Among the Maoris woman is the great representative of everyday life; according to her nature she is noa as the man is tapu. This difference is brought out with particular distinctness in ritual situations. It would, however, be wrong to treat these apart; the subject is too significant for us not to attempt a full description of the position of woman and the view held of her. It cannot be complete, and our sources often fail us, but it is possible to outline some of the most important features, and even though they are not all consequences of the fact that woman is profane, noa, we shall see that this fundamental feature of the Maori woman asserts itself almost everywhere.

It must be stated at once that the Maori woman is not oppressed because she is profane. In her married life she need not submit to bad treatment. She has always a possibility of dissolving the connection and returning home to her own kinship group.¹ Before strangers she stands in her home on an equal footing with her husband and generally has a right to invite travellers as guests on her own.² She also entertains the guests with dances just like the men.³

¹ E.g. Best 1924b: 406.
² Best 1924b: 374.
³ Best 1924b: 407.
Woman’s normal work is cooking and all that is connected with it i.e. gathering sticks for firewood and making the “plates” on which it is served. This is of course a sphere in which her profanity is of decisive importance. Life in her is not as life in the man so strong and pure that it can either damage others or be damaged itself by cooking. This is stressed by the fact that male slaves and men of very low birth, devoid of tapu, can also take part in the cooking. Furthermore, she makes clothes, mats, etc. She gathers mussels, berries, etc., whereas hunting and fishing is preferably attended to by the men. Strangely enough woman’s relationship to the tilling of the soil varies greatly from region to region. There are places on the east coast where the women must not take any part in the planting of kumara, indeed, they must not even enter the kumara field; in other places, e.g. Waikato, it is only the women who plant kumara. In the preparatory work of digging the field, etc., they took part everywhere.

Even though women contribute not a little to provide food, this is especially the man’s work. “Am I a man that I should provide food?” a woman may retort indignantly.

After all, there are only a very few activities from which woman is excluded on principle, viz. the building of large houses, fortresses, and canoes, besides everything connected with the sacral school. It is hardly accidental that these spheres in a special degree have Tane as tutelary deity, since tane means “male”; but then it should be added that women may take part in bird-catching to a limited extent, although birds also belong under Tane. The exclusion from the sacral school means that woman is cut off from functioning as a priestess, but—as we shall see—he is not thus excluded from significant roles in the ritual. Add to this that religious activities which do not require any ritual education, but are mainly based on inspiration, are open to women as well as men; for female shamans are found.

It is worth noting that the Maori does not even consider war as a completely unwomanly sphere. There are, indeed, warlike expeditions (blood vengeance) from which women are excluded for ritual reasons, but as a matter of fact women sometimes participate in military operations. On several occasions, they have successfully defended fortresses when the men were

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4. A survey is found in Firth 1929: 194 ff.
5. Best 1925d: 80 f.; 159; 160.
gone.\textsuperscript{11} In the saga about Ponga and Puhihuia, there is a detailed description of single combat between the heroine on the one hand and on the other hand the women—in turn—who together with her mother had gone to fetch her.\textsuperscript{12}

Several of the Maori sagas give evidence that the Maori admires courageous women. This admiration is genuine enough and enables clever and high-born women to play a considerable part in what we may roughly term public life.\textsuperscript{13} In the sagas there are instances of women who exerted great influence in a tribe.\textsuperscript{14} It may happen that a woman is the person who has the greatest authority in the tribe.\textsuperscript{15}

Particular importance is attached to a chief’s first-born daughter, or perhaps another woman of high-birth who is \textit{puhi}, i.e. a \textit{tapu} woman.\textsuperscript{16} She is then so far an exception among women, which manifests itself in the fact that she has nothing to do with cooking or coarse work; indeed, she may even be isolated from the cooking-shed with the same care as \textit{tapu} men.\textsuperscript{17}

It might seem that she thus stands completely out of woman’s normal \textit{noa} nature, but this does not hold good. Life is stronger in her than in others, but not much purer. She is still, being a woman, a representative of everyday life, only raised to a higher plane. This may seem sophistic, but is supported partly by the whole view of woman, partly—and particularly—by the ritual function often allotted to a \textit{puhi}.

We shall, however, for the present disregard these exceptions which perhaps were not found in all tribes, and pass on to a more detailed study of the significance of the fact that woman is the representative of everyday life or, more accurately, that of the “mixture of lives,” noting at once the result obtained, viz, that the repute of woman is great. It is presumably this very repute which makes her the great representative of everyday life; in her it obtains a much profounder importance than in anything else.

It is natural to ask: why is she \textit{noa}? Sometimes reference is made to her

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Best 1927: 122 ff.
\item \textsuperscript{12} White 1888a: 154 f.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Best 1924b: 477; Nicholas 1817: II, 111; Wilson 248 ff. After this evidence it is difficult to believe in Te Rangi Hiroa’s statement that women were not allowed to speak in public except among the Ngatikahungunu (Rangi Hiroa 1950: 344).
\item \textsuperscript{14} E.g. Tukutuku (Grey 1855: 167 f.); Rangirarunga’s daughter (Best 1927b: 241); Puhi huia’s mother (White 1888a: 150).
\item \textsuperscript{15} Best 1924b: 353.
\item \textsuperscript{16} According to the usage of certain tribes; see e.g. Best 1924b: 1, 450 f., and White 1887b: 157.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Best 1925b: 68; Best 1924b: 451; White 1887b: 157 f.
\end{itemize}
menstruation.\textsuperscript{18} In the period of menstruation she is \textit{tapu}, but of course with a very specific content of life. Is this what makes her \textit{noa} at other times? In the texts it is mentioned only as a cause in special cases, e.g. as a reason why she does not plant \textit{kumara} or fetch it from the pit (among the Ngatiawa?).\textsuperscript{19} Elsewhere mention is made of the women who must not approach the sacral school; they are the women who may be subject to menstruation.\textsuperscript{20} Now, in the rituals of the sacral school a woman appears, viz. as a ritual representative of everyday life when the pupils return to it. Best says about her that she “was either a barren woman, or one past the age of child-bearing, so that the excessive \textit{tapu} of the proceedings should have no ill-effects on an unborn child.”\textsuperscript{21} Women who are not subject to menstruation and, on the other hand, barren women and those past the age of childbearing, these two categories comprise almost the same individuals, but the reasons why they may approach the \textit{tapu} are quite different.

