

He Tuhinga Tuki Iho: Texts, Contexts, Resonances - Introduction

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This volume derives from a small symposium, “He Tuhinga nō Neherā”, held at the Hocken Collections in November 2018.¹ The event’s title, which may be translated as “Writings from the Past”, defined the subject of the meeting, that is, historical texts written by Māori. We have changed the name slightly for this publication; “He Tuhinga Tuku Iho”, playing with the *kīwaha*, “he taonga tuku iho” (treasures handed down), writings that pass on the language of earlier generations, and the thoughts, feelings and aspirations of *tūpuna*. Nine authors contribute to this collection, all but one of whom presented at the symposium. We encouraged them to consider various textual genres, such as petitions, newspaper articles, wills, pamphlets, letters, and speeches, although they could be interpret the term “text” as broadly as they wished.

In part this special issue addresses the question—do historical Māori texts matter? There are occasional scholarly assertions that Māori inhabit an essentially “oral” world in which text has little relevance, or that the impacts of literacy proved largely negative for Māori.² It is not the purpose of this volume to debate this point,³ and indeed, it is easy to show literacy “was the product of their encounter with both the agents of empire-building and missionisation”,⁴ and that orality, particularly eloquent *whaikōrero*, is still highly valued in Māori society.⁵ This collection does illustrate, however, through this tiny selection of documents from the rich archive of manuscript and printed material, that Māori have been (and still are) avid writers, constructing and utilising texts on a wide range of topics over the last two centuries of Aotearoa’s history, including contesting colonial rule. We might more accurately say that Māori is both an oral and written culture, and yes, historical Māori texts do matter.

This volume comprises nine essays by six Māori authors and three Pākehā. The Māori contributors have all chosen texts written directly by their own *tūpuna* or *whanaunga*. This category of “insider” writing by Māori who use their own kinship ties to places and people has a long history and is a methodology often used by Māori students at university (especially in humanities and the social sciences) for their research.⁶ This provides very personal links with the past, opening up what may once have only been private family history to a wider view. But it can also add layers of complexity and insight that may resonate with others’ own *whānau* histories. As such, these essays reflect the voices of the Māori contributors, with some choosing a more vernacular style that suits their content matter and audience. In contrast, the Pākehā contributors have chosen Māori texts, the sort with which they have some familiarity from their past work on Māori topics. While their topics may deal with wider themes, and still reflect the voices of the historical Māori actors, they do not quite match the intimacy that *whakapapa* connections can provide.

The volume’s subtitle “Texts, Contexts, Resonances” is designed to give some coherency to the collection, that authors might examine the content and meaning of their texts, but also the social and political contexts in which they were created, enabling deeper and more nuanced understandings of Māori textual culture and New Zealand histories rather than an ahistorical semantic reading. As such they build on the existing scholarship of people, Māori and Pākehā, such as Jane McRae, Bradford Haami, Kuni Jenkins, Phil Parkinson and others.⁷ By asking authors to explore the “resonances” of their text, we hoped that they might also shed light on how their texts have relevance for today in *te ao hurihuri*, the modern world which continues to change and grow. The impact of a text can sometimes be quite obvious, whether for an individual, *whānau*, *hapū*, *iwi*, or even the *motu*. But we also suggested that authors might

consider potential resonances that the (re-)exposure of a text to the modern gaze might generate. It is this component that differentiates these essays from other commentaries on the Māori written form.

In a way, these articles are a product of older philosophical Māori understandings of the dimensions of time and place. A generalised euro-centric understanding of time is as linear progression: the past remains in the past, today's events are the here and now and the future is yet to come. But in older Māori views of time, the past is also the here and now and the future is reflected in the present as well.⁸ For the purposes of these articles, the Māori texts are indeed products of the past, but each author opined on how their individual texts have relevance for today and even in the future.

The following essays give but some examples of some of the various written forms that were used by Māori over the years. The editors did not attempt a broad survey of all writing genres representing all iwi and rohe over the last two centuries (an impossible goal for a project this size) but instead encouraged the authors to select texts that spoke to them. The essays therefore provide mere snapshots of Māori writing and life, and are arranged chronologically from the 1850s through to the 1970s.

