Kāi Tahu Cultural Narrative *for* Clutha Valley School

Clutha Valley School
Logo here

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September 2019

Ko Kāi Tahu te iwi!

Introduction

The iwi of Kāi Tahu (also spelt Ngāi Tahu) is the collective of individuals who descend from three distinct but now genealogically inseparable groups: Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe and Ngāi Tahu. These names encompass the waves of people who migrated to Te Waipounamu prior to sustained European contact with the New Zealand archipelago, and who were woven together into a discernible whole by the late eighteenth century. Key to this entanglement were a series of strategic marriages and trade and exchange systems that bound widely dispersed families and communities together.

In the early nineteenth century, these people – who were beginning to call themselves Kāi Tahu in active acknowledgement of their common descent lines and shared heritage – were clustered in regional centres throughout the South Island, especially on its eastern and southern coasts. Materially and economically disadvantaged by British colonisation from the mid-nineteenth century, the overwhelming majority of individual Kāi Tahu were officially described as "landless" in the early twentieth century. Generations of Kāi Tahu leaders and entities called on the colonial state to rectify this situation for nearly 150 years, from 1848 until the passage of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act in 1998. This Treaty of Waitangi-based resolution restored a collective Kāi Tahu economic base that is held and managed by a tribal governance entity, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (hereafter TRoNT).

TRoNT has been the mandated collective voice of Kāi Tahu since 1996 when it was created by private statute to replace Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board that had operated for 50 years but was not fit for purpose. With an asset base of over $1.5b, TRoNT is an important part of the South Island economy and has commercial interests in tourism, fishing and farming. Over the last 20 years it has also invested over $400m in social development. Though based in Christchurch, TRoNT is made up of 18 marae-based papatipu rūnanga and eight of these are situated south of the Waitaki River. This speaks to the historical and contemporary importance of the southern South Island in Kāi Tahu life and culture: things that have shown remarkable endurance in the face of intergenerational indifference and sometimes overt hostility by New Zealand's settler majority culture.

Waitaha and Kāti Mamoe

Waitaha specifically refers to descendants of Rākaihautu, but can also be used to include the Hawea and Te Rapuwai people, all of whom are some of the first people to have lived in Te Waipounamu. Many Waitaha place names, creation stories and art works are still with us as cultural components of present-day Kāi Tahu.

Kāti Mamoe (also known as Ngāti Mamoe) were descendants of a chiefly woman from the east coast of Te Ika a Maui who migrated to its south coast near present-day Wellington. Some of these people subsequently crossed Raukawa Moana and established themselves in Te Waipounamu. This pattern was repeated by Ngāti Kuri and Ngāi Tūhaitara, two branches of what is retrospectively called Ngāi Tahu: descendants of Tahupōtiki, a close relative of Porourangi who is the founding ancestor of Ngāti Porou.[1] Ngāi Tahu coalesced around five primary hapū: Ngāti Kuri, Ngāti Irakehu, Ngāti Huirapa, Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki.

As they made a new home in Te Waipounamu, Kāti Mamoe groups extended their mana over pre-existing Waitaha communities through warfare, diplomacy and marriage. Ngāi Tahu groups, often existing in tension with one another as well as with resident Kāti Mamoe groups, subsequently did the same thing.

Ngāi Tahu

Kāti Mamoe authority at Kaikoura was ritualistically broken when the Ngāti Kuri chief Maru Kaitatea ate food from a sacred pōhā named Tohu Raumati. He thereafter established his people at Kaikoura where they continue to live. Kāti Mamoe authority then retreated in a southerly direction. In time, irreversibly so. As well as Maru, another important Ngāi Tahu ancestor was Tūāhuriri, whose youngest son, Moki, also led a substantial heke across Raukawa Moana into Te Waipounamu. This resulted in another son, Tūrākautahi, establishing his people at Kaiapoi and building a major pā there. Other chiefs associated with this Ngāi Tūhaitara migration fanned out across the Horomaka region: Te Rakiwhakaputa established a community at Rapaki, Mako did the same at Wairewa and Te Ruahikihiki at Taumutu. Descendants of these chiefs continue to maintain ahi kā in each of these locales.

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>
> *But in so doing, Ngāi Tahu became Kāi Tahu.”*

Rokopai and Tākata Pora

By the late eighteenth century, amidst ongoing tension between Kāti Mamoe and Kāi Tahu collectives, key figures brokered a peace agreement and series of high-ranking marriages referred to as Rokopai.[2] The first marriage was between the Kāti Mamoe chief, Te Rakiihia, and Hinehākiri, a cousin of Te Hautapunuiotu, who was a high-ranking Ngāi Tahu chief. Kohuwai, who was a mokopuna of Te Rakiihia, then married Honekai, a son of Te Hautapunuiotu. The latter couple had two children: a son, Te Whakataupuka, and a daughter, Kura. By such means, peace began to prevail in Murihiku and Ngāi Tahu authority continued to move south. But in so doing, Ngāi Tahu became Kāi Tahu. In other words, just as aspects of Waitaha culture persisted through marriage with Kāti Mamoe groups, developing Mamoe traditions – some of them linguistic – were likewise preserved in the southern South Island through the Rokopai framework.

