

BEFORE THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 2700
WAI 2872

IN THE MATTER OF

the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa
Inquiry

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

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

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF IPU TITO-ABSOLUM

Dated this 30 day of June 2021



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Waitangi Tribunal

30 Jun 2021

Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL

He Kupu Whakataki:

1. Tena koutou Te Roopu Whakamana i Te Tiriti o Waitangi, tenei te mihi atu ki a koutou mo tenei honore nui, te tuku matou, nga waahine, hei tautuhi ake a matou tino ahua hei painga mo matou. Tena koe te Kaiwhakawaa, koia tenei te wa tuatahi moku, toku tunga ki mua i tetahi tumuaki wahine, ka mihi, tena koe. Ki te roopu karauna, tena ano ra koutou, ki te hunga roia e awahi nei i a matou tena koutou, ki te hau kainga, Te Parawhau, tena koutou, ki te iwi nui tonu, ka mihi, ka mihi, ka mihi.
2. Toku ingoa ko Ipu Tito-Absolum te ingoa e mahi nei ahau mai i toku rekereketanga tae noa ki enei wa. E tika ana kia whakamaramahia taku ingoa tuturu i homaitia moku e toku tino tupuna-whaea a Maraea. Ko Te Ipu Whakatara, he karanga tupuna, o Te Uri Roroi, o Te Parawhau. He ingoa i heke mai i raro, i Te Aupouri i te tupuna a Whakatara, he tupuna rangatira, he tupuna parekura. Engari, i runga ano i nga ahuatanga o tenei ao, ka porohia ki a Ipu, kia taea ai te whanau me nga mahita te whakahua, kei he hoki i a ratou, koia na te take i porohia taku ingoa.
3. I heke mai ahau i ngā kāwai rangatira o Te Parawhau i a Tahuhu-potiki me Reipae. Mai i taua hononga ko Tua-auahi-roa, ko Tu Hurihia, ko Tu-Te-Angaanga, ko Tu-Hukea, ko Hoki-ki, ko Te-ara-kopeka, ko Teika-o-te-awa, ko Taura-ha-iti, ko Te-Pona-Harakeke, ko Tataia, ko Haumu, ko Kukupa. Ka moe a Kukupa i a Whitiao tana wahine tuatahi. Mai i taua hononga ko nga uri, ko Te-Ihi-o- te-rangi, ko Koke, ko Te Tirarau, ko Te Ipu Whakatara, ko Taurau. Ka moe Te Ipu Whakatara i a Pāpā, ko Tito, ka moe i a Kere, ko Kawenata. Ka moe i a Hariata ko Mihipo, ka moe i a Mori, ko ahau e tū ake nei.
4. Ki te taha o toku whaea he heke ano i nga kawai rangatira, ariki o Hokianga o Ngapuhi hoki. Me hoki atu koa ki te tupuna a Moka, I kona ka heke mai te arikitanga ki toku tupuna whaea, ki a Maraea. Mai i

Maraea ko tona kohine a Mere Heeni, na ka heke mai ki tona kotiro a Arihia, ki a Mori, tae noa ki ahau.

5. I whakaarohia e ahau, ee, kua oti te tuhi i nga korero hohonu mo nga Atua Wahine. I tuhia, i korerohia e o tatou waahine toa i nga marama taha ake nei, ki ahau nei, kua tuhia, kua korerohia, ko tatou tena. Pai atu me waiho era ki te taha ka huri aku whakaaro ki oku tupuna whaea me to matou mana motuhake.
6. Huakina te po uriuri, Huakina te po tangotango. Huakina te po i whakau ai te moe. Whiti roua i a Whiro. No Tu, No Rongo ra etahi tangata. Kia mau te rongu ki te kahui wairua. Kia mau te rongu ki te mata-ora. Whiti, whiti, whiti roua. Ka whiti rere ake Ki te whei ao ki te ao marama. Tihewa mauri ora.
7. I te timatanga, ko te Kore. Na te kore ko te Kowhao. Na te kowhao ko te kukune, Na te kukune ko te pupuke, Na te pupuke ko te Pu, ko te Weu, ko te More, ko te Rito, ko te Aka. Na te Aka ko te Rapunga, ko te Whainga, ko te Hihiri. Na te Hihiri ko te Mahara, ko te Hinengaro, ko te whakaaro, ko te Waananga, ko te Whe.
8. Na te Waananga me te Whe ko Te Atamai, ko Te Ahua. Na Te Atamai me Te Ahua, ko Te Wa me Te Atea. Mai i reira ka tae atu ki Hawaiki, te wahi e noho ai a Ranginui raua ko Papatuanuku. Ko Te Ira tane me Te Ira Wahine, Ka puta ki te whei ao ki te marama. Tihewa mauri ora.
9. Ka hoki kau ake ki te Kowhao, te wa i whakatoohia e Io te purapura hei timatanga o te taatai o te Ao. I reira hoki ka whakaurua te mauri ki roto hei whakakorikori i nga mea katoa, kia anga mua te taatai kia tae atu ki te Pu, kia tae atu ki te Hihiri. Ko te Hihiri ka taea te akiaki i nga mea katoa kia anga mua tonu. Na, ka hono Te Whe ki Waananga ka taea te Ao Wairua te whakaputa ke atu kia hono ki te taiao, te Ao Marama hoki. Na, ka whakaurua te mauri a Hauora ki roto i tena hononga ka puta ko Te Atamai me Te Ahua kia tae atu ki Hawaiki rangi te wahi nohoanga o Ranginui raua ko Papatuanuku.

