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**‘Kōrero Tuku Iho’:**

# **Reconfiguring Oral History and Oral Tradition**

A thesis  
submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
at the  
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by

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

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*Ngā Tohu Whakawhetai*

*Me mihi motuhake awau ki wera o wāku mātua tīpuna a rātou nei ngā awhina i tutuki ai wāku mahi mo taku tohu PhD. Ka nui te aroha mo rātou kua wheturangitia. Ki a Te Kapunga (Koro) Matemoana Dewes tetahi o ngā tohunga o ngā kōrero me ngā tikanga o Ngāti Porou whanui. Ki taku tīpuna hoki ki a Nēpia Mahuika, ko ia nei tetahi o wāku poutokomanawa, me wēra atu o rātou kua katohia e te ringa kaha o aitua. Ko koutou ko wāku karangatanga tena koutou kua riro atu nei ki te huia o te Kahurangi.*

*Haere! Haere! Haere!*



## **Abstract**

The studies of oral history and oral tradition each have their own distinctive bodies of literature and preferred methodologies, yet share significant overlaps that make them difficult to differentiate. For many indigenous peoples, oral histories and traditions are key to their their past, present, and future lives, and are rarely considered separate. This thesis examines the differences and similarities between the studies of oral history and oral tradition. It explores how these areas of research converge and diverge in form, politics, practice, and theory, and the extent to which they resonate within a specific 'indigenous' context and community.

The thesis draws on the life narrative interviews of four generations of Ngāti Porou descendents, the second largest tribal group in New Zealand, whose home boundaries extend from Potikirua in the north to Te Toka-a-Taiau in the south on the East Coast of the North Island. Drawing on these voices, this study offers a commentary on the form and nature of oral traditions and histories from an indigenous perspective, and explores the ways they converge and depart from 'international' understandings. An exploration of these intersections offers insights to the ways oral history and oral traditions might be reconsidered as distinctive fields of study. Reconfigured through an indigenous frame of reference, this thesis challenges scholars of both oral history and oral tradition to expand their conceptions. Likewise, it urges indigenous scholars to consider more deeply the work of oral historians and oral traditionalists to further enhance their scholarship. Moreover, this thesis revisits the intellectual and conceptual territory that names and claims oral history and oral tradition, and invites all those who work in these areas to develop a more extensive comprehension of the interconnections that exist between each area of study.

## Acknowledgements

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*‘Ehara taku toa i te toa takatahi, engari he toa takatini taku toa’*

*‘My individuality is not my strength, but that strength lies in my communal and collective actions and activities’*

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Finally, to my long-suffering whānau, particularly my children, who have made many sacrifices, and most of all, to Rangimarie, who has walked every step of the way, often carried my burdens, and been a constant source of peace and inspiration - I cannot thank you enough.

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*We reck not that the day is past;  
That Death and Time, the cruel Fates,  
Have torn us from the scenes we loved,  
And brought us to this unknown world.  
In mem'ry ling'ring, all too hazy,  
Blurred, uncertain, still they charm us.  
Ah, we love them! Language doth but  
Clothe in artifice our passion,  
Doth but to the world proclaim  
We are traitors to the past.*

*Traitors? When our hearts are beating,  
Thrilling stirred by recollections?  
Present, Future? Them we know not;  
For us no memories they hold.  
Traitors? When our ears are ringing,  
Filled with echoes from the dead?  
Deaf to all these chords alone  
Make heavenly music, penetrating  
Souls by strangeness long since deadened,  
Now in sympathy vibrating.  
Traitors? Nay, we scorn the name;  
Bigots, blind fanatic worshippers,  
Idolaters serving things of clay!  
Call us, and that name were dear!*

- from Sir Apirana T. Ngata, "A SCENE FROM THE PAST" written in 1892.



# Chapter One: Ngā Tātai Hekenga Kōrero: Strands of a Vocal History<sup>1</sup>

‘Ko Hikurangi te maunga  
Ko Waiapu te awa  
Ko Ngāti Porou te iwi’<sup>2</sup>

I am the product of many things, and my history has many threads. This is a thesis about how those threads are woven together, across generations, how they are patterned with language, songs and proverbs, and coloured by collective and individual narratives and experience. This is a thesis about me, about Ngāti Porou, our kōrero tuku iho and our relationship to history and historical scholarship.<sup>3</sup> The perception of history that I grew up with was founded on stories, songs, haka, genealogies and proverbs.<sup>4</sup> We called them many things; whakatauakī, mōteatea, whakapapa, and kōrero tuku iho. I was to discover later that others knew them as oral traditions and oral histories. These variations in naming and identifying meant little to me in my early years, but as a student of history I have come to understand the significance of that process, and how it is connected to control, ownership and power. This thesis engages with these issues from a Ngāti Porou perspective, and examines the form and nature of oral traditions and oral histories considering the similarities and differences that exist between them. It explores the spaces where oral history and oral traditions converge and diverge as historical sources and fields of study; how they are envisioned and identified within historical scholarship, and

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<sup>1</sup> Ngā tatai hekenga kōrero here refers to the descendent lines, or strands, of stories that connect our people in vocal histories passed on from generation to generation.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Hikurangi is the mountain, Waiapu the river, and Ngāti Porou are the people (tribe).’

<sup>3</sup> Kōrero tuku iho in this thesis is used to describe the way Ngāti Porou interpret oral tradition and oral history.

<sup>4</sup> A ‘haka’, simply translated, is a dance, but is often narrowly and simply defined as a war dance. I learnt the actions and words of the haka ‘Ruaumoko’ as a teenager from my grandfather. For further reading on haka of te Tairāwhiti see Te Kapunga Dewes, ed., *Māori Literature: He Haka Taparahi, Men’s Ceremonial Dance Poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taumaunu, Apirana Ngata* (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, 1972).

more importantly, within an indigenous reality. Subsequently, this study seeks to illustrate how researchers might better make sense and use of oral histories and traditions as special documents and treasures vital to the lives and aspirations of indigenous communities. Indeed, this study offers a commentary on how oral history and oral tradition are conceived beyond the dominant definitions advanced in the international literature. Thus, it is necessary to proceed by 'walking backwards into the future', with a reflective view to my own upbringing and to the experiences that have shaped the questions asked here, and the answers that follow.<sup>5</sup>

'He uri au no Tane' – I am a descendent of Tane, of Toi, Rauru, Paikea and Porou Ariki.<sup>6</sup> Their histories, fundamental to my whakapapa, constitute the parent vine on which hang all the stories and songs of my people and my family. When I was young the story of Paikea and his journey and arrival at Whangara was one of the most prominent kōrero in our whānau (family), only matched by the stories of Porourangi, and Tuwhakairiora.<sup>7</sup> Paikea, or the 'whale rider', as he is also known, has long been a key figure in Ngāti Porou history.<sup>8</sup> His story begins in our ancient homeland of Hawaiki, where it is said that 'a battle took place over family status and rivalries.'<sup>9</sup> According to kōrero tuku iho, Uenuku, a high chief in Hawaiki, chastised and belittled his son Ruatapu whom he humiliatingly declared was of low rank and

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<sup>5</sup> 'Walking backwards into the future' is a common saying, not only for Māori, but other Polynesian peoples. For further reading on this concept see Roma Mere Roberts, 'Walking Backwards into the Future: Māori Views on Genetically Modified Organisms', in *Perspectives on Indigenous Knowledge, WINHEC Journal* (2005), retrieved from [www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Journal/MereRoberts.pdf](http://www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Journal/MereRoberts.pdf) [last accessed 6/11/11] ; T. Jacobs and S. Falconer, 'Ka mua, ka muri; Walking backwards into the future: Paths towards managing Māori information in archives', *Archifacts*, (October, 2004), pp. 1-20.

<sup>7</sup> See also Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 6, 7, pp. 358-59.

<sup>8</sup> Paikea, or the 'whale rider', is a prominent figure in the oral history of the east coast, but has become a widely recognized story through recent novel and film adaptations. See Witi Ihimaera, *The Whale Rider* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1987); and Niki Caro, director, *The Whale Rider* (South Yarra, Vic: Buena Vista Home Video, 2003). See also Appendices 2, 'Paikea', p. 351.

<sup>9</sup> This is how Tamati Reedy describes it in his chapter on Ngāti Porou, Tamati Reedy, 'Ngāti Porou', in *Māori Peoples of New Zealand, Ngā iwi o Aotearoa* (Auckland: David Bateman/Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2006), p. 165.

status.<sup>10</sup> In plotting his revenge, Ruatapu, a strong swimmer, invited his brothers to accompany him on an early morning fishing expedition. Amongst them was Kahutia-te-rangi (Paikea), who would be the sole survivor of Ruatapu's murderous plot for revenge. After Ruatapu had drowned his other siblings, Paikea, it is said, escaped and was left stranded at sea, but after uttering a powerful incantation was borne ashore on the back of a whale.<sup>11</sup> This event in our history is known as Te Huripūreiata – the turning point - and is commemorated in story and song.<sup>12</sup> Paikea, the story, the song, and the anthem, remains one of the prominent oral histories recounted during my upbringing. Although his narrative has been committed to print, and invoked, told and retold, in varying forms, it is the oral renderings of that history that I recall most vividly. This living history, was spoken, transmitted face to face, was intergenerational, but most importantly, it was ours. Our oral traditions, to me, were not things to be found and learnt in books, but histories to be seen and heard from people, whose faces and tones were familiar and real.

Recalling these stories, I cannot help but think of those who recited them, the most memorable, my grandfather. He was born at Kaitaha in Whakawhitira, a few miles south of Tikitiki, and was the first male grandchild of Nēpia Te Aotapunui Mahuika, a chief with such mana that '[when he] frowned, the people kept silent, and when he smiled, the people smiled along with him.'<sup>13</sup> It is said that when my grandfather was born the happiest man on that occasion was my great great grandfather, who had

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<sup>10</sup> Ruatapu was born from a liaison between Uenuku and one of his female servants. A. T. Mahuika, Personal Communication, (Wed, 22 July 2009). He is also descendent of Toi, see Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 1, 5, pp. 352, 362.

<sup>11</sup> Another account is offered by Moni Taumaunu, who makes specific reference to the composition of the haka 'Paikea', See Te Kapunga Dewes, *Māori Literature*, pp. 27-34.

<sup>12</sup> Anaru Reedy, *Ngā Kōrero a Mohi Ruatapu, Tohunga Rongonui o Ngāti Porou: The Writings of Mohi Ruatapu* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 1993), 142-146. Te Huripūreiata might be described as a 'turning point', a 'turning of events, from an act of tragedy to one of survival,' A. T. Mahuika, Personal Communication, (Wed 22 July 2009).

<sup>13</sup> Nēpia Mahuika, *Aku Kōrero*, Private Memoirs, (Ngaruawahia), p. 1. See Appendices 4, 'East Coast – Te Araroa to Whareponga', p. 374.

waited for the birth of his first male grandchild. The story notes that when it came time to name his mokopuna (grandchild), the old man simply remarked 'Ko au tonu/ myself.'<sup>14</sup> In this one story, the history of not only my grandfather's christening, but my name also came to me with all its attendant implications: for not only did this story connect me to my grandfather, but to the descending genealogies - ngā tatai hekenka kōrero - we share. When I reflect on the songs and stories we were told I realise now that it was not simply my grandfather who was speaking, but generations of relatives as if they were weaving together an aural tapestry representative of our collective identity. These are strands of a vocal history, reverberations of a rich oral tradition, channeled through individuals and groups, and expressive of family, hapū, and iwi dynamics.

Although Paikea is an important person in our oral history, his story is only one of many. The history of our eponymous ancestor Porou Ariki Te Mātātara a Whare Te Tuhi Mareikura o Rauru is perhaps the most significant, and I recall a number of occasions when we were told about the circumstances of his birth; in much the same way I had been versed in my grandfather's christening. According to kōrero he was born at Whangara, early in the morning with 'the dawn breaking blood red and angry' a sign commemorated in the title, Te Tuhi Mareikura o Rauru: 'a full blooded man', belonging to, or descended of, Rauru.<sup>15</sup> According to Apirana Mahuika, the first part of his name Porou Ariki, is indicative of his status as the first born child from Toi, and was thus an 'Ariki', person, 'imbued with much tapu, being the most direct uri of the gods'.<sup>16</sup> The second part of his name, Te Mātātara a Whare, makes

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<sup>14</sup> The Rev. Pohipi Kohere had enquired of the old man 'as to the name of the child', Nēpia Mahuika, *Aku Kōrero*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> I draw here on the words of A. T. Ngata, *The Porourangi Māori Cultural School, Rauru nui a Toi Course, Lecture 1-7* (Gisborne: Māori Purposes Fund Board/Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, 2011, originally presented in 1944), p.6. Williams notes that the phrase Tuhi Mareikura refers to 'a method of ornamenting the forehead and face with red ochre' (Williams, 1975, p.448) cited in A. T. Mahuika, 'Origins of the Tribal Name Ngāti Porou', Unpublished Paper.

<sup>16</sup> Apirana Mahuika, 'Origins of the Tribal Name Ngāti Porou', Unpublished Paper, p. 7.

reference to the use of an analogy that refers to the threading together of flax strips to create an adornment for a house.<sup>17</sup> Like my grandfather's story, and the story of Paikea, these *kōrero tuku iho*, told us about who we were by the circumstances and histories associated with each individual. They were not myths or fable, but family histories.

In my *whānau*, and within Ngāti Porou, these oral traditions are vital components of our personal and collective identities. They are viewed as living documents, not just because they are oral, but because their outward expression represents an active connection that acknowledges a cultural and spiritual inheritance essential to who we are. But not all of the stories we grew up with were about people. Indeed, one of the most powerful focal points in both our family and Ngāti Porou oral tradition is our revered mountain Hikurangi. As far back as I can remember, we learnt songs and proverbs about this mountain. One very common saying, which is still heard frequently recounts the offering of the Māori kingship in the nineteenth century to the chief Te Kani-a-Takirau, who famously declined with the words, 'ehara toku maunga a Hikurangi i te maunga haere, engari he maunga tu tonu'/My mountain Hikurangi never moves but rather it remains steadfast.'<sup>18</sup> The invocation of Hikurangi here is inextricably connected to the people and their desire to retain their own autonomy. When I grew up, *whakatauakī*, such as this, were often recited and remembered as parts of songs, within which genealogies and sayings intermingled to tell the story. The living nature of the *whenua* and our relationship to it would often be emphasized. For instance, in the *mōteatea*, 'Kaati ra e hika', the snow capping the summit of Hikurangi is referred to in a well-known saying that signifies

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<sup>17</sup> Mahuika notes that 'mātātara refers to a greenstone skewer pin to fasten together a korowai or garment when worn. Porourangi symbolically speaking was the skewer or pin used to fasten together various *whakapapa* lines', 'Origins of the Tribal Name Ngāti Porou', Unpublished Paper, p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> The reference here is in regard to the other mountains, all of whom moved in pursuit of the maiden mountain Pihanga, whereas Hikurangi desisted, electing to remain steadfast in its original place. A.T. Mahuika, Personal Communication, (Wed 22 August 2011). Appendices 4, Map 'East Coast - Te Araroa to Whareponga', p. 374.

the mana and status of Te Rangitawaea in 'displaying his chiefly garments/e ka rukuruku a Te Rangitawaea i ona pueru e.'<sup>19</sup> Te Rangitawaea, the man of the mountain, is yet another celebrated name in Ngāti Porou whakapapa, and like others his association with Hikurangi is renowned in our oral traditions. However, by the time it had reached my generation, this whakataukī had been altered by incoming influences. Indeed, with the advent of Christianity in Ngāti Porou territory during the mid nineteenth century, the whiteness of the snow was made synonymous with the "White Surplices" worn by Anglican Clergyman, hence the modification 'e ka rukuruku a Te Rangitawaea i ana rirena/ Behold Te Rangitawaea displays his white linen.'<sup>20</sup> The changing nature of oral tradition was, at least in my youth, not commonly discussed, and it was not for some time that I understood the significance in the different accounts.

To my mind, the oral traditions were as steadfast as Hikurangi, and the illustrious history that surrounded it soon became fixed as a central focal point in my own personal story. The prominence of Hikurangi was something instilled within all of us and in me, not only as a child, but well into my adult life. Its meaning resonated with those of us raised in the cities, who associated home with a river called Waiapu, a mountain called Hikurangi, and a tribe called Ngāti Porou. This resolute connection to 'home' was amplified in oral tradition, again and again centering on Hikurangi, as evidenced in proverbs like 'Kei uta Hikurangi, kei tai Hikurangi, kia titiro iho ki te wai o te pākirikiri anō ko ngā hina o tōku ūpoko / In Hikurangi inland is the place, but at the seacoast look down at the blue cod soup, indeed white as the

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<sup>19</sup> 'Behold Te Rangitawaea displays his chiefly garments' from the waiata 'Kaati ra e Hika'. A.T. Mahuika, Personal Communication, (Wed 22 August 2011). See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 2, 18, pp. 353, 370. See also Appendices, 2, 'Kaati ra e hika', p. 337.

<sup>20</sup> It was thought that the original version was too provocative, and thus needed to be 'sanitised.' A.T. Mahuika, Personal Communication, (Wed 22 August 2011).

hair of my head'.<sup>21</sup> One of my favourite stories, also associated with Hikurangi, recounts one of the most well-known narratives in not only Ngāti Porou history, but New Zealand 'mythology': that is the fishing up of Te ika a Maui/the great fish of Maui. According to our kōrero tuku iho, as Maui Tikitiki-a-Taranga hauled up his great fish – the North Island - from the depths of the ocean, the first part to emerge was Hikurangi. His vessel, Nukutaimemeha, it is said became stranded there and remains on its peak to this day in petrified form.<sup>22</sup> The lament, 'Haere ra e Hika/farewell dear one' refers to this occasion in its closing lines, 'Ko Nukutaimemeha, ko te waka i hīia ai te whenua nui nei/Nukutaimemeha, the canoe which fished up this great land.'<sup>23</sup> For us, Maui was inextricably tied to our tribal history, and a living being in our genealogy. His relevance to us is as real and vital as the oral histories transmitted across time and generations. They told us about who we were descended from, how we arrived here, and how our land was named and populated. This was history, but not the same history we learnt at school or were exposed to in the public arena.

The histories of Maui and Paikea that were common in the kōrero tuku iho I grew up with were, in content, similar to those I encountered in schools or libraries, but in both form and nature they were clearly not the same. I recall markedly some of the children's books that lined the shelves, yet never thought too much about them. Maui and Paikea were there, usually in compilations, standing side by side with other tales such as Hinemoa and Tutanekai, Hatupatu, and Rona and the Moon.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> This is an old proverb, one of a large number of similar sayings, which refers to the importance of home. Compare, Hirini Moko Mead and Neil Grove, *Ngā Pēpeha a ngā Tipuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001), p. 206.

<sup>22</sup> Tamati Reedy offers an account of this story, 'Ngāti Porou', pp. 164-5. Maui is considered an ancestor rather than simply a mythic figure. He is a grandchild of Hine Mahuika, a renowned female ancestor, who has similarly been mythologised. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 1, 3, 12, pp. 352, 354, 364.

<sup>23</sup> See again, Reedy, 'Ngāti Porou', p. 165.

<sup>24</sup> See for instance A. Perry, *Hinemoa and Tutanekai: a legend of Rotorua* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1910); H. J. Calendar and Val Dixon, *Hinemoa and Tutanekai* (Hamilton: H. J. Calendar, 1976); Joy Cowley and Robyn Kahukiwa, *Hatupatu and the Birdwoman* (Auckland: Shortland, 1984); E. Tregear, 'The

Next to these stood other myths and legends like Rapunzel, Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, and Rumpelstiltskin.<sup>25</sup> The inference was certainly there, but I had little awareness then of what that meant in terms of our tribal history. In these well-established and prolific public representations, Maui had for a long time been popularized as a mythic figure, the quintessential 'hero' who slowed the sun, stole fire from the goddess Mahuika, and in his trickery and deception eventually succumbed to the power of Hine nui te po in an effort to overcome death.<sup>26</sup> But this was not history, this was folklore and fable, similar to the quaint fairy tales told by the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen who had tailored stories of fantasy and entertainment. On the shelves, various Māori oral traditions and histories were to be read alongside these stories, as no different to the tales of unicorns, magic beanstalks, goblins, witches and wizards.<sup>27</sup> This subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, reinvention of our oral traditions had been entrenched in writing, print, and popular public consciousness for well over a century before I came to them.

Mythology and Māori oral tradition had, well before my time, shared a long association in Aotearoa, the product of both settler invention and appropriation as much as Māori and iwi experimentation and collaboration. One of the key figures in establishing this relationship was Sir George Grey, whose extensive collection on

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Woman in the Moon', in *New Zealand Readers, Fairytales of New Zealand and the South Seas* (Wellington: Lyon and Blair, 1891), pp. 86-87; A. W. Reed, 'Rona', in *Treasury of Māori Folklore* (Wellington and Auckland: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1963), pp. 413-16.

<sup>25</sup> Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Rapunzel: a story by the Brothers Grimm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960); Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Rumpelstiltskin: a story from the Brothers Grimm* (London: Bodley Head, 1970); Nola Langner, *Cinderella retold and illustrated by Nola Langner* (New York: Scholastic Books, 1972); Rosemary Harris, *Beauty and the Beast, retold by Rosemary Harris and illustrated by Errol Le Cain* (London: Faber and Faber, 1979).

<sup>26</sup> See for instance A. W. Reed, *Maui: Legends of the Demigod of Polynesia* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1943); June Melser and Cliff Whiting, *Maui and the Sun* (Wellington: School Publications/Department of Education, 1984).

<sup>27</sup> For further reading on the work and lives of these authors see Jack David Zipes, *The Brothers Grimm: From Enchanted Forests to the Modern World* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002); Elias Bredsdorff, *Hans Christian Andersen: The Story of his Life and Work 1805-75* (London: Phaidon Press, 1975).



Māori 'lore' in the nineteenth century culminated in a variety of influential publications including *Ko Ngā Mahinga a Ngā Tupuna* (1854) and its English language equivalent *Polynesian Mythology* (1855).<sup>28</sup> Alongside Grey, other early writers on Māori mythology such as Rev. J. W. Stack, John White and Dr Edward Shortland, contributed to a canon of literature that would, in years to come, influence and inform almost every author and compiler of Māori myth and legend.<sup>29</sup> Their work, as Peter Gibbons writes, was recorded 'out of a mixture of personal curiosity (and at times astonishment at the "superstitions" of Māori) and a sense of scientific enquiry.'<sup>30</sup> Although originally produced in the mid-nineteenth century, they remained on the shelves for many years, and influenced a wide range of authors, including Edward Tregear, Stephenson Percy Smith, Elsdon Best, and later, Johannes Anderson and A. H. Reed.<sup>31</sup> Richard Taylor's, *Te a ika a Maui, New Zealand and its inhabitants*, for instance, was first published in 1855, was reissued again in 1870 with some revisions, and then again in 1974. Writing in his original introduction, Taylor noted that his intention was to 'rescue from that oblivion into which they were fast hastening, the Manners, Customs, Traditions, and Religion of the primitive race.'<sup>32</sup> Years later, A. H. Reed in his *Myths and Legends of Polynesia* would write: 'They have

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<sup>28</sup> Grey governed twice, from 1845-1853 in his first and most successful term and then again from 1861-1868. During his time in New Zealand he worked with Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikaheke in compiling and authoring a large body of Māori history. George Grey, *Ngā Mahi a Ngā Tūpuna: He Mea Kohikohi na Sir George Grey* (London: George Willis, 1854); George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealand Race, as furnished by their priests and their chiefs* (London: John Murray, 1855). He also oversaw John White's extensive work, which culminated in his *Ancient History of the Māori*. John White, *Ancient History of the Māori: his Mythology and Traditions*, vol. 1-6 (Wellington: Government Print, 1887).

<sup>29</sup> J. W. Stack, *Early Māoriland Adventures* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937); John White, *A Chapter from Māori Mythology* (Washington: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1891); Edward Shortland, *Māori Religion and Mythology: illustrated by translations of traditions* (London: Longmans Green, 1882).

<sup>30</sup> Peter Gibbons, 'Myths and Legends', Private Papers, p. 4. Much of the following reference to early writing on Myth and Legend is adapted from Gibbons unpublished chapter. I would like to thank him for allowing me to read and cite his research here.

<sup>31</sup> Gibbons, 'Myths and Legends', p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> Rev. Richard Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, New Zealand and its Inhabitants* (Wellington: A.H. & A. W Reed, 1974; originally published, London: Wertheim and McIntosh, 1855), p. vi.

been selected as typical of the imagination of a race that peopled land, sea, and sky with gods'. 'Maui', he wrote, an appropriate 'hero because he embodies the Polynesian idea of a hero – a gifted, clever, daring, impudent, rollicking fellow.'<sup>33</sup>

This mythologizing of *kōrero tuku iho*, and the methodical characterization of Māori views within writing and print also developed a long legacy within New Zealand classrooms. As early as 1880, Elizabeth Bourke's *A Little History of New Zealand*, written for use in schools, included reference to the legends of Maui, Hinemoa and Tutanekai.<sup>34</sup> Around this time, Edward Tregear, in association with Whitcombe and Tombs, also assisted in the production of a set of school readers; yet his fascination with oral tradition was perhaps more reflective of an interest in the possible origins of Polynesian peoples, a topic he wrote on and published in *The Aryan Māori* in 1885.<sup>35</sup> In the early twentieth century, Whitcombes printed a series of Historical Story Books, *Legends of the Maori*, followed by *More Tales of Maori Magic* written by Edith Howes, which were written for school-children aged between seven and fourteen.<sup>36</sup> Like her contemporaries, Kate McCosh Clark, drew much of her work from Grey's earlier compilations. In *Māori Tales and Legends*, one of many books she scribed for young and older readers, she wrote of Maui as the 'Hercules of the Pacific', a common reframing of the indigenous worldview within western models that likened Māori figures often to their perceived mythic Greek and Anglo counterparts.<sup>37</sup> This connection between Western folktales was certainly a part of the rationale behind Whitcombe and Tombs association with Johannes Andersen, whose *Māori Fairy*

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<sup>33</sup> A. H. Reed, *Myths and Legends of Polynesia Illustrated by Roger Hart* (Wellington: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1974), p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth Bourke, *A Little History of New Zealand: Progressive from Discovery to 1880 for children*, (Auckland: Upton, c1880).

<sup>35</sup> Edward Tregear, *The Aryan Māori* (Wellington: G. Didsbury, Government Printer, 1885).

<sup>36</sup> *Whitcombe and Tombs Historical Story books: Legends of the Māori* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1926); Edith Howes, *More Tales of Maori Magic* (Auckland: Whitcombe and Tombs 1957).

<sup>37</sup> Gibbons, 'Myths and Legends', p.3. Kate McCosh Clark, *Māori Tales and Legends* (London: D. Nutt, 1896).

*Tales*, also intended for children, was published in the early twentieth century with the hope that readers already familiar with the genre would recognize the famous similarities, even if only in name.<sup>38</sup>

The race to lure young learners, and inculcate within them important information regarding the ancient lore of their new country was a challenge happily taken up by a wide variety of writers and publishers. A.H. and A.W. Reed, also eager to enter the school marketplace dominated by Whitcombe and Tombs, circulated four small booklets in 1943, the *Raupo Series of School Readers*. Educational texts similar to these were followed by other related issues, such as *The Coming of the Maori to Ao-tea-roa*, and then, *Maui*, by 1943.<sup>39</sup> In 1946, A.W. Reed published the highly popular *Myths and Legends of Maoriland*, again written for ‘young people’ and specifically for the ‘children of New Zealand’ so that they might better ‘treasure their heritage of ancient story.’<sup>40</sup> These examples of early writing set the scene for what would emerge later in A. H. Reed’s *Treasury of Maori Folklore* (1963), *Wonder Tales of Maoriland* (1964) and Peter Gossage’s *How Maui found his father and the magic jawbone* (1980).<sup>41</sup> The prolific output of books by A.H. and A.W. Reed and Whitcombe and Tombs, together with the reprints of Grey, Taylor, Howe, and the emerging work of Gossage and others packed school shelves and public libraries with a growing literature for both young and older readers on Māori mythology.

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<sup>38</sup> Gibbons, ‘Myths and Legends’, p. 8. Johannes Andersen, *Māori Fairy Tales* (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1908).

<sup>39</sup> A. W. Reed, *The Coming of the Māori to Ao-tea-roa* (Wellington: A. H & A. W. Reed, 1934); A. W. Reed, *Maui: Legends of the Demigod of Polynesia* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1943).

<sup>40</sup> Later he would write that it was not intended as a children’s book at all. Gibbons, ‘Myths and Legends’, p. 13. A. W. Reed, *Myths and Legends of Māoriland* (Wellington: A. W. Reed, 1946).

<sup>41</sup> A. W. Reed, *Treasury of Maori Folklore* (Wellington: A. W. Reed, 1963); A. W. Reed, *Wonder Tales of Maoriland* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1964); Peter Gossage, *How Maui found his father and the magic jawbone* (Auckland: Lansdowne Press, 1980).

By the late twentieth century, Scholastic and Learning Media had commenced the production of a large array of school sets, picture books, and even oral soundtracks of story tellers reciting myths for younger listeners.<sup>42</sup> During this period, the work of Māori authors and compilers also appeared more regularly with contributions from Robyn Kahukiwa, Keri Kaa, and Meri Penfold, whose books on Maui and Paikea were popular with new generations.<sup>43</sup> The significance of Māori writing in our own language was also highlighted in the work of Katerina Mataira whose Māori language books for varying ages coincided with the Kohanga Reo movement and language revitalization initiatives of the 1980s.<sup>44</sup> One of the most memorable books then in our whānau household was Kahukiwa and Kaa's collaborative rendition of *Paikea*, although, not because of the story, but more for the illustrations and the fact that we could say 'here was our relative' in text, a person important enough to have a book of his own.<sup>45</sup> In reflection, with such a vast array of literature on our oral traditions in public circulation – and for so long - the question of legitimacy, history and myth was not a conscious issue for me as a young reader. The shaping of our stories in these books was such a 'normalised' part of our world that even our own people engaged in the process were most likely unaware of the historical reconfiguring taking place, in which our kōrero tuku iho had been steadily relegated to such a subordinate position.

This appropriation of oral tradition essentially consigned a large amount of kōrero tuku iho to the realms of 'pre-history', particularly in relation to the New Zealand national story. Maui, Paikea, Kupe, and Tara, as historical figures, simply did not

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<sup>42</sup> Gibbons, 'Myths and Legends', pp. 13-14.

<sup>43</sup> Robyn Kahukiwa, *The Koroua and the Mauri Stone* (Auckland: Puffin Books, 1994); Keri Kaa and Robyn Kahukiwa, *Taniwha* (Auckland: Puffin, 1986); Merimeri Penfold, *Te Ika a Maui, translated from Peter Gossage The Fish of Maui* (Auckland: Ashton Scholastic, 1990); Gavin Bishop and Katerina Mataira, *Ko Maui raua ko te atua o te ahi; he pūrakau Māori/kua kōrerohia anō, kua waituhia hoki e Gavin Bishop* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2001).

<sup>44</sup> Katerina Mataira, *Te Ātea* (Wellington: School Publications Branch, 1975).

<sup>45</sup> Robyn Kahukiwa and Keri Kaa, *Paikea, He Kōrero Pūrakau Tahito* (Auckland: Viking, 1993).

survive this transition to print, where myths were necessarily weeded out from the rigours of scientific objective empiricism, the core theory and practice within a growing professional history discipline.<sup>46</sup> In folktales and myth they were merely antiquarian relics of a culture civilized beyond, as George Grey and A. A. Grace both argued, the invalid ‘mental workings of a primitive’, ‘heathen’, and ‘savage’ people.<sup>47</sup> Outside of the classroom, books such as James Cowan’s *Maori Folktales of the Port Hills* reflected a desire by some to know the history of the landscape, yet even in this genre myth too was carefully distinguished from historical fact.<sup>48</sup> Myths and fairytales, more than simply the stuff of children’s books certainly had its place in popular public histories and academic writing.

The New Zealand national story, itself ironically a mythic tale of settlement and becoming, had steadily emerged in the writing of scholars such as W.H. Oliver, whose opening chapter in *The Story of New Zealand*, originally published in 1960, reflected the ‘progressive’ national narrative as one that tracked the country’s evolution from ‘From Wilderness to Frontier’: a theme reverberated decades later in the popular book and televised documentary series *Frontier of Dreams*.<sup>49</sup> W.P. Morrell’s simply titled *New Zealand* published in 1935 also sought to ‘interpret the history of New Zealand as the growth of a nation’, beginning with ‘The

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<sup>46</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup note that this ‘professionalised’ discipline emerged in the nineteenth century under the direction and influence of scholars such as Leopold Von Ranke. Leopold Von Ranke, a German historian of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was largely responsible for the development of a professional History discipline that focused on empirical methods. His contemporary, Georg Wilhelm Freidrich Hegel, emphasized the role of great men in history, and along with Leopold Von Ranke and other ‘empiricists’ advocated a rationalist approach to investigating the past. Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, eds, *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-Century History and Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> A. A. Grace, *Folk-Tales of the Māori* (Wellington: Gordon and Gotch, 1907), p. i; George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient traditional History of the New Zealand Race, as furnished by their Priests and their Chiefs* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, reprinted in 1956), p. x.

<sup>48</sup> Cowan’s book was also aimed at younger readers, but was most probably purchased as a gift for reading in the home – not aimed at schools. Gibbons, ‘Myths and Legends’, pp. 10-11. James Cowan, *Maori Folktales of the Port Hills, Canterbury, New Zealand*, (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1923).

<sup>49</sup> W.H. Oliver, *The Story of New Zealand* (London: Faber, 1960); Bronwyn Dalley and Gavin McClean, eds., *Frontier of Dreams: the Story of New Zealand* (Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2005).

Establishment of British Sovereignty', then progressing through various chapters, from 'The Ripening of Nationality' to the important topic of 'The Place of the Maori in National life'.<sup>50</sup> This narrative of becoming though, exclusive of Māori stories and tradition, had been largely influenced by J.B. Condliffe's earlier study, *New Zealand in the Making*, published by Allen and Unwin in 1930.<sup>51</sup> Histories such as these were all too common throughout the twentieth century, rarely drawing on Māori oral tradition in any substantial or meaningful way. Keith Sinclair's *A Destiny Apart, New Zealand's Search for National identity* in 1986, for instance, was most certainly inspired by his earlier book, *A History of New Zealand*, published in 1959, in which he argued that 'if we content ourselves with the Maori traditions as they were first recorded we find a mixture of unsifted fact and fable, which contributes little to firm knowledge'.<sup>52</sup> This no doubt was reflected in his careful decision to include, albeit cautiously, an account of 'The Fish of Maui' story as a prologue, in which he described Hine-ahu-one a 'Dawn-maid', and the male issue of Tane-nui-a-rangi the 'Maori Adam'.<sup>53</sup> Most significantly though, as was to be the case in *A Destiny Apart*, the foundations of these kōrero tuku iho simply did not feature in the major narrative. Instead, they remained routinely confined to 'pre-history', an interesting yet quaint curtain raiser to the more important story that followed. By the end of the twentieth century, the legacy of this writing on national identity had become well entrenched in New Zealand classrooms as part of the history curriculum, in which students were encouraged to study the search for that identity as a way of thinking about their own past.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> W.P.Morrell, *New Zealand* (London: Ernest Benn, 1935), pp. vii; xiii.

<sup>51</sup> J.B. Condliffe, *New Zealand in the Making* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1930).

<sup>52</sup> Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, (Auckland: A. Lane, 1980), p.18; Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1986).

<sup>53</sup> Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, pp. 11-28.

<sup>54</sup>The Ministry of Education would later institute 'The Search for New Zealand Security' as a standard unit topic in the year twelve history curriculum. NCEA Level 1: 'The Search for New Zealand Security' (Ministry of

In the public arena, the national myth or progress flourished in the writing of authors such as James Belich who, in his *Making Peoples* and *Paradise Reforged* continued the theme of progression and nationhood, despite having earlier championed revisionist history, an approach taken up in his acclaimed study of *The New Zealand Wars*. In *Making Peoples*, he commented on the surprise amongst Europeans 'at how well [the Maui story] accorded with the size and the shape of the three islands', yet could not bring himself, like others, to allow it purchase beyond the rigidity of archeological and scientific evidence.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, in his equally popular *Penguin History of New Zealand*, Michael King remarked that 'the climax of Maui's expedition' could be viewed as 'a poetic evocation of the upthrusting, down-thrusting, volcanism, glaciations and erosion which sculpted New Zealand's modern land forms.'<sup>56</sup> Their inclusion of *kōrero tuku iho*, cautious and sterile, were not the same as the living oral accounts heard and cherished in the *whānau* and communities in which I grew up. In mainstream histories such as these, oral traditions were regularly devalued as pre-history, and Māori and *iwi* experiences reduced to 'peripheral' subplots and chapters within the dominant story of nation and settlement, their perception as authoritative and exemplary historical texts effectively marking a long distance between 'History' and the past we knew.

If anything, the closest grand narrative similar to the 'nation' produced by a Māori author has been Ranginui Walker's *Ka Whāwhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End*. Far from a text that is read by multitudes of Māori readers, it is nonetheless instantly recognizable as different to the celebratory national discourse popularized in most Pākehā accounts. However, even in this 'counter narrative' history, oral tradition is

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Education). This is an ongoing assessment, see <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/classroom/ncea1/search-for-security> (Ministry of Culture and Heritage), [updated 15-April-2011].

<sup>55</sup> James Belich, *Making Peoples, a History of the New Zealanders: from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991), p. 40. James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: a History of the New Zealanders from the 1800s to the year 2000* (Auckland: Allen Lane; Penguin, 2001). James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Penguin, 1986).

<sup>56</sup> Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004), p. 21.

described as myth, Maui as a demi-god, and our origins summed up in what Walker writes were ‘three major myth cycles.’<sup>57</sup> Closer to home in Ngāti Porou, the place of *kōrero* *tuku iho* in text was surprisingly varied and rich, yet few homes, ours included, kept copies of the major literatures more easily available to readers now. I can recall only one, aside from Apirana Ngata and Pei te Hurinui Jones, *Ngā Mōteatea*, which itself was not common to most homes we visited, and was certainly not bedtime reading.<sup>58</sup> Beyond the whakapapa charts, which were items kept separate not only from children, but other prying eyes, was Bob McConnell’s *Te Araroa*, a locally published book that was not owned by many, but frequently borrowed, and sometimes not returned, to public libraries especially.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, written sources regarding the *kōrero* *tuku iho* I grew up with were not conspicuous commodities in the home, and it was not until my years at university that I discovered the vast reservoir of work on the east coast scribed by early and recent researchers, whānau, and historians. These oral traditions, or as some called them, oral histories, included Rongowhakaata Halbert’s extensive study on *Horouta*, and the very early writing of Walter Edward Gudgeon, who as a Land Court Judge in the late nineteenth century produced ‘The Māori Tribes of the East Coast of New Zealand’ for the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* in a range of volumes from 1894-1897.<sup>60</sup> Like Gudgeon, R.J.H. Drummond also drew extensively on oral tradition, and in his Masters thesis ‘The Origins and History of Ngāti Porou’ in 1937 opined that traditions, particularly those that were associated with ‘deeds of the super-natural’

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<sup>57</sup> Ranginui Walker, *Ka Whāwhai Tonu Mātou, Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin, 1990), p.11.

<sup>58</sup> A.T. Ngata, and Pei Te Hurinui Jones, *Ngā Mōteatea, The Songs Part 1*, Revised Edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004).

<sup>59</sup> Bob McConnell, *Te Araroa an East Coast community: A History* (Te Araroa: R. N. McConnell, 1993). See Appendices 4, ‘East Coast – Te Araroa to Whareponga’, p. 374.

<sup>60</sup> Walter Edward Gudgeon, *The Māori Tribes of the East Coast of New Zealand; reprinted from the Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 3-6, 1894-1897 (Wellington: University of Victoria Press, 1972).



could 'at the least, make us, slightly incredulous as to their foundation in fact.'<sup>61</sup> This was certainly removed from Gudgeon's more liberal evaluation, in which he argued that Maui Potiki was a real person, who lived, and whose stories might be understood as allegorical.<sup>62</sup>

Despite these varied appraisals surrounding the viability of oral traditions as reliable sources, their place as central components of each historical narrative reinforced them as history rather than myth. This much more palatable 'oral history' then, could be researched and written from oral traditions, thus constituting a valid interpretation of tribal origins, migration, settlement, wars, events and peoples. Like Drummond and Gudgeon, other theses on the east coast also included general references to oral history and tradition. Writing in his Masters thesis, 'Tuwhakairiora', Waipaina Awarau stressed that 'the story of Tuwhakairiora is no myth or mere tradition', but 'a history which in the absence of writing was transmitted from generation to generation by word of mouth.'<sup>63</sup> Similarly, in 'A History of Tokomaru Bay', Mark Isles argued that by 'focusing on the concept of "traditional history" we are in fact aided in understanding what stories are saying.'<sup>64</sup> These texts, although inclusive of oral tradition drew widely on written documents, particularly the Land Court Minute books, Māori newspapers, journal articles, and family manuscripts.<sup>65</sup> However, many moved beyond these types of written sources citing oral testimony and communication from varying authorities and experts

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<sup>61</sup> R.J.H. Drummond, 'The Origins and History of Ngāti Porou' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Victoria, 1937), p.14.

<sup>62</sup> Gudgeon, *The Māori Tribes of the East Coast*, vol. 3, p.189.

<sup>63</sup> Te Waipaina Awarau, 'Tuwhakairiora' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Canterbury, 1972), p. 1. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 7, 13, pp. 359, 365.

<sup>64</sup> Mark Isles, 'A Māori History of Tokomaru Bay, East Coast, North Island' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Auckland, 1981), p.10.

<sup>65</sup> Waipana Awarau had drawn on the work of Rev. Mohi Turei, whose Māori and English renditions of the Tuwhakairiora story were published some time ago in an edition of the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Mohi Turei, 'Tuwhakairiora', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 20 (1911), pp. 18-32.

within the tribe and particularly their own family. This included Apirana Mahuika, whose thesis on 'Ngā Wahine Kaihautu o Ngāti Porou: female leaders of Ngāti Porou' (1974) collated evidence from print, while drawing widely on personal communication transmitted orally in a range of circumstances from varying social and political contexts.<sup>66</sup> Substantially different to the literature on myth and legend, these tribal histories did not enjoy the same public dissemination, and were not readily available to schools or a general readership. Indeed, this lack of local history available to the east coast community was noted by Monty Soutar, who in his thesis, 'A History of Te Aitanga-a-Mate', sought to address this absence in educational resources.<sup>67</sup> This imbalance between preferred historical texts and local tradition accessible in schools and the public domain, accentuated further the distance between what was considered essential for general consumption, and academically rigorous enough to constitute a viable history.

Studies that relied on oral traditions as their main sources of reference, such as those previously mentioned on Ngāti Porou, were not completely missing from libraries and public spaces. Indeed, when I grew up, there were a number of classic tribal histories available to interested readers. Don Stafford's *Te Arawa*, for instance, was first published in 1967, while John Te Herekiele Grace's *Tuwharetoa*, had appeared nearly a decade earlier in 1959.<sup>68</sup> The intellectual foundations of these histories, based as they were on *kōrero tuku iho*, spoke immediately to the tensions between myth, fact, history and the perceived frailties of oral evidence. In regard to oral tradition, Stafford stressed that numerous stories 'must be open to doubt in the form

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<sup>66</sup> Apirana Tuahae Mahuika, 'Ngā Wahine Kaihautu o Ngāti Porou/Female Leaders of Ngāti Porou' (Unpublished Masters thesis, Sydney University, 1974). Compare Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 11, 16, 17, 18, pp. 363, 368, 369, 370.

<sup>67</sup> Monty Soutar, 'A History of Te Aitanga-a-Mate' (Unpublished Masters thesis, Massey University, 1998), p. i. See Appendices, Whakapapa Table 18, p. 370.

<sup>68</sup> Don M. Stafford, *Te Arawa: a History of the Arawa people* (Auckland: Reed, 1986, first published by A.H and A.W. Reed, Rotorua, in 1967); John T. H. Grace, *Tuwharetoa: a History of the Māori People of the Taupo District* (Auckland: A. H. Reed and A. W. Reed, 1959).

given by tradition' in some cases simply defying all the 'laws of logic.' Later, he urged readers to draw their own conclusions, keeping in mind the notion that 'tradition in its original form' was meant to be heard with all its inaccuracies.<sup>69</sup> This concern with the idea of oral tradition as history was certainly not new to these types of books. Elsdon Best, in his early work on *Tuhoe* echoed similar sentiments regarding the oral accounts of his informants.<sup>70</sup> Likewise, in *The Story of Aotea*, in 1924, T.G. Hammond wrote that 'while I fittingly characterize that of which I write as "a story". I do not suggest that it is a story distinct from historical fact; but that it is history and traditions recounted as our ancestors would have told the same tales when they were living in the Stone Age.'<sup>71</sup> Assertions such as this, although skeptical of oral traditions, fused together oral history as a way of thinking about how *kōrero* *tuku iho*, in spite of its weaknesses, might be thought of as more than simply mythic imagination. This acknowledging of tribal 'oral history' gained momentum in the work of scholars such as Pei Te Hurinui Jones, who in *Ngā iwi o Tainui* argued vigorously that 'Māori traditions are not located in some timeless past but are invariably diachronic narratives linked precisely to detailed genealogical lattices defining a chronology that is internally consistent and in conformity with biological constraints.'<sup>72</sup> Rev. J. C. Laughton, writing in his foreword to *Tuwharetoa* commended it for rescuing 'the tribal heritage from the ravages of time, and the danger of being irrevocably lost in a changing civilization.'<sup>73</sup> Within texts such as these, *kōrero* *tuku iho* then were seen as more than just fables. Like the living and breathing *kōrero*

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<sup>69</sup> Stafford, *Te Arawa*, p. v.

<sup>70</sup> Elsdon Best, *Tūhoe, the children of the mist: a sketch of the origin, history, myths and beliefs of the Tūhoe tribe of the Māori of New Zealand, with some account of other early tribes of the Bay of Plenty district* (New Plymouth: Board of Māori Ethnological Research for the Polynesian Society, 1925)

<sup>71</sup> T.G. Hammond, *The Story of Aotea* (Christchurch; Lyttleton Times, 1924), pp. 1-2.

<sup>72</sup> Pei Te Hurinui Jones and Bruce Biggs, *Ngā Iwi o Tainui* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1995), p. 7.

<sup>73</sup> Rev. J. C. Laughton 'Foreword' was written in 1957 some two years before the book was first published, Grace, *Tuwharetoa*, p. 7.

heard in my upbringing they too were considered oral history. However, in writing and print Māori oral histories were predominantly reduced to fantasy, and in historical scholarship regularly excluded as unreliable and fickle sources, sometimes disconnected from their local communities by ‘experts’ who failed to cite their informants.<sup>74</sup> In written tribal histories they found firmer footing as central components of the master narrative, and although still considered dubious by some, were defined more as oral history than just tradition, fable, or folklore.

A tendency to think of oral history and tradition as the same thing, whether spoken or written remains a very normal, and largely undisputed, practice across several academic disciplines. The aural transmission is arguably more nuanced and ‘living’, while the printed and written is more fossilised and therefore removed from the people and places they originated. Nevertheless, both the study of oral tradition and oral history remain closely connected, although regularly confused, not only by various scholars in history and other disciplines, but by many indigenous communities, who see both as essential components of their own pasts. This thesis attempts, then, to disentangle them as not only sources of vital importance for historians, but as studies and approaches in their own right. It explores how oral traditions and histories are conceived and engaged across varying divides, and examines how they have been, and are still, composed, transmitted, and understood within the boundaries of Ngāti Porou.

This study is then not a survey of Ngāti Porou oral histories or traditions, nor is it an attempt to produce a grand narrative on Ngāti Porou history. Rather it is an exploration of how the fields of oral tradition and oral history are different, how they share overlapping features and interests, but remain distinctive disciplines. This thesis challenges the view that Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions can be adequately defined by another group, and seeks to shed light on the sites where our

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<sup>74</sup> This process, as some scholars argue, has created a different understanding of the past, where history with a capital ‘H’ is juxtaposed to indigenous histories. This is discussed in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (California: Sage, 2000), p. 499.

perspectives converge and diverge from oral historians and oral traditionalists. In this regard this study offers an important and timely contribution to the literature in oral history and tradition, on both a local and global scale. It provides an indigenous critique of each field, and offers a fresh commentary on contemporary historical method, theory, and the perceived forms of oral history and tradition. The intent is to provide a much needed overview of the contrasts and connections between the studies of oral traditions and oral histories from an indigenous perspective, thus offering insights beneficial to all.

### **‘Titiro ki uta ra, ki Hikurangi Maunga’: The Thesis Landscape<sup>75</sup>**

There are two major questions explored throughout this thesis; first, in what ways are the studies of oral history and oral traditions the same, or different? And second, in what ways do these fields of study align with, or depart from, Ngāti Porou understandings of oral history and oral tradition? In answering these key questions this thesis explores the layers of ‘oral history’ and ‘oral tradition’ through five substantive chapters that form the main body of this study. These chapters begin with the perceived ‘form’ of oral traditions and oral histories as ‘oral’ sources, and moves on to examine the underlying politics, methods and theories that inform their practice and interpretation. Thus the thesis is structured in terms of a progression, from the out-ward appearance, and often superficial conceptualisation, of the ‘form’ (Chapters Four and Five), to the political aims and objectives that influence each group (Chapter Six). The study then considers the reality of oral history and traditions, including their political ambitions in method and ‘practice’ (Chapter Seven), and returns finally to the theoretical interpretive frames that inform the method, support the political ideals, and essentially shape the form (Chapter Eight).

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<sup>75</sup> ‘Look inland toward mount Hikurangi’, from the mōteatea, ‘Kaati ra e Hika.’ Appendices 2, p. 337. This thesis explores explicit questions related to the form, politics, methods, and theories of oral history and tradition, but does so with specific reference to Ngāti Porou, whose worldviews are symbolised here in mount Hikurangi.

Prior to this investigation, Chapter Two sets the scene for this study, beginning with the geographical, cultural, and intellectual landscapes of the Ngāti Porou world. Because this thesis draws extensively on the oral history interviews of four generations of Ngāti Porou participants, it pays specific attention to the methods, politics, challenges, and intricacies involved in this process. Thus, it discusses the rationale that has informed the methodology employed here, including the ethical dilemmas related to participant selection, interviewing, and the representation of people. The chapter surveys the 'landscapes' upon which this study is founded, framing the approach within the intellectual boundaries that mark a Ngāti Porou perspective. To this extent it considers the importance of language, gender, and age as crucial factors related to the interviews undertaken in this study. Most importantly, it deals with the issue of 'voice', particularly the amplification and interweaving of the author's voice with those of the participants. Moreover, it highlights the 'landscapes' that re-orientate this thesis within Ngāti Porou mātauranga (knowledge systems), and determines the way in which this study should be read and understood on 'our' terms. The historiographical background, and local intellectual, political, and cultural landscape is addressed in two preliminary chapters that set the scene of this study.

Chapter Three reviews the literature that has led to the formation of the disciplines now known as oral tradition and oral history. It traces the historiography within each field, and considers the ways in which scholars in both areas have developed their understandings. Chapter Three also examines how notions of oral history and oral tradition have been reflected, or ignored, in the Aotearoa New Zealand context, particularly the way in which they have been dealt with by indigenous scholars. Subsequently, it accounts for the development of critical theories that have emerged in 'post-colonial' and 'Kaupapa Māori' writing, and the impact this has on the way indigenous peoples have conceptualised oral history and tradition over time.

Both Chapters Four and Five explicitly discuss the form of oral tradition and oral history, comparing the views of oral historians and oral traditionalists with each other, and with the voices of the Ngāti Porou interviewees. Of the form of oral histories and traditions, Chapter Four specifically asks: why is the 'oral' so significant in oral history and tradition? Are Ngāti Porou understandings of the form of oral tradition and history similar to that of the anthropologist, folklorist, oral traditionalists and oral historian? These questions are expanded on further in Chapter Five, which looks more closely at traditions and oral histories in print and transmission. These opening chapters pull together the various definitions offered by scholars and the interviewees, noting their differences, and the competing and complimentary ideas each employ to make sense of the shape and form of the sources they create, pass on, and research.

Following on from this initial examination, Chapter Six explores the extent to which political ideas, aims, and motivations are shared across the studies of oral history and oral tradition. It asks: how are these similar, or vastly different, to Ngāti Porou perspectives, and how important are these diverse politics to understanding the way oral history and oral traditions are perceived, researched, and 'created'? This chapter then connects the introductory analysis of the form with the investigations of method and theory still to come. A deliberate discussion of political underpinnings at this stage of the study invites readers to reflect more deeply on the previous assertions of form, and offers a much-needed platform to more adequately discuss the significance, or rather problematic relevance, of method and theory that follow. It provides a discussion of gendered, religious, and national politics, particularly where they converge and diverge with cultural and indigenous notions of authenticity, survival, and self determination. Thus, Chapter Six considers how these aims and objectives mark distinctive attitudes to the way oral histories and oral traditions are shaped, used, and understood.

Chapter Seven focuses on the methods used by oral historians and oral traditionalists, from the various types of interviews they employ, to the practices of participant observation, transcription, and ethics that have become common to each group. Despite the influential political aims that shape the way scholars engage with oral history and oral tradition, Chapter Seven notes how methods are not necessarily reflective of those objectives and aspirations, and indeed may be poor indicators of whether a study is defined as oral history or oral tradition. To this extent it explores the key methods that have become standard practice for oral historians and oral traditionalists, and discusses the relevance of these approaches for Ngāti Porou peoples. A discussion of methods here is significant, particularly when it is this aspect that is perhaps the most obvious point of difference between the approaches used by oral historians and those who specifically research oral traditions. It sits between a discussion of political objectives in Chapter Six and the examination of theories in Chapter Eight because it highlights the 'practice', where the form is already considered, but where politics and theories are often implicitly rather than explicitly present.

An examination of method then leads into the penultimate chapter of this study, which explores the theoretical strands common to the disciplines of oral tradition and oral history, and notes the way they overlap and depart as approaches developed in both fields. Indeed, theory informs the methods scholars use, gives intellectual traction to political aims, and in the process recreates and interprets the form. Thus, Chapter Eight asks: what are the key theories used by oral historians and those who study oral traditions? How are they similar, and in what sense might they contribute to a more robust understanding of the differences between these two areas of research? Like all the preceding chapters it also considers the relevance of these theories to Ngāti Porou, and comments on the way they might be re-woven in future studies. To this end, this thesis unravels the multiple layers of oral history and oral tradition in a deeper analysis of the form, politics, methods and theories. It



strips away the surface, exploring what lies beyond the 'form', what exists when we probe for deeper meaning and purpose, and what is distinctive about the methods and theories that have become standard practice. Most significantly, this study offers a new point of reference within which definitions, sources, politics, purpose, practice and theories might yet be revisited, essentially modifying and reconfiguring the space and contours that stretch between, and encompass, the studies of oral history and oral tradition.

## Chapter Two: 'Te Wiwi Nāti': Ngāti Porou Landscapes

Te wiwi Nati, no Porourangi,  
he iwi moke no Waiapu,  
no Whangaokena, no Hikurangi.  
He wiwi, he Nati, he whanoke<sup>1</sup>

'Te wiwi Nāti' is a phrase drawn from the local landscape, from the imagery of 'close compact growing rushes', which has long been used as a symbolic reference to the 'unity and togetherness' of the Ngāti Porou people.<sup>2</sup> Negotiating the 'landscape', and becoming familiar with its 'indigenous' features, is important to explaining how this chapter is organised, how it might be read, and understood. This chapter traverses and marks the multi-levelled terrain that situates this study. It sets the scene, and orientates the reader within those bearings and landmarks that are significant to navigating this thesis. To this extent, this present chapter considers not simply the geographic and demographic landscapes from which the participants of this study speak, but the various political, gendered, linguistic, intellectual, and cultural landscapes that give depth, meaning, and shape to their words and silences. It explores the rationale and processes involved in the interviews conducted specifically for this study. Most significantly, this chapter discusses and clarifies many of the key terms employed in this thesis, and addresses the diverse, yet 'compact', realities of Ngāti Porou identity, with particular reference to the way their voices blend together, resonate with, and accent the words of the author.

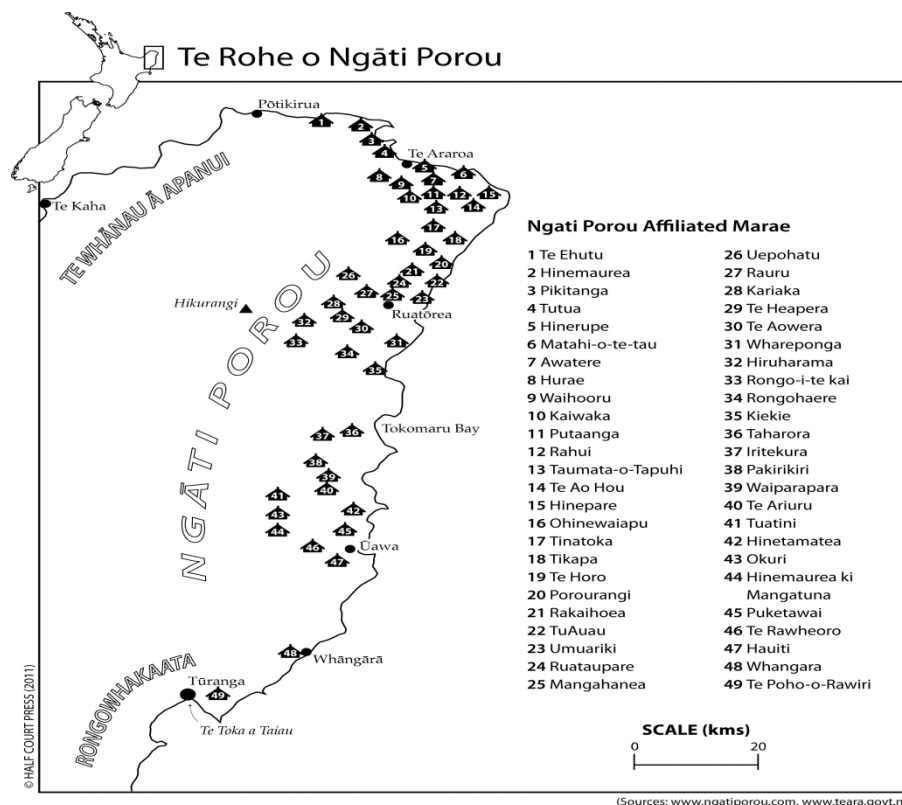
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<sup>1</sup> Of the words 'Te wiwi Nati, no Porourangi, he iwi moke, he whanoke', Monty Soutar writes that they can be interpreted: 'The Ngāti Porou, descendants of Porourangi, an independent people, and most determined.' Monty Soutar, 'Ngāti Porou Leadership; Rapata Wahawaha and the Politics of Conflict': kei te ora nei hoki tātou mo to tātou whenua''' (PhD thesis, Massey University, 2000), p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> See Tamati Reedy, 'Ngāti Porou', in *Māori Peoples of New Zealand, Ngā Iwi o Aotearoa* (Auckland: David Bateman/Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2006), p. 168.

## Ngāti Porou Localities

This study draws on oral history interviews with four generations of Ngāti Porou people, the second largest indigenous tribal group in Aotearoa New Zealand.<sup>3</sup> The traditional homeland of Ngāti Porou lies on the East Cape of the North Island of New Zealand, its boundaries between Potikirua in the North to Te Toka -a-Taiiau in the South.<sup>4</sup>



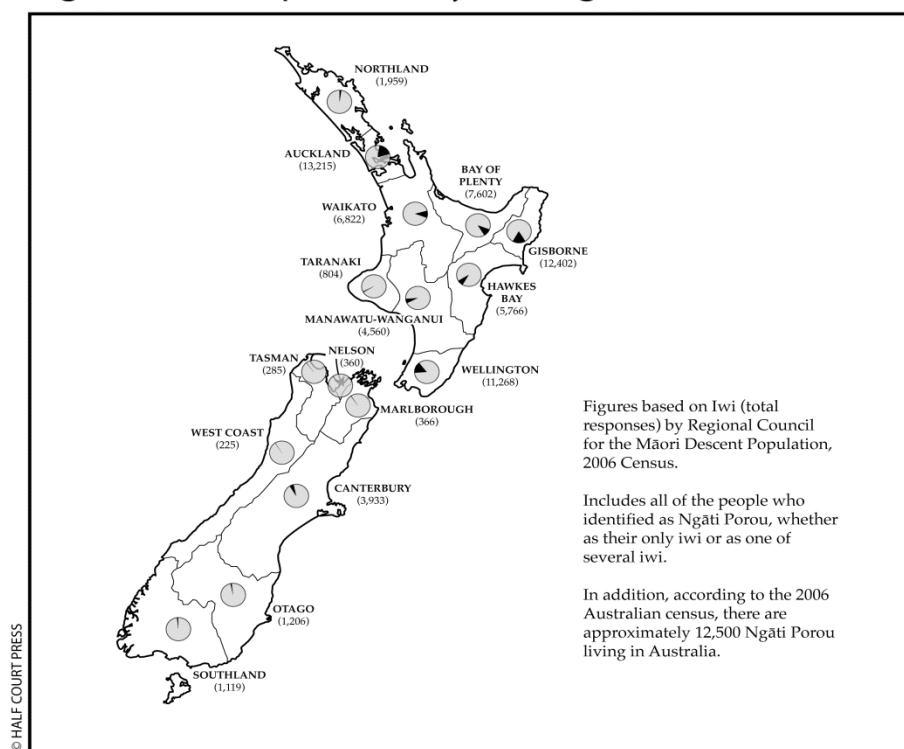
These traditional landmarks also identify the borders between our papa kaenga (homeland) and those of our nearest tribal relations, Te Whānau-a-Apanui northwest towards Te Kaha, and Rongowhakaata southward in what is now known as the Gisborne/Turanga area (see map). Ngāti Porou, although often considered to be a single tribal group on its own is in fact the unified body of a number of various

<sup>3</sup> In 2001, the Ngāti Porou population reached 61,701; the second largest iwi group in the country. See Statistics New Zealand, *2001 Census: Iwi*, p.11. See also Appendices 4, 'Ngāti Porou Hapu', p. 372, and compare Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 10, 14, 15, pp. 362, 366, 367.

<sup>4</sup> This is generally accepted as the traditional boundaries, see by A. T. Mahuika, 'Report: Hui re Boundaries with Turanganui' (11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September 1993), Private Papers.

hapū and sub-tribes including Ngāti Putaanga, Ngāti Uepohatu, Te Aitanga-a-Mate, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Konohi, and Te Whānau-a-Tuwhakairiora, among others.<sup>5</sup> These groups, located in different parts of the Ngāti Porou landscape, all have their own distinctive geographical boundaries, some inland toward mount Hikurangi, others on the foreshore, such as Te Aitanga-a-Mate at Whareponga, Te Whānau-a-Rutaupare ki Tūparoa, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti at Uawa, and Te Whānau-a-Iritekura at Tokomaru Bay.

### Ngāti Porou Population by NZ Region (2006 Census)



The boundaries of Ngāti Porou have not always been so simply defined, and, in some instances, there have been contestations surrounding the ownership of certain areas. The changing nature of land ownership, particularly as it has been interpreted within the Native and Māori Land Court process has led to a number of contests

<sup>5</sup> Ngāti Porou are made up of 53 hapū groupings. See Appendices 3, 'Ngāti Porou Hapu', p. 372. The numbers of Ngāti Porou people living in urban is areas shown in (MAP 2) 'Ngāti Porou Population by NZ Region', which draws on Statistics New Zealand, *Quickstats about Māori: 2006 Census/Tatauranga 2006* (Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

between competing tribal groups, sub-tribes, and even family members.<sup>6</sup> The imprint of colonial surveying, naming and claiming has also, at times, reduced Ngāti Porou to problematic homogeneous categories, such as the ‘east coast’ or just Tairāwhiti peoples.<sup>7</sup> In responding to the evolving markers of our identity and geographies, Ngāti Porou too have experimented with the way we have defined ourselves and grouped our diverse hapū.<sup>8</sup> Despite these changes, and the various ways in which Ngāti Porou might be configured, it is clear that today the tribe has a dynamic and growing population, with most of its members living outside of the traditional boundaries. Those who live abroad are often referred to as ‘Ngāti Porou ki te whenua’, and by some as ‘Rawaho’ (outsiders), which is a distinctively different identity to those who remain at home, who are considered *ahi ka roa* (long burning fires of occupation) or *kauruki tu roa* (long ascending smoke).<sup>9</sup> These are highly political identities within the tribe, with those viewed as *ahi ka roa* generally perceived to have more speaking rights or decision making rights than those whose home-fires have perhaps grown cold.

The majority of Ngāti Porou peoples, now live, or have lived at some stage, away from home. A number of interviews were conducted with participants in urban areas, and even those on the coast spoke about their time working and living in

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<sup>6</sup> Monty Soutar writes that many of our tipuna were soon using ‘fraudulent methods and malpractice to lay claim to as many blocks of land as they could’, Monty Soutar, ‘A History of Te Aitanga-a-Mate’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, Massey University, 1998), p.iii.

<sup>7</sup> More recently, Ngāti Porou have taken exception to the over simplification of their tribal identity. See A. T. Mahuika, in ‘He Kupu Kōrero na Apirana Tuahae Mahuika – Evidence Statement for Apirana Tuahae Mahuika’, (WAI262) (12th April 1999), pp. 3-5. The East Coast and Tairāwhiti identities have been maintained through provincial identities assigned to the area by central government, local councils, and other local and national organisations. For more discussion on this process on a national scale see Giselle Byrnes, *Boundary Markers: Land Surveying and the Colonisation of New Zealand* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), p. 80.

<sup>8</sup> The Rūnanga for instance initially used a rohe system divided into three groupings. More recently this model has been changed to seven clusters that account for a growing insistence on more equitable representation both inside and outside of our traditional boundaries. See ‘Trust Deed establishing Te Rūnanganui o Ngāti Porou, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou as Settlor, and, Te Rūnanganui o Ngāti Porou Trustee Limited as Trustee’ (2001), pp. 64-65.

<sup>9</sup> These terms, from a Ngāti Porou perspective, are defined by A. T. Mahuika, ‘Draft Affidavit on Behalf of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou to the Privy Council’, Private Papers (10<sup>th</sup> September 1996), pp. 12-13.

other regions. The unifying lattice that connects those from home with those who now live elsewhere is whakapapa. This genealogical connection is not simply a familial matter, but fuses individuals with their respective hapū (extended family grouping) and therefore identifies them with a specific marae or sub-tribal group.<sup>10</sup> These sub-tribal groupings, each the progeny of illustrious ancestors, highlight the vital role that whakapapa plays in the forming of interwoven identities, intellectual, spiritual, political and social networks that at once share common features and ideas, while quite distinct in their own local perspectives. This dynamic interplay between the collective identities of tribe, hapū, whānau, and individual is vital to the foundational theoretical and methodological discussions at work in this thesis. Indeed, before any other methodological or theoretical premise can rightfully be discussed or applied, it is imperative that the central epistemological frames of reference be considered and established to locate the reader within the intellectual landscapes of the people whose voices are amplified in these pages.

## The Intellectual Landscape

‘Tera te haeata takiri ana mai i runga o Hikurangi’<sup>11</sup>  
‘Behold the first light of dawn is reflected from the crest of Hikurangi’

This traditional Ngāti Porou saying, from the tribal haka ‘Kura Tiwaka’, serves as an apt description for how the knowledge in this thesis is interpreted and presented. The central and immovable reference point here is Hikurangi, not only the iconic and living embodiment of the tribe, but a symbolic representation of the mātauranga-a-iwi (tribal knowledge) upon which this thesis is founded and its

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<sup>10</sup> See for instance Appendices 3, Whakapapa Table 14, 15, pp. 366, 367.

<sup>11</sup> From the haka ‘Kura Tiwaka Taua’, See Te Kapunga Dewes, ed., *Māori literature: He Haka Taparahi, Men’s Ceremonial Dance Poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taumaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata* (Wellington: Department of Anthropology, Victoria University of Wellington, 1972), pp. 16 -17.

content conveyed.<sup>12</sup> Thus, what is ‘reflected’ from its crest, is influenced by its distinctive formations, and the illumination that it offers the reader coloured in the various tints, shades and flushes that radiate off its peaks. Hikurangi, then, in this thesis, is the embodiment of our tribal epistemological frames of reference.<sup>13</sup> The breaking ‘light of dawn’ indicates the varying insights and ruminations that are cast and reflected from a ‘steadfast’ Ngāti Porou perspective.<sup>14</sup> In this way, the varying analyses that take place in this thesis are all at some point exposed to, and reflected, from a Ngāti Porou cultural and political foundation. This approach is vital because it places our mātauranga at the centre of this scholarship and enables a more accurate exposition of the meaning of oral tradition and oral history as it is expressed from ‘our’ views.<sup>15</sup>

Although Hikurangi is invoked as the centralising point of reference in this thesis, it is not the only significant site or symbol of Ngāti Porou mātauranga. Other locations include Whangara-mai-Tawhiti, the birthplace of our eponymous ancestor Porourangi: the famed bay in which our revered tipuna Paikea made his home.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Hikurangi is used in this thesis as a metaphor for Ngāti Porou knowledge paradigms. Tamati Reedy offers a more rounded explanation of the significance of Hikurangi as a symbol of tribal identity, an ‘immovable’ icon, and living embodiment of Ngāti Porou, Reedy, ‘Ngāti Porou’, pp. 164-69.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Epistemology’ in this study refers to ‘a theory of knowledge’, of how Ngāti Porou know and perceive the world on our terms. In this sense, an epistemology is not the body of knowledge itself, but the lens through which knowledge is interpreted. For further reading here see Michel Foucault’s discussion on ‘epistemes’, from which my definition here is adapted (but not fully discussed in this thesis), Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), pp. 197-98; See also Richard Osbourne, *Megawords: 200 terms you really need to know* (New South Wales: Allen and Unwin, 2001), p. 125.

<sup>14</sup> The ‘Steadfast’ nature of mount Hikurangi is well rehearsed in songs and proverbs, and is also repeatedly referred to throughout this study.

<sup>15</sup> The use of the terms ‘our’, ‘us’, and ‘we’ are discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>16</sup> Porourangi’s birth is chronicled by Ngata in his lecture series on Rauru and Toi. Whangara, he notes, has long been considered one of the most important sites in Ngāti Porou history: A. T. Ngata, *The Porourangi Maori Cultural School, Rauru-nui-a-Toi Course, Lectures 1-7* (Gisborne: Māori Purposes Fund Board/Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, 2011, originally presented in 1944), pp. 5-7. Writing of the significance that Whangara has in Ngāti Porou history, A. T. Mahuika points out how this site was named by the voyager Paikea because it reminded him of his old homeland, Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, p. 23.

Like Hikurangi, Whetumataurau at Te Araroa is also considered an important summit and refuge in Ngāti Porou territory: a traditional place of residence for some of our most celebrated leaders.<sup>17</sup> Similar to the mountains and bays, Ngāti Porou peoples often refer to rivers as significant sites that can be invoked to interpret our historical perspectives. For instance, the erosion that has polluted the Waiapu river, once one of our most vibrant waterways, has recently been lamented as a distressing reflection of the poor 'health and well being of our people.'<sup>18</sup> From the rivers, to the mountains, valleys, streams, and bays, the landscape of Ngāti Porou offers an abundant array of interpretive lenses.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, despite the usefulness of Hikurangi as a focal point, it would be remiss not to point out other sites and sounds of home. Moreover, there are numerous ways in which the 'landscapes' of Ngāti Porou knowledge might be explored. Some utilise the various waka (canoe) histories and traditions, such as the Horouta and Nukutaimemeha voyages, as interpretive points of reference.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, for many of our people who no longer reside at home, waka (canoe) have often featured as significant links to our tribal identity and history. In the Wairarapa, for example, many Ngāti Porou have converged for hui at the urban marae Nukutaimemeha, while in the deep south others have met at places

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<sup>17</sup> The history and kōrero relevant to Whetumatarau is also presented in Bob McConnell, *Te Araroa an East Coast Community: a History* (Te Araroa: R. N. McConnell, 1993).

<sup>18</sup> Waiapu has been called 'the consumer of people' because it has taken many lives. The erosion and corrosive problems are addressed by A. T. Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero', pp. 51-53.

<sup>19</sup> Many of these frames have already been invoked by Ngāti Porou writers. Te Pākaka Tawhai for instance has written of the invaluable lens that our wharenuī provide in encapsulating our ancestors, our kōrero tuku iho and mātauranga. Te Pākaka Tawhai, 'He Tipuna Wharenuī o te Rohe o Uepohatu' (Unpublished Masters thesis, Massey University, 1978).

<sup>20</sup> Rongowhakaata Halbert, for instance, refers to the Horouta canoe as the organising hull of his history on the peoples in the east coast region. Rongowhakaata Halbert, *Horouta: the History of the Horouta canoe, Gisborne and East Coast* (Auckland: Reed, 1999). Nukutaimemeha is the ancestral canoe in which it is said that Maui discovered and settled the North Island.



such as Araiteuru, a marae that takes the name of another waka intimately connected with home.<sup>21</sup>

Significant to the waka histories is the role of whakapapa, or genealogy, which fulfils an organisational function in Māori and iwi communities. Apirana Mahuika has argued that the primary role of whakapapa is to include and not exclude.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the colourful and vibrant complexities of Ngāti Porou tribal identity reflect the multiple family connections that are retained across varying east coast communities. Ngāti Poroutanga then embraces numerous, and entangled, lines of descent, from Maui, Paikea, Porou Ariki, Uepohatu and Ruawaiipu to Hauiti, Te Rangitawaea, Uetuhiao, Ruataupare, and Tuwhakairora, and others, to name but a few.<sup>23</sup> Reading this study through a Ngāti Poroutanga lens brings to the fore the genealogical protocols that connect rather than divide our people, and highlights those perspectives that are characteristic of our worldviews, values and attitudes. Such political and cultural frames of reference are introduced regularly throughout this study. They mark the boundaries, layers, and foundations within which, and upon which, Ngāti Porou understandings of the forms, functions, purpose, theories and practice of oral history and oral tradition are 'reconfigured.'<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Nukutaimemeha, the waka, is also the name of the marae on the west side of Masterton, the largest town in the Wairarapa region that lies north of Wellington. Araiteuru is another waka associated with those who arrived and populated our shores, and was used as the name for an 'urban' marae in the South Island city of Dunedin. The intention of both marae has been to provide a space where Māori living in urban areas could congregate.

<sup>22</sup> He made these comments at a marae graduation ceremony at Waikato University in 2004. On the topic of whakapapa he also emphasized that our strength lies in our diversity as much as the close relationships we share.

<sup>23</sup> Tamati Reedy notes that the tribe has taken Porourangi's name for two reasons. First because of his status as an individual upon whom descended the major lines of Polynesia including Toi and Whatonga, and secondly, because his descendents 'produced warriors whose conquests in battle, along with strategic marriage alliances, subdued many of the competing forces in the Gisborne and East Coast regions'. Reedy, 'Ngāti Porou', p.164. These tipuna are all connected. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 16, 18, pp. 352, 354, 355, 356, 358, 368, 370.

<sup>24</sup> 'Configure' is used here because this interpretation of oral history and oral tradition is local, but in this thesis the attempt to analyse foreign definitions and ideas becomes a process of 'reconfiguration' through a Ngāti Porou epistemological lens.

## The Political Landscape

### *Māori and iwi Politics*

'Māori' are the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand, but this simplistic identity has long been problematised by tribal scholars.<sup>25</sup> 'The construction of Māori identity', as Waikato/Tainui scholar Tahu Kukutai states 'is, and always has been, a political and activist activity.'<sup>26</sup> Far from seeing themselves as a neatly defined homogeneous group, Māori have more often identified themselves and each other as separate tribal (iwi) peoples.<sup>27</sup> While being 'Māori' provides a strategic collective identity that enables a unified response to shared indigenous issues, the collective term 'Māori' is unable to account for the nuanced political realities of each iwi.<sup>28</sup> Na reira (therefore), this thesis avoids the deeply problematic analysis of 'Maori' understandings of oral tradition and oral history, and instead insist on a specific tribal approach. Focusing on a Ngāti Porou, rather than a 'Māori', cohort reveals its own political divisions, marked for instance by hapu (subtribe) and whānau (family)

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<sup>25</sup> 'Māori' is believed to be a term that came into popular use in the nineteenth century with the arrival of European settlers. Michael King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu: One Thousand Years of Māori History* (Auckland: Reed, 2001), p. 8. In the *Oxford Dictionary of New Zealand English*, an explanation for the word 'Māori' notes: that it 'developed [...] after the arrival of Europeans to fill a need to distinguish the "usual" or "ordinary" *tangata māori* from the "extraordinary" or "unusual" *tangata mā* (white) *tangata pora* (strange or extraordinary (boat people), *tangata tupua* (foreign or demonic or goblin people), or Pākehā.' H. W. Orsman, ed., *The Dictionary of New Zealand English – A Dictionary of New Zealandisms on Historical Principles* (Auckland and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 469. Alternatively, in *He Pātaka Kupu* the authors note that a 'Māori' is 'He tangata whenua nō Aotearoa, tērā tonu ka hoki ōna whakapapa ki tētahi o ngā tūpuna o runga i ngā waka i heke mai i te hekenga nui'/'is an indigenous person of the land (of the long white cloud), who retains a genealogical descent from an ancestor who arrived aboard one of the migratory vessels that arrived here in the great migration.' (My translation). *He Pātaka Kupu: Te Kai a te Rangatira* (Wellington: Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori/The Māori Language Commission, 2008), p. 403.

<sup>26</sup> Tahu Kukutai, 'Māori Identity and "Political Arithmetick": the dynamics of reporting ethnicity' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2001), pp. 47-58.

<sup>27</sup> Mason Durie, quoted in Tahu Kukutai, 'Māori Identity', p. 60.

<sup>28</sup> Māori identity is a well researched topic in Aotearoa New Zealand. Of Māori identity, Tracey McIntosh has in recent times offered a three tiered model that shifts between Māori as a fixed, forced, and fluid construction. See Tracey McIntosh, 'Māori Identities: Fixed, Fluid, Forced', in *New Zealand Identities, Departures and Destinations*, edited by James H. Liu, Tim McCreanor, Tracey McIntosh, and Teresa Teaiwa (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2005), pp. 43-48.

boundaries. These parochial identities are celebrated today in our annual ‘pa wars’ festivities, but are displays of unity rather than separatism.<sup>29</sup> While these contests highlight the more cohesive aspects evident in the tribe’s identity, other political and religious tensions have at times threatened iwi solidarity.<sup>30</sup>

At the time the interviews for this study were undertaken, Ngāti Porou had been negotiating with Crown representatives regarding the settlement of historic Treaty of Waitangi grievances and claims. Three counter-claimant groups opposed the tribe’s leadership organisation – Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou – arguing that their rights had been usurped, and that they should be recognised as their own distinctive tribal entities.<sup>31</sup> The key protagonists in these counter-claims identified themselves as Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Ruawaipu, and Ngāti Uepohatu, and they were adamant that the mandate to negotiate on their behalf had not been granted to Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou.<sup>32</sup> Many of those who identified as Ngāti Porou denounced these counter-claims and reasserted their own genealogical links to each sub-tribe (hapu), suggesting that the counter-claimants themselves had not sought their mandate to

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<sup>29</sup> ‘Pa Wars’ is an annual tribal event, which brings various marae groups together from all parts of Ngāti Porou to compete against each other in various sporting activities, and trivia games, but with the express purpose of celebrating our Ngāti Poroutanga.

<sup>30</sup> In the nineteenth century, for instance, internal conflict between members of the tribe who joined the Ringatu movement led by Te Kooti and the counter movement led by figures such as Rapata Wahawaha, highlighted severe division between the tribe based largely on religious affiliation. Te ‘Hahi Mihinare’ (the Anglican) contingent gained an ascendancy in this struggle, but the Ringatu church remains a strong community still to this day. However, A. T. Mahuika points out that despite these differences, ‘the fact that [people followed] these movements is not a denial of their roots. My grand uncle Peta Whekana was a Te Kooti follower, and at the end of the campaign he returned to his own whānau at Whakawhitira proclaiming his Ngāti Porou loyalty and affiliation. In Ngāti Porou many of our forebears were Ringatu.... There are also marae built and set aside for the Ringatu faith as for example Kaiwaka Marae at Tikitiki.’ A. T. Mahuika, ‘Draft Affidavit for the High Court in Wellington’, Private Papers, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup> For a more detailed reading of the history surrounding the internal disputes here, see New Zealand Waitangi Tribunal, *The East Coast Settlement Report (Wai 2190)* (Wellington, 2010), pp. 2-4, 12, 32, 62-64.

<sup>32</sup> See ‘Looking at Links with the Past’, letter to the editor, *Gisborne Herald*, Sue Nikora, 13 Dec 2007; ‘Survey to gauge Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti Support for Rūnanga Treaty Mandate’, *Gisborne Herald*, 15 Dec 2007; ‘Settlement Proposals Opposed, letter to the editor, *Gisborne Herald*, Ohomauri Joss Ripia, 4 Jan 2008; ‘Opposition to Mandate Bid Dominates’, *Gisborne Herald*, Wynsley Wrigley, 24 Jan 2008. See ‘Looking back at Māori ancestral links: Part One’, letter to the editor, *Gisborne Herald*, Bruce Morris, 29 Dec 2007. ‘Looking back at Māori ancestral links: Part Two’, letter to the editor, *Gisborne Herald*, Bruce Morris, 31 Dec 2007.

represent the three sub-tribes.<sup>33</sup> In some instance, these contentions turned some family members against each other and created tension, particularly suspicion about who was on either side of the debate.<sup>34</sup> Often, this scepticism was directed at my role as the interviewer, with many of the participants cautious of my personal loyalties based on my familial connections.<sup>35</sup>

The interviews in this thesis include those who supported and those who opposed the Rūnanga claim. Many are close relatives, which caused some contention and suspicion before the interviews commenced. When necessary, these issues were discussed at length prior to, and even during, the recordings. These interviews are highly valued because they illustrate the dynamic differences from one family member to the next. This political division is discussed when necessary throughout the thesis. Reference to those interviewees who themselves do not identify as Ngāti Porou are retained here because despite differences in opinion these participants share a close genealogical relationship.<sup>36</sup>

### *Intergenerational Politics*

The intention to interview multiple generations reflects an underlying aim of this study to: explore the ways oral histories and traditions are understood and passed on from one generation to another. In Ngāti Porou, as in other Māori communities,

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<sup>33</sup> See 'Reporua Marae Disclaims Support', letter to the editor, *Gisborne Herald*, W.P. Whangapirita, Marae Committee secretary, 28 Dec 2007. 'Some Reporua trustees do not disclaim mandate', letter to the editor, *Gisborne Herald*, W.P. Walker, Chairman of Trustees, 8 Jan 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Members of these various factions are deliberately interviewed in this thesis to offer a more nuanced reflection of our tribal perspectives.

<sup>35</sup> The chairperson of the Ngāti Porou Rūnanga, Apirana Mahuika, is my grandfather's brother. This family connection was discussed with a number of interviewees prior to many of the recordings, with some participants cautious of the aims and political objectives of the Rūnanga.

<sup>36</sup> Carrie Hamilton notes that there are often times when the interviewer fundamentally disagrees with the political views of the interviewee. She argues that it is still possible to conduct an interview in these circumstances, yet there needs to be a heightened sense of awareness regarding the subjectivity of both the narrator and the 'listener' and later interpreter of the interview. Carrie Hamilton, 'On Being a "Good" Interviewer: Empathy, Ethics and the Politics of Oral History', *Oral History*, 36, 2 (Autumn 2008), p. 37.

the conventions and protocols of whakapapa play a key role in the dynamics of the interview and the transmission of knowledge. Genealogical lines open and close access to various individuals and families, and are based largely on kin groups, or hapu and marae connections.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the age gap between the interviewer and interviewee can also have a significant bearing on the outcome of the interview. Pressing an older relative for more information or probing for deeper recollections can quickly become intrusive and be regarded as disrespectful. The correct navigation of these intergenerational relationships is based on fundamental codes of conduct such as manaakitanga, in which respect and hospitality is paramount. As Paul Thompson and Daniel Bertaux note, the cultural aspects in intergenerational transmission are significant:

Transmission between generations is as old as humanity itself. It arises from the fundamental human condition. Our lives are a fusion of nature and culture; but nature and culture are a contradiction. Because culture is what makes individual humans into a group, the core of human social identity, its continuity is vital .... But in contrast to the claims of culture to represent tradition over centuries, even eternal truths, stands the sheer brevity of individual human life. Hence the universal necessity for transmission between generations.<sup>38</sup>

Changing cultural realities in Māori and iwi communities have impacted considerably on conceptions and practices in both oral history and tradition. Of this change over generations, Te Rangihiroa once argued that ‘succeeding generations have received more and more education in the new culture and the cumulative effect gradually created a different mental attitude towards life.’<sup>39</sup> Although each generation is exposed to new ideas, an education in the ‘new culture’ is not the same in this generation as it may once have been for Te Rangihiroa. Today, the ‘new

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<sup>37</sup> Hapū and marae family connections draw together closely related kin groups, and are often well known links between various whānau. A. T. Mahuika, ‘Draft Affidavit on Behalf of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou’, pp. 5-7.

<sup>38</sup> Daniel Bertaux and Paul Thompson, eds., *Between Generations Family Models, Myths, and Memories* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005), p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Sir Peter Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa), *The Coming of the Māori* (Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1952), p. 409.

culture' for many Māori and iwi is not necessarily a colonial one, but a revitalization of their traditional worlds. Nevertheless, as Te Uira Manihera from Tainui argues:

The handing down of knowledge by old people is a very difficult thing. They have a look at their children and perhaps their oldest son. If he is mature enough or interested enough in his Māori, he might become the repository. But a lot of people say no. They would sooner take a knowledge of their oral traditions with them than pass them on to the present generation. They believe that if it goes to another person outside the family, in a short time it will have dissolved, absorbed by all the other people who have access to it. There is also a fear that by giving things out they could be commercialised. If this happens, they lose their sacredness, their fertility. They just become common.<sup>40</sup>

This mistrust of our own people, who may no longer value, or protect, traditional knowledge remains a powerful view today. The desire to protect what is considered tapu has a significant relationship to intergenerational transmission. Indeed, in Ngāti Porou, as Ngoi Pewhairangi writes, there is also considerable concern about the passing on of mātauranga. Of the sacredness of our oral traditions and histories she writes:

One thing hard for Pākehā to understand is that our elders never allow us to sell knowledge of anything Māori that is really tapu. To them it is priceless. Money can never buy knowledge and when they teach they will tell people: "This knowledge I am passing over to you must never be sold." This is how we get to know things. They're handed down from generation to generation and it becomes part of you. And this is the part of Māoritanga you can never teach. You know it's there all right, you've got it there.<sup>41</sup>

The embedded nature of our mātauranga and oral traditions in the lives of those who have been brought up in the culture is, as she points out, a vital part of the transmission process. However, as A. N. Applebee suggests, 'traditions enable and transform the minds of the individuals raised within them, and are in turn

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<sup>40</sup> Te Uira Manihera, 'Foreword: Learning and Tapu', in *Te Ao Hurihuri Aspects of Māoritanga*, edited by Michael King (Auckland: Reed, 1992), p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> Ngoi Pewhairangi, 'Foreword: Learning and Tapu', in *Te Ao Hurihuri Aspects of Māoritanga*, edited by Michael King (Auckland: Reed, 1992), p. 10.

themselves transformed by those same individuals.’<sup>42</sup> Thus, an intergenerational approach allows for an examination of the way oral traditions and histories are both instrumental in shaping knowledge over time, while they are themselves products of that very interaction. The intergenerational testimonies presented in this thesis enable a closer examination of the intersections where Ngāti Porou voices and ideas converge with and depart from the definitions and discussions of oral history and tradition maintained in the international literature. To this extent the intergenerational mix of life narratives examined here is essential to mapping these junctions and deviations, and highly valuable in explaining how oral traditions and histories are at once dynamic sources not just for communities, but more immediately to the individuals for whom they are most intimately designed.

### *Gendered Politics*

Many of the interviewees in this thesis are women, and particularly elderly women.<sup>43</sup> These elderly relations are referred to here as koka, or tipuna koka the Ngāti Porou terms for mother and grandmother. Many of these ‘nannies’ are very influential and strong minded people: they are leaders in various aspects of tribal life. Ngāti Porou women have long been regarded as outspoken and tenacious, a trait that most believe is inherited from an array of renowned female leaders.<sup>44</sup> These included women such as Hinerupe, whose mana whenua and mana tangata stretched from the Awatere river to Punaruku, and Hineauta, who was so tapu that she was

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<sup>42</sup> A. N. Applebee, *Curriculum as Conversation: Transforming Traditions of Teaching and Learning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Nineteen women are interviewed in this study, and thirty two men.

<sup>44</sup> For instance, Tania Ka’ai observes the significance of descent in the life of Ngoi Pewhairangi, Tania Ka’ai, *Ngoi Pewhairangi: an Extraordinary Life* (Wellington: Huia, 2008), p. 108.

‘amohia ai’/‘carried about on a litter’, and whose ‘presence alone was sufficient to subdue’ other male leaders.<sup>45</sup>

The assertive and uncompromising nature of Ngāti Porou women has been well documented in our history, with outstanding recent examples including Turuhira Tatare, Keita Walker, and Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, and among those who have passed on, Merekaraka Waititi, Putiputi Haerewa, and Materoa Reedy.<sup>46</sup> Of the mana these women possess, Apirana Mahuika observes that they were often the organisers and rallying points for local hui and tribal functions.<sup>47</sup> But this has not necessarily been the common experience for all Ngāti Porou women. The myth of the Ngāti Porou female leader as an outspoken force to be reckoned with is a powerful archetype that is articulated in many of the interviews.<sup>48</sup> This view of the role of women has long been a celebrated part of our tribal history and identity, and has been one of the distinctive features of our tribal identity.

Attention to the way men and women produce life narratives has been, and continues to be, a popular theme in oral history scholarship. Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis argues that ‘usually what is found in research on women is the “mythical male norm”, or in more current research, the white female norm, as the standard by which all others are judged.’<sup>49</sup> Although well versed in the history of our female

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<sup>45</sup> See A. T. Mahuika, ‘Ngā Wahine Kaihatu o Ngāti Porou/Female Leaders of Ngāti Porou’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, Sydney University, 1974), pp. 76, 169-171, 176. See also Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 16, 17, pp. 368, 369.

<sup>46</sup> Turuhira and Iritana are both interviewed in this thesis. The latter group are noted specifically by A. T. Mahuika in ‘Ngā Wahine Kaihatu’, pp. 162-65, 190-92, 196.

<sup>47</sup> A. T. Mahuika, ‘Ngā Wahine Kaihautu’, p. 190.

<sup>48</sup> These articulations are not developed in detail in the present study, but could provide significant future research topics for other researchers.

<sup>49</sup> Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis, ‘Black Women’s Life Stories: Reclaiming Self in Narrative Texts’, in *Women’s Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), p. 43. Here she refers to Patricia Hill Collins, ‘Critical Questions: Two Decades of Feminist Scholarship’, paper presented at the Eleventh Annual National Women’s Studies Association Conference, Towson, Maryland, 14-18 June 1989.



leaders, as a younger Ngāti Porou male, my ability to interpret the lives and perspectives of my female relatives is severely limited. In many of the interviews, there is a familiar mothering affection displayed by some of my elder female relatives, and the ‘co-constructed interview’ that Alessandro Portelli describes is highly influenced by our gendered relationship, as much as by our age differences.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, ‘learning to listen’ to the way these women expressed their views and ideas has been a constant challenge in this thesis. Paying closer attention to their words and silences, their references to hegemonic and patriarchal structures, and the way they dealt with conflicting cultural ideals, was a constant aim.<sup>51</sup> However, as Leonie Pihama and Patricia Mairangi Johnston point out, my limitations as a male listener are critical because the interpretation of Māori women’s voices can only really be defined by themselves:

For Māori women there are many differences which “count”. These include a diverse range of cultural considerations which must be defined by Māori women. A key difference is located within the unequal power-relations that exist in this [Pākehā colonial] society which have been instrumental in the marginalisation of Māori women.<sup>52</sup>

As a result, in attempting to allow my female relatives to speak for themselves, there is always the ever-present problem of my gendered position as the researcher. The application of a Pākehā interpretive approach to their words does not necessarily provide an appropriate amplification of their narratives. Most importantly, as Johnston writes: ‘for Māori women, the struggles with and challenges to the ways in which we are being constructed, defined, and represented as different culminate in

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<sup>50</sup> Alessandro Portelli, ‘What Makes Oral History Different’, in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 46.

<sup>51</sup> Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack, ‘Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses’, in *Women’s Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), p. 20.

<sup>52</sup> Patricia Mairangi Johnston, and Leonie Pihama, ‘What Counts as Difference and What Differences Count: gender, race, and the politics of difference’, in *Toi Wahine, the Worlds of Māori Women*, edited by K. Iwin and I. Ramsden (Auckland: Penguin, 1995), p. 86. Johnston and Pihama are referring her to a ‘Pākehā colonial’ society (my addition in the text).

complex interpretations of what differences count for us.’<sup>53</sup> If this is true for Māori women, then for Ngāti Porou women it is perhaps a more refined interpretation again, which may have some trouble finding purchase in a thesis structured and written by a man, even if he is Ngāti Porou. It is not my intention here to speak for Ngāti Porou women. Nevertheless, the theoretical dimensions and methodological approaches adopted for this study here have been chosen for their ability to enable a more gendered interpretation of the way each interviewee produces their own sense of oral traditions and history.

### *Te Reo Ake o Ngāti Porou*

Although this thesis is written in English, it draws heavily on te reo ake o Ngāti Porou.<sup>54</sup> Ngāti Porou reo is a distinctive dialectical form of Māori and the key language of our oral traditions and histories, but after generations of colonisation it has suffered at the hands of the colonisers, whose assimilationist policies removed it from schools and New Zealand society in general.<sup>55</sup> In recent decades, the government has taken steps to redress the declining status of the Māori language, but these measures have often been tokenistic and reluctant.<sup>56</sup> Ngāti Porou are

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<sup>53</sup> Patricia Mairingi Johnston, ‘Māori Women and the Politics of Theorizing Difference’, in *Feminist Thought in Aotearoa New Zealand Connections and Differences*, edited by R. Du Plessis and L. Alice (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 29.

<sup>54</sup> Te reo ake o Ngāti Porou, also referred to as the reo in this study, emphasises our own distinctive language and dialect instead of a homogeneous ‘Māori’ language. Despite this, some of the interviewees spoke in a more generic ‘Māori’ way, although most of the participants used specific Ngāti Porou words.

<sup>55</sup> For instance, the *Native Schools Act 1867* decreed that English should be the only language used in the education of Māori children and remained in force for many years. In 1961, the Hunn Report described the language as a relic of ancient Māori life, and by 1978 the *NZCER National Survey* showed that only about 20 percent of Māori were fluent speakers, with most of this group elderly people. For further reading on the historic oppression of the language see Bradford Haami, *Putea Whakairo Māori and the Written Word* (Wellington: Huia; Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2004); Richard Benton, *Flight of the Amokura* (Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational research, 1981); and *The Te Reo Māori Claim* (WAI 11) (Wellington, 1986).