Only in one place general reasons for women being \textit{noa} have been handed down. It is a text which runs as follows:\textsuperscript{22}

\begin{quote}
The men were \textit{tapu}, it fell to the lot of the women to be \textit{noa}, to be those who carried food, those who did all the profane work,\textsuperscript{23} viz. cooking. There was one kind of \textit{tohi} (baptism) for men, another for women; one training for men, another for women, one kind of \textit{pure} rites (\textit{karakia parea}ga) for men, another for women. Therefore the \textit{tapu} of men was greater than that of women; that of the men also had to do with (\textit{i ahu ano...ki}) the heavenly things, the many there, the innumerable above, \textit{Tawhirimatea}, the many below (i.e. in the Underworld), the innumerable below, the many in Hawaiki, the innumerable in Hawaiki; this was the reason for the men’s \textit{tapu}.

As to the \textit{tapu} of women, the things in heaven which had to do with them were only a certain part; the things below which had to do with women were only a certain part; the things in Hawaiki which had to do with women, only a certain part; (finally there were) the things which concerned \textit{Hinetewaiwa}, this was the reason for the women’s \textit{tapu} and the reason why that of the women was smaller.
\end{quote}

This section apparently gives two answers. First, the reasons for the difference are ascribed to the different environment during childhood and adolescence and the different rituals for the two sexes; particularly we note the different

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Best 1905: 212 f.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Best 1925d: 159 and 161.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Whatahoro 1913: 2.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Best 1925b: 1100.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Grey 1853: lxxviii.
\item \textsuperscript{23} \textit{Nga mea o muri}; the things behind—before is the sacred place.
\end{itemize}
tohi which are performed over the new-born girls and boys. This must be recognized as a rational, although somewhat special reason, for why are these tohi different? Next the tapus of men and women are discussed apart; here the reason given why the men’s tapu is greater is almost that it is greater! But we should not do the author wrong; he points out an actual difference expressed by Tawhirimatea and Hineteiwaiwa. This, again, refers back to the tohi rite; for girls are consecrated to Hineteiwaiwa. The meaning of Tawhirimate in this passage is less certain; but the local rite may very well be imagined to give to Tawhirimatea a similar position in the case of the boys as was given to Hineteiwaiwa in the case of the girls. Although apparently we have not advanced beyond the tohi rite, we really have got a fresh start, since these names lead us to mythology. This is the more fortunate as none of the reasons adduced for woman’s smaller tapu seems quite satisfactory. But what else was to be expected? What answer shall we get if we ask a European the reason why a man does not marry his sister? Some may answer that it is a disgusting idea, others that it is prohibited by legislation or by religion, others again will refer to the laws of heredity, etc. Nor can we expect to find definitive reasons for the lacking tapu of woman; but we may through the study of mythology view the problem in a wider connection, a part of a complex of feelings held by the Maori towards the world.

The first place in which we find mention made of the female in Maori mythology is in the creation-myth which starts by telling that Papa and Rangi, i.e. Earth and Heaven lie in a tight embrace, Earth being female and Heaven male. The decisive event of the myth is that Heaven and Earth are separated, as Heaven is raised on poles. Papa by Rangi has a number of children, the great gods in the pantheon of the Maori, but none of these is female.

In some versions there are, it is true, female gods in the eleven Heavens, but we never learn what use they make of their female nature. When the gods made up their minds to create man, they did not go to these goddesses, as their offspring would again have become gods. Instead, they created the first woman. There are many versions of this myth, but the great majority agree in stating that the first woman was created from the earth. This origin is often expressed in her name such as Hine-ahu-one, “the girl formed of earth,” or

25. Cf. Best 1924b: 15; otherwise it is Tu.
27. Whatahoro 1913: 33.
28. White 1887a: 117; 120; 129; 139; 142; 143; Whatahoro 1913: 33 ff.; Smith 1922: 49; Best 1924a: 74 ff.; Shortland 1882: 2 f.
29. Best 1924a: 76; Shortland 1882: 22; Whatahoro 1913: 35.
Hine-hau-one, which also contains “earth” and “girl,” one and hine, but in which hau cannot be translated with any certainty. It may be only a metathesis of ahu.\textsuperscript{30} This creation connects woman directly with the first female being Papa (Earth), and this connection is further emphasized in the versions in which woman is just created from Kurawaka, i.e. the mons veneris of Earth.\textsuperscript{31}

This woman gives birth to Hine-ata-uiira, who is the first ancestress of man.

The earthly nature of woman is not restricted to creation. In a significant myth which has also been handed down in a number of versions, she is not only the one who gives birth to human beings, but she also leads them into death.\textsuperscript{32} We have referred to the myth above (p. 59). By Hinehauone Tane begets a daughter, Hineatauira, whom he marries. When she hears that her father is her husband she flees in shame to the Underworld, where, as Hinenuitepo, she draws down her descendants.

