



# MARANGA MAI! TE REO AND MARAE IN CRISIS?

EDITED BY  
MERATA KAWHARU



**MARANGA MAI! OUR PEOPLE.  
WE HAVE BECOME COMPLACENT.  
OUR LANGUAGE AND OUR MARAE  
ARE STRUGGLING. YET WE  
REMAIN ASLEEP. WE NEED  
TO WAKE UP! — MERIMERI  
PENFOLD, TAI TOKERAU KUIA**





In recent decades, Māori have made huge efforts to reinvigorate te reo and the life of marae as the twin cornerstones of Māori identity. Māori television and radio stations have been set up, the Māori Language Commission established and kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa and wananga have emerged. Old marae gained new coats of paint and new marae were established. But despite these efforts, te reo and tribal marae today seem to be in crisis. The number of children in kōhanga reo is down 34 per cent from its peak. Only 15 per cent of Māori children are attending Māori-medium schooling. And fewer and fewer people are participating in marae activities. Without a living language spoken regularly on the marae or in everyday lives, what does the future hold for Māori and for our nation?

Focusing on the northern tribal district Tāi Tokerau as a case study but with conclusions applicable across the country, the leading Māori scholars and elders in *Maranga Mai!* ask these key questions and pose potential solutions. The chapters provide personal accounts and stories, statistics, demography and policy questions – and present important challenges for current and new generations of leaders to resolve.

*Maranga Mai!* is edited by anthropologist Merata Kawharu and includes a foreword by Erima Henare, chairman of the Māori Language Commission. The book has contributions from Ngāti Kuri kuia Merimeri Penfold, whose chapter in contemporary Tāi Tokerau te reo is also translated into English; anthropologist Paul Tapsell; kaumātua Hone Sadler, with a text in te reo with English translation; linguist Arapera Ngaha; Kevin Robinson, chief executive of Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa; educationalist Margie Hohepa; kaumātua Fraser Toi; sociologist Stephen McTaggart; lawyer Kiri Toki; Merata Kawharu along with emerging scholar Paratene Tane; another emerging scholar, Jade Aikman-Dodd; film-maker Michael Hennessy; and internationally renowned photographer Krzysztof Pfeiffer.

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# INTRODUCTION

‘Maranga mai,’ exclaimed Tāi Tokerau kuia Merimeri Penfold. ‘Wake up!’

The 94-year-old was at her home in the Far North on the phone to me in Dunedin. ‘Sometimes I just do not understand,’ she lamented. ‘Our people. We have become complacent. Our language and our marae are struggling. Yet we are asleep. We need to wake up!’

These sentiments more or less capture the tenor of this collection of essays. As the title of the book suggests, we present a challenge. Or *re*-present a challenge: kaumātua and other Māori leaders laid it down well before words were formed on these pages. Simply, the challenge is how to come to terms with deepening crises within Māori communities: the crisis of the Māori language and the crisis of our most central institution of identity, the tribal marae. An overarching question needs to be asked first: how real are the problems so claimed? Then there are critical questions of detail. If these crises are observable by and within Māori communities, where do the responsibilities lie in responding to them? Is it with marae communities, whānau, schools, Māori organisations and/or government? Who shoulders what obligations? Our book responds to these challenges and begins to address the issues directly. We do this by looking at what the concerns are, and how and why they have developed.

**PAUL TAPSELL** is chair of Māori Studies at the University of Otago. Of Te Arawa and Ngāti Raukawa descent, he has a background in museums and cultural heritage. Having graduated from the University of Oxford in 1998 with a D.Phil. in Museum Ethnography, he has worked as curator of the Rotorua Museum and director Māori at Auckland Museum. In the mid-1990s, he was instrumental in the return of Pukaki, an iconic and important taonga, to Rotorua from the Auckland Museum.

Professor Tapsell's passion is for customary leadership and the potential intersections with today's generation of dislocated indigenous youth, and these are his primary research focus. He is involved in tribal (especially Ngāti Whakaue) and national organisations. Paul is published widely on Māori and indigenous topics and has spearheaded the Māori Maps project.

