

**IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL**

**WAI 2700  
Wai 1477**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Mana Wahine Kaupapa Inquiry  
(Wai 2700)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of a claim by Esme Warati Sherwin, on behalf of herself, the late Emma Gibbs-Smith, and her whānau as members of Nga Whānau o Waitangi Horotutu me Taputaputa o Pahi, Ngāti Kawa, Ngāti Rāhiri, and Ngare Raumati

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**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ESME WARATI SHERWIN**

**Dated: 22 July 2022**

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**RECEIVED**

Waitangi Tribunal

**22 Jul 22**

Ministry of Justice  
WELLINGTON

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## MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL

### Introduction

1. My name is Esmé Warati Sherwin. I am a named claimant for the Wai 1477 claim. I live in Moerewa, and I affiliate to Nga Whānau o Waitangi Horotutu me Taputaputa o Pahi, Ngāti Kawa, Ngāti Rāhiri, and Ngare Raumati.
2. The Wai 1477 claim was lodged by my mother, Emma Gibbs-Smith, who passed away on 29 March 2019. I decided to lodge a claim in the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry because of my mother. She was one of the great modern mana wāhine.

Kua hinga tetahi o nga kauri o te waonui a Tane. Kua hinga tetahi o nga wāhine toa o Ngapuhi nui tonu i whawhai ai mo nga taonga Māori katoa i tukuna mai e ona matua e ona tūpuna ki a ia. I a ia e ora ana ka kaha ia ki te pupuri i enei taonga ona ki roto i te Te Taraipunanara o Waitangi. Ahakoa kua oti ke tenei mahi e koe e Emma engari ma matou e whakahaere tonu tae noa ki te mutunga.

*One of the kauri of the forest of Tane has fallen. One of the warrior women of Ngapuhi who fought for the preservation of the taonga passed down to her by her parents and her ancestors has left us. While she was alive, she fought hard to preserve these taonga in the Waitangi Tribunal. Although your part in the work has ended Emma, we will carry it on to the finish.*

E Emma haere ki ou tūpuna ou matua hoki. Haere ki a Hine-nui-te-po. Kei konei matou e tangi ana, e mamae ana mou kua wehea.

*Emma, go to your parents and ancestors. Go to Hine-nui-te-po. We are left here weeping and in pain for you.*

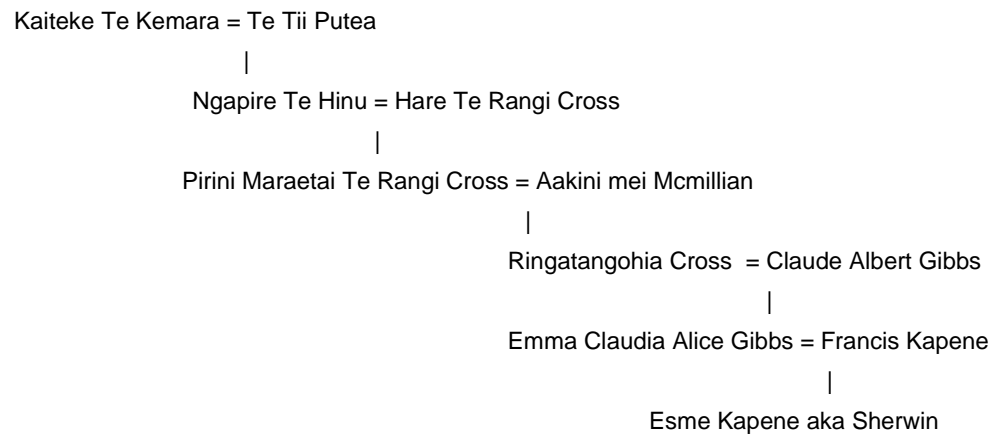
3. My passion is for the environment, family, and a wholistic sustainable life style. I have recently been appointed as a trustee on Te Tii Marae o Waitangi. I also have seven years' experience tutoring sustainable rural development and horticulture for North Tec. I have learnt that when I show my students how amazing we were prior to colonisation and remove the stereotypes imposed on Māori, that is when we get the best results. I have learnt that we all have the ability to be mana wāhine. What makes you a

good mana wāhine is just doing the best for ourselves our families and our hapū.

