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# **TE KANI-A-TAKIRAU**

## **ARIKI**

A thesis as part fulfilment of the requirements for a M.A. degree.

Massey University

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Uia mai koia whakahuatia ake  
 Ko wai ra? Ko wai ra?  
 Ko wai ra te tangata hau taua e hau mai nei?  
 E, ko Te Kani-a-Takirau.  
 Ko te mana nui hei tautoko ra,  
 Ka tu te ihiihi! ka tu te wanawana!  
 Rere ana te matakū e, ko koe ra, ko koe ra,  
 Tihei Mauriora!

He tokomaha te hunga na ratou nei i tautoko tenei tuhituhinga kia whakapukapukatia i penei rawa te hanga. Ki taku matua ki a Tokorua Te Kani-a-Takirau, nana hoki i 'ae mai' te kaupapa nei, mou tenei e koro. Ka tuku whakamihi atu ki a Meihana Durie me Monty Soutar me nga kaihautu o Te Putahi a Toi ki Te Whare Wananga o Manawatu e kaha nei te whakaoreore tenei kia whakatutuki totika ai te mahi nei. I tautokohia hoki e Wayne Ngata me Derek Lardelli o Te Mareikura kei Te Kuratini o Te Tairawhiti. Ka nui hoki te mihi ki nga kaimahi o Te Kooti Whenua Maori kei Turanga-nui-a-Kiwa. Kua tutuki i o koutou manaaki mai. Ki a Ta Henare Ngata ratou ko Hemi Holdsworth, ko Adrian Stewart, ko Kiki Smiler, ko Marei Norris, ko Anne McQuire me taku taina a Jock, kore rawa e warewaretia a koutou na takoha i tuku mai ai ki ahau hei awahina i te kaupapa nei. Hei whakamutunga ki taku manawa ki a Nori me a maua tamahine a Hana-Hekia, Aria Iranui me Hineteaiki, arohanui rawa .

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## Preface

Tihei mauriora! Ko Te Kani-a-Takirau te tihi o te karaka, ko Ngati Kahukuranui nga peka.

Ka tuku whakamihi atu ki te hunga kua memene ki tawhiti, ki nga kura wananga o te po. Otira, ki nga kaihautu kua whakarerea te kakau o te hoe, manaakitia. He mihi kau atu ana tenei kia koutou kia tahuri mai o koutou mata ki te iwi e manokohia tonutia nga mahi kaingakau, nga kaupapa whakapakari te noho ki te ao nei. He takoha, hei whakamana te rangatiratanga o te tangata enei kupu ruarua nei. E te matua, Te Kani-a-Takirau, tuku mai o manaakitanga ki o iwi e rapa ana, e kimi huarahi ana hei whakatutuki i ohau wawata i a koe e takatu haere nei te whenua. Ko te mana, ko to iwi, kia hiwa ra, maranga mai ki runga ki te hautu i o waka. Mihi mai, maioha mai.

This thesis has been prepared to contribute another perspective to the interesting and constantly evolving study of Maori leadership. In August 1992, the Sir Apirana Ngata Memorial Committee<sup>1</sup> devoted a section of their wananga programme, held in Uawa<sup>2</sup>, to the history of Te Kani-a-Takirau. The author of this thesis along with Wayne Ngata, and at the request of the committee and Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti<sup>3</sup>, made a presentation which outlined in broad perspective some of the highlights of the life of Te Kani-a-Takirau and his

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<sup>1</sup> This committee was set up in 1982 to continue the Rauru-nui-a-Toi lecture series format compiled and presented by Sir Apirana in 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Tolaga Bay, a small township situated 56 kilometres from Gisborne.

<sup>3</sup> The descendants of Hauiti. The tribal group of the Uawa area.

contributions to the situation of his people. Subsequently, it was recommended that an attempt be made to organise and document the presentation so that the history pertaining to Te Kani-a-Takirau could be made in greater detail and in a way more readily available to Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti and Ngati Porou. Hence this thesis, which I hope will go some way to achieving that aim.

