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## REPATRIATION, RECONCILIATION AND THE INVERSION OF PATRIARCHY

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This article aims to provide an indigenous Māori perspective on the history of scientific investigations, and more recent community collaborations, at an important ancestral Māori site in Aotearoa New Zealand. The first objective is to provide a perspective on the events surrounding the archaeological excavations and repatriation of *kōiwi tāngata* ‘human remains’ at Te Pokohiwi ō Kupe, also known as the Wairau Bar or “moa hunter” camp. The second objective is to reflect on the character and reputation of Hohua Peter MacDonald, a Māori elder and the principal opponent of the initial excavations in the 1950s. We do this by contextualising Peter’s protests within a longer history of Kurahaupō<sup>1</sup> resistance to colonisation. We argue that despite a difficult history, Rangitāne and the scholarly community have reconciled many of their differences. Here we discuss research undertaken as part of the repatriation. Our last objective is to demonstrate how an increasing knowledge of the Wairau Bar community, one of New Zealand’s first settlements, has spurred a renaissance within the *ahi kā roa*<sup>2</sup> community of the Wairau. Mitochondrial DNA sequencing, for instance, has led to a shift in focus from narratives that elevate male ancestors (Māori and Pākehā ‘European’) to narratives that retell the stories of female ancestors.

The significance of Te Pokohiwi ō Kupe has been recognised for some time; indeed, a plethora of scholarly articles, books and book chapters confirm this. The origins of the people who first settled there, when they arrived, their means of subsistence and their material culture are questions that scholars have attempted to answer. This scholarship can be traced back to 1912, when H.D. Skinner (1912: 105–8) documented the 21 km of canals in and around the Wairau Lagoons. The “whence of the Māori” has entertained the thoughts of Europeans since the time of James Cook, but it was the accidental discovery of human remains by Jim Eyles in 1939 that brought Te Pokohiwi to prominence. For three decades following Eyles’s discovery, human remains and artefacts were removed from the site, often under the supervision of professional archaeologists (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 13). The findings of Roger Duff (1950, 1956, 1977), Owen Wilkes (in Brooks *et al.* 2011) and Michael Trotter (in Duff 1977: 348–54) would be drawn on by future archaeologists

and researchers. It was Duff's work, however, that "became one of the most important contributions to the development of New Zealand archaeology and theory" (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 14), linking this site with the earliest period of Hawaiki dispersals.

While archaeologists have revelled in the opportunities the Bar has presented, for *tāngata whenua* 'people of the land' the experience has not been as positive. When Eyles made his discovery he set in motion a series of events that would occupy the lives of many, right up to the present day. Eyles would continue to fossick and excavate the site, collecting a great number of artefacts. Roger Duff's career would be greatly enhanced, and Rangitāne elders would pass on to the next generation the burden of bringing their *tūpuna* 'ancestors' home. In the end, it would be the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those elders who first protested at the Wairau Bar that would oversee the repatriation. With such a fraught history, it is difficult to imagine any kind of reconciliation between Rangitāne and the museum and archaeological communities. Nevertheless, in 2009 a significant move in that direction took place. Alongside a 2014 Treaty of Waitangi settlement, the repatriation stands as one of the most significant achievements for Rangitāne of the last 30 years. Another significant moment and a further step toward reconciliation occurred in June 2016 when Rangitāne hosted the New Zealand Archaeological Association Conference at Ukaipō, the tribe's cultural centre.

Despite these achievements there is, for Rangitāne, some unfinished business—the retelling of the story of Te Pokohiwi from their perspective. Useful here is a 2009 report commissioned by Rangitāne to "provide the fullest possible account of the circumstances under which human remains and artefacts were removed from the Wairau Bar between 1939–1964" (Armstrong 2009: 1–3). According to David Armstrong, the report's author, opposition to the removal of *tūpuna* began in 1946 when Rangitāne elder Peter MacDonald became aware of what was taking place (Armstrong 2009: 6–7). Protests took the form of complaints to the police, an attempt to take the case to the Māori Land Court, an approach to the Minister of Lands and a series of columns in the *Marlborough Express* written by Peter MacDonald (Anderson 2014: 100–1). This article builds on the Armstrong Report, providing a counter-narrative to the view that Rangitāne were complicit in the removal of human remains and artefacts from the Wairau Bar.

