
**KEI MUA I TE AROARO O TE RÖPŪ WHAKAMANA I
TE TIRITI O WAITANGI****BEFORE THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL****WAI 2700****WAI 2925****WAI 2930****WAI 3029**

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 Sir Edward Taihākurei Durie, Kaa Kereama and Anne Kendall on behalf of the New Zealand Māori Council (Wai 2925);

a claim by Pauline Vahakola-Rewiti for herself and Rongopai Māori Committee of Otara (Wai 2930); and

a claim by Grace Hoet (Wai 3029).

**JOINT BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ELAINE BEVAN, JANE WILSON
AND NGANEKO WILSON**27 July 2022

RECEIVED

Waitangi Tribunal

27 Jul 22Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

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E TE KAIWHAKAWĀ, TĒNĀ KOE.

Introduction

1. This joint brief of evidence of Elaine Bevan, Jane Wilson and Nganeko Wilson is filed in support of the following claims:
 - a) Wai 2925, a claim by Sir Edward Taihākurei Durie, Kaa Kereama and Anne Kendall on behalf of the New Zealand Māori Council;
 - b) Wai 2930, a claim by Pauline Vahakola-Rewiti for herself and Rongopai Māori Committee of Otago; and
 - c) Wai 3029, a claim by Grace Hoet.
2. This brief of evidence gives our whānau kōrero about two of our wāhine rangatira tupuna; Waitohi and Topeora.

The Life of Waitohi

3. Waitohi was the daughter of Ngāti Toa rangatira Werawera, and his second wife Parekōwhatu, of Ngāti Raukawa. Waitohi was born in the Waikato, in the late 1700's.
4. Her brother, the youngest of her four siblings, was Te Rauparaha. Te Rauparaha was the teina, and so he and his children did not have the same whakapapa, until this came in from the Te Arawa side. Nohorua was their brother.
5. Waitohi was married Te Rākaherea, brother to Pikoterangi, the King of Ngāti Toa, and begat Te Rangitopeora and Te Rangihaeata. Te Rākaherea was of higher rank than Waitohi. Their marriage gives us an indication of her character, her mana and her whakapapa, particularly in comparison to Te Rauparaha; Waitohi married into a higher family than Te Rauparaha. In those days, the marriages were arranged, based on your mana, whakapapa and political advantages.
6. During the ongoing conflicts between Ngāti Toa and many Waikato iwi in the early 1800's, Waitohi's extraordinary leadership skills came to light.

7. We only know of one speech she made when Ngāti Toa Rangatira were cornered by Ngāti Maniapoto. Ngāti Toa had assembled at Ōhāua-te-rangi pā, and a group of Waikato iwi had surrounded them, they were pinned down. Waitohi had just lost two of her own daughters, killed by Ngāti Pou, who were amongst the attackers. Waitohi recognised her Ngāti Te Ata whanaunga within the war party, and stepped in to prevent the attack. Waitohi made a speech on behalf of Ngāti Toa, pleading for peace. She was successful, and Ngāti Toa were able to continue back to Kāwhia. We would have been devastated if it wasn't for her.
8. Waitohi's husband, Te Rākaherea, fought in a battle in Waikato, the largest battle at the time, where he died. His brother, Pikoterangi, had started the war. After he died, Te Rauparaha's success was due to her, and hinged on her counsel.

Waitohi and Te Rauparaha

9. Following Te Rauparaha's successful battles against different iwi across the lower North Island, Ngāti Toa were settling in the early 1820's on Kāpiti Island and on the nearby mainland. At this time, Waitohi said to Te Rauparaha; now, you need to secure your conquest.
10. It is unlikely that Ngāti Toa would have been able to hold the conquered lands if Ngāti Raukawa and Taranaki did not come down and secure the conquest. Te Rauparaha wanted to bring Ngāti Raukawa down from the Waikato to help them hold the conquered lands. But he did not have the mana and the whakapapa to call them away from their whenua. Ngāti Raukawa refused to heed the call from Te Rauparaha, but they would listen to Waitohi. It was Waitohi who called for Ngāti Raukawa to come down to secure the conquest.
11. Te Whatanui, a Ngāti Raukawa rangatira, had originally gone to the East Coast with Tuwharetoa, Te Heuheu, where they were defeated and many Ngāti Raukawa were thrown in the lake. Once Te Whatanui had been defeated, he turned his focus to his whanaunga in the south – Te Rauparaha and Ngāti Toa.

