

W Ā N A N G A 1 9 9 9



TE WHAKARURUHAU

HEI PUPURI I TE AHO O TE WĀNANGA. HEI KAWE I NGĀ KURA HUNA A RUA



comments

ANCIENT MĀORI MANUSCRIPTS

**“Hei pupuri te aho o te wānanga
Hei kawē i ngā kura huna a Rua.”
To hold fast to the strands of valued learning
*To perpetuate the hidden schools of Rua.***

“Embodied in this whakataukī is the notion that learning is of considerable value. There is an implication of secrecy being reposed in Rua”.
Harrison, P.

It is believed that the term ‘Rua’ is descriptive of aspects of knowledge. Many obscure references are found in the ancient waiata, karakia and orations. An obvious example is in whakapapa. This reverberates as part of literary tradition and conceptual language developed to hold specific types of knowledge at certain levels of perception. Pākāriki Harrison, and others, is of the belief that the Rua schools and their priests upheld an elitist and secretive tiered system of education which was only available to certain sectors of the community. This was also tied into various art forms including the language.

Carving, in the view of Pākāriki is the supreme artistic achievement of the Māori people. It holds a whole range of emotions and feelings of love, joy, hate, challenges, and reverence. A student would normally be born into this area of study, but it would usually be up to the Tohunga when, and at what level, he would commence his teaching. To be a student of whakairo they would go through the necessary draughting processes, as only a certain type of student would have the proper credentials to enter this area of study. It may be that the process started at birth or at an age that would suit the Tohunga. It is my opinion based on observation and kōrero ki ōku koroua that everyone in the whānau, hapū and iwi had some knowledge of whakairo. Whether it was practical or theory or both, most Māori could shape some sort of utensil or implement. Never the less once the tauira was chosen the process of adapting them into the Rua of whakairo began in earnest. Let us examine some of these intangible manifestations.

Rua i te mahara	the power of thinking and memory
Rua i te pupuke	rise up, well, pupuke mahara i to hinengaro
Rua i te whaihanga	make, build, construct
Rua i te māhina	dawn, light
Rua i te kōrero	talk, information
Rua i te pūkenga	repository
Rua i te hiringa	desire
Rua i te horahora	spread and disseminate
Rua i te wānanga	body of knowledge
Rua i te wanawana	ability to acquire knowledge, quickness of understanding
Rua i te atamai	beauty
Rua i te kukakore	without chips
Rua i te parakore	without dust

Within the first tier, the suggestion is that the student is required to train their thoughts to expand on the topic. These tier have various Rua that the Tohunga would constantly be committed to observation and moderating. The understanding, memorising the symbolisms of aoteatea, mōteatea and whakapapa would not have been taken lightly, and as much time as necessary demanded before proceeding. Everything that Māori made was fashioned

with an eye on precision, and the beauty of artistic enhancement enriched with symbolic embellishment.

The whakarei (embellishment) of an article had meaning and significance that empowered the taonga and the user. Put into these Taonga were the concepts of mauri (life force), mana (psychic power) and tapu (spiritual restriction). Links to the past through artistic creation would often put the person studying whakairo in a position of tapu.

“Because of the highly spiritual area in which carvers operated, the magico - religious importance of the symbolism incorporated, and the need to propitiate the gods from whose domain the materials came, every art activity in the past was subject to stringent laws of tapu. Tapu was mainly used as a means of keeping civil and social order - only the tribal ariki would remove the more potent kinds of tapu”. Harrison, P.

Example: before the felling of a tree, permission had to be asked from Tāne, before the launching of a new waka, credence was asked of Tangaroa. Of course tapu of today is hugely different to how it was, it can be removed and replaced as people wish.

Eventually a student would find themselves carving an item in thought alone. In other words with some training a student could, by observation, identify which woods would be sufficient to complete a particular building, canoe, ornament or weapon. All aspects of the item would be visualised in thought, some artists refer to this as the third eye. Rua i te wanawana, atamai, kukakore, parakore. However, it is important to declare at this point that almost all of these Rua have all but been lost.

It is my view that karakia and hīmene that are commonly heard today assisted in the demise of this system. In part, because of European influences and in part, because of the eagerness of Māori to accept a Rua that supposedly had no prerequisites in short, Christianity happened. When the commoner and servants realised that this could be an offering with little or no constraints, the traditionally recognised system of being taught in the ways of the Tohunga was abandoned.

“Two young maidens waited upon her (Rukupō’s wife) and got whatever she wanted for the evil days had not yet befallen upon the Māori gentry. When their servants, realising their freedom under the new conditions of life which the adoption of Christianity had introduced, forsook their masters and left them to do the best they could for themselves.” Barrow, T.

There were other dynamics as well that effectively helped break ancient Aho Tapu, the vehicle of Māori transcripts, such as sickness, land wars both here and overseas as well as the displacement of Māori from their lands within the ever changing land legislation bills. From the 1830s through to the 1950s, Māori art went through a tumultuous ordeal. Whole generations of whakapapa were effectively removed from the equation.

