

the journal of
visual communication
research

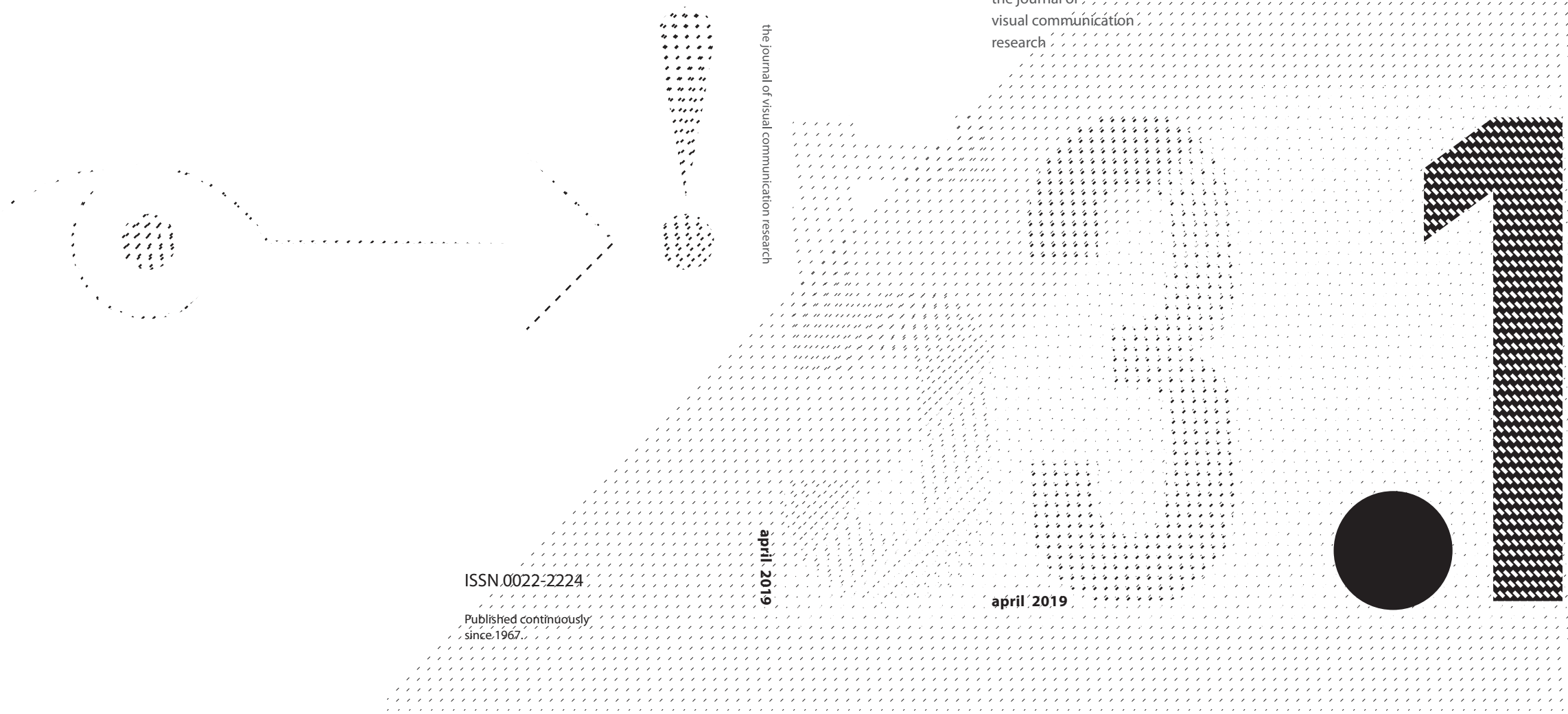
the journal of visual communication research

ISSN 0022-2224

Published continuously
since 1967

april 2019

april 2019



Subscription Rates

United States	Individual	Institutional
1 year	\$35.00	\$65.00
2 year	\$65.00	\$124.00

Canadian*	Individual	Institutional
1 year	\$44.00	\$ 74.00
2 year	\$83.00	\$142.00

Foreign**	Individual	Institutional
1 year	\$ 56.00	\$ 86.00
2 year	\$107.00	\$166.00

Prepayment is required. Make checks payable to University of Cincinnati
Visible Language in U.S. currency only, foreign banks need a U.S.
correspondent bank.

* Canadian subscriptions include additional postage (\$9.00 per year).

**Foreign subscriptions include additional postage (\$21.00 per year).

ISSN 0022-2224

Published continuously since 1967.

Back Copies

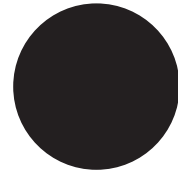
A limited number of nearly all back numbers is available. The journal website at <http://visiblelanguagejournal.com> is searchable and lists all issues, past article PDFs, contents, and abstracts.

Copyright Information

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) Transactional Reporting Service, provided that the base fee of \$1.00 per article, plus .10 per page is paid directly to:

CCC
21 Congress Street
Salem, Massachusetts 01970
Telephone 508.744.3350
0022-2224/86 \$1.00 plus .10

Visible Language



**the journal of
visual communication
research**

Special Issue:
Histories of
Visual Communication Design

April 2019

Advisory Board

Naomi Baron – *The American University, Washington, D.C.*

Michael Bierut – *Pentagram, New York, NY*

Charles Bigelow – *Type designer*

Matthew Carter – *Carter & Cone Type, Cambridge, MA*

Keith Crutcher – *Cincinnati, OH*

Mary Dyson – *University of Reading, UK*

Jorge Frascara – *University of Alberta, Canada*

Ken Friedman – *Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia*

Michael Golec – *School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL*

Judith Gregory – *University of California-Irvine, Irvine, CA*

Kevin Larson – *Microsoft Advanced Reading Technologies*

Aaron Marcus – *Aaron Marcus & Associates, Berkeley, CA*

Per Mollerup – *Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia*

Tom Ockerse – *Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI*

Sharon Poggenpohl – *Estes Park, CO*

Michael Renner – *The Basel School of Design – Visual Communication Institute,*

Academy of Art and Design, HGK FHNW

Stan Ruecker – *IIT, Chicago, IL*

Katie Salen – *DePaul University, Chicago, IL*

Peter Storkerson – *Champaign, IL*

Karl van der Waarde – *Avans University, Breda, The Netherlands*

Mike Zender – *University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH*

Naomi Baron – *The American University, Washington, D.C.*

Michael Bierut – *Pentagram, New York, NY*

Charles Bigelow – *Type designer*

Matthew Carter – *Carter & Cone Type, Cambridge, MA*

Keith Crutcher – *Cincinnati, OH*

Mary Dyson – *University of Reading, UK*

Jorge Frascara – *University of Alberta, Canada*

Ken Friedman – *Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia*

Michael Golec – *School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL*

Judith Gregory – *University of California-Irvine, Irvine, CA*

Kevin Larson – *Microsoft Advanced Reading Technologies*

Aaron Marcus – *Aaron Marcus & Associates, Berkeley, CA*

Per Mollerup – *Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia*

Tom Ockerse – *Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI*

Sharon Poggenpohl – *Estes Park, CO*

Michael Renner – *The Basel School of Design – Visual Communication Institute,*

Academy of Art and Design, HGK FHNW

Stan Ruecker – *IIT, Chicago, IL*

Katie Salen – *DePaul University, Chicago, IL*

Peter Storkerson – *Champaign, IL*

Karl van der Waarde – *Avans University, Breda, The Netherlands*

Mike Zender – *University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH*

Visible Language

Contents

Special Issue	<i>Histories of Visual Communication Design</i>	Dori Griffin	06 — 19
The Implications of Media:	<i>A material reading of nineteenth-century Arabic broadsides</i>	Hala Auji	20 — 49
Ismar David's Quest for Original Hebrew Typographic Signs		Shani Avni	50 — 75
Mana matauhi:	<i>A survey of Maori engagement with the written and printed word during the 19th century</i>	Johnson Witehira	76 — 109
Lower case in the flatlands:	<i>New Typography and orthographic reform in a Danish printing calendar</i>	Trond Klevgaard	110 — 131
Book Review	<i>About Design</i>		132 — 134

Mana mātātuhi: A survey of Māori engagement with the written and printed word during the 19th century

Johnson Witehira

This article follows the growth of written communication by Aotearoa New Zealand's indigenous Māori. The research focuses on nineteenth century developments, linking four significant areas of Māori writing – *tuhi rerehua* (calligraphy), *tuhi motumotu* (printing), *tuhi waitohu* (lettering), and *tātai kupu toi* (typography) – into a continuous *whakapapa* (genealogy) of what might be described as *hoahoa whakairoiro Māori* (Māori graphic design). Through a number of fascinating case studies, the research sheds light on the distinctive history of Māori lettering and typography. While some of these subjects have been explored separately within the literature of Māori cultural history, none have connected these practices into a definitive Māori tradition of creating and using letterforms for the purpose of visual communication. Importantly, this work also introduces a number of new *kupu Māori* (Māori words) relating to Māori visual communication design. These were created to help deal with what Māori artist and academic Robert Jahnke (2006) describes as the inability of Western terminology to delineate Māori visual culture. At the same time, the new terms help to define a body of *mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) which otherwise has yet to be articulated.

Key words:

*Māori visual communication,
Māhi toi Māori, Māori graphic design,
Māori typography,
indigenous visual communication,
indigenous design*

Introduction:

The Promise of the Written Word

Who writes?

For whom is the writing being done?

In what circumstances?

These it seems are the questions whose answers provide us with the ingredients making a politics of interpretation.

