

BEFORE THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL
TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

WAI 2700
WAI 381
WAI 2260

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 filed by **DAME ARETA KOOPU** on behalf of herself and on behalf of the Maori Women's Welfare League Incorporated and by **DAME WHINA COOPER, DAME MIRA SZASZY, DR ERIHAPETI MURCHIE, DAME GEORGINA KIRBY, VIOLET POU, DAME JUNE MARIU, HINE POTAKA, DAME AROHA RERITI-CROFTS** (being past Presidents of the Maori Women's Welfare League) and on behalf of themselves and **RĪPEKA EVANS** of Ngāpuhi, Te Aupouri, Ngāti Kahu and Ngāti Porou for herself and on behalf of Māori women and by **MARY-JANE PAPAARANGI REID** of Te Rarawa and Te Aupouri for herself and on behalf of Māori women and by **DONNA AWATERE-HUATA** of Ngāti Whakaue and Ngāti Porou for herself and on behalf of Māori women and by **LADY ROSE HENARE** for herself and on behalf of Ngāti Hine and by **KATERINA HOTERENE** for herself and on behalf of Ngāti Hine and by **TEPARA MABEL WAITITI** for herself and on behalf of Ngāti Hine and by **KARE COOPER-TATE** for herself and on behalf of Ngāti Hine (Wai 381)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ELLA YVETTE HENRY

29 June 2021

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WELLINGTON

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Waitangi Tribunal
30 June 2021
Ministry of Justice WELLINGTON

AND

IN THE MATTER

of a claim filed by **MARY-JANE PAPAARANGI REID** and **RĪPEKA EVANS** for and on behalf of the whānau, hapū and iwi of Te Tai Tokerau (Wai 2260)

I, Ella Yvette Henry of Auckland, say:

INTRODUCTION

1. Ko Ngātikahu ki Whangaroa, rātou, ko Te Rārawa, ngā iwi i te taha o tōku pāpā, ko Ngāti Kuri, te iwi i te taha o tōku whāea; Ko Māmaru te waka, ko Kahukuraariki te tūpuna, ko Tikawe te maunga, ko Waimahana te whenua, ko Matainaina te moana, ko Ngātikahu ki Whangaroa te iwi, ko Ngati Aukiwa te hapū, ko Ella Henry tōku ingoa
2. My name is Ella Yvette Henry. I am an Associate Professor and the Director of Māori Advancement for the Business School at the Auckland University of Technology. My research interests cover sociology, business, Māori media and Māori Indigenous development. I served as Chair of Nga Aho Whakaari (the Association of Māori in Screen Production), was a Treaty Negotiator for my Iwi (Ngātikahu ki Whangaroa) and served as a Trustee and Chair of the Kahukuraariki Trust (our Post-Settlement Governance Entity) after settlement in 2017. My doctoral thesis focuses on Māori entrepreneurship in screen production.
3. This brief of evidence is derived from a section in my Master’s thesis “Rangatira Wahine: Māori Women Managers and Leadership” (University of Auckland, 1994), which focusses on the role and status of Māori women in traditional society.¹ My thesis is attached as **Appendix A**.
4. This evidence highlights the status of wāhine Māori in traditional society, in which they played equal and complementary roles, in the public, political, economic and social affairs of their communities. It illustrates the gender complementarity existing in traditional Māori society; that duality which is reflected in the Māori cosmology and the duotheism of Ranginui and Papatūānuku.
5. Taken together, this literature provides insight into some of the values, traditions and practices, relating to social relations, sexuality, marriage, procreation, family, divisions of labour and warfare.

¹ Henry, Ella Y: Chapter one: Literature Survey, Section Three: Rangatira Wahine Maori Women Managers and Leadership, Master’s Thesis, University of Auckland; 1994 pp 36-104.

ETHNOGRAPHIC AND PATRIARCHAL MANIPULATION OF TRADITIONAL MĀORI SOCIETY AND WĀHINE MĀORI

6. Much of our knowledge of pre-European Māori society is derived from a combination of archaeological and ethnographic evidence.
7. According to orthodox archaeology, New Zealand had been inhabited for not more than one thousand years before 1769 (Cook's first landing). The Indigenous inhabitants were derived from one or more groups of Polynesian peoples, presumably from the northeast Pacific region.²
8. Māori society has been described as a cognatic, or bilineal, descent system; a rarer pattern of kinship in which children could trace their ancestry through either the male or female lines.
9. Anthropologists, most of whom were male in the formative years of this discipline, were more used to dealing with patrilineality, and when types were isolated which did not conform to their ideas, "[t]he usual solution was to toss these societies in the leftover bag and forget about them".³
10. However, it has been recognised that such approaches:⁴

[c]haracterise the work most eminent representatives of an anthropology that takes an essentially static and ahistorical view of the societies it studies, ignoring both the dynamics of precolonial change and the hard realities of colonisation. Thus, the entire conceptual framework of anthropology and, as a result, the data on which generalisations are based, suffer from ethnocentric and male-centred bias.
11. Davidson recognised that S. Percy Smith did not merely record tradition, but "[c]onstantly tried to edit and improve them to provide a more coherent story".⁵ In effect, the power of writing and recording history passed to Māori men, because Pākehā ethnographers actively sought them out and employed them.

² Davidson, Janet: *The Prehistory of New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 1

³ Keesing, R M: *Kin Groups & Social Structure* (Australia: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1975) p 77

⁴ Etienne, Mona & Leacock, Eleanor: *Women & Colonisation* (USA: Praeger Publishers, 1980) p 1

⁵ Davidson, Janet: *The Prehistory of New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 6

12. Over time, the intrinsic rightness of certain ideas, such as Māori male supremacy, has come to be accepted as the norm. Yet if one considers the key foundations of knowledge and values, through the ancient cosmology, and consequent social structures and relations which form the basis of *tikanga Māori*, one is confronted with contradictions.
13. If one then analyses the role and status of Māori women in contemporary society, it can be seen that the lack of a woman's voice in the writing of our history has, in many ways, contributed to our current subordinate position in some social and economic spheres.

NGĀ ATUA: THE DUALITY OF MĀORI COSMOLOGY

14. The Polynesians brought the cosmology of the South Pacific to this country and, though Māori have developed their own variations of many rituals over time, many mythological concepts are still common. The Māori creation myth also begins with the gradual evolution of being, from a void of non-being:⁶

One of the grandest Māori chants reveals creation in abstract physical stages, evolving through the three periods of thought, night, and finally light. It is dramatic and moving as any myth, not only because of its rich language and hypnotic rhythm, but also because its point of view is internal and participatory, not objective and reportorial. There is no one deity here, no fixing of a sacred process into one persona; nature itself is only a dependent part of the whole. Being itself evolves from the conception through thought, spirit and matter to the great climax, the blaze of day from the sky.

15. Walker adds that “[i]nherent in the genealogy of earth and sky, the gods and their human descendants, is the notion of evolution and progression”.⁷
16. Traditional Māori society was underpinned by a cosmology that emphasised and reinforced the dialectical parallelism of female-male complementarity, as personified by *Papatūānuku* – the earth mother, and *Ranginuiatane* – the sky father. The relationship between spiritual entities can be seen as important because they elaborate on the relationships which existed in human society. The

⁶ Sproul, Barbara: *Primal Myths* (San Francisco:Harper Collins, 1979) p 338

⁷ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 11

complementarity of *Papatūānuku* and *Ranginuiatane* was exemplified in daily practice by the unique leadership roles which women fulfilled in traditional Māori society. The roles of mum, grandma, big sis', which are so vilified in western society; when described as *kuia*, *whaea*, *tuakana*, *rangatira wahine*, to Māori, are rich in woman's power and knowing.