There has been though, a very slim line of survival of Māori art. Again this can be traced with some study quite accurately through Rahurihi Rukupō who in his time, had both stone and steel through the Ngāti Tarāwhai to Pine and John Taiapa. Rukupō however not only kept the faith of Māori art but actively protested the advance of Pākehā onto Māori tribal lands, but could also be seen as a pivotal point in Māori art, the attraction of steel. In what



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could be seen as a contradiction it was he who chased the steel nail. It was he who completed the first Whare Whakairo using the new technology, something in today's world that seems common place. Example, Te Hau ki Tūranga. Through this simple act of turning from stone to steel it could be said that it was Rukupō that brought the art of Whakairo Rākau to a new era. It could be said also what is tradition to us, may have been contemporary to our tīpuna. What is considered as contemporary to us may be tradition to our mokopuna.

At this point we need to turn our attention to the Aoteatea Whakairo to find the origins of our art. Referencing taken from four authors P Harrison, E Best, Whatahoro and H Mead.

Vs 1

**Ka heke a Mataora ki te whare o Kūwatawata
Ko Poutererangi ki Tāhekeroa
Ka tīkina Uhi Matarau
Mō te tīwhana o taku rae
Mō te pīhere o taku waha
Mō te moko o taku ūpoko e**

Question: Can anyone tell me briefly what Rua this verse is holding?

It was at a time when people and Tūrehu (patupaiarehe, kēhua) lived in complete harmony and it was at that time that a group of Tūrehu was travelling the land and came across Mataora sleeping. Discussing amongst themselves exactly what they thought he was, he awoke. Upon finding that he had visitors standing at his door he invited them in but they refused. He offered them eats to which they accepted, but declined the offer when they found the food was cooked or, as they thought, putrid. On realising that these strange looking people with long, red hip length hair did not eat cooked food, Mataora rushed to the pond the returned with fresh fish that the Tūrehu quickly ate. In their appreciation they did a dance not seen before and while dancing one of the Tūrehu caught the eye of Mataora. When the dancers stopped they asked Mataora if they could do anything else for him he replied that he would like the hand of one of the Tūrehu. Enquiring after which one of them he wanted, he pointed to the beautiful maid that turned out to be Niwareka. Attracted to each other they were married and lived in Mataora's village. Some time passed when trouble found them supposedly through the advances of Mataora's brother to Niwareka. Mataora took retribution out on Niwareka and she fled to her homeland, Rarohenga.

Unfortunately Rarohenga is considered as being equivalent to Hades in today's world of thought. Considering that this story is pre-European, Rarohenga was one of the many worlds where spirits were welcomed into. Māori considered interaction between the living world and the spirit world as common. Mataora felt deep regret for his actions and left his village and his world to find his wife.

He arrived at a place known as Poutererangi at the house of Kūwatawata who is the guardian to Tāhekeroa, the passage to Rarohenga. Asking if his wife passed this way, Kūwatawata said yes and to ask the Pīwaiwaka further on. When Mataora reached the fantail and enquired after his wife and what was happening in Rarohenga, the manu replied that they were singing and dancing, spinning tops, tattooing and some were weaving.

When Mataora passed by a whare where people were watching a tattooist at work he stopped when he saw that there was blood dripping to the floor. Mataora shouted that he was doing it wrong, that in the world of the living there was no spilling of blood. Uetonga the tattooist and also the father of Niwareka said that it was your world that was wrong because the Tūrehu way was permanent called '*hōpara makaurangi*' and that the one that Mataora had was only painted in red, blue and white called 'tuhi' and would easily come off. Uetonga reached up and wiped some of his moko off defacing it and embarrassing him. Mataora said to Uetonga because he defaced his moko that he would have to tattoo him their way, which so happened.

Niwareka and Mataora lived in Rarohenga for some time before Mataora wanted to return to the world of the living. Not willing to let them go, Uetonga said that he should mend his ways saying that the ways of the upper world is evil and to adopt the good ways of Rarohenga and Mataora so promised.

So after a threat or two from the brothers in law, Mataora and Niwareka were hesitantly allowed to leave. Uetonga told the couple to take the ruru and the pekapeka and rail with them to show them the way up to Poutererangi. When they reached there, they had a bit of a wait but forgot to declare their gifts at customs with Kūwatawata and therefore through those actions, Mataora was barred from Rarohenga. So this is the origin of Tā Moko. One could try to imagine some of the tikanga, tapu and the sacredness of the old Māori trying to live up to Mataora's promise. In order to adorn themselves with this gift from the Tūrehu, we find ourselves confronted with compromises in today's world. The gifts that Uetonga gave his daughter and son in law, the Rangihua papa, was the blue print for all other tāniko, a belt that was also the beginnings of other belts and the uhi matarau which are the instruments used in Tā Moko. Ref: Best, E.

Vs 2

**Ka ruku a Rua ki ngā ana hōhonu o Tangaroa
Ki ngā whare Ponaturi
E mau nei ngā ika i te mata kupenga o Kahukura
Ka tūwhaia ngā whare o te ao tū roa
Ki te mata a ruru hai pūkana ki ngā tini o te ao**

The most common belief is that Rua-Te-Pupuke fashioned a hook for his son Manuruhi. Rua saying to his offspring to wait until the time was right and he would take him out. Manuruhi being young and impatient and showing his youthfulness blatantly carried on without regard for protocol. Firstly, he broke the rule of not uttering the appropriate assurances to Tangaroa. Secondly, the tool worked that well that each time he cast, he pulled in a fish and did not return the first to Tangaroa without asking for permission. All the while Tangaroa was watching this young boy and becoming very angry. Finally he took steps to rectify this unsettling situation.

