

Auē`anga Ngākau - Silent Tears

**The Impact of Colonisation on Traditional Adoption Lore in
the Cook Islands: Examining the Status of *Tamariki `Āngai*
and their Entitlements.**

Diane Charlie-Puna

A thesis submitted to
Auckland University of Technology
In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

2018

Te Ipukarea, The National Māori Language Institute
Faculty of Culture and Society

Table of contents

Table of contents	ii
Attestation of authorship	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Dedication	x
Abstract	xi
Preface	xii
Orthographic Conventions	xii
Tamariki rētitā vs Tamariki `āngai	xii
About the Researcher	xiii
Personal motivation for this thesis	xiv
Western and Indigenous	xv
Chapter Titles	xv
Chapter 1: Setting the Scene	xvi
Chapter 2: Literature Review	xvi
Chapter 3: Evolution of Adoption Practices	xvi
Chapter 4: Emotional Journey	xvii
Chapter 5: Law verses Lore	xvii
Chapter 6: New Beginnings and Recommendations	xviii
1. CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE SCENE - <i>TE KAPUA`ANGA</i>	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Methodology	2
1.2(a) Qualitative Descriptive Methodology	2
1.2(b) Social Identity Theory	3
1.2(c) Social Identification	5
1.2(d) Social comparison	5
1.2(e) Psychoanalytic Theory	6
1.2(f) Ethological Theory	6
1.2(g) Social Role Theory	6
1.3 Method and Procedures for Undertaking Research	7
1.3(a) Insider-Research Approach	7
1.3(b) Participants	8
1.3(c) Traditional Leaders	8

1.4 Tamariki `Āngai/Tamariki Rētita Participants	10
1.4(a) Recruitment of participants	12
1.4(b) Interview Process	13
1.4(c) Questions and Answers	13
1.5 Data Analysis	14
1.5(a) Author's bias	14
1.5(b) Ethical Considerations	14
1.6 Indigenous Methodology	14
1.7 Metaphoric Ideology	16
Kete Ora`anga Model	17
Stage 1: Selection and Preparation	18
Stage 2: Weaving of the basket	20
Stage 3: Joining and Shaping of the basket	22
Stage 4: Closing of the bottom of the basket	23
The Final Product	25
1.8 Conclusion	25
2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW - `AKATAKA`ANGA PATOA	27
2.1 Introduction	27
2.2 Introduction of Colonial Legislations in the Cook Islands	28
2.3 Cook Islands Act 1915	30
2.4 Evolution of Adoption Practice in New Zealand	33
2.5 Evolution of Adoption Practice in Hawai'i	39
2.6 Conclusion	41
3. CHAPTER THREE: EVOLUTION OF ADOPTION PRATICES	43
<i>TE TAUI`ANGA O TE AU PEU TAMARAiki `ĀNGAI</i>	43
3.1 Introduction	43
3.2 Definition of Traditional Adoption Practice	44
3.3 The Evolution of Tamariki `Āngai	45
3.4 Influence of Colonisation	48
3.5 Rights and Entitlements of Tamariki `Āngai	50
3.6 Adoption Records of the Cook Islands	53
3.7 Conclusion	54
4. CHAPTER FOUR: EMOTIONAL JOURNEY - <i>KARERE PUKU`ATU</i>	56
4.1 Introduction	56
4.2 How They Became Tamariki `Āngai or Tamariki Rētita	58

4.3 Traditional Advisor's View on Tamariki `Angai Practice	63
Tupuariki Puna	64
Te`ānua Kāmana	65
4.4 Is Legalising Traditional Adoption Important?	67
4.5 Impact of Discovery on the Tamariki `Āngai	70
4.6 Emotional Impact on the Tamariki `āngai	74
4.7 Feeling Abandoned and Unwanted	78
4.8 Conclusion	80
5. CHAPTER FIVE: LAW VERSES LORE - <i>TE MANA TURE KI RUNGA`O I TE PEU TUPUNA</i>	
5.1 Introduction	82
5.2 Traditional Lore Maintained – Case Study of Mangaia & Pukapuka	83
5.2(a) Mangaia Adoption Lore	84
5.2(b) Pukapuka Adoption Lore	86
5.3 Land Rights and Distribution	88
5.4 Traditional Titles	92
5.6 Conclusions	94
6. CHAPTER 6: NEW BEGINNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - <i>PŌROKIROKI`ANGA</i>	96
6.1 Introduction	96
6.2 Research Findings	96
6.3 Linking the findings to the Indigenous Models	101
6.4 The Impact of Colonisation	103
6.5 Conclusion and Recommendations	105
6.6 Areas for further research	107
6.7 Final remarks	107
Bibliography	109
Māori Glossary	115

Figures and Tables

- Image 1: Pā Maunga motif drawn by Clive Nicholas 10 May 2016 for the Researcher.
- Image 2: Raranga motif - hand drawn by Clive Nicholas 10 May 2016.
- Image 3: Manutai motif - hand drawn by Clive Nicholas 10 May 2016.
- Image 4(a): Tikitikitangata motif - hand drawn by Clive Nicholas 10 May 2016.
- Image 4(b): Aitutaki 'atamira or carved seat with the tikitiki tangata motif carved around the seat. [Photo credit: Auckland War Memorial Museum. AM12995. Crocombe and Dixon (2015), Cook Islands Art and Architecture, p.219]
- Image 5: Kōrare motif - hand drawn by Clive Nicholas 10 May 2016.
- Image 6: Te Rā motif - hand drawn by Clive Nicholas 10 May 2016.
- Image 7: Photo of Tupuariki Puna and wife Purotu Puna, 2012.
- Image 8: Papa Dan Kamana [Photo credit: Luciana Matenga, granddaughter]
- Image 9(a): Rangihau Conceptual Model original canvas handwritten by the late John Rangihau. [Photo credit: Charlie-Puna, 2016, Tokomaru Bay Writing Retreat Feb 2016) – canvas was displayed by Kararaina Rangihau, daughter of the late John Rangihau and permission given to use image]
- Image 9(b): Rangihau Conceptual Model cited by Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2010, p. 17.
- Image 10(a) Reaction of the Mimosa Plant – Mimosa plant before being touched.
- Image 10(b) Reaction of the Mimosa Plant – Mimosa plant being touched
- Image 10(c) Reaction of the Mimosa Plant – Mimosa plant after being touched.
- Image 11: *Kete* Photo of a completed basket by Charlie-Puna 2016.
- Image 12 (a) Selection and preparation stage - *Nīkau* not suitable
- Image 12(b) Selection and preparation stage - *Nīkau* perfect and suitable
- Image 12(c) Selection and preparation stage - Steaming the *nīkau* over open fire
- Image 13(a) Preparation stage – Stripping *nikau* off the centre stem
- Image 13(b) Preparation stage – Twisting the *nīkau* – 'iri *taviri* stage
- Image 14(a) Weaving stage – *Ara* 'iri (twill weaving) top of the *kete*
- Image 14(b) Weaving stage – Continue twill weaving
- Image 15(a) Weaving stage – Twill weaving reached the bottom of the *kete*
- Image 15(b) Weaving stage - *raranga patapata* – checked weaving pattern

- Image 16(a) Joining and shaping of basket – Joining the ends of the *kete*
- Image 16(b) Joining and shaping of basket - Weaving the joint together
- Image 16(c) Joining and shaping of basket – Squeezing to shape the *kete* (round)
- Image 17(a) Closing of the bottom of the basket – First plait of the *kete*
- Image 17(b) Closing of the bottom of the basket – Second plait of the *kete*
- Image 17(c) Closing of the bottom of the basket – Third plait of the *kete*
- Image 18 Completed *kete tautai* – different photo of the complete basket, modelled by Miss Charlee Puna youngest daughter of the researcher.
- Image 19 Photo of Queen Makea Takau Ariki (1839-1911) [Holmes & Crocombe (2014). p.167]
- Image 20: Queen Makea Takau Ariki, Governor General Lord Ranfurly with British Resident Walter Gudgeon. (1839-1911). [Photo Credits: New Zealand. Minister of Internal Affairs: Photograph of Cook Islands Annexation Ceremony. Ref: PAColl-4235. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22321304>]
- Image 21: Pā Ariki, Tinomana Ariki, Ariki Makea Takau, Daniella Makea (seated) and unidentified Cook Islander (standing). Photo credits: from the album: Cook Islands, circa 1896, Rarotonga, Photographer: unknown. Te Papa (0.025525)
- Image 22: Painted image of the CICC Avarua church by John Walters open source permitted for personal use from – <http://www.ck/religion.htm>
- Image 23: Acceptable Attire Post Missionary Era – Photo of Ariki Makea Takau and husband, with Sir Richard Seddon and Mrs Seddon, at the time of annexation of the Cook Islands in 1900. [Photo credits: from the album: Cook Islands, 1900, by Frederick William Sears. Te Papa (0.025528)]

Attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shafiqul Kabir', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my research participants who openly and bravely shared their stories of what it is like to be a *tamariki`āngai* (feeding child) or a *tamariki rētitā* (legally adopted child). Your experiences are unique, and your insights, experiences and journey made this research possible. I will be forever grateful for your generosity of time and your courage to openly share your stories and most importantly, the ability to cope with the mixed feelings and emotions as a result of reliving those memories through your stories and sharing. This journey would not have been possible without your support and willingness to voluntarily participate and share your stories. I am honoured and will cherish them in my heart forever.

Many thanks to my supervisor, Professor Tania Ka'ai for your professionalism, academic guidance and patience during this journey, for guiding my writing and providing robust editing of my drafts. I appreciate your compassion, wisdom and support, it is a bonus that you are a Cook Islander and you understand the Cook Islands world view. To my co-supervisor Dr Rachael Ka'ai-Mahuta, thank you for your advice and contemporary study approach throughout this journey. To my awesome support person and guide, Tania Smith, this journey would not have been easy and as smooth sailing without your effective logistical and administration support. Thank you so much for everything.

Many thanks to Auckland University of Technology for the Peter Harwood Scholarship, to the staff of Te Ipukarea, and to Te Ara Poutama for the facilities and ongoing support for us Cook Island postgraduate students. Thank you also to the Māori and Pacific Postgraduate Students Wānanga Series for providing the Writing Retreats both here in the Cook Islands at USP so we Cook Island postgraduate students can participate here and in New Zealand. It is so important to provide us with an academic space to be able to study and write our theses. May this support continue for future students to access and benefit from. Thank you for everything.

To my family, thank you so much for your ongoing support during this journey. In so many ways you have made life easier for me to focus on my studies, when I neglected my motherly duties you were there to fill the gaps. I would not have made it without your love and support. To my father-in-law Tupuariki Puna and my traditional leader and advisor, thank you for sharing your wealth of knowledge about our Cook Islands customs, our culture, our language, our heritage and our identity. I am forever grateful. Meitaki atupaka for everything.

To my dearest loving husband, my best friend, my soul mate Nga Puna, thank you so much for sharing this journey with me, your understanding, ongoing support, patience and love have made this possible. Thank you for always believing in me and for the shoulder to cry on, the extra pair of eyes and ears to listen to my thoughts and struggles. I really appreciate everything you do for me, thank you for the exchange of wisdom and knowledge throughout this journey, I love you so much.

Lastly, to my five beautiful daughters, Nad tazkia, Kiana, Purotu, Tipoki-Tei and Charlee Puna, thank you for always being there for me no matter what, I love you with all my heart. Thank you for your patience, your ongoing support, for your love and for being my strength to see this journey to the end. There have been many times when I was under a lot of pressure and giving up was the only option, but each time I looked into your eyes, it gave me the courage and strength to pursue this journey to the very end. You all played a big part to provide me with the space and time so I could focus on writing my thesis chapters until the very end. During my struggles, you all picked me up and gave me the extra encouragement to keep going.

This is my journey, this is your journey and this is our journey and I hope to do you all proud. I love you all with all my heart! Meitaki atupaka.

Dedication

*E ngara ia Rīpou te va`anga 'akari
Do not forget the hands that fed you*

With the deepest love in my heart, I dedicate my thesis to my parents, Fred and Maki Charlie of Araura Enea. You have given me endless support and unconditional love and nurtured me throughout my life. I am honoured to be your daughter and privileged to learn life values from your endless guidance throughout my life. Thank you for everything and for always being there for me. I love you both with all my heart.

I also dedicate my thesis to all the *tamariki`āngai* of the Cook Islands.

Abstract

The traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* was widely practiced in the Cook Islands by our ancestors. *Tamariki`āngai* is the highest respected gift that anyone could ever give to a close relative. Commonly a grandchild is gifted to his or her grandparents by their biological parents as their way of honouring their parents. It is a traditional custom which was exercised well before the colonisation of the Cook Islands. This study focuses on the colonisation of the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* and examines the status of Cook Islands *tamariki`āngai* on the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki. Of particular interest are the contributing factors and reasons for a child to go through the *tamariki`āngai* practice and how the *papa`ā* (non-Māori) adoption law, as a result of colonisation, has influenced the status and entitlements of *tamariki`āngai*. This study also looks at the traditional allocation of inheritance, land and traditional title entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai*. In the pre-colonial era, having a large family in a tribal setting was paramount for survival purposes, for food gathering, hunting, providing security to the tribe, and multiplying the population of the tribe through child birth. Accordingly, the traditional practice of *tamariki`āngai* was a means of ensuring heirship within the tribe and embracing inter-tribal sharing of children to mark allegiances with each other.

The *tamariki`āngai* practice endured even after the introduction of non-Māori legislation to formalise the arrangement through the Land Court as stipulated by the Cook Islands Act 1915. The influence of non-Māori customs may have contributed to the modern perception and interpretation of the adoption practice. Subsequently, family disputes over birth rights, land rights and other entitlements is a result of the overlap of the two adoption frameworks.

The field work data was gathered from in-depth interviews and represents the views of the participants and traditional advisors. ‘Silent tears’ depicts the sensitiveness of the adoption practices especially when the adoption of non-blood related children were allowed through legislation and is often a topic that most families avoid open conversation about. The *tamariki`āngai* practice is traditionally an open arrangement, yet some choose to keep it a secret which often haunts them later in life once the child discovers the truth. This study explores the perceptions, views and experiences of several *tamariki`āngai*, it provides insights into the adoption experience, and identifies those characteristics which support and sustain *tamariki`āngai*. This approach contrasts with the *papa`ā* literature on adoptions because the *tamariki`āngai* experience is embedded in Cook Island Māori cultural beliefs and practices.

Preface

Orthographic Conventions

Following international academic practices, any words in Cook Island Māori language which are not proper nouns appear in italics followed by a translation of the word in brackets. A full list of Cook Islands Māori terms can be found in the Māori Glossary at the end of the thesis for further reference. The use of a long vowel has been denoted with a macron and the sudden stop sound made by rapidly closing the vocal cords has been denoted with a glottal stop with the exception of direct quotes. All direct quotes have been incorporated into the text in quotation marks whereas long quotes of 30 or more words have been typed in 11 point font, single spaced and indented to stand out from the text. In this case, quotation marks have not been used.

Tamariki rētita vs Tamariki `āngai

The term *tamariki rētita* (legally adopted child/children) refers to a child that has been legally adopted or registered through the Land Court system by the adopting parents. This practice is referred to in this research as the colonised adoption practice. The term *tamariki `āngai* (traditionally adopted child/children) refers to a child being brought up by other people that are not their biological parents. This practice is referred to in this research as a traditional adoption practice. *Tamariki `āngai* in the Aitutaki language refers to both feeding and adopted children, which is also the commonly used term in the Cook Islands today. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the two terms when referred to throughout this research. *Tamariki `āngai* in relation to the traditional adoption practice will be referenced significantly throughout this research. Furthermore, according to Pāpā Puna, in the Cook Islands Māori language the term *tamariki `āngai* refers to either a child or children. Most commonly, *tamaiti `āngai* (traditionally adopted boy) is called a *tamariki `āngai* rather than a *tamaiti `āngai*, also a *tamaiti rētita* (legally adopted boy) is called a *tamariki rētita* rather than a *tamaiti rētita*. Consequently, both *tamariki `āngai* and *tamariki rētita* will be used throughout this thesis to represent singular context for a boy or girl in a traditionally adopted or legally adopted arrangement.

Although *tamariki `āngai* is widely used in the Cook Islands, some islands in the Cook Islands have equivalent words to describe an adopted child such as *tamariki no'o puku'atu* in the Manihiki language. The literal translation for this term describes a child who sits on one's heart. Therefore, *tamariki no'o puku'atu* encapsulates the binding commitments and unconditional

love between the child and the *ngā metua`āngai* (feeding parents or traditionally adoptive parents). *Tamariki`ākē* in the Atiu language describes a child that is claimed or taken at birth while the mother is still recovering from giving birth, *`ākē* is the mother feeling tired, fatigued and restless after giving birth. *Tama`ū`ā* is commonly used in the Rarotonga language which describes a child who sits on one's thighs, *`ū`ā* (thigh) also refers to a non-blood related child being adopted into the family. In the Pukapuka language there are two types of traditional adoption practices. One called the *tamariki kokoti*, means to cut the child from all ties with the birth parents and *tamariki wāngai*, and is similar to the *tamariki`āngai* practice. *Tamariki`āngai* and *tamariki rētitā* will be utilised in this research.

Whether the participant was legally adopted through the Land Court system or not, is not important in this research. The sample participant of this research is balanced between *tamariki`āngai* and *tamariki rētitā*. Significantly, this study focuses on the influence of the introduction of the Land Court System and the Cook Islands Act 1915 into the Cook Islands and having a sample size that represents both practices is an advantage to this study.

In the Cook Islands context *ngā metua`āngai* is often translated as feeding parents which apart from being a literal translation is seen as an endearing and respectful term applied to the birth parents of the child. Instead of using traditionally adoptive parents, feeding parents will be used throughout this thesis. *Ngā metua rētitā* (legally adoptive parents) will be referred to throughout this thesis.

About the Researcher

The researcher is a New Zealand born Cook Islander. In October 1977, at the age of four months, my birth mother and I travelled to the island of Aitutaki. Since the age of four months I was raised on the island of Aitutaki by my extended family. I was looked after by my grandmother and other members of the family, including aunties, uncles and cousins. However, my feeding parents who were staying with the extended family at the time, and had no children of their own, claimed me (the researcher) as their own shortly after my arrival in Aitutaki amongst the extended family circle. I was not legally adopted through the Land Court system, but I am proud to be a *tamariki`āngai* and understand what it feels like to be in this situation. I see myself as a “gift of love” gifted from one brother to another and from a son to his mother (researcher's paternal grandmother). My feeding parents could not have any children of their own and therefore I was gifted to them to be raised as their own daughter.

As a *tamariki`āngai* I would say that my experience was all positive and has contributed to the way I am today, to the person I have become. I am an independent and strong minded individual who always stands up for what I believe in. I love my feeding parents and I am grateful for what they have done for me, for their ongoing support and for their unconditional love. I would not be where I am today without them. However, there is always a burning desire within me yearning for answers to the “what if” questions and the “why me” questions. Discovering the truth of being a *tamariki`āngai* never really affected me because the arrangement was made known to me at a very young age.

Personal motivation for this thesis

My journey of undertaking this research topic of *tamariki`āngai* has been aided by a yearning desire and curiosity to understand why *tamariki`āngai* was widely practiced within my own family and the wider Cook Islands community. This is something that I have been passionate about for my own personal interest and as a way of bringing closure to the many unanswered questions I have had about the *tamariki`āngai* custom. Subsequently, I was interested to know how others, such as my peers, feel about this practice and whether going through the legal adoption practice would have made any difference to the perception of *tamariki`āngai*.

Furthermore, the land and traditional title disputes within the Cook Islands community prompted me to learn about the root of these disputes and why they are issues that are now resolved within a court setting. This journey for me is an opportunity to contextualise the *tamariki`āngai* process using the in-depth knowledge and understanding of two traditional advisors and the experiences of 10 Cook Islanders who have gone through either one of the adoption practices. The composition of our Cook Islands families living in an extended family arrangement is a major contributing factor influencing the way our children are raised and by whom. It is a matter of survival and helping one another to get by each day, a support network that is traditionally accepted to be the norm in an Indigenous Cook Islands community. Looking after each other’s children in a family context is used to strengthen ties and relationships between families and to pass down knowledge from the grandparents to the grandchildren. However, over the years as the family composition has become smaller, the nuclear or immediate family has become the preferred living arrangement. Family planning has been promoted and having children is now planned and controlled, therefore, couples are in control of the number of children they could have and single, young women are able to have protection against unwanted or unplanned pregnancies. Migration has also increased with more children

moving away from their parents and living their own lives. Yet the *tamariki`āngai* practice is still common in contemporary Cook Islands society.

Western and Indigenous

The word Indigenous has been spelt with a capital ‘I’, except where it is part of a direct quote. This convention is used by many Indigenous authors, “as it corresponds with the term ‘Western’ (Ka‘ai-Mahuta, 2010, p.5).

Chapter Titles

The chapter titles were determined at the early stages of writing this thesis. They are closely aligned with the data collated through the one-on-one interviews with the participants. In the Cook Islands, traditional carving and body art designs through body tattooing utilise many unique motifs, symbols or designs. The history of the Cook Islands is documented through these traditional motifs, which portray our identity, our heritage and our Māori world view. For this study, six unique motifs were selected to represent each of the six chapters of the thesis. The motifs were selected and placed strategically under each chapter title and the interpretation and meaning are outlined before the commencement of each chapter. These motifs are commonly used on wood or shell carvings and also in body tattooing. The six motifs appear under each chapter in this order and are called; *pā maunga* (mountains), *raranga* (weaving), *manutai* (seabird), *tikitiki tangata* (people), *kōrare* (spearhead) and *te rā* (the sun). Each chapter has a title and the motifs are the cultural symbol that best represent the findings and stories of each chapter.

Chapter titles have been translated into Cook Islands Māori. Explanations of the significance of these motifs were sourced from various works and conversations with Cook Islands artists. Gudgeon, in 1905, was the first to record the motifs of the Cook Islands in his journal titled ‘The Origin of the Tā-tatau’. Later, in 1927, 1939 and 1944, Te Rangi Hiroa also known as Sir Peter Buck recorded more discovered motifs of the Cook Islands in his book called the ‘Arts and Crafts of the Cook Islands’. Subsequently, in 2003, Cook Islands academics, the late Ron Crocombe and his wife Marjorie Tua`inekore Crocombe, worked with Cook Islands artists to collate and publish a book called ‘Ākono`anga Māori: Cook Island’s Culture’. In 2011, Therese Mango and John Utanga published the ‘Patterns of the Past: Tattoo Revival in the Cook Islands’, this book focused on motifs used in the art of tattooing and explained the traditional ritual or practice associated with tattooing and the traditional tools used. Most recently in 2015, Marjorie Tua`inekore Crocombe together with Rod Dixon and Linda Crowl,

and working with various Cook Islands artists published a book called ‘Cook Islands Art and Architecture’. These publications describe the originality and meaning of each of the motifs selected for the chapter titles. They provide published references and documentation of what the motifs represent in the Cook Islands culture. In addition, a series of conversations with a young, famous tattooist, Clive Nicholas, owner of Polynesian Tattoo based in Rarotonga, provided some modern day interpretations of the motifs to assist with my understanding of the motifs for each chapter. He also drew them out for me to use as images in each of the chapters. Furthermore, images of the original sources such as artefacts, a paddle, ‘*atamira* (Chief’s chair) from respective islands, that had the motifs on them were scanned and printed in the chapters. Original sources of these images are acknowledged in the footnotes of each relevant page.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Setting the Scene

Chapter one sets the scene for this research. It describes the Cook Islands traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai*, and how it has influenced the status of the *tamariki`āngai* within the feeding family and the birth family. It will also examine the common contributing factors or reasons for a *tamariki`āngai* arrangement to take place within Cook Islands families. This chapter will also explain the method, theoretical frameworks and the Indigenous methodologies used for this study as a platform from which to interpret, locate and anchor the findings of this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter explores the relevant literature and research on adoption in other countries such as New Zealand and Hawai`i, as comparisons to the Cook Islands context, looking at the evolution of adoption practices in these countries and highlighting their similarities to the adoption practices in the Cook Islands. An in-depth explanation of the introduction of colonial legislations such as the Cook Islands Act 1915 is a crucial part of this chapter. Lastly, it explores the impact of colonisation on the traditional adoption practices and how it has influenced the perceptions of Cook Islanders towards *tamariki`āngai* practice.

Chapter 3: Evolution of Adoption Practices

This chapter examines literature from across the Pacific about adoption practices used traditionally and in contemporary contexts as well, to build a context from which to fully understand the nature of this research. This chapter expands on the evolution of traditional

adoption practice in the Cook Islands, exploring how colonisation has influenced the *tamariki`āngai* practice over the years and what is the general perception on what that practice entails in today's modern interpretation. In doing so, this chapter will describe the *tamariki`āngai* practice and how it has changed due to the influence of colonisation and the influence that legislation has had on the *tamariki`āngai* practice within the families and their new introduced perceptions on the practice.

Chapter 4: Emotional Journey

This chapter weaves together the common themes and stories of the participants and their experiences as a *tamariki`āngai* or *tamariki rētita*. It also includes the perceptions of the traditional leaders on the *tamariki`āngai* practice, relating those views to their own experiences, one being a father of a *tamariki rētita* and one being a *tamariki`āngai* himself. The chapter also describes the impact of the practice on the *tamariki`āngai* in contemporary times and outlines the emotional impact on the child as a result of discovering the truth about being a *tamariki`āngai* and how that discovery impacted on their relationship with their birth parents and family. It also highlights the participants views about whether legalising the arrangement is important and whether it would have made any difference to their experiences and the way they feel about being *tamariki`āngai*. Finally there will be a discussion about what influence *tamariki`āngai* practice had on their status within their families (adopted and birth) and their entitlements through land and traditional titles.

Chapter 5: Law verses Lore

This chapter explains the struggles that the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* faces in modern society today to affirm their identity and their status within both the birth family and the feeding family, and also their entitlements to the land and traditional titles. Furthermore, this chapter describes the traditional lore on two islands of the Cook Islands (Mangaia and Pukapuka) and their unique case studies in relation to rejecting the Western Land Court System on their islands. In those cases, land and traditional title entitlements are determined solely by traditional lore. However, new ideas introduced to the Cook Islands and the new governing laws that were enforced within the community will illustrate the impact on the traditional adoption practice.

Chapter 6: New Beginnings and Recommendations

Chapter six provides some recommendations to the findings of this research and provide an understanding of what the status and entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai* are in Cook Islands society today.

Glossary: A list of Māori terms used in the thesis is included at the back of the thesis after the bibliography.

Bibliography: The references and sources used in the thesis will be at the back of the thesis.

`Aka`āravei`anga (Salutation)

Pe'e `Akangāteitei (Chant of Respect)

Kūkūkina ki te pae rangi

Ko te mana ia o ngā Ariki

Kare au e rauka

Nōku ei toku Purotu

Nō roto i te kutikuti o te rangi e

E Rongo e, ka turuturu o te kau Ariki ki runga

Ka turuturu o te kau Ariki ki runga

Te `Akaāro`a

Chant of Respect

The skies will roar, lighting will strike, thunder storms will explode

This symbolises the presence of a Great King

I will not be defeated

My beauty is mine

It comes from the heavens above

Almighty Gods, let's all uplift our Great King

Let us all uplift our Great King

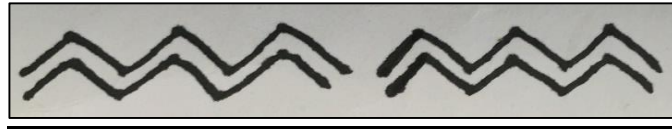
Amen

1. CHAPTER ONE:

SETTING THE SCENE

TE KAPUA`ANGA

PĀ MAUNGA/PAPAVARO



The selected motif for this chapter has two recorded names, *pā maunga* and *papavaro*, both will be used to represent this chapter. *Pā maunga* signifies the memories and new land discovery practices through voyaging of our ‘*ui tupuna* (ancestors) from Avaiki¹ left behind as they ventured off to discover new lands and new beginnings. The *pā maunga* would have been the last landmark they could see out at sea as they sailed away from their homeland and also the first landmark they could see on the horizon when they discovered new land. It signifies good news ahead as chapter one is about setting the scene for this research, looking at what the Cook Islands traditional adoption practice is and the journey to what it is perceived to be in this modern era. *Papavaro* refers to the footprints of the *varo* (crustacean similar to crayfish or lobster) on the sand as they move about, symbolising the footprint and influence of colonisation on the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* and the impact of that influence on the experiences of the *tamariki`āngai* in this research in relation to their inheritance and entitlements as *tamariki`āngai*.

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is about setting the scene. It will elaborate on the research question and the main purpose of this research journey. The aim of this study is to examine the colonisation of the traditional adoption practice known as *tamariki`āngai* (feeding child) and how it has influenced the status of the *tamariki`āngai* within the feeding family and the birth family. It also looks at the child’s inheritance and entitlements. According to Dodson (2009), *tamariki`āngai* is the informal island adoption referring to both the feeding and the fostered children.

¹ *Avaiki* – Buse & Taringa (1996) states that *avaiki* is widely used in Polynesian mythology and believed to be the original home of the Polynesian people before dispersal across Polynesia. It also featured as the underworld in many Cook Islands Māori legends.

The researcher will predominantly be looking at the common contributing factors or reasons for a *tamariki`āngai* arrangement to take place within Cook Islands families.

Accordingly, shared knowledge between the researcher and the participants through interviews will provide extremely personal insights into the adoption experience and identify those characteristics which support and sustain *tamariki`āngai*. This approach contrasts with the *papa`ā* (non-Māori) literature on adoption because the *tamariki`āngai* experience is embedded in Cook Islands Māori cultural beliefs and practices.

1.2 Methodology

This study aims to explore the experiences of the *tamariki`āngai* of the Cook Islands using a qualitative descriptive approach. In general, the aim of qualitative methodologies is to “describe the informant’s perceptions and experience of the world and its phenomena” (Neergaard, Olesen, Andersen, & Sondergaard, 2009, p. 53). Magilvy & Thomas (2009), suggest that usually this is achieved through the gathering of qualitative forms of data from a naturalistic environment in a textual form, rather than a numeric form, the naturalistic environment refers to a natural state, rather than the data being modified for the purpose of the research.

1.2(a) Qualitative Descriptive Methodology

There are other forms of qualitative descriptive methodologies. A qualitative descriptive methodology aims to obtain a “rich, straight description of an experience or an event” and in addition, it is data driven (Neergaard et al., 2009, p. 53). Sandelowski (2000), suggests that these qualitative descriptive studies focus on facts about an event or experience based on the data and meaning of the responses the participant provided during the one on one interview. According to Lee (2012), the use of pre-existing knowledge and recollection about an event is discouraged in qualitative descriptive approach, therefore, the information collected in this study is presented as it is told.

Lee (2012), describes three different strategies within the qualitative methodological approaches. Firstly, the phenomenological studies which focus on “interpreting the meaning of an event to the participants from a researcher’s point of view”. Secondly, the ethnographical studies which “interprets an event from a particular cultural perspective” and thirdly, the

grounded theoretical studies that focus on “the development of new theory” (Lee, 2012, p. 60). According to Sandelowski (2000), these qualitative methodologies present descriptive and interpretive findings, but a qualitative descriptive approach is more descriptive and less interpretive than others. Consequently, the qualitative descriptive approach is appropriate for this study because the interview transcript is qualitative text-based data, rather than numeric data, gathered from the one-on-one interviews with the participants in their homes or personal space (their choice of venue based on what they were most comfortable with). Therefore, it is describing the events as they are told rather than interpreting what was shared during the one-on-one interviews.