17. The primordial creator *Io*, who/which exists beyond *Rangi* and *Papa*, is the ultimate creator. *Io* has been translated as "The Supreme Being"⁸, and the "Unknown Creator".⁹ By and large, *Io* has been translated in the literature as a male entity, though on closer scrutiny all other aspects of Māori mythology embody a duality of divinities, the male and the female.
18. Though there is little evidence to corroborate the existence of a central, or Supreme Being called *Io* across all tribes, Rose Pere provides a deeper meaning of the word *Io*, which addresses the "duality" anomaly. According to Pere, **A-I-O** is the supreme life force, the godhead, comprising the combined sound vibrations of the mother – *A*; the child – *I*, and the father – *O*; together these sound vibrations form the basis of all life.¹⁰
19. On Pere's interpretation, it is the sounds, as represented in *karakia*, *kārangā*, and other ritual chants, that evoke, celebrate, and acknowledge, the power and force of life, creation, and procreation.
20. Thus, female and male energy combine and represent the duality which is mirrored in the duotheism of earth mother and sky father, of *Papatūānuku* and *Ranginui*. On that basis, the word *AO*, glossed as "world", also takes on new meaning, as it is the duality of male and female, without the child. It is the addition of the sound *I* which represents procreation and everlasting life through the child.

⁸ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London:Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967)

⁹ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926)

¹⁰ Pere, Rose: *Hui Taumata o Nga Wahine Maori*, 1993

21. Walker further states:¹¹

The death of Maui, the greatest culture hero in Māori mythology, is the rationale for the death of human beings. Since Maui was unable to defeat death, all human beings must be reconciled to its inevitability.

22. If we re-visit the tale of *Maui*, we find it is also the tale of *Hine nui te po*, which Jenkins interprets as a myth that:¹²

[d]emonstrates both the oppression and the prowess of women. On the one hand she suffers as the handmaiden of man and on the other she finds escape and rehabilitates herself to an existence, albeit remote and macabre, that gives her a power much stronger than she had to start with.

23. On this analysis, Māori women occupy an extremely important role in the cosmological paradigms for, “[t]hey not only controlled the power, they also had the control of resources”.¹³

24. Norman writes about *te tapu*, *te manakau*, *te wehi o te wahine*, as differentiated from the *tapu*, *mana*, and *wehi* of men. She states that these were powerful forces to be reckoned with in the traditional context, and goes on to note that all tribes record stories which illustrate the courageous feats of both women and men. For Norman:¹⁴

In the creation stories the activities of ancestors in ancient times celebrated the “*mana*” of Māori women and is evidence of the deeply rooted attachment to the land. The creation story represents the central axis from which the Māori perceived all living things came. There was *Papatūānuku*, from whose breast sprang plants, trees, animals, fish and fowl all of which provided sustenance... Aside from the traditional role of Māori women moreover is the reminder of the matrilineal descent coming from *Papatūānuku*.

25. Included in the mythology are female *atua*. Perhaps we do not know about the nature of the goddesses because no female *rangatira*, or chiefs, reported their stories to early ethnographers in as much detail as those reported by Smith and Best, and almost certainly women’s

¹¹ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 11

¹² Jenkins, Kuni: *Reflections on The Status of Maori Women*, Smith, Linda (Ed): *Te Pua, Te Puawaitanga Journal, Te Whare Wananga o Tamaki Makaurau*; 1992 p 39

¹³ Jenkins, Kuni: *Reflections on The Status of Maori Women*, Smith, Linda (Ed): *Te Pua, Te Puawaitanga Journal, Te Whare Wananga o Tamaki Makaurau*; 1992 p 38

¹⁴ Norman, Waerete: *Ha Aha te Mea Nui*, Smith, Linda (Ed): *Te Pua, Te Puawaitanga Journal, Te Whare Wananga o Tamaki Makaurau*; 1992 pp 8-9

stories and perspectives were not so eagerly sought after by those early ethnographers.

TANGATA WHENUA: THE ANCESTORS

26. In the human realm, there were women such as *Tukutuku*, who was a chief in her own right before she married *Paoa*. Her fame as a worker was widespread among her people, and she inspired them to produce and labour more diligently. Biggs writes that her people said of her:¹⁵

Now is seen your work, oh chief. There is the quality of the heart timber, and there is the quality of the sap. Now a chief works. She settled at a place and the people of her new tribe gathered round her as her subjects. Before there had been few people. By her kindness they grew in numbers and filled the village.

27. And in the far north was *Whangatauatea*, a chiefly woman from the *Aupouri* tribe, who is commemorated in the name of the sacred hill at Ahipara. She was taken as a wife by *Te Poroa*, chief of the *Te Rarawa* tribe, their marital relationship thus halting prevailing hostilities.¹⁶

28. Given the continual presence and power of women's roles and positions in myth and oral history, we need to assess how this knowledge has come to be interpreted by academics, theorists and ethnographers. We can look at the work of Klein who writes:¹⁷

The *whare wananga* was *tapu* and it is interesting to note that its access was totally forbidden to women and food. So women were denied the right to acquire the competence necessary to intercede with the gods on behalf of humans even if they were of high rank themselves. Elsdon Best notes exceptions where women acted as *tohunga* but in the lower branches of shamanism and rarely as mediums to *atua*. Men controlled exclusively the means of production and the access to the sources of production of the economy. The direct consequence was that women were totally dependent on the ability of men to create the conditions of their own survival.

¹⁵ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 56

¹⁶ Norman, Waerete: *Ha Aha te Mea Nui*, Smith, Linda (Ed): *Te Pua, Te Puawaitanga Journal, Te Whare Wananga o Tamaki Makaurau*; 1992 p 6

¹⁷ Klein JL: *The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society*, Master's Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981 p19

29. Citing only Best, Klein infers that women's rituals were relegated to "the lower branches of shamanism".¹⁸ In the same paragraph he comes to the conclusion that women, as a group, can be economically dependent in a society that is predicated on shared ownership of resources within *whānau*, *hapu*, and *iwi*, and where high levels of individual autonomy and participation in group decision-making are a norm. Klein's interpretation of women's access to sacred power is based on a particular interpretation of the "facts".
30. One can surmise from this varied discussion about *tohunga* and *whare wānanga* that they existed but that certain of them, from particular types or branches of sacred knowledge, may have been exclusively male. But that does not necessarily deny the existence of other types of learning institutions for female *tohunga*. Nor is there overwhelming evidence that male and female *whare wānanga*, if they existed, were hierarchically designated, with a superior male form. Norman (op.cit) has referred to a *whare kaupo*, a place where *whare wānanga* were held for women.

