

# Ngāti Kuia

*He Pūtake,  
Hei Pakiaka Ora  
—A History—*



**Madi Williams**

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Map on front endpaper (Map 1):  
Key locations in the Marlborough Sounds.

Map on back endpaper (Map 6):  
Boundaries of the *tuku*.

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*Ngā uri o Kuia*



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## Foreword

A generation ago, the Waitangi Tribunal sat in Te Taihū-o-Te-Waka-a-Māui. Over a four-year period, from 2000 to 2004, the tribes of the northern South Island presented their historic Treaty claims before the Tribunal. The Ngāti Kuia claim (WAI 561) was heard at Seifried Estate Winery, Nelson, in April 2003. The Tribunal found that all the iwi of Te Taihū had valid customary interests at 1840. These rights were protected by Te Tiriti o Waitangi; however, the Crown failed to uphold its obligations to Ngāti Kuia and Te Taihū Māori.

The Tribunal process was not only important in facilitating a settlement with the Crown: it also produced a corpus of research. The volumes commissioned by iwi and the Tribunal are an invaluable resource for historians. However, the research produced as part of the claims-settlement process is a specific type of history. The nature and form of this history has been much debated and discussed by scholars. Now, post-claims and settlement, tribal historians can speak to different research priorities.

In this seven-chapter volume, Madi Williams narrates the histories and experiences of her iwi – a first for Ngāti Kuia. She has drawn on whakapapa, pūrākau, manuscripts, official documents and Tribunal-generated reports, and has produced a narrative that will interest both descendants and readers of Māori history. It is impossible to discuss all ‘things’ Ngāti Kuia in one book. The subjects chosen here have been taken from the author’s doctoral thesis, ‘Ngāti Kuia: Stories About the Past’, with supplementary material that brings the Ngāti Kuia story into the twenty-first century.

As is the case with many iwi, the history of Ngāti Kuia has hitherto been written by others. Invariably, Ngāti Kuia have been misidentified, homogenised and constructed in ways that conform to colonising agendas. This volume speaks back to these narratives. It undermines notions of fatal impact. It gives back to ancestors their agency. Moreover, it provides a platform for current and future tribal historians to engage with, speak back to and grow the whare kōrero of Ngāti Kuia.

— Peter N. Meihana, August 2025



# Preface

Ngāti Kuia is an iwi from Te Taihū-o-Te-Waka-a-Māui (the northern South Island), named for the eponymous ancestress, Kuia, who married Rongotamea from the closely related Ngāti Apa tribe. Kuia was a descendant of Matuahautere, who arrived in Te Taihū in his waka, *Te Hoiere*, guided by the tribal taniwha (guardian spirit), Kaikaiāwaro. He placed the name Te Hoiere onto the landscape, later named the Pelorus by European arrivals. Ngāti Kuia is a conglomeration of earlier iwi and hapū groupings, having emerged from the context of Te Taihū through migration, raupatu (conquest), intermarriage and implanting of whakapapa onto the landscape.

By 1820, Ngāti Kuia was one of the three tangata whenua tribes of Te Taihū, the others being Ngāti Apa and Rangitāne. These iwi all descend from the *Kurahaupō* waka that came from Hawaiki, and so have strong whakapapa connections, but have maintained distinct group identities, coming together when needed, such as in battle and more recently in the Treaty settlement process. Underneath this larger umbrella grouping are the different layers of identity at iwi, hapū and whānau level. And externally, Ngāti Kuia connects to other iwi on both sides of Raukawa Moana, with particularly strong links to the Kurahaupō iwi of the East Coast of Te Ika-a-Māui. Nevertheless, Ngāti Kuia identity emerged in a uniquely Te Waipounamu context.

The early nineteenth century saw two significant shifts in Te Taihū. Firstly, in the 1820s and 1830s, Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Rārua, Te Ātiawa and Ngāti Tama, northern tribes from Kāwhia and Taranaki with close whakapapa connections, migrated to Te Waipounamu (the South Island). Secondly, following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, significant waves of European settlers began arriving in Te Taihū. These groups came to dominate, and as a result, the perspectives of Ngāti Kuia have remained largely absent from the historiography. While naturally this book covers aspects of Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa history due to the intertwined whakapapa with these groups, it does not claim to offer Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa perspectives or history in depth: these iwi deserve works dedicated to their unique perspectives.

Ngāti Kuia's history has been left out or misrepresented in existing works. This book is an intentional, necessary writing of Ngāti Kuia into the historical narratives. It is now time for our stories to be told by us. This is *a* Ngāti Kuia perspective, not *the* Ngāti Kuia perspective. There are always differing perspectives on events between people, whānau, hapū and iwi. This difference is not inherently problematic. In Māori understandings of history, different groups can have different perspectives of the same event, and none of them are untrue; they are just not universally true. A helpful analogy is siblings recounting a situation, such as a disagreement, to their parents; the event is the same, but the stories and perspectives will naturally differ.

This book is part of a long whakapapa of iwi histories, which are increasingly considered the preferable way to engage with Māori histories.<sup>1</sup> It is iwi-centric rather than Māori-centric, as Ngāti Kuia are a unique group with a past that can only be understood from a Ngāti Kuia-centric approach.

Iwi-centric approaches such as this one necessitate an insider perspective which provides unique insight and understanding. It also comes with rights and responsibilities.<sup>2</sup> Āpirana Ngata (Ngāti Porou) spoke of correcting the 'great deal of inaccurate matter' that has been promulgated about Māori, describing it as being our 'duty as descendants of [our] ancestors to see that the truth is put on record'.<sup>3</sup> My whakapapa enables me to write an 'insider' history and to ensure our perspectives are put on record. This responsibility guides my work.

This book emerged from my doctoral thesis. Initially, I set out to explore Māori and European ways of engaging with the past. It quickly became apparent the tohu (signs) were pointing me towards Ngāti Kuia and our specific history – both in the traditional sense of tohu and the tohu that is a supervisor saying, 'you need to be looking at Ngāti Kuia'. Traversing the histories of your iwi, Nēpia Mahuika writes, 'provides a map home for those who suffered from the indignity of having their identities, language and history systematically taken away from them'.<sup>4</sup> Through working on the thesis and its adaptation into this book, I made a map home for myself. I hope this work serves as a map home for others.

Arini Loader (Ngāti Raukawa, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Whakaue) argues that having those from within the community tell their histories is ‘crucial in restoring some semblance of counter-balance in the colonial narratives’.<sup>5</sup> Iwi histories like this one can counter so much work that, as Mahuika notes, ‘homogenizes Māori identity, experiences and mātauranga’.<sup>6</sup> This is precisely what this book sets out to achieve – balance. We already have the histories of the big ‘winners’ of New Zealand history; we need the previously unheard stories of smaller groups like Ngāti Kuia to see the broader picture.

The history of Ngāti Kuia, a small iwi from Te Taihū-o-Te-Waka-a-Māui, provides insight into the history of Māori and Pākehā in Aotearoa. Through tracing the history of Ngāti Kuia, we learn about the arrival of Māori from Hawaiki and the migrations in Aotearoa, and about how the land was settled and claimed. We learn about warfare between iwi and the ongoing relationships between the winners and losers of these conflicts. Māori land rights and the role of whakapapa are explored. We also see how two disparate cultures first interacted and came to reside in this land and the issues that arose, particularly with the arrival of settlers and the imposition of a colonial government. Ngāti Kuia, despite their small size, have punched above their weight in the struggle for justice and recognition for Māori. The fight of Ngāti Kuia tīpuna (ancestors) across the generations for their rights cannot be overstated.



## Acknowledgements

This book is dedicated to the Ngāti Kuia tīpuna and whānau who have fought tirelessly for our rights across the generations. It would not have been possible without the work of those who have gone before me and the support of the iwi today.

I am ever grateful to Dr Peter Meihana and Mark Moses for always being willing to talk about Ngāti Kuia history and whakapapa. Thank you for being so generous with your time and sharing your mātauranga. To Angie Stretch, ngā mihi nui ki a koe for your mahi on the translations for this book and taking the time to kōrero with me about them. Special thanks to Vanya George for your ability to wrangle us together for a kaupapa.

To the team at Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia, ngā mihi nui ki a koutou for your support. Thank you for allowing me to come and raid the archives and for the images used in this book.

