

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL
THE MANA WAHINE KAUPAPA INQUIRY

WAI 2700
WAI 120

IN THE MATTER OF

the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry

AND

a claim by the late Te Raumoa Balneavis Kawiti, Rhonda Aorangi Kawiti and Michelle Jessop on behalf of the Kawiti Marae Committee, the Kawiti whānau, and descendants of Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Manu, Te Kapotai, Ngāti Rahiri, Ngāti Rangi, Ngaitewake and Ngāpuhi iwi

Brief of Evidence of Aorangi Kawiti

Dated 30 June 2021

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Waitangi Tribunal

30 Jun 2021

Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL**Introduction**

1. My name is **RHONDA AORANGI KAWITI** (Aorangi).
2. This evidence is given on behalf of the late Te Raumoa Balneavis Kawiti and myself Rhonda Aorangi Kawiti, my tamariki mokopuna, the Kawiti Whānau, Kawiti Marae Committee, and descendants of Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Manu, Te Kapotai, Ngāti Rāhiri, Ngāti Rangī, Ngaitewake, Ngāpuhi and Te Waiariki, Ngāti Korora and Ngāti Takapari, Ngātiwai Tūwharetoa nga hapū iwi. Ko enei hononga ki te taha o toku papa. I te taha o toku mama, ko Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, Ngāti Porou, Te Whakatōhea, Ngāi Tūhoe nga hapū iwi.
3. I have given evidence along with late my uncle Te Raumoa Kawiti in the Wai 1040 Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry. That evidence focused on the waterway usage in our rohe, the Ruapekapeka war and the loss of tikanga. It is premised on the findings of Stage One Report of Te Paparahi o Te Raki, namely that Ngāpuhi did not cede sovereignty.
4. I have also given evidence in the Wai 2660 Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act Inquiry. That evidence focussed on our continued rangatiratanga, as premised on Tikanga Māori beliefs and the findings of the Stage One Report of Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry. It discussed the continued customary waterway usage - mana moana, mana whenua, mana tangata mai ra ano, ki tenei wa I roto I nga rohe katoa to matou, mai te maunga, ki te puna, ki te awa, me te roto, tae atu ki te puaha o te awa ki te moana, te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, me nga moana katoa to matou; the wars between the Kawanatanga and Ariki Rangatira such as our tupuna Kawiti and our many allies. These alliances / hononga tapu stretch across all our rohe of Aotearoa, have no physical boundaries such as fences / lines on a map - rather they exist through intergenerational lines of whakapapa, tatai, pu rakau, relationships of whanaungatanga, tomo, tonu, tuku, papapounamu / sacred agreements, poropiti / prophecies, waiata, haka, wero, karanga, whakatauki, whakatauaki, kiiwaha, cultural proverbs, quotes and sayings passed down through time immemorial, enacted during ceremonial, welcoming as well as protective powhiri and practical exercises and events involving the processes of tapu and noa.
5. My evidence in this inquiry will focus on issues from the Te Arataki document but will also include content from each inquiry our claim is involved with, as in line with tikanga tuku iho

- there are no definitive boundaries separating our people, our taiao, our knowledge - our world/ Te Ao Māori. Definitions are by nature Māori and Māori = “normal, usual, ordinary”, “freely, or without restraint or ceremony”. Thus, ka haere Māori was to go unrestrained and freely.¹

6. I am very comfortable, keen, and excited to present my evidence to this and any other inquiry regarding our collective and personal rangatiratanga anywhere in Aotearoa as my origins and identity are inextricably linked to all parts of our world- Te Ao Māori nei.