The earth, the Underworld, and death thus are intimately associated in Hinenuitepo. It is particularly as a woman that she unites these three. For death is further, in the myth about Maui and Hinenuitepo associated with woman, namely with her genitals. The myth records how Maui went into the Underworld in order to vanquish death in the shape of Hinenuitepo. He finds her sleeping with legs apart and tries to penetrate into her abdomen, but those who accompany him find the situation so ridiculous that in spite of advance warnings they cannot help laughing. Hinenuitepo wakes, squeezes Maui, and the hero dies.\textsuperscript{33}

These myths, which show how the earth, woman, particularly her genitals, and finally death, are felt as belonging together, are universally distributed among the Maoris. With them are associated mythical traits and statements about woman which have been collected by Elsdon Best, especially from the Ngatiawa.\textsuperscript{34} It is probable that they are the sinister element in woman’s nature more than is the case in other tribes (in this tribe, in particular, woman must not even enter the kumara field or the pit); but the fundamental view is the same, so Best’s material can very well be used for a further deepening of our

\textsuperscript{30} Rangi Hiroa (1950: 451) considers Hinehauone as a common variation of her name.
\textsuperscript{31} Whatahoro 1913: 34; Best 1924a: 75.
\textsuperscript{33} Numerous versions: White 1887b: 64; 71; 73; 77; 84; 106; 108; 110; Grey 1855: 22 f.; Whatahoro 1913: 63 f.; Potae and Ruatapu 1929: 26 and others. Furthermore there are in the texts numerous references to the genitals of Hinenuitepo as the sources of death, e.g. Best 1925b: 1136; White 1887a: 126.
\textsuperscript{34} Best 1914b, no. 66.
understanding.

In Best’s material, it is confirmed that the genitals not only of Hinenuitepo but of all women have death in them. “The genitals of woman are killers of man,” it says expressly, and they are denoted by words like rua iti and whawhaia, which denote concepts from black magic.35 Somewhere else it says: “The destroyer of man is the innate power of the human body, of the part to which the word tawhito applies. It turns upon and destroys man. It is the whare o Aituia. It represents the tawhito of Hinenuitepo, which was the demon that destroyed the person (i.e. Maui) who slew the Fire Children.”36 We shall return to the significant expression whare o Aituia.

Women may participate in small warlike expeditions, but in the case of real war, e.g. blood vengeance, the whole enterprise is strongly tapu. Women are strictly excluded from intercourse with the warriors and the whole undertaking is fenced round by rituals (rites of passage). One of these rituals is of a certain interest in this connection because of a ritual myth connected with it. The rites often take place near a sacred place (wai whakaika). Two mounds of earth are made, one of them called Tuahu a te rangi, “the sacred place of Heaven,” the other, Puke nui a Papa, “Papa’s big mound.” As puke also means mons veneris, and Papa is the mythical name of the earth, there is already in these names a significant suggestion. The priest plants a wand on each mound; the wands are called respectively tira ora and tira mate, “the wand of life” and “the wand of death.” Having recited some ritual words he overturns tira mate, but leaves tira ora standing.37

The content of this rite in its main features is clear enough, but the point is subtler than the surface would suggest; for we have a myth which clearly refers to this rite and which runs as follows:38 “Tiki formed two small mounds (puke) of earth, one of which was named Tuahu-a-te-rangi, and the other Puke-nui-o-Papa. In each of these mounds Tiki inserted a pole or wand (toko). The first-named mound represents life, prosperity, etc., and the latter stands for the Po (i.e. Hades) and misfortune, etc. Tiki produced woman from Puke-nui-o-Papa. He then overturned the wand on that mound. Roiho said to him: ‘See, Tiki, you have overthrown woman.’ That woman was Kurawaka.”39

This myth reveals that in the ritual mentioned the peculiar thing happens
that woman is created only in order to be overthrown. There are corresponding examples of the ritual train of thought of the Maori, which confirms the view that the idea is this: Before a war the warriors are to be cleansed of all extraneous and injurious life, particularly female influences. This is done by creating life and, apart from this, the injurious and female. Already in this way we must imagine that the injurious contents of the warriors are drawn out of them as it is, concentrated in the wand of death. (It is characteristic of the ritual train of thought of the Maori to create “death” in order to isolate and control it). Finally, this complex of death and female life is vanquished, by the wand being overturned.

Both myth and rite furthermore show a dualism which plays an important part for the Maori: ora and mate, life and death. With woman as the starting-point we have thrown light on one aspect, but the whole does not attain the right proportions until we have seen these two aspects of existence in opposition to one another. In the names of the two mounds there is a suggestion that life and heaven belong together, like death and the earth. The same meaning is probably involved in these words: “Below is the cave of death, namely with Papa (the earth), above is the cave of life.”

Death entered the world with woman, says the Maori; otherwise man would live unchangeably like the stars. The stars show him the nature of heaven: there life is eternal and uncontaminated by death. The reason is evident even though he does not state it expressly; in heaven life is so strong because it is pure, rising high above the earth, where it is polluted by fatal elements. Therefore heaven is the dwelling of the greatest and most tapu gods; there the isolation is to be found which their tapu requires.

In the various creation myths the central point is that this dualism is created, either as the “World of Day” and the “World of Night” or by Heaven and Earth being separated. In important rituals, too, the dualism is of fundamental importance; life and death are to be separated; this is a condition of the existence of life.

On the side of life are heaven and the highest gods; there the male is, too: “The divine seed is in the male (ko te kakano a te atua kei te tane), because he is a descendant of the gods. Women are descended from Papatuanuku...

40. Handy has rightly seen something radical in this dualism, which is found in the whole of Polynesia; but on the other hand he overemphasizes it when e.g. he uses it as basis of the concept of taboo (Handy 1927: 34 ff.).