Readers may notice a variety of orthographic styles used in these essays. Māori language comprises a range of mutually comprehensible reo from the many tribes and regions within New Zealand, and several authors have chosen to utilise aspects of their own reo ā-iwi. The orthography prescribed by Te Taura Whiri includes the use of macrons for long vowels, a tikanga now standardised in Māori texts in New Zealand's educational system.⁹ In contrast, Tangiwai Rewi's essay is written following a tikanga associated with Tainui iwi and hapū that uses the double vowels rather than macrons that "has fast become a symbol of tribal pride and identity in literary form" and is sometimes identified specifically as a Tainui tikanga.¹⁰ Angela Wanhalla and Megan Pōtiki's essays also employ, where appropriate, a distinctive feature of both spoken and written Southern Ngāi Tahu language in which a "k" is used instead of a "ng".¹¹ There are other examples of subtle usages of written Māori language from the Bay of Plenty within Poia Rewi's and Paerau Warbrick's texts that uses "ratau" or "matau", instead of the "ratou" and "matou" more commonly used in standardised Māori texts in New Zealand's educational system. Maintaining these linguistic distinctions assist the various reo ā-iwi to grow and develop adding richness and diversity to New Zealand society.¹²

In the first essay **Michael Reilly** turns his analysis to a text about Māui, an early folk hero known to all Māori iwi and some peoples of the Pacific, collected by the Rev. Johann Wohlers in Southland in the 1850s from Kāti Māmoe and Kāi Tahu, the tangata whenua. Because Wohlers sourced this account of the story of Māui from Māori in the southern reaches of the South Island, it possesses narrative styles particular to them, reminding us that different iwi had their own distinct versions of legend and history. Reilly's essay also alerts readers to constantly challenge those in power, to subvert norms and to effect change in emulation of the hero Māui.

Hēnare Wiremu Taratoa is best known as a principled freedom fighter who wrote a code of conduct for Ngāiterangi combatants in their struggle against the British Army at Tauranga in 1864. **Lachy Paterson** focuses instead on Taratoa's writings published in Māori-language newspapers when he was a teacher at the Māori school at Ōtaki in the late 1850s. A product of the missionary education system himself, Taratoa promoted the notions of British institutions, education and modernity, which Paterson juxtaposes with his death and the chivalrous actions

that have been attributed to him in popular culture. Taken alone, his early writings demonstrate the process of acculturation to which Māori were exposed, but he was not averse to asking awkward questions or giving his opinions in the Māori newspapers at the time. Paterson considers Taratoa's ideas on education being a key to Māori improvement, and their relevancy to Māori back then as well as today.

Angela Wanhalla's essay, which discusses a letter to the Native Minister in 1892 from her whānau from when they lived on the Taieri plains near Dunedin, demonstrates whānau activism through correspondence. As the Ngāi Tahu Reports produced by the Waitangi Tribunal are but one grand narrative concerning the iwi's efforts against the Crown,¹³ the article also positions the letter into an additional narrative concerning the efforts of Ngāi Tahu whānau to gain redress over land claims. Wanhalla's essay also addresses how the authors of the letters viewed themselves as Māori in the modernising New Zealand society of the late nineteenth century. Those questions of Māori identity and the place of Māori in the twenty-first century are a continual question for Māori as well as the rest of New Zealand as we move forward in our nation's development.¹⁴

Diary entries by **Megan Pōtiki's** tupuna from the end of the nineteenth-century and into the early twentieth-century form the basis of her analysis in the interpretation of moemoeā or dreams. In particular she examines diary entries written at the turn of the century by her Te Āti Awa tupuna, Rāniera Erihana (Rāniera Ellison) who had married into Ngāi Tahu people at Otākou on the Otago Peninsula near Dunedin.¹⁵ Traditionally, academics examined dreams as part of the science of the mind, or anthropologists made a note of them from a cultural perspective of peoples under examination. However, moemoeā belong to the spiritual aspects of Māori life and come under the genre of mātauranga Māori that has recently come under the spotlight in New Zealand academic and literary circles.¹⁶ Pōtiki's contribution is a reminder that these aspects of Māori culture involving the wairua of Māori remain influential in Māori society as well as New Zealand society despite our modern ways of living that push such things to the periphery.