Background

7. I was born 4th November 1962 in Blenheim, Te Wai Pounamu. My parents and I lived there until I was approximately 4 years old. I am the mataamua / first born, eldest of now seven siblings. Two more brothers, Craig and Kenneth were born there. Our father was in the New Zealand Air Force, serving as ground crew. We lived in Renwick, where it flooded periodically throughout the town. I recall wading through the flooded streets in our gumboots with our dad holding our hands, which we considered fun and continue to have no fear of flood waters, rather a healthy respect and careful consideration of all the elements of Tangaroa we are well familiar with.
8. As the eldest daughter I saw no different treatment of me and my brothers, of whom there are four. Both my mum and dad gave us equal opportunities for fun and responsible roles. As the eldest I did get to try things out first and as a consequence became brave and adventurous and quick to jump into any situation requiring work, protection, safety and care of my whānau and our world. High alert was a natural result of high need for protection of our whānau.
9. As uri of Kawiti, this was our normal. We were born to high expectations, high achievements, and high workload. We relish the busyness of high-level thinking and activity. Te kauae runga is our normal realm of activity - creativity, innovation, and quick strategizing our everyday modus operandi. Multiple languages, skills and thought processes readily developed in each of us as required. Te kauae raro is a realm of physical and more common activities we participate in as a way of focussed release of high energy, feeding the taha tinana, taha wairua and taha hinengaro of our whānau. These activities and realms

¹ Hohepa, P and Williams, D.V The Taking into Account of Te Ao Māori in Relation to Reform of the Law of Succession, Reprinted Wellington February 1996

are seamless and mainly invisible, but none the less powerful, imbuing mana into everything we do.

10. This continues to this day, with a toughness of character, personality, skills base, and prowess developed over time and hardships experienced throughout our lives, in our own reanga and respectively with each generation.
11. Each generation of wahine replants their whenua in their whenua - “Whakatongia te kakano: Ko wai au? Mirimiringia e te aroha...Whakatupua te ngakau Māori i roto i nga taonga tuku iho o nga matua tupuna me te wairua tapu... Tihewa Mauri Ora!!!”
12. This tikanga occurs where and when wahine know about it and are able to carry it out and know where to go to plant their whenua.
13. The tikanga of tapu and noa associated with the balance between tane and wahine, mana tane and mana wahine which nurture and maintain the safety and security of the Whare Tapu o Ngāpuhi, the house of my existence since I was 7 years old, when we moved north to my father’s home in Waiomio in 1969, from my mother’s rohe in Waimana of Ngāi Tūhoe

Te Arataki

14. I have read the questions to be addressed in these tūāpapa hearings as set out in the *Te Arataki* document. I appreciate the general direction these questions are taking, but in my view the questions are very formal and not conducive to creativity and creative / living thinking in terms of tikanga and Te Ao Māori. I will endeavour to answer as best I can and potentially change the framework to a Māori paradigm. For this reason, I will not repeat the questions set out in the document here.
15. This korero is from my experience, observations and learning in my lifetime, which I have been privileged to learn from wahine toa like my mother, grandmothers and tupuna wahine and tane who have gifted me with their korero and actions as a talisman, guidance and protection in my life.
16. Atua wahine:

- a) Papatuanuku: Earth- Mother, foundation, creator and recreator of life and life-giving forces, platform for kai and rongoa seeds to grow in, nutrients to grow and return to their prior state as part of Papatuanuku; place for turangawaewae tapu, wahi tapu, whare tupuna, tupuna, tamariki, mokopuna to stand and live; connection/ hononga whakapapa.
- b) Hineahuone: first woman created by Tane-nui-a-Rangi and Io on the beach at Kurawaka, embodying the shaping of mankind, earth formed, our live earth connection.
- c) Hinetitama: Dawn, the beginning of human life form, continued connection to matua, tupuna and whenua, bound night to day - became Hinenuite po.
- d) Hinenuitepo: the guardian of life and kaitiaki at end of life, guide of our returning place ki te kopu o te whenua, our safe place to belong and identify.
17. Te ira wahine, ira tane, ira tangata: the best way for me to express this is in a waiata I wrote recently to celebrate a graduation of 30 wahine in “Poupou Karanga” with Te Wananga o Raukawa:

WAIATA: Karanga Mai Ra

Karanga mai ra- te mana o te wahine

Tu mai ra- te mana o te tane

Hono mai ra ki te whare tangata e...aueee

Karanga mai ra, Karanga mai ra, Karanga mai ra e...

