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John White

Excerpt

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## SONG OF HOKI: A REPROOF OF THOSE WHO TEACH FALSE HISTORY.

THE shame I feel and pain it brings  
 Is like the power of active tribe,  
 And doth intensify the dread  
 Of evil news so loudly spoken from afar.  
 Oh! why should word be bought with word?  
 And why not now draw near?  
 And why—yes, why—oh! why, my heart,  
 So start and palpitate? For well I know  
 My home is where the nobly great  
 Reside, and loudly welcome all the warlike tribes  
 Of Horo-tiu to come and be our guests,  
 And deck them in their beauteous mats,  
 And sit with Tai-ha on his sacred seat,  
 And tell the haughty and contemptuous Tohe-roa,  
 That she must shift her seat, and stand aside  
 From noble seat, to space where evil sits  
 With witch and wizard brood, and where, my son,  
 Assembled groups do congregate, to go  
 On evil expedition full intent. But when the property  
 Is gathered in the house, such to exchange,  
 No passing thought recalls the doom of  
 Wai-ta-oro at entrance of O-koro Stream;  
 From which no profit came,  
 As was the case when Maui,  
 With his jesting act, fished up the land,  
 And pulled Long Hawa-iki far up on the shore  
 With Hika-te-pipiro, and led Rua-ea  
 On to the land, where all mankind should cease to live.  
 A barracouta was the fish that went  
 Beneath the keel of Tai-nui; but 'tis  
 Not here, nor in this sea, the act took place,  
 But such was acted far across the sea,  
 Where Tama-te-kapua uttered his commands,  
 And ancestors were then like goblin-gods.  
 Yes, Nga-puhi is like those gods;  
 And Roto-rua, and Hau-raki,  
 And Kahu-ngunu, and Wai-kato,  
 And Tara-naki, all have goblin-gods.  
 And, O my son! what tribe is not godlike?  
 Though now ye "Block the cave of Pi-hanga,"  
 And "Open wide Whanga-nui-a-tara,"  
 And cease to "Seek the bonds that peace doth make,"  
 And hold—yes, "Hold secure the little kit of Haere,"  
 And "Roast the small green parrakeet,"  
 Or "Eat the small green parrakeet."  
 But, O my son! why hidest thou thy god—  
 The god we call Tu-whakaparu-ate?  
 Come, hold him forth for eyes of man to see,  
 That fame of thy now having gods may yet  
 Be heard, and not in vain, far on the distant horizon.

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My home shall now be sounded high in fame,  
 And spoken of as home where warriors live  
 And where the house of Hine-te-iwaiwa is,  
 And in the south of this great Papa-tu-a-nuku,  
 Where Tai-ariki, Ue-koko, and Henga  
 Are in the abode of Tatau-o-te-po,  
 Where dwell on that big mountain-ridge  
 My ancestors, who breathed the dire old wizard-craft  
 So spoken of by chattering lips of man.

But thou art not of offspring of Koro-kino  
 Who skims o'er distant earth to overtake old Hori,  
 Who holds the power of gods, the great canoes  
 Who evil brought on to this land, when came  
 A stranger race, with all their garment-property,  
 So envied by the children of Komako ;  
 And by the black descendants of old Kai-hau,  
 Were seen displayed in omens from the gods,  
 And not by human eye oft seen ;  
 Though dared, and felt at Ma-takitaki  
 And Hau-raki, and, like the battle in the south,  
 At Pa-hunga-toroa, which nipped the fame of Kuku-tai.  
 And then the stealing sons of robbers passed  
 O'er all the land. And Nga-ti-te-ata  
 Shall dance the song of war at Puke-tutu  
 And Nga-ti-pukenga ; and Paea too, shall  
 Listen to the coming troop of war of Nga-puhi ;  
 And Tangi-te-ruru and Rau-roha  
 Shall meet and welcome him from far O-hi,  
 The noted Hongi-hika, and test the gods with  
 Sacred rites, to make them yield their power to man's dictates.

*Song composed by Hoki, as a taunt in answer to false  
 accusations regarding the history of the people.*



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# ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE MAORI.