4. This statement of my evidence is to support this Treaty claim in the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry.

### **My Mana Wāhine**

5. My whakapapa on my mother's side is:



6. The main activators of my mana wāhine were:
  - a. my birth mother, Emma Gibbs-Smith ("**Emma**") and her sisters;
  - b. my birth grandmother, Ringatongohia (Winnie Terangi) Cross ("**Winnie**");
  - c. my grandmother, Bella Warati Taituha Ashby ("**Bella Warati**");
  - d. my whāngai grandmothers' grandmother, Ene Kotoku Taituha ("**Ene**"); and
  - e. my marae and my hapū: Ngāti Kawa and Ngāti Rāhiri.
7. They are the activators of my mana wāhine because of the life lessons and guidance that I have received from them and the strength that they have shown me. Not all of it was mana wāhine. Colonisation had its influences. It

taught me empathy and mistrust of a system that was and is pitted against my people. The teachings from our mana wāhine have taught me to be humble and understanding of the issues our people face and the instigators who have inflicted their protocols on us.

8. I think the main strengths that I have learnt from these tūpuna wāhine is to 'carry on'. They taught me to keep it strong; it does not matter how much you get put down. That is what made mana wāhine so important because it was tūturu. It was not some made up kōrero or a chapter in a historic romanticized novel.

*Emma Gibbs-Smith*

9. Emma had very strong mana wāhine views; she was from a different era of mana wāhine. Her definition and experience of mana wāhine was a wahine of high moral standing, who is above reproach, and has an understanding of Te Ao Māori, religion, etiquette, gracefulness, and tenacity. I was blessed. Her mother, Bella Warati, was in the garden in gumboots, covered with paru, digging up plants, and providing for family. My mother followed her example and showed me that if things were not right, you could amend to create a fertile vibrant growing sustainable environment. This I learnt through life. It did not just apply to the māra but to life and family too. She taught me that mana wāhine is not just providing but showing us how it is done. She instilled the understanding of working together, as one. "Many hands make light work" is not just a whakataukī for getting the job done; it's a whakataukī for life. Emma showed us that our communities need to learn to work together to promote a better outcome for our younger generation.

*Ringatangohia (Winnie Terangi) Cross*

10. Winnie was an amazing woman. She was a very strong tohunga matakite. She understood rongoā and healing. She had the qualities of mana wāhine. These qualities were passed down to us through the matriarchal teachings of our mana wāhine. My whāngai grandmother, Bella Warati, and Winnie were very close; she called her "Sissy Bell" and they maintained a connection for our families.

11. Bella Warati was my whāngai grandmother. Although Bella was from the old days, she had an understanding of modern life. Her stories and kōrero are very old going back to pre-colonisation but they are oh so relevant to this day and age. Out of all of my nannies, there were not many like my nana. She only had a few of her own children and whāngai children, including my mother. She had a kaupapa of “we may not be direct blood, but we have all the same bones”. My Nana had that *āhua* of “never let the white-man system take the children; it will harm them, and they may never come back”. As a mana wāhine, she taught each of her children who they were and where they came from. She instilled them with that confidence and identity as mana wāhine. She taught them not to stand on each other’s toes and hurt each other because that is desecration of family. As mokos, my brother and I were blessed: we used to sit with our Nana for hours on end, quietly playing and listening to her and our nannies sharing their life lessons, sorrows and good times. I learnt so much from them during those times. Talking te reo Māori was illegal in her day and she feared we would be punished for speaking te reo. Instead, she would use moral stories, like Little Red Hen, from the colonials to enforce mana wāhine principles with us. She knew how to teach tūturu and make it pono.<sup>1</sup> Those were my teachings. I feel she probably did this because she knew colonisation was part of what we were living and she wanted us to be instilled with tika and pono principal’s that would protect us through life; she utilized colonial stories of matriarchal grandmothers and good moral practice.
  