Ka puta ki, ki te Wheiao

Ka puta ki, ki Te Ao Marama

Ka puta ki, ki te ira tangata e...aueee

Karanga mai, Karanga mai, Karanga mai ra eeee...²

18. Tane: embody tapu, tapu roles, protection, karakia, korero and mahi tapu such as construction, carving and warfare as required. There is much more to these roles, covered

² Kawiti, Aorangi: 19 December 2020

by exponents of te reo me ona tikanga, such as Patu Hohepa and many other published writers and Kaiako o te reo.

19. Wahine: embody noa, whare tangata, birth, death, kai, karanga / te reo tuatahi o te whare, te timatanga o te huihuinga, whakapapa and whenua / connection between ira tangata and land / a place to belong. Wahine, as whare tangata tapu, are the creators, nourishment and builders of ira tangata. Te u kaipo - the first and last nourishment of the child / tangata. The role of whakanoa is crucial to the role of whakatupu / tapu. Tapu needs noa to bring the balance of life back to the state of common and everyday so that every day activities can be carried out. Kai, wai, karakia, haka and waiata bring noa, often used in combination to remove tapu from formal and sacred activities, objects and people. Hence why ariki rangatira such as Kawiti were fed by their tonotono on the end of a stick.
20. Kaikaranga, te reo tuatahi: our role is to perceive, protect, welcome and repel manuhiri and whānau intentions, actions and progress into and within our traditional and contemporary territories. Wahine are the litmus, receptor, analyser and maintainer of peace, productivity and life. Without wahine Māori, hui and events of great and small import are unable to begin with the properly created balance of life. Wahine are a rongoa to tane and tane are a rongoa to wahine - this is the balance of life.
21. Roles are different and intertwined, interchangeable as required, such as Wairaka: “Ka Whakatane ahau i ahau.” At times wahine are kaikorero in their areas of expertise as well as in the absence of men and in the presence of men, as required and as deemed necessary for the purpose of kaupapa, mahi and matauranga Māori. I roto Ngāti Hine o Hineamaru i te Raki, wahine speak in formal and informal situations, events and activities relevant to tikanga Māori. Mea mai a Matua Hoterene “Boss” Tipene: “Tarau poto, tarau roa, horekau he tarau - ina whai korero koe, me tu ki te korero!” This korero expresses the practice we continue in Ngāti Hine whanua where women will speak at any time in proceedings-particularly during hui such as tangihanga, when there are often no men in an ope / men are not fluent in te reo and feel whakama / unable to speak in formal situations. Women also carve in Ngāti Hine, as in Motatau, where a special whare housed women carving for whare whakairo in the north - te whare tupuna at Manu Koroki, Motatau marae.
22. Tapu o te toto o te wahine: haemorrhaging, karakia, speaking to the mate toto, mate tinana, mate hinengaro, mate wahine, life-threatening, birth and death in the same breath.

23. Nga uri tapu o te whare tangata tapu.

Korero with Amadonna Jakeman

24. With her permission, I am going to speak about korero I had with my whanaunga Amadonna Jakeman on 21 January 2021 about mana wahine. She felt strongly that you should honour your feelings and wairua, and to follow them. I have changed the formatting of her korero for this brief of evidence to make it clear that this is her korero:

“I admire the strength of women in adversity, we hide our pain, vulnerability, mamae and near-death experiences until we have healed ourselves, as sharing it can make us even more vulnerable, open to criticism and take-over tactics while we are low in energy - we save our energy for ourselves and our healing. During the tapu of mate wahine, childbirth, haemorrhaging we separate ourselves from everyday people and activities - to save and protect our energy and our tapu state from the state of noa and potential destruction of our own personal tapu and inevitably of our person, personality, personage and who we really are.

Mum retreated a lot in her life and so do we to protect ourselves from the dispersions and distractions of the world, in order to focus on our roles of deep significance to our own world, Te Ao Māori.

People feel it, no matter how we try to hold it back - it takes more energy to with-hold our mauri / energy - it is so potent, powerful, and lethal. Our thoughts and our words are the channel of our energy - for life and for death. We are the kaitiaki / guardians of the passage of life and death. “Te Wheiao ki te Aomarama” expresses this perfectly! The birth canal of the whare tangata is one area and experience where we feel the potency and power of the force of the wahine as we push our peepi into the world of light.

