

BEFORE THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 2700

WAI 2872

IN THE MATTER OF

the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa  
Inquiry

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

a claim by **Dr Leonie Pihama,**  
**Angeline Greensill, Mereana**  
**Pitman, Hilda Halkyard-**  
**Harawira and Te Ringahuia**  
**Hata** (Wai 2872)

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OPENING PRESENTATION OF TE RINGAHUIA HATA FOR WAI 2872

Dated this 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2021

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Waitangi Tribunal

**2 Feb 2021**

Ministry of Justice  
WELLINGTON

## **MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL**

1. My name is Te Ringahuia Hata and I am a direct descendant of Muriwai, sister of Toroa of the Mataatua waka. I am of Te Whakatōhea descent through my parents, and Te Whānau a Apanui, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāi Tūhoe through my grandparents.
2. I have been given the honour to introduce the key speakers of our claim at this hearing. My own evidence will be given at Ngāruawāhia when my peoples of Te Whakatōhea give their testimony. The claim we represent has been filed by a group of women who have long provided the intellectual force for the struggles of the Māori Women's movement.
3. We will hear today from three of those women whose untiring efforts since the 1970's until the present day turned academia on its head; forged key initiatives like Rape Crisis and Women's Refuge in our communities as ways to provide safety for women suffering from sexual violence and the battery of oppression many Māori women were born into. They are leaders in the revival of knowledge bases consistent with Tikanga Māori that have formed the basis of a 40-year process of decolonisation of the practices of State hegemony that denies and invisibilises the power and dignity of women.
4. It would take a lifetime to recognise all they do. Ani Mikaere will commence our session. Dr Leonie Pihama will follow with her presentation, with Mereana Pittman concluding our presentations today.

## **TE AO MĀORI**

5. Tangata whenua of Aotearoa have had an intimate and enduring association with, and connection to our whenua, our moana, our waters and all animate and imamate objects between the sky and the sea since time immemorial. Our whakapapa to Te Ao Māori world can never be severed by dint of Crown policies, however the rights to govern, manage and own what we have always been a part of – can be disrupted for a moment in time.

6. Our association with Te Ao Māori is both physical and spiritual and sustains our way of life, our culture, our political and economic identity. It ensures our survival as distinct peoples, our fundamental interrelationships with the earth, the sky, the wind, the rain, and our links to our past and to our future. As wahine Māori it is our duty to protect, nurture and find peace all these elements left in our care, because we are the whenua and the whenua is us. We can't escape our destinies that we are born into.
7. Māori women in the claim we present are survivors of every strategy of disconnection and denial that has confronted us in Te Ao Pākeha and sadly in those places in Te Ao Māori that have followed those philosophies of erasure and denial. We stand as survivors; as nurturers; as repositories of knowledge; as sisters in the struggle to challenge the imbalance and to seek rectification for these entrenched abuses of our status and of those of our grandmothers our mothers our daughters and our grand-daughters.

## **PAPATŪĀNUKU**

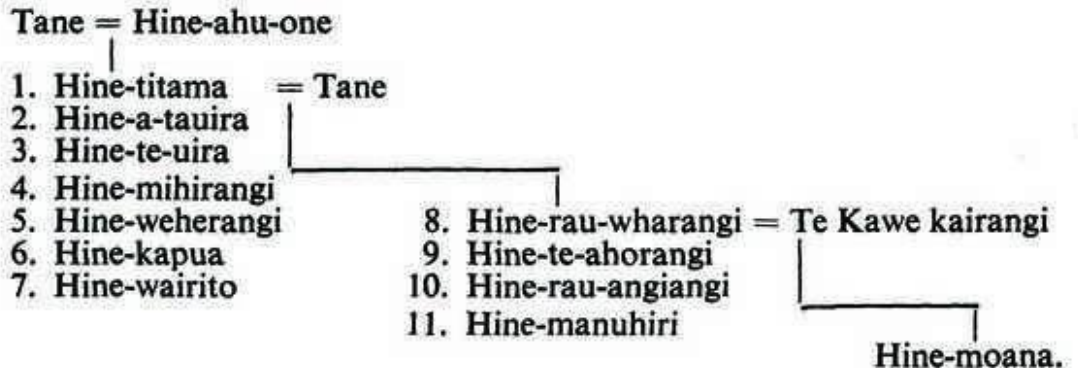
8. In the Māori world view, land gives birth to all things, including humankind, and provides the physical and spiritual basis for life. Papatūānuku, the land, is a powerful mother earth figure who gives many blessings to her children.<sup>1</sup> She is a mother earth figure who gives birth to all things, including people. Trees, birds and people are born from the land, which then nourishes them.
9. Through the retelling of the connection to Papatūānuku by the many witnesses the listener was able to discern, that such relationship manifests itself in ways that contribute to the unique intricacies that differentiate the peoples of Aotearoa. Such nuances supplement the distinctive identities of the Māori peoples and underlie the uniqueness of the peoples of Aotearoa. Such distinctiveness is deserving of being treasured just like the many varied species of birds that together bring harmony to the domains of Te Waonui-a-Tāne and Hinewao, the spiritual guardians of the forests. Such independence is fundamental to the wellbeing of all peoples.