In the meantime Rua was searching for his son everywhere. He asked the people of his village to no avail and eventually found himself at the place he secretly hoped he did not have to look, at the beach. Rua saw to his dismay the canoe tracks that led to the water.

In the search for his boy in amongst the different bays, he came across a surprising sight. There at the bottom of the moana, he could see a whare. Rua



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dived in and swam down and upon reaching the whare, realised that it was fully carved. This whare was called Huiteananui. The whareniui symbolises the personification of a human body. Usually representing the eponymous ancestor of an iwi. At the apex of the gables is the Koruru or head attached to the Tāhuhu or ridgepole or backbone. The Maihi or bargeboards or arms stretched out to the Raparapa or fingers to welcome the guests. Coming down from the Tāhuhu to the top of each Poupou are the Heke or rafters or ribs. In the story of Rua, the story tells us that this whareniui has a Tekoteko at the very top of the Koruru. The symbolism to this carved ancestor could be seen as the guardian to the Tangata whenua or an ancestor who is always ready.

While he was standing in front of the house, he could hear talking coming from inside the whare. This was the realm of the Ponaturi. On looking inside he saw that the Poupou from one wall were talking to the Poupou on the other wall. Startled but still wanting to find his son, he asked them if they had seen him. The reply was to ask the Tekoteko at which time Rua felt an overwhelming anger surge through him. He knew by their answer that his son had been killed.

He decided to hide and wait for the Ponaturi to return. When they did return and settled in for the night they quickly fell asleep. Rua covered all the windows and crevices so that the Ponaturi would sleep on. Then Rua set fire to the whare and waited beside the door with his mere. Many of the iwi escaped and they being the forefathers of the fish we find in the lakes and oceans. Many of them were caught by Rua's mere such as the wahitere (stingray), he was hit on the nose leaving him the pug nose. The wheke was hit that hard that it broke both its backbone. The kōkiri (leather jacket) and the tāmure (snapper) came next but they were burnt badly by the fire and that is why the tāmure is red headed. Most of the family of Ponaturi perished in the fire and so did most of the Poupou. Rua escaped with four Poupou and the tekoteko, which became the blueprints for Whakairo Rākau. Ref: Mead, H.

Vs 3

**Ka koi ngā toki a Hine tū a Hoanga
 Hangāia i te whatu o Poutini
 Ko Pakitua Mapumaioro Tauira a Pā
 Te Rakuraku a Tāwhaki, ko te Haemata
 Te Āwhiorangi, toki nui, toki roa, toki hāhā
 I tuai te Tokohurunuku, te Tokohururangi
 I te wehenga o Rangi ia Papa**

The study of stone played a huge part in the development of whakairo within hapū and iwi. It was this taonga, in my opinion, that structured Aotearoa commerce. Those iwi that had this as a trading commodity would travel the country to barter. Although beautiful, it could be argued that besides the wairua that the Poutini exhales (poutini being the original name for pounamu) that it is absolutely useless without the sandstone. Therefore new alliances were struck through marriage and resettlement when the people encountered that this stone was far superior than the argillite most iwi were using. Poutini (pounamu/greenstone) has been discovered in areas well noted by old Māori as regular travelling routes. For example, at Whareama (Castle Point) in the Wairarapa, greenstone artefacts have been found on the remote beaches beside mounds of pipi shells and fire sights. I can attest to this having found a piece myself during my time there 1990-94. The precious sandstone can be found

from Wairarapa to Rangitoto. It is presumed that the iwi travelling would camp along these coastal routes bringing enough poutini to ensure safe passage on their way to acquiring the necessary sandstone to cut and shape it.

It was at these hui that the students of whakairo would come into contact with varying attitudes in this discipline. It would be fair to say that at the heart of the iwi meaning the centre of its boundaries, te mita o tō rātou reo is almost unshakeable along with the culture and art. For example, if you were to throw a stone into a pond and imagine that being a chief saying to his people that from now on we will only get out of bed on the right side. His chiefs then liked that idea and say how proud they are to serve him and start to disseminate his wishes to the rest of the iwi persuading them to follow on. Now imagine throwing two stones into the water, where the ripples meet is where the changes in artistic style occur first.

As it happens the main players that appear in the third verse lived when the Gods had just formed the world. Hine-tuāhōanga was a maid married to Poutini. Apparently they fought constantly and you will find out why shortly. They were constantly antagonising each other that finally made them separate. Poutini aligned himself with his chiefs Tauira-karapa, Kahotea and Whatukura. So did Hine-tuāhōanga with hers Tūtaua and Whatuaho (varieties of sandstone).

Poutini and his iwi left their lands of Hawaiki and came across the seas to Te Auiti where they were pursued and defeated, and so carried on right across the moana to this land where they sought refuge at Tuhua (Mayor Island). This island in the Bay of Plenty was already occupied by an offspring of Whatuaho-Tuhua (obsidian). The fleeing greenstone proceeded on south by way of East Coast. Reaching the Waiapu they were going to head inland but found it occupied by offspring of Tuāhōanga and Whatuaho. There is a form of chert found at the Waiapu. The greenstone fled on reaching Waipiro. They scouted the place but found the offspring of Tuāhōanga staying at Pōkurukuru. When they stopped at Ūawa they found the offspring of Tuāhōanga and Whatuaho there at a place called Tīketangaroa. They were easy to spot because their skins gleamed red in the sun.