1.2(b) Social Identity Theory

Tajfel & Turner (1979), defines social identity theory as a person’s sense of who they are, based on their group membership. Tajfel & Turner (1979), also proposes that the groups that people belong to are an important source of pride and self-esteem. These groups give an individual a sense of social identity and a sense of belonging to that social world or group. Subsequently, the social identity theory is a means by which the *tamariki`āngai* can categorise themselves into the respective social groups that best accommodate their sense of identity and who they are and where they belong. This is an important aspect of how the *tamariki`āngai* would identify the social group membership they belong to, based on their experiences, perceptions of self and identity as *tamariki`āngai*.

According to West (2012), there is a need to appreciate the different notions of the self as outlined by Mead’s (1982), perspectives of the ‘self’ as the subject, and the object being the ‘me’ and the ‘I’ in order to understand human experiences. Pampel (2000), states that an individual’s experience, attitudes and personal thoughts develop from group membership. Pampel (2000) argues that researchers need to study external social behaviour in order to understand the internal thoughts and attitudes of the participants. As alluded by Pampel the researcher needs to embrace and understand the external social behaviour of the participant to understand their internal feelings shared in their stories. In order to apply Mead’s concept of ‘self’ to this study West (2012), argues that the study needs to investigate how the “adoptees accepts or rejects a group’s opinion and how their internal assumption affects their sense of self” (p. 34). Similar to the suggestion by Pampel (2000), West (2012), elaborated on how the participant’s view group opinions and how these affect their sense of self and identity. These

were important concepts that were considered throughout this study and also during the field work and data collection.

According to Alcoff & Mendieta (2003), these social theorists namely; Hegel, Marx, Freud and Mead were amongst the first academics to acknowledge the inability of the self to exist independent of the social domain. Expanding on this idea, Tajfel (2010), devised the term, social identity theory, a theory exploited to “understand the relationship between the individuals and their social worlds” (Moloney & Walker, 2007 cited by West 2012, p. 34). Burke & Reitzes (1991), argue that the “level of commitment to an identity is dependent on the strength of one’s relationship to others, while in a particular role identity” (p. 241). West (2012), argues that social identity theory encompasses “symbolic interactionism principles and is a useful theoretical approach for examining how the Māori adoptee’s social world influences their level of commitment to their ethnicity” (p. 34)².

Therefore, it is important for the researcher to understand the relationship of the participants with their social group, their community and of course their families. Consequently, the primary implication of this theory (Social Identity Theory) for this research is the method of defining how the *tamariki`āngai* perceives they are accepted or rejected by the in-group and the out-group members. According to West (2012), there are three components of social identity theory; categorisation, identification and comparison. Tajfel & Turner (1979) propose that there are three mental processes involved in evaluating others as ‘us’ or ‘them’ (i.e. ‘in-group’ and ‘out-group’). These are discussed below.

1.2(c) Social Categorisation

Tajfel & Turner (1979) state that categorisation is when people categorise objects in order to understand and identify them. In a very similar way we categorise people in order to understand their social environment. For example, boys and girls, students or public servants, because they are useful. Once we assign people to a category (i.e. student) then that helps us to understand them better. We define appropriate behaviours by reference to the norms of the group we categorised them with.

² Emma West in 2012 conducted a study on Navigating the Ethnic Identity of the Māori adoptee.

1.2(d) Social Identification

Tajfel & Turner (1979), state that identification is when we adopt the identity of the group we have categorised ourselves as belonging to. For example, we categorise ourselves as a student and begin to act in the ways we believe students act. There will be an emotional significance to the identification with a group (student), and self-esteem will become bound up with the (student) group membership.

1.2(e) Social comparison

The final component of social identity theory outlined by Tajfel & Turner (1979) is social comparison. Once we categorise ourselves as part of a group and have identified with that group we tend to compare that group with other groups (such as teachers).

Therefore, the social identity theory and group membership is not something foreign to be assigned to a person, it is a real, true and vital part of the person's life. Again it is crucial to remember, that the in-group is what we identify with and the out-group is what we do not identify with and may discriminate against.

Moloney & Walker (2007), explain that individuals put themselves within an in-group or an out-group and through the interactions in these two groups, the social identity emerges which guides their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Consequently, social identity theory according to Moloney & Walker (2007) explores "how people define themselves with respect to cultural contents, relations with others, and pursuing the group's goals" (p. 221). According to Stets & Burke (2000), there are many reasons why people identify with a social group including the need to feel valuable, worthy, competent, or effective, identifying with that group requires acceptance by that group.

Social identity theory is relevant to this study because it defines how the *tamariki`āngai* characterise themselves, which in-group they belong to and the out-group they do not belong to. Additionally, how they are accepted or rejected by the in and out groups, how they verify their position and how they maintain a positive self-concept during their interactions is important. Therefore, "understanding the value placed on an experience can be explored in relation to the adoptee's self-conception" (West, 2012, p. 35). Consequently, Brodzinsky, Schechter, Braff, & Singer, (1984), state that the effects of adoption cause personality and identity problems and are best understood by three theories: psychoanalytic theory, ethological

theory and social role theory. The three theories will be briefly outlined below to elaborate further on the potential personality and identity problems faced by a *tamariki āngai*.

1.2(f) Psychoanalytic Theory

Brodzinsky et al (1984), explain that psychoanalytic theory was widely written about in the 1960s. The most common interpretation of the theory is the potential for emotional problems in late adopted children due to an experience they have been through at a younger age. The psychoanalytic theory is a “method of investigating and treating personality disorders commonly used in psychotherapy”.³ It also includes the notion that childhood experiences can contribute to the way the child behaves later in life. For example, if the child’s parents divorced when the child is young, the child may not marry because of it.

1.2(g) Ethological Theory

Brodzinsky et al (1984), describe the ethological theory as the lack of family communication and adjustment due to the rapid transition of the adopted child at birth. The definition of ethology makes this clearer, “ethology stresses that behavior is strongly influenced by biology, is tied to evolution, and is characterised by critical or sensitive periods”.⁴ In other words, there are times when we are most sensitive to particular types of stimuli in our lives. For example, using the analogy of a baby goose (and ducklings), who is born prepared to develop an attachment and will claim the first thing they see when their egg hatches as their mother.

1.2(h) Social Role Theory

Brodzinsky et al (1984), describe the social role theory, stating that adopted children are referred to mental health professionals far more often than non-adopted children. In addition, the adopted children are reported to be more aggressive than non-adopted children. “Social role theory is a perspective in sociology and in social psychology that considers most of everyday activity to be the acting out of socially defined categories”.⁵ For example, an abusive father to an adopted child, the actions of the father will influence the behaviour and attitude of the child.

³ Psychoanalytic theory definition retrieved from <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-psychoanalytic-theory.html> on 17 March 2016

⁴ Ethology definition retrieved from <https://www.google.co.ck/web-ethology+theory> on 17 March 2016

⁵ Social role theory definition retrieved from <https://www.google.co.ck/web-social+role+theory> on 17 March 2016

Therefore, the child is more likely to replicate these actions in their adult lives towards their own children.

1.3 Method and Procedures for Undertaking Research

Methods and procedures used to gather the information and data for this study will be described in detail below. This section also outlines the parameters of this study and articulates the approach taken to analyse the data for this study.

1.3(a) Insider-Research Approach

Insider-research approach is the positioning of the researcher to the study being undertaken. Dwyer & Buckle (2009), described the insider-research approach and the issues around the qualitative methodology where the researcher plays a crucial role; it is “such a direct and intimate role in both data collection and analysis approach” (p.55).

Whether the researcher is an insider, sharing the characteristic, role, or experience under study with the participants, or an outsider to the commonality shared by participants, the personhood of the researcher, including her or his membership status in relation to those participating in the research, is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation. Dwyer & Buckle, 2009 (p. 55).

The researcher’s membership status in relation to the participants of the study is an essential aspect of the investigation. Accordingly, this study adopts an insider-research approach. The researcher is an Indigenous Cook Islands Māori undertaking research in a sensitive area that is closely guarded by the Indigenous community. Indigenous community research, where the researcher is a member of the community, has both advantages and disadvantages. The researcher is also a *tamariki`āngai* and therefore understands and can relate to the stories shared by the participants. Consequently, the researcher must not use her bias to influence the findings of this study.

Kanuha (2000), states that insider research refers to when a researcher conducts research with populations of which they are also a member. In this study, the researcher is a *tamariki`āngai* which makes her an insider. Thus, Asselin (2003), argues that the researcher shares an identity, experience, language and experiential base with the participants of the study. Arguably the positives outweigh the negatives. Possibly the biggest challenge in terms of insider research is the researcher’s *papa`anga* (genealogy) links to some of the research participants. This ostensible conflict of interest is recognised and debated vigorously amongst insider researchers

who “argue that this approach has the potential to engage community and develop a rich repository of depth and meaning” (Kanuha 2000, p.444).

1.3(b) Participants

The study has a sample size of ten participants, consisting of five females and five males. The participants must be a Cook Islands Māori residing on the islands of Rarotonga or Aitutaki, and be 30 years and older. The reason for this profile is that this age group will be more mature and able to handle the emotional effects of the adoption issue in openly sharing their stories. This cohort would also have a better understanding of the traditional adoption process with a wealth of knowledge and information in terms of their awareness of the complexities of the adoption experience. Additionally, two elders, who are both male with traditional knowledge of pre-European contact, were recruited to ensure that the research is contextualised and embedded in the Cook Islands adoption beliefs and traditional practices. Out of the ten participants, four are *tamariki rētita* and legally adopted through the Land Court system, and six are *tamariki `āngai*, endorsed through the traditional adoption practice. Of the six *tamariki `āngai*, two went through the name deed poll process to change their names to take the surnames of their feeding father. They undertook this process in their adulthood, over the legal age to be adopted of 21 years old, and according to the Cook Islands Act.

The participants of this research will be introduced in this section. The two traditional leaders' identities will be revealed as it is important to contextualise their views and knowledge of the traditional practices in their respective communities. It should be noted that in order to protect the identities of the ten participants (*tamariki `āngai and tamariki rētita*), made up Māori names will be given to each one of them and their ages will also be rounded to the nearest tenth. For example, 40s for a 44 year old, 50s for a 46 year old, and so forth. It should also be noted that these participants are descendants from the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki.

1.3(c) Traditional Leaders

The two traditional leaders to inform this study both have extensive knowledge and understanding of traditional values and practices. In particular, their experiences with the *tamariki `āngai* practice as a feeding child and a father of an adopted child. Both have extensive involvement with the community through sports, religion, and traditional

leadership and as paramount figures in their respective communities, specifically Aitutaki and Rarotonga.

Tupuariki Puna



Image 7: Pāpā Puna & Wife Purotu Puna, 2012. [Photo credit: Ngā Puna, son]

Tupuariki Puna (Pāpā Puna) is 73 years old and from the island of Aitutaki. He was a school teacher and later, Principal, at Araura College for over 40 years, in service to his people. Pāpā Puna is one of the only surviving *Tumu Kōrero* (orator) of the island of Aitutaki, he knows the history, legends and the language of Aitutaki. He currently holds the traditional title of Tua'ine Mata'iapo, *Tumu Kōrero* or *va`a `autara* (speaker) for Teurukura Ariki of the village of Re'ure'u, Aitutaki. He is a Justice of the Peace, a traditional leader, and an Elder of the Seventh Day Adventist church in Arutanga. Most recently, he has been an instrumental *Ta`unga* (expert) of the Aitutaki language dictionary working closely with the Dictionary of Cook Islands Languages project with Te Ipukarea. The National Māori Language Institute from the Auckland University of Technology in partnership with the University of the South Pacific, Cook Islands and the Ministry of Education, Cook Islands. He is also a loving husband to Purotu Puna and a loving father, grandfather and great grandfather of five children, 15 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Te`ānua Kāmana (Tepuretu Mata`iapo)

Te`ānua Kāmana also known as Dan Kāmana (Pāpā Dan) is 93 years old and from Rarotonga. He holds the traditional title of Tepuretu Mata'iapo. Papa Dan is a prominent figure in the village of Tupapa and his life revolves around his commitment to the church, community,

sports and politics. Pāpā Dan worked in both the public and private sector until he was elected as a Member of Parliament 1968 – 1978, and re-elected 1981 – 1993, and was a Minister of the Crown during this time. Pāpā Dan loves boxing and was a national representative to the South Pacific Games, Commonwealth Games, and World Games in the code of bowling. In 1994 he was presented with the Queen’s Medal of Order of British Empire (OBE) and in 2004 he was inducted to the Hall of Fame in Sports. He is the loving husband of the late Ūpoko Tutakiao and loving father, grandfather, great grandfather and great grandfather of nine children (six biological and three adopted), 38 grandchildren, 42 great grandchildren and five great grandchildren.



Image 8: Pāpā Dan Kāmana [Photo credit: Luciana Matenga, granddaughter]

1.4 Tamariki `Āngai/Tamariki Rētita Participants

The ten participants for this study come from different walks of life, each one of them have had unique and different life stories to share. In respect of their bravery to volunteer their time to inform this study it is only fitting to personalise their existence in this study through this introduction. The Māori names given to each one of the participants, are in no particular order and were allocated to each one of them by the researcher.

1. `Ātamu is in his 40s and grew up on the island of Aitutaki. He was legally adopted at a very young age and loves his adopted parents. He knows who his birth mother is. `Ātamu has vowed not to let any of his children go through this kind of lifestyle of being adopted.
2. Vaerua is in his 50s and grew up on the island of Rarotonga. He was at first raised by his grandmother, a Rangatira in her community who was well respected. When

Vaerua's grandmother passed away, he was taken in by his uncle. Vaerua had a hard life being verbally and physically abused by his feeding family. His bad experiences have made him stronger to face the many life challenges that come with the practice of *tamariki`āngai*.

3. Taina is in her 50s and grew up on the island of Rarotonga. She was raised by several extended family members and moved from one family to another. She had a hard life as a *tamariki`āngai* and wishes she had the time to get to know her birth mother before she died. Living the life she did have made Taina promise not to ever let any of her children go through this kind of arrangement, no matter what.
4. Tangaroa is in his 40s and grew up in New Zealand. He moved to Rarotonga in his twenties. He was raised by his birth mother's sister and her husband. He knew who his birth mother was, but had no information on his birth father. Identity was an issue for him, because of going through the *tamariki`āngai* experience he tries to always be involved with his children's lives no matter what.
5. Purotu is in her 30s and grew up on the island of Rarotonga. She was adopted at a very young age by her birth mother's older sister and her husband. She never knew her birth father. She loves her adopted parents as they did everything for her. She had a good up-bringing as a *tamariki rētita*.
6. Manea is in her 70s and grew up on the island of Aitutaki. She was adopted by her birth father's sister and her husband. She grew up with her siblings but did not know they were her real birth family. She discovered she was a *tamariki`āngai* when she was 11 years old while enrolling for secondary school at Tereora College (Rarotonga). She was later legally adopted and continued to take her adopted parents' name. She was spoilt as a *tamariki rētita*, and she regards herself as one of the lucky ones.
7. Tumutoa is in his 60s and grew up on the island of Rarotonga. He was raised by his birth mother's parents. He had a close relationship with his birth parents and his siblings. Things changed for him when his grandfather passed away when he was aged 15 and he was forced to move back home and live with his birth parents. Tumutoa feels that when the parents give up a child they should never claim them back especially when his feeding mother (grandmother) was still alive. Later in life he changed his name by deed poll to take his grandfather's surname.
8. Mere is in her 50s and grew up in New Zealand. She moved to Rarotonga later in life. She was legally adopted by her feeding parents and only met her birth mother when she was in her 40s. She never knew who her birth father was. She had a good experience

as an adopted child and loves her parents to bits. Mere feels she owes them the world for being there for her throughout her life.

9. Matamaru is in her 70s and grew up on the island of Aitutaki. She became a *tamariki* *`āngai* at birth and her feeding mother was related to her birth father. She grew up around her birth family (parents and siblings) but it never occurred to her that these people were her birth family until she came to Rarotonga to enroll in Tereora College at age 13 when she discovered that she was a *tamariki* *`āngai*. Her birth father would not allow her to be adopted by her feeding parents. Matamaru feels that the *tamariki* *`āngai* lifestyle is confusing for her. It created division between her and her birth family.
10. Ioane is in his 60s and grew up in New Zealand. He returned to Rarotonga in his early 20s. He was not legally adopted by his feeding parents. He changed his name by deed poll to take the surname of his feeding father later in life. Ioane knew his birth parents as Auntie and Uncle, until he was 18 years old when the truth came out. Ioane struggles with being accepted by his siblings on his feeding side although he gets along with his sisters on his birth side. However, Ioane feels stuck in between the two sets of families.

1.4(a) Recruitment of participants

The participants for this study were recruited using the snowballing technique. Vogt (1999), suggests that the snowballing technique consists of identifying a participant who is then used to refer the researcher on to other participants. Essentially, it is the word of mouth approach of recruiting possible participants for the study. The snowballing recruitment technique is the most appropriate method for this study, because it is informal and lends itself well to the small face to face community where the research is undertaken. Therefore, the research is confined to a specific target group. Prospective participants were able to promote the study amongst themselves within the Cook Islands community. The researcher presented a preliminary structure of this thesis at the University of the South Pacific campus in Rarotonga and from that public presentation four of the confirmed participants approached the researcher to register their interest in becoming one of the participants. Clearly the volunteering of participants is indicative of the dynamics of a small community where 'news travels fast'! Within a couple of weeks four other participants volunteered to be a part of the study. An overwhelming response through the snowballing technique confirmed the ten participants for this study within a couple of weeks. It worked out well as participants were willing to share their stories and not having to be convinced to share them.

The two traditional leaders were approached by the researcher to be part of the study and both willingly supported the study. When the participants were confirmed to take part in the study, a set of documents were given to them to read over before the interview took place. (1) Participants Information sheets about the research, (2) Participant Consent Forms, once the consent forms were signed, a copy was left with the participant and one copy was collected and filed.

1.4(b) Interview Process

The interview appointments were set in agreement with the participant's availability. Many considerations were given to the convenience of the participants in determining the times, days and venues to hold the interviews. The venue of the interview was the participant's choice, mostly it was conducted in their homes where the participants are more comfortable. A few interviews were at the researcher's office at work, after working hours. The length of the interview varied from 30 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes. The inclusion of a support person was offered and left entirely up to the participant to decide. None of the participants opted to utilise this option. The interview was audio-recorded and was later transcribed into a written format by the researcher. The transcripts were presented to the participants to verify before finalising. They were then labeled and filed carefully for easy referencing and safeguarding. The interviews commenced with a prayer by the researcher and/or the participant and ended with a prayer as well.

1.4(c) Questions and Answers

The questions were probing open-ended questions and were developed to elicit how the participants viewed their experiences as *tamariki`āngai*. Participants were encouraged to tell their stories as they saw fit rather than in a structured question format. There were nine questions altogether and the same set of questions were used for all the participants. Additional questions were asked as a way of verifying what they had shared with the researcher. All interview sessions included some crying from the participant whereby the researcher offered to discontinue the session or to reschedule. None of the participants chose to take time out, they simply paused a little, regathered their thoughts and continued on with the interview. There was also a lot of laughter shared during the interviews. The questions for the interviews were approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee. The set of questions for the traditional leaders were different. They had eight questions to answer that were related to the traditional adoption practice.

1.5 Data Analysis

The following steps were used to analyse the data. The interview recordings were transcribed and prepared for data analysis. The interviews in Cook Islands Māori were translated into English. All participants were given a made-up Māori name for the purpose of keeping their identity confidential throughout the thesis. The transcripts were labelled accordingly. Transcripts were further coded into common themes, similarities and differences, where the researcher copied the transcripts from each participant and pasted it under the common themes before carefully labeling them by the participant's new identity. Qualitative descriptive methodology was used and the data was critically analysed by the researcher. The stories were edited to protect the credibility and identity of the participant, as some of them used broken English and conversational Māori language during the interview.

1.5(a) Author's bias

At the onset, being a *tamariki`āngai*, the researcher had to be aware of any bias that may exist in the study. The researcher could therefore relate to some of the experiences shared by the participants and was fully aware of where she stood in this study, not to let her own personal experiences manipulate the scope of the study. The researcher believes she has achieved the right balance of objectivity and subjectivity in this study during the course of this journey.

1.5(b) Ethical Considerations

On 25th April 2015 the study was issued its ethical approval from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee.

1.6 Indigenous Methodology

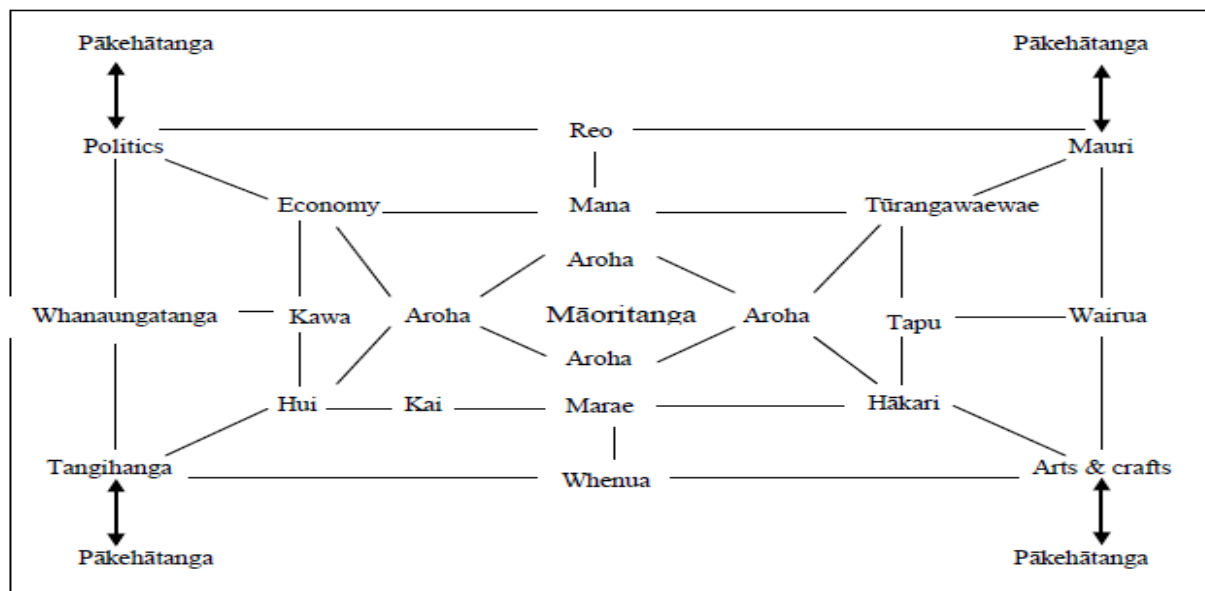
This research is informed by the John Rangihau's Conceptual Model to "illustrate the holistic nature of the" New Zealand "Māori world-view" and depicts the "inter-connectedness of Māori cultural concepts" (Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2010, p.20). Consequently, the Rangihau Model can be applied to the Cook Islands culture as this research relies heavily on its cultural links to the Cook Islands community and traditions. Furthermore, the Rangihau Model is viewed as a paradigm which encapsulates a Cook Islands ideological framework because it provides a cultural lens from which other Indigenous models can be developed. Ka'ai-Mahuta (2010), states that the Rangihau Model was developed to assist non-Māori in understanding the Māori world-view a lot better.

The diagram illustrates the interconnectedness of various concepts in Māori culture, centered around 'Whanaungatanga' (Relationships). The concepts are arranged in a hierarchical and interconnected manner, with red and green double-headed arrows indicating relationships.

- Top Layer:** 'Pakehatanga' (Government) is at the top left and top right. In the center are 'Politics/Te Mauritangata' and 'Mauri'.
- Second Layer:** 'Economics/Ohaoha' is on the left, 'Mana' is in the center, and 'Turangawaewae' is on the right.
- Third Layer:** 'Whanaungatanga' is on the left, 'Kawa' is on the far left, 'Aroha' is in the center-left, 'Maoritanga' is in the center, 'Aroha' is in the center-right, 'Tapu' is on the far right, and 'Wairua' is on the right.
- Fourth Layer:** 'Hui' is on the left, 'Kai' is in the center-left, 'Marae' is in the center, and 'Hakari' is on the right.
- Bottom Layer:** 'Pakehatanga' is at the bottom left and bottom right. In the center are 'Tangihanga' and 'Arts and Crafts'.

The diagram uses red and green double-headed arrows to indicate relationships between these concepts, showing a complex web of interconnectedness.

Image 9(a) Rangihau's Conceptual Model



The Rangihau Model can be seen as a portal and cultural lens from which the researcher can analyse, describe, explain and critique the data collected for this research located within an

Indigenous paradigm. The portal and cultural concepts being used from the Rangihau Model are “*kawa*” (*`ākono`anga* in Cook Islands Māori language) which represents the way we do things and “arts and crafts” known as *to`ito`i* and *raranga* in Cook Islands Māori.

The *`ākono`anga* Māori in the context of the Cook Islands follows the lore that when it comes to adoption, another member of the family looks after the child. Nel (2014), refers to this kind of arrangement as kin care, which involves the child being cared for by relatives, commonly the grandparents, aunties, uncles or other siblings. Kin care is an informal arrangement without legal interventions with relatives applying for parenting order or guardianship. This is our tradition and our *`ākono`anga* Māori.

The arts and craft portal in the Rangihau Model known as *to`ito`i* and *raranga* will be used as a cultural lens for understanding the *tamariki`āngai* experiences and practices associated with being a *tamariki`āngai*. The researcher has developed an Indigenous model in this study called the Kete Ora`anga Model, which is based on the traditional art of weaving a basket, to encapsulate this study and the upbringing of the *tamariki`āngai*. The *kete* (basket) used to illustrate this model is called a *kete tautai* (fisherman’s basket) commonly used on the island of Mangaia. Utilising the metaphor of a plant to understand the inner sensitive, emotional impact of the *tamariki`āngai* practice is also a part of this study. A mimosa plant (and its characteristics) is used to further understand the sensitivity and emotional feelings of the experience.

1.7 Metaphoric Ideology



Image 10(a), (b), (c): Reaction of the Mimosa Plant [Photo credit: Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a). Mimosa plant before being touched. (b). Mimosa plant being touched. (c). Mimosa plant after being touched.

The mimosa plant known as *pikika`a* (literally translated as telling lies) in Cook Islands Māori grows prolifically in the Cook Islands. It will be used as a metaphor in this study to represent the emotional effect and the sensitivity associated with the topic of adoption and the experiences of the *tamariki`āngai*, usually a topic that families avoid talking about. The emotional impact on the participants, as shared in their stories, is represented by the *pikika`a* plant. Image 10(a) shows a mimosa plant fully open and undisturbed, 10(b) shows the mimosa plant being touched and disturbed and 10(c) shows a mimosa plant all closed up after being touched and disturbed. The outer leaves of the mimosa plant are extremely sensitive. When touched, the leaves close up as shown in image 10(a), (b), (c), and seems to shrink. Give it a few minutes, and it will open up again as per 10(a). It also turns into an unattractive plant after being touched or disturbed from when it was blooming wild in the bush. The mimosa also has prickly sharp thorns that are very painful if touched and stepped on. This further signifies how touchy and sensitive the adoption topic is. A *tamariki`āngai* might look alright from the outside but once the topic is raised they could easily breakdown and avoid talking about it. Irrespective of whether the research findings reflect negative or positive outcomes, the mimosa plant and its characteristics encapsulates the adoption experience, the emotional effect and how sensitive the issue is in the Cook Islands.

Kete Ora`anga Model



Image 11: Kete Photo of a completed basket by Charlie-Puna 2016.

The *kete* (basket) making process is also used as a metaphor for the different stages of the research methodology. The weaving pattern of making the *kete*, represents the different literature reviewed to inform this study. It also represents the influences of both traditional and European adoption practices in the lives of the participants, in particular, looking at the Cook Islands traditional adoption practice and how colonisation has influenced those practices.

The Kete Ora`anga Model depicts the complexity of the adoption experience. The weaving pattern of the basket signifies the impact and overlapping nature of both non-Māori and Māori adoption practices. It also signifies the molding of the *tamariki`āngai* with the different experiences they have had in life, whether the positive experiences outweigh the negative will be respected within this model. The completed *kete* holds each *tamariki`āngai* and their case studies. The critical analysis of all data will be expressed symbolically through the Kete Ora`anga Model which combines the sensitivity of the adoption experience and the importance of weaving a strong foundation for the *kete* in the lives of the *tamariki`āngai*.

The researcher was privileged to have a *ta`unga* (traditional expert) from the island of Mangaia by the name of Māmā Teremoana Poila (Māmā Tere) to demonstrate the different stages of making a basket. Māmā Tere is one of the few surviving *ta`unga* in the Cook Islands that knows how to weave this type of fishermen's basket. She recently, held a workshop in Mangaia to teach the young generation the art of basket weaving (particularly this type of basket, being the most difficult to weave). The traditional Mangaian name for this *kete* is the *kete`apua* and is referred to these days as the *kete tautai* (fishing basket). Used by the fishermen, who would tie the *kete* around their waists when they would go fishing, the *kete tautai* is woven using *nīkau* (coconut palms).

In this section of the thesis; the different stages of weaving a basket will be outlined from selecting and preparing the *nīkau*, to the weaving stages, right through to the completion of the *kete* and this will be linked to the research methodology undertaken for this study. This section is informed by the knowledge shared by Māmā Teremoana Poila from the island of Mangaia.

Stage 1: Selection and Preparation



Image 12 (a), (b), (c): Selection and preparation stage [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a). *nīkau* not suitable

(b). *nīkau* perfect and suitable

(c). Steaming the *nīkau* over an open fire

The selection and preparation stage of the *kete* is crucial to ensure that the *nīkau* palm selected is fully formed with no defects on it and is clear of dry spots. Image 12(a) is a coconut tree with the *nīkau* standing upright or straight up and is not suitable because it is too stiff and hard for weaving. In image 12(b) it shows the *nīkau* slightly bend and more suitable. Māmā Tere states that a *nū kere* (green coconut) tree is most suitable, because the *nīkau* is slightly bend, known as *taupe* (bend over or bend down) in the Manganian language. The *nīkau* is flexible to weave and longer in length. The *nīkau* is then cut down ready for the preparation stage. Image 12(c) is the steaming of the *nīkau* on an open fire, this process is called *inaina tē nīkau* (steaming of the *nīkau*). It is important that the *nīkau* is not left on the fire too long but is swiftly moved back and forward to ensure that the whole palm is steamed thoroughly and evenly, but not over steamed or burnt. This process ensures that the *nīkau* is more flexible, stronger and unbreakable during the weaving stage.



Image 13 (a), (b): Preparation Stage [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a). stripping *nīkau* off the centre (b). 'iri tāviri stage - twisting

After the steaming of the *nīkau*, they are stripped apart as show in image 13(a). The *nīkau* is stripped off the centre part of the palm. To make a good size basket you need two full coconut palms. The *nīkau* is laid together and 'iri tāviri takes place. The leaflets are twisted over each other to form a firmer rim for the *kete* as shown in image 13(b). Two strips of leaflet twice the length of the basket are required to make a good size basket. The two midrib strips from image 12(a) are cut to the desired size and measurement of the basket.

The selection and preparation stage of the *kete* process represents the selection and preparation of the participants for this study. For example, care has been taken to ensure that the participants are all over thirty years old, that there are equal numbers of males and females and

that all the participants have gone through the *tamariki`āngai* and *tamariki rētita* experience in order to adequately inform and participate in this study.

The preparation of the participant is also important through providing an information sheet outlining the purpose of the study, the process and the scope of the study. This is followed by the signing of the consent form once the participant agrees to be part of this study. Furthermore, the researcher informs the participant before the interview takes place that there is a counselling service through Pūnanga Tauturu⁶ made available to them should they require this support. This process ensures that the participants are well equipped and ready for the study and specifically the interview process.