10. E tatou ma, waahine, taane, this is what I know of the cosmos and the creation of our Ao, te Ao o hapu, te Ao o Iwi. And from the Ngapuhi Waananga, Io-Matua-Kore, a Io-Taketake, ara, Io-Waananga seeded te Kore and Te Kowhao laying down the foundation of all things in the beginning, the taatai of events, and mauri that was infused into the cosmic process at various stages of growth to begin the quest to fulfil the latent urge and potential towards being and self-realisation.
11. From Ngapuhi accounts, potential and urge, the energy that was already in existence in Te Kore with Io Taketake, just needed a bit of a korikori to get movement into the cosmic process, which continues to evolve, mai i te kore, ki te po ki te ao maarama.
12. Maori Marsden did state that Io communed with himself, why did he do that, it was to activate both the male and female elements. I think this is a critical piece of information that we should not leave out of our narrative. Our ability to co-create not just to be known as te whare tangata.

Honouring Our Tupuna

13. We can lay claim to the world of creation, our right as waahine. We are the inheritors of the seed and the process. We carry the seed which enters into conception, the cosmic process of growth and birth in Te Ao Maori. We, therefore, reclaim our maternal knowledge, mana and associated rituals for waahine and whanau in order to preserve the tapu of ‘whanau,’ and of childbirth itself.
14. It is within our rights to use those phrases I have used at the beginning of this narrative. I te Kore ko te Kowhao, ko te Pu, ko te Weu, ko te More, ko te Rito. This framework of creation or dare I say ‘birthing’ is of us, it is our story, we are the story. Who is it who dared to defined waahine as ‘te whare tangata’? That viewpoint in my opinion defines us as housing mankind with no reference to the process, the relationship with the creative powers and the counterpart in the creation. I believe we go further than te whare tangata. Waahine are the successors of the

creation as well as the process. It is time for us to clarify our definition of ourselves and claim it all back as mana wahine tuku iho.

15. How we define our mana tuku iho maybe better reflected in our self-determined obligations as Waahine Rangatira, Waahine Ariki. Our cosmological beginnings as waahine which are reflected in the process of conception, from the purapura (seed) that enters the framework of creation where the varying degrees of mana have been bestowed at varying times of our own creation.

Te Mana Wahine tuku iho

16. *Te Tataia ai te Puhi-Ariki*- indicates that when wahine was formed by Tane there was a transferal of Atua-like mana in the birth of the first wahine of nobility. It is by wahine that taatai is complete. It is by wahine that taatai is protected.
17. *Te hiringa-matua*:—mana matua, the power of Tane formed wahine, first formed was proclaimed by Tane to be the matua of tangata, who was to be born in this world. Hine did not exist at that point.
18. *Te hiringa-tawhito-rangi*:—specifies that Tane endowed the first wahine with tapu mana, mana of forming tangata, the sanction of birth.
19. *Te hiringa tupua*: -- wahine formed by nga Atua was endowed with tapu mana by Tane.
20. *Te Oro kohanga o Te Puhi Ariki* – for the birth of the first women of nobility. These phrases relate to Hine Ahu One at her formation where each movement mana was imbued.

Te Kunenga mai o te tangata

I roto i te ahuru-mowai

Ka taka te pae o huaki-pouri

Ko te whare hangahanga tena a Tane-nui-a-rangi

I te one i Kurawaka

Tataia ai te Puhi-ariki

Te Hiringa-tupua

Ka karapinepine te putoto i a ia ki roto i te whare wahi-awa

Ka whakawhetu tama i a ia

Ka riro mai a Rua i te pukenga, a Rua i te horahora

Ka hokai tama i a ia

Koia hokai Rauru-nui

Koia hokai Rauru-whiwhia

Koia hokai Rauru-maruaitu

Ka maro tama i te ara namunamu ki tai ao.