Poutini brought his people on to Tūranga but they could not rest there because Tuāhōanga was already at Te Oikārewa and Waimata so they edged on. They stopped to scout Nukutaurua but saw Takamaitahu there an offspring of Wahuaho. They lay offshore at Heretaunga but saw the sons of Whatuaho there, Takamaitahu and Tongairi at Te Poho o Ruahine. Still by sea they journeyed on till they got to Whareama but found at Ōruhi, Tuāhōanga already there. (The sandstone of Ōruhi was quite sought after in former times, grinding stones etc.) In one P Smiths versions, the people of Poutini emptied the water from their waka at Palliser Bay by turning it upside down and today you're still able to find a variant of jade there, supposedly some of the flakes and chips at the bottom of the waka.

Poutini and his people finally settled at the South Island, but just as they were about to rest, the hostile raiders of Ngāhue, Rongokahi and Tūtaua attacked them scattering them and killing some. Some retreated with Poutini namely Raparapa-te-uira, Kahotea and Koukoumatua and yet more were killed or scattered. Poutini found themselves at a cascade (Wairere) in the upper most reaches of the Arahura River where they were safe from attack. There are a number of varieties of pounamu each having their own stories and origins of their name but we will stop here for now.



comments

Pakitua, Mapumaioro, Tauira a Pā, Te Rakuraku a Tāwhaki, Haemata, Te Āwhiorangi, Toki nui, Toki roa and Toki hāhā to my understanding are all names of sacred adzes.

Te Rakuraku a Tāwhaki is a toki held by the Waikato people. Toki nui, Toki roa and Toki hāhā are red stone adzes. Ref: Lagah, F.

Te Āwhiorangi is a toki made from an offcut pounamu that made the first Hei Tiki. The people of Ngāti Rauru are the guardians of this toki, and to this day no Pākeha has seen it. Ref: Best, E.

The reference to Tokohurunuku and Tokohururangi were two names of four poles that were put in place to separate Rangi and Papa. Two of these toki fell leaving the north wind, Tokohurunuku and the east wind, Tokohururangi in place. Te Āwhiorangi was the name of the toki that severed the arms of Rangi so that these toki could be set in place. Although as mentioned there were four toki, two fell because of the constant unease of Papatūānuku. So the sons of Papa and Rangi turned Papatūānuku over forever to watch Whiro, Hine nui te Pō and Rūaumoko.

It must be mentioned that the toki, in my opinion, is the single tool of the carver's arsenal that has still remained basically unchanged.

Vs4

**Ka whakareia ngā Rākau o te wao nui
Ko te Tōtara, ko te Kauri, ko te Pūriri, ko te Akerautangi
Ki te ngao tū, ki te ngao pae, ki te ngao matariki
Ki te whakatara, ki te waharua, ki te taowaru, ki te pākati, ki te pākura
Ki te pōnahi, ki te Pūhoro, ki te ritorito, ki te wakatau a miromiro e
Ka hāea ngā whēua kōauau whakatangitangi e...**

Pākāriki has paid tribute to the poets, composers, and historians of Māoridom by composing a poupou and erecting it into the whare *Te Poho o Tipene*.

The name of this poupou is Te Kai Whakatangitangi Kōauau. The overwhelming sincerity of this poupou strikes at the very bosom of these artists.

Pākāriki goes on to say that carvings represented the ancestor in the spiritual state of an abstract form. These were developed because the carver cannot visualise something that he has no prototype of in this world. They have, he mentions, the same spiritual and symbolic integrity as an angel with wings.

The richness and peculiarities of the natural environment and resources were studied in depth ie, Tōtara, Kauri, Pūriri and Akeake to name a few. Some trees were considered better for building. Others were favoured for whakairo that withstood the wind and rain. Others for the richness in the grains after completion. Importantly an understanding of individual logs was a necessity for instance, which woods floated the right way up and what could be pieced without stressing the grains. This verse tells of the various woods that are taken from the vast world of Tāne. Tōtara and Kauri being the most preferred because of suppleness of the grains that a carver has to work with. Pūriri and Akeake are typical of hard woods for such things as weapons and tools.

Ngao tū, ngao pae and ngao matariki refers to the different finishes to a flat, clean surface. Ngao tū or Toki Ngao Tū is the name given to an adze that was medium sized used for shaping beams and canoe hulls. Ngao pae or Toki Ngao Pae is the adze that had a heavy stone for roughing out work and across the grain. Ngao matariki or Toki Ngao Matariki is a small light adze used for finishing work to put a fine surface on dressed timbers also known as Toki Whakarau, Toki Haratua. Other Toki were Toki Tārai used for dressing timber, Toki Uri, that was a deep black stone adze. Of course the Toki Poutangata the most highly prized of adzes because of pounamu, the kaka feathers and the elaborately carved handles. Usually they were made from greenstone and had long thin blades rather than the thicker working blades because their carving material wasn't usually wood.

Whakatara, waharua, taowaru pākati etc are only the tip of the forest of a wide range of whakarei or surface patterns.

Initially carving was an adze craft with emphasis being placed on sculpture with surface patterning designed only to enhance the form, covering a range of patterns which could be completed easily using the limited variety of tools. With the advent of steel and a consequent development of a wider range of cutting, gouging and parting chisels, the craft accelerated in another direction. losing much of its sculptural quality in the process while moving rapidly into the area of surface design with its infinite variety of spirals and other motifs. Harrison, P.

