A New Zealand Myth

KUPE, TOI AND THE ‘FLEET’

About a century ago people in New Zealand became interested in the collection of Maori texts. Europeans were especially curious about the pre-history of the Maori people as told in their origin and migration traditions, and administrators found that to understand Maoris they had to know something of their oral literature.

In 1853 the Governor, Sir George Grey, published part of his collection of Maori texts of traditions and songs in Nga Moteatea. Edward Shortland, a Protector of Aborigines, included traditional material in Southern Districts of New Zealand published in 1851. Missionaries such as James Hamlin, William Colenso, Richard Taylor, J. F. H. Wohlers and others recorded traditional material. These records were added to by later collectors like John White, whose six volumes of The Ancient History of the Maori, published from 1887 to 1890, provided a heterogeneous collection of Maori texts for later writers to draw upon. Then in 1892 S. Percy Smith founded the Polynesian Society whose journal published traditions collected by W. E. Gudgeon, Edward Tregear, Elsdon Best and other Europeans or contributed by Maori members of the Society. The Society published The Lore of the Whare-Wananga, in two volumes of Maori text, translated and edited by Smith, in 1913-15. This provided a continuous and coherent recital of Maori prehistory that was soon accepted by scholar and layman alike as a true portrayal of Maori tradition.

This paper is a critical examination of some of the recorded origin and discovery traditions of the Maori. It is not based on an appeal to extratraditional evidence such as that provided by archaeology, but simply on a consideration of the traditional material itself. It does not concern the value or otherwise of Maori tradition as history. What is questioned is the status of the generally accepted versions of some traditions as genuine Maori tradition.

I

The Coming of the Maori:
some current New Zealand Folk-Lore

New Zealand school children are either taught formally, or absorb from their reading of any of a number of popular books on the

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subject, a standardised story which purports to summarise Maori
traditions of the discovery and settlement of New Zealand. This
story is widely accepted at all levels of scholarship as the following
quotations from the work of an eminent historian and an eminent
ethnologist will show:

Kupe was a discoverer whom, it appears, there is no gainsaying: Kupe may
stand with the other great voyagers of history; Kupe for his race is Colum-
bus or Magellan or Cook; for us he is to be deliberately admired like them
. . . . Kupe’s home, it is likely, was on Raiatea, one of the Society group;
but according to legend he was at . . . Rarotonga when in a dream he saw
the supreme god Io, who told him how to find the new land . . . . Kupe
left directions for his successors: ‘In sailing from Rarotonga to New Zea-
land, let the course be to the right hand of the setting sun, moon, or Venus,
in the month of February’; and that was presumably the month in which
he came, about the year 950. His canoe was called Matahorua, and with
him came a companion-chief Ngahue — who captained Tawiri-rangi —
and his wife and children, and a crew of sixty men. They made a landfall
near the North Cape and replenished their stores with birds and fish;
thence they sailed down the east coast of the North Island in Cook Strait . . . .

This first explorer, like later ones, spoke well of the high and misty
land, which seems — though on this point tradition varies — to have been
uninhabited. But whatever the truth of the matter in Kupe’s time, when two
hundreds years later men again sailed of set purpose to New Zealand and
remained there, they found many inhabitants . . . . They were a dark-
skinned people, tall and slim, with flat noses and restless eyes and upstand-
ing hair; lazy, little skilled in the arts of living. From Taranaki, where they
settled, they spread to many parts of the North Island, in particular north
to Tamaki . . . to the Bay of Plenty and Hawke’s Bay. These were the
tangata-whenua, ‘the people of the land’, who were found by Toi, when
he came from Tahiti about 1150, and who were taken in marriage or fought
and slain by the sons of Toi.

Toi was an elder of Tahiti, and one day he sat on a hillside with other
elders watching the young men at their canoe-races in the lagoon of
Pikopiko-i-whiti. Among the contenders were Toi’s grandson, Whatonga,
and his friend Tu Rarui. Excited and jubilant, these two sailed their canoe
outside the reef to the open sea; a fog came down, the wind blew off the
land, and they were lost to all sight. Full of grief, Toi waited long for his
grandson to come back; and then manned his own canoe to search for
him. He sailed to Samoa, he sailed to Rarotonga, in vain; he resolved to
sail farther still. And saying to the people of Rarotonga: ‘I go to seek my
child in strange lands, in the moist land discovered by Kupe, and I will
greet the landhead at Aotearoa or be engulfed in the stomach of Hine-
moana’, he put to sea . . . . Whatonga . . . returned to Tahiti [then set out]
in search of his grandfather . . . and at Whakatane . . . the old man and
the young at last [met] again. Whatonga, like Toi, decided to remain.
Neither had come intentionally to settle down. Neither had brought roots
to cultivate or seeds of edible plants; nor had the people of the land any.
Thus it was that Toi to future generations became Toi-kai-rakau, Toi the
eater of wood, who roasted fern-root and steamed cabbage tree bole to
join his fish and his fowl. Canoes went back for kumara . . . Between these tribes, allied with the unmixed children of Toi, and those who sprang from the earlier inhabitants, . . . wars arose . . . that lasted until, it is said, the last of the tangata-whenua fled in seven canoes upon the sea . . . in search of the Chatham Islands. There they lived for many generations, into our modern time . . .