42. Best 1905a: 150.
woman is the one whose loving care makes everything grow.” In poetry “heaven” often stands for the chief; this is an offshoot of the same feelings.

We can now compare all this with what we have previously learnt about the nobleman and his tapu that he is the person who guards life in its purity and strength from a profane world. The man, the highest gods, and the distant, inaccessible heaven with the unchanging stars—all these contain life purely and strongly, because they are tapu and isolated. The man is also the person who in principle represents the kinship group most purely (cf. pp. 16f. and 38).

Woman, on the other hand, often comes from another kinship group. She cooks the food, which is eaten by many different persons. Different life is mixed in her. Thus also in the earth, on which everybody treads. Woman and the earth are not so much the representatives of death as those of the mixture of life; but they become representatives of death because the pollution of life is the great source of misfortune and death, all that to the Maori is inherent in fate, aitua, that which compels man from without. It is woman as a woman who has the life-polluting element in her; for it is particularly associated with her genitals. We now understand the precision when these are termed whare o Aitua, “the house of Fate.”

It is probably impossible to tell whether the Maori had a feeling that there is something sterile about life in the man, for the very reason of its purity, so that the fertility of woman and the mixture of life are necessarily associated, or whether he just accepted the fact that it is the woman who bears children. At any rate, the man possesses life and the woman multiplies it, but at the same time she introduces death into it.

The crucial point in the woman’s being is that her life is made up of more varied, mixed and everyday contents than that of the male. This is the central point; her connection with aitua is secondary, as appears from the fact that she has not only this fatal point, but also a favorable point due to the fact that she is more robust as regards pollutions of life, just because by nature her life is made of several components.

43. Best 1924a: 252; cf. Whatahoro 1913: 17, where the gods and woman are set up as complements.
44. Williams 1932: rangi.
45. This is not a question of statistics, but of the view of the Maori: on the part of the kinship group there was certain distrust in woman. It is vented in a proverb (Grey 1857: 30): “He wahine whakarongo hikihiki—A female, perhaps, hears the enemies who have slain her family, sing, as they offer the bodies to the gods; or, ‘Tis little use having a daughter—she will, perhaps, raise up heirs for your foes.’”
46. Best 1925b: 1132 (quoted above, p. 220); 757.
We shall now see how these two aspects of woman’s nature assert themselves on special occasions and in concrete situations.

It is hardly necessary to dwell very much on the cases in which woman is dangerous to the tapu. The practical measures against woman as a profane being follow from all that has been said about the tapu in what precedes. The tapus which should particularly be protected from woman are those connected with “real” war (see above), with the building of fortresses, houses, and canoes, with the making of fishing gear, and with the sacral school. We shall mention some traits which show that the protection is especially directed against the genitals of woman. “Men were allowed to be spectators of canoe-making operations, but not so women. For if woman passes over the place where the canoe is being made, *ka oma nga atua*, the gods will desert the place, for the passing of the female organ over the ground has desecrated the tapu of the spot.”

It would seem reasonable to compare and support these reasons with the following statement: “It was looked upon as a very unfortunate thing for a woman to step over a male child, inasmuch as such an act would affect the growth of the child, causing it to be stunted. It was also bad form for a woman to step over the body of a man, an act of impertinence.”

From the same angle we should undoubtedly view the prohibitions from sexual intercourse to which men are subjected on various occasions, as warriors and (perhaps) as teachers or pupils at the sacral school.

Certain eating tapus only apply to women. They must not eat the enemies killed, which may be only an offshoot of the tapu of war. Rather more interesting is the fact that dog’s meat was tapu to women, as we have mythical reasons for it (see p. 207). Is this particular relationship between woman and the dog connected with the fact that the dog is a domestic animal and through the home is associated with woman more than with the man?

It was suggested above that woman as the representative of everyday life was more robust than the man. The mixed content of her everyday life is not only a danger to the pure content of the man’s life, it is also an asset in the defence against unwanted interference of life. Woman is the centre in a number of rites which avert great and extraneous influences, as she levels it down to the everyday level without harm to herself. We read about her power to conquer sorcery in the description of Tamure’s visit to the great sorcerer,

47. Best, 1925a: 59.
49. Taylor 1870: 189.
51. E.g, Shortland 1856: 248.
Kiki-whakamaroke-rakau (Kiki who makes trees wither). When Kiki offers bewitched food to Tamure, the latter makes his daughter take some of it first and put it under her foot while he himself repeats karakias. Only then can he eat without coming to grief.\textsuperscript{52}

A common way of protection from effects of sorcery had as its chief component that a woman ate a boiled \textit{kumara} or stepped over the threshold of the house after the \textit{kumara} had been placed under it.\textsuperscript{53}

A related procedure is that a man, when coming across a lizard (an ill omen), kills it and makes a woman step over it.\textsuperscript{54}

Both here and in what precedes we get an impression that the effect is especially associated with the genitals.

The technical term for a woman who officiates in that kind of rite is \textit{ruahine} (or \textit{ruwahine}; synonyms are \textit{tamawahine}, \textit{wahine kaihau}, and \textit{wahine kairangi}).\textsuperscript{55}

To what degree \textit{ruahine} has become an institution appears from the following \textit{karakia} which is meant to make an enemy restless so that he goes away voluntarily:

\begin{verbatim}
Hiki nuku, hiki rangi,
 hiki papa, hiki taua,
 whakamoe te ruahine.\textsuperscript{56}
 Carry away the extended (i.e. the earth), carry away heaven,
 Carry away the flat and firm (i.e. the earth), carry away the army,
 Put \textit{ruahine} to sleep!
\end{verbatim}

The reference must be to the \textit{ruahine} of the enemy, and so an attempt is made to make her sleep, i.e. to prevent her from annihilating the effect of the rite.