12. I feel that a lot of the ritual learning and lessons from my Nana was important knowledge. It was passed on orally, physically, and by being shown by doing. Although some mana wāhine principals have been degraded by colonisation, it has not all been wiped out. I feel a lot of it went underground, like the tohunga who kept using their gifts in the shadows after colonisation.

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<sup>1</sup> Tūturu means the truth or the true truth. To be true and right is pono and tika. Tūturu is mana wāhine because it is heartily the truth.

### *Ene Kotoku*

13. Ene was a mana wāhine for the Marupo line and other distinguished families such as the Taituha whānau. She married one of my tupuna, Hare Te Rangi, later in life, becoming companions and forming a closer relationship between whānau. This would cement our future whāngai relationship, connecting us, and kept alive by the mana wāhine. Her granddaughter was Bella Warati who was the whāngai mother for my mother. She taught my grandmother a lot of her values, including loyalty.

### *My Hapū*

14. I belong to Te Tii Marae o Waitangi and Ngāti Kawa Marae, Oromāhoe. My hapū, Ngāti Kawa and Ngāti Rāhiri, and my marae have also shown me what it means to be mana wāhine. As a child running around the marae, I have memories of all the awesome nannies aunts and uncles teaching me good life lessons. Those are the teachings I draw from: etiquette, strength, loyalty and knowledge. I learnt, if you stand, you stand tūturu. If you do not, it diminishes your ability to lead the people in a direct and correct manner. Those teachings motivate me to do better and fight to stand fearlessly for my whānau and my hapū.

### **Kaitiakitanga and Karakia**

15. Love and compassion were the groundings of mana wāhine. Mana wāhine was all about a wholistic, sustainable approach. It is common sense, with a lot of love. That is why we have the rituals and karakia: blessing our tamariki and blessing our whenua. A lot of the time our whenua was protected by a mana wahine, amongst others. They were usually involved in the important decisions to do with the land, horticulture, and agriculture. They were part of the kaitiaki because they had that passed down knowledge. You could always go to them for advice. A lot of farmers were mana wāhine because mana wāhine kept the tables laid and fires burning when men went to war and ensured everyone was cared for.

16. Prior to colonisation, it was common knowledge that mana wāhine had standing alongside the rangatira. The rangatira was the rangatira, but mana wāhine also held the land. That is because we have the pito. The land always belongs to the whakapapa. If you were mana wāhine of that whakapapa, you had mana whenua over that land or that hapū. That was another reason why mana wāhine were so revered and listened to and looked after. You did not want to disrespect mana wāhine because she might leave you and take her whenua and her knowledge of the land and resources with her.

#### *Toi Kairakau*

17. Toi Kairakau came before the great migrations. They did the big burn offs, which agriculturally was a very productive idea. Their tohunga blessed the whenua, and they asked for lush fertile lands, abundance of bird life, and food to benefit the coming migrations of waka. Toi Kairakau was approximately 200 years before the great migrations and that is exactly the period of time it would have taken for all the potash and nutrients from the burn offs to be sequestered by the whenua. This all made the lands fertile and abundant. By the time the whenua had regenerated, the land would have come up with a lot of healthy trees full of berries to feed the birds. It was lush and it was vibrant and there were hundreds and thousands of birds by the time our migrations came here. When pakeha came here, it was deafening. You could not sit and talk outside because of the sound of the birds chattering. That is why our culture uses slash and burn. It was understood by mana wāhine that was a good way to amend the soil.
18. The migrations came because they knew the whenua was ready. Mana wāhine on those waka did karakia everywhere they went before they hit land. For example, Muriwai, who was Toroa and Puhi's sister from Mātaatua waka led the karakia for the blessings of the whenua. Also when our tohunga and our waka got here, there were specific places where they said karakia to re-instill the mauri of those karakia. They are still very strong and that is why when you go to places like Whangaroa or the Kaimai ranges, you still see all the birds and beautiful forests. There's a certain mauri protection around those areas. These are the learnings that our mana wāhine would have known and adhered to and made sure that their hapū adhered to so that we

stayed strong and lived productive happy lives. Mana wāhine had the ability to lead, heal, love, nurture, and teach. These were tūturu teachings of our precolonial mana wāhine.