This stage of the *kete* process also signifies the process when a child is given to another person to look after. It is a delicate process and is usually carefully handled within a family context. *Tamariki`āngai* are kept within a family and carefully nurtured through the transitional arrangement. A parent would not just give their child up to anyone, only someone they trust and can rely on. The before birth practice, includes the adopting parents being required to provide food to the birth mother of the child. Therefore, preparation is both for the child and the parents as well.

Stage 2: Weaving of the basket



Image 14 (a), (b): Weaving Stage [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a). *Ara`iri* (twill weaving) top of the kete

(b). Continue Twill weaving

Once the rim of the *kete* is completed, one of the important stages is the starting of the weaving of the *kete* known as *akamata`anga ara`iri* as shown in image 14(a), the commencement of

⁶ Pūnanga Tauturu – A non-profit counselling services for all ages and genders free of charge.

the weaving of the basket. According to Māmā Tere, the *nīkau* is counted in threes and it is very important to maintain that count from the start of the weaving to the end. The count in threes enables the twill pattern to continue right through. During the process it was difficult to get the '*akamata`anga ara `iri*', which is the start of the basket correct, therefore, Māmā Tere had to intervene to complete this important stage. Māmā Tere states that the twill weaving pattern shown in image 14(b) is the most suitable because it is stronger than others and looks nice aesthetically. Once the start of weaving the twill pattern was set in motion, the remainder of the weaving was easy and all fell into place.

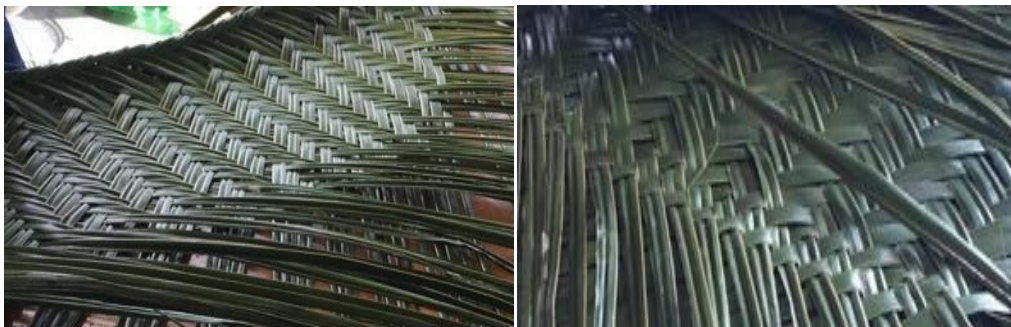


Image 15 (a), (b): Weaving Stage [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a). Twill weaving reached the bottom of the *kete* (b). *raranga patapata* – checked weaving pattern

The twill weaving pattern will continue until it reaches the bottom of the *kete* as shown in image 15(a). The weaving pattern will change to a checked weaving pattern known as *raranga patapata* in the Manganian language. *Raranga patapata* as shown in image 15(b) is woven at the bottom of the *kete* before the bottom is joined. Māmā Tere explained that the *raranga patapata* pattern is extra strong, more so than the *ara `iri* (twill) pattern and it is suitable for making the base of the *kete* stronger with no gaps. The change of pattern allows the weaver to strengthen the bottom part of the *kete* and changes the weaving count from three to one, before reaching the closing of the *kete*. This interchange makes it possible for the weaver to plait the closing of the *kete*. The weaving stage of the *kete* making process relates to the field work and literature review stage of the study. The different patterns of weaving the *kete* represent the different one-on-one interviews with the participants. The twill pattern represents the literature review stage and how it overlaps with the transcribed data of the participants stories. The *raranga patapata* pattern stage represents the critical analysis of all data by the researcher in order to form a solid foundation for this study.

The different weaving patterns of the *kete* also signifies the different inter-woven life values and teachings the adopted parents and family offer the *tamariki* `āngai. The influences of the church, culture, school, peers, and community, and of course, European influences are all represented by the overlapping weaving patterns. Furthermore, the overlapping weaving pattern of the *kete* represents the traditional adoption practice and the Westernised adoption practices that influence the adoption practice in today's society.

Stage 3: Joining and Shaping of the basket



Image 16 (a), (b), (c): Joining and Shaping [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a) Joining the ends of the *kete* (b). Weaving the joint together (c). Squeezing to shape the *kete* (round)

The joining and shaping stage of the *kete* making process is an important and careful process ensuring the two ends of the *kete* mirror or match each other as shown in image 16(a). Extra hands are required to hold the *kete* in place. Once the ends are joined or tied together. The *ta`unga* weaver will continue to weave using the twill pattern to match the sides of the *kete* as per image 16(b). As mentioned in stage 2, image 14(a) the counting of the *nīkau* in threes must be accurate simply because of this stage in image 16(b). If there is a miscount the weaving pattern will also be out of place. Image 16(c) illustrates when the joining is completed, then the *kete* must be put flat on the table to see if it will balance. Then the sides must be squeezed in to shape the *kete*, like the *kete tautai*. Instead of being round it needs to be in a canoe shape.

The joining and shaping stage of the *kete* represents the critical analysis of all data gathered for the study, including the interview data, the literature review and the researcher's interpretation and critical analysis of the findings. Allocating the participant's stories into common themes is a process undertaken to support the findings and the literature review analysis. Structuring the

thesis in a way that it creates flow throughout from chapter one to chapter six is also important. Therefore, it is important that the structure set at the start is correct as it ties back to the joining.

In relation to the *tamariki`āngai* process this stage of the *kete* signifies the personal developments of each of the *tamariki`āngai*. The timing of when the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement commenced is important to the child's development, behaviour and identity. The bond between the child and the feeding or adopted parents is stronger if the *tamariki`āngai* started at birth. As they grow older it is easy for the parents to relate and accommodate the child's feelings of being a *tamariki`āngai*. Nurturing the child correctly from the start of their life is important to form a strong relationship between the family and the child. The shaping stage signifies the different teachings, the unconditional love, fair treatment and making the child feel loved which is all part of an important process from the start of the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement.

Stage 4: Closing of the bottom of the basket



Image 17 (a), (b), (c): Closing of the bottom of the basket [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

(a) First plait of the *kete*

(b). Second plait of the *kete*

(c). Third plait of the *kete*

The closing of the bottom of the *kete* is the most technical stage of weaving the *kete*. Mama Tere states that this stage of the *kete* weaving is known as an '*iri taki toru*' in the Manganian language. The bottom of the *kete* is plaited and secured three times. Image 17(a) is the first stage when the *kete* is joined using the *rārānga patapata* weaving technique. The second plait at the bottom is a normal plait as shown in image 17(b), at this stage the bottom of the *kete* is securely fastened to avoid the objects from falling out of the *kete*. The final and third stage of the '*iri taki toru*' is to ensure that the ends where the *nīkau* will be cut off are securely tugged

in and will not slip out as shown in image 17(c). The closing of the bottom of the *kete* is an important stage of the process and for this particular *kete tautai*, it is important to ensure the objects, such as fish, will not fall through the bottom of the *kete*.

The closing of the *kete* represents the recommendations and findings of the study. Consequently, it is important to consider the main purpose of the study and address the research questions. Weaving the different findings throughout this journey to answer the research questions is represented by the three different weaving and plaiting techniques to secure the bottom of the *kete*. Not one or two recommendations but three, represented by the ‘*iri taki toru*’, are crucial to ensure that the views of the participants, traditional leaders, and literature are captured in this study.

This stage of the *kete* process signifies the importance of carefully reviewing the literature from different parts of the world, to encapsulate the impact of adoption processes to the lives of the *tamariki`āngai*. An adoption system that is recognised in today’s society is one that goes through the legal practice of formalising the adoption agreement. Having a strong foundation to help nurture and provide stability in the lives of the *tamariki`āngai*, to offer them that sense of belonging and being loved by those who have raised them to be the people they are today.

The Kete Ora’anga Model provides a paradigm where the process of going through the *tamariki`āngai* experience can be further elaborated on and critically analysed from the stories shared by the participants. It also encapsulates the upbringing experiences of the *tamariki`āngai* and the different personality traits they inherit from their feeding and/or adopted parents which are a crucial part of their personal development. Finally, the personal stories of the ten participants are respected and secured within the *kete* as a way of honouring their stories.

The Kete Ora’anga Model looks at the external influences in the lives of the *tamariki`āngai* whilst the mimosa or *pikika`a* plant looks at the internal influences and impact of *tamariki`āngai* in the lives of the participants. The strength of the *kete* represents the life and emotional journey of the *tamariki`āngai*. The appearance of the final product portrays the beauty of our Cook Islands heritage, our identity and our traditions.

The Final Product



Image 18: Complete *kete tautai* [Photo credit, Charlie-Puna 2016]

Different photo of the complete basket. Modelled by Miss Charlee Puna, daughter of the Researcher.

1.8 Conclusion

From the first moment that non-Māori discovered the Cook Islands, outsiders to the Cook Islands culture and traditional lore documented their interpretation, thoughts, observations and judgements relating to the Cook Islands people. Unfortunately, these observations have been predictably clarified through a non-Māori world view. Consequently the shared stories, knowledge and experiences of the participants are equally important to provide an impartial stability to the study. Fundamentally, a majority of the literature reviewed pertaining to the Cook Islands traditional adoption practice has been written with a view of an outsider looking in, such as the British residents in the late 1800 and the Missionaries. With that being said, some of the written accounts of the *tamariki`āngai* practice are exceptionally valuable, and some literature on the traditional adoption practice is indeed accurate. Many years' later Cook Islands academics have used these to support their own observations of the practice.

The *tamariki`āngai* practice is similar to those found in other cultures. For instance, the gifting of the first-born child to the grandparents or other family members is a common practice across Polynesia, for example, amongst New Zealand Māori communities. The kin-care arrangement also exists where the children are temporarily looked after by other family members with no legal arrangements required. The *tamariki`āngai* practice dictates that there must be a blood relationship to one of the parents. The enactment of the Cook Islands Law 1915 has in modern times influenced the traditional practice with families going through the Land Court system to legalise the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement. This is important mostly because the older

generations have passed on and therefore verbal decisions made in the past are likely to be unrecognised in the future.

The qualitative descriptive methodology was used to describe the stories of the participants, ensuring that the data was not interpreted and scrutinised to influence the outcome of the study. In order to understand the experiences, behaviour, attitudes and identity of the *tamariki`āngai*, reviewing and understanding the Social Identity Theory and its characteristics was essential. The researcher, being a *tamariki`āngai* herself, embraced the opportunity to adopt the insider research approach and the researcher maintained that approach throughout in this study. The indigenous methodology approach was critical to support the cultural lens of *‘ākono`anga* (customs) and *raranga* (weaving) to articulate and understand our Māori world view. The Māori world view is the foundation of the Rangihau model and from there the researcher has adopted and developed the Kete Ora`anga model to represent the *tamariki`āngai* practice and the research method.

2. CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

`AKATAKA`ANGA PATOA

RARANGA - WEAVING



The *raranga* (weaving) motif is symbolic of the weaving pattern used in the making of essential garments and crafts from pandanus and coconut palms. The weaving pattern and overlapping arrangement of the weave technique signifies the overlapping influence of non-Māori (European) practice into the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai*. The *raranga* motif was selected for this chapter as it reflects the critical analysis of the findings through the literature review, it represents the weaving and overlapping of common themes between the raw data and literature review.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the relevant literature and research on adoption in other countries such as New Zealand and Hawai`i, as comparisons to the Cook Islands context, looking at the evolution of adoption practices in these countries and highlighting their similarities to the adoption practices in the Cook Islands. The researcher has restricted the review of indigenous adoptions practices to Polynesia (New Zealand Māori included) given the historical genealogical connections, inter-relationships and synergies that exist culturally and linguistically between these countries. The amalgamation of colonial influences and imported legislations to these communities will also be discussed. An in-depth explanation of the introduction of colonial legislations such as the Cook Islands Act 1915 is a crucial part of this chapter. Lastly, it explores the impact of colonisation on the traditional adoption practices and how it has influenced the perceptions of Cook Islanders towards *tamariki`āngai* practice.

2.2 Introduction of Colonial Legislations in the Cook Islands

The introduction of adoption legislation to the Cook Islands can be interpreted as an act of influencing change and undertaking reform of traditional practices. A protocol that has been influenced by developmental dynamics such as colonial governing which shaped the incentives and dilemmas which form and refine the traditional practice of *tamariki`āngai*. However, before colonialism, the Cook Islands had its own tribal system where the authority to govern over each tribe was vested with the Ariki (High Chiefs) of each tribe, assisted by the Mataiapo (sub-chief) and Rangatira (assistant sub-chief) (Crocombe, 1983). It is a tribal system that fought hard against colonialism to maintain its power and legacy in the past and in today's society as well.

The arrival of the missionaries to the Cook Islands from 1821 onwards paved the way for the strong affiliation of the islands with the British Empire, headed by Queen Victoria. According to Crocombe (1983), the successful French annexation of Tahiti in 1843 frightened the Cook Islands into seeking protection from the British Empire. Crocombe highlights that in the 1870s, Rarotonga enjoyed prosperity and peace under the authority of Queen Makea (Makea Takau as she was known). She was the only woman paramount chief during that era. In 1888, Makea Takau lobbied the British to set up a protectorate to head off what she believed to be imminent invasion by the French (Crocombe, 1983).



Image 19: Queen Makea Takau Ariki (1839-1911). [Holmes & Crocombe (2014). Pg. 167]

Dodson (2009), states that “in 1888 the Cook Islands territory became a British Protectorate and in 1901 it was annexed by New Zealand” (p.23). According to Crocombe (1982), on October 7, 1900, five paramount chiefs and seven sub-chiefs on Rarotonga, sighted and endorsed the Deed of Cession without careful consideration of the ramifications and implications to the people. Furthermore, Crocombe (1982) asserts that Queen Makea Takau was instrumental in influencing the decision for the annexation of the Cook Islands by New Zealand. The annexation meant that the boundaries of New Zealand were extended to include the Cook Islands, which were administered by New Zealand until 1965 when the Cook Islands became self-governing with free association with New Zealand. This Deed allowed the Cook Islands to be a colony of New Zealand with a Resident Agent as caretaker (Crocombe, 1983).

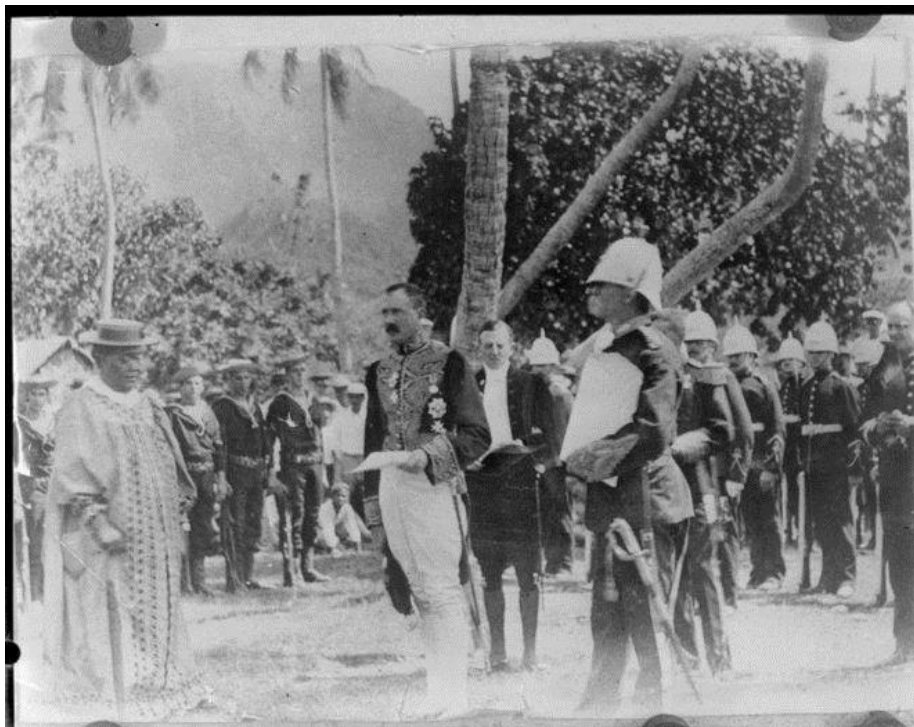


Image 20: Queen Makea Takau Ariki, Governor General Lord Ranfurly with British Resident Walter Gudgeon. (1839-1911). [Photo Credits: New Zealand. Minister of Internal Affairs: Photograph of Cook Islands Annexation Ceremony. Ref: PAColl-4235. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22321304>]

The image above was taken on the 7th October 1900. It shows Queen Makea Takau listening to Governor General Lord Ranfurly reading the annexation proclamation, with British Resident Walter Gudgeon. Also shown in the background are the British blue jackets and marines. Prior to this ceremony the Cook Islands was part of the British protectorate. With this annexation

milestone the boundaries under New Zealand's authority were extended to include the islands of the Cook Islands.

According to Dodson (2009), "Mangaia's objected to the appointment of Resident Agents imposed on them to replace their traditional leadership". Instead they formed a "legacy of mutual enmity between Rarotonga central government and Mangaia's traditional government" which still stands today (p.23). This was a stance that earned Mangaia the reputation of being resistant and unpredictable. Moss (1894) recorded that "Mangaia's saw themselves as subject to Mangaian laws wherever they reside" (p.22). Mangaia is one of the three islands (Mangaia, Pukapuka, Mitiaro,) in the Cook Islands that fought for their traditional rights and leadership to continue in the ruling of their people. This bold stance by Mangaia, as explained by Dodson, should be applauded.

2.3 Cook Islands Act 1915

The Cook Islands, previously under the British protectorate, was annexed by New Zealand in 1901, until 1965 when the Cook Islands became self-governing. The published material on adoption is complicated because it is embedded in the colonial and legislative relationship with New Zealand that introduced the justice system, whereby going through the Land Court to legally adopt a child became the preferred approach (Crocombe, 1961 and Braddeley, 1982). Dodson (2013), states the New Zealand Parliament ratified the Cook Islands Act 1915 which "unified the fifteen culturally different islands for administration purposes" (p.24). The Cook Islands Act 1915 established a High Court and a Native Land Court to administer all land hearings and adoption orders. Interestingly, the Cook Islands Act 1915 had two parts referring to the process of filing an adoption order in the Land Court system. The legislation relating to adoption in the islands became entangled in land tenure administration.

The Cook Islands Act 1915, part 15 Sec. 456 stated that the adoption by native custom is invalid whether made before or after the commencement of the Act, "shall be of any force or effect whether in respect of intestate succession or otherwise" not recognisable or invalid (p. 67). Therefore, section 456 of the Act states that any traditional adoption arrangement prior to or after the commencement of the Cook Islands Act 1915 is invalid and not recognised in the legal system. In other words, the influence of non-Māori legislation and practice provides no recognition of the Cook Islands *tamariki`āngai* practices. Furthermore, Sec.461 highlights the process of adopting a native child and stipulated who can be adopted, "the child to be adopted

is under the age of 21 years” and “the adopting parent (if unmarried) must be at least 30 years older than the child” (p.67). Section 462 also states that “no order of adoption shall be made without the consent of the parents...” (p. 67). Section 463 explains that no child that is already adopted can be re-adopted by any other person while the current adopted parents are still alive (Cook Islands Act 1915, Part 15, p.67). These enacted conditions are not implied in the traditional adoption practice. However, the parental consent being a must is a requirement of the traditional adoption practice.

Additionally, in Part 20 of the Cook Islands Act 1915, a provision was put in place to allow the adoption of native children by European and native spouses and also a married European husband and wife could jointly adopt a native child as well. This section of the Act contradicts the traditional adoption practice of being a family oriented practice, whereby the child to be raised by the feeding parents is blood related to one of the feeding parents (mother or father). Consequently, Europeans were allowed to adopt a Cook Islander, though, “no order shall be allowed under this section of the Act without the consent of the parents or the surviving parent” (Cook Islands Act 1915, Part 20 p.70).

The perceptions of Cook Islanders were influenced following the enactment of this adoption process. It formalises the adoption arrangement and it becomes more structured and documented once the adoption order is endorsed by the Land Court system. It could be suggested that the European influence of legalising the adoption through the court system provides the child with a more structured status within the adopted family, one that is supported by the legal system. In addition, the legal structure of adoption may provide certainty for the child, whereas the *tamariki āngai* practice has the potential of being overlooked by the family in the future. The verbal arrangement has the potential to be confusing for the child, because they can move from one family to another, essentially they may return or be taken back by their birth parents. These are the views and assumptions of the researcher and in chapter four of this thesis the views and perceptions of the traditional advisors and participants of this study will be outlined to confirm or negate these assumptions.

Crocombe (1983), describes how the New Zealand Māori experience of the imposition of European land tenure was replicated in the Cook Islands with the same chaotic results. Ostensibly the legislation was based on traditional adoption practices (both for the Cook Islands

and New Zealand Māori), but the reality is, the legislation served European political interests and aspirations.

In 1940, a Rarotonga Land Court judgement imposed a definitive prescription of what constitutes a Cook Island traditional adoption practice. To add insult to injury, the entire judgement purports to be informed by traditional practices and then goes on to emphatically undermine them. This encounter is a pure non-Māori influence on the decisions of the court, whereby traditional practice was adhered to and the land entitlement of the adopted child is limited only to the blood related parent.

In the Cook Islands the custom is that the adopted child must be related by blood to the adopting parents, and if there is not a fairly close relationship the adopting order should be refused. In the case of a husband and wife adopting a child, an adoption order must be made where there is a blood relationship, to one parent only, but the order should provide that the adopted child does not come into the lands of the parent where unrelated by blood (Land Court Minute Book 1940. p.321).

The above situation is an example of how the non-Māori way of thinking has influenced the *tamariki`āngai* practice. The legislated arrangement does specify that the adopted child can only claim land rights from the blood related parent (mother or father). For instance, if the child is blood related to the father he/she can access his land but will not have access to the mother's land. However, the traditional adoption practice in the Cook Islands is family oriented therefore, the decision whether the child has land rights on the non-blood related parent's side depends on the family. These land rights are controversial amongst families these days as they go head to head in the Land Court setting out to determine the rightful landowner and entitlements. Confusion is common as a result of the traditional practice converging with the legislation and the influence of non-Māori practices.

Crocombe (1964), provides information that contradicts the judgment in regards to adoption of children not related by blood.

Adoptees from outside the lineage were usually secondary members of it (that is the children of contingent members) and automatically assumed the status of primary members once adopted. Both the father and the brothers of the adoptee's mother were primary right holders there and could provide land for the child. Persons with no recognised connection by descent were sometimes adopted, though this was much less common than the adoption of kin and seems to have been practiced only by persons of rank (Crocombe, 1964 p. 56).

The controversy in the literature reinforces the reality of the Indigenous community. Indigenous communities are invariably closed communities, which explains the inability of

non-Māori to grasp the intricacies of Cook Islands traditional adoption practices. Therefore, this study is significant in exploring the experiences of *tamariki`āngai* from the position of an Indigenous Cook Islands Māori adoptee.

Before New Zealand annexed the Cook Islands, Fredrick Moss, a British resident (deployed around the Cook Islands) published an account of traditional adoption practices which is more reflective of European notions of adoption. This account is based on conjecture and typically demonstrates the superior colonial attitude to the Indigenous people of the Cook Islands. Moss states;

The adopted members are numerous in every family and are not distinguished from the rest. They have the same rights and are under the same obligations... This system of adoption is so old and constant that mother's part with their babies apparently without a pang, but its tendency must be to weaken very materially all family affection. (Moss, 1894, p. 23).

Obviously, Moss's observations of Cook Island traditional adoption practices are subjective and based on European sensibilities and cultural norms. The marginalisation of Cook Islands cultural perspectives is sustained over subsequent decades.

Evidently the Cook Islands Act imposed new grounds for the legalising of the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement within family. A process which can be misinterpreted by the people that can lead to family disputes later on in the lives of the *tamariki`āngai*. Although there was a shift of legalising the adoption practice being the most preferred and recognised in the court system, Cook Islanders continued to exercise the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai*. The root cause of the family disputes nowadays in regards to land rights is the contradicting views of the two separate practices. Society is faced with the two (traditional and modern) practices and using both simultaneously to determine their land rights is the wrong approach and deciding the approach that will benefit them the most. So if the traditional way was going to give them what they wanted they choose to use that traditional process. If the modern process is going to benefit them the most then they use the modern process and let the Land Court System determine their rights and entitlements.

2.4 Evolution of Adoption Practice in New Zealand

In 2001, Marie Dyhrberg presented an article about the issues around adoption practices in New Zealand. Dyhrberg (2001), describes the importation of English Laws to New Zealand, after being colonised by English settlers, as an interference with the Māori protocol that

impacted on the *whāngai* practice. *Whāngai* has been used from time immemorial to the present day, though its status within the legal system has varied over time, it was ignored and rejected until the twentieth century. *Whāngai* is a verb meaning to feed or nourish, this word also indicates the process of adoption and an adopted relative. Gibbs & Scherman (2013), supported Dyhrberg's views stating that the *whāngai* practice has existed within New Zealand Māori society for decades, and continued to be ignored and rejected by the natives until the twentieth century. Therefore, the importation of European law to New Zealand was not a welcoming influence and despite having these laws in place the Indigenous community were not convinced and continued practicing traditional adoption practice.

According to Benton, Frame, Meredith, (2013), since the introduction of alternative legal systems, the Māori customary practice of adoption became more varied and complex. "Traditionally, adoption seem to have been mainly of close relatives, with adoption of non-relatives rare or discouraged" (p.525). Benton et al, (2013), went on to say that in most adoption cases "for social and cultural reasons, the adopted children would be made aware of the identity of their natural parents". Furthermore, "*whāngai* closely related to the adoptive parent seem to have stronger claims to succession than more distant kin" (p.525). Additionally, there is no need for a special ceremony to affirm the traditional or customary adoption arrangement, the tribal endorsement to the arrangement is crucial to confirm the child's right and share of tribal land. Also, succession of rights and land share of the child could "only be secured by *ohākī* (public affirmation of a bequest) from the adopting parent" (p.525).

Keane (2011), describes *whāngai* practice as a child being raised by someone other than their birth parents, usually a relative. Most *whāngai* includes a grandchild being raised by grandparents. West (2012), argues that *whāngai* arrangements differ from legal adoption where children are "retained within kinship network with an open arrangement" and it is used to strengthen ties between family members (p.23). Whereas the legal adoption system is closed and outside of the kinship network.

Furthermore, Walker (2001) and Keane (2011), explain that the *whāngai* arrangement is open and the child is able to keep in contact with the birth parents. Although it continued to have no legal recognition, according to Dyhrberg (2001), *whāngai* practice remained the accepted practice for Māori families, regardless of the various adoption and child care Acts passed in the twentieth century. Child, Youth and Family (2010), state that Māori children living with

extended kin-carers are more likely to be placed with extended family. Gibbs & Scherman (2013), state that kin care was a normal practice in the Māori culture because grandparents are more involved in looking after their grandchildren.

The Māori community believed that the imported Adoption Acts interfere with the Māori *whakapapa* (genealogy) or traditional lines of descent, the child's legal connection to the biological parents. Subsequently, the Native Land Claims and Adjustment Act 1901 was introduced. Through this Act, it became essential to register *whāngai* placement in the Native Land Court to qualify the child to succeed to lands of their *whāngai* parents. The Act also established the legally recognised adoption of children, a new form of child placement that was not kinship based. Although, the Native Land Act 1909 prohibits the traditional *whāngai* practices and Māori were forced to legally adopt through the Native Land Act, Māori continued to *whāngai* children without legally adopting them at their own risk of not being able to legally succeed to land.⁷ The progression of bringing *whāngai* into the legal system began with the Native Land Claims and Adjustment Act 1901. The Act stipulates that a *whāngai* child must be registered with the Native Land Court in order to be able to inherit the lands of their *whāngai* parents. This became more prescriptive under the Native Land Act 1909.⁸

Benton et al (2013), stated that adoption made under “Māori customary law were rendered invalid in 1909, but reinstated in 1927, and made a condition of rights for inheritance for *whāngai* in 1993, whether they were legally adopted or not” (p.526). Accordingly, “confusion and conflict between Māori customary law and statute law on the rights of *whāngai*, resulted in many legal interventions” (p.526). During this era adoption cases were being heard in the court system as a result of both customary law and statute law being continuously debated and misinterpreted within the Māori community. The Native Land Court formalised rules against the gifting of land to the child through *ohākī*, at the same time a statute disallowing *ohākī* as a method of transferring land rights to the *whāngai* was enacted. These events are the reason for confusion and conflicting interpretation of the two systems in society. “Subsequent legislation regulating adoptions was used by Māori to clarify questions of succession” (p.526), however, there were concerns that “Māori adoptions might give rights of inheritance of Māori land to

⁷ Sources: Retrieved from <http://www.review.mai.ac.nz> on 27 February 2016).

⁸ Sources: Retrieved from www.teara.govt.nz on 4 March 2016.

non- Māori” (p.526). Furthermore, Benton et al (2013) stated that legislation in 1909 were enacted to prohibit the adoptions of non-Māori by Māori and vice versa, in order to protect Māori land rights. However, in 1955 this prohibition was repealed. This appeared to be a difficult time in terms of trying to get a balance between Māori and the European community.

Dyhrberg (2001) describes the reaction of Māori to the enactment of the Adoption Act 1955, stating that despite having an Adoption Act, Māori families continued practicing their traditional system of *whāngai*, which “embraces the importance of *whanau* and *whakapapa* (genealogy and ancestry)...they continued to ignore the non-Māori influence...to register the arrangement through the legal system” (Dyhrberg, 2001, p.7). Furthermore, the closed adoption or secrecy notion promoted by the Adoption Act 1955 was unfavourable to the Māori community. The biggest criticism of closed adoption is the disconnection of the children from their families (Bradley, 1997). For Māori, family “connection and *whakapapa* knowledge is seen as integral to their physical, social and spiritual wellbeing” (West, 2012, p.29). In addition, these connections support the transfer of knowledge and access to cultural practices and “are integral to the formation of identity” (West, 2012, p.29).

The Adoption Act 1915 continued to promote secrecy in adoption processes, which became the focus of adoption laws, mainly to protect the identity of the childless European couple (Bradley, 1997). The intention of the secrecy notion was compromised because the “Māori Land Court and adoption hearings remained open and Māori adoptions were published” in the Māori Gazette (Else, 1991, p.179). The Act further implemented closed adoption, a provision which suggested that the traditional Māori adoption practice was detrimental to the child and *whāngai* parents. However, from a “Māori’s perspective, closed adoption” will alienate the child from biological parents and the kin group which “threatens the child’s self-identity” (McRae & Nikora, 2006, p.2).

McRae & Nikora, (2006) outline that the traditional practice of *whāngai* is understood by Māori as a “*whānau* system” that provides the child with an “open and supportive environment to grow” which strengthens the family ties between *whānau* (p.3). “Paramount to the Māori world and fundamental to the *whāngai* institution is the kinship principle which acts to protect both the interest of the child and the *whānau* group” (McRae & Nikora, 2006, p.3). Furthermore, McRae & Nikora, (2006), outline the benefit of the traditional Māori *whāngai* practice as a support network that provides the opportunity for childless siblings to raise a child, supports a

young mother in raising her child, and elders in the family whose children have left home. For instance, the grandparents looking after a grandchild. Additionally, the “relationship between grandparents and *mokopuna* (grandchild) within Māori society is regarded as special in that love is shown freely and openly in actions, words and affections” (McRae & Nikora, 2006, p.4).