It was probably Honekai who moved Kāi Tahu groups to Ruapuke Island, east of Awarua (Bluff), by 1820. This enabled systematic engagement with tākata pora: sealers and sailors from all corners of the world who initially emanated out of New South Wales and increasingly visited southern Murihiku and Rakiura. Note that Kāi Tahu did not refer to such newcomers as Pākehā until the late nineteenth century. Among other new plants, animals and materials, tākata pora introduced white potatoes to Murihiku and this brought the region into a horticultural framework for the first time. Te Whakataupuka extended his father’s work by enabling sealers and Kāi Tahu women to establish a community at Whenua Hou, an island west of Rakiura. These relationships, many of which were later formalised in Christian marriage, produced large families that many present-day Kāi Tahu people descend from.

Measles and Muskets

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Te Whakataupuka also sanctioned the establishment of a shore-whaling station at Preservation Inlet from 1829 by Sydney-based merchants before falling prey to a measles epidemic that hit Murihiku in 1835. In common with Māori historical experience generally, measles, and other introduced diseases, especially tuberculosis, subsequently killed many Kāi Tahu individuals and even whole families well into the twentieth century. However, the 1835 measles epidemic did not deter Kāi Tahu individuals from continuing to visit Poihākena – Port Jackson (Sydney) or Poi Piripi – Port Philip (Melbourne) to enhance their personal mana. This was often tied to defending the Kāi Tahu realm during the so-called Musket Wars, which played out across the entire New Zealand archipelago until the late 1830s. For Kāi Tahu, this meant absorbing and responding to deadly raids by musket-wielding Ngāti Toa and allied tribes from the Kāpiti region led primarily by the chief Te Rauparaha. This existential threat, which led to the destruction of Kāi Tahu settlements at Kaikoura in 1827-28, Akaroa in 1830 and Kaiapoi Pā in 1831-32, was a key driver for Kāi Tahu to think and act at a recognisably iwi-level, possibly for the first time.

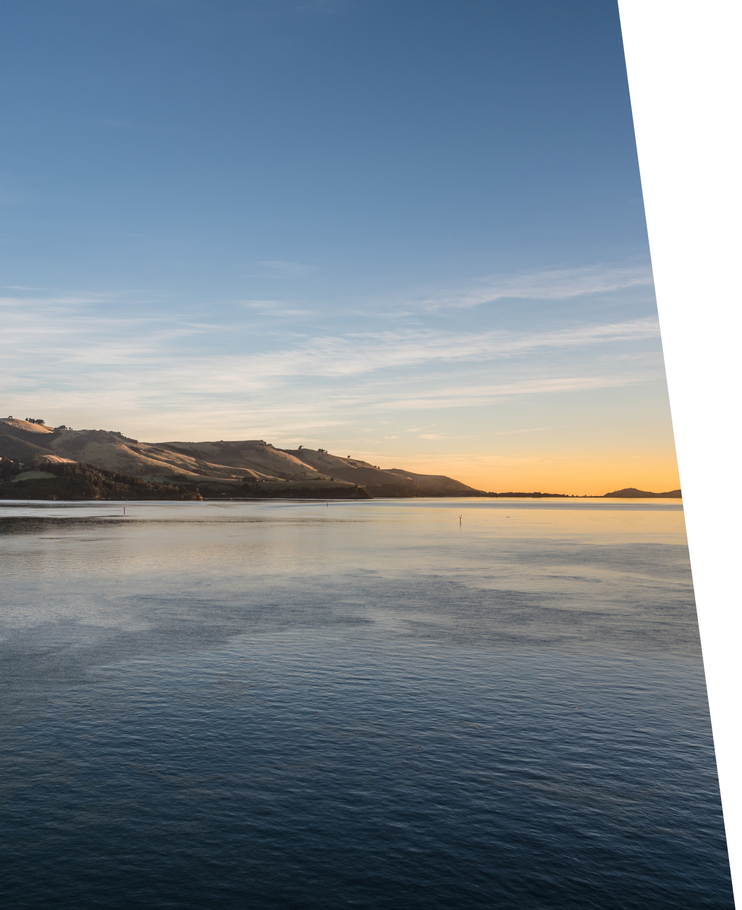
Southern Kāi Tahu, led especially by chiefs from Ruapuke, Ōtākou and Puketeraki, responded to Ngāti Toa with a series of successful counter-attacks. They did this armed with muskets, cannons and whale-boats acquired through sustained engagement with shore-whalers and other traders. The last major battle occurred in December 1836 after Te Puoho of Ngāti Tama and a group of warriors travelled down the less populated west coast of Te Waipounamu. This was part of an audacious plan to capture the Ruapuke stronghold. An offshoot of Ngāi Tahu from Kaiapoi, Ngāti Waewae, who held mana over Te Tai Poutini since defeating Ngāti Wairangi in the early nineteenth century, were unable to prevent the Te Puoho-led invasion from making their way south. It was not until the taua captured a Kāi Tahu kaika at Tuturau on the banks of the Mataura River, a proverbial stone's throw from Foveaux Strait and Ruapuke, that southern Kāi Tahu became aware of the threat. A successful pre-emptive strike was quickly launched in which Te Puoho was killed, his followers taken prisoner, and Kāi Tahu captives released. Three years later, Kāi Tahu and Ngāti Toa leaders formalised peace with one another as each group grappled with enormous challenges flowing from imperial Britain's growing role in the islands of New Zealand.