Edward Said (1982)

For the indigenous Māori of Aotearoa New Zealand, written language remains a relatively new method for communicating and storing information. Māori transmitted knowledge orally, through *mahi toi Māori* (visual arts practices) and complex systems of *tikanga* (cultural protocol) and *kawa* (tribal protocol) before the arrival of the British in 1769. These Māori-specific modes of communication supported distinctly Māori approaches to how knowledge was conceptualized, categorized, shared, and regulated. Moving into the twenty-first century, customary Māori modes of oral knowledge-sharing such as *waiata* (song), *whaikōrero* (oratory practice), and *karakia* (chant) remain at the heart of Māori culture. However, the impact of written forms of communication on Māori life cannot be overstated. This article follows the growth of Māori written communication, focusing on nineteenth century developments and linking four significant areas – *tuhi rerehua* (calligraphy), *tuhi motumotu* (printing), *tuhi waitohu* (lettering), and *tātai kupu toi* (typography) – into a continuous *whakapapa* (genealogy) of what might be described as *hoahoa whakairoiro Māori* (Māori graphic design). By conceptualizing these practices as a cohesive Māori tradition of creating and using letterforms for the purpose of visual communication, the article defines a body of *mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) within the domain of *hoahoa whakairoiro Māori*. By introducing *kupu Māori* (Māori words) relating to Māori written communication, the discussion and analysis of Māori letterforms and writing moves beyond the inability of Western terminology to delineate Māori visual culture (Jahnke 2006) and offers a model for situating discussions of both historical and contemporary Māori visual communication design within Māori language.

The research in this article utilizes a kaupapa Māori research methodology. *Kaupapa Māori* research, which was developed as part of Māori movement to challenge westernized notions of knowledge, culture, and research, questions the innate power imbalances between the “researcher” and the “researched” (Walker, Eketone, and Gibbs 2006). This approach means making explicit the *whakapapa* (identity) of the researcher, the intended audience, and the purposes of the research. I am a New Zealander of Māori (Ngāpuhi, Tamahaki, Ngāti Hinekura, Ngāi Tū Te-auru) and Pākehā (British) descent. You, the reader/audience, will have some interest in design and be either indigenous, non-indigenous, or of mixed heritage. The *kaupapa* (purpose) of the article is to *tūhonohono* (join) Māori forms of written communication into a larger body of *mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) and Māori visual arts practice. A key tenant of *kaupapa Māori* research

is that it encourages researchers to write in their own language. For this reason, Māori terms are applied as often as necessary with supporting definitions bracketed in English. In many cases, these terms combine existing Māori words into descriptors for design practices or typographic elements which have previously existed outside the nomenclature of Māori language. For example, *tātai kupu toi*, translated into English as *the arrangement of words with form*, was created for this research as a possible equivalent to the English word *typography*. This writing style and approach, writing from the inside, provides a platform for understanding Māori visual communication on Māori terms. The assertion of Māori rights over how research is conceived and carried out also applies to the use of images within this text. For example, in some meeting-houses photography is not allowed. In these instances, the author has created illustrations of specific lettering examples.

While the focus of this research is on Māori written communication, developments within Māori society cannot be fully understood without painting a picture of the complex social and political changes that occurred as a direct result of colonization (King 2007; Anderson, Binney, and Harris 2014). Contact with Europeans brought about dramatic changes to Māori culture and ways of life. The arrival of missionaries in 1814 did not bring about immediate cultural decimation; however, the deliberate subjugation of Māori by the British Crown and the subsequent settler government was in many instances facilitated by written communication. Binding written laws were used to confiscate lands and render *wānanga* (Māori schools of learning) illegal. At the same time, the printing and the distribution of European religious texts facilitated the displacement of *atua Māori* (Māori deity) and complex Māori systems of knowledge and spirituality.¹ Thus, Māori engagements with written forms of language are contextualized within a landscape in which colonization had – and still has – a huge impact on the lives of Māori New Zealanders. Following the arrival of missionaries, text as a form of communication quickly spread through *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori world). Letters and words, once alien to Māori, were soon used on carved and painted objects, on buildings and clothing, and later on the physical bodies of Māori people themselves. This article represents the first attempt, at least within academia, to create a holistic picture of these diverse Māori engagements with lettering and typography throughout the nineteenth century. The survey begins with an analysis of some of the earliest instances of Māori copying letterforms from the Roman alphabet. It then goes on to investigate examples of the first Māori copybooks, *niupepa Māori* (Māori newspapers), printed posters, *kupu whakairo* (carved texts), *kupu waituhi* (lettering), *kupu whatu* (woven texts), and *kupu tā tangata* (tattooed texts). These case studies, considered in relationship to one another, illuminate the early development of Māori *tātai kupu toi* (typography).

¹ In *Colonising Myths - Māori Realities, He Rukuruku Whakaaro* (2011), Māori academic Ani Makere discusses the colonization of *tikanga* Māori (the Māori worldview) and the role Christianity played in this. Mikaere summarizes, “With the arrival of the missionaries there began a concerted campaign of attack on Māori belief systems” (2011, 199).

Captured words, captured people

For Māori, the first exposure to the written word was an inauspicious event. In October 1769, three teenaged Māori boys were brought upon the *HMS Endeavour*. This was a show of hospitality from the ship's captain, James Cook, after the day's earlier skirmish in which Cook's men killed one Māori man and seriously injured three others. While Cook's intentions may have been good, local Māori almost certainly thought the boys were being captured, as Cook's men killed at least two more Māori during their attempts to bring their "guests" onto the ship. Once on board the *Endeavour*, the Māori boys would have been exposed to all manner of written communication, from letters embroidered on uniforms to descriptive text stenciled on the ship's inventory. While we can only imagine what these young Māori made of this strange event, Jones and Jenkins (2011) claim that this new form of communication must have seemed "magical." Adding to this, they write: "How astonishing to have one's name made in writing: spoken words that carried their *mana*, their *whakapapa* and their very identity, captured by strangers, not in *tā moko* and carving but marks on their peculiar 'white stuff'" (Jones and Jenkins 2011, 10).

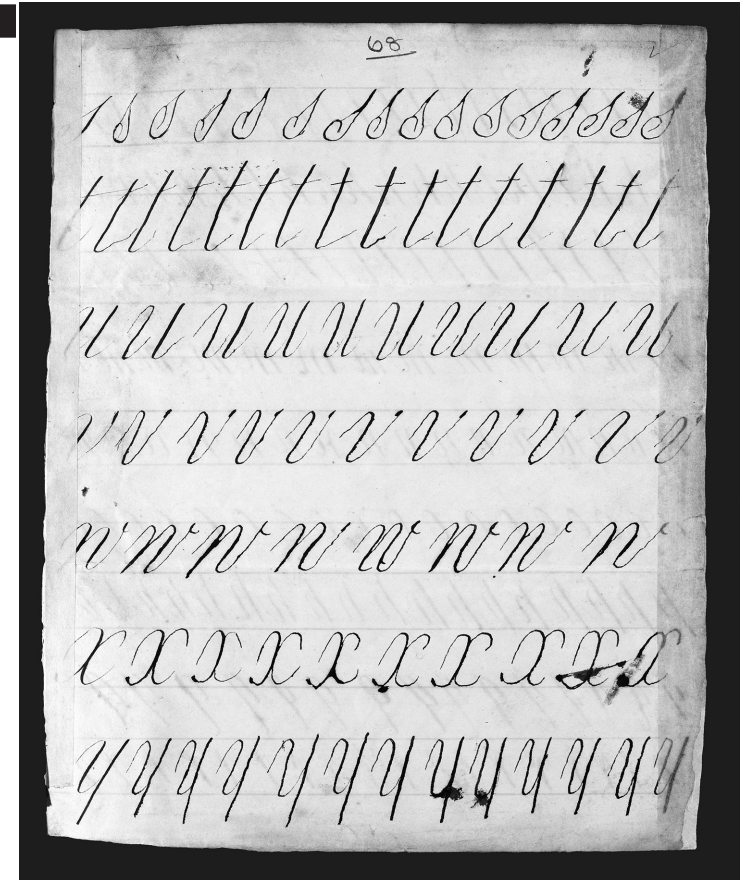
While seemingly magical, this new technology came with risks for Māori. To be captured physically is one thing. To have your important tribal histories and *whakapapa* captured by a "stranger" is another. As Māori writer Bradford Haami (2004) points out, Māori conceptions around the written word and its significance continued to differ dramatically to those of Pākehā settlers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Written documents containing tribal oral histories and traditions were treated with reverence. At the same time, "A special relationship governed by notions of separation, restriction and prohibition was created between the writer, the person written about, and the guardian of the document" (Haami 2004, 24). As Māori were to find later, the seemingly innocuous observations made by visiting Europeans would go on to form part of a larger system of colonial activity that ultimately facilitated the destruction of Māori ways of life (Tuhai-Smith 2012). In the years following Cook's first voyage of 1769, Māori words would be collected one by one. Joseph Banks, aided by translators Tupaia and Mai (Omai) from Ra'iatea, compiled basic lists of Māori nouns and verbs. However, it was not until 1774 that Māori would be actively engaged in the documentation of their own language. In this year the first sustained Māori texts, a *tangi* (lament) and five *haka* (dances), would be recorded. Then, thirty years later in 1813, a young boy named Māui would become the first Māori to learn to read, and perhaps more importantly, to write (Jones and Jenkins 2011).

Tuhi Rerehua:

Māori Calligraphy

FIGURE 1.

Sample of writing by Shunghie [Hongi Hika] on board the *Active* (1814). 243 x 192 mm, reproduced with permission from the Marsden Online Archive (MS_0054_068).