TIKANGA MĀORI: SOCIAL STRUCTURES, RELATIONS AND VALUES

31. The basic social unit was the *whānau*, which usually extended to three generations. Heading the *whānau* were *kaumātua* and *kuia*, respectively, male and female elders, the grandparents of the *whānau*. The children of the *whānau* were more likely to be influenced by these elders because *kaumātua* and *kuia* were the primary caregivers and educators of the very young, who remained at the village whilst their parents toiled.¹⁹
32. *Tikanga*, cultural practice, was the foundation of social order, the expression of the values that ensured strong and resilient communities. Among these is *koha*, which is categorised as reciprocity or gift-exchange, the cornerstone of the political economy. Davidson states that:²⁰

¹⁸ Klein JL: The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society, Master's Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981

¹⁹ Walker, Ranginui: Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 63

²⁰ Davidson, Janet: The Prehistory of New Zealand (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 195

Gift exchange was a principle means of overcoming deficiencies. Some valuable items were transported very long distances, far beyond those [distances] involved in other parts of Polynesia. Gift exchanges also served other social purposes, and a distinction has been drawn between economic and ceremonial gift exchange, according to whether the main motive for the transaction was the acquisition of goods or some wider social purpose.

33. Metge goes on to describe how the idea of securing a bargain was not the major point of gift-giving: "On the contrary, they gave as generously as they could, for, besides securing a better counter-gift, generosity increased the giver's mana, always a primary concern with the status-conscious Māoris"²¹

34. *Mana* has come to be associated with prestige, power and status. But it also has an esoteric quality, giving it a significance which ensured the word was not used lightly until more recently. Marsden notes that:²²

Early missionaries and anthropologists perpetuated the incorrect idea that mana was the positive and tapu the negative aspect of some vague psychic or spiritual force.. [but] .. tapu is the sacred state or condition of a person or thing placed under the patronage of the gods. Mana is the enduement of that object with spiritual power through the indwelling spirit over it. Humans thus become the channel through which the indwelling spirit of the deity was manifest.

35. *Mana* was vested in the chief, which gave that person status and power, but the autonomous relationship between the chiefs and their tribe acted as a constraint on the power of the chief, especially in regard to the expectations which a chief could impose on the tribe. Though chiefs maintained the *mana* of the *iwi*, or *hapū*, each individual member of the tribe retained a high degree of autonomy. Thus, a chief was not free to behave in a dictatorial or autocratic manner. Winiata stated:²³

Each position checked the other.. Public opinion was .. an effective limiting force upon autocracy. The institution of the marae, involving open discussions, the practice of oratory, and almost unlimited participation by adult members in the assemblies of the tribe, brought to the surface inherent strains and stresses of the power structure. The marae was always open to any member of the tribe,

²¹ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 20

²² Marsden, M: *God, Man & Universe - A Maori View*, King, Michael (Ed): *Te Ao Hurihuri - The World Moves On, Aspects of Maoritanga* (New Zealand: Hicks Smith Methuen; 1977) p 147

²³ Winiata, Maharaia: *Changing Role of the Leader in Maori Society*, Blackwood & Janet Paul, Auckland; 1967 p 39

for it was kindship, acquired through descent from the eponymous ancestor, that gave this right.

36. Like *mana*, *tapu* implied both power and constraint, and has increasingly come to be associated with male power, or the male spheres of activity. *Tapu* was, and is, synonymous with prohibition, and separation from the realm of day-to-day living. The *karakia* which liberated one from the prohibitions of some forms of *tapu* was termed *noa*. On this point, Johannsen writes that: "Among the Māoris woman is the great representative of everyday life; according to her nature she is *noa* as the man is *tapu*".²⁴
37. This perspective is continually reinforced by examples from ethnographies, if not in the interpretations of all ethnographers. But increasingly *noa* has come to be translated as: common or profane; rather than the more accurate translation of *noa* as a liberating force, an example of woman's power.
38. Much has been written about the significance, the sanctity, and sheer pervasiveness of *tapu*, and in particular the incompatibility of *tapu* and food, that is, food should not be in close proximity to *tapu* people, or the most *tapu* part of the body the head and where it has rested. Yet, archaeological finds on Ruapuke Island (Fouveau Island) indicate that food and cooking utensils were present in dwelling and sleeping houses in the 1820s.²⁵ Thus, the prohibitive relationship between food and *tapu* may well have been confined to the male sphere of experience and knowledge, rather than being a constraint on both men and women. Given the importance of food to the community, one could view the *tapu* associated with food as a means of empowering and enshrining women's access to power and control of food resources, for those who control food production and processing are extremely valuable and valued in any society.
39. Biggs relates a tale of a young man who has been secretly sleeping with a young woman, and is fearful of her mother's anger.²⁶ His

²⁴ Johannsen, JP: *The Maori & His Religion* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 214

²⁵ Davidson, Janet: *The Prehistory of New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 161

²⁶ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 51.

father recommended that he pre-empt any calls for *utu* by going to the mother with gifts that include land, dog skin cloaks, greenstone ornaments, canoes, and an assortment of weapons. These were, no doubt, valuable commodities to the young man's *whānau*, but his father stated that:²⁷

It is not as if a woman was a treasure of little worth. Remember that food comes from the earth, seafood from the net, and man comes forth from woman. Therefore, I exhaust our possessions to provide a shield against a major fight.

We see, from this example, a young woman who is a willing participant in a sexual relationship, and another woman whose control of the situation is verified by the anxiety that her anger causes in the young male and his father.

40. Another example given by Biggs offers the mother's perspective. In this case, a Māori slave who worked for a missionary had formed a relationship with a free woman. Her mother is quite pleased with the match, but must feign public anger and demand compensation for the loss of *mana* caused by this liaison. Otherwise, other members of her tribe might feel slighted (for her loss of *mana* was theirs also), and demand *utu* from her. So she protested publicly, and demanded *utu* from the missionary. He in turn gave her a blanket. As described by Biggs:²⁸

By simulating dissatisfaction, and by demanding compensation from the missionary the mother deprived others of a *take*, or cause, for a *taua muru* directed against herself as a consenting party.

Thus, the mother has manipulated the situation so that she, her daughter and the slave all gained what they wanted, with no loss of honour.

41. In fact, *muru* (the call for *utu*) was often at the request or instigation of women, and, as stated by Norman, "As a result of the influence she exerted full scale warfare was sometimes the outcome."²⁹ These are

²⁷ Biggs, Bruce: Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 51

²⁸ Biggs, Bruce: Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 51

²⁹ Norman, Waerete: Ha Aha te Mea Nui, Smith, Linda (Ed): Te Pua, Te Puawaitanga Journal, Te Whare Wananga o Tamaki Makaurau; 1992 p 6

hardly examples of women subjugated by the society in which they live.