Colonial settlement

A copy of the treaty first signed at Waitangi in February 1840 was signed by Kāi Tahu representatives in three locations in mid-1840: at Akaroa, off Ruapuke Island and at Ōtākou. Colonial settlement proceeded in Kāi Tahu territory from 1848 when the Scottish Free Church settlement of Dunedin was established at the top of Otago Harbour. This followed the Otakou Purchase negotiated four years earlier, which was the first of essentially eight large land purchases that took place within the Kāi Tahu takiwā between 1844 and 1864. By such means, the colonial government extinguished Kāi Tahu property rights in exchange for a combination of money, reserved lands, and, in some instances, specific protection of mahika kai: traditional food sources.

Quickly outnumbered by colonists, especially in Christchurch which was established in 1850, and Dunedin following the 1860s gold-rush, reserves set aside for Kāi Tahu were generally inadequate in size and quality. Some were simply never set aside at all. Most of the reserves that were set aside, nominally in perpetuity, were then subsequently eroded by the Native Land Court, the Māori Trustee and various Public Works Acts. Consequently, by 1890 it was found that 46% of Kāi Tahu had an insufficient amount of land for economic survival while 44% had none whatsoever. In other words, 90% of Kāi Tahu were considered landless before the close of the nineteenth century.[3] Economic marginalisation and poverty therefore substantially defined the colonial encounter, and even much of the twentieth century, for most Kāi Tahu families and villages. Recalling an exasperated kaumātua, Hoani Uru, in 1891, Ngāi Tahu historian Te Maire Tau writes that Uru had "seen Ngāi Tahu stripped of its resources, ignored by the new political order of the Pākehā, and worse, ridiculed."[4]

This situation would simply seem to prove the adage that might is right. However, Kāi Tahu landlessness had two ideological bases. The first was that colonists – and thus the colonial state – did not recognise traditional mahika kai practices as establishing property rights. These interests were therefore rarely protected.[5] The second reason was "racial amalgamation," an objective that actively informed government policy in New Zealand from the 1840s until the early 1970s.[6] This assumed that Māori individuals, especially those who had a non-Māori parent (as was common throughout Kāi Tahu by the late nineteenth century), would and should melt into colonial society – aided by exclusively English language-based Native Schools from 1867. By this logic, Kāi Tahu would eventually cease to exist as a distinct people and the state would therefore no longer owe it contractual obligations. This background helps to explain why, until recent decades, the New Zealand Government and wider Pākehā power-culture has ritually denied a collective Kāi Tahu existence and many New Zealanders still struggle with this concept.[7]



Te Kerēme

After nearly a century of petitions and commissions of enquiry, the bundle of Kāi Tahu grievances referred to as Te Kerēme – a transliteration of 'The Claim' – were lodged with the Waitangi Tribunal in 1986. This occurred after the government granted the Tribunal powers to investigate historical breaches of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi back to 1840. After years of detailed historical investigations, the Tribunal published three reports between 1991 and 1995. These found the Crown acted with unconscionable fraud towards Kāi Tahu and in repeated breach of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. The New Zealand Government accepted the Tribunal's findings and Kāi Tahu representatives, led by Tipene O'Regan, entered into difficult negotiations to work out a mutually acceptable compensation package. This was outlined in a Deed of Settlement that tribal representatives and representatives of the New Zealand Government signed on Takahanga Pā, Kaikoura, in 1997. This agreement was given effect to by legislation a year later and provides the economic foundation for contemporary Kāi Tahu leaders to dream and fashion better futures for tribal members – and do so in ways that perpetuate, revitalise and celebrate Kāi Tahu history and culture.

Role and significance of the Mata-au region to Kāi Tahu

Introduction

> *"...of the 18 papatipu rūnanga that constitute Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, those with the strongest shared interest in the Clutha Valley area are arguably Ōtākou, Hokonui and Waihopai."*

In his social history of Kāi Tahu in Otago between 1844 and 1994, historian Bill Dacker noted that it was "a slice out of a wider [tribal] story." Addressing those with a scant knowledge of Kāi Tahu history, he explained that the Otago region was "often influenced by outside forces and events." This point, which is important to grasp, is especially true of a locale such as the Mata-au, which is smaller in scale again. The river's role as something of a boundary further leads it to be shaped by – and to shape – other places and events within the Kāi Tahu takiwā. In other words, the role and significance of the Mata-au is only properly understood when placed in its wider genealogical and geographical contexts, which this of the report attempts to do.