From the viewpoint of the Uawa wananga, it was important that the history be written, because whenever the name of Te Kani-a-Takirau is mentioned, be it in whaikorero, on the marae, in a lecture, or dissertation or informal discussion, more often than not it is in the context of leadership and authority. For the people of the East Coast, he was the converging point of some of the most illustrious descent lines of Ngati Porou and neighbouring tribes. And, apart from being a descendant of renowned East Coast ancestors, in his lifetime he was not only a significant figure in the political environment of Maoridom but was also a repository for tribal knowledge and information. This is reflected in oral traditions and waiata that were composed for and about him and his tipuna. His name synonymous, with tribal identity, continues to be linked to waiata compositions, tribal reports, historical reviews and submissions to the crown.

In carrying out research for this thesis, I found that there was widespread acknowledgment of his status in both oral and written form. Interestingly, in many of the whakapapa manuscripts<sup>4</sup>, the authors had invariably traced a relationship between themselves and

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<sup>4</sup> Manuscripts of East Coast tribal whakapapa.

Te Kani-a-Takirau, reaffirming his importance at least for those occasions. For his people, he continues to personify tribal identity, authority and unity. This thesis explores the origins of his chiefly status, and offers a framework within which the legacy and vision of the man can be better understood.

One of the difficulties in writing about a man of such status, however, is maintaining a level of objectivity. Not only is he a tipuna, but in the author's own associations his name has always been spoken with reverence and respect. His life has held a special fascination and this thesis was to be a starting point for writing his story.

It is perhaps timely, then, as Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti and Ngati Porou approach a new century, that the history of Te Kani-a-Takirau is written not only to satisfy the academic requirements for a thesis in Maori Studies but also to ensure that his people have access to his history, ancestry and vision.



## INTRODUCTION

The leadership of Te Kani-a-Takirau, paramount chief of Ngati Porou, spanned the period of transition in the early 19th century from a society based on traditional leadership to one shaped by attitudes towards Pakeha colonisation.

Born into a time of fractionalised tribal warfare and burgeoning settler presence, Te Kani-a-Takirau stood between a traditional tribal society and a competitive market-driven world. He achieved eminence in both, and this thesis explores the relative contributions made by the man, his heritage, his style and most importantly his capacity to encourage his people to adapt to the technologies and theologies introduced by the new settlers. He exercised considerable influence on his own tribes, Ngati Porou and Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, and resided, for a great part of his life, with the latter at Uawa<sup>1</sup>.

Te Kani-a-Takirau appears in a number of historical accounts from D'Urville (1827)<sup>2</sup> and Polack's (1835)<sup>3</sup> to those of the present day. His name and those of his maatua (parents) and tipuna (grandparents) are heard in the waiata moteatea (song poetry) of Te Arawa<sup>4</sup>, the Tuhoë people<sup>5</sup>, Ngati Tuwharetoa<sup>6</sup>, Te Whanau-a-Apanui<sup>7</sup> and his own Ngati Porou<sup>8</sup> and Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Wahawaha cited in Smith, S.P. (1965:147) *Wars of the Northern against the Southern tribes of New Zealand in the 19th Century*. Journal Polynesian Society vol.9.

<sup>2</sup> Wright, O. (1950) *New Zealand 1826-1827 From the French of Dumont D'Urville*, Wingfield Press.

<sup>3</sup> Polack, J.S. (1839) *New Zealand: Being a narrative of travels and adventures*. Richard Bentley, 1839.

<sup>4</sup> Ngata, A.T. *Nga Moteatea*, song number 131.

<sup>5</sup> Ngata, A.T. *Nga Moteatea*, song number 243 & 309

<sup>6</sup> Ngata, A.T. *Nga Moteatea*, song number 379

<sup>7</sup> Ngata, A.T. *Nga Moteatea*, song number 316

<sup>8</sup> Ngata, A.T. *Nga Moteatea*, song number 16, 33 & 225

<sup>9</sup> Ngata, A.T. *Nga Moteatea*, song number 11, 130, 257A & 314

His contemporaries such as Te Heuheu Iwikau of Ngati Tuwharetoa<sup>10</sup>, and Temuera Te Amohau of Te Arawa<sup>11</sup>, recognised his *mana whakapapa* - authority through seniority of birth in the discussions surrounding the selection of the **Maori King**. He was offered the mantle of Maori king which he refused with the now oft quoted tribal proverb,

'Ehara taku maunga a Hikurangi i te maunga nekeneke'

'My mountain Hikurangi is a mountain that does not move.'<sup>12</sup>

In Uawa, the principal chiefs and land claimants of Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti in the latter part of the 1800s, who included Karauria Pahura<sup>13</sup>, Arapeta Rangiuia<sup>14</sup>, Rutene Te Eke<sup>15</sup>, Raniera Turoa<sup>16</sup> Patara Rangi<sup>17</sup> and Heremia Taurewa<sup>18</sup> also acknowledged the seniority of his lineage, and further stated that he had *mana tangata* - authority over the people, and *mana whenua* - authority over the land. The mana of Te Kani-a-Takirau was in existence and full force when the Treaty of Waitangi was signed<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Cowan, J. (1922: vol.1: 446) *The New Zealand Wars and the Pioneering Period*. Government Printer Wellington N.Z.