PŌWHIRI, KARANGA AND WHAIKŌRERO

42. A crucial social activity, that continues to retain its importance, is the *hui*. The *hui* is the basis of intra, and inter-tribal decision-making and communication. The tribe gathers on its *marae*, to welcome *manuhiri*, visitors. After the traditional *pōwhiri*, or welcome ritual, the discussions begin in earnest. The role of speakers on the *marae*, and their *whaikōrero*, or oratory, are acknowledged as a key component of *hui*. By and large, oratory during the *pōwhiri* is an exclusively male prerogative, except among a few East Coast tribes where women maintain full speaking rights on the *marae*. Dame Mira Szazy was a long-time proponent of Māori women's speaking rights on the *marae* (Szazy & Else, 1990). Te Awekotuku recalls one such speech from Dame Mira Szazy, in which, "she emphasised the need to reassess traditional roles, and commented on the sexist nature of *whaikōrero* prohibitions in certain tribal regions. She also inferred that denial of women's speaking rights implied denial of leadership potential".³⁰
43. Women who were notable exceptions to the rule of male-only *whaikōrero* include Mihi Kotukutuku of *Whānau a Apanui*, one of the tribes which has male and female speakers. On a visit to Rotorua, she was supposed to acknowledge the *Kawa o Te Arawa* which does not allow women speaking rights on the *paepae*, the male forum, but she rose to speak anyway. Of this event Te Awekotuku writes, "When rebuked, and commanded to sit down by none other than the venerable Mita Taupopoki, she lifted the hem of her skirt and exclaimed derisively, 'You say no woman has ever stood on this *marae*. Well, I tell you this, if it wasn't for a woman, you wouldn't be here today'.³¹
44. However, it is important to understand that though oratory is thought of as the domain of men in many tribes, across all the tribes the first

³⁰ Te Awekotuku, Ngahuia: *Mana Wahine Maori* (Auckland: New Womens' Press 1991) p 152

³¹ Te Awekotuku, Ngahuia: *Mana Wahine Maori* (Auckland: New Womens' Press 1991) p 100

voice heard at the *hui* is that of a woman, through the *kāranga*, the call of welcome, from the *tangata whenua* to the *manuhiri*. On the matter of power and voice of the *kāranga*, Karetu writes, “[i]t is in the *kāranga* that one will hear much of the beauty of the language, and experience some of the most moving moments”.³² Pere has interpreted the deeper meaning of the words and sounds associated with *kāranga*. On her interpretation, the word *kaikāranga*, for one who calls, is imbued with the deeper meanings of the sounds from which the word is derived, comprising the following elements:³³

- a. ***Ka ii*** – *To energise, to be, to fulfil a role; the vibration of the child;*
- b. ***Ka aa*** – *To energise, to be, the vibration of the mother*
- c. ***Ranga*** – *Sun, breath, weave together*

45. For Pere:³⁴

When we feel the sacred river, *awa atua*, we can become *kaikāranga*, so that we can energise and weave people together. *Kaikāranga* who fulfil their role in a formal context are also expected to link the people at the gathering in with the twelve planes of learning. The *kaikāranga* is the first communicator in *Tūhoe* and *Ruapani*. The *whaikōrero* carried out by the men is the communication that follows.

46. On this point, Walker states that the reason for the voice of welcome being the woman’s was, “Because of her power to negate *tapu* and evil spiritual influences”.³⁵ This ability to negate spiritual influences extended to carvings, for a female figure was carved into the lintel above guest houses. The presence on the door lintel is an acknowledgement of the importance of women. This in turn is known as ‘*mana wahine*’, which Walker has described as the, “Dual generative and destructive power of the female sex.”³⁶ The duality of woman is further elaborated by Johannsen when he writes: “The

³² Karetu, S: Language & Protocol of the Marae, King, Michael (Ed): *Te Ao Hurihuri – The World Moves On, Aspects of Maoritanga* (New Zealand: Hicks Smith Methuen; 1977) p 32

³³ Pere, Rose: *Ako* (Hamilton: Waikato University Press, 1980)

³⁴ Pere, Rose: *Hui Taumata o Nga Wahine Maori*, 1993

³⁵ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 73

³⁶ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 74

crucial point in the woman's being is that her life is made up of more varied, mixed and every day contents than that of the male... she is more robust as regards pollutions of life, just because by nature her life is made of several components".³⁷ We can assume that Johansen is making delicate reference to menstruation, gestation, and lactation, when he refers to women's 'several components.'

47. Te Awekotuku notes that, in recent years, the *kārangā* has not sounded forth at many *Te Arawa* hui. Thus, "People went without, and it almost became regarded as no longer critically important".³⁸ This lack of acknowledgment of the privileges of womanhood, such as *kārangā*, or the ritual of cleansing the new whare, has occurred alongside the increased privileges and prestige associated with male-centric rituals. It may be one of the greatest infamies of the colonial reconstruction of Māori society, is that the legitimate voice of Māori women, in the crucial decision-making process that the *hui* represents, has increasingly become devalued; whilst at the same time, the male voice, through *whaikōrero* has been increasingly venerated.
48. We turn now to a more detailed discussion of social activities in the community, to tease out the experiences and realities of members of the tribe, and in particular women's experience.

AKONGA: EDUCATION

49. Formal education of adults and young adults occurred in the *whare wānanga*, whilst the elders took responsibility for the very young. Writing on this point, well-known *kuiā* Ngoi Pewhairangi reminisces about her childhood among the *Ngāti Porou* people, "Awareness of *tapu* associated with learning is something we grew up with. If you are born on a marae, there are certain qualities about you that are recognised by elders. They don't actual teach you. They select you

³⁷ Johannsen, JP: *The Maori & His Religion* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 223

³⁸ Te Awekotuku, Ngahuaia: *Mana Wahine Maori* (Auckland:New Womens' Press 1991) p 100

and place you in a situation where you absorb knowledge”.³⁹ Rout also states that:⁴⁰

Meetings were held for the instruction of parents in such sacred matters as control of fertility, sex determination, marital happiness, and culture generally, and special mother’s meetings were also held. Such meetings were arranged during the ceremonies when different communities were visiting each other; and whichever proved to have the best knowledge of these matters was accorded high honour.

Thus, the particular knowledge and expertise of the women’s realm of activity was ensured through these meetings, and the specific roles which women occupied were maintained throughout the different communities.

AITANGA: SEXUALITY

50. From an early age, children lived in close and intimate contact with adults. Their introduction to bodily functions and reproduction was part of their early education. Premarital sex was a norm, and young adults were allowed, even expected, to engage in sexual experimentation before settling down in a stable relationship.⁴¹ On this point, Biggs states that, “[f]rom an early age sexual intercourse is frequent but not promiscuous”, and he adds that, “Malinowski has shown... in the Trobriands [that] such freedom did not deter young lovers from seeking marriage”.⁴² Thus, attitudes to sexual activity and marital relationships were inculcated from an early age.
51. On the point of marital relationships, we can learn much from traditions associated with these activities. One such concept which informs our understanding of social relations in traditional society is the institution of the *puhi*, sometimes referred to as a type of vestal virgin. Many writers have contributed to the discussion of the *puhi* maiden. Walker writes that this was a status accorded to a chief’s daughter, who was acknowledged as a virgin princess, and whose virtue was guarded day and night by female attendants so that she

³⁹ Pewhairangi, Ngoi: *Forward- Learning & Tapu*, King, Michael (Ed): [Te Ao Hurihuri – The World Moves On, Aspects of Maoritanga](#) (New Zealand: Hicks Smith Methuen; 1977) p 8

⁴⁰ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 78

⁴¹ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 25

⁴² Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) pp 19 and 28.

could be betrothed in a ceremonial inter-tribal marriage.⁴³ Johannsen, also notes the importance of the chief's first-born daughter, who could be considered a type of *tapu* woman. He writes, "She is so far an exception among women, which manifests itself in the fact that she has nothing to do with cooking or coarse work; indeed, she may even be isolated from the cooking shed with the same care as *tapu* men".⁴⁴ Incidentally, this latter quote is further evidence that males were excluded from the female domain, as much as women were excluded from male domains. Despite current debates about the existence of the *puhi*, we may conclude that it was a political institution utilised by some tribes to forge alliances between them and others, and that it did not survive early contact with the European. Conversely, the *puhi* may have been a rare or unusual means of cementing alliances which was taken out of its wider social context by Best, who may have sought to translate European values about young middle-class women as vestal virgins, onto traditional Māori political and social practices.