21. Mauri, tapu, taatai, mana, ahua, ha, hau, wairua, pumanawa are imbued into the forming child within te koopu o te wahine. Me penei hoki taku whakamarama: *Te Kunenga mai o te tangata*, the embryonic stage of the formation of tangata. *I roto i te ahuru-mowai*, the womb, the place where no harm can reach the child. *Ka taka te pae o huaki-pouri*, that before the womb has conceived, a barrier is fixed, so tapu it is, on conception her girlhood ceases and motherhood begins. As descendants of Ira Atua, we are a part of an inter-related universe.

Te Tupoupou

22. In keeping with the cosmos, I'd like to take us forward to the dying. A kuia in our hapu, Te Mahurehure ki Hokianga, is called by many names one of which is karanga-maha defined as mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt, sister and te Ukaipo.
23. An essential component of Karanga-maha is the Tupoupou (the watch or upholder, that's the best I could get it to in the English language). This position is reserved specifically for elderly waahine kua mutu te whanau peepi. She holds the responsibility and mana to provide protection for the Cosmic Space so that the spirits of our dead are given the rites of passage on their journey to Te Au o Te Reinga (the underworld abode) and Nga Rangi Tuhaha (upper-world abode). It also ensures that the space is honoured to allow the unrestricted ebb and

flow of the spiritual forces, **mana** that is manifested in the Arikitunga tuku iho and Rangatiratanga tuku Iho.

24. In the tangihanga the cosmic space is held by the tupoupou, an elderly female who sits beside the tupapaku who keeps vigil and does not leave the side of the tupapaku. She will not partake of any food or drink, she will keep watch, not only to ensure the 'cosmic space' is respected, but also to watch for any changes in the tupapaku. The tupoupou models the intense lament to arouse the emotions of visiting groups and raises the wailing pitch to assist the wairua on the Ara Wairua.
25. The Cosmos is the Universe. The Cosmic Space to Te Mahurehure is defined within the celestial spaces or esoteric realms. The Cosmic Space we are concerned with is the space in which our connection to the 'other' world is made. This cosmic space is the intangible space at the beginning of **Te Ara Whanui a Tane** in which the Spirits of our dead enter and trek ki **Te Hono i Wairua**, the gathering of the spirits, the place in the celestial space of Rauroha and the subterranean space of Te Reinga.
26. This is the role of our Tupoupou, waahine nahe in our hapu. Ka whanau mai te tangata ki tenei ao i te wahine, na, ma te wahine e tukuna atu te tangata ki te ara wairua i tona matenga. These kuia tupoupou are well respected in Te Mahurehure.
27. She will incite wailing to generate vibrations that will support the wairua on his/her hiikoi to the cosmic opening to the Ara Wairua. It is unfortunate that there are so many vibrations within the atmosphere that waahine will need to work harder. The tupoupou remained vigilant in the task of taking care of the space. But our modern tupoupou are getting out and about the marae, abandoned through colonisation. That's a shame as the wairua of our dead needs us more than ever to make it to the cosmic space.

Te Ururangi

28. Prior to entering the marae, manuhiri attending the tangihanga, first encounters the ritual of ururangi referred to as karanga in modern times. Karanga does not give the full meaning of ururangi, of waahine standing in front of the whare tangihanga waving raurau and calling. There is a striking difference between karanga and ururangi.
29. Ururangi in Te Mahurehure is referred only to tangihanga and when performed is known to evoke the Ara Wairua through a loud piercing pitch of the voice. The purpose of the ururangi is to provide the environment for the wairua to take its initial steps to the opening of the cosmic space on Te Ara Wairua. The reo ururangi, person performing the ururangi, enters a state of tapu equal to that of the manuhiri during the encounter.
30. The cosmic space or cosmic template arranged by nga Atua that encompasses the whole of the natural world, is a part of the cosmic order, an integral part of our traditional religion. As the ururangi is performed the manuhiri responds, usually a male in Ngapuhi, with rituals of poroporoaki, with women wailing as they approach the whare-mate. The Whare-mate literally means the house of death, where the principal mourners are arranged with the tupapaku.
31. The activity in the encounter between the reo ururangi and manuhiri is a part of our worldview, a ritual that assists the Wairua on his/her hiikoi. In Te Mahurehure the role belongs to waahine past childbearing stage, taane are known to perform the ritual but not in the way waahine do, but from the shadows in the whare. This does not happen often, but it has happened.

Te Mana Tuku Iho o oku Tupuna Waahine

32. He whakamarama tenei mo oku tupuna waahine, whaea hoki. He waahine tino Karangamaha ratou. He waahine ariki, waahine

rangatira, tohunga, matakite, parekura. Waahine kaiarahi taua whawhai, waahine mau patu, mau pu me te whakapohane. Tua atu i ena he reo ururangi, he reo karanga, te tupoupou, he whakatau manuhiri me te mahi karakia te hiki tapu. He tuahine ki te maha, he whaea ki te tini, he tupuna whaea hoki, he taonga no te iwi. Koia a ratou mahi i roto i o matou hapu, he maha.

