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NOTES ON A MODEL CANOE FROM MANGAIA, COOK GROUP

by
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[By A. HAMILTON.]

At the New Zealand International Exhibition held at Christchurch in the latter part of 1906 and the beginning of 1907, a number of Natives came over from the Cook Islands, bringing with them materials for the construction of houses and various articles. Amongst the exhibits made in the Islands and brought over for exhibition was a model of an ancient sea-going canoe formerly used by the inhabitants of Mangaia, one of the southernmost of the group of islands belonging to the Dominion of New Zealand, called the Hervey or Cook Islands.

I was much interested in the model, as it contained some special points of interest that were quite new to me. I was able to acquire the model for the Dominion Museum: and the following account of its making and the detailed description of the parts was obtained from the chief Tangitoru, by the kind assistance of Mr. H. Bishop, S.M., who was in charge of the Natives from the Cook Islands. Mr. J. T. Large, the Resident Commissioner of Mangaia, has kindly revised my notes, and gone over them with the makers of the model, and the statements made may therefore be relied upon as accurate. The name of the canoe is "A'ua'u," this being the ancient name of Mangaia. The name A'ua'u is the same as the Maori name for the Great Mercury Island in New Zealand, Ahuahu; but, there being no aspirate in the dialect of the Cook Islands, it is generally written the way given above. The "w" of the Maori is also "v" in the Islands.

The men who owned the canoe were Tangitoru, Ata, Atatama, and Autemate, all belonging to the Island of Mangaia. The *miro* wood for the hull was furnished by Autemate, and Terepo assisted him in roughly adzing it into shape. Tangitoru and Terepo then finished it off, made and carved all the separate parts, and painted the ornamentations, the patterns being taken by Tangitoru from ancestral marks tattooed on his own person.

The model is $14\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in extreme length, width 12 in., depth 18 in. It represents a canoe about 5 *maro*, or 30 ft., in length. The topsides are made of *puka*, a wood that lasts a long time if kept dry. The topsides are called *oaa*. The seats or cross-pieces are called *no'oanga*. When a piece of wood cannot be procured of sufficient length for a canoe, two or more pieces are joined: this join is called *poinga*, the foremost part of the hull being *aumi* (Maori *haumi*), the aftermost part *mirivaka*. If, however, it is found necessary to make the hull of more than two pieces, the part between any two joinings is called *e moe*. A small canoe dug out of one piece of wood only is called *e vaka tavatai*, but if composed of two or more pieces is called *e vaka poinga*.

The outrigger (*ama*) is connected with the hull by two cross-pieces (*kiato*, or *tito*: this last name is an old form not now in use). These *kiato* cross the hull, and in large canoes may project several feet on the opposite side. The left side of the canoe next the outrigger is called *oaa i ama*; the right side of the canoe is *oaa i katea*.

The flat piece of wood covering the bow and forming a figure-head is the *poki*. The point of the *poki*, just over the cutwater, is called *iu a'riari*. Returning inwards along the *poki* there is a crescent-shaped piece of wood called the *ua'riri* (the red star in the zenith). Mr. Large suggests that this may be Mercury. Close by this crescent is a star-shaped piece called *Maurua*. Between the *ua'riri* and the *Maurua* is a connecting-piece called the *va'i karakia* (the place of divination). In the centre of the star is a hole, and into this hole fits a stylet of wood about 15 in. long, connected with a cord which also passes through the hole, and is prevented from coming out altogether by a knot on the lower side of the *poki*. The stylet is called *te ui*. The canoe is steered by keeping it in line with *te ui* and some object at a distance. Half-way along the outrigger side of the canoe is a projecting ledge (in the model this portion is about 9 in. long by 4 in. in width); through this are bored seven holes large enough to receive the *ui* or stylet. The names of these holes are Te Raiti (east), Ngaau (south-east), Apatonga (south), Rakiroa (south-west), Opunga (west), Akama (north-west), and Apatokerau (north). When the sky was overcast or the heavenly bodies were obscured, by placing the *ui* in the proper hole, the direction of the cord from the star to the hole would enable the canoe to be kept on her course in the required direction. All canoes in the seas of that part were said to have been provided with this apparatus. This appears to be a very interesting and important fact as an addition to the sailing-charts and other devices for sailing the southern seas.