This book is based on my doctoral thesis 'Ngāti Kuia: Stories About the Past', completed in 2021. The thesis was made possible with financial support from a Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha/University of Canterbury Doctoral Scholarship and a Ngāi Tahu Research Centre Doctoral Scholarship. I was also fortunate to receive support from Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia and Wakatū Incorporation scholarship programmes. The conversion of the thesis into this book was made possible with support from the Judith Binney Trust Writing Award 2021. I would like to thank the Trust for their support and patience.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my doctoral supervisory team. To my primary supervisor, Professor Te Maire Tau, thank you for making time in your incredibly busy life to share your mātauranga and for pushing me to do a Ngāti Kuia-centric kaupapa. This would not have been possible without your guidance. To my other supervisors, Dr Martin Fisher and the late Dr Chris Jones, thank you for all your support during my doctoral journey.

As I was finishing my doctorate, I was fortunate to permanently join the team at Aotahi – School of Māori and Indigenous Studies at UC. I am incredibly grateful for the support from my Aotahi whānau – Unaiki Melrose, Jess Maclean, Liam Grant, Kirsty

Dunn, Phil Borell, Hamuera Kahi, Garrick Cooper, Jeanette King, Teena Henderson, Jamie Hape and Karen Murphy.

To the wonderful team at the Macmillan Brown Library at UC, thank you for all your help with locating sources and finding references. And I would also like to acknowledge the late Nekerangi Paul, who in his role at Macmillan Brown was so generous with his time and sharing his mātauranga on all things Te Ao Māori.

Thank you to those who kindly let me use their photographs, archives and artworks: Peter Meihana, Mark Moses, Melissa Banks, Lorraine Tarrant and Ruihana Hamuera. As well as the teams at Archives New Zealand, the Alexander Turnbull Library, Nelson Museum, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia, Ngāi Tahu Archives and the State Library of New South Wales for granting permission to include parts of their collections.

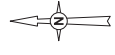
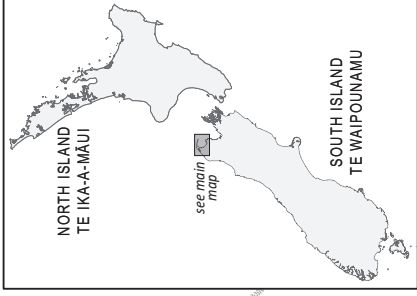
To the team at Auckland University Press, thank you for your support and guidance in bringing this book into the world. For believing that the story of a small iwi from Te Taihū is worth telling on the national stage. Special thanks go to Ross Calman for editing, Matariki Williams for proofreading, Glenys Daley for indexing, Tim Nolan for redrawing the maps and Neil Pardington for designing the internals and the cover.

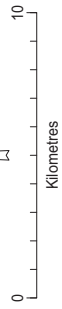
Thank you to my whānau and loved ones for your support while I brought this book to life. To Jesse for holding things down on the home front while I write. Finally, to my Nana, Jan, thank you for collecting our whānau whakapapa research, enabling me to pave a path home to Te Taihū.

**Right:**  
Map 2: Western Te Taihū from Te Matau/Separation Point to Onetahua/Farewell Spit.  
Map by Tim Nolan/Blackant Mapping Solutions.

**Overleaf left:**  
Map 3: Rangitoto and the tītī islands.  
Map by Tim Nolan/Blackant Mapping Solutions.

**Overleaf right:**  
Map 4: Te Hoiere to Te Tai-o-Aorere/Tasman Bay.  
Map by Tim Nolan/Blackant Mapping Solutions.



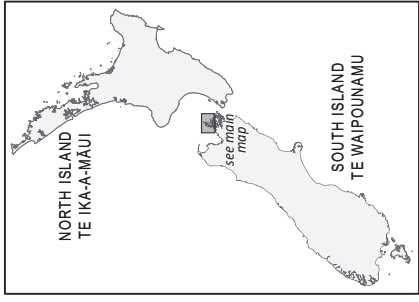


174°E

174°E

41°S

41°S



Takapourewa/Stephens Island

Kuru Pongi/Trio Islands

Chetwode Islands  
Te Kākaho Island

Titi Island

Te Paruparu/  
Forsyth Island

Te Akaroa/  
West Entry Point

Nukuwaiata Island

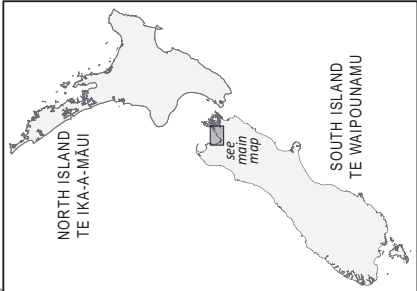
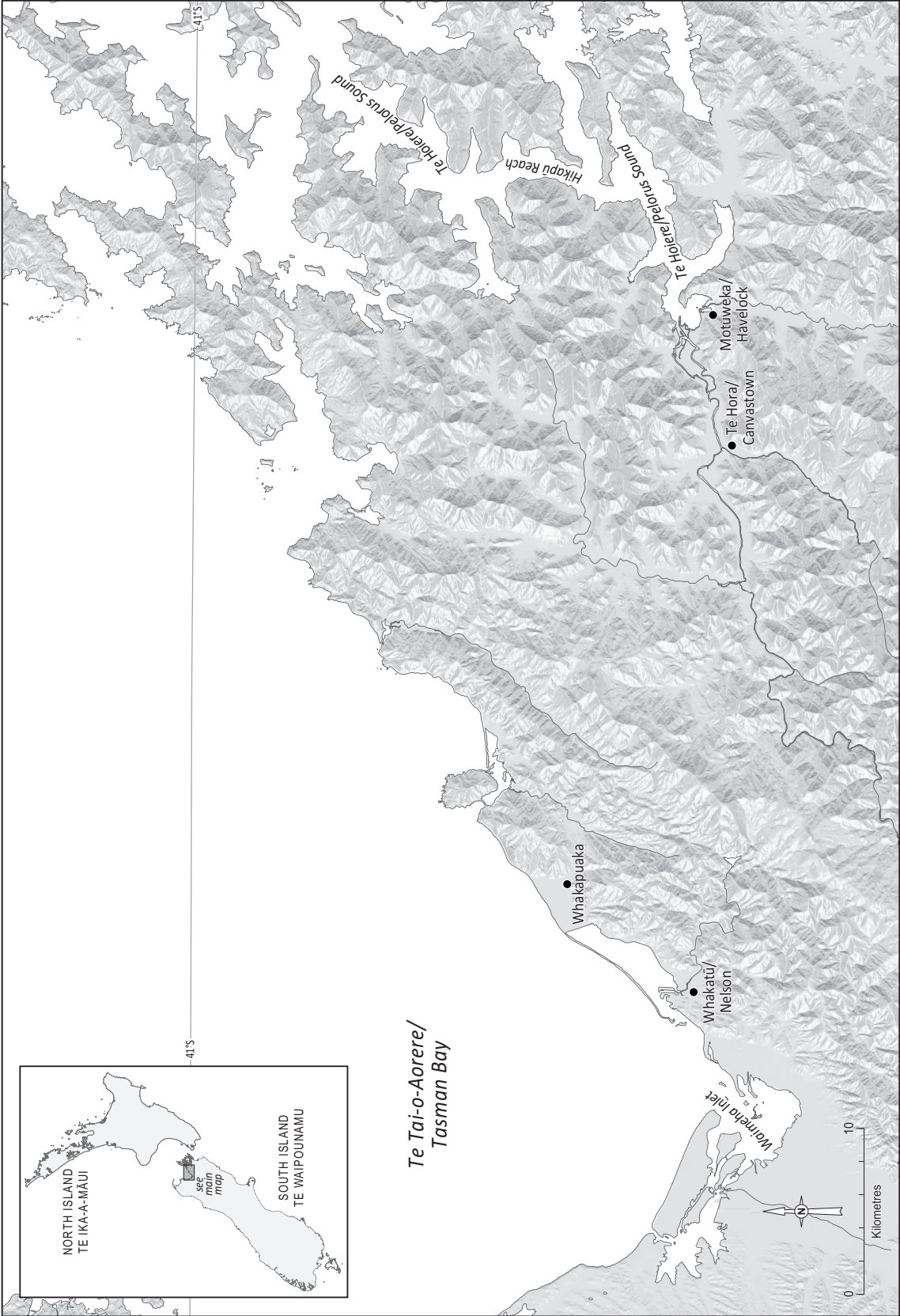
Te Hoiere/Pepus Sound