Vs5

**Ka puta noa ngā mahi o te whao
I hunāia i te repo
I tukuna i te pō
E kore nei e ai i te hau
Mātao ana i te korowai o Papatūānuku
Hai tauira mo ngā Tohunga Whakairo
He tauira tuku, he tauira tapu
He tauira māpuna, he tauira mokemoke
Pupuritia hei mauri e...**

Harakeke and the whenua were as major part of study as were the obvious.

Which harakeke plants had the fibrous strands long and durable enough to create lengths of weavable material (muka/whītau). Those plants that had short muka were regarded as good enough for weaving mats (whāriki) so therefore could be discarded by Te Tohunga Rākau. As it was pointed out that the blue print for all tāniko was given to Niwareka and Mataora in the form of *Te Rangi haupapa*. The student would learn a certain amount of weaving skills for lashing purposes and all the names that went with them. There were particular lashes for particular jobs. The bindings for the waka had to be specific for the stress factor that accumulated on the stress relief areas of the hull. The lashings for the toki had to be fine but strong so as to accompany the aesthetic pleasure of the tool. In short the extraction of muka for lashing presented both functional and artistic challenges.

Korowai o Papatūānuku/repo or paru were an important field of knowledge to Māori so they could extract their colours, what length of time it took etc. Some paru were so strong that carvers would only need to leave their pieces in there for a short while to require the desired colour. The paru became literally a natural Rua for carvings. Many of us in one way or another has had contact with taonga extraction from the swamps, rivers or drained areas of that nature. As well as preserve the carved piece from the natural elements such as the sun, rain and wind, these pits were like goldmines of iwi that had to move on. As I've said that the boundaries were often where the gathering place for new ideas accumulated. In some cases the boundary may have been a place of contention and warring parties may have made it impossible for the true owners of the carvings to retrieve them. It may have been common for a raiding party to display the carvings of an overrun hapū in often, unceremonious positions. So although they may have been in the cold blackness of Papatūānuku for ages, it may have been a blessing in disguise. I say this because it could well have ended up as firewood. So literally Papatūānuku, all these years, has preserved our taonga in the comfort of her korowai. I hope that this little insight into what the Rua of the origins and symbolisms of whakairo are, will sometime in the future benefit your mokopuna. We are all tauira in one form or another and I will be the first to admit with the little pieces that I have to offer and the little that you have to offer, we may share in a wealth of knowledge that we can both hand on to our mokopuna.

If I can teach 10 people and those people teach 10, maybe one or two will learn something. M Moeau, Wharekura, Masterton, 1993.

“E Koro, these people want this marae carved, and they're going to pay me.”

J Stewart, Masterton 1990

“Boy, I've never sold any of my work.”

M Moeau

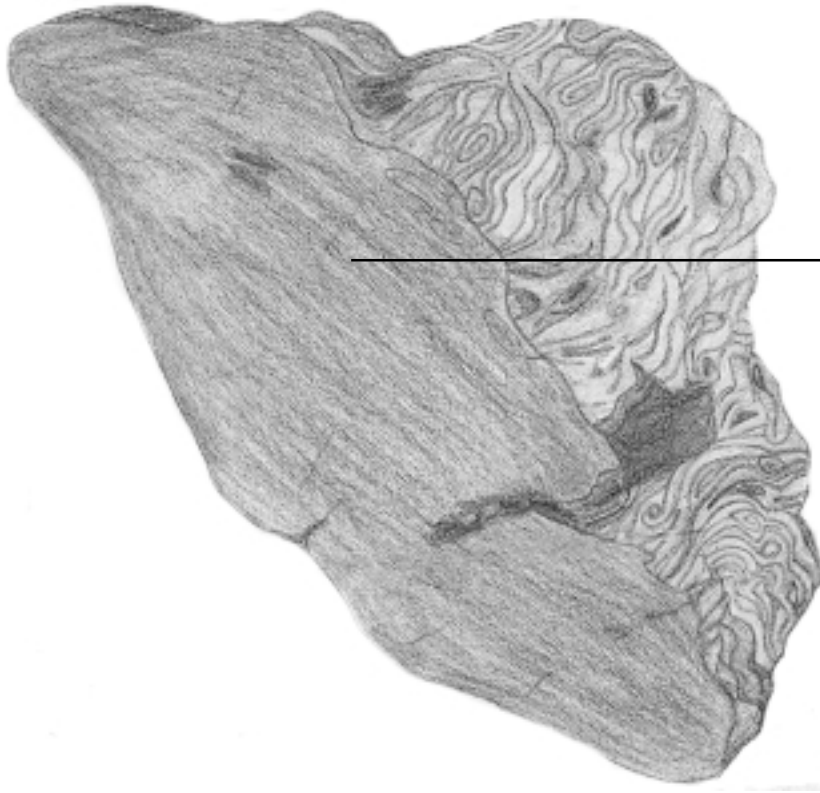
“E koro, how did the old people live?”

Five marae later he never did give me an answer. He died 1998 with a nod of his head.

