauira, including my mokopuna Joni Brooking.

Joni nurtures Te Ahi Mānuka from Kauaetangohia, an ancestral house constructed by Tame Poata, where she cultivates moko kauae and tipu kūmara (sweet potato) as symbols of significance and identification for her people, in a land once dedicated to the atua Rongomaraeroa, a metropolis of sweet potato cultivation.

Ahi Mānuka blazes brightly now as the people gather in ceremonial reclamation of the ancient mark of Rarohenga. The feathers of mana and peace are restored and pekapeka - the bat - adorns the head of the tohunga in this time when rituals emerge from the caverns of time. Matariki rises above signalling a new dawn and the return of the rituals of Rūaimoko.

Figure 60 *Ahi Mānuka.*



Ahi Anamata: 2023 – 2123

Tomorrow is shrouded in uncertainty, for who can see the infinite possibilities unfolding before us? I, Rūaimoko, am grateful that moko now thrives, and the people flourish once again. As one fern frond dies, so another comes to take its place - Māui and Sage Huia hold the world in their hands. Their rites of passage reclaimed through the tireless efforts of a few tohunga moko, called to reignite the sacred fires of Rūaimoko!

Tomorrow's children navigate new realities, like Toroa -the Albatross - they traverse extensive celestial realms of human potential, whilst firmly rooted in their ancestral heritage. Their moko might embody the strength of the chiefly adze of Ngāti Awa. 'Ko Ngāti Awa te toki tē tangatanga i te rā, tē ngohengohe i te wai! Ngāti Awa is the adze, whose bindings cannot be loosened by the sun, nor softened by the rain'. The sacred mountain Pūtauaki erupts on the threshold between Papa and Rangi, as the dormant fires of ritual moko reawaken! Toi-kai-rākau stands sentinel, ever vigilant of the ebbs and flows of the modern world from his ancestral fortress Kapūterangi, that ancient village of Māui-Tikitiki-a-Taranga.

For seven generations, my people have endured profound turmoil. I weep for those who suffered the upheaval of invasion. I stand proud of who the people have become - initiated, united, resilient and purposeful! The lived experience of colonial invasion, suppression and cultural decimation has been an initiation into the space of empathy and wisdom. The Whāriki Takapau is restored to its purpose and Te Uhi a Toroa has found new life, adapted, evolved, true to their origins. Moko has returned to the light of day!

Tihei Mauriora! Tihei Mouri Moko!

Figure 61 *Ahi Anamata.*



MOKO - THE ANCIENT MARK

*Born of Rarohenga in the realms of the deep
through fires of the ages the sages do keep
the sacred lineage and priestly connections
to Rūaimoko, the fledgling god turned under,
deep in the womb of Mother Gaia,
given to him a sacred fire.*

*Eruptions volcanic through veins of the earth
our mother left beautifully scarred gives birth...
to her children...*

*of crimson earth, from Kurawaka are we,
reflecting the atua perfectly,
great Tāne our father progenitor true
of Hine-ahu-one, from Papatūānuku!*

*Deep are the furrows of kauri-stained brows,
ancient the blood-stained chisel that ploughs...
through flesh and bone...*

*Ancestral origins of chiefly intent
this privileged legacy of sacred descent
masterfully delineated in symmetrical prose
resting on layers of glory and woes
bridging the worlds of darkness and light
Mataora and Niwareka in their crucial plight
he of the light and she of the night
brought chisel and weaving to the realm of the light,
albeit the night is truly the light.*

*Such is the legacy, the ancient mark,
such is the journey of which we embark.*

TOHI WHAKANOA

*Waerea, waerea, waerea ko roto, waerea ko waho,
waerea ngā taimahatanga, waerea ngā tapu.*

*Huakina, huakina, huakina mai rā
ngā tatau o te whare o Huiterangiora.*

*Kia tū tangatanga ai a Tāne,
Tāne Uehā, Tāne Pepeke,
Tāne Pupuke-i-te-Rangi,
Tāne Pupuke-i-te-Wā.*

*Tēnei rā te rau o kawa,
ka tohia, ka tohia rā koe ki te tohi nuku,
ka tohia rā koe ki te tohi rangi,
ka tohia ai to matua tō tupuna ā Tāwhaki,
Tāwhaki nui a Hema, Tāwhaki nui a Hamanga,
Putu atu ki te whei ao, puta atu ki te ao marama!*

