

Po Kauhau Lecture Series

Arapine Walker

The life and words of Wi Maihi Te Rangikaheke, major contributor to Sir George Grey's Ngā Mahi a Ngā Tupuna | 28 April, 2017

Tena koutou, to all of you who are participating in the revitalisation of the Maori language. I've driven down from Auckland, where I work at the NZ National Library.

The first time I came to this marae was in about 1986 or 85 was as part of Te Ropu o Te Reo Maori, o Aotearoa, who held one meeting per month for a year, one was hosted here. I came with Cath and her kids to prepare the marae that afternoon. We called in to visit Laurie and Cath introduced me as being of the Raimona whānau. Laurie said, that's your tupuna buried beneath the flagpole I was surprised, "really, I didn't know that?" When the hui finished, I went home and asked my mother whether it was true. She confirmed it. So that is when I began to research this part of my ancestry, Ngāti Rangitahi on my grandmother's side. So, that is Raimona Heretaunga and his children. My kuia, or Kuia, as she is commonly known or referred to. Her family name is Hinau or Hinau – Raimona. She was raised here by her parents. Her mother was also Arapine, from Ngāti Tūwharetoa. From that time on, I have been aware of my Ngāti Rangitahi roots.

When Cath invited me to give a lecture about this Ngāti Rangiwewehi tupuna, I had a chuckle to myself because, this is my Ngāti Rangiwewehi tupuna, on my father's side. As I was traveling down here and reading through my notes in preparation for this lecture, I came across a statement that I had made, that, on completion, I would present my thesis to my Rangiwewehi people. I haven't done that yet, mind you, they haven't asked me to either, perhaps that's the reason?

I wrote this dissertation out of compassion for my koroua, Wi Maihi, and because I was saddened by the fact that many people have referred to his manuscripts in numerous contexts - including universities throughout the country, kura reo etc, but at the time, no consideration had been given to his own people, Ngāti Rangiwewehi. I decided that the time had come for one of his whanau, of his descendants, to write about him. So that was the motivation for my thesis.

It wasn't until I had left home that I first heard of Wi Maihi. In about 1982 I was a student at Canterbury University in the South Island, pursuing my degree. I enrolled in a Māori language paper. The lecturer was a Pākehā woman and her topic was The Ancient Writings of the Māori – from the 1800s. One day, she gave us some pieces of writing by Wi Maihi. I recognised the name and when I went back home to Rotorua, I asked my father who Wi Maihi was. Dad told me that he is my tupuna. From there I began to research him and his manuscripts. Over the years, many years, Wi Maihi's texts have become inextricably linked to my own work because, his writings are renown in so many contexts.

Right up until this very week, I was in northland, my husband is from there, and my daughter was talking with her grandfather, he gave her a piece to analyse, it was a song of lament, he explained to her, to my daughter, that the song is from there, from Whangaroa. She brought the piece home and told me that she didn't really understand it. So, I directed her to the William's dictionary to sit down and look up the words that she didn't understand. While she was deciphering the piece, she came across a word "wheoro" and told me that this word features in the song about Hinemoa. I referred her to the Williams dictionary to find the definition of wheoro, which she did. The definition of wheoro referenced a piece by Wi Maihi and its use in the song about/by Hinemoa. His writings are found in many places, books, school text books, university readings, all over the place. When I began to formalise my research, I enrolled at Te Whare Wānanga o Raukawa, in the Mātauranga Māori masters programme, I knew that I didn't want to be constrained by mainstream university research conventions.