52. That aside, we are certain that sex, and sexual relations, were considered to be extremely important in traditional Māori society. The lack of squeamishness about sexual organs is also reflected in the comments from a *kaumātua*, reported by Elsdon Best. When asked why the ritual meal associated with aristocratic weddings was called the *kai kotere*, the old man replied, "Because the man is wedded to her abdomen, not to her head."⁴⁵ Unfortunately, in the translation to contemporary Western ideas about sexuality, Māori concepts have been reinterpreted, to the extent that writers such as Heuer analyse the term *whare mate* (house of death) as an entirely negative connotation.⁴⁶ She does not take full account of the cosmological relationship between a woman's vagina and death through *Hine nui te po*, nor the allegorical reference to male orgasm as a loss of control and form of death. What is apparent from this survey is that Māori

⁴³ Walker, Ranginui: Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 66

⁴⁴ Johannsen, JP: The Maori & His Religion (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 216

⁴⁵ Johannsen, JP: The Maori & His Religion (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 228

⁴⁶ Heuer, B: Maori Women (Wellington, A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1979)

sexuality, and its associated beliefs and practices, were fundamentally different from those of the 19th Century colonisers. It was not bound by the same social prohibitions, nor was it a means for men to control women's lives, bodies and reproduction.

MOENGA: MARRIAGE

53. The matter of marriage has also been discussed at great length in the literature. The following is an overview of some of the major contributions to the current debate about what form marriage took, or whether it existed at all in the European sense of the word.
54. We know that couples existed and that they: "had certain exclusive rights and duties to each other, especially sexual ones".⁴⁷ Once a couple selected each other they might announce their intentions to cohabit or simply begin to sleep together in the *whare* of either the male's or the female's family. As long as no relative opposed the union they would come to be seen as a couple. According to Makereti, little ceremony was observed in 'marriage',⁴⁸ but Biggs states that the community did reserve the right to express an opinion about the relationship.⁴⁹ Individuals in the tribe were not considered adult until they 'married' and had children. According to Rout, the primary aim of marriage, or stable relationships that resulted in children, was 'race improvement'. Those children who could trace their *whakapapa* through their mother and father were stable additions to the community. Prior to 'marriage', the sexual liaisons one engaged in should not result in pregnancy. If they did so, the relationship would need to be formalised by the community.⁵⁰
55. Marriage between chiefly individuals and 'commoners' was neither unusual nor problematic. Again, this could be related to the difficulties in interpreting who, or what, were 'commoners'. However, if race improvement was the aim of formal marriage, then linkages to senior descent lines through marriage would be desirable and encouraged by families of the junior descent lines. Makereti states

⁴⁷ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 27

⁴⁸ Makareti: *The Old Time Maori* (Auckland: New Womens' Press, 1986) p 78

⁴⁹ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 32

⁵⁰ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 58

that: “If a *wahine rangatira* married a man from another *hapū* of lower rank than herself, and her husband came to live with her people, she would retain her mana”.⁵¹

56. The home base of a couple was particularly important in the case of inter-tribal marriage, which gave outsiders access to family land. Metge notes that “[t]hose that did occur were usually arranged to establish or strengthen alliances”.⁵² Thus, *tono* or betrothal was common, particularly among the chiefly lines, and a person who broke an engagement could create a situation where their family were the target of a *taua* (war party) sent to extract *utu*. The reciprocal nature of such betrothals is noted by Makereti who states that:⁵³

When a family asked for a young girl to marry one of their boys, the girl’s family would be given gifts. If there were any heirlooms these would go to the girl for herself and her children.

57. Children whose parents belonged to different *hapū* could claim membership in both *hapū*, and this could create potential conflict among the tribes in terms of land inheritance, though often the individual’s commitment to the *hapū* of residence was much stronger.⁵⁴ The tribe’s main protection against this type of land loss was through traditional inheritance processes. For example, those who knew death was imminent would be obliged to make a public statement to dispose of personal property or land interests and the community was obliged to respect and adhere to their wishes.
58. Marriage, or formally recognised cohabitation, was often preceded by inter-family discussion. Biggs notes that:⁵⁵

Early observers of Māori culture were surprised at the apparent absence of any religious rite or ceremony marking marriage. Best, one of the most prolific recorders of Māori ethnography, apparently sharing this surprise at the lack of a wedding ceremony amongst this ‘most punctilious people’, proposed to show that a marriage rite did exist. It is now well-known that many primitive societies fail to sanctify marriage with religious observances.

⁵¹ Makereti: *The Old Time Maori* (Auckland: New Women’s Press, 1986) p 89

⁵² Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 27

⁵³ Makereti: *The Old Time Maori* (Auckland: New Women’s Press, 1986) p 65

⁵⁴ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 64

⁵⁵ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 52

59. It is very likely that what Best recorded as a marriage ceremony was the *umu kotere/kai kotere* (food at the tail end of a gathering), and even this has only been associated with the relationships of couples of high-status. Later writers merely accepted this evidence of the marriage sacrament as a given, but Biggs states he found no mention of it prior to 1903, and concludes: “It would appear that all references are to this one paper by Best and to subsequent statements by him”.⁵⁶
60. One might ask then, what is achieved in societies that have highly prescribed marriage rituals? For many centuries, in Western society, the institution of marriage and the religious beliefs from which it stems, have served to disadvantage women by maintaining their status as property, to be ‘given away’ by their fathers to their husbands.
61. Another aspect of Māori marital relationships, which reflects the status and role of Māori women is ‘marital separation’. Johannsen notes that women were always free to dissolve their connection with a ‘husband’ and return to their people.⁵⁷ No doubt, if this occurred her tribe would have cause for retribution in the form of *utu*, which would reflect badly on the husband, and could result in the exacting of costly revenge for the loss of *mana* to the wife and her *whānau*, because he had proven himself to be an inadequate marital partner.

WHAKAWHĀNAU: PROCREATION

62. Upon reaching adulthood, young Māori women would be introduced to women’s lore. One aspect of women’s knowledge relates to menstruation. Though, in modern society, menstruation may begin at the onset of adolescence, it begins at a later age in societies with a low protein diet. In a review of the menstruation literature, Bates-Gaston notes that both men and women attribute negative moods to pre-menstrual and menstrual phases, and that some women have

⁵⁶ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 53

⁵⁷ Johannsen, JP: *The Maori & His Religion* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 214

reported greater creativity and energy around menstruation.⁵⁸ Johannsen, in his discussion of menstruation, offers a reason why Māori women are considered *noa*. When she is menstruating she is very *tapu* for a specific period, and this may be the reason why, at all other times she is *noa*. Thus, women are attributed with both sources of power, *tapu* and *noa*, whilst men must call on women to free them from the prohibitions of *tapu*.⁵⁹

63. Menstruating women were constrained from participating in much of their usual activity, and in some tribal areas were ensconced in special houses for the duration of the bleeding cycle. In a sizeable community, many women could be menstruating at the same time. Under those conditions, the “bleeding” houses or spaces might provide welcome relief and companionship for many women. We may never know what occurred during and between women at these times, but if the women were able to engender their creative energy together, menstruation could have provided Māori women with a powerful time and space. On that basis, Heuer’s analysis that “[w]omen’s clothing and places where woman’s body had rested, were regarded as unclean and defiling because of the presumed residual effects of the spiritual powers of the menstrual flow”, seems ill-informed.⁶⁰ Heuer’s work on the role of Māori women has been criticised by Te Awekotuku as “[r]ife with generalisations, the book overlooks, or does not see, specific tribal differences, and draws heavily on the prejudiced products of white Victorian male observations”.⁶¹ Further, Pere states that amongst her *iwi*:⁶²

A man was honoured to clean the bloodied clothing of menstruating women, because he was able to share in the power of the sacred river, *awa atua*. *Te Awa Atua* was regarded as tangible evidence of ancestral blood and was always sacred to my mentors from *Tūhoe*, *Pōtiki*, *Ruapani*, and *Kahungunu*.