<sup>56</sup> The *Māori Language Act 1987* was passed to recognise Māori as an official language. Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, a body devoted to early childhood teaching of the language, was also established in the same year.

fortunate to have a number of native speakers still living, many of whom were interviewed for this study. In fact, several of the interviews were conducted only in the reo, while some are in both Ngāti Porou and English. All participants were invited to speak in the language of their choosing, and as a result some of the interviews differ markedly in the way ideas are expressed. The reo, particularly for native speakers, is filled with complex metaphorical allusions and frequently includes esoteric language.<sup>57</sup> It is virtually impossible to give a completely accurate translation, and there is always deeper meaning lost, so that a translation is incapable of breaching the divide between one worldview and another.<sup>58</sup> The interpreting of each participant's voice and meaning in this thesis depends upon the language they have chosen to use. Where the medium of communication is te reo o Ngāti Porou, an English translation is offered, with much care taken to provide as close a translation as possible.<sup>59</sup> Some translations here were provided by the speakers themselves, and my own efforts have been checked and cross-examined by my elders.

### *Ethics of the Interviews*

There is a significant body of literature now that deals not only with ethical issues in oral history interviewing, but with research undertaken specifically amongst indigenous peoples.<sup>60</sup> Of oral history and Māori research, Lesley Hall notes that

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<sup>57</sup> Ngata refers to this in his short preface to the 1959 edition of *Ngā Mōteatea The Songs Part 1*, Revised Edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, reprinted in 2004), p. xxiii.

<sup>58</sup> An interpretation of the past in the Māori language, as Raukura Roa points out, involves a certain level of cultural understanding and awareness, which encompasses both the symbolic and the ritual. See Raukura Roa, 'Ka Mahuta, Ngāti Hauā and the importance of translation theory', *He Puna Kōrero: Journal of Māori and Pacific Development*, 4, 2 (Sept 2003), pp. 3-24.

<sup>59</sup> I am indebted to A. T. Mahuika and M. Taiapa, who generously assisted me with amendments to my interpretations or provided their own translations. In other places, the translations are taken from the authors or speakers.

<sup>60</sup> See for instance, Theodore Karamanski, *Ethics and Public History: an Anthology* (Malabar: Kreiger Publishing, 1990); John Neuenschwander, *Oral History and the Law, Revised 3rd edition* (Carlisle: Oral History Association, 2002); Daphne Patai, 'Ethical problems of personal narratives, or, who should eat the last piece of cake?',

'ethical research for Māori communities extends far beyond issues of individual consent and confidentiality.'<sup>61</sup> Being attentive to the needs and rights of those interviewed here meant that the regulations and codes of conduct advised by both the University of Waikato and by the National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) were modified to accommodate relevant tikanga (protocols).<sup>62</sup> In many Māori contexts, the empowerment of the individual is also a matter for the community as a whole, and the safety of the speaker a significant concern for the whānau and hapū to which many of the interviewees belong.<sup>63</sup> Ethics as they apply to iwi research requires appropriate tribal supervision, and an openness about the ultimate aim of the research, as well as the suitability of the person to receive certain knowledge. Of Māori research ethics, Stephanie Milroy argues that it is important to find the 'true leaders in the community and not just the most public Māori. The true leaders are those with mana on the marae, regardless of their occupation in the Pākehā world.'<sup>64</sup> In this study, most of the interviews were organised and overseen by my own pakeke (elders) to ensure correct protocol was followed.

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*International Journal of Oral History*, 8 (Feb 1987); Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: a Practical Guide for Social Scientists* (London: Sage, 1994); J Ball and P. Janyst, 'Enacting Research in Partnerships within Indigenous Communities in Canada: "Do it in a good way"', *Human Research Ethics*, 3, 2 (June, 2008), pp. 33-51; Tupeni Baba, ed., *Researching Pacific and Indigenous Peoples* (Auckland: University of Auckland Press, 2004); Ngahuia Te Awakotuku, *He Tikanga whakaaro: Research Ethics in the Maori Community* (Wellington: Manatu Maori, 1991).

<sup>61</sup> Lesley Hall, 'Confidentially Speaking: Ethics in Interviewing' in *Remembering, Writing Oral history*, edited by Anna Green and Megan Hutching (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), p. 153.

<sup>62</sup> The National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) has established a set of guidelines, *Code of ethical and technical practice*, NOHANZ, while the University of Waikato maintains a code of conduct for researchers. 'Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations 2008' See <http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/ethicalConduct.html>. Retrieved 01/10/2010.

<sup>63</sup> It should be noted that some individuals are more prominent and well known representatives of the tribe, while others although not as recognised still in this thesis represent the tipuna that binds all of the speakers together. This is a matter of tikanga and whakapapa where the mana of the iwi rises and falls on the actions and words of its members.

<sup>64</sup> Stephanie Milroy, 'Māori Women and Domestic Violence', *Waikato Law Review*, vol. 4 (1996), p. 62.

Some of the interviews referred to in this study were recorded with individuals whose political views differed markedly from those of our tribal leaders. Listening openly and empathetically to these narratives was sometimes problematic. Carrie Hamilton has noted that although we might think we are empathetic, 'as oral historians we have ultimate authority over our narrators' words' and thus are in a more definitive position of power.<sup>65</sup> She goes on to suggest that 'an ethical interview may depend ... precisely on a willingness to distinguish between empathy and solidarity, and to allow emotional discomfort to lead to a questioning of political pieties, both those of the narrator and the interviewer.'<sup>66</sup> In the interviews with those who maintained distance between themselves and their identity as Ngāti Porou, it is not my intention to present them here as simply part of the tribe, but to allow them space to articulate their own ideas. In enabling their voices in this way, their interviews show how oral traditions are highly contested forms of historical knowledge, and therefore offer real variations to many of the other testimonies used in this thesis. Their views are important to the integrity of this study because they offer alternative perceptions about being Ngāti Porou. Interpreting their testimonies, however, means that their voices are often blended with and opposed by others, yet are constantly presented through the cultural and political interpretations of the author.<sup>67</sup> The reader should be aware of these constraints as they consider the extracts and analyses offered in this thesis.

Where issues of sensitivity arose in the interviews, resolutions were required before the participant's recording was used. On occasion, some of the interviewee identities

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<sup>65</sup> Hamilton, 'On Being a "Good Interviewer"', 2008, p. 37.

<sup>66</sup> 'Solidarity', she argues, involves 'both an analysis of relations of power in the past and a commitment to action in the present.' Carrie Hamilton, 'On Being a "Good" Interviewer', p. 42.

<sup>67</sup> The significance of the researcher's subjectivity is addressed by a number of scholars, but perhaps the most relevant to my situation is Monty Soutar, who argues that all tribal histories are 'interpretations influenced by the researcher's personal background and experience.' Monty Soutar, 'A Framework for Analyzing Written iwi Histories', *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 2, 1 (1996), p. 32.

are obscured. Nevertheless, provision of anonymity is not a simple or straightforward process. Lesley Hall writes that:

Use of pseudonyms ... may not keep a person's identity secret; the alternative of changing sufficient details to thwart identification may distort the research .... Of course, not everyone wants to remain anonymous; some are adamant that their names should appear. Some people, especially those who feel their stories have been distorted, may well believe that openness protects them from the possibility of fabrication or carelessness on the part of the researcher.<sup>68</sup>

For those individuals who requested anonymity, a pseudonym has been used to protect, as much as possible, their identities. However, it is not always possible to ensure anonymity in a country and community where lives are so intertwined and people so easily recognised.<sup>69</sup> These problems, when they have arisen, were discussed at length with participants prior to and after their interviews. In most cases, pseudonyms were unnecessary, but they are in a few instances used to conceal the narrator's identity.

## **The Methodological Landscape**

### *Selecting Participants*

The selection of participants for this study was discussed with various pakeke. An initial group of names, compiled in a handwritten list, led to the first interviews, and was followed by other suggestions made by this original cohort.<sup>70</sup> Many of the early recordings were undertaken with prominent Ngāti Porou figures and leaders. This number dramatically expanded as it became clear other voices were needed to

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<sup>68</sup> Lesley Hall, 'Confidentially Speaking', p. 158.

<sup>69</sup> This problem in New Zealand is also noted by Jane Moodie, 'The Moral World of the Waikite Valley', in *Remembering Writing Oral History*, edited by Anna Green and Megan Hutching (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), pp. 39-59.

<sup>70</sup> This 'snowballing' approach was not planned initially, but simply occurred as the number of interviews grew.

provide different hapū perspectives. Ngāti Porou is the second largest iwi in New Zealand, with the majority of people living away from the east coast. Consequently, there has been a specific effort to interview both those living at home and those who have settled in other parts of the country.<sup>71</sup> Many of the interviewees that reside outside of the coast were selected and approached by whānau members living back in our tribal boundaries. The majority of these interviewees shared an enthusiasm for home, and had grown up with a strong understanding of their tribal identity.

In total, 51 participants were recorded in this study, all from varying generations.<sup>72</sup> In many instances the interviewees were related, parents and their children, aunties, nieces and cousins, while at other times they shared more distant connections through wider family groupings. Some of the interviewees had recently returned to the east coast, while others had rarely been home. Those who have lived and remain at home are viewed as iwi kaenga (home people), ahi ka roa, or kauruki tu roa a group seen to have stronger rights by virtue of their long standing presence at home, while those who have lived away are generally referred to as ‘Ngāti Porou kei te whenua’, a group whose rights are often not seen to be as strong as the home peoples.<sup>73</sup> To this extent their narratives are connected through a deep cultural affiliation, yet richly diverse in their individual perspectives. A small few have little knowledge of their own Ngāti Poroutanga. Conversely, some of the interviewees are considered experts in Ngāti Porou history, tradition, language, and tikanga, while others were selected because their perspectives directly opposed the views of tribal leaders, and highlight different conceptions of oral tradition and history. The

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<sup>71</sup> Ngāti Porou has a huge population living outside of its boundaries for instance, in 2006, there was an estimated 6,822 living in Waikato, 5,766 in the Hawkes Bay, 4,563 in the Manawatu and Wanganui region, and 13,215 in Auckland. Of the estimated 12,402 living back on the coast, 4,212 were believed to be living in Gisborne (see the map ‘Ngāti Porou by NZ Region’ earlier in this chapter).

<sup>72</sup> Many of the participants were interviewed more than once.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Ahi ka roa’ and ‘kauruki tu roa’ are defined earlier in this chapter. ‘Iwi kaenga’ is also discussed by A. T. Mahuika, ‘Draft Affidavit in Response to Fisheries Deal’, Private Papers, (1992), pp. 12- 13. ‘Ngāti Porou kei te whenua’ is now a term that appears on our tribal website, see <http://www.Ngātiporou.com/Whānaungatanga/Whenua/default.asp>. [Retrieved 02/10/10].

interviews gathered here offer a wide array of voices that cover a spectrum of experiences over multiple generations.

### *Oral History Interviews*

The life history interview approach used in this thesis is based on an interview method popular among oral historians, who have found its open structure highly empowering to the narrator. Life testimonies, as Alessandro Portelli notes, are never solely constructed, and are always the product of a 'shared project in which the interviewer and the interviewee are involved together'.<sup>74</sup> Jane Moodie writes that this interactive life history interview is one in which 'the interviewer attends more to the narrator than to her own agenda, becoming immersed in the narrative of the interviewee, and trying to understand the story from the narrator's point of view without imposing her own interpretations.'<sup>75</sup> This interview method provides a useful approach for considering the way Ngāti Porou people, over several generations, have used, and passed on, oral traditions and histories in their personal lives. Moreover, in assessing the differences and connections between oral tradition and oral history, this method is not simply a tool for collecting data, but is examined within the body of the thesis as one aspect of 'oral history' practice. However, life narrative recordings are not the only types of interviews employed by oral historians.<sup>76</sup> An interactive interview is different to the more fully structured

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<sup>74</sup> Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different', in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 64.

<sup>75</sup> Jane Moodie, 'Pioneers and Helpmates: Composure and Gender Identity in the Oral narratives of Men and Women in the Waikite Valley' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>76</sup> Donald Ritchie also refers to the use of multiple interviews, which he describes as 'episodic interviews' or a 'series of shorter interviews'. See Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: a Practical Guide*, Second Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 40.



interviews that rely on a series of questions to guide the participant.<sup>77</sup> In regard to questionnaires, Ruth Thompson, Alan Roberts, and Louise Douglas write that:

The appropriateness of using questionnaires is one of the most fiercely debated areas in oral history. Many researchers argue that a questionnaire is too formal and that a list of topics used as a framework by a skilled asker of questions is more useful and flexible. Some prefer to interview with no framework at all, giving the interviewee the opportunity to determine the subjects to be discussed and the order in which they are discussed.<sup>78</sup>

Although the interviewer naturally brings their own interests and questions to the life history interview, the 'interactive' methodology seeks to enable the narrators by encouraging them to become involved in the organisation and production of the recording and to become the key architects in its composition.<sup>79</sup> Questionnaires, particularly those used in surveys, also tend to elicit more quantitative rather than qualitative data, yet some scholars believe that this approach is a valid way to undertake an oral history project.<sup>80</sup> Grant McCracken writes that 'the purpose of the qualitative interview is not to discover how many, and what kinds of, people share a certain characteristic. It is to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world.'<sup>81</sup> The interviews undertaken for this research rather than relying on a set of questions, focus more on the lives of each

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<sup>77</sup> Questionnaires, as Janet Z. Giele and Glen H. Elder Jr, argue can be used to plot, or chart, life stories, and offer a significant focus on the quantifiable aspects of life histories. See Janet Z. Giele, and Glen H. Elder Jr., eds., *Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London: Sage, 1998).

<sup>78</sup> Louise Douglas, Alan Roberts, Ruth Thompson, eds., *Oral History, a Handbook* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1988), p. 73.

<sup>79</sup> Charles Royal has suggested that researchers 'allow' participants 'to become involved in the organization of the interview' on their own terms. Charles Royal, *Te Haurapa: an Introduction to Researching Tribal Histories and Traditions* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), p. 44.

<sup>80</sup> The survey approach to oral history was employed by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, who searched for 'general patterns' and trends using a 'mechanistic' methodology that they likened to 'eavesdropping' in exploring the ways 'everyday Americans made use of the past'. See, 'Introduction: Scenes from a Survey', in *The Presence of the Past: Popular uses of History in American Life*, edited by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 2-3, 6-7.

<sup>81</sup> Grant McCracken, *The Long Interview, Qualitative Research Methods*, Series 13 (London: Sage, 1988), p. 17.

participant.<sup>82</sup> However, in most of the interviews individuals were asked about the types of books they read when growing up, the stories they were told, the songs sung to them and other moments in their lives deemed to be relevant to the transmission of oral histories and traditions.<sup>83</sup> These questions were not discussed beforehand, nor were they asked in a particular sequence.

The life narrative interview is also predominantly a one-on-one interview, rather than a group interview. The rationale here relates to the power dynamics that most often emerge in group settings, where individual voices are usually subsumed by more assertive or domineering participants. Of group interviews, Charles T. Morrissey points out how 'a hierarchy of deference may quickly emerge, with the person with senior status (due to age, wealth, authority or accomplishments) dominating the discussion, and others reluctant to diverge from the consensus being established.'<sup>84</sup> These issues were also observed by Monty Soutar during interviews undertaken with members of the Māori Battalion, where some soldiers appeared reluctant to speak ahead of, or at variance with, their higher ranked counterparts.<sup>85</sup> In reflecting on the interviews undertaken with C Company (the East Coast contingent), Monty Soutar writes that 'there was a distinct difference in the information offered by a person when they were being interviewed on their own rather than when they were being interviewed in a group.'<sup>86</sup> Where possible, the

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<sup>82</sup> Donald Ritchie stresses that 'life histories' from an oral historian's point of view means 'full scale autobiographical accounts that allow interviewees to relate their entire life, from childhood to present.' Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 40.

<sup>83</sup> These questions were not discussed beforehand. Shirely Dex notes the growing work in life histories which uses both structured and unstructured questionnaires. See Shirley Dex, ed., *Life and Work History Analyses: Qualitative and Quantitative Developments* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 1-20.

<sup>84</sup> Charles T. Morrissey, 'Oral History Interviews: From Inception to Closure', in *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2007), p. 174.

<sup>85</sup> Monty Soutar, 'C Company Oral History Project', *Te Pouhere Kōrero 3, Māori History, Māori People*, (2009), pp. 16-17.

<sup>86</sup> Soutar, 'C Company Oral History Project', p. 16.

interviews conducted for this thesis were one-on-one, but in some cases other support peoples or family members were present.<sup>87</sup>

Unlike the observational approach often employed by anthropologists and some sociologists, oral history interviews are interactive methodologies, where the researcher is considered complicit in the production of the recording. This point of difference has relevance to Ngāti Porou because much of the transmission and maintaining of oral tradition and history takes place in formal ritual and practices that involve both observation and participation. Danny Keenan argues that these occasions are vital to understanding Māori oral history. Recording oral tradition as it appears in formal occasions enables an observation of the sophisticated way in which oral tradition and history is performed and constantly remade in living practice. Nevertheless, that methodology was not employed in this study because it parallels the 'objective' approach that has been the hallmark of western research practice within indigenous communities, and because it can be exceptionally difficult to arrange a recording that essentially captures the voices of multiple participants in one continuous session.<sup>88</sup> To take on the role of objective observer in this situation makes little sense for a researcher who has grown up with these rituals and is more than capable of explaining their intricacies without recording them. More importantly, the oral history interview allows us to hear about the experiences of those who have similarly grown up as practitioners of oral tradition on the marae. This thesis therefore refers to a number of formal and ritual occasions, not from observational recordings, but from the experiences and accounts of those who have participated in them.

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<sup>87</sup> The option to have a support person attend the interview was noted in the information sheet prior to the interview. The presence of other listeners, or contributors, will be dealt with in more detail in the body of the thesis.

<sup>88</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, London and New York: University of Otago Press/Zed Books, 1999), pp. 42 -43.

### *Recording Equipment*

All of the interviews were recorded on a digital sound recorder: with the key emphasis a focus on quality of sound rather than visual environment.<sup>89</sup> However, some of the interviews also included video recorded images that captured the surroundings with the intention of showing how visual prompts may have stimulated the interviewee, or the interviewee's personal narrative performance.<sup>90</sup> This was significant in some interviews, where the narrator referred to photographs, buildings, landmarks, or displayed particular body movements, gestures, and facial expressions. Where possible, reference is made to these external factors, yet they were not always vital to the analysis of each interview. For some of the interviewees, the video recording equipment was distracting, but for many it was quickly forgotten and ignored. In some instances, the sound is not of a high quality, particularly in two interviews: one conducted outdoors by the beach, and another in a carving workshop. Both of the interviews were affected considerably by the surrounding noise, and were set in significant visual environments. More than an inconvenience, this noise together with the visual setting offered a rich contextualisation to the narratives. Unfortunately, not all of these spaces and interviews were captured on camera.

### *Interview Locations*

The significance of the interview location in this study is an important factor in determining what was said, and how it was said. As noted earlier, Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal has suggested that researchers should 'allow' participants 'to become

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<sup>89</sup> Oral historians have tended to emphasise the importance of listening and the 'orality' of oral history rather than the significance of sights or visual aids in the interview. See Nēpia Mahuika, 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind? The Significance of our Surroundings', *Oral History in New Zealand*, 21 (2009), p. 4.

<sup>90</sup> Dan Sipe points out that 'orality, at its core, is not purely a concept grounded in sound'. Dan Sipe, 'The Future of Oral History and Moving Images', in *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 382.

involved in the organization of the interview'.<sup>91</sup> The collaborative process in oral history interviewing encourages each participant to choose where they would like to conduct the interview, and if they would feel more comfortable having a support person present. However, these options can pose some problems, when locations and even support persons become distractions.<sup>92</sup> Most of the interviewees in this thesis chose to undertake their interview in the comfort of their own homes, usually by themselves, but sometimes with close family members present. The interview locations varied from living rooms, to kitchens, some conducted in office spaces in the home, others in the backyards, work spaces, on the marae and inside ancestral meeting houses. Often, these spaces contributed to what was said, influenced by photographs on the wall, carvings, flags, hills, streams, rivers, and other prompts and props. On some occasions other people present in the room or space shaped the narrative by asking questions, adding their own comments, or simply by being there as a listener.

Most of the interviews were conducted as seated or 'stationary' discussions, but some required walking and talking with the interviewee, who had decided to talk about their homes, places where they grew up, or areas of significance in proximity of the interview itself. In these moments, the interview shifted from a seated discussion to a moving and often explanatory mode, akin to a guided tour, where the listener was expected to hear and see in unison key features of what the narrator deemed vital to the conversation and life narrative. Donald Ritchie observes that 'the natural setting provides an abundance of stimulants' for the interviewee.<sup>93</sup> The thesis examines the significance of these interactive environments, particularly the props, such as landscapes, photographs, and carvings for the ways in which they reflect

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<sup>91</sup> Royal, *Te Haurapa*, p. 44.

<sup>92</sup> Each interviewee was encouraged to think about the setting in which the interview would take place, particularly its suitability for good sound quality. The significance of the interview surroundings were addressed in a letter sent to the majority of participants prior to the interview.

<sup>93</sup> Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 139.

understandings of the form and practice of oral tradition and oral history. As a consequence, the visual aspects of oral history are considered in this study as an important juncture where the study and conceptualisation of oral history and tradition intersects with indigenous perceptions and the international literature.

### *Oral and Written Sources*

This thesis draws primarily on recorded interviews, but makes mention of private papers, family documents, whakapapa books and other genealogical charts and writing kept and maintained by various individuals and families. Of these types of materials, Bruce Biggs writes that:

It was and is usual for Māori families to keep manuscript books in which are recorded genealogies, the texts of songs known to members of the family, and local traditions. Many such books have been destroyed accidentally or through ignorance of their true value, or because they were regarded as tapu, and perhaps malevolent.<sup>94</sup>

These written materials are vital to the way in which oral traditions are kept now, and how they have been passed on over many generations.<sup>95</sup> Many of these documents are tapu – viewed as sacred – and the identity of their caregivers in many instances has been obscured in the present study to keep their treasures safe from those who might demand access. The tapu of these written records often have strict tikanga surrounding their access and use, and this was certainly the case in this study.<sup>96</sup> Because much of this material has been safe guarded and hidden from prying eyes and hands, it is very difficult to reference them in this thesis. In places, ‘pseudonyms’ are used with different family books to distract those who would seek

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<sup>94</sup> Bruce Biggs and S. M. Mead, eds., *He Kohikohinga Aronui: Selected Readings in Māori* (Auckland: Anthropology Dept/University of Auckland, 1964), p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> The use of these textual materials in maintaining and disseminating genealogies and other histories are common to tribal groups in our country. Whakapapa books especially have been, and are still, used and kept sacred and secure.

<sup>96</sup> The tapu nature of these records is referred to by Bradford Haami, *Putea Whakairo: Māori and the Written Word* (Wellington: Huia Publishers in association with the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2004), p. 24.

to track them down. In this way, the thesis is constrained by the anxieties and fears still harboured among my own relatives who lost family genealogy books when they were taken by other relatives.<sup>97</sup> These families are now much more cautious with whom they allow access, and are careful not to publicise too openly the fact that they have in their possession these books of significant whānau and tribal importance.

Despite these anxieties, an examination of oral history and oral tradition within Ngāti Porou would be incomplete without reference to these types of materials. Although it is not possible to display the contents of many of these books in this thesis, many of the interviewees refer to them in their recordings, as well as to other materials and written documents that have importance in their lives. These include cookbooks, Marae minute books, photograph albums, and other private (and sometimes very public) writings that have been used and kept in their own homes. Beyond the interviews, then, this thesis draws on other mnemonic devices and data that are relevant to the production and dissemination of our oral traditions. Therefore it considers not only the oral recordings, but the visual and ritual components that are all part of the weaving together of Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition. However, many of these practices, devices, and materials are often talked about by the interviewees in their personal narratives, and therefore in that context are described by the very people who have utilised and interpreted them. In this sense, the interviews remain the foundational data referred to in this study, but are frequently supported with and supplemented by reference to the materials outside of the interviewees' own words.

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<sup>97</sup> They are very guarded about who is allowed to view these materials, and in many cases did not want the contents of the books revealed. This thesis therefore describes in a very limited way what is in the books, how they are set out, used by the people who own them, ensuring that the knowledge within them is preserved and kept privy to the whānau.

## The Theoretical landscape

### *Kaupapa Māori and Post-Colonialism*

Although this study centres itself within a Ngāti Porou theoretical, political, and intellectual framework, it also draws much of its theoretical presuppositions from Kaupapa Māori and post-colonial scholarship.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, post-colonialism and Kaupapa Māori both refer to a reclaiming of the 'centre', which is a key premise in this study, and is a major political aim for Ngāti Porou.<sup>99</sup> Thus, this thesis draws on the strengths of both Kaupapa Māori and post-colonial theory, but does so with specific iwi aspirations and visions in mind.<sup>100</sup> Kaupapa Māori, for instance, challenges the place of Pākehā history and power. It seeks to reclaim this 'colonised' space, but frequently does so from a Māori, rather than iwi, perspective. The notion of disturbing the centre has also been a significant aspect of post-colonial theory, one in which writing back meant identifying first how the colonised were essentialised as a peripheral and depowered subject in history.<sup>101</sup> However, the post-colonialism described by non-indigenous writers often bears little resemblance to Māori and iwi worldviews because of their inability to speak to our 'lived' experiences. Post-colonialism has also suffered from a critique of its 'post' position or self declaration, in which it has been seen to allow non-indigenous scholars a return to the act of

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<sup>98</sup> Kaupapa Māori has been used by a number of Māori and iwi scholars in recent research. See, for instance, Margaret Wilkie, 'Te Taumata, Te Timata: The Pinnacle, The First Step' (PhD thesis, University of Victoria, 2010); Tracey Gardner, 'Kaupapa Māori [Visual Design] Design Investigating 'Visual Communication Design By Māori, For Māori', Through Practices, Process and Theory' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Otago, 2008); Kahurangi Waititi, 'Applying Kaupapa Māori Processes to the Documentary Film' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2007).

<sup>99</sup> Both post-colonial and Kaupapa Māori writers have called for a reclaiming of the 'centre' but with different emphases and perspectives. See Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 23.

<sup>100</sup> The Rūnanga, as Tamati Reedy writes, 'has as the most noble of its objectives: Ko te whakapūmau i te mana motuhake o Ngāti Porou i roto i tōna mana atua, mana tangata, mana whenua/to retain forever the sovereignty of Ngāti Porou within its spiritual, human, and territorial sanctity.' Reedy, 'Ngāti Porou', p. 171.

<sup>101</sup> For further reading on post-colonial theory, see Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Post-colonial Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995).



researching the 'other' on Western-centric terms.<sup>102</sup> Some Māori scholars have interpreted this in different ways, such as Paul Meredith, who argues that 'the "post" does not mean "after" but refers to a continuous engagement with the effects of colonial occupation.'<sup>103</sup>

The writings of indigenous scholars on the subject of colonialism and oppression have shown that the frames of analysis needed to 'dismantle' the structures of western imperialism require different tools than those used to construct the 'masters house.'<sup>104</sup> Influential writers include Edward Said, whose critique of the 'othering' inherent in dominant western research has allowed for a more robust analysis of the process and power dynamics involved in identity-making on both sides of the east/west divide.<sup>105</sup> Frantz Fanon's clinical yet highly disturbing manifesto on the self hatred and loathing developed during colonial oppression also enabled a frightening description of the degraded humanity to which colonised peoples have been subjected.<sup>106</sup> Writers such as Gayatri Spivak assert the need for the subaltern to 'speak for themselves', while Huanani Kay-Trask has called for the replacement of western methods with indigenous ways of coming to understand history beyond books and the colonisers' research process.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, 'Postcolonial Perspectives', in *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory*, edited by Anna Green and Kathleen Troup (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 277 - 296.

<sup>103</sup> Paul Meredith, 'Revisioning New Zealandness: A Framework for Discussion', in *Revisioning and Reclaiming Citizenship: 23-28 November 1998 Colloquium Proceedings*, edited by Gay Morgan and Paul Havemann (Hamilton: University of Waikato Law School, 1998/2001), p. 56.

<sup>104</sup> Cited in Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 19.

<sup>105</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge/Kegan Paul, 1978).

<sup>106</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Grove Press, 2004, original English publication in 1965, French in 1961).

<sup>107</sup> Gayatri Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg (Chicago: MacMillan Education, 1988), pp.271-313; and Huanani Kay-Trask, 'From a Native Daughter', in *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, edited by Calvin Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 176, 178.

In finding ways to 'reclaim' our history, Māori scholars have been intrigued with the merits, and failings, of post-colonial theory. On the one hand, it has provided a highly useful way of thinking about the problems within colonial encounter, while on the other it has been critiqued for its inadequacy in failing to accentuate the obvious continuation of colonialism within our contemporary context.<sup>108</sup> Despite its potential to assist Māori history, post-colonialism has more often than not been cautiously navigated by our scholars, if not by-passed altogether.<sup>109</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes of a sneaking suspicion amongst indigenous academics 'that the fashion of post-colonialism has become a strategy for reinscribing or reauthorizing the privileges of non-indigenous academics because the field of "post-colonial" discourse has been defined in ways which can still leave out indigenous peoples, our ways of knowing and our current concerns.'<sup>110</sup> In Aotearoa, Leonie Pihama has contended that the use of the notion post-colonial 'not only centres Pākehā definitions' but is also disturbing in its denial of the voices of Māori. She argues that 'the notion of post-colonialism ... is itself a contradiction' in a society where 'every aspect of our lives is touched and imposed upon by the colonisers'.<sup>111</sup> These concerns, among many others, have led indigenous scholars, and Māori in particular, to take what they can from post-colonialism and move on, or rather, move away from what Sheilagh Walker has described as its 'Pākehā centred theoretical framework.'<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Moana Jackson, for instance, asserts that 'we are not in a post-colonial or neo-colonial period. Instead we are in a new version of the same old song of the dispossession and denial of the rights of the indigenous peoples.' Moana Jackson, 'Research and Colonisation of Māori Knowledge', *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 4, 1 (1998), p. 71.

<sup>109</sup> Leonie Pihama maintains that 'few Māori people use the term to describe or locate their work, rather, Māori works tend to be labelled as 'post-colonial' by Pākehā. This then raises issues about who defines Māori writing', see Leonie Pihama, 'Ko Taranaki te Maunga: Challenging Post-colonial Disturbances and Post-modern Fragmentation', *He Pukenga Kōrero*, Ngāhuru (Autumn), 2, 2 (1997), p. 11.

<sup>110</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 24.

<sup>111</sup> Pihama, 'Ko Taranaki te Maunga', p. 9.

<sup>112</sup> Cited in Pihama, 'Ko Taranaki te Maunga', p. 9

In many ways this seems ironic for a theory that considered writing back to the centre an empowering act, yet appeared to forget that the centre *itself* was the problem. 'Past the last post', more than an examination of the intersecting trajectories shared between post-modern and post-colonial theories, might then have a certain meaning for Māori, who have sought to place their mātauranga at the core of their work.<sup>113</sup> The resulting theoretical approach has been termed by some 'Kaupapa Māori theory and practice', a theory of change, liberation, and transformation, and even 'the philosophy and practice of being Māori.'<sup>114</sup> Kathie Irwin 'characterises it as research which is culturally safe, which involves the mentorship of elders, which is culturally relevant and appropriate while satisfying the rigour of research, and which is undertaken by a Māori researcher, not someone who happens to be Māori.'<sup>115</sup>

This is a significant assertion, because it highlights more precisely the differences between 'outsiders' and 'insiders' in Māori and iwi research. The 'insiders' as Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes, 'have to live with the consequences of their process on a day-to-day basis for ever more, and so do their families and communities.'<sup>116</sup> Of the 'insider' in Ngāti Porou research, Monty Soutar suggests that researchers who are

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<sup>113</sup> 'Past the last Post' has been a phrase used by a number of postcolonial scholars. Adam and Tiffen's edited collection of essays focused on the often competing discourses at work in post-modernism and post-colonial scholarship, examining the terminology and theoretical strains, ironies, and tropes that have accentuated the creation of meaning through 'text', the 'lived' experience, and other formal and political contemporary contexts. See Ian Adam, and Helen Tiffin, eds, *Past the Last Post: Theorizing Post-Colonialism and Post-Modernism* Calgary, 1990; and more recently in the New Zealand context, Giselle Byrnes, 'Past the Last Post? Time, Causation, and Treaty Claims History', *Law Text Culture*, 7 (2003), pp. 251-76.

<sup>114</sup> A Kaupapa Māori approach is inextricably connected to the local mātauranga, which is unable to be deciphered or articulated within a post-colonial frame built on non-Māori intellectual frameworks. See Graham H. Smith, 'Tane-nui-a-rangi's legacy: Propping up the sky. Kaupapa Māori as resistance and intervention'. Paper presented at NZARE/AARE Joint Conference, Deakin University Australia, published in *Creating space in institutional settings for Māori* (Auckland, 1992), p. 1; Graham Smith, Whakaoho Whānau: New formations of whānau as an intervention into Māori cultural and educational crises, *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 1, 1 (1995), pp. 18-36 (p.21).

<sup>115</sup> Cited in Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 184.

<sup>116</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 137.

‘competent in the language and culture’, is a member of the iwi, and who has access to both documentary evidence and resources of tribal scholarship, are more adequately placed to interpret the tribe’s history than others.<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, for all the inherent skills and ‘access’ available to these researchers, the ‘key’ factor in determining their right and ability to speak as insiders requires a living of the tikanga inherent within the mātauranga of the people.<sup>118</sup>

The expanding literature in Kaupapa Māori offers insights to the way we might better understand how to research and present Māori knowledge and history, and how we might improve our practice, and communicate with iwi and hapū. ‘Its popularity’, as Kathie Irwin notes, ‘lies perhaps in its ability to both acknowledge and accommodate Māori ways of being within an approach that remains academically rigorous.’<sup>119</sup> ‘It is not’, as Graham Smith argues, ‘a rejection of Pākehā knowledge and or culture’, but ‘advocates excellence within both cultures.’<sup>120</sup> For Ngāti Porou, the re-claiming of our world from the clutches of those who would consume it requires a pathway that has been partially signposted, but is still evolving in our own theory and practice. In redefining our world, we assert the notion that we are not ‘other’, and resist those voices, discourses, and frameworks that would either marginalise or subsume us.<sup>121</sup> To a large extent, this is what the nationalist focus within New Zealand history has done, and continues to do.<sup>122</sup> It was a concern many years ago for Māori scholars, who suggested that Pākehā were

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<sup>117</sup> Monty Soutar, ‘A framework for Analysing Written Iwi Histories’, p. 48.

<sup>118</sup> This is discussed at length by A. T. Mahuika, in ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, pp. 65-66.

<sup>119</sup> Cited in Rangimarie Mahuika, ‘Kaupapa Māori Theory is Critical and Anti-Colonial’, *Mai Review*, 3 (2008), [www.review.mai.ac.nz](http://www.review.mai.ac.nz) [last accessed 19 October 2011], p. 2.

<sup>120</sup> Graham Smith, ‘Kaupapa Māori: Educational resistance and intervention in Aotearoa (New Zealand)’, in *Higher education for indigenous peoples*, edited by G. H. Smith (Auckland: Research Unit for Māori Education, 1993), p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> I draw here on some of the words and phrasing of Leonie Pihama, ‘Ko Taranaki te Maunga’, p. 14.

<sup>122</sup> Kerry Howe writes that New Zealand’s historiography is determined by an underlying ‘national focus’. See Kerry Howe, ‘Two Worlds’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 37, 1 (2003), p. 50.

taking our knowledge without negotiation because they believed that it was essentially New Zealand culture.<sup>123</sup> The nation, and ‘New Zealand-ness’, we realize, has been so engrained in our historical consciousness that it sometimes appears as if there is a clear distinction between New Zealand history and Māori and iwi history. Indeed, if Māori are subsumed within the broader narratives of New Zealand history, so too have tribal histories been subsumed within the ‘Māori’ collective identity. In reclaiming our place in the centre, Māori is a category of some strategic relevance to iwi, but cannot fully realise our varying and distinctive perspectives and histories. A more specific centralising is vital because it disturbs some of the essentialisations about Ngāti Porou maintained by others, both Māori and Pākehā, that have at times portrayed us as ‘loyalists’, misinterpreted our kōrero, and ignored our own agency.<sup>124</sup> In stressing a Ngāti Porou historical perspective, the views of Pākehā and other iwi have necessarily been set aside on matters of importance to the iwi, particularly the right to define tikanga and interpret ‘our’ past.<sup>125</sup> Thus, in refining a theoretical approach that legitimately informs and enables Ngāti Porou, this study returns to the tribe’s foundational building blocks. It favours the tikanga related to whakapapa, mana tangata, and those practices that remain in the hapū and familial locations where the mātauranga of Ngāti Porou resides.

### *Theories in Oral History and Oral Tradition*

This thesis also considers the relevance of theories that are popular in oral history and oral tradition. Oral historians, for instance, have developed various interpretive concepts that deal with the process of memory. These ideas are examined in the

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<sup>123</sup> Hirini Moko Mead made this observation some time ago now, ‘Māoritanga, Should It Be Shared?’, *Listener*, 10 Dec 1977, p. 56.

<sup>124</sup> Monty Soutar responds to this misinterpreting of the Ngāti Porou perspective in, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership: Rāpata Wahawaha and the Politics of Conflict: “kei te ora nei hoki tātou mo to tātou whenua”’ (PhD thesis, Massey University, 2000).

<sup>125</sup> This is emphasised in a number of the interviews later in this study.

present study as they relate to the differences and similarities maintained by scholars in both areas, but also in relation to the ways the interviewees perceive oral tradition and history. The study operates as well on the theoretical premise that individuals within communities share a 'collective memory'. The collective memory, as Maurice Halbwachs has argued, works on the notion that individuals remember as part of wider communities, and that their memories are conceived in the broader social and cultural worlds to which they belong, whether tribal or national. Of remembering, Halbwachs' emphasises that we do so 'through a dialogue with others within social groups.' 'We remember', he argues, as 'children within families, or as adults within religious or occupational groups', and that the 'most durable memories' are 'those held by the greatest number.'<sup>126</sup> This theoretical basis has significant traction in this thesis, where the life narratives of each individual are inextricably connected to their tribal, hapū, and whānau narratives. In examining the way oral traditions and oral histories are encountered by each interviewee, the thesis explores the way this process occurs. One of the major criticisms of Halbwach's theory is that it is overly deterministic and, as Anna Green points out, leaves 'apparently little space for the consciously reflective individual, or for the role of experience in changing the ways in which individuals view the world.'<sup>127</sup> The utilisation of collective memory theories in this thesis tests the extent to which Ngāti Porou understandings of oral history and oral tradition are indicative of a tribal conceptualisation, or should be understood more as a personalised experience.

Similar to the importance of memory, definitions and theories regarding myth also have relevance to Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition. The reduction of Māori and iwi oral histories and traditions to 'myth' and 'legend' is a theme explored in this thesis. What counts as myth, history, or tradition also has a considerable bearing on

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<sup>126</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, translated from the French by Francis J Ditter, Jr., and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), pp. 27 -43.

<sup>127</sup> Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and "Collective Memory": Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32, 2 (Autumn 2004), p. 36.

the major questions asked in this study. For many indigenous peoples, and certainly for Ngāti Porou, myth and memory are an essential part of the way history is perceived and the tribe's aspirations realised. The significance of myth and memory for the marginalized and oppressed is also noted by Paul Thompson and Raphael Samuel who write:

This is why for minorities, for the less powerful, and most of all for the excluded, collective memory and myth are often still more salient: constantly resorted to both in reinforcing a sense of self also as a source of strategies for survival. In this context it is often persecution and common grievance which define belonging.<sup>128</sup>

Thus, in exploring the questions surrounding the difference and similarity between oral history and oral tradition, the present study takes these theoretical issues into account. It notes how the mythic or fabulous, the imaginary and real, are expressed in subjective realities, and are regularly interwoven in the production of the past, whether historical or traditional. In this way, as Luisa Passerini has argued, 'all biographical memory is true; [but] it is up to the interpreter to discover in which sense, [and] for what purpose.' The applicability of 'myth' to Ngāti Porou is then not simply a question of difference between truth and fiction, nor a matter of aligning with oral history or oral tradition, but a matter of interpretation.

Like myth and memory, this thesis also considers notions of narrative, which Hayden White has argued are always 'emplotted' by an 'historical imagination' that inevitably structures the past in relation to present day concerns.<sup>129</sup> Unpacking the layers of narrative that exist in the interviews enables an exploration of the way each participant reconciles their voice with a collective iwi perspective. This has

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<sup>128</sup> Samuel, Raphael, and Paul Thompson, eds., *The Myths we Live by* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 19.

<sup>129</sup> Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

resonance with the idea of ‘narrative scales’, which Anna Green and Kathleen Troup suggest:

May entail quite distinct levels of conceptual coherence.... [and] range from the micro-narrative of a particular event; a master narrative which seeks to explain a broader segment of history; a grand narrative which claims to offer the authoritative account of history generally, and finally a meta-narrative, which draws upon some particular cosmology or metaphysical foundation.<sup>130</sup>

For many of the interviewees in this study, the multiple narrative scales employed in their stories intersect with wider collective identities. In Ngāti Porou, one of the most powerful narrative layers is the story of citizenship, which at once impacts on each individual’s narratives of self, their narratives of nationhood, iwi membership, or identity as resister, activist, artist, or public servant.<sup>131</sup> This sophisticated process of narrative construction speaks immediately to both the theories of collective memory and to myth, and is referred to throughout the study.<sup>132</sup> The interviews, then, as much as they provide narratives about the lives of Ngāti Porou people, offer insights that contribute to a mapping of the spaces where oral tradition and oral histories converge and diverge from Māori and iwi perspectives.

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<sup>130</sup> Anna Green, and Kathleen Troup, eds., *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 204.

<sup>131</sup> The notion of citizenship perhaps best summed up in A. T. Ngata, *The Price of Citizenship; Ngarimu V.C* (Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1943). This notion of nationalism and sovereignty was later criticised in Donna Awatere, *Māori Sovereignty* (Auckland: Broadsheet, 1984). Peter Gibbons notes the discursive construction of nationalism. Gibbons, Peter, ‘The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 37, 1 (2003), pp. 38-47.

<sup>132</sup> Notions of ‘citizenship’ and the ‘New Zealander’ arise in the powerful myths of nationhood and search for identity narrated in popular histories of New Zealand. For a Māori response to this see Ani Mikaere, “Are We All New Zealanders Now?” A Māori response to the Pākehā quest for indigeneity’, *Bruce Jesson Memorial Lecture, Auckland*, (November 2004).



## Navigating the Landscape: How to Read this Thesis

### *The Voice(s) of this Study*

All of the interviewees in this thesis are connected through whakapapa. Indeed, the author shares close genealogical ties to many of the participants, including those who have opposed the Ngāti Porou settlement claims. Whakapapa is a vital aspect of the Māori and iwi world, and the tikanga related to it accentuates specific 'kinship obligations', and emphasises the notion of inclusivity, indicated in the utilisation of the collective pronouns 'our', 'us', and 'we' in this study.<sup>133</sup> In using these terms I note my own inextricable ties to my own iwi, yet am conscious of the problematic essentialism that may occur in this process.<sup>134</sup> The use of these terms is noted by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen in their study of the way the past is present in the lives of American peoples. They write that:

African Americans speak of "our race," "our roots," "our people"; American Indians speak of "our history," "our heritage," "our culture," "our tribe". The "we" they invoke stands in sharp opposition to the triumphant American "we": the narrative of the American nation state – the story often told by professional historians – is most alive for those who feel most alienated from it.<sup>135</sup>

Finding my own voice in this thesis draws on a similar mindset, and my voice blends itself with the voices of our people as a matter of subjective positioning, rather than attempting a futile objectivity that makes little sense in our culture. This study, then, posits a firm challenge to the reader, and asks them to re-orientate

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<sup>133</sup> This kinship obligation is discussed by A. T. Mahuika more fully, 'He Kupu Kōrero', pp. 33, 37.

<sup>134</sup> One danger is that this could suggest that 'our' worldviews are unproblematic. However, this study works off the assumption that 'our' perspectives are nuanced, yet part of a dynamic tribal view that is based on genealogical foundations and the need to differentiate ourselves from the dominant views of tauīwi (colonisers, foreigners, Pākehā).

<sup>135</sup> Rosenzweig and Thelen, 'Scenes from a Survey', p. 13.

themselves within the cultural and intellectual frames of Ngāti Porou.<sup>136</sup> Resituated in these ways, the use of these collective pronouns is better understood as reciprocal assertions of self-determination and accountability.<sup>137</sup> Indeed, it is impossible in this case to claim an outright objective position, or to suggest that my voice can exist as an independent authority when it relies so heavily on the testimonies of others in the leading of a discussion on Ngāti Porou perspectives. Thus, the present study advocates 'our' collective refrains, where the voices intermingle in a chorus that is layered with tones and textures, and where the lead vocalist shares similar rhythms and accents. In order to read this study an appreciation of this relationship is necessary in order to hear the nuances when 'we' and 'our' are invoked.

#### *Oral Traditionalists and Oral Historians*

Because this thesis examines the divergences and convergences between the studies of oral history and oral tradition, it necessarily refers to those who work specifically in each field. These groups are identified in this study as 'oral traditionalists' or 'oral historians', although in many ways these can be limiting and problematic classifications. As the thesis highlights, the blurred lines between the sources, theories, politics, and approaches in these fields calls into question the accuracy of these identifications, which may be reductive. Oral traditions, for instance, appear regularly in the sources used by oral historians, while oral histories can also be found in the studies of oral traditions. Nevertheless, in exploring the historiographies and the development of each body of literature (Chapter Three), this thesis notes an emergent set of common ideas and approaches maintained by scholars who regularly specify their practice and research either as oral history or as oral tradition. However, those who undertake oral history research, or explore oral

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<sup>136</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith notes the issue with 'reorienting' the self within these terms, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 35.

<sup>137</sup> 'Assertions of self determination' because 'we' and 'our' are explicit of a Ngāti Porou perspective, and similarly 'accountability' because it implies a certain level of liability/responsibility on behalf of the author.

traditions, come from multiple disciplinary backgrounds, such as literary studies, history, anthropology, folklore, musicology, sociology, indigenous studies, and education, among others. There are a significant number of scholars in various disciplines who contribute to the literature in either oral tradition or in oral history. Many who specifically study oral traditions have an anthropological background, or consider themselves folklorists or ethnomusicologists. Oral history, on the other hand, appears to have a much deeper array of scholars with historical, literary, psychology, and sociological backgrounds. These identifications are considered more closely in the following chapter, which explores the historiographies of each field, and notes the multiple interdisciplinarity of scholarship.

#### *Reconfiguring Oral History and Oral Tradition*

Although this study examines the differences and similarities between the studies of oral history and oral tradition, it does so from an explicitly Ngāti Porou perspective. Drawing on the interviews and available literature, this thesis seeks to reconfigure international, and even local, understandings of oral history and oral tradition within an indigenous context. For the reader, this involves a relocating that places Ngāti Poroutanga at the centre, builds on our mātauranga about the formation and naming of the land, accentuates our tikanga, and historical perspectives, and invokes the nuances and peculiarities that exist within our language and people from one valley and bay to the next. This is a people whose historical narrative affirms Maui not as some imaginary figure, but as a vital protagonist in history, whose now famous fishing expedition anchors our relationship with the land.<sup>138</sup> To apply a foreign interpretive mode of analysis to this world would be akin to navigating our history using a compass from 'elsewhere', set in a latitude and longitude that provides no accurate bearings within the realities of Ngāti Porou. Therefore, this

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<sup>138</sup> Nēpia Mahuika, 'Revitalizing Te Ika-a-Maui: Māori Migration and the Nation', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 43, 2 (2009), pp. 133-49.

study grounds itself within the epistemological frames of Ngāti Porou, and should be read with these reference points in mind.

## **Summary**

In order to read and understand this thesis an appreciation of the intellectual, political, methodological and theoretical landscapes it traverses is required. These dimensions provide important depth and layers, setting the scene in which this study takes place, and require an ambience that enables the voices to be heard on their terms. The intellectual landscape brings Ngāti Poroutanga to the centre and provides a reference point from which both the study of oral tradition and oral history might be reconfigured within an indigenous context. An awareness of the political landscape reveals the various contours and boundaries that mark the intersections between Māori and iwi sites of significance, the highways and byways in intergenerational and gendered politics, and the distinctive features of Ngāti Porou reo and ethical foundations. Both the methodological and theoretical landscapes draw attention to the memories, narratives, and myths that are produced in the interactive discussions referred to in this study. They highlight the junctions where Kaupapa Māori and post-colonialism cross-paths, diverge and depart, where oral and written sources repeatedly intersect.

Together, these landscapes overlap in a complex terrain, which poses specific navigational challenges for the reader. This chapter has suggested a reading that pays attention to the cultural imperatives of whakapapa, which blends the voices of this study in a nuanced chorus of 'our' perspectives. It has noted the limited identity categories within which oral historians and oral traditionalists are invoked and grouped for the purposes of this study. Finally, it has emphasised the 'reconfiguring' that accompanies the analysis of difference and commonalities between the studies of oral history and oral tradition. Subsequently, this study is not a conventional

history that might focus on an event, person, or movement set within a specific time period, but an examination of two expanding areas of historical scholarship that have not yet adequately accounted for indigenous perceptions. Moreover, this is a complex exploration, which deals to an extent with the abstract in analysing the applicability of theoretical and methodological approaches. Nevertheless, it alleviates this sense of abstraction by placing this study within a specific community, whose voices and perceptions are very real, and whose self determination and politics breathes life into the way oral history and oral tradition are lived and learnt in today's world. Thus, this thesis is essentially a study of the form, politics, method and theory of both oral history and oral traditions as it applies to Ngāti Porou people and the way we understand our own history and research.

## Chapter Three: Between the Intersections of Oral History and Oral Tradition

Oral history and oral tradition are terms that are used in a broad array of disciplines, from English literature, ballads and poetry to studies in anthropology, linguistics, ethnography, and, of course, history. Examples of their use, form, meaning and transmission, abound in a considerable and diverse body of literature. However, as specialized topics of investigation, they have only in recent times emerged as fields in their own right, with their own distinctive literary canons, theories and methodologies. This maturing has in no small way been assisted by developments in other disciplines, which in refining and expanding their own parameters have simultaneously contributed to the ways in which scholars in oral history and oral tradition have come to frame what they do, and identify the sources with which they work. The study of history for example, during the nineteenth century sought to become a more professionalized discipline under the direction of scholars such as Leopold von Ranke, whose focus on empirically sound methods and theories effectively distanced unreliable oral evidence from scientifically objective historical fact.<sup>1</sup> In this climate, with a dominant focus on written and archival evidence, which tended to tell the stories of the victors and elites, oral history and oral traditions were less favoured.

Nevertheless, the utilization of oral traditions and oral histories remained a common feature in a broad array of conventional disciplines, such as anthropology and geography, where despite their perceived inadequacies, they were often called upon to provide 'thick descriptions', while at other times they were used to account for the naming of landscapes, or the human origins of native and migrant groups.<sup>2</sup> Although

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<sup>1</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, eds., *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Clifford Geertz opening chapter, 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture', *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Basic Books, 1975). Elsdon Best, for instance, drew on a number of oral informants to convey how they viewed the world, including their ideas surrounding star signs, fauna and flora,

intertwined, oral traditions and oral history were not viewed as interchangeable in their form, practice and conceptualization. Consequently, as each field evolved, so too have the literatures that define what they are, how scholars might engage with them, and their relationship to other common threads of interest such as ethnicity, history, colonialism, gender, memory, myth, and narrative. This chapter examines the historiographical evolution of oral history and oral tradition, and focuses on the development of each field of study in both the international and local literature. It explores the ways in which scholars in both oral history and oral tradition have written about the work they undertake, and highlights the lack of discussion on the overlaps that may exist between these disciplines. Most significantly, in regard to the literature, this chapter shows how oral history and oral tradition are indeed viewed predominantly as two separate and distinct approaches, but how for Māori and Ngāti Porou they are far too narrowly defined and problematic. Thus, the chapter sets the scene for the body of this study, identifying at once the extensive body of work that exists in both oral tradition and oral history, while pointing toward the gaps in research where convergences and divergences might be more precisely identified.

## Oral Tradition

According to some scholars, the study of oral tradition can be traced back only as far as the early Greeks, whose epic ballads and long poems are still sources of interest and analysis today.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the substantial remnant of genealogies scribed in

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as well as other natural phenomena. Elsdon Best, *Tuhoe, the children of the mist: a sketch of the origin, history, myths and beliefs of the Tuhoe tribe of the Māori of New Zealand, with some account of other early tribes of the Bay of Plenty district* (New Plymouth: Board of Māori Ethnological Research for the Polynesian Society, 1925).

<sup>3</sup> Graham Smith, for instance, writes that in the 5th century BC, the Greek historian Thucydides 'made much of the accounts of eye-witnesses of the Peloponnesian Wars, "Whose reports", Thucydides claimed, "I have checked with as much thoroughness as possible"', in Graham Smith, *The Making of Oral History: Making History, The Changing face of the Profession in Britain*, retrieved from [http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/oral\\_history\\_3.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/oral_history_3.html), [retrieved 22 August 2011].

biblical texts attest to the enduring legacy oral traditions have enjoyed in many pre and post literate societies. It is impossible to comprehensively examine here the spoken or even written breadth of work on oral tradition, its origins clouded by the numerous definitions and histories it enjoys in multiple cultures and contexts. Within writing and print, the use of oral traditions can be found in various literatures, from myth and folklore, to the recording of songs, poems, ethnographies, anthropological studies and history. As early as 1773, Samuel Johnston, as Graham Smith reminds us, 'expressed a keen interest in oral histories and oral tradition in his study of Scottish beliefs and customs'.<sup>4</sup> A few decades later, the Serbian scholar Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic undertook a survey of the traditions of the Southern Slavic regions and their folktales, which culminated in various collections of folksongs and poems from 1821 through to 1870.<sup>5</sup> Despite these studies, oral tradition and oral history remained largely resigned to the confines of other emerging disciplines, where rather than classify their work as studies in oral tradition, researchers appeared content to persevere within the domains of ethnography, history, and folklore.

The first signs of an emerging scholarly literature on the nature of oral tradition surfaced in the work of Milman Parry, whose analysis of the Homeric ballads influenced a large array of scholars interested in oral tradition. Among these was his successor, Albert Lord, who in *The Singer of Tales*, published in 1960, developed Parry's earlier hypothesis, which together they termed the oral formulaic theory, or 'the oral formula'. This, Lord argued, offered a way in which scholars might be able to identify the orality of a verse or chant through an examination of regularly employed metrical conditions within the stanza that 'express an essential idea'.<sup>6</sup> For scholars, particularly of cultures whose traditions were predominantly spoken or

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<sup>4</sup> Graham Smith, 'The Making of Oral History' (online article). I would like to thank Graham Smith for his advice in regard to this thesis. This chapter draws extensively on his work.

<sup>5</sup> Duncan Wilson, *The Life and Times of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić 1787-1864; Literacy, Literature and National Independence in Serbia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

<sup>6</sup> Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 30.



sung, this theorizing on the form of their sources magnified their potential depth and complexity. Parry and Lord's theories, although not a comprehensive guide on the form and nature of oral traditions, would feature predominantly as a pivotal reference point in later writing, particularly in the work of oral traditionalists passionate about chants, songs, and the rhythms of aural memory.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time that folklorists were scrutinizing the new found metrical patterns in their sources, scholars in the areas of ethnohistory and anthropology were also considering the nature and form of the oral traditions they worked with. The most prolific of these writers, and arguably the most influential commentator on the study of oral tradition, was Jan Vansina, who in 1961 released *De La Tradition Orale: essai de methode historique* to French readers.<sup>8</sup> This was later published for English speaking audiences in 1965 under the title *Oral Tradition: a study in historical methodology*.<sup>9</sup> A best-seller in academic circles, it was acclaimed as a study of pioneering importance, and even promoted as a type of handbook and guide for budding researchers interested in using oral evidence.<sup>10</sup> Praised by reviewers for the success of his 'intense' functionalist analysis of oral traditions, Vansina's manifesto perhaps spoke mostly to the concerns of anthropological and ethno-historical communities of the West.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, his primary argument that 'oral traditions were, and are, valid

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<sup>7</sup> 'The oral formula' remains a topic of interest in the literature on oral tradition. There are various articles and studies that refer to Lord and Parry's work. Many of these can be found in the *Oral Tradition* journal, now accessible online. Another typical example can be found in the work of Minna Skafté Jensen, who in *The Homeric Question and the Oral Formulaic Theory* in 1980, noted the growing interest in oral composition generated by Parry and Lord's work, stating that 'publications are now appearing' that test their theory in relation to other traditions beyond Greek and modern Serobcroation epic. M S. Jensen, *The Homeric Question and the Oral Formulaic Theory* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 1980), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Jan Vansina, *De La Tradition Orale: essai de methode historique* (Belgium: Musee Royal De l'Afrique Centrale, 1961).

<sup>9</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: a Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1965).

<sup>10</sup> See for instance Francis West's review in *Oral History and Theory*, vol. 5, no. 3 (1996), pp. 348-52.

<sup>11</sup> The 'Functionalist' approach employed by Vansina, and social and cultural anthropologist of his generation, relates back to the writing of Emile Durkheim, and to notions about patterns of behavior, and the fulfilling of psychological and social needs as the reflection of a successfully functioning society. In the functional theoretical paradigm, espoused by Durkheim and other social scientists, human behavior is fundamentally

and highly useful sources of knowledge about the past' no doubt resonated with indigenous writers. Oral traditions, Vansina contended, 'occupy a special place', although little has been done 'towards analyzing their special features as historical documents.'<sup>12</sup> This assertion of not only their significance as valid sources but suitability as historical documents, accentuated the need for academics to be aware that the study of oral tradition in western societies should not be left just to anthropologists.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, while Vansina was by some admired and cited as a 'legitimator of their research', his emphasis on the strict conventions of historical method, made it difficult, as Selma Leydesdorff and Elizabeth Tonkins observed, to see how he could have been followed by many of them.<sup>14</sup> In this, the first of his major studies, Vansina hoped to draw attention to the richness of oral traditions through an examination of their form and transmission. Nevertheless, based as it was within a community of preliterate peoples, he conceded its limitations in being able to speak to broader indigenous audiences, particularly those influenced by the advent of literacy.

A flurry of writing followed the publication of Vansina's impressive study. This included numerous articles and some books, which Vansina himself noted contributed to the publication of his other even more widely read, *Oral Tradition as History*, some twenty years later.<sup>15</sup> One of those, highly influenced by Vansina was David Henige, historian and archivist, who wrote a significant analysis in 1972

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shaped by the moral, religious, and social society within which the individual lives. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, introduction by Lewis Coser, translated by W. D. Halls (London: MacMillan, 1984).

<sup>12</sup> Vansina, *Oral Tradition: a study in historical methodology*, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> Selma Leydesdorff and Elizabeth Tonkins, 'Aldine Transaction Introduction: The Volatility of the Oral', in Vansina, *Oral Tradition: a Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. xiii.

<sup>14</sup> Leydesdorff and Tonkins, 'Aldine Transaction Introduction', p. xiii.

<sup>15</sup> Vansina comments on the responses to his 1965 book in the preface of *Oral Tradition as History* (London: James Currey, 1985), pp. 27-28.

entitled *The Chronology of Oral Tradition*.<sup>16</sup> In it Henige explored how oral traditions 'arose in response to a broad range of stimuli', particularly the printed word, which he argued played a major role in how oral traditions were remade in a process he termed 'Feedback'.<sup>17</sup> Similarly inspired by Vansina, Kenneth C. Wylie writing in 1973 on ethnohistory defined it 'as the use of ethnographic and traditional documentary evidence within a methodological frame-work which combines the best analytical techniques of both history and anthropology.'<sup>18</sup> Wylie's appreciation of Vansina's systemization 'of the best methods for the use of oral tradition' led him to insist on a closer working relationship between traditional historiographical methods and ethnography, where 'oral traditions or other non-written sources would be given emphasis at least equal to written sources.'<sup>19</sup>

In 1980 a series of reactions to Vansina's work were published in a special edition of the *Journal of Cultural and Social Practice*, under the title, 'Using Oral Sources: Vansina and beyond.'<sup>20</sup> Commenting on Vansina's presence as the researcher, Joseph Miller questioned his involvement 'in oral history as a performer', asking, 'does he actually play the other role, that of interviewer when he collects traditions? Does he do oral history?'<sup>21</sup> In analyzing the messages and mediums evident within the study of oral traditions, Jeffery Hoover Van Fossen argued that 'oral traditions must be interpreted in their own socio-political contexts', while in another approach, Anthony Belgrano suggested further that although Vansina included myth in his typology, he never

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<sup>16</sup> David Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

<sup>17</sup> Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition*, pp. 95-6. Also see David William Cohen, *The Combining of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 230-231, for a broader contextual discussion on Henige's work as it relates to historical scholarship.

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth C. Wylie, 'The Uses and Misuses of Ethnohistory', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Spring 1973), p. 708.

<sup>19</sup> Wylie, 'The Uses and Misuses of Ethnohistory', p. 711.

<sup>20</sup> Kenneth Brown and Michael Roberts, eds., 'Using Oral Sources: Vansina and Beyond', Special Edition of the *Journal of Cultural and Social Practice*, no. 4 (September 1980).

<sup>21</sup> Joseph Miller, *The African Past Speaks: Essays on Oral Tradition* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon, 1980), p. 5.

probed for its meaning.<sup>22</sup> These essays, sought not only to expand on Vansina's seminal study, but in the process acknowledge it as a pivotal reference point in the literature.

After some reflection on the writing provoked by his first book, Vansina's *Oral Tradition as History* was published in 1985 as an extension of his earlier work necessitated, he argued, by the need to update his own thoughts. 'Its goal' he wrote, remained 'unchanged'. However, some reviewers believed that it was 'a completely different book from the original ... a much better book', which rather than 'bothering to argue with now obscure historians about the validity of oral evidence' simply 'addressed itself directly to an account of the process by which oral history is [and was] produced.'<sup>23</sup> As he asserted in his first study, Vansina maintained oral traditions were 'verbal messages.... reported statements from the past beyond the present generation... spoken, sung, or called out in musical instruments only.' This, he wrote further, 'makes clear that all oral sources are not oral traditions' and that 'there must be transmission by word of mouth over at least a generation .... sources for oral history are therefore not included.'<sup>24</sup> Vansina's groundbreaking work, as much as providing definitions and systems for academic engagement with oral tradition, made more a fleeting reference to the growing work in oral history, a literature largely ignored, or only briefly mentioned, by most other writers on oral tradition.

In both Lord and Vansina's seminal texts, oral tradition as an area of study centered on issues of its form and nature as verbally transmitted sources, yet as Henige and others had noted, oral traditions also shared close associations with textual and other visual materials. In 1988, Walter J. Ong explored the spaces where the oral and

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<sup>22</sup> Jeffrey Hoover, 'Message and Medium: Some Recent Developments in Oral Tradition', *Journal of Cultural and Social Practice*, no. 4 (September 1980), p. 19; Anthony Belgrano van Fossen, 'Oral Tradition, Myth, And Social Structure: Historical Perception in a French Messianic Movement', *Journal of Cultural and Social Practice*, no. 4 (September 1980), p. 39.

<sup>23</sup> Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, Backcover.

<sup>24</sup> Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, pp. 27-28.

written intersected in *Orality and Literacy, the technologizing of the Word*, in which he argued that 'literate peoples cannot fully comprehend purely oral forms, but make sense of orality within a literate mindset'. Similar to the work of Henige, Ong contrasted the 'primary orality' of purely oral cultures with what he described as a secondary orality within literate societies, suggesting that 'primary orality' is primary' in contrast with the 'secondary orality' of 'present day high technology culture, in which a new orality is sustained by telephone, radio, television, and other electronic devices that depend for their existence on writing and print.'<sup>25</sup> His problematising of the oral nature of transmission within a literate world provided a valuable contribution to the expanding literature on oral tradition, and featured prominently in other studies. This included Jack Goody, who in *The Power of Written Tradition* questioned the very nature of 'oral literature', what it is, and how researchers might better understand it. Rather than speaking of 'oral literatures', Goody described them as 'standardised oral forms,' which he argued helped to avoid the implication of letters embedded in the concept 'literary'.<sup>26</sup> The problem of using oral literature as a way of talking about oral traditions had also been discussed by Ong, who described it as 'rather like thinking of horses as automobiles without wheels ... [that is] you cannot without serious and disabling distortion describe a primary phenomenon by starting with a subsequent secondary phenomenon and paring away the differences'.<sup>27</sup> Such a sustained focus on the form of oral tradition continued in the work of scholars such as Ruth Finnegan, whose *Oral Tradition and Verbal Acts* was published in 1992.<sup>28</sup> Finnegan also developed an interest in Polynesian traditions, and in 1995 she co-edited *South Pacific Oral Traditions* with

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<sup>25</sup> Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy, the Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 1982), pp. 11-13.

<sup>26</sup> Jack Goody, *The Power of Written Tradition* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institute Press, 2000), p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>28</sup> Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Traditions and Verbal Acts: a Guide to Research Practices* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).

Margaret Orbell, whose fascination with Māori song and chant was similarly influenced by the ideas of Ong, Parry and Lord.<sup>29</sup> In much of the literature commentators tended to either explore the oral and written dimensions within oral tradition and its transmission, or revisit the formulaic theories espoused by Lord. In 1975, however, *Envelopes of Sound*, edited by Ron Grele brought together scholars from varying 'oral' divides, including Vansina, to address the 'problem of what the oral historian is all about', and to discuss ideas about different methods, theories and techniques.<sup>30</sup> Despite its potential, the book did not deliver a decisive response to these questions, but it did provide an important debate on the practice and nature of oral history.<sup>31</sup> Collaborations such as this have been rare, with writers tending to remain anchored in their areas of interest so that little consensus has been reached on what divides the studies of oral tradition from the studies of oral history. To an extent, clarifying the blurred lines that divide oral history and oral tradition has not always been a question of the orality in each field, but involved a reconsideration of what is meant by 'history' or 'tradition.' In 1983, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, for instance, argued that traditions are constructed by advanced nation states, and are more than just the archaic sources of pre-literate societies.<sup>32</sup> An emphasis on the *Invention of Tradition* as a modern phenomenon, and a political fabrication, effectively disturbed previous assumptions in anthropology, sociology, and history, where 'western experience' had been discursively privileged in a

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<sup>29</sup> Ruth Finnegan and Margaret Orbell, eds., *South Pacific Oral Tradition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

<sup>30</sup> Ronald J. Grele, and Studs Terkel, eds., *Envelopes of Sound, Six Practitioners Discuss the Method, Theory and Practice of Oral History and Oral Testimony* (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1975), pp. 6-7.

<sup>31</sup> The book drew on a number of recorded interviews in which Vansina and others openly discussed issues relating to oral history methodology.

<sup>32</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

dualism between modernity and tradition.<sup>33</sup> Thus, definitions of oral tradition shifted between already established disciplines, where questions of orality, history and tradition, were regularly critiqued, but not necessarily resolved.

Nevertheless, a growing interest in oral tradition, spurred on by the writings of Vansina and others, led to the founding of a journal in 1986 with the title *Oral Tradition*. Its underlying intention was to provide an interdisciplinary forum for worldwide discussion on the topic. This proved successful, with the publication of various special issues dedicated to the study of African, South Asian, Hebrew, Arabic, and Native American oral traditions.<sup>34</sup> Much of the journal's content, though, lingered on Parry and Lord's oral formulaic theory, or remained more attuned to Ong's ideas about orality and the literate world.<sup>35</sup> Overall, the journal, with its prolific literature, served to solidify the notion that the study of oral tradition was by this stage an established and internationally recognized field. In 1990, research on Māori oral tradition found its way into the journal in a special edition on the South Pacific.<sup>36</sup> Writing in her introduction to the edition, Ruth Finnegan, commented on how the international scholarly literature had taken 'surprisingly little account of the study of Pacific cultural form.'<sup>37</sup> Most significantly, she noted the controversial views amongst Pacific commentators surrounding oral

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<sup>33</sup> These points have been noted by Ton Otto, and Paul Pedersen, eds., *Tradition and Agency: Tracing Cultural Continuity and Invention* (Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2008), pp. 7, 20; and John Tomlinson, *Globalisation and Culture* (UK: Polity Press, 1999), p. 64.

<sup>34</sup> *Oral Tradition* can now be accessed online, and contains comprehensive archives dating back to its first publication. <http://journal.oraltradition.org/about>. Retrieved 1 September 2009. These special editions appeared in, *Oral Tradition*, 'African Oral Traditions', vol. 9, no. 1 (1994); 'South Asian Oral Traditions', vol. 12, no. 1 (1997); 'Hebrew and Tradition', vol. 14, no. 1 (1999); 'Arabic Oral Traditions', vol. 4, no. 1-2 (1989); and 'Native American Oral Traditions: Collaboration and Interpretation', vol. 13, no. 1 (1998).

<sup>35</sup> Special editions often concerned themselves with poems and ballads, such as 'Hispanic Balladry', *Oral Tradition*, vol. 2, no. 2-3 (1987). A festschrift to Walter Ong was published in vol. 2, no. 1 (1987), illustrating his importance to the discipline.

<sup>36</sup> Ruth Finnegan, ed., 'South Pacific Oral Tradition', Special Issue of *Oral Tradition*, vol. 5, no. 2-3 (1990).

<sup>37</sup> Ruth Finnegan, 'Introduction; or, Why the Comparativist Should Take Account of the South Pacific', *Oral Tradition*, vol. 5, no. 2-3 (1990), p. 159.

tradition as a concept, and encouraged readers to bear in mind the question: 'How far and in what sense are examples in this volume "traditional" and/or "oral"?'<sup>38</sup> Contributions to the special edition included studies based in the remote settings of Tonga, Tokelau, Papua New Guinea, and the Cook Islands. Margaret Orbell's essay on the form and content in Māori Women's love songs was the only New Zealand based analysis.<sup>39</sup> In it Orbell posited the idea that 'other traditions, such as that of the Maori, in which songs were not improvised ... were constructed largely from set themes and expressions' rather than just set formulas or verbal building blocks. The oral-formulaic theory, she argued, 'in its present form' was unable to 'fully explain the presence in oral poetry of set components.'<sup>40</sup> Orbell's article, typical of much of the literature looked back to Lord and Parry through an examination of song and ballad in what some termed ethnomusicology, a fusion of ethnography and the study of music. More recently, however, articles such as Thomas McKean's 'Tradition as Communication' have considered the intersections of memory, culture and orality in the representing of oral tradition in the present. His inquisitive consideration of not only a vertical diachronic preservation, but a more horizontal synchronic tradition illuminates a more socially eclectic process beyond Vansina's and Lord's original works. He contends that 'if tradition is process rather than content', then 'the mechanics are essentially the same today as they were in preliterate times.'<sup>41</sup> This theorizing speaks more directly to the complicated political,

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<sup>38</sup> Finnegan, 'Why the Comparativist Should Take Account of the South Pacific', p. 166.

<sup>39</sup> Margaret Orbell, "'My Summit Where I Sit": Form and Content in Maori Women's Love Songs', *Oral Tradition*, vol. 5, no. 2-3 (1990), pp. 185-204.

<sup>40</sup> Orbell, 'My Summit Where I Sit', p. 185.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas A. McKean, 'Tradition as Communication', *Oral Tradition* 18, 1 (2003), p. 49. It should be noted that studies and short essays on oral tradition surfaced elsewhere in other journals and books, such as Timothy Powell's 'Native/American Digital Storytelling: Situating the Cherokee Oral tradition within American Literary History', for instance recently appeared in *Literature Compass*. Timothy B. Powell, 'Native/American Digital Storytelling: Situating the Cherokee Oral tradition within American Literary History', *Literature Compass*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2007), pp. 1-23.



cultural, and social realities of Māori and iwi, who have considered their views on oral tradition significantly different to those imposed from the outside world.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, oral traditions have long provided substance to, and foundations for, Māori and iwi histories, yet have been plundered and often abused by non-Māori scholars for well over a century. On Māori oral tradition, Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal has argued that everything needed to maintain Māori society 'was contained in oral histories and traditions' and subsequently passed on through experts in various areas.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, a broad array of writing produced in New Zealand touches on oral tradition, but few scholars have offered a sustained commentary on the topic as an area of study, or as a methodological process attached to deeper theoretical foundations. Many of the initial writers, already mentioned above, operated within ethnographic and anthropological disciplines that often undervalued the significance of *kōrero tuku iho*. Despite this, the accumulation of oral tradition attracted considerable interest amongst early scholars in New Zealand, culminating in the establishment of an association to collect, record, and comment on the practice. The Polynesian Society, as it came to be known, was founded in 1892 by Stephenson Percy Smith, amidst rising concern about the steady demise of Māori oral traditions. Keith Sorrenson writes that 'the main impetus for the organization of the Polynesian Society came from within New Zealand: from a growing apprehension, expressed' by Percy Smith 'that, almost daily, the repositories of oral tradition were dying out and that their material needed to be recorded urgently or not at all.'<sup>43</sup> This written preservation of oral traditions had already begun in a variety of printed sources, such as the Māori Land Court Minute Books, a range of Māori language newspapers, and the transactions and proceedings of the New Zealand Institute. Although not all founded

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<sup>42</sup> Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 'Oral History and Hapū Development', in *Maori and Oral History: a Collection*, edited by Rachel Selby and Alison Laurie (Wellington: National Oral History Association, 2005), p. 16.

<sup>43</sup> The circular was distributed on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 1892. M.P.K. Sorrenson, *Manifest Duty: The Polynesian Society Over 100 Years* (Auckland: Polynesian Society, 1992), p. 21.

specifically for the purpose of recording Māori and iwi oral traditions in writing, these a major repository from which many scholars have drawn a vast majority of their 'oral' evidence regarding tribal tradition and history.

Percy Smith's concerns about the need to collect Māori oral traditions were shared predominantly by other Pākehā scholars of the time. The collecting and scrutinizing of the oral traditions within western paradigms was also a major part of this movement towards a periodical academic publication. Subsequently, the first volume of the *Journal of the Polynesian Society (JPS)* was produced in 1892, the editors keen to point out its primary function in promoting 'the study of the Anthropology, Ethnology, Philology, History and Antiquities of the Polynesian races'.<sup>44</sup> Such labour had begun in earlier decades in the work of Sir George Grey and John White, yet alongside the increasing volume of research by figures such as Elsdon Best and Walter Edward Gudgeon, there was, by the time the journal commenced, a rich and growing reservoir of study on oral traditions. Māori too were involved in this collecting and writing. Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikaheke, for instance, had collaborated with Grey in collecting a large amount of waiata and kōrero tuku iho. By the turn of the nineteenth century, new figures such as Apirana Ngata, an active member of the Polynesian Society, also turned their attention to the gathering and writing down of oral tradition for the purpose of cultural revitalisation. In 1911, the *JPS* published in both Māori and English Mohi Turei's short essay on the east coast leader, 'Tuwhakairiora'. Turei's version, although not the only one known on the coast, emerged in time as a tribal classic in print as much as it had long been in oral transmission.<sup>45</sup> Short pieces such as this in the journal often made reference to local proverbs and songs, and verbal correspondence with tribal experts, but rarely, if ever, focused on method and theory, or the form and nature of the oral traditions themselves. The transition from the oral to the print

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<sup>44</sup> Stephenson Percy Smith and Edward Tregear, eds., *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 1 (1892), p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> Rev. Mohi Turei, 'Tū-whaka-iri-ora', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 20 (1911), pp. 18-32.

was not a matter of much contention for Māori, who appeared more interested in simply recording and maintaining their histories within the local collective memory.

Despite the emphasis on collecting and preserving, some authors ventured into more self reflective waters. The most notable Māori scholar was Te Rangi Hiroa (Sir Peter Buck), who in 'The Value of Tradition in Polynesian Research' in 1924 provided a much needed and fascinating discussion on Māori oral tradition. His exploration of the ways in which oral traditions could, and should be, employed by researchers remains one of the few substantive essays on the topic by a Māori author today. The breadth and depth of the essay considered not only the form of oral traditions, but how they might be cross referenced against other Pacific traditions to reinforce their validity. Commenting on the definition of oral tradition he observed:

Tradition has been defined as the handing down of opinion or practices to posterity unwritten. This definition can only apply to a people with a written language. In the case of a people without writing, all information whether applying to the past, present, or future, must of necessity be handed down to posterity unwritten if transmitted at all. With the native races, the term tradition has come to be more closely associated with historical narratives that, in absence of writing, have been orally transmitted....tradition must be regarded as history derived from an unwritten source.<sup>46</sup>

Te Rangihiroa's significant essay, with its underlying argument regarding the value of kōrero tuku iho as history, appeared some forty years before Vansina's seminal work. Since then little has been produced in Aotearoa that rivals its approach to the topic, with most writer's content to simply use oral traditions rather than unpack them as sources, the products of research and transmission.<sup>47</sup> The submitting of

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<sup>46</sup> Sir Peter Buck, (Te Rangi Hiroa), 'The Value of Tradition in Polynesian Research' in *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, no. 35 (1926), p. 181.

<sup>47</sup> One of the other writers to briefly examine oral tradition was J.B.W Robertson, whose 'The Evaluation of Tribal Tradition as History', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 71 (September, 1962), pp. 293-309, did little to advance, or even match, the work done by Buck.

kōrero tuku iho to non-Māori modes of analysis continued within the steadily expanding reach of Western scientific investigation. Scholars such as Ngata and Buck, conscious of the impact of writing and print within the Māori world, were in many ways open to the use of other frameworks they perceived as potentially useful to the development of Māori and iwi communities. This intention was perhaps best highlighted by Ngata, who in his Rauru nui-a-Toi lecture series advocated a genealogical method related to the use and dating of whakapapa tables as an 'indispensable' approach, which he noted was used by the Polynesian Society 'in reconstructing Maori history'.<sup>48</sup> The benefits worked from the assumption that the 'length of a generation may be taken as twenty five years' and therefore could assist in placing certain events in kōrero tuku iho within a chronological frame.<sup>49</sup> One of the most notable examples of this method in practice calculated the generations from the crews of the 'great fleet', which scholars estimated as migrating to Aotearoa at about 1350 AD.<sup>50</sup> The fragility of this theory was later demonstrated by the work of D. R. Simmons, who in *The Great New Zealand Myth: a study of the discovery and origin traditions of the Maori* in 1976 argued that scholars such as Percy Smith had manipulated the oral traditions to arrive at their conclusions about one major historic voyage.<sup>51</sup>

This manipulation was not confined to New Zealand shores, and in the mid twentieth century, the Pacific anthropologist, Kenneth Emory, also influenced by

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<sup>48</sup> A. T. Ngata, *Rauru- nui a Toi Lectures*, p.4. Percy Smith, Elsdon Best, and Edward Tregear had also popularised the myth of a great fleet. Smith arguing that it followed the initial discovery by Kupe in 950 AD, and earlier visits by Whatonga and Toi between 1000-1100 AD.

<sup>49</sup> This method, advocated by the Polynesian Society, was derived from the work of Abraham Fornander, *An Account of the Polynesian Race*, 3 volumes (London: Kegan Paul, 1878-1885).

<sup>50</sup> Ngata, *Rauru-nui a Toi*, p. 5. The great fleet theory circulated within a wide range of writing on Māori and iwi history in Ngata's time. He also encouraged those present to purchase, borrow, and read Te Rangihiroa's earlier and smaller work on the *Coming of the Maori* and *Vikings of the Sunrise* (Buck's larger volume did not appear until 1949), as well as Stephenson Percy Smith's *Hawaiiki*, which he felt were seminal texts in Polynesian literature and history, Ngata, *Rauru-nui-Toi*, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> D. R. Simmons, *The Great New Zealand Myth: a Study of the Discovery and Origin Traditions of the Māori* (Wellington: Reed, 1976).

Buck, was equally critical of Frank Stimson's work, which he argued 'contorted oral testimony to produce Io and Kio' as the supreme-being in Polynesian oral tradition.<sup>52</sup> Stimson, a linguist scholar of the Tuamotuan language, retorted by reminding Emory that he and Buck were not specialists in the field and 'should leave linguistics severely alone'.<sup>53</sup> Episodes such as these were not uncommon in the collisions between oral tradition and the colonial scholarship of 'outsiders'.<sup>54</sup> The flattening of oral renditions upon the page often resulted in an odd mixture of traditional storytelling and a sometimes liberal interpretation taken by intellectuals on both sides of the divide. Nevertheless, many of those who were associated with the Polynesian Society shared and nurtured strong connections which inevitably led to a cross-fertilization of ideas, and the comparing of stories, songs, and traditions. In 1949 Katharine Luomala's *Maui of a thousand tricks* achieved this in spectacular fashion, in providing an intriguing exploration of the connections between the oral traditions of Māori and their Polynesian relatives.<sup>55</sup> Luomala, also a friend and contemporary of Buck and Emory, argued that 'a many sided hero requires a many sided investigation' in which there is 'no single "true" account'. Of Māori 'oral biographers' she continued, 'storytellers differ not only in the way they tell the myths about Maui but in their interpretation of what the stories and their ancient phrases mean.'<sup>56</sup> In work such as this, oral tradition as a form and field of study remained less concerned with the historical validity of the sources, and focused more on the lived

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<sup>52</sup> See Bob Krauss, *Keneti: South Seas adventures of Kenneth Emory* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988).

<sup>53</sup> Krauss, *Keneti*, p. 251.

<sup>54</sup> One of the better discussions surrounding the negative impact of 'outsiders' within Polynesian research has been written by Lilikala Kamelihiwa, *Native Land Foreign Desires*. Of the New Zealand, and Māori context, Linda Tuhiwai Smith has written in more depth on this issue, see *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 230.

<sup>55</sup> Katharine Luomala, *Maui-of-a-thousand-tricks: his Oceanic and European biographers* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1949).

<sup>56</sup> Luomala, *Maui-of-a-thousand-tricks*, p. 11.

significance of their meanings in the societies from which they originated and continued to thrive.

The most common, and perhaps easily accessible, vehicle of transmission, for scholars of the Pacific and Māori especially, remained the songs, waiata, lullabies, and laments of the local people. Much of the study of oral traditions in Aotearoa and the Pacific has revolved around the compilation and analysis of songs and ballads. In the early twentieth century, A.T. Ngata, for instance, compiled *Ngā Mōteatea*, an extensive collection of laments, love songs, and ballads, which they hoped would be useful to future generations.<sup>57</sup> The poetic nature of these oral traditions were commented on by Ngata, who noted that 'in former times a wealth of meaning was clothed within a word or two as delectable as a proverb in its poetical form and in its musical sound'.<sup>58</sup> Subsequently, to aid interpretation and understanding, Jones and Ngata included short genealogical tables, notes on the origins and stories surrounding the composers, as well as explanatory footnotes for key words, place names and people in the verses. More than simply a compilation of songs, Ngata eagerly anticipated that the *Ngā Mōteatea* volumes might eventually be used as educational resources for the teaching of Māori studies. This goal though was not realised in the production of Māori songbooks, which over the course of the twentieth century especially, grew in prodigious numbers for varying purposes. These ranged from A. T. Ngata and Hone Heke Ngapua's *Songs, Haka, and Ruri: for the use of the Maori contingent* in 1914 to Jim Phillpott's *Ten Maori Songs* in 1930, Ernest McKinlay's *Maori Songs* in 1936, Alan Armstrong's *Maori Games and Hakas* in 1964, and Sam Freedman's *Maori Songs of New Zealand* by 1967.<sup>59</sup> The collecting of

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<sup>57</sup> A.T Ngata, *Ngā Mōteatea The Songs Part 1*, Revised Edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004).

<sup>58</sup> Ngata, *Ngā Mōteatea*, p. xxiii.

<sup>59</sup> Apirana Ngata, Hone Heke Ngapua, *Songs, Haka, and Ruri: for the use of the Maori contingent* (Wellington: Govt Print, 1914); Jim Phillpott, *Ten Maori Songs* (Auckland: Arthur Eady, 1930); Ernest McKinlay, *Maori Songs* (Sydney: W.H. Paling & Co, 1936); Alan Armstrong, *Maori Games and Hakas* (Wellington: A.H. & A. W. Reed, 1964); Sam Freedman, *Maori Songs of New Zealand* (Wellington: Seven Seas, 1967).

more traditional chant as opposed to the compilation of the many new compositions fuelled by the popular tunes of the day remained a rarity in the literature on Māori and iwi music, verse and ballad. Aside from perhaps the much earlier work of George Grey and John McGregor, few of the compilations rivalled Jones and Ngata's earlier work, with most of the later publications tending to have either a commercial or commemorative purpose.<sup>60</sup> This included a wealth of songbooks dedicated to the troops and servicemen in both World Wars, and others concerned primarily with entertainment. Those more interested in the analytical study of songs and ballads, included Margaret Orbell, who in 1983, produced *Hawaiki: a new approach to Maori tradition*.<sup>61</sup> Orbell's interest in the work of Lord and Parry, and particularly the oral formula, was extended further in collaboration with Ruth Finnegan, with whom she worked on a special edition of Polynesian traditions for the *Oral Tradition* journal in 1990, as noted earlier. The most prolific collector of Māori song has been Mervyn McLean, whose doctoral thesis on 'Māori Chant: a study in ethnomusicology' was completed in 1965. According to McLean, Māori 'songs progressively ceased to be composed throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries making it more and more important to retain the old ones.'<sup>62</sup> His considerable collection of songs, a valuable resource for Māori and iwi, included fascinating insights into the process of transmission, and the protocols and rituals associated with their dissemination. By the early 1970s 'the range of data available for the

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<sup>60</sup> Alongside Ngata and Jones, *Ngā Mōteatea*, Grey and McGregor's publications lifted the number of recorded waiata into the hundreds by the beginning of the twentieth century. See Sir George Grey, *Ko Ngā Mōteatea me ngā Hakirara o Ngā Māori* (Wellington: Robert Stokes 1853); George Grey, *Ko Ngā Waiata Māori he mea kohikohi mai* (London: George Willis 1857); John McGregor, *Popular Māori Songs as written by the Māoris of Wai-kato* (Auckland: Field, 1893).

<sup>61</sup> Margaret Orbell, *Hawaiki: a new approach to Māori tradition* (Christchurch: Macmillan Brown lectures/University of Canterbury, 1983).

<sup>62</sup> Mervyn McLean, 'Sound Archiving and the Problems of Dissemination of Waiata', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 2 (1989), p. 14. Other publications include, Mervyn McLean, *Māori Music* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1970); *Songs of a Kaumatua – sung by Kino Hughes*, edited by Mervyn McLean and Margaret Orbell (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002); Mervyn McLean, *To tatou Waka: in search of Māori Music 1958-1979* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004).

study of Maori chant', as Hirini Moko Mead noted, had 'greatly increased, gaining popularity not only with the general public, but also as a subject of study amongst scholars.'<sup>63</sup> Despite this proliferation in textual and recorded materials, the transmission of mōteatea remained a process largely undertaken within kapahaka training, from primary schooling through to adult groups. In these locations, songs, haka, and laments were often taught by family members, specialists in dance and song, who relied more on their own personal resources than on the large amount of literature that had been published in the past century.<sup>64</sup>

Although songbooks and other manuscripts offered a greater amount of data in oral tradition, much of the interpretive focus remained fixated on its form as 'oral literature' rather than examining its oral transmission. In responding to the question 'is there such a thing as Maori literature', Agatha Thornton, in *Māori Oral Literature as seen by a classicist* answered, 'yes', but then asserted that it 'is only known to a handful of people.'<sup>65</sup> Her brief interpretive analysis, published in the late nineteen-eighties, considered 'two avenues by which we can have any knowledge of an oral literature today'. 'One', as she writes, 'is a living oral tradition coming right down to the present time; the other is through manuscripts or tapes in which the oral tradition has been fixed and so preserved.'<sup>66</sup> Certainly, the use of written materials, such as the

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<sup>63</sup> Hirini Moko Mead, 'The Study of Maori Chant', *Te Ao Hou*, no. 68 (1970), pp. 42-45. According to Mead, McLean had indicated that there must have been 'at least 5,000 texts in the literature and in tape-recorded collections' available to researchers around this time.

<sup>64</sup> Māori haka and dance groups had by this time become both a common and vital part of the transmission of traditional compositions in most tribal communities, including a growing urban Māori population. The role of these groups in supporting cultural revitalisation, had earlier been envisioned by leaders such as Ngata and Te Puea, but by the late twentieth century had blossomed into an immense array of both competitive and non-competitive festivals maintained at various levels from schools, marae and tribal areas, to a highly lucrative national tournament that evolved from its first festival at Rotorua in 1972. For further reading see, Wira Gardiner, *Haka* (Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2010); Timoti Karetu, *Haka, te tohu o te whenua rangatira/the dance of a noble people* (Auckland: Reed, 1993).

<sup>65</sup> Agathe Thornton, *Māori Oral Literature as seen by a classicist* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1987), p. 9. She was referring to the manuscript collections at the Turnbull and Hocken libraries, and particularly in terms of published materials to George Grey's *Polynesian Mythology* (at the Auckland Public Library), John White's *Ancient History of the Maori*, and Ngata's three volumes of *Ngā Mōteatea*.

<sup>66</sup> Thornton, *Māori Oral Literature*, p. 11.



Grey and White collections, the nineteenth century Māori newspapers, and the Land Court Minute Books, have often served as the dominant source materials for the increasing number of tribal histories produced in the twentieth century. Tiaki Hikawera Mitira (Mitchell), for instance, drew on a wide range of oral traditions predominantly from written material, particularly John White's *Ancient History of the Maori* and Edward Shortland's *Maori Religion and Mythology*, to tell the story of *Takitimu*.<sup>67</sup> Of the place of oral tradition, he confessed to restraint in recording the stories of myths or supernatural powers, other than to connect or support a story. His rationale for this approach based on the notion 'that it is only a belittlement of the personal ability and daring adventures accomplished by these stalwart men of old, to overshadow their achievement with supernatural powers.'<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Atholl Anderson, in *The Welcome of Strangers*, published some time later in 1998, largely used written records, including genealogical tables provided by members of the tribe, and claimant submissions from the Ngai Tahu proceedings heard by the Waitangi Tribunal between 1987 and 1989.<sup>69</sup> These texts were not so much concerned with a discussion on the form and nature of oral tradition, but favoured a certain type of history, one cautious about the limits of oral tradition as a reliable source. Oral tradition as history in New Zealand then, although a product of both interviews and static manuscripts, continued to be framed within a predominantly western legitimization of the past that remained doubtful of oral sources. This apprehension amongst scholars also contributed to an often fleeting discussion of the process within which the oral evidence they so readily employed had been produced. Indeed, few tribal histories offered any sustained analysis on the form of oral tradition, most seemingly content to explain them within a foreign interpretive

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<sup>67</sup> Tiaki Hikawera Mitira (Mitchell), *Takitimu* (Christchurch: Kiwi Publishers, 1997). Mitchell did draw on oral interviews as well, but did not reference his evidence, only providing a list of some selected sources on p. 267.

<sup>68</sup> Mitira, *Takitimu*, p. 9.

<sup>69</sup> Atholl Anderson, *The Welcome of Strangers: an Ethnohistory of Southern Māori AD 1650-1850* (Dunedin: Otago University Press in association with Dunedin City Council, 1998).

system that essentially distanced the end product from the process, effectively removing the source from the cultural context that could most appropriately decipher and illuminate it.

Nevertheless, not all writers remained so removed. Ruka Broughton especially in his thesis 'Ko Ngaa Paiaka o Ngaa Rauru kiitahi', devoted a number of pages to a discussion of oral tradition, particularly its strengths and weaknesses within Māori communities. Like many others, his analysis referred extensively to the work of Jan Vansina, including the view that 'oral traditions are never reliable' yet 'may contain a certain amount of truth'. In reference to the validity of oral evidence, Broughton also noted Vansina's assertion that 'all factors affecting the reliability of traditions should be thoroughly examined', and that 'the reliability of these sources should be examined according to the usual canons of historical methodology.'<sup>70</sup> However, despite an acknowledgment of Vansina's position on the subject, Broughton's own analysis of Māori oral tradition was grounded within his own local observations. He wrote that 'according to the elders, conflicting opinions and dissension [in Māori oral tradition] do not necessarily blur the truth, rather it isolates the truth'<sup>71</sup> Oral 'compositions' within these tribal communities, Broughton adds further, 'are transmitted orally almost word-perfect down the generations and their content, therefore, remained unaltered in most cases. This content contains much that can be regarded as factual material, whether biographical, historical, [or] genealogical.'<sup>72</sup> Broughton's perception of Māori oral transmission is one of the few examples, at that time, of a local Māori writer and researcher advancing beyond the borders of Vansina's seminal work. His foundational approach to the oral source material, although annotated with reference to the international literature, and concerned

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<sup>70</sup> Cites Vansina from his 1969 publication, p.8. Ruka Broughton, 'Ko Ngaa Paiaka o Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi/The Origins of Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Victoria, 1979), p. 6.

<sup>71</sup> Broughton, 'Ko Ngaa Paiaka o Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi', p. 5.

<sup>72</sup> Broughton, 'Ko Ngaa Paiaka o Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi', p. 7.

about the place of historical method and the veracity of the sources, was attuned to the more immediate cultural realities within which oral stories and songs had survived. For many Māori scholars, particularly in Broughton's era and beyond, the need to protect their history and knowledge from further colonial appropriation became an increasingly urgent matter. One of the more prominent commentators on the issue was Hirini Moko Mead, who in an article for the *Listener* in 1977 argued that Pākehā were taking our knowledge without negotiation because they believed that it was essentially New Zealand culture.<sup>73</sup> In a more heated criticism, Keri Kaa of Ngāti Porou, declared 'we have kept quiet for too long about how we truly feel about what is written about us by people from another culture. For years we have provided academic ethnic fodder for research and researchers. Perhaps it is time we set things straight by getting down to the enormous task of writing about ourselves.'<sup>74</sup>

Writing about ourselves has been much easier said than done, but in 1975 that objective appeared to gain momentum with the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal, and the hope that redress for past grievances might be made explicit in new histories based on Māori interpretations of colonial encounter.<sup>75</sup> The proliferation of written histories, and particularly oral tradition, within the ever increasing canon of Tribunal reports meant that the majority of Māori histories after this period drew to some extent on Tribunal research and oral tradition. However, far from liberating and empowering mātauranga Māori and history, the Tribunal's emphasis on grievance and legal process meant that oral traditions once again became subject to the scrutiny of a foreign evaluative analysis. As Giselle Byrnes has pointed out 'this was history written to an agenda as set out in the claimants

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<sup>73</sup> Hirini Moko Mead made this observation some time ago now, 'Maoritanga, Should It Be Shared?', *Listener*, 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 1977, p. 56.

<sup>74</sup> Cited in Michael King, *Being Pākehā Now* (Auckland: Penguin, 1999), p. 184.

<sup>75</sup> The Tribunal's retrospective gaze was expanded in 1985 to include historical grievances from 1840 to the present day.

“statement of claim”, one in which the kind of truth that the Tribunal produces is not absolute, but highly conditioned and constructed by the immediate social and political context.<sup>76</sup> In appraising the validity of Māori oral traditions within a non-Māori framework, Tribunal histories have severely influenced the way in which oral history and traditions have been understood by researchers within New Zealand for well over two decades. This subjection of Māori oral tradition to western modes of analysis thus became a major concern for local indigenous scholars, including Tipene O’Regan, who in the late eighties asserted that ‘my past is not a dead thing to be examined on the postmortem bench of science without my consent and without an effective recognition that I and my whakapapa are alive and kicking’.<sup>77</sup> On the topic of Māori history and tradition, Joe Pere observed only a few years later that:

Our repositories are the people that we cling to; there is no deviation; whatever they’ve said, their word has been transmitted down to us. This is because our repositories have not only been trained, skilled, rote-learned, whatever we might like to call it. But they have also taken on board a very sacred mission of transmitting information.<sup>78</sup>

In describing the process of oral transmission in these ways, Pere and others fiercely rejected the notion that our oral traditions should be subject to an examination within the interpretive parameters of western historical methodology. Although aware of the need to ensure historical accuracy, most Māori writers on oral tradition have found it difficult to reconcile western approaches with our own mātauranga. This was certainly the view of Rawiri Te Maire Tau, who in ‘Mātauranga Māori as an Epistemology’ argued that ‘the Maori perception of the past is not the same as that held by the Pakeha .... The real and present danger is that perhaps the *Maori*

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<sup>76</sup> Byrnes, *Boundary Markers*, pp. 18, 20-21.

