



A Separate Authority (He Mana Motuhake), *Volume II*

The Crown's Betrayal of the
Tūhoe Māori Sanctuary in
New Zealand, 1915–1926

Steven Webster



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The author and his family have identified the old home in the cover photo as that of Hikawera Te Kurapa, the *tohunga whakapono* ('expert on truth or faith') of Te Urewera hapū in the 1970–1980s. It was in Papueru, Heipipi, located on the road just south of Ruatāhuna (Fig. 1.1). Hikawera himself died in the 1980s. His name appears in the indexes of both volumes.

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*E te atua
taburi mai ōu taringa ki tā mātou inoi
hei whakangaro atu koe inā tangi atu mātou.
Anga mai, titiro mai hoki koe
ki a mātou e pokaikaha noa nei,
tangi nei hoki,
koi mātou e whakakorōria nei
ki tōu ingoa tapu.
Āmine¹*

(‘O Lord
turn your ear to our prayer
lest our cries be lost to you.
Turn to us, look at us
see our turmoils,
our cries of anguish,
so that we may glorify
your sacred name.
Amen’)

Dedication

These volumes are dedicated to the *wairua* ‘spirits’ who in life hosted me and my family in Te Urewera with *aroha* ‘love’ or ‘compassion’ and *rangatiritanga* ‘chiefly generosity’, passed us on to the care of their

offspring when they died, and even gave us a precious bit of them to raise ourselves. If I have done well enough in my researches into the lives of a few of their ancestors in Te Urewera, some of my accounts may survive, for better or worse, among their own stories that contest their own past among themselves. *Takoto mai ra, aku matua arohana* ‘rest in peace, our beloved parents’, te kuia rangatira Rangiwahaitiri Wharekiri Wiringi raua ko ana matua Te Wharekiri Pakitu me Te Hauaauru; taku tohunga tamariki Paki Haumate; aku tuakana Tumoana Tumoana raua ko Kui Hohua; te kuia rangatira anoo Kaa Numia Rangiaho; Paora Kruger raua ko Mihi, Hikawera Te Kurapa, Wharekiri Biddle, Tony Herewini *maa* (‘and all their cousins’ and *whāngai tamariki* ‘adopted’)—and may all their progeny be numerous and live on forever and ever. And here let me thank them again for their indulgence of my efforts to express my feelings, however ungrammatical and mispronounced, in the lovely words of *te reo*, their language.

NOTE

1. This is my own variation of the traditional Ringatū liturgy (perhaps more appropriately: *karakia* ‘prayer-chant’ or *inoi* ‘prayer-plea’) by Te Kooti with which Volume I was also opened. It is adapted from Judith Binney’s *Redemption Songs: A Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki* (2012: 297–8; fn 118; Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, New Zealand) but differs importantly in ways for which I am indebted to the Tūhoe but for which only I am responsible.

This *karakia* is known as the ‘Pokaikaha’ in the Ringatū church tradition. My version presented here in Māori is adapted from the original 1995 edition of Binney’s book, from which it varies by changing ‘*Atua*’ to ‘*atua*’ to avoid the monotheist assumption that Jeffrey Holman’s critique of Elsdon Best’s influence on traditional Māori concepts has called into question (Holman 2010), marking the long vowels with macrons, and changing ‘*kei*’ to ‘*hei*’ to reflect Tūhoe pronunciation. My translation also diverges significantly from Binney’s due to my interpretation of the Tūhoe *tohunga whakapono* (‘expert on truth’) Hikawera Te Kurapa’s advice on the meaning of *pokaikaha*. In 1983 I was told that he considered the concept to be central to the Ringatū church (but rejected by Rua Kenana’s *Iharaeraera* version of Ringatū) and that he translated it as “winding in, involution, even confusion of strength *in face of Pākehā oppression*” (Webster n.d. [UNB 2 (1983): 45]; my emphasis). Similarly, Williams translates *pōkaikaha* as “confused, at a

loss, in doubt” and *pokai* as a “ball...roll...swarm” (1957: 289). The addition of *kaha* ‘strong’ implies, to me, the tension of a coiled spring. Williams’ example of *pōkaikaha* also uses the phrase “*pōkaikaha noa*” or ‘ordinary pokaikaha’. Although Binney recognizes Ringatū concern “with the problems of the colonised” and regard to God in the spirit of Exodus rather than Christ (2012: 297–8), her interpretation leans more toward piety than mine.