⁵⁸ Bates-Gaston, J: *The Female Reproductive System & Work*, FirthCozens, Jenny & West, Michel (Eds): *Women at work* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1991) p 67

⁵⁹ Johannsen, JP: *The Maori & His Religion* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 217

⁶⁰ Heuer, B: *Maori Women* (Wellington, A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1979, cited in Klein JL: *The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society*, Master’s Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981) p 58

⁶¹ Te Awekotuku, Ngahuia: *Mana Wahine Maori* (Auckland: New Women’s Press 1991) p 73

⁶² Pere, Rose: *Hui Taumata o Nga Wahine Maori*, 1993

64. Pregnancy, too, was a specifically female domain, for it was the female relatives who counselled the young women during their first pregnancy. It was the women of the tribe who massaged the pregnant woman's breasts in preparation for lactation. Women were supposedly *tapu* whilst pregnant, but it would have been impractical to exclude them entirely from the workforce for nine months. Thus *pure*, or *waituhu* rites, were conducted at some stage during the pregnancy, after which time the woman could "mix with commoners and prepare food again".⁶³
65. Makereti also states that "[c]hildbirth and everything connected with it were under the care of the [female] beings *Hine te iwaiwa* and *Hine kōrako*, who personified the moon".⁶⁴ Biggs notes that Buller and Best refer to only female attendants at the birth, whilst Buck states that mother, father and husband were also present.⁶⁵ In the cases where a difficult birth occurred a priest was called in to recite appropriate *karakia*, incantations. Biggs does not mention whether the 'priest' was male or female, no doubt assuming that the 'priest' had to be a male, as would many of the readers of such a statement.
66. Birth was surrounded by *tapu*, so it took place outside the village, sometimes in a temporary shelter which could later be destroyed.⁶⁶ Generally, a woman might only receive help with the birth of her first child. My mother (born in 1919) has told how her own mother, who gave birth to 13, would leave the *kāinga* to go into the scrub and return alone with the newborn child. Makereti reinforces this point, stating that:⁶⁷

Whakawhānau or giving birth to a child was not a matter to worry over, and a Māori woman of the old days did not suffer or go through the same painful experience as the *wāhine Pākehā*. A woman was considered *tapu* for a certain time before and after confinement, that is, until after the *tua* or *tohi* had taken place, about seven or eight days after the birth of the child.

⁶³ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 65

⁶⁴ Makareti: *The Old Time Maori* (Auckland: New Women's' Press, 1986) p 119

⁶⁵ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 60

⁶⁶ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 28

⁶⁷ Makareti: *The Old Time Maori* (Auckland: New Women's' Press, 1986) p 113

67. Makereti also notes that women generally gave birth alone, and they or one of their female relatives buried the afterbirth, the *whenua*, whilst intoning appropriate *karakia*. Thus, women were familiar with ritual *karakia*, associated with one of the most important aspects of any society, the replacement of its members through childbirth.
68. Once having survived the rigours of childbirth, all writers seem to agree that children were highly valued in the community. Except for the duration of weaning, which could take up to two years, the children were reared by people other than their natural parents, as those were needed in the community labour pool.⁶⁸ Klein discusses the weaning period: “[w]hen a woman was carrying or feeding a baby, she was not available for complex tasks, was not very mobile, was less able to concentrate totally on specific jobs”.⁶⁹ This analysis is reiterated by Rout, who puts quite different emphasis on pregnancy and weaning:⁷⁰

Pregnant women and nursing mothers were not permitted to work and a husband and father who neglected to save his wife from family tasks during these times would be despised and condemned.

69. On these analyses, one writer (Klein) sees a woman’s exclusion from certain duties as disadvantageous and belittling, whilst the other (Rout) sees women as valued in such a way that they should be protected from arduous work during pregnancy and weaning.

MAHI: THE DIVISION OF LABOUR

70. The division of labour, discussed at length in many ethnographies, is an important indicator of gender relations, power and influence. All writers acknowledge a high degree of gender division of labour, but it is the emphasis or importance placed on the different activities that varies across writers. For example, Metge recognises that the labour of men and women is both complementary and reciprocal, but describes male activities, such as cultivating, climbing, fishing, carving, and performing esoteric rights, as arduous and exciting. Women, on the other hand, engage in safer, monotonous work such

⁶⁸ Davidson, Janet: *The Prehistory of New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 49

⁶⁹ Klein JL: *The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society*, Master’s Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981 p 28

⁷⁰ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 78

as gardening, gathering and preserving food, and weaving.⁷¹ And Klein's interpretation is that, "even though each sex was dependant on the other for general subsistence, women seemed to depend much more on men than men on women".⁷² This is Klein's conclusion, despite the body of contradictory evidence.

71. Such evidence includes Pere's text which states that:⁷³

...men were expected to do... anything that could be classified as dangerous. Women, on the other hand, particularly during the childbearing years, were expected to do the more every-day, but safer tasks, in that they were the people who conceived and bore the children, most important legacy of humanity.

72. Rout's description of women's labour shows quite a different emphasis. She writes: "Men should do the heavy work of cultivation, building and so forth: and women should do lighter work requiring more patience and loving care."⁷⁴ To reiterate this point, Johannsen states that "even though women contribute not a little to provide food, this is especially the man's work. 'Am I a man that I should provide food?', a woman may retort indignantly".⁷⁵ Then, by Winiata we are told that fishing, fowling and hunting for every day needs are male occupations, whilst both men and women worked on cultivations.⁷⁶ Davidson reinforces the idea that fishing was a male-only activity, but adds that shellfish gathering, and diving for crustaceans was a job for women. She illustrates this example by pointing out that such a meal was provided to Captain Cook and Banks, who in turn recorded that this type of food was "an important part of the 18th century diet". Anyone who has dived for crustaceans, without the accoutrements of modern society such as dive suits, snorkelling gear, and weights, will be aware that it is both strenuous and perilous.⁷⁷ Perhaps as strenuous and perilous as sitting in a canoe and casting fishing nets!