<sup>77</sup> Tipene O’Regan, ‘Who Owns the Past? Change in Māori Perceptions of the Past’, in *From the Beginning: The Archaeology of the Māori*, edited by John Wilson (Auckland: Penguin in association with New Zealand Historic Places Trust, 1987), p. 142.

<sup>78</sup> Joe Pere, ‘Oral Tradition and Tribal History’, *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 3 (1990-91), p. 2.

past is in danger – that it will be historicized and subverted into a form that our tohunga never intended.’<sup>79</sup>

Despite these concerns about the subjugation and redefining of our oral traditions within western scholarship, many Māori writers remained committed to validating and explaining the perceived inaccuracies inherent within their local traditions. In an article discussing Māori myth and legend Ranginui Walker emphasized the need for scholars to understand how oral traditions both reflect and reinforce the cultural values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of former generations. He writes:

Maori myths and traditions are logically arranged and related systems that fulfilled explanatory, integrating, validating, historic and socialization functions for the people who owned them. Although possessing super-normal powers in an age of miracles, the heroes of myths and traditions behave basically in human ways. They love, hate, fight and die just as their living counterparts do. Embedded in the stories are themes and myth-messages that provide precedents, models, and social prescriptions for human behavior. In some cases the myth-messages are so close to the existing reality of human behaviour that it is difficult to resolve whether myth is the prototype or the mirror image of reality.<sup>80</sup>

Like Walker, others have also sought to rationalize how Māori and iwi oral traditions might be understood and interpreted. More recently, in *Nga Pikituroa o Ngai Tahu/The oral traditions of Ngai Tahu*, Rawiri Te Maire Tau has described Maui Tikitiki-a-Taranga as ‘a figure of myth rather than history.’<sup>81</sup> He argues that beyond a certain period of time, which he calls ‘the distant past’, unverifiable oral tradition can only be thought of as myth. In briefly defining what he considers oral history, myth, and oral tradition, he posits that:

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<sup>79</sup> Rawiri Te Maire Tau, ‘Mātauranga Māori as an Epistemology’, in *Histories, Power and Loss: Uses of the Past—A New Zealand Commentary*, edited by Andrew Sharp and Paul McHugh (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp. 63, 73.

<sup>80</sup> Ranginui Walker, ‘The Relevance of Māori Myth and Tradition’, in *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga*, Revised Edition, edited by Michael King (Auckland: Reed, 1992), p. 182.

<sup>81</sup> Rawiri Te Maire Tau, *Ngā Pikituroa o Ngāi Tahu: the Oral Traditions of Ngāi Tahu* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003), p. 18

The recent past refers to what the writer sees as human history. The distant past is seen ... as the realm of myth. A definition of oral tradition is simply the passing down of tribal information that deals with the recent and distant past over a series of generations. Oral histories relate to events recalled within one's lifetime or of the lifetime of an informant.<sup>82</sup>

In searching for 'truth' and reliability in the interpretation of our oral traditions, Māori scholars have yet to settle on a consensus, with some like Te Maire Tau and Ranginui Walker suggesting we look either at the deeper subjective value within the traditions or apply evaluative rubrics that might yet determine the difference between myth and history in order to make sense of their value and legitimacy. However, for many, the more common approach has been to point scholars in the direction of Māori centred frames of interpretive analysis with the intention of enabling our stories to be told and understood on our terms. In the past decade, writers such as Danny Keenan and Mere Whaanga have argued for the need to examine and present Māori oral history from the cultural contexts within which they belong. Keenan, for instance, has argued that 'the concept of the paepae can be used when recording and arranging Māori oral histories .... to ensure that they conform to the same whaikōrero conventions (and conventions of the marae).'<sup>83</sup> Perhaps the most intriguing aspect in Keenan's writing is his tendency to consider oral history and oral tradition as essentially the same thing. 'Oral history', he opines, 'at once provides both narratives of the past, and frameworks within which to interpret those narratives [in the present].'<sup>84</sup> However, Keenan's focus on the performative transmission of the oral evidence such as whaikōrero in local Māori ritual and practice is not the same as the life history interviews that have become common to oral historians.

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<sup>82</sup> Te Maire Tau, *Ngā Pikitūora o Ngāi Tahu*, p. 17.

<sup>83</sup> Danny Keenan, 'The Past from the Paepae: Uses of the Past in Māori Oral History', *Oral History in New Zealand*, 12, 13 (2000-2001), pp. 33-38.

<sup>84</sup> Keenan, 'The Past from the Paepae', p. 33.

Despite this, Keenan's underlying point is that in researching and presenting Māori oral evidence, historians might more appropriately communicate them when portrayed in their own specific cultural contexts. In a similar fashion, Mere Whaanga, in *A Carved Cloak for Tahu*, notes that 'we tell our important stories in many art forms – in mōteatea or waiata of various types, through the carving and tukutuku that adorn the wharenui which in its entirety is a declaration of identity'<sup>85</sup> Whaanga asserts that oral traditions within the Māori world are not simply presented in oral ways, but conveyed in various forms. Apart from Whaanga's engaging work on the history of Ngai Tahu Matawhaiti, much of the literature regarding Māori oral tradition has rarely considered its form and nature. Indeed, little consideration has been given to the fact that the printed and visual evidence are not necessarily aural expressions but visual ones.

Although a more thorough examination of the form of Māori oral evidence has not yet materialised, there has been some commentary regarding the advent of print and literacy within Māori and iwi communities. There is little doubt that writing and print altered the template of what was once a primarily oral encounter, and, as local scholars have noted, Māori and iwi oral traditions have borne the brunt of a colonial tidal wave that changed the way Māori oral traditions were passed on and understood. Writing on the subject of Māori language and print, Bradford Haami has argued that Māori maintained and passed on historical narratives in a number of ways. He notes that carvings embodied and reflected important historical messages, while ta moko and even some early cave writing show that the transmission of the past was more than simply an oral exercise prior to the advent of writing. On its arrival in Aotearoa, 'the written word', as Haami states, 'had huge implications for the validation and mana of oral expression'.<sup>86</sup> Māori, as Jennifer Garlick points out,

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<sup>85</sup> Mere Whaanga, 'Telling our Stories: hapu identity in waiata, pakiwaitara and visual arts', *Oral History In New Zealand*, 15 (2003), p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> Bradford Haami, *Putea Whakairo: Māori and the Written Word* (Wellington: Huia/Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2004), p. 15.

'quickly adopted the technologies of writing and print, but over two centuries most Māori language published material has been produced by Pākehā-owned presses.'<sup>87</sup> Both Haami and Garlick's assessment of the impact of print technology touch on the highly influential role that literacy and print has played in altering the way Māori language and information was transmitted, but neither write at length on the implications that this had for oral traditions and history. Moreover, although it is generally accepted that writing and print dramatically changed the way Māori knowledge was presented and kept, there has been no attempt by local scholars to explore further the position maintained by Walter Ong: that a 'literate person can never fully recover the sense of what the word is to a purely oral people'.<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, recurrent in this small literature are particular insights regarding the ways in which the oral and written collided. For instance, as Judith Binney has emphasised, Māori were not simply the passive victims of literacy, but actively embraced print culture, reading, and books. In response to the notion that Māori may have rejected the transforming of their history within written dimensions, she notes 'the positive responses amongst Tuhoe and other Maori to a written history', and highlights further the deeply infused religious paradigms evident within evolving Māori oral convention, and particularly the place of biblical texts, which themselves have an overwhelmingly oral mindset infused within them.<sup>89</sup>

The literature on oral tradition, both international and local, has been produced within varying disciplines and interests, but has not converged together within the emerging field of oral tradition.<sup>90</sup> Despite the formation of a journal in the latter half of the twentieth century, the study of oral traditions on the global stage remains

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<sup>87</sup> Jennifer Garlick, *Maori Language Publishing, Some Issues* (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>88</sup> Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 12

<sup>89</sup> Judith Binney, 'Māori Oral Narratives, Pākehā Written Texts', in *The Shaping of History: Essays from the New Zealand Journal of History*, edited by Judith Binney (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp. 3, 9.

<sup>90</sup> In general, there has been no substantial discussion in the local New Zealand context which compares and contrasts studies in oral history and oral tradition.



largely committed to the examination of ballads, chants, and what some might describe as ‘oral cultures’ and ‘oral communities.’ Much of the literature within this canon of writing continues to explore Lord’s and Parry’s initial questions on oral formula, or Ong’s and Goody’s examinations of print and literacy. Jan Vansina’s seminal work also remains a key reference point for scholars of oral tradition. Nonetheless, few scholars seem to have reconciled their scholarship with the work of indigenous academics, historians, or oral historians. Within Aotearoa New Zealand, the study of oral traditions has rarely included an examination of the form and nature of the sources, but has tended to simply present them as one and the same thing. Moreover, a study of Māori oral traditions in today’s world is not often a study of purely oral sources, but written ones.

The difference and similarities between the studies of oral tradition and oral history has not been substantially discussed in the literature either in or beyond the Aotearoa New Zealand context. Scholarship in Māori and iwi history, despite its strong focus on oral tradition, and the increasing number of oral interviews undertaken by researchers, remains largely detached from the growing body of critical work on oral history that has emerged in the broader scholarly community especially within the last three decades.<sup>91</sup> Oral traditionalists themselves have rarely ventured into the deeper waters where their sources and their analysis might converge with some of the preoccupations of oral historians. Oral historians have similarly been content to set anchor in an area of interest that has yet to map the vast territories where the written and oral, traditional and historical, indigenous and colonial worlds collide, converge, and diverge.

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<sup>91</sup> Studies of waka traditions, for instance, although essentially examinations of *kōrero tuku iho*, have focused largely on debates surrounding the migratory myth of the great fleet. Although such research includes oral testimony from informants, there has been little attention given to the methodological issues, theory, and discussions of form relevant to the sources themselves. See Rawiri Taonui, ‘Te Haerenga Waka: Polynesian Origins, Migration and Navigation’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Auckland, 1994), and Rawiri Taonui, ‘Ngā Tatai-Whakapapa: Dynamics in Māori oral tradition’ (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2005).

## Oral History

Oral history also shares with oral traditions connections to cultures whose stories were spoken, heard, and transmitted from one generation to the next. Herodotus, for instance, drew on first-hand accounts to interpret the Persian Wars, while Thucydides similarly recounted interviews from witnesses of the Peloponnesian conflicts. The place of local historians in maintaining the stories of those who were present has a long tradition in many cultures. For some, this role required intensive training in remembering and reciting information, while for others, the advent of script, the etching of tablature, and other visual tools aided the retaining of information from informants. Whether the recorded stories of the ancient Greeks, the scribed proverbial sayings of China's Zhou Dynasty (1122-256 BCE), or the *griot's* rote-learned transmission of genealogies in Africa, oral history has been practiced for many centuries.<sup>92</sup> This historical convergence with the study of oral traditions also extends to the prejudicial treatment of oral sources in the nineteenth century, where the scientific movement led by Ranke and others negatively influenced the place of oral evidence in historical scholarship.<sup>93</sup> Like the study of oral traditions, oral history survived this long period of exile from 'scientific' scholarship, assisted by a range of scholars insistent on using the eye-witness testimony of individuals who could tell them more about the events, people, emotions, and real life experiences than documentary evidence could. In the United States, for instance, as Rebecca Sharpless writes, 'some historians ... were never won over by the scientific approach':

Californian Hubert Howe Bancroft, for example, recognized that missing from his vast collection of books, journals, maps, and manuscripts on Western north America were the living memories of many of the participants in the development of California and the West. Beginning in the 1860s, Bancroft hired

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<sup>92</sup> See Rebecca Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', in *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira Press, 2007), pp. 9-10.

<sup>93</sup> See Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, 'Oral History', in *The Houses of History*, p. 230.

assistants to interview and create autobiographies of a diverse group of people living in the western part of the US. The resulting volumes of "Dictations" ranged from a few pages to a full five-volume memoir.<sup>94</sup>

Despite the growing disapproval of oral evidence amongst now 'professional' historians, the collecting and recording of life histories and other personal interviews continued in practice. By the mid 1930s, the introduction of The Federal Writers Project in the United States began to look more closely at oral histories, with a collection of life stories eventually produced by W.T. Couch in 1939.<sup>95</sup> Closer to home, the journalist and historian, James Cowan in *The New Zealand Wars*, published in 1922 and 1923, used extensively the oral accounts of surviving veterans from the nineteenth century conflicts between local Māori and Colonial British forces.<sup>96</sup> Cowan, considered by some as arguably New Zealand's first oral historian, enjoyed a strong relationship with both Māori and Pākehā communities.<sup>97</sup> As James Belich notes, although Cowan:

Was a product of the intensely Anglocentric, and Empire-worshipping, period in New Zealand's development .... He showed a real sympathy for the Maoris ... and Maori veterans trusted him enough to provide him with accounts of their experiences .... His primary objective [though] was to rehabilitate the 'frontier period' and 'the adventure teeming life of the pioneer colonists', as an exciting and instructive field of study for the young colonial patriot.<sup>98</sup>

Although interested in the use of oral evidence, Cowan, as Michael King writes, 'tended to view his elderly [Māori] informants as survivors from a pristine age, as men and women who exemplified the most worthy features of their culture, which

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<sup>94</sup> Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', p. 10.

<sup>95</sup> Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', p.11.

<sup>96</sup> James Cowan, *The New Zealand Wars The New Zealand Wars: a History of the Māori Campaigns and the Pioneering Period* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1922).

<sup>97</sup> Chris Hilliard, 'Island Histories, the Writing of New Zealand History 1920-1940' (Unpublished Masters thesis, Auckland University, 1997), pp. 38, 41-42.

<sup>98</sup> James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, p. 16. Cowan also wrote a number of other books dealing with folklore and folktales, but did not differentiate oral tradition from oral history.

were destined for extinction'.<sup>99</sup> Like those of his era concerned with the possible loss of Māori oral tradition, Cowan's use of oral testimony reflected a desire to preserve the past for future generations. For a budding nation still in its infancy, oral sources did not simply complement the existing and growing stocks of written and printed records available to historians, but in some instances provided the central material for historical examination itself. This was not necessarily the case in other parts of the world, where writing and print had more thoroughly replaced oral transmission as the key vehicle for maintaining and disseminating the past.

Those interested in capturing or preserving community and cultural traditions found oral history recordings immensely valuable. Graham Smith notes that 'in the 1950s, the School of Scottish Studies at Edinburgh University and the Welsh Folk Museum established recording programmes.' These 'folk life' collections, he writes, drew on 'the recording of minority groups, such as Gaelic speakers.'<sup>100</sup> Although much of this work centred on the collecting and study of local folklore, there were also other projects that focused specifically on the dialectal and linguistic features retained and evolving within varying regions and communities.<sup>101</sup> To this extent, the study of oral traditions fell nicely within the bounds of early oral history work, featuring in some of the first issues of the *Oral History* journal (originally produced in 1971).<sup>102</sup> However, the study of oral tradition was not always a matter of interviewing or listening to oral testimony or recordings. A departure in the way the sources themselves were not only constructed but interpreted soon exaggerated the distance

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<sup>99</sup> Michael King, *Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004), p. 370.

<sup>100</sup> Graham Smith argues that 'while Eric Cregeen proved an inspirational figure in Scotland in England it was the work of George Ewart Evans that provided an important and lasting contribution'. Graham Smith, 'The Making of Oral History' (online article).

<sup>101</sup> Smith notes for instance the work conducted at the School of English at the University of Leeds and the Centre for English Cultural Tradition at Sheffield. Graham Smith, 'The Making of Oral History' (online article).

<sup>102</sup> Oral history, as Smith writes, 'remains an important means of researching 'tradition', as exemplified by researchers such as Doc Rowe, *Living Memories* (London: Thames Television, 1988); and Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Poetry, Its Nature Significance and Social Context* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

between the exclusive study of an oral history and a study of songs, ballads, myths, chants, legends, and other histories increasingly retained within written archives and printed documentation.

Oral history for much of the twentieth century then remained for the most part an 'ill favoured' methodology in contrast with the work of mainstream historians, whose preoccupation with the written archives seemed at times to border on obsession.<sup>103</sup> Those who managed to shake off the archival dust and acclimatize to the brightness beyond the dimly lit rows of printed evidence seemed few and far between. However, with the advent of sound recording technology, new source materials soon appeared. Indeed, at the same time Couch had been collecting and writing on the life histories of his informants, Allan Nevins began his work in collecting the life stories of influential American figures in an attempt to breathe life into a discipline he had denounced as lacking energy.<sup>104</sup> Following on from Crouch's *These Are Our lives*, a selection from interviews conducted with 'ordinary southerners', Nevins set about establishing what many believe was the first oral history program in the United States, in an attempt to grow 'the mass of information' potentially available for American researchers and historians.<sup>105</sup> Nevins extensive collection of interviews with prominent businessmen and politicians were recorded initially in longhand, but soon moved to transcriptions with the advent of the first American made tape recorder in 1948.<sup>106</sup> This growing archive of oral recordings was facilitated by a substantial donation of \$1.5 million US from a friend and associate of Nevins for the

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<sup>103</sup> Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', p. 11.

<sup>104</sup> Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', p. 11.

<sup>105</sup> W. T. Couch, *These Are Our Lives* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1939); Allan Nevins, *The Gateway to History* (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1938).

<sup>106</sup> Modeled on the German Magnetophon, the American made tape recorders did not become widely available until several years later. Eric D. Daniel, C. Denis Mee, and Mark H. Clark, eds., *Magnetic Recording, The First 100 Years* (New York: Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, 1999).

advancement of historical studies at Columbia University shortly after World War II.<sup>107</sup>

In Britain, the growing collection of records available from the BBC were also utilized by researchers during the early to mid twentieth century, and by 1964 Charles Parker, together with Peggy Seeger and Ewan McCall, had produced eight *Radio Ballads*. As Graham Smith writes, 'these were based on long recordings with "ordinary people" recalling their experiences. Included were the stories of boxers, fishermen, migrants, miners and construction workers.'<sup>108</sup> For some time, oral history in Britain, according to Smith, focused on biographical narratives, the recollection of an event, movement, or a moment in the individual's life.<sup>109</sup> The value of oral history in amplifying the voices of not only the 'ordinary' individual, but the oppressed in society made it a highly useful methodology for the growing work of scholars in various fields of study throughout the twentieth century. In 1945, for instance, the American folklorist, B. A. Botkin, produced *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery*, in which he drew on the interviews of former slaves. These stories, as Botkin noted, allowed for vivid and personalised accounts that enabled a more acute understanding of what it meant to be a slave, to be free, to endure and feel as a human being.<sup>110</sup> In contrast to the testimonies of influential public figures like those featured in Nevin's work, these oral histories gave voice to those predominantly silenced and marginalised in mainstream historical scholarship. Indeed, by the 1960s, newly emerging fields such as Labour history and Feminist studies found a natural home for oral history as a key approach to finding new information and fresh perspectives often difficult to locate in written records.

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<sup>107</sup> Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', p. 12.

<sup>108</sup> Smith writes that 'the approach of combining recollections based on lengthy recordings with music would be taken up in the 1980s by Billy Kay for his BBC Radio Scotland series.' Graham Smith, 'Making Oral History' (Online Article).

<sup>109</sup> Graham Smith, Personal Communication, Auckland, (November 2008).

<sup>110</sup> B. A. Botkin, *Lay My Burden Down: a Folk-history of Slavery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945).

This 'revival' of oral history, as Anna Green and Kathleen Troup write, 'derived from a new generation of historians steeped in the politics of the New Left, civil rights and feminism.'<sup>111</sup> For many in the United Kingdom, a 'history from below', aided by the voices and testimonies of the British working class, provided sources for a new history that quite simply was absent from the surviving documentary evidence. Still, this newly created or newly acquired evidence remained a dubious pool of data for those who believed them to be unreliable and marred by personal subjectivity. Such sentiments, as Green and Troup write 'were expressed by Eric Hobsbawm in an essay originally written in 1985', in which he described oral history as 'a remarkably slippery medium for preserving fact.'<sup>112</sup> Despite these reservations, oral history, or rather the 'new' oral history, had by the late 1960s attracted attention from a broad array of groups, including those interested in the social sciences, the study of tradition, folklore, history, archivists, public broadcasters, librarians, and museum curators. The potential for oral history, then, as not only a methodology for researching the past but a vibrant representation of it was no doubt alluring to those who could choose to study solely its manufacture, analysis, dissemination, or the process as a whole. As the discipline evolved, the possibilities for its use expanded, ranging from studies of individual and collective memory, the production of life narratives, the expression of emotions such as humour, anger, and trauma, to writing about the equipment used by interviewers, ethical issues, and the various presentations of oral histories in multiple public spaces.

The establishing of several organizations and societies accompanied the resurgence of the 'new' oral history, and by the early 1970's the Oral History Society in Britain was founded and chaired initially by John Saville.<sup>113</sup> Oral History organisations had

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<sup>111</sup> Green and Troup, 'Oral History', in *The Houses of History*, p. 231.

<sup>112</sup> Green and Troup, 'Oral History', in *The Houses of History*, p. 230.

<sup>113</sup> In Graham Smith, 'The Making of Oral History' (Online Article).

emerged much earlier in the United States with the Regional Oral History Office created at University of California, Berkeley, in 1954. Other universities and institutions followed suit, and by the mid 1960s some believed that a critical mass of oral history work nationwide necessitated a gathering, and unification of practitioners and interested parties in the US. The 'National Colloquium on Oral History' in 1966, as it was originally known, in time became the Oral History Association (OHA) of America, officially chartered in 1967. Like its British counterpart, the American Association produced an annual journal, the *Oral History Review* from 1973. Together with its British equivalent, *Oral History*, these publications considered a wide variety of oral history topics from interviewing and transcription to specific projects in both countries. In June 1996, the International Oral History Association (IOHA) was formally constituted in Göteborg, Sweden. Its journal *Words and Silences/Palabras y Silencios* has been published since 1997.<sup>114</sup>

Closer to home, the Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA) was originally founded in 1978, while the National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) was eventually established in 1986, and was much slower to merge with the movements of its international counterparts. As Anna Green notes, oral history in New Zealand has been 'much less visible' in university history departments than overseas in part 'due to the way oral and written histories have been categorised in New Zealand historiography.' She writes:

In 1987 Judith Binney wrote an influential article drawing a clear distinction between European written histories and Māori oral tradition. She concluded that "the contradictions in what constitutes history – oral and written – cannot be resolved. We cannot translate other histories into our own. We can merely juxtapose them." This binary model has remained largely uncontested, though

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<sup>114</sup> Ron Grele's recent contribution can be accessed through the organizations website <http://www.iohanet.org/index.html>. Ron Grele, 'From the intimate Circle to Globalized Oral History', *Words and Silences/Palabras y Silencios*, vol. 4, no. 1 (November 2007/2008). He argues that 'The internationalization of the world of oral history, it strikes me, has had three phases, and is on the verge of a fourth.'



this kind of absolute distinction between different forms of history has since been undermined in contemporary historical theory.<sup>115</sup>

The contestation in New Zealand historiography surrounding the ownership and representation of the past, and particularly of oral history, is a topic rarely discussed in the local oral history literature. Like its predecessors in other parts of the world, the oral history movement in New Zealand shares similar interests in interview methods, transcribing, ethics, and more recently the processes involved in remembering and narrating the past. However, there remains a still unresolved tension in the New Zealand context as to the differences between the studies of oral tradition and oral history.

Megan Hutchings, for instance, argued that 'Oral history is not a branch of history, but may better be defined as a method of gathering evidence'.<sup>116</sup> Of oral tradition she writes: 'There is another category of oral evidence – oral tradition, which is the narratives and descriptions of people and events in the past that have been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. These are recollections from another person's lifetime rather than that of the informant.'<sup>117</sup> Hutchings' summation of the difference between oral history and oral tradition fails to account for local indigenous understandings of both forms of study, but also works off the premise that oral history is only about the narratives of 'living' informants or those one generation further back. Her emphasis on the methodological focus of oral history itself limits its connection, as she argues, to history itself, and reduces it to merely a process for the collecting of data. Hutchings' position on the differences in both oral tradition and oral history is similar to some of the other key writers in the area. On the international scene, one of the earlier commentators to write on the difference

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<sup>115</sup> Anna Green and Megan Hutching, eds., *Remembering, Writing Oral History* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), p. 4.

<sup>116</sup> Megan Hutching, *Talking History: a Short Guide to Oral History* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1993), p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> Hutching, *Talking History*, p. 2.

between oral history and oral tradition from an oral historian's perspective was Ron Grele, who suggested that oral traditions are themselves predominantly based on myth and collective memories that give 'cognitive orientation to communities'. In contrast, oral history he argues, is made up of 'accounts and narratives which only become created by the active invention of someone asking questions from an historical perspective'. For Grele, Vansina's work is not considered 'oral history', or historical, more than it is myth.<sup>118</sup> Writing on the matter in *Envelopes of Sound* in 1975, Grele argued that:

Myth with its utopian vision, its sacerdotal nature, its elements of authority in answer to ignorance, doubt or disbelief functions as a cohesive element in a society, in contrast to history, which because it explains the past in order to offer ways to change the future and serves as the basis of political philosophy, becomes an ideological tool to alter the social order. Thus while actual consequences follow from each view of the world, it is history in its most ideological form, which offers a plan for social action.<sup>119</sup>

This intriguing assessment of both myth and history, similar to the views of some scholars of oral tradition, notes a specific divergence in the way the past is remembered. Grele's emphasis on the interview and methodological aspects within an oral history approach has over time led some to believe that oral history is more a practice than it is a field of study in its own right. However, this has not been the consensus amongst most oral historians, who have written extensively on the topic of what oral history is or might be. As for Walter Ong and Jack Goody, the oral nature of the work itself has been a key factor in describing the area. Indeed, for many oral historians, the orality of the sources they use are believed to be a central part of how oral history is defined. Alessandro Portelli, for instance, in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and other Stories* stresses that 'what makes oral history, oral history, is the orality of

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<sup>118</sup> Grele's assertion regarding the categorical differences between oral history and oral tradition are briefly discussed in 'Oral Sources: Vansina and Beyond', a special issue of *Social Analysis, Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, 4 (1980), pp. 5-6.

<sup>119</sup> R. J. Grele, and Studs Terkel, eds., *Envelopes of Sound*, p. 139.

the sources.<sup>120</sup> In explaining 'What makes Oral History different', Portelli, writes that 'written and oral sources are not mutually exclusive. They have common as well as autonomous characteristics, and specific functions which only either one can fill (or which one set of sources fills better than the other). Therefore, they require different and specific interpretive instruments.'<sup>121</sup> On the validity of oral evidence Portelli also insists that:

Oral sources are credible but with a different credibility. The importance of oral testimony may not lie in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it. As imagination, symbolism, and desire emerge. Therefore there are no "false" oral sources.<sup>122</sup>

Unlike Grele, Portelli's more liberal evaluation of the potential within oral evidence, suggests a more interpretive analysis of the process as a whole, rather than a dismissal of oral sources based on their content.<sup>123</sup> To this extent, many oral historians have spent considerable time focusing on the methodology they utilize, one that differs markedly from the observational approach associated more commonly with anthropology. Writing about the authenticity of oral evidence in 1987, Trevor Lummis argued that oral historians generally employ a life narrative approach with the aim of gaining 'information about the past; in the biographical life history... information about a person's development; and in the sociological life history, to grasp the ways in which a particular person constructs and makes sense of her own life at a given moment.' Commenting on the difference between oral history and oral tradition, Lummis suggested that 'the term "oral tradition" is normally applied to the practice of those historians working on the history of non-literate

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<sup>120</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991).

<sup>121</sup> Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p. 46.

<sup>122</sup> Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p. 51.

<sup>123</sup> On this issue, he writes, 'origin and content are not sufficient to distinguish oral sources from the range of sources used by social history in general'. Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p. 47.

societies', while oral history, he claims, 'is a methodology, not a historical subfield such as political, economic or social history.'<sup>124</sup>

However, Lummis' definitions of both oral tradition and oral history are implicitly disputed in the writing of such authors as Ong, Goody and Henige, who all note the vibrant reality of oral traditions within literate societies.<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, the view of oral history as quite simply a methodological approach persisted for some time in the twentieth century, with many researchers content to simply undertake interviews with little thought given to the deeper interpretive potential. Up until the 1970s oral interviews were considered in much the same fashion as documentary data: as a 'source of factual evidence.'<sup>126</sup> That approach to interviewing and oral testimony was described by Michael Roper as 'oral history in the reconstructive mode.'<sup>127</sup> One of the most notable projects to emerge in this period was Paul Thomson's *The Edwardians*, in which over 500 interviews examined the inequalities and social worlds of a large cross section of British society.<sup>128</sup> The testimonies, based on a lengthy interview schedule, were explored for the factual details they might reveal, rather than the deeper meanings available in each narrative.

By the end of the 1970s, this focus on empirical reconstruction shifted, with a growing number of scholars becoming interested in the subjective realities and perspectives available within the interviewee's recollections. The change in direction, as Michael Roper notes, marked a turning point in the field which he describes as the

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<sup>124</sup> Trevor Lummis, *Listening to History: The Authenticity of Oral Evidence* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987), pp. 21-24.

<sup>125</sup> Their writing and arguments are mentioned earlier in this chapter.

<sup>126</sup> Green and Troup, 'Oral History', in *The Houses of History*, p. 231.

<sup>127</sup> Michael Roper, 'Oral History', in *The Contemporary History handbook*, edited by Brian Brivati, Julia Buxton, and Anthony Seldon (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1996), p. 346.

<sup>128</sup> Despite Thompson's focus on the empirical insights gained in the interviews, the legitimacy of oral history sources remained a dubious proposition for some historians who still questioned the problem of subjectivity in the individual's perspective. Paul Thompson, *The Edwardians: the Remaking of British Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975).

development of 'oral history in the interpretive mode.'<sup>129</sup> Much more than simply a methodology, oral history, as Anna Green contends, has grown rapidly as a field of study in its own right. She writes that 'during the past decade [the 1990s] oral historians have developed a number of interpretive theories about memory and subjectivity, and the narrative structures which provide the framework for oral stories about the past.'<sup>130</sup>

The growing analysis of the theoretical dimensions of oral history have contributed significantly to its emergence as a distinctive area in historical scholarship. As in many disciplines, oral historians were highly influenced by the work of scholars in other fields. In this regard, one of the most influential hypotheses taken up by oral historians has been that of the 'collective memory', a theory advanced by the French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who argued that individuals only remember as part of groups, and that all memories and subsequent testimonies are based on a collective consciousness or collective memory.<sup>131</sup> Halbwachs' writing on memory, originally outlined in 1925 and later set out in a more expansive study in 1945, were eventually translated into English and published in the early 1980s. His most influential work, *The Collective Memory*, highlighted the process in which individuals make sense of their own past, as a sophisticated interaction with the wider communities to which they belong. Halbwachs' theories remain relevant to oral history debates today, but have largely been critiqued as scholars question and explore the agency of narrators and the highly complex communities to which they belong. This focus on the subjective world of the interviewee was taken further in the writing of Alistair Thomson, whose *Anzac Memories*, originally published in 1994, posited the theory of 'composure': that is that individuals compose life narratives based on the predominant myths and discourses of their contemporary society, and

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<sup>129</sup> Roper, 'Oral History', p.347.

<sup>130</sup> Anna Green, and Kathleen Troup, eds., *The Houses of History*, p.231.

<sup>131</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*: translated from the French by Francis J Ditter, Jr., and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper and Row, 1980).

that help them to feel relatively comfortable with who they are and have been over the course of their lives.<sup>132</sup>

The expanding work on memory and subjectivity especially has been highlighted in writing concerned with narrative construction, myth, and personal agency. In this way, the weaknesses perceived by some scholars in oral testimony because of its subjective nature became instead new strengths, as oral historians embraced the nuanced realities that a more analytical interpretive analysis might yield. Nevertheless, doubts about the subjectivity of oral history remained a constant problem in various historical communities across the globe. Such skepticism within the Italian historical community was noted by Alessandro Portelli who argued that a disappointing collectivity of 'academics had sought to dismiss oral history before knowing what it was or how to use it'.<sup>133</sup> To this extent, the study of oral history and oral traditions have long been the victims of a similar distrust amongst various members of the mainstream historical community, who have failed to comprehend how their own subjectivities are present in the narratives they construct from conventional documentary materials.

Nevertheless, the value in listening to, recording, and enabling the voices and memories of oral informants has been a major strength in the writing on oral history. In addressing its value to history and historians, Michael Frisch asserts that oral history is 'a powerful tool for discovering, exploring, and evaluating the nature of the process of historical memory – how people make sense of their past, how they connect individual experience and its social context, how the past becomes part of the present, and how people use it to interpret their lives and the world around them.'<sup>134</sup> Similarly, in her influential essay, 'Work Ideology and Consensus Under

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<sup>132</sup> Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>133</sup> Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p. 46.

<sup>134</sup> Michael Frisch, quoted in Anna Green and Megan Hutching, *Remembering*, p. 3.

Italian Fascism', Luisa Passerini pointed out that the subjective accounts offered by interviewees provided the 'raw material' of oral history. This material, she writes, consists of 'expressions and representations of culture', and other forms of awareness 'such as the sense of identity' and 'consciousness of one's self'.<sup>135</sup> The empowering potential of this interpretive approach has yet to find its way into the literature on oral tradition, where myth and history have still to be reconciled in both the western academic tradition as well as the growing indigenous scholarship.

The significance of myth in oral history, however, has been a particular area of scholarly interest in more recent times, with scholars intrigued by the way in which myths are employed by narrators to reconstruct their lives and memories. Raphael Samuel, commenting on the importance of 'imaginative paradigms' in the process of remembering defined myth as 'a metaphor for the symbolic order, or for the relationship between the imaginary and the real'. He argues that 'for the personal life narrative as anywhere else... no statement made about one's past individually, is in any way innocent of ideology or of imaginative complexes'.<sup>136</sup> Together with Paul Thompson, Samuel in *The Myths We live By* contends further that, 'as soon as we recognize the value of the subjective in individual testimonies, we challenge the accepted categories of history', and the individuality of each story then 'ceases to be an awkward impediment to generalization, and becomes instead a vital document of the construction of consciousness.'<sup>137</sup> This re-evaluation of myth in reconstructing the past has an obvious and significant connection to oral traditions, which in most cases draw on myths to tell vital stories. However, a focused application of this position has not yet emerged within historical writing on Māori 'myth' and mātauranga in Aotearoa New Zealand. Nevertheless, the interpretive potential inherent within

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<sup>135</sup> Luisa Passerini, 'Work ideology and consensus under Italian Fascism' in *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 54.

<sup>136</sup> Raphael Samuel, 'Myth and History: a first Reading', *Oral History*, 16 (1988), p. 15.

<sup>137</sup> Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, eds., *The Myths we Live by* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 2.

community, national, and family myths have been the subject of writing by a small few, including Jane Moodie, whose doctoral thesis 'Family Myths in Oral History: the unsettled narratives of descendants of a missionary-settler family in New Zealand' explores the ways in which families transmit and maintain myths across generations.<sup>138</sup> The importance of family and intergenerational myth making was not a topic discussed at length in *The Myths We Live By*, but was pursued as by Daniel Bertraux and Paul Thompson in *Between Generations, Family Models, Myths and Memories* in which they argued that the family was the main channel for the transmission of myths and history, a first port of call for most individuals in negotiating their private and public memories.<sup>139</sup>

Alongside an examination of the use of myth in oral testimony, oral historians have also closely considered the form and structure of the narratives themselves. Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-Duchet's searching essay on 'Narrative Structures, Social Models, and Symbolic Representation in the Life Story' offered one such interpretive model, urging the listener to pay attention to key phrases, patterns, refrains and narrative models in the interview.<sup>140</sup> Focused specifically on the way women recounted their life stories, Chanfrault-Duchet posited three specific narratives models, which she argued were generally adopted by those she interviewed. These ranged between 'the epic' which she proposes 'reveals an identification with the values of the community', 'the romanesque' or 'the quest for authentic values in a degraded world', and 'the picaresque model', essentially 'an ironical and satirical position in relation to hegemonic values.'<sup>141</sup> In examining the ways in which

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<sup>138</sup> Jane Moodie, 'Family Myths in Oral History: the unsettled narratives of descendants of a missionary-settler family in New Zealand' (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2004).

<sup>139</sup> Daniel Bertaux and Paul Thompson, *Between Generations, Family Models, Myths and Memories*, with a new introduction by Paul Thompson (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, revised edition, 2005).

<sup>140</sup> Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-Duchet, 'Narrative Structures, Social Models, and Symbolic Representation in the Life Story', in *Women's Words, The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 77-92.

<sup>141</sup> Chanfrault-Duchet, 'Narrative Structures', p. 80.



memories are sequenced, stories structured, myths invoked, and refrains and key phrases organized within the life narrative, oral historians have shifted away from a simplistic regurgitation of the oral history as just a recording. This expanded interpretive interest within the field has led to further explorations of the exchange and creative synergies between narrator and listener, including the significance of the environment, literary devices at work in the life narrative retelling, the impact of photographs, family albums, humour in oral history, trauma in reliving past tensions and conflicts, and of course the ongoing psychological parameters surrounding the maintaining and dissemination of memories.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, the subjective realities of those who not only actively remember, but strategically forget and sometimes create false memories, has been one of the more recent phenomena explored in the writing of oral historians. For instance, in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, Alessandro Portelli explores how and why those he interviewed in a small working-class Italian city maintained faulty memories regarding the date and circumstances surrounding Trastulli's death. Luigi Trastulli, a local worker, was killed during demonstrations against Italy's decision to join NATO in 1949, but many locals maintained that he died in 1953 when local factory workers rioted in response to mass job losses and unjust dismissals. In the prevailing local memory, then, Trastulli's death was remembered as part of a working class revolt, when in fact he had died some four years earlier at the hands of local police in an unrelated incident. Portelli's searching examination in this study highlighted the need to understand oral history testimony as more than fact or fiction, but the product of specifically structured narratives and interwoven themes. This subjective frailty, once condemned by critics of oral history,

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<sup>142</sup> Graham Smith writes that 'in the 1980s insights were being drawn from across the disciplinary spectrum. This included history, from which oral historians adopted methods of testing the reliability and consistency of testimonies, as well as combining oral testimonies with other sources. But it also included; sociological purposive and representative sampling methods and theories about difference and relationships in interviews; social psychological ideas about life review and remembering; psychoanalytical understandings of unconscious desires present in testimonies; community publishing, with its record of enabling groups to produce and disseminate histories.' Graham Smith, 'The Making of Oral History' (Online Article).

thus became a strength able to provide fascinating insights to the way in which individuals and groups composed their memories.

The key place of memory and remembering in oral history remains an important thread that binds other areas within the field together, such as studies regarding trauma, identity, migrant experiences, gendered narratives, and intergenerational life stories. In the work of Thomson, Portelli, and Passerini, the careful negotiation of what one remembers is as much about what they forget. On this matter Paul Ricoeur writes that 'forgetting is experienced as an attack on the reliability of memory.' 'Memory' he argues 'defines itself, at least in the first instance, as a struggle against forgetting.'<sup>143</sup> what some conventional historians might see as a slippery medium for fact is for oral historians a rich reservoir for revealing the human mind, the individual's historical consciousness, and the ways in which memories and histories are retained and expressed over time. The value of this theoretical approach for those interested in the use of oral traditions has not yet been fully realized or explored in the literature, and remains an area still in its infancy in oral history itself.

Although some oral historians have shown interest in the oral histories of ethnic minorities and various indigenous communities, few have addressed the way indigenous groups think about oral history. 'Black history' and particularly 'Black labour' was explored in a 1980 edition of *Oral History*, in which much of the content concerned with the life narratives of migrants from West Indian communities and Pakistan.<sup>144</sup> In 1993, a special edition of *Oral History* on ethnicity and identity included writing about the experiences of Japanese women in Britain and gypsy oral

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<sup>143</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 413.

<sup>144</sup> The edition featured articles on West Indian migration by Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, West Indian communities in Brixton by Donald Hinds, Pakistani life histories in Manchester by Prina Werbner, and an overview of 'Black labour in Britain' by Harry Goulbourne, in 'Black history', special issue, *Oral History*, 8, no. 1 (1980), pp. 24-34. Migration as a topic in oral history has been largely taken up by South American scholars.

history in Serbia.<sup>145</sup> Despite the increasing number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) oral history projects, the focus of these studies, whether on migration or gendered experiences, rarely considered the ways the people themselves understood oral history.<sup>146</sup> Instead, the 'oral history' in these projects referred more to the methodology of interviewing rather than any detailed examination of the traditional methods they employed for orally transmitting their own histories.

Thus, the 'empowering' potential often positively aligned with the resurgence of oral history worked to give voice to previously silenced groups, yet has struggled to take stock of the significant research now available on the topics of resistance, revitalisation, and reclaiming that have become vital to the ways in which oppressed and marginalized groups make sense of their own worlds, including oral histories, traditions, and life narratives. One of the few exceptions has been the work of Julie Cruickshank, whose *Life lived Like a Story* not only amplifies the voices of Athapaskan and Tlingit women and their ancestors, but does so by enabling their understandings of oral history and tradition to take centre stage. Her attention to the 'culturally embedded stories' told and retold by her participants illustrated how each 'mobilize[d] traditional dimensions of their culture – in oral narratives, songs, names of places and people – to explain and interpret their experiences.'<sup>147</sup> Similarly, in *Narrating the Past*, Elizabeth Tonkin's mixture of anthropological, historical, and

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<sup>145</sup> Oral History Society, 'Ethnicity and National Identity' – Special Issue, *Oral History*, 21, no. 1 (1993); Shaheeda Hosein, "'Until death do us part": marriage, divorce and the Indian woman in Trinidad', *Oral History*, 30, no. 1 (2002); Susan K. Burton, 'Issues in cross-cultural interviewing: Japanese women in England', *Oral History*, 31, no. 1 (2003); Jelena Cvorovic, 'Gypsy oral history in Serbia: from poverty to culture', *Oral History*, 33, no. 1 (2005).

<sup>146</sup> Some of the 'BME' oral history projects, as Graham Smith reports, included funding from 'the Heritage Lottery Fund, such as the Black and Ethnic Minority Experience based in Wolverhampton, the Chinese Oral History Project in London, and members of the Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre who have recorded 150 interviews with people from the Indian sub-continent. Then there are longer established initiatives – some have sound archives going back to the 1980s – including the Bradford Heritage Recording Unit, The Birmingham Black Oral History Project Archive and the Leicester Oral History Archive.' Graham Smith, 'The Making of Oral History' (Online Article).

<sup>147</sup> Julie Cruickshank, *Life Lived Like a Story, Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), p. x.

linguistic approaches to the accounts of local Liberian narrators highlights the intense cultural and social intersections at work in the way the past is recounted from the indigenous perspective. These studies remain the two major examples of the way indigenous perceptions might be understood within the practice of oral history, and highlight the gaping chasm that still exists between the ongoing research in oral history and the increasing literature in indigenous research and historical scholarship. Indeed, the meaning of oral history for many indigenous historians is not the same as that espoused by oral historians. Of most immediate concern to many indigenous scholars is the legacy of control and oppression that has denigrated and subordinated our ways of telling and understanding the past in favour of the supposedly superior western practices that now dictate the way history and even oral history should be defined and applied to research.

This issue has been addressed by a large number of indigenous writers, including the Hawaiian historian Huanani Kay-Trask, who wrote that 'to know my history, I had to put away my books and return to the land... [and] learn the language'. In asserting the need to own our histories on our terms, she points out that 'our story remains unwritten. It rests within the culture, which is inseparable from the land. To know this is to know our history.'<sup>148</sup> Her overarching argument, like many others, emphasizes the need to understand indigenous, and 'colonized', histories not from the perspectives of the colonizers, but from within the living and breathing worlds of the colonized. Writing further on this topic, Linda Tuhiwai Smith has contested the idea that indigenous knowledge is simply 'primitive' and 'incorrect'. She argues that the reclaiming of history by indigenous people is an 'essential aspect of decolonization.'<sup>149</sup> This self determination or what some have called 'a reclaiming' of

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<sup>148</sup> Huanani Kay-Trask, 'From a Native Daughter', in *The American Indian and the Problem of History* (New York: Manchester University Press), pp.176, 178.

<sup>149</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, London & New York: Zed Books, 1999), pp. 29-30, 183.

history on our terms, is a powerful focus in the work of Māori and iwi scholars in Aotearoa New Zealand.<sup>150</sup> It rejects the idea that our history belongs to anyone other than ourselves, and in this process is highly skeptical of ‘outsiders’ and outside knowledge that purports to tell us what history is, what category our history falls into, and how we should understand the past.<sup>151</sup> For these reasons, indigenous scholars in Aotearoa have been cautious, and often resistant, of oral history as it is defined in the international literature.

Consequently, many indigenous scholars around the world, and particularly those here in Aotearoa, have largely neglected oral history advances in both theory and methodology because they are unsure how it relates to the work they do. This was certainly the case at an International Oral History Association (IOHA) Conference convened in Sydney Australia in 2006.<sup>152</sup> During a meeting, under the topic of ‘indigenous memory’, those indigenous scholars in attendance expressed concern that the oral history they understood was not quite the same as that envisioned by the Association as a whole. It became apparent during the course of this meeting that a study in oral tradition was not considered the same as a study in oral history. This discomfort highlighted an immediate disjuncture between the way indigenous peoples felt about oral history, and the way it has evolved and been understood at a global level.<sup>153</sup> Here in Aotearoa, few Māori researchers have undertaken studies in

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<sup>150</sup> The notion of ‘reclaiming’ is noted by Moana Jackson, ‘Research and Colonization of Māori Knowledge’, *He Pukenga Kōrero*, vol.4, no. 1 (1998), pp. 69-76.

<sup>151</sup> For further reading here see Tipene O’Reagan, ‘Who Owns the Past? Change in Māori Perceptions of the Past’, in *From the Beginning: The Archaeology of the Māori*, edited by John Wilson (Auckland: Penguin in association with New Zealand Historic Places Trust, 1987), pp. 141-45

<sup>152</sup> ‘Dancing With Memory: Oral History and its Audiences’, 14<sup>th</sup> International Oral History Association (IOHA) Conference, Sydney, Australia, 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> (July 2006).

<sup>153</sup> The decision to write this thesis is directly related to that meeting. For those who attended the meeting a call for more writing on the topic was recommended, and suggested as a doctoral thesis topic. I took up the challenge to write from my indigenous position on the way we understand oral tradition and oral history, and to map the way this perspective relates to the literature and conceptualisations of oral history and tradition on the international stage.

oral history similar to those now employed by oral historians overseas. Monty Soutar's interviews with members of the Māori Battalion are perhaps one of the closest examples of an 'oral history' study within a Māori context.<sup>154</sup> The methodological insights he has gained from this project reflect many of the same issues discussed by oral historians overseas, although he does not give reference to comparable studies elsewhere, which indicates the disconnection, even though it is not a deliberate one. This situation highlights the distance between oral history scholarship in other parts of the world and the oral history work that has taken place on our shores. One of the few writers to discuss oral history within Māori communities is Rachel Selby, whose book, *Still Being Punished*, draws on interviews with five Māori men and women, each of whom recount how in their generation they were punished at school for speaking Māori. On the topic of oral transmission, Selby laments the fact that we are 'losing the skill of memorizing and telling our stories which our grandparents told us.'<sup>155</sup> Her consideration of not only the oral history method itself but the topic of language loss and preservation amongst our own people is a striking example of how both oral history and oral tradition in Māori communities are closely aligned. Her interviews with former students from Queen Victoria Māori Girls School and her recent oral history work on the traditional practice of eeling amongst her own people are also powerful examples of 'oral history' within a local iwi community.<sup>156</sup> Together with Alison Laurie, Rachel Selby also co-edited *Māori and oral history: a collection*, one of the few texts in New Zealand to explore oral history from multiple Māori perspectives.<sup>157</sup> These exceptions apart, it

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<sup>154</sup> Monty Soutar, 'C Company Oral History Project', *Te Pouhere Kōrero* 3 (2009), pp. 9-22.

<sup>155</sup> Rachel Selby, *Still Being Punished* (Wellington: Huia, 1999), p. 2.

<sup>156</sup> Danny Keenan, 'The Past from the Paepae: Uses of the Past in Māori Oral History', *Oral History in New Zealand*, 12/13 (2000-2001), pp. 33-38; Mere Whaanga, 'Telling our Stories: hapu identity in waiata, pakiwaitara and visual arts', in *Māori and Oral History: a Collection*, edited by Rachel Selby and Alison Laurie (Wellington: National Oral History Association of New Zealand, 2005), pp. 23-27.

<sup>157</sup> Rachel Selby and Alison Laurie, eds., *Māori and Oral History: a Collection* (Wellington: National Oral History Association, 2005).

seems that oral history within Māori and iwi scholarship has some way to go before it intersects with, and draws more effectively on, global research in the area.

It has been suggested that oral history has only in recent times been 'revived' by the efforts of historians 'steeped in the politics of the 'New Left.'<sup>158</sup> Although scholars interested in civil rights and women's words have contributed immensely to the development of oral history research today, oral history has in fact been practiced and written about for much of the twentieth century. As a field of study oral history continues to be thought of predominantly as a methodology, or an approach, rather than an area of scholarly activity with sophisticated interpretive theories. Indeed, for much of the twentieth century the practice of oral history operated in what has been described as the 'reconstructive mode', but following the dynamic shifts in thinking during both the cultural and linguistic turns, oral history is now thought to be a much more 'interpretive' practice. By the 1980s, as Graham Smith points out:

Oral history was not just about describing a dead past. It was about using that past to shape the present. In doing so, oral historians were not only recognising their relationships with the subjects of their studies, but were frequently arguing that oral history should empower people who had been doubly marginalised in history *and* then in historiography. This was in part a rejection of the 'objectivity' so prized by university-based historians that it would still be a subject of debate for historians more than two decades later.<sup>159</sup>

An increasing awareness of the need to operate beyond a simplistic reconstructive approach in turn led to the implementation of more robust interpretive theories related to the way oral testimonies themselves are produced. This enabled greater consideration of not only what had been said, but how it had been narrated and transmitted. Subsequently, many oral historians now tend to recognize more fully than they once did how the use of myths, anecdotes, and narrative structures are essential parts of the way individuals remember and make sense of their past and

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<sup>158</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, *The Houses of History*, p. 230.

<sup>159</sup> Graham Smith cites Justin Champion, 'What are historians for?', *Historical Research*, 81, no. 211 (2008), 167–88.

present lives. Despite these advances, it is then curious that the place, and use, of oral traditions remains an area rarely discussed in the literature on oral history, aside from their obvious relevance of oral tradition to myth. This situation has been most frustrating for indigenous oral historians, who have often found their understandings of oral history to be worlds apart from their other international colleagues.

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that very few local, and indigenous, scholars in Aotearoa New Zealand are aware of the work of international oral historians, and have thus already formulated their own views about what oral history is. Of further concern in the New Zealand context is the prevailing view amongst many oral history practitioners that theory is more an impediment to their practice than a benefit. This has led some to comment on the nature of oral history as either the 'boring Shakespearian oral history' advanced by overzealous academics or the 'rock and roll oral history' practiced by those freed from theoretical oppression in the field.<sup>160</sup> Of the 'rock n roll' mentality Luisa Passerini has warned of the tendency by some oral historians 'to transform the writing of history into a form of populism'. Much of the oral history work in New Zealand appears to still be lingering in the reconstructive mode, and has some way to go before practitioners, particularly community based researchers, embrace the potential available in a more interpretive analytical approach. Moreover, in this climate it is all too easy to dismiss the underlying theories that underpin the methodologies they employ. In reference to this issue, Alison Laurie has pointed out that 'not every recorded interview is an oral history, and that despite this some researchers still believe that what they are doing

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<sup>160</sup> This was the view taken by some at the 2007 National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) Conference 28-29 July, Wellington. Smith also notes this contention between academic oral history, noting that for some time, 'oral history was not closely associated with mainstream academic history departments'. He suggests that this 'perhaps in part accounts for the eclectic variety of approaches taken by oral historians.'



is oral history.’<sup>161</sup> This apparent lack of understanding, confusion, apathy, or even resistance, can be attributed to the way the terms oral history and oral traditions in Aotearoa are often used interchangeably. However, despite these issues, there is very little in the oral history literature, both locally or internationally, that engages with the differences and overlaps that exist between the practice and study of either oral history or oral tradition.

### Summary

Even though there is a significant amount of literature available on the study and practice of oral tradition and oral history, scholars in each area have rarely engaged with the overlaps and connections that they share. In oral tradition, Jan Vansina’s seminal work, although still quoted and referenced, is now outdated by the weight of writing in both oral history and indigenous circles respectively. Oral traditionalists have tended to focus their work on the study of ballads, chants, poetry, and the oral formulaic theory. Likewise, oral historians have remained fixated on the processes and methodologies of interviewing, recording, archiving, and transcribing, but in more recent years leading scholars have turned their attention toward interpretive theories of analysis such as composure and collective memory. Despite the seemingly obvious similarities, the study of oral traditions and the study of oral histories have seldom converged, notwithstanding that for indigenous peoples, particularly Māori and iwi, the terms or categories have often been regarded as interchangeable.

In considering the literature in both oral history and the study of oral tradition, this chapter has only commented briefly on the significant work produced by indigenous scholars, who have often expressed a fervent desire to make sense of the past on their

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<sup>161</sup> Alison Laurie, ‘Manufacturing Silences: not every recorded interview is an oral history’, in *Māori and Oral History: a Collection*, edited by Rachel Selby and Alison Laurie (Wellington: National Oral History Association of New Zealand, 2005), p. 78.

own terms and therefore have been reluctant to have 'outsiders' define what they think is oral history, history, or oral tradition. Indeed, within Aotearoa New Zealand, the difference between oral history and oral tradition is not a subject of debate largely because most Māori and iwi scholars simply view them as one and the same thing. Nevertheless, historians here have worked closely with oral traditions because they are part of the fabric of our indigenous and national history. For Māori and iwi, oral traditions have always provided the central ingredients of our histories, but we have yet to fully explore their changing form, and the ways we might engage with them more fruitfully. Although oral interviewing has long been in use here, its deeper theoretical and methodological dimensions are still to find their way into general practice in Aotearoa. Moreover, the oral history approach that enabled a 'history from below' and helped amplify women's voices from the peripheries is well suited to Māori and iwi aspirations, whose histories themselves are centered within a world of orality. Despite this potential, the study and practice of oral history as it has evolved within the international literature has rarely been considered by Māori and iwi scholars for more than its methodological value. This apparent apathy is very likely a symptom of the ongoing resistance Māori and other indigenous scholars maintain in relation to western research, which has not only classified and subsumed our knowledge and history, but in the process has laid claim to 'oral history', even if we perceive it differently.

In both the literature on oral tradition and oral history, there remains a significant gap where indigenous understandings are barely discussed or are not recognised. Nevertheless, both fields offer a rich array of writing relevant to Māori and iwi histories, including discussion regarding individual memory, the oral formulaic theory, myth, narrative and 'historical consciousness'. Conversely, the insights that indigenous scholarship offers also has immense benefits to scholars of both oral history and oral tradition, particularly in expanding the limited definitions and perspectives maintained in their own disciplines. Although there is a very limited

literature that explores the intersections between oral history and oral traditions, an examination of the connections and departures between these fields has the potential to vastly improve historical scholarship in this country and abroad. Indeed, for Māori, our oral histories are often drawn from the deep oral traditions that remain vital to our sense of identity and aspirations for revitalization. Unearthing the already extensive literature in both fields only illuminates the still un-traversed territories relevant to both areas of study.

## Chapter Four: 'Kōrero Tuku Iho' as Oral History and Tradition

'Whakatete mai ko Hikurangi'  
Thrusting upwards is Hikurangi<sup>1</sup>

When Maui hauled in his great fish, our narratives assert that Hikurangi was the first point to emerge from the ocean depths. This event is commemorated in our songs and stories, and serves as a political statement that affirms our indigeneity. For Ngāti Porou, this is kōrero tuku iho: oral history and tradition.<sup>2</sup> Of kōrero tuku iho Bradford Haami writes that:

The traditional Māori world was an oral culture. Language and memory (aided by mnemonic devices) were used by pre-literate Māori to preserve and communicate information and knowledge. Such a world reproduces its culture by embodying memories in words and deeds; "the mind through the memory carries culture from generation to generation".... The words and compositions of revered ancestors were sacred, and had great power and validity. They were "kōrero tuku iho" ("words handed down").<sup>3</sup>

The orality of kōrero tuku iho is implied here, yet with the advent of writing and other technologies, the 'words' have found additional forms in new modes of expression that have modified and enhanced them.<sup>4</sup> Thus, for Ngāti Porou, kōrero tuku iho is not simply a matter of speaking or hearing, but reading and writing: it is an artform. Despite these variations, the orality of our histories and traditions

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<sup>1</sup> These lines are taken from the haka 'Whakarongo ake ki te hira waka a Maui/Hearken to the faint call of the voice of Maui'. It refers to the emergence of mount Hikurangi from the ocean depths, and the moment at which it captured Maui's canoe Nukutaimemeha. Tamati Reedy, 'Ngāti Porou', *Māori Peoples of New Zealand, Ngā iwi o Aotearoa* (Wellington: Bateman, 2006), p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> 'Kōrero tuku iho' here literally means to pass on words and stories.

<sup>3</sup> Bradford Haami, *He Putea Whakairo: Māori and the Written Word* (Wellington: Huia/Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2004), p. 15. The quote that Haami refers to here is from Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p. xi.

<sup>4</sup> Timoti Karetu writes that once our 'ancestors mastered the art of writing' they became 'prolific correspondents', and that much of their early writing was based on 'conventions' developed from the etiquette and protocol of the marae and formal speeches (or whaikōrero). See Timoti Karetu, 'Māori Print Culture; the News Papers', in *Rere Atu Taku Manu! Discovering History, Language, and Politics in the Māori Language Newspapers*, edited by Jenifer Curnow, Ngapare Hopa, and Jane McRae (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002), p. 1.

continue to be emphasised. Why is this? Why is the oral so significant when our *kōrero tuku iho* is so multifaceted and diverse? Indeed, when we speak of *kōrero tuku iho*, does it bear any resemblance with the sources used by oral historians? Are our understandings of the form of oral tradition similar to that of the anthropologist, folklorist, and oral traditionalists? This chapter explores the various ways in which oral histories and oral traditions have been defined by Ngāti Porou people, and the extent to which these views are shared by oral traditionalists and oral historians. It focuses specifically on the form of an oral tradition and/or oral history, and with specific reference to the interviews undertaken in this study, compares the different and similar ways in which these sources are conceptualised and understood by all three groups of scholars.

## **Kōrero tuku iho as Ownership**

For Ngāti Porou the defining of oral history and oral tradition is a matter of power and liberation as much as it is a process of revitalisation and preservation.<sup>5</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith has pointed out that for many indigenous peoples the reclaiming of history 'is an important aspect of decolonization.' She writes that 'there are numerous oral histories which tell of what it means, what if it feels like, to be present while your history is erased before your eyes, dismissed as irrelevant, ignored or rendered as the lunatic ravings of drunken old people.'<sup>6</sup> Taking ownership of the past, or what oral history is, and what oral tradition might be, was a common theme

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<sup>5</sup> Privileging our definitions of oral history and tradition allows us to reclaim the past using our epistemological frames of reference, rather than having them provided for us by people who do not understand our world. This is an issue addressed by other indigenous scholars also. See for instance Huanani-Kay Trask, who writes 'If it is truly our history Western historians desire to know, they must put down their books and take up our practices.' In Huanani-Kay Trask, 'From a Native Daughter', in *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, edited by Calvin Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 178.

<sup>6</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, London & New York: University of Otago Press/Zed Books, 1999), pp. 29; 30. Linda's words have even more resonance for us, not only because of the fact that she is Ngāti Porou, but because she is viewed as one of our role models and leaders, particularly for those who work in the academic arena.

in many of the interviews. One of our pakeke (elders), Apirana Mahuika, had this to say about oral tradition:

It is Ngāti Porou talking about Ngāti Porou. It is not anybody else talking about us. It is not about us writing about ourselves. It is about us talking about ourselves: that is oral tradition. It is about us singing about ourselves in terms of ngā mōteatea and so on, because our mōteatea is part of our history. It is about us doing the haka about ourselves. It is not us being written about by other people. That is what I define as oral. It's us, e kōrero ana mo tātou anō (talking about ourselves). Kaore e noho ma tētahi kē e tuhituhi ngā kōrero mo tātou (it is not about others writing about us). Kaore e noho ma tētahi kē e kōrero ngā kōrero mo tātou (it is not about others talking about us). In terms of this I don't expect a Ngā Puhī to come along and talk about Ngāti Porou, in the same way he doesn't want me to go there and talk about Ngā Puhī. I can talk about my experiences with Ngā Puhī, but that is totally different to Ngāti Porou talking about himself or herself.<sup>7</sup>

Ownership here is embodied in the unbroken form of 'oral' communication that is kept and maintained by our people on our terms. Although this is an important aspect of kōrero tuku iho to Ngāti Porou, the intergenerational issue is considered one of the key indicators of difference between those in the international arena who study oral traditions and oral histories. Some oral historians, for instance, consider oral traditions a different 'category of oral evidence' precisely because they 'have been handed down by word of mouth' beyond the lifetime of their informants.<sup>8</sup> This was also the prevailing view maintained by Jan Vansina, who considered oral history a type of 'immediate history', different to oral traditions which he argued were no longer contemporary.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, oral history for our people was always seen to be recurring in the present, thus traditions were not viewed as something beyond the lifetime of a person, but inextricably connected to their contemporary worlds. The manipulation and regurgitation of our kōrero tuku iho was seen as an

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<sup>7</sup> Apirana Tūahae Mahuika, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (7<sup>th</sup> July 2009), Rec. 3, 8.30 – 9.40. I interviewed Api on five different occasions, during which he asked me to ask him specific questions related to the thesis. His is one of only a few interviews that is not a life history.

<sup>8</sup> Megan Hutching, *Talking History: a Short Guide to Oral History* (Auckland: Bridget Williams Books, 1993), p.2.

<sup>9</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 12-13.

entirely acceptable way to envision the form and process of oral history and tradition. Indeed, Derek Lardelli, one of our carvers and artists, found little difficulty with the fact that our oral traditions had 'been tampered with' or 'played with' across generations. This process, he argued, was normal for a 'people who are deeply rooted in their own culture ... [because] it's been negotiated so that it survives ... it will always survive but it will reinvent itself in another form.'<sup>10</sup>

This 'negotiation' has an underlying purpose, at once an issue of survival and revitalization it is also highly political and related to power. The fluid nature of what the interviewees considered 'oral' in oral history or tradition allowed for, and even expected, adaption, so long as it is managed by those who are proficient in the culture. Conversely, oral historians and oral traditionalists have tended to favour a far more strict adherence to the 'oral' form and nature of their sources and practice. Alessandro Portelli, for instance, writes that 'in the search for a distinguishing factor we must turn in the first place to the form', which for oral historians is distinctively oral despite the use of transcriptions.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, those who have worked with oral traditions have emphasised the notion that their sources are 'verbal messages' or 'oral statements', which distinguishes them from written messages.<sup>12</sup>

In defining the form as specifically oral, there is a danger of reducing the text and the voice to an unhelpful dichotomy, where orality and literature are polarised rather than complimentary. The fluidity and adaptability of *kōrero tuku iho*, for some of the interviewees, is seen as necessary to the survival and autonomy of a people who have considered writing a tool of colonisation, yet vital to liberation and resistance.

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<sup>10</sup> Derek Lardelli, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui a Kiwa (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 13.53 – 14.06.

<sup>11</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York, 1991), p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> Vansina concedes that this is also indicative of oral history, but that oral traditions are different because they move beyond the contemporary life of the oral history informant. Furthermore, he argues that oral traditions are not just about 'the past' or just narratives: a point that he appears to imply is yet another differentiation between oral traditions and oral history. Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, pp. 27-28.

However, for others like Api, the intimacy and seeming immediacy of orality more adequately enables ownership because the authors of books are not always present when their words are delivered, and thus appear less accountable than their oral counterparts. Moreover, the oral dissemination as it is understood in *kōrero tuku iho* is predominantly based on genealogical connections, which in theory ensure that the listener is immersed in the culture and is then able to interpret the oral history and tradition appropriately. On this issue, Api was resolute in his condemnation:

Again you will find that people who are not Māori have a propensity to interpret what for us is a fact by calling it a myth. For example, they refer to Maui as a mythical character. For us, as Ngāti Porou, Maui is an ancestor, to which we all have a whakapapa to Maui Tikitiki-a-Taranga. Some people would say “you know, Māori are reifying this person.” But the reality for us is that such is the skill and ability of this person that it is almost impossible to say that Maui is just something else.<sup>13</sup>

Alongside the binary of the voice and the text is tradition and history, which have been frequently juxtaposed as unreliable or authentic, the imaginary and the real.<sup>14</sup> *Kōrero tuku iho*, to Api, is closer to ‘history’ because he is aware that oral traditions have quickly been reduced to fiction predominantly by non-Māori scholars.<sup>15</sup> However, it is not always the ‘outsiders’ who have presented *kōrero tuku iho* as myth.<sup>16</sup> In *Ngā Pikituroa o Ngāi Tahu; The Oral Traditions of Ngāi Tahu* Rawiri Te Maire Tau examines oral tradition on a continuum between myth and history, placing Maui in the category of myth because he is considered to have ‘super-human

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<sup>13</sup> Api Mahuika, 00.55 – 1.51.

<sup>14</sup> Vansina argues for the validity of oral traditions, but only in as much as they could be verified in Western historical tradition, Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: a Study in Historical Methodology* (New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction, 2006, originally published in English in 1965), p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> There are multiple examples of this from the nineteenth century to more recent publications. See for instance, George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient traditional History of the New Zealand Race, as furnished by their Priests and their Chiefs* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1956), Rev. Richard Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, New Zealand and its inhabitants* (London: Wertheim and Macintosh, 1855), and more recently A.H Reed, *Myths and Legends of Polynesia Illustrated by Roger Hart* (Wellington: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1974).

<sup>16</sup> ‘Outsiders’ in this sense are best described in *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 137.



powers' and communicates directly with the gods.<sup>17</sup> This adversarial division between history and myth has a bearing on the way we might consider not just orality and the text, but oral 'history' and oral 'tradition.' Like *kōrero tuku iho*, the form of oral history and oral traditions are similarly defined in assertions of ownership. These definitions accentuate a dualistic relationship between the written and the oral, fiction and fact, history and myth, or tradition. The truth is, they are not as mutually exclusive or oppositional as they first appear.

### **Kōrero tuku iho as the Living World**

More than simply a phenomenon to be heard, the forms of oral history and traditions in the lives of those interviewed in this study took shape in a variety of ways. These included formal speeches, private discussions and accidental eavesdropping, but were also observed in daily chores, remembered in the repetition of ritual, and reiterated and transmitted in the carvings and aesthetics of tribal meeting-houses and dining rooms. Often, these spaces dictated the types of *kōrero* recounted by narrators and determined the form as a direct result of the occasion, the protocols, audience and the setting. For the majority of the interviewees, these physical spaces conveyed histories, reflected and reproduced traditions, and were living environments and embodiments of their ancestors and *kōrero tuku iho*.

The marae, according to most of the interviewees, was the most potent site to see, hear, and experience *kōrero tuku iho* in action. For some, it was considered a 'sacred place': 'We never wandered on there, but I remember when we were little we used to play down there cause there was a lot of undergrowth and fruit trees there, we used to sneak down.'<sup>18</sup> Morehu Te Maro remembered that it 'was always a curiosity

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<sup>17</sup> Rawiri Te Maire Tau, *Ngā Pikituroa o Ngāi Tahu: the Oral Traditions of Ngāi Tahu* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003), pp. 18-19.

<sup>18</sup> Maria Whitehead, *Oral History Interview*, Tologa Bay (11<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 9.39 – 11.14.

for people - what goes on at the marae, but they were very very strict. We were allowed there for a period of time, but when the pressures on them you go home.'<sup>19</sup> Others, like Kura Tibble, had different memories of the place of children on the marae: 'Growing up here, our life always revolved around the marae, cause in those days, nanny and nampa were always at the marae... during that time there was a lot of activity going on.'<sup>20</sup> For some of the interviewees in the generation after Kura, the communal nature of the marae was something they associated with their own family homes, like Riria Tautau-Grant, who recalled: 'Our house was a marae, that's the way we used it.'<sup>21</sup> The marae as a place where oral histories could be heard and learnt was emphasised by Iritana Tawhiwhirangi:

Anything, if it was tangi, or a birthday, or a hui about anything, we were always down there, so even though we were hovering around on the fringes of what was going on you understand it, and whaikōrero and waiata, you picked that up, and so there was a lot of learning that went on.<sup>22</sup>

Oral history and traditions in these spaces were heard and experienced, its form transmitted in living contexts, where the performance weaved together the ceremonial cries of welcome to visitors (*karanga*), the art of formal speeches (*whaikōrero*), and the singing of ancient songs (*mōteatea*). Here the form is aural and physical, seen in body movement, traditional gestures, and facial expressions, where intonation, rhythm and silence are displayed and seen. The wealth of oral transmission here is layered and living, but perhaps the most significant aspect of the marae is its aesthetics, its fully carved meeting houses, walls adorned with carvings, photographs, intricate patterns, weavings, and other visual stimulants.

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<sup>19</sup> Morehu Te Maro, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (13<sup>th</sup> December 2007), Rec Two 2.22 – 3.05.

<sup>20</sup> Kura Unuhia Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tikitiki (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 6.21 – 7.06.

<sup>21</sup> Riria Tautau-Grant, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (17<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 6.08 – 6.31.

<sup>22</sup> Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, *Oral History Interview*, Wairarapa (24<sup>th</sup> February 2008), 15.46 – 16.15.

In reference to the Ngāti Porou meeting houses, Te Pākaka Tawhai argues that they are imbued with ‘kōrero tahito’ (ancient histories) that give ‘meaning to our lives by narration or through the medium of the wharenuī.’<sup>23</sup> He contends that within the artwork of the wharenuī exist messages that ‘lie too deep for verbal expressions.’<sup>24</sup> Of the lessons to be learnt and the kōrero to be told in this setting, Anaru Kupenga had this to say:

They could not be measured on the same level as that of an ordinary house or meeting house, no, every house had a purpose to live for and they were carved beautifully to speak of all its whakapapa, to speak and talk about the coming of one ancestor after the other, described by the carvings, the year they came would be beautifully carved, the time they came would be carved into the main carvings. Everything was well recorded in a time and place. So yes, they were living monuments and they’re still alive today, and practiced as such from that day to this day. It is Pākehā methodology that has removed the Māori from understanding who and what he is, what those things represent and they’re depth.<sup>25</sup>

As Anaru stresses here, the form of oral histories and traditions in the whare tipuna is considered living and breathing because they ‘speak’ and tell stories, and are personifications of our ancestors. Despite this popular and romantic view of the environment, the reality is that without people to interpret and mediate them, they are more visual sources than they are oral. The histories of many Ngāti Porou houses have been recorded in print, but the nuances in the oral traditions and oral histories have largely remained in the memories of individuals, like Turuhira Tatare, who recounted this story about the shifting of the ancestral house, Putaanga, to Tawata:<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Te Pākaka Tawhai, ‘He Tipuna Wharenuī o te Rohe o Uepohatu’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, Massey University, 1978), p. 122. Te Pākaka is a descendent of Uepohatu, Umuariki, and Porourangi. These ancestors are connected. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 4, 14, 15, pp. 355, 366, 367.

<sup>24</sup> Tawhai, ‘He Tipuna Wharenuī o te Rohe o Uepohatu’, p. 121.

<sup>25</sup> Anaru Kupenga, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (9<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 17.10 – 19.10.

<sup>26</sup> Aside from Te Pākaka Tawhai’s thesis written in 1978, there are other studies such as D. Simmon, *Meeting Houses of Ngāti Porou o te Tairāwhiti* (Auckland: Reed, 2006), a study originally undertaken in the seventies, and more recently, Ngārino Ellis, ‘A Whakapapa of Tradition: Ngāti Porou Carving 1830-1930’ (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, forthcoming 2011).

Putanga used to be across the river towards the hills, and they never had really a proper dining hall. They had a meeting house which was Putanga, open at both ends. Where have you seen a marae with a doorway at the back and a doorway at the front, well that was Putanga. And what happened was, I think they had a beehive, or wasps, and somebody went to burn it and burnt the whole meeting house. And so nothing was shifted from there to Putanga's present site. They just put up that building to remember Putanga, but I don't think anything from the old Putanga was transferred because it's really standing on Tawata land – it's not Putanga, but I think they're going to call that Putanga where we said "Why wasn't Putanga built right next to Te Rahui o Kehu?", eh that big empty paddock there, so we can have big functions.<sup>27</sup>

According to nanny Turuhira, the whareniui was never shifted, but just rebuilt. This history is not found in the literature, but in the memories and voices of those who retain the kōrero. The orality of these sources then is conveyed to the listener by those who have the mātauranga (knowledge). This is a contentious implication for some of our own people, who would denounce a description of our carvings and whareniui as inanimate, inaudible, and seemingly dead objects. Indeed, for many, these are sites of history, living environments that speak to our perspectives of the past.<sup>28</sup>

The tendency for our people to see whare tipuna and whakairo (carvings) as oral sources likely stems from the belief that they are 'living' entities that carry the mauri (life force) of the ancestors they represent. Expanding on the function of whakairo, particularly those carvings in, and on, the meeting house, Anaru Kupenga remarked:

The Māori use these traditional carved monuments as memorial stones, as books to relate perhaps a thousand words, perhaps ten thousand words. Those were the physical aids, again they used the resources available wherever they were, more importantly in those carvings.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Turuhira Tatare, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui a Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 26.17 – 27.19. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 9, 10, pp. 361, 362.

<sup>28</sup> Mere Whaanga, for instance, writes that 'we tell our important stories in many art forms, - in mōteatea or waiata of various types, through the carving and tukutuku that adorn the whareniui.' Mere Whaanga, 'Telling our Stories: Hapu Identity in Waiata, Pakiwaitara and Visual Arts', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 15 (2003), p. 8.

<sup>29</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 13.39 -14.16.

Oral histories and traditions that are displayed in the meeting house, as Anaru suggests, can function like 'books.' This, in his view, does not dilute their 'orality', but enhances it. His perspective, one that was expressed by many other interviewees, shares some vague parallels to the notion of 'oral literature' that has been espoused by classicists like Agathe Thornton, who writes that 'the most important aspect of Māori literature is that it is oral literature written down for the first time.'<sup>30</sup> To an extent this is also the form of carvings. Indeed, if their creation is considered unique they too are always a 'first' because they are regurgitations of both the oral and written transmissions retold from the artist's consciousness and memory.<sup>31</sup> They are derived from *kōrero tuku iho* in print and voice, but to think of them as 'oral literatures' imagines texts, letters, and conventions that are not the same in their texture, colours, and shape.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, their fluidity is perhaps best explained by Derek Lardelli, who offered this deeply philosophical and fascinating exposition on the topic:

And so an iro does something – a maggot - a maggot does something. It has a role to play. Ka haramai te ngaro (along comes the fly), ka tau mai ki runga i te tupapaku (and lands on the cadavare), miti ranei (or the meat), miti pirau (rotten meat), koko ranei (or koko- rotten). Katahi mahi (it begins its work), ko ana mahi ka whānau mai ko te iro (its job is to lay its egg, to give birth to the maggot). Ko te mahi a te iro nei (then the maggot does its job). Kei whiwhi haere nei (it is selective). Ka ngaungau haere nei ... i ana mahi (it eats away – that is its work)... and you can see it happening on the joints. It eats, it moves in a circular motion to eat that period out – “period of ira” – and it's removing the negative. So “whaka-iro” is the same process, you dig into wood and your removing a

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<sup>30</sup> Agathe Thornton, *Māori Oral Literature as Seen by a Classicist* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1987), p. 10.

<sup>31</sup> In other words, carvings are always a 'first' because no two are exactly the same. Nevertheless, the artists produce a type of oral 'literature' because they have a literate mindset. This is not possible for purely oral cultures to whom literature would be anachronistic in the transformation from the oral to the physical (visual).

<sup>32</sup> The problem of an oral 'literature' is addressed by Jack Goody, who prefers 'standardised oral forms' (genres). He argues that 'literature' is problematic because it derives from letters and alphabetic written concepts, which are anachronistic in purely oral societies. This, of course, is not the case for Māori – at least the carvers of modern *whare tipuna* – who have all been exposed to literature, and therefore are able to make assumptions about the 'literary equivalent' they might visualise in their work. Jack Goody, *Myth, Ritual, and the Oral* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 41-42.

negative, and you're creating a positive, which is the tipuna. And that's what tipu means, it grows out of that. It grows out of the essence of the wood. So you're connecting it back to the wood. And that's an oral tradition. He aha tenei mea te whakairo? (what is this thing we know as whakairo?). He tangata mohio ki te whakairo i te kupu (A person who knows how to carve out words), whakairo i te rakau (to carve wood), whakairo whare (carve houses), te hinengaro (and the mind). The word goes to all aspects of language delivery.<sup>33</sup>

The essence of the kōrero tuku iho 'grows out' of its original form (which was oral), thus in the process of revisiting we are inscribing and adding to it, growing it in various ways. This is, as Derek alludes to, the application of oral tradition to 'all aspects of language delivery.' In other words, our kōrero tuku iho can be expressed and carved out in multiple shapes, from its aural origins to regurgitations in the same form, or new and enhanced versions in visual and other forms. Nevertheless, in each instance, the whakairo tells a story, and that story reflects a certain style or perspective, as Apirana Mahuika explains:

When I talk about carving to us, I talk about Pine's style. But if I talk about Pine Taiapa's style I will talk about his style and give all sorts of reasons why his style is easily detectable, and similarly with John's (John Taiapa). And the story in these two carvings was that uncle Pine carved this massive figure, and the man's penis was huge cause that's uncle Pine. And then on the other side, John knew that his brother was carving this, and so carved the woman's private part. So that the two can actually come together, and one was female and one was male, and they were talking about a whole story, but one preferred to talk about this. Does that mean to say that the meaning was less significant than the other? No, it wasn't. So, if you have a look at the carving, the two of them complimented each other. And so when the Māori tells a story, it may concentrate on this, but what is not said is the complimentary aspect to the rest of the context wherein most of the story is told.<sup>34</sup>

Pine Taiapa and his brother John, as Api points out, have different styles, but in their work strive to compliment what already exists, to add to and grow it as Derek alluded to earlier. The form of the kōrero tuku iho here is woven by other threads and layers, like a community of memories that speaks to each other and weaves in

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<sup>33</sup> Derek Lardelli, 25.58 – 27.05.

<sup>34</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec Three, 5.08 – 8.16.

and out, thus enabling a multifaceted display of the past. Perhaps a closer example of this process can be seen in tukutuku, decorative wall panels, which were traditionally made by stitching together a latticework of vertically and horizontally placed dehydrated stems from various plants such as the kākaka, toetoe grass, kākaho, or even the more solid woods such as rimu or tōtara. This was a practice that Jenny Donaldson remembers in her time on the marae: ‘Part of my life was growing up at Putaanga with my nan learning to tukutuku.... I did the back and he did the front, and then he would say “Moko, hara mai, hara mai, titiro (granddaughter, come here, come here, and watch)”, and he would explain what it was he was doing.’<sup>35</sup> This weaving together offers a useful metaphor to think about the form of oral tradition and oral history: this is that they overlap, are interlaced, and at moments, are definable in their pattern of orality, but are more complimentary than they are antagonistic or hostile. ‘Kōrero tuku iho as the living world’ operates on the notion that orality is not a static or fossilised phenomenon, but dynamic and evolving in form. This is vital to a more nuanced understanding of oral history and tradition, because as Alessandro Portelli suggests an oral approach that is more ‘additive and paratactic’ assists us in appreciating the notion that new forms do not remove the oral, but add to, and modify it.<sup>36</sup> For Ngāti Porou, these adaptations can be heard, seen, and experienced in ‘living’ environments that weave together multiple forms that are considered oral histories and traditions.

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<sup>35</sup> Jenny Donaldson, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (18<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 4.00 – 4.47. It is common in Ngāti Porou to refer to both male and female grandparents, and sometimes others of their generation as ‘nan’ or nanny. Here, Jenny is speaking about a male relative.

<sup>36</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Text and The Voice: Writing, Speaking and Democracy in American Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 5.

## Kōrero Tuku iho 'Caught' in Osmosis

Despite the fact that each interviewee expressed their thoughts in a life history recording, when they spoke about the form of oral histories, they tended to refer to the process of 'catching' the kōrero tuku iho. One of those was Tui Marino, who remembered: 'I was never told, do it like this, do it like that, I just knew how to do it.... and I suppose that's how you kind of catch it, rather than taught it. We weren't actually taught, but definitely caught a few things in terms of the meaning and the value.'<sup>37</sup> The idea of catching might be more familiar to anthropologists, whose methodologies resonate in the processes of observing hailed in Clifford Geertz's well known phrase of 'thick description.'<sup>38</sup> 'Catching' the kōrero, as others implied took place in a process of osmosis, where the oral sources were not singular or easily defineable, but multiple. Reminiscing about his upbringing, Herewini Parata recalled 'they [the old people] sung mōteatea and the whakapapa. All those things went together. And I suppose it's learning by osmosis.... You hear that in your mind.'<sup>39</sup> Likewise, when asked how she learnt the song 'Paikea', Materoa Collins recalled 'it was just assimilation through the marae, it was osmosis, just learning by observing sort of thing. I just don't remember not knowing it.'<sup>40</sup>

The elusive nature of the form of oral tradition or history, for some of the interviewees, seemed to hang in the air, as if it could be absorbed like a scent left lingering on your skin or clothing. At a deeper level it was considered simply a matter of observation, attunement, and listening. Indeed, catching the kōrero, as

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<sup>37</sup> Tui Marino, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui a Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> December 2008), 20.23 – 20.59.

<sup>38</sup> Geertz theory of 'thick description' invites researchers to pay closer attention to the cultural layers evident in what they observe and experience. See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures, selected essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>39</sup> Herewini Parata, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui a Kiwa (26<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 28.08 – 28.30.

<sup>40</sup> Materoa Collins and Tiawhe Musson, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (10<sup>th</sup> July 2008), Rec Two, 25.50 – 26.07.



Iritana Tawhiwhirangi explained, required an attentive ear: 'today as we talk about teaching te reo, it wasn't taught to us, we caught it, we heard it.'<sup>41</sup> Her emphasis on the language and teaching is reflective of a lifetime working in the field of Māori language revitalisation. The form, as she and others remember, is distinctively oral, with access granted to those prepared to listen and work, as Kura Tibble recounts:

No, they never talked to us about the history and things like that, we just grown up and hear it being spoken and that's how we learnt it. Like our own tikanga eh, it's just part of us. We just learnt it. You know, the children play around and we knew that you don't go and play on the paepae, when you have visitors on the paepae, on the marae atea I mean.... We knew as children, and we respected all that.<sup>42</sup>

The form then of the oral traditions and histories was more than simply a source to be heard, but an experience to be had. In the 'doing' of chores, the cooking of food, the preparation of beds, mattresses, and the collecting of wood, oral histories and traditions were absorbed, remembered in the scent of specific aromas in the kauta and beyond. The passing of oral histories, particularly the rationale inherent within these distinctive cultural scripts were presented in sometimes seemingly menial work, explained in the daily rhythms of life, where routines were textured with underlying stories that gave meaning to their existence in tribal practices and affairs. The form of the oral histories then, as Herewini Parata highlighted, could be heard, observed, and passed on in various ways. His knowledge of kōrero tuku iho, he says, was gathered over a lifetime of listening and learning:

By observation, and being there, [there] was nobody who sort of write a list out and said, oh you do this and that and everything else, all I learnt by observation.... I suppose, in the marae, when I learnt all these things, you had people who knew why they were doing things, and I suppose I caught the time when – you know like setting up the wharenuī – I was there helping as a male. Really, that's a woman's job. That's a woman's role, not because it's anything less, but koira te wa o te wahine (that's the domain of the woman), te whakatakato ngā whariki (the preparation of the mats), ngā moenga (the

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<sup>41</sup> Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, 12.20 – 12.29.

<sup>42</sup> Kura Unuhia Tibble, 23.11 – 23.43.

sleeping arrangements), ngā hīti (sheets), ngā perakehi (pillowcases), era ahuatanga (all those sorts of things), even te whakapae, te whakatau i te wahi mo te tupapaku, na te wahine kē era mahi (the preparation of the area for the arrival of the deceased, this was also a ritual undertaken by women), but like I said, I observed all that and the people that told me how to do things and all that. Well they told me, why, and when, and all that, and so that's why I know what to do.<sup>43</sup>

The contextual nature of the transmission then, for some, was more a type of 'visceral' experience that called on more of the senses than just hearing.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, in referring specifically to oral history, listening remained the core sensory mode of communication for most of the interviewees. Looking back on her childhood, Turuhira Tatare remembered the distinctive way in which they were taught to remember the scriptures. She recalls: 'we had no lights inside [the wharenuī], and so it was by ear, and you listened, and because the concentration was so deep you learnt a karakia (prayer) in no time, and mostly our karakia were taken from the Psalms. Yeh, we could recite Psalm 23, Psalm 63, Psalm 112.'<sup>45</sup>

Turuhira's recollection here of an aural experience is ironically informed by a textual source. The form then is a blend of both the written and the oral, the old and new, as the traditional aspects recited and heard in karakia drew on symbols, images, and motifs reforged in Christian narratives and theologies. It is an insightful demonstration of one way in which the oral and textual forms collide, converge, and then re-emerge as a more multidimensional form of oral tradition and history. Despite the presence of the text, her emphasis on the importance of listening was also a common refrain in most of the other interviews. Similarly, for Hetekia Nepia, listening to the kōrero tuku iho was the key to its transmission:

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<sup>43</sup> Herewini Parata, Rec Three, 1.09.06 – 1.10.21.

<sup>44</sup> The idea of a visceral experience is a concept lifted here from the work of Robyn Longhurst, Lynda Johnston, and Elsie Ho who argue for a more multisensory approach when understanding the way people interact with their environments. See Robyn Longhurst, Lynda Johnston, and Elsie Ho, 'A visceral approach: cooking at home with migrant women in Hamilton, New Zealand', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34, 3 (2009), p. 334.

<sup>45</sup> Turuhira Tatare, 7.37 – 8.07.

I te wa e taitamariki ana, ka haere au, ka mutu nga mahi i roto i te kauta haere au ki mua ki te whakarongo, te ariari mai nga taringa ki te whakarongo ki nga whaikōrero, ki nga kōrero hohonu, ki nga kōrero tapu o o tatou matua tipuna, nga whakapapa, nga tauparapara, nga karakia tahito, nga hononga tangata, nga hekenga whakapapa.

When I was still a child, I went, after I had finished working in the kauta, I went around the front to listen, so I could listen more clearly to the whaikōrero (speeches), to the depth of the kōrero, to the sacred stories of our forebears, the genealogies, the incantations, the ancient prayers, the links made between people, and the genealogies that have come down to us.<sup>46</sup>

Like Turuhira, Hetekia highlights the orality of the form, stressing the need to listen clearly in order to access and retain the stories. Although texts are seemingly absent in his recollections, his narrators are themselves inescapable members of a literate society that Walter Ong warned if left unchecked could subsume and ‘destroy memory.’<sup>47</sup> In the case of Hetekia’s elders, the literate mindset that Ong refers to likely worked to ‘restore’ and retain memory rather than obliterate it, thus the text in this way is not so much a destructive force than it is an ‘infinitely adaptable’ resource.<sup>48</sup> Although listening played a substantial role in the way oral traditions were understood by our people, the idea that listening in and of itself confined the source to an oral form was not necessarily the case. Moreover, in relation to the form and nature of oral traditions and histories: what can be heard and observed at first might be far less than oral beneath the surface. For oral traditionalists intent on exploring the worlds of purely oral culture these are not the forms of orality they would identify with. Conversely, for oral historians who rely on the recorded interview or transcript, the oral histories heard on the marae are made available not in their living contexts, but ‘caught’ in the memories and words of their informants.

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<sup>46</sup> Hetekia Nepia, *Oral History Interview*, Reporua (8<sup>th</sup> January 2008), Rec One 8.35 – 9.10.

<sup>47</sup> The old people who would have stood on the paepae when Hetekia was a young man would have all been highly literate (personal communication with Tamati Reedy, 2008). Walter Ong makes this point in, *Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 1982, reprinted 1988), p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> See Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 15. The adaptability and application of the text as a form that enhances and supports oral history and tradition is explored more deeply in Chapter Five.

For most of the interviewees, the catching of kōrero tuku iho was a highly reflective process, an ongoing dialogue that shifted over time. Reflecting on his childhood, John Coleman from Tokomaru bay recalls:

Part of our own kōrero pertaining to here, te whanau a Ruataupare - I learnt that when I was at home with my grandparents, and my parents, and you listen to kōrero and you go to a tangi, and a birthday, and you know all that sort of history was only spoken during those sorts of occasions. Tangi's, birthdays, weddings, or hui at a marae. And if you were prepared to sort of listen, well that was okay. But even during my upbringing, when I was going to school I sort of, the Treaty was hardly ever spoken about, until I became a bit closer to my grandfather, Hori Ngawai, and he was part of a movement like the Kotahitanga. There was my grandfather Hori Ngawai, and there was the likes of Hori Ketu, and they were all part of this movement, Kotahitanga. And that's when I started hearing a lot of things, but I didn't listen, and sort of later on, you know, they had become older and everything, but I think they still held some of these concerns about the Treaty of Waitangi while I was growing up, but not being aware of the significance of the Treaty because it was never taught to us at school. There was never mention of the Treaty, or our rights or anything else. Unfortunately, it's only when I left school and started working – it's mainly when I started working – and our people started to stand up, and started questioning all these things.<sup>49</sup>

The oral traditions and history that John remembers listening to are not repeated here, but they are included in his evolving political consciousness. They are twisted together with other memories that highlight the absence of the Treaty of Waitangi at school, mourns the lack of attention paid to family members involved in their own political movements, and rationalises the resistance of those he knew when he started working.<sup>50</sup> John begins with an emphasis on listening, but reminds us later in his ruminations that he didn't actually listen that well despite 'hearing a lot of things.' The reference to listening here tells us that what John heard all those years ago were oral traditions, yet what is eventually remembered in accounts such as these is drawn from a broader life narrative, where the oral tradition has been

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<sup>49</sup> John Coleman, *Oral History Interview*, Te Puia Springs (14<sup>th</sup> December 2007), Rec One, 7.43 – 9.30.

<sup>50</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi is considered a founding document of New Zealand nationalism. For further reading on the history of the Treaty see Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2011).

absorbed and reworked. In other words, the orality of these oral recordings are not the same as the orality generally associated with the way our people have learnt oral traditions and histories:

That's how we learnt, just by watching, hearing, and seeing these things, gee nanny and them, she, they were always at the marae, sometimes uncle and I would go with them when they would travel around with Apirana Ngata, go up to Te Kaha, Omaio, and you sit there and you listen to those sorts of people, and lie there, and I used to get hoha because I can't go to sleep, but then you just listen to that music, mōteatea, droning in your head and you fall off to sleep, and it's beautiful.<sup>51</sup>

For Kura, as it was for most of the other participants, the form of *kōrero* *tuku iho* took shape in a variety of ways that could be accessed without directly listening. This catching of oral traditions and history may have something to do with a lack of books, and other technologies in her day. Indeed, a lot of the interviewees in Kura's generation spoke about listening to the native speakers, and the immersion they experienced with family members who only ever spoke Māori. Kuini Tawhai, for instance, had this to say about her childhood: 'I didn't speak the language, back home here, but mum and nanny, and all them, the pakeke's would come here *kōrero* Māori, and I would listen to it not realising that what was going in here, that what I heard was implanted in my mind.'<sup>52</sup> This was a common theme shared by many interviewees, who claimed that even though they had only heard it, the knowledge itself remained there, dormant, until it was recalled and revitalised later in life. Those who study oral traditions have generally described this type of remembering as 'glosses on the meaning of history', yet potentially useful 'embellishments' that may have some relevance to studies of the 'historical consciousness' or 'contemporary mentalities.'<sup>53</sup> In advancing the notion that oral histories and traditions are 'caught' in osmosis, the interviewees' perceptions of orality were more

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<sup>51</sup> Kura Unuhia Tibble, 57.06 – 57.37.

<sup>52</sup> Kuini Tawhai, *Oral History Interview*, Mahora (15<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 55.37 – 56.13.

<sup>53</sup> See Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, p. 7.

fluid than fixed. From the actions of doing, hearing, seeing, and listening, *kōrero* *tuku iho* could be conveyed and learnt in various ways, even unknowingly 'implanted in the mind.' In these ways, they resemble more the types of oralities encountered by anthropologists, while for oral historians they can appear in the memory 'traces' of individual life testimonies.<sup>54</sup>

## **Kōrero Tuku iho as Whaikōrero and Performance**

Listening to, and catching, the oral histories and traditions, as this chapter has already stressed, occurs in 'living' settings, usually in certain occasions, complete with their own audiences and specific narrators. The most commonly observed performance is the *whaikōrero*, or 'Māori oratory', which one of our elders, Te Kapunga Dewes, argues 'is quite dissimilar to Pākehā public speaking, [it] is fused together to give the speaker diverse ways of expressing thoughts and feelings, and its mastery is the pinnacle reached by one well-versed in the oral arts in all their aspects.'<sup>55</sup> Speaking on the nature and form of *whaikōrero* in his interview, Derek Lardelli remarked:

Ko te *whaikōrero*, he taonga ano te *whaikōrero*. Engari, i te mutunga mai, ko tō reo, ko tō reo me ki penei "He reo mo tenei, ko koe te pu kanohi mo tō iwi, ko koe te mangai mo tō iwi, ehara ko koe te mea anake kei te *kōrero*, whai muri i a koe, ko tini raua ko mano e ngangau ana," na reira ka ki "ma te manaia ka tu te *whakairo*"... kei te tu te *whakairo* kore te manaia, kua kore e kiko. Kua mōumou taima. Ko te manaia, ko te pa tuwatawata e ngaungau ana ki te rangatira. Ko te mahi a te rangatira, ka mohio ana ki ngā tira *whakaeke* mai nei kei runga i tona marae.

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<sup>54</sup> Trevor Lummis suggests that this is what oral historians are interested in: 'an understanding of society from the material traces they leave behind'. Oral tradition, Lummis argues, are unreliable because the 'process of transmission from generation to generation presents problems of validity.' Trevor Lummis, *Listening To History: The Authority of Oral Evidence* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987), pp. 21, 26.

<sup>55</sup> Te Kapunga Dewes, 'The Case for Oral Arts', in *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga*, edited by Michael King (Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1977), pp. 55-56.