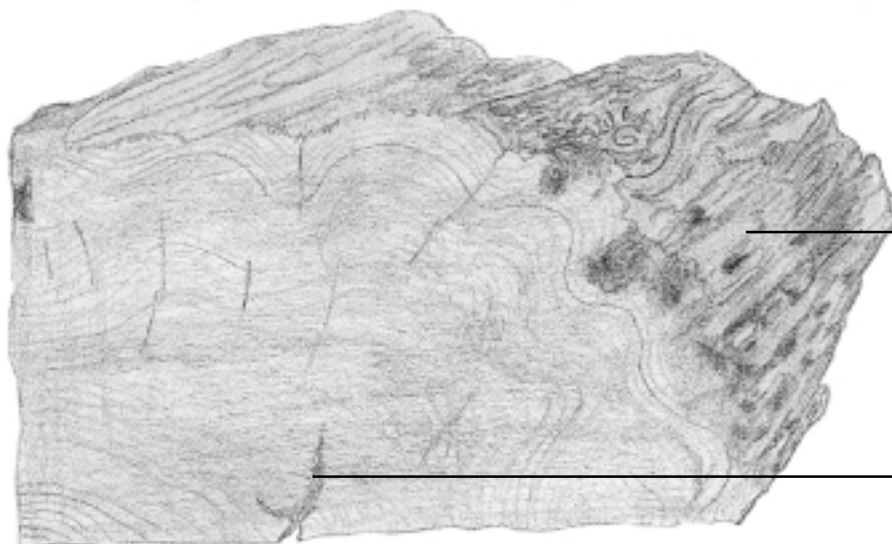
Nō reira e tū noa ake ana tēnei tauira mokemoke ki te mihi aroha ki a ia.

James Stewart

25 May 1999



HAKIHAKI



MŌWHAKIWHAKI

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PĀPOPO

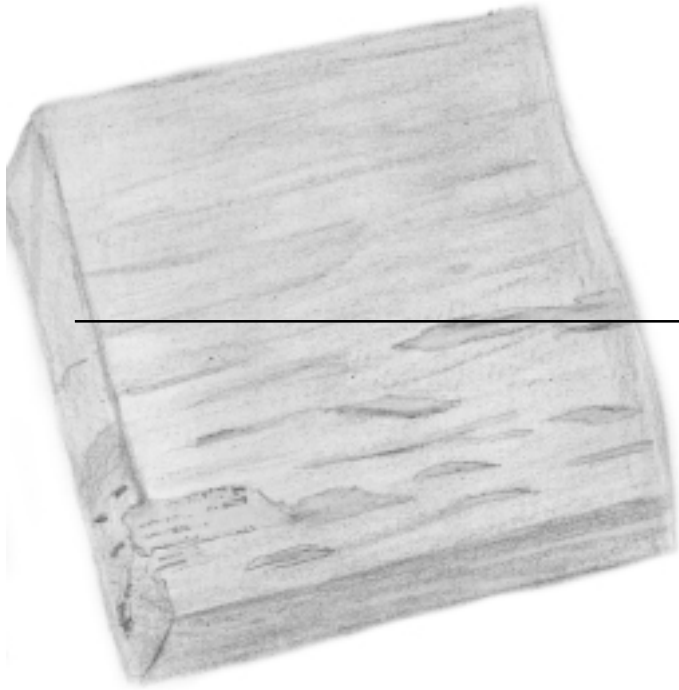


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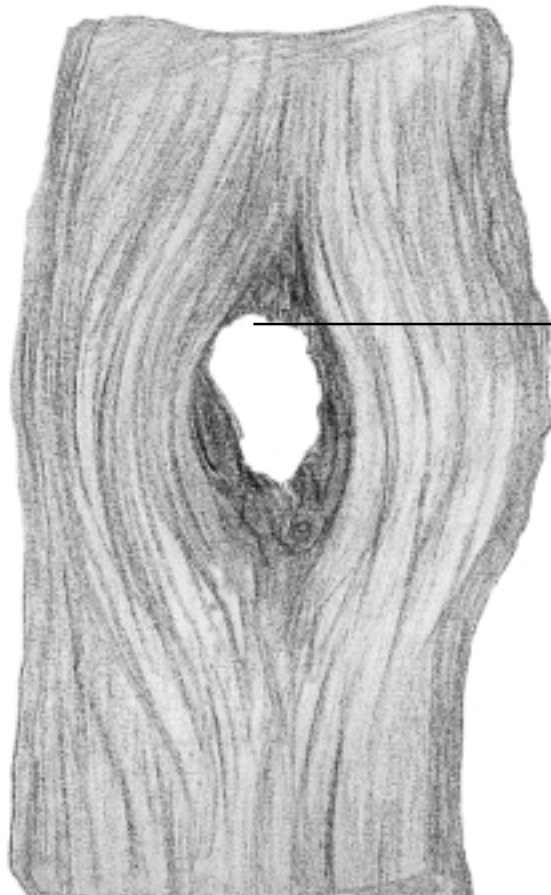