In the context of Te Kooti’s *karakia*, I think ‘turmoil’ best straddles all these meanings. Similarly, while Williams translates *koi* (in the sixth line) as ‘whilst’ or ‘lest’ (1957: 127), in the context of *tatau pounamu* ‘reconciliation’ as raised in Chapter 11 of Volume I and my recent essay (Webster 2019), I feel that ‘so that we may’ best conveys an appropriate sense of defiance or tension as well as pious entreaty or plea (which I also see in the second line “*hei whakangaro atu*”). I, of course, must bear all responsibility for this interpretation of Te Kooti’s *karakia*.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steven Webster immigrated with his family from the United States to New Zealand in 1972 and taught courses in social anthropology and Māori studies at the University of Auckland until retiring in 1998. He continues there as an honorary research fellow.

His PhD thesis from University of Washington, Seattle, was on kinship, ecology, and ethnicity of an indigenous community in the Peruvian Andes, but in New Zealand, he took up research among Māori in the Urewera, the University, and the wider society. He taught courses in kinship, ethos and worldview, ethnicity, history of anthropology, Māori land history in colonial New Zealand, and political economic critique of ideologies. Since retiring he taught as a visitor at Northwest Indian College, Tacoma, WA, and Princeton University and completed research for the Waitangi Tribunal on the Urewera District Native Reserve, Crown purchase campaign, and Consolidation Scheme 1894–1926. He continues ethnohistorical and contemporary research regarding the Māori.

ABBREVIATIONS¹

AADS	Lands and Survey archives, Archives New Zealand, Wellington
AJHR	Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
c.f.	closed files
GB	Urewera Consolidation Group Book
LINZ	Land Information New Zealand
MA	Māori Affairs Archives, Archives New Zealand, Wellington
MA-MLP	Māori Affairs-Māori Land Purchase Department Archives, Archives New Zealand, Wellington
MLC	Māori Land Court
ANZ Ak	Archives New Zealand, Auckland
ANZ Wgtn	Archives New Zealand, Wellington
NLA	Native Land Act
NLC	Native Land Court
RM	Register of Māoris (1918)
UAL	The University of Auckland Library, Auckland.
UAMB	Urewera Appellate Court Minute Books 1–2, 1912–13
UCS	Urewera Consolidation Scheme 1921–26
UCAMB	Urewera Commission Appeals Minute Books 1–3, 1906–7
UCMB	Urewera Consolidation Minute Books 1–2B, 1921–26
UDNR	Urewera District Native Reserve (1896–1922)
UMB	Urewera Consolidation Minute Books 1–9 (1899–1903)
USLS	Undersecretary, Lands and Survey Department

USND	Undersecretary, Native Department
WDMLC	Waiariki District Māori Land Court archives, Rotorua

NOTE

1. Abbreviations of References (see Bibliography).

A NOTE ON SOURCES

Volume II is a thorough revision of my 2004 report to the Waitangi Tribunal (WAI 894 #D8): ‘The Urewera Consolidation Scheme: Confrontations between Tūhoe and the Crown, 1915–1925’. Where appropriate, the revision remains documented in the historiographic tradition of endnotes citing primary sources in terms of acronyms, requiring the list of these abbreviations above. I often relied on other reports to the Tribunal as my secondary sources and their invaluable collections of supplementary papers (s.p. or Supp. Pap.) from archives, which are cited among the references at the end of each chapter as well as in the final bibliography. Their authors may also be found in the index. As described in Chap. 2, our own contributions were usually from the archives of the Waiariki Māori Land Court in Rotorua, through which the Crown’s Urewera Consolidation Scheme (UCS) officers usually operated. The revision of my own 2004 report benefitted from my subsequent research on the preceding era of the Urewera District Native Reserve (the sanctuary or refuge of the Tūhoe people) and my enriched appreciation of the roles of Tūhoe predecessors. My own primary sources are cited in the opening dedication and concluding acknowledgments.

A NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS FROM MĀORI

All words in Māori are italicized and followed in their early appearances by brief glosses appropriate to the context, which also appear in the index with that Māori word. Exceptions are proper nouns in Māori and *hapū*, the ancestral descent group, because it appears frequently. The author has often relied on Tūhoe Himaima Tumoana and other native speakers for these translations or glosses. However, in the case of many common words or expressions, translations of Urewera District Native Reserve Commission minute book 1 (UMB 1), and other occasions the author has relied on Māori dictionaries and his own limited familiarity with *te reo* Māori. If no other source is cited, the author takes full responsibility for translations or glosses.