Additionally, the secrecy and inflexibility that characterise many adoptions goes against Māori values of openness and flexibility in family arrangements. Therefore, a child adopted outside the *whānau* may lose his or her cultural and tribal identity and further “lose the opportunities...to the right of entitlement to Māori land” (Dyhrberg, 2001, p.8). In addition, one of the major issues of uncertainty around *whāngai* was the land rights and entitlement attached to the *whāngai* arrangement. The shift to embrace the legislated directions to recognise *whāngai* arrangements caused problems within *whānau* (Māori families) and the families started to doubt and question the land entitlements of the *whāngai* children (Dyhrberg (2001).

Te Mātāpunenga literature,⁹ by Benton, Frame, Meredith (2013), is a collection of concepts discussed using valuable quotes and references from the Native Land Court, including writings by Māori in newspapers, manuscripts sources and commentary by Māori experts that were translated into English. These were very useful in providing insight into the evolution of Māori customary adoption processes. The succession of rights of adopted children to native land according to Māori custom required the Judges of the Native Land Court “to understand the Māori customary practice of *whāngai*” (p.526).

The following opinion by Hairoa Mangakahia of Hauraki stated that there are cases where a foster-child would take his foster-father’s property and other instances where this was not the case; it depended on the circumstances. If the child was *whāngai* at birth, he would be considered the child of his foster-parent only if the child was a relative. The *whāngai* child would succeed to the property of the foster-parent automatically and would not need a bequest. However, if the “children were adopted after they were old enough to know their own parents, they would derive nothing by the adoption, except by gift of bequest” (p.527).

⁹ *Te Mātāpunenga* A Compendium of References to the Concepts and Institutions of Māori Customary Law. (p.525-538).

Furthermore, the Native Land Court in 1895 heard three cases about the rights of the *whāngai* child to succeed the interest of his/her adopting parents. Prior to issuing a decision of the three separate cases the Court's decision was aligned with the "Native customs of *whāngai* after a consideration of the evidence given and...decisions referred to during the hearing of the three cases" (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). The decisions delivered by the following Judges (Edger and Mair, Aperahama Te Kume and Hemi Erueti), on June 19, 1895 confirming the rights of the *whāngai* child to succeed the interest of his/her adopting parents similar to the previous opinion of Hairoa Mangakahia stated above. The Native custom of *whāngai* as per the decision of the Court stated, a "complete adoption would be where the child was taken in early infancy and lived with its adopting parent up to marriage of manhood" (p.527). Consequently, the adopted child must be a "relative by blood of the adopting parent" and the "adoption were made with the consent of the *hapū* or tribe", and the child remained in the *hapū* for the rest of his/her life will then be entitled to the *hapū* land, "under such conditions it would be entitled to succeed to the property of the adopting parent" (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). Accordingly, if the adopted child cared for his/her adopting parent in their old age "he would succeed to the whole interest of the adopting parent" (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). But "if there is a near relative, the adopted child would share in the succession" (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). The "adopted child would lose his rights if he neglected his adopting parent in his old age, or ceased to act with, or as a member of, the *hapū* or tribe" (p.527). This action by the adopted child will not allow him to succeed the interest of his adopting parent. The rights of the adopted children set out above "might be modified if the adopting parent made an *ohākī*" (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). Therefore, one way to confirm the child's status and entitlement is to have a bequest publicly made by the adopting parent.

According to Benton et al (2013), the land rights of the *whāngai* children verses the rights of the natural or biological children is determined through the custom of bequest or gifting land. Hone Heke¹⁰ in a newspaper article in 1902 stated that "if the foster father has children of his own, his rights will go to them, not to his *tamaiti whāngai*". The only way the *whāngai* child can obtain his foster father's land is "only through gifting, or oral bequest...the foster father must gift or bequeath while he is still alive". This must be presented publicly and declared in front of the *hapū* (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). The elders have not spoken of a situation where

¹⁰ Author of a newspaper article - Hone Heke, Te Puke ki Hikurangi, vol.4, no. 17, 15 February 1902, p.1.

the “*tamaiti whāngai* received any property (land) from the foster father on the grounds of his foster relationship, as foster children do under European law” (Benton et al, 2013, p.527). Benton et al (2013) stated; the land right of the *whāngai* child is treated differently if the child is related to his adopted father on the side of the family which has land rights and if the foster father is a Chief of the tribe. Additionally, it is not Māori customary lore for the interest of the adopting father to be passed on to the adopted child, “in the Māori tradition, adopted children would fall back on their rights through their birth parents” (p.529). The *whāngai* child would not have land rights if they did not have genealogical ties to it, the only exception is “through cultivation, however, the adopting father’s right to cultivation... would normally pass on to his original descendants or relatives” (p.529).

2.5 Evolution of Adoption Practice in Hawai‘i

In Hawai‘i, the traditional adoption arrangement is similar to the practice in the Cook Islands as outlined by the literature review. The most common form of adoption in Hawai‘i is called *hanai* (feed). Carroll (1970), states that the *hanai* practice is when the child is taken by another set of parents and raised up as their own child. It is basically a paperless practice and non-legally binding adoption, but it is so much more than that. It is their tradition and history. It is their greatest example of how highly the Hawaiian people regard their families and their children. Kaaihue (2009), explains a tradition in Hawai‘i for the gifting of the first born grandchild to the grandparents to raise. Accordingly, the Hawaiians consider this tradition as the highest form of love and respect that one could bestow upon their parents.¹¹

Furthermore, there are four important components of the traditional *hanai* arrangement in Hawai‘i.

The evidence available to us from elderly participants and documentary sources suggest that four principles were of particular importance in the traditional patterning of *hanai* relations. These were kinship and seniority between the natural parents and the adopting parents, and the age and sex of the child. (Carroll 1970, 24)

Carroll (1970) elaborates on the four principles of *hanai* arrangement. First, the child being *hanai* is always blood related from within the family. Seniority was relevant because if an

¹¹ Retrieved from, <https://kaaihue.wordpress.com/2009/06/14/the-meaning-of-hanai> on 14 March 2016

older brother asked for a younger brother's child, out of respect for the eldest, it was impossible to refuse the request. In many cases in Hawai'i, grandparents often asked for grandchildren or in some cases where an elder sibling is unable to have children, a child is gifted to him/her to *hanai*. The sex of the child is significant because first-born males were considered to belong to the father's side, and the first female child belonged to the mother's side.

Evidently, there are noticeable similarities between the traditional adoption practices of these different cultures; the Cook Islands, New Zealand Māori and Hawai'i. The gifting of grandchildren to grandparents, the gifting to other siblings who are childless, the distribution between the paternal and maternal line whereby the first born goes to the father and second born to the mother and so on, are all common practices in the cultures listed above.

Kenn (1939), explains that "Hawaiians are very careful as to the parentage of a *hanai* child and did not adopt indiscriminately as is often believed" (p. 47). Therefore, keeping the *hanai* practice within the family is widely respected amongst the extended families. Furthermore, several reasons why *hanai* is practiced widely in Hawai'i relates to the possibility of creating a strong bond between both parents (birth and adopting). This is "important for chiefs who were thus assured of alliances with other tribes" (Horn 1948, p. 24). Another reason is the "desire to have a child learn skills not possessed by their parents". Therefore, the child is "apprenticed to an expert...becoming for all practical purposes an adoptive member of the family" (Handy & Pukui, 1958. p. 258). Similar to transferring a grandchild to the grandparents to gift traditional knowledge and skills to the child. According to Carroll (1970), Hawaiians rarely rely upon adoption agencies to arrange *hanai*. Commonly if the parents were to die, siblings or grandparents were expected to *hanai* the children. If there were no senior relatives to *hanai* the children, the onus is with the eldest child of the family to *hanai* his or her younger siblings¹².

¹² Retrieved from <http://www.Hawai'ian-roots.com/adoption-in-ancient-Hawai'i.htm> on 14 March 2016).

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the colonial influence towards the *tamariki`āngai* practice is still a sensitive issue to address amongst families. Although legislation has been in place for over two decades the *tamariki`āngai* practice is still popular amongst families. Although the *tamariki`āngai* arrangements within families are not recognised in the court of law, families are now, documenting their family meetings in a form of a minute recording of the discussion held. This of course has recognition within the court system.

The move to encourage the protectorate of the British Empire over the Cook Islands was a strategy by Makea Takau in her efforts to thwart imminent invasion by the French. Just over ten years later the Cook Islands became a colony of New Zealand. Sixty five years after that the Cook Islands became self-governing. The enactment of the Cook Islands Act 1915 saw a shift to encourage families to legalise the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement through the Land Court system. Families continued to ignore and reject this approach and continued to practice *tamariki`āngai* within their families. Although there are some similarities between the traditional practice and the legal adoption practice, Cook Islanders still ignored the reform. The Act had its limitations and restrictions. Allowing non-Māori to adopt Cook Islands children is obviously new ground but the adoption order will be declined without parental consent, therefore, the traditional concepts are still supported in the Act. The legislation has specified that the adopted child can only claim land rights from the blood related parent. Evidently, land disputes between the families are very common nowadays, the root cause of the problem is that families are exercising both practices (*tamariki`āngai* and *tamariki rētita*) and using the two different frameworks simultaneously to get what they want with land entitlements and traditional titles. There needs to be a separation between the two to avoid further conflict and confusion amongst families. The legal structure provided by the Cook Islands Act 1915 can potentially provide structure and certainty to the child and the adoptive parents. The paperless traditional practice is a huge risk to all parties involved, in terms of not being recognised in the court system. Decisions passed down from one generation to the next can lose *mana* (power) and respect amongst families over time especially with the passing of the elderly across generations who are the guardians of this knowledge and cultural lore. Priorities are changing over time and individual gains and benefits because of greed for land, appear to be what rules and influence decisions and values regarding *tamariki`āngai* being replaced by *tamariki rētita*.

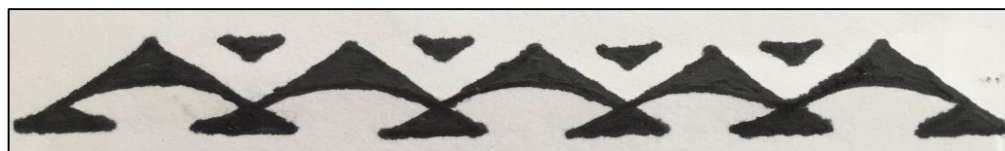
Similar to the situation of the Cook Islands the traditional adoption of *whāngai* has served Māori well for decades and so it is puzzling as to why Western laws have been introduced to govern these traditional practices and to try and fix something that is not broken. The European land tenure process which includes the administration of adoption order in New Zealand was replicated in the Cook Islands, therefore, similarities are expected to occur between the two communities. In comparison, the traditional adoption practices in New Zealand, Hawai‘i and the Cook Islands are very similar, whereby the arrangement is kept within the family and the arrangement is confirmed within a family meeting, that it is paperless and highly respected.

3. CHAPTER THREE:

EVOLUTION OF ADOPTION PRACTICES

TE TAUĀNGA O TE AU PEU TAMARAĪKI `ĀNGAI

MANUTAI - SEABIRD



The *Manutai* (seabird) motif is known as the fisherman's motif, an indication of good news or the arrival of good news, in the Cook Islands traditional voyaging and navigation practices. The bird at sea indicates the presence of fish and is an indication of land nearby. The Cook Islands has fifteen islands spread out over an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of about two million square kilometers in the South Pacific Ocean.¹³ So, just as birds will find their way across the Pacific Ocean and to the islands of the Cook Islands, the researcher uses the motif of *manutai* to symbolise the arrival of good news with the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1821 to the island of Aitutaki and their continued voyage to other islands of the Cook Islands (Crocombe, 1983). The *manutai* motif represents the safe voyage and journey over the ocean as they set sail to deliver the message of Christianity, and at the same time the influence of colonialism to the Cook Islands. *Manutai* navigates the researcher's journey in undertaking research into the early colonial era and how it has influenced the *tamariki `āngai* practice and philosophies of our people in embracing new discoveries. For this reason the *manutai* has been adopted as it ensures that this research is encapsulated with change, challenges and new discoveries.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter expands on the evolution of traditional adoption practice in the Cook Islands, exploring how colonisation has influenced the *tamariki `āngai* practice over the years and what is the general perception on what that practice entails in today's modern interpretation. In doing so, this chapter will describe the *tamariki `āngai* practice and how it has changed due to the influence of colonisation. In addition, historical events will be cited such as the arrival of

¹³ Source retrieved from www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cw.html on 1 May 2016

Christianity, epidemic outbreak in the 1830s which influenced families and traditional leaders who practiced *tamariki`āngai* as their way of ensuring an heir to their throne and traditional titles. As a result of significant historical events the practice of *tamariki`āngai* continued to be widely practiced well before the introduction of legislation to the Cook Islands. This chapter will also explore the influence that the legislation has had on the *tamariki`āngai* practice within the families and their new introduced perceptions on the practice.

3.2 Definition of Traditional Adoption Practice

The traditional adoption practice in the Cook Islands is commonly referred to as *tamariki`āngai*. The Dictionary of the Cook Islands Languages online defines *tamariki`āngai* as a foster-child. In the definition it specifically suggests that “*Mē ka 'āngai tamariki kōrua, 'e rave mei roto i tō kōrua kōpū tangata*. (If you two are going to adopt children, take them from within your own (extended) family (unit))” and “foster, when applied to kinship terms, is feeding” therefore “*tamariki`āngai* means feeding or foster children”.¹⁴ Earlier in the thesis, equivalent terms to describe the traditional adoption practice on different islands of the Cook Islands were highlighted. *Tamariki`āngai* is widely practiced in the Cook Islands within the family circles and often the only time family see the need to refer to the legislated practice of *tamariki rētita* is when there is no blood relationship between the adopting parent and the child.

Furthermore, there are similarities in the Cook Islands definition of *tamariki`āngai* with other countries. In the New Zealand Māori language the equivalent word for *tamariki`āngai* is *whāngai*, meaning traditional fostering and adoption of a child. Thus, “*whāngai* is a traditional practice that has been used from time immemorial to the present”¹⁵. Though the status of *whāngai* in the legal system has altered over time. In the Hawaiian language the term *hanai* means to adopt, to be close, to nourish and to sustain. *Hanai* also means to be adopted or looked after by other people other than the birth parents with or without legal papers.¹⁶ Moreover, the *tamariki`āngai* practice is an arrangement made within a family meeting setting without going through the court system. The practice is also known as a kin-care arrangement when family members look after each other’s children. That is a simple explanation of what a *tamariki`āngai* practice is. Evidently, there is limited literature relating to the traditional

¹⁴ Cook Islands Maori definition retrieved from <http://cookislandsdictionary.com/search> on 20 March 2016

¹⁵ New Zealand Maori definition retrieved from www.teara.govt.nz on 14 March 2016

¹⁶ Hawai’i definition retrieved from <http://www.urgandictionary.com/define.php?term=Hanai> on 14 March 2016

adoption practices of *tamariki`āngai* in the Cook Islands. This was of no surprise for a culture that heavily relies on oral history rather than written.

According to Dodson (2009), *tamariki`āngai* is defined “as the care of a child outside of their birth family” (p.57). Ron and Marjorie Crocombe (2003), state that the traditional adoption practice of the Cook Islands is “kinship rights and obligations” to the extended family to care for the child if and when required (p.19). It is a custom that has not been “comprehensively studied...nor have these customs been analysed for how it may influence” the behaviour of Cook Islanders over time (p.19).

Although there is limited specific literature on the Cook Islands *tamariki`āngai* practice, similar traditional adoption practices within Polynesian societies can be drawn on. These similarities can be confirmed by the transferring of traditional knowledge from one island to another through voyaging and exploring of the islands by our ‘*ui tupuna* (ancestors). Te Rangi Hiroa (1945), suggested that the “ancestors of the Polynesians did not enter Polynesia empty handed or empty headed” (p.13). Dodson (2013), states, one of the most documented practices throughout the Pacific is the informal island adoption process, such as *tamariki`āngai*. Other countries around the Pacific would have their own words to describe their traditional adoption practices. Our ancestors sailed across the Pacific with “their traditions that they transmitted, adapted and replicated” once they settled in the new discovered lands of the Pacific (p.77). Similarities to the situations in New Zealand Māori and Hawaiian communities are described in chapter two.

Beaglehole (1957), describes how the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement is sometimes decided before the child is born and the baby would remain with the birth parents until weaned from breastfeeding. The feeding parents are expected to provide good food to the birth mother until the child transfers to the feeding parents’ home, by this time the feeding parents would have named the child and must prepare a big feast to mark the occasion. The view by Beaglehole is interesting and it summarises the status and position of a *tamariki`āngai* within the new family and home of the feeding parents.

3.3 The Evolution of Tamariki`Āngai

The evolution of *tamariki`āngai* happened way before the colonisation of the Cook Islands. Kuhlmann (1943), argues that the original motive of adoption is for the sole purpose of heirship as illustrated back to antiquity where adoption of children was widely practiced by the Babylonians, Hebrews and Egyptians as their way of ensuring an heir to their thrones.

Kuhlmann (1943), describes the Roman law which recognises adoption as a “convenient method of providing a family heir to save the family from extinction” (p.222). Consequently, the Roman law provided for a complete “substitution of the adoptive in lieu of the natural relationship” (p.222). In addition, it should be noted that the Romans used “adoption as a device to promote the welfare of the family as a unit rather than the welfare of the child or of the society in general” (Kuhlmann, 1943, p.222).

In the Cook Islands the importance of ensuring that traditional status and chiefly titles were continued and having an heir to the title were highly considered. There were instances of inter tribe feeding of children to embrace that notion of having a successor to the title. One of the earliest and most famous examples shared by Braddeley (1982), is the “alliance between Tangi`ia the founder of the political district of Vaka Tākitumu and `Iro, a powerful Tahitian chief” (p.123). Moreover, to mark the friendship and alliance between the two Chiefs, “Tangi`ia adopted Pā, the son of `Iro and gave him the title of Pā Ariki of Tākitumu” which his descendants still hold today (p.123). Furthermore, *tamariki`āngai* in traditional times were often referred to as *tama`ū`ā* which literally means child of the thigh. Braddeley (1982), suggests that the use of the term *tama`ū`ā*, to describe the traditional adoption arrangement was more fitting for a non-blood relationship between the two parties (child and adoptive parents), because it is the act of placing a child on ones lap (thigh) as a gesture of acknowledging the child’s acceptance into the tribe from another tribal group.

According to Moss (1894), *tama`ū`ā* is commonly practiced with the feeding of a child from another tribe, Moss goes on to suggest that the child “does not become a member until formally admitted...children in this position are known as *tama`ū`ā*” (p.23). Furthermore, Braddeley (1982), suggests that the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement for a *tama`ū`ā* is recognised and “celebrated by a feast which marked the formal agreement between the adoptive and natural parents” (p.123). Therefore, the feast signified that the family have agreed and accorded the child with a privileged position within the family and fed on the parents thighs as a mark of his or her special status within the family. Consequently, the same term *tama`ū`ā* was “used to describe the relationship between the Ariki (High Chief) and the missionaries who were given protection” by the Chiefs (Braddeley, 1982, p.123). Missionaries were protected by the Chiefs during their quest to preach the gospel of Christianity to the locals. So, they were referred to as the *tama`ū`ā* of the High Chiefs.



Image 21: Pā Ariki, Tinomana Ariki, Ariki Makea Takau, Daniella Makea (seated) and unidentified Cook Islander (standing). Photo credits: from the album: Cook Islands, circa 1896, Rarotonga, Photographer, unknown. Te Papa (0.025525)

The *tamariki`āngai* practice continued to gain momentum after an epidemic outbreak of flu-like viral infections and measles amongst the Indigenous community, whereby the *Kōpū Ariki* were forced to feed children in order to have an heir to their titles. As a result of the epidemic spreading throughout the islands, tribal Chiefs were forced to *`āngai* (feed) children from within the tribes and the same practice was undertaken within families. Crocombe (1983), cited the record of John William, dated 1837, to describe an epidemic outbreak in Rarotonga during the months of April to August 1830, “the disease was named dysentery which is an inflammatory fever akin to typhus” (p.84). It was suggested that the epidemic was brought to the islands by a visiting ship. The missionaries were supplying the medicine to the sick people and visiting their homes day and night. It was recorded in the writings of John William that during that time there were “ten burials a day and sometimes twenty” (Crocombe, 1983 p.84). Crocombe (1983), went on to describe that the people were frightened by the ordeal and the fatal illness, “they lived in fear and for that reason that they decided to join the classes and the Ekalesia (Christian Congregation)”. Accordingly, “all contemporary mission sources interpreted the epidemic as God’s punishment for the people’s sins and noted that this was also the view of the people” (William, 1937 cited by Crocombe 1983, p.84). Evidently, there was a boost within the Rarotonga community to accept the Gospel into the tribal structure around the island. Crocombe (1983), stated that churches were built around the islands as a place of worship for the new converts into the Gospel that the missionaries shared with the native people.

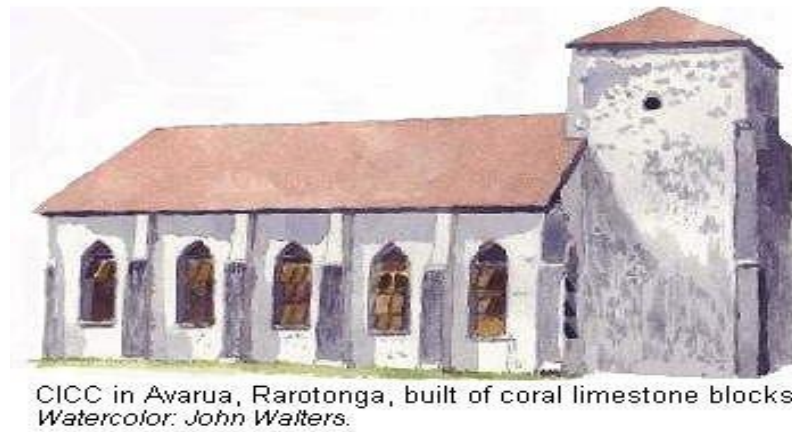


Image 22: Painted image of the CICC Avarua Church by John Walters open source permitted for personal use from. <http://www.ck/religion/htm>

Consequently, the traditional adoption practice became popular in the aftermath of the epidemic outbreak in the 1830s for the sole purpose of “intestate succession” (inheritance without a will) (Crocombe 1983, p.83). Braddeley (1982), described how it became paramount for the chiefly lineage in Rarotonga to inter-adopt the children in those days to ensure a successor was ready to rule once the chief passed on. However, Braddeley went on to state that “adoptions were of considerable political significance when they took place between chiefly lineages to prevent the outbreak of hostilities” (p.123). The consequence of this practice is that today the “Ariki (chiefly) lines in Rarotonga are related by so many consanguine ties that membership in one tribe usually implied membership in them all” (Braddeley, 1982, p.123).

Braddeley (1982), also describes the *tamariki`āngai* practices as an arrangement of looking after another family member’s child without any formal intervention. Braddeley (1982), states that the practice was “more formal and a ritualised affair than what it is today...it was marked by a large feast provided by the *kōpū tangata* (kin group) which signified the approval of the transaction by those partaking” (p.124). Braddeley described the process stating that “all the adopted child’s clothes, belongings and sleeping mats were removed from his natural parent’s house so that all trace of him was removed, symbolising that he no longer belonged to his natural parents” (p.124). Therefore, the large feast provided by the feeding parents marked the endorsement of the family for the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement to go ahead.

3.4 Influence of Colonisation

The influence of colonisation on the Cook Islands introduced changes and the undertaking of reform of traditional practices. Despite the traditional tribal systems within each tribal group

governed by the Ariki and supported by the Mata'iapo and Rangatira (Crocombe, 1983), the colonial manipulating and persistent tactics overruled the traditional norms. Traditional leaders who fought hard against colonialism in order to maintain their power, legacy, heritage and identity were outmaneuvered by the influence of colonisation. Furthermore, as a result of the Cook Islands' strong affiliation with the British Empire, the arrival of the missionaries in 1821 to the Cook Islands was another colonial move to further influence the traditional lore of the Cook Islands.

The impact of colonisation on the *tamariki`āngai* practice is evident throughout the history of the Cook Islands, as illustrated by the following accounts. Crocombe (1983) describes the arrival of the missionaries to convert Cook Islands people to Christianity, their use of a Tahitian translator to relay the message, and the fact that John William was successful with his mission to stop cannibalism amongst the natives. Furthermore, colonialism introduced economic activities in the Cook Islands during early discovery of the island. The missionaries achieved this by introducing trading while at the same time exploiting the natural resources for use in trading. Crocombe (1983), reported that the missionaries tried very hard to keep their new converts from the influence of visiting European and American ship crews by teaching them to read and write. Furthermore, they even hired police officers to monitor their neighbours' activities at all times. This was the era when the Blue Laws were developed and introduced by the missionaries, imposing behavioural guidelines for the local people to abide by, while using the police officers to monitor and uphold the provisions of the Blue Laws. Crocombe (1983), states that this era was the beginning of formal education in the Cook Islands. Crocombe (1983), also reported that population decline was experienced in the early 1900s as a result of a "severe epidemic spreading very quickly throughout the Cook Islands", additionally, other colonial influences such as the introduction and misuse of intoxicating liquors and the careless use of European weapons caused injuries to the locals (p.84). Braddeley (1982), further described in her article how the European influences have modified the traditional practices and invented new traditions which "compromised between the old and the new, which allows a considerable latitude" of interpretation of what the traditional practices are (Braddeley, 1982, p.122).

A notion that was frequently proclaimed by the former Premier of the Cook Islands, Sir Albert Henry, was that the Cook Islands people need to continue to refer to their traditional practices and culture, yet adapt to the changing circumstances. The comments below are taken from the Rambling Thoughts of the Premier of the Cook Islands in 1975;

What constitutes true or valid or legitimate culture? To me, culture is something passed on and learned. True culture must be identified with an historically known and proven past...culture must sometimes change to suit the time, for culture which does not change must die or stagnate. This is where the danger lies. If our true culture is left idle too long it could be forgotten and eventually lost (Henry, 1975, p.6).

Clearly, the main point of the above statement by Henry (1975), is that times are changing and therefore our traditions and our culture need to change with the time to avoid stagnating. With the influence of modern practices such as the introduction of the Land Court system enacted in the Cook Islands Act 1915 it is perceived by the people that going through the court setting and obtaining a seal of approval and the signature of the High Judge is perhaps necessary as it marks the endorsement of the adoption arrangement.

3.5 Rights and Entitlements of Tamariki `Āngai

Colonialism has influenced the perceptions and interpretation of the traditional adoption practice in the Cook Islands. In particular, the obligated rights of an adopted child are constantly being questioned. The following literature offers an interpretation of what those rights are and who should be entitled to them. Ron Crocombe in his Land Tenure literature in 1964 described the situation below;

Adoptees sometimes succeeded in holding primary rights in their lineage of adoption as well as their lineage of origin ... this marginal status of adoptees often led to dispute, and rights acquired by adoption have always been a matter of contention (Crocombe, 1964, p.57).

Crocombe's interpretation of the adoptees having claims on both sides, that is, the adopted side and the birth family side. This has proven to be problematic and the cause of family disputes over the rights and status acquired by the adoptee. In this interpretation, Crocombe is referring to a person that is legally adopted through the Land Court system. This point above supports the notion that *tamariki `āngai* must be related to the adoptive parents for these reasons especially when it comes to land and traditional title rights. Regardless of whether the adoption arrangement is formalised or not it really does not matter when it comes to entitlements because the child is blood related to one of the parents and can claim primary status and rights within that kin group. Besides, Braddeley (1982), states that the *tamariki `āngai* practice is undertaken both within and outside of the *kōpū tangata* (families) with full entitlements and rights in the adopting family being conferred upon the adoptee. Braddeley concluded that the most important requirement to a legitimate adoption is the consent and approval of the *kōpū tangata* involved on both sides (the adopted and birth parents), although the adoption through blood connections and within families was most preferred. The *tamariki `āngai* arrangement is

interpreted in a “way which accord with the principles of kinship rather than the dictates of a codified law” (Braddeley, 1982, p.135). Subsequently, in a bureaucratised society, *tamariki`āngai* is one of a few areas where the “traditional authorities, i.e. *kōpū tangata*, still have control” over the child (Braddeley, 1982, p.135).

The Cook Islands historical affairs are embedded through its legends and stories passed down through oral traditions and generations. The conceptions of *tamariki`āngai* practices were not only drawn from stories and legends, they were also influenced by the interpretations of early European observers which have been introduced into litigation in the Land Court to support claims to land. An example of those interpretations is presented in the statement below by Judge Ayson, which sets out the Court’s ideas about registration and traditional adoption practice in 1940. It also highlights the adopted child’s land rights and entitlements in his interpretation.

According to custom in the Cook Islands ... an adopted child is not treated as a child born of the adopting parents...an investigation or succession such a child does not come into all the lands of its adopting parents but only into such lands as may be set aside for the adopted child at the time of adoption. In the Cook Islands the custom is that the adopted child must be related by blood to the adopting parents, and if there is not a fairly close relationship the adopting order should be refused. In the case of a husband and wife adopting a child, an adoption order must be made where there is a blood relationship, to one parent only, but the order should provide that the adopted child does not come into the lands of the parent where unrelated by blood (Land Court Minute Book 22:321 cited by Braddeley, 1982, p.126).

Braddeley’s interpretation of the practice provides insight into the adopted child’s land rights and the critical fact that the child must be blood related to the adopting parents because of the child’s legitimate entitlement to the land. Furthermore, the statement confirms that the child does not have any land entitlement to the non-blood related adopted parent. The land gifted to a child is normally set aside at the time of the adoption in the family meeting where the approval of the *kōpū tangata* confirms the entitlement of the child.

Braddeley (1982), illustrates the importance of adoption of children within the family, that is, with blood connections to the adopted parents. Braddeley describes the relationship of the *metua`āngai* and *tamariki`āngai*, as identical to the relationship of natural parents and their children. Braddeley implied that “parental rights may be shared among several people, including the natural and adoptive parents” (p.131). There is definite evidence to suggest that Cook Islanders “conceive of parental rights as being shared among a number of kinsmen who have both the right and the obligation to care for the child of their kinsman” (p.131). Generally,

grandparents are “entitled to take their grandchildren to live with them as replacements for the children's parents” who have moved on with their own lives (Braddeley, 1982, p.131).

Furthermore, Braddeley states that the “sibling also has a strong claim on one's children especially if he or she is childless” (p.131). For these reasons, the most preferred adoption is by kin and within the family with great “opposition to the registration of adoptions”. Families “prefer children to be adopted from within the family so that the land remains within the kin group” (Braddeley, 1982, p.131). In terms of the status of the *tamariki`āngai* when it comes to land rights, where the “child is adopted by a close kinsman his status remains relatively unchanged”. Braddeley (1982), states that the status and entitlement of the adoptee is usually “determined at the time of adoption and agreed upon by the natural and adoptive parents” (p.132).

Furthermore, the acquisition of land is an important indicator of the *tamariki`āngai*'s status. The manner in which an adoptee acquires land is described in the following quote from the Land Court records cited by Braddeley;

The custom is to call a meeting of the adopting parents and ask for a piece of land. They will agree. If they don't agree the adopted child should call a meeting of his own family and ask to come back. If the asking is humble they will agree (Land Court Minute Book 20:314. Cited by Braddeley, 1982, p.132).

The statement and quote from the Land Court Minute book shows that an advantage of being adopted within the family is that the adoptee has the right to ask for land from either side (natural or adopted parents). Should the original request to the adopted parents be denied, the child can request for the same entitlement from the birth parents.