In terms of contemporary context, of the 18 papatipu rūnanga that constitute Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, those with the strongest shared interest in the Clutha Valley area are arguably Ōtākou, Hokonui and Waihopai (centred on Otago Harbour, Gore, and Invercargill respectively). However, whānau from Awarua, Oraka-Aparima, Puketeraki, Moeraki, Waihao, and Arowhenua also have strong associations – historical and contemporary – with the Matau-au river and its surrounding landscape. In other words, while the Clutha Valley is not at the heart of any papatipu rūnanga it is neither unknown nor insignificant from to Kāi Tahu. By way of explanation, the number and location of papatipu rūnanga are largely determined by pre-colonial Kāi Tahu settlement patterns, which were mostly coastal. Later, during the era of colonial land-purchasing, a number of seaside villages – places like Moeraki, Karitane, Ōtākou, Maitapapa and Te Karoro – were to some extent reserved for ongoing Kāi Tahu occupation during the era of colonial land-purchasing. The more enduring of these heartland villages subsequently dictated the frequency and distribution of most papatipu rūnanga.

Despite this coastal orientation, the southern South Island's interior was very much known, claimed, named and used by Kāi Tahu groups in pre-European times. Indeed, several whānau continued to visit and occupy specific sites for seasonal food-gathering until the late-nineteenth century. However, ongoing British settlement and ecological destruction – that were part and parcel of developing an agricultural economy – by and large put a stop to this. Accordingly, the relationship that Clutha Valley School has with Kāi Tahu whānau and institutions are less geographically proximate and less developed than the likes of that which Portobello School has with Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou or Bluff School has with Te Rūnanga o Awarua. However, the fact remains that the Clutha Valley and wider region is steeped in Kāi Tahu history. Moreover, papatipu rūnanga are committed to working with all schools in the Otago and Southland regions to improve their understanding of Kāi Tahu history and responsiveness to Kāi Tahu aspirations.

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A note on Māori history

This report endorses the way that Ngāi Tahu historian Te Maire Tau arranges the Māori past. His four-part spectrum, which is chronological, runs from myth to mytho-history, on to historical events originally recorded orally, and then history based on written sources.[8] He observes that mythical Māori figures, usually supernatural, explain natural phenomena or impart moral instruction. Mytho-historical figures on the other hand, are based on actual Māori people, but they are so distant in time that their stories have become encoded in mythic templates and substantially overlaid with symbols. For Tau, the historical realm thus begins with Māori who existed immediately prior to the sustained presence of Pākehā. While recollections of these people contain smaller mythic or symbolic elements, he notes that details of them can be light because they were first encoded orally.[9] In contrast, the historical realm, which is based on written sources, makes the Māori past more fully accessible and understandable to present audiences. This report refers to people and events from different parts of this spectrum but holds them apart to avoid treating myths as literal truths, and retrievable history as somehow esoteric and beyond general comprehension.

Significant landmarks and place names

A defining element in the Clutha Valley is very obviously the Clutha River itself. Earlier known to Pākehā as the Molyneux, its original name is Mata-au. This name is said to occur in a whakapapa that explains the origins of freshwater but is possibly a geographic descriptor that refers to the swift flow of the river’s surface water. According to ethnographer Herries Beattie, Mata-au was also the name of a highborn Waitaha-era woman. If this is not a coincidence, it was thought that she was named after the river, rather than vice versa.[10] In any event, the Mata-au is one of New Zealand’s longest rivers – running from Wanaka to Foveaux Strait. It was thus an important travel route to and from the interior, and its natural riches, for pre-European southern Māori. These resources included a number of freshwater and terrestrial food-sources as well types of pounamu. As with the Mataura and Waitaki rivers, mokihi – extremely buoyant waka constructed out of raupo and/or korari – were still widely used on the river, up until the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

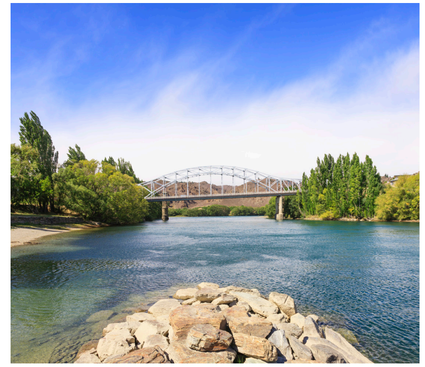
As a result of its central role in the pre-European Māori economy, Māori place names abound on and near the Mata-au. Large tributaries, river junctions, and natural features including rapids and small islands were all named. Many of these names persist while others have been lost or only partially or incorrectly recorded. Māori place names tend to fall in to one (or more) of four categories:

- **definite Hawaiki names** (e.g. Aoraki)
- **possible Hawaiki names** (e.g. Kairaki)
- **descriptive names** (e.g. Ruapuke)
- **names derived from events or people** (e.g, Koukourarata and Te Whaka a Te Wera respectively)

Hawaiki names are found throughout Polynesia, often in particular clusters, and were “planted” in the New Zealand archipelago by its first people. Descriptive names refer to natural features and often identify mahika kai and other useful resources. Place names derived from events or people are especially common and are a key aspect of taunaha: effectively claiming by naming. The Mata-au region, as with New Zealand generally, features place names from each of these four categories. Sometimes their meaning is clear and unambiguous, others are cryptic but discernible, while others again are mysterious and can simply be said to exist.