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PART I

Introduction



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1 A BRIEF ETHNOHISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Volume I of *He Mana Motuhake* examined the earlier era 1896–1913, during which *Ngāi Tūhoe* or the Tūhoe people, an indigenous *imi* (‘tribe’) of Māori, managed to consolidate their sanctuary in the Urewera mountains under their own authority—*he mana motuhake*, an independent dominion—protected from further incursions of colonization in New Zealand. Earlier in the 1860s New Zealand land wars, the Tūhoe had lost their best agricultural lands to Crown confiscations, and their traditional sanctuary had become their only remaining refuge. This Volume II follows their less successful struggle 1913–1925 to stem the Crown’s betrayal of the statutory Native Reserve that the government had enabled the Tūhoe to set up only a few years earlier. It is a comprehensive revision of my 2004 report to the Waitangi Tribunal of New Zealand on this era that now builds upon my subsequent research for Volume I.

Probably for the first time since British sovereignty was assumed in 1840, the 1896 Urewera District Native Reserve Act had established virtual home-rule for a Māori iwi over their ancestral lands. By 1907, under this relatively benevolent Act, the Tūhoe had established their Urewera District Native Reserve (UDNR) and self-governance over the area, but this statute began to be systematically subverted by 1908. By 1926 the huge reserve had been completely dismantled with over 70% of it taken over by the Crown. In the 1950s, most of this Crown land became the Urewera National Park. The Tūhoe efforts to recover their sanctuary persisted in various forms over the

next several decades, gaining strength in the Māori cultural renaissance of the 1980s and liberal governance of the 1990s. It was through this stubborn persistence that prolonged negotiations with the Crown were finally settled, under relatively conservative governance, in 2014 in statutes returning control of the National Park to the Tūhoe people. In terms of New Zealand's history of hostility toward what in some other nations has long been recognized as a form of 'internal' sovereignty or 'home-rule' by their indigenous peoples, this 2014 settlement was a reversal of the earlier reversal of the 1896 Urewera District Native Reserve Act.

The 2014 Tūhoe Claims Settlement and Te Urewera Acts formally settled the Tūhoe claims to the Waitangi Tribunal pursued since the 1980s, and along with the earlier Service Management Plan intend to redress the Crown's detailed acknowledgment and apology for 40 historical wrongs it did to the Tūhoe since 1840, including the confiscation of their best lands during the 1860s land wars (Tūhoe Claims Settlement Act 2014: 23–4; Te Urewera Act 2014). The details are unsparingly abject and the apology eloquent; my abiding impression is that the Tribunal enquiry had been thorough and the government settlement sincere. In the 2004 Waitangi Tribunal hearings I had been disappointed that, unlike many of the other reports for the Tribunal, the Crown decided not to present a counter-case to mine regarding the Crown's subversion of the UDNR 1915–1926. However, in returning virtually the whole reserve to the Tūhoe control in the 2014 Act, it went much further in redress than I had hoped.

Nevertheless, despite the laborious effort of Tūhoe leaders and government ministers, understandably given this bitter history many Tūhoe remain skeptical of the sincerity of the government's long-term intentions. The major betrayals of the past had often been led by reversals of previous policies and even disregard of previous laws. Tūhoe research of similar settlements overseas was not encouraging. The recent repetition of Crown dishonor in the 2007 'anti-terrorism' raids in the Rūātoki valley of the Urewera and imprisonment of key Tūhoe leaders on spurious charges (Sluka 2010), and the Prime Minister's public refusal in 2010 of any such settlement involving the Urewera National Park, of course reinforced Tūhoe doubts. Perhaps it is true that *Ngāi Tūhoe's* long battle to maintain their *mana motuhake* has in many ways just begun again.

The four figures included here will orient this introduction, but can also serve as an overview of major ethnohistorical developments through to the Te Urewera settlement in 2014.

Figure 1.1 depicts the general locality of the original Urewera District Native Reserve (UDNR) in the contemporary North Island of New