According to Braddeley (1982), there are no limits imposed on the rights of the adopted child, the situation and practice varies between families and from one case to another. Thus, Braddeley (1982), states that people openly discuss the *tika`ānga* (rights) of the *tamariki`āngai* if they are blood related, yet for a *tamariki`āngai* with no blood ties to the feeding parents can have no rights. Sadly if the child with no blood ties has no rights to the estate of the feeding parents, this does not stop them from “attending family meetings, taking the family names and undertaking the role and duties accorded to them within the adopting family” (Braddeley, 1982, p.132). Evidently in the statement made by Braddeley about the *tika`ānga* of the adopted child, it simply means that the adoptee should not expect to have rights over the estate of the adopting family as if they were born into that family, instead they need to show respect to the adopting

family and see the land rights bestowed upon them as a privilege and honour from the adopted family and not a birth right.

According to Beaglehole (1957), *tamariki`āngai* are favoured by the feeding parents if they had lived with them from birth, and they would expect to inherit the "land, property and status" of the feeding parents with the same entitlements as the natural children of the feeding parents (p. 164). This is one interpretation of what the *tamariki`āngai* rights are, depending on how long he or she has lived with the adoptive parents. Evidently, this is a result of the different interpretation of the *tamariki`āngai* practice due to the influence of colonisation.

3.6 Adoption Records of the Cook Islands

The researcher was fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to access the adoption records held by the Ministry of Justice in the Cook Islands with the support and approval of the Secretary of Justice, Mr Tingika Elikana. Before attempting to interpret the data, the researcher wishes to make a disclaimer that the analysis and interpretation of the available data are entirely the view of the researcher based on the information that was provided. The record provided was in an electronic form where the data was manually entered into the spreadsheet by a data entry officer and the original information came from the register books and adoption application forms. The records were incomplete in some areas where the cell was empty indicating that the register book was also left blank.

The researcher queried the incompleteness of the records with the Ministry of Justice through an email conversation. Accordingly, the Deputy Registrar, Tutai Matenga agreed "that the adoption orders obtained by Justice in the past were incomplete but today the requirements must be met before the adoption applications are received by her office". Matenga also went on to state that "the registration of births, deaths and marriages by Justice started in 1917 probably another reason why some of the records were not given at the time of filing the adoption application". To some extent according to Matenga "some of our old people didn't know their date of births". Matenga stated that the recording of births, deaths and marriages before 1917 were kept by the LMS.¹⁷

It should also be noted that of the total 1,911 adoption order entries listed in the records, 1,377 were ordered and gazetted, whilst 534 entries were either dismissed or were missing information. The adoption records provided started from the year 1905 through to 2016.

¹⁷Email conversation between the Researcher and Mrs Tutai Matenga on 9 June 2016 at 10.23am. Copy of email attached as Appendix 2.

Therefore, the analysis will be based on the 1,377 adoption applications that were ordered. If the adoption application was ordered in the records, it means it has been endorsed by the Land Court. The data presented shows there were more male babies being adopted than female babies, of the 1,377 adoptees recorded, 741 adoptees were male, 622 were female, and 14 recorded were unidentified in terms of the sex of the baby. Furthermore, of the data analysed there are only eight islands with adoption orders recorded. The majority of the adoptions recorded are from Rarotonga, 937 adoptees which is 68% of the total adoptions ordered. Aitutaki recorded 290 adoption orders which is 21% of the total and the remainder of the 150 adoption orders represents 11% for the remaining six islands recorded. However, this analysis does not represent a true distribution of adoption orders in the Cook Islands because the record is incomplete. Records for the remainder of the other islands of the Cook Islands were not included in this record. The records show adoption applications recorded by the year it was ordered or gazetted, the highest recorded was in the 1970's of 250 adoption orders followed by the 1980s with 186 adoption orders. Low adoption orders were recorded between the 1920s and 1950s, with no more than 70, and no less than 40 adoption orders in those years. It should also be noted that 18 of the 1377 recorded adoptions had missing information of what year the adoption was ordered.

The intention of accessing the adoption records of the Cook Islands was to identify significant trends in the data provided. A task that proved to be difficult considering that the data available to this study had a lot of significant gaps. Data being incomplete made it irrational to arrive at any definite conclusion of what might have caused the trends of the adoption process as it would largely be unsupported.

3.7 Conclusion

The arrival of Christianity to the Cook Islands marked the commencement of colonisation and the enforcement of European beliefs and legislation for the people of the Cook Islands. Specifically, the bible teachings by the missionaries lead by Rev. John William of the LMS, supported by Papehia, and later the introduction of legislation by New Zealand. In this era, the traditional practices of worshiping the wooden carved Gods were deemed sinful and the way our native people dressed were also considered unacceptable. The missionaries made an impact on the natives (Cook Islanders) and stopped the act of cannibalism. This encouraged discoverers and explorers to step foot onto the islands to trade and to harvest natural resources from the islands, introducing more colonial influences to the native people.

The introduction and integration of legislation based on Western world views into the administration of local affairs influenced and modified Indigenous traditional practices and the rights, including the distributions of inheritance and entitlements. The colonial influence led to the lack of recognition of the *tamariki* 'āngai arrangements through kin care and has forced Indigenous Cook Islanders to go through the court system to legalise the *tamariki* 'āngai arrangements. Consequently, this became the acceptable and recognised norm in modern society amongst the families. The *tamariki* 'āngai arrangement that was widely practiced within tribal groups or the political districts historically is referred to as *Vaka* in Rarotonga and *Tapere* on Aitutaki and other islands, as it is a means of ensuring a successor or heir to the Chiefly titles. As a result of an introduced epidemic outbreak throughout the Cook Islands, tribal groups and families were forced to adopt (*tamariki* 'āngai practice) a child from other tribes. The *tamariki* 'āngai practice was well received by the communities and the approval of the family was important to seal the arrangement. The entitlement of the adoptee were set at an early stage prior to the child being transferred to the new family. The child being blood related to one of the parents (feeding/adopted) is an important aspect of the *tamariki* 'āngai practice because of land distribution and entitlement to the traditional titles. The introduced legislated adoption practice through the Land Court system has its issues, for example, the legalising of the adoption arrangement does not necessarily give the adoptee birth rights to the lands of both adoptive parents. Again, family consent is paramount for endorsing the arrangement. Therefore, the entitlements of the child continue to be a disputed issue amongst families. Families will continue to dispute these rights unless of course the two different practices, traditional and legalising, are treated and considered separately. There are conditions imposed on the legislated practice of adoption whereby consent of the natural parent or single mother is mandatory and the original birth certificate of the child to be adopted must be provided. The adoption practice today is stringent and lengthy which discourage families from legalising the arrangement and continue to practice *tamariki* 'āngai. When it comes to land rights and traditional title disputes, those who practice the tradition can begin to regret their decision and in some cases, the child is over 21 years old and cannot be adopted at that age according to the Cook Islands Act 1915. Furthermore, due to the limited amount of vacant land available for distribution within the Cook Islands, families will continue to dispute land entitlements and distributions, especially if and when an adoptee is able to claim land entitlements on both sides of the adoptive parents (non-blood and blood related), and the endorsement of the family made some years back through the *tamariki* 'āngai practice can be argued in a court of law.

4. CHAPTER FOUR:

EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

KARERE PUKU`ATU

TIKITIKI TANGATA – THE PEOPLE



The *tikitiki tangata* (the people) motif is predominantly Aitutakian. It is found on the side of the *'atamira* (Chief's chair). It represents the human form where the hands and feet of the motif are joined continuously around the sides of the *'atamira*, depicting the unity of the people in the community, in support of their Chief. Thus, it is the people and not the *'atamira* that support and uplift the Chief. It is commonly used to signify unity within the community and the close-knit relationship of families and Cook Islands people. It also signifies strength and the willpower to keep your loved ones safe. The *tikitiki tangata* motif was chosen to represent this chapter as the common themes from the experiences of the *tamariki`āngai* are shared in this chapter. The *tikitiki tangata* motif embraces the individual stories with respect and support, and encourages unity within our community to understand the lives of the participants in this study. This chapter is supported by the views and perceptions of the traditional advisors together with the review of the relevant literature.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter weaves together the common themes and stories of the participants and their experiences as a *tamariki`āngai* or *tamariki rētitā*. It also includes the perceptions of the traditional leaders on the *tamariki`āngai* practice, relating those views to their own experiences, one being a father of a *tamariki rētitā* and one being a *tamariki`āngai* himself. It also looks at the contributing factors that led the participants to go through the *tamariki`āngai* practice. Additionally, it highlights the impact of the practice on the *tamariki`āngai* in contemporary times and outlines the emotional impact on the child as a result of discovering the truth about being a *tamariki`āngai* and how that discovery impacted on their relationship with their birth parents and family. These experiences lead to the participants incorporating

the notion of fantasies of what their *tamariki`āngai* arrangements meant to them. It will also highlight their views about whether legalising the arrangement is important and whether it would have made any difference to their experiences and the way they feel about being *tamariki`āngai*. Furthermore, it looks at the influence of the practice on the participants and how the influence of non-Māori impacted the *tamariki`āngai* experience. Consequently, what influence it had on their status within their families (adopted and birth) and their entitlements through land and traditional titles.

Throughout this journey the findings from the responses of the participants and traditional leaders painted some interesting similarities in their lives. Coincidentally, it is fitting at this stage of the thesis to introduce this scripture from the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. This text signifies the experiences of the adoptees. It is entitled ‘A Time for Everything’ found in the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3 verses 1 to 8 and it reads;

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die, a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted. A time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up. A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. A time to get, and a time to lose, a time to keep, and a time to cast away. A time to rend, and a time to sew, a time to keep silence, and a time to speak. A time to love, and a time to hate, a time of war, and a time of peace. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, King James Version)

This text explains the different seasons in life and there is certainly ‘a time for everything’ you go through in life and everything you do in life. Each verse of the scripture represents a certain time in the lives of the participants, the *tamariki`āngai*.

When undertaking the field work and during the one-on-one interviews, the mood of the participants changed frequently depending on the questions asked. This is due to the nature and sensitivity of the issues surrounding the *tamariki`āngai* practice. There were times when the participants were very sensitive, emotional and many tears were shed, and then in the next instance the room would be filled with laughter as the participants shared their experiences and their stories related to being *tamariki`āngai*. Across their shared experiences there were times of happiness and times of sadness, times of belonging and times of not belonging, times of certainty and times of uncertainty. This chapter is about the voices of the participants to inform the findings of this thesis. As a researcher I was overwhelmed by the effect of the practice on

the lives of these brave individuals, whom have whole heartedly volunteered their time and personal stories, I am forever grateful for that.

4.2 How They Became Tamariki `Āngai or Tamariki Rētita

In chapter three, the traditional factors influencing the *tamariki `āngai* practice were highlighted in the Cook Islands context as well as other countries for comparison purposes. This section highlights the reasons for the *tamariki `āngai* practice using the views of the ten participants and how they became a *tamariki `āngai* or *tamariki rētita*.

One participant `Ātamu, shared his feelings of uncertainty, he described his experience as someone who would sit on the fence throughout his life growing up as a *tamariki `āngai*. Some days he felt that he belonged and was part of the family, and some days he felt excluded from the family. `Ātamu describes his feeling of being neglected saying “some days you’re almost like a nobody that belongs in the middle of everything...not the centre but the middle”. He explains, “so if you’re in the centre, it means you’re important, but if you’re in the middle it means you’re in the way and not important”. `Ātamu suggests that he was mystified about his feelings and sometimes he substantiates their actions by saying “maybe they didn’t mean to exclude me and I’m over thinking it...I don’t know”.

`Ātamu is in his 40s, he was legally adopted through the Land Court system from the island of Aitutaki. `Ātamu’s response highlights the importance of family support and a kin-care arrangement that lead to `Ātamu being adopted by his adopted parents. `Ātamu describes his situation as the result of a broken up relationship and grandparents wanting the best for their daughter, who then opted to care for `Ātamu to provide their daughter a second chance at life and to complete her studies in Rarotonga. Therefore, `Ātamu was left with his grandparents and his birth mother’s brother adopted him. According to `Ātamu, at the time his grandparents were living with his parents (adopted) therefore `Ātamu states “my mum and dad (adopted) took me in as their own, dad being the main bread winner of the household and my grandparents were too old to care for a young baby at the time”. `Ātamu reflected on a common factor and traditions he has heard elderly people talk about, he states “it is tradition for a first grandchild especially boys to be gifted to the paternal grandparents”. He also added “another tradition is the sharing and naming of children, first born to the father, second born to the mother and so on”. Consequently, `Ātamu’s suggested in jest that “I’m the chosen one and a gift to my grandparents and onwards to my parents”. Perhaps what is most interesting about `Ātamu’s

response is that he has found a positive motive to explain why he ended up being adopted, such as being a gift to his grandparents rather than a result of a broken up relationship. In my opinion, this is `Ātamu's strategy to overcome his feelings of being adopted. In the end `Ātamu shares how he adores his parents and loves them to bits, but he has his own uncertainties about the practice and wishes he could have had a complete family unit to grow up with. "Personally, I adore my parents and I love them to bits but I wish I had a complete biological family unit". `Ātamu always feels left out and being a loner especially not having other siblings from the same set of biological parents. `Ātamu believes that his adopted family loves him in their own way but according to `Ātamu "they will never understand my feelings, unless they have gone through this kind of experience themselves".

Vaerua is in his 40s, a *tamariki `āngai* and grew up on Rarotonga. According to Vaerua, the opening of the Rarotonga International Airport made traveling abroad a lot more accessible to our people, and he blames migration as the reason for his situation. "I ended up being looked after by my Granduncle (birth mum's uncle), when my mum travelled to New Zealand and left me behind with her Uncle". Vaerua suggests that shortly after the airport was opened in the 1970s, more children were left behind ("abandoned") with other family members as their parents "travelled abroad for the so called greener pastures". Vaerua's assertion that in "most cases the grandparents become the legal guardians over these children who were left behind" can be tied back to the grandparents allowing their children an opportunity to seek employment or further their education abroad similar to `Ātamu's situation being left behind with his grandparents. Vaerua had a hard life as soon as his mum left the island, things suddenly changed "the niceness was fake and my mum was tricked into believing that I was in good hands". Vaerua went on to share that in his view his extra set of hands was required to work the plantation, feed the pigs and do all the hard chores around the home.

Taina is in her 50s, a *tamariki `āngai* who grew up on Rarotonga also shared her story. Similar to Vaerua's situation, migration was the reason she was left behind. Taina's response highlights the importance of being left with a close blood relative such as a grandparent. Taina states "I think things would have been better if I was left with my grandparents". In Taina's situation her birth mother left her with the extended family, related but not that close and she was moved around a lot from one family to another. Taina was constantly reminded growing up that she did not belong with the family she was with "I remember the family I was staying with kept saying to me *'tērā `oki te metua va`ine `ī `ānau`ia mai ei koe `akaruke `ua`ia mai*

koe' (there goes the woman that gave birth to you, who just left you behind just like that), it was a constant reminder from the families that raised me". Taina described how her aunties would tell her that she was a sick child, that's why she was left behind and was passed around from one family to another. Taina states "I was reminded, because I was a sick child and had sores all over my body, that's why I was unwanted and passed around from one family to another". Taina believes that the feeling of being unwanted can be tied back to her birth mother for initially leaving her behind.

Tangaroa is in his 40s, a *tamariki`āngai* he grew up in New Zealand and returned to Rarotonga to live when he was in his 20s. According to Tangaroa "migration and a single mother played a big part in my situation, my birth mother travelled to New Zealand and stayed with her older sister, she was pregnant at the age of 20, not working and in no position to raise a new born baby, so she gave me away to her older sister". Tangaroa reflects on the whole migration experience and he suggests that the transition from Rarotonga to a new, different environment would have been overwhelming for an island girl and to have a child out of wedlock in those days was a big deal in his family. In general, Tangaroa shares his views on the traditional adoption practice and why it takes place in the Cook Islands. According to Tangaroa, the first grandchild in the family is the grandparents' favourite and they end up raising the child as their own. Secondly, the naming of a child after a family member, can be misinterpreted as a gesture, and it is their right to take over the child as their own. In some cases couples with too many children tend to share them around with other family members to ease the burden. Tangaroa made a statement saying that the "*tamariki`āngai* arrangement is definitely a family affair and ideally it should be kept within the family".

Evidently there are similarities in the reasons of why the child ends up being adopted or *tamariki`āngai*. For example, Vaerua, Taina and Tangaroa's point about the migration of their respective birth parents to New Zealand left them to be raised by other family members. What is most interesting to me with the stories of the trio is that the single mother situation and having a child out of wedlock was a significant contributing factor to being *tamariki`āngai*. Similarly in `Ātamu's situation of being a child from a relationship breakup (unmarried) and his birth mother left to care for a baby on her own. Perhaps what is most interesting about their responses is that migration to another island (Rarotonga) or country like New Zealand is another way of offering the single parent an opportunity in life, a second chance to find better jobs, finish their training and start a better life for themselves. This can be supported by the

notion of the parents (grandparents) allowing their child (single mum) the chance to recollect themselves after a relationship breakup.

Purotu is in her 30s, was legally adopted by her parents from birth and grew up on Rarotonga. Purotu's situation is similar to Tangaroa's situation whereby an older sister stepped up to look after a younger sister's child born out of wedlock. In this case the older sister is allowing her younger sister another chance in life less the burden of looking after her new-born child on her own. Purotu was brought up in a loving family environment. Purotu described her only sad moments as being teased by her siblings (adopted parents children) about her parents (adopted) not being her real parents. The teasing would get to her and make her cry, "it hurts my feelings when they say things like that" because in Purotu's heart she knows that these are her parents and no one else. Purotu also shared how her parents have never told her about being adopted but she grew up finding out the truth herself. It didn't bother her at all. The treatment she got from her parents was genuine and she never felt neglected or disadvantaged because she's adopted. Apart from the teasing of her siblings, she had a good life and believes that she was lucky, "I am lucky to be brought up by my parents, I was spoilt and I love them to bits".

Manea is in her 70s, was legally adopted and grew up on Aitutaki. Manea describes the significance of her situation as it marks the bond between a brother and a sister. She was raised by her birth father's sister and her husband. According to Manea her birth parents and foster parents were neighbours. Shortly after Manea was born, her birth parents would travel by foot to another village to visit her maternal grandparents. A visit that would last a couple of days. Manea was constantly left with the neighbours (her birth father's sister) because she was too young to make the journey. Within a few weeks of this ongoing kin care arrangement, Manea described how her "adopted parents fell in love with me and looked after me from that day onwards". In Manea's case, she is blood related to her adopted mother and she was not given up, she was merely left for a short period of time in the care of her adopted mother and a special bond and attachment was formed. Manea shared her experience as being a "spoilt brat" who maintained affiliation with her birth family and they too spoilt her.

Matamaru is in her 70s, a *tamariki`āngai* who grew up on Aitutaki. Matamaru's arrangement was fortunate and unique, her feeding mother was a midwife assisting her birth mother during birth. Due to some complications during birth Matamaru's birth mother was unable to look after her or feed her with breast milk. Consequently, Matamaru's feeding mother provided

care and looked after her for a couple of weeks. Matamaru was never breastfed, she was fed with goat's milk and other alternatives from birth. According to Matamaru, this is how she became a *tamariki`āngai* until she was about eleven years old and her feeding parents went to New Zealand and left her with her birth parents. Matamaru did not understand why she was left behind until she discovered three years later that she was not her parents (feeding) biological daughter. Matamaru described herself as being a "spoilt brat" who got everything she wanted with her feeding parents, but things were different with her birth family. She struggled to fit in when she went back to them at age eleven. Matamaru reunited with her feeding parents at the age of seventeen in New Zealand and continued that close relationship with them until they died.

Obviously, there are similarities between the circumstances of Purotu, Manea and Matamaru of having a positive experience and a close bond with their adopted and feeding parents. They each felt that they were spoilt by their parents and were lucky to have been brought up by them. All three of these women referred to an attachment and bond between the child and the adopting parents at an early stage in their lives straight after birth. Hence, they were able to have that strong bond and relationship with their parents. A bond that each of these ladies found difficult to part with. In the case of Matamaru, she was returned to her birth family at the age of eleven before her feeding parents went to New Zealand. A transition she found difficult to adjust to. The treatment by her birth parents was different to how her feeding parents treated her. She was constantly trying to fit in with her siblings especially her biological sisters and they (biological siblings) saw her differently and were judgmental towards her and what she did in life.

Tumutoa is in his 60s, a *tamariki`āngai* and grew up on Rarotonga. He had a similar situation to Manea, being a gift from a brother to a sister who could not have any children of her own. In Tumutoa's situation, he was a gift to his elderly grandparents who did not have any children of their own. Tumutoa's grandparents also raised his birth mother, therefore, when he was born, and being the first grandchild his grandparents took him in and raised him as their own. Tumutoa enjoyed life with his grandparents "learning the life skills, good values and abundance of unconditional love and affection". Tumutoa also advocates that a first born child being gifted to the grandparents is a significant gesture of honouring the grandparents, a tradition in the Cook Islands where the grandchild especially a grandson, is taken by the grandparents. Tumutoa's assertion that being raised by the grandparents is a good thing not only to learn good

values but to embrace unconditional love can be tied back to Taina's comments that "things would have been better if I was left with my grandparents". Additionally, Tumutoa changed his name by deed poll so he could take the surname of his feeding parents.

Mere is in her 50s, legally adopted at birth from Rarotonga and shared her story of how she became adopted. Mere was certain that she was legally adopted as soon as her adopted parents could process the adoption papers. Mere shared how it was so obvious because she looked different to her siblings, "they looked different, I looked different, they were white and I was a bit browner". At first Mere thought it was cool to be adopted and that she was special, until she told her friends at school about her situation which took the coolness away for Mere. Mere's friends declared "that means you don't have a mum and dad...you don't belong to anyone then..." Mere's friends started teasing her about being adopted, which led her to think that "maybe it wasn't cool after all".

Ioane is in his 60s, a *tamariki`āngai* and grew up on Rarotonga. Ioane was raised by his feeding parents from birth. According to Ioane, his birth mother was pregnant at the time and his feeding mother asked if she could have the baby if it was a boy. According to Ioane, his feeding parents had two daughters at the time, they also had two boys (stillborn) before feeding Ioane as their own. Four years later his feeding mother gave birth to a baby boy, and then another three boys followed. Ioane described an encounter with his feeding mother before she passed away, "she asked me if I wanted to go back to my biological family". Ioane's mum explained to him that the agreement she made with Ioane's birth mother was for the duration of their (feeding parents) lives. "We only took you in while we are still alive, when we passed away you automatically go back to your birth family...that was my agreement with your birth mother". Ioane was happy and had no intention of going back to his biological side.

4.3 Traditional Advisor's View on Tamariki`Angai Practice

It is fitting at this stage to incorporate the views of the two traditional leaders to provide an informed comparison between the two lots of participants for this study. We are fortunate to share the views of our traditional advisors on why the *tamariki`āngai* practice takes place within our Cook Islands community.

Tupuariki Puna

Pāpā Puna is in his 70s, a traditional leader and *tumu kōrero* from Aitutaki. According to Pāpā Puna, *tamariki`āngai* is a very common practice in our communities, simply because it is our way of life, families live in an extended family situation as a matter of survival and providing for one another. Pāpā Puna outlined his opinion of possible reasons for *tamariki`āngai* to take place based on experiences within his family. The reasons are as follows;

1. It is tradition for the first born grandchild of the family to be gifted to the paternal grandparents.
2. Sometimes the birth mother died during birth, therefore the family take over raising the child.
3. Siblings cannot have children for some reason, therefore, they are usually gifted a child by other siblings.
4. The naming of children in the Cook Islands tradition is that the first born is named by the father and the second by the mother and so on. Therefore, naming a child after your father or the child's grandfather leads to the child being raised by the name sake.
5. The child is left with the grandparents to look after, for so many reasons. Having children too young with no father. Having children then relationships break-up so it gives individuals an opportunity for new relationships, including in the cases where one of the partners die young. Couples are too young so they go abroad for further studies or work. Consequently, while the children continue with their lives either with studies or opportunities abroad, the grandparent get attached to the child and therefore claim the child as their own. In some cases other siblings or extended family members still living at home gets attached to the child and claim the child as their own. In these situations, it becomes harder for the birth parents to claim the child back on their return from their studies or otherwise. Out of respect, these informal arrangements are almost normally accepted.
6. The influence of globalisation and regular transportation to New Zealand and Australia encouraged migration, therefore, parents travel to find greener pastures and leave their child behind with the grandparents just to have a better headstart without the hassles of childcare.

Pāpā Puna has outlined some of the reasons that a child ends up being a *tamariki`āngai*. Pāpā Puna explains the process where a meeting is convened for all of the family members (similar to a landowners meeting). The feeding or adopting parents must make the announcement to

the family of their request to raise or adopt the child. In return the birth parents must give their consent to the request, and the grandparents of the child on both the paternal and maternal sides must also approve the request. Pāpā Puna also added that before these meetings are convened the two set of parents must have agreed on the arrangement prior to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to however, seek the whole family's consent. For the practice to proceed, the family must consent to this request and cast their blessings on the arrangement. Even if the arrangement is to go through the Land Court System, the consent of the birth parents and the family is a must, without that consent the Judge will not consider the adoption order.

According to Pāpā Puna, in the past “*‘e mana te reo o te metua*” (the voice of the parents are powerful), therefore, what the head of the family says stands and is respected by the family. However, these days our people use the Court System to seal a deal when it comes to the child's rights and entitlements. Pāpā Puna asserts that the child's entitlements are also discussed in the same meeting such as land, traditional titles, inheritance and status within the family. The occasion is marked by a feast provided by the feeding or adopting parents for the family. Furthermore, Pāpā Puna declares that the *tamariki`āngai* practice is a family affair and by mutual agreement made within a family. He also adds that the *tamariki`āngai* must be blood related to one of the feeding or adopting parents.

Pāpā Puna shared his personal experience with the *tamariki`āngai* practice as an adopted father of a *tamariki`āngai*. Pāpā Puna described how his wife and three children instantly fell in love with his sister's six month old baby boy living with the extended family at the time. They all became very fond of this child. Pāpā Puna pleaded with his sister to leave her son with him and his family, so she could continue with her studies. Essentially, this story supports the notion that the *tamariki`āngai* process is a family affair. From a kin-care arrangement between a daughter (Pāpā Puna's sister) and her parents, to a brother begging his sister for her son. Pāpā Puna states that the agreement was mutual and he made arrangements to change the child's name and thereafter, the child became his adopted son.

Te`ānua Kāmana

Pāpā Dan is in his 90s and is a traditional leader from Rarotonga. *Tamariki`āngai* is a common practice throughout the Cook Islands, because we are a close-knit community. We help each other in times of need and it is the same arrangement when it comes to *tamariki`āngai*. According to Pāpā Dan, our Cook Islands way of living contributes to the *tamariki`āngai* practice, because we live in an extended family setting and we look after each other's children,

“we are one big happy family”. Pāpā Dan outlined what he believes are the reasons for *tamariki`āngai* to take place based on his own experiences within his family. The reasons are as follows and some are similar to the views of Pāpā Puna;

1. The first born grandchild in the family is taken over and fed by the grandparents, in a way it is viewed as the highest gift within a family.
2. To mark a friendship between two close friends - an exchange of a child is to mark that friendship, but it must be blood related.
3. When a sibling has girls only and no boys, and the other siblings has only boys and no girls, the two siblings exchange a child of the same age, different sex to raise as their own.
4. The birth mother dies at birth, the grandparents automatically take over the child and decide whether or not to give the child to a sibling of the deceased mother.
5. Migration to New Zealand forces the parents to leave the child behind with family members. In most cases the child ends up staying with the feeding family permanently.

According to Pāpā Dan, these are very common reasons for this practice in the Cook Islands. Pāpā Dan suggests that, in his view, there is a need to “legally adopt a child through the *papa`a* system” nowadays. The elders have passed on and the children of today have been influenced by the European ways and family values are different. The extended families are no longer practiced, but more an immediate family arrangement where the mother and father with their children live in their own home. Therefore, “to keep the peace within the families legalising the adoption arrangement is important” according to Pāpā Dan. Furthermore, Pāpā Dan highlights the openness of the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement in his family. As a *tamariki`āngai* himself, he understands the situation and is very grateful for the openness of the arrangement that he grew up in. Pāpā Dan stated, “it is a blessing in itself...you get to have one big happy family”. He recalls feeling special because he had two sets of parents he could turn to, when the going is tough on one side he would go to the other. Pāpā Dan reiterates that in his situation he was a gift of friendship, “friendship is marked by the exchanging of children as a gift between two best friends” (although he was related to both fathers). Pāpā Dan also asserts that once you look after a child he or she becomes yours, “because it is very common and easy for you to fall in love with these children, you have a special bond once you start to look after a child”. This bond is special and unbreakable according to Pāpā Dan.

The researcher is so fortunate to have the insight and knowledge of these traditional leaders and to have them share their experiences with the *tamariki`āngai* practice. It is clear that both Pāpā Puna and Pāpā Dan are referring to the *tamariki`āngai* practice as a family affair having shared similar stories of what influences *tamariki`āngai* in the Cook Islands. Interestingly, they both stated that when a first-born child is born, they are usually gifted back to the parents (grandparents), “as your way of saying thank you so much for everything you have done for me” (Pāpā Dan, 2016).

4.4 Is Legalising Traditional Adoption Important?

The land tenure process has over time influenced the *tamariki`āngai* practice and the pressure to legalise the traditional practice. Thus “land tenure is shaped by the society it serves, and by external forces” (Crocombe & Meleisea, 1994, p. 1). Crocombe & Meleisea (1994) suggest that traditions and systems are always changing and we need to understand the following; “forces to influence change, the nature of the change, and the speed at which the change will take place” (p. 2). Therefore, is legalising traditional adoption important?

The traditional advisors described the *tamariki`āngai* process as a non-legal intervention practice which is predominantly a mutual agreement by means of a verbal arrangement between families. The arrangement has been respected and honoured by families until external forces were introduced to promote change to the traditional practice. Pāpā Puna states that “early colonisers have influenced our traditional practice by enforcing their *papa`a* way, onto our people to legally adopt a child”. Pāpā Dan supports the notion of legalising the arrangement but not because he looked down on tradition but because “time is changing...a piece of paper (birth certificate) is important to confirm your identity”. The decision passed down by the *tupuna* (elders of the family) in the past was respected and a piece of paper from the court was not necessary. They had *mana* (power) within the families in the past, but not so much in today’s society. Nowadays, according to Pāpā Dan, “our people have been Westernised and colonised” and they are guided by the European process and “having the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement legalised in the Land Court system earns status and recognition”. What is most interesting about Pāpā Dan’s response is that a majority of the participants also supported this notion that legalising the *tamariki`āngai* is important and would solve a lot of family disputes over land rights and entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai*.

Furthermore, Pāpā Dan suggests that greed is one of those forces bringing about change and influencing our traditional practices, “greed is changing the way our people think”. He adds

that problems start when land rights issues and traditional titles are brought to the fore. Therefore, to avoid the problems and disputes between families they need to go through the Western system and legalise the adoption arrangements. There are contradicting views between the two traditional leaders, although Pāpā Dan's views are influenced by the reality of society today, however, he still has high regard for our traditional practices. But as he puts it "the older generation is dying and the generation of tomorrow are colonised and dangerous".

Ideally, according to Pāpā Puna, we need to "go back to our roots and ask the family" for consent over *tamariki`āngai*, and in that meeting the entitlements of the child should be set and agreed upon with all of the families and landowners present. The land entitlements, the traditional titles and other inheritance are also agreed upon, because this is who we are and family is everything to us. However, Pāpā Puna adds that "it is important for the children to respect these decisions made in the family meeting" and not to be greedy and ask for more entitlements.

According to Pāpā Puna our Cook Islands people living abroad have made things difficult for those living at home. In saying that, he believes that family disputes are happening because our people who have lived abroad for so long are returning and enforcing their *papa`ā* way of thinking onto our people and our families. Pāpā Puna states, "disputes are happening within families because of the influence of the Westernised way of thinking...our own people are using the introduced *papa`ā* way to demand their so-called rights". According to Pāpā Puna, this is not our way, the Māori way is that we look after each other, family always comes first, and therefore, we need to embrace our traditional Māori ways. Pāpā Puna's final remark is to "let the legal system deal with matters that need to go through that system and we stick to our traditions and our identity".