Herries Beattie collected scores of traditional Māori place names throughout Southland and Otago, including along the Mata-au and its surrounding landscape. An extract of a map on which he recorded some of these names is pictured below and speaks directly to the high level of movement and familiarity that Kāi Tahu whānau had with this expansive area. Through Beattie’s efforts, names such as Kututahu [Ngututahi in standard Māori orthography] have been preserved. This is the name of a hill near Clydevale that was once the site of a Kāti Mamoe-era pā. This place name and others like have been brought together by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and recently made available to the general public as part of an online encyclopaedia of South Island Māori place names: see www.kahurumanu.co.nz.

One of Beattie’s main sources of place name information for this part of South Otago was Eruete Kingi Ruru Kurupohatu (c.1839-1930). Based at Te Karoro (also known as Maranuku; part of present-day Kaka Point), near the mouth of the Mata-au, Kurupohatu was important Kāi Tahu leader in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and further information about him and this community occurs **below**.



Key myths associated with the Mata-au

An important myth associated with the Mata-au relates to Kōpūwai: 'a giant in Rapuwai or Waitaha times.'[11] This mythic creature was purported to be a giant lizard who caught and ate people who went bird-snaring or eeling in the area. On one such occasion, he killed and ate a party of people but spared the life of a woman, Kaiamio, who he kept as a captive wife. Kōpūwai kept her tethered by the wrist but she secretly fastened this to a raupo bush and escaped down river on a mokihi. Although Kōpūwai attempted empty the river and draw Kaiamio back to him by swallowing its water, she successfully reconnected with her community at Kaitangata.

Kaiamio explained to her people that the lizard beast was aided by two-headed dogs but that he slept heavily in a cave at the foot of the Old Man Range during North West winds. On one such occasion several hundred people set fire to this cave, burning Kōpūwai and his dogs inside. The cave had a hole in the top it, out of which flew a scale that transformed into a pair of lizards and gave rise to the South Island's lizards. The dogs, meanwhile, were petrified as prominent landmarks near present-day Duntroon.[12] When the people subsequently explored the cave, they found part of it filled with human bones, confirming the deadly toll that Kōpūwai had taken over the years.

If we accept that the Kōpūwai/Kaiamio narrative is not literally true, then we are left to discern, as best we can, what it encoded and imparted. For starters, it records that the river flow can sometimes suddenly drop. That is, it potentially refers to a naturally-occurring phenomenon. So too the reference to the north-west wind, which even several non-Māori in the present-day South Island view as a source of lethargy or time of strange events. A man-eating lizard was also perhaps a way of warning people to be especially prepared in a large and sometimes hostile environment. Put differently, it might have been a device to account for parties of hunters who went missing in the earliest days of Polynesian discovery when it was a foreign country.

In terms of culture rather than nature, the role played by Kaiamio – a woman who gets herself way out of a difficult situation and exacts revenge – has parallels with the foundational narratives of Hinetitama escaping Tane, or Hinenuitepo vanquishing Maui. Each instance encodes a gendered moral that highlights the specificities of female power.

This narrative is also possibly an example of a "mental map", which were common and necessary features of pre-European Māori who were effectively non-literate (mnemonic devices notwithstanding). Knowing a narrative about petrified dogs and their proximity to the cave complex referred to is one way of learning and teaching about this landscape even if one had not visited it or was only vaguely familiar with it. The Aoraki creation narrative similarly offers up a virtual map of the entire South Island while the attendant story of Tūterakiwhanoa encodes the locations of sheltered harbours on its south-western and eastern coasts.

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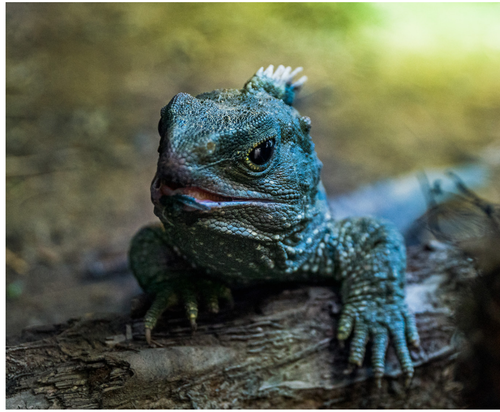
The idea that a single scale is the origin of lizards may be an example of the genealogical-based taxonomy by which pre-European Māori ordered the natural world. At the very least it would have accounted for the large number of lizards that once lived in the Mata-au region – several of which continue to persist. Equally, it may simply be another way of re-emphasising the generally tapu view held of lizards and thereby connect with another moral variable.

Capturing and killing Kōpūwai may also be viewed as a ritualistic necessity in a new landscape. Indeed, there are parallel stories in other parts of the South Island and throughout Polynesia where a beast has to be vanquished. Subsequently, dangerous areas were now safe for people to roam and use. Finally, the reference to a cave filled with human bones may also be a way of recording a safe place for depositing the remains of loved ones from those who might desecrate them, or, a way of rendering a physically dangerous area tapu to keep people safe by encouraging them to stay away from it.