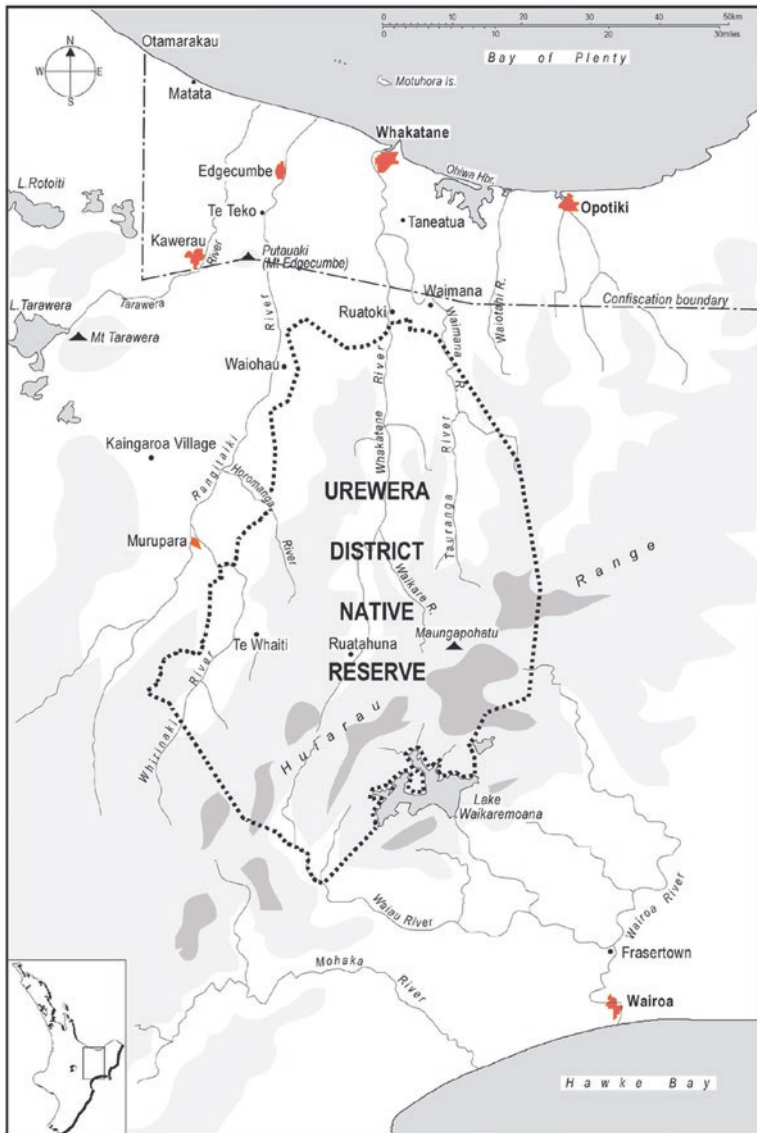


Fig. 1.1 Location of Urewera District Native Reserve (1903–1922) and contemporary townships. (Source: Webster 2004: 13)

Zealand, and the main details of the area between the Bay of Plenty and Hawke's Bay. This area includes the northern coastal lands confiscated by the Crown in the 1860s land wars and Lake Waikaremoana on the southern boundary. The Urewera mountains are shown in shading rising from the Bay of Plenty coast to their southern-most crest in the Huiarau Range. The three main river valleys running from south to north out of the mountains to the Bay of Plenty coast are also shown, with the Whakatane (originally Ohinemataroa) River and Tauranga/Waimana River and their major tributaries centered in the UDNR.

Figure 1.2 depicts about 38 blocks of the UDNR when it was officially established in 1907. This map also displays useful details of ranges, elevations, rivers, and tributaries. The investigation and provisional titles of these blocks were described in Volume I, focusing primarily on the records of the 1899–1903 commission which, I argue, was dominated by Tūhoe leaders. As was explained there, these records are far more reliable than those of the appeals commission, which did not meet until 1906–1907. The easternmost blocks Manuoha and Paharakeke were cut out of the UDNR in 1907. Some blocks were later partitioned in the Native Land Court between 1907 and 1913.

Figure 1.3 is a much simplified version of the most detailed map of the UDNR that I have discovered. The version here depicts an obscure proposal in May 1902 to amalgamate 35 blocks of the UDNR into only 10 titles, but which was aborted when hearings resumed the following October. The original blocks as approved in 1907 are outlined within each amalgamation, and can be identified by reference to Fig. 1.2. Because of its rich implications for research of Tūhoe *hapū* (ancestral descent group) organization and the relative *mana* ('prestige' or 'authority') of *hapū* leaders, two amalgamations (4 and 9) were analyzed in Volume I, Chap. 6, and Part II was devoted to a detailed reconstruction of the proposed Ruatāhuna-Waikaremoana amalgamation (2), an extensive marriage alliance, and related political alliances between *hapū* leaders 1900–1913.