It was left to a later immigration to populate [Aotearoa] more fully . . . This immigration was that of the group of canoes known as the Fleet, coming from Tahiti about the year 1350, together with three other canoes of great fame, which set out singly . . . The great canoes were made ready for sea, outriggers strengthened, stores packed on board; and some time in November or December, the months of the fair wind, the Fleet set sail — Tainui, Te Arawa, Mata-atua, Kurahaupo, and Tokomaru, with their men, women and children, their chiefs and their priests. So also did the independent canoes, Aotea, Horouta, Takitimu . . .

There is a widely accepted chronology for the sequence of events detailed in the above quotation, as shown in the following statement: 'Maori culture proper . . . developed in the North Island as the result of the fusion of the three main Polynesian migrations, those of Kupe (950 A.D.), Toi (1150 A.D.), and the Fleet (1350 A.D.).'²

There are a number of slightly divergent versions of this discovery and settlement story.³ However, they all include most of the following points: the 950, 1150, 1350 chronology for Kupe, Toi and the Fleet; the association of Toi and Whatonga as great voyagers, the latter settling in New Zealand; Kupe's circumnavigation, his failure to find people here, his return, and his refusal to come back to New Zealand; and the naming of Tainui, Te Arawa, Mata-atua, Kurahaupo, Tokomaru, as the Fleet, with Aotea and Takitimu sailing independently but about the same time.

Just what are the sources for these modern New Zealand folk tales, accepted so literally by so many of our scholars and promulgated so assiduously by our teachers and authors?

II

The Sources of the New Zealand Myth

Accounts of Maori discovery and settlement of New Zealand, such as those quoted above, stem directly, or after a critical filtering through some such book as Te Rangi Hiroa's The Coming of the Maori,⁴ from two published sources. The first and more important

¹ J. C. Beaglehole, The Discovery of New Zealand, London, 1961, pp. 1-8. See also Preface where doubt is expressed as to the historicity of the tradition, but none as to its authenticity.
⁴ Te Rangi Hiroa (P. H. Buck), The Coming of the Maori, Cawthron Institute, Nelson, 1929. 2nd ed., Wellington, 1950.
is The Lore of the Whare-Wananga, two volumes of Maori text, plus
a heavily edited translation and commentary by S. Percy Smith, which
were published in 1913 and 1915. A less important but much earlier
source is Polynesian Mythology, Sir George Grey’s fairly reliable
translation of his own remarkable collection of Maori texts. The Maori
texts and translation were first published in 1855. The Maori appeared
in an earlier book called Nga Mahinga a nga Tupuna Maori (1854)
and in a later expanded edition retitled Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna
(1928) edited by H. W. Williams.

Two of the most important figures in the popular English versions
of Maori tradition, which I have called the New Zealand myth, are
Kupe and Toi. Both Kupe and Toi are mentioned in Polynesian
Mythology. The authorship of the legend which mentions Toi is
known definitely. The original manuscript, dated 1849, is still extant.5
It is by Te Rangikaheke, a Ngati Rangiwewehi chief of the Rotorua
district, to whom indeed a large part of Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna can
be attributed.

Unfortunately the Toi of Polynesian Mythology has little but his
name in common with the Toi of the New Zealand myth. The
association with Whatonga, the canoe race on Pikopiko-in-whiti, the
voyage to New Zealand, and the settlement at Whakatane are all
missing. In Polynesian Mythology Toi is a chief of Hawaiki involved
with quarrels which resulted in the Arawa migration to New Zealand.
This discrepancy will be discussed in Part IV. Kupe, too, is mentioned
in Polynesian Mythology. In this case the tradition includes the essen-
tials of the myth — the voyage to New Zealand, the octopus of
Muturangi, the return to Hawaiki, and the refusal to come back to
New Zealand. The authorship and the authority of the tradition will
be discussed in Part III. Various canoes are mentioned in Polynesian
Mythology. Te Arawa and Tainui are stated to have been made by
the same tohunga. Other canoes named are Matatua, Takitimu, Kura-
haupo, Tokomaru and Matawhaorua. Te Rangikaheke is the author
of most of this story. This will be discussed in Part V.

The Lore of the Whare-Wananga is very much more important than
Polynesian Mythology as a source of the New Zealand myth. It has
been necessary to undertake the complicated task of investigating
the sources of The Lore itself in order to assess its worth as authentic
tradition. And this, of course, raises the question as to what can be
considered authentic tradition. A summary of the criteria used has
been published in the Journal of the Polynesian Society.6

III

Kupe the Discoverer

Polynesian explorer named Kupe arrived in this country in the tenth
century, the date being usually given as precisely as 925 A.D. This

5 Grey, New Zealand Maori ms. 81, p. 56, Auckland Public Library.
6 D. R. Simmons, ‘The Sources of Sir George Grey’s Nga Mahi a Nga
orthodox version of the Kupe tradition is widely accepted. Those
For many years it has been part of the New Zealand myth that a
who quote this information apparently believe that Maori traditions
and genealogy have preserved the past well enough to warrant such
statements, and that their statements about Kupe stem from a careful
interpretation of Maori tradition. It is this latter belief that is being
examined here.

What are the immediate sources of the Kupe story? John Te H.
Grace, W. A. Taylor, T. H. Mitara, W. P. Morrell repeat the story of
Kupe's arrival in New Zealand in the tenth century. The immediate
sources of their information are Te Rangi Hiroa’s *The Coming of the
Maori*, first published in 1929, and S. Percy Smith’s *History and Traditions of the Taranaki Coast* (1910). In this latter work Smith first
suggested the 925 A.D. date for Kupe, the discoverer of New Zealand.
*History and Traditions of the Taranaki Coast* is in fact the only source
of the tenth century dating of Kupe. Buck’s 1929 account and his
later and fuller 1950 account both stem largely from Smith’s edition
of *The Lore of the Whare-Wananga* which must be regarded as the
main published source of the accepted Kupe story.