12. Waitohi also asked Te Ahukaramū to bring Ngāti Raukawa down, as he also would not have listened to Te Rauparaha. She asked and he agreed, stating the whakatauki 'my back is strong enough to carry them!'. It was Waitohi's invitation that carried weight and convinced her whanaunga to make the great heke south.
13. Her whanaunga of Ngāti Huia, Te Manahi, stated 'We came at the desire of Waitohi. Had Te Rauparaha called, the people would not have assented. It was at the word of Waitohi.'
14. Waitohi was matakete, however Waitohi never put out wero or anything similar. It is clear that while Waitohi was alive, there was no infighting between Te Rauparaha and Rangihatea. Rangihatea took more of a leading role after mothers' death, and had two skirmishes with Te Rauparaha, one at Taupo pā and one at Ōtaki.
15. There is little whānau kōrero about her managing that relationship, but we know that there was never any squabbling between the two when she was alive. Te Rauparaha had avoided these small skirmishes, with Waitohi guiding him. She was his counsel.
16. It was Waitohi's mana that kept everything together at this time. When she passed, civil war descended straight after her tangi, including increasing division between Rangihatea and Te Rauparaha. The Taranaki tribes attacked Ngāti Raukawa directly after her tangi. There was peace amongst Raukawa and Taranaki tribes while she was alive; it was her keeping everything together.
17. This type of relationship between wāhine and tāne, of balance, support and guidance was common at this time. Waitohi had a lot of influence over Te Rauparaha, and his success. It was a family affair.

The Mana of Waitohi

18. It wasn't Waitohi's whakapapa that helped her lead, it was her natural ability. It was unfortunate for other iwi who did not have many wāhine military strategists, that they didn't have this leadership. Waitohi's political acumen is evidenced by the different focuses of her son, Rangihatea, and Te Rauparaha;

her son was more politically-minded, while Te Rauparaha was more focused on the commercial aspects of leadership.

19. In Waitohi's time and iwi, wāhine it was common for wāhine to be political and military strategists. In fact, in Ngāti Toa Rangatira, wāhine were considered the best strategists. Women held big roles in terms of warfare, that strategist mātauranga was carried by them. The strength for tāne was military prowess, and Ngāti Toa Rangatira was known more for keeping iwi well stocked.
20. Before colonisation, male and female had separate rankings, it was teina/tuakana not brothers above sisters, and vice versa.
21. So influential, well-respected and widely known was Waitohi, that at her tangi the artist George French Angas came across to Mana Island to draw her tomb.

The Life of Te Rangitopeora

22. Te Rangitopeora was the daughter of Waitohi and Te Rākaherea, born in Kawhia in the early 1800's.
23. Te Rangitopeora had six husbands, she demanded that her brother and uncle kill some of them, and she killed one herself.
24. Te Rangitopeora spoke on the marae, in her time there was not a golden rule for who could speak, it depended on the person's mana, the rank of the wāhine. According to Te Ware, Rangihaeta got sick of Te Rangitopeora's demands to speak on the marae etc.
25. Te Rangitopeora signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi for politics. She questioned many pakeha who had married into Ngāti Toa about Te Tiriti, one of whom told her "well one day your descendants will know how great you are". It was well within her right to sign for Ngāti Toa and Ngāti Raukawa, and to secure her own mana. This was a display of mana of wāhine in those days.

The Status of Wāhine at the time of Waitohi and Te Rangitopeora

26. Throughout history, there have been powerful wāhine. Ngāti Toa were very lucky to have both Waitohi and Te Rangitopeora around. Both women played a serious role in Ngāti Toa and Ngāti Raukawa histories.
27. Ngāti Toa have two wāhine who signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi; Te Rangitopeora and Te Rau o Te Rangi. Te Rauparaha signed it twice, and Rangihaeata refused to sign unless his sister signed. Te Rauparaha said just sign it, while Rangihaeata was focused on being accountable.
28. Te Rangitopeora signed on behalf of Ngāti Huia, even though she was Ngāti Toa. The ways in which our tupuna signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi can be complicated and interpreted in many different ways.
29. Our tupuna Tuparahaki, married Kokumara, ancestor of Ngāti Toa Rangatira. When he was killed, she put out a wero: whoever avenges husband I will marry. Wāhine Māori carried a lot of mana before colonisation, and still do to this day. Wāhine like Te Rangitopeora, Waitohi and Tuparahaki were not uncommon back in those days.
30. Whakapapa knowledge was passed down mainly by wāhine at this time. Those, wāhine and tāne both, who demonstrated skill with whakapapa kōrero were identified in childhood.

Wāhine and whenua

31. We know that Waitohi undertook all the land dividing for the lands taken by Te Rauparaha and Ngāti Toa Rangatira. Waitohi divided all lands between Ngāti Raukawa and Taranaki, allotting areas out of the first wave of conquest. There were also a large number of disputes over the conquered lands, and Waitohi was at the forefront of settling them.
32. Waitohi was also heavily involved in the decision that Kukutauaki Stream be the Te Āti Awa – Ngāti Raukawa boundary.
33. Te Rangitopeora's granddaughter, Henni Te Whiwhi did all the land transactions for Ngāti Huia. She was the one who told Ngāti Toa to drop out of agreement with Anglicans if they didn't honour it.

34. It was common for wāhine Māori at Waitohi's time to be involved in land divisions. All possessions were considered noa and therefore belonged to women. The land is our mother, it is Papatuanuku, and therefore belongs to women.

Dated at Wellington this 27 July 2022

Elaine Bevan

Jane Wilson

Nganeko Wilson