Bottle Point  
Otu Bay

Rangitoto ki te Tonga/  
D'Urville Island

Te Anini/French pass

Mukahanga





# Introduction

This book comprises seven chapters focusing on different elements of Ngāti Kuia identity and history. These, naturally, do not cover every facet of Ngāti Kuia history and should be viewed as a starting point from which to build in the future. The book is split into two parts: Te Ao Tawhito (the old world) and Te Ao Hou (the new world). Te Ao Tawhito provides an overview of Ngāti Kuia origins and whakapapa, and a discussion of three key Ngāti Kuia pūrākau. These pūrākau offer Ngāti Kuia perspectives of our history. They tell us what was important for the tīpuna to pass down the generations and how the Ngāti Kuia rohe was claimed. In Te Ao Hou, the focus shifts to the era of change, where Ngāti Kuia faced new challenges with the arrival of Europeans and incoming iwi from Te Ika-a-Māui. The Musket Wars of the 1820s ushered in a new era where Ngāti Kuia power was challenged by northern iwi. This was swiftly followed by the era of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the arrival of European settlers. The land ‘purchases’ of the nineteenth century had long-lasting impacts on Ngāti Kuia livelihoods and wellbeing. From the nineteenth century, Ngāti Kuia have been engaged in a near-constant struggle for recognition by other iwi of Te Taihū and the Crown. The Treaty settlement process and the Foreshore and Seabed Case of the early twenty-first century were continuations of the fight for recognition by Ngāti Kuia tīpuna for nearly a century. The common thread throughout these is the resilience and determination to fight for justice.

Chapter One provides an overview of Ngāti Kuia origins and whakapapa. Beginning with the pūrākau of Māui, Kupe and Matuahautere, the chapter explores the origins of Ngāti Kuia in Te Taihū. Ngāti Kuia whakapapa is a complex web of connections: to the early peoples of Te Taihū; to the *Kurahaupō* waka; and to various Te Ika-a-Māui-based groups. This first chapter gathers the threads of this web to explore the origins of the iwi. While Ngāti Kuia as an iwi emerged in Te Taihū, the history of migration, intermarriage and settlement form important parts of the story.

Chapter Two examines the taniwha Kaikaiāwaro, a crucial component of Ngāti Kuia identity and origins. Kipa Hēmi Whiro shared the pūrākau of Kaikaiāwaro and provided invaluable insight into the Ngāti Kuia worldview. This chapter outlines and analyses

this pūrākau and highlights its role in informing iwi identity. The whakapapa of Kaikaiāwaro provides the foundation of the pūrākau, which is permeated by the theme of tapu. The journeys of Kaikaiāwaro are symbolic of the removal of tapu over the land to make it spiritually safe to be inhabited and claimed by Ngāti Kuia. The pūrākau serves as an oral map of the Ngāti Kuia territory and is an assertion of mana and rights. It also contains a wealth of information regarding the fishing lore and practices of Ngāti Kuia. It follows a familiar template found in the traditions of related iwi, and its origins can be traced to the migrations from Hawaiki to Te Ika-a-Māui and on to Te Waipounamu. Therefore, this pūrākau is placed in the broader context of traditions, particularly those of Te Waipounamu. It is within pūrākau such as these that the values and mātauranga of Ngāti Kuia can be found.

Chapter Three examines Hinepopo, a Ngāti Kuia puihi (high-born young woman). She is primarily renowned for the remarkable feat of swimming across Raukawa Moana (Cook Strait). The Hinepopo pūrākau is a vital one for Ngāti Kuia identity. This chapter outlines and analyses this pūrākau to illustrate its role in creating meaning for Ngāti Kuia. It asks what this pūrākau can tell us about Ngāti Kuia origins and identity, and what values are contained within it. To achieve this, the pūrākau is discussed in the context of other Te Waipounamu traditions, as this is the best way to understand the symbols and meaning contained within it. The Hinepopo pūrākau, like that of Kaikaiāwaro, has parallels with other pūrākau from across the country and Hawaiki. The whakapapa of Hinepopo and her role as an archetypal character is outlined and some brief historical context is provided. However, the primary goal of this chapter is to show the connections between groups and how the pūrākau has been made specific to Ngāti Kuia. The main aim of the pūrākau is to illustrate Ngāti Kuia mana, rights and spiritual connection to the land. The themes of tapu, karakia and links to the environment permeate the narrative.

The final pūrākau chapter, Chapter Four, centres around the pūrākau about Whakataupōtiki, which recounts his actions in avenging the death of his brother, Tūwhakararo. Whakataupōtiki is the ideal strategist and warrior, and the pūrākau provides an example for others to follow. Eruera Wirihana recounted the pūrākau and accompanying waiata to Percy Smith in the late nineteenth century. Although a uniquely Ngāti Kuia version of the tradition was shared, it is a familiar narrative with versions in Te Ika-a-Māui, Rēkohu (the Chatham Islands) and Rarotonga. This chapter analyses the Ngāti Kuia rendition of Whakataupōtiki and how it highlights connections to other iwi and Hawaiki. The key themes are utu (reciprocity), the importance of karakia and war strategy.

Chapter Five focuses on Ngāti Kuia in the Musket Wars of the early nineteenth century. In particular, it explores the major battles of Waiorua, Hikapū, Whakapuaka and Kaiapoi Pā. Ngāti Kuia and other *Kurahaupō* waka iwi were resoundingly defeated

in the Battle of Waiorua on Kapiti around 1824. Ngāti Kuia were attacked at Te Hoiere in the battle of Hikapū in retribution for Waiorua. This chapter will also discuss the tuku whenua made by Ngāti Kuia and fellow Kurahaupō iwi to the migrating iwi Ngāti Koata, which allowed them to settle peacefully in Te Tauihu. A series of battles across Te Tauihu occurred as the incoming iwi exerted their strength. One of these battles, Whakapuaka, was at a shared Ngāti Kuia–Ngāti Koata pā that was attacked by the other migrating tribes and provides insight into the relationships on the ground at the time. Finally, the battle of Kaiapoi Pā will be examined. In 1831/32, a war party of northern iwi and Kurahaupō iwi, including some Ngāti Kuia, laid siege to the pā. Ngāti Kuia perspectives of these events have not been explored in depth before; existing accounts have removed Ngāti Kuia agency. This chapter outlines existing narratives as well as offering Ngāti Kuia counter-narratives.

Chapter Six discusses the drastically changed landscape following the arrival of the migrating tribes and European settlers. Ngāti Kuia were not invited to sign Te Tiriti o Waitangi and were not part of the 1839 New Zealand Company ‘purchases’ within Te Waipounamu. Ngāti Kuia were not included in the Nelson Tenth's Reserves, nor were they signatories to the 1853 Te Waipounamu Deed, which was the supposed purchase of all remaining Māori land. Only in 1856, after Ngāti Kuia demanded fair reimbursement and were under heavy pressure from the Crown, did they sign a deed and receive a mere £100 and 790 acres of reserves. Ngāti Kuia had little choice as the newly arrived northern iwi had already sold the lands (also having been compelled to do so). The petitions and protests of Ngāti Kuia whānau against these circumstances will be discussed. As Ngāti Kuia were increasingly dispossessed, the iwi described themselves as ‘the poorest tribe under the heavens’; insufficient reserves contributed significantly to this and will be outlined in depth.

Chapter Seven examines Ngāti Kuia’s ongoing fight for recognition through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Beginning with the battle for access to the tīti islands in the Marlborough Sounds and the ability to harvest the tīti, this chapter emphasises the continuous and intergenerational nature of Ngāti Kuia’s fight for rights. It then delves into the Treaty of Waitangi settlement, providing an account of the background to the claim and subsequent journey to settlement. It also covers the Foreshore and Seabed Case taken by the tribes of Te Tauihu in 1997. In that same year, they banded together and made an application to the Māori Land Court to determine the status of the foreshore and seabed of the Marlborough Sounds. Ngāti Kuia were an essential part of this landmark case, which was critical not only in the New Zealand context but also for International Indigenous Law.