MacKay, J.A. (1949:211) *Historic Poverty Bay and the East Coast Whitcoulls Ltd*. Christchurch. He quotes Cowan who informed him " that, when Tamihana Kuta and Matene Te Whiwhi began their crusade in 1852 in support of the appointment of a Maori King, Te Kani was, he understood, the first great chief to whom the kingship was offered." According to another version MacKay states " that the envoys were Tamihana and Matene and another that Te Heuheu himself visited Uawa."

Mitchell, J.H. (1944:149) writes " that Te Heuheu (the paramount chief of Ngai Tuwharetoa), of Taupo, who had a strong objection against the sovereignty of a Pakeha Queen, proceeded to ask Te Kani-a-Takirau to be the Maori king."

<sup>11</sup> Cowan, J. (1922: vol 1:151) *The New Zealand Wars and the Pioneering Period*. Government Printer Wellington New Zealand. He records Temuera as instructing Waikato " that if they wished to set up a Maori king they should apply to the highest chief in New Zealand, Te Kani-a-Takirau, of the East Cape."

<sup>12</sup> Mitchell, J.A. (1944:149) and Awatere, P. (date unknown) *Waiata 'Ka hoki nei au ki te Tairawhiti'*

<sup>13</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:281

<sup>14</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 8A:9 Kourateuwhi no.1

<sup>15</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 4 folio's 255-263. 28/5/1879 Waimata East

<sup>16</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:65 Wairoro no.2

<sup>17</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:283 Paratenohonoa or Wairoro

<sup>18</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:295

<sup>19</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 8A:24

He was associated with at least four houses: Te Ruakaka<sup>20</sup>, Hawaikinui<sup>21</sup>, Pakaroa<sup>22</sup> and one named after himself, which stood at Uawa. There are also a number of pa attributed to him including 'Hinuoपुरua' and 'Te Pourewa'<sup>23</sup>, an island fortress that had previously belonged to his maternal grandmother Hinematiaro. Te Kani-a-Takirau did not sign the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, but a hui to discuss the treaty was held in his house, 'Te Kani.'

His pakeha acquaintances of the 1830s onwards, such as Richard Taylor (1838) and Charles Baker who resided in Uawa from 1843 to 1851, had favourable comments to make about him. In fact their pen portraits of Te Kani-a-Takirau provide a detailed sketch of not only his aristocratic countenance but also the standing he had amongst his people. Despite a close relationship with these early missionaries he never converted to Christianity.

He is mentioned in the manuscripts of Te Whatahoro (1865) and Tarakawa (1899,1900). The status of Te Kani-a-Takirau moved Smith (1899-1904), supported by Wahawaha, to compare him with the *ariki* - paramount chiefs, found more commonly in the South Pacific.

Today, regard for Te Kani-a-Takirau remains strong. He is remembered for brokering peace between the warring factions in the battle of Toka-a-Kuku<sup>24</sup>, the last confrontation between the Whanau-a-Apanui and Ngati Porou tribes. He was instrumental in

<sup>20</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:292, Ani Rakena

<sup>21</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:62 Kingi Hori. Wairoro no.2

<sup>22</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 8A:Rawiri Karaha, Puatai

<sup>23</sup> Waiapu Minute Book 6:284 Raniera Turoa

<sup>24</sup> MacKay, J.A. (1949:93) quotes Wi Pere who said " that Te Kani-a-Takirau withdrew the attackers because he felt that adequate utu (satisfaction) had been gained."

establishing a thriving flax rope industry in Uawa, consequently uniting sections of his own tribe who had previously been sworn enemies.

In April 1844, he bought a European craft, a 20 ton cutter, from an Auckland resident, the first Maori to do so. The cutter was subsequently used for trading. In June of the same year, the Reverend Charles Baker sowed wheat for Te Kani-a-Takirau. The harvest furnished seventeen bushels. There were approximately 200 people working together to produce the yield.