The 1905 petition to King Edward VII, written by Pepene Eketone of Ngāti Maniapoto on behalf of Te Wherowhero Tāwhiao and others called for greater control for Māori over their land. Like Angela Wanhalla's essay, **Anaru Eketone's** contribution places the petition within wider narratives concerning the many grievances that Ngāti Maniapoto and the other Tainui confederation of iwi had against the Crown. This narrative is important because the Waitangi Tribunal did not issue a grand narrative on the Tainui grievances against the Crown as it did with the Ngāi Tahu Report of 1991. Instead, it took well into the 2000s before the Tribunal started to issue its findings on the Rohe Pōtae district of the Western Waikato and Northern Taranaki and King Country districts that contextually addressed Tainui claims as well.¹⁷ Eketone's contribution therefore adds whānau dimensions to those narratives as well as to the recent books written by Vincent O'Malley and Michael Belgrave regarding Māori social and political issues in the Waikato and King Country in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁸ The petition is a timely reminder that Māori like Ngāti Maniapoto are constantly calling on the Crown for greater autonomy over themselves and their resources such as those outlined in the contemporary issues surrounding the *He Puapua Report*, the Three Waters Reforms and the separate Māori Health Authority.¹⁹

Like Angela Wanhalla and Anaru Eketone's essays, **Paerau Warbrick** uses letters written to the Government in the first decade of the twentieth century concerning his whānau land rights written by his tupuna, Maata Rangitūkehu. In addition to discussing the content of the letters,

Warbrick also shows how they have subsequently been used in family reunion books to build knowledge amongst his whānau about their ancestors' lives. Furthermore, he addresses the effects that letters and other archival material can have in creating and enhancing "super narratives" that privilege particular interpretations of the past within whānau, hapū and iwi. His essay is a lesson for all New Zealanders about the processes that can lead to certain political narratives dominating over others.

Poia Rewi's essay analyses two letters written during the Second World War from his own whānau records from Ngāti Manawa in the southern Bay of Plenty, one in English, the other, from his uncle serving in the Maori Battalion in a mix of English and Māori. Rewi's contribution follows two paths; one, from his position as a whānau member, discusses his own emotional reaction to the letters and his imagining of their effect on those who read them; the other, as an expert in te reo Māori, follows his own musings on the nature of the written Māori of the 1940s, with two core themes concentrating on language delivery and stylistic observations. What becomes apparent in his essay is the constant mental mind-shifts that translators must do to understand historical texts in te reo, when the exact contexts can sometimes be lost to time, puzzling even the best language and cultural experts.²⁰ In such circumstances the scholar can only make the best interpretations they can, as Rewi does at times in his essay. The source material is extremely rare and we are privileged to see such taonga, and this essay reminds us of the follies of war and its immensely negative consequences for whānau.

Tangiwai Rewi's essay continues another Second World War theme, by analysing a waiata composed by Mite Kukutai, her whanaunga through their Tainui iwi connections. The waiata, which became extremely popular with Māori bands in the 1950s and 1960s, references the relationships that American servicemen had with Māori women in the South Auckland/Waikato region during their service in New Zealand between 1942-1944. It has an extremely personal significance to Tangiwai Rewi as her late father was a result of a relationship between her grandmother and one of the visiting American servicemen. Her essay therefore touches on her own whānau context of having to navigate complex family relationships, and resonates today for a number of New Zealanders (not just Māori) who are also descendants of these American servicemen, for whom the position of these men in their family histories continues to be a highly sensitive topic.

In the final essay, **Barbara Brookes** explores the parliamentary speeches of two prominent Māori politicians, Iriaka Rātana in 1950 and Whetū Tirikātene-Sullivan in 1967. Both women were path breakers in the House; Rātana, the first Māori woman parliamentarian, was not only a widow but also a working mother with many young children, while Tirikātene-Sullivan was a young married woman about to start her family when she got elected to the House. Both had to navigate the gendered politics not only for Māori women but also women generally in New Zealand society. The 1993 book *Making Policy Not Tea* detailed the lives of women Members of Parliament,²¹ and like that book Barbara Brookes's essay illuminates the challenges that Rātana and Tirikātene-Sullivan faced when they got elected. The lessons from this essay are instructive for when a Māori woman (or in fact any woman) aspires to higher offices in New Zealand whether they be in the area of politics, the judiciary or business management.

These essays examine a small selection of historical writings generated by Māori that nevertheless give readers some sense of the vast range of texts available, their creators and the society that they lived in. We hope that this volume will reach out to an audience beyond the academy, providing examples for schools endeavouring to include New Zealand history within

their curriculum, and to whānau researching their own histories. Without doubt, this journal's policy of free and open access will facilitate this. As well as revealing (or re-introducing) taonga that may have lain forgotten for many years, this collection also aims to encourage reflection on ways these texts might resonate with our own lives and contribute to our understandings of today's society and the future.