The article opens with a history of the excavations, and the Rangitāne response. At the time of the initial excavations, Peter MacDonald's knowledge of the history and traditions of the Wairau was questioned by scholars who also had an interest in the excavations. It will be shown that Peter's account was consistent with the views of earlier Kurahaupō scholars and scribes. The events that led to the return of *tūpuna* to Te Pokohiwi are then addressed, followed by a discussion of the research findings. Another focus of the article is the

impact of the repatriation and research on today's Rangitāne community. In particular, it considers the mtDNA sequencing carried out on the *kōiwi tāngata*, and mtDNA collected from Rangitāne members in 2016. An outcome of this work, led by the University of Otago's Professor Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith, is that members of Rangitāne were unambiguously confirmed as belonging to the same haplogroup as those ancestors returned to Te Pokohiwi in 2009 (Matisoo-Smith, letter to participants, 2016a). This has had unexpected but positive results. It will be argued that science has been a catalyst for a reassessment, a shifting of the lens through which *whakapapa* 'genealogies' and tradition have in recent times been interpreted. The story begins with the excavation of Burial 1, affectionately named "Aunty" by Rangitāne. It is retold here as it forms such a large part of Rangitāne's recent past, particularly for those who shouldered the burden and privilege of repatriation.

#### THE STORY BEGINS

In January 1939, following the discovery of a moa egg, Jim Eyles unearthed a human skull and ivory necklace (Eyles 2007: 61–63). The egg was perforated at one end and the necklace was made of seven whale ivory reels and a sperm whale tooth pendant (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 20). Both were deposited in the strong room of the National Bank in Blenheim for safekeeping, but such was the interest that the artefacts were collected daily to be displayed in a local fish shop (Eyles 2007: 64). As for the skull, "special pains are to be taken by Mr Perano to see that it is fittingly re-buried" (*Marlborough Express* 25 January 1939: 6). Eyles's unearthing of Aunty, and the excavation of Burial 2 three years later, opened the way for further excavations; indeed, Eyles and Duff excavated a further five burials in 1942 (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 57–58).

The focus of the excavations at this time were the burials and grave goods (Buckley *et al.* 2010: 2). In his book *The Moa-Hunter Period of Maori Culture*, Duff (1950) compared those artefacts obtained at Te Pokohiwi with those from the Marquesas, Cook and Society Islands and concluded that the people of Te Pokohiwi were of Eastern Polynesian origin. These findings debunked the theory, first advanced by Haast in 1871, and later by Smith and Best, that Māori were a late arrival who had dispossessed an earlier Melanesian people (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 14). Significantly though, Duff did not challenge the chronology posited by Smith; rather, he suggested that "the Moa-hunters were Polynesians from the migrations of Toi (1150 AD), Kupe, or earlier" (Duff 1977: 23). This would allow Duff to argue that the moa-hunter burials at the Wairau Bar, although Māori, were in no way connected to Rangitāne, whose ancestors had arrived with the so-called "Fleet" (Armstrong 2009: 4).

Soon after Eyles's discovery, offers to purchase the artefacts began to arrive. Eventually a deal was struck with the Dominion Museum (now Te Papa Tongarewa), which paid £130 for the moa egg and necklace. The museum

required that an indemnity be signed in case other claims arose (Eyles 2007: 66). Aunty's fate, for the most part, has remained outside of public discourse. Having been disinterred, photographed and reinterred, she was dug up a second time and shipped to the Dominion Museum in Wellington (Anderson 2014: 100–1). Here she remained until 2005 when Rangitāne led a community initiative that saw many Wairau Bar artefacts held at Te Papa and Canterbury Museum loaned to the Millennium Public Art Gallery in Blenheim for the *Kei Puta Te Wairau* exhibition (Marlborough District Council 2005: 3). As part of this initiative Aunty was returned home (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa 2005: 50). Although she would be the first to make it back to the Wairau, it would be take another four years before she would be finally laid to rest, along with the many other *tūpuna* who had been removed during the middle of the 20th century.

In March 1942 Eyles made another discovery. The *Marlborough Express* reported that while digging an air-raid shelter at the Wairau site Eyles came across a “varied collection of examples of the arts and crafts of the early New Zealanders”. These included “rough unpolished stone axes and chisels, not usually associated with Maori finds”, and a reel necklace similar to that belonging to Burial 1 (20 March 1942: 4). The Express noted that “they were quite without the finish and polish that the Maori put upon his artefacts and weapons”. The conclusion was that the site was the “scene of a more primitive and earlier type of culture than was later brought to these shores by the migration fleet” (28 March 1942: 6). Subsequent columns in the *Marlborough Express*, entitled “Before the Maori”, reinforced this view (30 March 1942: 6; 31 March 1942: 6).

Alerted to Eyles's find by the 20 March *Marlborough Express* article, Duff visited the Wairau Bar in April. He informed *Express* readers that the artefacts were “archaic Polynesian”, and that the “reels” were made of moa bone (13 April 1942: 4). He later wrote that Burial 2 was “a young man in the prime of his life” and, in comparison to the other burials, was furnished with the “greatest accumulation of offerings”. Duff also considered Burial 2 to be “most suitable for museum display” (Duff 1950: 38). Thus, Duff returned to Christchurch in possession of many artefacts on loan from Eyles (*Marlborough Express* 20 April 1942: 4). Burial 2 would be placed on display until, after ongoing criticism, the Museum removed the Wairau *kōiwi tāngata* from display.