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<sup>1</sup> Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 'Papatūānuku – the land', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land>.

## TE IRA WAHINE

10. According to Māori historical narratives, Hine Ahu One (earth-formed woman) was the first mortal woman. She was moulded by Tane, from different elements and parts of his mother Papatūānuku with help from his brothers. Red ochre clay and soil taken from the sacred lands of Kurawaka.
11. As Tane breathed life into her physically and spiritually chanting '*Tihei Mauri Ora*' – a common term used to open a whaikōrero in acknowledgement of the first breath that created humankind.
12. Tānenuiarangi is the eldest son of Ranginui and Papatūānuku. Tane (Atua Tane) and Hine Ahu One (Ira Wahine) had seven daughters, the eldest being Hine Titama. Tane then has four more daughters to Hine Titama, until she discovers the real identity of her father who fathers her own children, and she descends to Rarohenga to take the mantle as Hine Nui Te Po.



## WHARE TANGATA

13. All wahine Māori are honoured and acknowledged as *te whare tangata* (the house of humanity) and the ability to create life. The concept of kaitiakitanga is imbued within that responsibility that permeates throughout all forms of life, survival, protection, and guardianship and therefore treated with the same respect as Papatūānuku. You will often hear indigenous land protectors and activists say “You desecrate and disrespect mother earth, you disrespect all women”. After childbirth, it has always been

common practice to bury the whenua (placenta) and pito (umbilical cord) back into the earth at a significant place for the mother. Birthing practices in significant places on the land or in the waters were also common practice. Whenua ki te whenua.

14. Women are associated with the land, because the land gives birth to people, and so do women. The mana, or spiritual power and strength, of wahine Māori is such that they are highly respected and revered and have strong influence over land and men, hence the saying,

*“He wahine he whenua ngaro ai te tangata”*

*Through women and land, men will perish*

## **WHAKAPAPA O TĀWHAKI**

### **Te Tau o Mataatua**

*Ko wai rā! Ko wai rā te tangata tūtū taua!*

*Kāore koa ko Hau,*

*ko Nuiho,*

*ko Nuake,*

*ko Manu,*

*ko Weka,*

*ko Toroa,*

*ko Ruaihona,*

*ko Te Tahi o te Rā.*

*Tēnei te maro ka hurua huruhuru nui nō Manu, nō Weka.*

*Ka tū tapori atu, ka tū tapori mai.*

*Wero noa, wero noa ngā rākau whakaiaia nā ngā tīpuna i tīkina mai i rāwāhi hai*

*hōmai mō taku waka mō Waimihia,*

*te mata o ngā rākau a Tūkariri,*

*te mata o ngā rākau a Tūkaniwha,*

*te mata o ngā rākau a Tūkaitaua*

*whāno, whāno haramai te toki, haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!*

15. According to the late Sir Monita Delamere the karakia above is the *Tau o Mātaatua*. Within the karakia it recites the whakapapa to Wekanui, the mother of Muriwai. This whakapapa traces its descent from Tāwhaki. According to Mātaatua traditions it was Tāwhaki that ascended the heavens and acquired the kete o te wānanga the kits of knowledge.
16. The whakapapa below<sup>2</sup> traces my ancestress Muriwai, and her whakapapa from Papatūānuku to Tamanuitera who married Mārama-taiahoaho and begat Uira who begat Whaitiri-matakakā. The historical narratives of Whaititiri, Kaitanga and Hema will be covered in more detail by my cousin Te Kahautu Maxwell at the next hearings. It is from this historical narrative that we learn how women took refuge during tumultuous and trying times in relationships – the origins of women’s refuge.