At the stern is a lofty carved sternpost called *repe* (Maori, *rapa*), the top of which is barbed in a peculiar fashion called *tara auini*. From the loops or holes in the sternpost hung loops of rope. From these short loops stout ropes could be fastened to the foremost outrigger (*kiato auini*) on both sides. These were used in rough weather as life-lines. The lower life-line on the right side is called *e wa*, that on the opposite side, *e iviroa*; the middle life-line on both sides *maoraora*, the uppermost lines *vaatiia*. There is a *pe*, or song, to the effect that the good captain prepares his life-lines when he sees bad weather approaching.

As with the Maori, the sail was *ra*. It was made either from the leaf of the pandanus (*rauara*) or from *pakoko*, a native cloth made from the bark of the *aoa* and *anga*.

Tata, as in New Zealand, is the name of the canoe-baler; the paddle 'oe, the steering-paddle *oe tu oe*. *Tira* is the mast, and *riu* the hold or the inside of the canoe, as in New Zealand.

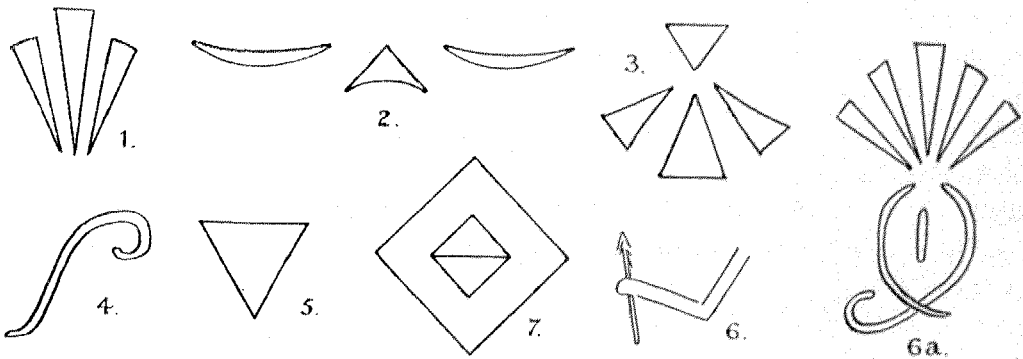
The details of the carvings and painted decorations are interesting, especially as it is generally so difficult to obtain the explanation and meaning of the separate marks.

(1.) The first is a combination of three wedge-shaped marks. These three represent the ancient tribes Akatauirā, Vairuarangi, and Pāpaarangi. Occasionally a fourth wedge was added, which signified the Tongaiti, a tribe of later date, which arrived from Tonga.

(2) is a form of tattooing anciently used, called *paoro*.

(3.) Ancestral tattooing called *tavakerake*. This is a copy of the pattern on the breast of Tangitoru. It is supposed to enable the bearer to increase and multiply.

(4) represents an empty marine shell called "*ariri*." When the animal dies or when the animal is eaten and the shell is lying empty on the beach, it is then entered and appropriated by a species of land-crab called "*unga*." This crab burrows



5286:

underground, and comes to the surface in the month of May. This shell was carried round as a symbol when war was inevitable, and when this was seen the women and children hid in caves, which were called their *ariri*, or places of refuge.

(5.) *Nio mango*—the shark's-tooth mark.

(6.) This sign is called *ma'ora*. It is bound to the forehead, and its signification was very similar to that of No. 4, being a call to arms, a kind of fiery cross, and at the same time a notice for non-combatants to get out of the way.

(7.) This is called *ia*, and is carved on a piece of wood, and carried round the country bound to the forehead of the bearer as the symbol of peace or peacemaking. The bearer also carried a "peace axe" (*maia*) in the belt (*tatua*). The drum of peace was only sounded after a human sacrifice had been made, and until this was heard it was not safe for the fugitives to come forth from their hiding-places.

It appears that every living thing except fish is called *manu*, and this led me to imagine at first that Tangitoru when describing No. 4 meant that a bird occupied the dead shells. A bird would be *manu rere*.

No. 3 differs from that given by Tangitoru to Dr. Buck on page 96.