

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

**WAI 2700
WAI 2260**

IN THE MATTER of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER of the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry (Wai 2700)

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)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF REREATA MAKIHA

2 July 2021

KĀHUI
LEGAL

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WELLINGTON

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Waitangi Tribunal

7 Jul 2021

Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

I, Rereata Makiha of Hokianga, say:

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Rereata Makiha. My iwi are Te Mahurehure, Te Aupōuri and Te Arawa. I am a Māori astronomer and leading authority on the Maramataka. I am currently working towards the revitalisation and validation of kōrero tuku iho and mātauranga Māori particularly around the Maramataka and environmental restoration. From the age of 18 years old, I spent eight years being taught in the ancient whare wānanga. I have held roles as a Kaiārahi Tikanga Māori at the Auckland Council and Kaumātua at the University of Auckland Business School. I am a former broadcaster with more than 40 years of experience as a reporter, news editor, director and television presenter at TVNZ and Māori Television.
2. This evidence outlines the following roles held by wāhine Māori in traditional society:
 - (a) navigators;
 - (b) keepers of traditional knowledge through whare wānanga; and
 - (c) gardeners.
3. This evidence only provides a snapshot of some of the kōrero about these kaupapa. It aims to highlight the essential and valued roles of wāhine Māori in traditional Māori society, and how they often complement the roles of tāne Māori.

WĀHINE MĀORI AS NAVIGATORS

4. In traditional Māori society, wāhine Māori were expert navigators.
5. According to the iwi and hapū of Hokianga such as Te Hikutu, the role of wāhine Māori as navigators can be traced back to Kupe. Instead of “Kupe” being just one person associated with the “discovery” of Aotearoa, the term “Kupe” was a general title given to expert navigators.
6. In Hokianga traditions, there were four Kupe who all had lead roles in discovering and navigating around Aotearoa and one of them was a

wahine. I am aware of the names of three of these “Kupe”: Kupe Rangi; Kupe Manawa; and Kupe Nuku. Only two of the Kupe – the third and fourth – navigated all over Aotearoa. Kupe Nuku named places in Wellington including Matiu (Somes Island).

7. It is thought that the third Kupe was the wahine. Some think it was Kuramārōtini, but I do not think this is the case.
8. The story about the four Kupe is currently being researched and discovered. I am aware that Jade Maipi has recorded interviews with kaumātua in Hokianga to find out more about the third Kupe. Details are expected to be published in September in a video segment for Te Taumata o Kupe, a digital interactive self-directed learning centre, being built at Te Mahurehure Marae in Auckland.
9. I am not aware of the traditions of other iwi outside of the Hokianga having more than one Kupe. I have not spoken to other iwi outside of the Hokianga about whether they had wāhine navigators.
10. Traditionally, both wāhine and tāne were navigators of waka and shared some of the same roles on waka. They also held distinct roles. For example, it was only wāhine who could karanga to the moana to communicate with the atua. This role was essential as a waka could not travel anywhere without a passenger who could karanga to the moana. The role of karanga was important as a means of communication with the atua.
11. The oro (pitch) of the karanga was the main way of communicating. Another space where you hear wāhine doing karanga as a means of communication is at tangihanga. You can tell who was coming onto the marae because of the oro of the karanga. Unfortunately, you do not hear this deep and rich form of karanga much anymore.
12. I do not know exactly why some iwi believe that only tāne belong on waka. I think it is related to the story of Nukutaiwhiti who led the Ngātokimatawhaorua waka which left Hawaiki for Aotearoa when it had not been completed and was still under tapu. This is probably why all the maramataka experts were on board the companion waka Māmari, which was captained by Ruanui.

13. Based on the korero I know, wāhine have always been navigators and play an important role on waka. In contemporary times, I know of very talented wāhine navigators. The late Hema Siope led the navigation of a waka from Rapanui (Easter Island) back home to Aotearoa using traditional knowledge, without any navigating instruments.

WĀHINE MĀORI AS KEEPERS OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH WHARE WĀNANGA

14. Whare wānanga were traditional places of higher learning. Both wāhine and tāne held traditional knowledge through whare wānanga. Certain mātauranga is connected with te ira wāhine and other mātauranga with te ira tāne. An example of mātauranga particularly associated with te ira wāhine is te taha wairua and connections with mate and the other side (matakite).
15. Wāhine, and especially kuia, are experts at communicating with the other side. They can do this as if the spirits are living in the real world and as if they are having a conversation with them. It was a regular thing and was passed down through generations. Some of our young ones can do it today.
16. Wāhine are experts at fare-welling the wairua (spirit) of the mate (dead). A lot of kōrero was passed down through whare wānanga that allowed wāhine to send the wairua of the mate back to the spiritual realm. This included knowledge that everyone has two ira – te ira wāhine and te ira tāne. Te ira wāhine – also known as mareikura – returns to the spiritual realm of Hinenuitepo and the house of Matangireia. Te ira tāne – also known as whatukura – returns to the spiritual realm of Tamanuitera and Ranginui and the house of Rauroha.
17. The puna roimata or the māturuturu roimata – a deep tangi (cry) – was only implanted in te ira wāhine. This type of tangi was important for fare-welling the dead and as an act of healing for whānau. The oro of the tangi was an important means of communication. For example, when the mate was close family, the pitch would go up. Here is an

example of a poroporoaki taught to us the Hokianga Whare Wānanga that speaks of the importance of the “puna roimata”:

He poroporoaki tenei mo koutou kia whakatakina atu o koutou maatua i te mate. Te hunga na ratou i whakato iho nga rakau nei a Puna Te Aroha a Maturu Roimata me Te Rangimarie ki runga ki nga iwi mahuetanga iho, He ohaaki ka hora ki runga i te iwi i mau ai te rongotaketake. Haere nga mate.