¹ We would like to thank Megan Pōtiki as a co-convenor of the symposium, the Hocken Library for hosting the event, and the University of Otago's Centre for Research on Colonial Culture for its financial support of the symposium and subsequent publication. We hope that this volume aligns with the Centre's stated goal of producing "critical histories of the present".

² D.F. McKenzie, *Oral Culture, Literacy & Print in Early New Zealand: the Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1985), *passim*; Sharon Dell, "The Maori Book or the Book in Maori", *New Zealand Libraries*, 45, 5 (1987): 100; Paul Moon, *Ka Ngaro Te Reo: Māori Language Under Siege in the Nineteenth Century* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2016), 21.

³ For example, see Lyndsay Head and Buddy Mikaere, "Was 19th Century Maori Society Literate?", *Archifacts* 2 (1988): 17-20; Tony Ballantyne, *The Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2012); Lachy Paterson, "Māori Literary Practices in Colonial New Zealand," in *Indigenous Textual Cultures: Reading and Writing in the Age of Global Empire*, eds. Tony Ballantyne, Lachy Paterson and Angela Wanhalla (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 80-98.

⁴ Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 141.

⁵ Poia Rewi, *Whaikōrero: The World of Māori Oratory* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2010).

⁶ For examples from some early Māori scholars using whānau examples in their research, see Maharaja Winiata, *The Changing Role of the Leader in Māori Society: A Study in Social Change and Race Relations*, (Auckland: Blackwood and Janet Paul, 1967); P W Hohepa, *A Māori Community in Northland* (Auckland: Anthropology Department, University of Auckland, 1964); I.H. Kawharu, *Orakei: A Ngāti Whatua Community* (Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1975); Ruka Broughton, "Ko ngaa Paiako o Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi" (MA: Wellington, Victoria University of Wellington, 1983).

⁷ For example, see Jane McRae, "From Māori Oral Traditions to Print," in *Book & Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa*, eds. Penny Griffith, Ross Harvey, Keith Maslen (Wellington N.Z. : Victoria University Press, 1997), 17-40; Jane McRae, "Māori oral tradition meets the book," in *A Book in the Hand: Essays on the History of the Book in New Zealand*, eds. Penelope Griffith, Peter H. Hughes, Alan Loney (Auckland, N.Z. : Auckland University Press, 2000); Bradford Haami, *Pūtea Whakairo: Māori and the Written Word* (Wellington, N.Z. : Huia Publishers, 2004); Phil Parkinson, *Books in Māori 1815-1900: Ngā Tānga Reo Māori* (Auckland: Reed, 2004); Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins, *Words between Us: He Kōrero: First Māori-Pākehā Conversations on Paper* (Wellington: Huia, 2011); *He Pukapuka Tātaku i ngā Mahi a Te Rauparaha Nui: A Record of the Life of the Great Te Rauparaha: by Tamihana Te Tauparaha*, translated and edited by Ross Calman (Auckland, NZ: Auckland University Press, 2020); Lachy Paterson & Angela Wanhalla, *He Reo wāhine: Māori Women's Voices from the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017); Tony Ballantyne, Lachy Paterson & Angela Wanhalla (eds), *Indigenous textual cultures: reading and writing in the age of global empire* (Durham; London : Duke University Press, 2020); Te Maire Tau, *I Whānau Au ki Kaiapoi: the Story of Natanahira Waruwarutu as Recorded by Thomas Green* (Dunedin: Otago University Press 2011); Helen Hogan, *Renata's Journey: Ko te Haerenga a Renata* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 1994); Margaret Orbell, *Waiata: Māori Songs in History: An Anthology* (Auckland: Reed, 1991); Jenifer Curnow, Ngāpare Hopa & Jane McRae, *He Pitopito Kōrero nō te Perehi Māori: Readings from the Māori Language Press* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 2006); Anaru Reedy, *Ngā Kōrero a Pita Kāpiti* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 1997); Mohi Turei, Wiremu Kaa & Te Ohore Kaa, *Mohi Turei: Āna Tuhinga i Roto i te Reo Māori* (Wellington: Victoria University Press 1996).

⁸ Brian Murton, "Being in the Place World: Toward a Māori 'Geographical Self'", *Journal of Cultural Geography* 29, no. 1, (2012): 87-104; M. Roberts, "Mind Maps of the Maori", *GeoJournal*

77 (2012): 741–51; Kevin D. Lo, Carla Houkamau, “Exploring the Cultural Origins of Differences in Time Orientation between European New Zealanders and Māori”, *New Zealand Journal of Human Resource Management* 12, no. 3 (2012): 105–23.