### **Holders of knowledge**

19. Mana wāhine were as significant as Rangatira and Tohunga: they are not in the same realm but had the same importance. Mana wāhine held the knowledge. They understood the land and the resources and where to find things because those resources were theirs which they lovingly shared with the hapū. They were kaitiaki for the whānau, whenua, and hapū, ensuring future resources. My understanding is that knowledge of medicinal herbs stayed with tohunga. Mana wāhine was about the handing down of kōrero, supporting *ahi kā* and kept the fires burning. For example, the stories of Mount Taratara and Tuna Paea would have been passed down by mana wāhine and others to help our people navigate and know the history and connection of that place to us. We all share the same whakapapa from the smallest stone to the biggest tree; these are our connections, our beginnings from Io.

#### *Mount Taratara*

20. The idea that our tūpuna were strong navigators shows in our kōrero about places and myths. In Whangaroa, there is a mountain called Mount Taratara. The kōrero is that Taratara was a young handsome fulla with two beautiful wives. There was a chief across the way, Maungataniwha, who got hoha at him because Taratara refused to give him one of his wives. As a result, the chief came over and smashed Taratara. Taratara's head is still sitting across the harbour in Whangaroa. Mt Taratara is sitting on the other side of Kaeo. It is a beautiful hill, but it has a big chunk of rock missing from it. When you traverse the oceans, the main thing you can see is the mountains; so, the kōrero matched what you see in the land. Our people knew where they were going because they already had the kōrero on how the land was formed.



### *Tuna Paea*

21. One of my favourite myths is about *Tuna Paea*, who was a giant *tuna* that came luring down from Kaikohe, through Orauta, trying to get back to the sea. The people of the time chased him because he had bitten a chief's foot off. A big hill called Tuhipa stopped his way and prevented him from going out to the sea. Tuhipa hurled rocks and boulders and fire at him. *Tuna Paea* writhed and reeled in the creek and then flipped around and went up another valley. When you look at this area you can see how the story actually is a description of the environment. *Tuna Paea* created the river and swamps. Tuhipa is a big hill that stops the river. The hill diverts the stream to a place called Pokapu where *Tuna Paea* hid, creating a swamp. The rocks that were thrown were from Pouerua Maunga erupting. In this way, a lot of our myths reflect the natural environment. Mana wāhine told these stories to show us how the environment was created.

### **Strategic Relationships**

22. One of the powers of the mana wāhine was to implement strategic relationships. This would ensure generation, after generation had connection. Mana wāhine could help protect hapū from being wiped out. If wāhine were married off and strategically placed somewhere, they saved lives. Sometimes we could not afford to kill each other off. There is kōrero about puhī who were given to bond the tribes together as whanaunga. This allowed those tribes to go into the future with less fear of attack and the ability to call on other hapū in times of trouble. Maikuku, Hineamaru, Āhuaiti, Hēni Ngārino are examples of mana wāhine who protected and bonded their people together.

### *Maikuku*

23. My kuia, Maikuku, was a puhī who was very tapu. She was sent to a cave at Waitangi to live and stay pure. She sat in this cave all alone. One day, her messengers, the dolphins, led this handsome man from Whangaroa to her. He had heard of her great beauty. His name was Huatakaroa. He married

my beautiful kuia and together they formed kinships between Waitangi and Whangaroa.

24. In the future this came to save lives because we did not end up killing each other. When the land wars came, that connection is what stopped a lot of fighting. It also allowed us to have the ability to come to each other's aid if we needed to. Sometimes when we had land wars, we still fought, but it gave us the ability to take slaves and save their lives because they were family.
25. Maikuku's strength as a strong wāhine are reflected in our hapū. The women of our hapū are considered very strong but humble. Most of us are very quiet, but when we need to war, we will. Those are the gifts that were given from our mana wāhine: to instil in us that confidence and knowledge that we can do anything that benefits the hapū. This is one example of the power of that mana wāhine's relationship with our Rangatira.