⁷¹ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 14

⁷² Klein JL: *The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society*, Master's Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981 p 29

⁷³ Pere, Rose: *Ako* (Hamilton: Waikato University Press, 1980)

⁷⁴ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 73

⁷⁵ Johannsen, JP: *The Maori & His Religion* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 215

⁷⁶ Winiata, Maharaia: *Changing Role of the Leader in Maori Society*, Blackwood & Janet Paul, Auckland; 1967 p 27

⁷⁷ Davidson, Janet: *The Prehistory of New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 142

73. Metge notes that men and women mastered the basic skills of the crafts associated with their gender, but acknowledges that variations were possible, so that workers could turn to another occupation if they finished or grew tired of one.⁷⁸ Rout also writes of the variation in daily labours and reiterates the social responsibilities that bound each member of the community. She notes that “[n]o Māori was simply an individual: He was always a member of the community and thus played his part as a cooperative worker in the general industry”. Following on from this point, she adds: “Administrators who squandered the common goods in foolish and extravagant public hospitality were recorded as having sinned against the community... In all cases the accused were arraigned before the bar of public opinion”.⁷⁹

TAUA: WARFARE

74. The development of military skills and strategies underpinned many activities and games, and early observers, such as Tasman and Cook, reported the Māori as warlike and aggressive. Cook, in particular, was impressed by their military appearance and courage.⁸⁰ Rout states that “[i]n battle the Māori was overcoming sin, defeating the sinful, stamping out wrong. There was no such thing as purposeless fighting”.⁸¹ And Metge adds that:⁸²

War was waged to obtain *utu*. To leave insults unavenged diminished the *mana* both of the individual and group. War also provided an outlet for the frustrations and limitations of village life and was often used by astute leaders to counter internal dissension. Ostensibly, the acquisition of land was of secondary importance. The visitors withdrew to their own territory between engagements and moved in permanently only after a series of successes. War always had to have a legitimate cause.

75. Thus, military strength and prowess were important for spiritual development, as well as the maintenance or furtherance of land tenure.

⁷⁸ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 14

⁷⁹ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 55

⁸⁰ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 47

⁸¹ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 53

⁸² Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 34

76. Inter-tribal conflict was believed to have been relatively common, particularly with the increasing fortification of tribal communities from the 14th century. Intra-tribal warfare was also presumed to be at least as common, no doubt because of the types of offences which could occur. With the sanction of custom, one party could attack and plunder another under the umbrella of *utu*. Even the seeking of *utu*, through conflict, was ritualised by set patterns. On this point, Biggs states that:⁸³

Later observers were to be appalled at the slaughter that took place in the musket era. While firearms probably greatly increased the numbers of casualties, warfare itself seems to have been common.

77. However, archaeological evidence does refute this statement to some extent. Davidson notes that:⁸⁴

...there is very little evidence of the so-called parrying fracture of the forearm, suggesting that the use of the hand-to-hand weapons such as *taiaha* may have been largely ceremonial. Examples of violent death are known, but again are not common.

78. On this point, Rout states that warfare was often caused by shortages of women and, “the real object was to gain more women members of the community. Yet even after conquest it was a sin for any individual man to take a woman against her will”.⁸⁵ This idea is borne out by Biggs who notes that marriages between victorious chiefs and women from the defeated party were a feature of peace making.⁸⁶ The conventions related to peace making included the exchanging of weapons, known as *tatau pounamu*. This was known as the ‘male peace’, sometimes referred to as the *rongo marae* because it was concluded after discussion on the *marae*, of which Walker states: “A male peace... could be abrogated by either party when it suited them. A more enduring peace was a woman’s peace, where women were exchanged with the victors.”⁸⁷ The latter was known as the *rongo wahine*, or woman’s peace.

⁸³ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 47

⁸⁴ Davidson, Janet: *The Prehistory of New Zealand* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1987) p 53

⁸⁵ Rout, Ettie: *Maori Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul trench trubner; 1926) p 71

⁸⁶ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 58

⁸⁷ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) p 72

79. Women warriors were known as *wahine toa*, and the literature identifies varying levels of their involvement in warfare. Johannsen records that warfare was not the exclusive domain of male warriors, and notes that:⁸⁸

Several of the Māori sagas give evidence that the Māori admires courageous women. This admiration is genuine enough and enables clever and high-born women to play a considerable part in what we may roughly term public life.

80. In fact, the *poi* dance was not only a game to encourage dexterity and grace. It helped strengthen wrists for martial arts, particularly in the use of *mau patu*, the single-handed weapons.⁸⁹

81. One well-known example of *wahine toa* relates the tale of *Puhi Huia*, a chiefly woman who had eloped with a young man of a lesser lineage from another tribe. It was agreed that a *taua*, war party, should be sent to extract *utu*. *Puhi Huia* met and defeated some of a *taua*, comprised entirely of women. We know little about, or if, any killing or bloodshed resulted but, at the conclusion of the battle, there was feasting and gifts were given to *Puhi Huia's* people. Of the event Biggs writes:⁹⁰

The elopement was a serious breach of custom, accentuated by the disparity in rank between the lovers. The two tribes saw the possibilities and, while prepared to fight if necessary, they so arranged matters that hostilities were less likely to follow.

82. In other words, all parties were able to come to accommodation, with a minimum of bloodshed, and no loss of *mana*.

RANGATIRATANGA: LEADERSHIP

Every leader has *mana* because he is a leader, and it is by having *mana* that a man gets to be a leader.⁹¹

83. A great deal has been written about Māori leadership, and much of that has implied a quite distinct gender qualification. That is, Māori

⁸⁸ Johannsen, JP: *The Maori & His Religion* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1954) p 215

⁸⁹ Te Awakotuku, Ngahuia: *Mana Wahine Maori* (Auckland: New Women's' Press 1991) p 126

⁹⁰ Biggs, Bruce: *Maori Marriage, An essay in reconstruction*, (Wellington: Polynesian Society Inc, 1960) p 38

⁹¹ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 152

leadership, in terms of day-to-day control and authority, has been defined as a primarily male domain. For example:⁹²

The status of chieftainship, whether at the ariki or rangatira level, was primarily determined by order of birth. When primogeniture coincided with male sex, and when, as rarely happened in practice, those in the line of succession were all first-born males, then one had the highest status in Māori chieftainship.... The female sex was regarded as inferior in status to the male, as this concept was stated in mythology... When the first born was female the problem of leadership was solved by differentiation of the roles. The female retained the social status due to her birth, but active political leadership passed over to the next oldest male.

84. Two decades later, we find this statement:⁹³

Canoe ancestors, or one of their descendants who had great mana, were used as points of reference for the definition of iwi identity.. Internally, hapu and iwi were stratified into three classes: rangatira (chiefs), tutua (commoners) and taurekareka (slaves). Rank and leadership were based on seniority of descent from founding ancestors. At the head of the rangatira class was the ariki, who was the first-born in the senior male line.. A first born female in the senior line was known as the ariki tapairu. She had certain ceremonial functions attached to her high rank as well as being the custodian of some rituals.

85. Evidence of the very 'maleness' of leadership can be deduced from these two quotations, for they are gauges of the extent to which *rangatiratanga* leadership has been defined and reinforced by male perceptions over the last thirty years.