The Kupu Whakamutunga (conclusion) offers some reflections and hopes for the future. Ngāti Kuia is now in a phase of development and growth following the Treaty settlement in 2014. There has been, and continues to be, a significant focus on growing

the capability and knowledge of whānau in their Ngāti Kuitanga. Hopefully, this current work can provide whānau with insight into their histories and Ngāti Kuitanga.

Maranga mai e ngā uri o Ngāti Kuia, e ngā mōrehu pakiaka ora o ngā whenua o Te Hoiere tae atu ki Whakatū.

Rise up the descendants of Ngāti Kuia, the surviving living roots of the land from the Marlborough Sounds to the Nelson district.<sup>1</sup>

## Sources of Ngāti Kuia History

During the Ngāti Kuia Treaty claim, Ngāti Kuia witness Te Kenehi Teira described the iwi's history as 'like one huge big jigsaw puzzle and you have to find all the pieces and put them together'.<sup>2</sup> While there is a significant gap in published histories regarding Ngāti Kuia, there is no shortage of knowledge or recorded information; it is just scattered around in 'pieces': in waiata and karakia, and in court records, whakapapa books and interviews. European ethnographers, such as Percy Smith and James Cowan, also played an essential role in recording early Ngāti Kuia history. These sources are the pieces of the Ngāti Kuia past. This book weaves the mātauranga within them into a coherent story of Ngāti Kuia and contributes another piece to the Ngāti Kuia puzzle. I hope that it continues to be built upon by future Ngāti Kuia scholars.

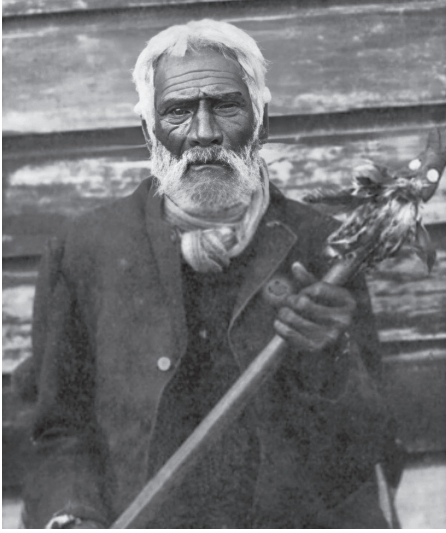
## Ngāti Kuia Experts

In whakapapa books, Native Land Court minutes and the archives of ethnographers, four Ngāti Kuia experts stand out as key sources of mātauranga, whakapapa and history: Meihana Kereopa, Tahuaraki Meihana,<sup>3</sup> Kipa Hēmi Whiro and Eruera Wirihana. These four experts were connected by whakapapa. Kipa and Eruera were both grandchildren of the tipuna Koangaumu and their standing as knowledge holders for Ngāti Kuia was recognised. This whakapapa is in the Hēmi (Kohi) whakapapa manuscript, which shows three descent lines from Koangaumu. The first and third are the pertinent ones here, but it is interesting to note that Tai-te-ariki was a composer, and some of his waiata appear in the Wirihana manuscript. Meihana Kereopa married Hēmi Whiro's sister Hana, making him Kipa's uncle.

### Whakapapa 1: Connections Between Key Ngāti Kuia Sources<sup>4</sup>

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Koangaumu	Koangaumu	Koangaumu
Pākauwera	Tai-te-ariki	Maihi
Wirihana	Āporo	Rina
Eruera	Kiti	Hēmi
		[Kipa]



Meihana Kereopa, c. 1910.  
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust Archive.



Tahuaraki Meihana with the Meihana manuscript,  
c. 1880–1900.  
Courtesy of Peter Meihana.

### *Meihana Kereopa and Tahuaraki Meihana*

Meihana Kereopa was the son of the chief Kereopa and his wife Kerenapu. He was born at Whakapuaka around 1800–1810 and resided at various locations throughout Te Taihū.<sup>5</sup> Meihana witnessed many of the events affecting Ngāti Kuia from the 1820s and was present at the Wairau Affray in 1843. He died in 1914.<sup>6</sup> He was put forward as the representative for Ngāti Kuia in the Native Land Court in the 1880s. In his evidence to the court, he stated:

I am the spokesperson of Ngati Kuia. I am the one that knows of the coming of the tribes here to conquer the land. It is not as if I have heard of it. I have observed it. I have seen the arrival of the tribes here to this island and their deeds. Some I have heard about others I have witnessed.<sup>7</sup>

Meihana was one of the first Ngāti Kuia people to become literate and he used these skills to record whakapapa, as well as protesting the injustices that affected his community. His son, with Hana of Ngāti Kuia, was Tahuaraki, who was the secretary for the Te Hora Komiti (committee) and, as a scribe, recorded much of the whakapapa in the Meihana manuscript. They were well recognised as leaders and knowledge holders of Ngāti Kuia. Peter MacDonald, Meihana's grandson and Tahuaraki's nephew, carried on their legacy, playing an important role in the Ngāti Māmoe and Ngāi Tahu Census Committee.



Lady Alina Bledisloe (left), Tahuaraki Meihana (centre) and Te Pou Hēmi Whiro (right) at the visit of Lord and Lady Bledisloe to Picton in January 1934.

Courtesy of Peter Meihana.

### *Kipa Hēmi Whiro*

Kipa was born at Te Hoiere around 1848 to Harota Uranga and Hēmi Te Wakarere Whiro. In the early part of his life, he also lived at Te Hora and Taituku. Acknowledged as a tohunga, he had a clubfoot, which was thought to be a sign of his status as a spiritual expert. Kipa was well known as an authority on tribal traditions and was able to call upon the taniwha Kaikaiāwaro. Using his prowess in karakia it was said he could shape-shift into the rupe (pigeon).<sup>8</sup>

In 1892, Kipa appeared in the Native Land Court as a Ngāti Kuia witness. In 1893, he was living at Te Hoiere when the river flooded, wreaking havoc on Ngāti Kuia settlements and livelihoods. Kipa and others of Ngāti Kuia and Rangitāne moved to Ōkoha at the head of Anakoha Bay, after they were allocated lands there by the 1893 Landless Natives Commission. Kipa was the leader at Ōkoha and played a vital role in fighting for the rights of Ngāti Kuia, including through letters and petitions. He was living there when he spoke to Cowan in 1908, sharing the pūrākau relating to Kaikaiāwaro and Hinepopo.<sup>9</sup>

He married Haromi Kiharoa of Ngāti Koata. Haromi's son Tiemi from her previous marriage would later marry Kipa's sister Ina, and this is my whakapapa line.



Haromi Kiharoa and Kipa Hēmi Whiro, c. 1909-1910.  
Author's personal collection.

## *Eruera Wirihana*

Eruera was born around 1818. In 1844 he was baptised as Eruera Nui and later became known as Eruera Wirihana and Edwin (or Edward) Wilson. His parents were Wirihana Kaipara and Kunari, and his paternal grandfather was the chief Pākauwera. Although Eruera is often referred to as Pākauwera in other sources, I will refer to him as Eruera Wirihana to differentiate him from his grandfather.