Excavations at the Wairau Bar continued throughout the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Many would be led by Duff, although Eyles undertook excavations on his own. Of particular interest are Burials 16a and 18. As will be discussed below, they, like Aunty and Burial 2, would become part of the ongoing story of the Wairau Bar. Burial 16a was unearthed in August 1943. In the few

months prior to this, “paddock 1” was re-ploughed, exposing Burials 8 to 11. The same technique was then applied to “paddock 3”, the area described by Duff as the “southern burial area”. It was as a consequence of ploughing that Burials 12 to 16 were found and excavated, at which time Burials 17 to 20 were found (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 20–23). Duff recorded that Burial 16 was “one headless (?) reburied heap of bones” and that “it was not possible to demonstrate whether the missing cranium had been carried away piecemeal in both ploughings”. Burial 18 was a “reburied heap of bones” found close to Burial 16 and the “base of the skull had been shattered by earlier ploughing, but from the remainder I judged it to be that of a middle-aged female” (Duff 1950: 58–59).

#### RANGITĀNE RESPONDS

What, then, was the Rangitāne view of the excavations? The Rangitāne oral traditions relating to the Wairau Bar come primarily from Peter MacDonald. These traditions, written by Peter and reproduced in the *Marlborough Express* during April and May 1947, leave no doubt as to the Rangitāne position. As far as Peter was concerned, the activities at the Wairau Bar amounted to nothing less than the “desecration” of a burial ground. He stated that his protest was not just one of “principle”; his ancestors were interred at the Bar, and he intended to utilise the Māori Social and Economic Act 1946 to have the area defined as a cemetery by the Native Land Court (10 April 1947: 4). Peter’s fight was, however, a one-sided affair. Pitted against a scientific fraternity armed with the most up-to-date theories and methodologies and a Marlborough community who took great pride in Eyles’s finds, he had little hope. Duff’s rejection of indigenous knowledge and his interpretation of the archaeology had the effect of disenfranchising Rangitāne.

Peter was the son of Teoti MacDonald, “the intelligent head of the natives” cited by Skinner as the source of information relating to the fish traps adjacent to the Wairau Bar (Skinner 1912). His maternal grandfather, Meihana Kereopa, and uncle, Tahuariki Meihana, were during their time tribal scribes whose *whakapapa* manuscript would be integral in the resurgence of the Kurahaupō tribes during the 19th century. The Meihana Manuscript (Kereopa and Meihana n.d.), and the later Hemi Manuscript (Hemi Te Pou n.d.), show four distinct *whakapapa* “groupings”: connections to Kupe, connections to Rangitāne, connections to Ngāti Apa (and Muaūpoko), connections to Ngāi Tahu, and the intermarriages of the aforementioned migrants to Ngāti Māmoe women. The point to note here is that Peter had access to elders of the previous generation while Peter himself sat on the Ngāti Māmoe and Ngāi Tahu Census Committee and was one of three official representatives appointed to petition Parliament in 1938 (*The Press* 6 January 1938: 14).

Peter's history of the Wairau Bar begins by naming and locating three villages and their associated burial grounds. Te Moua, the first burial ground, "takes in the present excavations", while its associated *pā* 'fortified village', specifically Te Aro Pipi, ran along the edge of the lagoon, "about where Mr Perano's house now stands". About a mile away, also on the edge of the lagoon, was Te Pokohiwi Pā and burial ground, the "main pa along the Boulder Bank". Opposite Te Pokohiwi, running out to sea, is a "rock formation ... on which an abundant growth of mussels was to be found". Further towards the Vernon Bluffs was Motueka Pā, which sat partly on an island extending towards the centre of the lagoon. "It is on this island that Purama, the last of the Rangitāne chiefs, is buried. The last pa, situated at the foot of the Bluffs, was occupied by a race of spirits and giants." These beings were unacquainted with fire and lived on berries and roots (*Marlborough Express* 17 April 1947: 3). Importantly, Purama was the cousin of Te Ruaoneone, the Rangitāne chief of Kōwhai Pā when it was sacked by Te Rauparahā c. 1828 (Waitangi Tribunal Report 2008: 116). His nephew, Ihaia Kaikōura, signed the Treaty of Waitangi at Port Underwood in 1840 (Waitangi Tribunal Report 2008: 180).