The art of speech making within Māori customs is regarded as a highly developed art form that has been passed down from generation to generation, but in the end, it is the language, it is the language, let me put it like this: “It is a contemporary language, you are the [spokesperson] face of the people, the mouthpiece for the tribe, but you are not the only person speaking, following behind you, are the multitudes who are biting at your heels [back]”, so it is said “the ornamental eloquence of the manaia adorns and beautifies all other carvings”. Carvings in a meeting house that exclude the manaia lack character and substance. The manaia is the fortification from the backbiting directed at the rangatira (leader or chief). The role of the rangātira, is to know those who proceed onto his/her marae.<sup>56</sup>

Like the ‘singers of tales’ referred to by Albert Lord, the exponents of whaikōrero also tended to maintain a certain role in the hapu or iwi as representatives and repositories of the communities history and knowledge.<sup>57</sup> As Derek mentions, they are spokespeople, who are assessed constantly by the tribe, and expected to know the subtleties and nuances of their craft. On the performance of whaikōrero, the Pākehā historian, Anne Salmond writes:

They (whaikōrero) are enacted in the full publicity of a ceremonial encounter. They are evaluated by the fire and drama of delivery, the appropriateness of content, and their general entertainment value. . . . The accomplished speaker wins prestige by demonstrating control over the formal devices of oratory, and the facility with which he can match the content of his speech to the immediate situation.<sup>58</sup>

The performance of oral tradition, as Vansina suggests, serves to create a multidimensional oral source, as the teller and the ‘public’ weave the tale together.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> “Ma te manaia ka tu te whakairo” - this saying uses the imagery of the manaia (usually a beaked, lizard like, figure in ornamental carving) to express an intended concept. In this case, the 'manaia' adorns and adds extra beauty to all other carvings in the ancestral meeting house for all to see in the same sense that it represents the rhetoric and eloquent prose of a speaker, which adorns and beautifies his speech for all to hear. Thus, if a speech is lacking in prose and eloquence, then it runs the risk of lacking character and substance. Derek Lardelli, 18.09 – 1849.

<sup>57</sup> Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

<sup>58</sup> Anne Salmond, ‘Mana makes the Man: A look at Māori Oratory and Politics’, in *Political Language and Oratory in Traditional Society*, edited by M. Bloch (London: Academic Press, 1975), pp. 52, 55.

<sup>59</sup> Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, p. 34.

Indeed, in Ngāti Porou, whaikōrero is not simply a singularly crafted source, as Herewini Parata recalls:

They'd be sitting there on the marae and listening to whaikōrero, and they be correcting, you know someone would use an o, and they go "a", and someone would use matou and they'd go "ratou" or "tatou", and there were all these little words that they used to correct, not so much on the content, but they were always whakatikatika the a, the o, the e, the u, and the little words between, the joining words .... And I find I'm like that now myself. When I hear a person using "a" and it's supposed to be "o", I'm going o, a, or if they pronounce words incorrectly, those kuias used to correct the word, they'd say it just loud enough so that the person who used it had heard, but not the whole world's heard.<sup>60</sup>

Whaikōrero although produced in a solo performance, has a number of sometimes unseen forces controlling its delivery. Speaking on his first time to stand and give a whaikōrero, Morehu Te Maro remembers that the old people there would 'get up', 'make apologies' and 'tidy up' if you had made 'mistakes.' His recollection of his first whaikōrero reveals not only how reluctant he was to be thrust into the role, but how he had been unknowingly prepared to fulfil it:

One day my uncle cried "e poi, hara mai ki konei, e noho" (hey boy, come over here and sit down), so my dad couldn't say anything, so I sit there.... Till one day, and there's another group of people come up and they're talking away to themselves, and I heard my uncle say "we'll try our boy out." I would have been about fifteen I guess at that time. Man, I didn't want to, and "no, you get up". Most of them (the visitors) were young people, and they didn't have a good enough speaker with them, but one of them did get up to speak. And I got up. And your mind goes backwards, what to say oh yeah "hara mai, hara mai, hara mai" (welcome, welcome, welcome). I even tried the pacing up and down after I got a bit used to it, but ... this is not me. But that's where I learned whaikōrero. I sit there and listen.<sup>61</sup>

The old koroua interviewed here was highly animated when telling this story. Morehu, or papa Boyce as he is known to many, is considered one of our spokespersons, and has fulfilled that role in a number of ways. His reference here to pacing has resonance in the broader literature, and can be associated particularly with the

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<sup>60</sup> Herewini Parata, Rec Two, 48.21 – 49.20.

<sup>61</sup> Morehu Te Maro, Rec Two, 5.41 – 7.40.



timing and rhythm with which some oral traditionalist might be familiar. Gregory Schrempp, for instance, writes that the:

Speed of *whaikōrero* delivery varies radically from speaker to speaker and occasion to occasion, but the ability demonstrated by some speakers to speak extemporaneously with rapid fire delivery, and yet maintain a regular cadence, strongly suggests that some degree of formulaic composition is involved.<sup>62</sup>

In Ngāti Porou, however, the use of formulaic types of oral expression in our *whaikōrero* such as *tauparapara* is not a common feature of our speaking style, at least not in recent times. The changing form of *whaikōrero* was an issue addressed by a number of people, like Turuhira Tatare, who recalled that:

The *whaikōrero* that I knew years and years ago there was no God or Jesus Christ or holy spirit or holy angels, there was none of that, it was purely Māori, and paying homage to the *whenua*, and to the *karakia* that was invented in that time, nature's *karakia*, not God's *karakia*, like the proverb and that "Hutia te rito o te harakeke, kei hea te Komako/ If you were to pluck out the centre of the flax bush, where would the bellbird sing?", we had to learn that, and then find out exactly what it meant. The bible was different, the *karakia*, the Ringatu services was different, you had to learn like "Ko Ihoa toku hepara/ the lord is my shepherd".... We could recite that but then we had to think about translating it back into English. Luckily the Bible at that time came out for us to have a look at how to translate it into English. It was a challenge. To me it was more of a learning thing than going to school.<sup>63</sup>

Over the space of only a few generations, *whaikōrero* has changed significantly in Ngāti Porou, yet maintained many of its core elements, structure and expressions. As an oral source, *whaikōrero* is perhaps one of our most valued treasures because it replicates the expression of our language in ways that enable our *tikanga* to thrive and our oral traditions to be told in their natural settings. The form of *whaikōrero* is not conducive to a one-on-one interview, not only because it is a formal speech, but because *whaikōrero* is produced in the refined conditions of the *marae atea*, where it

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<sup>62</sup> Gregory Schrempp, ed., *A Whaikōrero Reader: Comparative Perspectives for the Study of Whaikōrero and other Traditional Māori Speech Forms/readings selected by R.T. Mahuta* (Waikato: University of Waikato, 1984), p. 5.

<sup>63</sup> Turuhira Tatare, 13.31 – 15.12.

is forged in the immediate surroundings of the peoples for whom it is intended. Whaikōrero, more immediately appears to carry many of the elements that are of interest to those who study oral traditions, such as formulaic expressions, and the varied rhythms of speech. Nevertheless, as these interviews only briefly reveal, there is much that can be learnt from individual interviews with people who are able to reflect on the artform, the learning, nuances, and politics of whaikōrero beyond its performance at the time.

## **Oral Tradition and History as Karakia and Tauparapara**

In addition to whaikōrero, the use of prayer, incantation, or what many of our people know as karakia, is a significant vehicle in the transmission of our knowledge from generation to generation. Like whaikōrero, karakia has also changed over time, and become embedded with multiple colonial discourses, as Anaru Kupenga notes in this extract from his interview:

The whole process of karakia, I don't call karakia. There were kawa – rituals, tohi – purifications and so on and so forth, our people did that. It's an immersion, total immersion, go to the church and see the Priest dab a bit of water out of the bowl and put the sign of the cross on the head, and sprinkle a bit of... I don't know where that comes from, but each man to his religion so they say. I can't say we had religion, we were born religious. I mean think for yourself crossing those vast oceans into never nevers, they were great expeditioners – they were fantastic. We can't flow into their mind thought unless we actually leave the contamination here and move back in purity to understand the depth of what they went through, how they experienced it is as clear as a picture, same as their carvings and so on and so forth. So much today that people are confused, when they go to Rapanui they see those other Totem poles, what does this mean? Those are sign posts, when our people traversed the oceans backwards and forwards they knew where they were going, they didn't arrive here on an ill wind like it was stated in Pākehā history, by accident, coincidence – you forget those words, throw it back in the rubbish you believe what was stated by our people, it's still in the history.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 26.38 – 29.00.

When Anaru refers to purity and contamination here, he is implying that the prayers, rites and rituals that are dominant among our people today are not the same as those used and recited by our ancestors prior to the arrival of the colonisers. The changing form of what has now become karakia, as he opines, is ‘contaminated’ by the colonising impact of Pākehā history and spirituality. In Ngāti Porou this is an issue of some importance because the two dominant religions in our tribal history, the Anglican Church or Te Haahi Mihinare (or Matua) and the Ringatu Church, have both heavily relied on a Pākehā biblical text. The advent of Christianity has been viewed by some as one of the reasons why tauparapara is not used as commonly in Ngāti Porou whaikōrero today. On this topic, one of the younger generations of interviewees, Hetekia Nepia, expressed this view in relation to tauparapara and whaikōrero:

I mua o te taenga mai o nga tauiwi kaore a Ngāti Porou e tauparapara. Nā te hokinga mai o Amster Reedy,.. ta mātou principal o Ngata i mua ra. Ka ako ia i ngā rangatahi o te kura ki te mahi tauparapara, ki ngā karakia tahito. Ki mai ētahi o ngā pakeke o te tairawhiti, kaore a Ngāti Porou e tauparapara i mua. Ki ahau nei kei te he tera whakaaro, tera kōrero, kei konei kē etahi o ngā whare wānanga o te ao tahito, o te ao kohatu, ara, kei Rangitukia tetahi, Te whare Tapare o Whatonga, he whare wānanga tera, Te Rawheoro kei te Aitanga a Hauiti, kei Uawa, ētahi anō kei Rongowhakaata, te whare kōrero, kei Turanga nui a kiwa. Ētahi anō kei konei, wareware te ingoa. I ngā ra o mua, koira o rātou mahi, tauparapara, whakapapa, ngā karakia tahito.

It has been said that before the arrival of the foreigners, Ngāti Porou did not recite tauparapara. When Amster Reedy returned he was our Principal at Ngata (College), and he began to teach the young people of the school the art of tauparapara: the ancient prayers and incantations. Some of the elders on the east coast here said “Ngāti Porou did not do tauparapara in the past.” To me that way of thinking is not correct, just stories, because there existed here a number of the old schools of learning, of the old world, so, for instance there was one at Rangitukuia, Te Whare Tapere o Whatonga: that was a whare wānanga (a higher school of learning). There was Rawheoro at Te Aitanga a Haiuti at Uawa (for the Hauiti people at Tologa bay), and others in Rongowhakaata (a neighbouring tribal group), a whare kōrero at Turanga nui a Kiwa (Gisborne area), and others here, I forget their names. So in the old days, that was their practice, the tauparapara, genealogy, and ancient prayers.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Hetekia Nepia, Rec Two 2.38 – 3.56.

For Hetekia, a return to the old ways, and particularly the use of ‘traditional’ karakia, or ancient prayers, enables a reconnection with what he believes is a more pure form of our kōrero tuku iho. This desire to reclaim our more authentic oral histories and traditions returns to the issue of ownership mentioned earlier in this chapter. It therefore rejects ‘contaminated’ forms of our kōrero tuku iho referred to by Anaru, and in the process is cautious of the way writing has transformed our oral histories and traditions. In contrast to both Anaru and Hetekia’s perspectives on the issue of karakia and tauparapara, Apirana Mahuika had this to say:

The other significant thing about our dialect, and we’ve been instituted in terms of this: is that we don’t play around with flowery languages to the boredom of those that are listening, because a lot of the kōrero, a lot of the tauparapara that is currently used – a lot of people don’t really understand what that means, except that they use it. For God’s sake it could be that we are cursing one another, who knows, but with us we did exercise tauparapara, but we don’t use it now and haven’t used it pre-Ngata days till now. And we go straight into the business of greeting our guests, paying homage to our dead, and then getting on with the business at hand. Our whaikōrero uses the same language we use in daily speech. We don’t muck around and say there is a language more superior than the language I use. Some people would say rather rudely that Ngāti Porou’s language is te reo o te kauta (the language of the cookhouse) – I’ve heard us being described about that – hey nobody says that Ngāti Porou’s reo is the reo o te kauta. Our reo (language) is the reo handed down to us by our ancestors. If you listen to our old people you play the old tapes of Ngata and all those old people doing a whaikōrero. They are doing it in a Ngāti Porou way. The language that they are using in that ritual and ceremonial occasion is no different from the language they would use in conversing with one another. Language is a tool of context, and language is an adaptable tool of context, and you don’t have to change your language, because if you change your language into something that is so archaic then you are not communicating anything to our people at all.<sup>66</sup>

Api contends that it is important for speakers not to become lost in the deep metaphorical and ‘archaic’ contexts that he believes are beyond the reach of those in today’s world. These views reflect an upbringing in the Anglican Church, and years of theological training. However, in the interview Api quietly expressed his own reservations about the role of the Church, and its weaknesses in regard to the

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<sup>66</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec Three, 9.57 – 13.02.

empowering of our people. He was adamant that the language used in everyday conversation in Ngāti Porou, is no different to the words used in whaikōrero. Thus, he argued, it is our custom to move directly to the issue at hand rather than dwelling on the elaborate incantations. The merits and reality of reviving tauparapara in our formal speech-making is not the subject of this thesis, yet it is important to note here the debates between the revival of traditional karakia and the form of those in popular use today. As a category of oral tradition, tauparapara appear to be a more 'pure' oral tradition than Christian karakia. Both are repetitious and formulaic, and enable a fascinating reading of our cultural and social worlds, and the spiritual dimensions that inform them. Indeed, karakia, as Turuhira Tatare noted in her interview, is a daily activity for most of our people: 'Whenever you go fishing, you pray and protect yourself, and whenever you go eeling, you protect yourself, and you give thanks for what you get.'<sup>67</sup>

In the one-on-one interview familiar to oral historians, it is unlikely that karakia will feature very often. Indeed, only a few of the people interviewed in this study chose to begin the interview with a prayer. This included Pine Campbell, who it should be noted was a practicing member of the clergy at the time of his interview.<sup>68</sup> The closest any speaker came to using tauparapara in their recording was Anaru Kupenga, one of the more elderly interviewees, who began his testimony with the following words:

I te timatanga ko te kore, nā te kore i ai, ko te kore te rawea, ko te kore te whiwhia, ko te kore te tamua, ko te kore te matua, e hua, e hua ioio nui, ioio ariki ngahua, ioio taketake ki taku aro tēnei au, nā te kukune te pupuke, nā te pupuke te hihiri, nā te hihiri te mahara, nā te mahara te hinengaro, nā te hinengaro te manako ka nohoia te riroriro ka puta ko te pō, mai i te pō tuatahi ki te pō tuangahuru, ko te pō whawha, ko te pō tiwhatiwha, ko te pō namunamu, ko te pō kerekere, ko te pō tahuri atu, ko te pō tahuri mai ki taiao, ka tāpapa atu a Ranginaonao ariki, ki Rangi maomao, ki Rangi tatara tiritiri o rangi, e io e

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<sup>67</sup> Turuhira Tatare, 7.11 – 7.27.

<sup>68</sup> Pine Campbell, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (15<sup>th</sup> November 2007).

taketake, tākiritia te ara tipua, tākiritia te ara rangi, tākiritia te ara matua, he tipu, e rea, he nihoniho, he rearea, he kateatea, te pū, te more, te weu, te rea, te waonui, ko Ranginui e tū ake nei, ko Papatuanuku e hora atu rā, tihei mauri ora.

In the beginning there was the empty void, and from this nothingness a begetting, it is the nothing becoming, it is the nothingness possessed, it is the nothingness held fast, be formed, be formed, it is a big twitch, a parent twitch, fight fiercely, a long lasting twitch to my desire, there I am. From the conception comes the increase, from the increase comes the thought, from the thought comes the remembrance, from the remembrance comes the consciousness, from the consciousness comes the desire, from thence a rupturing that begat the night, from the first night to the tenth (month?), it is the night of feeling, the dark night, the night of seeking, the intense night, the night of turning, the night of turning toward the revealed world, Ranginao Ariki was named (the sky as a chief was named), at Rangi maomao (A distant sky), at Rangi tatara (distant sky) of the placing of Rangi, the long lasting twitch, loosen the demon way, loosen the heavenly way, loosen the godly way, grow, multiply, spring up, scatter forth, the shoot, the roots, the fibre, the growth, the great forest, tis Ranginui stretched above, tis Papatuanuku spread forth, there is life.<sup>69</sup>

These are phrases to be heard usually during formal occasions on the marae, as an invocation and acknowledgment of our origins, the creation of life, and humanity, and our continual link to the world around us. The depth of imagery and allusion in these poetic, and rhythmic, lines are very difficult to interpret in another language, which simply fails to appropriately convey their meaning. Even once translated the stories that weave through each message, such as the significance of the long night, the void, and the pathway to the revealed world are so vast that the written word is simply an inadequate space to present them.<sup>70</sup> The form of his type of oral history is severely distorted when flattened out in writing and print, yet equally limited in a captured recording removed from the place where it is living and breathing. Kōrero tuku iho in these forms are best heard in the context of the communities in which

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<sup>69</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 2.20 – 3.29. The translation of his words here are taken from various personal communications, but also from other available texts where some of the phrases he uses also appear, see for instance Rev. Richard Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui* (Auckland: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1855), pp. 14-15; and D. R. Simmon, *Iconography of New Zealand Māori Religion* (Netherlands: Leiden E. J. Brill, 1986), pp. 8-10.

<sup>70</sup> One interpretation alludes to the copulation between Rangi and Papa, the duration of the pregnancy referred to in the long nights, and eventual birth into the world of light. These are whakapapa (genealogies) of the natural and intellectual worlds. Alternatively, the growth, planting, and shooting up of the seeds and other vegetation also refer to these acts of evolution and becoming.

they are recited, where the cultural relevance is constantly interpreted by the people who live there.

## Summary

Ngāti Porou people define our oral histories and traditions in various ways. We refer to them as *kōrero tuku iho*, *taonga tuku iho* and *kōrero tahito*. The insistence of the 'oral' is significant to our people, despite the fact that our *kōrero tuku iho* is actually believed to be multifaceted and diverse. Emphasising their 'orality' is a matter of ownership that is often locked in a binary struggle between the voice and the text, but extends to the problematic use of the terms tradition and history. In their dichotomies they perpetuate the antagonistic relationship between the imaginary and the real, the unreliable and the authentic. However, this chapter shows through the use of interviews that they also converge and diverge, and these collisions illustrate the complimentary and nuanced realities of oral history or oral tradition.

The interviewees reveal that the form of oral history and tradition can be found in 'the living world', and observed when it is 'caught' in a process of osmosis. It is the product of generations of audiences and narrators, refined in particular settings, seen as much as heard, and always modified and evolving as they are recaptured and regurgitated in new ways. Thus, *kōrero tuku iho* does bear a resemblance with the sources used by oral historians, and is often similar to that of the anthropologist, folklorist, and oral traditionalists. But they resist narrow classifications, and are more than just aural phenomena, which in Ngāti Porou, acquire visual forms in carvings and other physical 'monuments' and moments. One of those key moments is *whaikōrero* where the dissemination of our oral histories and traditions is woven together by multiple threads. Similarly, *tauparapara* and *karakia* are also significant strands in the retention and transmission of our *kōrero tuku iho*, and are most effectively interpreted and understood in the communities to which they belong and

resonate. The patterns of orality displayed in the interweaving of these various forms, reveal an array of intersecting issues, from modernity and tradition, colonisation and reclamation, writing and orality, to interviews and observation. This sophisticated tapestry of oral history and tradition is multi-layered and complimentary, and requires further unraveling and restitching: a key aim of the following chapter.



# Chapter Five: 'Mai te Kupu-a-Waha': From the Spoken Word

'Mairātia iho te waha kai rongorongo ē,  
hei whakaoho pō i ahau ki te whare rā'

And leave behind the sweet sound of your voice,  
to comfort my wakeful nights within the house.<sup>1</sup>

In Ngāti Porou, the voice has long been thought of as the primary carrier of memory, and is said to linger beyond the lifetime of the speaker.<sup>2</sup> Such is the prevalence of orality in the way our people perceive the transmission of the past that even when the spoken word finds expression in new forms it is still referred to as oral. This is *kōrero tuku iho* as a living phenomenon, not lost or silenced in print, but enhanced by it. For oral historians, the emphasis on orality is much more explicit. Indeed, the oral form of their interviews is seen as the key to what makes their work *oral histories*.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, oral traditionalists, and folklorists especially, accentuate the orality of the songs and ballads they examine when demonstrating the ways they have been transmitted and memorised over time.<sup>4</sup> If oral history and oral tradition is about the study of oral sources and/or oral transmissions, then how might we

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<sup>1</sup> From a lament for her son by Hinekaukia, this is a well known Ngāti Porou waiata tangi (funeral song). A. T. Ngata, and Pei Te Hurinui Jones, eds., *Ngā Mōteatea: The Songs Part One*, Revised Edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), pp. 174-77. 'Mairātia iho' in the English translation was written as 'leave behind' but also means to 'make audible.' The term 'waha kai rongorongo' refers to a pleasant voice or singing voice. See Appendices 2, 'He Tangi mo Hinekaukia', p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly, William Shneider argues that oral traditions among Native American peoples are 'shared orally ... [and] are told over time in recognizably similar ways but with variations of detail and emphasis subject to the circumstances of each performance and the liberties taken by the speakers.' See William Schneider, 'The Search for Wisdom in Native American Narratives and Classical Scholarship', *Oral Tradition*, 18/2 (2003), p. 268.

<sup>3</sup> This is emphasised by Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different', in *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 64. Portelli's original chapter can be found in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 45-58.

<sup>4</sup> David C Rubin, for instance, argues that oral traditions rely on 'human memory for storage and oral/aural means for transmission'. See David C. Rubin, *Memory in Oral Traditions: the Cognitive Psychology of Epic, Ballads and Counting-out Rhymes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 3.

account for writing and print? Can we make sense of oral histories and traditions when we look more closely at the ways in which they are shaped and produced? This chapter continues to explore the way Ngāti Porou people conceptualise kōrero tuku iho. It draws further on the interviews to highlight where our ideas and definitions of oral histories and oral traditions are made and remade in multiple ‘processes’ of transmission. Thus, this chapter explores how Ngāti Porou teach, learn, ‘catch’, disseminate and live our kōrero tuku iho within a dynamic interweaving of various tikanga from one contemporary context to the next.

### **‘Raupatu a te Pene’: Kōrero tuku iho as a Product of Power<sup>5</sup>**

Writing and literacy in Ngāti Porou has provided a means of modifying and enabling our kōrero tuku iho, but has also been used as a tool of oppression. The scars left by writing have recently been lamented by one leader as ‘raupatu a te pene/confiscation by the pen’, a phrase used to describe our colonial history.<sup>6</sup> Speaking on the advent of writing in Ngāti Porou, Derek Lardelli drew attention to the inequality we have endured:

Na rātou tonu e tuhi era whakaaro, me te mea mōhio ano i era wā matemate haere tātou, na reira, te whakaaro ka penei ai rātou akuanei ka mate katoa te Māori. Na reira, Ka whakaaro penei ai, ka tuhituhingia ō rātou whakaaro mo te iwi matemate nei. E kaore rātou e tino whakaaro nui ki a tātou ki te Māori. Ki to tātou kaha ki te whawhai mo to tātou e tirohia ana te oranga (??)- na reira ka penei ai rātou e enei wa kei te ora rawa atu te Māori. Engari, ko te mate kē, ko te Pākehā kei te whakaaro tonu ko ā rātou kei runga, ko ā tātou kei raro. Rarururutia kia noho tahi ai tātou, te Pākehā me te Māori. Ahakoa kua tipu toto ki te whenua mai ngā pākanga tuatahi, tuarua, kei te pēhea tonu rātou e kore

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Raupatu a te pene’ was a phrase used by Apirana Mahuika in reference to the alienation of Ngāti Porou tribal lands by ‘law’ and government policy. His remarks were made in personal communication, but were also reiterated in an interview with Jodie Ihaka for *Te Karere* (7<sup>th</sup> November, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Raupatu as a term has been used to refer to physical confiscation usually by the ‘gun’, but this was not the case in Ngāti Porou. Ngāti Porou were viewed by many as ‘loyalists’, or crown supporters, while other tribes were considered ‘rebels.’ For further reading here see James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Penguin, 1986).

rātou e huri, ko rātou te rangātira kei runga, ko tātou kei raro. E kore rātou e huri ki ō tātou ake whakaaro.

It was they who wrote these things down because they believed at the time we were a dying race, so they really did think Māori were going to die out. Thus, the intention was that they would record in writing their memories of these people whom they supposed would soon be extinct. Their main priority was not really about us (our welfare): what was best for Māori. We fought for our survival and it is still the same today, Māori are still here, but the problem is the same: that Pākehā consider themselves' superior to us, and therefore position us as subordinate. There is still inequality between the Māori and the Pākehā. Although we spilt blood on the battlefields of the first and second World Wars, it was not enough to change their attitudes toward us. They retained their position of power, and perceived us as inferior. They have continued to disregard our point of view.<sup>7</sup>

In the transition from the oral to the text, Derek contends that our kōrero tuku iho was transformed in a new hierarchy of power.<sup>8</sup> His criticism is aimed at the 'Pākehā' process and mindset, where writing is seen to have served an imperialist function in displacing our voices with the views of a culture that considered the text a sign of its own superiority.<sup>9</sup> Their dominant accounts of oral history and tradition rarely accommodated our worldviews, but advanced discursive binaries between civilised settlers and rebellious natives.<sup>10</sup> Although most oral historians are adamant about the orality of the sources they use, some have asked whether the 'typed memoir' or

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<sup>7</sup> Derek Lardelli, *Oral History Interview*, Turanga nui a Kiwa (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 10.03-11.06.

<sup>8</sup> On the topic of colonisation and writing Jennifer Garlick observes that 'the intelligent members of a race renowned for its schools of learning, for its orally transmitted poetry, traditions and myths, were avid of the new knowledge, in the forefront of which western propagandists placed a knowledge of the new God. Reading and writing, the basis of the mechanism and the art of the new civilization! ... printed matter ... was hailed as only one more wonder, the undoubted convenience.' Jennifer Garlick, *Māori Language Publishing, Some Issues* (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 1998), p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> The issue of writing, imperialism, and colonisation for indigenous peoples is discussed in more depth by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, London and New York: University of Otago Press/Zed Books, 1999), pp. 28-29.

<sup>10</sup> These discursive constructions in the writing of New Zealand history are well documented. See for instance Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonisation and National Identity', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 36, 1 (1997), p. 15.

manuscript might yet be considered oral history.<sup>11</sup> Of the process of writing, Richard Cándida Smith asserts that authors of oral history must consider the important question of ‘whose voice or voices will provide the narrative spine.’<sup>12</sup> For Ngāti Porou, written texts are similarly identified as oral histories, but there are unresolved tensions surrounding their validity because, as Derek reminds us, the voices of Pākehā authors have too often subordinated our own. Despite this, Ngāti Porou people have not been passive victims but active agents and agitators, who embraced literacy if only to advance our own ambitions. Reflecting on her upbringing, Tinatoka Tawhai recalls ‘there were always books, all sorts of different books, so they did encourage that and we did do a lot of reading.’<sup>13</sup> From its inception, reading and writing spread like a ‘fever’ on the East Coast, with a particularly high demand for biblical texts.<sup>14</sup> These books, as other interviewees noted, were later read alongside newspapers, comic strips, diaries, workbooks and private memoirs.<sup>15</sup> Ngāti Porou people were not just consumers of the word, but prolific authors.

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<sup>11</sup> Valerie Raleigh Yow contends that the term oral history also refers to these forms of writing, as well as the method of interviewing. Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History, a Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Second Edition* (New York: Altamira, 2005), p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Cándida Smith, ‘Publishing Oral History: Oral Exchange and Print Culture’, in *Thinking About Oral History: Theories and Applications*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), p. 170.

<sup>13</sup> Tinatoka Tawhai, *Oral History Interview*, Mahora (15<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 5.49 – 6.42. She remembers being read Shakespeare and other poetry.

<sup>14</sup> Parekura Tamati White writes that ‘The Old Testament book became a valuable trade commodity on the East Coast. As pointed out by William Williams in November 1839, the demand for books on the East Coast was so great that Gilbert Mair, a Bay of Plenty trader, told Williams that if he had access to the small prayer books he could have purchased a cargo with them alone.’ See Parekura Tamati White, *Te Aitanga a Mate, Te Aowera and Te Whānau a Rakairoa, vol. 2 (WAI 792)* (August, 2001), p. 24.

<sup>15</sup> Boy Keelan and Jack Takurua remember reading comic books like ‘The Phantom’, while others like Wayne Ngata read newspapers. Tate Pewhairangi referred to workbooks and other written materials kept by people he knew working in the shearing sheds. Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, *Oral History Interview*, Wairarapa (28<sup>th</sup> February 2008), 14.36 – 14.57. Boy Keelan and Jack Takurua, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (13 December 2007), 20.17-21.26. Wayne Ngata, *Oral History Interview*, Uawa (17<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 15.29-17.23. Tate Pewhairangi, *Oral History Interview*, Tokomaru Bay (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 10.11-10.24.

The form of our *kōrero tuku iho* then multiplied in print, with some viewed as more authoritative than others. In the early twentieth century Sir Apirana Ngata urged our people to ‘study’ specific texts deemed ‘classics’ that everyone should know.<sup>16</sup> Ngāti Porou *kōrero tuku iho*, in this rapidly changing world, took on drastic new forms in collections of poetry and song, childrens books and court records. Although modified in print, their oral dimensions remained the key to their interpretation, but as Apirana Mahuika argued, have too regularly been overlooked in favour of the perceived authority of Pākehā writers:

The problem in relying on Pākehā historians [is that] ... they don’t know the context to all these stories. If Gudgeon knew and recorded the history accurately he would know who Porourangi is: Porourangi is shortened for Porou Ariki Te Matatara a Whare Te Tuhi Mareikura a Rauru. That’s an entire whakapapa there, you know ‘Te Matatara’ are patterns of decoration in a house, which symbolises the interweaving of all of the senior lines in this one man called Porou Ariki – Te Matatara a Whare, then Te Tuhi Mareikura a Rauru, which shows that he is also a descendent of Toikairakau, because Toi had Rauru. That’s the context, but a lot of Pākehās don’t understand, don’t know this.<sup>17</sup>

To know and retell Ngāti Porou history requires an immersion in the oral worlds of our people. Api’s criticism is not so much of the form of the text, but who is writing. He suggest that *kōrero tuku iho* *can* be written, but their veracity is borne out in ‘living’ contexts, where the community to whom it belongs is able to test, correct and contextualize them. This is a familiar idea in the work of Walter Ong, who has similarly argued that ‘writing establishes what has been called “context free” language or “autonomous” discourse’: that is discourse ‘which cannot be directly questioned or contested as oral speech can be because written discourse has been

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<sup>16</sup> These included John White, *Ancient History of the Māori*, vol 1-6 (Wellington: Government Printer, 1887-1891), and George Grey, *Ngā Mahi a Ngā Tūpuna: He Mea Kohikohi na Sir George Grey* (London: George Willis, 1854). See Ta Apirana T. Ngata, *The Porourangi Māori Cultural School, Rauru-nui-a-Toi Course, Lectures 1-7* (Gisbourne: Maori Purposes Fund Board/Te Runanga o Ngati Porou, 2011, originally presented in 1944), p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> Apirana Tuahae Mahuika, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (7<sup>TH</sup> July 2007), Rec. 3, 13.46 – 18.12. Walter Edward Gudgeon, a Judge in the Māori Land Court in the late nineteenth century, published successive volumes in the *Journal of the Polynesian Soceity* on ‘The Māori Tribes of the East Coast’ between 1894 and 1897. See Monty Soutar, ‘A Framework for Analysing Written iwi Histories’, *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 2, 1 (1996), p.45. Porourangi is a descendent of Toi and Whatonga. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Table 5, p. 357.

detached from its author.’<sup>18</sup> Oral traditionalists make note of the need to ‘contextualise’, and in the process have often adjudged the oral form more consistent than the written.<sup>19</sup> This notion resonates in Ngāti Porou, where, as Monty Soutar contends, the oral records are considered primary sources, while written documents are viewed as secondary evidence.<sup>20</sup> Some oral historians have stressed the need to reconsider what is oral history, not on their terms, but from the perspectives of their participants. Andrew Roberts, for instance, writes that oral historians ‘have not always taken sufficient note of the fact that their informants may think of time very differently.’<sup>21</sup> Indeed, in Ngāti Porou, and other Māori contexts, a linear schematic of time puts far too much distance between our kōrero tuku iho and the present, and can lose their shape when refashioned in paradigms foreign to our worldviews.<sup>22</sup>

Despite his reservations, Api accepted that it is necessary ‘for us to put all these things - the things that we know - on paper so that generations of our people will not forget’, but reiterated the view that the ones he trusts ‘are those that are written by people who know what the tikanga is all about.’<sup>23</sup> In the transition from the voice to the text and back again, the form of kōrero tuku iho, for many of the interviewees,

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<sup>18</sup> Walter Ong cites Hirsch (1977), who referred to ‘context free’ language, and Olson (1980), who wrote on ‘autonomous discourse’. See Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1982), p. 77.

<sup>19</sup> See Ruth Finnegan, ‘Preface’, in *South Pacific Oral Traditions*, edited by Ruth Finnegan, and Margaret Orbell (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Soutar, ‘A Framework for Analyzing Written Iwi Histories’, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Roberts, ‘The Use of Oral Sources for African History’, *Oral History, The Journal of The Oral History Society*, edited by Paul Thompson, vol. 4, no. 1 (Spring 1976), p. 50.

<sup>22</sup> In other words, for Māori, the past is produced in the present, in the local and living context rather a foreign country. The tensions between chronological time and Māori views of the past have been addressed by a number of scholars. See for instance, Rawiri Te Maire Tau, ‘Mātauranga Māori as an Epistemology’, in *Histories, Power and Loss: Uses of the Past - A New Zealand Commentary*, edited by Andrew Sharp and Paul McHugh (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp. 61-73; and Danny Keenan, ‘The Past from the Paepae: Uses of the Past in Māori Oral History’ in *Remembering, Writing Oral History*, edited by Anna Green and Megan Hutching (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), pp. 145-151.

<sup>23</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec Two, 0.02 – 0.52.

spiralled between purity and contamination.<sup>24</sup> Most of these textual adaptations then were still considered oral histories and traditions, not because they were viewed as aural sources, but because they were believed to retain the essence of our *kōrero tuku iho* so long as the writer had sufficient ability.<sup>25</sup> The form of our *kōrero tuku iho* as ‘history’ or ‘tradition’ has been highly influenced by their reconfiguring in print. For Bob McConnell, the *kōrero tuku iho* recorded in the Land Court Minute Books became his key source of authoritative evidence.<sup>26</sup> These, he considered ‘oral’ histories, because they were narrated, and scribed, in the court hearings. However, in writing, Bob struggled with the idea of the form as an ‘oral’ transmission:

I did have this reluctance, because this has to be recorded for people to read it, and that’s why after writing the [book] – as a history – I extracted stories from it and retold them in my two other books, have you seen *Ngā Taonga tuku iho*, as if I was an old man telling the kids at each place, visiting places.<sup>27</sup>

His other texts, one a children’s storybook, accentuated more emphatically the oral delivery, which Bob felt was problematic in written history. Although he considered the speakers in the Land Court to be skilled storytellers, Bob was concerned that they sometimes ‘got the stories a wee bit wrong.’<sup>28</sup> He doesn’t mention the fact that they may not have been willing to tell him, or that some of the testimonies in the

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<sup>24</sup> Alessandro Portelli writes that ‘orality and writing are forever changing roles, functions, and meanings in a mutual relationship of seeking and desire rather than exclusions and polarisations.’ Alessandro Portelli, *The Text and the Voice, Writing, Speaking, and Democracy in American Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. xiv. I refer to this exchange here as a type of ‘spiralling’ process that occurs in a vortex where the oral and textual are mixed and spun together.

<sup>25</sup> But they also had to have the mandate of the people. A good example of this was Arnold Reedy, who was widely supported by our people. Herewini Parata refers to this in his interview. Herewini Parata, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (26<sup>th</sup> January 2008), Rec. Three, 1.18 39 – 1.21.06.

<sup>26</sup> Bob has written a number of books, Bob McConnell, *Te Araroa: an East Coast Community – a History* (Te Araroa: R. N. Mc Connell, 1993); *He Taonga Tuku Iho: Ngāti Porou Stories from the East Cape* (Auckland: Reed, 2001); *Taonga Anō: more Ngāti Porou Stories from the East Cape* (Auckland: Reed, 2002).

<sup>27</sup> Bob said that he felt ‘confined by the writing of a ‘history.’ Bob McConnell, *Oral History Interview*, Te Araroa (8<sup>th</sup> December 2009), 31.40-32.20.

<sup>28</sup> McConnell, *Oral History Interview*, 16.22 – 16.40.

Land Court hearings were deliberate fabrications.<sup>29</sup> Kōrero tuku iho in this way has tended to be divided between supposedly accurate history and dubious traditions. This has also been a common theme in the literature of both oral history and oral tradition. Jan Vansina, for instance, despite his assertion that oral traditions were viable historical sources argued that their reliability must first be substantiated within the rigours of historical method.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, many oral historians have emphasised the need to corroborate oral information with textual records to affirm their legitimacy.<sup>31</sup> For Ngāti Porou, the nuanced realities of kōrero tuku iho allowed them to move freely between both the written and the oral, and most emphasised the need to return to the oral contexts in which the oral histories and traditions could be verified and understood more fully.

## **Kōrero tuku iho Shaped in Competing Conventions**

Beyond publically available manuscripts, our oral histories and traditions were also kept and read in more private texts. Shaun Awatere, for instance, recalls being given personal 'research materials' from an uncle.<sup>32</sup> Others, like Terri Lee Nyman, spoke of keeping journals and 'folders' where she wrote down oral traditions learnt from songs and haka.<sup>33</sup> A fear of forgetting prompted some to record their knowledge,

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<sup>29</sup> False testimony in the Courts occurred on numerous occasions. For further reading here, see Ann Parsonson, 'Stories for the Land: Oral Narratives in the Māori Land Court', in *Telling Stories: Indigenous History and Memory in Australia and New Zealand*, edited by Bain Attwood and Fiona Magowan (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp. 29-40.

<sup>30</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 27-28

<sup>31</sup> Despite the view that oral history deals primarily with oral sources, Ron Grele reminds us that 'where written sources are available, they should be used as background as well as corroboration. Oral data does not exonerate the historians from searching for and using written documents exhaustively.' Ronald J. Grele and Studs Terkel, eds., *Envelopes of Sound, Six Practitioners Discuss the Method, Theory and Practice of Oral History and Oral Testimony* (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1975) p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Shaun Awatere, *Oral History Interview*, Hopuhopu (17<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 11.52 – 12.17.

<sup>33</sup> Terri Lee Nyman, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (17<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 7.46 – 8.15.



including Whaimutu Dewes, who says that he didn't trust his own memory.<sup>34</sup> Jenny Donaldson recalls seeing genealogy books in her home that were finely crafted texts with 'beautiful writing.'<sup>35</sup> Whakapapa books, Apirana Mahuika noted, have been kept by most families, and these books, as Michael Taiapa explained in his interview, were used to highlight connections:<sup>36</sup>

He pukapuka whakapapa tāku tenei pukapuka mohio koe ki tenei ne, 100 years old now te pukapuka, ki taku mohio na Pine Taiapa nōna nei taua pukapuka i tuhi a rongonui rawa a Pine Taiapa puta noa i te rohe o te Tairawhiti hei tohunga mo te whakapapa e ai ki te kōrero a tōku nei mama ka haere mai te katoa ki a ia mo ngā hononga ki tēnei, ki tēna, ki tēra, ka hoki mai tetahi whānau pea ki te kite i a ia, kia ora e koro Pine, kei te mohio te whānau nei ki te whakapapa o tēnei taha, mohio ana koe ki tēra mena ka mohio, mena kaore i mohio a kei te pai, ko te nuinga o te wa mohio ana a Pine Taiapa ki ngā whakapapa cause about tekau mano ngā ingoa i roto i te pukapuka nei te tini rau mano.<sup>37</sup>

I have in my possession a whakapapa book that you already know about, it's about 100 years old now and I recall it being written by Pine Taiapa who was well known throughout the East Coast as a keeper of genealogy. According to Mum, many would come to see him about kinship relations such as a family member who went to see him and inquired about the whakapapa on this side, as you would know, and if he did or didn't know it, then it wasn't a problem. However, in saying that, he was well rehearsed in reciting whakapapa as his book contained a multitude of about 10,000 names.

Despite keeping books, the communicating of whakapapa and kōrero tuku iho as Michael noted, was more an oral process than a matter of reading or writing. Commenting on the impact of texts in Māori communities, Jennifer Garlick reiterated this view that Māori 'preferred to hear the matter, whether written or printed, read to them.' Māori, she argues 'preferred education through the ear, conveyed by artists in intonation and gesticulation.'<sup>38</sup> This appeared to be the case in

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<sup>34</sup> Whaimutu Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Rotorua (12<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 44.18 – 44.20.

<sup>35</sup> Jenny Donaldson, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (18<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 35.35 – 36.48.

<sup>36</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec One, 18.48 – 19.02.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Taiapa, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (8<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 28:53-30:30.

<sup>38</sup> Jennifer Garlick, p. 17.

most of the interviews too, where *kōrero tuku iho* in writing was often considered a type of oral performance. Indeed, Timoti Karetu has observed how Māori writers in the nineteenth century Māori newspapers developed written conventions 'based largely on the etiquette and protocol of the marae or tribal meeting-ground, and particularly that of *whaikōrero*.'<sup>39</sup> Thus, in the collision between our oral traditions and the advent of western written traditions, the form of *whakapapa* as *kōrero tuku iho* appeared to be shift between these two competing sets of conventions.

In line with western written conventions our people were specifically instructed to 'enter the [genealogical] tables on the left-hand side of a folschap minute book', with 'the opposite page being reserved for notes.'<sup>40</sup> Influenced by the The Polynesian Society, Sir Apirana Ngata was positive that *whakapapa* could 'supply the dates for our story' in that 'the length of a generation may be taken as twenty five years.'<sup>41</sup> Within the written form, *kōrero tuku iho* often appeared to depart from a focus on the inclusionary *tikanga* of *whakapapa*, to the exclusionary politics of difference, obsessed with ownership and the creating of a 'history' that could be verified on western terms.<sup>42</sup> In contrast, the conventions in our *tikanga*, as Derek Lardelli pointed out, accentuated a focus on the *mana* of the individual and tribe, whose recitations are produced in 'te hinengaro Māori/the Māori mindset:'

Kei te pai tena te kaiwhakapapa, engari ko te mahi ke kei te tukuna ngā Kōrero whakapapa kei roto i ngā Kooti Whenua Māori, ka ngaro te Māori ki te mau e tera momo. Ko ngā koroua o mua e hiana ke atu ngā ingoa Māori i pupuri i te

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<sup>39</sup> Timoti Karetu, 'Māori Print Culture; the Newspapers', in *Rere Atu, Taku Manu! Discovering History, Language and Politics in the Māori-language Newspapers*, edited by Jenifer Curnow, Ngapare Hopa and Jane McRae (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002), p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Apirana T Ngata, *Rauru-nui-a-Toi Lectures*, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> Ngata argued that 'by using this method the mean of generations from the crew of Te Arawa, Mataatua, Takitimu, Tainui and other canoes of what is called the fleet, the date of the migration is given as the year, 1,350 AD.' See Apirana T. Ngata, *Rauru-nui-a-Toi Lectures*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>42</sup> Particularly in the Land Court Minute Books, but as Timoti Karetu notes, in the newspapers, many of our writers wrote as if they were speaking on the marae. These two very different conventions shaped our *kōrero tuku iho* in significant ways. See Timoti Karetu, 'Māori Print Culture', pp. 1-16

hinengaro Māori. Ka tukuna kei roto i te pukapuka, ka honohono ki te pukapuka – Kaore e piri, ngā mea i enei ra, te ako i ngā whakapapa onamata. Ka mea mai, ka mina koe ki te ako i to whakapapa ra kei roto i te pukapuka, engari i ngā ra o mua, kei roto i te hinengaro Māori nei. Na reira, ka pai ngā whakairo, me ki ngā whaikōrero i runga i te wa kaenga. Na mea tino matatau rawa ki te whakapapa, ka mohio tonu ratou ka mauhia ake ngā whakapapa kei roto i te hinengaro, katahi ka karawhiua i runga i te marae. I enei ra, ka penei, “ah, taihoa, kei te wharangi rua tekau ma wha o te pukapuka ngā whakapapa nei.... Kei reira, kei reira.” He aha tenei mea ka tukuna atu i te pukapuka te mana, ko te mana kei te tangata tonu.

To be an exponent of whakapapa is good, but it is a different thing entirely to draw your genealogy from the Māori Land Court. Māori lost ownership of it in that form. The old people in those times cared for and contained the names in a consciousness that was irrevocably Māori. When it was reorganised in writing, the people today have not adhered to, or learnt, the whakapapa as it was in former times. You might say you are hungry to learn whakapapa from a book, but in the old days this information was stored in the Māori mind. So, it's good that we have great speakers back home, people who are extremely knowledgeable of genealogy, who still know how to carry their own whakapapa in their minds, and then are able to impart it on the marae. Today it's like this: “ah wait, hold on, the genealogy is on page twenty four.... There it is, there it is.” What is this practice that affords such authority to a book, when it should be the person who has the expertise.<sup>43</sup>

To know our kōrero tuku iho it is important to understand how we conceptualise it. Of whakapapa Derek explained: ‘Ki te kore te tangata i te mohio tenei, ka mate te tangata/If a person does not know this, then they do not exist.’<sup>44</sup> These conventions inherited from oral traditions were also ascribed to genealogy books. Indeed, whakapapa books had their own sense of sacredness, or tapu, and were not made available to everyone. Some books were burnt because they were believed to be causing spiritual and emotional injury.<sup>45</sup> Other interviewees lamented the fact that some of their family genealogy books were lost and buried with relatives, while others, remembered them being taken and hidden.<sup>46</sup> On the tapu related to

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<sup>43</sup> Derek Lardelli, 14.47-15.41.

<sup>44</sup> Derek Lardelli, 23.07 – 23.24.

<sup>45</sup> Mere (pseudonym), *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa, Rec Two, 2.29 – 4.10.

whakapapa books, Whaimutu Dewes argued that a better understanding of the conventions related to our tikanga would help to dispel some of their 'taboo':

Ahakoia he taonga, me tuku tonu atu ki te iwi, no ratou ake te whakapapa. Ehara i te mea, he mea huna... he mea tapu tera pukapuka? Ae, kei a ia tonu tona tapu, engari ehara i te mea he tapu, kia wehi, kia wehi te tapu, he tapu na te mea ko nga tipuna, ko nga ingoa, me te ingoa o to tipuna kei roto, a, me te whakamaumahara o ratou mahi. Engari, koira te mea ki ta taku papa, koira te mea e tapu ai te pukapuka. Ehara i te mea whakamataku, kia wehe ai.

Although it is to be treasured, you must take it to the people, because it is their genealogy, it is not something to be hidden away. Are these books supposed to be untouchable? Yes, it is a priceless and precious item, but it is not meant to be taboo, we shouldn't be afraid, or fear it, it is sacred because it carries our ancestors and their names within it, and the histories of their exploits. But, according to my father, that's the reason the book is tapu, but it is not something to be scared or afraid of.<sup>47</sup>

Although modified in writing, whakapapa books were still considered oral histories and traditions by the majority of interviewees. This is because their interpretation of the form of kōrero tuku iho was generally conceived within a worldview that favoured tikanga and oral ritual rather than western written traditions that focused on chronologies and validity. Books and writing assisted memory, and were considered by many as necessary to revitalisation and empowerment:

In the old days it was all word of mouth it got passed down in the song, in the hakas, in the whakapapa. And they were amazing, they retained all that stuff, but for future generations, my own personal feeling is that that stuff has to be written for us to retain it. It has to be. It has to be recorded, whether it be written, whether it be on video, whatever, but for our survival it has to.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Angela Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (10 December 2007), 50.50 – 52.03. Tinatoka Tawhai, 50.56 – 52.51. Mana tangata here refers to the family's status within the tribe, and together with mana whenua (land rights) enables them to make claims for land use, ownership, and unbroken rights specific to their hapu (subtribe). Mervyn McLean has also written that 'on the death of a singer, his manuscript waiata books are often buried with him.' Mervyn McLean, 'Sound Archiving and the Problems of Dissemination of Waiata', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 2 (1989), p. 14.

<sup>47</sup> Whaimutu Dewes, 40.41 – 41.04.

<sup>48</sup> Tinatoka Tawhai, 39.50 – 40.34.

As Tinatoka notes here, the utility of writing enhances our ability to retain our mātauranga, and is a matter of survival. The form of our oral history and tradition remained present in print where authors were active in following our worldviews, tikanga and conventions in expressing the kōrero tuku iho. For scholars of oral traditions these conventions have been recognised in their examinations of formulas and metric verse that appear when the songs and lineages are committed to print.<sup>49</sup> The rituals of oral tradition also appear in the recordings of oral historians, and were evident in many of the interviews undertaken in this study, including Anaru Kupenga's recording:

Ngā herenga o tāua whakapapa mai i a te akau ko Ngā Kuri Paaka ko koutou i heke me kī i ngā Kuri pāka a Uetuhiao rāua ko Tūtehurutea, ko koutou tērā, ko ngā Mahuika i heke mai i a Te Harata, ā ko mātou i heke mai i Ngā Kuri Paaka i a Kuku, Korohau me Rongotangatake. Tuia ā tāua whakapapa ki te maunga mai i te timatatanga ahakoa i wehe ko ētahi o ngā tamariki whakarerea mai ki muri he kōrero rāua ki a koe mō tērā o ngā tipuna, mō Tāwhai Winiata tētahi o ngā kaiarahi tohunga o te maunga o Hikurangi. Nā reirā ahakoa nāhau ngā pātai engari nāu anō ngā kōrero, ngā kōrero o tāua mātua, o tāua tipuna, e kore e wehea.

The descent lines of that particular genealogy descend inland to Ngā Kuri Paaka, from which you come from but more specifically Ngā Kuri Paaka a Uetuhiao and Tutehurutea. That's where the Mahuika family descend from, that is, from the line of Te Harata (unclear in the recording here?) and we descend from the lines of Ngā Kuri Paaka from Kuku, Korohau and Rongotangatake. Our genealogies interlink back to the sacred mountain from the beginning despite the occurrence of a separation from those who were regarded as castaways sometime later on. These connections can provide a personal witness concerning our ancestors, which can be validated in the guided and historical narratives of mount Hikurangi as given by Tawhai Winiata. However, not only do you possess the right questions, but you also possess the answers as contained within the oral histories of our forefathers, which will never fade away.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> A more recent discussion of the orality and literacy question for indigenous peoples is considered by Ruth Finnegan, who notes that the oral transition to print now has not been envisioned 'as some predestined oral-to-literate trajectory, but in each case a historically specific process.' Oral formulaic examinations are now expanding to accommodate 'multi-literacies', and as she suggests, perhaps even a 'multi-orality.' See Ruth Finnegan, 'Response from an Africanist Scholar', *Oral Tradition*, 25/1 (2010), pp. 8, 14-15.

<sup>50</sup> Anaru Kupenga, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (9<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 3.40 - 4.42. Compare Appendices 3, Whakapapa Table 18, p. 370.

Anaru's recounting of whakapapa here, although in a one on one interview, bore a strong resemblance to the intonations, style, and conventions common to whaikōrero in formal occasions. Whakapapa, whether written or spoken is one of the major threads of our kōrero tuku iho, and is at once an ongoing product of oral history and tradition, while simulateneously an essential part of the way in which it is produced. For Ngāti Porou, the orality of oral histories and traditions are not lost in writing and print, but enhanced by them. They are made and remade within specific cultural conventions that sometimes distort them and divide them between tradition and history. In written forms, our kōrero tuku iho exist in multiple genre from testimonies in the Land Court Minute records, published histories, and Māori newspapers, to private diaries, and genealogy books. All of these forms are created in a process of transmission that has for some time now spiralled between the voice and the text, but keeps coming back to the spoken word that lingers in the lived realities of our people.

### **Kōrero tuku iho a Product of the 'Classroom'**

Oral traditions and histories in Ngāti Porou are made and remade in a process of transmission. Some time ago now, Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson observed that 'there are numerous styles of oral transmission', and urged scholars to pursue the question of transmission and its form to 'better understand how it shapes historical messages and what we remember.'<sup>51</sup> In Ngāti Porou, the form of our kōrero tuku iho is passed on within a world of protocols or tikanga that influence the speakers, teachers, listeners, and learners. Of tikanga Waldo Houia recalled that all that was 'sewn into you orally':

Kaore i kōrero mai me pera rawa koe engari koina tāku wa ka kite koe i te ahuatanga o tenei mea te manaakitanga engari i kōrero noatia mai kare, so it was

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<sup>51</sup> Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, *The Myths We Live By* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 15

handed down orally, so those sort of values are being instilled in you. Ka peka mai he tangata, whangaihia na te mea koina te mahi o nga wa o mua ahakoa ko wai.

It was never really mentioned why you had to do the things you did, it was just the way things were. One would observe the principle of hospitality, but it was hardly spoken about, so it was handed down orally, so those sorts of values are being instilled in you. Whenever people came to visit us they were fed no matter who you were because that was the custom of the time.<sup>52</sup>

Waldo emphasises, as did most other interviewees, the orality of the transmission, but also the reality that these things were learnt in experiences, actions and routines. This process of remembering, as Turuhira Tatare recounts, was not something you did while just sitting and reading:

When we used to go to Ngāti Putaanga practices on horseback, this Henare Waitoa would be setting at the back on the horse with his wife, and he would be singing songs that he had just composed, by the time we got to our destination we knew the song. Because of the training that we had through Ringatu, by listening, ... we were taught by the old women, and even, it was the old ladies who taught our men how to haka, oh it was funny.<sup>53</sup>

Learning on horseback was part of the process of transmission for Turuhira, the form of the *kōrero* *tuku iho* primarily heard in an oral experience, but the environment and the mode of teaching also a vital stimulant. Writing on the topic of oral traditions, Robert Darnton notes that the 'transmission process affects stories differently in different cultures.' He argues that 'oral traditions are tenacious and long-lived' and that they do not simply 'collapse at their first exposure to the printed word.'<sup>54</sup> Likewise, some oral historians have similarly stressed the need for scholars to 'pay more attention than they usually do to the means by which still living traditions have been transmitted.' Andrew Roberts, for instance, writes that 'it may also be helpful to have a study of the transformation of traditions' in which

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<sup>52</sup> Waldo Houia, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (24<sup>th</sup> July 2008), 09:22-09:41.

<sup>53</sup> Turuhira Tatare, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 32.09 – 32.12.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Perseus Books Group, 1984), p. 20.

historians might think much harder about their informants own views of history, and about the way in which these are shaped by social horizons.<sup>55</sup> These views are shared by many in Ngāti Porou, who have asserted the need for historians outside of our communities to pay more attention to our process, tikanga, and worldviews. As a listener, observer and participant, Apirana Mahuika described our 'process' of transmission as a phenomenon that occurred in Ngāti Porou 'classrooms', where mātauranga was affirmed by the words of 'speech makers and singers of songs.'<sup>56</sup> For most of the interviewees, the teachers and learners in these classrooms were made up from the community as a whole. This was stressed by Hilda Tawhai, who recalls: 'you didn't just get raised by your mother and father - you got raised by everyone in your community.'<sup>57</sup> The transmission of kōrero tuku iho then, for most of the interviewees, occurred within broad definitions of the family, not confined to just immediate relatives, but inclusive of larger iwi and hapu groups. Moreover, this broad community of 'classrooms' stretched over a wide expanse that included the marae, wharenuī, kauta, private homes, gardens, horseback, and more formal sites such as wānanga, and sometimes even schools.

The wānanga (or traditional school of learning), for instance, was long seen, and is still today, as a key site where our history and traditions have been taught. It is in these spaces that many believe the 'powers of memory were developed', where the histories were memorised, incantations recited, and all the necessary rituals and customs observed.<sup>58</sup> Of wānanga, Mita Carter writes that 'only the most brilliant young men [were] accepted as entrants based on the powers of a retentive

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<sup>55</sup> Andrew Roberts, 'The Uses of Oral Sources', p. 51.

<sup>56</sup> Apirana Tuahae Mahuika, 'Ngā Wahine Kaihautu o Ngāti Porou: the female leaders of Ngāti Porou' (Unpublished Masters thesis, Sydney University, 1974), pp. li, iv.

<sup>57</sup> Hilda Tawhai, *Oral History Interview*, Tuparoa (29<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 15.17 – 17.10.

<sup>58</sup> Mita Carter, 'The Preservation of the Māori Oral Tradition', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol.3 (1990-91), p. 5.



memory.<sup>59</sup> In prior times, not just anyone would be accepted, but were subject to special selection and rituals, based on their ability to memorise and retain information. In Ngāti Porou these were special and tapu places, as Maria Whitehead noted in her interview.<sup>60</sup> According to Apirana Mahuika, wānanga in Ngāti Porou were not just for specialist people, but specialist knowledge:

We had several whare wānanga at home in Waiapu, we had Taperenui-a-Whatonga, and in Taperenui a Whatonga we had such things as waiata, as religious instructions, land care instruction, conservation instructions, fisheries instructions, whakapapa instructions.<sup>61</sup>

Different types of wānanga were also mentioned by other interviewees, such as Ihipera Morrell, who recalled her grandmother speaking about the education of their revered ancestor Rongo-i-te-kai at a 'whare wānanga mo ngā toa, mo ngā taua, ki te ako pakanga, patu tangata/a school of learning that specialised in the training of fighters and war parties. There he learnt strategies for battle, and armed combat training.'<sup>62</sup> According to Mervyn McLean, during the 1930's, Ngāti Porou held wānanga for the learning of waiata in which one individual would act as a 'prompter' (kai makamaka), while another, the 'kai wetewete' (analyst), would listen for errors.<sup>63</sup> In all of these instances, these 'traditional' schools of learning incorporated specific oral techniques to enable memory such as repetition and rhythm. One of these practices included the use of waha kohatu (a stone placed in the mouth), which Mita Carter asserts functioned as an 'aid to memory, and to

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<sup>59</sup> Mita Carter, 'The Preservation of the Māori Oral Tradition', p. 5.

<sup>60</sup> Maria Whitehead, *Oral History Interview*, Uawa (11<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 51.03 – 54.18.

<sup>61</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec One, 24.33 – 25.26.

<sup>62</sup> Ihipera Morrell, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (19<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 14.59 – 15. 34. Compare Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 2, 9, pp. 353, 361.

<sup>63</sup> He writes that 'after a song was learned, omission of words was regarded very seriously as a *whati* or omen of disaster.' Mervyn McLean, 'Sound Archiving', p. 14.

prevent stammering.’<sup>64</sup>The pedagogical approach of the *whare wānanga* then has been built on *tikanga*, which in former times included specific rituals that incurred severe repercussions if errors were made.<sup>65</sup> Forged in this process, Māori and Ngāti Porou oral traditions and histories have often been viewed as deeply sacred forms, their orality a matter of high importance. Understanding how this oral transmission takes place is similarly a key interest of folklorists, ‘historical musciologists’, and oral traditionalists, who examine the repetitive and rhythmic expressions and themes in songs, chants, ballads, and histories.<sup>66</sup> Commenting on the transmission of South Pacific oral traditions Ruth Finnegan has observed ‘how verbally articulated traditions are constructed as artistic genres or oral narratives developed through the dynamic interaction between culturally recognised conventions, personal creativity, and varying voices of differing individuals or groups.’<sup>67</sup> This has certainly been the case in our *wānanga*, where the *kōrero tuku iho* is produced with specific attention to *tikanga*, by individuals and groups, in various ways.

The emphasis on the orality of the learning remains a significant aspect of *wānanga* today. Of her own learning experience Tia Neha recalls that first it was oral ‘and then modelled ... we would have sit down *wānanga* and just go through it for about an hour, two hours every week.’<sup>68</sup> *Wānanga* today still offer opportunities for our

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<sup>64</sup> Carter writes that ‘Before beginning a recital the Māori would put the stone in his mouth, repeating the formula ‘with this, thus we remember.’ Mita Carter, ‘The Preservation of the Māori Oral Tradition’, p. 5.

<sup>65</sup> Writing on the *whare Wānanga* Elsdon Best recorded that ‘instruction is stated to have taken place under conditions of intense *tapu* (sacredness) in special schools of learning known as *whare wananga* where the object was to hand on knowledge ‘free of any alteration, omission, interpolation or deterioration’. Elsdon Best, *The Māori Division of Time* (Wellington: Government Print, 1959), p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> There is no clear definition of what, or who, is an oral traditionalist, thus folklorists and musciologists, tend to be considered oral traditionalists and even oral historians. In more recent scholarship, Francesca R. Sborgi Lawson provides a reminder of the fact that oral formulaic theory and questions remain relevant to current research. See Francesca R. Sborgi Lawson, ‘Rethinking the Orality-Literacy Paradigm in Musicology’, *Oral Tradition*, 25/2 (2010), p. 432.

<sup>67</sup> Ruth Finnegan, ‘South Pacific Oral Traditions’, pp.1-2.

<sup>68</sup> Tia Neha, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (19<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 35.10 – 35.50.

people to practice and perfect aspects of our ritual and tikanga, including speechmaking, karanga, and singing, as Morehu Te Maro remembers:

They used to go in the marae, and they sit in there, and they have their wānanga there. And they learn from one-another. They practice on one-another. The house is divided, and one part is the home-front and the other part is the visitors. They practiced their whaikōrero like that to each other, and they get up and do mōteatea. Things like that.<sup>69</sup>

In these specific locations, complete with their own protocols and rules, the kōrero tuku iho, were transmitted in classrooms that embodied our cultural practices. For those, who have lived away from home, the replication of these experiences is viewed as an important part of the process of learning. 'We used to have Ngāti Porou waiata sessions here [in Dunedin]', says Riria Tautau-Grant: 'For me it was about being in the space.'<sup>70</sup> The 'space' she refers to is the hui, its significance marked by the people who attend and the tikanga they establish. The act of holding wānanga served as a moment, place, and opportunity to enable the survival of our kōrero tuku iho in a living process. These are sites of immersion, where, as Api noted earlier the kōrero tuku iho can thrive because the environment as a whole speaks to our way of being and thinking. In her interview, Tinatoka Tawhai noted the merits of holding wānanga at home because:

It's actually brought all the people that are the exponents of those different kaupapa. So we've had uncle Prince in and we've done waiata and mōteatea with him and Connie. We've had rongoa Māori (health and medicine), and we've brought the appropriate people in to do that. We've had whaikōrero and karanga. You know it's really brought our marae alive. The other thing is our kids are there too, so they're taking it all in. They're part of it. And it's actually been a saviour for us. Without them I doubt we'd be where we are today.'<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Morehu Te Maro, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (13<sup>th</sup> December 2007), Rec 2, 4.59 – 5.20.

<sup>70</sup> Riria Tautau Grant, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (17<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 47.15 – 47.52.

<sup>71</sup> Tinatoka Tawhai, 41.19 – 42.19. These are common across the coast. Angela Tibble referred specifically to the wānanga she has attended: 'So we started having hard out wānanga' and we were 'taking them around the coast.' Angela Tibble, 27.30 – 27.35.

The shaping of *kōrero tuku iho* is more than an oral or written endeavour. Indeed, as the interviewees revealed it is a process brought to life within custom and protocols that remake our history and traditions in our contexts, and on our terms. Conversely, in the classrooms of mainstream and earlier Native Schools, the form of *kōrero tuku iho* differed markedly from its shape in *wānanga* because the underlying aspirations, rules and regulations, were not our own.<sup>72</sup> The absence of our *kōrero tuku iho* in the school curriculum was noted by many of the interviewees. Tuwhakairiora Tibble, for instance, recalled that:

We knew Hikurangi te maunga, Waiapu te awa, Ngāti Porou te iwi. For me that was about it. I didn't know about Pukemaire, the pa in Tiki... things like Umuariki, Tinatoka, all those ancestors, Hinetaora, the tipunas' Hunaara, Putaanga, all those tupuna. Those were things that we were never taught at school, but we learnt about who Captain Cook was.<sup>73</sup>

Most of the interviewees remember either the complete absence of *kōrero tuku iho* from their time at school or its reduction to fairytales, myths and legends. Schools, as Boy Keelan remembers, were Pākehā institutions, where their mindset, language, and history prevailed.<sup>74</sup> Of his time as a student John Coleman recalls that 'we were never told' anything about the Treaty of Waitangi, but were taught 'all about Shakespeare' and wheat fields in Canada.<sup>75</sup> Other interviewees had slightly different experiences, like Hera Boyle, who recollects local history lessons about the people, landscape, and politics; this she says was 'spoken stuff.'<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> In the Native Schools (from 1867-1969), and indeed in mainstream schooling, 'the state had been concerned to "civilise" Māori by encouraging them to abandon their traditional cultural values, customs and language in favour of those of the European.' Judith Simon, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, eds., *A Civilising Mission? Perceptions and Representations of the New Zealand Native School System* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001), p. 301.

<sup>73</sup> Tuwhakairiora Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007), 11,14 – 12.53. Compare Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 10, 13, 14, 17, pp. 362, 365, 366, 369.

<sup>74</sup> Boy Keelan, 6.26 – 6.57.

<sup>75</sup> John Coleman, *Oral History Interview*, Te Puia Springs (14<sup>th</sup> December 2007), Rec. 1, 7.00 – 7.41.

<sup>76</sup> Hera Boyle, *Oral History Interview*, Tikitiki (13<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 13.59 – 15.22.

The shaping of *kōrero tuku iho* in schools and *wānanga* relied on varying rules, regulations, and politics. Its form dramatically shaped or disfigured as oral histories and traditions depending on whose underlying frames of reference were in ascendance. The relevance of understanding oral history and tradition within the minds of its communicators is a notion expressed by an array of both oral traditionalists and oral historians. Some time ago now, the celebrated oral historian Studs Terkel in an interview with Ron Grele expressed the view that ‘if it is their truth, its got to be my truth... the memory is true. It’s there.’<sup>77</sup> In understanding the form of oral history and oral tradition within Ngāti Porou, an appreciation of the process in which it is shaped requires an attentive ear and open mind to know our ‘truths.’ These are truths forged in a world of customs and protocols that lie beneath the oral testimonies, and explain the silences, rhythms, and routines that dictate how they are heard, who hears them, and why.

### **Kōrero tuku iho Carried by ‘Specialists’ and Custodians**

For the majority of interviewees, certain underlying protocols, or *tikanga*, determined not only who would hear stories and songs, but how they should be transmitted to others. Reflecting on his upbringing, Herewini Parata considered himself a conduit and custodian of *kōrero tuku iho*:

I am a product, and I’m doing a lot of things [that] were a part of probably my mother’s upbringing, and the people that brought her up, and my father’s upbringing and the people that brought him up.... So I am the conduit of both of them ... I’m just a, I suppose, a custodian of the traditions, of the *kōrero tuku iho* of both of my father’s *whakapapa* and who he was, and my mother’s *whakapapa*, and who she was.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ronald J. Grele and Studs Terkel, eds., *Envelopes of Sound*, p. 14.

<sup>78</sup> Herewini Parata, Rec 2., 00.52 – 2.50.

Oral history and tradition in Ngāti Porou, as Herewini illustrates here, is varied, and tightly connected to the hapu and whānau we represent. The form then is powerfully shaped by our genealogical ties, which offer access to elders and teachers, and determine both what is heard and who hears it. Recipients of oral traditions and histories can be found in the whakapapa, as Derek Lardelli notes:

We know we had the ability to jump generations... oral tradition, for Māori, is still alive and well – it manifests itself in certain people. Penei te tipuna nei, penei a Maui (like this ancestor Maui).... special people like Apirana.<sup>79</sup>

Chosen people, in these terms, are those who are deemed to have special abilities and skills. Whakapapa, as Derek alludes to above, helps determine who is given access to knowledge, and most importantly who they represent. This selection of people followed a specific tikanga, or process that ensured our ownership of the knowledge and, as Anaru Kupenga points out, the survival of our culture:

They put these things in place and very selectively chose their people very carefully, in order to achieve that they sited those people that had the potential in those directions. I mean, waste of time trying to teach someone to be a surgeon when they're only a butcher, so they selected the best. The real reason why, was to ensure the survival of the race, of our people and also to ensure you have the scholars, the wise men taught to retain all that knowledge so that successive generations can continue. They knew their life span would end someday. They were willing to die, but in order to ensure that following generations – I mean you select an idiot for a captain, you got a thousand dead soldiers.<sup>80</sup>

Kōrero tuku iho then is a process as much as it is a product, and indeed, in the process is carefully shaped to reflect the worldviews of the people it represents. In Ngāti Porou, these are not just 'tribal' experts, but hapu and family experts. Together

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<sup>79</sup> Derek Lardelli, 28.31. – 29.10.

<sup>80</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 31.51 – 33.20.

they tell us about the past with multiple voices and skills that range from singing to carving, dancing, tattooing, weaving and speechmaking.<sup>81</sup>

The notion of specialists is not uncommon to oral traditionalists.<sup>82</sup> However, the issue of who is granted access to oral traditions and histories has not been as well documented in the literature. Jan Vansina observed how African historians have now taken over from the work he had begun, and what is most important is that 'it is they who are saying it.'<sup>83</sup> His ideas about ownership and representation resonate, although not in exactly the same way, with the rationale we maintain in relation to the selection of our repositories.<sup>84</sup> Oral historians, such as Linda Shopes have written more about the codes of conduct and ethical guidelines maintained by national oral history organisations than the ethical protocols important to indigenous research.<sup>85</sup> In the shaping of our kōrero tuku iho, the tikanga regarding access is a highly political matter, where 'outsiders' are often viewed with suspicion.<sup>86</sup> This politics concerning our kōrero tuku iho is dealt with more fully in the following chapter, but is an important part of the process of transmission, particularly the selection of custodians and conduits, to borrow Herewini's terminology.

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<sup>81</sup> Joseph Pere notes that 'many of our repositories know the responsibilities of and the repercussions that are associated with the ritual of transmission. So they have to be as accurate and direct as required, as has already been set out by our tipuna of the past. There is to be no deviation, no allowances; in other words you can't afford to water it down.' Joe Pere, 'Oral Tradition and Tribal History', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 3 (1990-91), p. 3.

<sup>82</sup> Elizabeth Tonkin, for instance, notes the role of experts in African oral tradition. Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts, the Social Construction of Oral History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 92.

<sup>83</sup> Vansina cited in *Envelopes of Sound*, p. 91.

<sup>84</sup> Vansina still considered empirical historical methodology important, Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, 1985, pp. 187-92. Ngāti Porou depart from this view in the sense that we do not want to perpetuate, or emulate the work of an outsider, but to reclaim the history that they have distorted.

<sup>85</sup> Linda Shopes, 'Legal and Ethical issues in Oral History', in *Handbook of Oral History*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira Press, 2008), pp. 135-69.

<sup>86</sup> I draw on Linda Tuhiwai Smith's definition of the 'outsider' here. See Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, pp. 137-141.

For the majority of interviewees, *kōrero* *tuku iho* was learnt from songs, informal conversations, rituals and speeches, with these living experts or specialists, rather than from books or writing. Many, for instance, learnt from various composers, who retold and taught our history and traditions in tribal anthems, chants, ditties, action songs, and haka. During her interview, Jenny Donaldson shared this memory about her father, Henare Waitoa, one of our most well-known composers:

I can remember being with dad when he was chopping the wood, *ka hara mai* a uncle Maru (uncle Maru arrived), and my father looked up, and this is funny, cause I was only a young girl, but somewhere along the line I can remember just a little bit of dad saying to uncle “how do you call yourself coming into this wood heap?”, and uncle said “*tomo mai*”... I was only young but the word *tomo mai* stuck in my head, and that was from Maru Karaka riding in, dad cutting the wood, and me standing there.<sup>87</sup>

‘*Tomo mai*’ is a phrase associated with one of Henare’s most famous waiata, written for the Māori battalion in 1946, its tune taken from a popular song of the time, ‘Goldmine in the Sky.’<sup>88</sup> It was later rehashed by the Howard Morrison Quartet, and became a popular party song in Māori households throughout the country. The form of the oral here is blended with contemporary influences of the time. Yet in many of the songs, the fundamental messages in our oral traditions and histories remained intact, as Te Kapunga Dewes indicated in his interview:

Nā hoki a Tuini, koia anō tētahi tohunga ki te tito waiata; titoa ngā waiata i te wā a ngā kirikiri tonu o Ihipiana, āe rā patua te Māori nā, ka titongia a Tuini Ngāwai āra Te Hokowhitu a Tū te waiata, [singing] engari ka whakamārama au ki aku taurira, he ringatū hoki a Tūini kei roto kē i tōna hinengaro, i roto i ana mahara, e Te Hokowhitu a Tū ko te atua Māori tērā o Tūmātauenga, e te hokowhitu a Tū, engari nā te waiata a Tū e te hokowhitu a Tū engari e te hokowhitu a Tū whakarongo atu a Tūmātauenga. Ko Tūmātauenga te atua o te iwi, Tūmātauenga te atua o te tangata koina inoi atu rā ki a Tūmātauenga kāti rā te hingahinga ki raro rā. Anō tētahi waiata a Tuini a te hokowhitu a Tū, [singing]

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<sup>87</sup> Jenny Donaldson, 13.01 – 14.01

<sup>88</sup> Maru Karaka was Henare's brother-in-law, and according to him the waiata, ‘*Tomo Mai e Tama Ma*’ was written the night before it was first performed by the hapū. See Te Kapunga Dewes, ‘*Ngā Waiata Haka a Henare Waitoa o Ngāti Porou/Modern Dance Poetry of Henare Waitoa of Ngāti Porou*’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Auckland, 1972).



nā reira kare he whakararuraru ki te mauri o ngā atua māori i te atua o te taha ki te hāhi Mihingare, te hāhi Momona rānei.<sup>89</sup>

Tuini, now there's another well-known prolific song writer who composed a range of waiata when our Māori troops were in Egypt dying in the war. And of course she composed "Te Hokowhitu a Tu." Anyway, as I explain to my students, Tuini was a staunch Ringatu at heart. In her reference to Te Hokowhitu a Tu, she was actually referring to the Māori god of war; nevertheless, because the song of Tu was actually referring to the band of Tu (the war party or Māori battalion) Tumatauenga still listened with intent to the war cries of his warriors. Tumatauenga is commonly referred to as the god of both kindred's and nations and it was to Tumatauenga that prayers were given when soldier's lamented or fell on the battlefield. However, there was another version of Tuini's waiata Te Hokowhitu a Tu, but this did not seem to interfere with or disrupt the mauri of Māori gods when contrasted with the beliefs of Christianity as found in the Anglican or Mormon churches.

Tumatauenga for some is a figure of 'myth' and oral tradition, and despite religious and spiritual differences, remains well entrenched in our waiata. This is kōrero tuku iho alive in 'composition', reinvigorated, but not abandoned in the process. The custodians of these kōrero tuku iho were people who were grounded, and active, in the genealogy, tikanga, and politics of the tribe. Often their songs would accentuate the connections between iwi, and the genealogical links that have been retained in oral tradition and history.<sup>90</sup> Tuini Ngawai, Henare Waitoa, and Ngoi Pewhairangi wrote most of their songs for the Māori battalion, but also wrote about our language, culture, geography and genealogies. Their waiata were composed and written long after our people had become literate, and thus are not the usual types of oral sources that ethno-musicologists and other oral traditionalist have focused on when considering 'purely' oral traditions. Similarly, these songs are seldom heard in the life narratives common to oral historians, unless specifically requested. They were sung in the some of the interviews though, but only by a few, like Prince Ferris, considered an authority on the haka Ruaumoko, and Te Kapunga Dewes, an expert, or 'specialist', in the songs of Henare Waitoa.

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<sup>89</sup> Te Kapunga Matemoana Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Rangitukia (11 December 2007), 02:17-05:56.

<sup>90</sup> This was noted by John Coleman, Rec. 2, 3.48 – 4.49.

All of the interviewees shared the same belief that the transmission of *kōrero tuku iho*, whether in songs, speeches, genealogies books or the spoken word, were passed on to people under a set of expectations and *tikanga*. These protocols often shaped the form of the *kōrero* to encapsulate the practices and views of a specific *hapu* or *whānau*, and were entrusted to certain people for safekeeping. These chosen repositories were viewed as conduits or custodians of tribal knowledge, and were expected to be familiar with the rituals and practices within which these oral traditions and histories were shaped.

### **Kōrero tuku iho in Waiata, Mōteatea, and Haka**

The form of Ngāti Porou oral histories and tradition has constantly evolved in new and dynamic contemporary settings. As many of the interviewees noted, the composing of songs was relative to the 'lifestyle' of each generation. Of the people he grew up with, Herewini Parata recalls:

That was their lifestyle, everything, when they were in the garden they were singing about, you know, *waiata mo te garden* (songs for the garden), when they were farming they were singing those sort of songs, when they were making flax they were singing *mōteatea* related to that, when they went to *tangihanga* they were singing all that sort of thing.<sup>91</sup>

In today's world, evolving technology and the fact that the majority of our people live away from our tribal home have altered the way we now compose, learn, and transmit our songs.<sup>92</sup> If our *kōrero tuku iho* is better understood in context, then many of those in more recent generations would struggle to connect with the worlds of our grandparents and ancestors. *Waiata*, as Wayne Ngata pointed out, were

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<sup>91</sup> Herewini Parata, Rec. 2, 44.20 – 45.43.

<sup>92</sup> The census and statistics reports have shown that the majority of our people live in the main centres, such as Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. New Zealand, *2001 Census: Iwi*, 1, p.11. See also 'Ngāti Porou kei te kainga – Ngāti Porou at home', <http://www.Ngātiporou.com/Whānaungatanga/Whenua/default.asp>, [retrieved 11 Jan 2011]; 'Ngāti Porou Kei te whenua – Ngāti Porou in Aotearoa', <http://www.ngatiporou.com/Whanaungatanga/Whenua/default.asp> [retrieved 11 Jan 2011].

received and conceived in contemporary settings, influenced by the tunes and topics of the day and the impact of technology: 'Ko ngā waiata i rongo ai matou ko ngā waiata o te wa ... ko ngā waiata i rongo ai matou ko ngā mea o te reo irirangi/Well the songs we heard were the songs of the times .... the songs we were familiar with were the ones on the radio.'<sup>93</sup>

Despite the seemingly destructive impact of changing demographics and developing technologies, the tikanga embedded in the content and transmission of our waiata is what makes them traditions and histories. Indeed, as Turuhira asserted in her interview, the kōrero tuku iho in songs serve a particular function:

We were lucky with people like Jacob, who composed whakapapa, like "Ko Hauiti te tipuna e, nana ko Kahukuranui.", and of course I belong to Tokomaru bay, "Ko Kapihoromaunga, Whakapawhero, ko Hine Maurea, ko koe Ruataupare", so we knew then how we were linked to Hauiti and Tologa. And then somebody did one for Tikitiki, about Tamataua and Putaanga, and then of course wherever we went we were able to stand up and say who we were by our waiata whakapapa.<sup>94</sup>

The kōrero tuku iho used in the waiata, as Turuhira suggests, works to uphold the tikanga of whakawhānaungatanga (the strengthening of interhapu relationships), and to serve as an affirmation of our various interrelated identities. Speaking on the tikanga of waiata, Herewini Parata observed certain protocols related to where and when songs are sung, and for what occasion: 'You know, some of the mōteatea we sing now, they're supposed to be sung in the wharemate (in the house), they're not supposed to be sung on the marae atea (outside the front of the house).'<sup>95</sup>

Observing tikanga in relation to when and where the waiata is most appropriate is part of what makes them 'traditional.' Not only is history and tradition carried in the content, as in the case of Turuhira's example above, but it is lived in the procedures

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<sup>93</sup> Wayne Ngata, 17:55-19:19.

<sup>94</sup> Turuhira Tatare, 24.21 – 25.11. Compare Appendices 3, Whakapapa Table 14, p. 366.

<sup>95</sup> Herewini Parata, Rec Three, 1.11.28 – 1.12.52.

surrounding its performance. However, these elements often change over time and in different contemporary settings take on new histories when waiata are borrowed or reshaped for new occasions and audiences, like the one referred to here by Te Kapunga Dewes:

Whakamutua atu, nā Apirana Ngata tonu nāna i tito a Pōkarekare ana, Pōkarekare ana ngā wai o Waiapu, heoi anō ki a Te Arawa pīrangi rātou ki ngā waiata a Ngāti Porou, Pōkarekare ana ngā wai o Rotorua e tā! Ka tika anō te whakaaro pēnei i a koe puku kata tonu, ko Hinemoa hoki te wahine nāna i kau te roto o Rotorua, ā, ko te kōauau a Tūtanekai ki te arataki ki a ia ki te moutere. I roto i ngā pūrākau ka haere mai te karere ki te whakaoho i a Tūtanekai taenga atu ki te wharemoa o Tūtanekai... i roto i te whare o te Māori rā e whā kē ngā waewae i kite atu au, kua moea kētia e ia a Hinemoa... e whā kē ngā waewae.<sup>96</sup>

On the contrary, it is a known fact that Apirana Ngata composed the waiata Pokarekare ana nga wai o Waiapu and that Te Arawa adapted it as evident in their wording Pokarekare ana nga wai o Rotorua, well what do you think of that. I agree that it is laughable. According to the story, Hinemoa was the maiden who swam the length of Lake Rotorua as she was guided to the island by the sound of Tutanekai's flute. It was reported that a servant was sent to the sleeping quarters of Tutanekai to awake him and as he approached the door of Tutanekai's house he looked into the room and could see two pairs of feet and not one lying in Tutanekai's bed. It was then that he realized that Tutanekai and Hinemoa had already married.

In the appropriation of songs, new histories often emerge, and the form of *kōrero* *tuku iho* refashioned to accommodate different or additional perspectives. The waiata referred to here has been altered, with lake Rotorua replacing the Waiapu river, and the accompanying history of Hinemoa and Tutanekai recounting a past that belongs elsewhere. Examples like this are commonplace, yet there are many others that show how old waiata and haka are used regularly to comment on new issues. Love songs, laments, and songs of disdain or disapproval are frequently performed because the generic messages inherent within them are timeless. They also invoke the histories and ancestors of a certain group or people. This sense of ownership, particularly by specific hapu groups and families is universal to not only Ngāti Porou, but Māori in

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<sup>96</sup> Te Kapunga Dewes, 00:15-02:08.

general.<sup>97</sup> To understand the form of our oral histories and traditions it is important to unravel the multiple layers that lie beneath and give them meaning. These layers reflect the customs and protocols of various whānau, hapu and iwi, whose histories have been fashioned by living experiences. Thus, the learning and performance of waiata, as some interviewees noted, required this familiarity to present it in the way that it was meant to be disseminated. This was a lesson Angela Tibble learnt from one of her nannies, who asserted ‘you’re not gonna get it cause until you’ve felt grief yourself you’re always gonna sing it differently to how I sing it.’<sup>98</sup> As Angela reminds us here, the form of our kōrero tuku iho is produced in a world of protocols and expectations, and is dynamic and evolving as succeeding generations take ownership of old themes and present them in new ways.

Looking back, some people confessed that they could not ‘stand mōteateas’, yet most of the interviewees had at some stage in their lives heard or learnt chants and songs that are considered classics in our tribal history.<sup>99</sup> The mōteatea and waiata learnt in our communities are similar to what some have termed ‘folklore’, which has been described as ‘the living oral culture of a society’ and ‘includes popular songs.’<sup>100</sup> In Ngāti Porou, these songs are embedded in ritual, particularly the protocols of the marae, where speakers are usually accompanied with supporting waiata that relate to the occasion. The mōteatea in Ngāti Porou is most often viewed as an ancient song, and the prose and words of these compositions are generally associated with highly esoteric forms of the language, as Apirana Mahuika notes:

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<sup>97</sup> This was mentioned by John Coleman, who referred to the compositions in Ngata’s *Ngā Mōteatea* that he argued belonged to Te Whānau a Ruataupare ki Tokomaru. John Coleman, 14.13 – 14.57.

<sup>98</sup> Angela Tibble, 41.11 – 42.10.

<sup>99</sup> Maria Whitehead, 47.56 – 49.09.

<sup>100</sup> Louise Douglas, Alan Roberts, Ruth Thompson, eds., *Oral History, a Handbook* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1988), p. 5.

We were very metaphorical in the way we expressed things in a way that we didn't give the full answer, we kept part of it in reserve, but Ngata in *Ngā Mōteatea*, if you read in *Ngā Mōteatea*, he talks about our language, he talks about the beauty of our language, he talks about the way in which we do our things in language. For example [reading from Ngata's book] "In these songs the poetical genius of our ancestors is made evident in their use of the Māori language. In latter times, in these days of the European, the language is regular, phrases are frequently broken up like an infant walking. In former times, a wealth of meaning was clothed within a word or two as delectable as a proverb in its poetic form, and it in its musical sound"... then he goes on to give an example "Like a stranded shoal of tattooed bodies at Kaiweka", and so he explained in Māori as spoken in our days like the shoal of wales stranded on the shore at Kaiweka. So our language was full of that kind of thing. It painted images conjured up in your mind: you can almost see it in just the mention of a word.<sup>101</sup>

Language is vital to the understanding of our *kōrero tuku iho*, whether in a spoken or written form. The conventions of our *kōrero tuku iho*, as Api refers to here, is deeply metaphorical and poetic rather than literal. It is interesting that he reads from Ngata's book to elaborate this point, and then returns to the notion that the words, whether in print or voice conjure up the images from a distant past. Thus, in this short extract, our *kōrero tuku iho* is spread thinly from its orality to the visual dynamics of print and the mind, its interpretation and accessibility dependant on the ability to think as our ancestors did. This, as other interviewees expressed, has been one of the major issues in the transmission of our *kōrero tuku iho*. Angela Tibble, for instance, points out that because the language is changing, it is now more difficult to understand what it was our ancestors and *pakeke* truly meant when they composed these *waiata*. She says:

At that time when Nanny was teaching us those *mōteatea*, *kāore mātou i te tino matatau ki te reo* (we were not that knowledgeable in the language), *ko āna akonga katoa ki a mātou kei roto i te reo* (All that she taught us was us in Māori) because that was the best way she could express it so we pretty much understand but were not able to.. *te hohonu o tona kōrero* (*the depth of her explanation*)? Yeah *ana kōrero* (her explanation) so *koira anō tētahi o ngā mate o*

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<sup>101</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec. 1, 13.42 – 15.16.

ēnei rā (that's one of the major problems today). I know the tune, I know a bit of the kōrero but not necessarily the in-depth-ness of the reo (language) behind it.<sup>102</sup>

The threat of losing our language also pertains to a loss of understanding in relation to our own history and tradition, and particularly the ability to interpret old ideas in a changing language that sometimes fails to capture the meanings of our forebears. Nevertheless, the orality of our transmission, as Derek Lardelli argues, encapsulates far more than the surface elements of the spoken word, but a reservoir of deeper meaning, stimulants and worldviews:

Initially as human beings, our first teachers are our mothers, and it will always be that way you can't change it, you can't change the nature of that... traditionally the oral stimulus was sound, and the visual stimulus was obviously the carving, and the visual display of whakairo, or whaka-iroiro. But as indigenous people, our indigeneity still lies in the language – what is the whakairo? What do we really mean when we say whakairo? He aha tenei mea te iro? Kua mau i a koe te iro – have you got that knowledge base set in your mind? ...Do we have the conceptual delivery of our language base enough to understand what's in behind the mōteatea; what's in behind the spoken word? So that we can understand it's not just the literal translation we're looking at. We're looking at something far more deeper than that, and that's the reason and the rationale behind why the language of most indigenous peoples needs to be removed from colonial oppression because it's the language that ties us into the land. It's a language that stems from the land, and therefore its sounds and its mechanism of delivery are all based around the land and the sea, and the natural environment.<sup>103</sup>

What lies 'in behind' the waiata, haka or spoken word, as Derek implies, is vital to the underlying meaning of the form. Without it, we cannot hope to describe our kōrero tuku iho at all. The language, environment, and tikanga are important to the shaping of our kōrero tuku iho, and are invoked in the words of individuals and collective groups. Indeed, for the majority of the interviewees, the shaping of kōrero tuku iho has been as much a group experience as it is an individual one. Reminiscing on his time as a young haka performer, Prince Ferris noted the multiple leaders of the songs and chants in his day, such as George Reedy, Merekaraka Ngarimu, and

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<sup>102</sup> Angela Tibble, 42.30 – 43.41.

<sup>103</sup> Derek Lardelli, 24.19 – 25.57.

Lucy Kupenga.<sup>104</sup> Each took charge of different items, and the key process of teaching and learning, he recalls, was oral:

In my time, when they sing, I listen. I listen for the action songs. Not so much the actions, but once you know the tune. Once you've got the song you can follow with the actions. That's how most of us do it in those days. But now it's all different now: all paper work.<sup>105</sup>

Other interviewees were asked about whether the words were displayed on paper for the group to read and learn. For many, this was their experience, but for some, like Angela Tibble it was predominantly 'just ā-taringa (by ear), none of those charts or anything like that, all ā-taringa, ā-whatu (by your eyes), ā-tinana (and the body).'<sup>106</sup> The stressing of a distinctively visceral experience remained a common pedagogical feature for most of the interviewees, and for many the most important aspect was not a verbatim knowledge of the words, but an understanding of the deeper meaning: Tinatoka Tawhai, for instance, explained that:

Before you even started learning the song, you had to research it yourself. Who composed the song? What was the song about? And this was where my dad was one advantage 'cause I'd just go home and ask him you see, so yeah, you had to do your research. You'd have to find out who wrote the song, when it was written, what the song meant, because how could you sing it if you didn't know what it meant.<sup>107</sup>

Tinatoka is referring to a tikanga here, a protocol to learning songs, chants, and haka that placed the importance on understanding it as meaningful to who we are, who it was written for, and whom it was composed by. In this way, the form of oral history and oral tradition is not accessed in a single source, but through multiple voices that are connected. In Ngāti Porou, the songs were generally 'caught' in the daily activities of the marae, as Angela Tibble recounts: 'it was just pure, oh the songs are

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<sup>104</sup> Prince Ferris, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (10<sup>th</sup> January 2008) 32.43 – 33.56.

<sup>105</sup> Prince Ferris, 34.07 – 34.45.

<sup>106</sup> Angela Tibble, 25.30 - 26.01.

<sup>107</sup> Tinatoka Tawhai, 18.53 – 19.36.



being sung again you stand up, watching, listening, singing.’ At various wānanga, she added, ‘the kōrero is given to go with the waiata’, but otherwise: ‘it was just all by ear, Kereruhuahua and all the mōteatea at home, we know the stories behind them – just knew them from hearing them a hundred billion times on the marae.’<sup>108</sup> The repetitive elements of oral transmission, in the modern world have not been hijacked by technology. Turuhira Tatare, a generation earlier, recalled learning songs while riding to haka practice on horse back.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, Matanuku Mahuika learnt haka in the car with his father on roadtrips ‘while we were travelling back and forth’ to the east coast.<sup>110</sup> In retrospect, Matanuku saw these as significant moments in the shaping of his mind and the trajectory of his life:

I thought the fact that he taught us Te Kiringutu before he taught us any other haka, because I don’t know when I developed an appreciation of what that haka meant, but I did understand the haka. The haka was a haka of protest, and about the rating and taxing of lands, and the operations of the Native Land Court... the reason I became a lawyer is probably because I was taught Te Kiringutu from an early stage.<sup>111</sup>

Matanuku reminds us that the orality of the process is still there, that the tikanga of the process remains, and that the lived experience behind the kōrero is vital to the relaying and understanding of its meaning beyond one generation to the next. This is kōrero tuku iho in our waiata, haka, and mōteatea, weaving in and out of each other in a sophisticated interplay, where customs and protocols, language, orality and new technologies overlap in the making and remaking of our oral histories and traditions. They are shaped in contemporary societies, but always with an awareness of the tikanga and worldviews that give emotion and relevance to the spoken word.

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<sup>108</sup> Angela Tibble, 26.16 – 27.16. See Appendices 2, ‘He Tangi mo Hinekauika’, p. 338.

<sup>109</sup> Turuhira Tatare, 32.09 – 32.12.

<sup>110</sup> Matanuku Mahuika, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (12<sup>th</sup> December 2008), 41.26 – 43.33.

<sup>111</sup> Matanuku Mahuika, 43.43 – 44.22. See Appendices 2, ‘Te Kiringutu’, pp. 347-348.

## Summary

For Ngāti Porou people the orality of our kōrero tuku iho is not necessarily lost in writing and print, but enhanced by it. This is because the fundamental oral conventions of tikanga that shape and define our histories and traditions are still there in the voices of those authors who remain connected to our mātauranga. Nevertheless, since its inception the majority of writing has deliberately ignored our perspectives, favouring supposedly superior western written traditions and discourses. This has been denounced by our people as 'raupatu a te pene' for its' alienating of not only our lands and language, but our frames of reference and mana regarding the past. The subordination of Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions in these ways tended to distort them in a binary between verifiable written history and unreliable oral evidence. In response, many of the interviewees argued that in order to know our kōrero tuku iho it is necessary to be immersed in the oral worlds of our people. The need to understand oral traditions in 'context' is a view shared by some oral traditionalists, but it is unclear the extent to which they are committed to enable those views. Similarly oral historians have not always paid sufficient attention to the views of their informants, and despite an awareness of ethical issues regarding informed consent and access, have rarely addressed these issues from indigenous perspectives.

For the majority of the interviewees, the nuanced realities of kōrero tuku iho allowed them to move freely between both the written and the oral. The text, viewed as a supportive tool of remembering, while the oral considered more authoritative because it is can be tested in living traditions and rituals. Thus, in understanding the form of our kōrero tuku iho, the interviewees asserted that they are made and remade within specific cultural practices. Whakapapa, for instance, shifted between prescribed written conventions and the customs and protocols of the 'Māori mindset', where tapu and tikanga dictated what is said, silenced, conveyed and

used. Shaped in a process of transmission, oral histories and traditions were produced in 'classrooms', schools and wānanga that rely on varying rules and regulations depending on whose views are in power. For Ngāti Porou, the 'truth' of our kōrero tuku iho then is forged in a world of customs and protocols that lie beneath the form, and explain the silences, rhythms, and routines that dictate how they are heard, who hears them, and why.

The form of our oral histories and traditions, as most of the interviewees attested, were shaped by chosen repositories and specialists, whose responsibilities and actions corresponded to a set of expectations. As custodians of tribal knowledge, these people acted as 'conduits' with a requirement to be familiar with the rituals and practices that bring our kōrero tuku iho to life. Thus, the kōrero tuku iho is not meant to be an individual retelling, but the view of entire communities, formed in a collective that encapsulates the stories of hapu, whānau, and iwi. An interweaving of these voices is then patterned in contemporary contexts, where old themes are recreated in innovative forms, enhanced by popular tunes, or reworked with different emphases. The specialist, or composers, grounded in their own culture are tasked with the duty of safeguarding the 'traditional' and 'historic' threads and refrains that speak to our identities and worldviews. Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions produced in these ways accentuate the oral, and return constantly to this form, because this is where they are predominantly heard, passed on, and lived.

Hearing the kōrero tuku iho was the common pedagogical experience of most interviewees, where verbatim, or rote-learned, knowledge paled in comparison to the acquisition of deeper meanings. Most importantly, what lies 'in behind' the waiata, haka or spoken word was considered vital to the underlying meaning of the form. Subsequently, a more comprehensive understanding and ability in the language was seen as a key aspect of retaining the essence of our kōrero tuku iho. In addition, the land, ocean, rivers, and mountains were also viewed as crucial to the contextualising of our oral histories and traditions. Together with our customs and protocols it is

these layers of our world that give shape and meaning to what we understand as oral history and tradition. They are carried in the voices of Ngāti Porou people, whether written or oral, shaped in a process of transmission that is layered and sophisticated, and formed in dynamic and evolving contemporary settings that speak to our worldviews.