The second volume of *The Lore of the Whare-Wananga* has
to say about Kupe can be briefly summarised. Kupe was a chief of
Hawaiki. His father was from Rarotonga. His father-in-law was from
Rangi-atea. Kupe quarrelled with Muturangi over the pet octopus of
the latter which continually stole the bait from Kupe’s lines. Kupe,
in *Matahorua*, and Ngake, in *Tawiri-rangi*, pursued the octopus to
New Zealand. The octopus was killed. Kupe went to the South Island
and discovered greenstone. He returned to Hawaiki from Hokianga.
Here he discussed the new land with various people including Turi,
who used his directions to come to New Zealand in the *Aotea* canoe.

At one point in the Maori text a question was asked of the tohunga:
‘Sir, how do we enter into the genealogy of Kupe and his children?’
He replied, ‘There is no consistency (tikanga) in the genealogies
because according to some there are two generations according to
others three or four generations, and then the “great fleet” (heke nui)
came to New Zealand.’ Smith translates this as follows: ‘There is

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7 John Te H. Grace, *Tukuharetoto*, Wellington, 1960, p. 19; W. A. Taylor,
*The Lore and History of the South Island Maori*, Christchurch, 1950, p. 16;
8 S. P. Smith, *The Lore of the Whare-Wananga*, Part II, New Plymouth,
no reliance to be placed upon (some) genealogies because, in different cases, they state two, three, or four generations before the migration took place to Aotearoa.' Then in a footnote he adds: 'That is, explains the scribe, the migration of Toi, which flourished thirty-one generations ago, and of his grandson Whatonga and others.'

The significance of this becomes apparent when the question of dating Kupe is considered.

So much for The Lore of Whare-Wananga version of Kupe, which, as we have seen, is the main published source for the accepted Kupe story. We can now look at the primary sources of this particular version of the Kupe tradition. Smith tells us in the introductions to the two volumes of The Lore of Whare-Wananga that it was compiled from transcripts of talks by two tohunga, Nepia Pohuhu and Te Matorohanga. The transcripts were made by Te Whatahoro Jury and copies, or copies of copies, of portions of these transcripts are still extant. The manuscripts which are important at this point are those I have called the Best-Matorohanga, Best-Pohuhu, J. M. Jury, Downes and S. P. Smith manuscripts.

Authenticated versions of the Matorohanga and Pohuhu teachings were sent for publication to the Dominion Museum by a committee of Ngati Kahungunu elders called the Tanenuiarangi Committee in 1908. In the foreword to the Lore Smith says the Tanenuiarangi Committee Seal was stamped on the source manuscripts for the texts published, which he copied from Whatahoro's books. The Tanenuiarangi manuscripts sent to the Dominion Museum were copied by Elsdon Best and H. M. Stowell but not published.

Although in The Lore of the Whare-Wananga, II, the account of Kupe is attributed to Te Matorohanga, the Best-Matorohanga manuscript (our source for what Matorohanga is said to have taught) contains only the following brief account of Kupe:

Turi was a nephew [classificatory?] of Kupe. Kupe's was the first canoe [to come] to this Island, Turi's was the second. Rongorongo was a daughter of Nga Toto, a chief of Rangi-atea, which lies at Tiritiri-o-te-moana. Kupe heard of this land lying at Tiritiri-o-te-moana covered by sky mist. He smelled the scent of the earth. Kupe said, 'After me, go to the land which is covered by mist. You will see the "posts" of my canoe, [of] karaka lying, the two in a heap. This is the earth I smelt, that I scented. It is loam, light your fire there.' Turi said, 'Kupe will not return again.' That ends my explanation to you.

The original manuscript for the printed version is a transcript taken down by T. W. Downes from Whatahoro. The source of this information could be Pohuhu's teaching as it is not contained in the

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9 ibid., p. 66.
Best-Matorohanga manuscript but an examination of our only extant source for Pohuhu (the Best-Pohuhu manuscript) shows only a brief mention of Kupe, as the discoverer of Tiritiri-o-te-moana, but no account of Kupe.

On the other hand the J. M. Jury manuscript has an account of Kupe which is substantially the same as the published version attributed to Te Matorohanga. Indeed a careful comparison of the Lore account with the J. M. Jury manuscript shows that though they are not exactly the same, they are extremely similar and, moreover, share features which, as we shall see, do not occur in any other version of the Kupe tradition. If this is the case it is important to know whether or not the J. M. Jury manuscript is in fact an early source, for early source material is more likely to be authentic than later material.

