

Maori Political Rhetoric

By Maria Bargh

When considering how Maori political rhetoric fits within the New Zealand political landscape it is necessary to ask what makes such rhetoric distinctive and important. In this paper I examine three areas of distinctly Maori political rhetoric; the unique locations of Maori politics, the formalities to be observed by speakers and the use of particular rhetorical devices by Maori speakers, including the use of Maori language and *waiata* (song). Given the ways that the distinctive nature of Maori political rhetoric is often undervalued, misinterpreted or misrepresented by many non-Maori, the questions which underlie the discussion here must be around what the implications of this situation are for Maori and non-Maori.

Unique Locations of Maori politics

The first place where Maori political rhetoric can be found is at *marae*. *marae* are places where *tangata whenua* have *turangawaenae* (a place to stand)¹ and where Maori identity, cultural values, beliefs, practices and traditions have priority and are affirmed and reaffirmed.²

Marae are a mixture of spaces and times. *Marae* are places where during much of the time, rhetoric is controlled by particular rules (*tikanga* and *kawa*). The *karanga* (call of people onto the *marae*) and *whaikorero* (the formal oratory) are possibly the most important rhetoric which enable the functioning of the *marae*. Usually people who have not visited a particular *marae* before (*waenae tapu*) need to be formally welcomed on- either by a *powhiri* or a *whakatau* (a more informal welcome) and many *marae* have *tikanga* that these formalities must be conducted in the Maori language. Once the welcoming formalities are completed a less restricted time is opened up where, depending on the exact business of the day, people can all speak without formal restrictions.

In early colonial times most political activity in New Zealand was centred on *marae*. Premiers would visit *marae* to speak with Maori about the issues of the day. Comments made about these interactions provide insights into how non-Maori of that time understood Maori political rhetoric. An occasion in 1902, where Premier Richard Seddon was speaking at Papawai *marae* in the Wairarapa, highlights some of the issues of misinterpretation and misrepresentation that occurred including when Premier Seddon apparently attempted to follow a Maori rhetorical style. Seddon was speaking on the

¹ Anne Salmond, *Hui*, Auckland: Reed, 1987, p. 31.

² Ngahuia Te Awekotuku 1996, quoted in Karyn McRae, "'Tangi and State Funeral: Te Arikini Dame Te Atairangikaahu & Prime Minister Norman Kirk", A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Social Science in Psychology", accessed 21 July 2011, <http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/10289/4995/1/thesis.pdf> p. 88.

matter of Maori desires to participate in the Boer war and was accused of advocating “savage methods of warfare”.³ A reporter writing in Seddon’s defence noted that

everyone familiar with native customs is aware that a florid style of oratory must be adopted at native assemblages as appealing best to their imagination and being most gratifying to their self-esteem. In this respect Mr. Seddon only followed the usual course observed by all responsible men who have official intercourse with spirited dark races in this and other lands.⁴

This quote tells us a great many things. It reminds us that Maori political rhetoric is often judged by non-Maori standards and is often misinterpreted and misrepresented. What the reporter here describes as a “florid style” i.e. “elaborately ornate; ostentatious; showy”⁵ would, in a Maori view, be ensuring that it was acknowledging the appropriate history and people and encompassing the natural environment, so centrally important to the existence of Maori at that time. Such different understandings may give us pause to consider how such tendencies might continue to manifest themselves today.

Other locations in the later 1800s of intense Maori political rhetoric were sessions of the Maori parliaments or Kotahitanga movement which were based at *marae*. Even in the western sense therefore, *marae* have been sites of politics, of what might be labelled ‘formal politics’ or politics with a capital ‘P’. And the political rhetoric of *marae* was, in the 1800s and early 1900s, disseminated via Maori newspapers which often had connections either with the *marae* itself or the political movements using *marae*.

More recently the Maori media has continued the tradition of articulating uniquely Maori political rhetoric. In 1996, for example, Moana Jackson began a political column in the Maori newspaper *Kia Hira Ra*. The column was called “Te *Marae* Atea” (the space in front of the meeting house where *powhiri* usually take place) and the newspaper described the section in this way: “Wellington solicitor, Moana Jackson will lead this ‘*whaikorero*’ each month. The emphasis of this column is to ‘stand and talk’ – to ‘listen and reply’.” Political rhetoric and distinctly Maori rhetorical devices as well as the metaphorical *marae* are combined here.