In summary, like so many Māori myths or mytho-history, the Kōpūwai/Kaiamio narrative is cryptic, and our ability to access and understand it is unclear. Regardless, it is a an early cultural construct that says something specific about the Mata-au environment and its earliest human inhabitants.



> *A cessation in hostilities then led to the establishment of a boundary between Ngāi Tahu and Kāti Mamoe spheres of mana: the Mata-au.*

Tīpuna associations and events

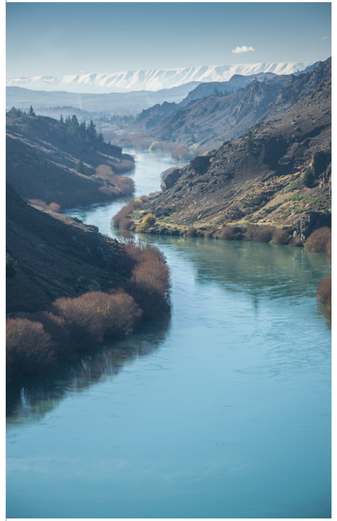
Following the successful settlement of the Kaiapoi and Horomaka regions by Ngāi Tūhaitara groups, which was a key moment in a process retrospectively understood as the southern migration of Ngāi Tahu, pre-existing Kāti Mamoe communities were woven in to the new political order through marriage, or, conversely, pushed further south. One in a series of ongoing battles between these two broad groupings took place downstream of Tuapeka, at a place called Te Kauae Whakatoro. A cessation in hostilities then led to the establishment of a boundary between Ngāi Tahu and Kāti Mamoe spheres of mana: the Mata-au. This natural delineation was further enhanced by the erection of a symbolic post near present-day Clinton that gave rise to the name Poupoutunoa. However, this boundary was effectively eroded by ongoing strategic marriages between senior Ngāi Tahu and Kāti Mamoe families. Perhaps the most famous of these, at least south of the Waitaki River, are those collectively referred to as Rokopai (or Rongopai), as outlined in the first part of this report.

The Rokopai marriages connected senior Kāti Mamoe and Kāi Tahu descent lines in the far south and reshaped political power on the eve of the sustained presence of Pākehā in southern Te Wai Pounamu. For those reasons, this chapter of history is well-known throughout the iwi and often referred to. For example, the so-called "iwi wall" in the wharenui ***Tahupotiki*** on Bluff's Te Rau Aroha Marae, features a striking visual representation of the Rokopai marriages.

Less well-known is that events leading up to Rokopai, and those in its immediate wake, played out in or near the Clutha Valley. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why the area is considered significant from a Kāi Tahu vantage. For starters, though confirmed at Kaiapoi Pā, the Rokopai agreement is thought to have been negotiated at Poupoutunoa. As stated earlier, its main protagonists in this were the chiefs Te Hautapunuiotu and Rakiihia. The latter's granddaughter and the former's son were married and had a highborn son, Te Whakataupuka, and daughter, Kura. She in turn gave birth to the famous Tūhawaiki.

Tūhawaiki is said to have been born at either Tauhinu or Murikauhaka, in the early nineteenth century. Tauhinu, now mostly commonly-known as Inch Clutha is a large island formed where the Mata-au splits south of present-day Balclutha, and Murikauhaka was a village located at the mouth of the Mata-au (near the present-day settlement of Kaka Point). Kura and her husband Te Kaihaere and their families were based at Murikauhaka so the reference to Tūhawaiki being born at Tauhinu may be symbolic. In other words, just as Tūhawaiki further bridged senior Kāi Tahu and Kāti Mamoe descent lines, his supposed place of birth was located in the very middle of what had hitherto been distinct realms of tribal authority, thereby eroding them.

As mentioned in the first part of this report, the Kāi Tahu chief Honekai – paternal grandfather of Tūhawaiki – established a



base on Ruapuke Island in response to the sustained presence of tākata pora on the southern and eastern coasts of Te Waipounamu. Tūhawaiki inherited this mantle of leadership in 1835 and likewise continued to be based at Ruapuke. However, he roamed widely throughout the South Island, led battles with Ngāti Toa forces, and also visited New South Wales several times between the 1820s and 40s. Highborn but also highly-intelligent, Tūhawaiki was, in Atholl Anderson's words, a "highly influential figure in the early years of European contact" and his premature death off the Timaru coast in 1844 when Kāi Tahu communities "were about to face the main influx of Pakeha settlement was a considerable tragedy." Simply put, Tūhawaiki was a powerful Kāi Tahu chief at an extremely important moment in Kāi Tahu history.

In the context of the Clutha Valley area, Tūhawaiki illustrates how Kāi Tahu from the Mata-au region were plugged in to larger entities and distant places. Moreover, he has numerous descendants and many of them have continued to reside and work in South Otago while also maintaining their property interests on Ruapuke Island and participating in seasonal mahika kai activities such as muttonbirding. So much for confident predictions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Pākehā press that southern Kāi Tahu would somehow "die out." One of the reasons for assertions of this sort, an example of which occurs below, was that remnant Kāi Tahu communities were often simply out of sight of Pākehā.