Figure 1.4 depicts the major developments between the establishment of the UDNR in 1907 through its several decades as the Urewera National Park surrounding remnant Tūhoe lands to the 2014 Te Urewera settlement acts returning control of the national park to the Tūhoe.

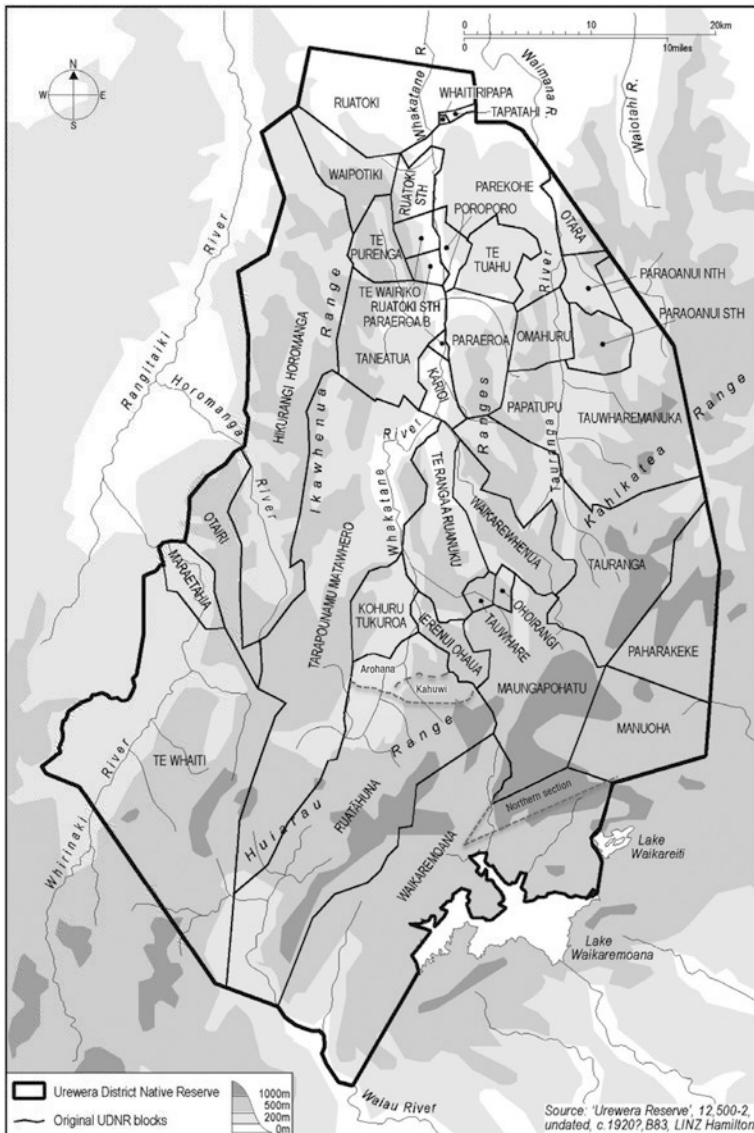


Fig. 1.2 Urewera District Native Reserve blocks 1907 with topographic details.
(Source: Webster 2004: 331)

