

MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND TE PAPA TONGAREWA

MEMO TO THE BOARD

From Apirana Mahuika
14 October 1992

MANA TAONGA

Tena koe

At its meeting of 30 September 1992 Nga Kaiwawao resolved to recommend that the Board:

endorses the concept of Mana taonga.

Mana Taonga has been developed in response to the need to give to all the Iwi a very real sense of ownership in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Mana Taonga enables any Iwi or other culture to stand on the Marae and exercise their own Tikanga or protocols by right of the Taonga held within the Museum. The concept of Mana Taonga was tested before, and gained the endorsement of, a number of gatherings of consultants and consultations with Iwi in 1989 and 1990.

TANGATA WHENUA

Tangata Whenua means literally "people of the land".

Today, the concept is symbolically adhered to, irrespective of the fact that Tangata Whenua may no longer own the land.

Tangata Whenua rights are ascribed by genealogy through the founding ancestor to successive generations.

Tangata Whenua rights are exercised today, in the main, on ritual and ceremonial occasions. However, where Tangata Whenua still hold ownership to resources, their rights are not extinguished in terms of control and authority over the use and management of these resources.

All tribes respect the Tangata Whenua - Tanga of tribes - and accordingly do not usurp or encroach upon the rights or Tino Rangatiratanga of the local people.

Turangawaewae literally means "a place to stand". Like Tangata Whenua, Turangawaewae rights come through genealogy.

Tangata Whenua rights and Turangawaewae rights complement each other, and both exist interdependently of each other.

Mana Tangata is nothing more than rights conferred by Tangata Whenua and Turangawaewae.

MANA TAONGA

Mana Taonga on the other hand, are rights conferred upon people or groups through the Whakapapa of:

- (i) the creator of specific Taonga;
- (ii) the ancestors after whom the Taonga is named; and
- (iii) the Whanau, Hapu or Iwi to whom the Taonga is an heirloom.

Mana Taonga could be seen in the manner in which Koha often operates. For instance in traditional times, a chief at a Tangi may place a tribal heirloom at the foot of the casket, as a means of acknowledging the chieftainship of the deceased. However, depending on how the heirloom is placed, such a gift is required at an appropriate time, to be returned to the owners of the heirloom. This custom still exists today. Accordingly, Mana Taonga over such a Koha is not lost to the Whanau, Hapu or Iwi, nor can it be said or assumed, that the Taonga is gone forever.

Mana Taonga can never be extinguished either by tribes where such Taonga are located, or by Tangata Whenua to whom ownership of the Taonga was never given.

Mana Taonga ascribes certain rights viz:

- (i) ownership rights conferred by Whakapapa;
- (ii) respect of Taonga - their Tapu and what they stand for;
- (iii) respect by Tangata Whenua for Taonga held in their region; and
- (iv) care and protection of Taonga.

Taonga also designates alliances between tribes such as political alliances and support one for the other.