Unfortunately it is impossible to be sure that the J. M. Jury manuscript is in fact an early source. The only extant copy of the manuscript is that made by Smith in 1911 from the original of the Downes-Whatahoro III volume, into which it had been copied by Whatahoro some time after 1908 when Downes had copied all the material which was then in Whatahoro’s book. (This is referred to by Smith as Whatahoro vol. III). Moreover the earlier history as stated by J. M. Jury and Whatahoro in a note appended to the manuscript does not inspire confidence in the material as a true copy of what is allegedly an 1840 manuscript. J. M. Jury, father of Whatahoro, was an Englishman who understood but could not write Maori and so took down the talks in English. These were copied out into another book in 1876 and given to Whatahoro Jury. Thomas Young, Government interpreter, translated the material into Maori, and it was this version which was copied by Whatahoro into the original of the Downes-Whatahoro III volume after 1908. Then Smith copied out Whatahoro’s copy and translated part of it into English for publication in the Lore. Smith did not see the original English or any copy other than the post-1908 version added to the original of the Downes-Whatahoro III volume. There is no mention made of material contained in the manuscript until 1910 when we first hear of it from Smith. The manuscript appears to be the product of more than one writer as the style changes from one narrative to another. Finally, in the Kupe narrative the writer gives the impression of being on

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13 Smith Papers.
14 See note with Smith Papers, Whatahoro III copy. Downes was sending material to Smith which he had copied or heard from Whatahoro between 1908 and 1910 when Smith went to see Whatahoro personally.
16 Note with J. M. Jury ms., Smith Papers.
17 S. P. Smith, History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast, New Plymouth, 1910, Preface. (Also referred to as H. and T. of the Taranaki Coast, Maori History of the Taranaki Coast, and Taranaki Coast, the various spine titles on bound copies.)
the West Coast only, whereas, in the other accounts the speaker is quite clearly placed upon the East Coast.

The history of the manuscript then raises doubts as to whether it is what it purports to be; these doubts are confirmed by internal features which indicate that it is a compilation from different sources and different tribal areas.

Widespread knowledge of a tradition is one of the criteria of authenticity. Therefore I will now survey all early traditional references to Kupe in order to see whether or not The Lore of the Whare-Wananga version of the Kupe tradition was widely known either in the Ngati-Kahungunu area, from whence it allegedly stems, or elsewhere. 19

Ngati Kahungunu versions of Kupe either place Kupe on the Takitimu canoe or refer to him as a contemporary of people who are said to have been on it. Nowhere is there mention of such salient features of the orthodox version as the octopus of Muturangi and the pursuit from Hawaiki to New Zealand. Nor is Kupe mentioned as being associated with any other canoe.

The Tainui canoe area stories are very different in that Kupe is said to have stolen Hoturapa’s wife, then came to New Zealand where he cut up the land. He raised rough seas round the coast and then went away.

Wanganui-Taranaki references are essentially similar. Kupe is constantly associated with Turi, captain of the Aotea canoe. Kupe comes looking for his wife stolen by Hoturapa in a canoe called Matahorua. Kupe is given as a brother of Ngake. He cut up the land and then returned encountering rough seas on his way. In some versions Kupe finds a monster cuttlefish blocking Patea harbour; this he kills. The version by Piri Kawau in Grey’s Nga Mahi 20 includes a passage by an unknown author which recounts the killing of the octopus of Muturangi but not the chase to New Zealand. The association of the octopus of Muturangi and Kupe, suspect as it is, occurs only in this area and in The Lore of the Whare-Wananga. Other stories of the octopus, which is either named or unnamed, but not associated with Kupe, are known from Wanganui. At Tauranga a similar story is told of the octopus of Muturangi associated with Tamatea. The Ngati Rangi tribe, who tell this story, have no knowledge of Kupe at all.

The Northland area provides the earliest reference to Kupe in a manuscript written by a Marist missionary at Hokianga in 1841. 21 Maui in fishing up New Zealand catches his hook on the gable of Nukutawhiti’s house. Nukutawhiti is said to be the wife of Kupe, one of Maui’s helpers in the formation of New Zealand. This reference is a little garbled but is confirmed by accounts taken down in the Hokianga in 1846 and 1847 by John White who mentions Kupe and

19 For a fuller survey see ibid.
his canoe Matawhaorua or Matahorua. A manuscript written in 1849 by Aperahama Taonui, prophet of the Ngakahi cult of Waima, Hokianga, includes the story of Kupe as a contemporary of Nukutawhiti, the original ancestor of Ngapuhi. Taonui also gives an important genealogy which will be referred to later. The Hokianga version of the Kupe story is recorded in a number of sources and is still an integral part of modern folk lore of the district.

Except for an early copy of Kupe's song from Taiaroa of Otakou in 1853, early information from the South Island is lacking. The dominant Kai-Tahu tribe is of Ngati Kahungunu descent and later information is essentially the same as for Ngati Kahungunu. In the northern part of the South Island the people present in the nineteenth century where from Rangitane, Muaupoko and Tainui tribes of Wellington and Horowhenua. The information recorded accords with that of Wanganui-Taranaki and Tainui areas.

In the preceding sections the early traditional evidence regarding Kupe has been summarised. It is very different from the orthodox Kupe story, which, as we have seen, derives entirely from Te Whatahoro, Smith's immediate source for The Lore of the Whare-Wananga Maori texts.

Te Whatahoro, the 'scribe' of The Lore, is said to have obtained his material from Ngati Kahungunu sources, according to Smith, from Te Matorohanga in 1865, but according to internal evidence from the J. M. Jury manuscript. This latter is suspect because, although it was supposed to have been written in 1840, we first hear of it in 1910 and no one living has seen the original.

There are several curious features about this Te Whatahoro version of Kupe. Although it is supposed to have come from Ngati Kahungunu, there are no other early Ngati Kahungunu stories which are anything like it. On the other hand the story is much more like the general Tainui-Wanganui-Taranaki account of Kupe, and we know that Te Whatahoro lived in Wanganui for many years. One cannot help suspecting that the Kupe version in the Lore owes more to Taranaki-Wanganui sources than it does to Ngati Kahungunu.