I first began my dissertation in Otaki in 1998, at the time, my husband, our children and I were living in Otaki, I started it back then however, I didn't complete it. In 2015, my daughter was enrolled there studying for a degree in Mātauranga Māori, and I was her lecturer, I was teaching the students at our school who were studying for a Mātauranga Māori degree through Te Wānanga o Raukawa, which spurred me on to complete my thesis. I contacted Te Wānanga o Raukawa and enquired into the possibility of completing just the essay requirement of my studies rather than repeating year one again and the research component. I'd completed the research over the course of 30 years. They agreed. In 2015 I wrote my thesis. It was arduous work. I mistakenly thought that because I'd spent many years studying my tupuna, that I was familiar with his entire body of work, however, there was a lot more research to be done, it was a huge task. To this very day, I know that I have still not read the entirety of his work, that is how expansive his collection is. I often see and hear new examples of his writing. Last year I started a new job at The National Library of New Zealand and within the National Library is a department called the Alexander Turnbull Library, which specialises in research. The Alexander Turnbull Library houses some of our tupuna's manuscripts, including letters to Donald McClean and to people of that generation, petitions to the government and the complete collection of Whai Ngata and of his tupuna, Sir Apirana Ngata, which the whānau have submitted to the Alexander Turnbull Library for safe keeping. They directed me to a website called Papers Past, a collection of newspapers from last century which have been digitised and are accessible from your computer. I entered my tupuna's name in the search field which revealed 10 to 15 pages of titles that referenced him, so, I began to read through the links. While reading through the articles, I came across a notice in a newspaper that was written by Wi Maihi, the notice began "Attention, Chiefs of Ngāpuhi". My interest was captured! Why would my tupuna be writing to the chiefs of Ngāpuhi? I read on, and the gist of the article was an appeal was being made by Wi Maihi to the chiefs of Ngāpuhi to manage the people in the Kaipara district before more inter iwi wars ensued, with inevitable, dire outcomes. There he was, telling the rangatira of the north what to do. I turned to my husband and said, "this is why I always tell you what to do, it's inherent from my tupuna, a legacy passed down through generations". I have that notice and I'm in the process of researching the context of it, along with the Ngāpuhi elders who were referred to; I'm currently researching those Ngāpuhi tupuna, who they were, where they were from and what was happening there at the time. Here you have it, this is my tupuna.

‘Kaore he mea i waiho noa e oku tiipuna te tini raupeka kia waimarie ai’ ‘My ancestors left nothing undone to make sure that the very many things of uncertain or doubtful outcome should turn out favourably’ Wi Maihi Te Rangikaheke, 1835.

This was taken from one of his scripts. When Ngāti Rangiwewehi made their submission to the Waitangi Tribunal, for Awahou and its water, this was the title of the submission. If you have questions, just ask.

Where is Wi Maihi from?

Ko Te Arawa te waka, ko Ngāti Rangiwewehi, ko Ngāti Kereru te hapū, he was raised at Awahou. He was born at Awahou and he was raised there. His name - within Ngāti Rangiwewehi he is known as Wi Maihi. He's referred to by many names in other's writings, Wiremu Maihi, Te Rangikāheke, William Marsh. One of his sons died and he was subsequently referred to by his son's name. Within his lifetime, he was known by many names but the name that he is known as within Ngāti Rangiwewehi is Wi Maihi. Te Rangikāheke was his father. This photo is held by the Alexander Turnbull Library, the gun that he's holding in the photo is still owned by the whānau, I don't know why, but it is. His gun and his greenstone pendant remain in the possession of the whānau. His pendant is called Ngā Karu a Wī Maihi, it's about this big, made of greenstone.

Bab Walker: In relation to the gun, in 2007 the whanau gifted the gun to Ngāti Rangiwewehi. Wi Maihi received the gun as partial payment for his writing; a gun, blankets and cash. Not land, he refused to be compensated with land. The whānau gave the gun to Rangiwewehi on the understanding that once the land claims have been settled, Rangiwewehi will return the gun to the whānau.

Cath: I'm not clear about what that saying means 'Kāore he mea i waiho noa e oku tiipuna te tini raupeka kia waimarie ai'

My interpretation of it is that, those tupuna didn't say things for the sake of it, they were words of advice, not to be taken lightly. Often within his writings, it is difficult to interpret the symbolism or the hidden inferences, particularly on initial inspection of a text. I think that is true of his own writing.

Cath: Purposeful ???

Who did Wi Maihi descend from?

His father was Te Rangikaheke, his mother was Papaka Kai Hau. Wi Maihi was born at Awahou, his year of birth is uncertain, but this is an approximation. When I was researching this, my Rangiwewehi relations suggested that he was still a child when Mokoia fell, because his mother was taken captive by Ngāpuhi at the siege of Mokoia and he was with her. We assume that if he was an adult, he would have been enlisted as a soldier at the time, instead, he went with his mother, so he must have still been a child. He remained in Ngāpuhi. It has been recorded that his father paid a ransom for the release of his wife and children. It appears that Wi Maihi and another of his siblings were taken to Ngāpuhi where they lived for a time. Some of my relatives believe that he learnt to read and write there. At the time of the battle of

Mokoia, there were no Pākeha in Rotorua, no teachers, not until Chapman's arrival, hence the assumption that he learnt to read and write while he was in Ngāpuhi, because he went on to become an accomplished, published scholar. That's why I've estimated his year of birth to be within that period of 5 years, approximately 1810 -'15, because he was still been a child when they were taken to Ngāpuhi.