PŪKANOHI
PŪMANGA



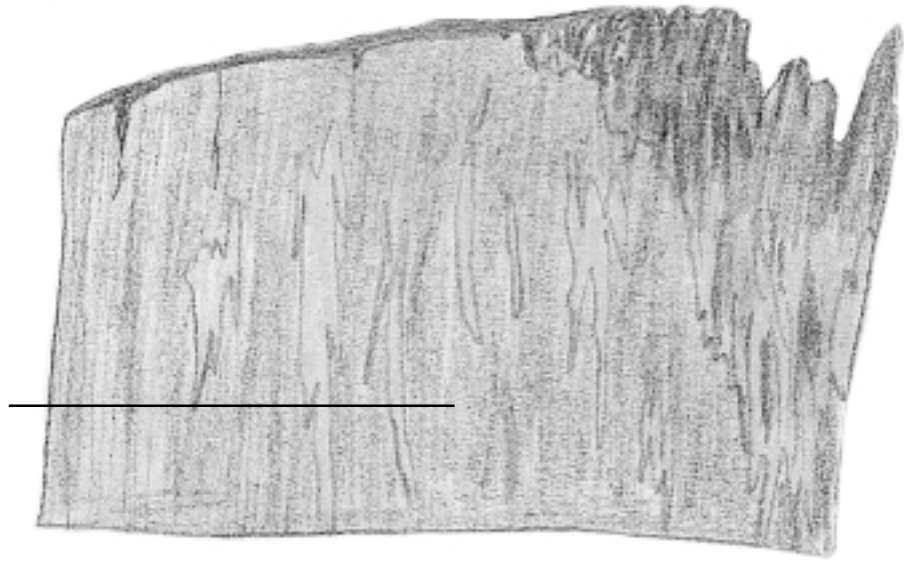


TŌTARA PŌ

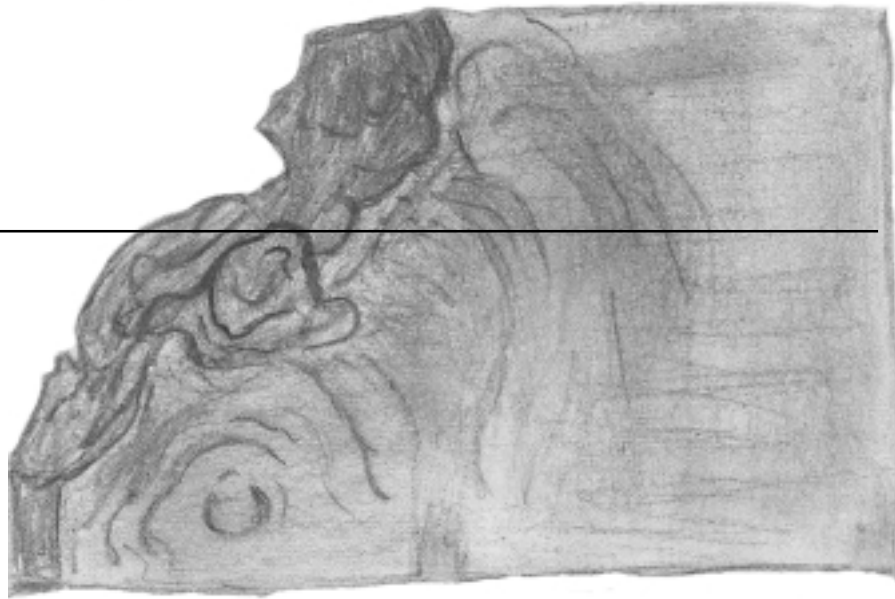


WHAREMOA

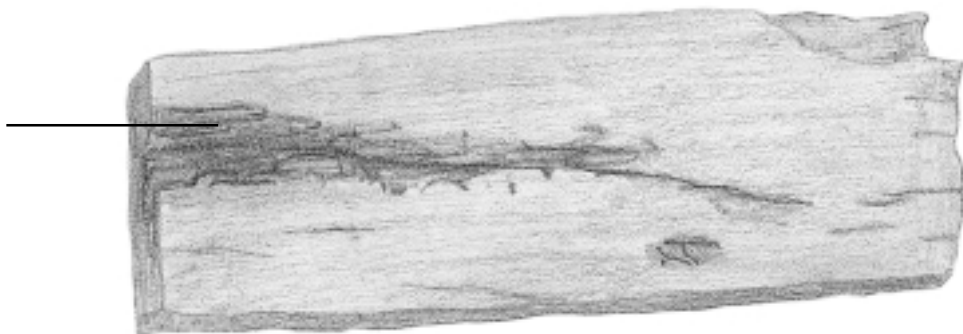
PŌKARAKARA

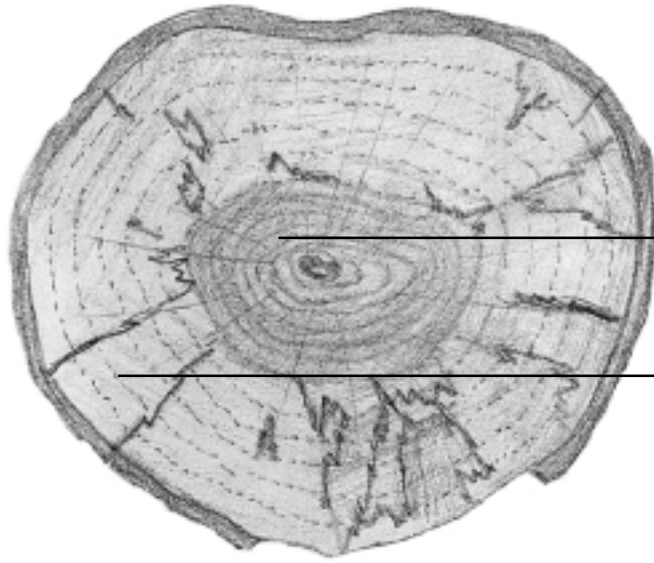


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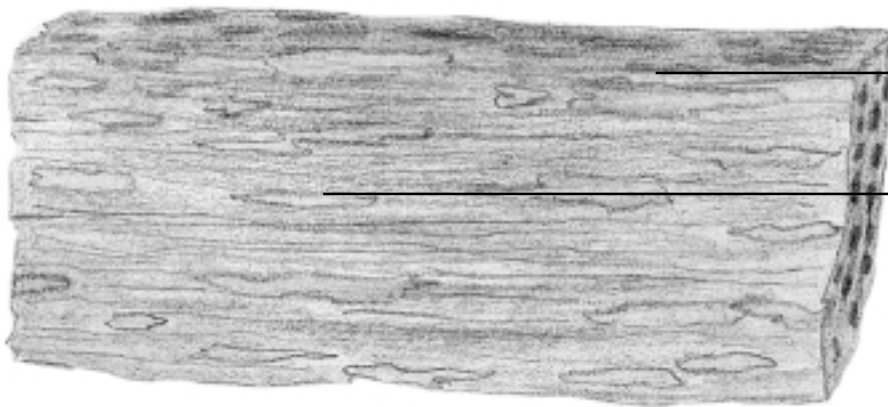