There is also the curious fact that the association of Kupe and the octopus of Muturangi occurs only in two sources, namely in Nga Mahi, where it is interpolated in the middle of a manuscript whose author is known, and the Lore (i.e. from Whatahoro). It is possible that he owned a copy of Nga Mahinga and got the Muturangi incident from there.

An important factor emerging from the survey of authentic Kupe

22 J. White, Private Journal, ms. 143, Alexander Turnbull Library.
23 Best copy, Best Papers, 17. See also White, AJHR, 1880, II, G.8 item 14, pp. 15, 28.
24 In 1870 Whatahoro was recorder for Muaupoko land claims in the Horowhenua. He spent much of his time in the meeting house called 'Kupe'. He later lived and died in Wanganui. See Horowhenua Commission, AJHR, 1896, III, C.2, pp. 238-9.
25 According to his descendants, Whatahoro assisted Grey to collect material on the East Coast in the eighteen-sixties. Personal communication.
traditions is that legendary knowledge of Kupe was purely regional. It was confined to the north and the west of the North Island, and the Kahanungunu area, including the South Island. Many areas have no knowledge of Kupe at all.

Finally, there is the problem of dating Kupe. S. Percy Smith in 1910 identified two Kupes, one who came in the tenth century, and one who was contemporary with the 'Great Fleet'.

Precise dates were obtained by adding up genealogies counting twenty-five years to a generation. While the traditions clearly place Kupe as a contemporary of the founding ancestors at eighteen to twenty-four generations ago, two areas, Northland and Taranaki, also state that Kupe saw no people on his visit. It was believed that New Zealand had been inhabited prior to the fourteenth century, a belief substantiated by archeological excavations in the latter part of the nineteenth century and by research aided by carbon-dating since then.

Smith's dilemma was resolved when his attention was drawn to three genealogical lines from Northland which put Kupe at forty generations ago. The three lines were obtained from Taonui by John White, Hone Mohi Tawhai also of Waima Hokiang, and Rev. R. G. Hammond, who had got his from Tawhai when stationed at Waima. Tawhai at this time had in his possession manuscript books written by Taonui. Smith treated them as three genealogies but they are clearly all one line derived from Taonui. Moreover in Taonui's manuscripts the names from Kupe to Rahiri, pivotal ancestor of modern Ngapuhi groups, are stated to be used as tapu removers.

This is borne out by the forms of the names which tend to repeat their first syllables as in many ritualistic pseudo-genealogies. In the Taonui genealogy there are six generations between Kupe and Nukutawhiti, which would have made it somewhat difficult for them to meet as they are said to have done in Taonui's own record. All other genealogies from the North, which include Kupe, place him within one or two generations of Nukutawhiti.

This single line from Taonui is incompatible with all other genealogies which include Kupe in the areas where he is known. Only one tribe, Muanpoko of Horowhenua, claimed direct descent from Kupe who is placed about eighteen generations ago. Kupe genealogies are known only from areas with traditions referring to him. If any validity is placed in genealogical dating techniques which take account of biological facts, then Kupe should belong to the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries A.D., not the tenth century.

IV
Toi the Migrant

The story of Toi and Whatonga as migrants to New Zealand in 1150 A.D. is usually included in the New Zealand myth to explain

26 Smith, *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast*, p. 56.
27 ibid., pp. 52-53.
28 Best copy, *Best Papers*, 17, p. 2.
the presence of people when the ‘Great Fleet’ arrived. Examination of authentic Toi traditions is complicated by the fact that there are several stories of a Toi with little or nothing in common. There are also many areas where Toi is included in genealogies but no tradition is known.

A careful examination of published sources makes it clear that the account given to the second volume of The Lore of the Whare-Wananga is the immediate source of all the published versions, as it is the only source to include the canoe-race story telling how Whatonga was swept out to sea, Toi’s voyage to New Zealand and the reunion of Toi and Whatonga in New Zealand. The Lore account is printed from a manuscript taken down by T. W. Downes from Whatahoro but possibly derived from very similar, though not identical, versions in the Pohuhu manuscript or more likely the J. M. Jury manuscript. The material is said to be by Te Matorohanga but there is no account of Toi in the Best-Matorohanga manuscript. Pohuhu came from the Wairarapa and belonged to Ngati Hinepare and Ngati Kahungunu tribes. Material from this area has been recorded by Grey, White, Colenso, Locke, Gudgeon and others. It is startling to find that none of these sources contains anything even remotely resembling the orthodox version, even though John White’s notes and published Ancient History of the Maori include information from two of the tohunga, Nepia Pohuhu and Paratene Te Okawhare, and two of the students, Rihari Tohi and Te Whatahoro, present at the 1865 session which produced the texts on which the Lore is said to be based. In fact, in the Ngati Kahungunu area, though Toi is found in a few genealogical tables there is no tradition of him at all, except in the doubtful Pohuhu and J. M. Jury manuscript. The Pohuhu manuscript is known to be a compilation and does include information from other informants. A thorough search of all traditional sources has failed to find any authority for this story other than the Pohuhu and Jury manuscripts. Whatonga is linked with Toi usually as a grandson on a number of genealogies but he

29 Downes-Matatorohanga ms., I, pp. 18-43.
31 J. White, The Ancient History of the Maori, Preface, vol. VI.
32 Best-Matorohanga ms., Foreword and p. 1.
33 See Smith-Pohuhu ms. title page listing authors dating between 1863 and 1886 including Pohuhu, Tohi, Okawhare.
is nowhere associated in tradition with Toi. Neither is Toi ever spoken of as a migrant. All traditions either refer to him as a man who lived in Hawaiki (Arawa traditions) and was associated with events leading up to the coming of the Arawa to New Zealand, or as an origin ancestor born in New Zealand (Tuhoe tradition).