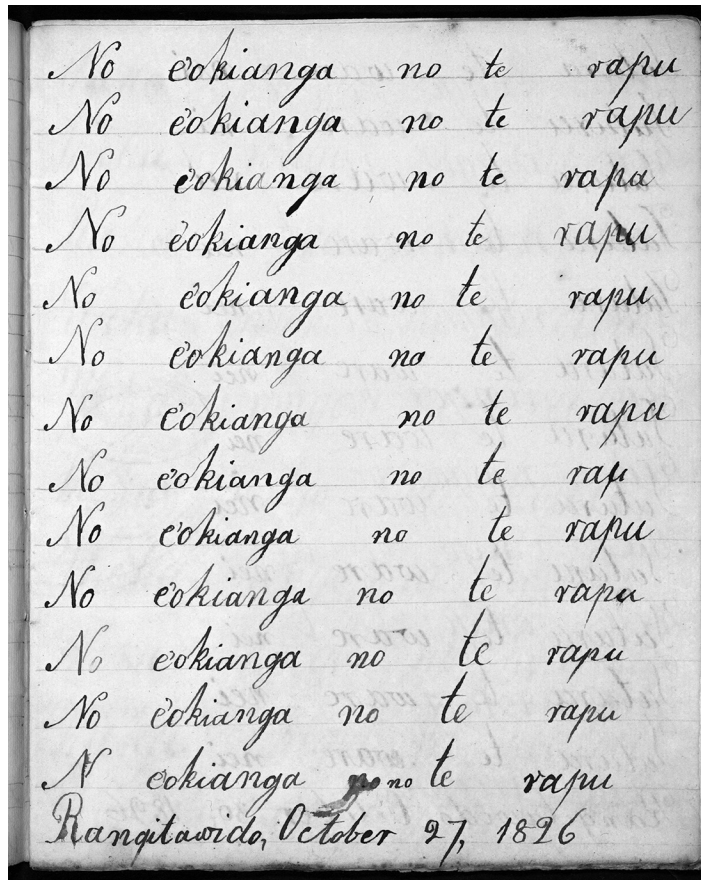


One of the first accounts of Māori actively copying the English alphabet and practicing *tuhi rerehua* (calligraphy) occurred in 1814 aboard the *HMS Active* (Figure 1). During this trip, the four Māori aboard were offered metal fish hooks by the missionary Thomas Kendall in reward for every completed page they copied. While it seems strange to imagine a powerful Māori chief such as Hongi Hika patiently copying the Roman alphabet, the exchange of letters for metal tools would have seemed to be fair *utu* (reciprocity). In addition to this, Hika maintained a keen interest in Pākehā technology throughout his life. Having seen the power of Pākehā tools, particularly muskets, Hika understood that those with the knowledge and ability to use this new technology would have an advantage in trade and war (Binney, O'Malley, and Ward 2018). Hika's penmanship displays both a careful and sensitive hand. For the most part he seems to have had little trouble copying the example letters. Even with the more complex forms, such as the *s* in this example, Hika makes considerable progress across the page. While impres-

sive as a first foray into using a quill pen, Hika was already a skilled craftsman in *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori world), “a master of the curve with a steady, sure hand” (Jones and Jenkins 2011, 66). Beyond Hika’s clear technical ability, though, carving seems to have had little influence upon the letterforms he created. There are no distinctly idiosyncratic references to Māori imagery or art. The pages stand as an important historical rather than aesthetic artefact, capturing a moment where Māori for the first time, and on their own terms, began to assimilate writing and the written word into their world. Hika would go on to play an important role in the development of Māori written communication. In 1815, he supported Thomas Kendall in writing the first book about Māori language, *A korao [kōrero] no New Zealand; or, the New Zealander’s first book; being an attempt to compose some lessons for the instruction of the natives* (1815). Then, in 1820, Hika and another Ngāpuhi chief, Waikato, travelled to England where they helped linguist Samuel Lee produce *A Grammar and vocabulary of the language of New Zealand* (1820), the first dictionary of Māori language.

FIGURE 2.

Rangitawhoro’s copybook (1826). 162 mm x 211 mm. Reproduced with permission from the Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries (GNZMMS-19-1-7).



A later example of *tuhi rehua* (calligraphy) written in the Māori language is seen in a copybook produced by Rangitawhoro in 1826 during his attendance as a student at the Rangihoua mission school in the Bay of Islands (Figure 2). The Rangihoua school, established in 1816 by the missionary Thomas Kendal of the Anglican Church Missionary Society, was the first British-style education program for Māori in New Zealand. The school quickly gained popularity amongst Māori, as they saw English education as being critical to the success of their children and the tribes. With an increasing settler population, an ability to write and speak English would enhance one’s ability to communicate and trade with Pākehā (Mikaere 2016). Yet, while Māori considered this British knowledge supplementary to existing Māori languages and practices (Simon 1998), missionaries saw the education of the “natives” as a route towards conversion to Christianity and the civilizing of Māori. As Mikaere notes, “Motivated principally by a desire to convert Māori to Christianity, the missionaries limited their instruction to Christian texts that had been translated into Māori. While the language was Māori, the values being conveyed were distinctly European” (2016, 50). The *tuhi rehua* in Rangitawhoro’s copy book demonstrates the evolution of Māori writing. Where individual letters were first copied, twelve years later we now see instances of whole words and sentences. The phrase *No eokiangā no te rapu* (From Hokianga, from te rapu) is repeated in cursive script across thirteen lines. At the bottom of the page we see the author’s name and the date, “October 27, 1826.” Aesthetically, the letterforms are less consistent than Hika’s; however, this is possibly due to the fact that copying whole words is more difficult than copying single letters, and unlike Hika, Rangitawhoro was not a master carver. Nevertheless, Rangitawhoro’s work displays some skill in his attempts to imitate the example sentence carefully. The curled flourishes on the uppercase *N* and delicate links between *o* and *k* in the word *eokiangā* suggest a light hand which improves with practice, though toward the end of the writing exercise, perhaps as a result of tiredness or boredom, wide variation is once again in evidence.

What might we take away from these initial attempts by Māori to engage with written communication? In the instances shown here (Figures 1 and 2), it seems that Māori were quite adept at using the Pākehā tools of writing. This might be due to the fact that for many Māori working *ā-ringā* (with your hands) was a daily occurrence. From carving and weaving, to painting and hunting, Māori were accustomed to doing careful work by hand. At the same time, the ability to read and write was also associated with great *mana* (power and prestige). To write, and to write well, was both a show of prowess in the tools of the Pākehā and a useful skill in unlocking the Pākehā world:

— The missionaries early accounts of the enthusiasm for learning to read and write in Māori were not exaggerated. *Tangata whenua* [Māori] were keenly interested in new ideas and technology, and literacy was manifestly a key to Pākehā culture – a skill associated with considerable *mana* (Anderson, Binney, and Harris 2014, 196).

Māori recognized that literacy, at least in the Pākehā society, was related to power. It could lead to more and better trade opportunities. Problematically, though, literacy for Māori (at least in the first half of the nineteenth century) would also be tied to Christianity. Copying words and sentences, as done in calligraphic practice, would mean copying religious texts and the ideas conveyed in them. As literacy aided conversion, Christian ideas, biblical metaphors and stories would be assimilated into Māori culture (Anderson, Binney, and Harris 2014). Christian beliefs would be further spread through the use of printed communication. In 1834, the Church mission printer William Colenso established a printing press at Paihia, in the Bay of Islands. He printed millions of pages over the following years. By 1845, there was a bible or prayer book for each member of the adult Māori population (Calman 2012). The printed word would be a powerful tool for the transmission of Pākehā ideas to an increasingly literate Māori society. However, Māori could also use the power of the press to reach Māori audiences and spread Māori ideas.

Tuhī motumotu:

Māori developments in printing

The first printing press arrived in Aotearoa in 1834, thirty years after the initial appearance of missionaries. For Māori, though, access to the technology would not occur until much later. In 1857, two Māori chiefs visited Austria with the intent of bringing a press home for Māori use. Then, five years later, Māori would go on to produce the first *niupepa Māori* (Māori newspaper), putting the power of the press to use for Māori purposes. This section presents this first Māori newspaper, *Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na* (The War-bird of New Zealand in Flight to You), as an important step in Māori printing. Though short lived, the *Te Hokioi* newspaper set a precedent for the Māori papers that were to follow later in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Two other examples of early Māori printing, a bank note (Figure 4) from *Te Peeke o Aotearoa* (the bank of New Zealand) and a hand produced manuscript poster (Figure 5), are also discussed in this section. In these later examples, Māori themes, content, and aesthetics slowly come to the fore.

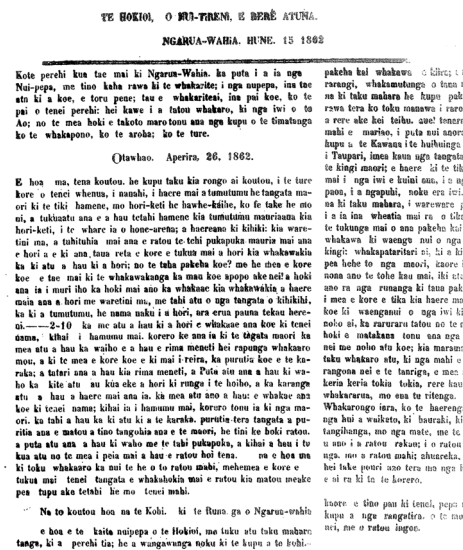
Māori language newspapers appeared from the mid-nineteenth century in Aotearoa. In the first phase of this development, beginning in 1842, Māori newspapers were published by the New Zealand government for colonizing purposes, with “Māori being the only language available in which colonial authorities could exploit the power of print” (Rogers 1998, 182). During the next phase, though, Māori would start to produce their own *niupepa Māori* for Māori purposes. These *niupepa Māori* were used to “apprise government and Pakeha of Māori opinion, to unify Māori thought and action, particularly in regard to land, and to educate Māori about their own society and the world” (Curnow 2002, 17). It was in this second period of development that *Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na*, the first Māori language newspaper produced entirely by Māori, was launched

by the Kingitanga (Parkinson and Griffith 2004).

The Kingitanga (Māori King) movement developed during the 1850s in Aotearoa as a Māori response to the lawless Pākehā settlers and increased loss of land to colonialists. The Kingitanga sought to unify Māori by developing a system similar to the British Monarchy (Ballara 1996). After much discussion and many *hui* (meetings), Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, a powerful chief from Waikato, was named as Māori King in 1858. While the Kingitanga did not see itself in direct opposition to the Queen, the British Crown saw the Kingitanga as a serious threat to the Colonial Government and its aspirations for land acquisition. Criticisms of the government, printed in *Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na*, undoubtedly contributed to the stresses between those supporting Māori of the Kingitanga and supporters of the British Crown. In a direct move to counter the “propoganda” found in the Kingitanga’s *niupepa*, the government would go on to establish another Māori language paper, *Te Pihoihoi Mokemoke i runga i te Tuanui* (February–March 1863). This would eventually result in the sacking of the government paper by Māori from the Waikato tribes. As historian Jane McRae (2014) notes for the online *Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, a government-sponsored cultural heritage project, “The rancorous exchanges between the papers ended when, in March 1863, Ngāti Maniapoto chief Rewi Maniapoto led a party to seize the government press, revealing each side’s recognition of the potential power of the Māori-language newspapers.” During this same year, the tensions came to a more serious head. Māori tribes affiliated with the Kingitanga were given an ultimatum by Governor George Grey: swear allegiance to the British Queen Victoria or have their lands confiscated (Ballara 1996). This marked the beginning of the New Zealand Land Wars. For many tribes the raupatu (government forced land confiscations) would prove to be disastrous. Roughly 3.5 million acres of land was confiscated during this period, 1.2 million acres of which belonged the tribes of the Waikato area in which the Kingitanga movement was based.