33. Me hoki atu ahau ki muri, ki te waa o nga pakanga, o nga hapu i roto i o matou raorao, te pakanga me Ngati Whatua. Te waa i tu hoariri etahi o nga hapu o Hokianga me Ngati Whatua, i mua o te taenga mai o Pakeha. I tetahi o nga pakanga i taua wa e paa ana ki a Ngai Tuteauru (Ngai Tu) me ona kaitautoko, a Ngati Pakau, a Te Mahurehure, a Ngai Tupoto me nga hapu i te tonga o te wahapu o Hokianga.
34. I taua wa hiwa katoa nga kaitorotoro, i runga i nga maunga e karapoti ana i nga raorao, ka kitea i te taua o Ngati Whatua e heke mai ana i Maunganui, i Tutamoe hoki, mura katoa te one i te mangu. Mohio tonu a Ngai Tu, ee, haere mai ana te taua ra ki te patu i a ratou. Ka huihui te iwi, waahine, taane, i te mutunga ka tono atu ki a Tarutaru o Waireia¹, Kua tapirihia hei **Exhibit "A"** i te taha raki o te wahapu o Hokianga, kia heke mai. Te taenga mai o te rangatira ra me tona taua ka tahuri ki te keru waikeri, he tini i waenga i te taua o Ngai Tu me te putanga o Ngati Whatua, ka hipokina nga waikeri ki te rahurahu ka taaria kia puta mai a Ngati Whatua. Te taenga mai o Ngati Whatua ka haere te ope waahine ki mua o te taua, hore kau he kakahu, kiri-kau ana ki te taununu te taua, me te mohio ki te rikarika ka huakina, ki te mau ka patua ratou kia mate, he whakahawe, he kanga ra tena mahi ki te hoariri.
35. Na, ka taununu, ka whakamaua te riri e Ngati Whatua ka arumia. Ka huri nga waahine ki nga waikeri ka oma, ka peke katahi, karua tae atu ki te mutunga, kiihai i mau. I a Ngati Whatua e aru atu ana i nga waahine ka taka ki roto i nga waikeri, ka haere te taua tane o Ngai Tu

¹ Appendix 1.1.1

ka patua te hoariri kia mate, tini rawa i mate, te toenga i oma. Ngawari noa nga mahi a te taua taane i taua pakanga. Koia te pakanga mutunga o Ngai Tu i roto i to matou takiwa. Ka nui nga korero pena i roto i a matou me Ngati Whatua.

Te Mana o Tutairua

36. Tenei wahine rongonui a Tutairua, he tupuna whaea noku, he wahine puhi, he wahine rongonui i roto i Te Mahurehure, i a Ngati Pakau, Te Rauwawe, a Ngai Tu me nga hapu o te Wahapu o Hokianga. Ko aku kupu korero mona kua tuhia ki roto i WAI 1040 Te Paparahi ki te Raki, i a WAI 1525, kua taapiri ano ki te taha.² hei **Exhibit “B”**. Ko toku taatai ki te tupuna a Tuteauru kua tapiri ki te taha.³ hei **Exhibit “C”**. Me penei taku korero i te timatanga.
37. I a te Tino Rangatira a Tupoto e koroheke haere ana ko tona tino moemoea kia maua e ia te taniwha a Arai-te-uru, kia whakararatangia, kei mahi nanakia ki te iwi. Koia tana mahi i nga wa i a ia e haerere ana i runga ake i te kare o te wai, he rapu i te taniwha a Arai-te-uru kia mau i a ia. Kiihai i taea engari mohio tonu matou i a Tutairua te mana hei whakararata taniwha, te mea ko Araite-uru he hoa takaro no Tutairua.
38. Ka hiahia a Tutairua ki kake ake i nga rakau teitei, ma Araiteuru e hiki iho ki runga, mena ka hiahia a Tutairau kia piki ki runga i nga paringa ma Araiteuru ka hiki atu ki runga, koia ta raua mahi hoahoa. Tenei tupuna whaea he matakite. I a Tupoto e heke mai ana mohio tonu a Tutairua a hea ka tae ake te kaumatua, ka haere ki te piri, te huna i a ia me tana kuri mokai.
39. Mai i a Tutairau ko Tuteauru, mai i a Tuteauru ko Kuiawai, ko Mahuri, ko Kohuru, engari tona ingoa tuturu ko Whatarangi. Kuiawai

² Appendix 1.1.2

³ Appendix 1.1.3

being the oldest held the ability to speak for the people and land, to command respect by virtue of this ability.