There is a recognition here that waahine were the everlasting peace makers. To settle disputes or grievances waahine were often married off to other tribes “ki te hohou i te rongo” or te rongotaketake, everlasting peace. An example was the marriage of Matire Toha from Te Waihangehange and Ngati Kuta to Kakati (Potatau Te Wherowhero’s younger brother) to settle the dispute between Ngapuhi and Tainui.

18. During the time of tangihanga, our kuia and wāhine used to sit quietly for three days, only drink puna wai and did not eat. This mātauranga cannot be replicated by tāne and I do not think it is right when tāne sit next to our mate these days.
19. Wāhine are traditionally matakite and certain things could only be done with their guidance, including both physical healing (broken bones, cracked skulls, skin and stomach ailments) and spiritual healing (using special water and medicines, and karakia). They could commune with the “other world”. Our grandmother was an example of those kuia who could see and speak to the matangaro or hidden. I believe it was their attention to details in keeping the tapu realm separate from the noa that enabled them to do this.
20. Some tāne were matakite and had these abilities, but they did not have access to some realms. It goes back to the balance between te ira wāhine and te ira tāne in te ao Māori; night and day. Te pō is the heke wāhine and te ao is te rerenga tāne.

WĀHINE MĀORI AS GARDENERS

21. The traditional Māori world view recognises the relationship between the spiritual world and the natural environment. Food was the key driver for cultivation because it was so important to Māori survival and played an important part in spiritual rituals as a sanctifier of tapu and noa. Food brings people back into the safe state of noa restoring physical and spiritual balance. Noa frees something from tapu or

restriction and negates tapu which is inseparable from Māori cultural practices.

22. Food gardens were considered tapu from the time of planting right through to harvest.
23. The role of wāhine Māori as gardeners for the production of kai involved significant leadership in managing and controlling the planting, growing and harvesting, sorting and distributing the harvest, and bringing people together to share kai and wānanga to plan for the year ahead.
24. This evidence about the role of wāhine as gardeners is based on the perspective of my whānau.
25. Wāhine and kuia held knowledge that meant they would choose the days to plant seeds, and directed how to plant seeds. The tāne would set out the tāpapa – the seed bed for kumara plants. The wāhine had the main job of ensuring everything was planted correctly.
26. Kuia also had the job of making kete for the harvested kai. This would take place for two weeks prior to harvesting.
27. A day before harvesting kai, a hāngī would be laid down consisting of the kai that was to be harvested. For example, if kumara was to be harvested, the hāngī would consist of kumara. It was only the day after the hāngī that we could harvest the kumara.
28. Wāhine and kuia played a central ceremonial role at the time of harvesting. They would recite karakia and this was an essential step in the process – we would not touch the harvest until wāhine and kuia had completed the ceremony. The wāhine were the only ones who could recite the karakia.
29. These karakia recite whakapapa back to wāhine atua. Nowadays, however, we are struggling to find and maintain these traditional karakia as kuia are passing away.
30. Even though we have lost the karakia, we have just started to go back to this practice. Just two weeks ago my whānau laid down a hāngī for the upcoming kumara harvest.

31. Traditionally, tāne would recite a whakatapatapa – a rhythmic chant – when digging up the kai. Following this, the wāhine would be in charge of the kōmiri (sorting or separating). Wāhine would separate the kai out into piles: one to get eaten straight away; another to be used for seeds; another to be set aside to tautoko the marae; and another to be set aside for manuhiri – the biggest kumara to show off.
32. During this process, it was only the wāhine that could touch the seeds. There were special wāhine who were experts at selecting the good seeds. I am unaware of why this was, but it might have been because tāne can be too rough with the delicate seeds.
33. After kai had been harvested, there would be a hākari, including a wānanga that could last weeks (usually two). Each group would bring kai from their area and it was an extremely important event to share kai and seeds, to bring people together, and to plan for the year ahead. A lot of this process was led by kuia.
34. We lost these practices increasingly over the 19th and 20th centuries as our people lost the gardens and went to the city to find jobs. The practices and knowledge were learnt as a part of growing up around the garden, but this was not possible when people left.
35. Wāhine also played important roles in gathering resources outside of the garden – they were experts at gathering rongoā from the forest. I am not an expert in this area; however I am aware of some of the practices.

36. One practice in particular was that the wāhine would always collect leaves for rongoā from the side of a plant that is facing the sunrise. Leaves from the other side were used for tauā/mate to put on the head. I am aware of a story where a kōtiro collected leaves from both sides of a puriri tree and took them to her kuia. The kuia was able to separate the leaves into two piles – one from each side of the plant – to ensure they were used appropriately.

DATED this 2nd day of July 2021



REREATA MAKIHA