The Tuhoe-Bay of Plenty Toi is, to quote Elsdon Best, ‘always spoken of as having been born in New Zealand and no tradition is here preserved of his having left this land’.\(^{34}\) This Toi, known as Toi-kai-rakau (Toi the wood eater), is often associated with the introduction of kumara to the area. An alternative name is Toi-te-huatahi (Toi the only child). Whatonga is unknown. This Toi, according to genealogies, lived twenty-two generations ago. In only one genealogy is Whatonga included. Rauru is more often given as Toi’s son.

The Arawa Toi-te-Huatahi is included in Grey’s *Nga Mahi*,\(^{35}\) from the story by Te Rangikaheke.\(^{36}\) Except for his name, Toi-te-Huatahi, he has nothing in common with either the Tuhoe-Bay of Plenty Toi or the orthodox Toi.

These are the only two areas which have a tradition of Toi at all.

On the basis of traditions we are justified in recognising at least two Toi: the Toi of the Arawa tradition who lived in Hawaiki and is linked into Arawa genealogies three generations earlier than Tamate-Kapua who captained the Arawa canoe; and the Toi-Kai-Rakau of the Bay of Plenty-Tuhoe area. The Arawa and Tuhoe-Bay of Plenty traditions and associated genealogies do not concern the same people, the traditions being quite different and the genealogies sharing only the name Toi in common.

Documentary material from other tribes includes no traditional references to Toi at all though his name is found on genealogies. In the absence of traditional references the only way to decide whether the occurrence of a name Toi on genealogies is a reference to the same man is by looking for associated names. A preliminary inspection of about eighty genealogies revealed several names which occur frequently and can be regarded as diagnostic. Two of these are Rauru and/or Whatonga. The occurrence of these two names on two separate genealogies containing the name Toi can be regarded as referring to the same man.

Genealogies from six areas, Ngati Kahungunu, Rangitane-Muapokoko, Ngati Porou, Ngai Tahu, Ngapuhi, Tainui and Wanganui, place Toi at varying distances from living men. Of all these groups only Rangitane claim land through descent from Whatonga but usually do not associate him with Toi at all. They have a tradition of Whatonga as captain of the *Kurahaupo*, their origin canoe, but no tradition of Toi. In fact, all the Rangitane genealogies associating their Whatonga with Toi are recorded after 1870 when Te Whata-

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\(^{32}\) Grey, *Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna*, pp. 54-57.

\(^{33}\) Grey, *New Zealand Maori ms. 81*, pp. 56-57.
horo was living in the district. It is more than likely that part of what has become the orthodox tradition was collected at this time by Te Whatahoro and married to East Coast-Bay of Plenty elements.

The Toi-te-Huatahi associated with Rauru or Whatonga on the genealogies from outside Arawa or Tuhoe areas is not assigned any consistent position being placed anywhere from twenty-nine to forty-two generations ago. A Toi, often not associated with Rauru or Whatonga, is usually assigned a cosmogonic position as the first man created and follows Tiki, the progenitor of man, in most areas. In Ngati Kahungunu myth Tane is the progenitor god. The name Toi can be translated as the source, origin, spring or native, and in the ritualistic and cryptic creation chants in genealogical form it appears as Toi-te-huatahi or Toi the first.

A great deal of confusion appears to have resulted when this cosmogonic Toi and the genealogies containing the Tuhoe-Bay of Plenty Toi have come into contact. Alexander Shand, a notable Maori scholar and collector of Chatham Islands 'Moriori' traditions, having heard from Smith about his Toi theories, wrote on 11 April 1908:

I notice you appear to incline to the belief that Toi, Rauru and Whatonga arrived in N.Z. Well, it may be so if it can be shown that Toi was Toi Kai rakau and these were his descendants — in which case it would seem as if [they were] Moriori ancestors also, but if you look up the Karakia's [incantations] it was always, Ko Tu, Ko Tane, Ko Tane, then Tiki, Toi, Rauru and Whatonga as the 'heaven born' — It always seems to me somewhat of a mixture of the gods or demigods by way of preamble then breaking into later ancestors.37

V

The Fleet

References to origin canoes are made in Grey's Nga Mahi.38 A short passage about the canoes on page 59 is mainly taken from a manuscript by Te Rangikaheke of the Ngati Rangiwehi tribe of Arawa, with an interpolation from Matane Te Whiwihi of Ngati Toa, a Tainui tribe.39 The text in Nga Mahi is taken from an earlier publication by Grey40 and has undergone some editing as the list of canoes in Te Rangikaheke's section includes Matawhaorua, a Hokianga Ngapuhi name for Kupe's canoes. This name is not known to the Arawa. The second section referring to the canoes in Nga Mahi (pp. 60-70) is likewise a composite from manuscripts by Te Rangikaheke and Te Whiwhi.41 When separated the sources recount their own regional traditions of the arrival of the Arawa and Tainui canoes

37 Smith Papers.
38 Grey, Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna, p. 59.
39 Grey, New Zealand Maori mss. 44 and 77.
40 Grey, Ko Nga Moteatea, Me Nga Hakirara O Nga Maori, Wellington, 1853, p. lviii.
41 Te Rangikaheke, Grey, New Zealand Maori mss. 44, 81, 51; Te Whiwhi, Grey, New Zealand Maori ms. 77.
at Maketu and Kawhia. Similarly other sections in Nga Mahi, when unscrambled, refer to regional origin traditions of the authors’ tribes. Shortland in 1854 also referred to origin canoes which left Hawaiki naming Tainui, Te Arawa and Mataatua.

