

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

Wai 2700

Wai 1940

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 Jane Mihingarangi Ruka Te Korako on behalf of the Grandmother Council of the Waitaha Nation, including the three hapū of Ngāti Kurawaka, Ngāti Rakaiwaka and Ngāti Pakauwaka

**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF MARY-ELLEN ELLE ARCHER
CONFIDENTIAL VERSION**

15 August 2022

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Waitangi Tribunal

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Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

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I, **MARY-ELLEN ELLE ARCHER**, Director, of Ōtautahi, state:

Introduction

1. I present this Brief of Evidence (“BoE”) in support of the claim of the Waitaha Grandmother Council of Aotearoa. I am a Māori woman of Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Porou, and Ngāpuhi iwi. My whakapapa is set out below.
2. Ko Mongero te maunga, ko te Huihui te awa, ko te Ngātokimatawhaorua te waka, ko Kaingahoa te Marae, ko Tumanako te wharenuī, ko Ngai te Waka ki Waoku te hapū, ko Rahiri te tangata, ko Ngāpuhi te iwi. I te taha o toku whaea ko Waiapu Winiata Whiu, rawa ko Kohe Erena te Maunga Waiti, ko Aroha Anne Wilson, nee Whiu toku mama, ko Hinerangi Whiu toku tīpuna whaea. Ko Tuterangi Whiu toku tīpuna matua. Ko Mouhau te maunga, Ko ohinemuri raua ko waihou te awa, Ko Tainui te waka, Ko te pai o hauraki te marae, Ko Te Rangatahi te wharekai, Ko Ngāti Tangata raua ko Ngāti Pinenga te hapu, Ko Marutuahu te tangata, Ko Ngāti Tamaterā te iwi. Ko Tetekura Rapana Paraku toku tīpuna. Ko Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Porou oku iwi, ko Elle Archer toku ingoa.
3. I am a professional Director and governance professional, sitting on multiple Boards within multiple sectors today. I sit on the Boards of the Central Plains Water Trust, ChristchurchNZ, ELG Ltd, Ako Ōtautahi Learning City Christchurch, Selwyn District Council, and Nulca NZ. I am also a PhD candidate at the University of Canterbury, examining impact-led governance.
4. I connect my experiences with the mana and manaaki of my tīpuna who were leaders in the times before Te Tiriti. Mana wahine te rangatiratanga is all connected.
5. The following evidence is based on discussions with my mother, my grandmother, my aunties, and other women in our whanau. We talked about mana wahine, atua wahine, and our tupuna wahine. We also discussed our mana as women pre and post colonisation. It has been a journey, so I feel the evidence below is important in telling my story.
6. I have read and understand the Tribunal’s direction that these are tūāpapa hearings, intended to set the foundation of the Mana Wahine inquiry so that Crown breaches can

be explored at a later stage. I will make reference in this BoE to some events post-1840, but this is always in order to provide some context and contrasting information to explain how the mana of Wahine was different pre-1840.

Mana Wahine and Rangatiratanga

7. I have many stories about the rangatiratanga of wahine dating back to 1740, as I am a descendant of Tuterangi Whiu, the chief of our hapū within Ngāpuhi. He was married to Hinerangi Whiu, who told a lot of stories in relation to rangatira for Māori wahine. I also hear similar stories with our Ngāti Tamatera iwi, and related hapū.
8. A lot of wahine were involved in various leadership roles. For instance in the marae, the environment as kaitiaki, in agriculture, the gathering of food and weaving, education, birthing and child rearing, and anything to do with life and creation, including health and wellbeing.
9. One of our relatives was going to sign Te Tiriti o Waitangi, but she was not allowed to sign because the Crown did not allow women to have voting and signing rights, as these were not recognised. This was written in a waiata passed down the generations. I am endeavouring to find out more information about this from my whānau.
10. Another example is that some of our ancestors were reira, or women assassins. They were trained to fight and trained to battle in what might be considered by some as ‘martial arts’ today. Some wahine would be at the front of war parties, carrying their mauri with them.
11. The respect for women leadership comes from the idea that women were the creators of life. So before 1840, women were seen as tuakana to men, because we were the creators and the preservers of life. Ngā wahine opinions, words and actions would carry great mana.
12. For instance, wahine were heavily involved in what the Western world might call ‘governance’, driving a lot of hui and discussions, but also driving the creation of strategy and strategic thinking when it came to dealing with all matters within the whanau and hapū, including interactions with other hapū or iwi. Everything that related to the life and wellbeing of the tribe, women were involved with.

13. [REDACTED]

14. [REDACTED]

15. In general, after 1840 Māori women not only had to go through the suppression suffered by all Māori by way of the loss of culture, identity, reo, and self-worth, but we also had to go through the added oppression of being second class to men. In our family, my grandmother wanted better for my mother and put her into nursing, and in turn my mother wanted better for me, so has always encouraged me to develop my career.

16. I stand here now with this knowledge of my tipuna wahine, as a leader in multiple areas. I have had to fight to get to where I am, but this ancestral knowledge is a korowai for my purpose, and provides meaning for my contributions to the collective – as my tipuna wahine stood tuturu pre-1840.

Dated 15 August 2022



ELLE ARCHER