FIGURE 3.

Detail of *Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na* (June 15, 1862), the first Māori newspaper. 300 x 230mm, reproduced with permission from the National Library of New Zealand.



Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na (Figure 3), first published in June 1862, featured Māori opinion and articles supporting the Māori Kingitanga movement. It was edited by Patara Te Tuhi, a cousin of the first Māori King, Tāwhiao Pōtatau te Wherowhero. In terms of typographic design, *Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na* displays a considerable amount of restraint. Arranged in a three column grid, the newspaper features only two Didone typefaces. The undecorated masthead, set in a bold uppercase, is not much larger than the body copy size. As with the early examples of *tuhi rerehua*, there does not appear to be anything distinctly Māori about the typography or arrangement of information. Aesthetically, though, we do see how the *te reo Māori* (Māori language) affects the typographic color – the lightness or darkness – of the page. There is an overall evenness, which might be attributed to use of many small particles in *te reo* Māori. Surprisingly, there are also a limited number of line breaks in the text.²

The consistent structure and application of type raises another question: how did Patara Te Tuhi and those assisting him produce such a conventionally-designed newspaper in only their first attempt? Part of the answer might be found in the fascinating history behind the printing press they used. In 1857, two Waikato chiefs, Wiremu Toetoe Tumohe of Rangiaowhia and Te Hemara Te Rerehau Paraone of Ngati Maniapoto, travelled to Austria aboard the frigate *Novara* with the intention of learning the art of printing. At *Kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei*, the imperial printing house in Vienna, they learned printing along with “the manipulation of types and lithography, besides copper-plate engraving and drawing from nature” (Scherzer 1863, 175). Here, the Austrians were so impressed by the chiefs’ efforts that they were gifted a printing press by the Emperor Franz Joseph. As Scherzer wrote:

— So intelligent and anxious for improvement did they prove themselves to be, that the Imperial Government were requested by the Directors of the State Printing Office to present the two Maories on their return to their native country with the necessary implements to enable them to avail themselves at home of the knowledge they acquired under such creditable circumstances (Scherzer 1863, 175).

It was the first such press ever to be owned by Māori. However, on their return, it appears that neither man was able to put his newfound knowledge of printing to any use. Both Tumohe and Te Rerehau were called away to aid their tribes with other, more pressing tasks, such as preparing for the upcoming land wars (Cameron 1958). Cowan (1922) suggests that the skilled hand behind the typesetting of *Te Hokioi* came from Honana Maioha, the younger brother of Patara Te Tuhi. Maioha, who assisted in the publishing of the paper, had been given some instruction on the art of composing type by a Pākehā printer from Auckland. However, Te Tuhi was also known as a master carver. Perhaps, as with the Ngāpuhi chief Hongi Hika, Te Tuhi’s skill

² This contrasts with the author’s experience in setting text in Māori, in which the number of long Māori words, particularly verbs, leads to numerous line breaks or jarring differences in line length. Perhaps this is due to the changing nature or complexity of Māori language in the twenty-first century, or perhaps something been lost in the transition from hand to automatic digital typesetting.

as a carver gave him some appreciation for aesthetics and eye for compositional arrangement. The last issue of *Te Hokioi o Nui Tireni e Rere atu na* was printed on 21 May, 1863, less than a year after its first. Despite this brief run, the paper set a precedent for Māori printing. The Kingitanga movement would go on to produce a number of other unique examples of Māori lettering and printing.

FIGURE 4

Kotahi pauna, Māori one pound bank note issued by King Tāwhiao in the 1880s. Colour print, 215mm x 128mm. Reproduced with permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library at the New Zealand National Archives (qMS-2136-36).

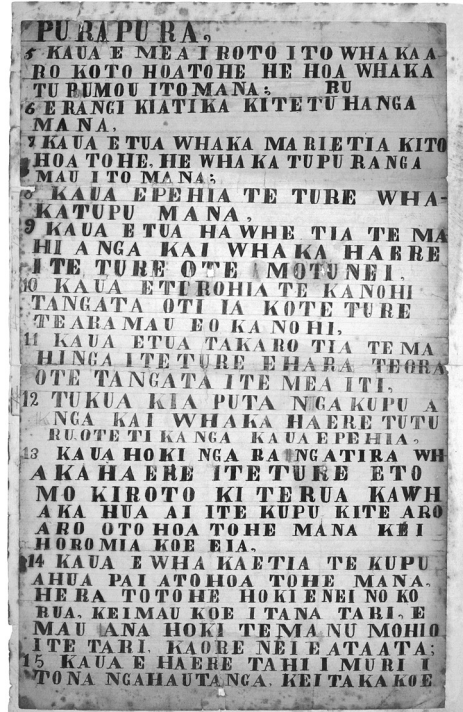


In 1886, the Māori King Tāwhiao established a bank, *Te Peeke o Aotearoa* (the Bank of New Zealand), to provide independent banking services for Māori. A rare example of a one-pound bank note from the Kingitanga’s bank (Figure 4) conveys a powerful expression of Māori self-determination and self-regulation. King Tāwhiao, driven by a desire for Māori autonomy, would go on to establish a separate Government, with parliament, treasury, licences, courts, justices and constables, power to levy fines for the treasury, and a bank to house the treasury (Park 1992). Aside from the fact the bank was established, we know little about it or its history. Of the evidence we do have, Park (1992, 161) has suggested we take caution as much of it is biased and derisive of Māori attempts to develop this new currency. Looking at the complexity and sophistication of the one-pound note, one thing is certain: the development of the Māori bank and its notes was a serious endeavor. Printed in five colors on cream-colored paper, the note features floral ornaments, five different typeface styles and weights, quatrefoils, decorative illustrations of flowers and flax, and the use of overprinting. Though much of the iconography is not distinctively Māori, the text is in Māori and the illustrated *harakeke* (Phormium tenax) flax is a plant used extensively by Māori. Flax was used in all manner of Māori life, from making *kākahu* (clothing), *kete* (baskets) and *whariki* (mats), to *taura* (ropes), lashings, *kupenga* (fish-nets), and even babies’ rattles. In fact, flax was so important to Māori that on hearing of its absence in England Māori chiefs commented, “How is it possible to live there without it?” and “I would not dwell in such a land as that” (Colenso 1891, 464). Returning to the printed words on the note, we see the legends *Kotahi Pauna* (one pound), *Ko Te Peeke o Aotearoa* (the bank of Aotearoa, or New Zealand) and *E whaimana ana tenei moni ki nga tangata katoa* (this money is valid for all people). That the note

is valid for *all people* highlights the Kīngitanga movement's intentions to support *tinorangatiranga* (Māori sovereignty) while remaining open to engagement with the new Pākehā settlers. As a historical piece of printing in Aotearoa by Māori, the *Kotahi Pauna* note is a significant example of Māori putting the tools and technology of print to use for Māori purposes.³

FIGURE 5.

Kingitanga proclamation of principles from the King Movement (16 May, 1878). 247mm x 381 mm. Reproduced with permission of Auckland Libraries, Sir George Grey Special Collections (GNZMMS21).

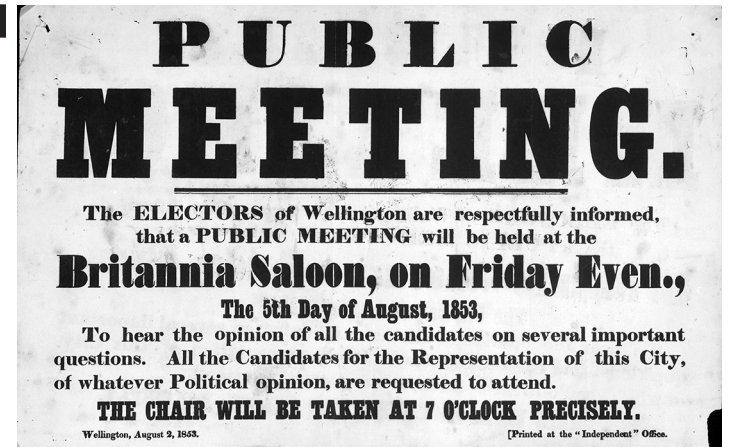


In a proclamation of principles from the King Movement (Figure 5), we see a distinctive style of lettering which Māori would apply throughout the nineteenth century to print, architecture, objects, and people. For the most part, the lettering conforms to a rational serif classification, with thin unbracketed serifs, a vertical axis, and horizontal stress. The extreme stroke contrast, though, points towards a sub-genre within the Modern style called ultra bold or fat-face. This style, developed in London at the turn of the nineteenth century (Kennard 2015), was intended for use in print advertising. Māori probably adopted this style of lettering from posters and other printed ephemera available in Aotearoa during the nineteenth century, as illustrated by an 1853 broadside (Figure 6) using the same ultra bold style, along with slab serifs and smaller, lower contrast Didones.

³ For this reason, for the author of this article, *Te Peeke o Aotearoa* stands as a vision for Māori independence going into the future.

FIGURE 6.

Public Meeting broadside, 1853, example of letterpress print available in New Zealand during the nineteenth century, 440 x 290 mm. Reproduced with permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library at the New Zealand National Archives (Eph-C-POLITICS-1853-01).



What is interesting in the Kīngitanga proclamation example is that the ultra bold style has been applied to a long body of text, and all in uppercase. This contrasts with the printed texts created by Pākehā in which ultra bold would have been applied sparingly as display text for headings. A number of other divergences from the ultra bold style can be seen in the Kīngitanga proclamation. The vowels, with some exceptions in the *E* characters, have all been condensed. Visually, this creates a varied rhythm further highlighted by the more frequent use of vowels in the Māori language. Another area of note is the use of heavy-weight serifs on the letters *T* and *E*. In both instances, the counter spaces around the vertical strokes are reduced dramatically. In the case of the *E*, the serifs almost touch in the middle. With the *T*, the serifs are often pushed down significantly past the x-height. Then, as if mocking these bulging geometric serifs, the letter *R* boasts a curved leg and delicately rounded tail. With these regular irregularities, we see the emergence of a style that might better be described as an *irrational serif*. Discussing the rational serif style, Stephen Coles writes, "Because these typefaces are not so much written as 'constructed,' their forms are very even in proportion and structure" (2013, 15). While "construction" is still obvious in the lettering in the bank note (Figure 4), the Kīngitanga proclamation document appears full of vigor and movement. Some of this effect is due to the fact that the lettering is done *ā-ringā* (by hand). As noted above, the idiosyncratic condensing of the vowels and the high number of vowels in *te reo Māori* also contribute towards the visual rhythm seen in this example.