In recent times specific *marae* have become particular sites of attention for MPs and are places where the significance of Maori political rhetoric and the location itself are intimately connected.

Turangawaewae

Turangawaewae *marae* is the heart of the Kingitanga (King) movement. Established in 1858 to counter the relentless Crown desire to acquire land, the Kingitanga and Turangawaewae *marae* are often synonymous. In the 1800s the Crown and other non-Maori groups sought to destroy the Kingitanga. It might appear ironic therefore that successive Prime Ministers have attended the annual commemorations at

³ “Exposed! The Premier at Papawai, A denial of the Speech. Refutation of the Denial” *The Evening Post* 24 November 1902. Paperspast, accessed 18 August 2011, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d=EP19021124.2.34&c=-----10--1----0-->

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Oxford English Dictionary.

Turangawaewae *marae* to celebrate the coronation of the King (and Queen). In 2006 it became an even bigger site of national focus with the tangi of the Queen at that time, Dame Te Atairangikahu. Non-Maori MPs at *marae* have sought to conform with the requirements of the *marae* even though they may lack the language and training. Helen Clark, for example, in her address at Turangawaewae in 2006 bent her speech to the formal format for *whaikorero* rhetoric, acknowledging Te Arikiniui, (who was still alive at the time) the river and paying her respects to the dead.⁶

Ratana Pa

Annually in January, the Ratana Movement based near Whanganui celebrate founder Tahupotiki Ratana's birthday. The close political links forged between Ratana and the Labour Party in the 1930s provide the explanation for Labour party attendance and indeed may also explain the interest in the event by other political parties who seek to edge in or disrupt the Labour party arrangements. In his speech at Ratana in 2010 Phil Goff, like Clark at Turangawaewae, adhered to Maori protocols in his speech giving a mihi, acknowledging the whareniui, the *marae* lands, the dead and returning to the living as is appropriate.⁷ Even Don Brash, in 2005 found himself acknowledging Ratana, Ratana president Harry Meihana, and other Maori dignitaries when he visited the pa.⁸

Te Tii

Because of its Waitangi location Te Tii *marae* is in many ways seen as unavoidable for Prime Ministers and other senior MPs on Waitangi Day if they perceive the need for, even a minimal level of acknowledgment of The Treaty of Waitangi.

Formalities to be observed by speakers

Like other political rhetoric, Maori political rhetoric has formalities to be observed in order that people 'get it right'.

If on a *marae*, speakers must obey the rules of the *marae*, follow the correct *tikanga* about when you are supposed to speak- which varies across the country- speak at appropriate times, have waiata to back you up, acknowledge the correct people, dead and alive, know history of the place (otherwise you can not acknowledge the correct ancestors and hosts). Poia Rewi argues that *whaikorero* is "strongly associated with formalities" and any transgressions of these established behaviours "resonates as a 'slight'"⁹. Hence the importance for those speaking on *marae* to 'get it right'.

⁶ Helen Clark, Address at the 40th Koroneihana, May 2006, accessed 8 August 2011, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0605/S00517.htm>

⁷ Phil Goff, Speech at Ratana, accessed 8 August 2011, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA1001/S00104.htm>

⁸ Don Brash, speech at Ratana pa, <http://www.nbr.co.nz/politics/text-brash-speech-ratana-marae>

⁹ Poia Rewi, "Culture: Compromise or Perish!" in *Indigenous Identity and Resistance: Researching the Diversity of Knowledge*, edited by B. Hokowhitu, N. Kermoal, C. Andersen, A. Petersen, M. Reilly, I. Altamirano-Jimenez and P. Rewi, Dunedin: University of Otago Press p. 59.

In terms of the identity of the speaker and who can speak in the welcoming formalities on *marae*, speaking is generally restricted. For *karanga* these restrictions are for women of a certain age and for the iwi of Te Arawa where I am from, women can only *karanga* if their mother is no longer alive or does not *karanga*. For *whaikorero*, restrictions pertain to men of a certain age and again for Te Arawa only if their father is no longer alive or does not *whaikorero* can they do one. However, as I said previously, once the formalities are over anyone can speak.

People physically stand to speak on *marae*. The term '*turangawaewae*' translates as a place for your feet to stand. Standing and belonging are therefore connected. If you do not belong to a *marae* you usually do not rise to speak in the formalities unless you are a speaker for all *manuhiri* (guests).