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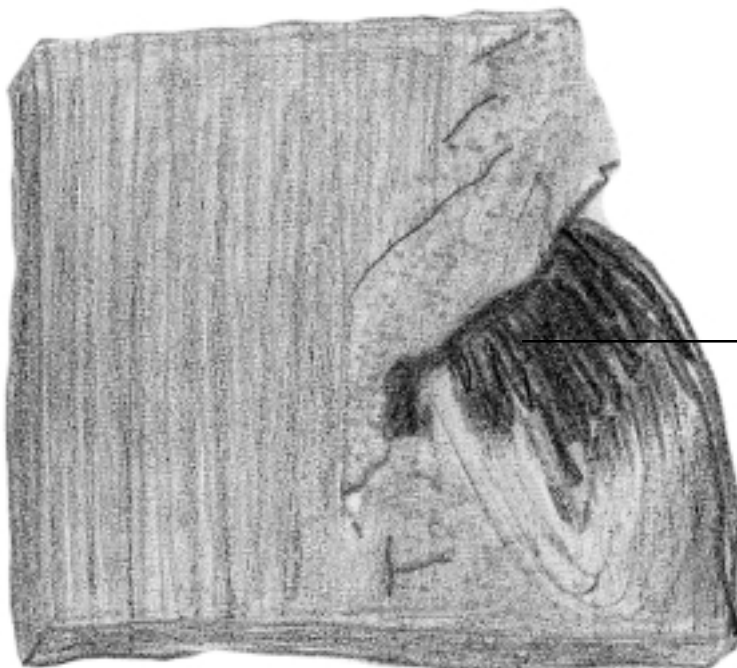
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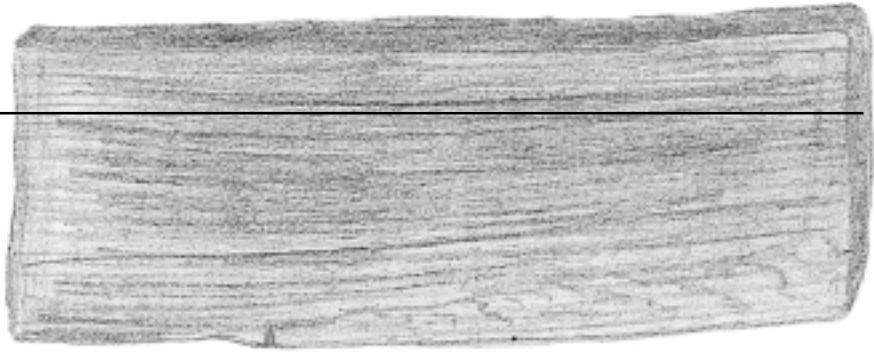
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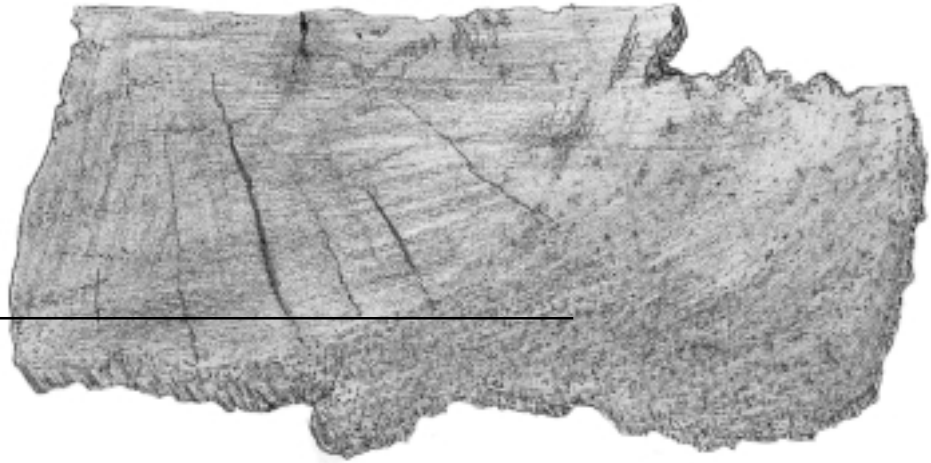


PŪKANOHI MONA

**WHATUTOTO
TAIKURA**



**PŪHĀHĀ
PŪWHĀWHĀ**



AKOAKO