A peculiar rite which is performed by a \textit{ruahine} in bad weather consists in her insulting the weather with a formula in which the terrible term of abuse \textit{“pokokohua”} occurs; it takes the force from the gale.\textsuperscript{57}

It is a remarkable fact that a \textit{ruahine} is often a \textit{puhi}, thus a woman with a certain \textit{tapu}.\textsuperscript{58} It would seem self-contradictory as her ritual function is just that

\textsuperscript{52} White 1888b: 52.
\textsuperscript{53} Best 1925b: 1087.
\textsuperscript{54} Best 1925b: 1011.
\textsuperscript{55} Best 1925a: 880; Best 1924b: 205.
\textsuperscript{56} Best 1925b: 67 (cf. Best 1901a: 6, where \textit{ruahine} is also implied as an institution); “the extended,” etc., i.e.: both the enemy and his cosmos are to be removed, as they are connected in his \textit{mana}.
\textsuperscript{57} Best 1925b: 888.
\textsuperscript{58} E.g. Best 1924a: 170.
of representing everyday life; but it should perhaps be interpreted as a compromise which is required because she is, indeed, to eliminate an extraneous tapu, but at the same time she must not injure the tapu of the kinship group. She should perhaps be considered an exponent of an ennobled everyday life who has kept her robust power of smoothing out the too great and extraneous elements. Life in her is stronger than in other women, but is still of a mixed character.

The necessity of such a compromise is evident when a ruahine treats a man who has become nervous by violating a kinship tapu in its highest degree, viz. the tapu of the first-born in a noble family. She then steps over him or makes him creep between her legs.\(^{59}\) It is worth noting that the suffering person can creep between the legs of the first-born (te ariki) if it is the tapu of the latter that has been violated.\(^ {60}\) (By the way: if only for that reason it is wisest not to talk about ritual birth in this connexion). The reason why the man can here replace woman is no doubt that it is kinship life of which the violator has got too much. But we may also ask conversely: How can woman replace te ariki, the person with the highest kinship-tapu? The answer is obvious: Because she herself has a certain tapu so that the suffering man does not either lose all of his surplus of male life by the rite. Presumably it is the very kind of ritual situation in which a surplus—but no more—is to be removed which has occasioned that there exists a ruahine who is tapu.

There is another rite which supports the explanation proposed. The rite which serves to remove the tapu from a new-born child, is described by Shortland as follows:

A small sacred fire being kindled by itself, the father takes some fern-root and roasts it thereon. The food so prepared is called horohoronga. He then places the child in his arms, and after touching the head, back, and different parts of its body with the horohoronga, he eats it. This act is termed kai-katoa i te tamaiti, eating the child all over, and is the conclusion of the ceremony performed by the father. The sacred restriction, however, is not yet completely removed from the infant; but nothing more can be done till the following morning, when, at daylight, the child’s eldest relative in the direct female line, cooks fern-root over a sacred fire, precisely in the manner the father had done, and having similarly touched the head and various parts of the body of the infant with this dressed food, afterwards swallows it.\(^ {61}\)

\(^{59}\) Best 1925b: 1093.

\(^{60}\) Gudegon 1905: 63 f. (yet Gudgeon, who is the author, in my opinion introduces a false element by his speaking of mana). Best has a variant of the rite (1902b: 51); but it is not evident what kinds of violations of tapu are involved; see his 1924a: 222.

\(^{61}\) Shortland 1856: 144 f.
There are two things to be noted in this connection. One is that the man takes a closely related tapu upon him; the other that he cannot remove it to the degree wanted, but must have a woman to do so. We can now more precisely state the main conditions of a man replacing a ruahine. On the one hand, he can do so when the tapu is related to him, on the other hand it is desirable when the level of tapu should not be lowered too much.

Shortland in his Maori Religion states a somewhat different procedure for the ritual over a new-born child, which, however, neither supports nor contradicts this view. Here the woman steps over the child and the corresponding ritual text emphasizes that this act absorbs the tapu:

The boy infant is stept over,
The boy infant is climbed over,
The boy infant is lifted in the arms,
The boy infant is free from tapu,
He runs freely where food is cooked.

A subsequent rite with fern-root is more difficult to interpret, but perhaps it is carried out to give a certain sacral tapu to the child, as the fern-root is finally to be placed in the sacred place. If so, it is due to the fact that the boy is a chief’s son. The rite in this way falls into two parts: first the birth tapu is removed, then a certain sacral tapu is imparted to him.

The rituals over children at any rate are somewhat different from those mentioned above in which it was a question of sorcery and violations of tapu. In its core the function of the ruahine is the same, viz. that of removing tapu, but it seems a more important task to introduce a human being in its entirety into the community of everyday life. Ruahine appears in several other rituals of the same kind in which she, in the truest sense, stands for everyday existence as a life form. She can, e.g., make highly tapu warriors returning home noa with a ritual meal. The tapu which sticks to a man’s hands when he has cut his grand-child’s hair, is removed by her. She eats from the first bird that

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62. That it is really a related tapu appears from the fact that the father may be present at the birth (e.g. Stack 1877: 66), just as he in any case belongs to the narrow circle who has access to the isolated hut in which high-born women give birth to their children (Best 1924: 8).

63. The man can with his phallus avert sorcery; but as far as can be judged, the point of view is quite a different one; so there is no inconsistency with the present formulation; see p. 233 f.