#### *Āhuaiti*

26. In our whakapapa, Āhuaiti was a mana wāhine who, through her union with Rāhiri, created our hapū, Ngāti Rāhiri. The kōrero goes that Rāhiri, came to Āhuaiti's beautiful fertile land and they bore a child together. Their relationship did not last. To different hapū, there are different variations of that story. The story I know is that is Āhuaiti had mentioned that her brothers were coming to visit while Rāhiri was away. Rāhiri told her not to give them the good kumara because her brothers seeing the prime kumara might want the fertile lands for themselves. When Rāhiri returned, he was upset that Āhuaiti fed her brothers the good kumara, so he left her. Āhuaiti still allowed her son to have those teachings about who his father was. That was her mana she instilled into her child. Although Rāhiri is our linkage to who we are, the relationships he formed with these high standing women kept peace in the future. Ngāti Kawa and Ngāti Rāhiri had formed a strategic relationship between Hokianga and Pēwhairangi. The following whakataukī depicts that if ever we needed each other, we could call on those relations:

Ka mimiti te puna i Taumārere

Ka totō te puna i Hokianga

Ka totō te puna i Taumārere

Ka mimiti te puna i Hokianga

*When the spring at Taumārere dries up,*

*The spring at Hokianga flows.*

*And when the spring at Taumārere is full,*

*The spring at Hokianga dries up.*

### *Hēni Ngārino*

27. Hēni Ngārino was a Waikato princess who formed a union with Maihi Kawiti in the North. The mana of her relationship was significant. That union between the Tainui Waikato and Ngāti Hine cemented a strong bond between us when it came to supporting each other's iwi.

### **Companionship**

28. There was no stigma around having many husbands prior to colonisation. Women were not bound to a man, and as a mana wāhine, you could walk away and form a union, or form a new union if your man died. The only time you could not be with another man was if you were pregnant and mana wāhine would support these actions. If your man died and you were pregnant, you could not touch another man until you had given birth because you had to keep the seed clean.
29. If a mana wāhine had no partner, everyone would race for that wāhine to ensure they were safe and protected. That is why we have a relationship with Maikuku, Āhuaiti, and Hēningārino. Despite this, my understanding is that it was uncommon to hear about wāhine with several marriages at a time. Men seemed to be allowed to have many wives at a time but that was also about increasing the hapū. When you are older, it is more about companionship.

## Teaching

30. Mana wāhine were in charge of teaching children etiquette, behaviours, and ritual. They would oversee that kaiako taught the correct etiquette. Those would usually concern things like body tapū and things to keep that hapū safe, like personal hygiene. Mana wāhine were the ones who sat in the marae or at events and they graciously fed the tamariki the knowledge that they needed. Mana wāhine was understanding of not just her community but her whanaunga. They understood how important it was to teach our ways. Teaching children to do things is part of kōhanga which directly influences on every aspect of village life. Tohunga, mana wāhine, and the whaea of the community would have worked together within that kaupapa: the idiom is apt that it takes a village to raise a child.
31. Mana wāhine had the ability to utilise tone to calm children. When it came to kōhanga, ritual, incantations, and chants; we were all about the karakia. We know that tone has a lot to do with our environment, our wellbeing, and our āhua. We understood that when you talk to your tamariki, you go down to their level. We understood that different ages had different aspects. We allow our children to be outspoken until their confidence is built, and they are in the right direction. As they get older, children need to be given direction, so they understand their place in the village and how integral it was to work together.
32. At around about the age of 7, you would have to go see the tohunga. The tohunga could be male or female. The tohunga would take the children aside and find their strengths, where they were driven, and what they were directed to. The tohunga would choose from signs given who the child was going to be and who their lead atua would be. They would sit with the children and watch the children as they would play. It would always start with play; it was never work. When someone is truly happy, they will excel at what they are doing. The wāhine would be there, tending to the children, but the tohunga would watch them. If a tamariki would go and play in the water, they would see “oh you’re a water person.” They would see the children that would go and pick out the worms and play with the worms so they would know “you’re the cultivators.” They would see the children who want to have

a fight all the time and know “you're the warrior.” That is how they would see things. Children were then put into specific realms. Wāhine who were noted as a ‘special girl’ probably would have been called puhi. These girls would have shown qualities of caring, empathy, understanding, knowledge, and humbleness.