## Chapter Six: ‘Ko Porou Koa!’: Politics of Power in Oral History and Tradition<sup>1</sup>

Self-determination and identity affirmation have long been key refrains in the politics of Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition. When Te Kani a Takirau declined the position of Māori King in the mid-nineteenth century, his reference to the steadfast nature of Hikurangi had intended to highlight more the resolute declaration of our own tribal independence than a rejection of the mantle of King.<sup>2</sup> Of his status he issued this firm reminder:

Kua kingi mai anō au i ōku tipuna

I am already a king by my lineage.<sup>3</sup>

Proverbs such as this are powerful political statements in Ngāti Porou, and have been recounted over generations within new contexts, where our *kōrero tuku iho* are retold to fit evolving circumstances and agendas. This is typical of the way history is made and remade across the world. Writing on the topic of oral history, for instance, Paul Thompson has argued that ‘all history depends ultimately on its social purpose.’<sup>4</sup> Anthropologists, ethnologists, and others who have studied oral traditions also note a ‘sense’ of the political in the processes they observe, and the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Ko Porou koa!’ – ‘tis Porou indeed’, an affirmation of the progeny of Porourangi taken from the haka powhiri ‘Te Urunga Tu’, in which the descendents of Porourangi, Hamo-te-Rangi and Tahu are emphasised (See Appendices 2, ‘Te Urunga Tu’, p. 352). It is used here to accentuate the notion that our political reference points converge in the assertion of our identity as Ngāti Porou people. Thus it is a political statement of Ngāti Porou autonomy.

<sup>2</sup> His response: ‘Ehara taku maunga Hikurangi i te maunga haere, engari he maunga tu tonu/My mountain Hikurangi never moves. It remains fast in one place’ also makes reference to the notion of resisting the temptation to pursue mana, or treasures, which essentially distract us from our own self worth, or leave us vulnerable to the political whims of others.

<sup>3</sup> Te Kani a Takirau was indeed of a high born status, through his grandmother Hine Matioro he descended from Te Uhunui o te Rangi, from Rerekohu, from Tuwhakairiora, Ruataupare, and other prominent figures significant in Ngāti Porou whakapapa. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Table 8, p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Thompson, ‘The Voice of the Past’, in *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 21.

research they undertake.<sup>5</sup> But, to what extent are these political ideas, aims, and motivations shared across the studies of oral history and oral tradition? Are they similar, or vastly different, to Ngāti Porou perspectives? Moreover, how important are these objectives to understanding the way oral history and oral traditions are understood, researched, and ‘created’ by all three groups? This chapter compares the politics of research and history-making in the work of oral traditionalists and oral historians, with the perspectives of Ngāti Porou people. It examines the intersections where gendered, religious, and national politics converge and diverge with cultural and indigenous aspirations, notions of authenticity, survival, decolonisation and self determination. The chapter considers how each groups’ views overlap, converge, and depart, and how these aims and objectives mark distinctive attitudes to the way oral histories and oral traditions are shaped, used, and understood.

## **Kōrero tuku iho as Mana Motuhake**

Oral history and traditions are produced and contested in multiple ways that reflect the underlying political aims and aspirations of individuals and collective groups. From questions of gender and tribal identity to religion and language, Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho shape, and are themselves shaped by, an array of political issues. Despite the influence of new ideologies and even spiritual perspectives, our underlying political awareness has remained steadfast in its affirmation of our mana motuhake.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, Te Kani a Takirau’s statement of ‘fierce independence’, as

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<sup>5</sup> The ‘politics of meaning’, for instance, was discussed at length by Geertz, who saw political influence as ‘an undubitable proposition.’ His interest was to consider the ‘stream of events’ between ‘political life and the web of beliefs that comprise a culture.’ Clifford Geertz, *The interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 311.

<sup>6</sup> The idea of mana motuhake here is explained more fully by Apirana Mahuika in ‘A Ngāti Porou Perspective’, *Weeping Waters: the Treaty of Waitangi and Constitutional Change*, edited by Malcolm Mulholland and Veronica Tawhai (Wellington: Huia, 2010), pp. 145-63.

Tamati Reedy writes, ‘characterises the tribe even today.’<sup>7</sup> More recently, Apirana Mahuika has called for our people to be mindful of Te Kani a Takirau’s declaration that ‘we, and we alone, are the commanders of our destiny going forward.’<sup>8</sup> This affirmation of our identity and political position has often been misinterpreted by others who have labelled Ngāti Porou ‘kūpapa’, and those who have described the pursuit of Māori history as an expedition in ‘treacherous waters.’<sup>9</sup>

To comprehend Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions it is vital to understand the underlying political objectives that shape the way they are expressed and applied over time. During his interview for this study, Nolan Raihānia recalled that when the Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou was first established its initial goal was to ‘receive back’ mount Hikurangi.<sup>10</sup> Speaking on this episode in our tribal history, Matanuku Mahuika noted that the ownership of Hikurangi remained present in our political consciousness through kōrero tuku iho despite legal title being held between the Crown and the Williams family.<sup>11</sup> In addition, Matanuku emphasised the long standing assertion of our ancestral rights resonant in this saying:

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<sup>7</sup> Tamati Reedy, ‘Ngāti Porou’, in *Māori Peoples of New Zealand, Ngā Iwi o Aotearoa* (Auckland: David Bateman/Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2006), p. 168.

<sup>8</sup> A. T. Mahuika, ‘A Ngāti Porou Perspective’, p. 161.

<sup>9</sup> Monty Soutar writes that ‘kūpapa’ can mean ‘neutrality’, but has also been associated with the notion of ‘traitor’ and loyalists to the Crown. See Monty Soutar, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership: Rāpata Wahawaha and the Politics of Conflict “kei te ora nei hoki tātou mo to tātou whenua”’ (PhD thesis, Massey University, 2000), p. 21. Angela Ballara has asked ‘Should European scholars even attempt to enter the treacherous waters of “Māori history”?’ Angela Ballara, “‘I riro i te hoko’: Problems in Cross-Cultural Historical Scholarship’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 34 (2000), p. 21.

<sup>10</sup> Nolan Raihānia, *Oral History Interview*, Tokomaru Bay (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 1:02:22-1:04:03. Initially the rūnanga dealt with the return of Hikurangi, but became the official governing body of the tribe as a whole up until the recent settlement negotiations when a new governing entity was discussed and voted for in the post governance settlement agreement. There were other rūnanga in operation at the time following the devolution of Māori affairs, such as Te Rūnanga o Paieka. Apirana Mahuika, Personal Correspondence (28 May 2011).

<sup>11</sup> He says ‘no law can ever remove the deep cultural and spiritual connection that [we] have to the coast... we didn’t cross it [Hikurangi] out from the whakatauki when we got up on the marae.’ Matanuku Mahuika, ‘Where to Form Here? Issues Around the Takutai Moana Bill’, Manu Ao Presentation, Victoria University, Wellington (18<sup>th</sup> May 2011), 34.10 – 35. 20.

E kore te mana tipuna e waimeha, he mana tūturu mo ake tonu.

Tipuna rights never diminish, they endure forever.<sup>12</sup>

Like Te Kani a Takirau's statement, the key concept here accentuates whakapapa as key to mana whenua.<sup>13</sup> As oral traditions and histories, these kōrero tuku iho reflect explicit Ngāti Porou political aspirations related to land ownership and mana tangata.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, oral historians and oral traditionalists have their own identifiable objectives. Rebecca Sharpless records that the aim for many oral historians has been to simply obtain 'a fuller record of the past': to document particularly the 'lives of ordinary people.'<sup>15</sup> Despite these political overtones, Paul Thompson has pointed out that 'oral history is not necessarily an instrument for change', but 'depends upon the spirit in which it is used.'<sup>16</sup> Alternatively, social and cultural anthropologists who study oral traditions, as Joy Hendry argues, have primarily focused on 'the different ways people have of looking at the world they live in.'<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, as Erich Kolig writes: 'whatever the short-term mission of an individual anthropologist ... the noble cause of anthropology *per se* is surely the pursuit of truth.'<sup>18</sup> Whether a pursuit for 'truth' or a 'fuller' exploration of the past, these aims are inextricably connected with issues of ownership and representation.

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<sup>12</sup> According to Matanuku, this was a phrase uttered by one of our tipuna's, Timoti Kauī. Matanuku Mahuika 'Where to Form Here? Issues Around the Takutai Moana Bill', Manu Ao Presentation (slideshow), Victoria University, Wellington (18<sup>th</sup> May 2011). See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Table 14, p. 366.

<sup>13</sup> Apirana Mahuika has argued that 'mana whenua rights as with all others is whakapapa or genealogically determined.' Apirana Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero na Apirana Tuahae Mahuika – Evidence Statement for Apirana Tuahae Mahuika' (WAI262) (12<sup>th</sup> April 1999), p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> Mana tangata here is based on mana whakapapa (the authority we inherit through our genealogy), and refers to the rights of our people to claim control, and governance, over our own land, history, and future.

<sup>15</sup> Rebecca Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', in *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira Press, 2007), pp. 21; 24.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Thompson, 'The Voice of the Past', p. 22.

<sup>17</sup> Joy Hendry, *Sharing Our Worlds: An introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology, Second Edition* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Erich Kolig, 'The Politics of Indigenous – or Ingenious – Tradition', in *Tradition and Agency: Tracing Cultural Continuity and Invention*, edited by Ton Otto, and Paul Pedersen (Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2008), p. 309.



Indeed, the 'ordinary' voices, the previously overlooked, or even the marginalised and indigenous are strategic representations created in the power politics of binary and intersecting identities.<sup>19</sup> They overlap, and may share underlying goals for empowerment, but their political trajectories often part ways when dreams of national identity or cultural unity depart from tribal autonomy or indigenous rights.

Thinking in binaries and intersectional identity politics was a very real, and often subconscious, aspect of the way each interviewee made sense of the *kōrero tuku iho* they have maintained in their own lives. Although critiqued for their narrow essentialism, Paulo Friere has noted how strategic binary identities encourage deeper levels of 'conscientization' because 'consciousness, although conditioned, can recognize that it is conditioned.' He argues that it is 'this "critical" dimension of consciousness' that 'accounts for the goals men assign to their transforming acts upon the world.'<sup>20</sup> When interviewees spoke of 'real' Māori, of colonisers, authentic tradition, or devious Pākehā, they did so with various intersecting binary identities in mind. Moreover, the underlying aim of Ngāti Porou *mana motuhake* remained a consistent theme, in which the leadership of women, the independence of *whānau* and *hapū*, and the interrogation of our contemporary and traditional tribal worldviews were regularly revisited.

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<sup>19</sup> Binaries and essentialisations are often criticized for their simplistic reductionism, but their utility lies in their ability to facilitate dialogue in specific power relationships, thus encouraging greater and deeper levels of consciousness. Paora Meredith has argued that "'Essentialist frameworks" have been and will continue to be employed as a strategic movement in creating certain spaces of resistance against immutable colonial elements.' Paora Meredith, 'Revisioning New Zealandness: A Framework for Discussion', in *Revisioning and Reclaiming Citizenship*, edited by Gay Morgan and Paul Havemann (Hamilton: University of Waikato, 1998/2001), p. 58.

<sup>20</sup> Paulo Freire, *The Politics of Education Culture, Power and Liberation* (Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1985), pp. 69-70.

## Kōrero tuku iho as Mana Whakapapa and Mana Wairua

The collective, rather than individual, nature of Ngāti Porou politicisation is reflective of the foundational significance of mana whakapapa, and the tikanga and tradition that informs it. This political resonance is emphasised by Apirana Mahuika, who notes how:

[Sir Apirana] Ngata established C Company of the 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion on tikanga and traditional lines.... He adopted the common whakapapa of those iwi that made up the company. The whakapapa basis he used was the waka concept and, in this case, the Horouta waka tradition.<sup>21</sup>

Whakapapa here enables a unifying politics of identity, where connections are reinforced and used to organise on a pan-tribal basis. In contrast to the tikanga of inclusion and connection, whakapapa has also been employed to highlight divisions. Speaking on this issue Wayne Ngata lamented the ‘disconnectedness’ involved in this way of using kōrero tuku iho:

Kare au i tiki atu i te whakapapa hei whakawehewehe kia noho, me ki ko ahau ki ko he wa ano kia whakaaetia tahitia a te wehe mea, te wehe mea engari e kore e taea te whakawehewehe i runga i ngā tahu heke i mea tipuna i mea tipuna koirā ko te mate nui kua kitea e au i roto i nga mahi a keremi Waitangi kia hoki ano ki to patai mai mehemea kua mohio ke atu au ki a au a kua tino mohio ahau ki a au ano engari ko te mea kei te whakararu i a au ko te whakaputa kōrero a te tangata e mea ana ko to wehenga ki mea he motuhake ko to wehenga ki mea he motuhake ana ma reira ano e mea ai kua raru tatou a Māori nei haunga ano te keremi ki Waitangi engari ki te kaha a tatou whai i tera huarahi i nga keremi ka mutu ka tino wehewehe te noho a ngai Māori nei mehemea ko te Tairawhiti tenei a kua tino wehewehe te noho a ngai Māori nei kua kore a tamariki, a mokopuna ranei e mohio ki te whanaungatanga o mea ki a mea a koirā tetahi ahuatanga e mahara nei au, e tino mahara nei au.

I will never use whakapapa as a means of separation and to remain as such, I acknowledge my other connections, but at times there seems to be individual agreements on separatism. Anyway, it is impossible to separate whakapapa when you consider the male lines that descend from one ancestor and another.

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<sup>21</sup> The Horouta waka ‘tradition’ is only one of many that are relevant to Ngāti Porou. See Tamati Reedy, ‘Ngāti Porou’, p. 165. A. T. Mahuika, ‘A Ngāti Porou Perspective’, p. 158. Monty Soutar notes that lineage alone did not guarantee nomination as an officer, but whakapapa was a consideration. Monty Soutar, *Ngā Tama Toa: the Price of Citizenship, C Company 28 (Māori) Battalion 1939-1945* (Auckland: David Bateman, 2008), pp. 45-9.

And as a result, it's a major issue as I have witnessed it for myself through Treaty claim submissions. To answer your question: if I know who I am, then I understand who I am, but what concerns me is when people say that your own connection (or individualism) to such and such is your own unique identity and it is through such statements that problematic issues of disconnectedness begins to occur *and* in addition to those already fuelled by ongoing Treaty claims. Consequently, if we continue down this path, then Māori will become divided amongst itself. And if Te Tairāwhiti continues on in this manner, then it will suffer the same fate and our children and grandchildren will not know their kinship relationships one to another. That is one aspect of this whole situation that I feel very strongly about.<sup>22</sup>

In achieving mana motuhake, whakapapa advances more a notion of inclusivity than it does exclusivity. This was the experience of the majority of interviewees, such as John Coleman, who remembers the learning of waiata that 'made us all one .... we didn't go as individual hapū but we were representing our hapū to combine as Ngāti Porou as an iwi.'<sup>23</sup> The songs John refers to here are tribal anthems, kōrero tuku iho from various hapū that essentially worked to unite the people. He remembers that when we got together as an iwi, people from specific areas would be put in front when a song from their hapū was sung, 'because they're the owners of these waiata.'<sup>24</sup> Far from a politics of division this dynamic interaction, as Apirana Mahuika argues, highlights collaboration, where the people come together as a single unit to achieve a specific purpose and then 'revert back to the activities of their whānau/hapū.'<sup>25</sup> This is a familiar idea for those who study oral traditions, such as Ton Otto, who observes that traditions 'can be used to legitimate or naturalize existing relations of power, but they can also be employed to mobilize a group of

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<sup>22</sup> Wayne Ngata, *Oral History Interview*, Uawa (17<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 50:16-57:09.

<sup>23</sup> John Coleman, *Oral History Interview*, Te Puia Springs (14<sup>th</sup> December 2007), Rec Two, 14.49 – 16.01.

<sup>24</sup> John Coleman, Rec Two, 6.42 – 17.28.

<sup>25</sup> He describes this as a process of fission and fusion. See A. T. Mahuika, 'A Ngāti Porou Perspective', p. 152. Others have referred to the Ngāti Porou tribal collective as a type of 'corporate' entity, an identity our hapū and whānau use 'when we wish to present a united front.' See Te Pākaka Tawhai, 'He Tipuna Wharenui o te Rohe o Uepohatu' (Unpublished Masters thesis, Massey University, 1978), p. 45.

people for political change.’<sup>26</sup> An interdisciplinary approach to thinking about traditions has been influenced by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger’s work on *The Invention of Tradition*, in which:

“Invented tradition” is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.<sup>27</sup>

Traditions as political fabrications have proved troublesome for some scholars, who have been intent on exposing them as false culture and consciousness.<sup>28</sup> Moving away from this research agenda, as Juri Mykkänen argues, ‘underlines not only the durability of culture but also the necessary sense that accompanies any social act, whether driven by power motives or not.’<sup>29</sup> For Ngāti Porou, the politicisation in our kōrero tuku iho resists the imposition of ‘invented tradition’ in favour of the innovative continuity that characterises a tribal dedication to resistance and self determination. In other words, we consider kōrero tuku iho the continuation of living tradition rather than the invention of nationhood referred to by Hobsbawm and Ranger.

Kōrero tuku iho as a living history in Ngāti Porou is thus created in the collision of multiple political intersections, and is highly influenced by the continuation of fundamental political ideas such as those related to the communal and inclusive mana motuhake of whakapapa. For oral historians, as Richard Crowenshaw and Selma Leydesdorff write, ‘it is the task of oral history to maintain both a sense of the

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<sup>26</sup> Ton Otto, ‘Rethinking Tradition: Invention, Cultural Continuity and Agency’, in *Experiencing New Worlds*, edited by Jurg Wassmann and Katharina Sockhaus (New York: Beghahn Books, 2007), p. 52.

<sup>27</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> This prevailing attitude in Anthropology is noted by Juri Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics: a New Political Anthropology of the Hawaiian Kingdom* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2003), p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, p. 2.

individual and the collective, and to make sense of memory despite its differences.’<sup>30</sup> More than individual and collective tensions in memory making, the interviewees in this study tended to highlight differences in broader political intersections and binaries. One of the key sites of collision was religious affiliation. Whaimutu Dewes recalls ‘of all the kids brought up there at Horoera, I was the only one who didn’t get baptised ... because I ran away [laughing]’:

The elder who was giving us the listen before we all got onto the bus to go down to the river where this was going to take place, he was giving us this story from Genesis, and he slanted it ... what he said was, dark people are the descendents of Cain, Cain killed Abel, therefore they have the curse of Cain on them... therefore they’re going to go to hell, but it’s okay if you get baptised then you’re in the Church of Latter Day Saints and therefore all your ancestors sins have been washed away and you can go to heaven... and I was thinking, I don’t know about this [laughing] ... it just wasn’t right and it seemed to me that it was him.<sup>31</sup>

Whaimutu’s recollection here illustrates the collision between religious affiliation and racial discourses of inferiority common to our colonial history. The political influence of religion in Ngāti Porou has had a profound impact on our *kōrero tuku iho*. According to Apirana Mahuika, the initial strength of the Anglican Church in Ngāti Porou came from its targeting of the senior whakapapa ranks, but failed as a system because ‘the status of rangātira was not accorded to those people’, and ‘their mana rangātiratanga was not recognised by the Church.’<sup>32</sup> This clash, between an incoming theological order, and an already established tribal hierarchy, created distinct political tensions. In regard to *kōrero tuku iho*, the underlying religious fervour in the church sanitised waiata that were previously considered too sexual or provocative, removed the male genitalia from carvings, and impacted on the

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<sup>30</sup>Richard Crownshaw and Selma Leydesdorff, ‘Introduction to the Transaction edition’, in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, edited by Luisa Passerini (London: Transaction, 2005), p. xvi.

<sup>31</sup> Whaimutu Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Rotorua (12<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 13.28 – 15.51.

<sup>32</sup> Apirana Mahuika, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (7<sup>th</sup> July 2009), Rec One, 1.59 – 3.02.

underlying spiritual narratives of Māori oral traditions and histories as Api explains:<sup>33</sup>

Then of course there is the immediate conflict that Māori people have with the afterlife, because the Anglicans say, and so does Roman Catholicism and others, that for you to go to heaven you have to be baptised, otherwise that gate is closed to you. And Roman Catholics said that you go into a state of purgatory... it conflicts with the Māori position in terms of the Afterlife. Because for us the afterlife is that you are forgiven at death for all your shortcomings, and so that you get the whaikōrero, the tangi, the poroporoaki are all part and parcel of the Māori spiritual theology talking about your life after death with your ancestors. The life after death is the home where we're all going to. The life after death is where all the chiefs and everybody else are gathered. That's where you are going. Reconciliation is made at death. Whereas other Churches say there is none, you will be judged in heaven.<sup>34</sup>

Kōrero tuku iho conveys a theology, a philosophy, and a mana wairua that has evolved, and contended with Christianity. In its re-articulations, these evolving oral histories and traditions are thus understood within varying political intersections, where religion and gender converge, the tradition and modern collide, and where the authenticity of our identity has been debated and played out. Testing authenticity is a concept familiar to many who work with oral traditions. Erich Kolig writes that 'anthropological investigation has shown the inherent difficulty involved in testing the validity of claims in terms of the identity and continuity of "tradition."' <sup>35</sup> Beyond the search for truth, the aims, or rather 'initial impulse' of oral historians, as Alessandro Portelli notes, has been to 'search for "more reality," for direct experience, and for first person "testimony."' <sup>36</sup> In varying ways, the testimonies shared in this study highlighted how the realities of old and political

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<sup>33</sup> Api argued that 'the Anglicans looked upon our art-forms, particularly for example the penis of men ... and they saw all of this as being signs of a barbaric and primitive race, and so they came along with their saws, and they chopped off the penises from these carved figures, which in essence was an interference and a breach of the significance of the total art-form to our history'. Api Mahuika, Rec One, 4.40 – 5.14.

<sup>34</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec One, 6.21 – 7.41.

<sup>35</sup> Erich Kolig, 'The Politics of Indigenous - or Ingenious - Tradition', p. 309.

<sup>36</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories, Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. vii.

ideas impacted on their individual lives, but also on the collective hapū and tribal histories that have been handed down over generations.

Reflecting on the collision between traditional and new beliefs, Apirana Mahuika referred to the infusion of tikanga in the Ringatu Church, and the re-articulation of biblical doctrines in Te Kooti's 'expressions' and interpretations.<sup>37</sup> This, he asserted, is an intertwining of our oral history and tradition, of our tikanga, but not a concession of our mana whakapapa, mana wairua, and autonomy.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, in terms of the politics of power inherent in our tribal religious affiliations, Derek Lardelli asserts that, the underlying aims were to benefit our people, to explore possibilities, and retain iwi mana into the future:

I have a personal view that religion really was entered into because it allowed an opportunity for intellectual exploration, and our old people were so well grounded in their cultural delivery that there was a challenge there. And they took up that challenge with both arms, and entered into that particular religious belief, knowing very well that they had their own. They just wanted something to balance off it. What happened is that inevitably the colonial religion dominated because that's what they do. And hence, the theory of sending in the missionaries first is an old tactic that you're well aware of. What it does is that it breaks down the language, it breaks down the art... it makes it easier to colonise.<sup>39</sup>

Ngāti Porou underlying political aims did not dissipate with the arrival of religion and foreign ideologies. Instead they accelerated and adapted as new opportunities arose to articulate and assert tribal mana in new ways. To this extent kōrero tuku iho never remained fixed or static, but evolved. The underlying politicisation of oral histories and traditions depended then on who was telling the story. Mana motuhake remained a constant political objective, yet in spiritual and religious

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<sup>37</sup> Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki was the founder and leader of the Ringatu Church. For further reading on his life see Judith Binney, *Redemption Songs: a Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki* (Auckland: Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Books, 1995).

<sup>38</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec One, 10.17 – 13.07.

<sup>39</sup> Derek Lardelli, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 27.12 – 28.05.

matters, incantations or tauparapara tended to give way to new karakia, and religious affiliation often marked departures between those who resisted Pakehā indoctrination and those who saw it as a means of furthering tribal autonomy.<sup>40</sup> This collision was perhaps best illustrated by Anaru Kupenga, who argued:

Religion didn't belong to us, that's an import. Māori didn't have religion, he didn't need religion, he was religion because he was God himself. Man didn't need religion, he practiced it, he was in harmony with nature and with his God.... What's religion? ... our people never had religion ... That's an introductory word to divide understandings of different cultures to how they effectively see and communicate with their God. But as for us, we were in total harmony with our Gods, our one God.<sup>41</sup>

Anaru's perspective here illustrates one side of the divide between those who perceive Māori conversion to Christianity as a form of colonial indoctrination and others who saw it as a means to enhance our tribal well-being. Understanding *kōrero tuku iho* then requires a need to see the presence of multiple intersections and binaries, where religious views often converged and diverged with colonial attitudes and the politics of tribal autonomy.

### **Kōrero tuku iho as Mana Wahine: 'Waiapu kōkā huhua'**<sup>42</sup>

Ngāti Porou is a tribe who have long been led and directed by influential and powerful women. This is reflected in the whakataukī 'Waiapu kōkā huhua', or

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<sup>40</sup> This was an issue referred to in earlier chapters – the discontinuance of tauparapara has become a trademark of Ngāti Porou whaikōrero today, its roots likely in the conversion of many of our people to Christianity, which has led to two divided views: one; the notion that this evolvment is the product of foreign indoctrination; the other an assertion of our own autonomy in choosing new directions for our people and their wellbeing. Apirana Mahuika, Personal Communication (2011).

<sup>41</sup> Anaru Kupenga, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (9<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 23.33 – 26.38.

<sup>42</sup> 'Waiapu of many mothers'. Mead notes that 'this refers to the large population of Waiapu and its many whānau (extended families), often led by chiefly women. Such a huge group is often difficult to unite.' Hirini Moko Mead and Neil Grove, *Ngā Pēpeha a Ngā Tīpuna: The Sayings of the Ancestors* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2001), pp. 415-6. Rewiti Kohere on the other hand, writes that 'The saying signifies disunity. I don't think there is more united a tribe than Ngāti Porou. I have my doubt as to the antiquity of this saying.' Rewiti Kohere, *He Kōnae Aronui: Māori Proverbs and Sayings* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1951), p. 47.



‘Waiapu of many mothers’, but is also prominent in many other sayings. Our kōrero tuku iho, and particularly our genealogies, speak to and celebrate the mana of women, as Te Kapunga (Koro) Dewes highlighted in his interview:

Ko ngā pakoko, statues carved, kei reira, kei Rongomaiāniwaniwa, ko ngā wāhine nei ko rātou kē kei runga i ngā ūpoko o ngā tāne he tipua tēnā otirā ka titiro koe i ngā tuhituhinga tērā māua ko Apirana Mahuika ngā tohu o ngā wāhine nei tiro tiro haere tonu koe i ngā pū, ngā whānau ingoa wāhine, ngā whareniui ingoa wāhine, ana koina te tohu toa, te tohu nui o ngā wāhine o Ngāti Porou.

Let me say, the statues standing at Rongomaianiwaniwa are those of women who stand upon the heads of the males and are our great ancestors. As you read the accounts given by Apirana Mahuika and myself and their related symbolisms you will then become familiar with the origins of female descent lines and ancestral houses named after women. For in them, are noble symbols indicative of mana wahine within Ngāti Porou.<sup>43</sup>

Rongomaiāniwaniwa is the daughter of our eponymous ancestor Porourangi, and is also the name of the meeting house at Rahui-o-Kehu in Tikitiki. Like many other ancestral houses in Ngāti Porou, the carvings depict, as Koro notes above, the prominence of women in our tribal history. Their leadership is also emphasised in songs, and the naming of family groupings, and are distinctive of Ngāti Porou tribal identity and politics, as Derek Lardelli points out:

Mohio koe kei roto o Ngāti Porou ngā wahine Kaihautu – mai-ra ano tena ahuatanga – me mai ano ki a... [unclear in the recording???] Paikea – i tana urunga mai ki uta, puta mai te patai “i ahu mai koe i whea?” Me mai “ara, i tau karemoana”, mahea koe i uru mai ki uta? “Ka hara mai au ki runga i te tuara o toku koka ko Rongomaitahanui”. Ka moe a Taneuarangi ka puta ko tama ko Paikea. Ko Te Rongomaitahanui is the southern white whale. Ka moe a Taneuarangi ki te “white whale” ka puta ko Paikea, “Sperm whale”. Kei te kōrero tatou mo Tutarakauika mo te wahine [unclear in the recording], Kei te kōrero mai tatou mo te haerenga mai .... [ a big bit missing here]... he wahine, he momo mahi, he momo mana mo te wahine. Te kaihaututanga.

You’re already aware about the great female leaders in Ngāti Porou, which is an integral part of our make-up from time immemorial. When Paikea landed on

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<sup>43</sup> Te Kapunga Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Rangitukia (11<sup>th</sup> December 2007), Rec Three, 10:12-11:47. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 7, 19, pp. 359, 371.

these shore he was asked “from whence cometh thou?” he answered ‘from Tau Karemoana” and again he was asked “how cometh thou to these shores?” and he replied “I came to these shores on the ancestral whale of my mother Rongomaitahanui who married Taneuarangi and begat Paikea, a son.” It is said that Rongomaitahanui is the Southern White whale and that Taneuarangi married the White whale and begat Paikea who is known as the Sperm whale. Here we are talking about the leadership (of Tutarakauika) in regard to the role of a woman and its connection to great ocean voyages and family kinship. We therefore see that women, born of destiny, can possess certain rights in roles of leadership.<sup>44</sup>

Paikea as the Sperm Whale, recounted here by Derek, is one of many symbolic characterisations in our kōrero tuku iho, and makes specific mention of the genealogy from a union between the Southern White Whale and White Whale. This is a common aspect of Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions, the relationship between human beings and the natural world.<sup>45</sup> They are political statements about our custodianship as kaitiaki of land, water, and the natural environment, and the leadership of our women in this ongoing relationship. Similarly, an amplification of women’s voices has been one of the key political aims in oral history. Described as ‘women doing oral history with other women’ this approach focuses on the recovery of women’s ‘stories’ complimentary to the principles of feminist research, which as Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai note, advocates the notion of ‘research by, about, and for women.’<sup>46</sup> This self determination has political resonance for Ngāti Porou, who empathise with the feminist contention that ‘traditional oral history methodology did not serve well the interests of women’, in the same way it has overlooked our indigenous aspirations.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, a number of interviewees addressed specific concerns about the inequalities affecting our women in a

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<sup>44</sup> Derek Lardelli, 19.03 – 21.10.

<sup>45</sup> This is common to other tribes, and not just Ngāti Porou. For further reading here, Naomi Simmonds, ‘Mana Wahine Geographies: Spiritual, Spatial and Embodied Understandings of Papatūānuku’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2009).

<sup>46</sup> Sherna Berger Gluck, and Daphne Patai, eds., *Women’s Words: the Feminist Practice of Oral History* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 1-2.

<sup>47</sup> Berger Gluck and Patai, *Women’s Words*, p. 1.

changing society. Tuwhakairiora Tibble, for instance, was adamant that ‘we should have some women’ standing on the marae because ‘they make more sense’ than the men.<sup>48</sup> In fact, as Tinatoka Tawhai pointed out, women already exercise leadership in these contexts, yet the question of how this works together with our tikanga, she suggested, is an unresolved issue:

You know where we went to today, the marae was really in a period where there was no-one there, there were no buildings, so we’ve sort of started from scratch, so our tikanga still hasn’t really been set in place, and we’re talking about this now. You know, what was the tikanga down here? Can we change our tikanga? You know we have no men down there. We have no men down there. It’s women that run that marae, and so can we get up and speak on our marae? Can we set our own tikanga up? My aunty did it, why can’t I do it? It’s not who says it, it’s what gets said eh.... And what’s going to happen if we don’t do it? What about our marae? What about our kids? What about our mokopuna?<sup>49</sup>

Questions surrounding the continuation of tikanga and its application, like the ones asked here by Tinatoka, are related to the notion of a ‘living tradition.’ “My aunty did it’, she recalls, so ‘why can’t I do it?’ The underlying mana motuhake she invokes is a commentary on multi-layered political issues, where mana wahine converges with a collective sense of mana motuhake, and the impact of a creeping colonial patriarchy invested in various religious ideals and mainstream discourses regarding the role of women and ‘natives.’<sup>50</sup> Much of the feminist analysis in oral history, however, has rarely accounted for these types of complex intersectional politics.<sup>51</sup> Although interested in ‘women’s words’, Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-

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<sup>48</sup> Tuwhakairiora Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007), 45.58 – 47.12. Despite the assertion of female leadership, the numbers of women speaking on the marae are significantly less than in earlier generations, where a number of prominent women had exercised their leadership roles. See Apirana Mahuika, ‘Ngā Wahine Kaihautu o Ngāti Porou: female leaders of Ngāti Porou’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, Sydney University, 1974).

<sup>49</sup> Tinatoka Tawhai, *Oral History Interview*, Mahora (15<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 35.43 – 36.57.

<sup>50</sup> For a more in-depth discussion on these issues, see Ani Mikaere, *The Balance Destroyed: Consequences for Māori Women of the Colonisation of Tikanga Māori* (Auckland: International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, 2003).

<sup>51</sup> This was noted for instance by Judith Stacey, who also argued that ‘While there cannot be a fully feminist ethnography, there can be (indeed there are) ethnographies that are partially feminist, accounts of culture enhanced by the application of feminist perspectives’. Judith Stacy, ‘Can there be a feminist Ethnology?’, in

Duchet writes that ‘above all’, the focus in oral history remains on the ‘condition’ of women, and ‘with the collective representations of women as they have been shaped by the society’ within which they reside.<sup>52</sup> Oral traditionalist have seldom considered women’s voices to the same extent, yet some studies on folksongs have noted a distinctive pitch and tone to women’s performance, and the predominant role of female composers in certain societies.<sup>53</sup> For Ngāti Porou, mana wahine is often articulated within a collision of multiple political perspectives. Nevertheless, it predominantly works to reassert a collective mana motuhake because it is a vital aspect of our tribal identity. Moreover, despite uncertainty regarding its reality in daily practice, it remains a consistent theme that stretches across our hapū and whānau, collective and personal, histories.

### **Te Kōrero tuku iho o ‘Ngā tini uri o Porourangi’<sup>54</sup>**

The oral histories and traditions of Ngāti Porou descend from multiple lines that carry with them diverse perspectives. In its communal and collective form, these kōrero tuku iho are bound together in whakapapa that have ‘lived’ through generations of conflicting internal politics. One of the long lasting political contests recounts the rivalry between Rāpata Wahawaha and Te Kooti, the former a staunch

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*Women’s Words, the Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 117.

<sup>52</sup> Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-Duchet, ‘Narrative Structure , Social Models, and Symbolic Representations in the Life Story’, in *Women’s Words, the Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 77.

<sup>53</sup> See Elizabeth C. Fine, *The Folklore Text: From Performance to Print* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). Margaret Orbell has commented on the frequency of female composers in Māori communities. Margaret Orbell, ‘My Summit Where I Sit: Form and Content in Māori Women’s Love Songs’, in *South Pacific Oral Traditions* , edited by Ruth Finnegan, and Margaret Orbell (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 30-31.

<sup>54</sup> Monty Soutar writes that ‘Ngāti Porou is a shortened form of “Ngā tini uri o Porourangi”’, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership’, p. 29. It can be roughly translated as ‘the numerous descendents of Porourangi’, and is used here to refer to the multiple lines of descent in our iwi, each with their own perspectives.

advocate of the Anglican Church, and latter the founder of the Ringatu movement.<sup>55</sup> Many of the interviewees spoke about this tension, including Turuhira Tatare, who was passionate in her views regarding each individual:

Te Kooti, he was all Māori, he was all Māori, and he defied people who defied him, he was so angry with his uncle for kicking his backside and saying get on the boat, get on the boat, get on the boat. Whereas Rāpata Wahawaha, he joined the constabulary, and in recent times someone suggested to celebrate his hundred years, and one old gentlemen from the coast, said “that will be the day. He was a murderer. Any man that followed the constabulary made [of a] Pākehā [unclear in the recording here]. No, we’re not celebrating his birthday, or whatever. You can celebrate it, but don’t ask us to we’re too senior for that.” And so there you are. You had a man that was Māori, but adopted Pākehā ways, and then you had a Māori who was Māori.<sup>56</sup>

Turuhira’s assessment here is drawn between the binaries of authenticity and fraudulence, between being Māori and an adoption of ‘Pākehā ways.’ In this dichotomy one is characterised a defiant hero, while the other a subservient ‘murderer.’ Despite this view, other members of the tribe have remembered Wahawaha for his drive to defend Ngāti Porou mana motuhake from external influences. Writing on Wahawaha’s leadership, Monty Soutar argues that his decisions were based on the ‘perpetuation of tribal independence and autonomy.’<sup>57</sup> Rāpata Wahawaha’s prevailing leadership, he writes, ‘positioned Ngāti Porou to take advantage of new technologies and new alliances.’<sup>58</sup> These differing views were maintained by the interviewees, some who shared Turuhira’s perspective, and others who reflected Monty’s summation. Despite these divisions, the majority remained parochial in terms of their Ngāti Poroutanga. Nevertheless, divergent

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<sup>55</sup> Soutar writes that ‘throughout his life [Wahawaha] remained fiercely constant to his Anglican allegiance.’ He became a leader of Ngāti Porou, yet was considered a traitor by others, particularly those who followed the pan-tribal ‘Hauhauism’ and Pai Marire movements. Soutar, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership’, pp. 129, 229-305.

<sup>56</sup> Turuhira Tatare, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 17.47 – 18.59.

<sup>57</sup> Soutar, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership’, p. 298.

<sup>58</sup> Soutar, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership’, p. 302.

interpretations, as Herewini Parata explains, are common and widely accepted on the coast:

My uncle Tamati, he'd done this research and he'd found this story about the Tuwhakairiora story written by Waipaina Awarau – Waipaina Awarau's thesis on Tuwhakairiora – so he thought he found something, you know, totally new. And so my grandfather Arnold was in Mihinui with uncle Paki, and at that time uncle Tamati was teaching in Te Aroha, and so he went over to papa to tell papa that he had found this great story about Tuwhakairiora. And he had put it onto a tape. Anyway the tape had started, and it was going, and papa stopped the tape and he said "Kaati, that's not the story, this is the story." So papa started to talk the Tuwhakairiora story from his slant, because Waipaina's was from an Iritekura perspective, papa's was from Pākānui's perspective... and so you'd probably get somebody else from the Wharekahika, Te Araroa perspective. It would be slightly different, but it's all the same story. But at the end of the day you are aligned to the stories that you've been told.<sup>59</sup>

All of the groups mentioned here have their own genealogical connection to Tuwhakairiora, and each emphasise their own particular hapū or iwi aspects of the kōrero tuku iho as it relates to them. This is the nature of oral tradition and history for a people who are intertwined through multiple descent lines, as Apirana Mahuika notes:

You know if you get two people reporting on the same incident they will have different emphases in different aspects of the story they will tell. And they forget the other aspects of the story. Not that those other aspects did not occur, but because of their particular interest in terms of what they're observing they tend to talk about that more.<sup>60</sup>

Forgetting is a frequently neglected aspect of how people remember, and as Api contends here often accounts for some of the differences in each perspective.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, not all accounts of the past are equally valid representations, and in some instances kōrero tuku iho have been grossly distorted and inadequately

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<sup>59</sup> Herewini Parata, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (26<sup>th</sup> January 2008), Rec Three, 1.22. 52 – 1.25.12.

<sup>60</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec Three, 3.44 – 5.07.

<sup>61</sup> 'Forgetting' is as much an aspect of remembering aspect, which will be considered more in the following chapter. Paul Riccouer, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

presented.<sup>62</sup> This form of remembering has become one of the growing concerns in oral history, where the once 'naïve claim' to give voice to the previously silenced is, as Luisa Passerini argues, now 'not enough.' 'Fighting silence', she contends, is no longer an appropriate term for the 'task' of oral history, which must also consider 'distortions' and false memory.<sup>63</sup> This more engaged and seemingly activist view of the practice and aims of oral history is not as common in the work of oral traditionalists, who tend to observe traditions at work rather than participate in a transformative critique of their influence. Thus, the approach taken, particularly by anthropologists has been to describe, rather than subvert, traditions as political resources in the context of 'national claims', or as phenomena 'frequently invented in the period of emerging nationalism.'<sup>64</sup> In contrast to the political aims of oral history, which has sought to 'empower women, the working class and ethnic minorities', studies in oral tradition have appeared content to simply portray the problems rather than contribute solutions.<sup>65</sup> For the interviewees, oral histories and traditions were inextricably connected to their lived realities, to their identities, past, present and future, and were constantly retold in an ongoing struggle for mana motuhake.

Many of the interviewees in this study discuss autonomy in an antagonistic relationship between the perceived purity of tradition and the 'corrupted' nature of modernity.<sup>66</sup> Derek Lardelli warned against this limited binary of 'new' and 'old',

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<sup>62</sup> According to Api Mahuika, this misrepresentation had been part of a departure from the underlying tikanga and political aims of our collective autonomy. This departure in political objectives he explained in a dichotomy between 'moni' and 'mana', where the pursuit of money had caused some to distort whakapapa by closing it down within an exclusionary interpretation rather than the inclusionary reality that is crucial to our 'mana' motuhake. A. T. Mahuika, Personal Communication (28<sup>th</sup> May 2011).

<sup>63</sup> Luisa Passerini, ed., *Memory and Totalitarianism* (London: Transaction, Revised edition, 2005, originally published in 1992), p. 16.

<sup>64</sup> Otto, 'Rethinking Tradition', pp. 52-3.

<sup>65</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, eds., *The Houses of History, a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 231. This political difference between studies in oral history and oral tradition is perhaps best illustrated in the theoretical and methodological approaches employed by each, which is the subject of the following chapters.

<sup>66</sup> Anaru Kupenga used the word 'corrupted' in this way a number of times during his interview.

arguing against narrow views of traditional or modern art because ‘for me there’s no such thing. It’s about continuum of movement because tomorrow my art will be tradition.’<sup>67</sup> Those interested in the study of culture and tradition have also noted this ‘dualism’ between tradition and modernity, some comparing it with Edward Said’s ‘oriental-occidental’ critique noting the discursively privileged position of the West and the ‘negative’ *other-ing* of tradition<sup>68</sup> Despite this apparent sense of consciousness in anthropology, some scholars have used it to argue against the continuity of *kōrero tuku iho*. Steven Webster, for instance, argued that ‘Māori culture must not be understood abstractly in the Romantic tradition as “a whole way of life” somehow unique, integral, [and] harmonious.’<sup>69</sup> His misunderstanding of *kōrero tuku iho* and Māori realities fails to account for the evolving nature of living traditions. Indeed, as the interviewees highlighted, the ‘turning’ of oral traditions in an evolving contemporary world was often viewed as an ‘ugly’ transformation, where meanings were regularly re-imagined within dynamic new forms.<sup>70</sup> This was a common view of the changing styles in *kapahaka*, where older ‘traditional’ movements and sounds, were constantly rehashed by changing technologies. ‘The preservers of all those items are now gone’, laments Turuhira Tatare, ‘and here we’ve turned to guitars, banjos, ukuleles, [and] drums.’<sup>71</sup> Retaining the old songs, as John Coleman contends, is as much, if not more, a practical issue than a resistance to change: ‘we don’t have to be adding to that list, otherwise in another hundred years

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<sup>67</sup> Derek Lardelli, 35.42 – 36.15.

<sup>68</sup> John Tomlinson, *Globalisation and Culture* (UK: Polity Press, 1999), p. 64. See also, John McKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1995).

<sup>69</sup> Steven Webster, *Patrons of Māori Culture: Power, Theory and Ideology in the Māori Renaissance* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 1998), p. 48.

<sup>70</sup> This was Turuhira’s view of *waiata* that became party songs, but were originally ‘dedicated to the fallen’, 41.07 – 41.47.

<sup>71</sup> Tatare, 46.54 – 47.19.



time we'll have about five or six hundred songs and we'll only know about fifty of them.'<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, this innovative adaption to the changing world has long been a part of the Ngāti Porou political mindset, and is echoed in the kōrero of our forebears, such as the revered chief Uenuku, who in his departing words urged the people to remain faithful in their religious convictions: 'I muri nei kia mau ki te whakapono/after I am gone hold fast to Christianity.'<sup>73</sup> This willingness to adapt and evolve has sometimes drawn criticism even within our own ranks. However, as Derek Lardelli stressed, the underlying political aim was not to remain passive and become subsumed, but to be proactive, assertive, and liberated in an ever evolving world:

People also say things about Apirana Ngata; that he harnessed the culture and closed it down in - the arts, but in actual fact when you look at some of the tukutuku work that he did it was revolutionary for its time. And the templating of Māori meeting houses under Ngata – he succeeded in his aim: to revitalize that cultural demise that was happening. But what he always pushed, was the next level, was to start recreating it in another realm. So the adaptation would change as it moved. As our people moved and adapted to change, orally, physically, spiritually, then those houses would change to look like us.<sup>74</sup>

It is this political worldview that has shaped the way our kōrero tuku iho is retold, performed, and communicated. Oral histories and traditions then, envisioned in these ways, are never static or fixed, but always moving, living, and growing in new contemporary situations that give fresh perspectives to old themes. This is a level of ownership that rejects the 'closing down' of kōrero tuku iho, and embraces the more fluid and innovative interpretations that open up possibilities for growth and empowerment. They can never be simply 'invented traditions' because the physical

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<sup>72</sup> Coleman, Rec Two, 9.50 – 11.07.

<sup>73</sup> An 'ohaki' (final words) retained in Ngāti Porou history noted by Te Hāmana Mahuika in his explanation of the haka 'Tīhei Tāruke.' See Te Kapunga Dewes, ed., *Māori Literature: he Haka Taparahi, Men's Ceremonial Dance Poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taumaunu, Apirana Ngata* (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, 1972), p. 5.

<sup>74</sup> Lardelli, 36.32 – 37.18.

and intellectual whakapapa that ties them together occurs in an ongoing process that reiterates mana motuhake and tikanga.<sup>75</sup> Of the aims in oral history, Alessandro Portelli writes that ‘this is where the specific reliability of oral sources arises: even when they do not tell the events as they occurred, the discrepancies and the errors are themselves events, clues for the work of desire and pain over time, for the painful search for meaning.’<sup>76</sup> Beneath the surface of Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho lie similar ‘clues’, threaded in political nuances that reveal the ‘desire and pain’ endured for survival and autonomy. They are not merely fabrications, but fluid and reliable sources that disturb, preserve, and reshape who we are, have been, and might yet become.

### **Kōrero tuku iho as Survival**

Framing Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions within a proactive politics of self determination has simultaneously been a matter of resistance and survival. Within this process, discourses of colonisation have become more and more a part of the political terminology in Ngāti Porou. Thus, in articulating mana motuhake, we have for some time now invoked the ‘colonised’ and ‘coloniser’ alongside phrases such as ‘tauwi/foreigner’, ‘rawaho/outsider’, and ‘tangata whenua/people of the land.’ In this way, sayings such as ‘ahi ka roa/long burning fires of occupation’ and ‘kauruki tu roa/long ascending smoke’ make reference to an ownership now conscious of an ongoing colonial, rather than tribal, threat.<sup>77</sup> Of the deliberate subordination of our history, Derek Lardelli remarked: ‘they [the colonisers] need to write about us to

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<sup>75</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>76</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Order Has Been Carried Out: History, Memory, and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p. 16.

<sup>77</sup> These terms are described more fully in Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, pp. 12-13.

justify their existence here.’<sup>78</sup> This is exactly what they did, and in their colonial mis-education Māori and iwi were reduced to ‘natives’ and ‘savages’, while the discursive constructions of the ‘settler’ and ‘New Zealander’ became powerful political archetypes and histories.<sup>79</sup> Subsequently, many of the interviewees’ life stories told of a re-education, or awakening, in which they reworked memories of racial abuse in the new terms of colonial oppression. Jason Koia, for instance, ‘hated being Māori’ when he was going to school: ‘I wanted to be a Pākehā because Māori were toothless alcoholics and drunken bums - and they were poor.’ Looking back now he sees that view as a result ‘of being colonised ... assimilated into being the “New Zealander” so to speak.’<sup>80</sup> ‘I was born in an era’, Maud Tautau recalls, ‘when Māori was being shoved out the door and English was being brought in, so if you spoke Māori in the school grounds you got six of the best or mustard on your tongue.’<sup>81</sup> These stories illustrate an emergent consciousness, where their experiences are now recounted in specific political terms, colonial discourses, and binaries. For some, like Anaru Kupenga, the impact of colonisation has left our own culture ‘corrupted’:

When I think back on those many years ... our old people in those days empowered us to use 95% of our brain ‘cause today I believe the Pākehā methodology only uses 5%, they put the other 95% on hold, therefore we rely on the aid of books etc. to carry our brain which we are not using and becomes useless we become so dependent on those things that we actually become useless, we have forgotten how to retain that information to carry it, so that its

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<sup>78</sup> Lardelli, 33.32-33.34.

<sup>79</sup> For more on the education of Māori see Judith Simon, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, eds., *A Civilising Mission? Perceptions and Representations of the New Zealand Native School System* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001). The discursive construction of New Zealandness is noted by Peter Gibbons in, ‘The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 37, 1 (2003), pp. 38-47.

<sup>80</sup> Jason Koia, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (10<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 12.11 – 12.49.

<sup>81</sup> Maud Tautau, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (19<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 2.47 – 3.04.

immediately at your side when you're in need of it, so you don't have to look in a book or hunt for it.<sup>82</sup>

If we leave aside for a moment a desire to prove or disprove the percentages, or even Anaru's broader claims related to aural methodologies and books, his message here is really about independence, and the erosion of our traditions and autonomy. For Anaru, Pākehā 'education was a farce', while the mātauranga and kōrero tuku iho retained and passed on by our parents and grandparents were seen as empowering to who we are and what we desire.<sup>83</sup> This is at odds with the objectives of various scholars of oral traditions such as Erich Kolig, who writes that 'the fluidity of culture, and the creativity of invention involved in the revitalisation of tradition, have led many within the dominant society in New Zealand and Australia to be sceptical of indigenous claims and to stress the need for them to be thoroughly and objectively checked by anthropologists.'<sup>84</sup>

The checking, validating, denying, and controlling of our oral histories and traditions by Pākehā people was something that many of the interviewees fiercely rejected.<sup>85</sup> Turuhira Tatare, for example, was adamant that 'we have to learn to defend ourselves.'<sup>86</sup> Her view was repeated by others, whose suspicions regarding the ulterior motives of Pākehā was often reinforced with reminders about the lack of

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<sup>82</sup> Kupenga, 6.17 – 6.13.

<sup>83</sup> Kupenga, 37.53 – 40.00.

<sup>84</sup> Kolig, 'The Politics of Indigenous – or Ingenious – Tradition', p. 308. Anthropologists, who look in from an outside position lack accountability, and are often unable to comprehend the living reality of the culture, and regularly misread and misrepresent it. They assume that the fluidity they perceive corrects the romanticism maintained by the indigenous peoples. However, these views fail to account for the strategic resistance indigenous peoples exercise in response to colonial power, and the secrets and nuance they retain and keep from the prying eyes of outsiders.

<sup>85</sup> 'Pākehā' is a problematic and contested term. It is used here because this is the term that most of the interviewees used to refer to European peoples in this country, and particularly to those who have been seen as colonisers. Frequently, the term Pākehā has changed over time, from an identification of whiteness and 'other' to an identity of the oppressor, and also to a new national identity as 'New Zealander.' See, for instance, Michael King, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland: Penguin, 1999).

<sup>86</sup> Tatare, Rec Two, 22.53- 23.54.

partnership supposedly advocated in the Treaty of Waitangi. Views such as these have long been intertwined in our oral traditions and histories, particularly our songs and haka. Perhaps one of the best examples of this in Ngāti Porou can be found in varying renditions of the haka ‘Te Kiringutu’, as Ngata wrote:

This composition has come down the generations and had its greatest revival with topical adaptations in 1888, when the Porourangi meeting house was formally opened. Led by the late Tuta Nihoniho, a noted chief of the Hikurangi subtribes, a section of Ngāti Porou registered their protest against the rating of their lands and the taxation of articles of every day consumption, specifying the “pu tōriri” or the tobacco plant. It was revived again at the Waitangi celebrations in 1934 and was adopted by the men of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Māori reinforcements as the “piece de resistance” of the recent celebration of the opening of Tamatekapua at Rotorua. Its main theme is not outdated, the complementary, yet seemingly, contradictory features of civilisation with the still novel but bitter pill of taxation.<sup>87</sup>

Communicating our disapproval in the aggressive form of haka is part and parcel of the underlying resistance echoed in a declaration of our mana motuhake. In its own fierce and confronting prose, Te Kiringutu reflects in poetic form the principal affirmation stressed in Te Kani a Takirau’s statement of independence: to protect what is in the best interests of Ngāti Porou. In this regard the haka asserts:

A haha! Na te ngutu o te	To remove the tattoo from Māori
Māori, pohara,	lips, relieve his distress,
Kai kutu, na te werweri koe	Stop him eating lice, and cleanse
i hōmai ki konei	him of dirt and disgust
E kāore iara, I haramai tonu	Yea! But all that was a deep-lined
Koe	design, neath which to
Ki te kai whenua	devour our lands! <sup>88</sup>

Beneath the ‘deep-lined design’ lies the threat, a reminder to our people that the potential benefits can sometimes obscure the lurking danger to our mana motuhake. The notion of deception is a familiar idea in the work of some oral traditionalists, such as Ton Otto, who notes that ‘a particular tradition may serve ideological

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<sup>87</sup> Dewes, *Māori Literature*, p.13.

<sup>88</sup> Dewes, *Māori Literature*, p.13. See Appendices 2, ‘Te Kiringutu’, pp. 347-348.

functions by “disguising” power inequalities or by “persuading” those who are subordinated that the inequalities are in their very best interests.’<sup>89</sup> For the majority of those interviewed in this study, the deceptions, and dismissals of our indigenous rights engendered suspicion of the powerful nation-making discourses that have advanced the government’s colonial agenda. The act of reclaiming our past then has become an increasingly more urgent strategy if Māori and iwi are to resist subsumation and realise our political aspirations and ambitions, as Derek Lardelli notes:

It’s important that you write the history of Māori. The rest of New Zealand will have already written their histories, would already have documented what they considered to be our histories. We should be writing about what we consider to be our history.... I can be a New Zealander too, but I choose to be Māori because it gives me my identity. It gives me a sense of who I am. Anyone can be a New Zealander you just have to wait two years.<sup>90</sup>

Re-writing, here is an act of survival that is inextricably connected to the assertion of *mana motuhake*. Implicit in Derek’s remarks are various binary layers beneath the identities of Māori and New Zealanders, such as *tangata whenua* and *tau iwi*, or ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders.’<sup>91</sup> For those who work with oral traditions, the insider/outsider duality is a familiar political dilemma. Indeed, as Steven Webster writes, ‘social anthropologists make a profession of being outsiders’, but should not be drawn into a ‘naïve’ advocacy of the ‘interest of their hosts.’<sup>92</sup> This has been an issue for Māori and iwi scholars, who have vigorously criticised the research of outsiders, particularly those who have deliberately ignored our political views in the

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<sup>89</sup> Otto, ‘Rethinking Tradition’, p. 52.

<sup>90</sup> Lardelli, 32.41 – 34.49.

<sup>91</sup> The ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ here is a duality related to indigenous research. See Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, pp. 137-41.

<sup>92</sup> Webster, *Patrons of Māori Culture*, pp. 10, 258.

belief that their own were somehow absented in an 'objective' empirical practice.<sup>93</sup> For Ngāti Porou, as the interviews revealed, there can be no understanding or interpretation of our oral histories and traditions from the 'outside', without a greater appreciation of our tribal aims and aspirations as they are conveyed on our terms. In this way, the language is one of the keys to mana motuhake because it is the ultimate expression of Māori and iwi kōrero tuku iho, the most unique and exact transmission of our thoughts and worldviews.

The survival of our reo (language) has become a key focus not only for Ngāti Porou, but Māori in general. Within this process our oral histories and traditions have been interwoven, invoked, and re-imagined because, as Apirana Mahuika states, the reo 'is an important tool which transmits our history down to us over the generations.'<sup>94</sup> Language is a strong indicator of who is in power, whose knowledge is in ascendancy.<sup>95</sup> For our people, as Anaru Kupenga maintains in his interview, the reo is vital to an enabling of our history and identity and to our social and political well being:

To understand oral language, oral transmission, is to understand the language fluently, so it'd be quite difficult to take our people down that path, we can employ the English words to help them understand, but it won't have the same effect as our own language because our language, our oral tradition, is an emotional language, it's a very passionate language, it's a language that uses eye contact, body language, hand signals, face language to employ the thinking of a people and if you can't understand or speak the language fluently you're gonna find it quite difficult.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> For more discussion about these concerns see the set of essays published in the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Māori Historians Association Journal, Aroha Harris & Alice Te Punga Sommerville, eds., *Te Pouhere Kōrero, Māori History, Māori People* (Wellington, 2010).

<sup>94</sup> Mahuika, Rec Three, 9.57 – 10. 35.

<sup>95</sup> A phenomenon noted by a range of scholars, including Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège De France 1975-76* (London: Penguin, 2003, originally published in 1997), pp. 153-55.

<sup>96</sup> Kupenga, 1.19- 1. 26.

Anaru's assertion here is one of ownership, in which the language is key to unlocking the meaning of our world. The language he refers to is multidimensional, emotional and physical, yet is also culturally distinctive in its appearance and expression. For others, like Turuhira Tatare, this body, hand, and facial language, was described in our own style of performance, where traditional protocols and new ideas were blended with a requisite understanding of the meanings behind the words:

We (Ngāti Porou) had two rhythms, the waltz timing, and then the foxtrot timing. And the actions really had to express the words. And it fits, if you're paying homage to someone who's just passed on, you wouldn't be smiling. But most times you smiled as if you were absolutely enjoying your item. And there was no seriousness with your facial expressions.<sup>97</sup>

This is typical of all iwi, yet for many of our people specific movements became signatures of Ngāti Porou style, such as the exaggerated swing in action songs.<sup>98</sup> Of the stance and rhythm in haka, Te Hāmana Mahuika noted that 'mo te takahi o te waewae ... kotahi tonu te takahi o te waewae/in regard to the stamping of the feet ... the rhythm is maintained with one leg.'<sup>99</sup> These aspects of our body movement, together with our reo and dialect, combine in a multidimensional performance that is in essence a political statement of identity. Many of the interviewees made mention of a specific Ngāti Porou style, including Angela Tibble, who in reminiscing about her nannies remarked: 'I don't see anyone who performs like them now. You know they say Ngāti Porou's got a special style and swing of performing, and to me no one performs like how they did.'<sup>100</sup> Despite a general consensus about these

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<sup>97</sup> Tatare, 38.37 – 39.56.

<sup>98</sup> Although, some have noted variations between hapū, for instance a more exaggerated lifting of the leg in groups of the Waiapu valley as opposed to their relations at Tokomaru bay. See *Te Hokowhitu a Tūmatauenga*, Documentary, screened Waka Huia, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

<sup>99</sup> Taken from an excerpt where Hāmana is commenting on the tikanga of the haka. See Te Kapunga Dewes, *Māori Literature*, p. 2.

<sup>100</sup> Angela Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (10<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 28.30 – 29.24.



instantly recognisable tribal traits, others like John Coleman, issued the reminder that ‘we all say we are Ngāti Porou, but there are a few things that we do differently on our marae, and you know we can’t say that we do things exactly the same.’<sup>101</sup> This was reiterated by Herewini Parata, who emphasised ‘te reo ake o Ngāti Porou’ as a living language within hapū that are still active today.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, waiata and haka were generally performed by the specific communities and families of their composers, but came to the tribal consciousness as a means of creating and presenting a united front or often to express their political concerns.<sup>103</sup> One of the more well known examples in recent generations is the haka ‘Poropeihana’, which Shaun Awatere spoke about in his interview:

I actually found out what it meant later on, but we were just taught, “okay, yeah yeah, Poropeihana we must learn this.” They didn’t really teach us, “oh this is the history behind it, this is what happened” ... It was hard case finding out about it. It was about this old fella who couldn’t stand Ngata for introducing the Act into Parliament banning beers [laughing] I cracked up when I saw that and “oh yes, that’s a typical Ngāti Porou haka.”<sup>104</sup>

Shaun understood that the essential political message of the haka is about an assertion of autonomy by those within the tribe who disagreed with Ngata’s stance on prohibition. Nevertheless, as a tribal classic it reiterates this message to a larger audience as an expression of Ngāti Porou independence and self determination. In renditions after its original performance, Poropeihana’s principal political aim has not sought to undermine Ngata’s leadership, nor to insist on the sale of alcohol to

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<sup>101</sup> Coleman, Rec Three, 19.43 – 20.32.

<sup>102</sup> Parata, Rec Three, 1.03.53 – 1.04.55.

<sup>103</sup> This was noted by a number of the interviewees, including Prince Ferris, Turuhira Tatare, Herewini Parata, John Coleman.

<sup>104</sup> It is said that Tamati Kaiwai composed this haka around about 1927 in response to the prohibition of the sale of alcohol on the east coast to assist in the payments of the mortgages taken out for Dairy farming (headed by Apirana Ngata). Apirana Mahuika has said that it was composed by more than one person, each contributing a verse before the arrival of Ngata at Mangahānea, where the meeting was scheduled. Personal Communication (2011). Shaun Awatere, *Oral History Interview*, Hopuhopu (17<sup>th</sup> January 2007), 00.31 – 1.46.

our people.<sup>105</sup> Instead, like numerous other songs, chants, proverbs, and haka in the canon of Ngāti Porou oral traditions and histories, it posits an uncompromising political message: 'E horahia mai o ture ki ahau/Sir, disclose to us your laws (of prohibition)' ... 'Aha! Ha! E me whakairi ki runga ki te tekoteko o te whare e tu mai nei ra/Aha! Ha! Let these laws be placed to lie suspended upon the carved figure of the house yonder.'<sup>106</sup> This, however, is a significantly different approach from the objectives of most oral historians who, as Rebecca Sharpless observes, aim to "'give" back history to the people.'<sup>107</sup> Writing on the approaches taken by anthropologists, Joy Hendry contends that 'it is important to learn the language of the people' because 'first-hand knowledge is the only way to become fully aware of the meanings and implications of the words used.'<sup>108</sup> Looking in from the outside in these ways requires a connection with those on the inside who are often suspicious of 'outside' researchers and their motives. Subsequently, in fighting for the survival of our language and culture, Ngāti Porou have been active in ensuring that our reo is revitalised on our terms.<sup>109</sup>

This was emphasised by Turuhira Tatare during her interview, in an anecdote where she recounts an altercation in which she and Api refused to subject Ngāti Porou reo to the conventions of another iwi. Her response to that challenge was furious and

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<sup>105</sup> Ka'ai- Mahuta cites Wiremu Kaa's view of Poropeihana as a significant 'model' or 'template for protest.' See Rachael Te Āwhina Ka'ai- Mahuta, 'He kupu tuku iho mō tēnei reinga: a Critical Analysis of Waiata and Haka as Commentaries and Archives of Māori Political History' (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2010), p. 192. Despite its specific focus on prohibition, and its direction at Ngata, the protest in Poropeihana relates more deeply to a rejection of imposed and restrictive laws, and is a call for self determination, thus it has relevance beyond Ngata's time.

<sup>106</sup> Apirana Mahuika gives this explanation: 'If these laws are suspended to rest on the carved figure of the house, they will cease to have any impact on Maori.' He points out that 'this haka was a collective composition by Ngāti Porou pakeke who were at Mangahanea marae, waiting for the arrival of Ngata for a hui with them.' A. T. Mahuika, Personal Communication (16<sup>th</sup> July 2011). Appendices 2, 'Poropeihana', p. 346.

<sup>107</sup> Sharpless, 'The History of Oral History', p. 29.

<sup>108</sup> Hendry, *Sharing Our Worlds*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>109</sup> This is similar of other iwi, yet there is a growing emphasis on the specific revitalisation of tribal dialects and language as opposed to a standardisation approach to the Māori language as a whole.

resolute: 'I'm not going to be guided by [others] ... I'm not changing my reo for nobody!' <sup>110</sup> Ensuring the survival of our reo is vital because, as Derek Lardelli reminds us, 'our indigeneity still lies in the language.' <sup>111</sup> Taking ownership of our own language learning, what is learnt, how, and by whom, was an important political decision for many of the interviewees, including Herewini Parata, who recalls:

I went to varsity at Waikato, and Sam Karetu was there, and I was sitting there and he was giving a lecture on te reo Māori. And I thought, far out, why am I sitting here listening to him telling me about te reo Māori when I can go home and get it live. And so I did, I stood up in the back of the lecture room, and I went like this (waving), walked out, went home, packed my bags and went home. Sam Karetu never saw till about eight months later, and he said "I didn't realise you were, I thought you were just going out of that lecture, I didn't realise you were going right out." And I said to him, "that's why I went home. No disrespect to you but I thought why am I listening to this when I can get it live at home." <sup>112</sup>

Herewini's reaction here might be better understood as a decision to place our worldviews at the centre of his language learning. Going home to 'get it live' highlights the fact that our reo is the vehicle for the living traditions that inform our tribal epistemologies. Indeed, of the importance of home, the chief Kōkere once uttered these words:

Waiho a Kōkere ki konei. Kia rere aku toto ki nga wai ratarata o Makarika  
Let Kōkere remain here so that my blood will flow into the cool rippling waters  
of Makarika. <sup>113</sup>

The prevailing significance of home, and the survival of our own language, was a theme expressed by one of our most outstanding advocates, Ngoi Pewhairangi, who

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<sup>110</sup> Tataru, 48.55 – 50.51.

<sup>111</sup> Lardelli, 24.19 – 25.57.

<sup>112</sup> Parata, Rec Three, 1.42.41 – 1.43.48.

<sup>113</sup> This exchange between Kōkere and Tomokai is referred to in Rewiti Kohere, *He Kōnae Aronui: Māori Proverbs and Sayings* (Wellington: A. H & A. W. Reed, 1951), p. 15. The translation and account I refer to here is from Apirana Mahuika, Personal Correspondence (15<sup>th</sup> July 2001).

issued this reminder in one of her last compositions: 'Kua ngaro ngā mōrehu, Tū mokemoke noa/our remnants have passed on, leaving us desolate .... Tō reo karanga e, tō reo karanga e/Your language calls, your language beckons.'<sup>114</sup> Survival as an integral aspect of Ngāti Porou ambitions to re-energise the language weaves through the theme of mana motuhake passed on from one generation to the next. For the interviewees, these were political views maintained in the living traditions of home, expressed in distinctive terms, and an inescapable reality in their daily lives. Because the subject matter is culture and traditions, Ton Otto notes that, anthropologists often 'get entangled in politics and morality', and should 'guard oneself against potential misuse' by working 'according to the highest professional standards for knowledge production.'<sup>115</sup> However, indigenous scholars have pointed out that these 'standards' are rarely our own, and are usually inadequate frameworks to apply to our worldviews and knowledge systems.<sup>116</sup> Conversely, as Paul Thompson notes, 'there are academics who pursue fact-finding research on remote problems, avoiding any entanglement with wider interpretations or contemporary issues, insisting only on the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.' He goes on to argue that 'they have one thing in common with the bland contemporary tourism which exploits the past as if it were another foreign country to escape to ... Both look to their incomes free from interference, and in return stir no challenge to the social system.'<sup>117</sup> Living our tribal oral histories and traditions are not only goals and ambitions, but realities of

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<sup>114</sup> Ngoi composed this song for the opening of the dining room at Mātaura. Many of our people had shifted there to work in the freezing works or shearing gangs, including Nolan Raihānia, who was instrumental in the establishment of that particular marae, 'Te Hono o te Ika-a-Maui ki Ngai Tahu'. For further explanation of the waiata see Tania M. Ka'ai, *Ngoingoi Pewhairangi: A Remarkable Life* (Wellington: Huia, 2008), pp. 94-5. My translation here.

<sup>115</sup> Otto, 'Rethinking Tradition', p. 55.

<sup>116</sup> This is an argument made by a number of scholars, see for instance, Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: how shall we live in harmony? Ko Hawai'i 'Aina a me Na Koi Pu'umake a ka Po'e Haole: pehea lā e pono ai?* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1992); Rawiri Te Maire Tau, 'Mātauranga Māori as an Epistemology', in *Histories, Power and Loss: Uses of the Past- A New Zealand Commentary*, edited by Andrew Sharp and Paul McHugh (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp. 61-73.

<sup>117</sup> Thompson, *The Oral History Reader*, p. 21.

an outlook that distinguishes Ngāti Porou political entrenchment from the ‘tourism’ of researchers who might interpret our kōrero tuku iho within foreign frameworks. While survival, revitalisation, and mana motuhake are constant in Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho, the search for ‘truth’ and meaning dominate the approach of oral historians and oral traditionalists.<sup>118</sup> These differences reflect to an extent the insider/outsider dynamic, in which the political tension between ownership and dispossession is a more immediate threat to peoples who have been colonised like Ngāti Porou.

### **E tipu e rea mo nga ra o tou ao<sup>119</sup>**

Remaining steadfast in the affirming of our autonomy should not be misinterpreted as a rejection of the outside world. Apirana Mahuika has written that ‘our cultural survival was reliant on how dynamic and, therefore adaptable it can be, to meet new challenges.’ ‘Over the centuries’, he argues, ‘we have made changes, based on tikanga’, which guaranteed continuity across generations.<sup>120</sup> Our tribal kōrero tuku iho reflects this attitude and is rehearsed frequently in Apirana Ngata’s famous proverb ‘e tipu a rea’, in which he encourages an active embracing of new technologies that might enhance and enable Ngāti Porou well-being. This was a familiar theme in many of the interviews. Speaking of his parent’s generation Tuwhakairiora Tibble suggested that they may have ‘felt it was more important for us to be educated in a Pākehā world.’<sup>121</sup> For Derek Lardelli, the use of new

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<sup>118</sup> Although, for oral historians, the search for ‘meaning’ often disturbs the notion of ‘truth’ because it focuses more on the way individuals compose, distort, and disturb the ‘facts’ of their stories. This theoretical approach is discussed more fully in the following chapter.

<sup>119</sup> ‘Grow young one to meet the needs of your time and generation.’ This translation from Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero,’ p. 68.

<sup>120</sup> Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, p. 68.

<sup>121</sup> Tibble, 13.27 – 13.48.

technologies has been an important part of the ‘cutting edge’ of our cultural ‘survival’:

The moko movement wouldn’t be as strong today if we didn’t have an electric gun, and it’s the excitement and the entrepreneurial push that our people have to get involved with it and challenge ourselves at the cutting edge of survival, and also to take that cutting edge and deliver it back at the enemy. We do a lot of trips overseas now, and the rationale behind it is that we are revisiting a lot of those types of Hawaiiki, and we are revisiting those kōrero ... if you can use Eurocentric practices and theories to enhance something that needs enhancing then do it but make sure you have full control over what it’s doing.<sup>122</sup>

Despite this active adaption of ‘Eurocentric practices’, others like Eru Potaka Dewes, opined that ‘we started to buy into the Pākehā game of writing our local history up.’ ‘Once it gets into print’, he argues, ‘it belongs to somebody else ... it’s made more accessible to somebody else.’<sup>123</sup> Eru’s apprehensions were largely related to the transformation he has observed of kōrero tuku iho in literature, and particularly the intellectual ownership he believes some Pākehā scholars have claimed over Māori and iwi knowledge.<sup>124</sup> Similar concerns were echoed by other interviewees, who reinforced the view that iwi engagement with, and adaption of, external ideas should be carefully negotiated on our terms. Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, for instance, lamented a lack of appreciation in the ‘modern world’ for indigenous ways of thinking:

Modern society places so much emphasis on qualifications, and there is quite a mystique around this kind of academic achievement, I’m not saying it isn’t important, of course it is, but what I am saying is that in my view there is a lack

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<sup>122</sup> Hawaiiki here has many meanings, it can be a birth place, a point of origin and connection, and a place where it is believed some go after death. It is used often in oratory on the marae. The whakatauki ‘Ehara i te mea poka hōu mai: nō Hawaiiki mai anō/It is not a new thing done without proper cause: it has come to us all the way from Hawaiiki’, for instance, signifies an intellectual and spiritual location. Derek Lardelli, 31.15 – 32.28.

<sup>123</sup> Eru Potaka Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Hopuhopu (22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008), Rec three, 55.12 – 55.34.

<sup>124</sup> Potaka Dewes, Rec Three, 1.00.03 – 1.01.06.

of in-depth understanding about the learning that goes on in indigenous societies.<sup>125</sup>

Likewise, Api made mention of the flawed nature of writing Ngāti Porou history within a thesis that he argued must succumb to university regulations. 'Pākehās can't interpret our way' he argued, but 'universities have got to adapt to that otherwise they'll muck it up.'<sup>126</sup> Views such as these illustrate the tension between a desire to evolve and enhance our mātauranga, and the need to ensure it is not appropriated or distorted in ways that dissolve our identity or mana motuhake. These are not new concerns, and have been repeatedly addressed in Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho. One of the most pertinent examples can be found in the highly metaphorical haka 'Tihei Tāruke', composed by the Rev. Mohi Turei.<sup>127</sup> In his interpretation, Wiremu Kaa suggests that it is a commentary on the tension between traditional Māori and Christian theologies. He writes:

Mohi had come to the realisation that his taha Ngāti Porou cannot be abandoned or trashed because the wairua from his mātua and his tīpuna are the material essence of his being ... In today's climate, Ngāti Porou individuals are at liberty to choose a particular source of spiritual preference. However, Ngāti Porou individuals have no choice with regard to the (Ngāti Porou theology) customs and beliefs that belong to our landscape. We are all born into and all form part of our Ngāti Porou wairua. We may choose to ignore it or even to place it to one side. These Ngāti Porou beliefs are part of us. Our whakapapa is the bond that affirms our tūrangawaewae here in Tairāwhiti. Our individual tāruke will always contain the wairua that is Ngāti Porou tūturu. Whatever else we place in that tāruke is up to every Ngāti Porou individual.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, *Oral History Interview*, Wairarapa (24<sup>th</sup> February 2008), 13.00 – 13.52.

<sup>126</sup> Api Mahuika, Rec Two, 2.38 – 4.56.

<sup>127</sup> Tāruke here refers to 'a wicker trap for crayfish', and the haka itself according to Apirana Mahuika refers to the mana moana of the whānau in the Rangitukia area.' Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero', p. ix. In his explanation of the haka, Hāmana Mahuika notes the highly skilled ability of its author as an expert in the language. See Te Kapunga Dewes, *Māori Literature*, p. 5. Tihei Tāruke, relates to the advent of Christianity in Ngāti Porou: 'E, I aha tērā, e hara mai ki roto ki Waiapu? Alas! What is this that prevails upon the Waiapu.' This translation from 'Piripi Taumata-a-Kura: the Seeds of Christianity' in *Ngā Māunga Kōrero, Te Nupepa o te Tairāwhiti*, (July 6<sup>th</sup> 2007), p. 18. Appendices 2, 'Tihei Taruke', p. 345.

<sup>128</sup> The first part of this extract is cited from Rachael Te Āwhina Ka'ai- Mahuta, 'He kupu tuku iho mō tēnei reinga', in which she quotes from an 'unpublished paper' written by Wiremu Kaa, p. 201. Compare Wiremu Kaa, 'He Haka te Waka ko tōna hua, he Whakapono Māori', in *Mai i Rangiatea*, vol. 1, (January 2003), pp. 57-

Messages for our people across generations are resonant in compositions such as *Tihei Tāruke*. In this case, as Wiremu Kaa implies, the haka transmits an assertion of our *tūrangawaewae* and identity as ‘Ngāti Porou tūturu’, but allows space for individuals to ‘choose a particular source of spiritual preference.’<sup>129</sup> This sense of agency is thus a significant aspect of our *mana motuhake*, and was evident in the way many of the interviewees recounted their lives and experiences. When her daughters were born, Tinatoka Tawhai remembers making a deliberate decision to become involved with the *marae*, to contribute, and take whatever skills she could:

Once I had my girls I’d take them. It didn’t matter who died, I’d toddle along to the *marae*. In the beginning I didn’t have a clue what I was doing, but I thought well I can take my hands, and I can peel some spuds, and I can wash some dishes. You know, those sorts of things, and it did a lot for me spiritually, *wairua* wise, because I’m with my *whanaungas*, you know, my extended family. That’s where I’ve learnt a lot of my *tikanga*.<sup>130</sup>

What she describes here is an intricately connected set of *tikanga*, at once a form of *whakawhānaungatanga* (relationship building), *manaakitanga* (service), and the reciprocal relationship that runs through them in a process of osmosis that others referred to earlier in this thesis. The continuation and evolution of the ritual, customs, and practice in our *tikanga* was an issue that many of the interviewees referred to in the recordings. Speaking on the fluid nature of our *tikanga*, Maria Whitehead observed that ‘we are highly flexible’ and often change *kawa* and *tikanga* ‘to suit ourselves.’<sup>131</sup> Tuwhakairiora Tibble pointed out that ‘*tikanga* can vary from *hapū* to *hapū* and tribe to tribe’, but questioned what he believed was the hypocrisy of those who transgressed some of its basic principles.<sup>132</sup> Similarly, Boy Keelan

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64. The rest of this extract, also quoted by Ka’ai-Mahuta, can be found in Wiremu Kaa, ‘Ngāti Porou Spirituality’, in *Mai i Rangīātea*, vol. 3 (January 2007), p. 72.

<sup>129</sup> Kaa, ‘Ngāti Porou Spirituality’, p. 72.

<sup>130</sup> Tawhai, 28.42 – 29.31.

<sup>131</sup> Maria Whitehead, *Oral History Interview*, Uawa (11<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 1.01.07 – 1.01.49.

<sup>132</sup> Tibble, 35.34 – 38.52.



remembers 'people drinking on the paepae, and kaumatua turning up [who] could barely stand.'<sup>133</sup> What tikanga is or should be, where its origins lie, and how it is authentic, are questions that relate not only to the way Ngāti Porou shape our identities and mould our histories, but the underlying values that inform a tribal epistemology that gives rise to aspirations and aims. In her interview, Tinatoka Tawhai stressed that today, tikanga 'has developed out of a need really', as a matter of survival:

If we are to survive as a hapū, as a marae, we have to evolve with it. We can still hold onto our things, and retain those things that are important to us tikanga wise, but they do have to evolve in some way. Now something that frustrates me though is that some of our older people are the very ones that put us wrong. And so we go onto the marae and then we've got these older people who we're supposed to be taking a lead from saying "Now, this is how it is, te mea, te mea, te mea, you don't do this. This is how this is done, and this is done." But they're the very ones you see just ten minutes later doing exactly the opposite. An example is crossing the paepae. You know that sort of thing – basic tikanga. Then ten minutes later you see them doing it, and I'm like eh? And so it's really hard because we haven't got a lot of really good role models. Not so much role models, ones that we respect, that we believe in, that can teach us. You know we're wandering around in the dark basically.<sup>134</sup>

Kōrero tuku iho provides opportunities for us to see tikanga in historical perspective as living and dynamic phenomena. However, as Tinatoka notes, the underlying political act of survival is intertwined with a desire to see it lived and not mythologised. Oral traditions and histories, for Ngāti Porou people, inform a way of life, and are not static and fleeting inventions. Looking beyond the notion of fabricated and 'invented traditions', some anthropologists have stressed a need to consider local 'manifestations of living traditions', but most seem to deny creativity or agency in an overly deterministic sense of invention.<sup>135</sup> Oral historians, as Anna Green writes, have also grappled with an exaggerated 'collective' constructivism

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<sup>133</sup> Boy Keelan, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (13<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 19.06 – 19.49.

<sup>134</sup> Tawhai, 38.06 – 39.27.

<sup>135</sup> Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, p. 2.

that minimises 'the value of individual memory.'<sup>136</sup> Of this approach in oral history, Alessandro Portelli notes that it 'is basically the process of creating relationships: between narrators and narratees, between events in the past and dialogic narratives in the present.' 'The historian', he argues, 'must work on both the factual and the narrative planes, the referent and the signifier, the past and the present, and, most of all, on the space between all of them.'<sup>137</sup>

From a Ngāti Porou perspective, this 'space' is a highly politicised expanse, in which assertions of autonomy, resistance, and survival coalesce in living traditions and oral histories. Although the advocating of autonomy has regularly manifested a rejection of overbearing outside influences, it has also engendered a tenacious struggle for survival. Within this politicisation, as the interviewees and kōrero tuku iho have illustrated, resides a willingness to adapt new possibilities that enhance and enrich our mana motuhake. Thus, as Api Mahuika writes:

Ngata's message will materialize only if we, and we alone, are in control of the cultural adaptations necessary with each age of time, because it is only we who have by whakapapa, our taonga tuku iho, it is only we who live and practice the tikanga and its values, we who have knowledge of it and how effective it can be in our lives, because its interpretation is an expression of our Mātauranga Ngāti Porou.<sup>138</sup>

If we are to realise the aspirations and messages conferred to each generation, then the mātauranga in our kōrero tuku iho must become a living part of who we are. Only then, as Api implies, can we truly exercise mana, 'control' the way our culture evolves, and protect the essence of our tribal and hapū worldviews. This is the space within which our kōrero tuku iho takes shape, as the dynamic expressions of

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<sup>136</sup> Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and "Collective Memory": Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32, 2 (Autumn 2004), pp. 42-3.

<sup>137</sup> Portelli, *The Order Has Been Carried Out*, p. 15.

<sup>138</sup> A. T. Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero', p. 68.

political affirmations that secure our identity in relationships past, present, and future.

## Summary

Ngāti Porou, oral traditionalists, and oral historians have varying political aims and objectives when it comes to the conception and shaping of oral histories and traditions. Oral historians focus on documenting the 'lives of ordinary people' and empowering the silenced, but this explicit activism is not as pronounced in the work of oral traditionalists. In contrast, the immediate realities for Ngāti Porou, as the interviews revealed, are inherited in deeply entrenched political themes that speak to autonomy and indigenous identity. Built on the fundamental assertion of mana motuhake, proverbs such as those uttered by Te Kani a Takirau resonated in all of the political binaries and intersections addressed by the interviewees. Indeed, thinking in binaries and complex intersectionalities was common to a strategic politics, but is not shared by anthropologists who argue against the limitations of what they perceive as 'romantic' and 'invented' identities and traditions. For Ngāti Porou, the continuity of *kōrero tuku iho* emphasised a living and ongoing political strain of thought, while for oral historians the collective consciousness tended to give way to a more refined search for the 'creation of meaning' that compliments nuance. In Ngāti Porou, this nuance was marked within the inclusionary politics that highlighted multiple lines of descent and an innovative adaption of new ideologies. Thus, *kōrero tuku iho* has never remained fixed or static, but accelerated in new articulations.

In the recordings, the status of women is well noted as essential to Ngāti Porou tribal identity, and regularly invoked to accentuate connections to the natural world. Acknowledging women's perspectives is similarly a key aim in oral history, yet the intersectional politics where gender, race, and colonialism collide remains a

problematic and rarely discussed phenomenon. Alternatively, anthropologists have seldom considered the autonomous empowerment of women's voices, although some studies note the prominence of female composers, and the differences in women's singing. Conversely, in Ngāti Porou, the political perspectives of women are reiterated constantly in kōrero tuku iho, passed on in the multiple descent lines that constitute 'Ngā tini uri o Ngāti Porou.' It is here, where the nuanced political contests are living and vibrant, and could never be simply 'invented', but resonate themes of autonomy in well known proverbs, songs, and haka such as Te Kiringutu, Tihei Tāruke, and Poropeihana. Understanding the messages, as the interviewees asserted, requires knowledge of the language because it unlocks the meaning to interpreting a distinctive style and assertion of mana motuhake. In contrast to these themes of survival and autonomy, the search for 'truth' appears to dominate the approach of oral traditionalists. Oral history, on the other hand, has long been viewed as a liberating approach, but as some argue is dependent on the underlying 'spirit in which it is used.'

Kōrero tuku iho in Ngāti Porou are shaped in an intersecting politics that affirms an identity based on mana motuhake. From Te Kani a Takirau's statement of independence to Apirana Ngata's exhortation to adapt the evolving world on our terms, Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions have been constantly invoked, and shaped, within specific political themes. They converge more with the emancipatory aims of oral historians, yet depart significantly from the distanced, objective, yet seemingly benevolent motivations of oral traditionalists. This is perhaps symptomatic of the underlying theoretical and methodological approaches that inform their practice –a key focus of the following chapters which underline the relationships that exist between politics, method and theory. Nevertheless, despite the significance of these methodological and theoretical dimensions, studies in oral history and tradition are not simply passive products of external ideologies, but

realisations of internal perspectives refined in the politics of lived identities and experiences.

# Chapter Seven: Ngā Tikanga Kōrero Onamata: Oral History and Tradition in Practice

I pungia te tangata i te wai o te ra,  
I pungia te tangata ki te one i Takawhiti.

The anchor for mankind is in the sunlit waters  
The anchor for mankind is on the beach at Takawhiti.<sup>1</sup>

‘Takawhiti’ in the lines recited here refers to a roto (lake) that lies between the twin peaks of mount Hikurangi.<sup>2</sup> It is said that within its waters lie the remains of the canoe Nukutaimemeha, which belonged to the illustrious voyager and ancestor, Maui Tikitiki-a-Taranga. Hikurangi as a sanctuary on which Ngāti Porou history is ‘anchored’ is an apt reference point from which a discussion of research methods might be best considered on local terms. Indeed, in our kōrero tuku iho, Hikurangi is regarded as the site where the tribe’s ancestors found refuge from ‘te tai whakamate a Ruatapu/the great tidal wave of Ruatapu.’<sup>3</sup> Similarly, with the increasing tide of methodological approaches that have swept into Māori and iwi communities over the past two centuries, Hikurangi stands as a reminder for those in Te Tairāwhiti that the utilisation of these practices must remain anchored in the foundations that have served and protected our tribal identities and worldviews for generations. For Ngāti Porou the adaption of method, and theory, in the communicating of local iwi history and identity is widely accepted. Kōrero tuku iho welcomes the arrival of ‘outside’ ideas, technologies, and approaches that might enhance the way Ngāti Porou people present and retell our stories. During his interview, Derek Lardelli, for

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<sup>1</sup> From ‘A Song for Te Rakahurumai.’ Takawhiti is a lake on mount Hikurangi, and it is believed that ‘In this lake, forever circling around, is the canoe Nukutaimemeha; said to be the canoe from which Maui fished up this land.’ For a fuller explanation of the waiata see A. T. Ngata, & Pei Te Hurinui Jones, eds., *Ngā Mōteatea*, Part 1, Revised edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), pp. 156-59. For others the lake is known as ‘Hine-Takawhiti’. See Appendices 2, ‘A Song for Te Rakahurumai’, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> These peaks are referred to as ‘te tone o Houku’ and ‘te tipu o Taikehu’: female and male.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase ‘te tai whakamate a Ruatapu’ used here is taken from ‘Ka Hoki nei au’ a waiata that recounts the migration voyage of the Horouta canoe. See Appendices 2, ‘Ka Hoki nei au’, pp. 332-333.

instance, stressed that ‘if you can use Eurocentric practices and theories to enhance something that needs enhancing then do it, but make sure you have full control over what it’s doing.’<sup>4</sup> This chapter focuses on the methods used by oral historians and oral traditionalists, from the various types of interviews they employ, to the practices of participant observation, transcription, and ethics that have become common to each group. Method and theory is inextricably intertwined because theory informs method.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, many still undertake methodological approaches without an appreciation, or acknowledgment, of their deeper theoretical implications.<sup>6</sup> This chapter considers the key methods that have become standard practice for oral historians and oral traditionalists, but leaves a deeper discussion of the theories that inform them for the chapter that follows. It explores the overlaps between the methods used by oral historians and oral traditionalists, and discusses the way these approaches have been applied, embraced, and/or rejected by Ngāti Porou peoples.

## **Interviews and Recordings: ‘Capturing’ the Voice**

The interview has long been a key research method employed by those who study oral histories and oral traditions. Oral historians, as Donald Ritchie argues collect ‘memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interview[s]’, but this approach, he contends, ‘does not include random taping ...

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<sup>4</sup> Derek Lardelli, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui a Kiwa (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 31.15 – 32.28.

<sup>5</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup have emphasized that ‘every piece of historical writing has a theoretical basis on which evidence is filtered and understood.’ Anna Green, and Kathleen Troup, eds., *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. vii.

<sup>6</sup> There are, for instance, those who undertake oral history work in this country, who believe that an overly theorised interview method is the boring ‘Shakespeare’ approach used by academics, and thus favour the ‘rock’ n’ roll’ approach that has been made popular by journalists. This was the view presented in a session with Judith Fyfe and Hugo Manson, ‘Historically Speaking: Twenty Years of Oral History in Aotearoa New Zealand’, in *Looking Backwards, Moving Forward – The Past and Future of Oral History in New Zealand*, NOHANZ Conference 2007 (Wellington, July 28-29).

nor does it refer to recorded speeches, personal diaries on tape or other sound recordings that lack the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee.<sup>7</sup> Based on this view, oratory in the formal settings of the marae, even if they are recorded would not be classified by some as an oral history approach. Nevertheless, this form of dissemination, including the informal moments of ‘capture’ described earlier in this study, is the primary means of communication maintained in Ngāti Porou. Interviewing, for our people, is predominantly a formal and foreign method of oral transference, despite the fact information was heard and recorded by those with an ‘attentive ear’ as far back as the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond the narrow description of oral history interviewing defined above, Alistair Thomson points out that ‘there is no single “right way” to do an interview.’ He writes: ‘the interview is a relationship embedded within particular cultural practices and informed by culturally specific systems and relations of communication.’<sup>9</sup> Capturing Ngāti Porou oral histories and traditions, and ensuring that it follows our cultural ‘systems’ is difficult to fit into the ‘oral history’ interview approach described by Donald Ritchie. Although interviewees told stories, sung songs, and referred to whakatauki, their narrations were significantly different to the renditions of oral history and tradition heard in formal occasions.<sup>10</sup> In most of the interviews, narrators begun by reciting whakapapa, a cultural practice common to the way our

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<sup>7</sup> Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, Second Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> One of those who was especially ‘attentive’ in this regard was Walter Edward Gudgeon, whom Monty Soutar notes ‘enjoyed the confidence of at least one tohunga’, yet gathered the majority of his research from the Native Land Court Minute Books. Monty Soutar, ‘A Framework for Analyzing Written Iwi Histories’, *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 2, 1 (1996), p. 45. James Cowan is also credited with an ‘oral history’ approach based on interviews undertaken with veterans from the New Zealand Wars. See James Cowan, *The New Zealand Wars: a History of the Māori Campaigns and the Pioneering Period* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1922).

<sup>9</sup> Alistair Thomson, ‘Fifty years on: An International Perspective on Oral History’, *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, 21 (1999), p. 82.

<sup>10</sup> Te Kapunga Dewes, for instance, sung songs during his interview, but the narrative of the interview was not situated within any broader ritual context that would be normative for marae. Te Kapunga Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Rangitukia (11 December 2007).



people welcome visitors. Pine Campbell, for instance, spent some time before the interview recounting genealogies from photos on the walls of his office, emphasising the connections between our families.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, Tuhorouta Kauai, spoke about the close relationship that binds us together through my great grandmother.<sup>12</sup> These interviews were entirely in te reo Māori, and included karakia (prayer), but tended to follow a chronological order rather than the protocol or sequence one would hear from a whaikōrero. Aside from these moments, the interviews rarely reflected formal cultural ritual, but offered insights as individuals recounted their personal experiences in whaikōrero, waiata, and tangihanga.

Despite its commonality to oral history, interviewing is a method employed by most researchers. The interview, as Alice and Howard Hoffman observe, has value as a text 'that can be subjected to literary, anthropological, or social analysis.'<sup>13</sup> Well before the arrival of the 'oral historian', it was ethnographers and anthropologists who spoke with and captured Māori and iwi oral histories and traditions.<sup>14</sup> Of these researchers, Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes that their practice 'conjures bad memories' for indigenous peoples, and that the 'ethnographic gaze' employed by anthropologists especially have led them to be 'popularly perceived by the indigenous world as the epitome of all that is bad with academics.'<sup>15</sup> This mistrust of

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<sup>11</sup> Pine Campbell, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (15<sup>th</sup> November 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Tuhorouta Kauai, *Oral History Interview*, Otautahi (1<sup>st</sup> September 2010), 00.20-01.36. We share a genealogical connection through both my grandmother and grandfather's sides (see appendices).

<sup>13</sup> Alice Hoffman and Howard Hoffman, 'Memory theory', in *Thinking About Oral History: Theories and Applications*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira Press, 2008), p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> See for instance, Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient traditional History of the New Zealand Race, as furnished by their Priests and their Chiefs* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1956); Rev. Richard Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui or New Zealand and its inhabitants* (London: Wertheim and Macintosh, 1855); Elsdon Best, *The art of the Whare Pora: notes on the clothing of the ancient Maori, their knowledge of preparing, dyeing and weaving various fibres, together with some account of dress and ornaments and the ancient ceremonies and superstitions of the Whare Pora* (Wellington: Government Print, 1899); S. Percy Smith, 'An 1858 journey into the interior', *Taranaki Herald* (New Plymouth, 1953).

<sup>15</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies, Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, London and New York: University of Otago Press/Zed Books, 1999), pp. 1, 67.

researchers, and ‘outsiders’, who have taken indigenous knowledge and claimed it as their own, has remained an issue for Māori, and Ngāti Porou, people.<sup>16</sup> However, during this study, these concerns were alleviated by the fact that the recordings were intended to highlight understandings of the world from the interviewees’ perspectives, rather than a supposedly objective ‘outside’ representation.<sup>17</sup> Most of the participants were vastly experienced with interviewing, and a large number, also well versed with academic study, asked questions about the ethical issues related to their recordings.<sup>18</sup> Some remained cautious about the use of video and audio equipment, were sceptical of my role as the researcher, and inquisitive of the underlying intent of the interview. Tui Marino, for instance, questioned the objectives of the interviews asking if they were politically motivated by the divisions between the Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou and counter claimants.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Jason Koia was also careful to ensure that his interview was not being used to discredit the Ruawaipu claim.<sup>20</sup> To this extent, my status shifted back and forth between ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’, at once on the ‘inside’ through a shared genealogy, while often resituated to the ‘outside’ by age, gender, occupation, or a perceived political difference.

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<sup>16</sup> This has been noted by Nēpia Mahuika, ‘Closing the Gaps: From Post-colonialism to Kaupapa Māori and Beyond’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 45, 1 (2011), pp. 15-32; and Moana Jackson, ‘Research and Colonization of Māori Knowledge’, *He Pukenga Kōrero*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1998), pp. 69-76.

<sup>17</sup> This did not mean that my position was necessarily always understood as an ‘insider’. Indeed, various issues often highlighted my ‘outsider status’, sometimes my job as an academic, my familial and hapu connections, while at other times my age and gender, or my perceived political connections within the tribe. This shifting positionality of ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ is addressed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 138.

<sup>18</sup> Derek Lardelli, for instance, noted some of the ethical issues he had encountered in his own work, and was keenly aware of the frailties in signing consent forms that take knowledge and mana away from our people. Others were not as attentive to the consent forms, and appeared disinterested and impatient when we discussed ethics.

<sup>19</sup> Tui Marino saw the interview as an opportunity to counter the Rūnanga perspective. Before the interview we discussed the intentions of the research, particularly the influence of the Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou. Tui Marino, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui-a-Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> December 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Jason’s interview had been arranged by some whānau. Jason Koia, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui-a-Kiwa (10<sup>th</sup> May 2008).