64. Shortland 1882: 40 f.

65. Best 1897: 49; Shortland 1851: 69.

is caught, in order that women can enter the forest and take part in the bird-catching.\textsuperscript{67} She removes the \textit{tapu} from greenstone.\textsuperscript{68} Sometimes a woman removes the \textit{tapu} from the stock of \textit{kumara}, but it is not necessarily a \textit{ruahine}.\textsuperscript{69}

Canoes, fortresses, and houses under construction are strictly \textit{tapu} to women; in return \textit{ruahine} plays an important part when these buildings are to be introduced into everyday existence. It is a common custom that a \textit{ruahine} is the first to enter a fortress or house during the inauguration ritual.\textsuperscript{70} In these situations, woman appears as the Hineteiwaia of mythology, the first \textit{ruahine}.\textsuperscript{71} Hineteiwaia is the founder of woman’s social and ritual functions, a cultural heroine of woman. She is the source of the \textit{ruahine} function as well as of the art of weaving;\textsuperscript{72} and it is she who is in charge of births.\textsuperscript{73} As mentioned above, female children are dedicated to Hineteiwaia.\textsuperscript{74}

The function as a \textit{ruahine} of course presupposes that the woman is not in one of the special states of \textit{tapu} which are peculiar to her. The crucial point in what precedes is the relationship woman–man. Birth is a chapter apart; during that period woman is very \textit{tapu} and is completely withdrawn from her normal sphere.

The relationship between man and woman in the erotic sphere are not decided quite so much by the ritually stamped conception of man and woman just described. Still, here, too, it exerts its influence on the given physiological conditions, since it is interwoven into the Maori’s whole way of experiencing things—his character, temperament, or whatever we should call it. Furthermore, the subject is sufficiently important for a discussion of it—probably the first—to be desirable.

“Erotic sphere” is perhaps an inapt word, as it involves a strong suggestion of emotional life which is alien to the Maori. He does not walk romantically round the flower of love; he goes for it and picks it if he can. When Best asked an old Maori why the ritual meal associated with the wedding in more aristocratic circles was called \textit{kai kotore}, the latter answered:\textsuperscript{75} “The reason

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{67}  Best 1924b: II, 459.
\item \textsuperscript{68}  Tiniraupeka in Graham 1943: 49.
\item \textsuperscript{69}  Best, 1916: 78.
\item \textsuperscript{71}  Best 1925b: 783 f.
\item \textsuperscript{72}  Best 1924b: II, 514.
\item \textsuperscript{73}  Best 1924b: II, 2; Grey 1855: 49.
\item \textsuperscript{74}  Best 1924b: II, 27; Grey 1853: lxxvii.
\item \textsuperscript{75}  Best 1903d: 44.
\end{itemize}
why it is called kotore food, is that the man is wedded to her abdomen (kotore), not to her head.” The Maori calls a spade a spade. The story is told somewhere of a man who lives on one side of a river and every day sees a woman whose husband is absent on a journey, appear on the opposite bank and make water. She is beautiful, and when he has seen this for some time, “ka kaha pea te pana ake o te taukari...kia tae a ia ki te wahine ra, then the jerks in his penis became very strong to get hold of the woman over there.”

A fair number of that kind of example might be adduced; but it would no doubt be premature for that reason to deny that he should have more delicate erotic feelings. On the other hand, it may be said with certainty that he does not cultivate them. The difference from his Hawaiian cousin with his sophisticated emotional lyrics is enormous. The great difference is in the fact that the Maori does not cultivate the falling in love; to him it is a mate, a want and weakening, and this is all there is to it. We have passionate expressions of betrayed love, but no cultivation of or dwelling on the faceted emotions of love.

In the nature of things such a negative characterization is of limited value. It is more important to understand the actual facts of what to us seems coarseness. What offends us is ultimately that we find his expressions soulless; but in this respect the Maori lives on quite a different basis. His experiences are not debased by being felt in his body. Intense feelings are allowed to stay where they are felt in his bowels and breast; he does not feel any call to en- noble them by removing them to his soul (see pp. 223 ff.), just as naturally his love life is allowed to keep its natural place in the organs determined for it without therefore becoming coarse and physiological. As we shall see below, sexual intercourse in and with its physiological occurrences has a marked content of experience which is culturally determined. Finally, it should not be forgotten that the erotic relationship is only an element in a human relationship the external setting of which is matrimony.

The sources do not allow us to draw any detailed portrait of the erotic ideal in the case of the man; but no doubt we may say that it was the nobleman as described above. The special things occasionally emphasized, such as beauty, maia, and the like, are included in this ideal.

The female ideal is more aesthetically determined. The young men fell in love with Puhihuia on account of her beautiful dance; they were not least

76. White 1888a: 184.
77. Cf. p. 252 f.; aroha on falling in love belongs to a later period.
78. See e.g. Grey 1855: 116; 120.
79. White 1887a: 87; 1888a: 150.
fascinated by her eyes when she opened them wide during the dance; they were “like the full moon which rises above the horizon.” In another beautiful woman, the teeth were extolled; “when she laughed, her teeth shone white like the don of the albatross.”

Te Huhuti, too, was beautiful; “her skin was like a white cliff,” her beauty “like dawn which breaks on the horizon.” Uru-te-kakara’s beauty, as Ngarue saw her, is described in more detail: “She was a woman of slim build and her form tapered well from breast to waist. Then her buttocks became exposed and he saw how well set she was, and of what fine carriage; how shape-ly her calves; her skin being darkish brown, her face handsome, the hair of the head curly, the eyebrows long and prominent; an exceedingly handsome figure.”

A peculiarity of the mutual relations of the sexes plays a role in the male and female ideals; for it is by no means unfeminine among the Maoris for woman to be erotically aggressive; indeed, it must, if anything, be characterized as normal for woman. Best describes the advances of the young people as follows: “The young people, when gathered together at night in the whare tapere or ‘play-houses,’ in which many games, dances, etc., were indulged in to pass away the time, would make advances to each other and afterwards meet at some place agreed upon. Such places were often in the forest, and were termed taupunipuni. These advances spoken of were often made by the girls, the recognized sign being a pinch, or the scratching of the finger-tip on the hand of the desired person.”