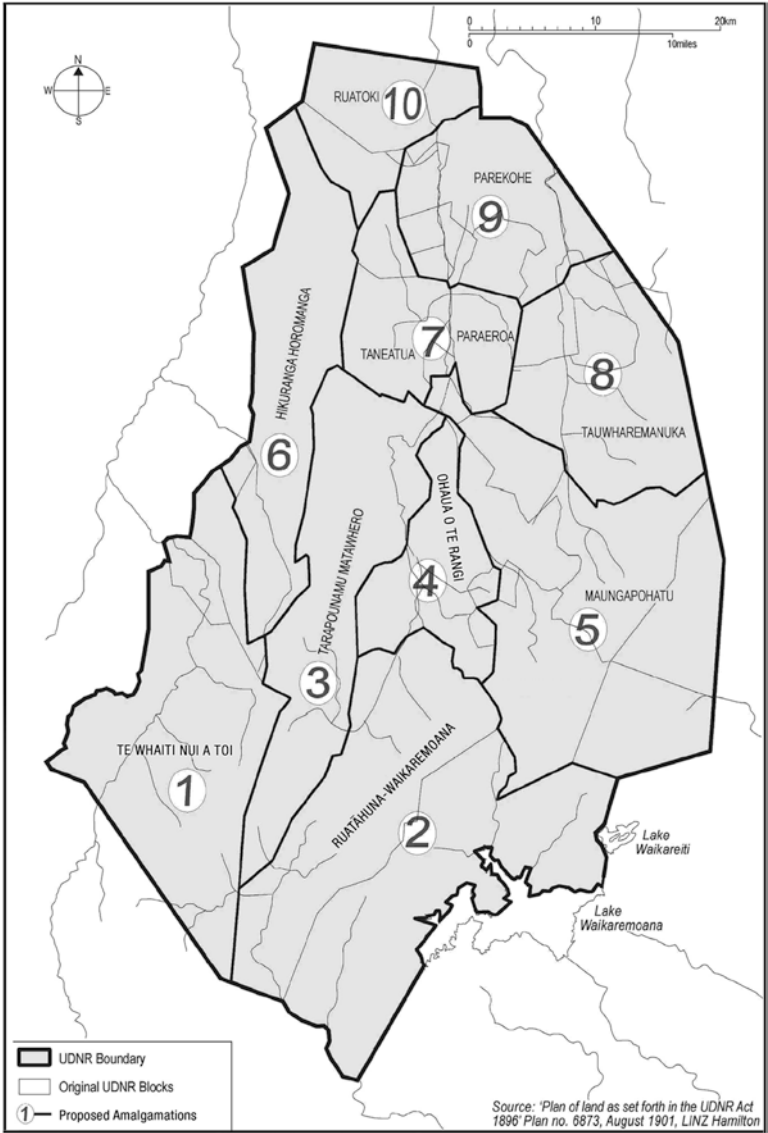


Fig. 1.3 Urewera District Native Reserve showing 1902 proposal to amalgamate all blocks into 10 titles. (Source: Webster 2004: 17)

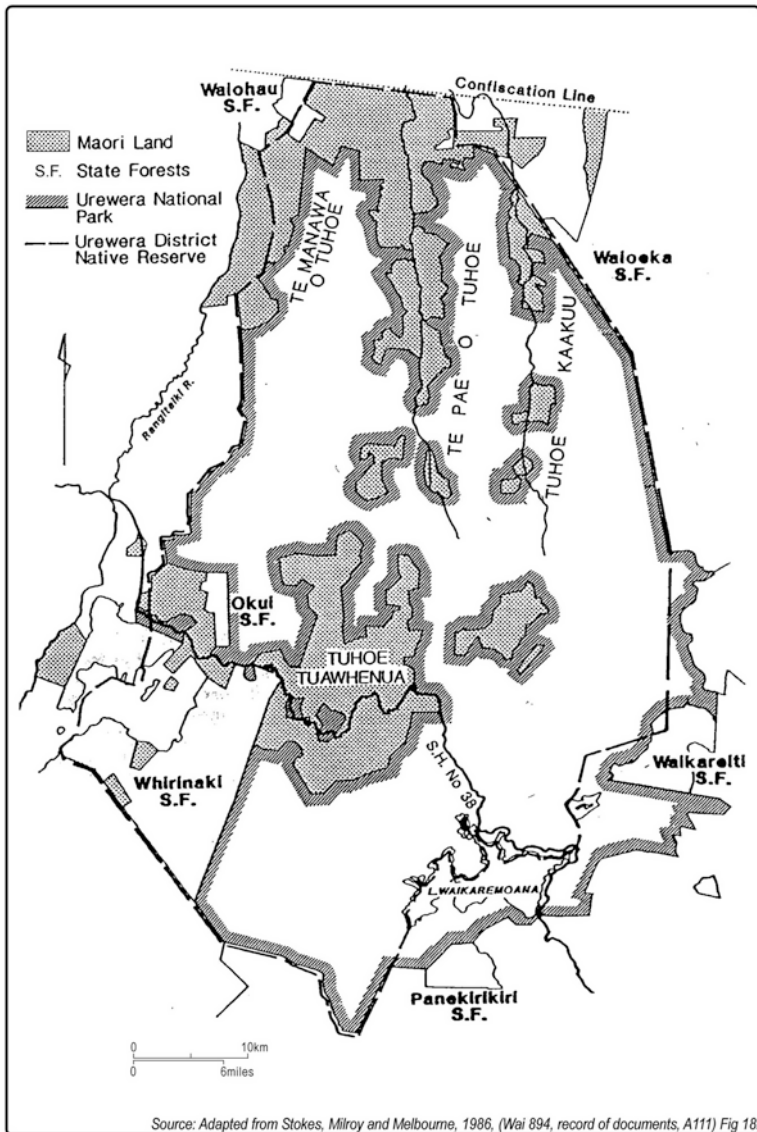


Fig. 1.4 Tūhoe non-sellers' lands relocated in UDNR and Urewera National Park 1925–2014. (Source: Webster 2004: 18)