<sup>2</sup> The whakapapa of Muriwai from Papatuanuku (Te Kahautu Maxwell 2019).

Tautūrangi (Nukutere waka)  
 Ngatorohaka  
 Hitewhatu  
 Meremere  
 Te Whatui  
 Te Matete  
 Tunamu (Mataatua Waka)  
 Hanenepounamu = Haruataimoana MURIWAI ----- TOROA ----- PUHI  
**TŪTAMURE = HINE-I=KAUIA ----- |**  
 Manutaurehe  
 Rongoteake  
 Urekākā  
 Ruawharo  
 Kōpā-ā-Ruawharo  
 Ūpokohapa  
 Hōpukanga  
 Marutataka  
 Te Uru  
 Tamakauwhata  
 Te Puinga  
 Pākihi  
 Kawhata  
 Maawe  
**TE APOROTANGA(i haina i Te Tiriti o Waitangi)**  
 Mākawa  
 Te Riaki  
 Te Hata  
 Porena  
 Te Waiwhakaruku  
**TE RINGAHUIA HATA**

\*Whakapapa nā Te Riaki Amoamo

## WAHINE MĀORI

17. All wahine Māori can trace their ancestral roots back to tīpuna who either landed here on a waka, a deity or through cosmos. As wahine Māori, we see that there is an alternative view of land and sea to the Western one, so the linear concepts of time in the Western fashion are of no consequence to Te Ao Māori (the Māori World). There is an ebb and flow of continuance in Te Ao Māori which link tangata with the horizon, just as Tangaroa and Hinemoana move in perfect motion with each other. Through the romantic merging energies of Tangaroa and Hinemoana the people are able to hearken back in time and are also galvanized forward; they are not, however, split into that which has happened and will happen. Hence the ability of Māori to

remain grounded rests upon the holistic worldview which definitely underpins perceptions of *papamoana* (the ocean bed).

18. Her ubiquity is evident in her link with Hawaiiki. Hinemoana and Papamoana join Aotearoa with the ancestral homelands of her children in Hawaiki and therefore provides a continuation of energy pathways for the living and the dead. The point at which she meets with her spirit gods, Tangaroa and Hinemoana is not her commencement or her conclusion. It is part of a never-ending continuum of relationships that cement her, and their histories and herstories, to this part of the world with obligations for future generations that cannot be denied or severed. Our inter-relationships with the peoples of the Pacific therefore cannot be denied by a non-indigenous colonizing system.
19. Wahine Māori bore witness to traumas inflicted on them as a result of colonisation, dispossession, and paternalism. It forces us to focus on the relations, such as the relation between mother and child, mother, and partner and between people and land, which have been interfered with and devastated as a result of government policies and illegal acts of invasion and war.
20. For generations we have sung and danced to the rhythm of the liberating waiata of political resistance of our ancestors. We have cried and wept for the devastation that had been wrought by strangers to their shores who brought the promise of respect and coexistence in documents of peace like the Treaty of Waitangi, but who practiced a deceit that wreaked havoc on the most prized indigenous institutions of Māori, our whānau and our hapū, as the ruthless winds of change were imposed on our ways of life and values so they became marginalised and invisibilised on our own soil, and in our own nation.
21. The evidence submitted by my co-claimants in this Inquiry echo a predominant theme – that of the degradation of wahine Māori, both figuratively and metaphorically (although within a traditional Māori framework the distinction is perhaps a false one). Alongside the theft of women as trophies of the coloniser's wars, women also bore witness to the theft of Papatūānuku, our whenua. The vulnerability of women in the face of



daunting military might was immortalised in many of the waiata that were recalled from Tūhoe and Taranaki.