The fact that woman takes the lead in erotic affairs is to the Maori simply part of her nature; this is first of all apparent from the myth about Hineteiwaiwa, who, as mentioned above, was the source of woman’s social personality. The myth—which for that matter contains many difficulties for the interpreter—is clear enough on this point. It is the woman, Hineteiwaiwa who seeks out and conquers the man, Tinirau. One of the versions give us the situation in a few words: “Hineteiwaiwa was enraptured by Tinirau and Tinirau by Hineteiwaiwa. Then Tinirau was seized by Hineteiwaiwa and they lived together.”

80. White 1888a: 117; Grey 1855: 141.
83. Best 1925e: 296.
85. Best 1903d: 33.
86. Wohlers 1874: 49.
The same trait is repeated in numerous myths and sagas. Whaitiri came down from heaven allured by Kaitangata’s name. It was the girls—both Hine-moa and Te Huhuti—who swam across broad lakes in order to reach their lovers. Tukutuku wooed the cautiously reserved man, Paoa; Pare wooed Huttu, etc.

I dare not maintain that there should be any necessary connexion between woman’s erotic aggressivity and her everyday nature; but the different attitudes of the sexes fits extraordinarily well into the picture of man as the pure being surrounded by tapus and woman as the robust one whose nature allows her to behave without constant consideration for herself. During the significant years of childhood and adolescence there is constantly a difference in the ease with which the sexes can touch things they do not possess. Is it inconceivable that this difference should ultimately leave its traces in their elementary feelings as regards physical touch so that the men become more reserved?

Whatever the reason, woman’s erotic aggressivity must be regarded as part of Maori culture. We have to keep this in mind when we consider how much the carriage of the woman is sexually determined. For instance their gait: “Native women adopted a peculiar gait that was acquired in youth, a loose-jointed swinging of the hips that looks ungainly to us, but was admired by the Maori. Mothers drilled their daughters in this accomplishment, termed onioni, and I have heard a say to her girl: “Ha! Kaore koe e onioni” (“What! You don’t onioni!”) when the young one was neglecting to practise the gait.” Onioni also means “to copulate.” The women’s dances were also characteristic by similar erotically inciting movements, also termed onioni.

Woman’s inciting behaviour thus is culturally determined and has nothing to do with shamelessness; it is only that the bounds are placed elsewhere than among us. At the moment the bounds are overstepped, woman’s modesty appears without vacillation. Hineteiwaiwa may again serve as a model. Her husband, Tinirau, wants to sleep with her outside the house, but this is revolting to her modesty, and a fog descends under the shelter of which she is carried away by her brother. This occurs in one of the versions only, but there are examples of Maori women who have killed themselves because

87. E.g. White 1887a: 105.
90. Best 1924b: 408.
91. Best 1925c: 54.
92. White 1887b: 130.
their modesty had been violated (see e.g. pp. 51 ff.). “We have it on record,” writes Downes, “that on one occasion when a girl was being cruelly murdered, she would not even raise her hands to ward off the blows, lest her person be exposed.”

Because woman takes the lead in the relationship between the sexes, man should not be imagined to be passive. Presumably this is inconceivable, if only for physiological reasons; but to this should be added the fundamental part which activity plays for the Maori’s mental health. This regarding of activity as a pledge of life’s health no doubt contributes its share to the fact that the meeting of the sexes in its climax during their sexual intercourse is experienced as a fight.

There is a manifest connection between the male organ and warlike courage. A provocative battle song which was sung in war by the tribes Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitoa, begins like this:

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Awhea tou ure ka riri?
awhea tou ure ka tora?
...
When will thy penis fight?
When will thy penis rise?
...
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It is not only a question of vague notions or purely linguistic images, but of a tangible connection between courage and erection. In Te Rangi Hiroa, we find an important piece of information: “If the leader of a war party awoke with an erection on the morning before battle, it showed that his courage ran high and hence was regarded as an omen of success.” A passage in one of Gudgeon’s articles gives a similar idea: “There is in the Maori or Polynesian, mind a close connection between procreative ability and great courage, and hence the word toa would comprehend both phases of man. It is this that makes the Phallic cult of the Maori so interesting. The peculiar state of the virile organ of a warrior when engaged in mortal combat is a matter well recognized in Maori superstition.” Gudgeon also gives the information that ariki before a war passed with straddling legs over the warriors, probably in order to impart to them the warlike courage belonging to the male organ.

93. Downes 1929: 158.
97. Gudgeon 1905: 64. The rite can also be supposed to remove a strange tapu, as Gudgeon presumably thinks; cf. p. 212.
When Gudgeon speaks of “Phallic cult” among the Maoris it is, however, necessary to make certain reservations. It is true that some phallic stones have been found, but their use is uncertain, even though Hammond’s supposition that they served to make *kumara* field fertile sounds reasonable enough, since the planting of *kumara*, as among other tillers of the soil, has a sexual content. A phallic *mauri* for deep-sea fishing is also on record. At any rate these phallic stones are of sporadic occurrence. A phallic symbolism may have been connected with the beam of the latrine, but in any case this information is based on isolated evidence. Phallic elements in art (the handles of canoe bailers, flutes, etc.) can hardly be taken into account as they do not seem to play any cultic part. The expression “Phallic cult” thus must not induce anybody to assume that we are faced with something which may be compared with e.g. the Greek Dionysia or the like.