As a child he survived the raids by northern iwi, fleeing into the hills with his father from the battle of Hikapū. Eruera's grandfather, Pākauwera, was killed at this battle and his mother Kunari was taken captive and married to Apitia of Te Ātiawa. Eruera married Miriama Huriwai of Ngāi Tūāhuriri.<sup>10</sup> In 1856, he signed the Ngāti Kuia Deed of Sale.<sup>11</sup> He worked as a ferryman until the bridge over the Whakamarino River was constructed.<sup>12</sup> Later in life, he ran the store at Canvastown.<sup>13</sup> Before this, he lived in Wellington for a time, where he would visit Percy Smith. He was also on the Te Hora Komiti for the Ngāti Māmoe and Ngāi Tahu Claim. Eruera died in November 1902 and was buried at Canvastown.<sup>14</sup>

## **The Wirihana Manuscript**

One of the most significant sources of Ngāti Kuia history is the manuscript of information shared by Eruera Wirihana with Percy Smith in the late nineteenth century. While it is commonly known as the Pākauwera manuscript, I will refer to it as the Wirihana manuscript in this book, for reasons outlined in the previous section. The manuscript, which is held in the Alexander Turnbull Library, contains a wealth of pūrākau, waiata and karakia – pieces of the Ngāti Kuia past.<sup>15</sup> Smith recalled that Eruera shared 'some 150 songs' with him, many labelled, 'He waiata nā Ngāti Kuia' (a song from Ngāti Kuia).<sup>16</sup> In total, fifty-six were Ngāti Kuia waiata and karakia, of which twelve had named composers who were Ngāti Kuia ancestors. Examples of these will be referred to throughout this book. There was also a selection of waiata and karakia from other iwi including Ngāti Apa, Rangitāne, Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri, Ngāti Tara, Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāi Tahu.<sup>17</sup>

## **Pākehā Ethnographers**

Early Pākehā ethnographers spoke with Māori and recorded their kōrero (information). These early ethnographers were influenced by the widespread idea in the late nineteenth century that Māori were a 'dying race'. There was a push to record Māori information before it was too late. The documentation they created provide a rich corpus of information, some of which would have been lost if they had not recorded it. However, at times, their bias prevented them from appreciating the full value of the information.

### *Percy Smith*

Stephenson Percy Smith (1840–1922) was pivotal in recording Ngāti Kuia history. Born in England, Smith migrated to New Zealand as a child and spent the remainder of his childhood in Taranaki. After briefly serving in the local militia, Smith worked as a surveyor. While travelling for his surveying work, he collected information from Māori about their history and traditions. Upon his retirement, this became his sole focus. Smith co-founded the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* and was also a significant contributor. His main contribution to recording Ngāti Kuia history was his work with Eruera Wirihana compiling the Wirihana manuscript. He also recorded and translated Eruera's 'The Story of Hine-popo'. His 1917 article, 'Notes on the Ngati-Kuia tribe of the South Island, N.Z.' is also a key source.

Smith's recording of Eruera's mātauranga is an invaluable resource. His translations were not perfect and his own bias would often come through in his comments. For instance, Smith wrote patronisingly that Eruera 'was a communicative old fellow in some subjects connected with his tribe, but would not be considered a first-class Ruanuku, or learned man'.<sup>18</sup> Smith also dismissed much of the material, writing that 'the songs as a rule are not worth translating' and '[f]ew of these songs, etc., have any interest'.<sup>19</sup> These value judgements are problematic and highlight some of the issues with the work of early Pākehā ethnographers. The use of the Wirihana manuscript throughout this book will show how wrong the value judgements were. This is not to completely discount their work, as they collected a valuable corpus of information, but to acknowledge that it is imperfect and needs to be read in conjunction with other sources.

### *James Cowan*

James Cowan (1870–1943) was a journalist and historian during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Cowan's father was originally from Ireland and became a soldier during the Waikato War. Cowan grew up in Kihikihi in the Waikato on land confiscated from Māori in the 1860s. These circumstances influenced Cowan's interest in Māori histories.<sup>20</sup> Over his career, he worked as a journalist and published on Māori history, including on Te Taihū. He was particularly important for Ngāti Kuia because he recorded the tradition of the tribal taniwha Kaikaiāwaro and disseminated it in newspapers and a book.<sup>21</sup> While by no means perfect, Cowan spoke with Māori and presented their information positively compared to other writers of the time. In his book, *Pelorus Jack*, he wrote, 'this little book has been written in order to place on record some facts and folk-lore about the famous fish'.<sup>22</sup>

## Whakapapa Books

Whakapapa books created in the second half of the nineteenth century hold some of the most valuable surviving information. From the late 1870s, Kurahaupō iwi of Te Taihū held wānanga to gather information for the Ngāti Māmoē and Ngāi Tahu Kerēme (claim).<sup>23</sup> Whānau were part of Te Kerēme through their Māmoē whakapapa. They came together to wānanga on whakapapa and recorded the outcome in whakapapa books. First, Meihana Kereopa and his son Tahuaraki Meihana compiled the Meihana manuscript, a whakapapa book which includes details such as date, informant and location.<sup>24</sup> Later Te Pou Hēmi Whiro, Kipa's brother, and other contributors utilised many of the earlier Meihana whakapapa to prepare the Hēmi (Kohi) whakapapa manuscript.<sup>25</sup> According to Peter Meihana, by this time, the late nineteenth century, 'people are talking about themselves as Ngāti Kuia'.<sup>26</sup> Te Pou Hēmi Whiro used the book to record the minutes of the Te Hora Komiti for the Ngāti Māmoē claim, and then his son Eruera used it for Native Land Court claims.<sup>27</sup> Following this, Tuiti and Peter MacDonald used the book during their time on the Ngāi Tahu Census Committee in the early twentieth century.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the Hēmi whakapapa book is sometimes called the Kohi whakapapa book, the name for the section of whakapapa compiled for the census committee.<sup>29</sup> The Hēmi book is primarily arranged in tables and is an excellent example of the transition in the presentation of whakapapa.

## Native Land Court Minute Books

Native Land Court minute books are a key resource, with their documentation of Kurahaupō witnesses presenting evidence. The minute books are one of the earliest records of Ngāti Kuia perspectives. As a source, the minutes have some limitations. The questions asked of the witnesses are generally not recorded and European officials transcribed the kōrero. Most te reo Māori versions are not accessible any more (although part of one te reo minute book has been located). The witnesses were also there for a purpose – to substantiate their claims to land. This means the information they shared was pertinent for particular land claims and whakapapa relating to those. As long as these limitations are understood, the minute books provide helpful insight into Ngāti Kuia history and the perspectives of other Te Taihū iwi.

## Petitions and Letters

Ngāti Kuia rangatira and their communities have consistently fought for recognition through all available channels. From the nineteenth century, they sent a series of petitions and letters to Parliament and officials, pushing for their rights to be recognised. Many of these letters are held in Archives New Zealand. These are invaluable sources that contain the words of the tipuna and show their determination to fight for justice. These petitions and letters help us to piece together the Ngāti Kuia story.

## **The Waitangi Tribunal and Treaty Settlements**

The Waitangi Tribunal and Treaty settlement processes of the 2000s and 2010s created a large corpus of information. This was the first time Ngāti Kuia perspectives were listened to and recorded in depth. Some of the key sources to emerge from these processes were:

- research reports compiled by the iwi and their expert witnesses
- interviews conducted with kaumātua
- Waitangi Tribunal hearing transcripts and recordings where the evidence was examined
- Waitangi Tribunal reports
- the Ngāti Kuia Deed of Settlement.

The research commissioned by Ngāti Kuia provides the most information.<sup>30</sup> The resulting Tribunal reports and deed of settlement are more limited sources as they are confined to outlining the history of Ngāti Kuia and the Crown to identify breaches of Te Tiriti.

## **Contemporary Knowledge Holders**

I conducted interviews with Mark Moses and Peter Meihana, two contemporary Ngāti Kuia knowledge holders who were involved in the Treaty settlement process. These interviews delved into the settlement process and the broader history of Ngāti Kuia. Both of these experts have also compiled an extensive range of resources, which has been invaluable for my own research. In particular, Moses' work on the whakapapa and pūrākau of Ngāti Kuia and Peter Meihana's corpus of academic literature on Ngāti Kuia. A particularly important source is the 2017 chapter, 'New Grounds, Old Battles: The Kurahaupō Settlement', written by Meihana, with Moses and fellow settlement negotiator, Richard Bradley, as well as Judith Macdonald, a trustee of the Kurahaupō ki Te Waipounamu Trust.<sup>31</sup>



# **Part One – Te Ao Tawhito**



# Chapter One – Ngāti Kuia Origins and Whakapapa

Ngāti Kuia have whakapapa connections to the *Kurahaupō* waka and Te Ika-a-Māui, but arose in Te Taihū as an iwi grouping. There are many strands of whakapapa woven into Ngāti Kuia. The origins of the iwi will be outlined first through the pūrākau of Māui, Kupe, and of the tipuna (ancestor) Matuahautere and the taniwha Kaikaiāwaro, before delving into the migrations and marriages that contributed to the make up of Ngāti Kuia identity in Te Taihū.