Cathy: Pāpaka Kaihau was his mother?

Yes, in this whakapapa her name has been shortened to Kaihau, her full name was Pāpaka Kaihau.

Cathy: Did she have any other children, any Ngāpuhi children while she was in Ngāpuhi?

I don't know, but she came back, his mother and her children came back to Te Arawa.

Cathy: Do you know what ransom was paid?

No, I looked for details but all that he says in his writings is that there was a ransom but there is no further explanation as to what the recompense was; whether it was cash, goods or otherwise.

This shows his genealogical links through his father, Te Rangikaheke, to Rangitihi and to Rangiwewehi.

Cathy: Who is his Rangitihi ancestor?

Rangitihi? Rotorua. I'm not a whakapapa specialist. As far as I know, although this only shows three, he had four children, two boys and two girls. Both boys died without issue. One of his daughters was Ngārongo, she was also known as Te Whai Mātauranga, my daughter is named after her, she also had no issue. His other daughter, Hiria Haua, is who we descend from. The Wiremu whānau from Pukehina, Hare Wiremu and whānau, Mc Phersons, Polamalu, all of those whānau are descendants of Hiria Haua. Here is Wi Maihi, Hiria Haua was his daughter, Hiria Haua had Wiremu Ereatara, and from Wiremu Ereatara came Mere and Mere is the mother of my father.

Cathy: Ereatara features in Rangitihi whakapapa too. How did the sons die?

I've heard that one died in battle, the battle against Te Kooti.

Wahine: Kaokaoroa, here?

No. At Omarumutu. One was killed there and one died as a child.

Cathy: Hiria Haua.

She was his daughter. At times, my tupuna was unorthodox. He had two wives, reports say there may have been three or four, and then there were his children. He was an accomplished writer; his most proclaimed talent was in literary arts. Between 1849 and 1853, he lived with Governor Grey in order to teach him the Māori language, so, at Grey's request, he moved to live with him and teach him Māori. During this time, Grey also asked that he record the many

aspects of Māori culture, customs, legends, history, proverbs, the evolution of the universe; all of these topics he recorded for Grey. At the time, he was employed to do this work by Grey. According to the New Zealand Society of Historians, Wi Maihi was the first ever paid historian in New Zealand so, he is also acknowledged in their records of New Zealand history.

He was a rangatira of his iwi. His knowledge was immeasurable and his level of expertise is evident in his manuscripts. He died in 1896. He was somewhat unconventional, for example, he did not support the Kingitanga. I've read some of his letters to Wiremu Tamehana expressing his opposition to the King Movement, most people of the day supported it, he however, did not. He had a different point of view.

Cathy: Why didn't he support the Kingitanga?

In his opinion, the Kingitanga was a replication of a system that had Pakeha origins, which he saw no benefit in it, his focus was to preserve the wellbeing of his own iwi. When Te Kooti was being pursued, he formed an alliance with the Pākeha, for the wellbeing of his iwi. If we consider the landscape, and where Te Kooti's support was, the only access was via Rotorua, therefore, he decided that in the interest of survival of his iwi, they would side with the Pākeha rather than be killed by them. His primary concern was his iwi, the tribal unity that is often spoken of nowadays, was not appropriate.

In the context of his life; he was a child during the Ngāpuhi siege of Mokoia, he witnessed the consequence of musket warfare, his mother died at the battle at Puhirua, these were some of the things he personally experienced, so in my mind, he was driven by these experiences to protect his people from harm. Except for when he went to live with Grey, he thought that if Grey learnt Māori beliefs and practices, he would be more understanding of his people's plight.

Cathy: How did his mother die?

She was killed during a battle at Puhirua, a pā of Ngāti Rangiwewehi.