For the majority of participants, the 'oral history' interviews we recorded were seen as methodologically simplistic: an interviewer asking individuals questions about the past.<sup>21</sup> In many ways, this understanding accords well with Donald A. Ritchie's view that 'an oral history interview generally consists of a well-prepared interviewer questioning an interviewee and recording their exchange in audio or video format.'<sup>22</sup> Despite this basic assumption, what might be called an 'oral history' interview is in fact no different to the various types of interviews employed by other scholars. Oral historians and folklorists both use interviews, but 'the two practices', Ritchie argues, might be thought of 'as opposite ends of a continuum', where the personal experiences of the interviewee is the preferred focus for oral historians, while traditional stories, songs, and community expressions are of most interest to folklorists.<sup>23</sup> These divergent interests, as they are applied to the interview methodology, not only shape what is said, and how it is interpreted, but the underlying way the oral testimony is identified, mined, and represented as possibly an 'historical' narrative, an anthropology, or psychoanalysis.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, interviews that claim to be 'oral history' approaches could quite easily be regarded as life interviews, group interviews, semi-structured, one-on-one, interactive, or even

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<sup>21</sup> The majority of participants asked whether I wanted to leave questions with them prior to the interview, and considered an 'oral history' a straightforward one-on-one recording, where I would enquire about their personal history.

<sup>22</sup> Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> He argues further that 'Folklorists are more likely to interview more than one person at a time being 'more interested in the interplay' between interviewees', and that 'availability for general research, reinterpretation, and verification defines oral history.' Ritchie also asserts that an interview becomes an oral history only when it has been recorded, processed in some way, made available in an archive, library, or other repository, or reproduced in relatively verbatim form to publication.' This is not the common view maintained by oral historians in general. Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, pp. 24, 37.

<sup>24</sup> Alessandro Portelli notes that the control in this relationship remains with the interviewer, or historian, who has the ultimate control over what is omitted, kept, and emphasised from the interview. In this process, the underlying theories, philosophies, and perspectives of the narrator are reassembled and interpreted as much as they are amplified or illuminated. Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 56.

single issue interviews.<sup>25</sup> What makes them specifically oral history or tradition has little to do with the methodology itself, but the underlying interpretive focus. More than simply a 'methodology', an oral history approach takes shape in the distinctive frames of analysis and conversation that accentuate the historical and oral features of the interview.<sup>26</sup>

## From Group Interviews to Surveys and Questions

Oral history interview methods range from surveys, to individual and group recordings, rather than one distinctive technique. In Ngāti Porou, one of the most comprehensive 'oral history projects' drew on over four hundred hours of interviews with C Company veterans of the 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion, who served during the Second World War. The interviews differed between individual and group recordings, were predominantly held in the Māori language, included family participation, and had different interviewers, not just from the research team.<sup>27</sup> Reflecting on the interviews during this project, Monty Soutar writes that there was a 'distinctive difference in the information offered by a person when they were being interviewed on their own rather than when they were being interviewed in a group.'<sup>28</sup> Individuals, he later indicated, would often dominate the discussion, particularly if they were a higher ranking officer. As well as the monopolising of group interviews, other scholars have also noted the difficulty of 'identifying who is

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<sup>25</sup> Single issue testimony 'may be carried out on a one-to-one or group basis.' 'They are the main method for learning about a particular event.' Hugo Slim and Paul Thompson, with Olivia Bennett and Nigel Cross, 'Ways of Listening', in *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 117.

<sup>26</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup note that oral history is 'usually referred to as a methodology', despite the increase of interpretive theories. Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, 'Oral history', in *The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory* edited by Anna Green and Kathleen Troup (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 230.

<sup>27</sup> Monty Soutar, 'C Company Oral History Project', *Te Pouhere Kōrero* 3, (2009), pp. 16-17.

<sup>28</sup> Soutar, 'C Company Oral History Project', p. 16.

speaking' in recordings with multiple voices.<sup>29</sup> Groups, as some oral historians observe, often 'pressure people towards a socially acceptable testimony', yet 'in many societies, group interviews may be more in keeping with the customary ways of communication.'<sup>30</sup> The group as a collective force in constructing oral history and tradition is common to Ngāti Porou, and has significant traction in ritual practices such as powhiri (official welcomes). Conversely, recorded interviews, where the conventions are generally applied from Western traditions 'captures' group voices, but not in their common cultural settings. Subsequently, the idea of a group account, from a Ngāti Porou perspective, has more relevance to the method of participant observation, than it does a recorded interview.<sup>31</sup> For those who study oral traditions, 'group accounts', as Jan Vansina points out, 'are the typical oral traditions of many authors.... are told on formal occasions... [and] are often the property of a group.'<sup>32</sup> This is certainly the case with Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho, yet traces of these oral histories and traditions are also found in one-on-one interviews, where individuals invoke genealogies, proverbs, songs and other stories to make sense of their personal identities, past, present, and future lives.

The notion of simply observing, even within the interview, is one that David Henige cautions against. He writes that 'any historian satisfied with group interviews is

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<sup>29</sup> Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 62.

<sup>30</sup> Likewise, they can be less inhibiting by 'taking the focus off individuals' Hugo Slim et al., 'Ways of Listening', p. 118.

<sup>31</sup> It should be noted here that there are various types of group interviews. In 'Focus Group' interviews, as Ranjit Kumar writes 'you explore the perceptions, experiences, and understandings of a group of people who have some experiences in common with regard to a situation or event.' Ranjit Kumar, *Research Methodology, a Step-By-Step Guide for Beginners, Third Edition* (London: Sage, 2011), p. 160. These are different to 'community interviews', which 'may resemble public meetings more than group discussions', or 'diary interviews', which 'involves selecting a sample of people who contribute regular diary entries as part of a continuing and long-term study of social trends.' 'The participants make a commitment to keep a written or oral, tape recorded diary.' Hugo Slim et al., 'Ways of Listening', pp. 117-19.

<sup>32</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p. 19.

content to be a bystander to his own research.’<sup>33</sup> As a methodology then, the interview, whether with groups or individuals, accentuates a collaborative interplay, a negotiation of power between a listener and narrator, an informant or interrogator. To this extent, the use of questions impacts on the interview method employed by those interested in oral histories and traditions, particularly the power dynamic produced in structured, unstructured, or even semi-structured, interview approaches. Ranjit Kumar observes that in-depth interviews have ‘roots in interpretive tradition’, and seek ‘to understand the informant’s perspective.’<sup>34</sup> He notes the ‘spur of the moment’ approach to unstructured interviews, as opposed to the ‘predetermined questions’ in structured interviews that rely on a schedule.<sup>35</sup> For oral historians, as Trevor Lummis points out, the unstructured interview allows the narrator ‘to relate their experience in terms of their own priorities and interests’, but warns:

This would be fine if the aim of oral history was to collect lots of biographies .... Researchers should not aspire to a non-interventionary role somehow assuming that this results in less biased information .... Few oral historians today would advocate such an unstructured approach.<sup>36</sup>

Allowing the narrator to dictate the direction of the interview was a major objective in this study. However, in one recording, an observer interjected and begun to ask their own questions because they felt the interviewee needed to be led rather than left to drift along.<sup>37</sup> Some apologised because they felt they were ‘getting off track’, while others came prepared with books, photo albums, and narratives they wanted

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<sup>33</sup> David Henige, *Historical Evidence and Argument* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), p. 81.

<sup>34</sup> He notes that these are usually more than one interview. Kumar, *Research Methodology*, p. 160.

<sup>35</sup> Kumar, *Research Methodology*, p. 145.

<sup>36</sup> Trevor Lummis, *Listening to History, The Authenticity of Oral Evidence* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), p. 43.

<sup>37</sup> The names of these participants are withheld here to protect their anonymity. During the interview, one of the participants close families members interjected, after which an argument between the observer and the narrator ensued. Eventually, the observer became part of the interview, and later asked a number of questions themselves.

to tell, irrespective of the questions that may have been asked by the interviewer.<sup>38</sup> Writing on the interviews undertaken for the C Company project, Monty Soutar found that 'the best interviews were often those where we used kaumātua [elders] as interviewers.'<sup>39</sup> This would have been a much more preferable option, particularly at those times when my questions bordered on a cross-examination rather than a free-flowing discussion. Indeed, whenever too many questions were asked during this study the interview tended to be reduced to a type of quantitative exercise rather than a qualitative methodology. On this issue, Grant McCracken has written that 'the purpose of the qualitative interview is not to discover how many, and what kinds of, people share a certain characteristic. It is to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world.'<sup>40</sup>

The interview as a qualitative, rather than quantitative method is widely considered the strength of oral history, but many oral historians often draw quantitative data from the interview projects they undertake.<sup>41</sup> Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, for instance, in the *Presence of the Past*, undertook a large scale 'oral history' project, or rather an 'oral' survey, that explored the way 'ordinary' American's made sense of the past in their everyday lives. Conducted as phone interviews, Rosenzweig and Thelen confessed their own 'skepticism about the scientific claims of survey research', but believed that this would allow them to 'listen to people as they used the past in their daily lives to map out patterns.'<sup>42</sup> Such an approach in Te Tairāwhiti would be culturally inappropriate, and deny the 'kanohi ki te kanohi/face to face'

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<sup>38</sup> 'Getting off track' was a concern voiced by a number of the participants in this study, who apologised when they thought they were drifting off topic.

<sup>39</sup> Monty Soutar, 'C Company Oral History Project', p. 17.

<sup>40</sup> Grant McCracken, *The Long Interview*, Qualitative Research Methods Series 13 (London: Sage, 1988), p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Thompson, one of many authors, notes the quantitative and qualitative differences related to oral history interviewing. See Paul Thompson, *Voices of the Past, Oral History*, Third Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 78-80.

<sup>42</sup> Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past, Popular uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 2-3.

protocol that is a part of local tikanga.<sup>43</sup> The survey, or questionnaire design, as Trevor Lummis contends, 'has very different assumptions and conditions from those of oral history. They require answers which can be numerically processed with the minimum of preparation and so limit the choice of answers to pre-planned categories.'<sup>44</sup>

Taking a completely unstructured approach to the interviews in this study - without any questions at all - would also have been entirely inadequate. Questions, although potentially intrusive, were also necessary to prompt the speaker and stimulate discussion.<sup>45</sup> A closed question would often help clarify issues, while open questions enabled deeper reflection. But most importantly, questions are the staple diet of dialogue, verbal interaction, and interviewing, and were useful in the interviews conducted in this study in as much as they assisted rather than drove the recording. Nevertheless, for oral historians the use of questionnaires, as Louise Douglas writes, is 'one of the most fiercely debated areas in oral history.' She notes that for many:

A questionnaire is too formal and that a list of topics used as a framework by a skilled asker of questions is more useful and flexible. Some prefer to interview with no framework at all, giving the interviewee the opportunity to determine the subjects to be discussed and the order in which they are discussed.<sup>46</sup>

Operating without a schedule or list of questions does not mean that there is no focus or frame of reference at work in the recording. In order to enable a more free

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<sup>43</sup> Meeting face to face is an important aspect of research relevant to Māori. Cram and Pipi argue that 'Kanohi ki te kanohi is regarded within Māori communities as critical when one has an important "take" or purpose. This form of consultation allows the people in the community to use all their senses as complementary sources of information for assessing and evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of becoming involved.' F. Cram, and K Pipi, *Māori/Iwi Provider Success: Report on the Pilot Project* (Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland: International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, 2000), p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> 'Survey questionnaires', he notes, 'are concerned with the technique of formulating questions so that they mean the same thing to everyone', and usually ask participants to respond to a scale, in a continuum between options such as 'Agree' or 'Strongly Disagree'. Trevor Lummis, *Listening to History*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>45</sup> These strengths related to questioning, and questionnaires are addressed by oral historians, see Ritchie, *Doing Oral history*, pp. 86-87, 92-93.

<sup>46</sup> Louise Douglas, Alan Roberts, Ruth Thompson, eds., *Oral History, a Handbook* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1988), p. 73.



flowing interview, the participants in this study were asked to talk about their lives, yet throughout the interviews they were questioned regularly about the songs they remember, the stories they were told, the books they read, and other issues related to the transmission of oral tradition and history. Most were asked about where their name came from, the first time they remember speaking on the marae, whether they recall their family's genealogy books, or their experiences with kapahaka, carving, or other rituals and skills related to the passing of oral history and tradition. In these ways, they were at once the 'stand alone' or one on one 'oral histories' familiar to scholars such as Valerie J Janesick. However, they were also similar to what she calls 'collective oral histories' where 'individual stories' are considered in relation to 'a particular theme or stories in which all people share a particular experience.'<sup>47</sup>

The life story approach, yet another popular term related to the oral history method, is also used by social scientist, who undertake 'life course' research that plots and charts life narratives, and draws significant quantitative data from set questionnaires.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, this highly quantitative approach is not the life history most oral historians are familiar with, but emphasise just how slippery the notion of a life history interview method really is. For some scholars, the interview far from an oral history can be viewed as 'collaborative storying', where the words of participants and researchers 'merge' in narratives 'co-joint' constructions and meanings.<sup>49</sup> Those who specifically study 'oral traditions', such as folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and even anthropologists, also utilise a range of recordings. Like oral historians, they employ various interview techniques to gather the data and

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<sup>47</sup> Valerie J. Janesick, *Oral History for the Qualitative Researcher, Choreographing the Story* (New York: Guilford Press, 2010), pp. 2-3.

<sup>48</sup> See for instance, Janet Z. Giele, and Glen H. Elder Jr., eds., *Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London: Sage, 1998).

<sup>49</sup> This is a methodology undertaken by Russell Bishop, who argues that 'interviews as "collaborative storying" goes beyond an approach that simply focuses on the cooperative sharing of experiences and focuses on connectedness.' He contends that these interviews should account for the 'cultural world view' within which the participant functions. Russell Bishop, 'Interviewing as Collaborative Storytelling', *Education Research and Perspectives*, vol. 24, no. 1 (1999), p. 41.

qualitative information they seek, whether one-on-one or grouped interviews, or more 'episodic' interviews that focus on specific events or experiences. For Ngāti Porou, recorded testimony as court minutes, written diaries, and interviews have become normal modes of transmission, yet are all removed from the traditional customs and rituals in which *kōrero tuku iho* are best seen in practice.

### **Interactive Life Narratives, Sights, Sounds, and the “Walk Along”**

Despite the multiple methods that are used in studies of oral history or tradition, the life narrative interview remains one of most recognised and popular approaches used by oral historians' today. According to Trevor Lummis, because oral history has such an affinity with life history it is 'sometimes loosely referred to as the life history method.'<sup>50</sup> He argues further that:

The difference between the way social scientists use life story methodology and oral history is one of central focus: life story emphasis is on the subjective world of the informant (although that is understood within the structures of history and sociology), whereas oral history is primarily concerned with gathering information about historical and social structures (although the persons subjectivity will be apparent and of interest at the same time).<sup>51</sup>

The 'focus' here, as Lummis concedes, is blurred between a search for broader structures and an examination of the subjective worlds of individual narrators. To this extent, it is not the method itself that makes the interview an oral history approach, but the researcher's analytical and interpretive framework. Life narrative, as a method, is employed not only by oral historians, but scholars from various fields, including those who study oral traditions. As Julie Cruckshank observes, 'documenting life histories has always been an approved fieldwork method in anthropology.' She writes that 'instead of working from the conventional formula in

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<sup>50</sup> Lummis, *Listening to History*, p. 25.

<sup>51</sup> Lummis, *Listening to History*, p. 25.

which the outside investigator initiates and controls the research, this model depends on ongoing collaboration between interviewer and interviewee.<sup>52</sup>

In recounting their life stories, the participants in this study regularly spoke about their personal memories related to the traditions and histories they were raised with. Reminiscing about the old people he grew up with, Ned Tibble remarked 'we called our grandfathers nanny eh, te ingoa o te koroua nei (the name of this old man), we used to refer to him as Nanny Māka':

I remember one day, this old man, he and I got on a horse. And I jumped on behind him and rode down to Hicks bay... down to the beach by Horseshoe Bay there, and he took me down that creek, and he got off and we used to collect pipi, yep... we used to get pipi along that foreshore there.... He used to kōrero to me "you don't bring a rake and you rakuraku them eh, ka ngaro ngā pipi". Nothing there now, I don't know why.<sup>53</sup>

Testimonies, like this, provide nuanced perspectives into the collective worlds in which the traditions, rituals, language and histories of the coast have thrived. Their 'subjective' narratives, similar to the narratives Lummis refers to above, constantly intersected with the social systems and structures of interest to sociologists and anthropologists. In their individual life histories, the interviewees in this study regularly offered glimpses into the way traditions and histories were lived and practiced in the community. Reflecting on his life and particularly the loss of his father, Rawiri Wanoa recounted this story relevant to Ngāti Porou tribal customs and histories:

Heoi anō rā, tekau mā toru tōku pakeke ka mate taku pāpā i toromi i roto i te Awatere ... ngā mea i whaia ake ai i roto i te Awatere koinei ngā kōrero a ngā mātua tūpuna i aua wā, he taniwha kei roto i te awa, ki te kite koutou i te taniwha, kua, engari me tiki e koutou he tohunga tikina atu te tohunga e mea mai i roto i Te Whānau-ā-Apanui kua wareware i a au tērā tohunga koira ngā kōrero a aku mātua tūpuna i a au ... ināiane, nāna pea i whakamakere te mana o

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<sup>52</sup> Julie Cruickshank, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life stories of three Yukon Native Elders* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), p. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Ned Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tawata (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 2.30 - 3.38.

te taniwha rā i roto i te awa. I muri mai i tērā kua pai te awa, kua pai ngā whakahaere, ā, kua kore aituā.

Well, I was thirteen years old when my father drowned in the Awatere river. According to the stories of my elders in those days people were chased often in the Awatere, there was a taniwha (leviathan) in the river and if you saw one, then you wouldn't go in the water, but you would seek out a tohunga (priest), the tohunga was chosen from among Te Whanau-a-Apanui (another tribe in the area). I forget now who that person was, but that is the story of my elders that was told to me ... now, I think it was he who got rid of the influence of the taniwha in that part of the river, after that, the river was fine, it was safe to use, and there were no more deaths at that place.<sup>54</sup>

Like Ned, Rawiri's life history interview enabled personal perspectives regarding our traditions and rituals. Through the interactive and collaborative method of life history, the oral traditions best heard in formal occasions could also be found in individual testimony, where the narrators were free from the constraints inherent in the protocols of tribal and hapū gatherings. For those interested in the oral traditions of communities, Julie Cruickshank writes that 'by looking at the ways people use the traditional dimension of culture as a resource to talk about the past, we may be able to see life history as contributing explanations of cultural process rather than as a simply illustrating or supplementing ethnographic description.'<sup>55</sup> Indeed, the life history interviews employed in this study, although not explicitly driven by questions surrounding oral tradition offered invaluable personal testimonies about how our tribal histories have been stored and recounted by individuals. For some scholars, these types of interviews are considered 'standard autobiography' or 'oral memoir[s]', which Mary A. Lawson observes 'features the subject telling his or her own story, with the writer adding explanations and footnotes.'<sup>56</sup> These interviews, as Hugo Slim asserts, are the 'most wide ranging', and 'are normally private, one-to-

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<sup>54</sup> Rawiri Wanoa, *Oral History Interview*, Te Araroa (8<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 00:27 – 03:55.

<sup>55</sup> Cruickshank, *Life Lived Like a Story*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>56</sup> Mary A. Lawson, 'Research Design and Strategies', in *Handbook of Oral History*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), p. 108.

one encounters between interviewer and narrator.<sup>57</sup> They are significantly different to the 'Life Course' method, which explores how 'the social meanings of age and work differ between working-class, middle-class, and professional men.'<sup>58</sup> The Life Course approach, according to Kim Lacy Rogers, focuses more on 'operative age units within populations in terms of cohorts rather than generations.'<sup>59</sup> For Ngāti Porou, this is an entirely inadequate approach for a people whose history and traditions are tightly interwoven by genealogies. Despite this, the narrative aspect within life history interviews enables storytellers, and was a significant methodological strength in the interviews undertaken in this study. 'The narrative technique', as Ranjit Kumar writes 'may have a therapeutic impact' because it assists a person 'to feel more at ease with an event.'<sup>60</sup> Rawiri Wanoa's story about his father might be considered in this regard, but it was more explicit in other testimonies, like Terri Lee-Nyman's interview, during which she candidly spoke about her traumatic awakening, and journey of re-discovery: 'I'm still learning, you know, I want to be known as a wahine who is strong in Ngāti Porou.'<sup>61</sup> Telling her story was as much a personally therapeutic act as it was a straight forward autobiography. The narrative aspect of the recording provided an opportunity for Terri to strategically place her traumatic moments in a life story that served to empower her as the ultimate interpreter of her own life. Life history interviews are not only common to oral

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<sup>57</sup>'An average life story', he writes, 'may need two or three sessions and can take anything from one to eight hours.' Hugo Slim et al., 'Ways of Listening', p. 116.

<sup>58</sup> Kim Lacy Rogers, 'Aging, the Life Course, and Oral History', in *Handbook of Oral History*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), p. 312.

<sup>59</sup> 'Generations are understood to have genealogical or familial derivation, but cohorts are composed of individuals born within a generally limited number of years, say intervals of five to ten years.' Life Course scholars then prefer to work with 'cohorts' rather than generations. Kim Lacy Rogers, 'Aging, the Life Course, and Oral History', p. 312.

<sup>60</sup> Kumar, *Research Methodology*, p. 161.

<sup>61</sup> Terri described a number of traumatic incidents that had dramatically changed her life. The interview itself, she believed allowed an opportunity to talk about, and work through, many of the issues and challenges that she and her immediate family have faced. Terri Lee- Nyman, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (17<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 7.18 – 7.40.

history, but to a wide range of scholars. For the participants in this study, the life history method enabled them to retell the past in their own words, and offered glimpses into tribal tradition and stories from personal perspectives rather than simply observed in formal settings.

In telling their stories, many of the interviewees used props, referred to the environment, and moved about during the recording. My interview with Rawiri Wanoa, at his home in Te Araroa, began in a batch, not far from the main house. After only a few minutes, he prompted me to bring my recording equipment and follow him as we walked to the marae. For some this might not be understood as your typical seated life history interview, but for many Māori, these physical sites and spaces are intrinsic to understanding the individual, who they are, and who they represent. In this instance, the land becomes part of the life narrative, the hills and buildings physical reference points from which hang stories about the individual's life and world. This connection to the landscape, as Keri Brown writes, 'is crucial' for Māori, 'goes beyond a purely physical attachment', and is 'central to Māori identity' and the maintaining of whakapapa links.<sup>62</sup> Interviewing in the moment, and capturing as much of the surrounding world, for me, meant having to move, follow, observe and view. The 'hikoī' (walk) that we undertook at Te Araroa enabled him to relax in his element, and helped me to see and experience the narrative beyond the interviewer's chair. This methodological variant on the seated life history required an engagement with the sights and sounds of the local setting, and allowed Rawiri to literally take control in steering the interview.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> This connection to the landscape, as Keri Brown writes, 'is crucial' for Māori, 'goes beyond a purely physical attachment', and is 'central to Māori identity' and the maintaining of whakapapa links. Keri Brown, 'Upsetting Geographies: Sacred Spaces of Matata' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2008), p. 24.

<sup>63</sup> It also required portable equipment. The video recorder that had initially been mounted on a tri-pod was of poor sound quality, so the remainder of the interview captured shaky hand held visual scenes, while he held and spoke into the audio recorder like a microphone, I followed with the camera.

Katie Moles writes that by walking ‘people are able to connect times and places through the grounded experience of their material environment.’<sup>64</sup> This natural setting, as Donald Ritchie observes, usually provides ‘an abundance of stimulants’ for the interviewee.<sup>65</sup> Being aware of how to tap into, view and read, these visually dynamic words requires a multisensory approach to research. Robyn Longhurst, Lynda Johnston and Elsie Ho, have suggested that this might be thought of as a ‘visceral approach’; visceral in reference ‘to the sensations, moods and ways of being that emerge from our sensory engagement with the material and discursive environments in which we live.’ ‘Paying attention to the visceral’, as they argue, ‘means paying attention to the senses – sight, sound, touch, smell and taste’.<sup>66</sup> Many, if not all the interviews I undertook involved eating, drinking, walking, singing, and of course talking, at varying stages. More than just mundane experiences or simple social ritual, these acts and interactions were often parts of a performative politics relative to each person’s subjectivity.<sup>67</sup> For instance, I was told by one aunty that in order to interview her mother I would effectively have to chase her around the kitchen, because she was a ‘kāuta person’, who never stayed still, and felt much more comfortable moving, cooking, and working.<sup>68</sup> This was at once an affirmation of her commitment to the people and a personal ethic of hard work, while simultaneously a protective strategy to place her world at the centre of our kōrero.

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<sup>64</sup> Katie Moles, ‘A Walk in Thirdspace: Place, Methods and Walking’, *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 13, no. 4 (2008), <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/13/4/2.html> [Retrieved 24<sup>th</sup> August 2009].

<sup>65</sup> Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 139.

<sup>66</sup> Robyn Longhurst, Lynda Johnston, and Elsie Ho, ‘A visceral approach: cooking ‘at home’ with migrant women in Hamilton, New Zealand’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34, 3 (2009), p. 334. Longhurst, Johnston, and Ho did not focus explicitly on indigenous peoples’ experiences, yet the notion of a visceral multisensory experience has immense relevance to the interviews undertaken in this study, where recordings were accompanied regularly by food, and were conducted in kitchens, kāuta, and workshops.

<sup>67</sup> For further reading here, see Longhurst, Johnston, and Ho, ‘A visceral approach’, p. 342

<sup>68</sup> A kāuta is a cooking shed. Personal Communication: Nēpia Mahuika with Ariana Ngatai (pseudonym), Tikitiki (12<sup>th</sup> December 2007).

Ron Grele has argued that oral historians 'do not usually go into the field to test memory, we often especially in archival projects, bring along memory jogs.'<sup>69</sup> However, other oral historians note that 'revisiting a place' or conducting a 'walk about' is a common method in oral history interviewing.<sup>70</sup> Beyond simply an oral history approach, this method is known to other scholars as 'the go along method': a form of qualitative in-depth recording that Richard M. Carpiano writes 'is conducted by researchers accompanying individual informants on outings in their familiar environment.'<sup>71</sup> Reference to the environment, and the use of props and other stimulants was a common feature in the majority of interviews undertaken in this study. Most referred to photographs to recount stories similar to this one told by Turuhira Tatare:

My great grandfather there in that photo was an Anglican Minister. He's from Wairoa. Before he died he couldn't speak English. He couldn't read nor write. On the third day of his death he came back to life. Uncanny story, but it's true. He came back to life. He could read. He could write. And he knew the bible from cover to cover. That's history in Wairoa. And he built his Church at Ruataniwha in Wairoa and he married a Stapleton.<sup>72</sup>

Photographs were significant mnemonic devices, often set out in a type of narrative sequence meaningful to the interviewee.<sup>73</sup> Prince Ferris, for instance, referred to the photographs of various trucks he owned and operated, noting their successive years in a display familiar to the genealogical arrangements often seen in whareniui.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ronald J. Grele, 'Oral History as Evidence', in *Handbook of Oral History*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), p. 85.

<sup>70</sup> Hugo Slim et al., 'Ways of Listening', p. 120.

<sup>71</sup> Carpiano notes that this is a sociological approach interested in examining peoples 'experiences, interpretations and practices' within their own environment. Richard M. Carpiano, 'Come Take a Walk With Me: The "Go Along" interview as a novel method for studying the implications of Health and wellbeing', *Health and Place*, 15 (2009), p. 264.

<sup>72</sup> Turuhira Tatare, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui-a-Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 32.19 – 33.16.

<sup>73</sup> Penny Robinson writes that 'photographs, are sometimes used as mnemonic devices that allow' interviewees 'to refer to certain people or events.' Penny Robinson, 'Whose place? Mine, yours or ours', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 15 (2003), p. 14.

<sup>74</sup> Prince Ferris, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (10 January 2008).



These types of mnemonic stimulants are often extremely important objects for the people who talk about their significance in their own lives. Not only were they utilised to tell personal life stories, but in the following extract was used to convey what the interviewee believed were appropriate moral and ethical codes of conduct:

She [sister in law] walked into my house one day, and this photo of Apirana Ngata was on the wall, and so she said to me “who is that fella?”, you know, “tell me all about him.” You know, it’s really difficult to explain to a Pākehā, who doesn’t really want to know the answer, and “Yes, is he a relative of yours?”, “Yes”, “Yes, but how is he a relative of yours?”, and so I got stuck into her, and I said to her “Not only is he a relative of mine, but he is a relative of your husband, and that makes him a relative of your children as well, so you better start paying attention.” And for the first time, her husband told her off.<sup>75</sup>

This anecdote, although a story about a strained relationship with her sister-in-law, highlights an underlying tikanga (ethic/protocol) relevant to research, in which it is vital to ensure you are well prepared, and have paid ‘attention’, before stumbling in to the interviewee’s social and cultural environment.<sup>76</sup> Paying close attention to the way props are used is important in communities where different protocols and cultural understandings dictate not only the types of objects used, but their function in the recounting of oral histories and traditions. In Ngāti Porou, and other Māori communities, the use of props and mnemonic devices are significant to the way we recount our oral histories and traditions. On this kaupapa Jacob Karaka and Nēpia Mahuika Snr refer to the use of tokotoko in whaikōrero to recount whakapapa and history.<sup>77</sup> Carving as Apirana Mahuika notes is generally considered a written form of what was initially transmitted in an oral form. He argues that reading the

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<sup>75</sup> Raiha Green (pseudonym), *Oral History Interview*, 38.03 – 38.54.

<sup>76</sup> The narrator here draws on a powerfully negative Pākehā archetype to suggest that her sister-in-laws behaviour is reflective of a perceived lack of courtesy and understanding believed common to Pākehā peoples. This is not always the case, certainly not a truth of all Pākehā people, yet remained a regular stereotype used by the majority of interviewees.

<sup>77</sup> Jacob Karaka and Nēpia Mahuika Snr interview at Hopuhopu. Video (DVD) Recording. Held by Author.

environment, the stars, tides, and landscape has long been key aspects of the way our people tell stories.<sup>78</sup> On the use of tokotoko, Anne Salmond writes:

The carved walking-stick (*tokotoko*), a whalebone *kotiate* or a *mere* (hand weapons) are indispensable props for a dramatic performance, and some people say they repel *mākutū* (black magic) as well. They give the orator authority, and lend emphasis to his gestures. Sometimes the speaker has no walking stick, so he picks up an umbrella instead and uses that in his oration.<sup>79</sup>

Although participants in this study drew on props, such as letters, books, photographs, and even the natural environment, their utilisation of these stimulants were framed within the life narrative interview method. In life histories, as Dan Sipe contends, narrators' respond and 'refer to their setting and objects' in ways that reveal how 'the spoken word' is always 'embedded in a setting, a situation, [and] context.'<sup>80</sup> The interview, in this sense, is different to the formal events and rituals that are located in specific contexts and practices that have their own conventions. Capturing the *kōrero tuku iho* in these spaces includes all the sights, sounds, and other voices that contribute to the event. The interview as a method applicable to Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition is limited by the interviewee/interviewer dynamic. As the interviewees highlighted, the transmission of *kōrero tuku iho* was often something caught in multiple moments of observation. To this extent the 'walk along' method has particular resonance for a people who have grown up with tribal educations similar to the one described here by Tinatoka:

My father was a person who never went past a creek or a hill without giving you the *kōrero*, re our *tikanga*, re our history, so although half the time we weren't all listening, it actually stuck in there, Nēpia, years later. So we'd never go past a creek, and he'd name it and he'd tell us a bit of history pertaining to that particular area. He always told us who our real *whānaungas* were, and so I

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<sup>78</sup> These interviews were conducted at Hopuhopu (the interviewer, unknown). Recordings held by author.

<sup>79</sup> Anne Salmond, *Hui: A Study of Maori Ceremonial Gatherings, Second Edition* (Auckland: Reed Publishing, 1994, originally published in 1976), p. 172.

<sup>80</sup> Dan Sipe, 'The Future of Oral History and Moving Images', in *The Oral History Reader* edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 382.

really learnt a lot from him without really realising it. And he had a lot of knowledge, particularly with our history and whakapapa... I think it was inherent in him - that was his thing.<sup>81</sup>

The observing, listening, and capturing predominant in this approach is much closer to the popular anthropological method referred to later in this chapter. For those who study oral traditions, as Jan Vansina writes, these types of 'commentaries' on the environment are 'explanations ... often for remarkable features in a landscape, or to explain monuments. People often explained small depressions in rocks as imprints of hands and feet of founding heroes, kings, or prophets.'<sup>82</sup> Oral history as a method breathes life into an historical discipline once dominated by the silent sources in archives. But there is much more to the senses than just listening to the interview, than simply asking questions, and much more to the way *kōrero tuku iho* is conveyed than an aural recording could possibly hope to capture. With the rapidly advancing technologies available to researchers, the visual and multi sensory realities in research enable interviews that are more than simply 'aural' histories.

These developments have been keenly observed by various scholars, who note the potential to incorporate visual methodologies that enhance the way interviews might be analysed and understood. Video recordings, as Jeff Friedman and Catherine Moana Te Rangitakina Ruka Gwynne observe, allow the interviewer to be seen in the frame ensuring that the audience understands 'how the interview emerged from a mutual interaction of two subjects ... [and] took place on the porch of their marae meeting house so that the natural landscape, from the ground plane up into the sky, was included as context for the interview.'<sup>83</sup> Including the landscape, and setting, particularly for those who were interviewed at home, and within the boundaries of Ngāti Porou, offers a far richer interpretive lens through which the

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<sup>81</sup> Tinatoka Tawhai, *Oral History Interview*, Mahora (15<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 10.10 – 11. 58.

<sup>82</sup> Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, p. 10.

<sup>83</sup> Jeff Friedman, with Catherine Moana Te Rangitakina Ruka Gwynne, 'Blood and Books: Performing Oral History', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 19 (2007), p. 16.

kōrero tuku iho might be communicated. On this topic, Gillian Rose points out that 'the interpretation of visual images' must then 'address questions of cultural meaning and power.'<sup>84</sup> The interview, although a highly useful approach, has an immediate power dynamic created in the direction imposed by the interviewer, whether subtle or obvious. As a conventional means of conveying oral history and tradition it has slowly become a more and more normative research practice in Te Tairāwhiti. However, there are many who are still highly uncomfortable with oral let alone a visual recordings of their image and privacy. Understanding the cultural aspects of our oral delivery is a difficult task in an interview that is essentially a foreign method, yet the study of 'culture' is a primary focus for many who collect and examine oral traditions. Moreover, interviews are not the only methods employed in the researching of oral tradition and history. Ethnographic and anthropological observations have long been a popular practice related to the investigation of kōrero tuku iho.

## **Participant Observation, Field Notes, and Ethics**

Beyond the interview method, oral traditions and histories are also recorded in participant observation, a research approach popular to anthropology and ethnography.<sup>85</sup> According to Ruth Finnegan, anthropology traditionally uses a 'combination of in-depth fieldwork with a comparative perspective.' This distinctive approach, she argues, 'has become increasingly important as older divides between anthropology and such other disciplines as oral history, literary study and, in particular, folklore are now narrowing.'<sup>86</sup> Influenced by the work of Bronislaw

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<sup>84</sup> Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (London: Sage, 2001), pp. 2-3.

<sup>85</sup> The 'participant observation' method, according to Ranjit Kumar is 'where you participate in the activities of the group being studied.' Ranjit Kumar, *Research Methodology*, p. 141.

<sup>86</sup> Ruth H. Finnegan, *Oral traditions and the Verbal Arts: a Guide to Research Practices* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 1.

Malinowski, Franz Boas, and Clifford Geertz the 'observation' approach in anthropology adapted, eventually moving 'off the verandah' to a more involved practice that required immersion in the daily rituals of the researched.<sup>87</sup> This method has drawn considerable criticism from Māori scholars, who for over a century have called for a reclaiming of the past in order to 'straighten up' what has been produced about us by Pākehā researchers.<sup>88</sup> For Māori and other 'colonised' peoples, historians and anthropologists have often been condemned as 'takers and users', whose intellectual imperialism thrives in 'insulated' disciplines that regularly 'distance' and 'absolve themselves of responsibility.'<sup>89</sup>

Amiria Henare writes that 'social anthropology by and about Māori people today is virtually a thing of the past.'<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, working amongst his own people, Des Kahotea claims that his approach moved beyond traditional understandings of anthropology. As an 'ethnographic insider' he asserts that his upbringing within the community and involvement in tribal politics relocates him as a 'native informant anthropologist.'<sup>91</sup> The idea of an 'indigenous anthropologist' is also emphasised in the work of other Pacific Scholars, who note the importance of genealogy in their

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<sup>87</sup> For further reading see Michael W. Young, *Malinowski: odyssey of an anthropologist, 1884-1920* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Vernon J Williams Jnr, *Rethinking Race, Franz Boas and His Contemporaries* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures, selected essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>88</sup> This was addressed by Te Rangihiroa, who wrote of the need 'to straighten up what has been written by our Pākehā pioneers' in a letter to Ngata well over a century ago now. M. P. K. Sorrenson, ed., *Na to hoa aroha: From your dear friend, the correspondence between Sir Apirana Ngata and Peter Buck, 1925 – 1950 Vol 2* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1987).

<sup>89</sup> Huanani Kay Trask, cited in Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 67.

<sup>90</sup> Allan Hanson, 'The Making of the Māori: Culture, Invention and its logic', *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 91, 4 (Dec 1989), p. 890 cited in Amiria Henare 'Ngā Rakau a te Pākehā: reconsidering Māori Anthropology', in *Anthropology and Science: Epistemologies in Practice*, edited by Jeanette Edwards, Penny Harvey, and Peter Wade (New York: Berg, 2007), p. 93.

<sup>91</sup> Des Tatana Kahotea, 'The "native informant" anthropologist as Kaupapa Maori research', *MAI Review*, 1 (2006), [www.review.mai.ac.nz](http://www.review.mai.ac.nz) [last accessed 19 October 2011], p. 1.

practice, and accentuate a focus on ‘homework’ rather than ‘fieldwork.’<sup>92</sup> In this sense, observation as a method remains a viable approach, so long as the ‘insiders’ have control over the way their worlds are conveyed to outsiders.<sup>93</sup>

Within Ngāti Porou, the notion of ‘fieldwork’ is a similarly problematic idea, which re-orientates our world on the periphery of research as a community to be visited rather than ‘lived’ in. Capturing and representing kōrero tuku iho is not simply a gift, but a responsibility as Herewini Parata points out in his interview:

Kōrero tuku iho, no-one else is going to validate it. We’ve got to validate it ourselves. And if it’s validated by ourselves for ourselves then who is any other historian... or any other race of people to say that our kōrero tuku iho is not valid... so we’ve got the kōrero tuku iho, we’ve got the written word, we’ve got the whakairo of the kōrero, in carving, in tukutuku, we’ve got it in paintings, and all that. And I think we’ve got to use all those mediums and maintain them as valid forms of transmitting history ... on to the next generation. Because all our talk now and what we do is going to be kōrero tuku iho for our children.<sup>94</sup>

For Herewini, and many other interviewees, oral histories and traditions were heard and learnt not only in formal ritual, but in everyday activities. The methodology of participant observation, where the researcher becomes immersed in the world and practices of the community has long included the learning of the language.<sup>95</sup> Monty Soutar notes the importance of ‘competency in the language’ as a factor that has enabled historical research within Ngāti Porou. Despite this ability, he goes on to highlight how cultural insight and awareness are in actuality more important to a

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<sup>92</sup> Ty P. Kāwika Tengan, Tēvita O. Ka’ili and Rochelle Tuitagava’a Fonoti, eds., ‘Genealogies: Articulating Indigenous Anthropology in/of Oceania’, *Pacific Studies*, vol. 33, no. 3/3 (2010), pp. 141, 150.

<sup>93</sup> Similar ideas have been debated by scholars on Australian and South Pacific tradition and history for more than a decade. See for instance, Tim Rowse, ‘Culturally Appropriate Indigenous Accountability’, *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 43, no. 9 (June/July 2000), pp. 1514-1532; Marcia Langton, ‘The Edge of the Sacred, the Edge of Death: Sensual Inscriptions’, in *Inscribed Landscapes: Marking and Making Place*, edited by Bruno David and Meredith Wilson (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002), pp. 253-269.

<sup>94</sup> Herewini Parata, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui-a-Kiwa (26<sup>th</sup> January 2008), Rec 3, 1.44.01 - 1.45.22.

<sup>95</sup> Joy Hendry argues that it is common practice for anthropologists to learn the language and the ‘world view it portrays.’ Joy Hendry, *Sharing Our Worlds: an Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology*, Second Edition (New York: New York University Press, 2008), p. 5.

robust interpretive analysis of Ngāti Porou history.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, language competency was a strategy employed in the methods of early ethnographers to ‘facilitate the completion of colonisation.’<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, simply being in the field, or learning the language, are insufficient to acquiring an understanding if the aim and focus is applied from elsewhere. Thus, the intention then - the underlying political and intellectual objectives - is significant to the application of the method. Paul Thompson writes that:

The historian comes to the interview to learn: to sit at the feet of others who, because they come from a different social class, or are less educated, or older, know more about something. The reconstruction of history itself becomes a much more widely collaborative process, in which non-professionals must play a crucial part.<sup>98</sup>

The ‘collaborator’ rather than the ‘informant’ is often considered a more empowered partner in interviewing and observation.<sup>99</sup> However, in both the interview and participant observation, it is the observer who retains power, even if it is seemingly ‘silenced during the interactive process.’<sup>100</sup> Observers in ‘field orientated’ disciplines record their experiences, then select extracts from their field notes, or wait to write them up afterwards.<sup>101</sup> This, as Willa K. Baum contends, is a familiar practice for oral historians, who she argues should keep ‘jottings on the surroundings, appearance of

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<sup>96</sup> Soutar, ‘A Framework for Analyzing Written Iwi Histories’, pp. 47-50.

<sup>97</sup> This is noted by the anthropologist Toon Van Meijl, ‘Historicising Maoritanga: Colonial Ethnography and the Reification of Maori Traditions’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 105, no. 3 (September 1996), p. 323.

<sup>98</sup> Paul Thompson, *Voices of the Past*, p. 12.

<sup>99</sup> See Hendry, *Sharing Our Worlds*, pp. 3-5.

<sup>100</sup> Ranjit Kumar argues that there is a possibility ‘of observer bias.’ Kumar, *Research Methodology*, p. 141. For indigenous peoples, this ‘bias’ has significant consequences, and has been heavily criticised. See for instance, Haunani-Kay Trask, ‘From a Native Daughter’, in *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, edited by Calvin Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 171-79; and Tipene O’Regan, ‘Who Owns the Past? Change in Māori Perceptions of the Past’, in *From the Beginning: The Archaeology of the Māori*, edited by John Wilson (Auckland: Penguin in association with New Zealand Historic Places Trust, 1987), pp. 141-45.

<sup>101</sup> Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 38.

the narrator, [and] other persons present.’<sup>102</sup> A more distanced observation method though, as Trevor Lummis contends, is different to an oral history approach that seeks to establish the ‘authenticity of recorded information, not heresy or various combinations of note-taking in the field or writing-up in retrospect which leave the actual words and evidence of the informant available only at second hand.’<sup>103</sup>

Recorded interviews, as some claim, enable those on the inside to ‘speak for themselves’, while participant observation tends to rely more heavily on the listener’s interpretation.<sup>104</sup> Both are viable methods that have relevance to the way Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition is transmitted, but are similarly dependent, as Monty Soutar argues, on the researcher’s ability to present the kōrero in a ‘form characteristic of Ngāti Porou thought.’<sup>105</sup> Interviews capture voices, yet observational recordings often do the same thing within the normative routines and rituals of the community.<sup>106</sup> This notion of ‘participant observation’ might be reconsidered in indigenous communities like Ngāti Porou, where kōrero tuku iho is ‘caught’ in the multiple modes described earlier in this study. Writing on the research experience with her people in the Australian outback, Lorina Barker saw it as an opportunity to re-immense herself in the culture, and to participate in different activities:

I have adapted the anthropological use of the term ‘hanging out’ which involves participant observation, to my use of hangin’ out to mean, hangin’ out in my community, and with my family yarnin’ and catchin’ up .... The ritual of ‘catchin’ up’ offered an opportunity for the researcher and participants to get to know one another both on a professional level, as researcher and participant,

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<sup>102</sup> Willa K. Baum, *Transcribing and Editing Oral History* (New York: Altamira Press, 1991), p. 8.

<sup>103</sup> Lummis, *Listening to History*, p. 25.

<sup>104</sup> Interviews are themselves interpretations as much as they are ‘recordings’. Alessandro Portelli reminds us that ‘the control of historical discourse remains firmly in the hands of the historian. It is the historian who selects the people who will be interviewed, who contributes to the shaping of the testimony ... and who gives the testimony its final published shape.’ Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p. 56.

<sup>105</sup> Soutar, ‘A Framework for Analyzing Written Iwi Histories’, p. 46.

<sup>106</sup> Ranjit Kumar points out that ‘when individuals or groups become aware that they are being observed, they may change their behaviour’ and become uncomfortable. Kumar, *Research Methodology*, pp. 141, 143.



and informally as community people, insiders, sharing memories and stories of Weilmoringle and some aspect of our lives. 'Hangin' out' was not deliberate, but rather an unconscious and natural act, part of the 'ways of knowing', 'ways of being' and 'ways of doing' in one's own cultural and social spaces.<sup>107</sup>

Despite its obvious anthropological roots, Lorina employed this method in an approach she called 'collecting oral histories.' The notion of 'hangin' out' has resonance for Ngāti Porou, whose kōrero tuku iho are often recounted in our 'ways of being' and 'doing.' At funerals they are whispered over the tupapaku by aunties and grandmothers, and both cheerfully and solemnly remembered by elders late at night in the kāuta. For the interviewees, they were heard in daily rituals from gardening and hunting, to fishing, and chopping wood. These moments are not artificially manufactured in the way interviews are, but are spontaneous 'natural acts' difficult to capture in digital recordings.

Studies in oral history or oral tradition then are not dependent on any particular 'oral' method, but can be found in both observations and interviews. The practice of 'hangin' out', referred to by Barker, offers the opportunity to hear kōrero tuku iho in impromptu moments, but recorded observation of more formal occasions are also viable to Māori. Indeed, the ceremonial rituals on the marae are immensely valuable opportunities to see, hear, and experience, kōrero tuku iho as living phenomena. Beyond the interview, these occasions illustrate the ways oral history and traditions are retold within the specific tikanga of the marae, as Tuwhakairiora Tibble noted in his interview:

From my own perception of what I saw of it – if you went on to the marae you went on as a group and you didn't go on until the kuia called you on ... then we went on, we went so far then we stopped. Paid our respects, and then we sat down and the men all went to the front. Then it (the meeting) was opened up with a karakia, and then kaikōrero, and then it was handed over to our side, and then the men on this side would speak. Each time a speaker finished speaking then it would be followed with a waiata. To me it would be boring because it

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<sup>107</sup> Lorina Barker, "'Hangin' Out" and "Yarnin": Reflecting on the Experience of Collecting Oral Histories', *History Australia*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2008), pp. 09.3- 09.4.

would take too long.... [but] that was tikanga. That was the protocol of the marae.<sup>108</sup>

Being able to experience kōrero tuku iho in practice is vital to understanding how it is understood within tribal contexts. The interview, although a highly useful and insightful oral source, is a limited method in that it is unable to capture the protocols and customs that shape the way oral histories and traditions are made and remade in our formal tribal customs. The need to see, hear, and live kōrero tuku iho to understand it requires an evolvment of the methods that focus on the capture of orality. In conjunction with interviews, hangin' out, walking alongside, and becoming immersed in the culture and community are vital to a more appropriate study of kōrero tuku iho. Writing on the way oral traditions are considered by some researchers, Ruth Finnegan observes that 'oral folklore, like stories, songs or proverbs is distinguished from material culture.' She argues that, 'such contrasts need care for they sometimes reflect less local distinctions than unthinking western models or verbal "text" as self-evidently differentiated from visual, auditory or bodily signs.'<sup>109</sup> Reconfiguring 'western' models and methods in ways that reflect local cultural protocols can radically transform interview and observation methods from the insular disciplines that claim them as *their* approaches. From a Ngāti Porou perspective, this re-claiming places our terminology and mātauranga at the centre of a methodological and theoretical reimagining. Inextricably connected to this process then are the underlying tikanga and ethical considerations that are crucial to the re-orienting of foreign methods within our frames of reference.

Commenting on the access to Ngāti Porou research manuscripts and knowledge, Monty Soutar, writes that our people 'are careful as to who has access and are not

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<sup>108</sup> Tuwhakairiora Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Tūranganui-a-Kiwa (2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007), 35.34 – 37.18.

<sup>109</sup> Finnegan, *Oral Traditions and Verbal Arts*, p. 6.

keen to part with the material even if it will help historians toward a more informed view of history.’<sup>110</sup> He notes further that:

In the past there has been concern that in the wrong hands, either Māori or Pākehā, the information might be used inappropriately .... While such manuscripts were probably never intended for an audience beyond the writer’s particular whānau, the difficulty facing the tribal historian using this material is to present the facts without diminishing the value of the material in the eyes of those who carefully guard it.’<sup>111</sup>

Irrespective of the method, whether oral recordings, observations, archival or documentary analysis, the underlying tikanga (protocols) that drives the research is of most significance to Ngāti Porou people. This was reflected in many of the interviews, where kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) interaction was required, and where whakawhānaungatanga (relationship building) through whakapapa was the norm. In all of the interviews in this study, it was an adherence to particular protocols that dictated the success and relevance of the method in practice. One of the key tikanga focused on the importance of ‘connecting’ and acknowledging our whakapapa ties. Waldo Houia, for instance, reminded me that ‘Nēpia, our uncle was named after your name, your great great grandfather and of course his youngest daughter was Hirena that was the links between us, Ngati Rangi.’<sup>112</sup> ‘You know, our transport in those days was your grandfather’s truck’, remembers Jack Takurua, who also noted the close-knit connections of our hapū at Whakawhitira.<sup>113</sup> The genealogies that bind us together carry underlying tikanga that assist access, yet simultaneously involve reciprocal responsibilities in relationships of trust and respect. During his interview, while making reference to our familial connections, Herewini Parata spoke of the whānaungatanga significant in our whakapapa:

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<sup>110</sup> Monty Soutar, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership: Rāpata Wahawaha and the Politics of Conflict: “kei te ora nei hoki tātou mo to tātou whenua”’ (PhD thesis, Massey University, 2000), p. iv.

<sup>111</sup> Soutar, ‘Ngāti Porou Leadership’, p. v.

<sup>112</sup> Waldo Houia, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (24<sup>th</sup> July 2008).

<sup>113</sup> Jack Takurua, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (13<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 16.24 – 16. 28.

I spent a lot of time at Mahora, with nanny Pee Tawhai and nanny Jim Tawhai. I spent a lot of time there. Nanny Pee Tawhai and those sorts of people, they just doted on my grandfather. They supported my grandfather and whatever he said they agreed with him, they were supportive of that. And nanny Pee Tawhai's first husband was Turanga Tuhaka, that was nanny Hana's cousin. And so you had those ties, and nanny Jim Tawhai. Well that was your great grandmother's brother, nanny Tangipo's brother.<sup>114</sup>

For our people, the tikanga that our forebears exercised in respect of one another is important to any method employed within research by, for, or about, Ngāti Porou. It defines the roles of insiders and outsiders, interviewers and interviewees, observers and the observed, within protocols that make sense within our worldviews. This epistemological framework has also been adopted in the work of those who claim an 'indigenous anthropologist' position relevant to their evolutionary methods. 'Whakapapa', as they argue is central to their practice, because it 'provides a solid foundation or a "standing place" for researchers, whether or not indigenous, who go into the field carrying their genealogies and histories.'<sup>115</sup> This application of whakapapa is not simply the recognition of our physical and ancestral genealogy, but an intellectual genealogy, which informs the oral histories and traditions passed on through generations.<sup>116</sup> An epistemological re-defining of oral history methods in practice necessarily requires an ethical code of conduct that reflects what is important to indigenous people. From a Ngāti Porou perspective, this epistemological outlook, as Apirana Mahuika asserts, is based within Ngāti Porou mātauranga:

The key to Mātauranga Ngāti Porou is tikanga, or in the English terms, culture. In culture or tikanga we find all those elements that are essential to life, namely, the rules and regulations about norms of behaviour and respect for people and property, rules of lore out of which arises systems of law, moral codes of

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<sup>114</sup> Herewini Parata, 30.11 – 32.11.

<sup>115</sup> Ty P. Kāwika Tengan et al., 'Genealogies', p. 160.

<sup>116</sup> Ty P. Kāwika Tengan et al., 'Genealogies', p. 160.

behaviour and justice, sets of value systems, political and economic systems and religious and spiritual sanctions.<sup>117</sup>

To accurately represent our *kōrero tuku iho*, the methods utilised by oral historians and traditionalists must be grounded within those practices that speak to our cultural worldviews, moral codes and value systems. Interviews, or observational recordings, that follow the correct *tikanga* should initially be organised and overseen by a supervisory group of *pakeke*, or elders. Donald Ritchie refers to these groups as ‘advisory Committees’, yet for Ngāti Porou, these people are *kaitiaki* (guardians), who are not only aware of the experts within the *iwi*, but are themselves custodians of tribal history and protocol.<sup>118</sup> In relation to Māori research, Stephanie Milroy argues that ‘it is important to find the true leaders in the community and not just the most public Māori.’<sup>119</sup> This is an issue reflected in the writing of Elizabeth Tonkin, who observes that ‘people without access to authoritative voices ... are hampered in representing their accounts of the past to themselves as well as to others.’<sup>120</sup>

‘Authorities’, or ‘true leaders’, can sometimes be confusing for those who are unaware of the political dynamics and history of the tribe. Of the role of the researcher who is guided by their *pakeke*, Monty Soutar points out that the *tikanga* in this approach is perhaps best expressed in the *whakataukī* ‘*whakarongo ki te kupu o tōu matua/pay heed to the words of your elders.*’<sup>121</sup> Age and gender are also factors that are governed by various *tikanga* in Māori research, yet alter from tribe to tribe in Aotearoa New Zealand because each have their own protocols that impact on the access allowed to women or young people. The rationale that informs these

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<sup>117</sup> Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, pp. 65-66.

<sup>118</sup> Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, p. 54.

<sup>119</sup> Stephanie Milroy, ‘Māori Women and Domestic Violence: The Methodology of Research and the Māori Perspective’, *Waikato Law Review*, (1996), p. 61.

<sup>120</sup> Elizabeth Tonkin, ‘History and the Myth of Realism’, in *The Myths We Live By*, edited by Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson (London and New York: Routledge, 1987), p. 26.

<sup>121</sup> Soutar, ‘A Framework for Analyzing Written Iwi Histories’, p. 44.

principles of tikanga are often alien to many 'outside' researchers, who seem incapable of understanding Ngāti Porou and other indigenous perspectives. Linda Tuhiwai Smith has noted this 'denial' of indigenous ways of knowing as a lack of 'respect', yet 'respect' she argues is a key principle in tikanga that advocates:

Aroha ki te tangata (respect for people)  
Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)  
Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the *mana* of the people)<sup>122</sup>

These principles are vitally important to the methods of interviewing and observation within Ngāti Porou, but are expressed in different ways by other scholars. Valerie Yow points out that 'codes of ethics in sociology, anthropology, and psychology emphasize the researcher's responsibility to avoid harm to human subjects', and have become even more pro-active in 'admonishing researchers to protect subjects.'<sup>123</sup> In the National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) Code of Conduct researchers are encouraged to 'guard against possible social injury ... or exploitation'; to 'develop sufficient skills and knowledge... through reading and training'; and 'to conduct interviews with an awareness of cultural or individual sensibilities.'<sup>124</sup> These broad guidelines though lack specificity, and are grounded within the intrusive Western paradigms that Apirana Mahuika criticised during his interview: 'Maori writers, especially you guys in the world of academia ... at the end of the day you have to succumb to that, which naturally would distort your view of our history.'<sup>125</sup> 'Aroha ki te tangata / respect for people', as a tikanga significant to oral history method is inclusive of the informed consent referred to by scholars such as Linda Shopes, who point out that:

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<sup>122</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 120.

<sup>123</sup> Valerie Yow, 'Ethics and Interpersonal Relationships in Oral History Research', *Oral History Review*, 22/1 (Summer 1995), pp. 51-52.

<sup>124</sup> NOHANZ, *Code of Ethical and Technical Practice* (Wellington: NOHANZ, 2001).

<sup>125</sup> Apirana Mahuika, 3.38 – 3.52.

Interviewees need to know the intended use of the interview as well as possible future uses; that they will have the opportunity to review and amend the transcript, if project protocols include transcription; and where the interviewer or project intends to place tapes and tapes for permanent preservation.<sup>126</sup>

Sentiments such as these are familiar to, 'Maori people', as Stephanie Milroy writes, who 'like to see proof that the good intentions of the researcher are being carried out.'<sup>127</sup> However, in practice, tribal understandings of these principles 'extend far beyond issues of individual consent and confidentiality.'<sup>128</sup> They include a responsibility to empower speakers beyond the interview or observation approach, to ensure that the iwi is adequately and appropriately represented. To this extent, a reversal of the power should enable the participant rather than the researcher or listener, creating a 'collaboration' that is driven by the community to whom the research matters most. 'For Maori', as Milroy notes, 'there is none of the concept of "researcher" as an independent, neutral observer who is accountable to himself/herself or the academic community rather than the community being researched.'<sup>129</sup> In alignment with these protocols, the interviews undertaken in this study were rarely short visits, but were often long and extended.

The tikanga embedded in these occasions were less about the interviews themselves than they were a matter of social etiquette and manaakitanga. Meals were shared, connections were reforged, politics were discussed, and the 'gaze', questions, and observations were directed not simply at the 'participants', but at the 'researcher', whose skills, attitude, and character were carefully being assessed. For the interviewees, these were familiar and common tikanga, similar to the preparation

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<sup>126</sup> Linda Shopes, 'Legal and Ethical Issues in Oral History', in *Handbook of Oral History*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), p. 138.

<sup>127</sup> Milroy, 'Māori Women and Domestic Violence', p. 61.

<sup>128</sup> Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, p. 119.

<sup>129</sup> Milroy, 'Māori Women and Domestic Violence', p. 60.

afforded those who are eventually considered ready to take on new roles and responsibilities, as Nolan Raihania stressed in his interview:

Preparation for the pae was just going along and sitting in the back seat, the ones that are already on the pae well they take the front seats they usually have a couple of seats one at the back or even starts from before that arā ki waho rā of course it really starts at the back of the cook house peeling spuds that's where it starts and cutting the meat, that's where it starts everywhere really and gradually move in and sometimes there's no one there to do the whaikōrero and say one of you fellas haere mai ki te mea and they go up and whaikōrero the best you can.<sup>130</sup>

This aspect of the methodology in observation and interviewing is sparsely mentioned in the literature. Nolan's story here illustrates a type of apprenticeship, which is often a long drawn out process where individuals essentially prove themselves as trustworthy, responsible, and adequately skilled recipients. In contrast, 'outside' researchers have often sought to justify their presence as much needed objective observers and experts. Angela Ballara, for instance, writes that 'Māori families sometimes prefer that an unrelated historian or experienced writer, Māori or Pākehā, be appointed author, while they assist with evidence.'<sup>131</sup> Similarly, Mervyn McClean, writing on the work of folklorists and 'ethnomusicologists' claims:

It cannot be taken for granted that just anyone is a suitable recipient for recorded waiata just because she or he is Māori.... I have always walked a tightrope trying to balance usually legitimate claims for use of archival materials on the one hand with deeply held cultural values on the other which are no longer subscribed to by all Māoris.<sup>132</sup>

Although genealogical connection is important, it does not guarantee access. However, Monty Soutar points out that 'descent from the families who have been

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<sup>130</sup> Nolan Raihania, *Oral History Interview*, Tokomaru Bay (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 54:23-57:27.

<sup>131</sup> Angela Ballara, 'Te Taha Māori o te Papatangata o Aotearoa: The Māori Dimensions of the DNZB', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 7 (1995), p. 3.

<sup>132</sup> Mervyn McLean, 'Sound Archiving and the Problems of Dissemination of Waiata', *Oral History in New Zealand*, vol. 2 (1989), p. 18.



repositories of history within the tribe increases one's right to continue the role.'<sup>133</sup> This was reflected in the interviews for this study, where participants noted the selection and education of people who lived 'day and night' at the marae, who were taught and raised by their grandparents to fulfil certain responsibilities.<sup>134</sup> In these ways the methods of oral transmission and communication have precedents already established within Ngāti Porou and other Māori communities. Interviews and observations are approaches that have become increasingly common with advancing technologies and a willingness to adapt new techniques that enable the retelling of our histories. In addition, the methods in observations are particularly relevant to formal gatherings, yet participation is perhaps best practiced in wānanga, which not only has roots in traditional ritual, but is set within the methodological frames of iwi and hapū mātauranga and tikanga. Many of the interviews spoke at length on the importance of wānanga, including Angela Tibble, who referred to the use of 'hikoī' in hui held at Whareponga and other areas of the coast since the turn of this century.<sup>135</sup>

Although the oral history interview method is designed to capture the voices of narrators, it is not so much the practice that is emancipatory and enabling, but the interpretive analysis researchers assign to it. The participant observation approach facilitates an opportunity to hear, see, and experience oral traditions and histories in action, yet is not a method renowned for its empowerment of the researched. Paul Thompson has suggested that 'historical information need not be taken away from the community for interpretation and presentation by the professional historian', but 'through oral history the community can, and should, be given the confidence to

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<sup>133</sup> Soutar, 'A Framework for Analyzing Written Iwi Histories', p. 44.

<sup>134</sup> This was a topic referred to in many interviews, including Te Awhe, who spoke about one of the leaders in her generation who was brought up and taught by her grandfather. Materoa and Tiawhe, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (10<sup>th</sup> July 2008) Rec Two, 6.44 – 7.25.

<sup>135</sup> Angela Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui-a-Kiwa (10<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 36.45 – 37.09.

write its own history.'<sup>136</sup> This is at odds with the underlying aims that accompany the practice of other scholars, who contend:

There is the ethical problem of, on the one hand, maintaining regard for the people one is interviewing and, on the other, adhering to the disciplinary imperative to tell the truth, not in some essentializing, positivist sense, but by trying to get the whole story, even if following the evidence where it leads undercuts one's sympathies; by probing hesitations, contradictions, and silences in the narrator's account; by getting underneath polite glosses; by asking hard questions; and by resisting the tendency to create one-dimensional heroes out of people interviewed, for romanticization is its own form of patronization.<sup>137</sup>

Operating within 'outside' paradigms that impose foreign methods in the search for 'truth', not only removes indigenous knowledge from its intellectual context, but often distorts it beyond the perspectives of those to whom it belongs. For Ngāti Porou, the underlying epistemological foundations relevant to our *kōrero tuku iho* provide protocols and ethics that are vital to the success of methods such as interviewing and participant observation. These *tikanga*, anchored within our tribal world-views repositions, translates, and makes relevant any approach that seeks to represent our *kōrero tuku iho*. Subsequently, the study of Ngāti Porou 'oral history' or 'oral tradition' cannot be carried out via a simplistic application of foreign methods, but only through a sophisticated reconfiguration where those methods are securely anchored by our underlying theories and practices. This inextricable connection between *mātauranga* and *tikanga* highlights the fact that a greater reflective understanding of theory is the key to unlocking and improving the methods we use. Moreover, theory has the potential to enable *tikanga*, because it helps to explain the connections between the necessity of protocols, practice, and the rationale that transforms sterile methods into active and emancipatory practice.

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<sup>136</sup> Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, p. 17.

<sup>137</sup> Shopes, 'Legal and Ethical Issues', p. 157.

## Summary

The study of oral history or oral tradition is not determined simply by the methods researchers use, but by the underlying interpretive focus. Despite its centrality to the field of oral history, interviews, for instance, are employed by many researchers, who likewise claim them as significant aspects of their approach. The interview itself can be implemented in multiple ways that shift between structured and unstructured questionnaires, surveys, group discussions, or one on one exchanges. Indeed, what might be called an 'oral history' interview could in fact be no different to the various types of interviews employed by other scholars. Group interviews, far from simply an 'oral history' method, are popular across multiple disciplines, yet have some resonance for the collective construction of *kōrero tuku iho* common to Ngāti Porou ritual and practices. Similarly, surveys have also been utilised by scholars who consider them part of an 'oral history' approach, but for Ngāti Porou are inadequate because they deny the 'kanohi ki te kanohi' protocol important to our *tikanga*.

The most common interview associated with oral history research is the life narrative recording. However, life histories, or 'life course' methods, are also common to other disciplines and scholars, whose intellectual focus examines them beyond history or tradition. In addition to this, the one-on-one 'aural' emphasis is similarly problematic, particularly when oral histories and traditions are communicated in specific rituals and formal settings. For Ngāti Porou, interviews that are not anchored and understood in our *tikanga* are limited in their ability to explain *kōrero tuku iho* in living practice. Nevertheless, in accounting for various sights and sounds, some interview methods such as the walk along, or 'hikoī' illustrate the way individuals' interact with their surroundings. Many of the interviewees, for instance, employed props and utilised mnemonic devices to tell their stories, requiring then a multisensory approach to unpack and interpret their

world. Life narrative interviews, then, offer valuable personal insights and accounts of traditions, rituals, and language in practice, and are thus applicable to personal histories and broader collective traditions.

Beyond interviews, oral histories and traditions are also captured in the participant observation method. Although an apt way to experience the formal performance of Ngāti Porou *kōrero tuku iho*, it is an approach still considered a tool of colonial research. Other indigenous scholars note their own reimagining of this method as 'indigenous anthropology', which is anchored within a 'genealogical' frame of reference, and accentuates a focus on homework rather than fieldwork. While the interview approach used by oral historians is viewed as empowering and liberating, participant observations tend to rely heavily on the observer's role as interpreter and lead 'collaborator.' Moreover, although the oral history interview method is designed to capture the voices of narrators, it is not so much the practice that is emancipatory and enabling, but the interpretive analysis researchers assign to it. The participant observation approach facilitates an opportunity to hear, see, and experience oral traditions and histories in action, but is not a method renowned for its empowerment of the researched.

Reconfiguring participant observation within a Ngāti Porou frame of reference might be closer to the 'hangin' out' model that emphasises the need to be guided by those on the inside. This requires a greater understanding of *tikanga* which works to relocate power in the hands of the 'observed' rather than the 'observers.' Anchored in Ngāti Porou *mātauranga*, researchers would necessarily need to find the true leaders, and abide by protocols relative to gender and age. In the implementation of foreign methods, researchers might then be expected to serve an apprenticeship to prove themselves as trustworthy, responsible, aware, and adequately skilled recipients. Thus, understanding *tikanga*, requires a knowledge of the underlying epistemological foundation that informs and reflects what is important to indigenous people. It entails a reversal of the power, where the underlying

epistemological foundations favour protocols and ethics relevant to the empowerment of the 'researched' rather than the researchers. Oral historians and oral traditionalists use multiple methods, which overlap, and have shifting resonance to Ngāti Porou worldviews. They are informed by interrelated theories, underlying political aims, and epistemologies, which are the subject of the following chapter.

## Chapter Eight: 'Te Matātara-a-Whare': Theories in Oral History and Tradition

According to Apirana Mahuika, 'Te Matātara-a-Whare' refers to 'the multiplicity of strands woven together to adorn a house.'<sup>1</sup> Within Ngāti Porou, it features in the name of the tribe's eponymous ancestor, Porourangi, whose full title is Porou Ariki Te Matātara a Whare Te Tuhi Mareikura a Rauru.<sup>2</sup> 'In Porourangi's case', as Api argues, he is the intricate 'adornment resulting from his senior whakapapa', from a genealogy that weaves together a highborn lineage.<sup>3</sup> This notion of interweaving is a fitting analogy for the way Ngāti Porou might consider the application of various interpretive theories to our oral history and tradition.<sup>4</sup> In the production and dissemination of our *kōrero tuku iho*, the layered theoretical tapestry is carefully interwoven to suitably depict our perceptions of who we are.<sup>5</sup> Theories, in this way, offer a type of utility in that they can be refashioned to ensure that specific patterns or worldviews are visible in the final design. However, this requires a conscious

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<sup>1</sup> Apirana Tuahae Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero na Apirana Tuahae Mahuika – Evidence Statement for Apirana Tuahae Mahuika', (WAI262) (12<sup>th</sup> April 1999), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> A. T. Ngata offers an explanation and translation of the name in *The Porourangi Maori Cultural School, Raurunui-a-Toi Course: Lectures 1-7* (Gisborne: Māori Purposes Fund Board/Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, 2011, originally presented in 1944), pp. 6-7.

<sup>3</sup> Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero', p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> This includes theories that are common and traditional to our tribal knowledge, as well as theories that have been developed elsewhere and are then adapted to work in our cultural context.

<sup>5</sup> Ngāti Porou theoretical understandings have long been dynamic and evolutionary. For instance, our tribal theories of origin are nuanced perceptions, which have embraced and tested various theories of time, including Apirana Ngata's insistence on a twenty-five year standardisation between generations to a more culturally reflective approach in favour of Ngāti Porou 'mana motuhake' expressed in the work of Apirana Mahuika. Compare A. T. Ngata, "'The Genealogical Method as Applied to the Early History of New Zealand'" (to be read to the Wellington Branch of the New Zealand Historical Association)', Private Papers, (Held in the 'Special Collections', University of Auckland Library).

appreciation and application of theory, which is not always typical to those who work with oral histories and oral traditions.<sup>6</sup>

Despite this, there are multiple theories that are closely associated with the studies of oral history and tradition.<sup>7</sup> These include theories about the way individuals and communities remember and forget, tell stories, transmit oral accounts, employ myths, and define and compose identities. This chapter explores the theoretical strands common to the studies of oral tradition and oral history, and discusses the way they overlap and depart as approaches developed in both fields. It asks: what are the key theories used by oral historians and those who study oral traditions? How are they similar, and in what sense might they contribute to a more robust understanding of the differences between these two areas of research? This chapter also considers the relevance of these theories to Ngāti Porou, particularly the extent to which they might be applicable to interpretive understandings of our kōrero tuku iho. Thus, it accounts for the way our people shape and maintain theories specific to our worldviews, and comments on the way these threads might be re-woven in the studies of kōrero tuku iho.

## **Whatu te Kanoi Kōrero: Re-Theorising in Local Patterns<sup>8</sup>**

Many indigenous peoples 'do not relate to imported theory, practices, and methods very well', yet some have become more adventurous in their willingness to test

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<sup>6</sup> This noted by Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, 'Oral History', in *The Houses of History: a critical reader in twentieth century history and theory*, edited by Anna Green and Kathleen Troup (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 231; and Michael Roper, 'Oral History', in *The Contemporary History Handbook*, edited by Brian Brivati, Julia Buxton and Anthony Seldon (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 345 – 352.

<sup>7</sup> The use, and presence, of theory in historical scholarship has also been criticised by some scholars. See, for instance, Keith Windschuttle, *The Killing of History: How a Discipline is Being Murdered by Literary Critics and Social Theorists* (Paddington: Macleay, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> 'Whatu te kanoi kōrero' here can be translated as 'weave the strands of history' a reference to the idea that our oral histories and traditions are produced in the interweaving of theoretical strands.

theories in their local contexts.<sup>9</sup> In Aotearoa New Zealand, Graham Hingangaroa Smith has stressed the need to utilise theory in supporting and realising strategies for Māori intervention. He writes that ‘all theory is important; the critical point is that “theories”, because they are socially constructed phenomena, are likely to be laden with “cultural” and “social” interests. In this sense the “validity” of theory will obtain its true worth in the outcomes of its practice and application.’<sup>10</sup> For Ngāti Porou, the need to accommodate and utilise ‘foreign’ ideas is well rehearsed in *kōrero* *tuku iho*. On this issue, Apirana Mahuika writes:

Our cultural survival was reliant on how dynamic and, therefore adaptable it can be, to meet new challenges. It was this dynamic attribute of our culture which enabled our forebears and our culture to survive on arrival from Hawaiki.<sup>11</sup>

‘Outside’ theories that enable the tribe’s aims and aspirations have long been employed to support Ngāti Porou independence and autonomy.<sup>12</sup> By ensuring that the *mana* of *iwi*, *hapū* and *whānau* remains intact during this process of adaptation, our people have been able to use new knowledge more effectively. For many, it is *tikanga* that embodies the underlying theoretical and philosophical strains that materialise from this interaction between foreign ideologies and tribal and *hapū mātauranga*.<sup>13</sup> In the same way that theory informs method, *tikanga* is similarly the enacted practice, customs, and protocols designed in the interweaving of our *iwi*

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<sup>9</sup>Kayen G. Tomaselli, Lauren Dyll, and Michael Francis, “‘Self’ and ‘Other’”, *Auto Reflexive and Indigenous Ethnography*, in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, edited by Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (London: Sage, 2008), pp. 354-55.

<sup>10</sup> Graham Hingangaroa Smith, ‘The Development of Kaupapa Māori Theory and Praxis’ (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 1997), p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, p. 68.

<sup>12</sup> This is perhaps best reflected in the mass conversions to Christianity in the nineteenth century, the large numbers of soldiers enlisted to the Māori Battalion in the twentieth century, and a strong connection to national politics and ‘Pākehā’ education as a means of building capacity within our own ranks.

<sup>13</sup> Changes then are expected, but as Api notes, they are woven into our *tikanga*: ‘Over the centuries we have made changes, based on *tikanga*, but done in a way which does not compromise *tikanga*, so, in this way, have guaranteed the continuity of *tikanga* from one generation to another, present day included.’ Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, p. 68.



epistemologies. It is this foundation of tribal theory, politics, and philosophy that elaborately patterns the histories and traditions Ngāti Porou call our own. Re-centering the world within local frameworks is an argument developed in the work of post-colonialists and Kaupapa Māori theorists. Post-colonial theory evolved from literary scholarship in an historical practice that 'revised' the perspective of the colonised, seeking to place their views 'at the centre of the historical process.'<sup>14</sup> Kaupapa Māori also seeks to 'retrieve' those spaces that enable our people to set the directions of research on our terms.<sup>15</sup> Both draw on deeper theoretical genealogies, but Kaupapa Māori reconfigures those ideas within the more immediate settings of the indigenous people.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, for our people, it is our Ngāti Poroutanga that reshapes and interweaves external ideas within an underlying epistemology and theory that brings our knowledge to the forefront of scholarship.<sup>17</sup>

The fundamental role theory plays in the research and production of history is also a well rehearsed argument in the literature on oral history and tradition. Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, for instance, contend that 'every piece of historical writing has a theoretical basis on which evidence is filtered and understood'.<sup>18</sup> Likewise, Mary Fulbrook asserts that all history writing, whether historians acknowledge it or not is

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<sup>14</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, 'Postcolonial Perspectives', *The Houses of History: a critical reader in twentieth-century history and theory*, edited by Anna Green and Kathleen Troup (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 278.

<sup>15</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies, Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, London and New York: University of Otago Press/Zed Books, 1999), p. 183.

<sup>16</sup> Both groups of scholars refer to the work of Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Granada, 1970); and Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge/Kegan Paul, 1978). Kaupapa Māori scholars have also drawn on the 'transformative' theories of Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London: Continuum Publishing, 1970).

<sup>17</sup> This idea is developed more in Nēpia Mahuika, 'Closing the Gaps: From Post-Colonialism to Kaupapa Māori and Beyond', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 45, 1 (2011), pp. 15-32; and Apirana Mahuika, 'A Ngāti Porou Perspective', in *Weeping Waters, The Treaty of Waitangi and Constitutional Change*, edited by Malcolm Mulholland and Veronica Tawhai (Wellington: Huia, 2010), pp. 145-63.

<sup>18</sup> Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, eds., *The Houses of History: a critical reader in twentieth-century history and theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. vii.

'an intrinsically theoretical as well as empirical enterprise.'<sup>19</sup> Despite the case for a more theoretically minded understanding of research and history, there are many practitioners of oral history and tradition who have little time for the intrusions of theory.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, oral history has often been thought of as a methodology more than a theory. African American oral historian Alfredteen Brown Harrison describes it as 'a planned, organized method of eliciting information from selected narrators about their personal experiences for preservation and scholarly use.'<sup>21</sup> From the New Zealand literature Alison Laurie refers to oral history as:

A recorded interview made by agreement with an interviewee willing to tell a particular story or series of stories about themselves on tape, with an intention that this tape be archived under conditions agreed to by the interviewee.<sup>22</sup>

Oral history as simply a method fails to account for the underlying interpretive analysis that gives enhanced meaning to what is said and heard. A sterile empirical approach to gathering and presenting oral testimony has been termed 'oral history in the reconstructive mode', while a more theoretically aware practice embraces an 'interpretive mode' that accounts for the strengths of subjectivity and individual remembering.<sup>23</sup> Far from a study defined by the methods of interviewing or observation, research in oral history and oral tradition are significantly influenced by theoretical assumptions about the nature of remembering, storytelling, transmission and representation. Jane Moodie observes that there are three main strands in oral

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<sup>19</sup> Mary Fulbrook, *Historical Theory* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Most notably here in the New Zealand context, the intrusive problem of theory in oral history research was central to a discussion held by Judith Fyfe and Hugo Manson, 'Historically Speaking: Twenty Years of Oral History in Aotearoa New Zealand', in *Looking Backwards, Moving Forward – The Past and Future of Oral History in New Zealand*, NOHANZ Conference 2007 (Wellington, July 28-29).

<sup>21</sup> Alfredteen Brown Harrison, 'Oral History: The Pathway to a Peoples Cultural Memory', *Oral History in New Zealand*, 2 (1989), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Alison J. Laurie, 'Manufacturing Silences: not every recorded interview is an oral history', in *Māori and Oral History: A Collection*, edited by Rachel Selby and Alison J. Laurie (Wellington: National Oral History Association of New Zealand, 2005), p. 78.

<sup>23</sup> See Roper, 'Oral History', pp. 435-52.

history theory; the sociological and anthropological, which ‘identifies the social context as an important influence in the shaping of memory’; the literary or linguistic, which is ‘particularly attentive to the narrative and linguistic structures’ that influence to oral testimony; and the psychological or psychoanalytical, which ‘emphasizes the subjective nature of oral testimony.’<sup>24</sup> Those who study oral traditions also draw on anthropological and sociological strands, and have similarly developed linguistic theories relevant to folklore and epic ballads. The question of memory in both oral history and oral tradition looms large, and is a pivotal part of how scholars in these areas make sense of their work as this chapter discusses.

### **‘Na te Mahara te Kōrero’: Re-theorising Memory and Myth<sup>25</sup>**

Various theories about how groups and individuals remember are central to the study of both oral history and oral tradition. The unreliable memory has been a key criticism of oral history, with scholars calling for more work between oral historians and psychologists to establish the ‘parameters of memory.’<sup>26</sup> What people remember, as Paul Thompson contends is influenced by ‘social interest.’<sup>27</sup> Similarly, this view was shared by a number of the interview subjects, including Jason Koia, who claimed:

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<sup>24</sup> Jane Moodie, ‘Family Myths in Oral History: the unsettled narratives of descendants of a missionary-settler family in New Zealand’ (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2004), p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> A play on the phrase ‘na te mahara te hingaro/from the remembrance the consciousness’ to note the connection between memory and our kōrero tuku iho.

<sup>26</sup> Green and Troup, ‘Oral History’ in *The Houses of History*, p. 230.

<sup>27</sup> He writes that ‘accurate memory is much more likely when it meets a social interest and need.’ Paul Thompson, *The Voices of the Past, Oral History*, Third Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 132.

If you're really passionate about it, if you're really in tune with it, you don't need to record or write anything down. It just automatically stays in your head for some reason.<sup>28</sup>

Remembering, for each individual, entailed a pulling together of experiences and ideas in a finely textured reconstruction. Reminiscing about her childhood, Materoa Collins recalls:

In my early years I have vivid memories of my dad and uncle Scarlet going out on horses and doing all that farm work, and being part of that, and playing in wool sheds and all that.<sup>29</sup>

Her personal memories, like most of the other participants, intertwine with what is remembered of other lives, generations, and collectives, and woven in layered narratives that broach topics of gender, work, education, religion and identity. In reference to the topic of memory, Ron Grele describes it 'as a process dynamically related to history, not as a timeless tradition but as being progressively altered from generation to generation.'<sup>30</sup> The distinction made here between the 'progressive' remembering of history and the static transmission of tradition is blurred in the lives of Ngāti Porou people, who consider tradition to be an ongoing negotiation between past, present, and future. This is addressed in the cultural views regarding whakapapa, bloodlines, and the inherited nature of 'tradition', as Derek Lardelli points out:

If he comes from that line he should be able to do this and this in his bloodline. And it's the same with carving - was passed down family to family, tradition, and oral tradition, was kept in that family tree because they had that type of whakapapa.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Jason Koia, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui-a-Kiwa (10<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 45.01 – 45.11.

<sup>29</sup> Materoa Collins and Tiawhe Musson, *Oral History Interview*, Kirikiriroa (10<sup>th</sup> July 2008), Rec One, 3.31 – 3.49.

<sup>30</sup> Ronald J. Grele, 'Oral History as Evidence', in *Handbook of Oral History*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), p. 83.

<sup>31</sup> A number of scholars have written about whakapapa as a theoretical and philosophical approach. See for instance, J. Te Rito, 'Whakapapa: A framework for understanding identity', *MAI Review*, 2 (2007) Article 2, [www.review.mai.ac.nz](http://www.review.mai.ac.nz), [last accessed 19/10/11]; Takirangi Smith, 'Ngā Tini Ahuatanga o Whakapapa Kōrero', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 32, no. 1 (2000), pp. 53-60; and Mere Roberts, Bradford Haami,

For some scholars, this may be a challenging theoretical premise, but as Elizabeth Tonkin observes: ‘the past is not only a resource to deploy, to support a case or assert a social claim, it also enters memory in different ways and helps to structure it. Literate or illiterate, we are our memories’.<sup>32</sup> Taking ‘ownership of the past’, is an intersecting theoretical strand that has significant traction in Ngāti Porou, and in other indigenous communities.<sup>33</sup> Asserting ownership in a ‘transformative’ reclamation of our own history was a common feature in many of the interviews. In specific relation to memory, Materoa referred to them as gifts and abilities that are held by, and passed on to, certain people:

All we have are stories ... from my uncle ... he could name every hill, and he was almost down to naming every tree sometimes, I used to think he was making it up, but he would look at a hill and say “that hill is... and on that hill, this happened, and this happened, and this over there because this happened, and that happened” that’s what we had.... He was raised by my nanny too, and because I was named after her, I got that special treatment from him, and he’d come and pick me up, and whenever he was travelling anywhere, tangi, and I’d go and he’d just talk, but I don’t have that whakapapa brain, you know, some people can hold names and hold events – I don’t have that. I can’t remember the names of half the kids in my class most of the time. *Was that deliberate on his part?* ‘Yep, I think he had a plan, but I didn’t fulfil it very well. The chosen one that you are so supposed to put all that knowledge in to.... It missed me. I think it’s gone to my son. My oldest son has that ability, but he doesn’t have his koro with him anymore.’<sup>34</sup>

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Richard Benton, Terre Satterfield, Melissa L. Finucane, Mark Henare, and Manuka Henare, ‘Whakapapa as a Māori Mental Construct: Some Implications for the Debate over Genetic Modification of Organisms’, *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 16, no. 1 (Spring 2004), pp. 1-28. Derek Lardelli, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui – a-Kiwa (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 29.38 – 30.48.

<sup>32</sup> Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating our Pasts, the Social Construction of Oral History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> A number of scholars have written extensively on this proactive and transformative politics in theories lifted from post-colonialism, feminist theories, neo-Marxist theories, and other ‘critical’ theories. Kaupapa Māori theory, for instance, draws on the work of Paulo Freire, and adapts to the way Māori might expand its relevance in our local contexts. See for instance, Graham Hingangaroa Smith, ‘Paulo Freire: Lessons in Transformative Praxis’, in *Paulo Freire, Politics and Pedagogy, reflections from Aotearoa-New Zealand*, edited by Peter Roberts (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1999), pp. 35-41; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, ‘Kaupapa Māori research’, in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, edited by M. Battiste (Canada: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), pp. 225-247; Anaru Eketone, ‘Theoretical underpinning of Kaupapa Māori directed practice’, *MAI Review*, 1 (2008) Target Article, [www.review.mai.ac.nz](http://www.review.mai.ac.nz), [last accessed 19/10/11].

<sup>34</sup> Materora and Tiawhe, Rec Two, 00.28 – 1.46.

Remembering, in Ngāti Porou, is often considered a skill and trait significant to who might be considered an able repository and custodian of our history. What they remember as individuals is significant to the collective memory of the tribe as a whole because they are charged with the responsibility to hold our histories and traditions together. This relationship between the individual and collective memory is also a key theoretical strand in the study of oral history. The collective memory, as the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs claims, encompasses ‘individual memories while remaining distinct from them.’<sup>35</sup> Paula Hamilton writes that the collective memory ‘usually refers to the making of a group memory so that it becomes an expression of identity, and accepted by that group as the “truth” of experience.’<sup>36</sup> For Ngāti Porou, this interplay in memory aligns well with the mātauranga and tikanga related to whakapapa and kōrero tuku iho. However, the collective memory as a theory is not distinctive just to oral history, but is part of a growing field dedicated to memory studies.<sup>37</sup> Conversely, those who specifically study oral traditions have not developed collective memory theory to the same extent as oral historians. Of the remembering in oral traditions, Robert Darnton suggests that:

These “singers of tales” do not possess the fabulous powers of memory and memorization sometimes attributed to “primitive” peoples. They do not memorize very much at all. Instead they combine stock phrases, formulas, and narrative segments in patterns improvised according to the response of their audience.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, translated from the French by Francis J. Ditter Jr, and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), p. 51.

<sup>36</sup> Paula Hamilton, ‘Memory Studies and Cultural History’, in *Cultural History in Australia*, edited by Hsu Ming Teo and Richard White (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2003), p. 90.

<sup>37</sup> Anna Green notes that ‘collective memory theory’, although part of the theoretical literature in oral history, is part of a growing field in ‘memory studies.’ See Anna Green, ‘Individual Remembering and “Collective Memory”’: Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates’, *Oral History*, 32, 2 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 35-44.

<sup>38</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Perseus Books Group, 1984), p. 19.

With a focus on ‘formulas’ and ‘stock phrases’, the research in oral tradition has rarely expanded on memory theory beyond a focus on rhythm and repetition. Nevertheless, this aspect of remembering, or rather ‘memory’ transmission, has significant relevance to Ngāti Porou kōrero *tuku iho*. Speaking on the traditional methods of remembering, Anaru Kupenga has this to say about the process:

They [the elders] would wait late at night at the marae, until late and then the lights went down, all the lights were switched off, tilly lamp, candles, they blew it out and the room was in total darkness and they’d practice on us as little children for the retention of memory. They’d practice talking so that we can beam in with our ears and we were more comprehensive and tentative of the information because there was no visibility of our eyes to contaminate our brain, it was totally clear. I marvel at the use of original and traditional methods of learning, and here it was being displayed by our elders. No doubt they carried on doing that throughout the years but slowly technology I guess you could say won the day. Hence the decline of history within our people, which now requires scholars to maintain and retain those kinds of resources for the future.<sup>39</sup>

Our ‘history’, Anaru argues, declined with the advent of technology, and the loss of old practices and theories used to perfect the retention of memory. Similar to the theories of repetition advanced in the work of oral traditionalist and folklorists, our practices confirm the idea that the past is carried in rhythm and recurring phrases.<sup>40</sup> For a people whose history is conveyed in formal speeches, proverbs, and songs, the repetition of sayings and stories is necessarily an integral part of the way we theorise our world, and account for how it is remembered.<sup>41</sup> Likewise, the collective memory in which that history is produced allows for the nuanced accounts of our individual tribal members, so long as they have a base understanding of *tikanga* and

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<sup>39</sup> Anaru Kupenga, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (9<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 9.17 – 11.14.

<sup>40</sup> The oral formulaic theory more commonly associated with the study of oral tradition and folklore will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

<sup>41</sup> The use of ‘theorise’ in relation to Māori history is addressed in the work of Aroha Harris, who writes that we have recently reaffirmed the presence of theory in the way we construct the past. Aroha Harris, ‘Theorize This: We Are What We Write’, *Te Pouhere Kōrero*, 3 (2009), pp. 83-90.

mātauranga.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the collective memory theory reflected in our tribal kōrero assists a necessary resistant narrative to dominant 'mainstream' memory-making that has pushed our oral histories and traditions to the margins. This strategic reality in the way collective memories operate in marginalised communities is noted by Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, who write:

The collective memories of minorities need continual active expression if they are to survive being absorbed or smothered by the historical traditions of the majority. Nor is this dominance a mere matter of numbers. The powerful have a breathtaking ability to stamp their own meanings on the past. Our tales of Empire are of bravery and benign administration of a 'master race', rather than of superior military technology or back-breaking slavery in plantation or pit.<sup>43</sup>

Collective memory theory has specific relevance to Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho, and is reflective of the way our history and tradition is connected in our genealogy and practice. Although a highly deterministic theoretical approach, from an indigenous perspective the homogeneous identities it reveals are strategically important to the disruption of those dominant memories imposed by oppressive groups.<sup>44</sup> Subsequently for Ngāti Porou, collective memory theory is exceptionally useful, yet would necessarily be refined within our local conceptions of Kaupapa Māori and postcolonial theories that both share a mistrust of the imperial 'centering' of history by the colonisers.<sup>45</sup> Beyond the collective memory, however, are other theories in

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<sup>42</sup> This requirement was noted by the majority of interviewees, particularly the need to know tikanga and mātauranga before changing or adapting it. It is in essence a safeguard to ensure that our history is not distorted beyond our recognition. This is an issue discussed in the literature, particularly in relation to Māori theories of resistance and activism. See for instance the writing of Moana Jackson, 'Research and Colonization of Māori Knowledge', *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 4, 1 (1998), pp. 69-76; and S. Walker, 'Kia tau te Rangimarie: Kaupapa Māori theory as a resistance against the construction of Māori as the 'Other' (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Auckland, 1996).

<sup>43</sup> Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, eds., 'Introduction', in *The Myths We Live By* (London and New York: Routledge, 1987), p. 18.

<sup>44</sup> In this case, the 'other' here represents the collective memory advanced in the New Zealand public consciousness, which advocates a unified national identity and master narrative. See Nēpia Mahuika, 'Revitalizing te-ika-a-Maui: Māori Migration and the Nation', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 43, 2 (2009), pp. 133-149.

<sup>45</sup> See for instance, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: research and indigenous peoples* (Dunedin, London & New York: University of Otago Press/Zed, 1999); and Giselle Byrnes and Catharine



oral history that emphasise the subjective memories of individuals. Alistair Thomson's theory of 'composure', for instance, underlines the reality that individual's in fact struggle to achieve a 'sense of composure' more than they are 'composed' within collective scripts and discourses.<sup>46</sup> Within Ngāti Porou, the nuanced testimonies of our people reflect this theoretical claim, yet as a group, our tribal collective memories also struggle to find 'composure' within dominant national myths.<sup>47</sup> Speaking on his experiences with the Māori battalion, Nolan Raihania recalls:

Well there were bugger all changes when we come back, it was still the bloody same, ko ngā Pākehā ngā rangātira (Pākehā were still the boss), you got to go and work for the Pākehā, our Māori farms, they weren't really up to scratch i ērā wā (in those times), not like now we got some pretty good corporations now that have built up over those years since then, but those years they weren't very financial, you had to go the Pākehā farms for work; te mahi Taiapa (fencing), tope manuka (tree felling), all those sort of jobs, koira ngā mahi mā te Māori (that was the work for Māori) and that was the same as before we went, nothing had changed in that respect.<sup>48</sup>

Much like the returned servicemen Alistair Thomson interviewed in Australia, our soldiers found that the 'price of citizenship' paid in their endeavours failed to equate with the realities they came home to after the war.<sup>49</sup> For many Māori, the myths of

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Colborne, eds., 'Editorial Introduction: The Utility and Futility of "The Nation" in Histories of Aotearoa New Zealand', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 45, 1 (2011), pp. 1-14.

<sup>46</sup> On the theory of composure, Alistair Thomson writes, 'we compose our memories to make sense of our past and present lives. 'Composure' is an aptly ambiguous term to describe the process of memory making. In one sense we compose or construct memories using the public languages and meanings of our culture. In another sense we compose memories that help us to feel relatively comfortable with our lives and identities, that gives us a feeling of composure.' Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories, Living with the Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> It should be noted that Thomson's theory of composure was adapted: 'From the writings of international oral historians and the Popular Memory Group. I developed the theory of memory composure, which has informed my study of Anzac memories.' Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p. 229.

<sup>48</sup> Nolan Raihania, *Oral History Interview*, Tokomaru Bay (18<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 38:41-42:26.

<sup>49</sup> 'The Price of Citizenship' had been a powerful discourse in the arguments for Māori participation in the Second World War. However, the realisation of social and racial equality inherent within the notion of 'citizenship' and 'one nation for all' has remained an embedded phrase in our national and historical consciousness, despite the diverse realities between Māori and Pākehā servicemen after the wars. See A. T. Ngata, *The Price of Citizenship: Ngārimu VC* (Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1943).

national unity commemorated in ANZAC day celebrations were simply at odds with the differences they remember in their personal lives. Thus, the collective memories vital to Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition, are then held together by individual memories.<sup>50</sup> This theoretical tension between individual agency and an overly deterministic collective remembering is recognised and discussed at length by oral historians, who note that:

Collective memory then is the screen on to which different subjectivities project their discrepant versions of the past for different (political) reasons. It is the task of oral history to maintain both a sense of the individual and the collective, and to make sense of memory despite its differences.<sup>51</sup>

In the transmission of *kōrero tuku iho* from one generation to the next, Ngāti Porou oral history is at once a collective enterprise, yet in its living reality is expressed in multiple and nuanced individualities.<sup>52</sup> Memory, as a device or process used to ‘define ourselves’ is a common assertion in the oral history literature, yet the act of remembering often entails a considered denial of the past, or forgetting.<sup>53</sup> Thus, in defining what is oral history or oral tradition, the binary process of remembering

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<sup>50</sup> The political and social purpose inherent in Ngāti Porou collective remembrance is nuanced in the individual testimonies, which reflect varying familial and hapu trajectories, but are connected by tribal affirmations, proverbs, leadership, and the underlying genealogical strands that note indigeneity, ownership, identity, and *mātauranga*. This is noted earlier in chapter six by those who highlighted intersectional differences in particular hapu, yet the corporateness of iwi.

<sup>51</sup> Richard Crownshaw and Selma Leydesdorff, ‘Introduction to the Transaction Edition’, in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, edited by Luisa Passerini (London: Transaction, 2005), p. xvi. The significance of individual testimonies in collective memory is perhaps best highlighted in Alessandro Portelli, *The Order Has Been Carried Out, History, Memory, and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003); the issue of agency and constructivism is also noted in Anna Green, ‘Individual Remembering’, pp. 35-44.