Comprehensively, this map outlines the largely congruent boundaries of the

- (i) UDNR 1907–1922; already by 1908 the Crown was circumventing the protections of the 1896 Act and by 1915 had mobilized a campaign to purchase individual shares in hopes of buying out entire blocks.
- (ii) The four customary Tūhoe regions into which over 200 blocks owned by the Tūhoe refusing to sell their shares in the UDNR blocks were relocated in the Urewera Consolidation Scheme (UCS) of 1921–1926, comprising less than 30% of the lands that had been protected under the UDNR Act.
- (iii) The Urewera National Park that was established in the 1950s on the Crown's 1925 award to itself of over 70% of the UDNR obtained in its purchase campaign and 40% taken from each new block for surveying and road costs.

The present Volume II of *He Mana Motuhake* examines details of the Crown purchase campaign and the following Urewera Consolidation Scheme 1915–1926, which repealed the UDNR and its intended virtual home-rule. The promised roads were never built, resulting in continuing impoverishment, and by the 1930s pressure was again being applied to owners of the new blocks to sell to the Crown. Nevertheless, almost all of the over 200 new blocks held by the Tūhoe ‘non-sellers’ throughout the National Park remained defiantly in their descendants’ ownership for nearly another century, importantly backing up their negotiations for the return of Te Urewera in the 2014 settlement. The irony of the Tūhoe *pupuri whenua* (‘land withholders’) surviving in the midst of the park was doubly ironic for decades: while Pākehā (‘European’ or ‘white’) hikers, hunters, and tourists remained only vaguely aware that while in the mountain wilderness of this huge National Park they were actually on anciently held Māori land; meanwhile, the Tūhoe who had stubbornly retained this land often pretended or felt deeply that they had never lost their sanctuary. The stories of this irony are manifold (Tahi 2015).

Since the global ethnic revivals of the 1970s, and in some reports for the Waitangi Tribunal over the last two decades, a romantic assumption that the history of colonization is a history of victimization has often been led to a further assumption of passive acceptance by the colonized. Such assumptions are rarely supported by the facts of an actual history, and are furthermore damaging to efforts to redress an unjust history. To the

contrary, examination of a specific history usually shows, as it does with the Tūhoe, that although the colonized may have lost much in the long run, they did not do so without a struggle, often maintained control of events at least for the short run, and in this way ensured that part of that history was made on their own terms. Some New Zealand historians and ethnohistorians have been developing this new perspective (Hill 2004, 2009; Johnson 2016; O'Malley 1996 and his current works). In Volume I, I argued that the era of investigation and establishment of the Urewera District Native Reserve 1894–1912 must be seen in these terms, and here in Volume II, with regard to the following Crown purchase campaign and Urewera Consolidation Scheme 1915–1926, I again seek to substantiate it. After reviewing the chapters of Volume I below, I will return to a general discussion of the theoretical and ethnohistorical issues involved in this perspective. The Tūhoe accomplishment in regaining control of their Urewera sanctuary in 2014, nearly a century later, speaks for itself.

2 A REVIEW OF VOLUME I OF *A SEPARATE AUTHORITY* (*HE MANA MOTUHAKE*)

The Preface to Volume I briefly outlined my personal background among the Tūhoe and other research regarding the Māori and, with an eye to my credentials, discussed the issue of indigeneity in New Zealand. Although the rest of the volume, as an extended ethnohistory, is not explicitly preoccupied by its grounding in social theory and methodology, I outlined my own grounding there in the Preface with regard to the issue of indigeneity and my other essays on the Tūhoe.

Chapter 1, the 'Introduction', described the geographic setting and popular appeal of the Urewera and Tūhoe, their historical context and population at the turn of last century, and their recent recovery of statutory control over Te Urewera, their traditional mountain sanctuary. These discussions were concluded with a review of my earlier work on the Crown's betrayal of the UDNR, pointing out that the purchasing campaign and consolidation scheme pressed upon the Tūhoe 1915–1926 had left the surviving remnants of ancestral land in such chaos that their long memory and restored control will nevertheless be challenged, for some time to come, to rebuild their *mana motuhake* in their recovered sanctuary. The last part of the Introduction then previewed, one by one, each chapter of Volume I.