## Māui

Māui is perhaps the most widely known figure from Māori tradition. Ngāti Kuia tradition mentions Māui, and he is thought to have fished up Te Ika-a-Māui from Arapaoa in the Marlborough Sounds using his hook, Te Matau-a-piki-mai-awea.<sup>1</sup> His whakapapa to Kuia is as follows:

### Whakapapa 2: Māui to Kuia<sup>2</sup>

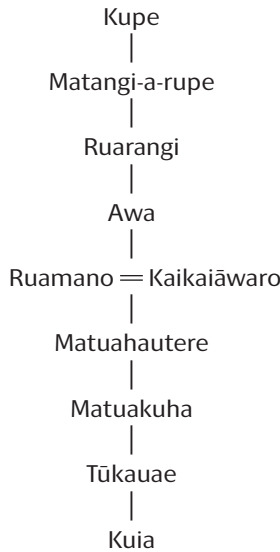


## Kupe

Next, we can trace Ngāti Kuia's origins through Kupe and Matuahautere. Ngāti Kuia are descendants of Kupe, who arrived on the *Matahourua* waka and navigated around Te Waipounamu and Te Ika-a-Māui.<sup>3</sup> 'We are one of the oldest of Kupe's descendants to occupy Te Waipounamu', as tribal knowledge holder Mark Moses told the Waitangi Tribunal.<sup>4</sup>

### Whakapapa 3: Kupe, Kaikaiāwaro, Kuia<sup>5</sup>

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Kupe voyaged across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean) in pursuit of Te Wheke-a-Muturangi (the octopus of Muturangi). He killed the wheke at the entrance to Tōtaranui (Queen Charlotte Sound), at Kura-te-au (Tory Channel), using a strike known as Arapaoa ('ara' rise and 'paoa' strike), which is commemorated in the name Arapaoa Island.<sup>6</sup> The name Kura-te-au ('kura' red and 'au' current) refers to the octopus's red blood in the channel. Kupe left the eyeballs of Te Wheke in the ocean, and they became known as Whatutipare and Whatukaipono (and, later on, as The Brothers islands).<sup>7</sup> Place names such as these commemorate the deeds of Kupe in the landscape of Te Taihū.

Ngāti Kuia tradition states that Kupe left a kaitiaki (guardian), Kaikaiāwaro, in the Rangitoto (D'Urville Island) area to guide his descendants.<sup>8</sup> Kupe also had a pet named Rupe (another name for the kererū or New Zealand pigeon) and when they arrived in Te Taihū, he tasked Rupe with investigating the resources of the forests. Rupe is said to have explored Puhikererū (Mt Furneaux) and what became known as Te Rupe-o-Ruapaka (near Canvastown). These areas are both rich in bird life.<sup>9</sup> Rupe had two heads,



Te Aumiti (French Pass), Rangitoto (D'Urville Island), 1958.  
French Pass, D'Urville Island, Marlborough Sounds. Whites Aviation Ltd: Photographs,  
Alexander Turnbull Library, WA-47702-F.

one facing forwards and one facing backwards. This is both practical for surveying the area and a symbol for seeing the past and the future. When Rupe saw the area's wealth of resources, he abandoned Kupe and remained there.

Kupe's daughter Hine had a kaitiaki in the form of a bird named Te Kawau-a-Toru. Te Kawau drowned when checking the currents in Te Aumiti (French Pass). Kupe then named the channel Te Aumiti-a-Te-Kawau-a-Toru (the current that swallowed Te Kawau-a-Toru).<sup>10</sup>

While the crew were gathering provisions at Nukuwaiata (Chetwode Islands), two crew members, Pani and Kereopa, deserted, desiring to remain in the area. Some say they took one of Kupe's children with them, either voluntarily or by force.<sup>11</sup> Kupe pursued them but they used their prowess in karakia to evade capture and separated to make it more difficult for Kupe to catch them. However, Pani died when his waka hit rough seas, while Kereopa managed to escape. At Whakatū, Kupe nearly captured Kereopa, but Kereopa performed a karakia that caused the rocks to fall creating the Boulder Bank near Nelson. The name Te Taero-a-Kereopa (the obstruction of Kereopa) commemorates this event.<sup>12</sup>

The tradition of Kupe emphasises the length of Ngāti Kuia occupation in Te Taihū and the power of karakia.<sup>13</sup> As will be seen throughout the book, karakia are an essential part of Ngāti Kuia identity and feature prominently in Ngāti Kuia pūrākau.

## Matuahautere

Matuahautere is the tipuna most frequently mentioned in Ngāti Kuia pepeha. A descendant of Kupe, he arrived in Te Taihū in his waka *Te Hoiere*, escorted by the taniwha Kaikaiāwaro. Like Kupe before him, Matuahautere placed names onto the landscape. He settled near Anakoha at Titi-i-te-rangi Bay, a name given by Matuahautere when he saw the numbers of tīti (muttonbirds) there.<sup>14</sup> He named Parororangi (also known as Parororaki) maunga, referencing the stormy sky.<sup>15</sup> The maunga is the home of the patupaiarehe (fairy folk), and in Ngāti Kuia kōrero tuku iho (oral tradition), is described as a ‘vantage point at which they gathered to view the other Rangituhaha (heavens) and a pathway to the human world’.<sup>16</sup> Tribal tradition tells of Matuahautere catching two patupaiarehe on the maunga, a man and a woman. The man was killed and the woman was married to a Ngāti Kuia rangatira (chief). One of their descendants was Kunari, who married Wirihana Kaipara and bore a son, Eruera Wirihana. In the statutory acknowledgements for Te Taihū, the whakapapa connection to the patupaiarehe was described as symbolic of the link ‘between the spiritual and human realms; the “upper realm” (te kauwae runga) and the “lower realm” (te kauwae raro). These spiritual links to the past form an integral part of Ngāti Kuia identity today.’<sup>17</sup>

## Kurahaupō

Some Ngāti Kuia tipuna, including Whātonga, arrived in Aotearoa on the *Kurahaupō* waka that came from Hawaiki. The whakapapa from Māui (see Whakapapa 2), which includes Whātonga, demonstrates Ngāti Kuia’s connection to the *Kurahaupō* waka.<sup>18</sup> The eponymous tipuna Kuia, Apa and Rangitāne all descend from Whātonga.<sup>19</sup> This waka connection is the first layer of whakapapa links between these groups.

## Hapū and Iwi

A number of hapū and iwi groups contribute to the whakapapa of Ngāti Kuia. Peter Meihana describes Ngāti Kuia as ‘a confederation of hapū’.<sup>20</sup> The nineteenth-century Meihana manuscript identifies the primary groups that make up Ngāti Kuia whakapapa as Ngāti Māmoe, Ngāti Wairangi, Ngāti Kopia (also known as Ngāti Kōpiha), Ngāti Hine, Ngāi Tawake, Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri, Ngāi Te Heiwi, Ngāti Apa and Ngāti Hāpairangi.<sup>21</sup> Whakapapa 7 illustrates the key connections between these groups.