Noticeably, in the responses of the two traditional advisors they strongly support the notion that the *tamariki`āngai* practice is purely a family affair. To embrace this tradition, the *tamariki`āngai* must be humble and go back to their roots to seek their inheritance. To prepare for the worst and to embrace change, Pāpā Dan suggests that legalising the arrangement using Western laws is a solution to family disputes in the future, because times are changing and the older generations have passed on.

In addition, the majority of the *tamariki`āngai* participants support the notion that legalising the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement is important. What is evident from the participants' responses is that legalising the arrangement is important to confirm the child's eligibilities and entitlements to land and traditional titles. In some cases, the *tamariki`āngai* are taken back by the birth family because they were not legally adopted and going through the court system will avoid that from happening, according to Tumutoa. He also added that legally adopting the child is important nowadays, because the decisions of the past may be overlooked by the families because they were not documented.

Decisions made in the past were based on *mana* (power) and in today's society "it stands for nothing". Tumutoa went on to say that in his situation, the decision of his grandparents (the people that brought him up) in relation to his land entitlements was and still is being respected by the family. "The family respected that decision...which is rare these days. That would not work well with other families". However, Tumutoa went on to say that "identity is important" and "being loyal to your feeding parents is also important", therefore, "obtaining a stamp of approval and recognition through the court system seals the deal". Tumutoa explained that he was not legally adopted. However, he changed his name by deed poll in order to take his feeding father's surname, for Tumutoa that's how he sealed his deal.

`Ātamu emphasises the importance of legalising the adoption arrangement nowadays because there are legislations in place to guide us. He also added "legally adopting a child confirms their legal rights to the blood related parent's land". Sometimes the family of the non-blood related parent may also recognise the child. As suggested earlier by Pāpā Puna, it is all up to the family and *tamariki`āngai* practice is a family affair. In today's society "everything must be supported by documentation", "*kare e mana o te autara va`a i teia tuatau*" (verbal decision has no authority these days), these days "everything is black and white", according to Pāpā Puna.

`Ātamu, made a good point about land entitlements from the non-blood related parent in that if adoption was legalised, then it should be automatic. However, at the same time he could be overstepping the traditional process of having these entitlements agreed upon by the family in a family meeting as described by Pāpā Puna earlier. Pāpā Puna states, that the paternal and maternal grandparents must also consent to the *tamariki`āngai* request and at the same time

put in place the child's entitlements on both sides of the adopting parents. That process would perhaps eliminate future disputes, instead of relying solely on legislated practices.

Vaerua argues in favour of the *tamariki`āngai* practice within families and that the child must be blood related to one of the feeding parents. He says this is very important so the “child can succeed to the land”, hence “my family will never adopt or feed a child that is not of blood to my family”. Despite being blood related to the parents who raised the child, Vaerua supports the notion of legalising this arrangement because “our families are getting bigger and our *pā metua* (elderly) have passed on” and evidently in today's society “blood families are still disputing land entitlements” because the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement was “not legally recognised or formalised”. In the past, according to Vaerua, the practice was that if the “Rangatira (high chief) makes the decision on *tamariki`āngai* land entitlements, the family do not question that decision”. Vaerua asserts that the “decisions whether to legally adopt or not, lies solely within the family protocols” which are different between families. The traditional titles is another issue. In his family the traditional titles are shared amongst the family lines, passing from one sibling to the next. The successor must be a biological child to that line unless of course they did not have a biological heir, then a *tamariki`āngai* would be considered as a last resort and must be blood related to the family.

The Cook Islands traditional practices are unique, they have value and *mana* in our families. However, the European practices have influenced our perceptions on what is acceptable practice. As a result, it has influenced most of the participants into supporting the notion of having the *tamariki`āngai* arrangements legalised in order to be recognised in today's society.

4.5 Impact of Discovery on the Tamariki`Āngai

Discovering the truth about being *tamariki`āngai* played a big part in the lives of the participants. It triggered a lot of emotional feelings towards the arrangement. They struggled with this question during the interview and became emotional as they shared their experiences of when they discovered that they were a *tamariki`āngai*. Eight of the ten participants were emotionally affected by the question on how they found out that they were a *tamariki`āngai*.

Vaerua suspected that he was a *tamariki`āngai* when he was in his teens. “I was in a mature state of mind to know the difference...my status at home and how people were treating me”. He was intrigued to find out who his real parents were. “It lead me to finding out and verifying

from my birth certificate that my actual names that I was taking at school didn't exist on my birth certificate". Vaerua stated that when he discovered he was a *tamariki`āngai*, "it sort of painted a clear picture as to why my past was the way it was and how I was treated, especially the unpleasant moments".

Taina discovered that she was a *tamariki`āngai* as soon as she was able to speak and understand what people were saying to her. Taina was constantly reminded that she did not belong with this family as she was moved from one family to another.

I was probably six years old I was able to understand what was going on, people I was staying with keeps saying horrible things to me, *'tērā 'oki te metua va'ine i 'ānau'ia mai ei koe, 'akaruke 'ua 'ia mai'* (there goes the woman who gave birth to you, just left you behind)...it was a constant reminder from the family that raised me, that I was not theirs. So they didn't try to hide the truth from me. (Taina 2016, personal communication)

In `Ātamu's situation it was kept from him until he was fifteen years old. He discovered through an argument with one of his siblings and in the heat of the moment his sibling bluntly said, "that's not your mum, that's my mum...your mum is...". `Ātamu described his reaction, "I laughed at this statement and ignored the childishness". Later that day `Ātamu confronted his mum (adopted) about the statement as he thought it was childish and untrue, but instead his mother cried and `Ātamu's parents convened a family meeting with all his siblings to explain the arrangement.

It was heart breaking for `Ātamu as he described how he was numbed during that meeting and so many things were going through his head at the time "I had a lot of flashbacks remembering things that have happened before that day". `Ātamu added;

I was confused and wanted that conversation to end. I was heartbroken...everyone was crying around me and I thought I'm the victim here why are you guys crying. I was speechless and didn't know what to say. It was shocking and I felt betrayed...it was life changing for me...it almost felt like my world had ended right there and then. The whole experience was life changing and thinking about it right now makes me very emotional.

At this stage of the interview `Ātamu was very emotional but he bravely continued to share his story. He went on to say, "I started to think of all the worst situations in my life, the little treatments here and there and sort of started to put things together". `Ātamu continued to explain how his grandfather would always pick on him for no reason at all, and from that day on he knew and understood why. His grandfather hated him because "I'm a bastard child in his eyes" a child that came from a broken up relationship and born out of wedlock.

As for Tangaroa it was a matter of validating his own suspicions of his situation being a *tamariki`āngai*. Tangaroa described how he “kind of figured it out when I was about eight years old because I looked a lot different from my brothers and sisters” (he was referring to the other siblings he grew up with).

I suspected that I was a feeding child...and I officially confirmed my suspicion at age ten when I saw my birth certificate and it was different...it had my mother's (birth mother) name on it...I think it really didn't come as a surprise...it kind of just validated it and made it official for me...It wasn't a big deal to me at the time I guess. (Tangaroa 2016, personal communication)

According to Tangaroa his feeding parents “drilled into me that I was their child, right from when I was little and that my real mother was my aunty”. Tangaroa shared that the most disappointing thing for him is “not knowing who my father is”.

Purotu shared how she discovered that she was adopted by being teased by her siblings (adopted) and other family members asking my mum questions about me. She said;

I always hear my aunties and uncles saying things like ‘*is this...daughter*’, plus my siblings always tease me saying things like ‘*that's not your mum and dad that's our mum and dad*’...I will go and tell my parents what they said...and my dad would give them a hiding. But my parents never admitted to me that I was adopted.

She also remembers how her mum would always quickly defend her when family members “asked whether I was someone else's daughter”. My mum would quickly say “no, this is my own daughter”. Purotu explained how she just grew up and accepted that she was adopted and it did not affect how she felt about her parents.

Manea did not know she was a *tamariki`āngai* until she was enrolling for Tereora College. According to Manea she was not affected by the discovery because “I was a spoilt brat”;

I was eleven years old when I discovered...my feeding parents never told me that I was a *tamariki`āngai*...I was not worried...I still love my feeding parents, they were good to me so when I found out I was not upset about it. (Manea 2016, personal communication)

The discovery for Manea just made sense of what she had experienced in life. Manea lived just down the road from her biological family and visited them nearly every day. She was always told to take some food (sometimes fish) to this family (birth family) and would not know that she was taking food to her birth family and the children she was playing with were actually her biological brothers and sisters.

Tumutoa also worked it out for himself that he was *tamariki`āngai*. He described, how his mum and dad (feeding grandparents) were very old at the time when he was growing up. So he figured it out himself.

I figured it out myself, I wasn't told by anyone else, and my old man and old lady were really old. It wasn't really a big deal as we were a close family...I was just happy...as long as I stayed with my grandparents...I knew all my brothers and sisters and who my real mum and dad were. (Tumutoa 2016, personal communication)

Things started to get emotionally difficult for Tumutoa when his grandfather passed away and his birth parents demanded for him to go back to them. "I was not emotionally close with my birth family...I grew up with my grandparents, they raised me since I was a baby and I owe it to them to be with them for the rest of my life". Everything changed for Tumutoa after that, he ran away from home and left school because of it.

Mere discovered that she was adopted when she was eleven years old. Her adopted parents told her she was adopted into their family.

I don't think I was angry, I never got angry. I thought at the time it was cool because I was different. Then I asked mum and dad about my older siblings because they all looked different or rather I looked different from them...they were white and I was a bit browner. I thought being adopted was cool and that I was special. (Mere 2016, personal communication)

It was not a big deal for Mere because she too had her own suspicions about being adopted because she looked different from her siblings. The only disturbing experience which haunted Mere later in life was finally getting to meet her birth mother and feeling guilty and disloyal to her adopted parents.

Matamaru's situation is similar to Manea's, she too discovered she was a *tamariki`āngai* when enrolling for Tereora College. Her birth certificate was required and she had a different name from what she had been taking for thirteen years. Matamaru described her feelings when she discovered that she was a *tamariki`āngai*, "I was hurt and didn't want to believe it, I felt betrayed by my parents (both sides) for not telling me earlier". It was a difficult time for Matamaru, she described how she had a lot of unanswered questions and her feeding parents who were in New Zealand at the time. "I really cried when I found out that my dad (feeding)

wasn't my real dad...I also found out that I was held back by my birth father...he didn't allow me to follow my parents (feeding) to New Zealand".

Ioane discovered he was a *tamariki`āngai* through a drinking session between his father (feeding father) and his uncle (birth father). Ioane described the event when he was seventeen years old. His father told him to drive his uncle home, but this uncle (birth father) turned around in his drunken state and said "that's not your father, I'm your father". After that incident Ioane asked his parents what it all meant and that's when they told him the truth. Ioane stated that he was confused and mad at the same time, because, he grew up knowing his birth parents as aunty and uncle, and yet they were his real parents. Ioane was disappointed because he was very fond of his feeding parents and did not want to believe that they were not his real parents but the aunty and uncle he had known all his life.

Discovering they were *tamariki`āngai* has impacted the participants in a number of ways and, in some cases has led them to feel that they were abandoned and unwanted. The discovery has also helped them to understand why certain things were happening in their lives. It also made some of them feel uncertain of their personal status within their families.

4.6 Emotional Impact on the Tamariki`āngai

The feeling of being unwanted and the uncertainty of where they belonged with the feeding and adopted families contributed to the *tamariki`āngai* feeling isolated from their new families. Feeling unwanted and uncertain was a common response from the majority of the participants as they described their experiences growing up as a *tamariki`āngai* within their families. The *tamariki rētitā* also expressed the same feelings within their adopted families. Regardless of whether you are legally adopted or just a feeding child, the feeling of uncertainty and being unwanted is very similar for the sample participants of this study. According to Brinich, when a child is adopted it emphasises that the "adopted child being wanted, neglecting the unspoken reality that before the child was wanted he or she was perhaps unwanted" (Brinich, 1995 p.26). This statement explains the common feelings that a child being raised by another set of parents other than their birth parents may experience. Although they were adopted, which shows they were wanted by the adopted parents, they could have been unwanted by their birth parents in the first instance before transferring to the adopted parents.

The field work journey was overwhelmed with a lot of emotions as the participants shared their stories and their experiences. In Chapter one, the characteristics of the mimosa plant upon being touched was used to compare the sensitivity of the adoption issues and experiences of the participants. During the interview process a lot of emotions were expressed depending on what the question was. Despite having negative or positive experiences, the participants expressed some emotions when they were asked about their relationship with their birth families. As a researcher who is also a *tamariki`āngai*, I was able to relate to how they were feeling and understood what they were going through during the interview. It was important to show respect for their emotions and let them take a few moments to assemble themselves before proceeding on to the next question. In many sessions, the participants would be crying and laughing at the same time, nevertheless, they were able to progress on with the interview. The question “how did you feel when you discovered that you were a *tamariki`āngai*” is one that most of the participants found difficult to answer and became very emotional as they tried to share their feelings.

In order to compare the stories shared by the participants in this study it is useful to consider a study by Hylton (2007) which explores the impact of adoption on adoptees in New Zealand. In particular, Hylton described the psychological impact of adoption on the adoptee. Hylton states that adoption creates a psychological risk for the adoptee. In a comparison between the adopted and non-adopted populations the study indicates that the most commonly cited impacts of adoption are, “multiple losses and challenges with grieving, impaired attachment and fear of abandonment, difficulties with identity formation and challenges to the integration of love and hate” (Hylton, 2007 p.33). Additionally, difficulties in developing positive self-representation and self-esteem is a consequence or impact of adoption. Ultimately, these factors affect the adoptee’s interpersonal relationships and personal development. Throughout this chapter we will capture some of the challenges faced by the participants that are similar to the challenges raised above in a New Zealand context.

What is common between the findings of Hylton’s study and the participants in this study is the emotional impact they experienced as *tamariki`āngai*. The uncertainty of the ‘unknown’ and the ‘what if’. Five of the participants did not know who their biological father was and after discovering that they were a *tamariki`āngai* to the set of parents that were looking after them, they began to wonder what life would be like if they knew who their biological father was. Tangaroa states “I always wondered what my real father looked like, do I look like him...I

always fantasised about him having blue eyes and being very good looking”. In contrast, Taina said, “my real father is unknown and I would like him to remain as an ‘unknown’ for the rest of my life”. Some even wondered what life would have been like living with their biological family. Taina shared how she would often feel jealous of her biological siblings, “I got jealous of my brothers and sisters because they had the opportunity to live with my birth mum...I didn’t have that opportunity”. According to Freeman & Freund (1998), in constructing the representations of unknown biological parents, the adoptee must draw on what “...little information they have, with no information...fantasies are constructed to attempt to organise an internal picture of the person’s heritage and biological identity” (p. 26).

Being adopted and going through the traditional adoption practice is not all bad according to the views of most of the participants. What makes it a negative experience is not having an adequate support system in place, and the families being secretive about the adoption arrangement. Furthermore, some participants felt strongly that without this practice, many children would be neglected in the community and would be in a far worse situation than being looked after by another family member. Hylton (2007), argues that adoption is an ideal solution to a common community problem of child negligence and sees the “emotional and psychological consequences as negligible, or largely repairable with a supportive adoptive environment” (p.10). Tangaroa feels strongly about having a good support system and that secrecy should be discouraged, Tangaroa states;

I think there needs to be more support around being adopted...don’t need to hide the truth...you are family and blood related and so there is no need to hide the truth from the child. I found out myself and then we’ve never really sat down and spoke about it. My mum and dad (feeding parents) never really admitted to me that ‘hey you are this person’s child and we raised you as our own. I kind of found out myself who my birth mother was although she was my mum’s younger sister.

Tangaroa believes that by being open and honest about the adoption right from the start may be the solution to the negative feeling around the notion of *tamariki`āngai*. It is important to share with the *tamariki`āngai* what has happened to them instead of letting the child discover on their own. Tangaroa claims that;

This is when it gets ugly...especially I think in particular, for males...they tend to get a lot of identity issues when they reach teenage or adolescence year...I think that is why they gravitate towards gangs and stuff...to have that sense of belonging...gang is the easiest fix, they accept you...it also raised the issue around trust within the family and the issue around why the big secret.

The point that Tangaroa makes about the family being open about the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement from the very outset, rather than the child finding out at their own accord, is critical as it influences the child's self-esteem and identity. The child's discovery could lead to the child reacting in a negative way psychologically, behaviourally, emotionally and socially where, "they show a higher incidence of behavioural, emotional, and academic problems than their non-adopted peers", (Brodzinsky, 1993, p. 43). Jones (1997), suggests that adopted children are more likely to develop psychological problems in childhood or later in life than non-adopted children. Therefore, in order to overcome these psychological issues, a strong support system for the child is important.

Based on the data collated, there were no reports of severe psychological impacts or problems identified amongst the participants of this study. Though, in most cases, the participants were clearly affected during the time of discovery, at which time, they became unsettled and some of them changed their way of life and became involved with gang activities and socially dysfunctional activities such as, drinking, smoking and so forth. Evidently, the participants of this study got over the negative experiences and reactions and became strong and independent individuals. Vaerua described how things just got worse for him and he felt that giving up on life was his only option and in a one-off attempt he tried to hurt himself (self-harm) because he was always tired of working around home, he got sick of the way he was being treated by his feeding family. Despite going through that experience of trying to hurt himself, Vaerua believes the ordeal changed him and he stated "that was my turning point". Vaerua shared his ordeal;

I was in a really low point in my life...I had no answers to my questions as to why am I being treated like this...is this all that I have to my life...where do I actually belong. I was tired of being treated the way I was being treated but after I tried to take my own life and failed because the tree wasn't high enough (*he was laughing when he shared this story*)...I was conscious the whole time just felt numbed afterwards...I also had a vision of my grandmother standing over me and telling me off for what I have just done. I was overwhelmed with emotions and I just cried and cried and cried... Since that day, I was a new person, I gained the courage to stand up for myself and speak my mind...they are not worth my life so I chose to live it the way I wanted to live my life, that was my turning point.

For Vaerua, he believed that he was given a second chance at life so he was determined to make it a good one. From that day on, Vaerua fought back, seeking help from the authorities and leaving his grand-uncle to live with another family member.

Other participants also experienced a hard life as *tamariki`āngai*, in fact many felt that throughout their lives they had no say in any matter at all. They just did as they were told and took what was given to them. Taina shared her views on the matter;

It is weird, you really have no say, you have no say in anything at all, because ‘*e tamariki`āngai`ua rāi koe* (you are just a feeding child). When the biological children came back home you have no show, you get neglected...nasty things are said to you...you get nothing...you just sit there and watch as they enjoy their sweets, presents and all.

The impact in this situation of being treated the way she was, made Taina promise to herself, not to let her own children go through this kind of life, no matter what. “I vow to myself I will never give up my children to anybody, I don’t care who they are, they are never going to leave me and they never did”. In this case, the experience of being a *tamariki`āngai* has not severely affected the participant psychologically, but it has made her stronger and determined not to repeat the practice of *tamariki`āngai* with her own children.

4.7 Feeling Abandoned and Unwanted

Feeling abandoned and unwanted is another common theme that emerged during the fieldwork as the participants explained their feelings. Those that went through a rough upbringing as a *tamariki`āngai* have formed negative feelings of being abandoned and unwanted, which led them to feeling uncertain of where they belong within the adopted family. Taina described how she was being transferred from one family to another which made her feel unwanted each time it happened. As for `Ātamu, after learning the truth about being a *tamariki rētita*, he felt that he was unwanted and abandoned by his birth mother. At the same time he questioned his own status within his adopted family and became uncertain about a lot of things such as whether they really loved him or not.

Regardless of feeling abandoned and unwanted yet, when it came to describing their feelings towards their birth parents they quickly rationalised and justified the contributing factors to being *tamariki`āngai*. `Ātamu suggested that his grandparents took him in as their way of “giving their daughter another chance to life”, despite feeling abandoned and unwanted. Tangaroa stated that, “it comes down to circumstance...my mother was very young so the best option for me was to go and live with my feeding parents who were already well established, they had their own house and they were both working”. According to Purotu, “I am lucky to have been adopted by my parents because my birth mother was by herself”. Matamaru explained that her birth mother was ill after giving birth to her therefore, her feeding mother

took her in. In my opinion, the participants were trying to mask their feelings of abandonment by painting a positive picture about their transition from their birth parents to their feeding parents. Although they had negative experiences they still found it in their hearts to share something positive about their *tamariki`āngai* arrangements within their new families.

Hodges (1990) in her clinical work described the most common fantasy of adoptees in relation to their adoption is to mask the pain of abandonment and being unwanted by putting a positive take on it. For example, the adoptee replaces the statements of, “she gave me up” and, “she did not want me”, with more positive statements such as, “It’s not that she didn’t want me”, it is because, “she physically wasn’t able to keep me” (Hodges 1990, p.64). Another fantasy claimed by another adoptee in Hodges study was reported as “she did want me, I was taken away by force”. The fantasy of being, “kidnapped by the adoptive parents, one which transforms the unwanted child into a child wanted twice over” (Hodges, 1990, p. 64). The notion of wanted twice refers to the first time being wanted by the birth mother, and the second time being wanted by the adopted parents (the two that kidnapped the child). In Taina’s situation she preferred not to imagine what her biological father would be like because there is no way of going back on what she has experienced, therefore crying over it is pointless. Deeg (2002), explained a situation where an adoptee did not see the point in exploring fantasies of her birth parents and trying to justify their act of abandoning her. Therefore, in refusing to fantasise over an “unreliable biological mother...simultaneously gratified a desire for revenge that expressed her pained representation of abandoned infant self” (Deeg, 2002, p. 200). Obviously, the child preferred not to waste any time in criticising and questioning the adoption arrangement. This is one way of getting over it, to forget the biological parents that never raised them and move on with life with their new feeding or adopted parents. This could be the only solution for some.

Mere shared how she never thought she would ever want to meet her birth mother, until she was in her 40s. When she was younger she despised the woman and never wanted anything to do with her. She was happy with her adopted parents. However, Mere struggled a lot with identity issues when she got older. Mere became curious what her birth parents would look like, she also wondered “what makes me?” According to Mere, when she finally met her birth mother she was happy that she did but Mere described her feeling of guilt, “I think I love her but I will never tell her that I love her...I feel guilty for my mum and dad (adopted)...I was scared to tell them about my birth mother”. According to Mere, there is never the right answer

to explain how she feels about her birth mother. Mere states “I always feel that I needed to be loyal to my adopted parents...I didn’t think not knowing where I came from would affect me so much”. Furthermore, she felt that she owed it to her daughter and her granddaughter to find out where she actually came from. As a final point, for many of the participants in this study, knowing was enough for them to understand why things happened the way they did in their lives. None of the participants had the desire to build a relationship with their birth parents, if given the opportunity. Most were happy to leave things as they are, maybe if they were younger they would, but in their 30s and older going back to mend those relationship gaps with the birth parents is not important.

The emotional feelings expressed by the participants came to the fore once the child discovered the truth about being *tamariki`āngai*. According to `Ātamu, “the feeling of being unwanted has haunted me from the day I discovered that I was adopted”. Therefore, the impact of discovery on some of the participants is that they started to question the reasons of why they were adopted out or raised by other people. They started to feel uncertain about where they stand and what rights and entitlements do they have within their family (feeding or adopted). They also started to wonder how life would be different if they were raised by their birth parents.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has unearthed a number of interesting traditional contributing factors to why the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement is widely practiced in the Cook Islands. The tradition of gifting the first born grandchild to the grandparents is an arrangement that is temporary and through mutual agreements between families and it should remain as that, in my opinion. Families utilise this arrangement to ensure that the grandparents would have an extra pair of legs and hands around the home to assist them in their elderly years. Once they pass on the child automatically goes back to their birth parents. Another form of gifting a child is to a sibling who is unable to have their own children, in these situations the arrangement could be permanent depending on the consent of the birth parents and the family. Furthermore, in some cases the birth mother experienced complications during birth therefore, other family members stepped in to care for the newborn child, and situations like these could end up being a long term arrangement because the bond between the child and the feeding parents is almost immediate. It was concluded that without the *tamariki`āngai* practice a lot of children would be neglected and worse off in the community. The kin-care system supports the *tamariki*

`āngai practice within families ensuring a loving and caring environment is established for these children. A family affair encapsulates the *tamariki `āngai* practice, therefore the child must be blood related to the feeding and adoptive parents.

There were some mixed feelings amongst the participants and traditional advisors when it came to the notion of legalising the *tamariki `āngai* arrangement through the Land Court System. There was a difference in opinion between the two traditional leaders, one suggesting that times are changing and the traditional ways are no longer recognised in today's society, and the other suggesting that legislation has been put in place to guide the decisions. One of the traditional leaders suggested that legalising the traditional adoption is important for the arrangement to be recognised and subsequently to determine the entitlements of the child. Being a traditionalist, Pāpā Puna asserts that our traditional way is who we are, and going back to our roots is the solution to all family disputes. Obtaining the family's approval for the *tamariki `āngai* arrangement is required in both traditional and legislated practices. Therefore, the two practices are interrelated and could be seen as complementing each other. As a result of colonisation the perceptions of our people have influenced the way we do things. Economic development has also influenced our practices and our perceptions towards our traditional ways. Greed has often led families to have inter-family disputes when it comes to land entitlements, traditional titles and *tamariki `āngai*. In the end the children are the ones that are affected the most.

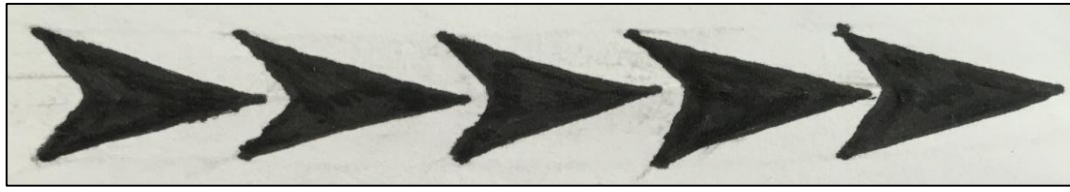
The emotional impact on the *tamariki `āngai* surfaced in their discussion about how they discovered that they were a *tamariki `āngai*. Prior to discovering the truth, emotional impact to the *tamariki `āngai* happened when they experienced mistreatments from their new family. The three common emotional issues identified in this study are: feeling unwanted, feeling abandoned and feeling uncertain.

5. CHAPTER FIVE:

LAW VERSES LORE

TE MANA TURE KI RUNGA`O I TE PEU TUPUNA

KORARE – SPEARHEAD



The *kōrare* (the spearhead) motif represents a war weapon in traditional times. In today's society, particularly in the art of tattooing, it symbolises courage and determination in overcoming life's challenges. The *kōrare* motif was chosen for this chapter because it signifies the struggles that the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* faces in modern society today. Since the introduction of European law to the Cook Islands, families have struggled in implementing both European law and Cook Islands lore associated with *tamariki`āngai*. The *kōrare* portrays this as they affirm their identity, their status within the families (birth and feeding family) and also their entitlements to the land and traditional titles. Consequently, it signifies the participant's courage to overcome the challenges they face in their families and society because of being adopted through the *tamariki`āngai* practice. *Kōrare* represents the voices of the participants and their determination to overcome life's challenges throughout their journey as a *tamariki`āngai*.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces two interesting case studies from the islands of Mangaia and Pukapuka. The two islands have continued to hold on to their traditional protocols when it comes to *tamariki`āngai* practices and land distribution. It is fitting to highlight the traditional lore of these islands to portray the cultural identity of these islands in comparison to the change in the traditional lore of the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki. Furthermore, this chapter will look at how the introduced European legislation and government process of registering the adoption orders in Rarotonga is influencing land distributions and entitlements on the islands of Mangaia and Pukapuka, to determine whether the Rarotonga adoption process is recognised on these islands and what impact it has, if any, on the family arrangements. This chapter also looks at

the inheritance of the *tamariki`āngai*, their land entitlements and traditional titles from the views of the participants and written accounts from Cook Islands scholars on what these rights and entitlements are. This chapter explores the challenges faced by the participants who have gone through the traditional adoption practice and also those that have gone through the endorsement of registering the adoption through the Land Court system. It outlines the similarities and differences between the two cohorts of participants, the *tamariki`āngai* and *tamariki rētita*. It further explores the influence of colonisation on traditional adoption and the misinterpretation of the legislated process by Cook Islanders and how this process has compromised the eligibility of the *tamariki`āngai* to acquire the birth right endowment of land that reaffirms their status and entitlement.

5.2 Traditional Lore Maintained – Case Study of Mangaia & Pukapuka

The colonial influence including the appointment of Resident Officers on each island to ensure law and order spread across the Cook Islands like an epidemic that influenced the traditional lore of the islands. The traditional practices and leaders were being replaced. However, prominent traditional leaders fought against the changes dished out from the island of Rarotonga. Crocombe (1987), described that in 1902, the New Zealand Government introduced the Cook Islands Land Court process which diminished the traditional leader's rights and power to govern the process of land distribution and boundaries. The islands of Mangaia, Pukapuka and Mitiaro (of the fifteen islands) were opposed to allowing a Land Court system, in favour of traditional land practices (Crocombe, 1987). The Constitution Amendment no. 9 Act 1981 preserves their right to conduct land cases in traditional tribunals “unless the traditional authorities request otherwise” (Crocombe, 1987, p.62). Most particularly refusing the court system and the “law jurisdiction to dictate the traditional practices on these islands” (p.62). The traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* is very common on these islands and is endorsed in their traditional format and settings. Due to not allowing the Land Court on these islands, the traditional land system was maintained and therefore the *tamariki`āngai* practice was also maintained. However, it does not prevent or limit the parents from undertaking the registration of adoption orders of their children through the Land Court system set up in Rarotonga. When it comes to the land entitlements of the adopted child registered through the Land Court in Rarotonga, it has no grounds or recognition with the land distribution on these islands (Mangaia and Pukapuka).

5.2(a) Mangaia Adoption Lore

According to Te Rangi Hiroa (1934), a father is always delighted on the birth of a son as it ensures that his family line is perpetuated. Mangaian's prefer to have more sons in order to strengthen family status and the tribal group, which depends heavily on working and maintaining the land for food cultivations. Furthermore, Te Rangi Hiroa (1934) states that fathers like to arrange their "son's marriage in order that he may have grandchildren and be assured both the perpetuation of his family line and the continued strength of his tribe" (p.96). Te Rangi Hiroa (1934) asserts that the Mangaia family is patriarchal, consequently the wife leaves her father's tribe and land to live with her husband in his tribal group and on his land. Also in Mangaia the tradition of *tu`a`anga* (sharing) of the children is well honoured, whereby the first born belongs to the father and his tribe and the second born to the mother and her tribe and so on. Traditional lore in Mangaia states that once the wife leaves her father to marry her husband she will join her husband's tribe (Te Rangi Hiroa, 1934). Therefore, she will no longer have any claim to her birth rights from her father's tribe.