My sister and I made clay pieces with women wearing kara draped on them, which are about to be fired. When I saw you (Aorangi) wearing your kara, our kara, Te Whakaputanga at Kawiti, Te Mawhe Kairangi and Ruapekapeka, I thought: Wow - this is no accident!

Not many people can handle our toto, energy - our momo! The few that can understand the intrinsically deep tapu and noa states of our being support, love and appreciate us as we are, who we are - they know we can be nothing else but ourselves.

It is lonely, though I am not alone, due to our whakapapa / gene pool, our momo, our tupuna in us - their whakaaro in us, their strength in us. Many are attracted to the potent energy we are and we bring to the space we are in at any given time. Others who are gifted as we are see us, feel us and recognise us when we meet.

It can be quite traumatising to rehash / retell our life stories before the Tribunal, expressing our momo whakaaro, mahi kino, mahi he placed upon us by the crown and colonisation. We have been going through this all our lives."

25. I agree with the korero of Amadonna Jakeman. This is what Mana Wahine looks and feels like, ara ko hau. When you hear a waiata that imbues tangi, aroha, mamae, matauranga, relationships, connection, kai, korero, pukana and passion into your psyche - this is mana wahine! The crown have tried to destroy us and FAILED! Ka ora tonu te tatou tapu o te wahine!
26. This Inquiry is an opportunity for the Crown to discover, endeavour to understand, and support us in our own journey of learning and healing who we are as wahine Māori- not in the crown framework, diagnosis/ pathology and prescription of the disease of colonisation. The crown is unable to heal us as mana wahine, because they have no knowledge, experience and skills base or understanding relevant to our experience and existence. The crown owe wahine Māori the reinstatement of MANA WAHINE by firstly asking wahine Māori to define, explain and encompass all that we are, as much as is humanly possible, for all to understand.
27. Mana, by its very nature is what another person / entity believes, perceives and conceives of that person / entity. That would be the role of Māori - wahine and tane. Whether uri are tane or wahine, our whakapapa gene pool and inherited rights are gifted to us without prejudice. We may carry various similar and dissimilar roles. Mana rangatira is inherent in us all.

28. I tuku to tika mai nga taonga, whenua, hononga, waiata, te reo, property me nga tini mahi kaitiaki katoa ki a matou nga wahine me nga tane hoki.

Te mana o te wahine in Māori society and Rangatira wahine

29. “Mana wahine” means the mana attributable to wahine through descent, experience, expertise, wananga and achievement; that which wahine are able to achieve and be; that which our people know and believe to be true.
30. Mana wahine is expressed by wahine in many ways and people. For example:
- a) Leadership: Hineamaru, Te Puea Herangi, Te Atairangikahu, Whina Cooper, Mira Szaszy;
 - b) Karanga, korero, waiata, haka, whakatauki, karakia;
 - c) Karanga, as with all creative korero/ communication, can be welcoming, alarming, alerting the whānau, hapū and iwi of impending risk of encroachment, attack, danger or ahua of any kind. Karanga can also be repelling in their nature, volume, expression and implementation. Kai karanga have a similar role to scouts, in terms of the ability and capacity of wahine Māori to sense with all senses - taha wairua, taha tinana, taha hinengaro and taha whānau the approach and intent of others to their kainga.
 - d) Kuia: are often the lead kaikaranga, when available, as their senses are honed by years of experience, practice, understanding and knowledge. Kuia are often, though not always, beyond the child-bearing stage of their life, therefore potentially more readily available for this key role and possibly more capable in fulfilling this crucial role to capacity. This is not always the case, so should always be considered on merit of the people and situation.
 - e) Importantly, kuia would normally have passed their intrinsic and learned knowledge, experience and skills to her successors, thereby completing the cycle of life intrinsic to Māori. Kuia would gladly and graciously give themselves on behalf of the protection, safety and security of the whānau, pa, marae, papakainga, whenua tuku iho, taonga and wahi tapu. This is all part of our role as mana wahine. The younger child-bearing wahine would be protected further back in the social and physical infrastructure of the

whānau and hapū, in order to continue the chiefly ariki rangatira bloodline. E.g: Te Waiariki women warriors carried the babies and children to safety, placing the babies in kete, feeding the tamariki with rongoa te make them quiet and sleep so the invading enemies could not hear them cry out, placed them in a sacred Puriri tree at the top of maunga Whakairiora (hence the name: whaka iri ki te ora), then the women guarded them at the base of the tree in case of penetration beyond the pa, Rangī Korero / speaking sky and the battle fields of Te Waiariki, Ngāti Korora and Ngāti Takapari at Pii Manu, Ngunguru Sandspit and the whenua tapu of Horahora.³

