

Tangatawairua and the Sunriseman

It came to pass one night that a messenger called, and asked if Tangatawairua would receive precious stones (Kohatu Tapu) from the Sunriseman who had journeyed over the Land of Dreamtime.

Tangatawairua went to prepare himself for the special sunrise ritual. He prepared his family for the roles that they were to play and drifted into sleep in order to open the corridors of his mind to receive his Kawa or protocol.

In the darkness of early dawn Tangatawairua rose with his family and journeyed to Puke-O-Te Rangimarie to await the Sunriseman. Tangatawairua prepared the ground beneath his feet and the air that surrounded the Marae. The consecrated ground was ready for the visitors. The women of the Whanau chanted the Karanga — the sacred call bidding the visitors to come upon the Marae under the mantle of peace. Tangatawairua stepped forth — his whaikorero vibrated the still morning air:

*Behold a breath of life
Behold a glimmer of light, the dawn of light,
behold light of day
From the heavens above by the way of the God creation*

*Down to the womb of mankind,
motherearth*

Behold I am alive

*To the great house of peace before me,
I give you my greeting*

*To the sacred ground beneath our feet
I greet thee*

*To the spirits of our ancestors go forth
away, way, away*

*Spirits whose place is not here, journey
away,*

*Haere atu ki hawai iki, Hawai iki roa
Hawai iki Pamamao*

*Let us commit the departed to the
departed*

*Salutations, salutations, salutations
To the visitors who have journeyed from
over the oceans*

*Behold a glimmer of light, the dawn of
light, behold light of day*

*From the heavens above by the way of
the God creation*

*To the visitors who have journeyed from
over the oceans*

*To the great visitor who journeyed from
the land of Dreamtime*

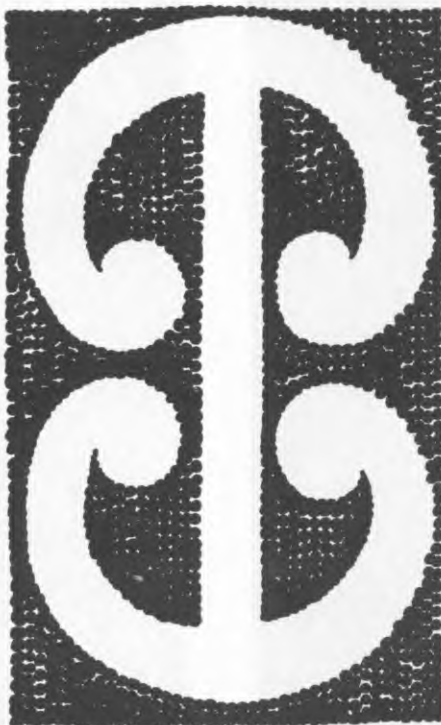
*I bid you welcome in peace, I bid you
welcome in love*

Let us gather in love and peace

*Before you, I stand, the messenger of
the people*

Greetings all, greetings one and all.

As Tangatawairua finished his whaikorero, a Rangatira from his family chanted a Haka to welcome the visitors. The sounds of TAPARAHİ rent the air. Then came the heartfelt sounds of the Waiata TENA KOUTOU. So con-



cluded the welcome by the Whanau O Te Wairua.

The Sunriseman stepped forth, gave his message and sang a waiata in the language of Dreamtime land. He presented his gifts to Tangatawairua and explained that the ceremonial stones had been the possession of his people for over 2,000 years. Upon this revelation, Tangatawairua saw the significance — these stones were older than the time when his own ancestors first stepped onto this very land. The oldest people living in the world had brought a very tapu gift to place in the hands of the youngest people living.

"What wisdom lies here?" reflected Tangatawairua.

Songs were sung and speeches exchanged. The Sunriseman told of the power the sun gives his people; told of the visions and warmth that radiate; told of the Dreamtime — then handed the Kohatu to Tangatawairua.

Tangatawairua then set the stones down by two trees. The tall older tree had come from the land of Dreamtime, the small tree from this very land. Those trees told the wisdom to all who surveyed. Tangatawairua departed promising to return to collect kohatu before sunset.

All through the day the stones were bathed in a new light in a new and strange land. When Tangatawairua returned, he found the Sunriseman pa-

tiently waiting. He was then told of the significance of the stones. Some were used for the ceremonial lacerations of initiation, some were used for circumcision and some were mother stones. All were very tapu, very sacred and of great significance.

Tangatawairua felt the immense importance of the gift. He felt that these stones were reaching through a median of time to give a message to the people of the world about the troubled times to come. The sunset had just begun when Tangatawairua rose, bid his tuakana farewell saying that he must hasten to do what he had to do, before the light fled from the sky.

Tangatawairua took the stones to a secret place by the lake, so that their story could be told to the new stones of his land. In the early light before dawn he went alone to perform his ritual. As he neared the waiting place, he called to the spirits to give guidance. He called to the mountain yonder; he spoke to the clear water of the mother lake. He was told to take the kohatu to a sacred place for safe keeping. They were to remain at this sacred site, called Papakohatu, until all the visitors had left this new and strange land.

As Tangatawairua recited his incantations the first morning rays of the sun kissed the sacred spot Wairukahanga. As he left with kohatutapu the spirits wailed their grief for the agonies of the people of the land of Dreamtime. Tangatawairua journeyed yonder until he came to a special sacred place that will play a great role for the people of this land. A spiritual Rangatira greeted Tangatawairua and led him to the site to rest the Kohatu Tapu before they began their task.

Tangatawairua walked quickly through the green bush. The birds helping to guide him to his destined place. He came to the high cliffs and gazed over the great crystal lake. He turned east and continued on his way. Suddenly before his eyes stood the rocks of the sacred place Papakohatu. He greeted the rocks and asked, "Where is the guardian — the keeper for these precious relics?" He was shown. As he thrust his hand into the special rock it split open.

Below in the darkness lay a cavity. Tangatawairua lay the relics from Dreamtime into a bed of soft leaves and moss. He closed up the opening placed his tapu head against the guardian rock and recited a karakia. Bidding farewell to Papakohatu he departed with a joy-filled heart, homeward to his whanau.

As he slept that night, the corridors of his mind received the purpose and tasks. Tangatawairua and the Kohatu Tapu were locked into the destiny of mankind.