Part I (Chaps. 2–6), 'Tūhoe *hapū* and the Establishment of the Urewera District Native Reserve', examined the operations of the investigative

commission 1899–1903 from the ethnohistorical point of view that *hapū* were traditionally, and continue to be, the fundamental basis of Māori resistance to colonization as well as their ordinary social organization.

Chapter 2, ‘The Tūhoe *rohe pōtae* and the Urewera District Native Reserve Commission’, described the UDNR investigative commission and examined the issue of its legitimacy among the Tūhoe with regard to the reliability of its record for an ethnohistorical reconstruction. The first part of this chapter summarized the procedure and findings of the investigative commission 1899–1903, especially with regard to the problem it faced between the surveying of the whole area into blocks and mediating the claims of *hapū* that controlled or contested the specific lands involved. In the second part it was argued that the balance of evidence indicates that the commission, especially insofar as the majority of its members were Tūhoe *rangatira* and respected leaders, was generally accepted as legitimate among other Tūhoe leaders and people at large. It was furthermore argued that the conclusions of two other outside authorities (Judith Binney and Jeffrey Sissons) that the investigative commission as well as the 1896 Act undermined Tūhoe hopes from the start are not well-founded.

Chapter 3, ‘Difficulties of the commission defining blocks by *hapū*’, pursued some of the difficulties that emerged in the investigation due to the misleading popular assumption included in the 1896 Act that a Māori *hapū* (ancestral descent group) is aligned with a particular territory. Specific difficulties examined include radical changes in the number and identification of *hapū* over several years, procedural compromises and precedents set in the first block investigation, the following resolution to expedite hearings that was to cause problems in the coming years, and an aborted plan to amalgamate the 35 blocks into which the reserve had been divided into only 10 larger blocks. The resulting confrontations and resolutions clarified the actual structure and dynamics of Māori *hapū*, at least in this historical context and among Tūhoe. Close examination of the prolonged Te Waipotiki case supported the conclusion of the previous chapter that investigative procedures were largely under the control of Tūhoe leaders outside formal hearings and the resulting block lists preserved important details of *hapū* social organization that might have otherwise been lost.

Chapter 4, ‘The Tamaikoha *hapū* branch: internal social organization’, was the first of two chapters devoted to close analysis of one example of Tūhoe social organization in these years. Displaying the ethnohistorical

method used, a 1903 provisional block list of electors (shareholders), including this *hapū* branch, was examined in order to overcome the illusion of ‘families’ obscuring the implications of such titles by explicating the significance of sibling groups and surnames, and identifying spouses, mothers, marriages, and land rights relative to other blocks. The care, consistency, and compromise shown by Tūhoe leaders revealed here also supported the conclusion that they largely controlled commission proceedings. It also exposed the easy but irresponsible method by which the later appeals commission settled appeals by simply extending block lists beyond solidary *hapū* membership, also leaving the final titles more vulnerable to subsequent purchase of individual shares in the Crown’s subversion of the 1896 Act.

Chapter 5, ‘The Tamaikoha *hapū* branch: *hapū* affiliations’, pursued the fundamental role of *hapū* in Tūhoe social and political organization by extracting evidence of the potential or active *hapū* affiliations of Tamaikoha’s branch from commission and other records during these years. The special problems of Tamaikoha’s *mana* ‘prestige’, ambivalent relation to the commission, and sometimes informal claims rubber-stamped behind the scenes were also examined. Comparison with Sissons’ information from 1978 regarding Tamaikoha’s *hapū* affiliations in the 1870s offered revealing information of changes in actual or assumed affiliations over the preceding century. Along with the following Chap. 6, this chapter attempted to explore subtleties of the array, range, and prioritization of *hapū* affiliations among the Tūhoe during this era.

It bears repeating that any such attempt must remain aware that the social structures so well understood by the Tūhoe commissioners were themselves changing in new ways in the context of colonial power and the Tūhoe struggle to maintain or regain control over that power while dealing with each other’s initiatives. The much less successful struggles of the Tamaikoha *hapū* branch against the subsequent Crown purchase campaign and Urewera Consolidation Scheme are taken up again in Chap. 2 of this volume.

Chapter 6, ‘Tūhoe *hapū* organization and the amalgamation plan’, presented an overview of Tūhoe *hapū* throughout the Urewera District Native Reserve by way of a belated plan of the commission in 1902 to group the 35 blocks that they had investigated and approved into just 10 larger blocks. The various motives behind the plan and the last-minute decision to abort it are considered, concluding that it was primarily an initiative of Tūhoe leaders themselves. Two of the ten proposed amalgamations,