Cathy: Did she die in battle or was she a maruringa

As far as I know, she was a casualty of the war. He was present at the time, he saw the consequences of war, of killing people and possibly even cannibalism, I'm not sure.

Cathy: Who were they fighting at that time?

I think it was Ngai Te Rangi?

What was his legacy to the world? His huge body of written work. This includes more than 800 pages in Grey's Collection, which is held in the Auckland Public Library. Also held there, are numerous other manuscripts, but in terms of the work that Grey collected, there are over 800 pages written by my tupuna.

Cathy: Does the Rotorua Library have copies?

Yes, Rotorua Library has copies Wi Maihi's writings, not Grey's complete collection, only Wi Maihi's manuscripts. That is his legacy to us. His writings are comprehensive and cover

an extensive range of subjects, beginning with evolution of the universe and the exploits of Ranginui (and Papatuanuku's) and children, to facial tattoos, bird snaring and marriage customs, the scope is impressive. All his writings are from his people's perspective, their world view. He writes from his view, his people's view, a Te Arawa view, he doesn't speak for anyone else. All his writings are written in te reo Māori, I haven't seen anything written in English. I don't doubt that he was proficient in English as well, but his writings are exclusively in te reo Māori. His large body of written work includes genealogies, ritual chants, songs, proverbs, legends, Te Arawa history, from the evolution of the universe until the voyage of Te Arawa to New Zealand, the populating of the entire area, Hatupatu, Hinemoa, it's all included in his manuscripts. In addition to the Grey Collection, examples of his writings can be found in newspapers, letters to the powers that be of the day, Donald Maclean, Governor Brown, Grey, to the Queen of England, he also wrote to the Queen, there are many examples. While I was researching, I discovered that a lot of his work was being used in mainstream universities; Bruce Biggs wrote a book called 'Māori Marriage', much of the content came from the work of Wi Maihi. The book written by Dr Margie Hohepa in the last 5 years, which speaks about leadership in schools, references the writings of this rangatira. I've found that the type of subjects, that feature prominently in his writings have been covered, however, the likes of chants, songs and proverbs have not been researched in depth. That is where I believe the depth of the knowledge lies, in the genealogies, the ritual chants, the songs and the proverbs. One of the volumes in Grey's Collection is strictly songs, someone is yet to take up the challenge to study these things in detail, I'm convinced there is a lot still to be discovered. Are there any questions?

This is a letter that he wrote to Maclean. It's interesting.

GayleDawson?: Could Governor Grey read Māori?

Wi Maihi taught him Māori, in the end he was reasonably fluent reader and writer of Māori.

Cathy: Ara, where did Wi Maihi determine the Whangaparāoa where the canoe landed, to be? Whangaparāoa on the East Coast, or Whangaparāoa near Auckland?

I don't know. Throughout the years, people have mistakenly assumed that I am an authority on his work. People ring me regularly to ask – one time, Uncle Mita Mohi phoned me to ask what Wi Maihi had said about travelling on a boat without a life-jacket? I have no idea!

Do you know whether George Grey took a Te Arawa mistress? Who lived with him, perhaps? Have you come across anything to that effect?

No. Certainly not my tupuna, who was still a child at the time. It's possible, I know that neither he nor his wife was particularly fond of the other, so maybe. When I was conferencing with the lecturers at Te Wānanga o Raukawa to determine the focus of my thesis, I was asked to identify a fundamental narrative in his work. I turned to this example that is found universally; in books, including kids' books and can be seen or heard in any number of places. "Kotahi anō te tupuna o te tangata Māori, ko Ranginui e tū iho nei, ko Papatuanuku e takoto nei". There are two schools of thought; one which believes in Io, the other, which regards Io as a notion of contemporary times. So, some believe that this proverb reveals that Io did not exist in our tupuna's belief system. That's why I chose it, and my assertion is "E tika ana ta Wiremu

Maihi Te Rangikāheke kōrero, kotahi anō te tupuna o te tangata Māori, ko Ranginui e tū iho nei, ko Papatūānuku e takoto nei.”