*Tiaho mai rā roto, tiaho mai rā waho,
tiaho mai ngā māramatanga,
kia ū kia mau, mau kita ē!*

*Manawa mai te putanga o tēnei ariki,
Manawa mai te putanga o wēnei tauira,
tū mai he kura tangata nō te awe māpara.
Ē te kuru matarerehu,
ē te pūkauwae o Hineteiwaiwa,
ē tū, ē puta ko te whai ao ko te ao marama,
uhi wero, tau mai te mourī,
haumi ē, hui ē, tāiki ē!*

Nā Raniera McGrath

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APPENDICES

Appendix One



22/11/2022

Turumakina Duley
89 Ningaloo Drive Pimpama
Queensland, AUSTRALIA

Tēnā koe Turumakina,

Tēnā koe i roto i ngā tini āhuatanga o te wā.

Student ID:

2045376

Doctoral Research Committee: Proposal DRC044.22 Outcome - Approved

The Doctoral Research Committee has considered your research proposal and provided their approval.

The committee congratulates you on your research thus far and wishes you all the best in your doctoral journey.

If you have any queries regarding the outcome of your research proposal, please contact us on our freephone number 0508926264 or via e-mail DRC@wananga.ac.nz

Nāku noa, nā

Ashlee Te Naiti
Doctoral Research Committee Secretary Phone: 0508 92 62 64

Appendix Two



01.12.22

Turumakina Duley 89 Ningaloo Drive Pimpama QLD 8888

Tēnā koe Turumakina,

Tēnā koe i roto i ngā tini āhuatanga o te wā.

Ethics Research Committee Application EC2022.19 Outcome: Approved

The Ethics Research Committee has today considered your application. The committee has approved your ethics application and congratulates you on your study to date.

Please ensure that you keep a copy of this letter on file and include the Ethics committee document reference number: EC2022.19 on any correspondence relating to your research. This includes documents for your participants or other parties. Please also enclose this letter of approval in the back of your completed thesis as an appendix.

We wish you all the best in your research and look forward to the outcome and final result of your submitted thesis.

If you have any queries regarding the outcome of your ethics application, please contact us on our freephone number 0508926264 or via e-mail ethics@wananga.ac.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

Dr Shonelle Wana, BMM, MIS, Dr.IDA

Ethics Research Committee Secretary

Phone: 0508 92 62 64

Appendix Three

WAKA WHAKAARO – GLOSSARY

These definitions and key concepts provide a foundation for understanding the focus and scope of this thesis.

2. **Ahi:** Fire.
3. **Ahi Anamata:** The ritual fire of foresight.
4. **Ahi Kōmau:** The sacred volcanic fire of Ruaimoko, the god of volcanoes and tattooing.
5. **Ahi Mānuka:** The ceremonial fire of tattooing.
6. **Ahi Raupatu:** Fires of the scorched earth. Confiscated lands.
7. **Ahi Tahutahu:** The intermittent fires of occupation.
8. **Ahi Tāmau:** The practice of sustaining fire across time.
9. **Ahi Tā Moko:** The ritual rite of tattooing.
10. **Hinenuitepō:** The goddess of death.
11. **Hineteiwaiwa:** The goddess of childbirth, weaving and women's cycles.
12. **Io Matua:** Supreme being, the source of all things.
13. **Kaitā:** Tattooist.
14. **Kaiwhiwhi:** Tattoo recipient.
15. **Kaupapa:** Initiative, purpose, reason
16. **Kaupapa Māori:** A Māori philosophy and approach that centres Māori perspectives, values, knowledge and aspirations within academic research. It emphasises self-determination, cultural revitalisation and collective well-being.
17. **Kauwae Runga:** The upper jaw, the celestial basket of knowledge.
18. **Kauwae Raro:** The lower jaw, the terrestrial basket of knowledge.
19. **Mana:** Authority, prestige, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma.
20. **Mana Atua:** Godly authority.
21. **Mana Motuhake:** Self-determination, autonomy, self-governing, independence.
separate identity, authority, mana through self-determination and control over one's own destiny, independent authority.
22. **Mana Tangata:** Power and status accrued through one's leadership talents, human rights, mana of people.