## CHAPTER I.

Yes, my small canoe, how little do I dread  
 Thy loss, O Te-rau-o-te-kaha! Thou art here  
 And mine. I brought thee here to be my own, my guardian help  
 And god, to beautify the landing-place where I my vessels keep;  
 That when the voice of man is heard my startled spirit  
 Leaps, as thou dost, god-like, sit upon the stream—  
 The stream of Ha-waiki, Raurutanga, and Ao-tea—  
 As I ascend the peak of Whiti-reia,  
 The brow o'er which the sun and moon oft pass,  
 At which oft Tapere-whatu-au, with flashing eye  
 And outstretched neck, will often glance.  
 Breathe the sacred song and chant it to the earth,  
 And in these days raise high aloft the sacred power  
 Of Tanga-roa (ocean's god) and bring it high on land.  
 The distant, loud, and far-off voice of Uru and  
 Ngangana are heard with voice of Whatu in the vale  
 Where Mangai-nuku, Mangai-rangi, Mangai-papa,  
 And Mangai-te-tahua are; but, O my small canoe!  
 I teach each one the words of sacred chant  
 Of old Takei—the song he chanted o'er himself  
 As into war he boldly went. I also taught them to  
 Tu-hikitia, Tu-hapainga, Tu-ka-rere, as I  
 Repeated these at Marere, and heard them echoed at the landing-  
 place—  
 The landing, where the great of Rangi are, where flaps  
 The wings of the great bird of Tane—the bird of plumes;  
 Add other plumes and bring them near together, 'tis Rae,  
 Kurae-maru, Whiwhia, and Rawea—Rawea caught.

*This song was composed by Whanake on account of his canoe  
 called Te-rau-o-te-kaha having gone adrift.*

## THE ANCIENT CANOES, AND TAI-NUI.

### (NGA-TI-MAHUTA.)

ACCORDING to what the ancients have said, the canoe called  
 Mata-atua (god-face) landed at Whaka-tane (like a man).  
 In this canoe a stone god was brought, which god was a  
*kumara* (sweet potato) god.

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The canoe called Te-Arawa (the shark), which had also a stone god on board, landed at Make-tu (ridge of the nose). This god was also a *kumara* (sweet potato) god, and is now kept at the island called Mokoia (tattoo him), in the Lake Roto-rua (second lake).

The canoe of Turi (deaf or obstinate) called Ao-tea (fair cloud) landed at Hokianga-o-kupe (the return of Kupe), from which place she sailed, going by the west coast, and landed at Pa-tea (white fort). The *karaka* (*Corynocarpus levigata*) was brought in this canoe.

Tai-nui (great tide) landed at Hau-raki (dry wind), and the crew paddled from there and entered the Tamaki (start involuntarily), that is in the Whanga-makau (wait for the loved one) River. As they had to wait there for their supreme female head, called Marama (moon), as she and her slave-man had landed at Marama-rua (double moon), and the people in the canoe waited there for her; hence the origin of the name of that creek, Whanga-makau (wait for the loved one), where they waited for that which they loved—for the spouse. Tai-nui was dragged across the portage of O-tahuhu (the ridge-pole) into the tide at-Manuka (regret) (or Manu-kau—all birds), and out into the great sea, where they, Hotu-nui (great sob) and his companions, paddled along the west coast and landed at Ka-whia (embraced).

Hotu-nui is the progenitor of all the Wai-kato (nipping water) tribes and all the other tribes. And they cultivated (set) at Ka-whia the *kumara* which they had brought over in the Tai-nui.

There were other canoes named, which canoes came to these Islands and landed in this land.

The traditional account given by the ancients says that the people called Patu-pae-arehe (weapon laid across, and weary, or fairies) came in the canoe Tai-nui; also the rat, with the *kumara* (sweet potato). And as Tai-nui went by the east coast the crew landed at Tutu-kaka (the *kaka* birds' perch), and went on shore there to look at the land; Patu-pae-arehe also fled on shore, and took some *kumara*

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## PATU-PAE-AREHE.

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with him in his hand, which were concealed from the sight of man by this *atua* (being) ; also the rat swam on shore and ate some of the *kumara* taken on shore by the Patu-pae-arehe, and hence, on account of some of these *kumara* being eaten by the rat, the following song was composed by a very old man of ancient days when his *kumara* were eaten by rats. This old man had heard of the *kumara* of the Patu-pae-arehe having been eaten by rats, and, as his were eaten by the same kind of animal, hence the origin of his song. This is the song alluded to :—

Here I sit, and heart of man  
 Requires to find some powerful charm  
 To counteract the ill befallen me.  
 Oh ! now confusion's here confounded.  
 But grow, O tendrils ! grow,  
 And flourish where ye sprout ;  
 The while I climb and sit on hill  
 In lonely mood outside my home.  
 O birds ! whose voice is hushed  
 Below me now at Rangi-ahua,  
 Come, meet again and sing your song.  
 I sacred am, and feel a dread  
 Of Rongo-tapu-hirahira(hingahinga)  
 (The great and sacred *kumara*).  
 But Thou, O Tane ! promoter,  
 And he who calls great evil,  
 And parent of the forest-land,  
 Art not abashed to stand  
 In presence of the little mouth (man),  
 Or see the child of piercing tooth (rat)  
 Devour and blight my growing crop,  
 Which in days past sat sheltered  
 In the prow of Tai-nui,  
 And passed across the sea  
 With Hotu-roa in his canoe ;  
 When Hotu brought the *kumara*,  
 And blessed the sun-lit world with food.  
 Ah ! why now heed the gods' commands,  
 Or think their power as aught ?  
 Then cast thou all behind thy back,  
 And deem their power as ornaments ;  
 While Heaven propitious smiles,  
 And screens at once from evil's power.  
 Then cease thy charms to chant  
 And incantations sing to Hau-turu  
 And Te-whara. In those though sacred hills