A truly effective and persuasive speaker in Maori political settings must be fluent in te reo and English. There are conventions and ways of saying things in Maori which are not covered by simply speaking English. The use of *whakapapa* (genealogy), metaphor and stories is hugely significant here. Being able to connect yourself and your own iwi through genealogy to the people you are visiting, or who are visiting you, is a skill and requires a sharp memory. Explaining the issues of the day in terms which bring out the beauty, nobility or broader context of the event through metaphor draws people in to the topic. Adding a story, which preferably connects your own history and knowledge to the issue at hand also enables a Maori audience to relate and appreciate the speaker and the issue.

An effective and persuasive speaker in Maori settings must also be seen reasonably frequently at *marae*. MPs, Maori or otherwise, attend *hui* at *marae* around the country. For MPs of the Maori electorates it is commonly understood within these electorates that parliamentary representatives will be a seen face (*kanohi kitea*) at meetings and at *tangi* of significance in these areas. This is not unique to MPs of these places and is arguably a requirement for all Maori leaders of these areas.

I would like to provide some examples of what I regard as good quality Maori political rhetoric. These are from within the House as most Maori political rhetoric at *marae* may exist on tapes recorded by individuals but is not often widely transcribed and distributed. One of the challenges with having many of the political statements, jibes or challenges laced within the rhetoric of the *whaikorero*, rather than in a formal written speech, is that it can act to make their nature and their importance invisible to non-Maori and non-Maori language speakers. This suggests that much more research of the oral presentation of political rhetoric on the *marae* is needed. The examples I have here are all translations of the Maori and are parts of speeches that are directed largely to the people in the public gallery rather than to other MPs in the House. The first of the examples is by Whetu Tirikatene Sullivan who demonstrates the way that Maori political rhetoric acknowledges

the genealogy of an issue not only by mentioning the people involved but also by connecting them rhetorically with the natural environment of their tribal area.

Whetu Tirikatene Sullivan, the Third Reading of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu Bill, 1996.

First of all, my mind goes back to my father, Te Koata, Te Omeka, who was responsible for the first Ngai Tahu Bill for us. It was Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana who said that my Koata brought about the first Ngai Tahu Bill. That has been fulfilled correctly. The winds of the world cast their force upon Aorangi standing before us among the lofty mountains of the south. The snows float to the Great Sea of Kiwa by way of the rivers named Waitaki, Waimakariri, Rakaia, and others. Like those rivers, the tears of the Takahanga and Kapariera *marae* well up and join together, and flow freely, for the sterling work done by Wiremu Horomona and Te Rino for the younger generation. Both have passed on together in spirit to confront that Son, our redeemer, the Lord. Go, depart you two. Sleep the long sleep peacefully in the face of the Lord, the redeemer, Jesus Christ.¹⁰

In this second example, Mita Ririnui demonstrates the acknowledgement of the *tangata whenua iwi*, the people who hold mana over where he stands, which he connects not simply to the Bill in question but all the way back to traditional prophets and the sacred mountain of those people.

Mita Ririnui, Port Nicholson Block (Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Bill — Third Reading, 30 July 2009.

Greetings to the House, whilst seeking the words befitting the occasion. I stand here as a child of Te Moana-a-Toi, the lands from Bowentown in the west to Whangaparaoa in the east; and of the region from Maketu to the south. I stand here on the sacred ground of Pipitea, offering words to the home people who have come to this House.

To the home people, I greet you in humility and ask for your forbearance. I do not stand here to trample upon the mana bequeathed to you by your ancestors. It is right to acknowledge the long path you have travelled to reach the settlement of your claims here in the presence of the Crown. Journey's end is at hand. So I acknowledge and commend you. Although your ancestors are not here, their spirit and energy are upon you this day, that all may hear of the ill-treatment by the Crown of you in the past. So it is right that my contribution today be entirely in our noble language. There is much to be admired in the acts of grace you have displayed. Today, in your presence, the Minister has settled and acknowledged

¹⁰ Whetu Tirikatene Sullivan, the Third Reading of 'Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu Bill', 17 April 1996, *Hansard*, accessed 18 August 2011

<http://www.vdig.net/hansard/archive.jsp?y=1996&m=04&d=17&o=34&p=45>

the wrongs of the Crown. In an act of grace, you have forgiven the Crown for its wrongs against the people. This calls to mind the prophets Te Whiti and Tohu, who led the people on the path of righteousness, truth, and goodwill. Today in your presence, those principles have borne fruit. Acknowledgments must be given to the elders and leaders.