<sup>52</sup> The collective memory in intergenerational transmission is discussed in the work of Howard Shuman and Jacqueline Scott, ‘Generations and Collective Memories’, *American Sociological Review*, vol. 54 (June, 1989), p. 359-381. Similarly, Eviatar Zerubavel emphasises both the personal recollections and social/collective remembering as equally viable, see Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

<sup>53</sup> Ulric Neisser, *Memory Observed* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1982) cited in Alice Hoffman and Howard Hoffman, ‘Memory Theory’, in *Thinking About Oral History: Theories and Applications*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira Press, 2008), p. 35. See also Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 413.

and forgetting is a vital interpretive component.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, it is not necessarily distinctive of either a study of oral 'history' or 'tradition', but relative to both despite the fact collective and individual memory theories are more predominant in oral history scholarship. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of tradition is highlighted in Renate Siebert's 'Don't Forget: Fragments of a Negative Tradition', in which she asks:

What is, in fact, tradition? Is it that relationship with the generations that come before me and the institutions that they have left? It is the past that comes near me, touches me, absorbs me, and surrounds me. But there are ancient traditions and those that are still alive; fossilisations and caricatures of traditions. Furthermore there are good and generous traditions, and those that are bad and evil, stenching, or deathly. What is the relationship between institutions and traditions? Do traditions select, save the good, obscure the disturbing and deathly? Do they lead us or do they deceive us? What is the authority of traditions and how do they affect the individual?<sup>55</sup>

Oral traditions exist in personal recall, in interviews, and are easily historicised in both individual and collective memories and contexts. This notion of oral tradition as history is also asserted by Jan Vansina, who reminds us that 'reminiscences become family traditions known and told by one or more people even after the death of the person whose reminiscences they were.'<sup>56</sup> Within Ngāti Porou, oral histories and traditions are woven together in the process of remembering and forgetting, but are more closely aligned to collective memory theories than the individual acts of composure referred to by oral historians. The 'trauma' of colonial injustice here is felt more keenly, and explained more coherently, in a collective tribal memory that highlights and enables our whakapapa and indigeneity as a group more than as individuals. This aspect of our memory making is vital, and shares a certain level of activism visible in oral history memory theories. Indeed, as Richard Crownshaw and

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<sup>54</sup> Anna Green has pointed out that 'all forms of historical understanding – even those that do not engage the faculty of personal memory at all – are increasingly classified as memory.' She notes this problem particularly in relation to the individual, who she argues has become increasingly 'detached from memory.' Green, 'Individual Remembering', p. 37.

<sup>55</sup> Renate Siebert, 'Don't Forget: Fragments of a Negative Tradition', in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, edited by Luisa Passerini (London: Transaction, 2005), pp. 166-67.

<sup>56</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (London: James Currey, 1985), p. 18.

Selma Leyesdorff point out: ‘recent work [in oral history] has particularly exciting applications in colonial and postcolonial studies’, particularly in the accentuating of subjective memories that advance human agency and autonomy.<sup>57</sup> Although most oral historians focus on the individual and collective memory binary in memory theory, Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho initially considers the indigenous and colonial distinctions in our collective memory before personal nuances.<sup>58</sup> Thus, what is forgotten or remembered, and what is considered history or tradition, are highly political acts, and viewed as inextricably linked and often interchangeable.

So far I have been arguing that collective and individual memory theories such as ‘composure’ are predominant in the work of oral historians, but are not as explicit in the study of oral traditions.<sup>59</sup> Yet, they have significant relevance to the way Ngāti Porou remember, and are especially useful in explaining the way we maintain our traditions as personal and collective histories. However, also evident in the individual and collective remembering developed by oral historians is the question of myth: that is the way myths are employed and negotiated in people’s lives. Myths, like collective and individual memory, also have a highly developed theoretical literature in oral history research. Paul Thompson and Raphael Samuel, for instance, have written extensively on the ‘myths we live by’, which below the surface, they argue, contain ‘residues of a magical world view’ that include:

Notions of destiny in blood embodied in self characterisation... often a story will pivot on a moment of revelation or truth, and in the talismanic importance

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<sup>57</sup> They also note how the critical analysis of those who have struggled under totalitarian regimes can be found in other locations beyond the Holocaust, and can thus ‘merge from the shadow of the Holocaust.’ Crownshaw and Leyesdorff, ‘Introduction’, pp. xi-xiii.

<sup>58</sup> This is because our immediate contention comes from the subsuming national myths and ‘histories’ that threaten our tribal and eventually personal realities. The nuanced and personal remembering that occurs within the tribe is careful to account for this dilemma.

<sup>59</sup> Memory theories in oral tradition generally focus on the ‘oral formulaic theory’, which is discussed later in this chapter. Theorists in this area draw heavily on the work of linguists, but also on ‘cognitive psychology’. One of the more comprehensive contributions in this area is David C. Rubin, *Memory in Oral Traditions, The Cognitive Psychology of Epic Ballads and Counting-out Rhymes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

attached to “extraordinary coincidence” and “pluck” it is possible to discern, concealed as a memory trace, ideas of a destiny and fate, a hidden hand guiding the subject forward.’<sup>60</sup>

What some call ‘myths’, are considered histories and important tribal mātauranga for Ngāti Porou. Indeed, prophetic dreams and sayings for many Ngāti Porou people are not fairy tales and fables, but vital parts of individual life scripts and family histories. The birth of many of our great leaders, for instance, are accompanied by prophecies, from the revered warrior chief Tuwhakairiora to one of our most celebrated leaders in recent times Sir Apirana Ngata.<sup>61</sup> However, the myths we live by are now powerfully entangled with other cultures and histories. Consider for instance this story recounted by Tia Neha:

Another one [story] about the kuia (old ladies) that would be playing cards in the wharenuī (meeting house), no, not in the wharenuī in ...[the] kauta (cooking shed), and they looked up at the urupa (graveyard) and there was this light, and there was this man that came in, came into the whare, and basically he sat down and played with them, and they were having jokes and what-not, and then one of the kuia dropped her card and looked down and Hika! (oh man!) this fella had one hoof, and one shoe, and I don’t know whether this was myth, or this was kōrero pono (a true story), but that remained in me as a kid, and so whenever we went back to the coast I was too scared to go to the toilet in case I’d see that man with the hoof... and about a year ago I was having a kōrero (chat) with mum and I said “I read somewhere in one of your biblical passages that the man with the hoof may be described, half man, half beast, may be described as Lucifer, or the Demon, the Devil”, and she said “That is one explanation.”<sup>62</sup>

For our people, the ‘hoofed man’ is a figure that appeared with the arrival of European stories, particularly the Bible, but is not a part of pre-colonial Ngāti Porou

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<sup>60</sup> Paul Thompson and Raphael Samuel, *The Myths We Live By*, p. 10.

<sup>61</sup>The prophetic saying uttered by Te Ataakura is in reference to the birth of her son, Tuwhakairiora, ‘E whana koe i roto i au he tane, ki a ea i a koe te mate o to tipuna/ if thou who kicks violently within me is a son, then it is you who will avenge the death of your grandfather.’ See A. T. Mahuika, ‘Ngā Wahine Kaihautu o Ngāti Porou: female leaders of Ngāti Porou’ (Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Sydney, 1974), p. 41. Likewise Ngata’s birth was foreseen and proclaimed by a tohunga (priest) and recorded by Paratene Ngata (Apirana’s father), who recounted the use of karakia, the rising smoke from a paua shell, and the appearance of a rainbow as well as other rituals pertaining to the ceremony performed by the tohunga. These prophecies are known, now written, and retained in our kōrero tuku iho. A story noted in Michael King, *Apirana Ngata, E Tipu e Rea* (Wellington: Department of Education, 1988), pp. 4-5.

<sup>62</sup> Tia Neha, *Oral History Interview*, Otepoti (19<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 25.33 – 27.09.

history. Joan Metge has argued that for Māori, myths are both ‘historical and ahistorical’, but are always contemporary constructions where ‘time is annihilated’ as the past is ‘brought into the present.’<sup>63</sup> An explanation of myth from a Ngāti Porou perspective was offered by Apirana Mahuika during his interview:

For us mythical is pūrākau ... I remember when we were little, at night, because there was no power and you would try and go to sleep, and then you get people to give you a pūrākau, a story, that you make up going around the room. And the sooner you sleep the better off you are, you know, because, we always were mātaku kehua (afraid of ghosts) in those days. And so if you can get someone to talk you a long pūrākau it can give you time to sleep. And so I remember all sorts of pūrākau. These were myths – make up stories – koina te pūrākau ki te Māori (that is the myth to the Māori). But legends are kōrero tahito (ancient stories/histories), mo te tētahi tangata, mo tētahi iwi (for people and tribes). Koina te (that is the) legend. He tangata rongonui (a renowned person). Koina te legend, tēna mea te tangata. Tuwhakairiora ki a tātou (that is who Tuwhakairiora the person is to us) – the legend because he was one of our warrior ancestors. For me, Umuariki is a legend because he was one of our warrior ancestors that also relates back to us.’<sup>64</sup>

The notion of what is real and imaginary, ‘made up stories’, as opposed to an account of historical accuracy are not unfamiliar issues for our people.<sup>65</sup> As Api implies above, what some call legend or myth we understand in the skills and status of a person.<sup>66</sup> Writing on family myths in oral history testimonies, Jane Moodie points out that myths can be identified by ‘the use of certain stereotyped images, and the connotations of particular words, as well as by attitudes and behaviours.’<sup>67</sup> This

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<sup>63</sup> Joan Metge, ‘Myths Are For Telling’, in *Sporen in De Anthropologie*, edited by Paul Van der Grijp, Ton Lemaire, and Albert Trouwborst (Nijmegen: Instituut voor Kulturele en Sociale Antropologie Katholieke Universiteit, 1987), p. 174.

<sup>64</sup> Api Mahuika, *Oral History Interview*, Kaiti (7<sup>th</sup> July 2009), Rec Three, 2.16 – 3.21. See Appendices 3, Whakapapa Tables 14, 15, pp. 366, 367.

<sup>65</sup> Metge argues that Māori had ‘no sense of history as a Western historian understands it’, but presented the past in ‘contemporary idiom’ where ‘scope for choice and therefore change is built into and an inevitable consequence of the transmission process.’ Metge, ‘Myths Are For Telling’, pp. 168, 176.

<sup>66</sup> He goes on in the interview to give the example of Maui, who he argues is seen to be reified by those who look in at Māori culture, yet for our people is an historical figure whose abilities and deeds are emphasised as extraordinary. Apirana Mahuika, Rec three, 00.55 – 1.51.

<sup>67</sup> Moodie, ‘Family Myths in Oral History’, p. 10.

lifting of models, or stereotypes, from 'pre-established frameworks' is, as Jean Peneff claims, not an unusual process in life narratives.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, myth in oral history interpretive theory, as Ron Grele notes, work as 'organising principles of memory', which are 'crucial to the construction of a collective vision of the past – a history.'<sup>69</sup> This is certainly the case in Ngāti Porou, where so called myths in our kōrero tuku iho are actually viewed by our people as history:

That takes me back to Maui, when Maui was fishing on the ocean, he didn't fish New Zealand out of the sea, he witnessed the splitting of the continents, so it's been turned into a myth. No, it's true, he saw the big land mass splitting up, he heard the rumble of the ocean from beneath before the land sunk, and lands erupted from the sea to divide Hawaiiki-nui into the countries that they are today. No fable, no mystery – but a fact. If one bothered to push those land masses back together they'd fit neatly like a jig-saw puzzle.<sup>70</sup>

Anaru Kupenga's appraisal here is connected to the shifting of tectonic plates noted in the seismic event that is said to have fractured Gondwanaland creating the various South Pacific land masses we inhabit today.<sup>71</sup> His interpretation of Maui's story as fact rather than fable accentuates the historical relevance of 'myth' in our cultural frame of reference. Like Anaru, most of the other interviewees considered kōrero tuku iho to be closer to history than myth: a deliberate differentiation that tended to assert the validity of our knowledge.<sup>72</sup> This rejection of myth reflects a resistance to outside definitions that have distorted and marginalised our oral

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<sup>68</sup> Jean Peneff, 'Myths in Life Stories', in *The Myths We Live By*, edited by Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 36.

<sup>69</sup> Grele, 'Oral History as Evidence', p. 86.

<sup>70</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 22.13 – 23.14.

<sup>71</sup> This is the predominant theory maintained by scholars in New Zealand. For further reading see George Gibbs, *Ghosts of Gondwanaland: The History of Life in New Zealand* (Nelson: Craig Potton, 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Eru Potaka Dewes, for instance, was adamant that 'history' rather than 'myth stories' were the key kōrero heard on marae. Eru Potaka Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Hopuhopu (22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008), Rec Three, 25.26 – 26.28; 29.57 – 30.15.

history and tradition within limited understandings of myth.<sup>73</sup> However, for oral historians a more analytical appreciation of myth is one of the strengths in oral history theory. Of the significance of myth Paul Thompson and Raphael Samuel write:

Myths are a way not only of structuring memory but also of exploring experience.... In such instances mythical accounts of the past can powerfully evoke the ways in which life was formerly experienced and perceived. Myth may take us closer to past meanings and certainly to subjectivity than thick description and the painstaking accumulation of fact.<sup>74</sup>

Far from problematic and unreliable, myths in oral history are welcomed for what they reveal about memory rather than fact or fiction.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, because oral testimony is 'pre-eminently an expression and representation of culture', specific 'dimensions of memory' such as myth are seen to be best understood within their local contexts.<sup>76</sup> This has resonance for Ngāti Porou, who maintain that our oral history and traditions should be understood within our own mātauranga. To this extent, the interpretive theory related to myth has considerable relevance to our kōrero tuku iho because it allows it to breathe, yet at once actively interrogates those 'mythical elements' that are vital to its evolving shape and form.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> This is noted earlier in chapter two. Also see Nēpia Mahuika, 'Kōrero Tuku iho: Our Gift and Our Responsibility', *Te Pouhere Kōrero IV, Māori History, Māori People* (2010), pp. 21-40.

<sup>74</sup> Samuel and Thompson, *The Myths We Live By*, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> Thompson and Samuel contend that just because 'memory can be structured like myth does not mean that it can or should be reduced to it.' Samuel and Thompson, *The Myths We Live By*, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> Luisa Passerini, 'Work Ideology and Consensus Under Italian Facism', *History Workshop Journal*, 8 (1979), p. 84. Ron Grele has argued further that 'if personal identity is structured collectively through myth it is given agency through ideology.' The ideological and psychological aspects of desire in memory then should also be considered in their cultural contexts. Grele, 'Oral History as Evidence', p. 90

<sup>77</sup> Thompson and Samuel write that 'In identifying mythical elements in our own cultural or professional assumptions, we threaten our ethnocentric self-confidence.' Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, *The Myths We Live By*, p. 5.



Like memory, myth is also a theory advanced more in the oral history literature than it is the work of oral traditionalists. Within the study of oral tradition myth is often narrowly defined in contrast to historical fact, and therefore reduces Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho to fable, fairytale, and the unreal. Oral historians, on the other hand, focus more on the subjective and psychoanalytic utility of myth in the way groups and individuals organise memories and tell their stories. Subsequently, studies in oral tradition differ markedly to oral history when it comes to the analysis of myth, the former generally content to accept myth as less reliable accounts, while the latter intrigued by the use of myth in the way the past is massaged into cultural meaning and realities.

### **Ngāti Poroutanga: Re-theorising Narratives and Formulas**

Narrative theories are also significant interpretive approaches employed in the study of oral traditions and histories. The narrative 'turn' as Mary Chamberlain writes, has added a much needed degree of sophistication to the understanding of oral history narratives, shifting the focus from the 'observable and measureable to the symbolic and semiotic.'<sup>78</sup> Telling the story is an important art-form in the Māori world, and in Ngāti Porou the transmission of our history has long been crafted in the interplay between multiple orators. Reflecting on memories of his father's generation, Whaimutu Dewes recalls that when they got together 'they'd talk ... and tell tales to each other.'<sup>79</sup> Passing on our oral traditions and histories, although left to specifically skilled kaikōrero, is a communal narrative construction for Ngāti Porou more than an autobiographical account.<sup>80</sup> With the advent of writing and print, the traditions

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<sup>78</sup> Mary Chamberlain, 'Narrative Theory', *Thinking About Oral History: Theories and Applications*, edited by Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Meyers, and Rebecca Sharpless (New York: Altamira, 2008), pp. 143, 163

<sup>79</sup> Whaimutu Dewes, *Oral History Interview*, Rotorua (2007), 1.02.45 – 1.04.44.

<sup>80</sup> This collective storytelling is also common to other peoples. See William Schneider, *So They Understand: Cultural Issues in Oral History* (Utah: Utah State University Press, 2002).

and history of previously oral cultures have been reshaped in collisions between new and old narrative structures.<sup>81</sup> For instance, Rewiti Kohere, in his autobiography tells a series of short stories that are generally tribal histories. Here he recounts an incident that connects to the naming of one of our most famous leaders:

Te Rangitaukiwaho, a chief, was strongly advised not to put out to sea, for the moon was in its *takirau* phase and the sea would be rough, or *kani*. The chief replied that he was aware of the fact but he was prepared to risk the *takirau*. he and all his crew perished when sailing off the notoriously dangerous Tauhinu Point, off Tokararangi reef, and a child which was born later was given the name Te Kani-a-Takirau. This child grew up to be the great Tologa Bay Chief known throughout New Zealand.<sup>82</sup>

More than an autobiography, Rewiti's life history is also a narrative of the tribe as a whole, of our places, people, events, and politics. It is typical of *kōrero tuku iho* in Ngāti Porou. This personal, yet collective and traditional, history reads as 'life lived like a story', an approach familiar to those who study oral traditions, such as Julie Cruickshank, who accentuates the use of 'tradition' in the life narratives she found among Athapaskan women in the Yukon territory.<sup>83</sup> For Ngāti Porou, the narrative traditions maintained in formal rituals observe a specific protocol, from the acknowledgement of the natural world, places and local people, specific commemoration of the deceased, to all the genealogies relevant to those people and places. However, in these oral histories, as John Coleman notes, the 'focus of the day' governs the structure of the narrative:

Everything also referred to the gathering of the day, or the kaupapa of the day, and they two tribes getting together or the two hapu getting together, and

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<sup>81</sup> This is also noted by Bradford Haami, who highlights the specific change in Māori oral tradition with the advent of writing. Bradford Haami, *Putea Whakairo: Māori and the Written Word* (Wellington: Huia/Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2004). The evolution of oral traditions in creative literature is also discussed in Gayl Jones, *Liberating Voices, Oral Tradition in African American literature* (New York: Penguin, 1991).

<sup>82</sup> Kohere notes that *takirau* is 'The fifth night of the moon', and that the literal meaning of *kani* here is 'to saw, as the bow of a canoe cuts into the sea.' Rewiti Kohere, *The Autobiography of a Maori* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1951), p. 62.

<sup>83</sup> Julie Cruickshank, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life stories of three Yukon Native Elders* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

reflects on whether we've gone there for the opening of a meeting house or a dining room.<sup>84</sup>

Telling our stories together, as a group, accentuates a collective rather than personal narrative approach. William Schneider contends that these types of gatherings highlight a 'neglected genre of oral history', different to interviews which tend to consist of 'people asking questions.'<sup>85</sup> In this way both the study of oral history and tradition draw on narrative theories, oral traditionalists interested more in collective storytelling, while oral historians often focus more on individual life narratives. For both scholars, the linguistic and literary aspects in narrative theories offer various insights. The semiotic conceptualisation of culture, for instance, lifted from linguistic and anthropological study has particular relevance for those who work with the oral traditions of indigenous communities.<sup>86</sup> Likewise, paying closer attention to the construction of narratives in biographical life histories is of specific value to oral historians, who contemplate the processes of meaning, time, imagination, memory, and subjectivity in their interactive interviews.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, the connection between narrative and memory has been an important theoretical strand in oral history.<sup>88</sup> Drawing on the work of Alan Megill, some oral historians have highlighted the 'conceptual coherence' at work in narrative scales, from micro narratives, to grand and meta narratives, each with their own emphasis.<sup>89</sup> These layers can also be seen in the oral recordings in this study, where interviewees shaped life stories from the

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<sup>84</sup> John Coleman, *Oral History Interview*, Te Puia Springs (14<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 3.48 – 4.49

<sup>85</sup> Schneider, *So They Understand*, pp. 6, 81-92.

<sup>86</sup> This is highly influenced by Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>87</sup> This is noted by Chamberlain, 'Narrative Theory', p. 149. Of the potential in narrative analysis, Hayden White writes: 'Narrative is never a neutral discursive form that may or may not represent real events in their aspect as developmental processes but rather entails ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and specifically political implications.' Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. ix.

<sup>88</sup> Adapted from the work of Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

<sup>89</sup> Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, p. 204.

multiple narrative scales forged through their personal and collective memories.

Turuhira Tatare, for instance, recalls:

... going to the water at midnight, and frightened of ghosts, even the hooting of an owl would make us jump, scream, and carry on, and we had to go to the water barefooted, but there was no smacking of a child, there was too much tapu, but then that was a good guideline for us, don't touch people's properties. When you're told don't it means don't. You know, don't eat in the meeting house, you eat at the table. There was always karakia. And you're praying for all sorts, you're praying for guidance, and you're paying homage to Tangaroa, to the departmental Gods. And you're also taught to pray, but you're never told why there was such a religion as the Ringatu until we reached the age of about fourteen I think, no sixteen sorry, when our tohunga died ... he was, and then I asked. Some religions say the Lord's prayer right through, why is it that we finish the lord's prayer half way? I didn't know the answer until many years later, but those questions were still on my mind, and then I found that Te Kooti started the Ringatu faith, and that he was still in the era of the man-eating stage at that time, so he took the Lord's prayer half way. It was only when Jesus Christ was made known to us that's why we completed the Lord's prayer.<sup>90</sup>

At the centre of her story is a personal negotiation with various narrative scales, in this case, the competing meta-narratives of Christianity and traditional tribal theologies and mātauranga. These deep narratives of creation, human purpose, and moral conduct are important to Turuhira because they work to inform her interpretations of other narrative layers in the interview. Thus, based on her underlying narrative constructions she later refers to Pākehā as 'the rebels' in a counter narrative that reframes New Zealand history within a story about struggle and resistance rather than progress and colonisation.<sup>91</sup>

Beyond the micro and meta narrative structures, other oral historians, such as Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-Duchet have urged scholars to consider various narrative models. She notes three specific types; the epic that reveals 'an identification with the values of the community'; the romanesque, which considers 'the quest for authentic values in a degraded world', and the picaresque: 'an ironical and satirical

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<sup>90</sup> Turuhira Tatare, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui-a-Kiwa (12<sup>th</sup> May 2008), 4.32 – 6.46

<sup>91</sup> Tatare, 17.19 - 17.23.

position in relation to hegemonic values.’<sup>92</sup> These narrative models also have particular relevance to the way our people told their stories, albeit within more local and distinctive archetypes. Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, for instance, spoke of her life in three major epochs:

Here I am, next month I’ll be seventy nine, year after I’ll be eighty. I was born in 1929, and I think in everybody’s lives there are certain milestones that become key milestones...my life has been, sort of, every twenty years has been a significant happening, and I’m going to talk about that to start off with because 1929 I was born. 1949 I was married, and my son was born. That’s first twenty years. Second twenty years from 49 to 69, your relation my husband died, Porourangi in 1969, so that was the second twenty years.... The third twenty years was not so much that anybody died, but in 1989 Maori Affairs died. I was working in Maori Affairs and it was disestablished in 89, so it was another twenty year period. Also this twenty year time factor applies to the Kohanga Reo movement. I was appointed to manage the movement in 1982, and so in 2002 I was going around the country with the trustees, and Te Arikinui, Dame te Ata was with us, and as we were going around to the different rohes celebrating the twenty years anniversary... we were moving on from Matatua to Tairawhiti Gisborne, and I suddenly realised, my goodness this is twenty years we’re celebrating, and I made up my mind in the car on the way to Gisborne that I would seriously consider stepping down.... I guess what I’m saying is that in my life, and in anybody’s life, there are significant happenings and milestones, and so the twenty year thing for me has always had a significance for me.<sup>93</sup>

Iritana’s narrative is a story of service, divided by three significant moments or ‘happenings.’ She is a survivor, an agitator and activist, her narrative is a combination of the epic and romanesque model, but only inasmuch as they relate to the values of *our* tribal community. The narrative model interpretive theory here opens up possibilities, which can only be realised once they have been reconfigured within our cultural frames of reference. Taking the narrator’s cultural understandings into account is a familiar issue for those who study both oral histories and traditions. Writing of narrative in oral history, Mary Chamberlain

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<sup>92</sup> Marie-Francoise Chanfrault-Duchet, ‘Narrative Structures, Social Models, and Symbolic Representation in the Life Story’, in *Women’s Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 77-92.

<sup>93</sup> Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, *Oral History Interview*, Wairarapa (24<sup>th</sup> February 2008), 00.47 – 4.12.

argues that 'what is remembered, when and why is moulded by the culture in which they live, the language at their disposal and the conventions and the genre appropriate to the occasion.'<sup>94</sup> Similarly, in regard to indigenous life histories and traditions, Julie Cruickshank observes that:

Narrators who make sense of apparent archaic imagery are utilizing a traditional dimension of cultural life as a resource that translates and makes sense of their life experiences. I would argue that storytelling is central to their intellectual tradition and that we should pay attention to how it continues to be a communicative act.<sup>95</sup>

Most of the stories told in the interviews undertaken in this study referred explicitly to Ngāti Porou imagery and mātauranga. In reference to carving, identity, and history, Derek Lardelli spoke of the 'manaia' and the 'iro', while many others referred to 'tapu' and tikanga related to tuakana and taina, and other genealogical relationships. Some, like Turuhira Tatare and Te Kapunga Dewes made reference to wharenuī and whare wānanga, and the deeply poetic nature of our language and storytelling. Others, like Anaru Kupenga made mention of the environment, of our equivalents in Papatuanuku and Ranginui, and the cosmological and theological relationships embedded in our histories and practices. Here, he refers to the process undertaken by the tohunga whakairo (expert carver):

He utters his prayers before he's selected the tree to cut down and take its life, knowing full well that the trees, the birds and the fishes were the first creations of Io, they were his tuākana (seniors), he was the last of all creation, so he utters his prayers asking forgiveness before he cut them down. In cutting it down he returned the beauty back to the tree in the form of a carving, giving the tree or that carving life to speak again, but in a form that can be left as a message for coming generations. He didn't take a life just for the sake of it, he dared to do that knowing full well that was his tuakana. So those were just one of the many aids that he used to erect houses and so on and so forth.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Chamberlain, 'Narrative Theory', p. 157.

<sup>95</sup> Julie Cruickshank, 'Myth as a Framework for life stories: Athapaskan Women Making Sense of Social Change in Northern Canada', in *The Myths We Live By*, edited by Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson (London and New York: Routledge, 1987), p. 176.

<sup>96</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 14.44 - 16.21.

Applying narrative theories to an exploration of the oral histories or traditions of individuals and groups requires an understanding of their epistemological foundations. Narrative interpretive analyses, however, are not explicitly oral history or oral tradition theories, but show how both are entangled in the process of storytelling and narrative construction. Storytelling then, whether in a one on one interview or woven together from the paepae are already imbued with prior 'content', or ideologies that locate them within specific contexts as both histories and traditions.<sup>97</sup> The difference between oral history and tradition then, is not identifiable in the method or theory, but the underlying perspective from which they are heard and disseminated. Nevertheless, narrative theories offer significant relevance and value to interpretive research in Ngāti Porou oral history, particularly biographical interviews. Anna Green, for instance, has observed that 'sometimes a person will identify the "key" to the composition of their narrative, pointing to an early event or experience that set the direction of his or her life.'<sup>98</sup> This was the case in many of the interviews, and was perhaps most obvious in Materoa Collins narrative, where she recalled an important story about her father that she believes shaped the trajectory of her life:

He left school when he was legally able to in those days, and I'm not sure whether he made it to thirteen or fourteen, when he left school. He left school an intelligent person, really really intelligent man. What happened to him that finally drove him out was (a) you couldn't speak Māori, and he could only speak Māori, and (b) he got into a bit of an altercation with a teacher there. The night before he had burnt his hand getting something off the fire: his hand had blistered, but the next day at school his hand was bandaged, wrapped up, and had some rongoa (medicine) on it from his nanny. One of his mates had stolen some fruit, and he had eaten it as well, and the teacher finds out and he goes to give everybody the strap because of eating this fruit, and so dad being dad "yeah, I ate it", holds out his un-burnt hand, but the teacher asked for the burnt one, and he took the bandages off and strapped him on that hand. And it opened up his blisters. He took the strapping and told the teacher where to stick his

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<sup>97</sup> Hayden White, *The Content of the Form*, p. xi.

<sup>98</sup> Anna Green and Megan Hutching, eds., *Remembering, Writing Oral History* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), p. 15.

school, and then he left. And so for him, he felt that education was what we needed, and Māori was not. So, he refused to teach his kids Māori. He refused, he kept saying “It’s not going to get you anywhere”, but my nanny who didn’t speak English... that Māori in me was planted and blossomed.<sup>99</sup>

Materoa went on to work for many years as a teacher, predominantly with Māori children. Reflecting on her life, this story is a pivotal part of her journey. The ‘key’ to the life narrative, like the one expressed by Materoa, is on some ways similar to the idea of a ‘peripeteia’, or turning point, which others like Jason Koia noted in their life stories.<sup>100</sup>

I went back to a tangi, and it started raining. Next minute ... this light came down from the sky and it shone on this headstone, and it was the tallest headstone in the urupa (graveyard) ... as it came down I saw the Waiapu valley around and I got this warm feeling, this really strong warm feeling. It was strength, I couldn’t describe it, it gave me goosebumps ... it was a really warm awesome feeling. And basically it just said, it was like freedom, “come back and help your people.” That’s what it said, and I didn’t know it. I was working at Woolworths then... and I was slaving away as you do – you know, Māoris are good workers ... and I thought “you know I’m sick and tired of having Pākehā bosses that sit on their arse and do absolutely nothing, while I’m doing work and their getting paid more than me ... it’s not right! We should be Kings and Queens on our own soil, and here we are being fodder, being labourers, being honest, while other people are getting wealthy and prosperous off our backs”.... and so I was chopping my cabbages, and that’s when I made my decision “I aint working for a white man for the rest of my life”, so I just quit my job.<sup>101</sup>

Jason’s turning point is marked in a vision, a spiritual experience, which serves as an awakening that later accounts for his reason to contest the Ngāti Porou settlement claim. Interpreting the narrative, particularly the way it is organised and composed requires an understanding of the way the storyteller engages with the motifs and themes evident in their communities. These, as Alessandro Portelli suggests, can often include ‘standing up to the big man’ or ‘personal confrontations with figures of

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<sup>99</sup> Materoa and Tiawhe, Rec One, 15.17 – 17.10.

<sup>100</sup> The ‘peripeteia’ or turning point in narrative is referred to by Jerome Bruner, ‘The Uses of Story’ in *Making the Stories, Law, Literature, Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 6.

<sup>101</sup> Jason Koia, 27.11 – 31.14



institutional authority.<sup>102</sup> In Jason's story it is the slothful Pākehā boss, and later in his interview the deceitful and oppressive tribal governing body, while for Materoa it is the institution and colonial system that betrayed not only her father, but Māori as a whole.

Storytelling is a crucial aspect of both oral history interviewing and the study of oral traditions. However, oral traditions are also regularly employed in the interactive biographies common to life narratives, and are therefore inseparable from what some call 'oral histories.' Closely linked to theories of memory, narrative interpretive analyses deal predominantly with the ways individuals shape their histories, yet not always with the ways in which oral histories are produced in specific contexts. Elizabeth Tonkin, among others, has noted how the social and cultural context contributes to the way narratives are told.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, within Ngāti Porou, an understanding of oral traditions and history requires a reconsideration of these terms as *kōrero tuku iho*.<sup>104</sup> By looking at our cultural dimensions, the expansive realities of both oral history and oral tradition shift between personal negotiations of collective scripts reiterated in private and public contexts. In these spaces, narrative and memory theories are equally relevant, yet many who study oral traditions within communities that have a strong oral culture employ oral formulaic theories which they apply to ballads and songs.<sup>105</sup> The oral formulaic theory, advanced in the work of Milman Parry and Albert Lord deals with 'repeated word groups', with standard stock phrases, and the way these are metrically employed in an explicitly

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<sup>102</sup> Alessandro Portelli, 'Oral History as Genre', in *Narrative and Genre*, edited by Mary Chamberlain and Paul Thompson (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 26.

<sup>103</sup> Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>104</sup> This is discussed in Chapter Four specifically.

<sup>105</sup> The 'oral formulaic theory', though, as John Miles Foley notes, is only 'one approach to oral tradition.' John Miles Foley, *The Theory of Oral Composition*, p. xiii.

oral composition.<sup>106</sup> However, the irony of most oral formulaic theory research is that it is carried out with written sources to ascertain whether the song or ballad was at one stage conveyed orally. It is a theory of memory, but not with the same emphasis as collective memory or composure. Walter Ong, for instance, observes that:

In a primary oral culture, to solve effectively the problem of retaining and retrieving carefully articulated thought, you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence. Your thoughts must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antithesis, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulaic expressions, in standard thematic settings (the assembly, the meal, the duel, the hero's helper, and so on), in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone, so that they come to mind readily and which themselves are patterned for retention and ready recall or in other mnemonic form.<sup>107</sup>

Considering the memorisation of 'traditions' as an oral formulaic act has some relevance to Ngāti Porou, yet is difficult to examine in a community that has been highly literate for some time.<sup>108</sup> The rhythmic and mnemonic 'patterns' were not specifically addressed by the interviewees, nevertheless, they did note the process of remembering as a repetitious activity that mimicked the tone, phrases and orality of their teachers and mentors. Tia Neha recalls that the oral dimensions of songs and stories were 'modelled' and practiced for hours every week over a select period of time.<sup>109</sup> Her mother, Ihipera Morrell, pointed out that this oral transmission was similar to the way she learnt in her generation to 'imitate' the oral expressions of their kuia.<sup>110</sup> Memorising oral compositions, as Angela Tibble contended has

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<sup>106</sup> Although this study of 'orality' has for some time been an examination of printed sources, as Lord notes, 'students of epic have now willingly applied themselves to the study of repeated phrases by textual analysis.' Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1960), p. 30.

<sup>107</sup> Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy, The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Methuen, 1982), p. 34.

<sup>108</sup> The defining of this area of study as oral 'tradition' is problematic. This is discussed more fully in Chapters Four and Five. Many of the mōteatea (songs) collected by A. T. Ngata and others were composed in the nineteenth century, at a time when reading and writing was a popular activity encouraged in Ngāti Porou communities.

<sup>109</sup> Tia Neha, 35.10 – 35.50.

<sup>110</sup> Ihipera Morrell, *Oral History Interview, Otepoti* (19<sup>th</sup> April 2008), 11.41 – 12.46.

changed though, because on the one hand the songs and histories could be ‘caught’ when you ‘go to the pā’ and others ‘sing them’, but are now often learnt outside of these rituals in artificial contexts.<sup>111</sup> Indeed, songs, as Prince Ferris observed, were predominantly learnt now by ‘paper’ rather than ear.<sup>112</sup>

Parry and Lord’s oral formula has become one of the key theories in the literature on oral tradition, but is largely used by ethnomusicologists and folklorists. Some scholars have argued that it is an outmoded ‘phase in the history of Homeric scholarship’, while others such as Merrit Sale have leapt to its defence arguing that ‘oral composition is consistent with considerably more individual freedom in the use of formulae than Parry appears to permit.’<sup>113</sup> This theory of orality and memory rarely features in the writing of oral historians, but has been considered in the work of scholars who explore ‘traditional’ Māori songs. Margaret Orbell, for instance, claims that Māori traditional ‘songs were not improvised’ but ‘constructed largely from set themes and expressions’ of which the oral-formulaic theory is unable to fully account or explain.<sup>114</sup> Similarly, in a more recent study, Raukura Roa argues that ‘although there is little evidence for the extensive use of oral formulae in traditional mōteatea, there is nevertheless not only compelling evidence of extensive use of formulaic themes, but also evidence of the use of formulaic structuring.’<sup>115</sup> As both assert, the oral formulaic theory has considerable relevance to the study of mōteatea, but is more a matter of formulaic structuring than metric conditioning. For Ngāti Porou, this theoretical approach has application to further study regarding the way our kōrero tuku iho is structured and disseminated. Indeed, as Iritana

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<sup>111</sup> Angela Tibble, *Oral History Interview*, Turanganui-a-Kiwa (10<sup>th</sup> December 2007), 25.30 - 26.01.

<sup>112</sup> Prince Ferris, *Oral History Interview*, Ruatorea (10<sup>th</sup> January 2008), 34.07 – 34.45.

<sup>113</sup> Merrit Sale, ‘In Defence of Milman Parry: Renewing the Oral Theory’, *Oral Tradition*, 11/12 (1996), p. 374.

<sup>114</sup> Margaret Orbell, ‘“My Summit Where I Sit”: Form and Content in Māori Women’s love Songs’, *Oral Tradition*, 5/2-3 (1990), p. 185.

<sup>115</sup> Raukura Roa, ‘Formulaic Discourse Patterning in Mōteatea’ (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2008), p. 204.

Tawhiwhirangi observed in her interview, *mōteatea* was rehearsed over and over again in ‘an essentially oral environment’, where the set expressions in speeches and songs were highly repetitious.<sup>116</sup> *Kōrero tuku iho*, in Whaimutu Dewes experience, are told verbally ‘over and over again’ drawing on set stories, themes and motifs.<sup>117</sup> The oral formulaic theory then supports the notion of a sophisticated remembering in communities that maintain strong oral customs and conventions, yet is limited by its focus on ballads and songs.

As an approach to the study of oral tradition, the oral formulaic theory only pays partial attention to interpretations of culture, despite the fact it is heavily used by ethnographers. Like memory studies, culture is a topic explored across many disciplines, and is popular in anthropology, where structural and functionalist theories have been developed in the work of scholars such as Claude Lévi Strauss and Bronislaw Malinowski.<sup>118</sup> Focused on ‘symbolic rituals’ as a means of investigating culture, the anthropologists Clifford Geertz also proposed that a type of ‘thick description’ could highlight symbolic behaviours evident in wider society.<sup>119</sup> Influenced by Geertz theory, the cultural historian, Robert Darnton produced an ‘anthropological history’ in which he explored the symbolic significance surrounding the torture and massacre of cats in Paris toward the end of

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<sup>116</sup> Tawhiwhirangi, 17.04 – 17.51.

<sup>117</sup> Dewes, 43.11 – 45.10.

<sup>118</sup> Claude Lévi Strauss, a French anthropologist, developed structural theories based on the idea of a social ‘synchronic’ system, where similarities and difference could be explored in the various symbolic aspects of culture. His thinking reflective of the linguistic theories posited by Saussure and later Roman Jakobson, accentuated the notion that binary oppositions are embedded in language, myth and history. Claude Lévi Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, Vol. 2 (London: Penguin, 1978). Anthropologists, such as Bronislaw Malinowski, also adopted the functionalist theories of Emile Durkheim, a sociologist, and emphasised how rituals and ceremonies contribute to social cohesion. For further reading see Randall Collins, *Four Sociological Traditions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Durkheim’s functionalist collective paradigm is also evident in the scholarship of Maurice Halbwachs, whose collective memory has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

<sup>119</sup> For further reading see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

the eighteenth century.<sup>120</sup> These theories, a blend of linguistic and literary hermeneutics, as well as symbolic and synchronic structural and functionalist theories, have relevance to the way Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho might be explored. Indeed, understanding our symbolic and ritual conventions is essential to the study and interpretation of our oral histories and traditions, as Derek Lardelli reminds us in chapter four: ‘He tangata mohio ki te whakairo i te kupu (A person who knows how to carve out words), whakairo i te rakau (to carve wood), whakairo whare (carve houses), te hinengaro (and the mind)’ will know how to engage with, research, and present our oral histories and traditions on multiple levels (Chapter Four).<sup>121</sup> To know our theories is to understand their form, the methods used to disseminate them, and the tikanga (protocols) that govern the way they are communicated (Chapter Seven).<sup>122</sup>

As this thesis has demonstrated, specific templates and linguistic scripts provide insights to the way our people theorise the world. This includes a politics of activism - a mana motuhake – that declares ‘kua kingi mai ano au i aku tipuna/I am a King already by my lineage’ (Chapter Six). Our theories, like our histories, are embedded in our songs and proverbs. For Matanuku it was haka - like Te Kiringutu - that he invoked to theorise his working life as a lawyer (Chapter Five). We draw on these scripts to construct our identities, from songs similar to this one composed by Ngoi Pewhairangi:

If you’re from Tokomaru, Tūranga, Te Araroa  
Any place beyond that smoky East Coast line  
Then you’re from Naati  
From Ngāti Porou

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<sup>120</sup> Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, p. xix.

<sup>121</sup> This was discussed in chapter four. Derek Lardelli, 25.58 – 27.05.

<sup>122</sup> The notion that Ngāti Porou ‘oral histories and traditions are made and remade in our formal tribal customs’ is discussed in Chapter Seven.

'Cause I'm from Naati too.<sup>123</sup>

Ngoi's waiata repeats the underlying messages found in other proverbs, sayings, genealogical renditions, haka and mōteatea that affirm our tribal identity. In this sense, our theories define us, and are 'lived' in the same way the interviewees asserted in chapters four and five. Grounded in our world, collective memory theory is best described within the theoretical dimensions of whakapapa. This has already been addressed in this study in the words of Api Mahuika (Chapter Five), Wayne Ngata and Herewini Parata (Chapter Six), who stressed the importance of inclusivity and nuanced realities in whakapapa: the hypothesis that collective and individual memories in our living genealogical lives are always a negotiation and disruption. Similarly, the duality in structuralism can be seen in Ngāti Porou understandings of 'ahi ka roa/the long burning fires of occupation' and 'kauruki tu roa/the long ascending smoke', as well as the deeper political divisions we see between our indigenous status and the national colonial identity (Chapter Six).<sup>124</sup> Likewise, our theoretical understandings of myth can perhaps best be observed in our continual evocation of the stories told in songs and haka, such as 'Ruaumoko', which recounts a famous historical incident between Uenuku and Tutaua in archaic and metaphorical allusions:

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<sup>123</sup> Tānia M. Ka'ai, *Ngoingoi Pewhairangi: A Remarkable Life* (Wellington: Huia, 2008), p. 121.

<sup>124</sup> These terms are addressed more fully in Mahuika, 'He Kupu Kōrero', pp. 12-13.

... ko te rakau a Tungawerewere  
 he rakau tapu na Tutaua ki a Uenuku,  
 I patukuia ki te tipua o Rangitopeka  
 pakaru te upoko o Rangitopeka  
 Patua ki waenganui o te tau ki Hikurangi  
 he toka whakairo e tu ake nei  
 He Atua! He Tangata! He Atua!  
 He Tangata! Ho!

... It is the rod of Tungawerewere  
 the sacred stick given by Tutaua to Uenuku  
 It struck the monster Te Rangitopeka  
 and smashed the head of Te Rangitopeka  
 Cleaving the twin peaks of Hikurangi  
 where the carved rock emerges  
 a gift of the gods! a gift of men!  
 The wonder of men! the miracle of  
 Heaven!<sup>125</sup>

Myths in Ngāti Porou are different to pūrakau or ‘made up stories’, but are highly imaginative and historical. The haka ‘Ruaumoko’ refers to the earthquake god, but the event commemorated here recalls the provocative phallic dance of Tutaua used to entertain and amuse the high chief Uenuku so as to avoid the likelihood of an impending death – a common fate for many of his food-bearers.<sup>126</sup> Retelling events such as these accentuate the fabulous and ‘legendary’ that Apirana Mahuika noted in the story of Maui (Chapter Four), and are deeply metaphorical so as not to ‘give the full answer’, keeping it safely ‘reserved’ (Chapter Five).<sup>127</sup> Ngāti Porou then theorise myth, not as fantasy or the unreal, but elaborate histories that draw on the deeply symbolic and metaphorical motifs and terms found in our mātauranga. To this extent the oral formulaic theory also has relevance to our aural transmission and can be seen in whaikōrero and recurrent phrases similar to the incantation uttered by Anaru Kupenga in Chapter Four:

<sup>125</sup> Cited here from A. T. Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, pp. 19-20. He refers to Ngata’s translation. See Appendices 2, ‘Ruaumoko’, p. 344.

<sup>126</sup> See also Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, pp. 18-19; Te Kapunga Dewes, ed., *Māori Literature: He Haka Taparahi, Men’s Ceremonial Dance Poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taumaunu, Apirana Ngata* (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp. 7-11.

<sup>127</sup> These were heard in Api Mahuika, Rec Three, 00.55 – 1.51; 13.42 – 15.16.

Nā te kukune te pupuke,  
nā te pupuke te hihiri,  
nā te hihiri te mahara,  
nā te mahara te hinengaro,  
nā te hinengaro te manako.

From the conception comes the increase,  
from the increase comes the thought,  
from the thought comes the remembrance,  
from the remembrance comes the  
consciousness,  
from the consciousness comes the desire.<sup>128</sup>

Here the rhythmic and repetitive is framed in set expressions, but connected to key themes in our world: in this case an intellectual whakapapa that accounts for the ‘birth’ and development of consciousness and desire.<sup>129</sup> Exploring the discursive elements beyond the formulaic theory in Ngāti Porou requires an advanced knowledge of the language, and insight to the way we theorise ourselves and our world. Theory offers a conceptual lens to the interpretation of ‘reality’ and the significance of the ‘imaginary’, yet not all realities are the same.

Ngāti Porou theories offer a considered and reflective indication of our reality, are not abstract or ethereal, but are informed with specific aspirations that give meaning and purpose to the way we decode the world around us. On one level it deals with the esoteric, the ‘kauae runga’ (the upper jaw), or the spiritual, holistic, and religious. While on another level, it accounts for ‘te ao o te tangata’ or the ‘kauae raro’ (lower jaw), which involves ‘operational tasks’, including the ‘implementing and interpretations of the esoteric.’<sup>130</sup> It also latches itself together in the parent vines of whakapapa that account for relationships, responsibilities, collectives and multiple identities. At its heart, Ngāti Porou theories entwine and encapsulate the steadfast political aims of mana motuhake that celebrate the role of our female leaders in a reconfigured gendered and feminist view that is a deep part of our historical

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<sup>128</sup> Anaru Kupenga, 2.20 – 3.29.

<sup>129</sup> Raukura Roa notes the existence of formulaic structures rather than metric formulation in her research. She argues that specific and general macro patterns can be seen in many compositions, and that certain ‘genre’ also exist that include hortatory and explanatory purposes. She calls for a study of the ‘thematic’ aspects, motifs and type settings, in mōteatea. Roa, ‘Formulaic Discourse’, pp. 199, 202.

<sup>130</sup> Mahuika, ‘He Kupu Kōrero’, p. 66.



narrative (see Chapter Six). This theory of autonomy is one of action, in which ‘manaaki ki te tangata/the service for others’ (Chapter Seven) is weaved together with declarations of exceptionalism that remind us who we are and who we represent. These theories of the self are rehearsed and passed on in the words of tribal songs that recount not only the past, but inherited ideas across generations:

Whakaangi i runga rā he kauwhau ariki ē,  
Koi tata iho koe ki ngā wāhi noa.

Soar gracefully on high, O chieftainess,  
And do not descend too near to the common places.<sup>131</sup>

Whakapapa, as these lines remind us, remains a powerfully interpretive lens to the roles and identities transmitted in our *kōrero tuku iho*.<sup>132</sup> Understanding these roles, and more importantly the responsibilities that are embedded in the claim for autonomy and mana, is a theoretical premise that runs throughout our *mātauranga*. It accounts for service and hospitality, ethics, and the underlying rationale that governs our moral, social, and cultural codes. In relation to *kōrero tuku iho*, the active realities in Ngāti Porou theoretical foundations transform our oral traditions and oral histories into living and breathing adornments. They are vigorously defended, not because we believe every sentence to be true, but because they are invaluable to the explication of our past, present, and future. Thus, in affirming *kōrero tuku iho* as living Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition, the interviewees were unanimous, all in consensus with this view summed up by Derek Lardelli:

Ki taku, kei te ora te taha o te rongō. Kei te ora te taha a waha. Haere ki konei ngā ahuatanga hou penei ko te rorohiko, penei te tuhituhi, engari, a waha, mai te mama, mai te koka ki te tamaiti, te *kōrero-a-waha* tenei. E kore rawa e ngaro nei.... Kei reira tonu te oral tradition. Kei reira tonu te oral tradition .... We’ll never ever lose it, ever.

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<sup>131</sup> From ‘He Waiata Oriori’ by Hinekitawhiti, in Apirana T. Ngata and Pei Te Hurinui Jones, eds., *Ngā Mōteatea, the Songs, Part. 1*, Revised Edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), p. 5.

<sup>132</sup> Apirana Mahuika draws attention to the genealogical lines of seniority that are significant in these lines, A.T Mahuika, ‘Ngā Wahine Kaihautu’, pp. 89-91.

To me, the listening is still alive, and the oratory is ongoing. New technologies have arrived here, like the computer, like writing, but, from our mouths, from the mothers, and from the mother to the child, this is word of mouth, and it will not be lost .... The oral tradition is still there, it is still there.... We'll never ever lose it, ever.<sup>133</sup>

This is a statement more than an observation, connected to a tribal assertion of mana motuhake, a theory of action that accentuates our mātauranga. In the rich tapestry that displays Ngāti Porou oral history and tradition, the methods used to illuminate the form of our kōrero tuku iho are embroidered with theories that are weaved together in our political and epistemological foundations. The textures, patterns and shapes displayed, reflect specific tints and colours that shimmer off the twin peaks of our sacred mountain: a symbol of our intellectual, cultural, and spiritual centre. How else can we understand and explain the ways in which oral history and oral tradition might be seen and understood from a Ngāti Porou perspective. Moreover, how could anyone else hope to explore and tell our histories, employ a method, or advance a hypothesis, until they have become familiar with the intricate strands that tie our theoretical perspectives together.

## Summary

There are a number of theories that are considered 'key' interpretive approaches in the studies of oral history and oral tradition. However, not all researchers – or practitioners - in these disciplines have been mindful of the fact that theory informs the methods they employ. This chapter began with the assertion that an appreciation of 'theory' is crucial to a more informed understanding of the study of oral history and/or oral tradition. A deeper consideration of theory reveals the fact that they are social, cultural, and politically constructed phenomena. Thus for Ngāti Porou,

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<sup>133</sup> Lardelli, 13.12 – 13.52.

external theoretical strands are constantly interwoven within an epistemology that 're-centres' and re-theorises the world based on our local patterns.

Scholars in oral history and oral tradition have developed different types of memory theories that have become key approaches used in each discipline. Oral historians, for instance, have advanced collective memory theory noting the way individuals remember as part of wider groups. The collective memory is congruent with Ngāti Porou theories of whakapapa, where individuals are always part of the wider genealogies they inherit. Some oral traditionalists are aware of this, particularly Elizabeth Tonkin and Julie Cruickshank, who emphasise the fact that 'we are our memories', and note the part tradition plays in indigenous recall. Nevertheless, collective memory is a key theory in oral history scholarship more than oral tradition. Likewise, the theory of composure is also attributed to oral history research, yet in Ngāti Porou it is rather a lack of composure that highlights the way our people struggle against the subsuming public memories created by the colonisers. This binary, and selective, process of remembering and forgetting in 'composure' is not necessarily distinctive of either a study of oral 'history' or 'tradition', but relative to both despite the fact it is predominant in oral history scholarship. Indeed, oral traditions exist in personal recall, in interviews, and are easily historicised in both individual and collective contexts and negotiations. Thus, in the study of oral tradition and oral history, remembering is a key theoretical premise to both groups. However Ngāti Porou, oral histories and traditions are more closely aligned to collective remembering through the re-theorised patterns that assert a more coherent tribal memory, which serves as a strategic identity in the advancement of mana motuhake and Ngāti Poroutanga.

Another key theoretical focus in oral history is myth. This has not been as highly developed in the literature in oral tradition, which tends to treat myth as unreliable and fictitious. Myths in Ngāti Porou are not necessarily the same interpretations of 'myth' maintained by non-Māori. Thus, for Ngāti Porou, myth, or pūrakau, can be

'made up stories', but are also associated with *kōrero tuku iho*, which we consider fact more than fiction. In this regard, oral history theories of myth are highly relevant to Ngāti Porou because they acknowledge the strength of myth in the construction of subjective realities. This interpretive theory in oral history is significant because it seeks to understand 'myths' from the perspectives of the narrators, yet interrogates the 'mythical elements' evident in their retelling.

In conjunction with myth and memory, narrative, or storytelling, is also a key theoretical approach employed by both oral historians and oral traditionalists. Ngāti Porou draw on multiple narrators as a matter of *tikanga* and convention, yet the voice we take is a voice we share, which has responsibility as a conduit to the *iwi* as a whole. Thus, there are no single storytellers. This is similar to the ideas found by some who study the oral traditions of other indigenous peoples, noting the way they live 'life as a story' in the pulling together of their tribal histories: a practice some believe is a neglected aspect of oral history. Nevertheless, oral historians have developed exceptionally useful narrative theories linked to the construction predominantly of life narrative or biographical interviews. They draw on narrative scales, the key to narratives, turning points, and the structure of narrative in epic, *romanesque*, or *picaresque*, terms. These were evident in the interviews in this study, but were reshaped in 'counter' narratives that highlighted Ngāti Porou theoretical conceptions of activism and autonomy. Moreover, this storytelling, whether in a one-on-one interview or woven together in specific cultural rituals are imbued with 'content' that re-theorise them in proactive scripts that generally advocated underlying tribal political and cultural objectives.

Beyond the theories of memory, myth, and narrative, popular in oral history, oral traditionalists have developed a specific type of memory theory in the oral formula that tests the aural authenticity of epic poetry and ballads. This repetitive and rhythmic mnemonic structuring is also evident in Ngāti Porou *kōrero tuku iho*, and can be seen in *mōteatea*, *tauparapara*, *whaikōrero*, and other modes of expression.

However, the oral formulaic theory focused on metric and linguistic evidence tends to neglect the deeper cultural components that influence aural memory, tradition and history. Indeed, as this chapter has stressed, the more immediate cultural frameworks transform and 're-theorise' external theoretical strands. It has argued that a deeper understanding of Ngāti Porou theory allows scholars to see how collective memory and composure are re-negotiated by whakapapa and mana motuhake. Reading the patterns of Ngāti Poroutanga theory highlights the way the oral formula is present within our kōrero tuku iho. Resituated in our theories, myths are accounted for as 'pūrakau' and kōrero tawhito, rather than dismissed as fiction or fact. Most importantly, a Ngāti Poroutanga theoretical realignment brings iwi political and activist approaches to the fore, and transforms oral tradition and oral history to kōrero tuku iho. Although similarities and differences between oral history and oral tradition can be seen in the form and method, it is the politics and theoretical developments that illuminate the most significant distinctions. For Ngāti Porou it is found in the adornment created in a sophisticated interweaving of theories that re-designs method and gives shape and meaning to the oral histories and traditions we call our own.

# Chapter Nine: Reflections from Hikurangi

‘Ka rukuruku a Te Rangitawaea i ona pueru’  
‘Te Rangitawaea displays his chiefly garments’<sup>1</sup>

This thesis has identified some of the ways in which the studies of oral history and oral tradition overlap, converge, and depart in form, politics, method, and theory. Simultaneously, it has considered whether these threads and layers of understanding are present, or absent, in Ngāti Porou conceptualisations of oral history and tradition. To this extent, the voices of various Tairāwhiti people have been crucial to this analysis, and have provided explanations that centre this study within the nuanced perspectives of a Ngāti Porou intellectual frame of reference. Thus, standing steadfast at the centre of this study is Hikurangi, symbolic of a Ngāti Porou epistemological vantage point, which has been presented in this thesis as Ngāti Poroutanga. This concluding chapter summarises the findings of this study as they are reconfigured from the peaks of our worldview, and beckons the reader back to the mountain upon which ‘rests the snow.’<sup>2</sup> Here, the key points and conclusions of this thesis can be considered reflections from Hikurangi, or Ngāti Porou thinking on ‘display’: where the illuminating insights regarding the differences and similarities between oral history and oral tradition are now re-coloured in the tints and shades of a Ngāti Porou perspective summed up in the proverb ‘ka rukuruku a Te Rangitawaea i ona pueru.’

Drawing on a diverse array of voices to explore the difference and similarities that exist between the studies of oral history and oral tradition, this thesis contends that

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<sup>1</sup> A proverb that refers to the status of Te Rangitawaea as the man of the mountain. Te Rangitawaea here is representative of the tribe as whole. When snow rests upon the mountain, it is said that it is a sign, or “display”, of Te Rangitawaea’s chieftenship, also a metaphor for Ngāti Porou mana mātauranga (authority of our knowledge). Thus, it is also a reflection of the tribe’s perspective, and authority to display that perspective. Personal Correspondence with A. T. Mahuika, at the Ngata Lectures, Ruatōrea (11<sup>th</sup> October 2011).

<sup>2</sup> This phrase, ‘on which rests the snow’ is taken from a proverb uttered by Te Aotaki when hearing of the return of Tuwhakairiora he declared: ‘Kāti, tukua mai ki Hikurangi, ki te maunga tauria mai e te huka’ ‘Enough, let him come to Hikurangi, to the mountain on which rests the snow.’

there are more overlaps between these disciplines than there are divergences. The boundaries that supposedly indicate these disparities, as this study claims, are more artificial than they are real, and are exaggerated by an overemphasis on a simplistic 'orality'. Similarly, the labels 'history' or 'tradition' often work to distinguish 'valid' knowledge from 'unreliable' knowledge, but are far too narrow generalisations to determine one field from the other. In addition to these problems, the sources, or rather the 'form', used by oral historians and oral traditionalists are equally inadequate in providing explanations as to the borders between the studies of oral history and oral tradition. In response to these problems, this thesis has found that the underlying political aims and aspirations of researchers have a much stronger bearing on how oral history and oral tradition have been accounted for as evolving disciplines, which are enabled, and in some cases disabled, by the method and theories used by both groups of scholars. However, despite the predominant view espoused in the literature, it is not simply the method, the form, nor is it the theory, that distinguishes between the study of oral history and oral tradition. Indeed, this thesis has shown that the methods, sources, and theories employed by oral historians and oral traditionalists have significant parallels, and therefore should not be confused as separate fields of study.

## **Oral History and Oral Tradition as Bodies of Literature**

This thesis began with a review of the literature in oral history and oral tradition, illustrating how each have developed as areas of study in their own right. Within these bodies of literature, scholars in oral tradition have tended to focus predominantly on songs, ballads and the oral formulaic theory, while oral historians have placed more emphasis on recorded one-on-one interviews and collective memory theory. Scholars in both fields, as this thesis highlights, have also been inclined to view oral tradition as 'knowledge passed on through generations' rather

than the 'immediate' oral interactions that are experienced with interviewees in the oral history approach. Thus, oral tradition as a field emerged from a study of ballads, myths, and folklore, while oral history developed as a study of recorded interviews with living participants. In addition, this thesis has shown how the studies of oral history and oral tradition have endured a long and troubled relationship with mainstream 'History' which has tended to consider them both as inferior forms of research. This marginalisation has been addressed by scholars in oral history and oral tradition in various ways, yet as this thesis has illustrated, their responses have rarely been unified.

Likewise, indigenous peoples have also encountered this sense of rejection, yet have found little recourse to remedy this problem unless they align with the definitions of oral history and oral tradition proposed by the dominant scholarship of 'others.' As this thesis has highlighted, the definitions of international scholars in oral history and oral tradition have been largely ignored by Māori and iwi researchers, who have resisted the defining of their knowledge by foreigners. The literature review showed how some indigenous peoples, such as Ngāti Porou, have often struggled to equate their understandings of oral history and oral tradition with the work of 'mainstream' scholars. Although the literature in the fields of oral history and oral tradition continue to grow, indigenous perspectives remain largely absent in the way these scholars define orality, tradition, or history. Subsequently, this thesis sought to offer a commentary on how oral history and oral tradition are conceived beyond the dominant definitions advanced in the international literature, and resonate or are absent in Ngāti Porou conceptualisations.

## **The Form of Oral Tradition and Oral History**

The key question of the study, which looked at the differences and similarities in oral history and oral tradition, required an examination of the multiple layers



inherent in each field of study. Beginning with the form, this thesis moved on to consider the politics, methods and theories, relevant to oral historians and oral traditionalists. The question of 'form' was addressed in Chapters Four and Five, which focused on the sources used by oral historians and traditionalists and Ngāti Porou. Chapter Four considered the notion of oral history and tradition as 'kōrero tuku iho' and asked: why is the oral so significant in oral history and tradition when Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho is so multifaceted and diverse? The following chapter expanded on this initial question, and asked the reader to consider more closely the multiple forms within which oral histories and traditions are produced and shaped. Of the form of oral history and oral tradition, this thesis has argued that oral historians emphasise the orality of their sources, while oral traditionalists work predominantly with written sources, yet assert the 'orality' in the sources they use in reference to perceived 'metric' conditions. However, the form of oral history and oral tradition, as this study has shown, is multi-faceted and more than simply 'aural' phenomena. For Ngāti Porou, they are defined as kōrero tuku iho, taonga tuku iho, and kōrero tahito, found in the living world, and caught in osmosis. They are the product of generations of audiences and narrators, refined in particular settings, seen as much as heard, and always modified and evolving as they are recaptured and regurgitated in new ways. Kōrero tuku iho, as these chapters highlighted, bear a resemblance with the sources used by oral historians, and is often similar to that of the anthropologist, folklorist, and oral traditionalists. For Ngāti Porou people, the 'oral' also remains significant, but is a matter of ownership that is often locked in a binary struggle between the voice and the text. These chapters also pointed out how the orality of the form is also related to the power dynamics entrenched in the terms tradition and history, where history has been equated with reliable written evidence, while tradition has been the product of unreliable oral transmission.

The form of oral history and oral tradition for Ngāti Porou, more than just aural sources, are created and acquired in visual forms, carvings, and other physical

'monuments'. Beyond the 'oral' source, the form of oral traditions and oral histories, as this study has argued, can be experienced in specific moments, informal and formal settings, whenever an orator performs *whaikōrero*, tells the story, or recites and expresses *tauparapara* or *karakia*. Thus, the sophisticated tapestry of oral history and oral tradition are in reality multi-layered and complimentary, rather than distinctly oral or textual, and as this thesis has asserted are best interpreted and understood in the communities to which they belong. In Chapter Five, this study pointed out how the orality of *kōrero tuku iho* is not necessarily lost in writing and print, but enhanced by it. This chapter drew attention to the fact that the majority of writing on Ngāti Porou has deliberately ignored 'our' perspectives, favouring western written traditions, which have been denounced by our people as '*raupatu a te pene*.' Of the form of oral history and tradition, the interviewees argued that in order to know *kōrero tuku iho* it is necessary to be immersed in the oral worlds of the people. These are worlds shaped by *tikanga* and *whakapapa*, where specific cultural conventions influence what is said, silenced, conveyed and used. Revitalised in a process of transmission, oral histories and traditions, as the interviewees in this study convey, are produced in *iwi* 'classrooms', schools and *wānanga* that rely on varying rules and regulations depending on whose views are in ascendancy or power. For Ngāti Porou, the 'truth' of *kōrero tuku iho* is forged in a world of customs and protocols that lie beneath the form, and explain the rhythms, and routines that dictate how they are heard, who hears them, and why. Chapter Five highlights how this need to understand oral traditions in 'context' is a view shared by some oral traditionalists, yet is not always evident in practice. In difference to the popular view in oral history that the orality of oral history lies simply in the aural recording, both Chapters Four and Five contend that this 'orality' can be accessed in various other forms. Subsequently, although the form of oral history and tradition has generally been perceived as an explicitly aural encounter, these chapters have argued for a broader appreciation of the 'oral' source.

In dissolving the 'aural' nature of the form, this thesis has shown how the studies of oral history and tradition are more closely woven together than they are divided by the sources they employ and critique. In Chapters Four and Five, the form of oral histories and traditions were seen to be shaped by chosen repositories and specialists, who are required to be familiar with the rituals and practices that bring *kōrero tuku iho* to life. *Kōrero tuku iho* then, as this thesis stresses, is not meant to be an individual retelling, but the view of entire communities, formed in a collective that encapsulates the stories of hapu, whānau, and iwi. This interweaving is patterned in contemporary contexts, where old themes are recreated in innovative forms, enhanced by popular tunes, or reworked with different emphases. Hearing the *kōrero tuku iho* was the common pedagogical experience of most interviewees, where verbatim, or rote-learned, knowledge paled in comparison to the acquisition of deeper meanings. What lies 'in behind' the spoken word was considered vital to the underlying meaning of the form, where the language, land, ocean, rivers, and mountains were seen as key to the contextualising of our oral histories and traditions. The form – or sources used by scholars - as a means of differentiating between the studies of oral history and oral tradition speak more to the overlaps and commonalities of each discipline than they do to their differences.

## **The Politics of Oral History and Oral Tradition**

The political aims and ideals relevant to scholarship in oral history and oral tradition were examined in Chapter Six. An exploration of the politics of oral history and tradition at this stage in the thesis served as a reminder that the form is inextricably connected to political objectives, and that the methodologies and theories (considered in Chapters Seven and Eight) also correspond to the underlying cultural, social, and gendered, politics that are embedded in the community. In Chapter Six, this study observed that Ngāti Porou, oral traditionalists, and oral historians, have

varying political aims and objectives when it comes to the conception and shaping of oral histories and traditions. Oral historians, for instance, tend to focus on documenting the 'lives of ordinary people' and empowering the silenced, yet this has not been a key aim in the work of oral traditionalists. For Ngāti Porou, as the interviews revealed, oral histories and traditions are inherited in deeply entrenched political themes that speak to autonomy and tribal mana motuhake. Of the similar politics in oral history and oral tradition this thesis found that the use of binaries and complex intersectionalities were a common aspect for all three groups. For some oral traditionalists there is a clear binary between 'invented' and 'authentic' traditions, while for oral historians the collective consciousness tended to give way to a more refined search for the 'creation of meaning' that compliments nuance, and individual subjectivity and agency. In Ngāti Porou, individual nuance was evident within an inclusionary politics of whakapapa that highlighted multiple lines of descent and an innovative adaption of new ideologies.

An underlying politics of mana wahine is also a key feature in the way Ngāti Porou oral history and traditions are understood and conveyed. This strain of political activism has been well developed in oral history by researchers interested in gender, but as this thesis has argued is not as evident in the scholarship in oral tradition. For Ngāti Porou, a knowledge of the language is seen as vital because it unlocks the meaning to interpreting our own distinctive style and the assertion of mana motuhake. Kōrero tuku iho in Ngāti Porou politics converge more with the emancipatory aims of oral historians, and depart significantly from the distanced objective motivations of oral traditionalists, and as this study has contended can be seen more explicitly in the underlying theoretical and methodological approaches employed by both sets of scholars.

## **The Methods of Oral Tradition and Oral History**

The methods employed by both oral historians and those who focus on oral traditions were examined in Chapter Seven. In reference to these varying approaches, this thesis has argued that the studies of oral history and oral tradition cannot be determined simply by the methods scholars employ. Despite its centrality to the field of oral history, interviews, for instance, are employed across a range of disciplines, who likewise claim them as significant aspects of their approach. Thus, what might be called an 'oral history' interview is in fact no different to the various types of interviews employed by researchers in other fields. Group interviews, surveys, and life histories, far from simply 'oral history' methods, are popular across multiple disciplines. The recorded 'aural' emphasis is similarly problematic, particularly when oral histories and oral traditions are communicated in rituals and formal settings. In accounting for various sights and sounds, some interview methods such as the walk along, or 'hikoī', facilitate more of an interaction with the environment, while other methods encourage the use of props and other mnemonic devices, thus requiring then a multisensory approach to unpack and interpret the performance. Beyond the oral emphasis in oral history, this study accentuated the reality that oral histories are also captured in the participant observation method popular to many who have studied the oral traditions of various cultural groups. This thesis argued, however, that for Ngāti Porou this approach is still considered a tool of colonial research, yet for some an 'indigenous anthropology' works to alleviate this problem by anchoring the approach within a 'genealogical' frame of reference, which focuses on 'home'-work rather than fieldwork. Nevertheless, this thesis has contended that while the interview approach used by oral historians is viewed as liberating, participant observations tend to rely heavily on the observer's role as interpreter and lead 'collaborator.' Oral historians, then, as this thesis has argued tend to see the interview as interactive and empowering and a key feature of

the discipline, while in contrast the majority of those who study oral traditions do not see the recording as a fundamental part of their approach.

Despite these differences, this thesis argues that in relation to methodology, both oral historians and oral traditionalists in practice use multiple methods, which overlap, and have shifting resonance to Ngāti Porou worldviews. Group interviews and surveys, for instance, have significance for the collective construction of *kōrero* *tuku iho* common to Ngāti Porou ritual and practices. However, surveys for Ngāti Porou are inadequate because they deny the 'kanohi ki te kanohi/face to face' protocol important to *tikanga*. One of the key ideas conveyed in Chapter Seven highlights the fact that it is not so much the practice or method of oral history that is emancipatory and enabling, but the interpretive emphasis researchers assign to it. Conversely, the participant observation approach facilitates an opportunity to hear, see, and experience oral traditions and histories in action, yet is not a method renowned for its empowerment of the 'researched.' This study, then, argues that a reconfiguring of participant observation within an indigenous frame of reference might be closer to the 'hangin' out' model that emphasises the need to relocate power in the hands of the 'observed' rather than the 'observers.' In the implementation of foreign methods, researchers might thus be expected to serve an apprenticeship to prove themselves as trustworthy, responsible, aware, and adequately skilled recipients. As this thesis asserts, an understanding of these *tikanga* entails a reversal of power, where the underlying epistemological foundations favour protocols and ethics relevant to the 'researched' rather than the researchers. Moreover, as Chapter Seven illustrates, it is not the method that defines oral history from oral tradition, but a sophisticated interweaving of the underlying political aims and epistemologies that emerge in the theories that drive the research as a whole.

## **The Theories of Oral History and Oral Tradition**

This thesis also found that oral historians and oral traditionalist predominantly employ different theories. Despite this, not all researchers and practitioners in these disciplines are mindful of the fact that theory informs the methods they use. Nevertheless, common to both the studies of oral history and oral tradition is an emphasis on memory, and varying memory theories. Oral historians, for instance, have developed theories of collective memory noting the way individuals remember as part of wider groups. The collective memory, as this thesis argues is consistent with Ngāti Porou theories of whakapapa, where individuals are always part of the wider genealogies they inherit. This study found that the 'collective memory', like 'composure' are theoretical presuppositions used more in oral history scholarship than oral tradition. However, the binary, and selective, process of remembering and forgetting in 'composure' is, as Chapter Eight highlights, not necessarily distinctive of either a study of oral 'history' or 'tradition', but relative to both despite the fact it is predominant in oral history scholarship. Oral traditions, for example, exist in personal recall, in interviews, and are easily historicised in both individual and collective contexts and negotiations. Therefore, whether in the study of oral tradition or oral history, remembering is a key theoretical premise to both groups.

The overlaps between oral history and oral tradition can also be seen in the theorising and relevance of myth. As this thesis contends, myth and memory theories have been developed more in oral history scholarship than the literature in oral tradition, which tends to treat myth as unreliable and fictitious. The importance of myth in oral history on the other hand has substantial relevance to Ngāti Porou because it acknowledges the strengths of myth in the construction of subjective realities. This interpretive theory in oral history, as this thesis points out, also accentuates the importance of 'myths' as they are expressed from the perspectives of the narrators, yet interrogates the 'mythical elements' evident in their retelling. In

conjunction with myth and memory, the theoretical developments in narrative, or storytelling, is also common to both oral historians and oral traditionalists. Of this combination of myth and narrative, this thesis has noted how oral traditions are crucial to the way many indigenous peoples live 'life as a story' in the pulling together of their tribal histories: a practice scholars in oral tradition believe is a neglected aspect of oral history. In contrast, oral historians have developed exceptionally useful narrative theories linked to the construction predominantly of life narrative or biographical interviews. They draw on literary theory, and narrative scales, the key to narratives, turning points, and the structure of narrative in epic, romanesque, or picaresque, terms. For the interviewees in this study, these narrative elements were evident in the recordings, but were shaped in 'counter' narratives that highlighted tribal and hapu-centred political activism and autonomy.

Similar to the overlaps in method, Chapter Eight accentuated a similar overlap in theory, but did highlight the fact that oral traditionalists have developed a specific type of memory theory in the oral formula that tests the aural authenticity of epic poetry and ballads. However, this repetitive and rhythmic mnemonic structuring focused on metric and linguistic evidence tends to neglect the deeper cultural components that influence aural memory, tradition and history. Nevertheless, as this thesis argues, reading the patterns of Ngāti Poroutanga highlights the way the oral formula is present within our kōrero tuku iho. In this way, myths in Ngāti Porou are accounted for as 'pūrakau' and kōrero tahito, rather than dismissed as fiction or fact. Moreover, as this thesis has contended, a Ngāti Poroutanga theoretical realignment brings iwi political and activist approaches to the fore, and transforms oral tradition and oral history to kōrero tuku iho. Subsequently, as this thesis has shown, although similarities and differences between oral history and oral tradition can be seen in the form and method, it is the politics and theoretical developments that illuminate most obvious points of departure between each group of scholars.



## Summary

This study has posited challenges to the existing literature in oral history and tradition, on both a global and local scale. It has provided an indigenous critique of each field, and offers a fresh commentary on contemporary historical method, theory, and the perceived forms of oral history and tradition. It has urged researchers to explore and understand more deeply the way oral histories and traditions are viewed in indigenous communities. Of the study of oral tradition, this thesis asserts that they are more than just myth, fable, and folklore, and challenges the reduction of our 'history' to traditions that devalue Ngāti Porou understandings of the past. Furthermore, this thesis urges both oral traditionalists and oral historians to reconsider more the connections they share, whether in fact they are any different at all. In this regard it has dissolved some of the perceived boundaries that exist between oral history and oral tradition, noting how they share much more in common than they are different. It has illustrated how oral traditions can be found in interviews, are not just songs and ballads, and how oral history is more than recorded interviews. Furthermore, in specific reference to the approach and study of oral traditions, this study has argued that they need to be understood within the distinctive epistemological frames of the people to whom they belong. Indeed, as this thesis demonstrates, indigenous peoples have their own ways of dealing with oral traditions, and that these conceptualisations might yet be more adequately addressed by scholars of oral tradition. Those who study oral traditions might then reconsider more the power position of observer in their theoretical and methodological practice, and beyond the oral formulaic theory draw more extensively on the memory theories that have been developed in oral history.

This thesis has contended that oral history cannot be simply defined by the sources, but are expressed in a variety of 'forms.' It has illustrated how oral history is not simply a methodology or an approach, but a perspective devised from the

underlying politics inherent in 'knowledge construction', validity, and orality. Oral historians, then, as this thesis argues might reconsider the defining of the field on a narrow methodological basis, given that oral history is a visual and performative reality as much as an aural experience. The emancipatory possibilities that have developed in oral history theory, as this study claims can be further enhanced if scholars take stock of the indigenous transformative theories that empower the oppressed rather than the oppressors. Thus, oral historians might also pay more attention to the way indigenous peoples define oral histories, particularly the ethical understandings that are significant to indigenous protocols. Most significantly, this thesis has challenged oral historians to consider more closely the connections between 'tradition' and 'history', and to expand limited understandings of these terms to allow for a more robust interchange between the scholarship in oral history and oral tradition.

In exploring the intersections between oral history and oral tradition, this thesis highlights multiple ways in which the work of these scholars resonate and can contribute to indigenous history and scholarship. Indigenous scholars, then, as this study urges, should also pay more attention to the methods and theories employed by oral historians and oral traditionalists, and especially to memory theories, particularly those that note the importance of subjective realities in myth, narrative, and history. These well-developed interpretive approaches offer an immense contribution to our history and the way we might make it more understandable and relevant to 'others.' A greater connection to the international scholarship in oral history and oral tradition has the ability to significantly enhance indigenous scholarship in oral tradition and oral history. This thesis urges indigenous peoples to recognise the strengths and value in international oral history method and theory, and depart from the exclusionary and resistant politics that has often ignored western scholarship. In validating and empowering our history, indigenous scholars might then more readily draw on theories of composure, and oral history writing on

subjectivity and collective memory to accentuate the meaning behind the words narrators use.

This study has revealed how a greater appreciation for the commonalities between oral history and oral tradition theory has the potential to advance scholarship on oral history in New Zealand beyond the reconstructive mode and place it firmly in a more robust interpretive practice. Oral history in New Zealand, as this thesis asserts, might yet more closely align and define its connections to oral traditions, particularly Maori and iwi perspectives, where there is still some confusion as to how oral history and oral tradition are both similar and different. Reconfiguring oral history in this way offers a challenge to New Zealand history as a whole, and has the potential to shift Māori and iwi history to the fore rather than the margins. A reconfiguring of oral tradition and oral history in this country has the potential to turn *kōrero tuku iho* from 'pre-history', fable, and unreliable myth, to a history of here, of newcomers, migrants and iwi kaenga.

For Māori, iwi, and Ngāti Porou in particular, this thesis has asserted the viability and validity of our *kōrero tuku iho*, and has noted the ways in which oral history and tradition are more allies than they are adversaries. Despite our reluctance to embrace foreign frames of thinking, a reconfiguration of the scholarship in oral history and oral tradition has significant relevance to our aspirations. A more robust appreciation of the work of oral historians and traditionalists allows us to understand and enhance our own history. In Ngāti Porou, as this study has shown, the adaption of our *mātauranga* and history has served to empower and maintain our *mana motuhake*. This thesis emphasises how this desire to survive and adapt might be enhanced and supported with a closer and more careful consideration of the ways in which *kōrero tuku iho* are reflective and relevant to research in oral tradition and oral history.

In many ways, this study has been limited by its specific focus on the difference between oral history and oral tradition, and subsequent relevance to Ngāti Porou. Because of this focus it has been unable to explore more fully the significance of gender and class in the literature related to oral history and tradition. In Ngāti Porou, questions of female leadership and identity have been explored by previous scholars, yet little work has been done on the changing nature of gender in Ngāti Porou contemporary history, and therefore the ways in which women's testimonies might differ to those of men. Similarly, this thesis has only superficially addressed the problem of a homogeneous Māori approach to oral history and tradition, and has referred to indigenous and colonial identities interchangeably leaving aside the debates regarding indigenous identity and history. These are questions for future research, where a more comprehensive comparative analysis of indigenous and colonial oral histories and traditions might yet reveal the expected nuances that have been overlooked in this study.

Throughout this thesis, a generic view of Ngāti Porou tribal identity has enabled a more focused analysis of our kōrero tuku iho. However, as the interviews highlight, these categories are far more sophisticated at ground level, where familial and sub-tribal peculiarities show the complexity in the way tikanga and mātauranga are shaped and applied. Likewise, this thesis has operated on simplified definitions of the 'oral historian' or 'oral traditionalist', each loosely connected through the literature. A further study of the disciplinary backgrounds these scholars share might yet reveal more insights to the ways they define what is oral history and tradition. This thesis has focused on the current body of writing in each area, and has focused predominantly on academic practitioners, and those who have written in the 'disciplines', rather than those who see oral history and tradition as a hobby or past-time. Subsequently, there remains room for a wider analysis of those who perceive oral tradition and history beyond the literature discussed in this thesis, whose definitions may expand beyond those offered in current scholarship.

## He Kupu Whakamutunga

This thesis has examined the multilayered relationships that exist between oral history and oral tradition, Ngāti Porou kōrero tuku iho and historical scholarship. In an evolving and changing world, these perspectives have not always aligned, or been given equal weight as viable records or approaches to studying the past. For some time each has been defined differently by scholars seeking to make them their own. However, as this thesis has illustrated, these fields of study have more in common than these scholars tend to assert. What we still practice today in whaikōrero, mōteatea, whakataukī, whakapapa and kōrero tuku iho, can be viewed as both oral traditions *and* oral histories. Oral historians and oral traditionalists, like Ngāti Porou and other indigenous peoples, have sought to show how the subjectivity of oral history testimonies are no different to those that manifest in written documents, and makes them no less important as sources for the creation of valid histories. Thus, this thesis has endeavoured to show how our kōrero tuku iho might benefit from an engagement with the theories and methods of oral historians and oral traditionalists, and how their work might in turn be strengthened by engagement with our perspectives. While the thesis has noted the differences that exist between these groups, it has shown that many of those differences are artificial. Unpicking these overlaps is a necessary first step to finding commonalities that can then be stitched together to form more inclusive definitions of oral history and tradition and more robust understandings for future research.

For Ngāti Porou, metaphor and symbolism are fundamental aspects of the way our past, present, and future are structured and narrated. Similarly, this thesis has been organised around a number of important motifs, symbols, and metaphors. It has referred regularly to the notion of weaving, or raranga, to singing and waiata, and to the collective vision maintained as the foundational lattice of our genealogy or whakapapa. Most important of all is Hikurangi, the central intellectual and cultural

reference point upon which this study has been set and analysed. In concluding this thesis then, it is fitting to return once more to the spring of proverbs and *kōrero* from which our oral histories and traditions have flowed from one generation to the next. This final chapter has made reference to two famous tribal proverbs. The first, a reminder of the *mana* of Te Rangitawaea, whose prestige is displayed in the snow that often caps Mount Hikurangi: a symbol of Ngāti Porou prowess, skill, intellect and ability on display. The second proverb, also in reference to Hikurangi, was uttered by the great chief Te Aotaki upon hearing of the return of Tuwhakairiora, who, as the Rev. Mohi Turei has chronicled, went on to become one of the most renowned rangatira in Ngāti Porou history.<sup>3</sup> The closing refrains in this thesis return once more to the words of yet another celebrated leader, Sir Apirana Ngata, whose passion for the retention of Ngāti Porou traditions and histories is displayed in his prolific writing and work that have become *kōrero* *tuku iho* for following generations. Far from lost or departed, our oral histories and traditions remain living and vibrant, enhanced, yet still as poetic, symbolic, and metaphorical as they always were. Within them, the *mātauranga* of our people are retained in lingering echoes that continue to inspire. This has been one of the key contentions in this thesis, itself a reverberation of Ngata's 'scene from the past' which asserts:

We reckon not that the day is past;  
That Death and Time, the cruel Fates,  
Have torn us from the scenes we loved,  
And brought us to this unknown world.  
In mem'ry ling'ring, all too hazy,  
Blurred, uncertain, still they charm us.  
Ah, we love them! Language doth but  
Clothe in artifice our passion,  
Doth but to the world proclaim  
We are traitors to the past.

Traitors? When our hearts are beating,  
Thrilling stirred by recollections?  
Present, Future? Them we know not;  
For us no memories they hold.

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<sup>3</sup> Rev. Mohi Turei, 'Tu-whakairi-ora', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1911), pp. 17-34.

Traitors? When our ears are ringing,  
Filled with echoes from the dead?  
Deaf to all these chords alone  
Make heavenly music, penetrating  
Souls by strangeness long since deadened,  
Now in sympathy vibrating.  
Traitors? Nay, we scorn the name;  
Bigots, blind fanatic worshippers,  
Idolaters serving things of clay!  
Call us, and that name were dear!

- from Sir Apirana T. Ngata, "A SCENE FROM THE PAST" written in 1892.

# APPENDIX 1

## Glossary of Māori and Iwi Terms

<i>Ahi kaa roa</i>	domestic fire, signifying continuous occupation of land
<i>Ahua</i>	form, appearance
<i>Aotearoa</i>	land of the long white cloud, another name for New Zealand
<i>Awa</i>	river, stream
<i>Haka</i>	dance, war dance/chant
<i>Haahi Mihinare</i>	Anglican church
<i>Hapū</i>	clan, sub-tribe, descendants, pregnant
<i>Hawaiki</i>	ancestral homeland
<i>Hikoi</i>	step, walk
<i>Hoha</i>	annoyed, annoying, annoyance
<i>Hōri</i>	(colloquial) rough, rugged, poor
<i>Horouta</i>	ancestral canoe in the east coast region
<i>Hua rakau</i>	fruit, grubs, forest foods
<i>Hui</i>	assembly, gathering, meeting
<i>Io</i>	an omnipotent being, god of creation
<i>Iro</i>	maggot
<i>Iwi</i>	iwi, tribe, bone, people
<i>Iwi kaenga</i>	home people
<i>Kai</i>	food, agent when used with a noun, eg. <i>kaimahi</i> (worker)
<i>Kaimahi</i>	worker
<i>Kaimakamaka</i>	prompter
<i>Kaitiaki</i>	protector, caretaker
<i>Kaiwetewete</i>	analyst
<i>Kākaho</i>	native plant
<i>Kākaka</i>	native plant
<i>Kanohi ki te kanohi</i>	face to face
<i>Kapahaka</i>	dance group
<i>Karakia</i>	incantation, prayer
<i>Karanga</i>	call, welcome
<i>Kauae raro</i>	lower jawbone, operational tasks that implement the interpretations of the esoteric
<i>Kauae runga</i>	upper jawbone, refers to higher esoteric knowledge
<i>Kaupapa</i>	plan, principle, philosophy, proposal
<i>Kaupapa Māori</i>	a Māori political and theoretical approach to research
<i>Kaumātua</i>	elder, elders
<i>Kauruki tu roa</i>	long ascending smoke, signifying continuous occupation of land
<i>Kauta</i>	cooking shed
<i>Kawa</i>	custom



<i>Kingitanga</i>	King movement
<i>Kohanga reo</i>	language nest
<i>Koka</i>	mother, aunt
<i>Kotahitanga</i>	Māori political movement, unity
<i>Kotiate</i>	whale bone hand weapon
<i>Kōrero</i>	talk, speech, narrative
<i>Kōrero tuku iho</i>	oral history or tradition
<i>Koroheke</i>	old man, old people
<i>Kōtiro</i>	girl
<i>Kuia</i>	grandmother, elderly woman
<i>Kupapa</i>	stoop, be neutral in a quarrel, loyalists to the British Crown
<i>Mai ra ano</i>	long ago
<i>Makutu</i>	spell, hex, sorcery, curse
<i>Mana</i>	authority, power, prestige,
<i>Manaia</i>	ornate beaked lizard figure
<i>Mana tangata</i>	authority and power exercised by people
<i>Mana motuhake</i>	ultimate authority, power and independence
<i>Mana wahine</i>	authority and power exercised by women
<i>Mana wairua</i>	authority and power derived from spiritual sources
<i>Mana whakapapa</i>	authority and prestige derived from ancestors
<i>Mana whenua</i>	authority and prestige derived from control over land
<i>Manaaki</i>	hospitality, help, care for
<i>Māori</i>	normal, natural
<i>Marae (atea)</i>	courtyard in front of meeting house
<i>Mataku</i>	afraid, fearful
<i>Matatua</i>	ancestral canoe
<i>Mātauranga/</i>	knowledge, learning
<i>Mātauranga Māori</i>	Māori knowledge
<i>Mātauranga-a-iwi</i>	knowledge belonging to an iwi
<i>Matekite</i>	seer, second sight
<i>Mātua</i>	parent
<i>Maui</i>	ancestor of Ngāti Porou (and other iwi)
<i>Maunga</i>	mountain
<i>Mauri</i>	life force
<i>Mere</i>	hand weapon, club, mace
<i>Mīnita</i>	minister
<i>Moana</i>	ocean
<i>Mokai</i>	servant, pet
<i>Mokopuna, moko</i>	grandchild
<i>Moteatea</i>	lament
<i>Motu</i>	island, sever, cut
<i>Nehe ra</i>	ancient, old days
<i>Ngahere</i>	forest, bush
<i>Ngapuhi</i>	confederation of Northern tribes (North Island)
<i>Ngatoroirangi</i>	ancestor of Te Arawa and Tuwharetoa

<i>Ngāti Porou</i>	east coast tribe of the north island
<i>Ngāti Porou ki te whenua</i>	Ngāti Porou not living within their traditional region
<i>Ngāti Poroutanga</i>	the essence of being Ngāti Porou
<i>Nukutaimemeha</i>	ancestral canoe belonging to Maui
<i>Pā</i>	fortified village
<i>Paepae</i>	horizontal board, speakers of the tangata whenua
<i>Paikea</i>	ancestor of Ngāti Porou
<i>Paimarire</i>	good and peaceful, Māori religious following
<i>Pākehā</i>	person of European descent
<i>Pākeke</i>	adult, old person
<i>Papakāinga</i>	homestead
<i>Pāpatuanuku</i>	earth mother
<i>Paru</i>	dirt, dirty
<i>Patupaiarehe</i>	sprite, fairy
<i>Pēpeha</i>	tribal sayings
<i>Pono</i>	true, honest
<i>Poroporoaki</i>	farewell
<i>Pōtae</i>	hat
<i>Puna</i>	spring
<i>Pūrākau</i>	legend, myth, story
<i>Rangatira</i>	chief
<i>Rangatiratanga</i>	chiefly control and authority
<i>Ranginui</i>	sky father, also a genealogical ancestor (Māori)
<i>Ratou</i>	them
<i>Rāwaho</i>	outsider
<i>Reo</i>	voice, language
<i>Rimu</i>	native tree
<i>Ringatu</i>	upraised hand, Māori religious following
<i>Rīwai</i>	potatoe
<i>Rohe</i>	district,
<i>Roto</i>	lake, inside
<i>Ruaumoko</i>	god of earthquakes and volcanoes
<i>Runanga</i>	council, assembly
<i>Taha-wairua</i>	spiritual side
<i>Tainui</i>	west coast tribe of the North Island
<i>Taina</i>	younger male relative of male/younger female relative of female
<i>Takatahi</i>	impatient, unequal
<i>Takitimu</i>	ancestral canoe
<i>Tāne</i>	male, god of the forest, also a genealogical ancestor (Māori)
<i>Tangaroa</i>	god of the sea, also a genealogical ancestor (Māori)
<i>Tāngata whenua</i>	people of the land
<i>Tangi, Tangihanga</i>	to cry, Māori funeral ceremony

<i>Taonga</i>	treasure, treasured item, prized possession
<i>Taperenui a Whatonga</i>	traditional house of learning in Ngāti Porou
<i>Tapu</i>	sacred, prohibited, restricted
<i>Taringa</i>	ear
<i>Tatou</i>	us, inclusive of speaker and listener
<i>Tauparapara</i>	incantation
<i>Tāwhaki</i>	legendary ancestor of the Waikato/Tainui region
<i>Tauīwi</i>	foreigner
<i>Tautoko</i>	support
<i>Te Ao Māori</i>	the Māori world
<i>Te Huripūreiata</i>	turning point (an event in Ngāti Porou history)
<i>Tika</i>	correct, straight
<i>Tikanga</i>	customs, protocols
<i>Tinana</i>	body
<i>Tino rangatiratanga</i>	self determination
<i>Tipu</i>	grow, develop
<i>Tipuna</i>	ancestors, grandparents
<i>Tipuna koka</i>	grandmother, grand aunt
<i>Toetoe</i>	native grass
<i>Tohi</i>	type of customary ceremony
<i>Tōhunga</i>	expert, doctor
<i>Tokotoko</i>	walking stick
<i>Tōtara</i>	native tree
<i>Tuakana</i>	older male relative of male/older female relative of female
<i>Tuhoe</i>	inland Bay of Plenty tribe of the North Island
<i>Tukutuku</i>	traditional lattice work
<i>Tūmataunga</i>	god of war, also a genealogical ancestor (Māori)
<i>Tupāpaku</i>	deceased person, corpse
<i>Tūturu</i>	authentic, real, true
<i>Uri</i>	descendants
<i>Waewae</i>	leg, legs
<i>Waha kohatu</i>	stone placed in the mouth
<i>Wahine</i>	woman, women
<i>Waiata</i>	song, sing
<i>Wairua</i>	spirit
<i>Wairuatanga</i>	spiritualism, spirituality
<i>Waka</i>	canoe
<i>Wānanga</i>	school of learning
<i>Whaikōrero</i>	formal speech
<i>Whakairo</i>	traditional art of carving
<i>Whakapapa</i>	genealogy
<i>Whakataukī/</i>	
<i>Whakataukī</i>	proverb, sayings
<i>Whakatika</i>	to correct
<i>Whakatōhea</i>	eastern Bay of Plenty tribe of the north island

<i>Whānau</i>	family, birth
<i>Whānaunga/</i>	
<i>Whānaungatanga</i>	relations, relationships with others
<i>Whangai</i>	adopt, adopted person
<i>Wharemate</i>	house of death
<i>Wharenui</i>	traditional meeting house
<i>Whariki</i>	woven mat
<i>Whatū</i>	to weave
<i>Whenua</i>	land
<i>Wiwi nāti</i>	idiomatic term used to refer to Ngāti Porou

## APPENDIX 2

### Selected Mōteatea, Waiata, and Haka

#### Mōteatea/Waiata

##### *Ka Hoki nei au*

Ka hoki nei au ki te Tairawhiti  
E taki ana au i Te Papa Tipu o Horouta  
Wananga,  
Horouta wananga whakamau tonu atu ki  
Tikirau  
nga waka u mai Te kura a Mahina  
ka whanatu taku tira ma takutai  
Kei Patangata, Tumoana kotore  
Kei Maniaroa he kuri paka  
nga Uetuhiao e roha mai ra  
Ka wehe Apanui ka wehe a Porou  
Kei te Kawakawa mai i Tawhiti  
ko te whanau a Tuwhakairiora  
Kei Waiapu te tainga o Te Riu o Horouta  
Ko Te Iwi Tena Ngati Porou  
Tatara e maru ana

As I Return to the Eastern seaboard and  
traverse  
the ancestral land of the Horouta canoe.  
come upon Tikirau the landing place of  
the canoes.  
I turn and travel by the coast to  
Patangata  
The area of Tumoana Kotore  
then to Maniaroa where the brown dogs  
of Uetuhiao fought and died.  
Thus serving Apanui and Ngati Porou  
Kawakawa mai i tawhiti the area of Te  
whanau a Tuwhakairiora  
At Waiapu where the emptying of the  
Horouta canoe took place.  
The Begining of Ngati Porou where they  
lived in multitudes.

Maunga Hikurangi  
te iringa waka o Maui Tikitiki  
Te Maunga pupu o te tangata  
i te tai whakamate a Ruatapu  
whakatauki ai Te Kani a Takirau  
He Maunga tu tonu mai ona mata  
tona mana tuku iho no tua whakarere  
Ko Te Ahika roa Na Uepohatu  
Aitanga a mate  
Te Umuariki e

The Mountain Hikurangi, where Mauis  
canoe lies, The heart and symbol  
of the people  
The great tidal wave of Ruatapu  
the proverbial saying of Te Kani a  
Takirau  
A mountain steadfast ever since the  
begining of time  
it awesomeness embracing its people  
since time immemorial  
the caretakers being Ngati Uepohatu  
Te Aitanga a Mate and Umuariki.

Ka hoki nei au ki te Tairawhiti  
Ka huri au Ki Tawhiti a Pawa  
Ko Te whanau a Iritekura  
Kei Marotiri Kei Tuatini  
Ko te Whanau a Ruataupare  
Kei Mangatuna Kei Uawa  
E ko Te Aitanga a Hauiti  
Kei te Rototahi Ko te whiro nui  
Taniwha mai ra Ha Paikea!

Ka hoki nei au ki te Tairawhiti  
Kei Whangara mai i Tawhiti  
ko te wa tena kia a Hinematiaro  
Whakamaui tonu ki Turanganui  
U tonu ki Te Toka a Taiau  
E ko te Aitanga a Mahaki  
Ko Rongowhakata ko Kahungunu  
Whakataukitia ai ka tere raua  
ka tere pipi whakao  
Tena ona Tohu Tena ona Mana  
Ko Manawaru ko Araiteuru  
Ko Pipitaiari Tona Tipua  
Ka u Taku tira Te Kuri a Pawa  
Kia Tamanuhiri Kia Ruapani  
Ko Te ni ao ra o nga waka nei  
Takitimu Ki te tonga  
Horouta wananga me ona wheue  
Ka Hapopotia ra  
E takoto i te repo o te Muriwai  
Horouta wananga  
me ona wheue  
Toitu atu Ra ki te Tairawhiti  
Ka Puta te Mauri ki te Whai ao  
Ki Te Ao Marama e

I return again to the eastern seaboard  
come upon Tawhiti a Paoa  
the area of te whanau a Iritekura at  
Marotiri at Tuatini te whanau a  
Ruataupare  
at Mangatuna at Uawa  
Te aitanga a Hauiti at Rototahi te  
whironui and the eminent Paikea!