My research has revealed these key factors:

He had a Te Arawa perspective of the world. Everything in relation to Te Arawa. If you read what he has written about whakapapa, you will see that it shows that every iwi originates from Te Arawa – genealogies from Ngāpuhi to Te Arawa, Ngāti Kahungunu, that is how it is presented. It is an iwi centric view. I’m of the opinion that his perspective couldn’t be any different. He begins with himself and his own genealogy. Genealogy is the framework for his writing. He begins with whakapapa, an essential element of a Māori worldview. Māori language, all his work is written in the Māori language. Although it was written, he used a recital technique, he uses recitation, he is not writing for the sake of writing or reading, he is reciting what he knows. The Māori language is not just a written language, the literature is recorded orally as well.

He was quick to take up writing as a way of recording, he wasn’t daunted by the written word as a new means to record knowledge. Any questions?

This picture depicts traditional tattoos; he also wrote about traditional tattooing and gave descriptions of different patterns along with a narrative of customs and rituals.

Cathy: By his definition, Rangi and Papa are one in the same? We are all descended from the one ancestor?

It appears that way, they are the one ancestor.

My dissertation is finished, here it is, but like most kaupapa Māori, work generates work. I contemplated how I could include his iwi’s perspective in my thesis. I managed this by interviewing some of my relatives; My father and his cousin, descendants of Wi Maihi. I interviewed some of my cousins and some of our children’s generation, like Hohua (Mohi), about the writings of Wi Maihi. They unanimously agreed that all the manuscripts in Grey’s collection, that were written by Wi Maihi’s or contributed to by him should be emancipated from the collection. For as long as his work remains within the collection, Grey is the owner and author of the work. Therefore, that his work and appendices be referenced back to him as the author and that it all be digitised. All his manuscripts are handwritten. If you were to request his work from the Rotorua library, you would receive handwritten manuscripts which can be difficult to read. Transcribed and digitised versions of his work would make them more accessible. As would arranging them for use as teaching material. Some of the appendices are legends and folklore, such as Rangi and Papa, the stories of their children, the burning of the Te Arawa canoe; all of these stories are independent of each other, the idea would be to rearrange the complete compilation. The volume of songs should be thoroughly examined. One of the songs is Hinemoa’s song. I was reading it as I was researching material at the Rotorua Library, I’d often open one of his manuscripts and begin reading, as I was reading this particular time, I realised that I was familiar with the text, it dawned on me that they were the lyrics to a song that the kids at Te Kura o Ruamata sings. I realised then, that regardless of how descriptive the text is, the depth of Hinemoa’s emotions aren’t felt until you hear the song being sung. It isn’t until then that you feel her longing for her sweetheart being fully expressed, and

the true intensity of her love for him – through song rather than through reading it on a page and that is what I mean when I say our language is vibrant and should not be restricted to being read only. Right, that covers digitalisation.

Explore the intricacies of the songs, chants, genealogies herein lies the depth of the knowledge. I haven't started that yet. Some of the songs have spent a long time on the pages of these books without being sung, the tunes long since lost. As with Hinemoa's song, these songs can easily be revived. This applies to many of the songs and chants. He examined how the Māori language was evolving at the time, this included dialectal comparisons between Te Arawa and Ngāpuhi with descriptions of vocabulary and dialogue. Much of his work is still to be explored. Perhaps someone else will take up the challenge?

Cathy: Who translated his writings into English?

As mentioned before, Bruce Biggs translated Māori Marriage, other people have translated pieces of his work.

Who translated Grey's book?

Grey himself. A key cause of Ngāti Rangiwewehi's despair is that Grey never acknowledged Wi Maihi as the author of any of his contributions to the Grey collection. There were others as well who contributed writings to Grey's collection who were never referenced or acknowledged by Grey as the authors of their work, Wi Maihi wasn't the only contributing author.

How many songs are there? Lots.

All from Te Arawa? Yes...for someone.

Cathy: (unable to hear?)

I've had this particular karakia for years and still haven't committed it to memory; my thesis begins with this, which is found in his writings that says "purua to taringa kia turi kia hoi, kei whakarongo koe ki te korero iti. Ko te kōrero iti, ko tahuhunu, ko taurere ko te hau aitu"

My whānau have a saying now, "that's gossip, stop it. Or, don't listen to gossip".

Cathy: Did he write about Te Aokapurangi?

I haven't found anything. I've categorised everything as part of my thesis but I haven't come across anything yet about Te Aokapurangi. It's interesting that he didn't write about the siege of Mokoia at all, despite the fact that he was there, a child at the time, he didn't write about it at all.