I also want to acknowledge the surging seas yonder, the rivers that flow from the mountains, and the ancestral mountain [Taranaki]. I recall the saying that, although it is a barren mountain, birds fly there to drink from the wellspring that never runs dry. Similarly, the spirit and the words of the prophets shine on in you, their descendants. They are here for the children and the grandchildren, so that they may know the path taken, and so that the negotiations and discussions with the Crown were conducted by the home people in a spirit of goodwill.¹¹

Te Ururoa Flavell, speaking on the same Bill, shows the importance of the lyrics of songs and political symbols, such as feathers, for the people involved in the Settlement.

Te Ururoa Flavell speaking on Port Nicholson Block (Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Bill — Third Reading, 30 July 2009.

To recite part of a waiata: “set your gaze upon the barren mountain that looms over Parihaka, over Wai-te-toroa, and in the presence of Ngati Moeahu and Ngati Haupoto, throwing off the garments from Queen Victoria. Good job! Good job! Tohu and Te Whiti, the two birds who triumphed over their foes, with love as their weapon. Heedless to the thunder that reverberates over Parihaka, ue, ue, ue ha.” I trust that my rendition was not too poor, because that change has many layers of meanings and understandings.

O people of Te Whiti, of Tohu, the people of the raukura feather, you are here present in the sanctum of Queen Victoria. This has been a momentous week, being Maori Language Week. Further, the bill seeking statutory recognition for Matariki was debated in the House; some agree, some do not. Katerina Heikoko Mataira was honoured for her efforts to preserve the language; and this afternoon on the steps of Parliament there gathered many young children to promote non-violence. I recall the guiding principles of Parihaka: through goodwill you will overcome your foe. You, the iwi, have kept true to that legacy; that makes the occasion more poignant. In most claims settlements, the Crown

¹¹ Mita Ririnui, Port Nicholson Block (Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Bill — Third Reading, 30 July 2009, http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Debates/Debates/a/1/5/49HansD_20090730_00000805-Port-Nicholson-Block-Taranaki-Whanui-ki.htm

admits the wrongfulness of its actions. However, in this instance, you, the people, have said: enough; let peace weave us in unity. You have followed this path, so I extend love to you all. Greetings, and welcome to you all.¹²

In this final example of high quality Maori political rhetoric in the House, Te Ururoa Flavell weaves a significant traditional song in contrast with contemporary events.

Te Ururoa Flavell, The Affiliate Te Arawa Iwi and Hapu Claims Settlement Bill 2008

...Return, all of you, to this occasion. Listen to the debate and the depth of discussion, and I hope you can all say it is now finished. We all recognise that this has not been an easy journey that you here today have travelled. Our ancestor Tamatekapua, as we know, when on the trip from Hawaiki, committed adultery and descended into the whirlpool of Te Parata. Like him you were able to come out of the whirlpool to the world of light, and continue on the journey. So it is appropriate that I acknowledge you.¹³

Use of particular rhetorical devices by Maori speakers

As with other cultures the words and speeches of great orators and leaders are remembered and repeated. For example in my examples above Mita Ririnui and Te Ururoa Flavell both referred to Te Whiti and Tohu who were the central leaders at Parihaka, Taranaki in the 1800s.

Proverbs are also crucially important and there are many which indicate the specific rules around rhetoric and include: '*Ko te kai a te rangatira, he korero*' which tells us that 'the food of chiefs is talk'. A leader's integrity and mana is based on their word, and the truth of their words. Some also suggest that it points to consensus decision-making as integral to good leadership and governing.¹⁴ Others include, '*E kore te kumara e whakakii ana tana reka*', the sweet potato does not say how sweet he is. And '*He mana to te kupu*' – my word is my bond.

Some proverbs or conventions of Maori political rhetoric may not translate well or may be easily misinterpreted by those unfamiliar with the convention. Hone Harawira discovered this when he responded to a question about what he thought of the death of

¹² Te Ururoa Flavell, Port Nicholson Block (Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Bill — Third Reading, 30 July 2009, http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Debates/Debates/a/1/5/49HansD_20090730_00000805-Port-Nicholson-Block-Taranaki-Whanui-ki.htm

¹³ Te Ururoa Flavell, *Hansard*, 23 Sep 2008 Affiliate Te Arawa Iwi and Hapu Claims Settlement Bill, p. 19115