33. Mana wāhine also had observational skills. They were able to explain to our tamariki what was wrong with them. The mana wāhine would go “Well look at him. Who is his atua? That is who he is and let’s make it work.” That is why sometimes in their families, they would select specific whānau or specific children or mokopuna to do something. For example, my Nana picked me out to do certain things because of my empathy, passion, and tenacity. With the guidance of a mana wāhine, we were kept on a straight path. Those are things we have missed out on since the degradation of mana wāhine.
34. Mana wāhine were led, not just by our head but by our hearts as well. Versed with karakia, blessings, rituals, and song, mana wāhine knew how important they were. They were responsible for the manaakitanga, keeping stories alive, keeping the fires burning, and keeping their people safe. A strong mana wāhine keeps the families together. They had political standing in their hapū. Mana wāhine would hold and pass on the knowledge of who we were and our whanaunga, so we didn’t kill each other. It was their job to keep us up on a pedestal so we did not slip, and if we did slip, people around us would help the mana wāhine to help pick us up.
35. For me, I realised mana wāhine had a huge responsibility to learn everything they needed to protect the hapū and would act on it to ensure their hapū was provided for. That is why it was always “look after your wāhine” and “listen to your mana wāhine”. People back then knew that without the knowledge, empathy, kōrero, and understanding of their mana wāhine, they could lose everything. If it was not whenua, it would be stories lost. If it is not that, it is bloodlines lost.

## Strength

36. Many women could be special but only certain women were recognised as mana wāhine. Mana wāhine had the ability to be women of leadership, kindness, and strength. Wāhine fought too: we were very avid fighters. It needs to be acknowledged that a lot of our wāhine went to war and were amazing commanders. They were not just wrapping maemae or feeding people; they were successful strategic initiators. This showed that wāhine had the ability to be adaptable wherever they went. Mana wāhine also protected their people and had the ability to summon great physical strength as shown in the stories of Te Ao-kapurangi and Wairaka.

### *Te Ao-kapurangi*

37. Te Ao-kapurangi was a Ngāpuhi mana wāhine. Te Ao-kapurangi knew of an impending attack on Mokoia Island which would affect many of her loved ones. She came to our Ngāpuhi rangatira and our tohunga and she begged them, “please, please, please spare these people”. They told her to go back to her island and gather the ones she loved. They told her to go sit on top of her wharenuī with her legs splayed over the opening. If those people wanted to live, they would noa themselves by passing under her legs which put a protection of wāhine on them. They did this by showing their submission to our Ngāpuhi wāhine. All the people who went under her and into the body spent the night listening to their brethren around them being killed and slaughtered because they did not want to adhere. That is what happens when you bow down to mana wāhine: you get privilege. Their privilege was that they were allowed to live. When I say mana wāhine was the difference between living and dying, ae, kia ora, it is.

### *Wairaka*

38. Wairaka was from the Mātaatua waka. The captain of that waka was Toroa, and his brother was Puhi of Ngāpuhi. The kōrero goes that they arrived in Whakatane, but they did not tie off the waka properly. The men left Wairaka and the women with the waka because they were going into the interior. The waka started drifting out. Wairaka performed karakia and asked “make me

a man". She pulled the waka back to safety. It was an incredible feat of strength for her to have done that. For a man to do that would have been almost impossible. She was not man; she was mana wāhine.

## **Whāngai**

39. Whāngai was a big thing prior to colonisation. There were always issues of parents dying, or children orphaned, and hapū were something that you did not want to get smaller. Whāngai was a good way of keeping those children within their family hapū. When we have big families, caring for children is not a big burden because everyone works together. Whāngai was a very easy form of adoption in those day because we were not about pen and paper.
40. Whāngai was also sometimes a form of muru. We have a thing called muru, which is reparation. We also have a thing called utu, which is revenge during times of war. Muru could be anything: it could be land, it could be marrying a mana wāhine, and sometimes it was a child. Other times, mana wāhine would take on whāngai for those strategic bonds.