The whakapapa, at times, can be convoluted; there was no single migration south from the Wairarapa, rather, it was a process of different migrations and intermarriage with various groups over time. There were often many layers of intermarriage through

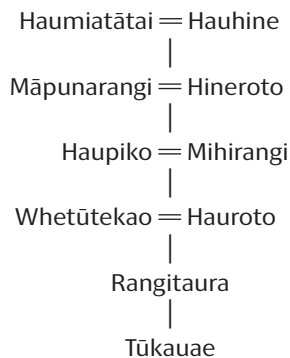
the generations. Over time, Ngāti Kuia emerged as the iwi identity, maintaining these whakapapa links. By the late nineteenth century, these various groups largely sat under the iwi groupings of Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Apa and Rangitāne in Te Taihū, although these did not completely supersede the older hapū identities.<sup>22</sup>

### Te Ika-a-Māui

Further whakapapa ties between the groups who later became the three Kurahaupō iwi of Te Taihū were created in Te Ika-a-Māui. Although Ngāti Kuia as a grouping emerged in Te Taihū, the iwi’s whakapapa also ties back to Te Ika-a-Māui, primarily the Wairarapa. For instance, Kuia’s father, Tūkauae, lived in the Wairarapa, Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) and finally, Te Taihū. This pattern was typical, with groups migrating from Wairarapa to Te Whanganui-a-Tara and later into Te Taihū. Tūkauae was a descendant of Matuahautere and his son Matuakuha, as shown in Whakapapa 3.<sup>23</sup> Tūkauae also had Ngāi Tara and Ngāti Māmoe whakapapa. Whakapapa 4, a tātai hikohiko (abbreviated whakapapa), shows Tūkauae’s descent from Haumiatātai of Ngāti Māmoe.<sup>24</sup>

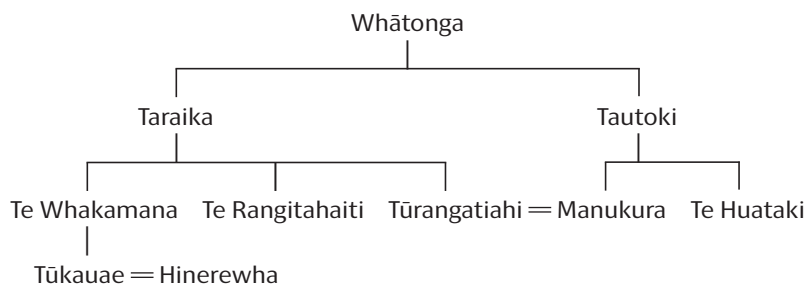
#### Whakapapa 4: Tūkauae

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While in the Wairarapa, the tipuna made a series of strategic marriages, creating alliances and strengthening their connections. There were marriages between Tūkauae, Te Whakamana (Ngāi Tara) and Te Huataki’s whānau (Rangitāne). Tūkauae married Te Whakamana’s daughter, Hinerewha. Te Whakamana’s brother, Tūrangatahi, married Te Huataki’s sister, Maninikura (also known as Manukura). Whakapapa 5 illustrates these marriages.<sup>25</sup>

## Whakapapa 5: Whātonga to Tūkauae



Alliances were also created through tuku whenua (gifts of land). Te Whakamana made one such alliance with Ngāti Ira by gifting land to the rangatira Te Whakaumu. Te Whakaumu then married Te Whakamana's daughter, Hine-i-te-pūtangi.<sup>26</sup> Ngāti Ira also made a tuku whenua in the Wairarapa to Ngāi Tara tīpuna following their involvement in a heke with Ngāti Ira. This was solidified through the marriage of Tūkauae's son, Māhangakōkō, and Hinehuri, a daughter of the Ngāti Ira rangatira, Matuaterangi.<sup>27</sup> Some of the Ngāi Tara and Rangitāne rangatira then migrated south to the Wellington region, including Te Whakamana and his brother Te Rangitahaiti, Tūkauae and Te Huataki. Some of their children remained in Te Ika-a-Māui when Ngāti Kuia's ancestors migrated to Te Taihu.

### Te Taihu-o-Te-Waka-a-Māui

As tīpuna migrated to Te Taihu, they engaged in conflicts and intermarried with existing groups. Interlinking with the whakapapa of the earlier inhabitants was necessary for security and connection to the land. The descendants of these marriages then had rights through whakapapa and conquest, much preferred to rights gained through conquest alone. For the security of occupation, as Te Maire Tau notes, the incomers had to 'not only intermarry with the local people but also learn the whakapapa or the spiritual essence of the land. Claiming land by conquest was not enough to gain mana to the land.'<sup>28</sup> Previous groups were not eradicated; their whakapapa, mana, and mātauranga (knowledge) were absorbed, ensuring spiritual safety and rights for the incoming group. The earlier peoples of Te Taihu that Ngāti Kuia intermarried with were Ngāti Māmoe, Ngāti Wairangi and Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri. It is difficult to determine when these peoples arrived in Te Taihu. Most agree that Ngāti Māmoe and Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri arrived in Te Taihu in the sixteenth century and that a group of Ngāi Tara preceded them, arriving in the late fifteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

### *Ngāti Māmoe*

Ngāti Māmoe were an early group who inhabited Te Taihū, migrating there from the Heretaunga region (Hawke's Bay). Under pressure from Rangitāne in the north, they migrated first to Te Whanganui-a-Tara. They were influenced to migrate further south by a koha (gift) of food from the Waitaha iwi of Te Waipounamu. Realising how rich the resources must be, they migrated to Te Taihū and further south in Te Waipounamu.<sup>30</sup>

Ngāti Māmoe became the dominant iwi of Te Waipounamu through intermarrying with the Waitaha people. Links were created with Ngāti Kuia when Tūkauae's sister, Hine-i-te-kōwhāangi, married Māmoe's descendant, Pūroto. Pūroto was the child of Kopia and Wairangi, whose descendants were known as Ngāti Kopia and Ngāti Wairangi.<sup>31</sup> Some of their descendants migrated to Te Tai Poutini and some remained in Te Taihū. The descendants of Hine-i-te-kōwhāangi and Pūroto formed the Ngāti Hine hapū. These links are outlined in Whakapapa 7.

### *Ngāi Tara and Ngāi Tarapounamu*

The early Ngāi Tara group who migrated to Te Waipounamu became known as Ngāi Tarapounamu to differentiate them from their relations in the north. Ngāi Tarapounamu also had Ngāti Ira whakapapa lines.<sup>32</sup> Ngāi Tarapounamu appear to have been resident in Te Taihū by 1500, contemporaneously with Waitaha. Ngāi Tarapounamu groups occupied the Tōtaranui, Te Hoiere and Waimeha areas.

Confusingly, there was also another tribe known as Ngāi Tarapounamu that resided on Rangitoto at the same time. This tribe originated in Taranaki. A waka of this Ngāi Tarapounamu people was out fishing and was blown south by a storm, washing ashore on the western side of Rangitoto.<sup>33</sup> Realising the quality of resources in the area, they returned home to Taranaki to bring more people to settle in the area.<sup>34</sup>

So when the later tipuna migrated south, they married the existing Ngāi Tara, further consolidating these whakapapa connections. The Ngāi Tara of Te Ika-a-Māui and Te Taihū already had connections, but more were created in Te Taihū through ongoing intermarriage.

### *Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri*

Some of the closest whakapapa connections are between Ngāti Kuia and Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri, who both descend from the *Kurahaupō* waka. Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri arrived in Te Taihū via the Bay of Plenty in the sixteenth century. Their occupation spanned the region, from Rangitoto in the Marlborough Sounds to Mohua (Golden Bay), where they encountered Abel Tasman and his crew in 1642.<sup>35</sup> Intermarriage between Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri and those who would become known as Ngāti Kuia was extensive.<sup>36</sup>

Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri continued to operate as their own group but became more integrated into Ngāti Kuia whakapapa over time. Following the arrival of northern iwi

and Europeans in the 1820s, Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri became even more closely associated with Ngāti Kuia. Related groups banded together as they could not continue to survive independently. This was likely already occurring, but increased during this time of drastic change in the mid-nineteenth century. It became problematic when the New Zealand Company and Crown did not understand the complexities of whakapapa and connections between groups and could not (or rather, did not) distinguish between the groups for land sales.

Although the three Kurahaupō iwi previously mentioned became the dominant groups in the nineteenth century, Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri whakapapa was retained and called upon from time to time. Many names given by Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri remain on the landscape of Te Taihū. For instance, the mountain Puhikererū is named for a Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri ancestor.<sup>37</sup>

An interesting example of retaining Tūmatakōkiri lines and names is found in the diary of politician and amateur naturalist Joshua Rutland, who lived in Marlborough from the 1860s.<sup>38</sup> He recorded that around 1869–70, Ngāti Kuia chief Hēmi Whiro of Te Hora and Taituku pā (near Canvastown) was crafting a waka intended for fellow Ngāti Kuia chief, Kereopa Ngārangi of Ruapaka Pā (also near Canvastown).<sup>39</sup> This waka was named *Te Whitiō*, after a Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri ancestor.<sup>40</sup> Some Te Whitiō and Tāwhati descendants had been granted land at Ruapaka after the 1856 Crown purchase.<sup>41</sup> The whakapapa of these ancestors was provided in the Meihana manuscript.<sup>42</sup>



Dr Peter Meihana (left), Keelan Walker (centre) and Aroha Bond (right) with the waka *Te Whitiō*, carved by their ancestor Hēmi Whiro in 1869 or 1870. The waka is now cared for by Marlborough Museum. Stuff Limited, 634486919.