I return again to the Eastern Seaboard  
and come upon Whangara mai i tawhiti  
the time of Hinematiaro I approached  
Turanganui landing at Te Toka a Taiau  
and thus the people of Te Aitanga a  
Mahaki  
Rongowhakata and Kahungunu and the  
proverbial saying  
Ka tere raua ko tere pipi whakao  
Each to his own autonomy prestige.  
Manawaru and Araiteuru  
Pipitaiari the strange and unexplained.  
I land again at Te Kuri a Pawa  
the area of Tamanuhiri and Ruapani  
the overlapping boundries of the two  
canoe areas.  
Takitimu to south  
Horouta canoe lies petrified in the lake at  
Muriwai  
the Horouta canoe from the eastern  
seaboard.  
Emanating its mantle and essence into  
the world of Light.

*He Waiata Oriori na Hinekitawhiti*

Kia tapu hoki koe nā Tuariki, ē!  
Kia tapu hoki koe nā Porouhorea!  
Kāti nei e noa ko tō taina ē!  
Whakaangi i runga rā he kauwhau ariki  
ē,  
Koi tata iho koe ki ngā wāhi noa.  
Whakatūria te tira hei Ngapunarua,  
Tahuri ō mata ngā kohu tāpui, kai  
Runga o Te Kautuku, e rapa ana hine ī  
Te kauwhau mua i a Hinemakaho hai  
A Hinerautu, hai a Tikitikiorangi, hai  
Konā rā kōrua, ē!

Āna, e koro! Auaka e whāngaia ki te  
umu nui  
Whāngaia iho rā ki te umu ki tahaki, hai  
Te pongi matapō hei katamu mahana  
Kia ora ai hine takawhaki atu ana ngā  
Moka one rā i roto o Punaruku, tē,  
Mā Te Rangitumoana māna e  
whakapeka,  
Moe rawa ki konā, ē!

Māu e kī atu, 'Arahina ake au ki  
Runga o Te Huia ki a Ngarangikamaea,  
Kia mārāma au ki roto Tawhitinui.'  
Tēnā rā Kakahu māna e ui mai  
'Nā wai rā tēnei tamaiti, ē?'

Māu e kī atu, 'Nā Te Au-o-Mawake',  
Kia tangi mai ai ō tuākana kōkā,

May you be set apart, as is fitting for a  
descendant of Tuariki;  
May you be set apart, as is fitting for a  
descendant of Porouhorea;  
Let only your younger relative be free  
from restriction.  
Soar gracefully high, O Chieftainess, and  
do not descend too near to the common  
places.  
Project your journey to Ngapunarua  
Then turn your eyes to the interlaced  
mists,  
which float above Kautuku; for the  
maiden  
Seeks the first-born line from  
Hinemakaho,  
Such as Hinerautu and Tikitikiorangi;  
And there you will be with your elder.

Do not, O sir, give her food from the  
common earth oven,  
But feed her from the over reserved for  
her kind,  
With the dark-fleshed taro, that she may  
chew with relish,  
And be sustained, when presently in her  
roaming  
She comes to the small stretches of beach  
inside Punaruku.  
There Te Rangitumoana will invite her  
To turn aside and rest the night.

Say to him, 'Lead me  
To lofty Te Huia, to Ngarangikamaea,  
Whence I may see clearly into  
Tawhitinui.'  
Kakahu will be there to ask,  
'Whose child may this be?'

You will tell her, you are of Te Au-o-  
Mawake;

'I haramai rā koe ngā kauanga i Kaituri,  
nā!  
I haramai rā koe ngā uru karaka i Te  
Ariuru, nā-  
Hau te mau mai i ngā taonga o  
Wharawhara, hai Tohu rā mōhou, koi  
hēngia koe, ko  
Te Paekura ki tō taringa, ko Waikanae ki  
tō ringa, hai Taputapu mōhou, e hine!'

So that your relatives may greet you and  
cry-  
'Ah! You have come from the crossings  
at Kaituri,  
You have come indeed from the karaka  
groves at Te Ariuru.  
You are bedecked with the ornaments of  
Wharawhara  
To signify, that no one may mistake you,  
Te Paekura pendant from your ear,  
Waikanae in your hand-  
Precious things for you, little maid!'

Ngata, A.T., & Pei Te Hurinui Jones, *Ngā Mōteatea The Songs Part 1*, Revised Edition (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), pp. 2-7



*Haere ra e Hika*

Haere ra e hika, koutou ko ou matua  
Unuhia i te rito o te harakeke  
Ka tu i te aro-a-kapa  
Aku nui, aku rahi, e  
Aku whakatamarahi ki te rangi  
Waiho te iwi, mana e mae noa

Depart, dearest one, in the company of  
your elders.  
Plucked like the centre shoot of the flax,  
As you stood in the foremost rank.  
My renowned one, my noble one,  
My proud boast oft flung to the heavens!  
Bereft the tribe, seeking solace all in vain!

Kia mate ia nei koe, e hika  
Ko Atamira te waka, Ko Hotutaihirangi,  
Ko Tai-o-puapua, ko Te Raro-tua-maheni  
e  
Ko Areiteuru, Ko Nukutaimemeha  
Te waka i hiia ai te whenua nui nei

You are gone indeed, dear one,  
(For your) canoe there are Atamira,  
Hotutaihirangi,  
Tai-o-puapua, Te Raro-tua-maheni,  
Araiteuru, and Nukutaimemeha  
The canoe which fished up this  
widespread land.

*Kaati ra e Hika*

Kaati ra e hika te takato ki raro ra  
He ue ake ra ka he to manawa  
Ka titiro ra ki uta ra ki Hikurangi maunga  
Ko te puke tena i whakatauki a Porourangi e  
Ka rukuruku a Te Rangitawaea i ona rinena e

Kei hea mai koe e te tai whakarunga e te tai whakararo  
Na Porourangi e, ko Roro na Tawake  
Na Hikatoa e, ko Ponapatukia  
Ko koe ra e hika e

**K.** Ka mamae hoki ra e  
Ka mamae hoki ra te tini o te tangata  
Ka mamae hoki ra ki a Tama na Tu  
Ka takitahi koa nga kaihautu o te waka o Porourangi  
Ka arearea koa  
Puangai i tona rua

**K.** Ko taku hiahia e  
Kia ora tonu koe, hai karanga i o iwi  
Ka tutu o rongo ki nga mana katoa  
Ko tama i te mania, ko tama i te pa heke  
Ka ngaro koe e hika ki te po  
Aue!  
Ko nga iwi katoa e aue mai na  
Ka nui taku aroha na e

*He Tangi mo Hinekaukia*

E hika mā ē! I hoki mai au i  
Kererūhuahua,  
Noho tūpuhi ana ko au anake i te  
tamaiti mate.  
Me te tai hokohoko ki te awa i Tirau, ē ī;  
Tangi whakaroro ana ki te Houhangapa

O friends! I am now returned from  
Kererūhuahua,  
A fugitive bereft am I, because a child is  
dead.  
Like the tides within Tirau forever rising  
and falling is my wild lamentation within  
Houhangapa

Tērā ia taku mea kei te tau o te marino,  
ē,  
Kei ōna whakawiringa i roto i Te Apiti;  
E taututetute ana, kia puta ia ki waho rā  
ē ī,  
Ki te kai tiotio i tiria ki te māpou.

Yonder lies my cherished one on a  
peaceful slope  
Beyond the winding course within Te  
Apiti;  
(His spirit) strives in vain to open up the  
pathway  
To the tasty tiotio loosened with the  
māpou.

Tērā Te Rerenga whakatarawai ana ē ī,  
Whakaangi mai rā, e tama, me he manu.  
Mairātia iho te waha kai rongorongo ē  
Hei whakaoho pō i ahau ki te whare rā.

Lo, Te Rerenga like a misty apparition  
appears  
Soar hither then, O son, like the bird,  
And leave behind the sweet sound of your  
voice,  
To comfort my wakeful nights within the  
house.

*E te Hokowhitu a Tu*

E te Hokowhitu a Tū kia kaha rā  
Kāti rā te hingahinga ki raro rā  
Mā ngā whakaaro kei runga rawa  
Hei arahi ki te ara e tika ai  
Whirinaki whirinaki tātou katoa  
Kia kotahi rā  
Ngā marae e tū noa nei  
Ngā maunga e tū noa nei  
Aue rā e tama mā  
Te mamae, te pōuri nui  
E patu nei i a au inā  
Ngārimu aue  
Ānei tō iwi e  
E tangi nei e

*Po Po*

Po! Po!  
E tangi ana tama ki te kai māna!  
Waiho, me tiki ake kit e Pou-a-hao-kai,  
Hei ā mai te pakeke ki uta ra,  
Hei waiu mo tama;  
Kia homai e to tupuna e Uenuku.  
Whakarongo! Ko te kumara ko Parinui-te-ra.  
Ka hikimata te tapuae o Tangaroa  
Ka whaimata te tapuae o Tangaroa.  
Tangaroa! Ka haruru!

Ka noho Uru ka noho i a Ngangana;  
Putā mai ki waho ra ko Ta Aotu.  
Ko Te Aohore, ko Hinetuahoanga  
Ko Tangaroa! Ko Whatu o Poutini, e!

Kei te kukunetanga mai  
I Hawaiki ko te ahua ia,  
Ko Maui-wharekino ka noho i a Pani,  
Ka kawea kit e wai o Monariki  
Ma Onehunga, ma Onerere,  
Ma te piere, ma te matata  
Te pia tangi wharau, ka hoake  
Ki runga ra, te Pīpī-wharauoa.  
Na Whena koe, e Waho e!  
Tuatahi, e Waho e!

Tuarua, ka topea i reira  
Ko te Whatanui, Ko te Whataroa, ko te ti-  
haere,  
Na Kohuru, na Paeaki,  
Na Turiwhatu, na Rakaiaora.  
Ko Waiho anake te tangata i rerenoa  
I te ahi rara a Rongomaraeroa,  
Ko te kakahu no Tu, ko te Rangikaupapa,  
Ko te tatua i riro mai  
I a Kanoa, i a Matuatonga.

Pō! Pō!  
My son, *Tama*, is crying for food!  
Wait until it is fetched from the Pillars-of-  
netted food.  
And the whale is driven ashore,  
To give milk for you, my son,  
Verily, your ancestor Uenuku will give  
freely.  
Now listen! The kumara is from the Beetling-  
Cliff-of-the-sun  
Beyond the eager bounding strides of  
Tangaroa, God of the Sea;  
Lo, striding to and fro is Tangaroa,  
Tangaroa! Listen to his resounding roar.

'Twas Uru who did abide with Ngangana  
And they begat Te Aotu,  
Te Aohore, Hinetuahoanga,  
Tangaroa and the Stone of Poutini!

The primeval pregnancy began  
In Hawaiki, when they appeared  
Maui-whare-kino who took Pani to wife,  
She it was who was taken to the waters of  
Monariki  
(For the rites) of the Smoothing-sand, of the  
Flying-sand,  
Of the 'opening fissure', of the 'gaping  
crevice',  
Of the 'first whimper from the shelter', thus  
giving  
Birth to (the glistening) Pīpī-wharauoa.  
You are of Whena, O Waho!  
Thus the first part, O Waho!

Of the second part was the severing over  
yonder  
(Of the timbers) for the Whatanui, Whataroa,  
and the perch of  
For Kohuru, for Paeaki,  
For Turiwhatu, and for Rakaiaora.  
Waiho was the only one who fled  
From the scattered fires of Rongomaraeroa.  
The cloak of Tu, God of war, is the Day-of-  
annihilation,

Tenei te manawa ka puritia,  
 Tenei te Manawa ka tawhia;  
 Kia haramai tona hokowhitu i te ara,  
 Ka kiia Ruatapu e Uenuku ki te tama  
 meamea,  
 Ka tahuri i te Huripureiata,  
 Ka whakakau tama i a ia.  
 Whakarere iho ana te kakau o te hoe,  
 Ko Maninitua, ko Maniniaro.  
 Ka tangi te kura, ka tangi wiwini!  
 Ka tangi te kura, ka tangi wawana!  
 Ko Hakirangi ka u kei uta  
 Te kowhai ka ngaora ka ringitia te kete  
 Ko Manawaru, Ko Araiteuru,  
 Ka kitea e te tini, e te mano.  
 Ko Makauri anake i mahue atu  
 I waho i Toka-ahuru;  
 Ko te peka i rere mai ki uta ra  
 Hei kura mo Māhaki;  
 Ko Mangamoteo, ko Uetanguru,  
 Ko te kōiwi ko Rongorapua,  
 Waiho me tiki ake  
 Ki te kumara i a Rangi.  
 Ko Pekehawani ka noho i a Rehua;  
 Ko Ruhiterangi ka tau kei raro,  
 Te ngahuru tikotikoiere,  
 Ko Poututerangi te mātahi o te tau,  
 Te putunga o te hinu, e tama!

The belt of which was brought hither  
 By Kanoa and Matuatonga  
 Hence the spirit oft is apprehensive,  
 Hence the spirit oft is in suspense,  
 By the tidings of his armed band along the  
 pathway taken  
 When Ruatapu was named by Uenuku a  
 mis-begotten son,  
 And brought about the disaster of Huri-  
 pureiata,  
 When that son in desperation swam away.  
 Hurriedly he put aside the hand-grip of the  
 paddles, Manini-tua and Manini-aro  
 The noble one cried, crying in fear!  
 The noble one cried, crying in terror!  
 Hakirangi it was who reached the shore,  
 And with the flowering kowhai, emptied the  
 kit at Manawaru and Araiteuru,  
 There to be seen by myriads and thousands.  
 Only Makauri was left behind  
 Out there at (the sheltering reef of) Toka-  
 ahuru; The branch which was cast ashore  
 Became a prized plume of Māhaki.  
 Mangamoteo and Uetanguru  
 Ritually nurtured (the tillage of) Rongorapua  
 They waited until they brought  
 The kumara from the Heavens above.  
 'Twas there Pekehawani was taken in  
 wedlock by Rehua;  
 Ruhiterangi (was conceived and ) alighted  
 here below,  
 Hence the bounteous harvest-time,  
 When Poututerangi brings forth the first  
 fruits of the year  
 And the calabashes overflow with game fat,  
 O Son!

*A Lament for Te Rakahurumai*

He mahi ā waha i rangona e au  
Kei Taiporutu; kia whitirere au,  
Ko koe rā, e koro, e auraki ana mai,  
Kia moe tāua i te maru aiahi, ēī.

Te ao o te pārerā e koheri atu rā,  
E miri atu rā ia i waho o Te Koreke;  
E whanatu ana koe ki a Te Rewarewa rā,  
Nāna nei au koi whakatakurutu.  
E au tūkinō te manu, ka huri mai,  
Ka riro ia koe, ka mania i te rango, ī.

Nōku te wareware, kīhei rawa i puritia;  
Tukua kia haere, kia tae te koronga  
Tērā Puakato, ko he waka kia oma;  
Kei tua Renata, e aroha nei au,  
I te wā, e hika, koi piri tahi ana, ēī.

Ka whiri ngā mate ki ngā momo rangatira  
Ka kawa ngā ware, ka waikoherikitia,  
Ka kai he pua kē, ka rauiri ki te one, ī.

Hei konei noa au pōrangī noa ai;  
Me pēnei ana te tiketike maunga,  
Mārama te titiro ki te tahora rā ia;  
Kei waho koutou, e kai ora i ahau, ī.

The sound of voices I did hear  
Coming from Taiporutu; expectant I arose,  
Me thought it was you, O sir, returning  
So that we two might embrace as evening  
shadows fall.

I mark the flight of the wild duck o'er  
yonder  
Speeding close by Te Koreke over there;  
Would, my loved one, you were thus on  
your way to Rewarewa,  
For quite distraught and enfeebled now am  
I.  
Beguiled by that wanton bird, in my anguish  
I turn about,  
Alas you are gone, slipping away as if on  
wooden rollers.

Mine was the forgetfulness in not detaining  
you,  
(I) Allowed you to depart, and now comes  
remorse.  
Behold Puakato, whence the canoe sped  
onward;  
Beyond is Renata for whom I mourn,  
Recalling the time, dear one, when we two  
embraced.

The encompassing grief for all ye noble ones  
Transcends the sorrow for those lowly ones  
who lie here,  
Like blooms of lesser hue, scattered upon the  
strand.

Let me here remain as one demented,  
Oh would I were on a lofty peak,  
I would then clearly see the waste lands out  
yonder,  
Where ye all do lie, consuming me (with  
grief).

*Tomo mai*

Tomo mai e Tama mā ki roto, ki roto  
I ngā ringa e tuwhera atu nei,  
Ki ngā mōrehu o te Kiwi e,  
Ki ngā Tama Toa o tēnei riri nui.

Hoki mai, hoki mai ki te wā kāinga,  
Kua tutuki te tūmanako,  
Kei te kapakapa mai te Haki, te Haki  
O Ingarangi i runga o Tiamana e.

Hoki ruarua mai e Tama mā  
Ki ngā iwi e tatari atu nei,  
Kua mahue atu rā ngā tini hoa  
Ki runga whenua, iwi kē.

Na Te Moana rā ko te Wikitōria,  
Hei whakamaumaharatanga e,  
Ki o rātau tinana kei pāmamao  
Ki o rātau ingoa kei muri nei.

Dewes, Te Kapunga, 'Ngā Waiata Haka a Henare Waitoa o Ngāti Porou / Modern Dance Poetry of Henare Waitoa of Ngāti Porou' (Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Auckland, 1972), pp. 52-53



## Haka

### *Rūaumoko*

Kaea: Ko Rūaumoko e ngunguru nei!

Katoa: Au! Au! Aue ha!

Kaea: Ko Rūaumoko e ngunguru nei!

Katoa: Au! Au! Aue ha!

Kaea: A ha ha!

Katoa: E ko te rākau a Tūngawerewere! A ha ha!

He rākau tapu, na Tūtāua ki a Uenuku

I pātukia ki te tipua ki Ōrangitopeka,

Pakaru te ūpoko o Rangitopeka,

Patua ki waenganui o te tau ki

Hikurangi,

He toka whakairo e tū ake nei,

He atua! He tangata! He atua! He

tangata! Ho!

Kaea: He atua, he atua, Tauparetaitoko,

Kia kitea e Paretaitoko te whare

haunga!

Katoa: A ha ha! Ka whakatete mai o rei, he

kuri! Au!

Kaea: A ha ha!

Katoa: Na wai parehua taku hope kia

whakaka te rangi

Kia tare au! Ha!

Kaea: He roha te kawau!

Katoa: Ha!

Kaea: Kei te pou tara

Katoa: Tū ka tetē, ka tetē! Tau ha!

Kaea: Ko komako, ko komako!

Katoa: E ko te hautapu e rite ki te kai na

Matariki,

Tapaireiria koi tapa!

Tapa konunua koiana tukua!

I aue!

Solo: Hark to the rumble of the earthquake  
god!

Chorus: Au! Au! Aue ha!

Solo: 'Tis Rūaumoko that quakes and stirs!

Chorus: Au! Au! Aue ha!

Solo: A ha ha!

Chorus: It is the rod of Tūngawerewere,  
The sacred stick given by Tūtāua to  
Uenuku.

It struck the monster Rangitopeka,

And smashed the head of

Rangitopeka,

Cleaving the twin peaks of

Hikurangi,

Where the carved rock emerges,

A gift of the Gods! The wonder of

men! A miracle of Heaven! The lure  
of mankind!

Solo: 'Tis divine! 'Tis divine!

Behold Paretaitoko searches and  
finds hidden places!

Chorus: A ha ha! Where the dogs gnash their  
teeth in frenzy! Au!

Solo: A ha ha!

Chorus: They have gnawed and bitten deep  
until in pain I see the heavens blaze,  
Ere I faint! Ha!

Solo: Like the shag with outspread wings!

Chorus: Ha!

Solo: In the throes!

Chorus: With its last expiring breath, Ha!

Solo: 'Tis komako, 'Tis komako

Chorus: No translation available.

Dewes, Te Kapunga, ed., *Māori Literature, He Haka Taparahi: Men's Ceremonial Dance poetry, na Te Hāmāna Mahuika*, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taunaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp. 7-9.

*Tihei Tārukei*

Kaea: Ko ngā iwi katoa e kanga mai nei...

Katoa: Ki taku ūpoko

Kaea: He tapu...

Katoa: Taku ūpoko

Kaea: Ko Tuairangi

Katoa: Taku ūpoko

Kaea: Ko Tuainuku

Katoa: Taku ūpoko

Kaea: Ahaha

Katoa: Hei kai māhau te whetū

Hei kai māhau te marama

Tuku tonu, heke tonu te ika ki Te Reinga, Whio.

Kaea: Ko Rangitukia rā te Pāriha i tukua atu ai ngā Kai-whakaako tokowhā:

Ruka ki Reporua,

Hohepa ki Paripari,

Kāwhia ki Whangakareao,

Apakura ki Whangapiritia e.

Katoa: E i aha tērā,

E haramai ki roto ki Waiapū kia kite koe i Tawa Mapua,

E te Paripari Tihei Tāruke,

I kiia nei e Rerekohu,

“Hoatu karia ōna kauae.”

Pūrari paka, i kaura mōkai. Hei.

If from Te Aowera: Kaea: Ko Te Awe Mapara kai kōareare, ūpoko kāuka, rama  
tuna pakupaku, o papa hamupaka,  
E kanga mai rā...

Katoa: Ki taku ūpoko

If from Te Koroni: Kaea: Te Koroni mākutū kai hua pāua  
O toka tūroto e kanga mai nei...

Katoa: Ki taku ūpoko

Dewes, Te Kapunga, ed., *Māori Literature, He Haka Taparahi: Men's Ceremonial Dance poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika*, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taunaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp.4-6

*Poropeihana*

Ko Āpirana rā te tangata i takarure  
mai rā (i) ngā ture, i roto o Pōneke  
Ahaha!  
Horahia mai o ture ki ahau  
Horahia mai o ture ki ahau  
Tū ana te Minita (i) waenganui  
Tū ana te Minita (i) waenganui  
O ture i patu iho i runga o te iwi Māori  
Ahaha!  
E ka whakairi ki runga ki te tekoteko (o)  
Te whare e tū mai nei na... Hi Tei...  
O ture hamupaka koia naka... Hi Tei...  
O ture kaunihera koia naka... Hi Tei...  
Poropeihana koia naka... Hi Tei...  
Ka minamina 'hau ki te waipiro  
Ka hokona i te pō  
Hi aue, Hi aue, Hi aue.  
Homai o kupu kia wetewetea, wetewetea  
Au, au, aue. Hei

Dewes, Te Kapunga, ed., *Māori Literature, He Haka Taparahi: Men's Ceremonial Dance poetry, na Te Hāmāna Mahuika*, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taunaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp.19-20

*Te Kiringutu*

Kaea: Ponga ra! Ponga ra!

Katoa: Ka tataki mai Te Whare o ngā ture!

Ka whiria te Māori! Ka whiria!  
(E) ngau nei ona reiti. (E) ngau nei  
ona take! A ha ha!  
Te taea te ueue!  
I aue! Hei!

Kaea: Patua i te whenua!

Katoa: Hei!

Kaea: Whakataua i ngā ture!

Katoa: Hei!

Kaea: A ha ha!

Katoa: Na ngā mema rā te kohuru  
Na te Kawana te koheriheri!  
Ka raruraru ngā ture!  
Ka raparapa ki te pua torori!  
I aue!

Kaea: Kāore hoki te mate o te whenua e  
Te makere atu ki raro ra!

Katoa: A ha ha! Iri tonu mai runga  
O te kiringutu mau mai ai,  
Hei tipare taua mot e hoariri!  
A ha ha! I tahuna mai au  
Ki te whakahaere toto koa,  
A ki te ngākau o te whenua nei,  
Ki te koura! I aue, taukiri e!

Kaea: A ha ha!

Katoa: Ko tūhikitia. Ko tūhapainga  
I raro i te whero o te Māori!  
Hukiti!  
A ha ha! Na te ngutu o te Māori,  
pohara,  
Kai kutu, na te weriweri koe i  
homai ki konei. E kāore iara, i haramai  
tonu koe Ki te kai whenua!  
Pokokohua! Kuaramokai! Hei!

Solo: The shadows fall! The shadows fall!

Chorus: The house which makes the laws  
is Chattering

And the Māori will be plaited as a Rope.  
Its rates and its taxes are biting!  
A ha ha!

Its teeth cannot be withdrawn. Alas!

Solo: The land will be destroyed!

Chorus: Hei!

Solo: The laws are spread-eagled over it!

Chorus: Hei!

Solo: A ha ha!

Chorus: The members have done this  
black deed, And the rulers have  
conspired in the evil; The laws of the land  
are confused, For even the tobacco leaf is  
singled out! Alas!

Solo: Never does the loss of our landed  
heritage cease to burden our minds!

Chorus: A ha ha! Ever it is upon our lips,  
clinging

As did the headbands of the  
warriors arranged to parry the  
enemy's blow! A ha ha!

I was scorched in the fire of the  
sacrifice of blood, and stripped  
to the vital heart of the land,  
Bribed with the Pakeha gold!

Alas!

Ah me!

Solo: A ha ha!

Chorus: Was it not your declared mission  
To remove the tattoo from Māori  
lips, Relieve his distress,  
Stop him eating lice, and cleanse  
him of dirt and disgust?

Yea! But all that was deep-lined  
Design 'neath which to  
Devour our lands!

Ha! May your heads be boiled!  
Displayed on the toasting sticks!

Kaea: A ha ha!

Katoa: Kei puta atu hoki te ihu o te waka  
I ngā torouka o Niu Tirenī,  
Ka paia pukutia mai e ngā uaua  
O te ture a te Kawana!  
Te taea te ueue!  
Au! Au! Aue!

Solo: A ha ha!

Chorus: How can the nose of the bark  
(canoe) you give us  
Pass by the rugged headlands of  
New Zealand,  
When confronted with the  
Restrictive perplexing laws  
Obstacles that cannot be  
removed Alas! A me!

Kaea: Ko komako, ko komako

Katoa: E ko te hautapu e rite ki te kai na  
Matariki  
Tapareireia koia tapa!  
Tapa konunua koia ana tukua!  
I aue!

Solo: It is komako. It is komako

Chorus: translation unavailable.

Dewes, Te Kapunga, ed., *Māori Literature, He Haka Taparahi: Men's Ceremonial Dance poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taunaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata* (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp.12-15

*Kura Tīwaka Tauā*

Kaea: Ma konei ake au!  
Katoa: Titaha ake ai, hai!  
Kaea: Me kore e tūtaki!  
Katoa: He pupu karikawa, he pupu  
harerorero hai!  
Kaea: Ka tikoki!  
Katoa: Ka tahuri!  
Kaea: Ka tikoki!  
Katoa: Ka tahuri!  
Ka tahuri rā Nui Tīreni i aue!  
Kaea: Papā te whatitiri, hikohiko te uira,  
I kanapu ki te rangi, i whetuki  
i raro rā,  
Rū ana te whenua, e!  
Katoa: E, i aha tērā e! Ko te werohanga a  
Porourangi i te Ika a Māui  
E takoto nei! A ha ha!  
Kia anga tiraha rā to puku ki  
runga rā!  
A ha ha! Kia eke mai o iwi ki  
runga ki  
To tuatua werowero ai e ha!  
I aue taukiri e!  
Kaea: Tēnā rā, e Tama! Tū ake ki runga  
rā  
Ki te hautu i ohou waka, i  
a Horouta.  
Takitimu, Mataatua, Tainui,  
Te Arawa. E takoto nei!  
Katoa: A ha ha!  
Kaea: Aue! He tia, he tia, he tia!  
Aue! He ranga, he ranga, he  
ranga!  
Katoa: Whakarere iho ana te kakau o te  
hoe  
Ko Maninitua! Ko Maniniaro!  
Tangi te kura i tangi wiwini,  
Tangi te kura i tangi wawana!  
Kaea: Tērā te haeata takiri ana mai  
i runga o Hikurangi!  
Katoa: Aha! Whaiuru, whaiuru, whaiuru!

Solo: Let me proceed by this way!  
Chorus: Sidling along!  
Solo: Mayhap I shall there meet?  
Chorus: Some ancient lolling his tongue  
at me!  
Solo: It is heeling over!  
Chorus: It has capsized!  
Solo: It is careening over!  
Chorus: It has capsized!  
New Zealand has heeled over!  
Aue!  
Solo: The thunder crashes, the lightening  
flashes,  
Illuminating the heavens, while  
the shock strikes earth  
Which trembles and quakes, Ha!  
Chorus: So nature bears witness that  
Porourangi has pierced the great  
Fish of Māui,  
which lies beneath us! A ha ha!  
So it is your belly, upturned  
and laid bare! A ha ha!  
So that your people may mount  
and spare you! A ha ha!  
Solo: Arise then, my Son, and take your  
Stand  
To direct and urge on your  
canoes,  
Horouta, Takitimu, Mataatua,  
Tainui, Te Arawa,  
The great fleet drawn up here!  
Chorus: A ha ha!  
Solo: Striking, sweeping, paddling!  
Now on the other side paddling!  
Chorus: Down dips the blade of the  
paddle  
Sweeping behind, flashing before!  
The speeding canoe sings in the  
wind  
Vibrant with energy it chants to  
the breeze!

Aha! Whaiato, whaiato, whaiato!  
 Arara tini! Arara tini! Ara ri!  
 Kaea: A ko tēnā, tēnā!  
 Katoa: A ko tēnā, tēnā!  
 Ēhara ko te wai o te waha,  
 ko te wai o te waha!  
 Hei koti, hei koti, hei koti!  
 Kaea: Ka rere! I ka rere!  
 Katoa: Te rere i te waka, kutangitangi,  
 Kutangitangi!  
 E kura tīwaka tauā!  
 E kura tīwaka tauā!  
 E kura wawawa wai!  
 E kura wawawa wai!  
 Kaea: Ko komako! Ko komako!  
 Katoa: E ko te hautapu e rite ki te  
 kai na Matariki  
 Tapa reireia koia tapu  
 Tapa konunua koia ana tukua  
 I aue!

Solo: Behold the first light of dawn  
 Is reflected from the crest of  
 Hikurangi!  
 Chorus: A ha ha! Dipping close to this  
 side,  
 A ha ha! Now changing and  
 plunging  
 to that side!  
 Urging and urging the bark on!  
 Solo: Now faster and faster!  
 Chorus: Yes faster and faster!  
 Is it not like the foam from  
 your mouth,  
 Thrown out, expelled with force!  
 Solo: So it speeds, so it speeds –  
 Chorus: So my canoe rushes along,  
 swiftly,  
 So smoothly!  
 For it is the canoe of war! It is the  
 master of the seas!  
 Cleaving the ocean waves,  
 parting  
 the wild rushing seas!  
 Solo: It is komako, 'tis komako  
 Chorus: translation unavailable

Dewes, Te Kapunga, ed., *Māori Literature, He Haka Taparahi: Men's Ceremonial Dance poetry, na Te Hāmana Mahuika*, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taunaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp. 16-18

*Paikea*

Kaea: Uia mai koia, whakahuatia ake, ko wai te whare nei?

Katoa: Ko Whitireia, ko Whitireia

Kaea: Ko wai te tekoteko kei runga?

Katoa: Ko Paikea, ko Paikea

Kaea: Whakakau Paikea

Katoa: Hei

Kaea: Whakakau he tipua

Katoa: Hei

Kaea: Whakakau he taniwha

Katoa: Hei

Ka ū Paikea ki Ahuahu, pakia,  
Kei te whitia koe ko Kahu-tia-te-rangi,  
E ai to ure ki te tamahine a Te Whironui,  
Nāna i noho Te Rototahi,  
Aue, aue, he koruru koe e Koro e.

Dewes, Te Kapunga, ed., *Māori Literature, He Haka Taparahi: Men's Ceremonial Dance poetry, na Te Hāmāna Mahuika*, Arnold Reedy, Rev. Tipi Kaa, Mārū Karaka, Moni Taunaunu, Sir. Apirana Ngata (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Anthropology, 1972), pp. 22-35.



*Te Urunga Tu*

Tena i whiua!  
Taku pohiri e rere atu ra  
Ki te hiku o te ika,  
Te puku o te whenua,

Te pane o te motu, ki  
Te whakawhititanga i Raukawa  
Ki te Waipounamu, e.  
E, i aha tera!  
E Haramai koe i te pohiritanga

A taku manu  
Haramai koe I te pohiritanga  
A taku manu  
He tiwaiwaka ahau na Maui  
Tiori rau e he ha!

He tiwaiwaka ahau na Maui!  
Tiori rau e he ha!  
Te urunga Tu, te urunga pae  
Te urunga matiketike!  
Te urunga Tu, te urunga pae

Te urunga matiketike!  
Ko tou aro i tahuri mai  
Ko toku aro i tahuri atu,  
Takina ko au, takina ko koe!  
Ko tou aro I tahuri mai

Ko toku aro I tahuri atu  
Takina ko au, takina ko koe!  
Porou koa!  
Ko Hamo te wahine koa!  
Ko Tahu koa!

Ko Hamo te wahine koa!  
Nana i tohatoha ki Niu Tirenī!  
Ka hipokina.  
Haere mai! Haere mai!  
Haere mai! Haere mai!  
Ki taku hui! Hei!

Begin with a swing  
My call has gone forth  
To the tail of the fish  
To the belly of the land

To the head of the island  
To the crossing at Raukawa  
To the Waipounamu  
Lo! Haw have you responded?  
You have come at the call

Of my bird.  
You have responded to the call  
Of my bird.  
I am the fantail of Maui  
Chirping my welcome everywhere!

I am the fantail of Maui!  
Chirping my welcome everywhere  
The bank of warriors, the multitudinous  
band,  
The lively bank is here,  
The warrior bank, the multitudinous band,

The vigilant band is here.  
Turning, you face me  
Turning you face me  
Defiantly challenging each other!  
Turning, you face me,

Turning I face you,  
Defiantly challenging each other!  
For it was Porou indeed  
And Hamo his wife!  
For it was Tahu indeed

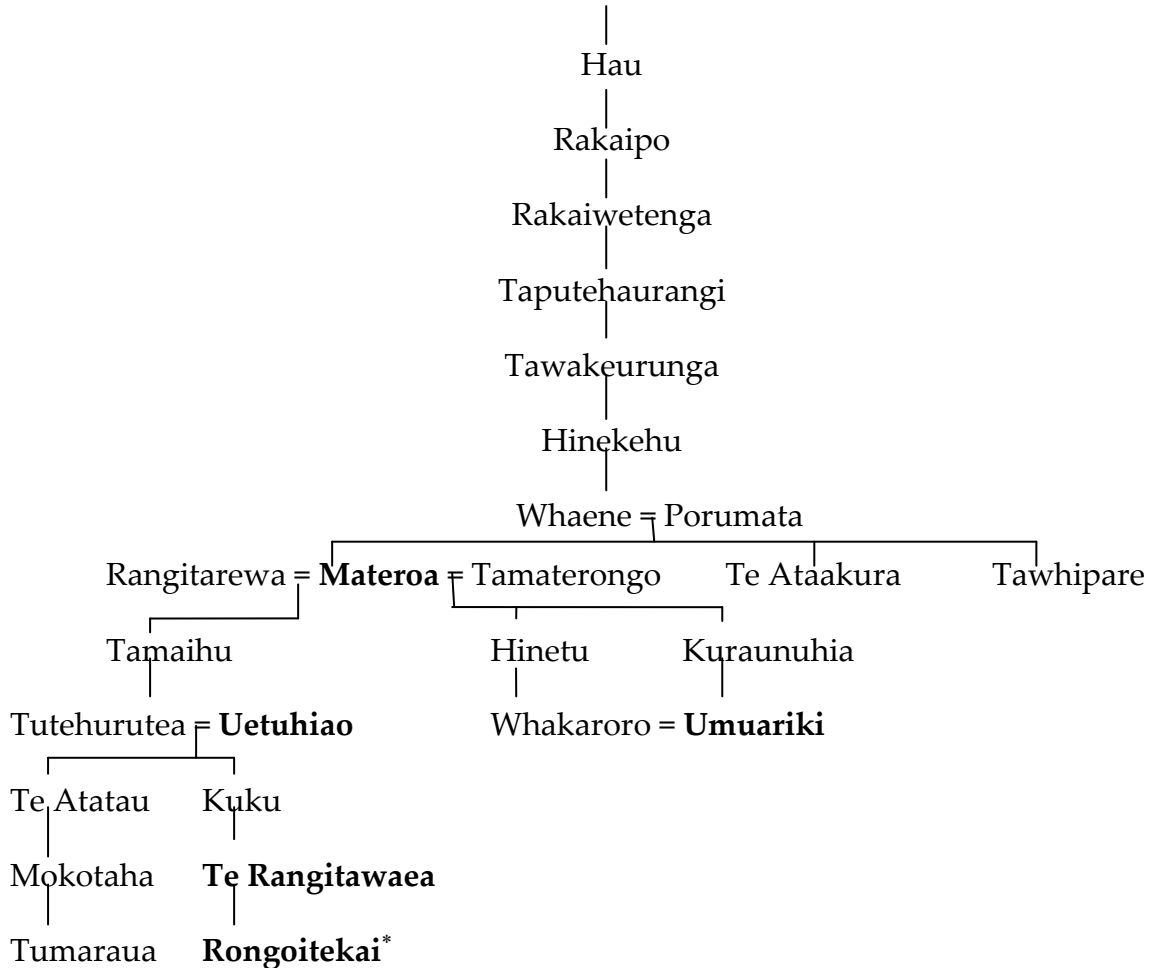
And Hamo his wife!  
Who scattered their descendants throughout  
New Zealand  
Populating the land entirely  
Welcome! Welcome!  
Welcome! Welcome!  
To my gathering

Mahuika, A. T., *Nga Haka Taparahi o Ngāti Porou*, 1995, Private Papers.



## Whakapapa Table 2.

### Porou Ariki Te Matātara a Whare te Tuhi Mareikura a Rauru (Porourangi) \*



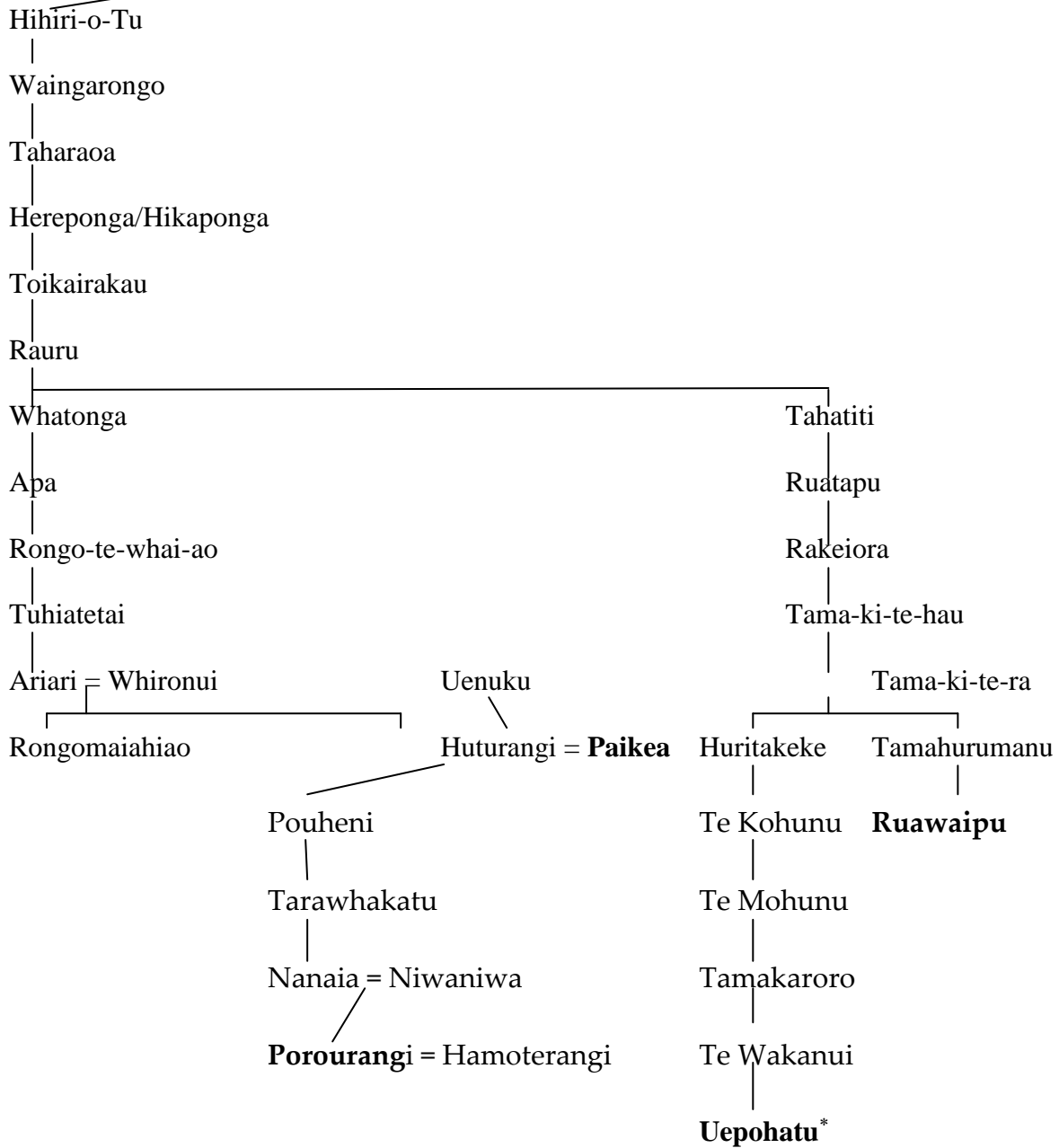
(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

\* Porourangi's full name shows his high born status as a descendent of Rauru.

\* Rongoitekai and Te Rangitawaea are descendents of Porourangi.

### Whakapapa Table 3.

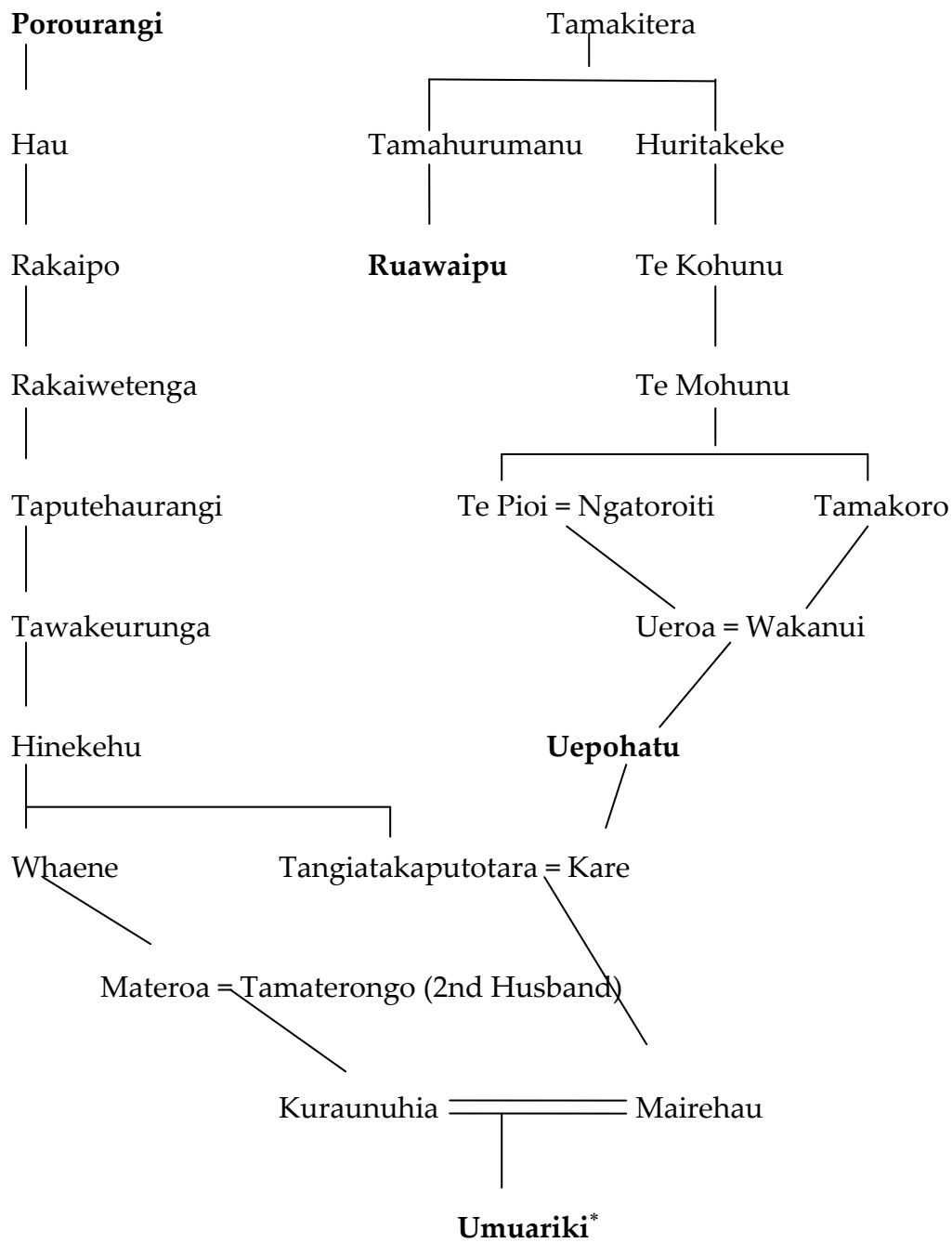
Maui-Tikitiki-a-Taranga = Hurunga-te-Rangi



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

\* Uepohatu and Ruawaipu are also descendants of Maui, Toi, and Rauru.

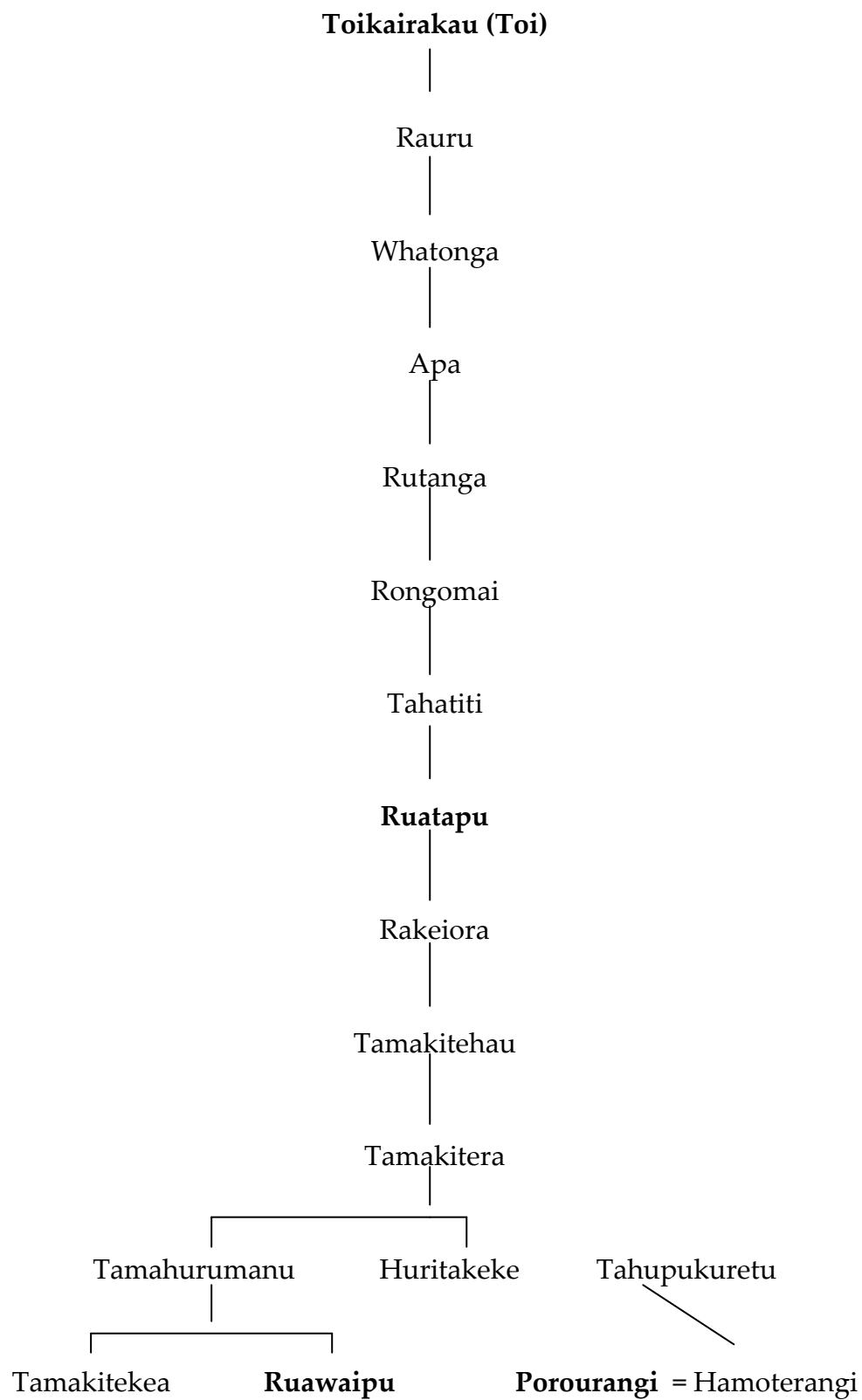
## Whakapapa Table 4.



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

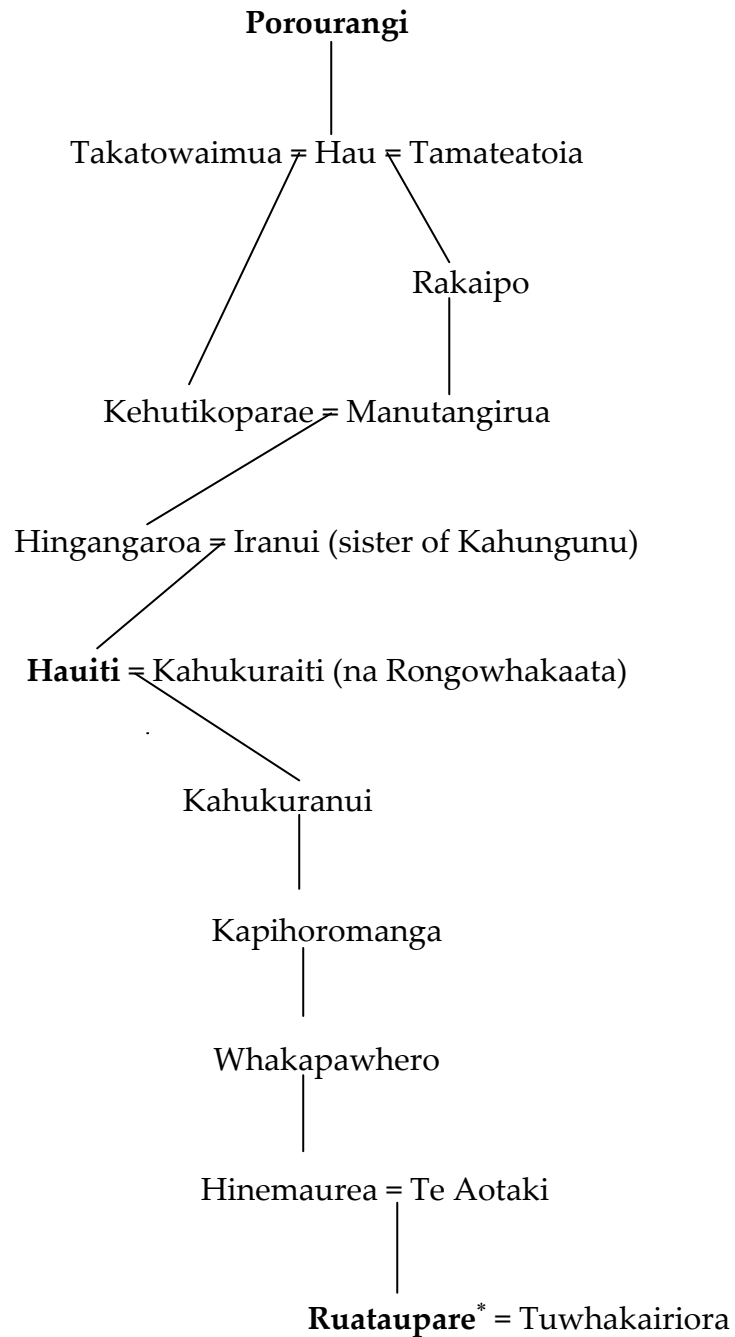
\* Ngāti Porou share a close connection to Uepohatu through a common ancestor, Umuariki. Descendants of Ruawaipu also share multiple connections to both Uepohatu and Ngāti Porou. Umuariki is the name of one of the two marae at Tuparoa.

## Whakapapa Table 5.



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

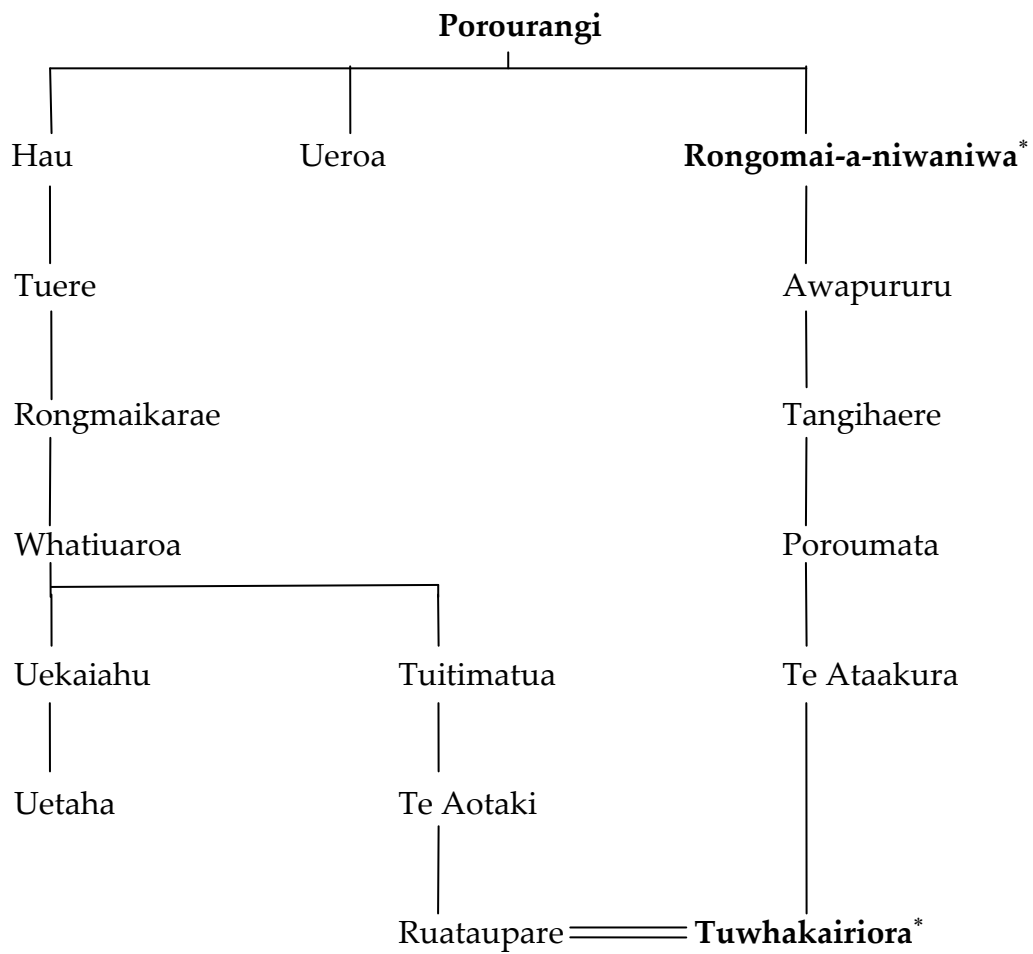
**Whakapapa Table 6.**



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers; Sir A. T. Ngata, Rauru-nui a Toi lecture 2, 1944-45))

\* Both Ruataupare and Hauiti are descendents of Porourangi. Ruataupare has a number of hapu/whānau that take her name, including descendents at Tokomaru Bay, and those at Tuparoa who have a marae named after her.

**Whakapapa Table 7.**



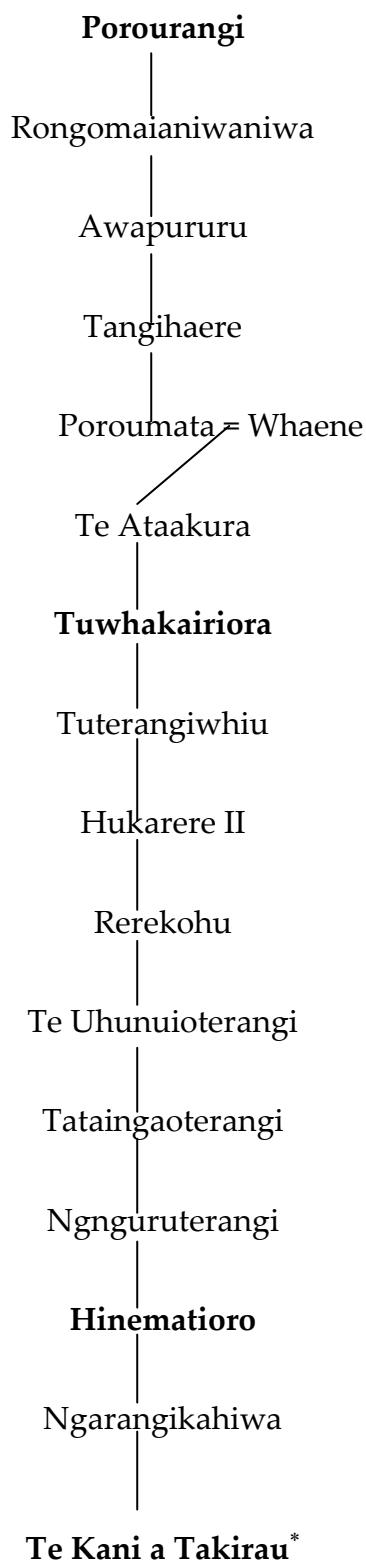
(adapted from A. T. 'Origins of the name Ngāti Porou'; Sir A. T. Ngata, Rauru-nui a Toi lecture 2, 1944-45))

\* The meetinghouse at Rahui-o-Kehu at Tikitiki is named after this prominent ancestress.

\* Both Tuwhakairiora and Ruataupare are descendents of Porourangi.



## Whakapapa Table 8.

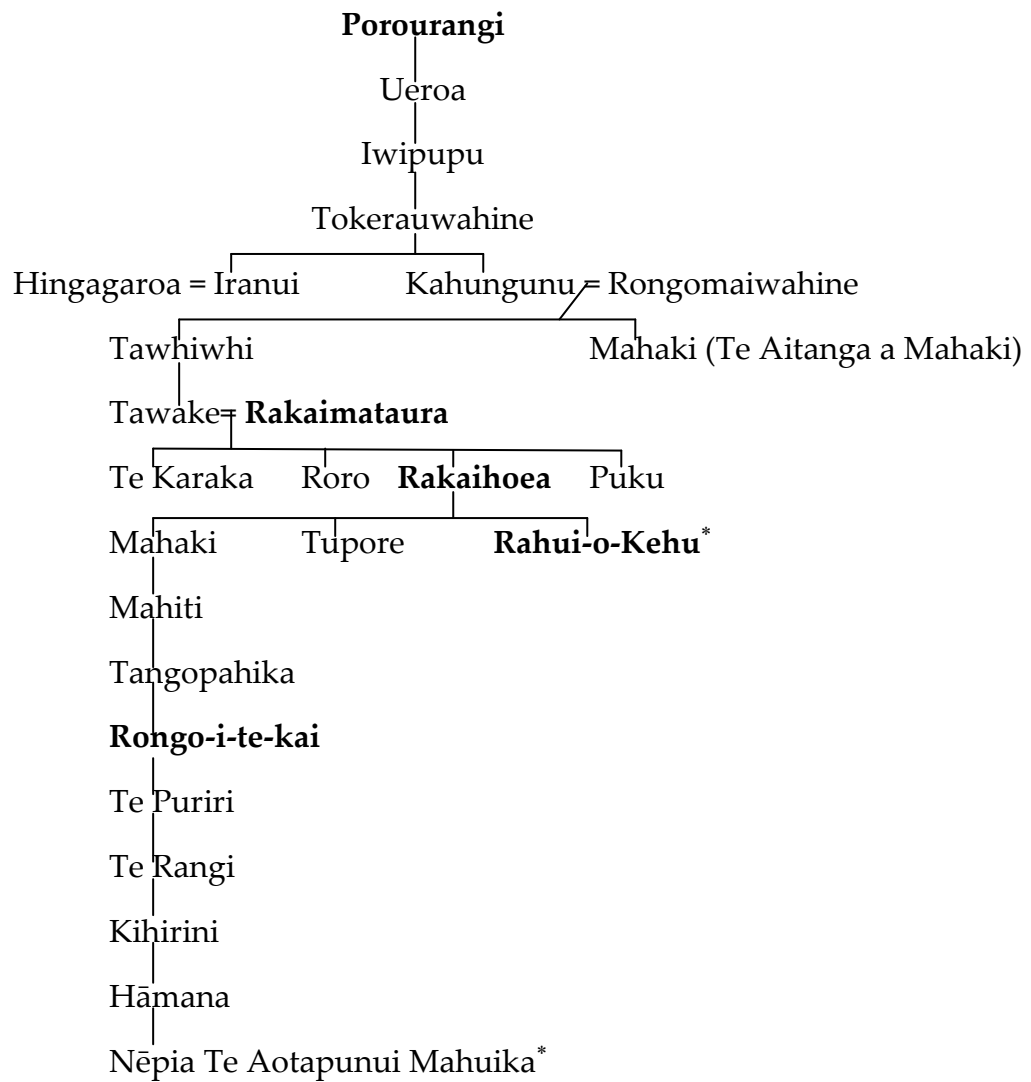


(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Personal Correspondence)

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\* Te Kani a Takirau of a high born lineage. It is chiefly status to which he refers in declining the invitation to be 'Māori' King.

## Whakapapa Table 9.

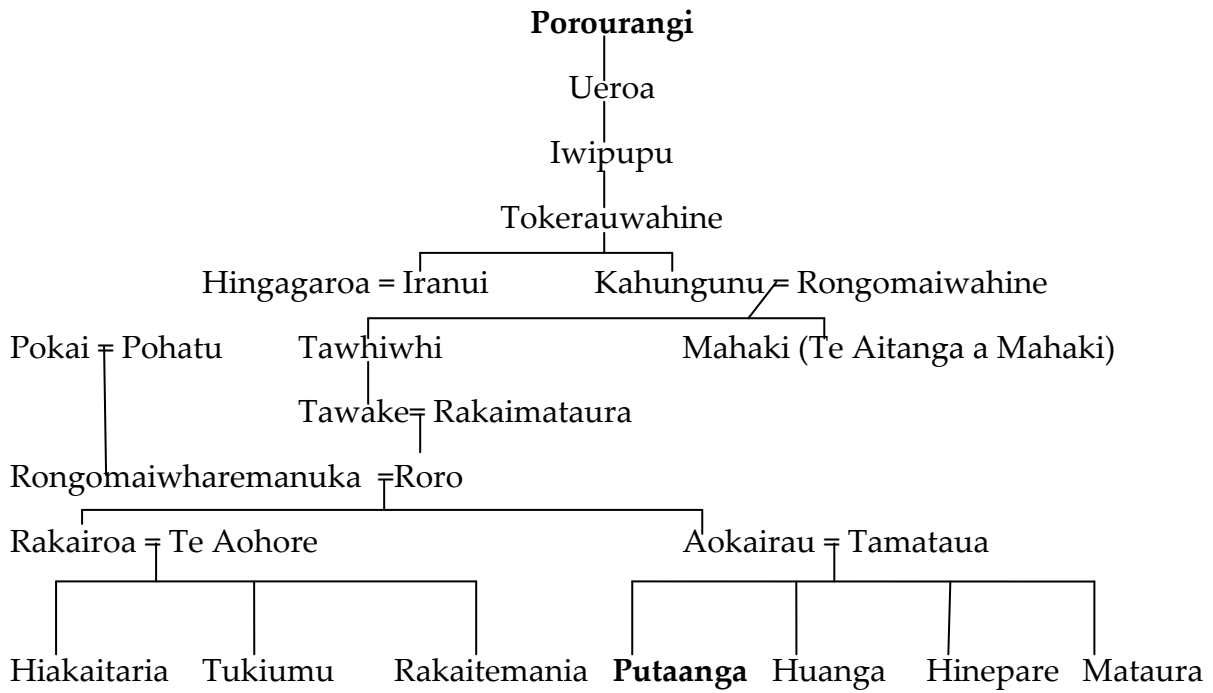


(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

\* Rahui marae at Tikitikii takes its name from this tipuna.

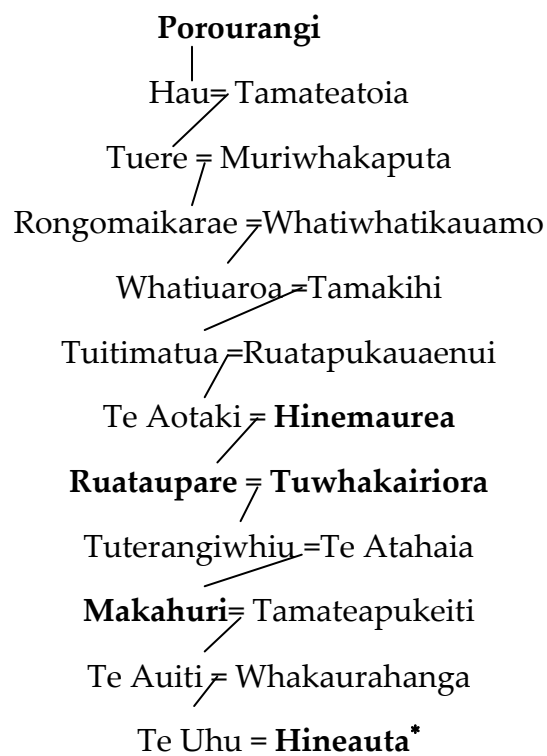
\* As argued in this study, Porourangi, and other 'legendary' ancestors are considered real people. This table highlights that descent to my great great grandfather, Nēpia Te Aotapunui Mahuika.

**Whakapapa Table 10.**



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers; Sir A. T. Ngata, Rauru-nui a Toi lecture 2, 1944-45)

## Whakapapa Table 11.

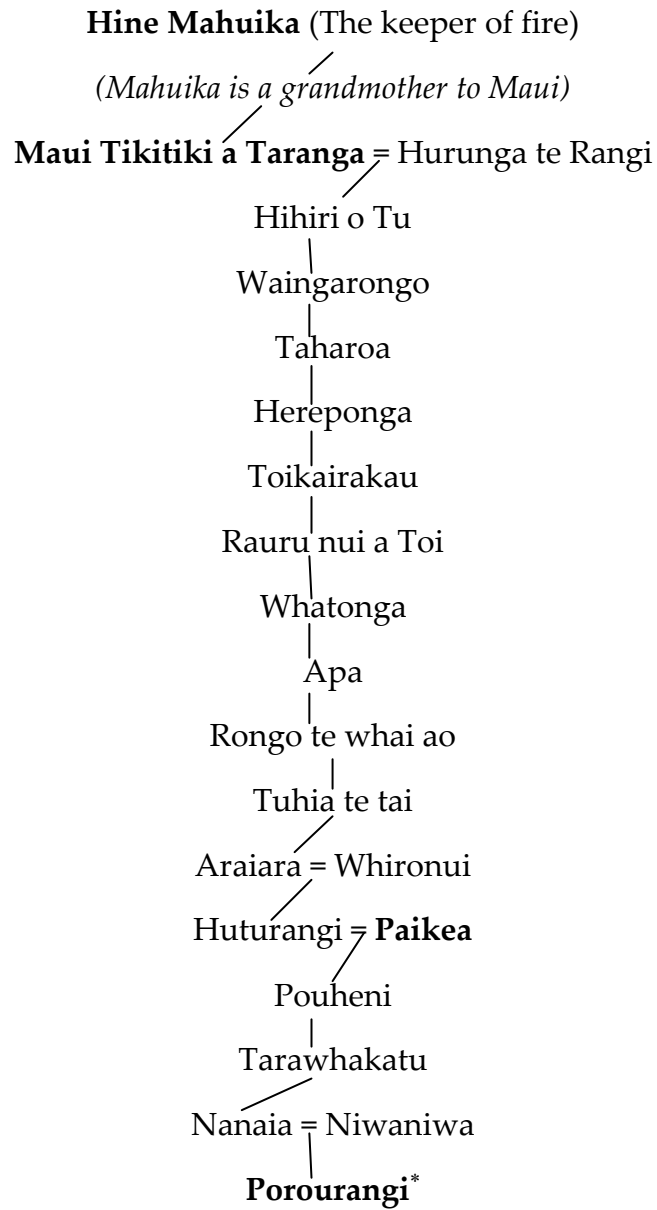


(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

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\* Hinemaurea, Ruataupare and Hineauta are renowned female leaders of their generation.

## Whakapapa Table 12.

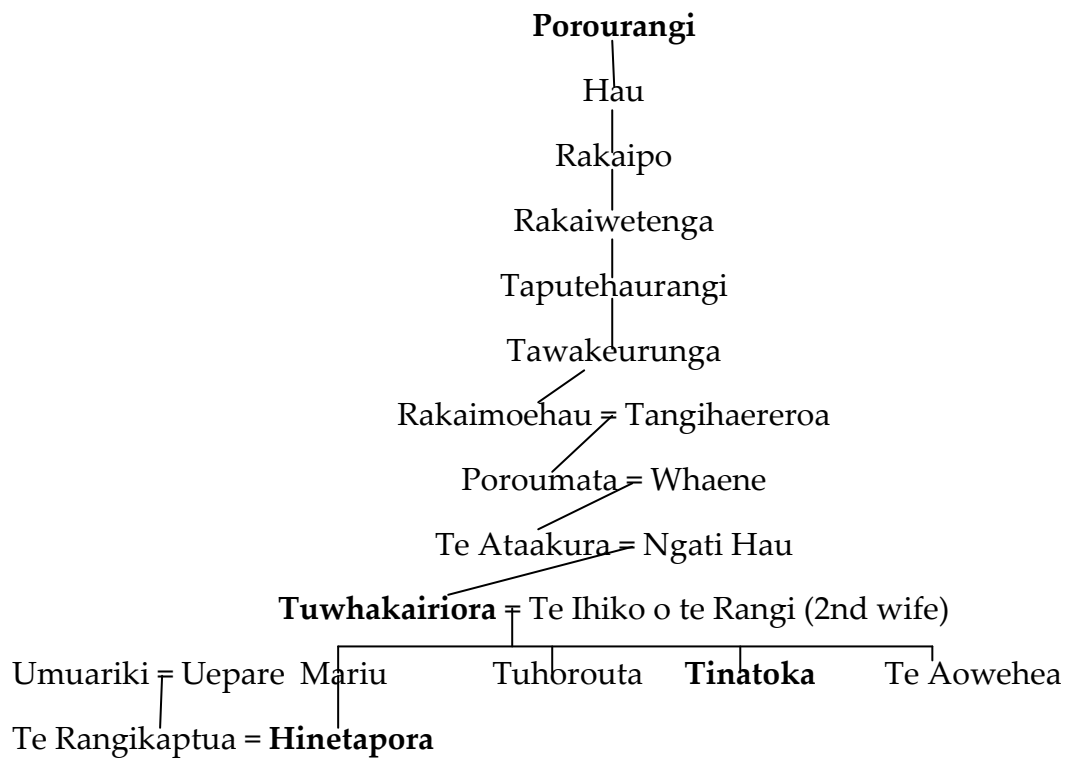


(adapted from Nēpia Mahuika Snr, Genealogy Papers)

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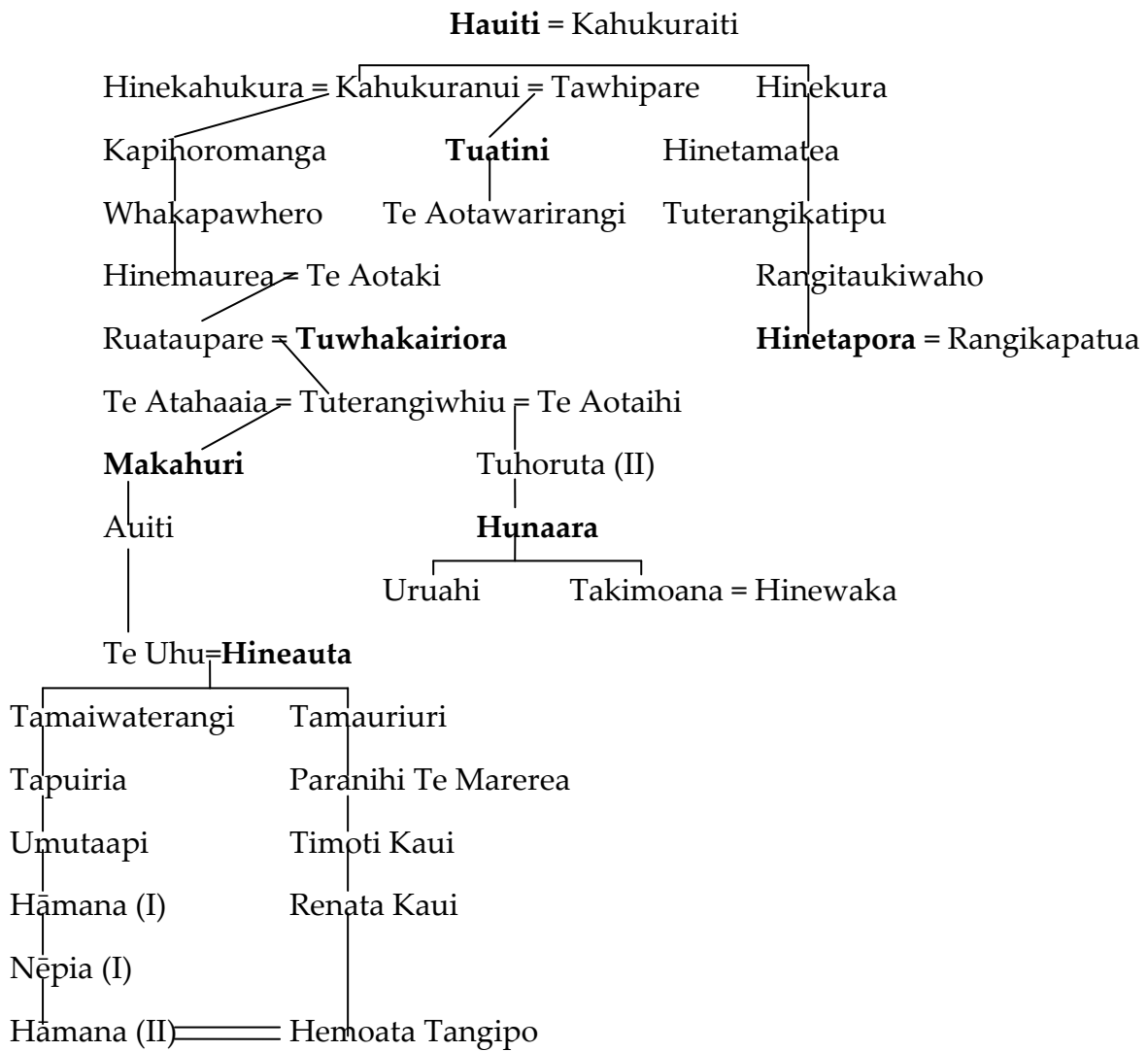
\* Porourangi is also a descendent of Hine Mahuika (the mythologized 'goddess of fire').

**Whakapapa Table 13.**



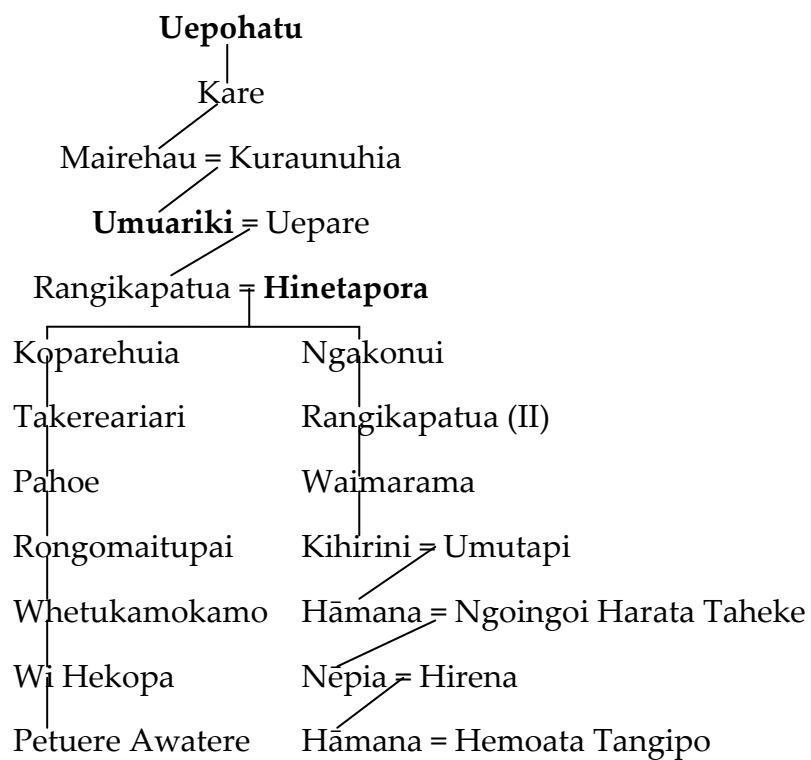
(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

**Whakapapa Table 14.**



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

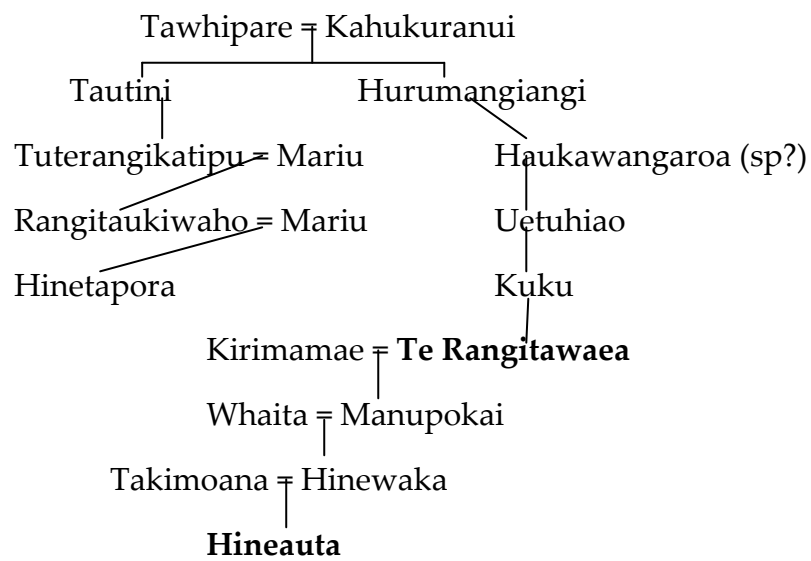
**Whakapapa Table 15.**



(adapted from A. T. Mahuika, Private Papers)

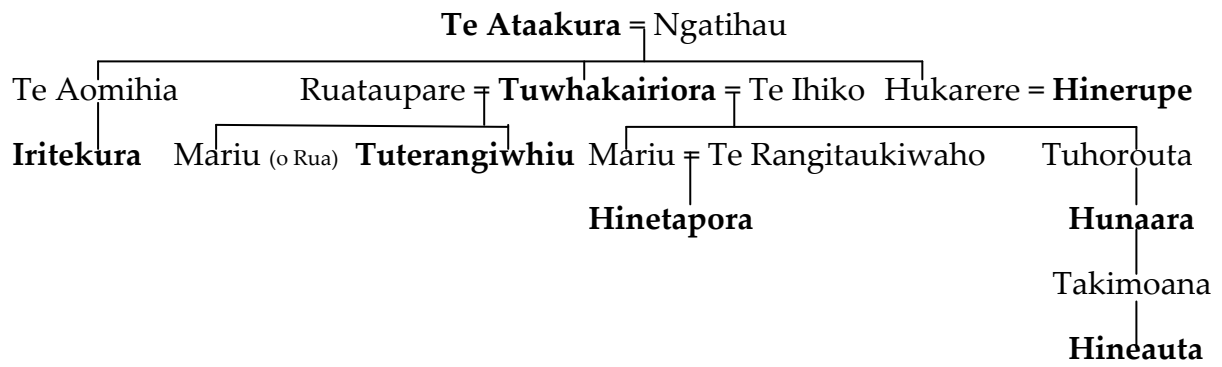


**Whakapapa Table 16.**



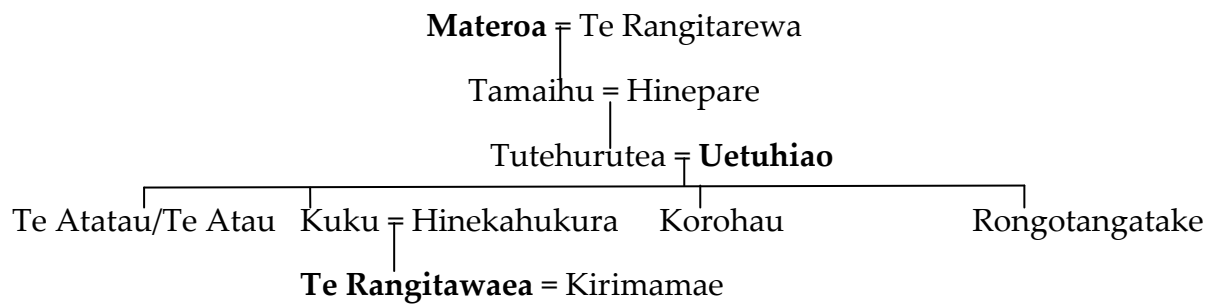
(adapted from Nēpia Mahuika Snr, Genealogy Papers)

**Whakapapa Table 17.**



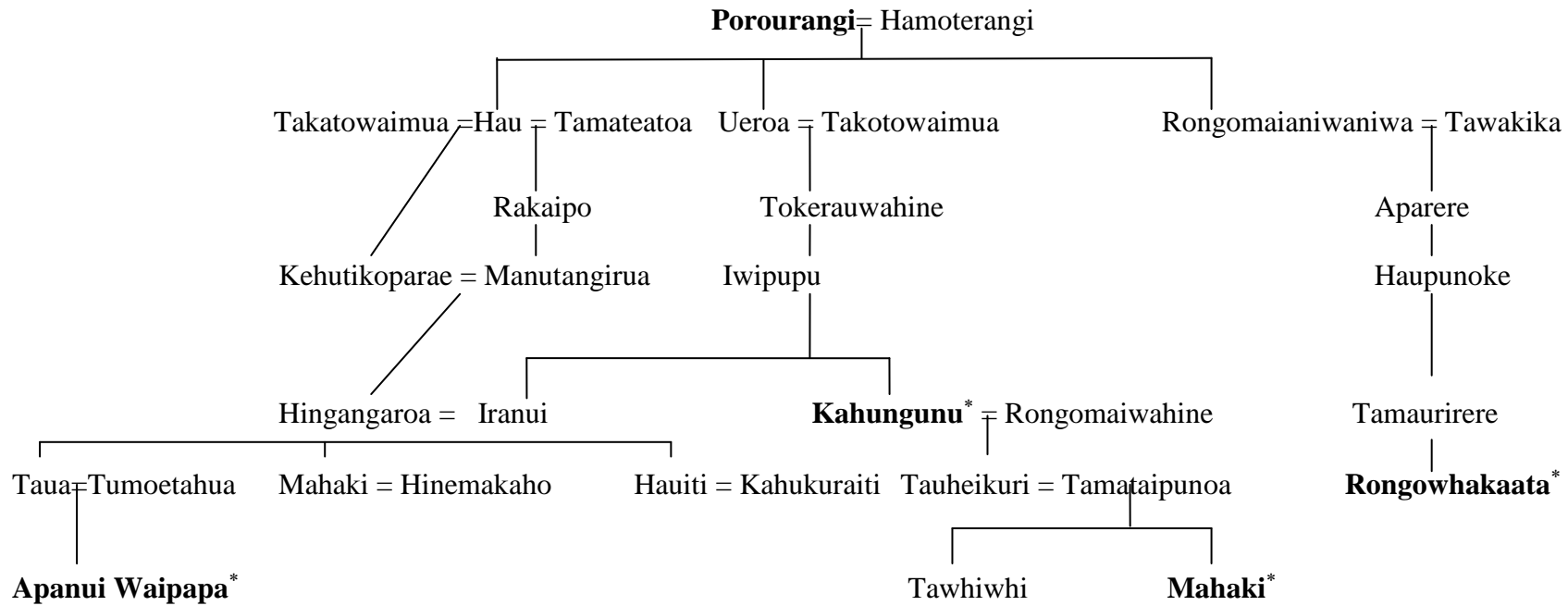
(adapted from Nēpia Mahuika Snr, Genealogy Papers)

**Whakapapa Table 18.**



(adapted from Nēpia Mahuika Snr, Genealogy Papers)

Whakapapa Table 19.



(adapted from Nēpia Mahuika Snr, Genealogy Papers)

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\* Ngāti Kahungunu  
 \* Rongowhakaata  
 \* Te Whānau a Apanui  
 \* Te Aitanga a Mahaki

## Ngāti Porou Hapu

Ngāti Oneone

Ngāti Konohi

Te Aitanga a Hauiti

Ngāti Kahukuranui

Ngāti Hau

Ngāti Wakarara

Ngāti Ira

Te Whānau a Ruataupare

Te Whānau a Te Aotawarirangi

Te Whānau a Iritekura

Te Whānau a Rakairoa

Te Whānau a Te Haemata

Ngāti Rakai

Te Aitanga a Mate

Te Aowera

Te Whānau a Hinekehu

Ngāti Uepohatu

Te Whānau a Hinetapora

Te Whānau a Umuariki

Te Whānau a Ruataupare ki Tuparoa

Ngai Tangihaere

Ngāti Rangī

Te Whānau a Rakaihoea

Te Whānau a Karuai

Te Whānau a Rakaimataura

Ngai Tuere

Te Whānau a Uruhōnea

Ngāti Horowai

Te Whānau a Mahaki

Te Whānau a Pokai

Te Whānau a Hineauta

Te Whānau a Te Uruahi

Te Whānau a Tapuhi

Ngai Tane

Ngāti Nua

Te Whānau a Hinepare

Te Whānau a Takimoana

Ngāti Hokopu

Te Whānau a Rerewa

Ngāti Putaanga

Ngāti Puai

Ngai Tutekohi

Te Whānau a Hinerupe

Te Whānau a Tuwhakairiora ki

Kawakawa mai Tawhiti

Te Whānau a Hunaara

Te Whānau a Rerekohu

Te Whānau a Hinehou

Ngai Tamakoro

Te Whānau a Kahu

Te Whānau a Te Aotaki

Te Whānau a Tuwhakairiora ki

Wharekahika

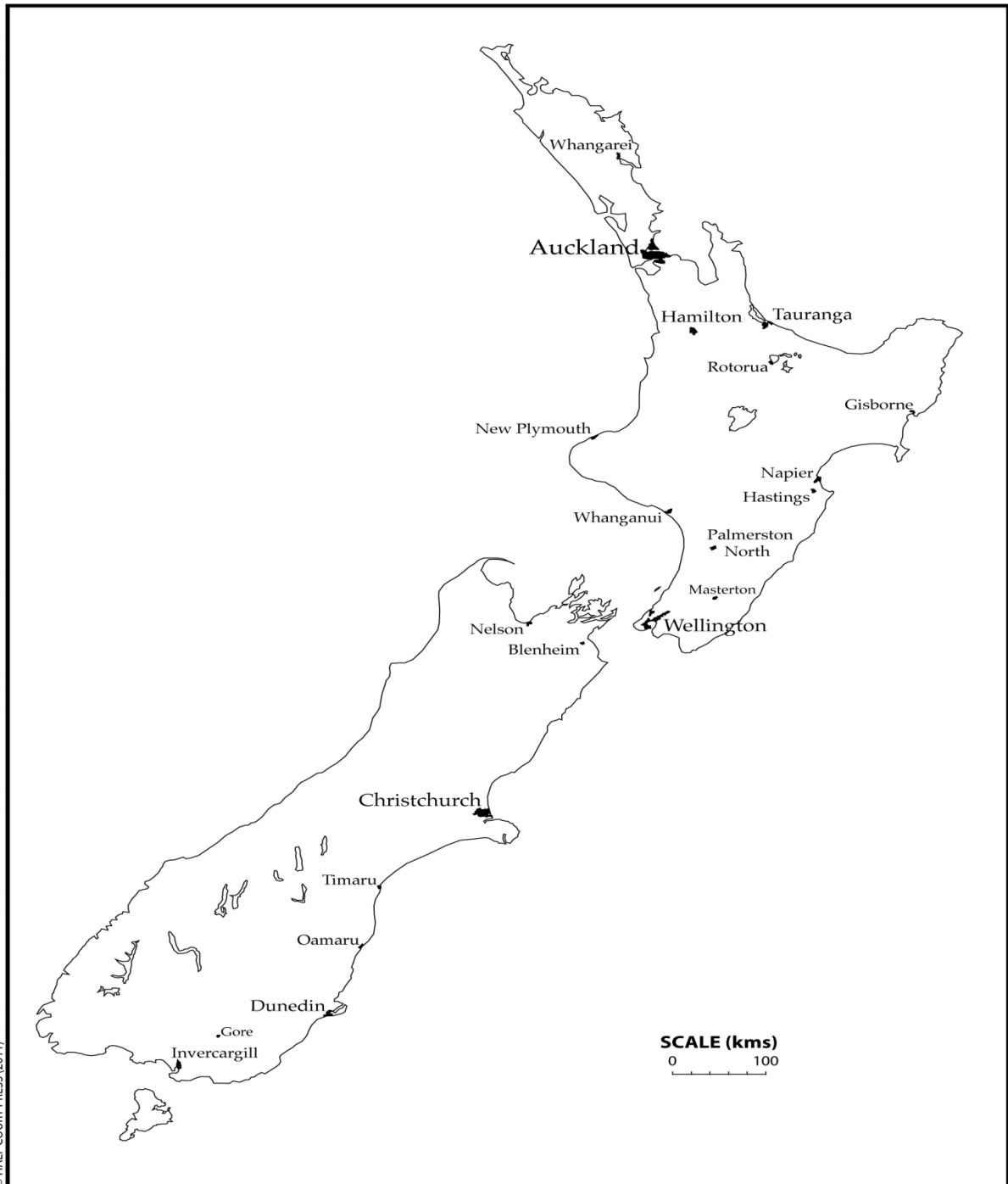
Te Whānau a Tapaeururangi

Te Whānau a Te Aotaihi

# Appendix 4

## Maps

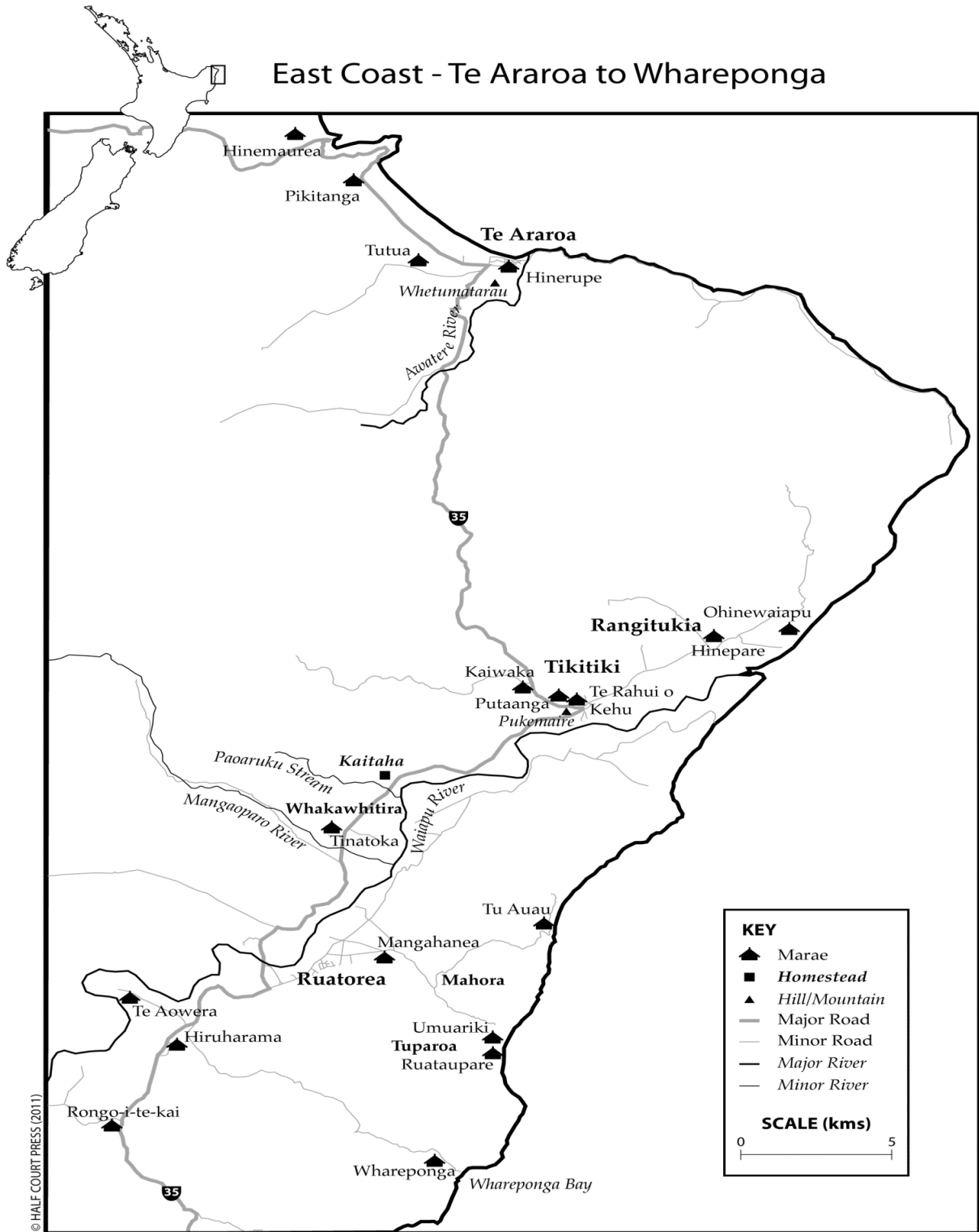
### Aotearoa - New Zealand



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# East Coast - Te Araroa to Whareponga



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(Sources: www.linz.govt.nz, www.ngatiporou.com)

# Bibliography

This list of sources is set out under the following headings:

## *Primary Sources:*

- I. Oral History Interviews
- II. Official Publications

## *Secondary Sources:*

- I. Books
- II. Articles and Chapters
- III. Theses
- IV. Newspaper Articles
- V. Unpublished Papers and Speeches
- VI. Internet Sources

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*Note:* The majority of recordings for this project are currently held by the author of this study until suitable tribal/hapu archives are established. Some recordings have been returned to interviewees, while others have been destroyed according to the various requests of individual participants.

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