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Confusion and mistaken trust are placed.  
 Then press towards those hills, and see  
 If thou canst bite, and make an impress  
 Of thy teeth in them. But, oh! the *kumara*  
 Still grows on cliffs in Hawa-iki,  
 Where germ, and sprout, and life  
 Of such were seen the first.  
 But rats have blighted all now here.

## TAI-NUI. (NGA-TI-MAHUTA.)

The first canoes that came from the other side—that is, from Hawa-iki—and came to Ao-tea-roa (long light world), were called Te-arawa (shark), Kura-whau-po (combined red cloud of night), and Mata-atua (face of a god).

Papa says, at the time these canoes paddled (that is, sailed) towards this place Rata was left at Hawa-iki. Rata was a most learned man to make canoes, and Rata with his sub-tribe stayed at Hawa-iki. But the very (true) name of the land from which these canoes came to this land is not known—whether it is Hawa-iki or some other land, or an island or a great land.

Rata thought that they must make a canoe for themselves, and in the morning he went into the forest to find a tree of which to make a canoe; and when he had found one he went back to the settlement and slept. At dawn of day he took his axe and went to cut the tree down. When the tree was felled a bird called a *popokotea* (*Orthonyx albicilla*) and one called a *pihipihi* (*Xencus longipes*—a wren, the smallest New Zealand bird) were seen. The coming of these birds was an ill omen, as Rata had done wrong in the act of cutting the tree down for his canoe. Rata went back to his home and slept. On the following day he went again to work at his canoe, and found the tree standing up as it had grown; so he went back to his home and told the news to his sister.

She asked, “How did you act in cutting your tree down?”

Rata answered, “I went to the tree and cut it down, and cut the top off it; but I had seen two birds, a *popokotea* and a *pihipihi*, and I came back home and slept.”

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## KOWHITI-NUI KILLED.

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The sister said, "You did wrong in going back to make a canoe. You should first of all have rubbed your axe on me to make it sharp, and when you had left to go and cut your tree down you should have touched your axe against me; then you could have cut your tree down: and when it was felled you should have covered the stump with the *panako* (a species of fern)." The reason this woman had for mentioning the fern *panako* was that to use this fern as she stated was a custom followed since the days of ancient times. When it is decided to fell a tree for a canoe, the axe which is to be first used to cut the tree down is touched with fern-root.

Rata now went to cut his tree down, and did as instructed by his sister; and when he had felled it he covered the stump with the fern *panako*, and he also covered the body of the tree intended for a canoe with the same sort of fern.

On the following day Rata worked at the outside of his canoe; then he worked on the inside—on the hold of the canoe. And when the food was collected for those who worked at the canoe it was not guarded by any one; so a boy called Kowhiti-nui (he who takes many choice bits from a heap) took and ate the choice bits of this food. Against this boy Rata felt a hatred, and when the day came that the canoe should be laid on one side, so that the other side could be completed, Rata called and said to Kowhiti-nui, "Pull the rope, that the canoe may cant on one side." Now, Kowhiti-nui was a brave little fellow, so he took hold of the rope and pulled. Rata said to him, "Put it round your neck." Now, Rata had made a slip-knot on the end of the rope, and Kowhiti-nui put this over his head, and Rata pulled it tight and killed the boy, and buried him in the chips made in making the canoe.

When the canoe was finished and the day came to drag it to the sea, all the tribe collected, and the father of Kowhiti-nui was there; but not any of the people

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knew that the boy had been killed, and they thought he was absent at some other of the settlements in the district, and so expressed their thoughts without reserve. It was agreed that so soon as the canoe was afloat on the sea she should be loaded, and twice seventy people go on board of her, with Hotu-roa as the leader, and that the name of the canoe should be Tai-nui.

Now that the canoe was completed Rata stood up and chanted his incantation, to the words of which the canoe Tai-nui should be dragged to the sea. And when the incantation was chanted the canoe had been dragged to the sea. This is the incantation of Rata :—

Sharpen the axe of Hine-tu-a-hoanga;  
But it is I, Rata, searching for  
The river at Pikopiko-i-whiti.  
Death has been at Maunga-roa—  
The death of Kowhiti-nui.