## **LOSS OF MANA AND KNOWLEDGE**

22. Through the maltreatment of wahine Māori and hence the whare tangata, (the sacred house of future generations, the womb) wahine Māori became vulnerable to the intentions of the foreign Crown to bring them under the yoke of their perceived authority. The insistence of aiming at the heart of a people to subjugate continued through the denigration of women which was most evident as the demise of women role models in leadership structures and then too, the knowledge that was held specifically by women became the consequence of processes of modernisation and the mirroring of colonisers behaviours.
23. The loss of not just the acknowledged mana of women but our inherited knowledge, held sombre consequences for successive generations following the arrival of Pākeha. Women were the keepers of esoteric and spiritual knowledge that would be shared orally so that it may be protected for generations unborn. These guides provided security for the survival of Māori as a distinct people.
24. The rejuvenating cyclic nature of the links between Papatūānuku, and her children were disrupted, and the people likewise were unable to cloak themselves in the weave of their connection with their tīpuna (ancestors) and their atua (spiritual guardians). Knowledge was lost, and/or worse, rewritten and retold through a colonised lens underpinned by Christian ideologies. Our Māori histories became transmitted through western lenses and paradigms – that then became Māori mythology and history.
25. Like Ali Baba and the forty thieves, the Crown and their instruments of darkness stealthily infiltrated the lands and the minds of the tangata whenua, the Māori those living in traditional territories or by forces processes of urban migration living in communities far from their ahi kaa and their ukaipō. Population policies and the swamping of territories controlled by hapū and whānau by those that labelled the status of Māori women as second

class and their beliefs as alien to Western paradigms added to the trauma of disconnection to whakapapa that those practices wrought. Whānau and hapū were disillusioned by the acts of iniquity committed against their offerings of trust and kindness and became seduced by the deliberate cooption of Māori male leadership into the colonial wars of the Pākehā invaders. Even when the Crown acknowledged its own wrongdoing, it failed to conceive that the real fault was its own assumed superiority. And as a thief who considers himself able to bargain with the victims, land was returned to some people, but it was not returned to everybody. The whisper of shiny baubles and other fantastic treasures still await whānau hapū and iwi in the modern context with compensation in lieu of their lands and their taonga being dangled to seduce and erase Māori women's roles and presence in these processes. We were told as the new policies of Settlements and Fiscal Envelopes were announced that we had to move from the paradigm of grievance into development but in a development paradigm controlled by a new patriarchy whose leadership in the main was Crown conferred and then recognised. However, the promise of true wealth and wellbeing was false. For the 'rootless', one's poverty persists defiantly, while real wealth accrues to the Crown and those that it acts as a servant for. As ashes in the mouths of the people, Crown policy drives the shovel deeper into the roots of the sacred lands; people have died in numbers disproportionate to the new arrivals and others become indigent.

## **CONCLUSION**

26. The witness's testimony which commences at these hearings are poignant reminders of the misdeeds and crimes that the Crown and its practices have committed on Māori women their daughters and their granddaughters. Māori Women have, we are reminded through their testimony to set the framework of the weeks of testimony that will follow:
  - a) Been dispossessed and displaced from their ancestral lands and denied their customary interests in lands; resources; waahi tapu (sacred places) and other taonga tuku iho (precious inherited possessions animate and inanimate);

- b) Suffered the destruction or erosion of their economic base, social patterns and traditional leadership structures;
- c) Been prevented from or hampered in the proper utilization and development of their remaining interests in land and resources;
- d) Been prevented from and hampered in the exercise of tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty);
- e) Suffered the loss of life;
- f) Suffered the loss of freedom;
- g) Suffered the erosion of their right of self-determination and the exercise of the prerogatives flowing from that right to ensure the wellbeing of their whānau (family) and hapū (community) and other esteemed institutions and possessions;
- h) Suffered from unemployment and other adverse social consequences relating to their spiritual well being; health; welfare and education;
- i) Suffered a consequent loss of mana;
- j) Suffered forced migration which saw their peoples dislocated to urban centers with the consequential emotional trauma resulting from removal from customary lands, kainga tūturu, resources, and waahi tapu
- k) Been denied their tribal knowledge base;
- l) Suffered the shame of being landless;
- m) Suffered the shame of being forgotten by generations of young people who live as Māori without identity and who suffer the consequences of spiritual dislocation from their turangawaewae. (intimate connection to stand on their mother)

27. Creating a genuinely post-colonial society is not simply a struggle to be waged by tangata whenua alone. It is also the responsibility for others of us

who call this country Aotearoa ‘home’. Our herstories recounted as part of these proceedings are a tribute to the Māori women leaders in resistance who continue to weave threads of hope and light in the depth of the night. People like Dame Whina Cooper, Dame Mira Szaszy, Tuaiwa Eva Rickard, Mereana Pittman, Nganeko Minhinnick and many more. Those who have hope and commitment and who suffer threats but who obstinately persevere with their task, at great danger to themselves.

28. Those who are the freedom fighters of their lands and their peoples and too often the martyrs of protracted struggle. Those who have persisted to weave magic in the hearts of the generations to follow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Te Ringahuia Hata', written over a horizontal line.

Te Ringahuia Hata