Nevertheless the orthodox fleet story is derived from the second volume of Percy Smith’s The Lore of the Whare-Wananga. As Te Rangi Hiroa said in 1950: ‘The great migration from Hawaiki is the most famous event in Maori history. S. Percy Smith arrived at the approximate date of 1350 A.D. The lack of authenticity of the Lore version is again made clear by a study of the Best-Matorohanga manuscript. This source gives a full and complete version of the Takitimu traditions proper to the Kahungunu area and mentions the names of Tainui, Tokomaru, Mataatua, Te Arawa and Te Ririno canoes as being known but does not include any of the other canoe traditions attributed to Matorohanga. The primary source for these canoe traditions is again Te Whatahoro whose own manuscripts contain information from other areas. As an example, the Lore includes a detailed history of the settlement of the Chatham Islands said to have been obtained by Te Matorohanga on a visit to Taranaki before 1865 when he heard it from the great tohunga, Turaukawa. The original source manuscript for this tradition is a copy made by Te Whatahoro in 1913, of a manuscript of talks given in 1902, by two ‘Moriori’ from the Chatham Islands, who were speaking to the assembled elders in Turaukawa meeting house at Taiporahenui, South Taranaki. While most of the manuscripts Smith obtained from Te Whatahoro were rewritten before he saw them, in this particular case notes in Maori shorthand were made on the margins of the manuscript in which the origin and date of the material is clearly stated. Only Best and Smith were familiar with the system of Maori shorthand they had devised. Comparison of the shorthand characters with those of Best and Smith leaves no doubt that Smith actually saw and annotated a copy of the manuscript dated 1902, which he

42 See Simmons, ‘The Sources of Sir George Grey’s Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna’, 177-85.
44 Te Rangi Hiroa, 2nd ed., p. 36.
45 Best-Matorohanga ms., p. 101. See Smith, The Lore of the Whare-Wananga, Part II, p. 228, where this passage is included in the translation but not in the Maori text.
46 ibid., p. 226. Text from Smith-Whatahoro II, pp. 68-70, some items of which date between 1890 and 1902 and are from various areas. Smith, The Lore of the Whare-Wananga, Part II, pp. 227-49, 250-3, 264-70, all of which have a similar origin. Smith-Whatahoro, I, p. 84-96, from the original New Zealand Maori Purposes Fund Board ms. 102 of which this is a part copy, dated between 1890 and 1902.
47 See New Zealand Maori Purposes Fund Board mss., 102-125.
48 New Zealand Maori Purposes Fund Board mss. 110, pp. 160-70. Moriori is the name given by the original inhabitants of the Chathams to themselves. It is probably a reduplicated form of maori, meaning ordinary. The Chathams word was unknown in New Zealand as a racial or tribal name until used by Europeans.
then published as having been given by Te Matorohanga in 1865.

Traditions as to the origin of the various tribal groups are, as might be expected, very regional. The main origin canoe of a particular tribe is well known, as are origin canoes of tribes with whom the particular group has intermarried, but prior to 1862, except in one doubtful source from the North, there is no tradition of a fleet of canoes arriving together. In fact only two canoes are mentioned as contemporary, *Tainui* and *Te Arawa*, a position reinforced by early marriage between the two groups. Early records could suggest that some of the canoe traditions refer to internal migration within New Zealand with possibly a secondary application of an ancestral canoe name.

S. P. Smith, in arriving at the date of 1350 A.D. or twenty-two generations prior to 1900, did so by averaging out a great number of genealogical lines. He started out with the premise that there had been a migration. By searching tradition he found that a number of canoes were mentioned as arriving in New Zealand. *Aotea*, *Tokomaru*, *Kurahaupo*, *Tainui*, *Te Arawa*, *Takitimu*, *Mataatua* are the seven cited as the main canoes of the fleet of 1350 A.D. Toi is dated at 1150 A.D. because he flourished 'some eight or nine generations prior to the arrival of the Fleet'.49 In fixing this date for the fleet Smith took ancestors given by tradition as arriving on the canoes and counted the generations back to them. In table XXIV of the *Taranaki Coast*, Tama-te-Kapua of the *Arawa* and Toroa of *Mataatua* are both given at twenty-two generations ago at which point the genealogies stop. As Smith remarks: 'The lines from the Bay of Plenty i.e. Ngati Awa, Ure-wera etc. are generally shorter than the mean number and yet we cannot doubt the arrival of their ancestral canoe "Mata-atua" is correct, and that the number of generations is right when deduced from all tribal histories.'50 In fact, the Ngati Awa and Urewera, descended from Toroa, universally place him fourteen to sixteen generations ago. We can presume, of course, as Smith did, that all the tribes descended from Toroa are mistaken. Similarly the *Arawa* canoe is usually placed at eighteen generations ago. A survey of authentic genealogies reveals that of the 'Fleet' canoes, *Tainui* is placed as nineteen to twenty-three generations prior to 1900, *Arawa* at eighteen generations, *Mataatua* at fourteen to sixteen generations, *Takitimu* at eighteen, *Tokomaru* at twenty-seven and *Aotea* at twenty-six, the Rangitane-*Kurahaupo* at seventeen generations ago and the Taranaki-*Kurahaupo* at twenty-six generations. It will be obvious that any average derived from these figures means nothing. By Smith's reckoning the difference between the *Mataatua* at fourteen generations and the *Aotea* at twenty-six generations is 550 years.