Te Mana o Maraea

40. Te Kuri o te Wao, he wahine rongonui, he ariki o nga hapu o nga raorao puta atu ki Rawene. He tohunga rongoa, he matakite ra hoki, he tupuna whaea noku. Te Kuri o Te Wao married Irishman Thomas Cassidy and in doing so, was said to have become the first Maori woman to be baptized Catholic, as Maraea Cassidy (Katete). She however eventually renounced Catholicism and converted to the Methodist church as it was said that the haahi Weteriana supported her practice of rongoa and other spiritual rituals.
41. Maraea Te-Kuri-o-te-Wao Paehangi, born in Waima, was the daughter of one of the most prominent and influential Chiefs, both in Hokianga and Te Taiamai. Maraea was born in 1814 was said to be the first Maori wahine on the Catholic register. We are told Maraea had a beautiful singing voice and she was the daughter of Moka Paehangi and Kohinewai both of chiefly rank.
42. Her father Moka⁴ Kua tapirihia hei **Exhibit “D”** was the youngest of three brothers, all from a prominent Ngāpuhi chief, Paehangi. He was a notable Ngapuhi chief of Ngai Tawake descent, who along with his brothers Te Wharerahi and Rewa, formed the Patukeha hapu in memory of their slain mother Te Auparo and sister Te Karehu. Their mother and sister had been killed in an attack by the Ngare Raumati Iwi at the Okuratope Pa, (Waimate North) in 1800.
43. As one of Hongi Hika's generals and a distinguished warrior during the Musket Wars, he participated in a number of battles along with his two brothers. He was the only rangatira involved in three major events in 1835 to 1840, these being the Declaration of Independence, Hobsons Proclamations, and the Tiriti o Waitangi.

⁴ Appendix 1.1.4

44. Although Moka's name appears on the Tiriti o Waitangi in well-developed English cursive and the claim by academics and historians that he signed this document, his "mark" is notably absent. Maori academic Brent Kerehona claims that on close inspection, it seems as though Moka was a person of high significance. He was an original signatory to the Declaration of Independence the same document that the Crown had aimed to revoke, was the only Maori signatory to the Proclamation and after raising specific issues, as well as questioning Hobson about pre-emption and illegal land transactions at the meeting at Waitangi, appears not to have been satisfied with the explanations provided and chose not to sign the Tiriti with his "mark."
45. Moka married Hinewai of Te Mahurehure⁵ Kua tapirihia hei **Exhibit "E"** and between them they had two daughters. One was propelled into prominence and the other, Hoki, became a Catholic nun named Pietre as she was noticed by Bishop Pompallier for her leadership qualities. Moka commanded the lower reaches of the Waima - Taheke Rivers as far as the settlement of Rawene known as Opara i mua, and across the rivers to Moehau and Te Ngahengahe.
46. His other daughter, Maraea Kuri o te Wao, became one of the highest ranking waahine of Hokianga and accompanied her father to Australia on musket buying trips. She was purported to having caught sight of 15 year old convict Thomas Cassidy, who was a son of an Irish doctor, charged with spying for the *Sinn Fein*,⁶ and some say he stole a pig and was sentenced to five years hard labour and shipped to the colony of Australia.
47. Having seen him on one of their trips, Maraea asked her father to buy him for her. Still in her teens, she was to wait until Cassidy had served

⁵ Appendix 1.1.4 Te Taatai o Hinehuia

⁶ Sinn Féin is the largest Irish republican political party, and was historically associated with the IRA, while also having been associated with the Provisional IRA in the party's modern incarnation. The Irish government alleged that senior members of Sinn Féin have held posts on the IRA Army Council.

out his time. And arriving in Hokianga was traded up the river to be the Pakeha-Maori of the hapu, Te Mahurehure, a prominent position supposedly bringing new skills into the hapu. Maraea married Thomas Cassidy in Sydney on the 30th October 1835 at aged 19.

48. Like other waahine of prominence Maraea had her own working Pa which was known as Whaingenge, situated in the lower reaches of our valley, which is now the urupa for whanau who relates to Whaingenge.
49. Most Pakeha traders, adventurers, soldiers who planned to settle in Hokianga in the pre-Treaty period formed permanent relationships with daughters of chiefs for their own safety. As with all such relationships, Thomas Cassidy was expected to be the trader for Te Mahurehure as well as have reciprocal mana-relationships with Maraea and the children. This is that protection of taatai that I had spoken of before.
50. This reminds me, this is my own point of view, of how royalty of England works. To put it simply those who marry into royalty will be on the edge, and if they put a spanner in the works, they will be cast aside. It may not be proper to liken our tupuna process with others, but I couldn't help making the comparison.
51. Cassidy obviously put a spanner in the works as he betrayed that relationship by drunkenness and illicit relations with a widow in Rawene. The worst is that he molested his oldest daughter Mere. Maraea, it is said, laid-in-wait for him in her father's fortified village where they had their colonial house and assassinated him. She and daughters buried him in their open fireplace and cooked their food over the fire. Law of that time was in the hands of each tribal nation, and she was the law. She was judge and jury and she had the authority to decide on who lived and who died, and she carried out the sentence.
52. In those days, late 1700s early 1800s, alliances with Pakeha were highly valued for trading benefits and chiefs sometimes encouraged

their daughters into relationships of that nature. It was a time-honoured chiefly entitlement, exercised by both tane and waahine of high rank, for their daughters, but in our case, Maraea chose that path herself. In our terms of today she was making an investment. While waahine in hapu, like their European counterparts, may have been restricted in their choices of occupation and frequently treated as chattels this was not so of our tupuna Maraea.