Peter's account of Rangitāne just prior to their arrival in the South Island begins "near where the Ruamahanga enters the sea". Since the arrival of their ancestors in New Zealand these people had increased in number until they occupied the area from Dannevirke through to the Manawatū, and on to Lake Horowhenua. According to Peter, pressure from the north and "dissension among their own elders" compelled branches of Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa to move south. The migrants eventually crossed Cook Strait and entered Tōtaranui where they settled for a time at Ship Cove. The "characteristics and language" of the people they found, the "Ngatimamoe", were "similar to their own". The eventual "elimination" of these people "was accomplished more by intermarriage than force of arms" (*Marlborough Express* 24 April 1947: 6; see also below). From here Rangitāne entered the Wairau Valley via the Para swamp. The occupation of the Wairau Bar, writes Peter, took place following a series of battles, the first at Te Aro Pipi and the second at Te Pokohiwi, both localities on the Bar. Ultimately, the conflict was concluded with an agreement whereby the Ngāti Māmoe leadership would vacate the area and guarantee safe passage as far as Waipapa (*Marlborough Express* 15 January 1947). The marriages Peter refers to have been recorded in tribal *whakapapa* manuscripts, allowing for an estimation of the time at which these events took place, the late 17th or early 18th century being the most likely.

Peter's view of what was taking place at the Wairau Bar was representative of more general Kurahaupō views, which were shaped by *whakapapa* and tradition. The notion of absorption through intermarriage can also be discerned from statements made by other Kurahaupō elders. For instance, Eruera Wirihana Pakauwera, a Musket Wars survivor, considered Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri

and Ngāti Kuia to be very closely related, a result of intermarriage. That the present generation are the descendants of first peoples is suggested in tribal *whakapapa* manuscripts. One of the earliest *whakapapa* recorded in the Meihana Manuscript is dated July 1867 and comes from his Ngāti Hinekauwhata relative, Hōhepa Te Kiaka, who at the time was resident at Rangitoto or D'Urville's Island (Kereopa and Meihana n.d.: 210). A veteran of the Musket Wars, Hōhepa, and his relatives Hura Kopapa and Wirihana Kaipara, joined the recently arrived Ngāti Koata in raids down into Canterbury (Nelson MB2 1892: 311). The Kurahaupō tribes had longstanding grievances with their Ngāi Tahu relatives and would have embraced the opportunity to settle old scores. Taking an overland route, their role in the war party—as Ngāti Koata had no knowledge of the interior—was as lead scouts, using knowledge that had been accumulated and passed from one generation to the next, beginning arguably with those ancestors who first exploited the resources of the Nelson mineral belt. In 1856 Hura and Wirihana signed the Ngāti Kuia and Rangitāne Deed of Sale (Mackay 1873: 316), while Hōhepa was a signatory to the so-called Ngāti Koata Deed (Mackay 1873: 317). As it transpired, Hōhepa did not receive any portion of the £100 paid, nor was he included in any of the promised reserves (Jenkins to Domett 1858). Evidently, Hōhepa's assistance to the Ngāti Koata leadership had been forgotten following the deaths of senior Ngāti Koata chiefs.

It was in the context of highlighting this poor treatment that Hōhepa articulated his connection with Rangitoto Island and illustrated alliances through intermarriage and their links with land rights. The *whakapapa* dictated to Meihana in 1867 was accompanied by a letter addressed to Donald McLean. Hōhepa questioned McLean as to the Crown's failure to provide him with land. In the first instance he recites his *whakapapa* from Tu Pehia, the younger brother of Haeamaiiterangi—"te putaki te kingi nui no taua motu". Having established this connection to the "King of Rangitoto", Hōhepa declared:

*Ka waiho ahau he putake hei paki aka ora mataua e motu Rangitoto no reira ka nono taua iwi a Ngati Koata ki runga ki toku tuara hei putake tonu ahau mo ratou he oti ano taku.* (Kereopa and Meihana n.d.: 9)

I will leave that which is the source and a vine of life to that other island for Rangitoto. From there dwelt that tribe Ngati Koata upon my back so I could be a source for them. [see Campbell 2000: 18–19]

Hōhepa, then, is the source, and it is upon his back that Ngāti Koata stands, and from whom their rights to Rangitoto emanate. For Peter this kind of imagery would have been deeply entrenched in his psyche; indeed the circumstances surrounding Huataki's marriage to Wharepuka invokes similar imagery (Bradley 2003: 22–23). While there are no extant traditions

of migration associated with Haeamaiiterangi, as there are with Huataki, what has been remembered are the many marriages between the King of Rangitoto's descendants—Ngāti Hinekauwhata—and migrating peoples. Rangitoto was an important point of arrival for migrants from the north, and in particular, those coming from the Rangitikei, Horowhenua and Whanganui (Moses 1996). For instance, multiple migrations of Ngāti Apa arrived and quickly married into the resident population. Hōhepa makes no mention of the *tuku* 'gifting of land' by Tutepourangi, the customary mechanism by which Ngāti Koata settled in Te Tauihu (northern South Island); however, two Ngāti Hinekauwhata women married Ngāti Koata chiefs as part of the arrangement. This ensured that the descendants of those marriages would, in Durie's words, have "all ten toes embedded in the soil" (Durie 1994: 65). Peter would have been well aware of this, and it would have shaped his understanding of history and custom in the northern South Island.