23. **Mana Whenua:** Mana of the land, territorial rights, authority over land or territory, jurisdiction,
24. **Mātauranga Māori:** Māori knowledge, wisdom and understanding, encompassing both traditional and contemporary knowledge systems unique to Māori culture and worldview.
25. **Mataatua:** The double hulled ocean fairing canoe that conveyed our ancestors to the shores of Kakahoroa, modern day Whakatāne, the name now represents the region of Mataatua peopled by the descendants of our ancestral canoe.
26. **Mauri:** Life principle, life force, vital essence, the essential quality and vitality of a being.
27. **Mauriora:** Life force of humans.
28. **Mouri:** Life force of humans.
29. **Paepaeroa:** Decorated edge of the ritual mat where supporters sit. Supporters.
30. **Ngāti Awa:** The people of the Mataatua region who descend from Awanuiārangi II, the great grandson of Toroa, who was the chief of the Mataatua canoe.
31. **Wairua:** Spirit, sprits, spiritual.
32. **Whāriki Takapau:** A ritual mat finely woven for the purpose of rituals, in this case tā moko.
33. **Whakawhāriki:** A term that denotes a cohort of people undertaking their moko kanohi at the same occasion, usually a mokopapa.
34. **Wānanga:** Knowledge, to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider, conference, seminar, tribal knowledge, lore, learning important traditional cultural, religious, historical, genealogical and philosophical knowledge.
35. **Whakapapa:** The Māori concept of genealogy and interconnectedness, tracing relationships and connections between people, places and environment. It acknowledges the importance of ancestral knowledge and identity.
36. **Pūrākau:** The art of conveying narratives or stories through various forms, such as oral traditions, written texts, visual arts, performances or digital media. Storytelling serves as a means of communication, cultural preservation, transmission of knowledge, morals, ethics and identity expression.
37. **Rūaimoko:** Youngest of the pantheon of gods, god of earthquakes, volcanoes and tattooing.
38. **Tapu and Noa:** Tapu and noa are Māori concepts that relate to states of religious restriction and non-restriction, the ‘sacred’ and the ‘profane’. Tapu refers to the

‘sacred’, ‘restricted’, or ‘prohibited’ aspects of rituals, while *noa* refers to the ‘ordinary’, ‘everyday’ and ‘free’ aspects. These concepts play a significant role in Māori cultural practices, rituals and relationships, influencing behaviour, spaces and objects.

39. **Te Tiriti o Waitangi:** The Treaty of Waitangi will always be quoted as ‘Te Tiriti o Waitangi’ in this thesis, because it is the Māori version of this constitution that has *mana* and was signed by over 500 chiefs from around Aotearoa.
40. **Tohunga:** Expert in their field, proficient, adept, skilled person, chosen expert, priest, healer, a person chosen by the agent of an *atua*.
41. **TWWOA:** Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi.
42. **Creative Thesis:** Scholarly works that incorporate artistic or creative components as integral parts of the research process and outcomes. Creative theses allow for innovative approaches, such as artistic expressions, performances, or multimedia installations, to explore research questions and contribute to the academic field.
43. **Identity:** The complex and multifaceted sense of self, shaped by personal experiences, cultural affiliations, social interactions and historical contexts. Identity can encompass various dimensions, including cultural, spiritual, ethnic, national, gender and individual aspects.
44. **Initiation:** The act or process of initiating someone, the process or condition of being initiated through ritual ceremony.
45. **Liminal:** *Liminality* refers to the transitional phase or state of ambiguity, often marked by rituals or rites of passage, where individuals or groups undergo profound transformation or change (Van Gennep, 2019).
46. **Liminoid:** *Liminoid* refers to experiences and rituals that resemble *liminality* but occur outside of traditional cultural structures and lack the transformative power of true *liminal* rites, often serving as responses to the crises that life may throw at us (Turner, 1982).
47. **Psychological Archetypes:** Psychological archetypes are universal, symbolic patterns or images that are deeply rooted in the collective unconscious, as proposed by Carl Jung's analytical psychology. Archetypes represent fundamental human experiences, emotions and themes that transcend cultural boundaries and appear in myths, stories and dreams. They can provide insights into the human psyche and shape narratives and character development in storytelling.