## **Justice**

41. We were once warriors and, in those days, taking a life for the right reason cause was honourable. However, when we took lives in battle back in the day, we took responsibility of those families. We sometimes took slaves. Sometimes these slaves became hapū members.
42. The abuse of wāhine was rare. It did not happen to the extent it does nowadays. Men had a job, and their job was to protect, feed, and procreate. Wāhine's job was to be protective, procreate, and create the hapū. Only a woman can do that, so we were sacred. Not all of us were mana wāhine but we all were sacred. Abuse did happen but it was a tribal thing. If there were abuses, they were dealt with straight way because it was something that the hapū did not want to get out of hand. The elders would step in and mana wāhine would be part of those decision makers. By the time women were

involved, you were in big trouble. Men would try with guidance and direction. If it kept happening, you got more guidance and direction. If a problem was repeated in a hapū, that was an instant indication that something is wrong. If something happens once, that is ignorance. If it happens over and over again, that is arrogance.

43. Sometimes the whole hapū would reprimand you and, if you did something really bad, then they would turn their back on you. You were out of sight and that is how it would stay. Kore take (of no issue) is the modern term for it. We had justice. I am not talking modern day justice. I am talking real justice. We were also allowed to leave our men. I know that in some cases, wāhine were allowed to go home to their own families.

### **Birth**

44. Because wāhine were the growers of the hapū, we were looked after extra specially. There is kaupapa around childbirth, pregnancy, working in the field, and even the raising of your voice. You do not yell at the wāhine because it is attacking the spirit and an attacked spirit may bear a broken child. Once you were in the hapū way; you were everyone's wife. You were still allowed to work, but as soon as you showed any kind of stress or mamae, people would come to your aid. Even in giving birth, the karakia chants and tones are soothing to make sure the child had a good chance. With my children, giving birth was beautiful but only if you love pain. For my first four children, I did natural birth with no drugs because I did not want to pollute my and my babies' bodies and that was my own choice. By the time I had my fifth child, I had learned the tones. Even if I did not know karakia, I used those tones and had a pain free birth. If I'd had a mana wāhine with me, I would have known that from the start. I probably would have ended up with ten children and not just six. That is what the mana wāhine was about. She was there when the baby comes out and she would tie the pito with the flax because flax gel is healing. The child would have karakia said connecting them to their whakapapa, thanking the universe, and blessing them into their future with lots of love. That was all done by mana wāhine.



## Balance

45. To me, mana wāhine is balance personified. A person can be mana wāhine by birth right or through the qualities they display. Mana wāhine is honour, etiquette, humble, love, direction, and strength. Mana wāhine knew pain too and they would feel their family's pain when things were not right. It would have been hard keeping your family in line. All that love came with strength and discipline. If your kuia gave you direction you would follow that through because of the standing she had. Mana wāhine took on the burden of their hapū's pain alongside that love.
46. The individual cannot be a working cog without balance. If everyone understands our female and male qualities, then everything works together. When you get someone who does not understand, then that is a backwards cog, and the machinery stops working. For example, tū is strength, kaha or fight. I also describe it as arrogance. If you always go into everything with tū, everything is going to be a fight. If you are whakamā, which is shy, you will never speak up and you will never stand your ground. You are the opposite of the tū, and you will not get anywhere. If you are too cheeky, then people will never take you seriously. If you are too serious, then people will not listen to you because they will think you are a drag.
47. To me these are the different qualities that would be associated with an atua. For example, shyness is associated with the atua Rūaumoko: the unborn atua that is under the ground and never wanted to come out because he wanted to hide in his mummy and be there and be loved and be cared for. Mana Wāhine is all about balance, whether it is anger, love, hate, or pain. Without balance, it is not going to work. If there is only one side of the waka rowing, you are going to go in circles and repeat problems.

48. I believe in balance, a holistic lifestyle, and sustainability. I believe mana wāhine held that in their own way. Everything a mana wāhine does is to preserve the connection and balance between our hinengaro (mind), our wairua (spirit), our tinana (bodies) and whakapapa. These are the qualities that our precolonial mana wāhine possessed and led us with.

**DATED** this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of **July 2022**



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**Esmé Sherwin**