Despite Peter's standing and credentials, Duff continued to assert the pre-eminence of his own knowledge. Furthermore, rather than respond to Peter via the *Marlborough Express*, as he had been invited to do, Duff wrote to the Rangitāne elder. He asked why Peter had not contacted him, "a friend of the Maori people", before "dragging the bones of your ancestors before the eyes of the Pakeha in the newspaper" (perhaps an ironic phrasing considering Duff had removed Burial 2 for the purpose of display). As for the identity of the Wairau Bar burials, Duff was quite certain they had nothing to do with Rangitāne:

...when you say that we have dug out your ancestors, the matter is different, I know and you do not. We have not been digging in an urupa; we have been digging in a kainga, so old that moas and other birds which have become extinct were the food of those people. Those people lived in peace, they had no enemies, they buried their dead near their houses. What Maori tribe ever did the same? Not one, as you know, and we all know. [see Armstrong 2009: 79–80]

Before writing to Peter, Duff consulted W.J. Elvy. Elvy worked as a survey draughtsman for the Lands and Survey Department at Blenheim and had at times clashed with Māori when their interests conflicted with the Crown's. Peter, according to Elvy, was after "cheap notoriety", and his "knowledge does not extend far back probably 100 years at most" (Armstrong 2009: 75–76). Elvy was also an amateur ethnographer who, despite his view of Peter, was happy to cite the Rangitāne elder, "who at his death was the oldest representative of the Rangitāne tribe living in the district". In fact, in his *Kei Puta Te Wairau* Elvy quoted large chunks of Peter's *Marlborough Express* articles (Elvy 1957: 45–47).

Peter's inability to prevent the excavations had much to do with Duff's reputation as a senior scholar. The theory advanced by Duff that the Wairau Bar burials were Māori, but not the ancestors of Rangitāne, who it was widely accepted had arrived with the fleet. Furthermore, Eyles, through whom Duff maintained access to the Bar, seems to have relied on an apparent conversation between his stepfather, Charlie Perano, and Manny MacDonald. Following the first disinterment of Aunty, Manny, according to Eyles, had told Charlie, "It's nothing to do with us, Charlie .... He's not one of ours" (in Eyles 2007: 64). Even if this was the case, it is apparent, perhaps because of the protests of the more senior Peter MacDonald, that Rangitāne consent was withdrawn. In 1955, the *Marlborough Express* (16 November 1955: 6) reported that Peter's nephew, Nugget MacDonald, a representative of the Wairau Tribal Committee, declared that he would protest any further excavations at the Wairau Bar.

#### THE LONG ROAD HOME

The fate of Te Pokohiwi, the land itself, is essentially the story of colonisation. Historic Crown land purchases and subsequent ownership and leasing arrangements all undermined the ability of Rangitāne to influence what happened at the Bar (Armstrong 2009: 51–54). It is worthwhile noting the Armstrong Report's conclusion that those with interests at the Bar colluded to keep Rangitāne in check, the extent of the collusion going so far as withholding a Crown Law opinion that raised questions as to who in law owned the *kōiwi* and artefacts (Armstrong 2009: 54–59). From the 1990s, there has been a shift in thinking, and in turn, a greater recognition of the connection Rangitāne has to Te Pokohiwi. Katharina Ruckstuhl and colleagues (2015: 637) write that this shift reflected international trends. In New Zealand, legislation giving greater consultative powers to Māori and the acceptance of *mātauranga Māori* as a "legitimate knowledge domain in its own right" has led to fruitful dialogue. What must be remembered also is the legacy of protest and resistance left behind by Peter MacDonald.

At the time Peter was protesting, the Kurahaupō peoples of Te Tauihu were still living on or near reserves created as a result of 19th-century Crown purchases or established under the South Island Landless Natives legislation of 1906 (Waitangi Tribunal Report 2008: 658). Peter and his wife, Sarah, for instance, had recently moved from Endeavour Inlet, a Landless Native reserve, to Picton. Following World War II, however, people started to steadily move from the Pelorus and Queen Charlotte Sounds, Port Gore, Croisilles Harbour and Canvastown to larger urban centres such as Blenheim (the Wairau), Nelson and Picton. In many cases, those families that settled in the Wairau were in fact resettling. These urban migrants were the children or grandchildren of individuals who had left the Wairau, having in some

cases been excluded from the Wairau reserves through the processes of the Native Land Court. This aside, their return sparked a number of initiatives, including the establishment of a *marae* ‘community complex’ at Omaka and the building of a *whare tūpuna* ‘carved meetinghouse’.