When all the uncertain features have been sifted out we have only the fact left that the penis played a role in some small rites for the averting of sorcery and thus had a function reminding us of that of the female organs. But the similarity is hardly great; it is, however, more difficult to attain to certainty as to the nature of the male organ as we are here without the broad basis of rites, myths, and folklore on which we could build when mentioning conditions in the case of woman. The *karakias* called *kaiure*, which are repeated while one holds the penis, are difficult to understand. The one most easily understood runs as follows in Te Rangi Hiroa’s translation:

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Attack the penis!
Death weaken and pass by!
Let what you attack
Be my penis.
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Unfortunately the words do not tell with certainty how the penis is to avert death, but the word “attack (patu)” suggests that the situation is understood as warlike.

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98. See e.g. Best 1925d: 105 and fig. 47.
99. Best 1929b: 3.
100. These questions, I think, are best discussed in connexion with the rituals and myths belonging there.
101. Handy considers “Phallicism” as rather important in Polynesian religion (see Handy 1927: Index s. v. phallicism). In the case of the Maoris (e.g. in the question of “*tiki*”) his representation will hardly hold good.
102. Best 1925b: 1132-1135.
As seen in connection with what was adduced above, it may be said that there is a major probability that the male organ acts as a warrior and kills hostile influences as contrasted with the female organ which absorbs and levels them. In most of the rites the prepuce is retracted, which emphasizes the sexual element. We have now, to the best of our ability, drawn the portraits of man and woman with the Maoris as determined by their sexes. How do they experience their meeting in the act of copulation? We must do without an external description of postures, etc., as the bits of information that can be scraped together are insufficient. The pictorial presentations found carved particularly on the store-houses do not give any unambiguous guidance. How greatly are they determined by artistic convention? How much by realism? Fortunately, we have in the myth of the first act of copulation in connection with the creation of woman a document which lets us see something of what happens in the minds of the two partners. An interpreter, however, comes up against the obstacle that these texts are full of terms for internal anatomical details in woman—of which the Maori as a cannibal had a rather grisly knowledge—without it being possible to identify them, as the dictionaries rarely go beyond translating, with exasperating monotony, the terms by “pudenda muliebra.”

In the myth about the first act of copulation, after the creation of Hine, the first woman, a karakia is recited over her; “this karakia is recited before Hine in order to strengthen the desire for her enemy (hoariri), for Tikiahua.” Here we already meet with the fighting motif, as Tikiahua is the mythical name of the phallus. It should be kept in mind that the word for “enemy,” hoariri, has another ring to the Maori than to us, as it literally means “fighting-fellow,” which is connected with a peculiar “fellowship” in the hostile relationship (see p. 86). Furthermore, it is said that the ritual is to provide that she gives birth to children. In Nepia Pohuhu’s enumeration of the gods who contributed the various parts to woman, it says: “It was Tane-matua alone who placed...Mokakati at the entrance to the hindmost in order to beat Tiki. From now on the battle between Tiki and Rihi (!Karihi?) became a standing one, and this very day peace has not yet been made.” This does not take us much farther, but it emphasizes

104. See Ploss and Bartels 1927: II; 64 ff, and fig. 501 for a fine rendering (presumably of the “Fox Pataka”) and a contribution to the discussion of the question from the physiological point of view.
105. Whatahoro 1913: 36 f.; cf. Smith 1922: 49. Both texts are due to Nepia Pohuhu; it would be interesting to know whether Best 1924a: 75 ff. had an independent source.
106. Whatahoro 1913: 36.
107. Best 1923c: 53f.
108. Smith 1922: 49; cf. Best 1924a: 75; the woman’s weapon is wairutua; but what is that?
109. Tuarongo “the back wall of a house”.

the fact that the events of the myth still flare up in those of the present day. The fight between the male and the female organs, between Tiki and Karihi, was not finished with primordial time, but is fought every time man embraces woman. The ritual performed over the primordial pair, Hine and Tane, is constantly repeated in order to bind man and woman together in marriage and create fertility; what we find here encased in the myth is therefore probably a piece of the wedding ritual which was performed over high-born couples.

About the act itself it finally says: “Then (Tiki) was drawn out by Karihi; he was drawn up into Mauhi’s and Maukati’s paepae (trap, i.e. vagina?) and there Tikinui and Tikiroa were beaten. Then Tiki died (mate).” Mauhi (and Maukati) are gods who assisted at the creation of woman and furthermore are of importance at births. The whole description gives us an impression that the woman performs a considerable part of the movements.

“Then Tiki died.”

These words also refer to the physiological fact that the erection subsides. There is something profoundly characteristic of the Maori in this. Not only in the degree in which he experiences with his body, but also in the fact that he feels the tense activity as the true expression of life so that the relaxation is experienced as a defeat (mate). This is no doubt associated inextricably with the Maori’s whole view of man and woman; in the culmination of sensual delight the man in nuce feels the whole mystery of creation: that woman actualizes man’s life, but that, bringing forth life, she imbues it with defeat and death.

110. Karihi here is the female genitals (in spite of Williams!); see e.g. Whatahoro 1913: 37: auaha ki roto ki te karihi o Hineone and Best 1925e: 312: he ure i makona ai a Karihi.

111. Whatahoro 1913: 37.

112. Whatahoro 1913: 37; cf. Best 1924a: 76.

113. According to Best (1924a: 221), a ritual copulation between the army leader and a woman occasionally took place before the battle. This may seem rather astonishing as the warrior otherwise is kept isolated from women, but the addition that the purpose was divinatory makes it more easily intelligible. Keeping in mind the close relation between erection and courage (p. 232), it seems an obvious idea that copulation was a prototype of the following fight. The omen is taken accordingly, presumably mainly from the persistence of the erection or the like.