Dodson (2009), states that in Mangaia the *kōpū tangata* (families) are the Land Court, and the allocation of land rights and boundaries are determined through traditional lore. The Aronga Mana (traditional leaders on Mangaia) strongly objected to the invasion of the European Land Court process. However, Dodson reports that Mangaians can register their *tamariki`āngai* in the Rarotonga Land Court and the Aronga Mana cannot prevent them from doing so, a process which has no influence on the land distribution and entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai* on Mangaia. The decision of the land is made by the family and passed down by the Aronga Mana of each district on Mangaia. Dodson (2009) described a situation where a dying adopting father requested the presence of the Aronga Mana to his sick bed and told the Aronga Mana of his desire to give land to his adopted child. In situations like these the Aronga Mana of Mangaia will ensure the wish of the dying father is honoured. Dodson (2009), shared the views of her participants which suggest that *tamariki`āngai* are disadvantaged to claim for land entitlements if they are not legally registered and therefore a Mangaian without land is devalued. Furthermore, Dodson suggests that the process of legally adopting the child can protect the *tamariki`āngai* against the *kōreromotu* (verbal promise) being disregarded in families following the death of the feeding parents. However, in addition "segregating past practice from current guidelines is difficult because Mangaia's history is closely interwoven with the present, and to a great extent, the custom remains flexible" (Dodson, 2009, p.144). The entitlements of a *tamariki`āngai* passed down through *kōreromotu* in the past was highly

respected by the extended family, similar to a will in a European context. The difference is that a will is documented and endorsed by a legal authority and *kōreromotu* is unwritten and verbally expressed and passed down from generation to generation.

The Manganian adoption lore is flexible whereby anyone can adopt a child as long as agreement of the arrangement is reached between both sets of parents. According to Firth (1957), before the influence of Europeans, “the Mangania custom is that adoption appears to be confined solely to a transference of children from the group of the father to that of the mother” (p. 590). This practice still happens today even if the child’s birth father is unknown, there is always a reason within the Manganian community for a *tamariki`āngai* arrangement to take place. It is also tradition for Manganians not to give their children to other people but only to blood relatives. Dodson (2009), states that the naming of a baby after their grandparents usually ends up weakening the birth parents’ right to retain the baby and the grandparents end up raising the child. The traditional naming of the child in Mangania can connect the *tamariki`āngai* to their blood lineage and “thereby qualifies land access and reciprocity associated with lineage membership” (Dodson, 2009, p.147). The relationship between naming a child, land access and reciprocity is that the *tamariki`āngai* receives a piece of land from the feeding parent to “ensure family stability on that land is perpetuity” (Dodson, 2009, p.147). Dodson (2009), argues that *tamariki`āngai* arrangements are verbal in Mangania, therefore not difficult to rescind. In some cases they are crisis driven due to the death of a birth mother, but in most cases *tamariki`āngai* are pre-arranged before birth, within families, with the approval of the larger family. Subsequently, the *tamariki`āngai* cannot claim the land of their feeding parents because they are only taking their names informally without any legal interventions. Therefore, the land rights of the *tamariki`āngai* in the Manganian tradition are agreed upon at the outset prior to the child being transferred to the feeding parents. Dodson (2009), went on to describe how the *tamariki`āngai* inheritance is decided by the feeding parents by calling a meeting with the Aronga Mana and Kāvana (High Chief) of the district to inform them of their desire to allocate an inheritance to the *tamariki`āngai*. According to Dodson, although this process has taken place the *tamariki`āngai* must be humble in requesting land from the family or risk being evicted from the land by relatives after the feeding parents die.

According to Dodson (2009), legally adopting a child brings equality and is intended to bestow birth rights and status to the *tamariki`āngai*. Furthermore, if a child is legally adopted or registered it gives them the right to inherit the land of the adopted parents, whereas a child that is not registered has no rights. On the contrary, participants in Dodson’s study claimed that

even if the child is legally adopted or registered the child is still not a birth child simply because the registering of the child does not erase their lineage with the birth family. However, Dodson argues that “legally registered adoption done in Rarotonga’s Land Court is an elective means of protecting the *tamariki`āngai`’s* inheritance claims” (p.167). It is also a sign that the feeding parents value their feeding children therefore, “formalising an adoption is an outward sign that the *metua`āngai`* are more invested in their *tamariki`āngai`*” (p.169).

Dodson (2009), outlined that land ownership is more important to Mangaiaans than a traditional title. The protocol to transfer land ownership involves the identity of the person requesting land. The relationship of the person to the stewards over the land is highly important. Accordingly, families act as “gate-keepers to the land who also have the authority over eligibility and access to allocate land within their jurisdictions” (Dodson, 2009, p.169). Therefore, a piece of land allocated for feeding parents can be gifted or allocated to the *tamariki`āngai`*. These arrangements are adopted by the Aronga Mana on Mangaia. Therefore, *tamariki`āngai`* can inherit land from both sets of parents depending on the family’s decision. If the family approve of such arrangements then the same approval can come from the Aronga Mana to seal the deal and confirm that arrangement. Therefore, legalising the *tamariki`āngai`* arrangement is not important in Mangaia, as long as the Aronga Mana have approved the arrangement following the decision of the family. If that occurs, the decision is honoured and respected in Mangaia. Land entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai`* are undisputed by the extended family if the seal of approval from the Aronga Mana is confirmed and handed down to the family. If the adoption arrangement was ordered in the Land Court in Rarotonga and failed to go through the traditional process in Mangaia, then unfortunately that legal arrangement has no grounds and mandate on Mangaia.

5.2(b) Pukapuka Adoption Lore

Pukapuka adoption lore has a unique and clear distinction between the two set of practices, supported by its traditional way of doing things and closely guided by its traditional leaders. Beaglehole (1934), explained the two forms of traditional adoption on the island of Pukapuka. Both are widely practiced depending on the arrangements and agreements with the family. The *kokoti* (to cut) practice is a complete adoption “usually involves change of residence and change of patrilineal descent” (Beaglehole, 1934, p.251). The second being the *wāngai* (to feed) practice according to Beaglehole (1934), which is a feeding adoption “usually involves change of residence, but never change of descent line” (p.251). Both *kokoti* and *wāngai* are practiced within families and the child must be blood related to one of the parents, either the

mother or the father. Both practices are governed through the traditional framework on Pukapuka which has no legal affiliation with the European legislations widely practiced in Rarotonga and other islands of the Cook Islands.

Evidently, there are similarities in the Pukapuka *wāngai* adoption practices and the process in Rarotonga and Aitutaki, known as *tamariki`āngai*. The two main reasons for adoption in Pukapuka are personal and economic Beaglehole (1934). The personal motive is supported by a childless father to “ensure the continuation of his patrilineal descent line” (p.251). The economic incentive for a childless couple who have a *tama kokoti* (adopted child) is the food distribution the child can bring to their household from the village food sharing custom. Beaglehole (1934), suggests that the most favourable method of adoption is before birth and the adopting parents are present during labour or child birth. The process is simple and the consent of the paternal and maternal grandparents is sought before the request is extended “with their bilateral kinship groups to see if there is any objection to breaking a descent line” (Beaglehole, 1934, p.252). If the request is supported, the adopting parents are notified and they are required to feed the pregnant mother with the best food possible, until she gives birth. They are required to keep feeding the mother during the nursing or feeding period until the baby is weaned. The adopting parents are responsible for naming the child and providing a birth feast for the families. At weaning time the adopting parents take full possession of the child. Again another feast must be provide by the adopting parents to mark the handing over of the child. Furthermore, the adopting parents must bear valuable gifts to the birth family of the child before they take the child away. At this stage “it completes the adoption, henceforth the child lives with the adopting parents...birth parents give up all control over the child” (Beaglehole, 1934, p.252). The situation explained above by Beaglehole is the *kokoti* traditional adoption practice in Pukapuka.

Beaglehole (1934), distinguishes between *tama kokoti* and *tama wāngai* whereby a feast ceremony is not required before the *tama wāngai* goes to the feeding parents. The child in this arrangement is free to return to the birth family. However, the food share the child receives from the village sharing ceremony must go to the feeding parents. Beaglehole (1934), explained the Pukapuka tradition around the *tama kokoti*'s entitlements to land which are discussed prior and agreed to by the family to avoid problems arising in the future. Furthermore the *tama kokoti* “child loses all status, kinship and sociological, in relation to his blood families” (Beaglehole, 1934, p.256). Therefore, “all kinship ties established by birth are

broken...a new kinship obligation are formulated...with the adopting parents” (Beaglehole, 1934, p.256).

Beaglehole (1934) states that the *kokoti* practice was well honoured by families in the past once the decision is approved by the kinship group (families) (p.256). However, due to the motives of natural affection and economic advantage associated with a child, birth parents can find it difficult to completely relinquish their relationship with the child. The birth parents could encourage the child to visit them and they pet them and provide them with gifts and treats. Such treatment is disliked by the adoptive parents who expect the birth parents to turn the child away (Beaglehole, 1934).

Furthermore, Beaglehole (1934), described the burial tradition whereby the *tama kokoti* will be buried on the adoptive father’s side and not the birth father. Whereas the *tama wāngai* will return to the burial site of his or her birth father. According to Beaglehole the *tama kokoti* practice has a clear traditional protocol which links to the inheritance and entitlement of the child, land entitlement is passed down from the adoptive father to the *tama kokoti*.

Beaglehole (1934), also described how European law has no jurisdiction on Pukapuka and if and when there are disputes within the family regarding the adoption arrangements, and they are unable to solve the disputes, the matter is brought to the attention of the Ariki (High Chief) whose decision is final. Taking the matter to the Ariki to solve is usually the last resort, according to Beaglehole (1934). Ideally, the head of the family is highly respected within each *kopu tangata* and decisions made should also be respected and honoured.

5.3 Land Rights and Distribution

Land tenure is one of the common themes in the findings of this study as shared through the responses of the participants. A comprehensive review of literature relating to the land tenure practices in the Cook Islands is outlined to show how the influence of European law changed and shaped the Māori custom around land tenure. From the responses of the participants it is clear that land rights are a sensitive issue to talk about as a *tamariki`āngai*, especially if you are not blood related to the *metua`āngai* (feeding parents). Similar to the practice of *tamariki`āngai*, Crocombe & Meleisea (1994), suggests that the system is shaped by society and external forces such as colonisation and this has influenced and shaped the traditional lore around land distribution in the Cook Islands. Crocombe & Meleisea (1994) also suggests that change will take place whether we like it or not, but what is most important is that “we need to

understand the following, the force influencing the change, the nature of the change and the speed at which the change takes place” (p.2).

According to Tina Browne (1994), prior to the arrival of Christianity, land was owned by the Ariki (high chiefs), “The authority of the Ariki was paramount and ownership was usually the result of conquest” (p.205). The influence of colonisation through the acceptance of Christianity by the *Ariki* followed by the cessation of warfare, and introduction of trade and meant that the land rights and land distribution lore began to change. The Cook Islands Act 1915 defines traditional land as “land which being rested in the Crown is held by natives or the descendants of natives under Native custom and usages of the Cook Islands” (p.206). The native custom is defined as “the ancient custom and usage of the native Cook Islands” (Browne, 1994, p.206). Browne (1994), described how the missionaries have influenced the Ariki to induce the people to move their domestic dwellings near the coastal areas and to settle around the missionary centres. According to Brown, in 1894 the Federal Parliament declared “the land is owned by the tribe but its use is with the family who occupy that land. The family consists of all the children, who have a common ancestor” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, (p.206).

Browne (1994), states that after the annexation of the Cook Islands by New Zealand in 1900 there was a shift to increase and promote agricultural activities and at the same time encourage European settlers to the islands. The land ownership was established therefore the land occupants were given “individual freehold right to ensure security of tenure” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.207). Hence the establishment of the Cook Islands Native Lands Title Courts to determine “every title to interest in customary land...according to the ancient custom and usage of the natives of the Cooks” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.207). Furthermore, the influence of the land ownership reform created excessive fragmentation of ownership as a result of relying on the “Register of Titles”. According to Browne the new change to the system is that once the previous landowner is deceased then the successors to the land are all of the children of the previous owner. Therefore, if “there were 10 owners in a plot of land in 1906, today there are often 100 or more owners hold their interest as tenants is common with undivided shares” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.207).

Under the “traditional system, the relative interest of owners were more or less determined by occupation rather than on an equal basis” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne,

1994, p.207). Since the introduction of the Land Court to the Cook Islands, three of the islands, namely Mangaia, Pukapuka, and Mitiaro have been excluded by virtue of the Constitution Amendments no.9 Act 1980-81. The Act prescribed that the land matters on these islands were “to continue to be dealt with by customary procedures unless the customary authorities request otherwise” (p.208).

In addition, the Occupation Right granted under the Cook Islands Amendments Act 1946 states this process entails the right to occupy a piece of land for agricultural or residential purposes. However, the “jurisdiction of the court can only be exercised if the majority of landowners...approves the occupation right” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.208). Under this land process the land ends up idle because land occupation holders have migrated overseas and “cannot be deprived of their land rights” whereas under the traditional system they would lose it if the land is left idle for a long time, and the land goes back to the family to be reallocated if they wish to do so. The traditional system to land distribution is determined by the person’s ability to develop the land, not by equal share based on birth rights and family lineage.

Browne (1994), states that the approval of landowners is not statutory but over the years the land court have considered those approvals. According to Browne (1994) “the approval of the landowners is not a statutory requirement” nevertheless the court over the years have declined an application without the approval of the majority landowners (p.208). Browne (1994), describes how the Government tried to introduce schemes to encourage a more productive use of the land, such as the citrus scheme in 1946 with the cost to start up the citrus plantation being subsidised by the Government. The maximum use of the land was vested into the family, the citrus plantations were owned by and benefitted the whole family rather than the individuals. However, at the same time occupation rights were ongoing and being practiced therefore, diminishing the land available for development to stimulate economic activities. “The land facilitation of Dealing Act 1979 enabled landowners to lease, partition of the land to other landowners” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.209). This Act was designed to mitigate the problem of land lying idle because of absentee landowners.

Shortly after that, the vesting order was introduced in the 1960’s “whereby the land owner’s interest could be vested in individual landowners” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.209). During this era, the Land Court was heavily criticised in their interpretation of the Māori Custom. In particular the allocation of land to a traditional title

holder (Ariki, Mata‘iapo and Rangatira) are allocated blocks of lands to administer within their tribe and *kōpū tangata*. Land allocated for a traditional title is called an “*enua tao`anga*”, which is regarded as a traditional occupation right where the Land Court has no jurisdiction. The distribution of that special land is vested in the title holder or traditional leader.

According to Browne (1994) the court has tried to apply this Māori custom in most land applications. However one of the difficulties over the years is keeping up with the change. These changes were influenced by “Christian missionaries, new technology, commerce and European Law” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.209). Browne (1994), described the pre-missionaries where women were forbidden from holding traditional titles, however, over a hundred years later women were able to hold these titles. Due to the ambiguity of what these Māori customs are, the House of Ariki and Koutu Nui developed general guidelines of Māori custom and presented that to the Government to adopt and to be implemented by the Land Division thus “Recognising the problem of land remaining idle” (Declaration as to Land, 1894, cited by Browne, 1994, p.210). This issue evolved because of occupation right holders and those applying for occupation rights and residing outside of the Cook Islands. Conditions such as how long has the applicant resided outside of the Cook Islands, full details of why the section is required, estimated cost of the house, proof that the applicant has the finance ready to build the house, a plan of the house and details of when the applicant will be returning to the Cook Islands to commence the project. Browne (1994) also indicated that the Land Court can cancel an occupation right if the court was satisfied that land had not been developed for over ten years. “Court has now made it a condition of all occupation rights that they will lapse if the applicants have not commenced construction within 5 years and completed within 7 years” (p.211).

According to Browne (1994),

“the court has held the view that the purpose of granting occupation right is for people to occupy the land. If they are not able to occupy within a specified timeframe then they should relinquish the right to other members who may wish to occupy. Some owners do not agree with the conditions imposed by the court. They feel that if the family has granted a section to a member of the family then it should be available to that person and his/her descendants forever. Other owners on the other hand, welcome the new policy of the court, as it “makes land available to those owners who are desperate to build” (p.211).

Gilson (1980) states that “land tenure under the Cook Islands Act 1915 stated that the succession to any land titles are determined by native customs...but it forbade the willing of land” (p.148). Furthermore, “only legally adopted children could succeed to the land interests

of foster parents” (Gilson, 1980. p.148). Gilson (1980), went on to state that land ownership can be transferred by inheritance, he also highlighted that the legally adopted children share the same land rights as the birth children. “All the children of the landowner including the legally adopted children were to inherit equal rights of use, but willing land was not permitted” (Gilson, 1980, p.148). Gilson went on to say that the Land Court was bestowed the sole right to legalise the adoption order to avoid the confusion amongst families in respect to land rights for the adopted children. These views are constantly contradicted by the *tamariki`āngai* practice whereby the approval of the family is all that is required for the child to have rights to the land of the feeding parents. Traditionally, the *kōreromutu* (verbal promises) are honoured and respected by the family from one generation to another.

5.4 Traditional Titles

The traditional title protocol is an interesting one and is also an ongoing debated issue amongst families. Pāpā Puna shared his view on the Māori lore of claiming and being a successor of a traditional title such as Ariki, Mata‘iapo and Rangatira within the family. According to Pāpā Puna, the *tamariki`āngai* cannot be appointed to these traditional titles as per the *peu* Māori (Māori lore). Pāpā Puna asserts that the successor to traditional titles must be the biological children of the current title holder. However, “if the Ariki does not have biological children he or she can notify the family and the House of Ariki of his intentions...to bestow the title upon his feeding child when he passed on” according to PāpāPuna. Pāpā Puna also asserts that these kinds of arrangements have happened in the past and these arrangements are documented in the Ariki’s genealogy. Decisions like this are well respected and honoured by the family and according to Pāpā Puna, “very rarely the decision of the title holder is challenged after they passed on”. Pāpā Puna also suggests that “*e mana te kōreromotu ‘ā te au metua*” (“there is authority in the verbal promises of our ancestors”). In these situations, although there is a lore around the rightful successor to a traditional title, there is also some flexibility around it and the family and House of Ariki approval is paramount in these arrangements.

5.5 Land Entitlements - Views of the Participants

Land rights are a common theme amongst the participants of this study. The views of Pāpā Puna and Pāpā Dan are very similar suggesting that the *tamariki`āngai* can only have access to the land of the parent they are blood related to. Pāpā Dan argues that a *tamariki`āngai* should only claim land on one side. If he or she obtains land on the feeding side then he or she should not be greedy and claim on the biological side. Pāpā Dan suggests “this is when the problem within the family starts because of greed and jealousy amongst the family”. He also

suggests because of families getting bigger it is hard to ensure that all the children get a piece of land. According to Pāpā Puna “land availability is very slim nowadays...family must allocate based on traditional allocation protocols”. According to Pāpā Puna, “land is granted to a child when he or she is ready to build his or her house rather than equally distributing to all your children”. Approving land based on their ability to develop the land will eliminate the family land being idle because the occupation right holder is overseas or still studying.

Vaerua described the tradition within his family when it comes to land rights, “my *tupuna* (ancestors) have succeeded on the land...therefore the land is inherited by the children and gets passed down to the children’s children” and so on. According to Vaerua, his family always “adopted a child that is blood related” therefore, things are easier when it comes to land distribution. Because the *tamariki`āngai* are blood relatives they have equal rights to the family land and they don’t have to be legally adopted or go to the court to justify their land rights. Furthermore, Vaerua states that once the head of the family spoke on these land rights, these decisions were respected and honoured by the family. The same protocol is practiced within Vaerua’s family for traditional titles. The *tamariki`āngai* within Vaerua’s family being blood related to the family have equal right to claim the traditional titles as that of birth children. Again the traditional titles are communicated openly within the family and titles are bestowed on a child (birth or *tamariki`āngai*) if he or she is the next in line for the title.

‘Ātamu and Purotu share the same view when it comes to land rights. Both state that land is always a sensitive issue especially when it involves the land of the non-blood related parent. According to ‘Ātamu land is a “sensitive topic especially when the adopted child is not related to one of the parents”. Therefore, it depends on the family and whether they would allow an adopted son with no blood relation to the mother to have access to her land. Purotu also supports that notion and said “I am not related to my adopted father, therefore, I would never want to pursue that option of claiming his land in order to keep the peace in the family”. Both also suggested that it is better for all if their land rights are only considered from the set of parents they are related to. ‘Ātamu suggests that if he is given the opportunity to accept land from his mum’s family he would be honoured to accept that, but “I would not expect that privilege to be bestowed upon me”. ‘Ātamu asserts that he would not ask for it to avoid being hurt with the decision of the family. ‘Ātamu suggests that land entitlement should be the decision of his parents, ‘Ātamu had land rights on his dad’s side but not his mother’s. If the

parents wish to give him a piece of land then that decision should be theirs and “as an adopted child I have no right to ask for it”.

Tangaroa shared a different view when he described his perception about land rights of an adopted child or *tamariki`āngai*. Tangaroa asserts that he would rather buy land due to the politics and family disputes over lands, “I would rather buy my land if I needed one, instead of getting into the birth rights to land issues”. Tangaroa has opted to avoid the confrontation with the family in asking for a piece of land, instead he would just buy a 60 year lease hold, which is a common occurrence in the Cook Islands these days.

In the situations of Ioane, Matamaru and Manea, the trio are very lucky to have been gifted a piece of land by their feeding parents. In Ioane’s situation, his feeding mother gifted a whole acre of land for him but when he went to legalise the land arrangement that his mother vouched for him, “My brother (sibling on the feeding side) opposed the decision of my mother and claimed half of the land for himself”. Ioane describes his feelings about land rights now, “concerning the land, I think I’m more worried about it now than before especially as I’m getting older”. He is more fearful for his son because “if I was a biological child then I wouldn’t worry about it” according to Ioane. Ioane’s worst fear is that his feeding siblings can move his family off the land once he’s passed on.

Luckily for Matamaru and Manea they had things handed to them on a “silver platter”, that is how Matamaru described this act of kindness, whereby her feeding father gifted a piece of land for her and her children, with no interruptions from his family. That is similar to Manea’s experience where her adopted parents gifted her and her son a piece of land. Obviously the two participants are examples of a child who is blood related with the feeding and adopted parents and so they have legal rights to their land anyway. Furthermore, the situation of the pair is also a unique one because they both have access to the land of their biological parents as well. Consequently, both families have approved of Matamaru and Manea having access to lands on both sides of their family (adopted/feeding and biological) despite the European law suggesting otherwise.

5.6 Conclusions

In conclusion the unique case study of Mangaia and Pukapuka described in this chapter is an example of a traditional Māori lore that has survived colonisation and the European influence of land distribution and *tamariki`āngai*. The introduction of the Land Court system was strongly opposed by the traditional leaders on these islands who have sustained that stance

since the early 1900s. The Land Court administration on Rarotonga has no jurisdiction on these islands. The unique identification of land boundaries are located and identified by coconut trees, chestnut trees and land marks which continued to be respected on these islands. The allocation of land to each tribe is governed by the Aronga Mana (traditional leaders) of the tribe, such as the 'Ui Ariki, 'Ui Rangatira and 'Ui Mata'iaipo.¹⁸ They allocate allotment of lands to each family, who have the authority to distribute how they see fit within their families. If and when disputes arise within the family due to land allocation, the Aronga Mana intervention is sought by the patriarch of the family and the decision of the Aronga Mana is final. The *tamariki`āngai* practice is very common on these islands and similarly administered through the Aronga Mana setting. Decisions made within the traditional Aronga Mana protocol are honoured and respected on both islands. Initially, before the Aronga Mana consider the request of the family, the family must have a decision for such arrangements and approved within a family meeting setting. The absence of the Land Court administration on Mangaia and Pukapuka means that legally adopting and registering the child from these islands can be done in the Rarotonga Land Court administration. However, the legalising of the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement in Rarotonga changes nothing. On these islands it does not overrule the traditional protocol on these islands. The introduction of European Law to administer the land application process and *tamariki`āngai* practice has influenced the allocation of land. Land lore promotes equal access to the land and fair access to develop the land. It supports the notion whereby the land is occupied once the occupation right holder is ready to develop the land, rather than claiming equal distribution of land amongst family members. Furthermore, the introduction of legislation has influenced the status and land rights of the *tamariki`āngai*. The finding concludes that a child must be legally adopted in order to have equal land rights with the biological siblings. A stance which contradicts the Māori lore whereby the approval of the family can determine the land rights and entitlement of the child, whether they are legally or not legally adopted is not important. Furthermore, the inheritance of the *tamariki`āngai*, their land entitlements and the successor to the traditional titles are all determined by the *kōpū tangata* (family) with the Aronga Mana's process to formalise those arrangements. Therefore, the eligibility of the *tamariki`āngai* to acquire the birth right endowment of land is determined by the family approval which also reaffirms their status within their family.

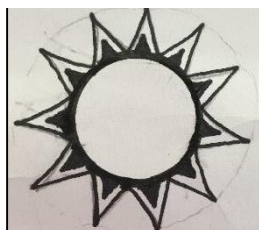
¹⁸ *Ui* (*Ui Ariki, Ui Rangatira, Ui Mataiapo*) the use of the word *Ui* is to emphasis the collective traditional leaders. For example *Ui Ariki* means all the Chiefs of the land and so on.

6. CHAPTER 6:

NEW BEGINNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PŌROKIROKI'ANGA

TE RĀ – THE SUN



The standalone motif called *te rā* (the sun), is commonly used in a body tattooing design, which symbolises the beginning of life or new life, positive attitude and rising to the challenge as described by Tattooist Clive Nicholas. The motif is usually placed in the centre of a series of other designs interconnecting to the motif *te rā*. This motif was selected to represent this chapter because it signifies the new discovered knowledge and understanding of what the status and entitlements of *tamariki`āngai* are in the Cook Islands. This chapter revisits the research question, highlights the findings of this study and presents recommendations for consideration by government policy-makers in the Cook Islands.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter revisits the aim of this study in understanding the impact of colonisation on the *tamariki`āngai* practice of the Cook Islands and to outline the status of *tamariki`āngai* and their entitlements and the research question, that is, articulating what are the implications of colonisation on the traditional adoption lore, status and entitlement of *tamariki`āngai*? Therefore, this chapter will review the findings of the study to effectively answer the research question and provide some recommendations for consideration.

6.2 Research Findings

The reform of the adoption practice has provided a lot of families with a directive through the Cook Island Land Court to legalise the *tamariki`āngai* arrangements within families and to determine the status and entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai*. As previously explained, the traditional adoption practice of *tamariki`āngai* is embedded within family blood lines. The traditional *tamariki`āngai* practice is widely known as an informal island adoption practice or

arrangement which predominantly occurs within families and blood related individuals, that is, the parents and the child. This is also known as a kin-care arrangement, whereby a blood relative of the child provides care for the child when required by other family members, commonly grandparents looking after grandchildren. This practice has evolved from the time that the Indigenous leaders of the Cook Islands practiced the traditional *tamariki 'āngai* practice within their tribal groups led by the 'Ui Ariki, 'Ui Mataiapo and 'Ui Rangatira.

One historical example highlighted in this study is the *tamariki 'āngai* arrangement that Tangi`ia embraced with the son of his Tahitian friend 'Iro, named Pā Ariki. Tangi`ia's title was bestowed upon Pā Ariki when he passed on and is still held by descendants of Pā Ariki today. The strings of the flu-like epidemic outbreak on Rarotonga in the 1830s saw a lot of children dying and some were heirs to the Chiefly titles. As a result of this loss, Ariki title holders around Rarotonga resorted to claiming children from other Ariki lineage through the *tamariki 'āngai* practice as their way of ensuring an heir to the throne of traditional leaders. Regardless of being a *tamariki 'āngai*, decisions through a verbal promise known as *kōreromotu* by the family were made, and endorsed by the Aronga Mana (traditional leaders) who are highly respected.

The arrival of the missionaries in the 1820s encroached and imposed new beliefs onto the Indigenous Cook Island people. They condemned a lot of the traditional practices such as the worshiping of the wooden Gods referred to as Tangaroa (traditional spiritual God), according to their European and missionary lenses. The warfare practices between tribal groups to conquer lands, taro patches and young maidens and warriors to grow the number of the tribal groups were also condemned. Over time, the oral histories were manipulated by gospels and spiritual teachings of the Christian bible. It reformed the *peu* Māori (traditional way) and evidently influenced the daily attire of the local people, with the introduction of long sleeves, high necks and long dresses for the women and a full suit of trousers and white shirts for the men. The bare skin was deemed sinful and unchristian by the missionaries.



Image 23: Acceptable Attire post- missionary Era – Photo of Ariki Makea Takau and husband, with Sir Richard Seddon and Mrs Seddon, at the time of annexation of the Cook Islands in 1900. [Photo credits: from the album: Cook Islands, 1900, by Frederick William Sears. Te Papa (0.025528)]

Furthermore, foreign politics introduced by the United Kingdom (British Empire) in 1888 continued to influence the traditional lores of the Cook Islands during this period. With the Cook Islands becoming a protectorate of New Zealand in 1901, native Māori Cook Islanders saw more and more influences upon their traditional practices and cultural lores. The introduction of foreign legislation continued to encroach upon local practices. Although the Cook Islands gained independence in 1965, it remained politically affiliated to New Zealand and still is to a degree although 50 years of self-government was celebrated in the Cook Islands in 2015. The rapid development of the Cook Islands has made travel abroad a lot safer, more accessible, and frequent and easier which has opened up new opportunities for Cook Islanders. Consequently, depopulation because of migration, has become a national problem due to the outward flow of Cook Islanders and the exodus of people abroad continues to be a problem today. The migration of Cook Islanders has led to children being left behind with the grandparents to look after and, in some cases, they are left permanently with family members to look after.

During the pre-missionary era, the Indigenous Cook Island people were strong in their traditional culture and values and as such this continued to reinforce the connectedness of the people to the land. Families were living in a tribal context and were much larger and inter-dependent for survival purposes. The traditional adoption lore through *tamariki`āngai*, the sharing and naming of children, tied families together. Supporting the childless siblings by

gifting a child to them was well respected and considered an honourable gesture within families. The tradition of gifting the first grandchild to the paternal grandparents was also widely practiced and valued. Therefore, these are practices that were well known and well respected in the past by families were sealed by verbal agreements and as such, were recognised and respected amongst Cook Island families.

The Cook Islands Act 1915, legislated the process of applying for an adoption order in the court of law, under the Land Court system. At this time, the European practice of legalising the adoption arrangement through the court system was encouraged while the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement was deemed unacceptable during the time this legislation was enacted in 1915 and rolled out into the community. Despite the concerted effort to legalise the arrangement, Cook Islanders have continued to practice *tamariki`āngai* up to this day. There was a significant shift especially in Rarotonga to legalise previous *tamariki`āngai* arrangements in order for the arrangement to be recorded in the government records, documented as a resource for the family to refer to in the future. However, it did not fully eliminate the *tamariki`āngai* practice. The two adoption practices of ‘traditional lore’ and ‘Western law’ have compromised each practice. For example with the adoption practice of traditional lore, being blood related to one of the feeding parents is a must, but the same requirement is also adhered to with regard to the adoption practice using Western law. However, the Cook Islands Act 1915 introduced a separate part of the Act for the adoption of non-blood related children by native Cook Islanders and European parents. Subsequently, the endorsement of the wider family is a must for non-blood related adoption arrangements. The traditional process of family meetings and family approval was highly important when it concerned non-blood arrangements because of land entitlements and the status of the child within the family.

The administration of adoption orders are also handled through the Land Court setting, therefore, the same traditional process of asking for a piece of land through a family meeting is the same concept for the adoption of a child using Western practice. In the same meeting, the entitlement of the *tamariki`āngai* is also discussed and approved by the family members present at this family meeting of all landowners. The decision of the family meeting is recorded and signatures of landowners are collected and the documents presented to the Judge during the Land Court setting when the case of the adoption is heard or deliberated. A significant practice to mark the approval and blessing of the family for the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement is a big feast organised for the family to enjoy after the meeting to signify the endorsement of the arrangement. Therefore, there are still some common elements between the two practices.