In 1944 for instance, Herries Beattie rejected the popular belief that Kāi Tahu were altogether "lost in the inflowing white tide" and highlighted places "that sheltered the Natives" where they "preserved their racial identity" and lived "quiet lives…little noticed by the newspapers or the public."[13] He was referring to small coastal settlements around Southland and Otago, including Te Karoro, also known as Maranuku

Te Karoro was one of three reserves set aside as part of the 1844 Otakou Purchase (the other two being on the Otago Peninsula and Maitapapa near Taieri Mouth) was home to more than 200 Kāi Tahu in 1830. However, numbers at Te Karoro declined significantly by 1840. This was partly attributable to the ravages of introduced diseases such as measles and tuberculosis, but also a consequence of changing settlement patterns in response to potential raids by Ngāti Toa and the emergence of shore-whaling stations. In those contexts, many people relocated to the likes of Ōtākou and Ruapuke. Nonetheless, Te Karoro has always been home to a number of Kāi Tahu families and holds ongoing significance for many tribal members. Not only does it contain treasured urupā and the bones of revered ancestors, it is also a key source of natural resources for persisting cultural material traditions.[14] For these reasons, much of the area's land is still designated Māori freehold land or Māori reserved land.

By 1891, Te Karoro was home to a at least 25 Kāi Tahu individuals, many of whom also identified strongly with

their Waitaha or Kāti Mamoe lineage.[15] These people included Haimona Rakiraki/Rakitapu (c.1800-1895), Ihaia Potiki (c.1833-1907) and Erueti Kingi Kurupohatu (aka Kingi Ruru) (c.1839-1930). These three men held tribal leadership positions within and beyond Te Karoro and were important sources of information for the likes of Herries Beattie vis-à-vis local Māori place names and pre-European events. It was from Te Karoro that these men and their whānau negotiated the challenges and opportunities of colonisation while holding on to many of their traditions. For example, both Rakiraki and Potiki participated in the Otago goldrush (both of their names appear in an 1861 register of miners' rights for Lawrence and Waitahuna) while Potiki was noted for his attendance at "all the Native Councils, as well as the Native Land Court, and generally looked after the interests of the Maoris." Similarly, Kurupohatu was listed as regional delegate to a large tribal gathering at Temuka in mid-1907 dedicated to Te Kerēme.[16]

Born at Ruapuke, Kurupohatu later lived with an uncle at Mataipapa and was at Otago Harbour in 1848 when the ***John Wickliffe*** and ***Philip Laing*** arrived with the first Scottish colonists. One of his first cousins, Te Uira, was a wife of Tūhawaiki, to whom Kurupohatu was in any case related. According to Beattie, "All students of the Maori lore of Otago must remain under a deep debt of gratitude to [Kurupohatu]. It gave him great pleasure to assist in the perpetuation of information about his race and he spared no pains in endeavouring to further that object." Similarly genial remarks were made about both Rakiraki and Potiki in the wake of their deaths.

For example, when Potiki passed away – at the time "perhaps the very oldest resident of the Clutha district" – he was described in the local newspaper as a "capable man, and respected by all who knew him for his honesty and straightness." Described as the son of a chief of Kāi Tahu and Kāti Mamoe – "all one" – his death "created quite a stir amongst the Maoris" and large numbers gathered for his tangihanga

> *from all parts of Otago, and some parts of Canterbury. There were Maories present from Temuka, North and south Waitaki, Puketeraki, Henley, Bluff, Riverton, and a lot from Colac Bay...There must have been 50 visiting Maories, including men and women and few picaninnies carried on a plaid on the back. This in addition to the Maories residing at the Port made the largest gathering of Maories that there has been for many years.*

Despite these numbers of people, the many of dispersed settlements they travelled from, the intergenerational nature of the visiting groups, and the relatively strong cultural practices on display, the article concluded thus: "One thing is certain: The Maori in these parts will soon be a thing

of the past. In a generation or two what is left of it will be merged in the white man."[17] This is a clear example of the "dying Māori" discourse which has parallels in North America with the idea of the "vanishing Indian." In both places, as in other settler colonies, European colonists established a framework of authenticity by which they were able to deny the indigeneity of indigenous people and thereby contemplate the "extinction" of people who were often in fact their neighbours.[18] As in the United States, Canada and Australia, this ideological project persists and "continues to shape, limit and inhibit" views of Kāi Tahu (and Māori more generally) in New Zealand.[19] Consequently, while historical research and writing on Kāi Tahu by Pākehā has sometimes been conducted in uninterested and scholarly rigorous ways (for example by Edward Shortland and Herries Beattie), a lot of it tells us more about colonial views of Māori, race, and modernity, than the Kāi Tahu past itself. This is one reason why TRoNT has an Archive Team and is funding an ongoing series of tribal biographies: to produce history that accounts for Kāi Tahu lives, survival and history – ***in*** time.[20] In other words, to tell stories of continuity and persistence alongside more familiar ones of change and supposed extinction.[21]