Cathy: Was he present on Mokoia when it was plundered?

Apparently, he was there at the time with his mother, which is where they were captured by Ngāpuhi and taken up north.

Cathy: Where was Te Rangikāheke?

He wasn't there. He wrote on a wide range of subjects.

Cathy: And he didn't mention Io in any of his karakia?

No. I haven't seen Io mentioned in any of his works. I'm not sure whether he deliberately chose not to disclose anything about Io or whether Io was a foreign concept to him, I don't know, but Io is not referred to in any of his writings.

It's my belief that the reason that the western world hasn't really investigated these subjects is because they don't have a framework for the subject matter; songs, chants, genealogy and proverbs. Those are my thoughts. They've researched the easily observable, common subjects such as the evolution of the universe, traditional tattooing, sovereignty etc. because they didn't see the value in those other subjects.

Cathy: So, he was taken up north and educated there?

That's the view of my relations.

And then he came home?

Yes, he returned home with his mother.

Cathy: Did he serve his apprenticeship under the tutelage of Te Arawa tohunga?

Possibly? In one of his pieces, he declares that he is not a tohunga. He emphasises that 'this has not been validated by tohunga', this tells me that he is saying that he himself, is not a tohunga. In addition, in his recital of the evolution of the universe, he gave his account to someone from Tahiti to take back to their people in Tahiti for review and validation.

Cathy: Tahiti...

Maybe it was Hawaii?

What was the purpose of his letter to the Queen?

I think he was an older man when he wrote to the Queen, to remind her that he had worked for her, he also worked for the government, he reminded her that he was a loyal and long serving employee, assisting her and her representatives and he asked that she provide for him.

Cathy: Did the Queen respond?

Not that I've seen.

Cathy: What year was that?

Approximately 70 or 75, he was old by the time.

Luckily for me, when I went to the Auckland Library last year and was assisted by Robert

Eruera, the curator of the Māori publications. I made an appointment to meet with him and when I did, he showed me into a room, I followed him and in the room was a table, upon the table was a box atop of what looked like a cushion. He invited me to read what was inside, it was the handwritten manuscripts. I asked if it was ok to handle them to which he replied, yes, of course. I opened the book and found that karakia. He (Robert) told me that despite the age, they are still in excellent condition. When I was speaking to the staff about digitising my tupuna's work, he told me that if the whānau makes a request, the library will happily oblige. We've been talking about repatriating his manuscripts for a long time but due to their age, it would be difficult to care for them properly. However, technology has advanced to where it is now a real possibility to have the original manuscripts preserved and back in the possession of the iwi. I was rapt to hear that. If you have any documents housed at the Auckland Museum that were written by your ancestors, contact them.

Yes, he and his whanau lived with Grey and his wife in Auckland, where he taught Grey Māori. When Grey went back to South Africa, Wi Maihi and his whanau remained in Auckland for a further 2 or 3 years. I saw that he featured in some of the newspaper articles, that Wi Maihi and his whanau were still in Auckland.

At the time, a Te Arawa woman was murdered by a Pākehā by the name of Bennett. Te Arawa told Governor Grey that they would not intervene but would instead leave it to Grey to administer justice. Grey, however, was in South Africa at the time so the man was not dealt with. Representatives from Te Arawa went to Auckland and told the Pākehā there that if they did not sort the matter out, they would kill him, Bennett. The names of the chiefs were listed. Wi Maihi was one, he was living in Auckland, and to my surprise, Patuone was another, they obviously all knew each other. Patuone was also living in Auckland. He knew many people.

He worked for the government at the time. He had a house on Mokoia. In his last days, he lived on Mokoia. When he knew his time was nearly over, he returned to Awahou to die.

Have they agreed to digitise his writings? The descendants haven't applied to the library to do it yet. He (Robert) advised that we not make our request to digitise the work too broad but to detail what and how we want it formatted/categorised. The descendants and Ngāti Rangiwewehi are concerned that Grey's collection is out of copyright, the period of copyright has expired. Someone else can reproduce Grey's collection perhaps in a different format and copyright it as their own. That is something that we have considered for digitising the work, to enable us to apply for copyright of Wi Maihi's work.

Tūtū Kautai: Mihi

Henare Mason: Karakia