86. Such statements, made as they are by respected and knowledgeable Māori leaders, have enormous impact on the readers' perception of Māori leadership. However, if we look at other works we are offered alternative perspectives. For example, Mahuika has written about the *Ngati Porou* experience. He points out that early writers focused attention on primogeniture through male lines as a precursor for leadership, and presents the case of his own tribe, where leadership is both inherited through senior female lines, and leadership by women has been achieved. He identifies the 'popular' elements of leadership as being:⁹⁴

⁹² Winiata, Maharaia: *Changing Role of the Leader in Maori Society*, Blackwood & Janet Paul, Auckland; 1967 p 28

⁹³ Walker, Ranginui: *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) pp 65-66

⁹⁴ Mahuika, A: *Leadership: Inherited & Achieved*, King, Michael (Ed): *Te Ao Hurihuri – The World Moves On, Aspects of Maoritanga* (New Zealand: Hicks Smith Methuen; 1977)

- a. the prerogative of males only;
 - b. determined by primogeniture which is based on male issue;
 - c. thus, if a female was the first born she would relegate rights to leadership to her male relatives. She retained, however, deference due to her rank as a female ariki; and
 - d. chieftainship and leadership in most cases went together.
87. After having established these criteria, Mahuika proceeds to systematically refute each of them on the basis of Ngāti Porou whakapapa, mythology, and recorded history.⁹⁵
88. Though Mahuika wrote this pivotal work ten years after Winiata, and fifteen years before Walker, it has not encroached on the continued perceptions of the 'maleness' of leadership qualities which pervades the literature.
89. Contradictions also about leadership proliferate as we explore the literature further. For example, Winiata discusses inheritance through both patrilineal and matrilineal lines, but states that: "it was usual for the wife to live in her husband's village, so that children grew up there and maintained closer association with the father's hapu".⁹⁶ Yet, one of the most astute leaders identified by Walker is Te Huki from Ngāti Kahungunu, described as: "the key ancestor in the unification of the sub-tribes, not by making war but by making strategic political marriages... the plan involved keeping his wives in their home territories and visiting them periodically".⁹⁷
90. If we look in more detail at the 'gender aspect' of leadership we find statements such as the following: "Women brought their own qualities to bear on leadership but by and large the expectations of them were the same as for men."⁹⁸ Comments such as this, following on as they

⁹⁵ Mahuika, A: Leadership: Inherited & Achieved, King, Michael (Ed): Te Ao Hurihuri – The World Moves On, Aspects of Maoritanga (New Zealand: Hicks Smith Methuen; 1977) p 80

⁹⁶ Winiata, Maharaia: Changing Role of the Leader in Maori Society, Blackwood & Janet Paul, Auckland; 1967 p 26

⁹⁷ Walker, Ranginui: Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou- Struggle Without End (Auckland: Penguin Publishing, 1990) pp 57

⁹⁸ Te Punui Kokiri: Nga Toka Tu Moana-Maori Leadership, Ministerial Report for the Ministry of Maori Development 1993 p 17

do from an implicit assumption of the male-ness of leadership, do not open the way for investigation of any unique aspects of Māori women's leadership or its significance. We are left with the sense that Māori women leaders are the same as Māori men leaders because the demands on them are similar, but traditional society is predicated on the fundamental differences between men and women.

91. Winiata has, however, recorded:⁹⁹

...one of the important roles of the women leaders. They frequently provide a focus for protest. They embody Māori values, they support efforts toward self-determination, while at the same time attempting to refashion Māori society to conform more and more with the standards of the wider New Zealand society.

92. This is clearly recognition of Māori women's pro-active approach to their leadership responsibilities and styles. For example, Māori women in the post-European era have been at the cutting edge of protest, thus we might assume that their role in traditional society could also have involved maintaining checks and balances against male power, prerogative, and *tapu* through their *noa*, or woman power. Metge contributes to this discussion by acknowledging that, though leadership was the monopoly of older males in theory, the reality was that "women of character and ability often exerted a powerful influence from behind the scenes".¹⁰⁰ The implicit assumption here, however, is that 'behind the scenes' is less significant than 'in-front' of the scenes. But, ideas about 'behind' and 'in-front', are saturated with Western values associated with public and private spheres of activity. If Māori women were powerful 'behind the scenes', it may well be that 'behind the scenes' was a meaningful locus of political activity and control, given there is no evidence that the public and the private were assigned the same meanings in traditional Māori society, as they are in Western society.

93. The great tragedy about these differing perceptions and contradictions is the effect it has on the way knowledge about Māori society has developed and been reproduced over time. This is borne out in Klein's thesis, in which he states from the outset: "I establish

⁹⁹ Winiata, Maharaia: *Changing Role of the Leader in Maori Society*, Blackwood & Janet Paul, Auckland; 1967 p 170

¹⁰⁰ Metge, Joan: *The Maoris of New Zealand* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p 33

why Māori men as opposed to Māori women were the actual leaders in the society and how they succeeded in subordinating women in all aspects of Māori life".¹⁰¹ In terms of the role of the chief, Klein writes:¹⁰²

He directed the major economic operations of the community.. controlled access to the source of production, was director of works in the most important economic operations and embodied the tribal interests in relation to land and intertribal economic exchange. He was thus a dominant figure in the social relations of production from which he gained considerable power, which he shared however with the other priestly experts and the minor chiefs and the elders of the tribe.

94. These statements, though drawn from the work of noted historians, have not captured the texture or complexity of Māori female/male relations. Klein has not explored the mythology in detail, and merely reiterates, and reinforces, androcentric biases about Māori leadership which pervade interpretations of Māori society.
95. Te Awekotuku maintains that Māori male leaders define Māori leadership and being through their own visible activities. She recognises this construction, or reconstruction, of Māori male leadership as a form of indigenous patriarchy. For her, moderate Māori male leaders negotiate to maintain their position within the dominant white patriarchy; whilst radical Māori male leaders seek to overthrow white patriarchy and replace it with a Māori male order.¹⁰³ Her critique represents the views of Māori women whose analyses are at the forefront of the re-appraisal of Māori society, Māori women's place within that society, and their roles as leaders.
96. One final and important aspect of contemporary Māori society needs to be addressed in some detail. For it is this, more than anything else identified in the literature, which has undermined the complementary nature of Māori gender and power relations. That is, the effects on Māori society of colonisation, capitalism, and patriarchy, the hallmarks of Western culture.

¹⁰¹ Klein JL: *The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society*, Master's Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981 p 15

¹⁰² Klein JL: *The Relations of the Sexes in Maori Society*, Master's Thesis, University of Auckland; 1981 p 18

¹⁰³ Te Awekotuku, Ngahuia: *Mana Wahine Maori* (Auckland: New Women's' Press, 1991) p 61

CONCLUSION

97. Taken together, this literature provides insight into some of the values, traditions and practices, relating to social relations, sexuality, marriage, procreation, family, divisions of labour and warfare. It highlights the status of wāhine Māori in traditional society, in which they played equal and complementary roles, in the public, political, economic and social affairs of their communities. It adds weight to the gender complementarity existing in traditional Māori society; that duality which is reflected in the duotheism of Ranginui and Papatūānuku.
98. That status ceased on February 6th 1840, when wāhine Māori became British citizens, at a time when the women of Britain, where, according to English common law, the head of the family, be they father or husband, was in control of the household, and "women and children were chattels to be used and abused by the paterfamilias as he chose".¹⁰⁴

DATED this 29th day of June 2021



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¹⁰⁴ Mikaere, Ani: Maori Women: Caught in the contradictions of a colonised reality. (Waikato: Waikato Law Review 1994) p 129