This evidence of continuing regard raises interesting questions.

What was the basis for Te Kani-a-Takirau's authority among his people ? Was he born a leader or did circumstances make an leader of him ?

Why was he considered an ariki ? Did his qualities and endowments make possible the achievements for which he is remembered ? How can such qualities be appraised ?

These questions form the substrate for this chapter.

Qualities of leadership have been discussed in some depth by Best, Keesing (1928), Firth (1929, 1959), Buck (1950), Winiata (1956), Hopa (1966) and Mahuika (1972). From these works it is possible to construct a model of chieftainship and the status of ariki. Mahuika in particular provides a framework for leadership based on the concepts of;

- (1) Mana atua or mana whakapapa
- (2) Mana tangata and
- (3) Mana whenua.

These were also primary criteria for establishing land tenure in the Maori Land Courts of the late 1800s in the Turanga (Gisborne), Uawa (Tolaga Bay) and Waiapu areas. Accordingly, any framework that

attempts to measure chieftainship or ariki status should include these concepts.

**Chapter One Arikitanga** concludes that mana whakapapa, mana tangata and mana whenua, in combination and at a level acceptable to the people contributed to the status of *Mana ariki* or paramount chief. Just as importantly, tribal whakapapa, korero tahito and waiata moteatea commemorated the rise and work of the ariki and, in turn, contributed to the tribal memories of the leader.

While the leader possessed influence stemming from rank and mana, authority and status nevertheless depended on the support or otherwise of the tribe for the title of ariki was conveyed recognition of exceptional rank and support from the people.

**Chapter Two Mana Whakapapa**, investigates the source of the mana whakapapa of Te Kani-a-Takirau. Whakapapa, korero tahito and waiata moteatea assist in this respect. Together these are traditional forms of leadership identification and recognition. The theme is consistent with Walker<sup>25</sup> who urges the development of indigenous models of validation and methodology, and an extension and reinforcement of the traditional knowledge base - whakapapa, korero tahito (oral history) and waiata as pertinent cultural imperatives for research in or about kaupapa Maori. In this thesis, this will augment the framework for explaining the characteristics and significance of ariki, thereby allowing some insight into the sphere of influence of Te Kani-a-Takirau. The whakapapa tables also serve as a chronology to identify the status of antecedents. But for the most part a descriptive style has been chosen to relate key events and relationships.

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<sup>25</sup> Walker cited in Te Awakotuku 1991:14

**Chapter Three Mana Tangata**, provides evidence of the mana tangata of Te Kani-a-Takirau, and recounts his adult years and main accomplishments. It concludes that by drawing together the mana that was exclusively his by virtue of his birthright and the theologies of peace promulgated by early missionaries, he became the advocate of peaceful intervention and unarmed mediation. In many respects this method of intervention was a turning point for a people already growing weary of war as a means of securing peace. Moreover, his approach was fruitful in terms of enterpenureal economic alliances and the trading activities already alluded to. It would be wrong to assume that he was driven by a capitalist yearning for power and fortune, but equally it would be simplistic to search for altruism and higher order in all that he did.

**Chapter Four Mana Whenua**, traces the authority that Te Kani-a-Takirau had over the lands of Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti. This section draws heavily on the evidence given by a number of the key claimants in the Maori Land Court sittings of the late 1800s. Even some years after his death, many kaikorero qualified their claims to the land through a geneological relationship with him.

Securing land for future generations is seen as a key outcome of his endeavours.

Te Kani-a-Takirau provided a style of leadership that is not without meaning to a tribe more than a century later. His legacy paved the way for entry into the 20th and 21st centuries.

**Chapter five Mana Ariki**, addresses the style of leadership that will be needed to take Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti and Ngati Porou to and beyond the year 2000. It does not seek to identify possible leaders nor does it advance absolute qualities for leadership. Instead it reaches the conclusion that leadership potential can only be realised

if it has a context appropriate to the people, their traditions and examples.

The chapter concludes by linking contemporary times and challenges with the historical evolution of leadership and reaffirming the central role of Te Kani-a-Takirau as a leader with mana and vision; a product of a former era but not constrained by the norms of his times. In this sense, the essence of his leadership was the capacity to embrace the new and remould it to his own framework.