Conclusion

This cultural narrative is illustrative rather than exhaustive. It has highlighted some – rather than all – key places, people and moments in Kāi Tahu history as they relate to the Matau-au region. It is hoped that this introductory overview encourages the board and management of Clutha Valley School to develop its relationship with TRoNT or one or more papatipu rūnanga, as opposed to seeing this narrative as one-off activity. Aukaha holds the view that an ongoing relationship can lead to beneficial outcomes for the school – staff and pupils alike – as well Kāi Tahu whānui. Simply put, if we agree that aspects of our colonial past were inappropriate, and some of its enduring legacies are unacceptable, then there is a need to do things differently. A useful starting to point is to get to know one another, which is what this report seeks to do. We then need to keep in touch.

Select bibliography and further reading

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Endnotes

1 For more on the "Ngāi Tahu" migration to Te Waipounamu, see Te Maire Tau and Atholl Anderson, ed. *Ngāi Tahu: A Migration History: The Carrington Text* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books in association with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, 2008) and Te Maire Tau, *Ngā Pikitūroa o Ngāi Tahu – The Oral Traditions of Ngāi Tahu* (Dunedin, N.Z.: University of Otago Press, 2003).

2 Te Maire Tau, "Ngāi Tahu", in *Māori Peoples of New Zealand: Ngā Iwi o Aotearoa*, ed. New Zealand Ministry of Culture and Heritage (Auckland: David Bateman, 2006), p.124.

3 Waitangi Tribunal, *Ngai Tahu Report 1991*, Wellington, 1991, 2.13. See also Harry C. Evison, *The Ngai Tahu Deeds: A Window on New Zealand history* (Christchurch, N.Z.: Canterbury University Press, 2006), pp.256-71.

4 Te Maire Tau, "Ngai Tahu – From 'Better to be Dead and Out of the Way' to 'To Be Seen to Belong' in *Southern Capital – Christchurch: Towards a City Biography, 1850-2000*, ed. John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (Christchurch, N.Z.: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 222.

5 Tony Ballantyne, "Economic Systems, Colonization and the Production of Difference: Thinking Through Southern New Zealand", unpublished paper, copy in author's possession, p.12.

6 For more on racial amalgamation, Damon Salesa, *Racial Crossings: Race, Intermarriage, and the Victorian British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

7 See Tipene O'Regan, "Impact on Māori – a Ngāi Tahu perspective" in *"In Good Faith" Symposium proceedings marking the 20th anniversary of the* Lands *case*, ed. Jacinta Ruru, (Wellington, N.Z.: New Zealand Law Foundation, 2008), pp.41-50.

8 Rawiri Te Maire Tau, *Ngā Pikitūroa o Ngāi Tahu: The Oral Traditions of Ngāi Tahu*, (Dunedin, N.Z.: Otago University Press, 2003), 18-20.

9 Ibid.

10 Herries Beattie, "The Southern Māori – Stray Papers. XXIII – The Clutha River, *Otago Daily Times*, 8 November 1930, p.2

11 An overview of this is given in Herries Beattie (ed Atholl Anderson), *Traditional Lifeways of the Southern Maori*, p.561.

12 Apparently these were rocks in the bottom of a clear pool of freshwater, which were much valued. Unfortunately, Pākehā colonists used this hollow as a rubbish dump. A kaumatua who visited the site 40 years apart "scarcely knew the spot…I could not see my two-headed dogs . They were all buried under heaps of rusty kerosene tins and piles of ashes and rubbish. I could have sat down and wept." Herries Beattie, The "Tino", *Otago Daily Times*, 29 December 1933, p.8.

13 Herries Beattie, *Our Southernmost Maoris* (Dunedin: Otago Daily Times, 1954), p.8.

14 For example, despite ongoing degradation of the coastal marine area, important beds of rimurapa (bull kelp) are still located at Te Karoro. Some Kāi Tahu still harvest blades of this rimurapa to make pōhā – cured kelp-bags in which processed juvenile tītī (muttonbirds) are stored and transported from the Tītī Islands to the mainland. Pōhā were widely used until the 1950s and each summer Kāi Tahu households throughout Southland and Otago were often identifiable by rows of inflated lengths of rimurapa drying on clotheslines. The Metzger whānau from Bluff, who harvest rimurapa at Te Karoro every year, are one of the last whānau to keep this practice alive. See Rob Tipa, "Something in the water," *Te Karaka* (Kana 2011), pp.28-32 and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwVMlODvWNc.

15 Dacker, *Te Mamae me Te Aroha*, p.79.

16 Ibid; "Huge Native Claim," *Press*, 22 July 1907, p.3.

17 MAORI TANGI AT PORT MOLYNEUX, *Clutha Leader*, 7 June 1907, p.5.

18 Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting. Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), pp.xiii-xv.

19 Ibid., p.xiv.

20 Ibid., pp.xviii-xx.

21 See https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/tangata-ngai-tahu-people-ngai-tahu-book-longlisted-ockham-new-zealand-book-awards/

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