53. Maraea had four daughters and three sons, only one son went on to have children. All daughters went on to marry tane to begin rangatira lines linking them to Te Mahurehure, her son who survived was the only one to carry the name Cassidy into the future.
54. Her first born, Mary Jane (Mere) was a fine and intelligent wahine, one of great beauty as were her sisters. She was to enter into a relationship with four Pakeha and one Tarara, most were skilled in various occupation. Although her first tane, Patrick Murray, was an Army Soldier from England with whom she had three children whilst living in Auckland, he was a scoundrel and was arrested for dealing arms with Maori in the Wairarapa, he also deserted the army. Their marriage was witnessed by Moses Whittingham. It is unclear whether he returned to England when his regiment returned as nothing further was heard of his whereabouts.
55. However, Mere later married Moses Whittingham in 1859 and had 9 children. She was with child at 7 months when Moses died after being kicked in the head by a horse when helping someone. At age 40 she was left to raise 9 children ages ranging between 2 years and 17 years. My Karani, Arihia was three years old at the time. Mere's first family were of age and already independent.
56. At his death the town of Parnell held a charity benefit fundraiser to support Mere and her nine children, due to either being pohara or Thomas Whittingham was a much-respected person in the community. However, when she died at the age of 75 sadly, she was

buried in what is called the Paupers section of the Waikumete cemetery. She delivered children with her 3 other husbands.

57. Her third youngest daughter, Arihia married Mita Hohepa of Te Uri o te Aho and lived in Te Mahurehure to start their family. She was known as karani Pono among her whanaunga. She was a native speaker, she lived by the rituals and tikanga of Te Mahurehure and she was a respected member of Te Mahurehure.
58. Arihia was a young mother at the beginning of the dog tax resistance, a resistance led by our leaders against paying land tax (on land held under Crown grant within five miles of a public road, so the roads were built within the distance), the wheel tax (on vehicles with certain tyre widths), and the dog tax, under which local authorities issued owners with a licensed collar for each dog at 2s. 6d. and they issued seasonal restrictions on hunting native birds.
59. Between 1894 and 1898 pigeons and ducks were shot out of season and offered to law officers as a form of challenge. Non-payers of the dog-tax were fined, refused to pay, were summonsed for debt collection and refused to appear. They wanted the right to live as Maori without interference, and to make use of their traditional resources as guaranteed by the Tiriti o Waitangi.
60. The summonses kept piling up and the people of Te Mahurehure became deeply disturbed as new tactics were used by the council, one of which was the threat made by Menzies that if they did not pay they would be sent to an ice-bound country where their bones would crack from the extreme cold. They would not have known what ice or snow was but they were extremely familiar with the phrase “Te Anu Matao.” The people were in such a state of terror that many, including all women and children, took to sleeping in the bush. Arihia was among those who had to make shelter in different areas nightly for herself and her 5 children, for five years, for safety in

case the law came in stealth at night and take their children while they were sleeping.

61. Within the five-year period Arihia gave birth to a stillborn and did not have any other children within that phase of their existence. Her next birth was recorded in 1899. The leaders were incarcerated in 1898. This is telling in regard to the conditions in which they were living. This would have been the worst period of their lives as poverty began to bite and health issues began taking its toll.
62. Romana Te Paehangi, a Rangatira of Te Mahurehure announced that the people would not pay the land tax, the dog tax and other taxes, and would not stop shooting pigeon. He stated, 'we will die on account of these taxes.' In fact, many did die but mainly through poor health. The waahine, rekereke and the elderly were alone in finding food to feed the whanau as the abled taane had to make sleepers to pay off the debt incurred over the five years leading up to the custody of their leaders. Still, they held onto their convictions including Arihia. I remember her korero about their life during those years and the hardships they suffered. She often spoke about the tough life in the gumfields, yet there was no animosity in her voice.
63. She went on to having 9 more children after the resistance, my mother being the potiki. Yet it was my aunt, her older sister who lived through the dog-tax years that emerged as the outspoken one of the whole whanau. She was a small wahine in stature, she did not give into any tane domination either from her tane or her eight tungane, nor did she allow herself to become entirely obedient to many of the oppressive systems imposed on them. She took a stance on issues and was outspoken on the marae as well as in whanau hui in our home. Our mother, being the youngest was comfortable with her life and did not get involved in the debates, yet it was my aunt who caught my attention as a young person, and I have not moderated my stance to this day.