Taituku Pā, c. 1880.

J. P. Murray, *Taitook Pah Pelorus*, c. 1880. Alexander Turnbull Library, C-126-014.

## Whakapapa 6: Te Whitiō and Tāwhati

Haeamaiterangi = Tūkakia

Tamatitoko = Tūkaimanawa

Hinekauwhata = Te Wawaro

Tāwhati = Te Whitiō

In 1867, Hōhepa Te Kiaka of Ngāi Tara, Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri and Ngāti Kuia invoked the Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri tipuna Haeamaiterangi as the basis for his rights to Rangitoto:<sup>43</sup>

Ka tahi hoki ahau ka whakaputa i taku kupu kia koe kia rongo mai nga iwi e noho ana i te na motu i tenei motu me te iwi Pakeha hoki e noho ana ki te hauauru ki te tua whenua ko Haeamaiterangi te putake he Kingi nui no taua motu. He tupuna noku tona teina ko Tupehia, ta Tupehia ko Hunuku ta Hunuku ko Papanui ta Papanui ko Mokorea. He tupuna katoa enei noku ta Mokorea, ko Hunuku ta Hunuku, ko Hohepa Te Kiaka. Ka waiho ahau he putake hei pakiaka ora<sup>44</sup> mo taua motu, mo Rangitoto. No reira ka noho taua iwi a Ngati Koata ki runga ki toku tuara hei putake tonu ahau mo ratou.

I am speaking to you now so that all the tribes who live on that island and this, as well as the Pākehā people who live to the west and inland, may hear. Haeamaiterangi is the basis for all claims, he was the absolute ruler of that island. His younger brother Tupehia is my ancestor. Tupehia had Hunuku, Hunuku had Papanui, Papanui had Mokorea. These are all ancestors of mine. Mokorea had Hunuku, and Hunuku had Hohepa Te Kiaka. I regard myself as a basis and living root for that island, for Rangitoto. Therefore that iwi, Ngati Koata, lives on my back, I am the basis for them.<sup>45</sup>

Through this statement, Te Kiaka asserted his claim to Rangitoto where he resided and explained that this Tūmatakōkiri whakapapa is the basis for the *tuku whenua* to Ngāti Koata in the 1820s: Kurahaupō iwi were able to make the *tuku* because their Tūmatakōkiri whakapapa provided their rights to Rangitoto.<sup>46</sup> While Tūmatakōkiri were no longer the dominant group in Te Taihū, the whakapapa was retained, and its importance in Ngāti Kuia land rights was acknowledged. Eruera Wirihana discussed these connections with Percy Smith, saying, ‘Rangitane, Ngati-Apa, Ngati-Kuia, Ngati-Tumatakokiri and Ngaitara, all come from the same source, that Rangitane originally occupied Tamaki [Tāmaki-nui-a-Rua] with Ngaitara, but [Ngāti] Apa never lived on that side of the range. Of the tribes, [Ngāti] Kuia and [Ngāti] Tumatakokiri are the nearest relatives, in fact the same people.’<sup>47</sup> These links were further strengthened in the late nineteenth century as a result of the reduction in numbers and the shifting of groups.<sup>48</sup>

### **He Pūtake, Hei Pakiaka Ora**

The interwoven nature of Ngāti Kuia whakapapa was outlined to the Waitangi Tribunal in the opening submissions for the Ngāti Kuia claim:

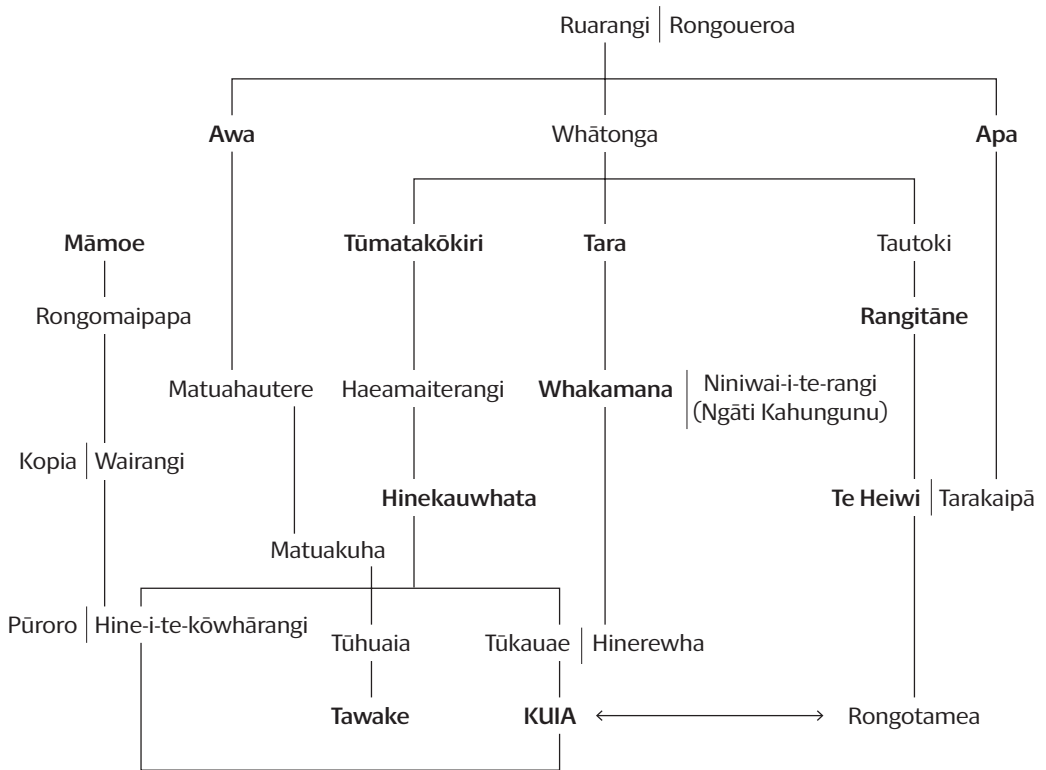
Ngati Kuia descend from the first peoples of this land. Climate, resources, human nature, desire for independence or freedom from aggression or overpopulation played a part in the formation of iwi who, in pre-Western contact society were highly mobile transitional groups of inter-related whanau or hapu. Ngati Kuia were one such group.<sup>49</sup>

Ngāti Kuia are *tangata whenua* of Te Taihū and have kept their *ahi kā* (fires of occupation) alight. Ngāti Kuia *tipuna* and their whakapapa are the *pūtake* (basis) for this status. ‘Pūtake’ is an excellent term to describe Ngāti Kuia. Cowan noted that Ngāti Kuia were an ‘ancient’ tribe.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, Elvy explained that when Ngāti Kuia ‘tell you a locality name it is beyond question, since they have occupied the Pelorus Sounds a very long time’.<sup>51</sup> Ngata in his report on Ngāti Kuia ‘assessed from the *korero* of Ngati Kuia . . . that they are an ancient iwi, established on the descent lines of *tangata whenua*

of Te Taihū.<sup>52</sup> Kath Hemi also spoke of this during the Tribunal hearings, saying that ‘although Kuia as an iwi is recent, their roots are indeed ancient and so intertwined with associated iwi as to be impossible to unravel’. She further said that, ‘if Kuia went back into their original lines of Whakamana and Ngai Tara that nobody could tell when they arrived here, they were so ancient’.<sup>53</sup> These ancient lines, which Rangitāne also claim, have often been misunderstood or simply ignored.

Ngāti Kuia descend from the first people of Te Taihū. Ngāti Kuia whakapapa stretches back to Te Ika-a-Māui, but the iwi emerged as a grouping in Te Taihū. By 1820, Ngāti Kuia and their close relations, Ngāti Apa and Rangitāne, were the tangata whenua of Te Taihū.

### Whakapapa 7: Origins of Ngāti Kuia Whakapapa Connections (nā Mark Moses)



Bold tipuna names were applied to hapū or iwi groupings



Waharoa, Te Hora Pā, Canvastown.  
Melissa Banks Photography.