From a graphic design point of enquiry, the Māori newspapers and public documents are significant as they present some of the earliest examples of Māori *tātai kupu toi* (typography) – that is, Māori setting and arranging type for print. While the manuscript proclamation (Figure 5) is not technically an example of print, it is related closely to the other examples in this section as it was generated by the *Kīngitanga* movement as a text intended for public circulation. In all of these examples, *kaihoahoa Māori* (Māori graphic designers) adapted imported technologies and forms to meet Māori visual communication needs.

Kupu Whakairo:

carved text enters the sacred house

As written and printed text began to flourish, written communication would make its way into the most sacred of Māori spaces, the *wharenuī* (large meeting-house). Large Māori meeting-houses first appeared on the landscape in Aotearoa in the mid-1800s. Their development was in part a response to land loss (through both sale and government confiscation) and the newly-introduced Pākehā concepts of private and individual ownership. The *wharenuī* provided Māori communities with a place to unite, to establish their *mana* (authority) over their lands, and to discuss political, social and local Māori issues. As with other structures, including the *pātaka* (storehouse) and *waka taua* (war canoe), Māori would incorporate elaborate carving into the construction of these new buildings. The unity of the tribe was further emphasized in *wharenuī* by carvings featuring ancestors and their stories, and by the naming of *wharenuī* after an eponymous ancestor. Haami (2004) notes that these ancestral houses, with their vast bodies of knowledge embedded in carvings and woven panels, would be likened by some Māori to libraries and learning centers.

Lettering was applied both on and inside the *wharenuī*, supplementing the existing complex Māori system of carving, painting, and weaving. This synthesis between carving and the written word was useful to Māori for two reasons. First, it enabled clarity about the specific narratives and ancestors associated with each *whare*, and second, it enabled a wider audience access to the carved forms in lieu of local knowledge or informants (Neich 1994). By painting and carving names into ancestor Figures, Māori could make sure that this critical information would be available to their newly literate population. Approximately half of the Māori population would be literate by 1845 (Sorrenson 1981).

The ability to read and write, though, is only one form of literacy. As Māori skill with written communication increased, the general ability of Māori to understand and appreciate their mostly connotative visual arts practice was diminishing (Neich 1998). Adding further detail about how Pākehā culture affected Māori communication, Neich writes:

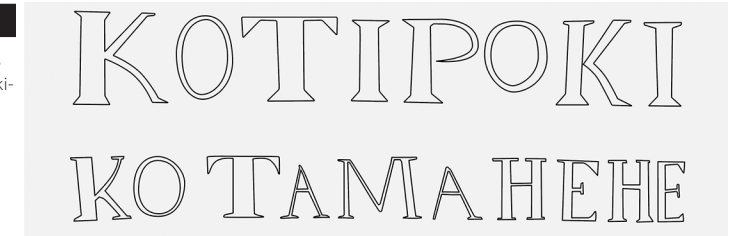
As the general cultural context changed, and as the participant's knowledge and understanding of the traditional context became more diluted by Christianity and European culture, so their appreciation of the connotations of carving based on this traditional context changed and weakened. To accommodate this, carvers made their meeting houses more and more denotational by using mnemonic devices, by including distinguishing attributes, by illustrating famous incidents and by adding printed names and labels to carvings (Neich 2001, 110).

The appearance of *kupu whakairo* (carved text) within *Te Hau ki Tūranga*, the oldest extant *whare whakairo* (carved-house) in Aotearoa New Zealand, demonstrates how quickly written communication was to become a common part of the Māori carving lexicon. *Te Hau ki Tūranga*, which originally stood in the Manutuke area of Gisborne, was built by carvers from the

Rongowhakaata tribe during the early years of contact between Māori and Pākehā settlers. This was a period in which European ideas about religion and philosophy would come to affect the carvers greatly.

FIGURE 7.

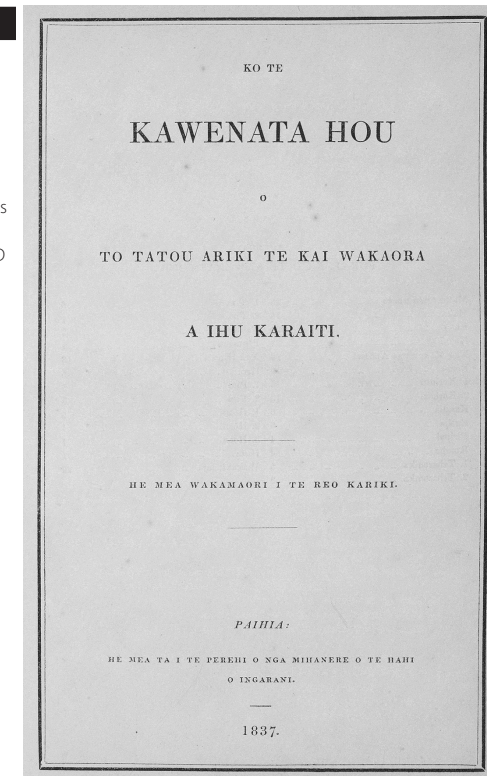
Author generated examples of carved text from *Te Hau-ki-Tūranga* (Witehira, 2018).



According to researcher Deidre Brown (1996), the carved texts in *Te Hau ki Tūranga* clearly demonstrate the impact of missionary teaching on the Rongowhakaata carvers, many of whom were baptized. Commenting specifically on the use of carved text, Barrow also makes note of the Christian influences on writing: "Many of the lettered names on Figures in *Te-Hau-ki-Turanga*, and in other houses, appear to have a form derived from the Victorian typefaces used in the letterpress of missionary books such as hymn books and the Christian scriptures then available to the Māori" (Barrow 1969, 82). In examining the *kupu whakairo* from *Te Hau ki Tūranga* (Figure 7) it seems plausible that biblical texts influenced the letterforms. *Ko Te Kawenata Hou* (the New Testament, Figure 8), first published in Māori in

FIGURE 8.

Ko te Kawenata Hou o to tatou Ariki te Kai Wakaora a Ihu Karaiti: he mea wakamaori i te reo Kariki, 1837, New Zealand, by Church Missionary Society, Archdeacon William Williams D.C.L. Bequest of William Colenso, 1899. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Te Papa (RB000371).



1837 by Colenso's printing press at Pahia, would go on to have sixty thousand copies sold by 1845 (Anderson, Binney and Harris 2014). In Figure 7, we see the use of a Didone letter that is similar to those found in *Ko Te Kawenta Hou* and other religious texts in Aotearoa at the time.

However, there are some divergences from the Didone style. The stroke contrast within the letters *o* and *a* is consistently reduced to almost a uniform line, while the serifs seem to alternate from an engraved flared chisel style to the thin unbracketed style associated with rational typefaces. Two distinctive features in this example are the treatment of the letter *O*, which is raised above the baseline, and the curved leg on the *K*. No documentation exists around why carvers made these changes to the letterforms. In correspondence with the author, New Zealand typeface designer Kris Sowersby has suggested that treatment of the letter *O* probably comes from inscriptional lettering and carving found in Aotearoa at the time. This might explain the use of flared stems. In some instances the carving substrate also seems to have affected how the letter was treated. Looking at the use of triangular serifs, it may have been that these are more natural to carve in wood than tapering bracketed serifs (email from Kris Sowersby, May 7, 2018). *Kupu whakairo*, applied to carved Figures, would often be squeezed into and around different limbs. Where it was applied to *poupou*, the interior wall carvings that featured ancestors, the names would often appear carved or painted across the neck (either side of the tongue), or in the area just above or below the collarbone.

An example of this lettering treatment can be seen in a carved *poupou* (Figure 9) from the meeting house Hotunui (1878), now housed within the Auckland Museum. On first glance the words *KORA* and *UTAO* are seen in the space between the shoulders and the mouth of the Figure. For those familiar with the Māori language and the stories within this meeting-house, though, what is actually read is the name of the important Ngāti Maru ancestor, Rautao. In *te reo Māori* the particle *ko* is generally used before proper names, pronouns, and common nouns. Thus, what appears to be *KORA* and *UTAO* is actually read *KO RAUTAO*. Interestingly the carver has decided to split the name of this ancestor into two parts, *RA* and *UTAO*. This might indicate that Māori had some flexibility, at least during the nineteenth century, around how important words and names could be used in written communication. Perhaps the transmission of knowledge relating to the ancestor's identity is more important than readability. Or maybe the carver has simply chosen symmetry over readability. Looking more closely at the text on Rautao (Figure 10), the lettering conforms relatively closely to the Didone style, with the variations in stroke width and some use of unbracketed serifs. However, the downward-pointing forked crossbar of the *A* is a preferred feature that would appear throughout Māori carved, painted, and later tattooed text. The variety in serif forms, from unbracketed hairlines to wedges and flared serifs, as demonstrated throughout this article aligns with Māori lettering trends of the time.