Te Mana Motuhake o Wahine

64. It is interesting to note that nga waahine of Te Mahurehure were extremely independent from their tane counterparts as explained in our narratives. In the early days, early 1800s, there were two occupied paa at the mouth of the Waima River further on from Whaingenge, pa belonging to Maraea. These two pa represented the degree of struggle over resources and power our tupuna waahine were involved in.
65. The pa, Whakataha, was built by waahine and occupied by waahine which included Ngauru, the wife of the Chief Te Kiripute. It was here that Samuel Marsden saw, among other things ta-moko puoro being done on waahine by a wahine, Marsden mistook her for a widow. In actual fact her tane, the chief, Te Kiripute, was still very much alive and living in his own pa, Tapere, further west a distance of about 12 kilometres away.
66. Later, another pa was built close to Whakataha by Te Kiripute and named it Otahiti. When he moved into his new pa the waahine move out of Whakataha en-masse to escape what some of us might now call male domination.
67. A tattooist, wahine carver Pakiri from Mangamuka was taught whakairo and ta-moko with other tane and waahine by a master carver, Whatarangi. He was the youngest brother of Kuiawai, rangatira o Te Mahurehure, which reminds me of an incident I experienced while teaching in an all-girls school in Auckland.
68. Their moto was 'Girls can do anything.' I was sold on their motto and believed fully that of course girls could do anything including bone carving. So, I was so sure of myself that it won't be a problem I'll pop up to the Hoani Waititi marae in West Auckland and ask to be trained by those Ngapuhi men who were running programmes on the marae, it's okay they're Ngapuhi.

69. I went directly to my whanaunga Gus, he was from Waimate North and Ngapuhi. I politely asked if he would take me on as a student, to learn to bone carve. He laughed and laughed he could hardly get the words out, 'teach you? a woman?' Heck I didn't see the funny side and I was annoyed and left him. On my way home to Mt Roskill I had an idea. I turned around and drove out to Henderson and went to a jeweller I knew and asked him to teach me to make jewellery from bone. He was pakeha. It was from that humble beginning I became a bone-carver and so did my akoranga.

Te Mana tapu o te wahine

70. Moetu Takirau-Makiha he wahine matakite, he tohunga rongoa, tohunga hiki tapu, he wahine rongonui i roto i nga hapu o Hokianga me te Taiamai he karani no matou. Our Urupa, Okahu, was considered one of the most extremely tapu burial places in our valleys, so tapu that the only times people were allowed in there was te tanu tupapaku and to clean the graves and cut the grass on boxing day each year. The rituals on entry and exit were very strict, Karani Moetu will stand outside the gate of the Urupa, she would check our hands to ensure we did not bring anything out, she'd send us down the bank to the awa te horoi, then back to her where she would what we called 'paraoa' us. She would tap cooked bread over our heads, bodies and hands. Nothing was to be taken in and nothing was to be brought out. If anything was taken in it could not be brought out.

71. The grave diggers faced a much more onerous task, they were to wait around the urupa until mid-night, strip off and totally immerse themselves in the awa in all seasons. That done Karani Moetu was there to 'paraoa' them. When a person died all their belongings were taken to a certain burial cave-like space in the urupa and left there, at her directions, the normal rituals took place there.

72. That practice continued until she and four other kuia of Te Mahurehure decided that the rituals must be reduced before they

passed on, so they got together to perform the hiki tapu ritual to lift the extremes from the urupa as there would not have been a person in our parent's generation capable of continuing the rituals, not tohunga enough maybe.

73. Now this Kuia Rongonui was known mo te hahu koiwi. My older brother and cousins who were around 16 years old, along with adult men and kaumatua were selected to gather koiwi in our ngahere. They had to attend a hui at the camp-site to prepare for the task, they were not permitted to return to their homes, they were placed under the strict laws of tapu. Koiwi was gathered at night. They had no light, no torches, only a bottle of whiskey. In pitch black each one of them were given the gift to be able to hear the sounds of wailing. Their task was to follow the sounds holding out the bottle of whiskey so that they could see the bones which lit up in the darkness. One cousin couldn't handle it and had to be released. He had to go through a cleansing ritual with Karani Moetu before he was allowed out. They spent a week in the state of tapu under the watchful eye of our Karani tohunga. They had special people, both wahine and tane, to cook their meals and to feed them from a distance.

