

SOVEREIGN PARTS – by Anahera Herbert-Graves



Moana Jackson returned to Taitokerau last week to report on the findings of [Matike Mai o Aotearoa](#) regards constitutional transformation for the nations in this country, based on [He Hākaputanga o Nga Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī](#), as well as [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#) and tikanga.

Over the past four years more than 250 hui were held around the motu at which whanau, hapū and iwi Rangatira imagined what life will look like under such a constitution. Those hui were the first phase of this current transformation.

In the second phase, a further round of 20 hui-a-rohe are being held, and the first two of those hui were at Miria marae in Waiomio last Friday morning, followed by Kareponia marae that afternoon.

I couldn't get to Miria, so I made sure to be at Kareponia, and I was not disappointed in either the calibre of Rangatira who came nor the quality of the whakawhiwhitikorero, especially the tautohetohe.

Unsurprisingly, given that *He Hākaputanga* was debated and signed in 1835 by the Rangatira at a hui of Te Wakaminenga, many northern hapū have a strong connection to that document; for them it is THE Constitution.

So when a Wakaminenga member suggested to the Kareponia hui that Ngapuhi ought to take *He Hākaputanga* and visit every hapū in the motu with it, I thought, "Tika āna to korero. Kua mahi kē a Matike Mai o Aotearoa."

Because, although under tikanga interaction between an iwi and unaffiliated hapū is rare and risky, it's very common and completely lawful for hapū to interact directly with each other, regardless of their iwi affiliations. Ka puea ake tōna Rangatiratanga i āna pāhekoheko me te whānau hapū.

However, that same Rangatira prefaced his tohu with this patai: 'Is it possible that Matike Mai o Aotearoa is doing more harm than good?'



Again, it's about that strong connection to *He Hākaputanga*. Not only is it the first document using the English alphabet to record the simple reality that we were sovereign, it's the foundation upon which we remain sovereign to this day.

So, given that knowledge, how to answer his question? In the words of Moana himself, let me answer it in parts, beginning with answering the question of another Rangatira at the Kareponia hui who asked, "What is our purpose?"

Te Mana Motuhake o nga Rangatiratanga me te Hākapūmāutanga o nga hapū is our purpose. Therefore it follows that everything else must uphold, reaffirm and enhance that purpose in order to progress it.

The mahi we do in our whānau and hapū is the principle part. The work of Te Wakaminenga is an upholding part. The Waitangi Tribunal's [Report on Stage 1 of Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry](#) is a reaffirming part. The work of Matike Mai o Aotearoa is an enhancing part.

It is not accidental that these many parts are coalescing and coming together at this time. Me rapu tonu, me wewete mārire i ngā kōpaki, kia kitea ai te kai o roto.