The growing importance of writing as tool for Māori communication is best highlighted by the application of texts to *pou tokomanawa* (Figure 11). *Pou tokomanawa* are carved Figures placed at the bottom of

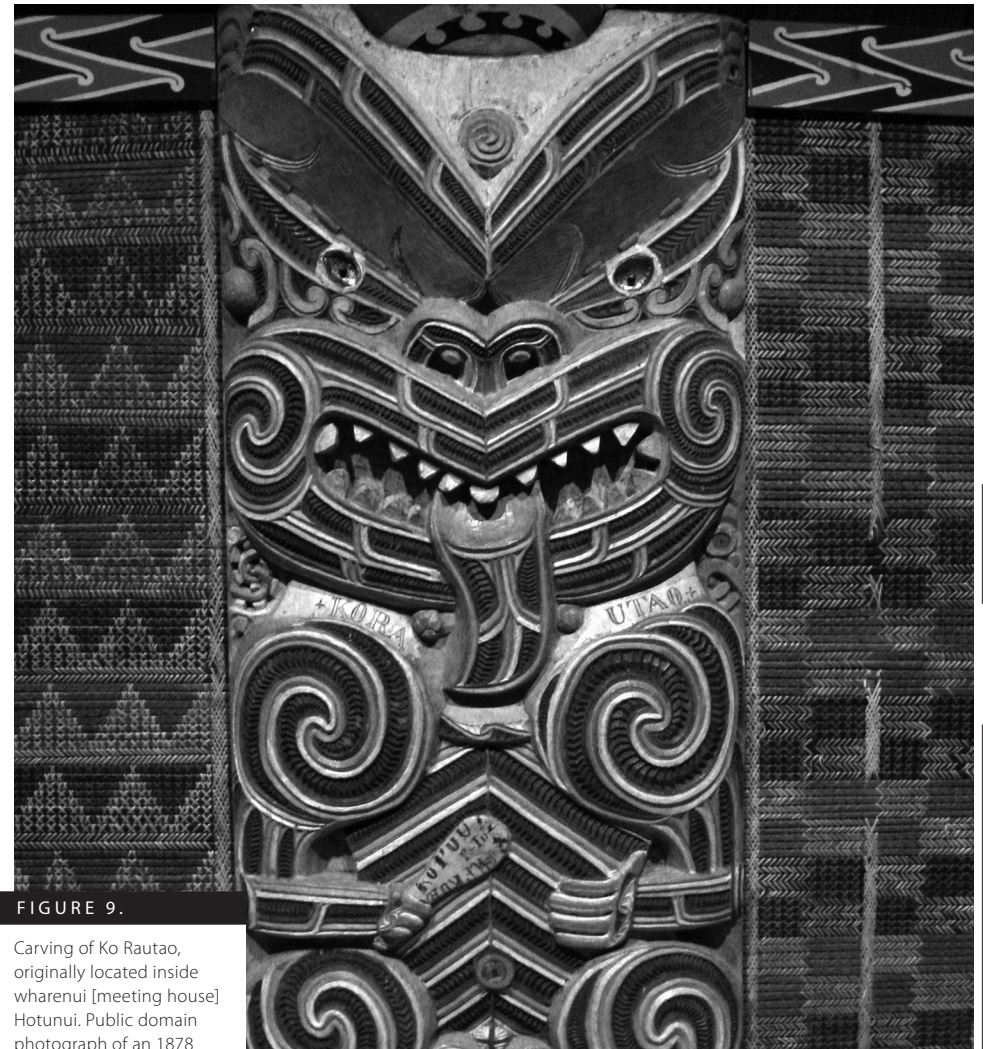


FIGURE 9.

Carving of Ko Rautao, originally located inside wharenui [meeting house] Hotunui. Public domain photograph of an 1878 poupou carving, currently in the Auckland War Memorial Museum, Tāmaki Paenga Hira.

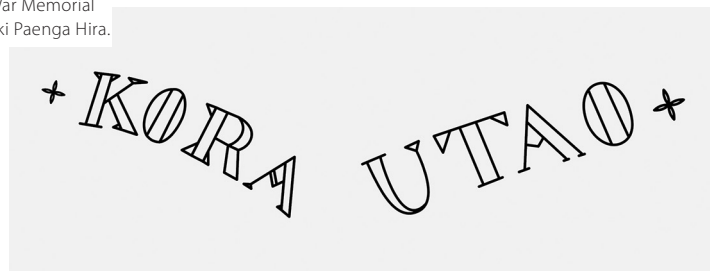


FIGURE 10.

Detail of Ko Rautao text (Witehira, 2018).

FIGURE 11.

Pou tokomanawa, centre ridgepole Figures at carved house at Taradale, 1889. Alexander Turnbull Library. 1/1-025857-G



the ridge poles within the *wharenui*. The significance of the carvings in the first instance can be found in the name itself. The word *pou tokomanawa* literally translates as “the post supporting the *manawana*” (heart). Secondly, *pou tokomanawa* are the only carved Figures inside the meeting house to be rendered naturalistically. While the bodies are somewhat abstracted, the faces on *pou tokomanawa* feature *tā moko* (facial tattoo) patterns based on those worn by the ancestors they depict. These carved Figures were often treated as living ancestors. *Pou tokomanawa* were dressed in prized *kākahu* (cloaks) at special occasions and greeted in the customary manner of *hongī*, whereby the noses of visitors and guests are pressed together. The application of carved text across the chest of *pou tokomanawa*, in light of the noted cultural significance of these carvings, suggests two things. Firstly, that Māori carvers may have preferred the power of direct written communication, or legibility, over aesthetic harmony. To a modern viewer, the text carved directly across the chest appears jarring. As if little thought has been put towards its application. However, position of the text across the chest is the only place on the *pou tokomanawa* where text of this scale, and where text with a horizontal base-line, can be applied. Putting our contemporary tastes aside, Māori carvers may also have found this application to be both functional and aesthetically pleasing. Secondly, the use of text on these Figures might also suggest that text was deemed necessary to communicate with a changing Māori audience, one becoming less familiar with its own complex system of visual language. For such an audience, the texts could function as captions, giving meaning to forms and figures that might otherwise go unnoticed or remain incomprehensible. To a modern viewer, there is certainly an incongruity between the strikingly beautiful and unified carved forms and the seemingly disruptive text placement.

Kupu waituhi:

Māori hand-painted lettering

Māori figurative painting within the *wharenui* went through an unprecedented period of growth between 1870 and 1920. For many Māori communities, paint provided an inexpensive way to decorate their *wharenui*. For others, paint supplemented and enhanced the carvings and woven forms already found on their meeting houses. According to Neich (1993), the medium of paint provided a way for Māori to express their new identities in a rapidly changing world:

Whereas previously different group identities could be adequately expressed by selecting different ancestor Figures, now painted Figures and symbols were being employed to express all these new different types of identities. The new expression of identity was needed to deal with finer and finer distinctions between groups, distinctions that had not existed in the earlier Māori world (Neich 1993, 148).

Māori identity prior to European contact was mostly defined by tribal and sub-tribal groupings. However, alignment to any number of the nineteenth century Christian (Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian, Methodists, Mormon, Jehovah) or syncretic Māori (Pai Mārire, Ringatū, Rātana and Rua Kenana) belief systems during the nineteenth century would add another layer of complexity and difference to how Māori related to one another. While figurative and naturalistic imagery took precedence in the new expressions of identity, *kupu waituhi* (painted text) and lettering also featured prominently. Initially the *kupu waituhi* was used in a similar fashion to carved texts, to capture the names of ancestors. Notable early examples of this can be seen in the *wharenui* Te Mana o Tūranga (1865), Te Tokanganui-a-Noho seen in Figure 12 (1872), Rongopai (1888), and Hikurangi (1880s), where the names of ancestors are painted across the neck, collarbone and chest of Figures.

FIGURE 12.

Poupou (Figures) inside the *wharenui* known as Te Tokanganui-a-noho. Examples of *kupu waituhi* can be seen in the painted names of ancestors. Between the Figures are woven *tukutuku* panels. Courtesy of the Anthropology Photographic Archive, Department of Anthropology, University of Auckland.

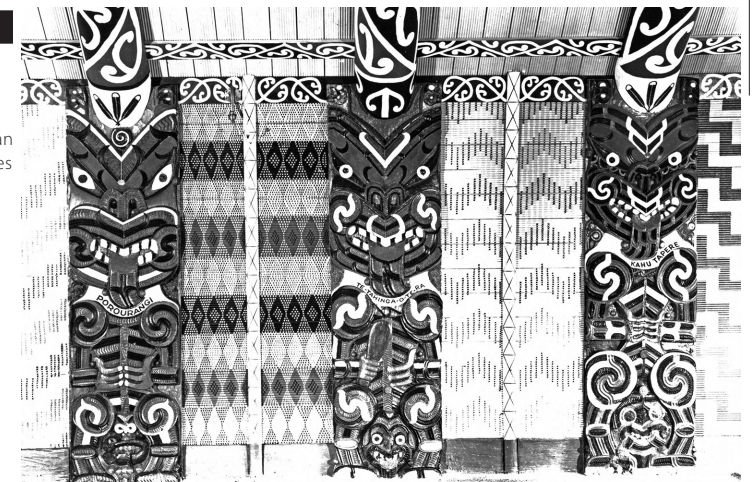


FIGURE 13.

Painted names of ancestors as applied within whareniui. Top text 'Ko Te Maha' from whareniui Whakapau, lower text 'Ngati Hau' found within whareniui, Te Mana-o-Tūranga (Witehira, 2018).

KO TE MAHA
 NGATI HAU

Often the style of lettering in *kupu waituhi* would also conform to the earlier tradition of using Didone letterforms. Figure 13 presents two examples from text as applied to ancestors in Te Mana o Tūranga and the meeting-house Whakapau (c. 1900). Looking at the letter *A* in the Whakapau example, we see a continuation of the trend to break the crossbar to form a downward arrow. The slanted *N* seen in the lower example of Figure 13 is a stylistic trait that can be found in other Māori carvings and paintings. Painted lettering and the act of painting, which was considered less *tapu* (sacred) than carving, also allowed artists to add details about stories and specific events. Often artists would include the names of tribal *waka* (canoes) as well as geographical information about significant mountains and rivers. In the *whareniui* Hinetapora (1896), painted labels identify scenes of political satire (Neich 1993), while in Houngarea (1916), the dates of significant events are painted prominently across the top of *Epa* (rear wall supporting posts).

FIGURE 14.

Unique painted names text examples, topline of text 'ki to moenga' from the whareniui Apumoana, bottom line of text 'Iritekura' from the whare of the same name Iritekura (Witehira, 2018).