Officially opened on 27 October 1985, Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu was the first carved meetinghouse built in Te Tauihu in the post-war period. During the early 1980s the Marlborough Māori community concentrated its energies on establishing a *marae* at Omaka, though the thought had been there for some time. Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu is the physical manifestation of oral tradition and *whakapapa* (Bradley 2003: 16–17). The name of the *whare* is suggestive of its geographical location—a point of arrival and departure—a reality that is reflected in the *whakapapa* make-up of the *tāngata whenua*. The *poupou* ‘carved posts or panels’ and *tukutuku* ‘woven panels’ that adorn the walls of the house retell the area’s history while at the same time giving us an insight into the thinking of those elders who provided guidance in its construction (Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu 1985). These elders were the students of the previous generation’s learned men and women, people such as Peter MacDonald and Eruera Pou Hemi Whiro.

As one enters the courtyard in front of the *whare* one is met by four male ancestors. At the apex of the *whare* stands Ngahue, and beneath him, Kupe. To Kupe’s right stands Huataki, and to the left, Marukaitātea. These ancestors represent different phases in the peopling of the Wairau. At one level they act as mnemonics for a more complex retelling of the past. The story of Huataki, for instance, cannot be retold without reference to his Ngāti Māmoe wives, who it could be argued are the more important characters in the story of the Wairau. Inside the *whare* stand ancestors credited with supernatural powers. Te Hau, it is said, was resident in the Wairau at the time of Kupe’s visit, and their encounter caused earthquakes and tsunamis resulting in the creation of significant landmarks. The building of Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu was a great achievement for the Marlborough Māori community, and since then Omaka has been the venue for a number of significant national *hui* ‘meetings’. Indeed, it was here that the Wairau Bar *tūpuna* would make their last stop before returning to Te Pokohiwi.

Before then, however, high-level negotiations between parties would take place. The context for such negotiations, as noted above, were changes to legislation and the emergence and acceptance of Māori-centred epistemologies. The work of the Waitangi Tribunal has been instrumental in this space, helping to shape judicial procedures and policy requiring various government agencies to consult with Māori. The Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 is one piece of legislation that speaks directly to the issues addressed here. The Act empowers Heritage New Zealand to identify, record and protect historic places. This includes archaeological sites. Another

key development, as far as the Wairau Bar is concerned, took place in 1998 when Canterbury Museum adopted Ngāi Tahu's *kōiwi* policy (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu 1993), which changed the way the Museum dealt with issues relating to *kōiwi tāngata*. Here the influence of then Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Chairperson Mark Solomon was important. Furthermore, "Canterbury Museum's agreement to relinquish the *kōiwi tāngata* was not achieved without some pressure on the part of Rangitāne who were at the time negotiating with the Government to finalise their claim to the Waitangi Tribunal" (Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015: 642–45). Settlement discussions also led to the return of land at the Wairau Bar (Meihana *et al.* 2017).

Realising that research would be a condition of repatriation Rangitāne sought the advice of archaeologists Foss Leach and Janet Davidson. In previous years, they had established a positive relationship with the tribe, and they suggested Rangitāne approach Professor Richard Walter, who was then a Co-director of Southern Pacific Archaeological Research (SPAR) at University of Otago. At a *hui* held in Christchurch in September 2008 researchers presented the proposed research programme for the Wairau Bar. Their aim was to use modern archaeological methods to gain a greater understanding of the site and allow researchers to better interpret previously excavated material. In December, the parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding, "the first of its kind in New Zealand" (Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015: 646). Unlike the excavations carried out by Duff and Eyles, the research undertaken by SPAR was built on relationships and mapping areas of trust.

The research programme resulted in a number of published articles, some of which have been consulted here (Brooks *et al.* 2011; Davidson *et al.* 2011; Greig *et al.* 2015; Jacomb *et al.* 2014; Knapp *et al.* 2012; Kinaston *et al.* 2013; Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015; Walter *et al.* 2010; Walter *et al.* 2017). The science was of great interest to Rangitāne, but their interest also extended to the circumstances that led to the excavations; this was the context in which the Armstrong Report was commissioned. The Armstrong Report for the most part has been confined to the archives; nevertheless, it has made a valuable contribution to the story of the Wairau Bar, bringing together primary source material, much of it held in the Canterbury Museum archives, and hitherto available to a limited number of people. Moreover, it addressed the issues that are important to Rangitāne.

#### OLD ENEMIES, NEW ALLIES

Prior to the *kōiwi* being returned to the Wairau, they were transported from Canterbury Museum to the University of Otago where they underwent macroscopic examination and isotope (carbon, nitrogen, strontium) analysis of bone, tooth collagen and enamel (Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015: 646). The test sample consisted of bone from 38 individuals and 24 teeth. A "reflection of

diet and childhood residence”, the isotopic signatures of Burials 1 to 7 “may be representative of the TEP-like [tropical East Polynesian] diet consisting of protein primarily derived from domestic species” (Kinaston *et al.* 2013: 6). This group of burials, which included Aunty, also contained a far greater portion of grave offerings, including moa eggs, necklaces and ornaments. Isotope analysis, when taken in conjunction with other archaeological evidence, supports the hypothesis that these burials were part of the founding population (Kinaston *et al.* 2013: 8). The remaining burials show a variability in diet that might suggest a degree of mobility “during the colonizer phase of New Zealand prehistory” (Kinaston *et al.* 2013: 9).