- f) Tohunga: wahine Māori had deep and well practice capacity to sense and read / understand the tohu of the taiao, manu, hau, Maramataka. Lifetimes of observation and succession and practice of this matauranga / knowledge and skills encouraged and developed expert behaviour and practices in these areas.

- g) Whenua: land, placenta/ after-birth, place of origin and place to belong, live and grow-homeland.

- h) Whakapapa: blood and bone ties, genealogy.

- i) Tatai: historic korero connecting the whakapapa.

- j) Whanaungatanga: relationships which are inherent through whakapapa and develop over time, either in a lifetime or intergenerationally, within whānau, hapū and iwi as well as inter-whānau and inter-tribally.

- k) Taonga, rauemi, rawa: precious and highly valued property such as whenua / land, timber / rakau, rongoa, wai Māori, wai Moana, kai Māori, kaimoana, hua whenua, hua rakau, manu, kuri, wheua tohora, pounamu, waka, whakairo, kainga, hononga toto, whakapapa, ope taua, ope kaitiaki. For example, Arapera (Tipene) Prime provided timber for the Whare Runanga at Waitangi - a significant contribution by a wahine with the mana, hence manaakitanga and capacity to do so.

³ Sade, Violet, 16 October 2016 p12 Horahora Local Study, WAI 1040, #A70

- l) Kai-Whakairo: Ngāti Hine women carve and are protected and provided with the skills and capacity to do so. For example, Nita Jones, Amadonna and Noelle Jakeman and other wahine carved Manu Koroki, whare tupuna at Motatau marae. This became their normal, with Amadonna carving a matenga / head, her first carving which she placed with her grandmother, Nanny Emma Tipene when she passed; Noelle helped carve the whare whakairo at Te Papa due to this trait - encouraged and supported by their ariki rangatira mothers and grandmothers. These are but a few of many korero regarding te mana o te wahine
31. Mana wahine survive to tell our story. Even now, at the recent Ruapekapeka 175 year commemorations, the mana o te wahine is threatened by our own whānau: tane, tungane, uncles, aunties, tuakana, teina, tamahine, iramutu, even kuia / kaumatua seek to usurp and crush the mana o te wahine, with comments like: “She has no right to touch that book” (the Kohimarama Conference 1860 red book, when it belonged to my grandfather; or actions such as swinging a punch at me and saying: “I don’t trust her!”, when I am a kaitiaki actively entrusted with taonga tapu), bringing 3 dogs to growl and run over our pa, wahi tapu, arguing the point: “Pai ana enei kuri” without facing me / speaking respectfully, hiding under a korowai and the cover of darkness without tikanga of aroha, tautoko / manaakitanga and integrity for the kaupapa of Ruapekapeka; bullying the kaitiaki and kaikaranga of this wahi tapu, saying they are offended by a wahine wearing the kara of our tupuna Kawiti on her body when it was gifted as koha across our marae atea at Kawiti marae under the auspices of “Kawea a Puriri mai” to our whānau - nga uri whakaheke a Kawiti.
32. Small hope for hohou te rongu / peace when there is little respect for Kawiti wahine in the midst of Ruapekapeka!
33. Te wheiao ki te ao marama - from the darkness to the light is the passage, aroha leads the wero and respect paves the journey - one step at a time, many steps over time towards a world that truly blends te taiao / natural beliefs and practices with te ao hou / a new world of clarity, understanding and manaakitanga tetahi ki tetahi.

DATED this 30th day of June 2021

A.R. Kawiti

Rhonda Aorangi Kawiti