¹⁴ Tama Potaka, Speech delivered at the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Leaders Conference, April 26 - May 1, 1998, Taipei, Taiwan, accessed 8 August 2011, <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/~caplabtb/potaka1.html>

Osama bin Laden on Te Karere, TVNZ. He replied “*E hoa, e mea ana te korero o to tatou ao Maori abakoa ko wai te tangata, te iti me te rahi, e tika ana kia mihi atu ki a ia e ngaro atu I tenei wa, na reira, haere te rangatira, haere atu ki o ukaipo, haere atu ki o tupuna ...*”

My translation:

Friend [to the interviewer] as we say in our Maori world, no matter who the person, great or small the correct thing to do is to acknowledge they have gone from this world, therefore farewell *rangatira*, return to your spiritual base, return to your ancestors...

Harawira was criticised for what some commentators saw as a description of bin Laden as a freedom fighter.¹⁵ Harawira uses the word ‘*rangatira*’, often translated as leader, which is the common term when acknowledging someone who is the leader of a group, whatever their deeds in life. In Maori traditions, usually once you begin speaking of the dead, the understanding is that you have gathered them into the land of the living and that you need to return them back to the spirit world before you finish speaking.¹⁶ This was the context in which Harawira referred to bin Laden as a leader.

The use of Maori language.

As mentioned previously, using Maori language is central to the distinct nature of Maori political rhetoric. In her compilation of a Maori legal dictionary, Mamari Stephens has analysed the use of the Maori language in the House. She argues that the House is being used as a kind of *marae atea* and part of a political theatre

whereby Maori Members seek to pursue political aims for themselves, their parties and their constituencies. Te reo Maori has also been used to create a ‘theatre of memory’ whereby these same Members, using te reo Maori in that space, (re)connect with one another and reinforce connection with those who have passed on.¹⁷

Stephens describes how, until the 1880s the majority of Maori Members of parliament understood little or no English but by the 20th century most Maori Members were bilingual.¹⁸ This led to various standards and conventions around language interpretations, and usage of the English language rather than Maori. In recent times this has changed, with Maori language becoming an official language. However some are still uncomfortable with aspects of the current conventions. During the Third Reading of the Port Nicholson Block Bill, Te Ururoa Flavell pointed out the difficulty he and others have with some of the current conventions surrounding Maori language. He said

The member Mita Ririnui made a very good point in his speech—acknowledgments, my kin—declaring that his entire speech would be delivered in our Maori language. The rules of this House direct that all speeches delivered in our language be rendered piecemeal to allow for an English interpretation. This type of interpreting makes it hard for Maori speakers, because it interrupts the

¹⁵ “Key: Harawira’s bin Laden comments ‘ridiculous’”, Stuff website accessed 17 November 2011, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/4964292/Key-Harawiras-bin-Laden-comments-ridiculous>

¹⁶ Hirini Moko Mead, *Tikanga Maori: Living by Maori Values*, Wellington: Huia, p. 133- 150.

¹⁷ Mamari Stephens (2010). “‘Tame Kaka’ Still? Maori Members and the Use of Maori Language in the New Zealand House of Representatives.” *Law Text Culture* 14, p. 224.

¹⁸ Ibid.

natural flow. Today, Mita has challenged this shabby treatment of the Maori language; he has shown how Maori should be spoken here: one delivery from start to end, uninterrupted. This descendant of the ancestral canoe Te Arawa will follow his lead.¹⁹

Stephens suggests that the substantive everyday usage of Maori language in the House almost entirely disappeared between 1913- 1980 whereas the ritualistic formal Maori, while not always recorded, survived.²⁰ This survival, she suggests, was because “little attention was paid to it by Pakeha Members” and because “Maori Members understood the debating chamber of Parliament as a performative space; a space within which their own speech acts and bodily actions create and recreate Maori history and Maori modes of thought”²¹.

Stephens argues

Material from 1951 and 1997 can serve to exemplify how ritualised, formal Maori language, far from comprising mere ceremonial frills to the real business of Parliament, was an important tool to enable Maori Members to create and maintain a community of practice and enact a theatre of memory, and even political theatre, that passed beneath the notice of most in the House.²²

While the transformations made by Maori members, as a result of their deployment of *tikanga* and *te reo* Maori, may not have had impacts on the actions of the Crown, these features and uses of *tikanga* and *te reo*, are visible in the House and in Hansard. Their influence on non-Maori within the House should not be understated. Further research into the changes in non-Maori usages of Maori language and formalities in the House would shed further light on the topic. Going deeper, research into changes in non-Maori attitudes towards Maori issues as a result of greater levels of exposure to Maori people, language and customs in the House would provide an indication of other potential outcomes. As Poia Rewi argues, while some Maori cultural practices may be negatively compromised by their introduction into new spaces, without them non-Maori may not have Maori cultural experiences, which is a “loss to the wealth of cultural diversity”²³.