The ownership and stewardship over land is traditionally shared among family members within a family context. This custom has been impacted on by colonial influences. Land in the Cook Islands is a highly political and sensitive issue and tensions tend to develop between families when the person claiming land is a *tamariki`āngai*. As previously mentioned, the entitlement of the *tamariki`āngai* is decided at the initiation family meeting for the *tamariki`āngai*, however, those that are blood related and have birth rights to the land of the blood related parents, tend to face objections when trying to claim for land entitlements on the non-blood related parent's lands. This is when the problems start. Unlike when the child is biologically related to both sets of parents, they have equal rights and birth rights to the land of both set of parents. Therefore, the same arrangement is expected by the *tamariki`āngai* when they claim for land. As for a non-blood related child to the family, the difficulties he or she faces is twice as harder than the previous example of a blood related child.

Additionally, some children that are *tamariki`āngai* still face difficulties when acquiring land from the family, especially if they have already been given a piece of land, and their desire to claim for another share is frowned upon by families. Consequently, they are often labelled as being greedy, whilst birth right children do not get the same treatment. The treatment of *tamariki`āngai* has changed over the years, verbal decisions made amongst families traditionally referred to as *kōreromotu*, no longer stands in today's society because the Western legal system has outweighed its status.

In the researcher's opinion, a contributing factor to the family overlooking or ignoring these verbal promises by older relatives is to do with the diminishing land availability due to the numbers of families or landowners increasing over time. For example, when a father is given equal shares of land with his siblings, his children will then get an equal share of the father's land. However, if he has four children, his land will get divided amongst the four. The four children's equal share of the fathers land will further be shared evenly with their children and so forth, thus proliferating the reduction of the size of the share across successive generations. Generally, land is evenly distributed from one generation to another. However, the human element of greed amongst families can consume some families resulting in, more land disputes through the court. Therefore, if the *tamariki`āngai* notion surfaces in these disputes, the matter gets worse and the child's status and entitlements becomes questionable usually leaving the child emotionally hurt and further disadvantaged.

Although this study had a small cohort of participants, the perspectives held by the *tamariki`āngai* participants are important as it shows how they were influenced by the level of support they received from their feeding or adoptive parents and family. As *tamariki`āngai*, the positive and negative experiences have influenced the participants sense of self and their attitudes towards the practice of *tamariki`āngai* and being raised by other people. These attitudes did not necessarily result in psychological problems though some of the informants have experienced emotional and behavioural problems associated with the timing of discovery, their status and also entitlement allocations. In some cases, the *tamariki`āngai* have grown into strong and independent individuals who have found their own destiny in life. Therefore, this study cannot conclude whether being a *tamariki`āngai* has disadvantaged a person. What can be said, is that each case is unique in itself and, one way or the other, it has made them the people they are today; strong and independent.

6.3 Linking the findings to the Indigenous Models

This study has offered new perspectives around the practice of *tamariki`āngai*. It has the potential to inform and influence families and community as a whole by sharing knowledge and experiences over the *tamariki`āngai* practice which are not often shared openly. The Kete Ora`anga model of this study signifies the *mana* (sacred power), the *aro`a* (love), the *reo* (language), the *peu* Māori (tradition), our heritage and the identity of the Cook Islands people. The step by step process of weaving the *kete* has portrayed a well thought out and careful process where the sequence of weaving patterns at different stages of the *kete*-making process is significant and plays an important role to strengthen the capability of the complete *kete*. This process can be likened to the data gathering process, to the gathering of the stories of the participants who are *tamariki`āngai* or *tamariki rētita* and the careful exchange and knowledge sharing between the researcher and participant.

Further to this, is the importance of nurturing a *tamariki`āngai* with the support of the family and the different stages of development. For example, the different experiences throughout the child's life is portrayed by the different weave pattern of the *kete* which can make the child stronger to face challenges and opportunities during their life. A further analogy relates to the kindness of the *ta`unga* (expert) weaver for the time she dedicated to this study to show the researcher the different crucial stages of making a *kete*. Her kindness signifies the pure kind hearted support of the community towards the practice. Her willingness to teach and share the art of basket weaving portrays the passion of the passing down of knowledge from the older generation to the younger generation. *Kete* weaving is an art-form which can, in relation to

this study, signify the different stages of the *tamariki* `āngai arrangement. The final stage of weaving the bottom of the *kete* is the most important stage of weaving the *kete*. It needs a strong foundation at the bottom of the *kete* to prevent objects from falling out of the *kete*. At the same time this stage relates to the experiences and upbringing of the child in a *tamariki* `āngai situation. The foundational nurturing of the relationship between the adoptive parents is important and can pave the future relationships of all parties. The Kete Ora`anga at its completed stage is likened to being a vessel that can hold and secure the individual stories of the participants of this study, to keep their stories safe and to carry the *tamariki* `āngai and *tamariki* *rētita* through their journey of life. The Kete Ora`anga model represents our Māori customs, our heritage and our identity.

The emotional journey and experiences of the *tamariki* `āngai are encapsulated within the characteristics of the mimosa plant. The experiences and the tears shared by the participants during this study is reflected by the characteristics of the mimosa plant. The highly sensitive nature of the mimosa plant signifies the experiences of the *tamariki* `āngai and their status and entitlements. The *tamariki* `āngai is a sensitive topic that most families avoid talking about. The majority of the participants felt that there was no need to be secretive about the arrangement and that by keeping the arrangement open within the families can eliminate further problems down the line. The openness of the practice within families can contribute positively to the development of the child and helping them understand the reasons for being raised by other family members.

Tangaroa, one of the participants of this study argued that there is no “need to hide the truth from the child...you are family and blood related”. Although the field work showed several instances of emotional impact when the participants discovered they were a *tamariki* `āngai, the data also revealed their ability to get over it and move on quickly. This could be attributed to the fact that, the arrangement was openly discussed within the family and therefore all parties were comfortable to talk about it openly rather than keeping it hidden from the child. Often when these things are hidden, it becomes a sensitive issue to talk about. In some cases the ability of the feeding parents to have their own child is protected hence keeping the arrangement secretive. This study recommends that the welfare of the child should be the forefront and most important to nurture and help them understand the reasons of being *tamariki* `āngai.

Similarly the distribution of land can also be represented by the characteristics of the mimosa plant, the study revealed that when it comes to land distribution and entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai*, it becomes a sensitive topic for families to openly discuss. The traditional adoption lore around status and entitlements are usually affirmed within a family meeting for the *tamariki`āngai*. But in today's society as previously mentioned, this is no longer the case due to issues such as greed. For example, the *kōreromotu* (verbal promise) of the parents who have passed on are being ignored by families and there is an unwillingness of some families to recognise these promises retrospectively. This means that land issues have become sensitive topics for families to deal with. According to Ioane, "telling a person that there is no land is never a nice thing to say and always perceived as being disrespectful". Consequently, in today's society, families are having disputes over land rights, traditional titles and so on and using the European setup of going through the Land Court system to settle their differences. Whereas issues like these could easily be ironed out within a family meeting using the traditional practice. According to Pāpā Puna "our people have forgotten our customs, our Māori way", when we are faced with land issues or disputes within families "our people are quick to take the matter before the court to solve". PāpāPuna asserts that "going back to your *kopu tangata* to solve the problem is our Māori way...going to the court is the *papa`āway*".

6.4 The Impact of Colonisation

Throughout this thesis the researcher has identified the influence of colonisation on the practice of *tamariki`āngai* and the implications on status and land entitlements. The significant influence of colonisation is the reform of the informal traditional adoption arrangement within families and how it has changed the perceptions of Cook Islanders towards *tamariki`āngai*, their status and land entitlements within the family. It has challenged the practice traditionally known as kin-care where blood relatives take on the responsibility of raising a child or looking after a child within a family when the need arises. The introduction of foreign frameworks and colonial legislation to the Cook Islands, has seen families legalising these arrangements through the courts and Western law. Western law appears to be the preferred option of adoption by most families today. Both practices use the same traditional process of holding a family meeting to decide and endorse the request for a child to be adopted and also the land entitlements of the child. However, the practice of acquiring a legal seal of approval through the Land Court setting seems to be the common practice in today's society. Unfortunately, the fear of the researcher is that there will come a time, as the *pā metua* pass on family decisions with no legal seal of approval from the Land Court, where decisions using the kin-care

approach will have absolutely no standing in today's society, herein lies the impact of colonisation.

Furthermore, the status of *tamariki`āngai* are dependable on the strong relationships of the family, within an immediate family the child is considered as part of the family, however, the extended family may not share the same views. In the situation where one sibling allowed one of his/her children to be raised by another sibling, a *tamariki`āngai* arrangement in this situation is highly respected by the immediate family. Only when it involves the extended family, then the blood rights of the child to the non-related set of parent becomes a sensitive issue within the family. A close-knit family still honours and respects the decisions made through traditional lore, however, the legal seal is a matter of compliance in today's society. Since Cook Islanders of today live in a documented and evidence-based society whereby verbal decisions are not recognised, especially when the *pā metua* have passed on, often problems occur which centre on land entitlement which is a birth right of every individual within a family lineage. Land disputes stemming from the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement often creates tension within families. The intensity of the land disputes reflect the fight for eligibility and entitlement of the *tamariki`āngai*. It appears to be institutionally alienated because of how the adoption arrangement is honoured, interpreted and administered by the families especially when the arrangement is verbal with no legal recognition. Frequently these land disputes result in bitterness that fractures relationships within the family for generations. Even if the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement is well defined within the family meetings, families can manipulate the arrangement to control assets such as withholding land from the *tamariki`āngai*.

The scarcity of land has also contributed to the dispute amongst families in relation to land entitlements. It is not because the family do not want to grant land to the *tamariki`āngai*, it is simply because there is no land available. Additionally, colonisation has influenced the distribution of land, whereby the land was not evenly distributed to family members because of their birth rights. It used to be distributed by the *pā metua* to those that are ready to develop the land by way of building a house or planting the land. As an implication of Western legislation, these days land is being occupied by family members through shares and birth rights whether they are living in the country or abroad. As a result, entitlement of land has now become a sensitive topic amongst families because the number of shares occupied by a family unit creates animosity amongst and between families. Another contributing factor is the amount of available land as shares are scarce within families, therefore the animosity continues and increases in intensity when it relates to a *tamariki`āngai* claiming their land entitlements. The

amount of undeveloped land is growing in the Cook Islands because those that have occupation rights over the land are often living abroad and the process is harder for others to revoke their occupation rights. Despite having legislation in place to allow land-owners to reclaim undeveloped lands, this is a practice that families do not favour practising because of their relationship with each other. The revoking of occupation right is rarely practised despite having a legal platform to exercise that right amongst families.

6.5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Historically, *tamariki`āngai* was a verbal arrangement between families and land entitlements were handed down through a verbal promise known as *kōreromotu* passed down from one generation to another. An important aspect about this arrangement is that, the approval sought through a tribal or family meeting is the seal of approval followed by a sharing of a special feast to mark the occasion. It has become evident throughout this study that colonisation has influenced and changed the perceptions of the family, community and the children towards this tradition. The *kōreromotu* are frowned upon by family in contemporary times and the *tamariki`āngai* and their entitlements and status becomes contested especially if they are not blood related to the family. Hence the importance of a blood related child to one of the feeding parent.

Furthermore, the introduction of law has questioned the integrity of the verbal arrangement, the *kōreromotu* handed down by the Pā Metua. Feeding parents have been driven towards utilising the European process and register the adoption order through the Land Court system as stipulated by parts 15 and 20 of the Cook Islands Act 1915. Values and priorities of the families have changed, where greed has overruled the way decisions are made and interpreted. For example, economic development and economic gains have increased the demand for land and consequently, the entitlements of the *tamariki`āngai* have become questionable and contested because of it. The tradition of settling things within a family meeting are now often overlooked and family decisions ignored. Nowadays, it is becoming a norm for the family to allow a European process to guide their decisions. However, despite the introduction of the legal framework to the Cook Islands, some families continue to exercise the traditional practice of *tamariki`āngai*.

The traditional process of land distribution is also another interesting finding. Land was traditionally allocated to a person who was ready to develop the land and plant the land. It was not distributed by equal shares. This traditional lore of land distribution ensures that the land

was being fully utilised and not left unused. As it is the case nowadays, family members have occupation right to land through the Land Court system and have travelled abroad leaving the land undeveloped and unused for years. However, when it comes to the entitlement of traditional titles, the findings showed that traditionally these traditional titles are birth rights only and can only be bestowed onto a biological child or a blood related person. Nowadays, there are traditional titles that have been bestowed upon a *tamariki`āngai* and are being disputed by the biological lineage to the title.

The way forward without losing our tradition and our identity is that current legislation must be revised to embrace our traditional customary lore and recognise its value within the contemporary Cook Island community. This will protect the integrity of our *peu* Māori while utilising Western law to protect the rights of the *tamariki`āngai* as per the tradition by documenting the decisions of the families engaged in the *tamariki`āngai* practice. The implementation of this recommendation will empower families especially future generations. In terms of land distribution and entitlements, it is recommended due to limited land availability and the increasing family numbers, that equal shares or birth right land entitlement be completely reviewed. Considering land requests based on the readiness of the person requesting to develop land should be made a priority and whether they already have a piece of land should also be considered. By taking these into consideration, it should address the issue around fairness of distribution amongst family, including *tamariki`āngai*.

Furthermore, the practice of *tamariki`āngai* and *tamariki rētita* should not be kept a secret and it is recommended that the child should be made aware of the arrangement as early as possible. Being open about the arrangement with the child as soon as they are able to comprehend and understand the situation is seen as the best option to ensure transparency. Keeping it a secret only makes things worse once the child finds out the truth as outlined by the stories of the participants of this study. The tradition of gifting a child to the grandparents is a beautiful gesture of respect and honouring the parents, or even gifting a child to a childless sibling. If the child is made aware of these arrangements and why it took place, they will be more inclined to accept the decisions made for them.

Another recommendation for consideration is the drafting of a separate piece of adoption legislation specifically to govern the process of adoption. Rather than using the Land Court system to facilitate the adoption arrangement, the proposed new legislation should protect the child from mistreatment and provide them with rights to stand up against mistreatment of any

sort. This recommendation will allow the process of adoption to be managed better in the future and having a mandated process can protect all parties involved in the adoption arrangements and more so reduce the number of disputes amongst families in the court system. Then again adoption is dealing with a human being and should have its own legislation to govern the process. Subsequently, having our very own Cook Islands Adoption Act in the future will certainly provide our Cook Islands people a framework to guide them, both the child and the parents.

6.6 Areas for further research

This study had left many questions unanswered and issues unaddressed. The scope of this study did not look at the impact on the giving parents and the receiving parents of the *tamariki`āngai*. In concluding, I am confident that I have created other paths for other research work to be undertaken in this field. There are areas that need further investigation, such as, exploring the impact of the *tamariki`āngai* arrangement onto the giving and the receiving parents and the wider family. Another field to further investigate is the situation of an orphan child in the Cook Islands, and how their placement with their new parents should be handled differently. There are speculations throughout this journey relating to the behavioural issues of *tamariki`āngai*, an area that also needs to be looked into. There is no data available to support these speculations that high risk and troubled youth are *tamariki`āngai*. Therefore, this is another field that needs to be investigated, in order for policies and frameworks to be developed to support the findings.

6.7 Final remarks

I have come to the end of this journey and in reflecting back on my experience as a researcher I am honoured to have been given consent to hear the participants stories and to have their trust to write these up. I have developed a deeper respect for our traditional way of doing things and I highly value the decisions that our *‘ui tupuna* have made for us and passed down through generations which help to shape our Cook Island society, our heritage and our identity as Cook Islanders as this knowledge and practices are still relevant to our society in the modern world.

Lastly, as a *tamariki`āngai*, I am comforted by my discovery and findings of this research and understand that I am also privileged and honoured to be a *tamariki`āngai*, a special gift from a son to his mother and from a brother to a brother. My upbringing as a *tamariki`āngai* was different, it was an open arrangement from the start and I was taught by my feeding parents to call my biological parents mum and dad as well and still call them that today.

I end with this traditional chant from the island of Aitutaki. A chant that is usually said by an elderly person as his words of encouragement for his children who are embarking on a journey of higher education. The chant urges the receiver not to forget their traditions and what they believe in, to hold on to their values, traditions, heritage and identity, to embrace these and to have God in their life to guide and to protect them.

*E no`o ki tō tūruki,
Ki tō `au-mi`i vaka,
Kia ara tikatika,
Kia ara teitei
Mouria te Atua ki tō rima
Tātākina ki runga
Iē kō kō*

Bibliography

- Alcoff, L., & Mendieta, E. (2003). *Identities: Race, class, gender, and nationality*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Asselin, M. E. (2003). Insider research: Issues to consider when doing qualitative research in your own setting. *Journal for Nurses in Staff Development*, 19(2), 99-103.
- Beaglehole, E. (1934). *Ethnology of Pukapuka*. Pacific Island Ethnographic Survey. Great Britain: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Beaglehole, E. (1957). *Social change in the South Pacific*. Great Britain: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Benton, R., Frame, A., Meredith, P. (2013). The Mātāpuenga. *A compendium of References to the Concepts and Institutions of Māori Customary Law*. Pg. 525-538.
- Berry, M. 1991. The Practice of open adoption: Finding from a study of 1396 adoptive families. *Children and Youth Services Review* (1991) 13:379-395.
- Berry, M. 1992. Adoptive parent's perceptions of and contort with open adoption. *Child Welfare*.
- Berry, M. 1993. Risk and Benefit of Open Adoption. *The future of children adoption* Vol.3, no.1 – Spring 1993.
- Bradley, J. (1997). Kei konei tonu mātou (We are still here). In *Adoption and Healing: Proceedings of the International Conference on Adoption and Healing* (pp. 37-44). Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Adoption Education and Healing Trust.
- Brinich, P. M. (1995). Psychoanalytic perspectives on adoption and ambivalence. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 12, 181-199.
- Brodzinsky, D.M., Schechter, D.E., Braff, A.M., & Singer, L.M. (1984). Psychological and Academic Adjustment in Adopted Children. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 52, (4), 582-590.
- Brodzinsky, D. M. (1993). Long-term outcomes in adoption. *The Future of Children*, 3 (1), 153-166.
- Browne, T, P. (1994), Traditional rights and customary usage in the Cook Islands, in Ron Crocombe & Malama Meleisea (eds), *Land issues in the Pacific*, Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.
- Child, Youth and Family Report. (2010). Engaging Children, Youth and Families – More than a Good Idea. *Journal of Academic Child Adolescence*. Aug, 2010, 19(3):168.
- Crocombe, R. (1964). *Land tenure in the Cook Islands*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Crocombe, R. (Ed.). (1980). *The Cook Islands: 1820-1950*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.

- Crocombe, M. T. (Ed.). (1983). *Cannibals and converts: Radical change in the Cook Islands*. Suva: University of the South Pacific.
- Crocombe, R. (Ed.). (1987). *Land tenure in the Pacific* (3rd ed.). Suva: University of the South Pacific.
- Crocombe, R. (1987). The Cook Islands: Fragmentation and emigration. In R. Crocombe (Ed.), *Land tenure in the Pacific* (pp. 59-73). Suva: University of the South Pacific.
- Crocombe, R. & Meleisea, M. (1994). *Land Issues in the Pacific*. Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies. University of Canterbury and Institute of Pacific Studies USP.
- Crocombe, R. (2001). *The South Pacific*. Suva: The University of the South Pacific.
- Crocombe, R. & Crocombe, M. T. (Eds.). (2003). *Akono'anga Maori Cook Islands culture*. Suva/Rarotonga: University of the South Pacific.
- Deeg, C. F. (2002). On the adoptees Cathexis of the lost object. *Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy*, 7(2), 152-161.
- Dodson, M. (2009). Unmasking Mangaia's Practice of *Tamariki 'Āngai* – Informal Island Adoption. Doctor of Philosophy with University of Otago. Dunedin.
- Dwyer, S. C., Buckle, J. L. (2009). The Space Between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 8(1), 1-10. International Institute for Qualitative Methodology,
- Dyhrberg, M. (2001). Inter-country Adoptions – Pacific Rim Adoptions. *The impact of European Law on customary Adoption Practices in Aotearoa*. International Bar Association Conference, Cancun, Mexico.
- Elizabeth J. Samuels. The Idea of Adoption: *An Inquiry into the History of Adult Adoptee Access to Birth Records*, 53 RUTGERS L. REV. 367 (2001).
- Else, A. (1991). A question of adoption: Closed stranger adoption in New Zealand, 1944-1974. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.
- Firth, R. (1957). *We, the Tikopia: A sociological study of kinship in primitive Polynesia* (2nd ed.). London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Freeman, M. & Freund, W. (1998). Working with adopted clients. *Journal of Analytic Social Work*, 5, 25-37.
- Gilson, R. Phillip., (1980) *The Cook Islands, 1820-1950*. Victoria University Press in association with the Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific. (Edited by Ron Crocombe)
- Handy, E.S. Craighill, & Puki, M. Kawena. (1958). *The Polynesian Family System in Ka'u Hawai'i*. Polynesian Society Reprints, Series no. 6. Wellington, N.Z.: The Polynesian Society.
- Harper, J. (1984). Who am I? A crisis of identity for the adopted adolescent. *Mental Health in Australia*, 1(13), 16-18.

- Henry, A. R. H., (1975). *Rambling Thoughts of the Premier of the Cook Islands, Rarotonga*, cyclostyled.
- Hiroa, Te Rangi (Peter H. Buck) (1934). *Mangaian Society*. New York: Kraus Reprint Co.
- Hiroa, Te Rangi (Peter H. Buck), (1945). *An introduction to Polynesian anthropology*. Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum.
- Hodges, J. (1984). Two crucial questions: Adopted children in psychoanalytic treatment. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 10, 49-56.
- Hodges, J. (1990). The relationship to self and objects in early maternal deprivation and adoption. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 16(1), 53-73.
- Holmes, R., Crocombe, R. (2014). *The Impact of Europeans upon Southern Cook Islands Maori Society, Customary Law and Land Tenure Law*. New Zealand and International sales and The Cook Islands Library and Museum Society Incorporated.
- Hylton, J. L. (2007). *The Influence of Being an Adopted Person on the Psychotherapeutic Relationship from an Object Relations Perspective: A modified systematic literature review with clinical illustration*. Master of Health Science in Psychotherapy with Auckland University of Technology.
- Jones, A. (1997). Issues relevant to therapy with adoptees. *Psychotherapy*, 34, 64-68.
- Ka'ai-Mahuta, R, T. (2010). *Hē kupu tuku iho mō tēnei reanga: A critical analysis of waiata and haka as commentaries and archives of Maori political history*. Doctor of Philosophy with Auckland University of Technology.
- Kanuha, V. K. (2000). "Being" native versus "going native": Conducting social work research as an insider. School of Social Work. University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 96822, USA. kanuha@hawaii.edu.
- Lee, H. (2012). *Online Group Discussions with Adolescent Inter-country Adoptees in New Zealand: A Qualitative Investigation into Their Experiences*. Master of Philosophy in Psychology with Auckland University of Technology.
- Magilvy, J. K., & Thomas, E. (2009). A first qualitative project: Qualitative descriptive design for novice researchers. *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing*, 14(4), 298-300.
- Mangos, T., Utanga, J. (2011). *Patterns of the Past: Tattoo Revival in the Cook Islands*, University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.
- McRae, K. O., & Nikora, L. W. (2006). *Whangai: Remembering, understanding and Experiencing*. MAI Review, Intern Research Report 7.
- Mead, G. H. (1982). *The Individual and Social Self*. 1st Edition. University of Chicago Press.
- Moloney, G., & Walker, I. (Eds.). (2007). *Social representations and identity: Content, process and power*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Moss, F. J., (1894). The Maori Polity of Rarotonga. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*. 3:20-6 on 31 March 2016).

- Nathan, J.E. (1984). *Visitation after adoption: in the best interest of the child*. New York University Law review (1984) 59:633-675.
- Neergaard, M. A., Olesen, F., Andersen R. S., & Sondergaard, J. (2009). Qualitative description – the poor cousin of health research? *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 9(1), 52-56. Doi:10.1186/1471-2288-9-52
- Nel, L. (2014). Children whose parents foster other children: The experiences of growing up with a foster sibling. Masters of Health Science in Counselling Psychology. Auckland University of Technology. Department of Psychology. Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences.
- Pampel, F. (2000). *Sociological lives and ideas: An introduction to the classical theorists*. Basingstoke, England: Macmillan
- Priel, B., Kantor, B. & Besser, A. (2000). Two maternal representations. A study of Israeli adopted children. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 17, 128-145.
- Tajfel, H. (2010). Social identity and intergroup relations. *European studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An Integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of inter group relations*. 33, 47.
- Tizard, B. (1991). Inter-country Adoption: A Review of the Evidence. *Child Psychol. Psychiat.* Vol. 32, No. 5, pp. 743-756, 1991. Printed in Great Britain. Pergamon Press Association for Child Psychology and Psychiatry
- Stets, J., & Burke, P. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63(3), 224-237. Doi: 10.2307/2695870
- Villanova Law Review. Intestate Succession, Sociology and the Adopted Child. *Published by Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Digital Repository*. Vol. 11 (1966)
- Vogt, W. P. (1999) *Dictionary of Statistics and Methodology: A non-technical guide for the Social Science*, London. Sage.
- Walker, S. 2001. The Maatua Whangai Programme o Otepoti: from a caregiver perspective. Master of Consumer and Applied Sciences thesis. University of Otago, Dunedin.
- West, E. F. (2012). *Manu is my Homegirl: Navigating the Ethnic Identity of the Māori Adoptee*. Masters of Philosophy with Auckland University of Technology.

Electronic Sources (websites retrieved)

- Braddeley, J. (1982). Adoption in Rarotonga, volume 91 (1982), No. 1. P. 121-138, University of Auckland The journal of the Polynesian Society: retrieved from <http://www.jps.auckland.ac.nz/document> on 31 March 2016.

- Burke, P. J., & Reitzes, D. C. (1991). An Identity Theory Approach to Commitment. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 54(3), 239–251. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2786653>
- Buse, J., Taringa, R., (1996) Cook Islands Maori Dictionary with English Finder list, edited by Biggs, B. and Moeka`a R. The Australian National University. Retrieved from <http://cookislandsdictionary.com/search?idiom=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&keywords=tamariki+angai&search> on 13 March 2016)
- Carroll, V. (1970). Adoption in Easter Oceania. University of Hawai'i Press. Child, Youth and Family, 2001. Why you should care. Retrieved from <http://www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/news/2020/why-you-should-care.html> (accessed 21 February 2016).
- Fleming, A. (2012). Balancing the Adoptive Triangle: The Need to Protect Biological Parents' Privacy Rights". (Retrieved from http://erepository.law.shu.edu/student_scholarship/101)
- Gibbs, A., & Scherman, R. 2013. Pathways to parenting in New Zealand: issues in law, policy and practice, Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences online, 8:1-2, 13-26. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1177083.2013.821077> insider. *Social Work*, 45(5), 439-447.
- Horn, J. 1948. "Adoption customs in old Hawai'i." *Paradise of the Pacific* 60:23-25. Retrieved from <http://www.Hawai'ian-roots.com/adoption-in-ancient-Hawai'i.htm> on 14 March 2016
- Keane, B. 2001. Whangai customary fostering and adoption. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 10 May 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/whangai-customary-fostering-and-adoption> (accessed 21 February 2016)
- Keane, B. 2011. Whangai – customary fostering and adoption" Te Ara – the encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/whangai-customary-fostering-and-adoption> (accessed on 27 February 2016)
- Kenn, Charles W. 1939, Some Hawai'ian relationship terms re-examined. *Social Process in Hawai'i* 5:46-50. Honolulu: Sociology Club of the University of Hawai'i. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/hanai> on 14 March 2016
- Kuhlmann, F. L., (1943). Intestate Succession by and from the Adopted Child, 28 Wash. U. L. Q. 221 (1943). (Retrieved from http://openscholarship.wustl.edu/law_lawreview/vol28/iss4/22

Other Websites accessed:

Retrieved from <http://www.urgandictionary.com/define.php?term=Hanai> on 14 March 2016

Retrieved from <https://kaaihue.wordpress.com/2009/06/14/the-meaning-of-hanai> on 14 March 2016

Retrieved from <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-psychoanalytic-theory.html> on 17 March 2016

Retrieved from <http://www.ck/religion/htm> on 17 March 2016

Retrieved from <https://www.google.co.ck/web-ethology+theory> on 17 March 2016

Retrieved from <https://www.google.co.ck/web-social+role+theory> on 17 March 2016

Retrieved from <http://www.review.mai.ac.nz> on 27 February 2016

Retrieved from www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cw.html on 1 May 2016

Personal Communication (interviews)

Puna, T. (2016). Traditional Leader

Kamana, D. (2016). Traditional Leader

`Ātamu. (2016). Tamariki rētitā

Vaerua. (2016). Tamariki `āngai

Taina. (2016). Tamariki `āngai

Tangaroa (2016). Tamariki `āngai

Purotu. (2016). Tamariki rētitā

Manea. (2016). Tamariki rētitā

Tumutoa. (2016). Tamariki `āngai

Mere. (2016). Tamariki rētitā

Matamaru. (2016). Tamariki `āngai

Ioane. (2016). Tamariki `āngai

Government Data

Adoption records of the Cook Islands from 1905 to 2016, Ministry of Justice. Data was incomplete, a lot of missing data in the record.

Māori Glossary

<i>`aka`āravei`anga</i>	- salutation
<i>`akamata`anga</i>	- the start of, the beginning
<i>`akataka`anga pātoa</i>	- discussion over a topic, review and describe.
<i>`ākē</i>	- tired and fatigued feeling for of the mother after birth
<i>`atamira</i>	- chiefly ceremonial seat
<i>`ū`ā</i>	- thigh
<i>`ui tupuna</i>	- ancestors
<i>karere puku`atu</i>	- message from the heart
<i>kete tautai</i>	- fishing basket
<i>kete</i>	- basket
<i>kōrare</i>	- spearhead motif
<i>mana</i>	- power
<i>manutai</i>	- sea bird motif
<i>meitaki`atupaka</i>	- thank you very much
<i>ngā metua`āngai</i>	- feeding parents/traditionally adoptive parents
<i>ngā metua rētita</i>	- adopted parents/legally adoptive parents
<i>mokopuna</i>	- grandchild, grandchildren
<i>nīkau</i>	- coconut palm
<i>ora`anga</i>	- life
<i>pā maunga</i>	- mountain ridge
<i>pā metua</i>	- parents, grandparents, older generation
<i>papa varo</i>	- a crustacean foot print
<i>papa`ā</i>	- European or non-Māori
<i>peu</i>	- a Maori practice or custom or tradition
<i>pōrokiroki</i>	- useful advice, recommendations
<i>raranga</i>	- weaving
<i>rungā`o</i>	- on top of
<i>ta`unga</i>	- expert
<i>tama`ū`ā</i>	- feeding child that is not blood related to the one parent
<i>tamariki`ākē</i>	- adopted child/children in the Atiu language
<i>tamariki`āngai</i>	- feeding child/children or traditionally adopted child/children
<i>tamariki kokoti</i>	- adopted child/children in the Pukapuka language
<i>tamariki no`o puku`atu</i>	- adopted child/children in the Manihiki language
<i>tamariki rētita</i>	- adopted child/children or legally adoptive child/children
<i>tamariki wāngai</i>	- feeding child/children in the Pukapuka language
<i>tātatau</i>	- tattooing
<i>tauī`anga</i>	- changing
<i>te kāpua`anga</i>	- in the beginning
<i>te Rā</i>	- the sun motif
<i>tika`anga</i>	- rights, entitlements, birth rights
<i>tikitiki tangata</i>	- the people motif
<i>tumu kōrero</i>	- orator
<i>ture</i>	- law and rules
<i>va`a`autara</i>	- speaker