74. Our second wahine mana motuhake is Maria Romana, wife of our tohunga Haki Romana. She was a powerful speaker on all our marae in the valley and she had speaking rights on the marae in Waitangi, in the hapu o Ngati Rahiri. She would get up and whakatau manuhiri and adhered to all the rituals in our hapu. She was a writer of apakura, one of which is still sung to this day, memorialising her heartbreak in apakura.

Haki moeroa maranga mai ki runga.

Tenei o iwi ka u, ki uta

Nga tai pakipaki ki waho o Moehau

Nga tai whakahoki hoki nana koe

I hari atu e.

Kua tae ra koe ki runga o Whaingenge

Tahuri mai o mata, titiro ki o iwi e
Tu mai kona mihi mai tuara
Maku koe e ringi-ringi ki te wai roimata
Hei pono te mahara tena ra koe
Kei te koinga mai ki te haukainga
He tangi ra na o iwi e
E Haki he aha ra i tangihia e
Ko te ngaro i nga tau he ngaro hoki mai
Ko te ngaro i to tinana, he ngaro oti atu i.


75. Before I end, I would like to share with you my decision to enter into the Mana Wahine Inquiry. It started out with I do not think I really had anything constructive to say, to, well maybe, but I don't know 'what.' My struggle was simply because I have not put myself out there as a wahine of influence, as I was approached to put a brief in. I appreciate people's confidence in me, confidence I did not really have earlier. It took a while for me to realise that I did have a lot to say.
76. While writing up my brief of evidence for WAI 2750 the Housing Kaupapa Inquiry under WAI 2710, I came across a blog about the incarceration of our waahine Maori, from a pakeha male who describes himself as a professional blogger who wrote. Waitangi 2021 – We've all been failed by the Treaty' staring me in the face on my computer, which propelled me into this inquiry.
77. That blog caught my attention. What he wrote shook me up quite a bit, and I followed it through by asking for the right to use his blog. His reply was, 'Comrade!! Feel free to use anything in your struggle.' Within the blog he addressed the kinds of treatment waahine Maori are receiving whilst incarcerated, I was livid by what I had discovered in my research.
78. Wahine inmates were charged for arson in the Auckland women's prison, a deliberate attempt to gain attention to the dehumanising practices at the Auckland women's prison, which constitutes cruel,

brutal, degrading treatment and inhumane practices, on waahine inmates. They failed to provide adequate care for a wahine before she died of cancer, assaulting waahine inmates, and throwing waahine into solitary confinement inflicted on them by male and female guards of the prison.

79. I attach as **Exhibit “F”** a press release by Amnesty International.
80. An asthmatic wahine, ‘KC’, was repeatedly pepper sprayed in her cell. Six guards wearing masks, shields and helmet stood outside her cell door while releasing 4 cans of pepper spray into her small cell and placing towels under the door to prevent spray from escaping. This is what the guards call a cell-buster extraction. After 20 minutes the guards will enter the cell to remove a lifeless wahine suffering from the effects of the pepper spray, from the cell. KC, at her trial said in evidence that she had to show used sanitary products to be given a new one to both male and female guards. She also told the court that if she needed to get clean clothes she was to undress in front of the officers, kneel down and they slip in a new set of clothes. When this went on for months and months, she told that court that she was about to lose it.
81. Another wahine, ‘MB’, had spent many days in the prison's segregation unit. She suffered intense depression, having to call in the Maori Chaplain for help her cope. She was consigned to segregation for four months and after three months she attempted suicide.
82. MB was examined by a nurse after the suicide attempt and moved to the Intensive Support Unit. But she was moved back to the pound the next day and left there for several more weeks.
83. At the arson trial another inmate, ‘PR’ recounted her life in the pound. She recalled what guards would instruct her to do before they would give her food. She told the court that she was to place her

forehead on the ground, lock her arms and her legs in the back and lay her face down on the concrete right next to the toilet.

84. I have attached a media article relating to these wahine as **Exhibit “G”**.
85. There is more but this will give you a good picture of what is happening to waahine Maori in prisons. Sixty-eight percent of the waahine in the Women's Prison in Auckland are Maori, making them the most incarcerated group of indigenous waahine on earth, which is a real concern.’
86. I wrote, ‘which is a real concern’ so I did not sound too forthright, in actual fact I was livid, I am still outraged over the behaviour towards and treatment of waahine Maori, allowed by the system and legally practiced by male guards of the prison. How did it get to that point? Where are our Maori MPs, by doing nothing they become perpetrators in the action?
87. Those waahine are our mothers and future mothers of this nation of ours, what is truly happening to our waahine Maori? If I can I will enter this into any other claim I make until something is done for our waahine. I am aware there has been an inquiry into the system, regardless of what has been addressed, what those waahine were put through should not go unanswered. It is brutality, it is torture and criminal in my view, and it shouldn’t be happening in this country. He mana ano ta te mana wahine.
88. Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa



IPU TITO-ABSOLUM