Then the people shouted, —

O sin! our day.

Rata answered,—

Killed by Rata of Wahie-roa.

The people shouted,—

O sin! our day.

Rata answered,—

Dash it, the two, and bind them.

The people shouted,—

Dash it, the two, and bind them.

Rata answered,—

Fire, with a screen of air—  
Air of the year with a spear on the brow.

And this is also another incantation chanted when Tai-nui was dragged to the sea :—

Drag Tai-nui down to the ocean.  
Who shall drag her? Hearken :  
'Tis the news of earth—the news of heaven.  
Plant, caulk. Welcome, O Tane!  
We will swim that you may be admired  
By all the crowd of people.



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## TAI-NUI STARTS ON HER VOYAGE.

11

I have come for you to the forest of Tane  
 As an embracing husband, a husband of delight,  
 And a husband to lead ; but we are blown on  
 By the air from Wai-hi. Move, bow of the canoe.  
 Move by short stages ; move ; slide, slide.

Then Raka-taua (entangle a war-party) (or Raka-aura—entangle a rope), the father of Kowhiti-nui, knew from the words of the incantation of Rata that his son was dead. Raka-taua was a wizard, and all the tribe were afraid of him ; and when he went to search for his son the tribe said, “ Let us start on our voyage that we may escape, and leave Raka-taua here.”

And this is the incantation chanted when Tai-nui left to go on her voyage :—

The man on shore uncovers, and waits not for the man of the sea.  
 The man of the sea uncovers, and waits not for the man of the shore.  
 Even so the great dowry, the long dowry,  
 The opened stream, the stream of blood,  
 By putting the war-troop to sleep,  
 And Tu and Rongo (gods of war and food),  
 The sons who own or dam the stream.  
 Do not hinder or cover the son ; let him go out  
 Of the grief and troubles, where lords appear,  
 And Rongo (god of food) is counterpart  
 Of all that man doth need on earth.

Now, Hotu-roa and Tai-ketu (ebbing tide) (or Tai-kehu—red tide), Mama-o-rongo (offerings to the god Rongo), Ao-o-rongo (day of the god Rongo), and Taura-waho (the outer stay for the mast) embarked, and all sat at the stern of the canoe ; but in the centre, or where the water is baled out of the canoe, sat Po-tu-keha (night of the flea awake) (Pou-tu-keka—verily deranged), and in the bow sat the priest, with Rata and his sister Hine.

The food brought in Tai-nui was *kumara* (sweet potato), *hue* (gourd), *po-hue* (convolvulus), and *mawhai* (*Sicyos angulatus*), which were for the crew to live on while at sea.

When Raka-taua had got back from searching for his son, Tai-nui had gone a great distance out on the ocean, and he called to those in the canoe and said, “ Bring the canoe back for me ;” but the canoe was not brought back to

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him, and he was angry, and stood up and chanted incantations over the ocean, and the entrance of the harbour was closed up by the power of his incantations. But the priest who was sitting in the bow of the canoe Tai-nui stood up and chanted incantations, and the entrance of the harbour was again opened, and Tai-nui went out to sea and sailed on to this land Ao-tea-roa, and landed at Whanga-paraoa (harbour of the whale). The oysters which were on the rocks held Tai-nui there; but the priest who was sitting in the bow of Tai-nui stood up and chanted incantations, and the canoe was released, and she sailed away swiftly over the sea, and landed on the other side of O-tahuhu (the ridge-pole), to the east of the spot called the Apunga-o-tai-nui (the spot where Tai-nui was held); but so soon as the canoe had landed there Raka-taua was seen there also. A sea-monster had brought him over the great sea. There were not any people there, and the other canoes had also landed at other places.

Tai-nui was dragged over the isthmus at O-tahuhu, and sailed away along the west coast from the entrance of the Manuka harbour towards the south. And when she had got opposite to the entrance of the Wai-kato (full tide) harbour, the people in the canoe saw the water flowing outwards to the sea, and the priest who sat in the bow of the canoe said "Wai-kato, wai-kato kau" ("Flood-water, all flood-water"). These words he uttered in jest, as a taunt, and he threw his paddle on shore, which stuck in the cliff above him. And they paddled on along the west coast, where again this priest said, "Ko te akau kau" ("All sea-coast"). And when they arrived at Kawhia the same priest said, "Kawhia kau" ("All kawhia"), on account of the fish *kawhia* being so abundant there. And they landed there, and there again they found Raka-taua, who was standing looking at them. These words are not a myth; they are the words of very truth.

And they dragged Tai-nui on shore, and the skids over which they dragged her grew, and to this day they are still growing there.