⁹ Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, *Guidelines for Māori Language Orthography*. Accessed 21 January 2020. <https://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Corporate-docs/Orthographic-conventions/Guidelines-for-Maori-Language-Orthography.pdf>.

¹⁰ Raukura Roa, Paania Papa, Jarred Boon and Rahui Papa (eds), *He Puna Kupu He Manawa Aa-Whenua: he Kohinga Kupu noo Roto i a Tainui: A Collection of Words Used Within Tainui* (Auckland: Raupo, 2019): 14–15. Ngāti Maniapoto scholar Bruce Biggs, in particular, promoted the use of double-vowels. See Andrew Pawley, “Bruce Biggs, 1921-2000: A Tribute”, *Oceanic Linguistics*, 40, no. 1 (2001): 13.

¹¹ See Hana Merenea O’Regan, “Te Tīmataka mai i te Waiatataka mai o te Reo” (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2016).

¹² See ‘Māori Language Week 2020: The Different Mita, Dialects, of te Reo Māori’, *New Zealand Herald*, 17 September 2020, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/kahu/maori-language-week-2020-the-different-mita-dialects-of-te-reo-maori/G27YBVHQ2R4BQIPDGPZSMX32PQ/> (accessed 14 December 2022).

¹³ Waitangi Tribunal, *Ngai Tahu Report* (3 volumes) (Wellington: GP Publications, 1991); *Ngai Tahu Sea Fisheries Report* (Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 1993); *Ngai Tahu Ancillary Claims Report* (Wellington: GP Publications, 1995).

¹⁴ Carla A. Houkamau and Chris G. Sibley, “The Revised Multidimensional Model of Māori Identity and Cultural Engagement (MMM-ICE2)”, *Social Indicators Research* 122 (2015): 279–96; Manying Ip, *Being Maori-Chinese: Mixed Identities* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008); Adalgisa Giorgio & Carla Houkamau, “Hybrid Identities: Māori Italians Challenging Racism and the Māori/Pākehā Binary”, *Social Identities* 27, No. 1 (2021): 20-43.

¹⁵ Megan Potiki, “The Otago Peninsula, A Unique Identity”, *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* 10, no. 1 (2016): 67-84; Megan Potiki, “The Face of Nature: An Environmental History of the Otago Peninsula”, *The Journal of New Zealand Studies* NS28 (2019): 135-6.

¹⁶ Kendall Clements, Garth Cooper, Michael Corballis, Doug Elliffe, Robert Nola, Elizabeth Rata, John Werry, “In Defence of Science”, *New Zealand Listener* (31 July 2021): 4; Sam Sachdeva, “Royal Society Investigation into Mātauranga Māori Letter Sparks Academic Debate”, Newsroom (28 December 2021), <https://www.newsroom.co.nz/royal-society-investigation-into-matauranga-maori-letter-sparks-academic-debate> (accessed 22 February 2021).

¹⁷ Waitangi Tribunal, *Te Mana Whata Ahuru: Report on Te Rohe Pōtae Claims* (6 parts) (Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 2018-2020).

¹⁸ Vincent O’Malley, *The Great War for New Zealand Waikato 1800–2000* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2016); Michael Belgrave, *Dancing with the King : the rise and fall of the King Country, 1864-1885* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017).

¹⁹ Claire Charters, Kayla Kingdon-Bebb, Tamati Olsen, Waimirirangi Ormsby, Emily Owen, Judith Pryor, Jacinta Ruru, Naomi Solomon, Gary Williams, *He Puapua: Report of the Working Group on a Plan to Realise the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Aotearoa, New Zealand* (Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri, 2020); “Future of Health: Te Anamata o te Oranga”, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, <https://www.futureofhealth.govt.nz/maori-health-authority/> (accessed 22 February 2021); Department of Internal Affairs, *Three Waters Reform. Overview* (Wellington: Te Tari Taiwhenua Internal Affairs, 2021).

²⁰ For example the late Ngāti Awa historian Te Onehou Phillis who was steeped in te reo and tikanga Māori was unable to work out some of the Māori-language phrases that her father used in various texts, even with the help of other language experts such as Meri Simpson. Onehou Phillis, *Eruera Mānuera* (Whanganui-a-Tara: Huia Publishers and Eruera Mānuera Memorial Education Trust, 2002).

²¹ Arthur Baysting, Dyan Campbell & Margaret Dagg, *Making Policy not Tea: Women in Parliament* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1993).