KI TO MOENGA
 IRITEKURA

The need to express newly developing Māori identities also resulted in a number of unique letterform design responses, with examples illustrated in Figure 14. In the top line of text from the *whareniui* Apumoana we see the words *Ki to moenga*. These words are rendered in the Tuscan style of lettering which originated in wood type of the early nineteenth century. Created for display purposes, the Tuscan style features decorative gestures and is characterized by split (bi- and tri-furcated) serifs, forked (broken) cross bars, and slab serifs. In a contemporary context, this ornate style is more often recognized for its use in Western cowboy films. A special feature of the Apumoana text is the use of the slanted *N*. Again we also see the downward

FIGURE 15.

House with painted lettering and naturalistic paintings, near Masterton, mid-1870s. Bragge, James, 1833?-1908: Maori family outside a whare puni, Mangaakuta, near Masterton. Ref: 1/2-004136-F. Reproduced with permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

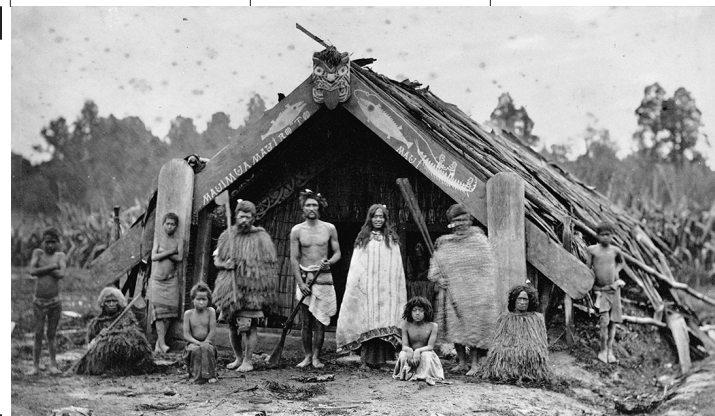


FIGURE 16.

Detail of *kupu waituhi* (hand-painted lettering) on wharepuni (Witehira, 2018).

MAUIMUA MAUIRO TO

FIGURE 17.

Detail of painted text on whare Te Puhi o Mataatua. Te Puhi o Mataatua meeting house at Mataatua. Ref: PAColl-4249-09. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.



FIGURE 18.

detail of *kupu waituhi* (hand-painted lettering) on wharepuni, Te Puhi o Mataatua (Witehira, 2018).

TEPUHIOMATATUA

pointing crossbar on the *A* (a feature that can be found in examples of the Tuscan Roman style and earlier in Celtic manuscripts, like the Lindisfarne Gospels). Finally, we see a peculiar addition of serif or spur-like elements to the *O*. In flattening out the top and bottom parts of the *O*, these spurs help bring the rounded shapes into line with the other letters. In the text from the whareniui *Iritekura*, we see what appears to be a wholly distinct form of lettering. Here each letter is rendered with such care that the larger word appears more like an artwork. The implied significance of this design is probably deliberate as *Iritekura* is also the name of the *whareniui* in which this text is painted. Within this meeting house there are a number of other unique examples of lettering; notably, in all instances the written text appears to have been considered as an integral and holistic part of the design, rather than simply as an addition.

Painted lettering was also used on the exterior of some *wharenuī*. In a number of examples, the names of prominent ancestors can be seen applied to the slanted *maihi* (bargeboard) which are attached to the front of the meeting-house. On a *wharenuī* near Masterton, New Zealand (Figure 15, Figure 16), we see the possible influence of wood-block printing, with some additional local developments. This includes the closing of the *O* to form two semi-circular forms, the use of a tittle (dot) above the uppercase *I* characters, and the use of small ornamental details inside the *U* letters. On *Te Puhī o Matatua* (c. 1890s, Figure 17, Figure 18), the lettering features some idiosyncratic elements. Close inspection reveals that the *kaihoahoa Māori* (Māori designer) has created something altogether new, a synthesis of the Didone rational serif with elements from an inscriptional style of lettering. The regular geometry, vertical stress and high stroke contrast on some of the letters are reminiscent of the Didone style used regularly in carved text. However, the forked (broken) crossbars on the letters *A* and *H*, as well as some use of more moderate stroke contrasts, link to Tuscan Roman tradition. The thin hairline serifs normally found on rational typefaces have also been abandoned here, while we see a continuation of the Māori lettering precedent of using tilted letters as seen in the *M* and the *A* of this example. This stylistic innovation suggests that the role of the *kaihoahoa Māori* was not simply to copy imported forms, but to integrate, to invent, and to develop forms suited to local purposes and contexts.

Kupu whatu:

Woven words

Within the *wharenuī*, text also began to appear in another important space, the *tukutuku* woven panels. These panels, which feature abstracted designs relating to the *wharenuī* and *Te Ao Māori*, are found in the spaces between the carved *poupou* Figures inside the meeting house (refer to Figure 12). Though initiated in the late 1800s, this innovation would be adopted later by carvers from the Rotorua School of Arts and Crafts. Sir Apirana Ngata, a prominent Māori politician in early twentieth century, established the School in 1926 as a way to maintain and promote customary Māori arts practices. Carvers educated at the Rotorua School applied textual *tukutuku* within *wharenuī* and *whare karakia* (churches) throughout the 1930s. One of the earliest examples of *kupu whatu* (woven text) can be found in Pourangi, a meeting-house belonging to the tribe Ngāti Porou (not pictured). The Pourangi *tukutuku*, designed by Karauria Kauri (1886-1888), features images of ancestors with woven names between their legs. In this instance a Grotesque sans serif style lettering is used. This typographic preference aligns with local Iwirākau visual culture at the time; other examples include *wharenuī* Kapohanga (c.1880) and Hinetāpora (1882-86). The forked crossbars of the *A* and *H* are replaced by horizontal ones set asymmetrically above or below the x-height. The downward stroke of the *N* is also unique in that it connects to the second vertical stroke above the x-height. This

development may have come from the removal of the lower parallel strokes of the *N* in earlier Didone style, as we know this was used in earlier carving (for example, in *wharenuī* Hau Te Ana Nui a Tangaroa). The distinctive Māori practice of using line breaks to work within the restrictions of space is also persistent in examples of *kupu whatu*. Throughout the *wharenuī* Pourangi, line breaks see the names of ancestors broken into parts. As noted earlier, this suggests that breaks in readability were not considered to be an offence to the named ancestor.

FIGURE 19.

Close up of *tukutuku* woven text panel from *wharenuī* named Hikurangi. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. 22664-1/2.



FIGURE 20.

detail of *kupu waituhi* (hand-painted lettering) on *wharenuī*, Hikurangi (Witehira, 2018).

HAER
EMHI
KITE
WHA
RE

In a few exceptional cases (such as the *whareniui* Nga Tau e Waru, Ruapekapeka, and Hikurangi) *tukutuku* panels also appeared on the *mahau* (front porch) of the meeting-house. In the example from Hikurangi (Figure 19, Figure 20), the words “Haere mai ki te whare” (welcome to the house) conform to some of the Māori typographic conventions of the time; characteristic features include the backwards slanting *A*, the use of heavy wedge-like serifs on the *E* and *T*, and the use of a curved leg on the *K*. The *kupu whatu* is arranged in an almost modular approach, or in typographic terms appearing justified to the left. Reading the text from top to bottom we see: haer-ema-kite-whar-re. The line breaks in the text may be due to the restrictions of the rigid horizontal structure of the woven panels. As suggested earlier, these disruptions to readability probably had little effect on comprehension for the local Māori audience. While the carved texts on ancestor Figures functioned like captions to provide the names of the Figures, these woven texts offered conventional greetings expressed in familiar language; in both cases, familiarity with the linguistic conventions of the message, and the brevity of the message, allowed the *kaihoahoa Māori* (Māori designer) compositional flexibility.

Kupu tā tangata:

The appearance of tattooed words

The Māori tradition of *tā moko* (tattooing), particularly applied to the face, is known throughout the world. Māori traditions relating to what we might call *kupu tā tangata* (tattooed text), though, are less acknowledged. While numerous examples of this practice can be found, particularly in the Whanganui area of New Zealand, specific documentation around *kupu tā tangata* is practically non-existent. This may be due to tattooed text being considered an anomaly rather than part of the continued and authentic practice of Māori tattooing culture. However, the written word's incorporation into *tā moko* was significant, as Māori consider the human body to be especially sacred. It is governed by complex rules relating to *tapu* (sacredness) and *mana* (power, prestige, authority). Describing *tapu* and its relation to the human body, noted Māori scholar Hirini Mead writes, “The most important spiritual attribute is one's *tapu* [...] it is like a force field that can be felt and sensed by others. It is the sacred life force which supports the *mauri* (spark of life)” (2016, 49). Personal *tapu* could be damaged by direct assault on the body, and by the loss of blood or contact with certain *tapu* or *noa* (profane) objects. Therefore, the practice of *tā moko* (literally, chiselling the skin) was considered to be sacrosanct. The appearance of letters on the body signals a total integration of text and the Roman alphabet into Māori visual arts.

The formal visual characteristics of *kupu tā tangata* (tattooed text) echo those already seen in carved, painted, and woven texts. In Figure 21, we see *kupu tā tangata* applied to the right arm of Koha Hipango, a woman who likely came from the Whanganui area. The text features two names, *Rahapa* and *Wari*, which are read down the arm. Stylistically, the



FIGURE 21.