The use of waiata

Waiata are central to supporting Maori political speeches and for reiterating the political message of the occasion.

¹⁹ Te Ururoa Flavell, Third Reading, Port Nicholson Block. (Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Bill, Thursday 30 July 2009

²⁰ Mamari Stephens (2010). “Tame Kaka’ Still? Maori Members and the Use of Maori Language in the New Zealand House of Representatives.” *Law Text Culture* 14, p. 224.

²¹ Ibid, p. 225.

²² Ibid, p. 233.

²³ Poia Rewi, “Culture: Compromise or Perish!” in *Indigenous Identity and Resistance: Researching the Diversity of Knowledge*, edited by B. Hokowhitu, N. Kermoal, C. Andersen, A. Petersen, M. Reilly, I. Altamirano-Jimenez and P. Rewi, Dunedin: University of Otago Press p. 69.

Many, if not all Treaty Settlement Bills are begun and followed on their Readings in the House with waiata or haka, the performance of which are recorded in Hansard. These waiata/haka are usually performed by people in the public gallery, technically breaching the rules of the House, but tolerated because of their significance. The significance for those singing and the particular songs sung, is also huge. For example at the final Reading of the Ngati Awa Deed of Settlement the waiata sung described the pain and shame and distress caused by acts of the Crown. The waiata was printed in the actual Deed of Settlement.²⁴

Beyond the Readings of Settlement Bills, *waiata* are also tolerated at other times because of their significance. On the occasion of the swearing in of Hone Harawira as Leader of the Mana Party, Lockwood Smith ejected Harawira from the House because he did not affirm the legally required oath in parliament. A waiata was being sung from the public gallery as Harawira was ejected and Smith commented afterwards:

I regretted very much interrupting a waiata. A waiata is such a fundamental part of the culture of this country, and I regretted very much having to seek to interrupt a waiata, but, in the circumstances, abuse of the law of this country cannot be celebrated, either. That is why I sought to interrupt the waiata. Had the affirmation been taken correctly, I would not have interrupted that waiata...²⁵

Some research, which covers aspects of Maori political rhetoric in its oral form, has been conducted but has not come under the purview of political science researchers as it has been part of studies of proverbs or songs. Apirana Ngata famously collected a staggering range of songs and published them in volumes with the Polynesian Society as *Nga Moteatea* from 1928. To describe them as songs is a little misleading however. They are of many types and include intricate descriptions of the histories and politics of areas and peoples and are intimately tied into the political rhetoric which has often been ignored.²⁶

Conclusion

Much of the rhetoric I have discussed in this paper has been Maori political rhetoric which addresses other Maori. In a sense such rhetoric operates within Maoridom. The use of Maori political rhetoric to a non-Maori audience is much less common. The reasons for this are perhaps several: Maori appreciate that non-Maori are not familiar with the locations, the formalities and rules of Maori political rhetoric. All too commonly

²⁴ “He Tangi Mo Matahina”, By Te Araroa O Ngai Tamaoki Me Te Pahipoto, 27 March 2003, Deed of Settlement to Settle Ngati Awa Historical Claim accessed 18 August 2011, <http://nz01.terabyte.co.nz/ots/DocumentLibrary%5CNgatiAwaDoS-part1.pdf>

²⁵ Lockwood Smith, 14th July 2011, *Hansard*, accessed 18 August 2011, http://theyworkforyou.co.nz/members_sworn/2011/jul/14

²⁶ Te AhukaramU Charles Royal, “Moteatea and the Transmission of History”, A paper delivered, to the Otaki Historical Society, 4 February 1997, accessed 18 August 2011 <http://www.orotokare.org.nz/assets/moteateaandhistory.pdf>

there is also evidence that many non-Maori are also not appreciative of Maori political rhetoric in the way that Maori are. Why then do Maori use distinctly Maori political rhetoric at all in non-Maori environments? I'd suggest it comes back to the lingering desire to be interpreted correctly and to be represented fairly. Failing all that it serves to remind other Maori that Maori traditions, histories and politics are distinctive and enduring.