DNA analysis was also carried out at the University of Otago. Geneticists have over decades developed techniques that have helped trace the movement of peoples. A technique first used to gain greater insight into the evolutionary history of other species, it was later applied to humans, giving rise to the “Out of Africa” or “Mitochondrial Eve” hypothesis (Matisoo-Smith 2016b). Mutations constituting the so-called “Polynesian motif”, or haplogroup B4a1a1 (previously referred to as B4a1a1a) are found throughout the Pacific, and even as far away as Madagascar (Razafindrazaka *et al.* 2010). Another study, investigating metabolic disease in Māori and other Polynesians, suggested that “the genetics of Polynesian populations has been shaped by island hopping migration events, the result being an increased risk of disease” (Benton *et al.* 2012: 1). The study, which sequenced 20 modern Māori individuals, also identified three previously unreported haplotypes within the B4a1a1 haplogroup, B4a1a1c, B4a1a1a3 and B4a1a1a5, as well as “novel” variants hitherto undocumented: 1185T, 4769A and 16126T (Benton *et al.* 2012: 6).

Of the 42 *tūpuna* returned to the Wairau, 19 were screened by University of Otago researchers, of which “4 provided sufficient sequence data for downstream analysis”. It was determined that Burials 1 and 16a belonged to B4a1a1a3 (now called B4a1a1c), Burial 2.1 to B4a1a1a, and Burial 18 to B4a1a1. The “novel” variants identified by Benton *et al.* were also carried by all four individuals. Burials 1 and 16a were found to carry the mutation 1185T, and mutation 4769G was displayed in Burials 2.1 and 18 (Knapp *et al.* 2012: 18351). According to Knapp *et al.* these mutations could “not have evolved and gained dominance in a population in <50 y” and must therefore have arrived in New Zealand on the voyaging canoes (Knapp *et al.* 2012: 18352).

In June 2016 Rangitāne hosted the New Zealand Archaeological Association Conference. This was another important step towards reconciliation. During the conference, three significant events took place: the results of the mtDNA sequencing of Wairau Bar *tūpuna* were presented (Collins *et al.* 2016); participants had the opportunity to visit Te Pokohiwi, where researchers and Rangitāne retold the story of the Wairau; and, as part of the Africa to

Aotearoa project, Rangitāne descendants were given the opportunity to have their DNA tested. This last event was led by University of Otago professor Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith. Many of the participants were interested to know if they were connected to those *tūpuna* at the Wairau Bar. It was explained that if “they do share those same mtDNA signatures, that means that, at some point they shared a direct common maternal ancestor. It could have been Auntie (Burial 1) or it could have been a more distant ancestor in Hawaiiki” (Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith pers. comm., 2016). In December participants received the results. Rangitāne *whānau* ‘extended family’ were excited to see the idea of their East Polynesian heritage expressed through the scientific genetic analysis. Moreover, it was noted that all of the lineages identified were found throughout New Zealand and the wider Pacific, excepting B4a1a1c, which includes Aunty and Burials 16a and 22a, and which has thus far only been found in Polynesia (Matisoo-Smith 2016a).

#### A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Genetic testing of *kōiwi tāngata* was one aspect of the research programme that initially aroused concern for Rangitāne, and some of the leadership were even opposed to it. In retrospect, however, it can be said that the mtDNA sequencing has had some positive, albeit unexpected, results. The repatriation and an increased understanding of Aunty and her life has engendered an acute awareness in the *ahi kā roa* community of heritage and its importance. This heightened awareness and sensitivity was recently seen in relation to a Heritage New Zealand (HNZ) investigation concerning damage to an archaeological site on the northern side of the Wairau River mouth. Tribal members raised the issue at the Rangitāne Annual General Meeting in 2015 (Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau 2015). Of particular concern was the fact that a newly elected trustee of Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau (Tribal Council) was a director of Montford Corporation, the entity subject to the investigation. However, the Rūnanga was prevented from discussing the matter as proceedings were under a suppression order (Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau 2015). In July 2016 HNZ’s legal advisor sent a memorandum to the Heritage New Zealand Board and the Māori Heritage Council, which summarised the case. The memorandum noted a legal analysis carried out by Montford’s counsel that weighed up the likelihood of a successful prosecution. The memorandum also noted that an offer had been received from Montford to pay for an archaeological survey of their property with an undertaking that it would be followed in any further work in the area if the prosecution was withdrawn. The offer was accepted by HNZ (Memorandum, 2016).