## CHAPTER TWO

# TRIBAL MARAE: CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS?

PAUL TAPSELL

*I see the legacy of colonisation and the loss Māori suffered: the loss of mana and the right to fully be Māori in your own country.* – Piripi Walker, speaking on Radio New Zealand National, 1 August 2010

**I** GREW UP IN THE RURAL BAY OF PLENTY–WAIKATO REGIONS OF AOTEAROA New Zealand, believing anything north of the Auckland Harbour Bridge was enemy country. Once a year we would visit Uncle Pekamu, Dad's older brother, and his whānau (family) who lived on the lower slopes of the extinct volcano Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill). The journey north would seem to take forever, but to help pass time we 'eye-spied' old pā (terraced villages, now abandoned) from the rear of Dad's car. My uncle's house was a Victorian mansion, with central heating and an impressive view to the northwest: towards enemy country! Uncle Pek and Dad would tease us: 'That's Ngāpuhi country up there boys: they stole our women once upon a time!' Those sorts of comments didn't register much to us youngsters. We were less interested in stories and more interested in exploring the neighbourhood. But we did like the idea of 'enemy country' for seeding further imaginings of battle and war. It seemed to take forever to climb the grassed slopes of Maungakiekie – terrace after steep terrace – until finally we reached a place we could look north, beyond the harbour bridge over the Waitematā. 'Enemy country' we would parrot as we sat on the edge of a large flat area with karaka trees and grazing sheep. We imagined massive palisades protecting us from

**HŌNE SADLER** (Ngāti Moerewa, Ngāti Rangi and Ngāi Tawake ki Te Waoku) has a Master of Maturanga Māori degree from Te Wānanga o Raukawa. He was brought up in Tautoro, south west of Kaikohe. Hōne attended Tautoro Māori School and after his family shifted to Kaikohe, he attended Kaikohe Māori School and then Kaikohe Primary School, completing his compulsory education at Northland College in 1967.

He graduated from North Shore Teachers' College, beginning his teaching career in 1970. He taught in the primary and secondary services before moving to the tertiary sector, where he began at Northland Polytechnic. He is now a senior lecturer in the Māori Studies Department at the University of Auckland.

Hōne is a fluent native speaker of te reo and has been steeped in tikanga Ngāpuhi and Ngāpuhi histories and haka, with mentoring by his parents and his uncles. He has been involved with the Tiriti o Waitangi claims for about 40 years. He was chosen, along with Patu Hohepa, Erima Henare, Hirini Henare and Rima Edwards, by Ngāpuhi to lay the foundations for the opening of the Ngāpuhi early hearings of Te Paparahi o Te Raki, the WAI 1040 claim.



## CHAPTER THREE

# TE MEMEHA HAERE O NGĀ KAIKŌRERO TOHUNGA KI RUNGA I NGĀ MARAE

HŌNE SADLER

**K**o raungaiti haere te noho o ngā taumata kōrero ki runga i ngā marae o Ngāpuhi i te mimiti o ngā puna pupuri kōrero, pupuri tikanga hoki. Me tōku hakapae e pērā katoa ana ki runga i ngā marae puta i te motu whānui. Erangi, he waimārie kē ētahi o ngā marae nā te mea e kaha tonu ana ō rātou taumata i te whai tohunga ki te tuku mihi hakatau hei pōwhiri manuhiri, e mau tonu ana ki ngā kaupapa tika, kia noho ora tonu ngā tikanga tuku iho o ngā mātua, tūpuna.

Ko te nuinga o ngā kaumātua e pupuri ana i te mauri o ngā marae i ēnei wā tonu, ko rātou hoki te hunga kātahi anō kia hoki mai ki te kāinga, e hia kē tau e ngaro ana ki roto i ngā ngahere raima, ki ngā tāone nunui. I hakarērea e rātou ngā kāinga tupu i te tamatānetanga, ā, ka haere ki te rapu mahi, oranga hoki mō rātou me ō rātou whānau, tamariki anō rā hoki. Nā ka tae ki te kaumātuatanga, ka mutu te mahi, ka pā mai te tō o te kāinga ka kore e taea te karo, ā, ka hakatika ka hoki.

He tauhou hoki rātou ki te noho i ngā taumata. Kāhore anō kia pakari ai ō rātou reo. Kāhore e tino mōhio ana ki ngā mahi hakahaere o te marae. Nā, ko ngā taimahatanga ko utaina ki runga i ō rātou pokowhiwhi hei amo mō te iwi, hapū me te whānau. Koia ēnei ko te nuinga o ngā tūmomo





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