49 Smith, *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast*, p. 57.
50 ibid., p. 66.
VI

Conclusion

It seems pertinent to sum up and also to ask why the New Zealand myth came to be so readily accepted. Briefly summarised the main points made in this paper are:

1. The orthodox versions of the Kupe, Toi and Fleet stories do not represent authentic Maori tradition.
2. Authentic Kupe traditions can be divided into Eastern and Western versions, each of which is known only in certain areas.
3. Toi-kai-rakau as a native born origin ancestor is known in the Bay of Plenty-Tuhoe area.
4. Toi-te-huatahi, a Hawaikian who never came to New Zealand, is known in the Arawa area.
5. The origin canoes of the various tribal groups are well known in their own areas.

If these are the results of an examination of traditional sources, why then has the orthodox version been so readily accepted? To answer this question we will have to call on non-traditional evidence — that of archaeology. In 1851 Walter Mantell reported a site at Te Ranga-tapu, near Wanganui, in which he found the remains of the extinct moa in association with human artifacts and ovens. In 1852 he found further proof of the contemporaneity of man and moa at Te Awakokomuka near Oamaru which he had renamed Awamoa.

The whole question of moa had excited much interest since 1839 when moa remains were first discovered. Man was first associated with them in 1843, but little notice was taken of this until ten years later when Mantell's report appeared in the New Zealand Spectator in 1853, following his earlier unpublished lecture to the New Zealand Society in 1851. Mantell's addresses to the New Zealand Institute in 1868 and Wellington Philosophical Society in 1872 reinforced new information being brought forward at that time by Haast and others.

In 1870 Julius von Haast had started excavations at Rakaia River mouth and later at Redcliffs. At first he was convinced that he had found evidence of people contemporary with the moa, having a culture resembling that of the newly defined Paleolithic age of Europe. He considered that the Maori people on arrival had probably found a race of indigenous people, the direct descendants of the

51 R. Taylor, 'An Account of the First Discovery of Moa Remains', Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, V (1873), 98.
52 W. Mantell, 'Address on the Moa', Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, I (1868), 18-19.
54 J. Von Haast, 'Moa and Moa-hunters', Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, IV (1871), 66-107.
55 J. Von Haast, 'Researches and Excavations carried on, in and near the Moa-bone Point Cave, Sumner Road, in the year 1872', Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, VII (1874), 54, 85; 'Notes on an Ancient Native Burial Place, near the Moa-bone Point, Sumner', ibid., VII (1874), 86-91.
moa-hunters' and of the same Polynesian race as themselves.\(^{56}\)

In the fourth volume of the *Transactions*, in which von Haast published three of his papers on the moa-hunters, there are also papers on the same subject by Stack, Hector and Murison, and the next volume contains papers by Mantell and Taylor totalling some sixty-five pages of print. This is followed in the next few years by many other articles on the same subject. It is not very surprising then that S. P. Smith, in writing to Joshua Rutland on 29 October 1889, should say, 'My theory is that the Maori found a race of Polynesians here on his arrival. I have been gradually working on this theory but have little time for it and . . . that if the Maoris only came here twenty-one generations ago they never could have increased in numbers as much as the race had done'.\(^{57}\) Smith's problem then was to supply a workable chronology to include three events:

1. The original discovery of New Zealand.
2. The settling by the original race (Haast's moa-hunters).
3. The arrival of the Maori and the disappearance of the original people.

Sufficient distance had to be allowed between these events. Thus we have the one 'fixed' point, the 1350 A.D. fleet and subsequent determination of Toi at 1150 and Kupe at 950. The original statement of this chronology does not include Toi\(^{58}\) as a migrant to New Zealand but refers to his son Rauru.\(^{59}\) Whatohoro's material filled in the whole of this framework so neatly that Smith was absolutely seduced. Whatohoro never spoke to Smith or Best in anything but Maori, but he was undoubtedly an extremely intelligent man who was fluent in English and quite capable of reading Smith's *Hawaiki*, the early instalments of *Taranaki Coast* and the *Transactions*.

It seems thus that the orthodox story and chronology arose mainly to explain the findings of archaeology and the comparison of these with late Maori culture. It was an attempt to provide a framework by which to order prehistory. In more modern times this framework, which arose out of archaeology, has been used to explain archaeological data.\(^{60}\) Even a cursory examination of the secondary sources would invalidate any such use.

Maori or any other traditional material must be studied in its own terms as a body of information in its own right. The positive aspects of this paper have been to demonstrate if only briefly the regional nature of traditional stories. Even this simple fact immediately tells us something of the identity or difference of the various tribal groups

\(^{56}\) J. Von Haast, 'Moas and Moa-hunters', ibid., IV (1871), 106.
\(^{57}\) Smith letter book, Polynesian Society Library.
\(^{58}\) Smith, *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast*, pp. 70-73.
\(^{59}\) S. P. Smith, *Hawaiki*, Wellington, 1904, p. 221.
at the time of recording. What correlation there is, if any, between traditional data and archaeology remains to be seen. The two studies operate on different levels and each must be studied as a separate discipline before any correlation can be attempted.

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