The archaeological report commissioned as part of an out-of-court settlement with Montford Corporation noted that the Montford Estate

contained 13 sites, four of which are newly recorded (Habberfield-Short 2016: 74). While most were middens or associated with cooking, one site, recorded in 1961, is a burial site that Duff considered was contemporaneous with the Wairau Bar (Habberfield-Short 2016: 37). According to the report, “all sites are of sufficient rarity/uniqueness by their association with the Wairau Bar archaeological landscape”. Significantly, however, “they are likely to be further affected by farming practices, vineyard development, and on-going vineyard operations” (Habberfield-Short 2016: 2).

*Whakapapa* manuscripts, oral tradition and a carved meetinghouse not only are indicative of a deep interest in history and heritage, they are also constitutive of a Kurahaupō epistemology. However, indigenous knowledge systems have struggled in the face of European colonisation. The imposition or adoption of Western colonial structures, now often deemed to be “traditional”, have resulted in a tendency to elevate male ancestors. The expectations of the Native Land Court and its processes, coupled with the adoption of Christianity and its culturally defined hierarchies, has also resulted in the reification of patriarchy (Mikaere 2011: 196–98, 206–07). The effect of Christianity was such that Hoani Makitanara (MacDonald), the younger brother of Peter, lamented that with the arrival of the missionaries, and subsequent Māori conversion, the “ancient gods … withdrew their protection and retreated to the heavens, where, so our *tohunga* ['experts'] tell us they will remain until the Maori returns to his ancient customs and beliefs” (Elvy 1957: 73).

It is somewhat of a paradox, then, that science, often considered an instrument of Western imperialism, has been a catalyst for the inversion of patriarchy. A positive outcome of the Wairau Bar research, and in particular the mtDNA sequencing, has been a refocusing on the past. “Aunty”, who she was, how she lived and how she died has led to a greater interest in *ahi kā roa* as expressed in *whakapapa* through female ancestors: Hinekoareare, Te Heiwi, Wharepuka, Ruamate, and Hinepango. The stories of female ancestors, so often submerged beneath the deeds of their migrant husbands, are now being retold, albeit spurred by scientific observation. This shift (or return) has been hastened, arguably, by the reconciliation of tensions between scholastic and *iwi* ‘tribal’ communities, allowing ideas of their different knowledge traditions to be better shared. There is potential for this to challenge historical and contemporary structures, such as 19th-century Crown purchases, Native Land Court decisions and contemporary treaty settlement arrangements, which although “settled” remain live in a customary world.

\* \* \*

The repatriation of kōiwi tāngata in 2009 has had a significant impact on the Rangitāne people of the Wairau. It has presented the tribe with an opportunity to address a grievance that multiple generations have carried. For the

descendants of Peter MacDonald that grievance has weighed heavily. The repatriation has also resulted in the fostering of new relationships between Rangitāne and the scholastic community, and has in turn created the space in which knowledge traditions can be shared. The scientific research carried out as part of the repatriation has excited the interest of Rangitāne, and in particular, mtDNA sequencing. Confirmation of the connections between East Polynesia, the people who first settled at Te Pokohiwi (“Aunty”), and Rangitāne has led to more questions being asked about other female ancestors. Moreover, the improved knowledge of the past has engendered in the local Rangitāne community a desire to protect heritage and archaeological sites.

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#### NOTES

1. Here the term “Kurahaupō” is used to denote three Māori tribal groups: Ngāti Kuia, Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa. The Kurahaupō tribes also claim descent from other ancestral migratory canoes.
2. The term *ahi kā roa* ‘continuous occupation of land’ is used here to describe the Rangitāne community that continues to live in the Wairau.

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## ABSTRACT

During the 1940s and 1950s *kōiwi tāngata* (human remains) were excavated at the Wairau Bar and taken to the Canterbury Museum. The excavations provided the scientific community with an abundance of data about the Polynesian settlement of New Zealand. For the Rangitāne community of the Wairau the excavations have been a cause of distress. At the time of the excavations, tribal elder Peter MacDonald protested the removal of the *kōiwi tāngata*. Although his protests were unsuccessful, his legacy of protest was passed to subsequent generations. This article examines the history of the Wairau Bar and the excavations from a Rangitāne perspective, contextualising the tribe's experiences within a longer history of European colonisation. The article discusses the negotiations between various institutions and Rangitāne, which led to the repatriation of *kōiwi tāngata* in 2009. A condition of repatriation was that the *kōiwi tāngata* undergo scientific analysis, including mtDNA sequencing. Despite having some reservations initially, the research has had positive but unexpected outcomes for Rangitāne. The article suggests that mtDNA sequencing, with its focus on maternal descent, has led to a growing interest in female ancestors generally.

**Keywords:** New Zealand, Māori, Wairau Bar, *kōiwi tāngata* (human remains), repatriation, Rangitāne, Ngāti Kuia, patriarchy, community archaeology

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