Photograph of Koha Hipango (from Whanganui) with name “Rahapa Wari” tattooed on the arm. William Henry Thomas Partington. Ref: 1/2-008290-G. Reprinted with permission from the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

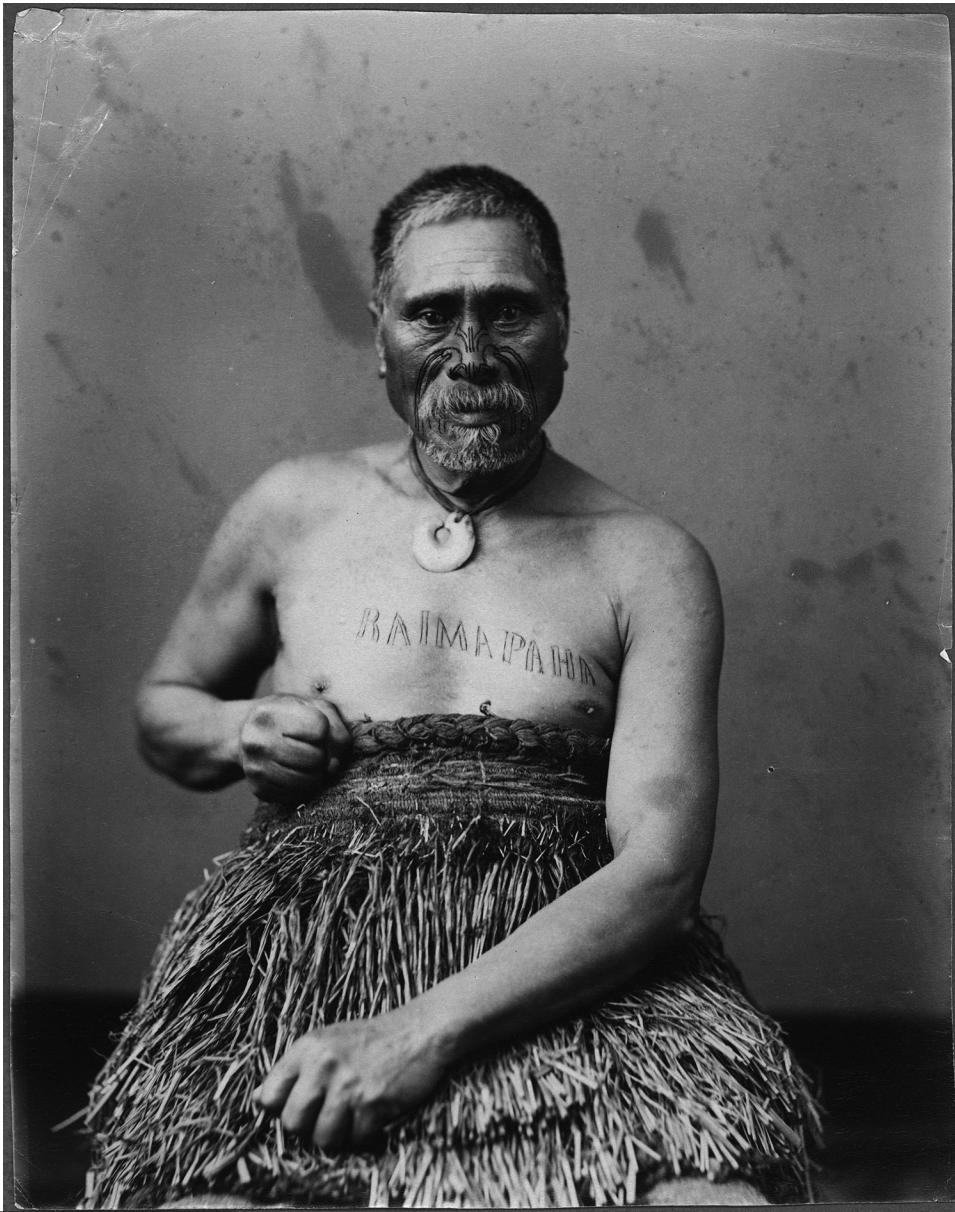


FIGURE 22.

Portrait of Turahui (from Whanganui) with name Raimapaha tattooed across chest. Whanganui Regional Museum Photographic Collection; reference 2003.

lettering follows the precedents seen across Māori texts of the nineteenth century, using an ultra bold Didone style, letters rendered in uppercase, and downward facing forked crossbars in the *H* and the *A*. As with some examples of *kupu whakairo*, the lettering also has no fill (it is outlined). However, a distinct feature of the *kupu tā tangata* here is the use of an internal stroke which runs parallel to the outer shapes of the letter. Looking to Figure 22, we are made aware again of the close relationship between Māori carving and Māori tattooing practices. The placement of the name, *Raimapaha*, tattooed



FIGURE 23.

Photograph of Pikau Teimana of Putaruru with words 'Aohau Taute' tattooed onto left arm. Photographer unknown, Ref: PAColl-3861-44-01. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

across the chest of a man known as Turahui (Tarahui) echoes the lettering seen on carved *pou tokomanawa* Figures (refer to Figure 11). The Didone style of lettering, outline technique, and slanting of some characters – particularly the *A* and *M* – also connect this *kupu tā tangata* to *kupu whakairo* practice. Thus man and carved representations of man are brought together through customary tattoo (facial *moko*) and the use of lettering. Whereas the abstracted *moko* designs once spoke of a person's identity, written language was now being used to extend Māori communication. A tattooed name could be worn as proudly as any other *ta moko*.

Some examples of *Kupu ta tangata* also suggest regional and tribal stylistic variation. In the final example of *kupu tā tangata* (Figure 23), we see a portrait of Māori woman known as Pikau Teimana. The words *Ao-hau* and *Taute* can be seen tattooed on the left arm, with the text this time being read up the arm towards the shoulder. The style of *kupu tā tangata* differs markedly to the precedents seen in other Māori texts during the nineteenth century. Again, the letters appear to borrow from the Tuscan Roman style, popular in woodblock printing during the early to mid nineteenth century. The lettering in this instance features flared serifs, which taper off in *A* letters, high contrast between thick and thin strokes, and a distinctive bulging in the stems of all letters though the midline of the characters. As a preliminary study into this area it is difficult to determine whether or not the *kupu tā tangata* on Pikau Teimana is an anomaly. However, this example comes from outside of the Whanganui region, indicating that there may be other regional and tribal stylistic traditions of tattooed text.

Conclusion

Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Māori.

The language is the life force of the mana Māori.

— Sir James Hēnare, Māori language claim to the Waitangi Tribunal, 1985

In 1769 the lives of New Zealand's indigenous Māori people would be forever changed. Europeans would make their first landing on the shores of Aotearoa New Zealand, bringing two vastly different worlds together. The British, for the most part, would deride Māori culture and ignore the fact that Māori had developed sophisticated knowledge in a number of areas including ocean-voyaging, agriculture, and astronomy. In contrast to this, Māori were keen to adapt and adopt Pākehā (British) tools, technologies and ideas into their world. One such Pākehā technology, as presented here, was that of written communication.

Māori passed on their knowledge and history through highly developed systems of oratory practice, visual arts, and performance prior to the arrival of Europeans. Through oral traditions, important knowledge could be safely kept and shared amongst individuals and small kin-based

groups. This importance of oral transmission in Māori culture is further highlighted in the visual arts, for example, where the tongue is given prominence on ancestor figures. Yet, orally-centric knowledge systems suffer from a number of unique problems. Knowledge which has not been passed on can die with its holder. It is difficult to disseminate knowledge to larger groups of people. Lastly, due to their changeable nature, oral histories – at least from a Western perspective – can be considered unreliable. Written communication, introduced by Europeans, provided Māori with a new way to future-proof, disseminate, and store knowledge and histories. In some instances, this technology supplemented existing Māori systems for knowledge transmission. In others, though, written communication would go on to undermine traditional Māori modes of communication.

In the years following the arrival of Captain James Cook and *The Endeavour*, *te reo Maori* (the Māori language), was harnessed by Pākehā scientists, settlers and missionaries. The first missionaries, who took great pains to document and formalize written Māori, used the language as a tool for converting Māori to Christianity. For some Māori this would result in the abandonment of their ways of knowing, thinking, and being in the world. As African author Ngugui wa Thiong'o has written, language carries culture and the language of the colonizer became the means by which the "mental universe of the colonized" was dominated (1986). However, Māori engagement with written communication, as with settlers, would be far from passive.

Despite colonization and attempted cultural annihilation, Māori embraced an adaptive approach, incorporating Latin typographic forms and lettering aesthetics into an indigenous heritage, eventually re-framing the visual language of writing as a specifically Māori practice. Māori worked closely with missionaries to take an active part in the development of *te reo* Māori as a written language. As Māori gained literacy and access to written communication throughout the nineteenth century, they also began to put the newly acquired tools to use. Māori owned and operated printing presses, such as Te Hokioi o Niu Tiren e Rere atu na (January–May 1863), Te Wananga (1874-1878), and Huia Tangata Kotahi (1893–95) allowed for the dissemination of news, history, song, and politics. Inside the *whareniui*, the written word would be integrated into the pre-existing system of *mahi toi Māori* (Māori visual arts). Names of ancestors, dates of significant events, and tribal histories were carved, painted, and woven into the sacred meeting house. Then finally, perhaps as an ultimate expression of the integration of text into Māori culture, text was tattooed onto the bodies of the *tangata whenua*.

Moving into the present, Māori have been able to draw on historical written documents in the process of rebuilding histories and restoring cultural practices destroyed by colonization. At the same time, written documents such as the *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (The treaty of Waitangi), signed by some Māori chiefs and the British Crown in the 1840s, are being used by Māori to overturn past injustices and to seek redress around the loss of land, culture, and resources. Written communication, once introduced as a tool for civilizing and converting Māori towards Christianity, continues to be put to use by Māori for Māori means. A key question for Māori in the

twenty-first century is: how do Māori engage with the ever changing forms of digital, augmented, and virtual communication? While oral communication is viewed by some as limited in its ability to retain history, this form of communication contributed to unique elements within Māori culture. For Māori, history was fluid and open to interpretation. It was shaped and added to by the knowledge holder. The result of this is seen in the sophisticated forms of oratory such as *whaikōrero* (oratory debate) which are at the heart of Māori culture. If modes of communication shape culture, and cultural practice, how does digital communication shape Māori culture now? Interrogating the early history of Māori written and typographic communication not only sheds light on the past but might also inform the development of a digital visual language specific to Māori contexts.

Glossary

Kupu whakairo	carved text
kupu waituhi	painted text
Kupu whatu	woven texts
kupu tā tangata	tattooed texts
tuhi rerehua	calligraphy
kupu a-ringa	lettering
tuhi waitohu	lettering
tātai kupu toi	typography
tuhi matarongo	typeface (the face of sound)
momotuhi	font
niupepa Māori Māori	newspapers

References

- Anderson, A., J. Binney, and A. Harris. 2014. *Tangata Whenua an illustrated history*. Auckland: Bridget Williams Books.
- Barrow, T. 1969. *Māori wood sculpture of New Zealand*. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company.
- Binney, J. 2005. *The legacy of guilt: A life of Thomas Kendall*. Wellington, N.Z.: Bridget Williams Books.
- Binney, J., V. O'Malley, and A. Ward. 2018. *Te Ao Hou: The New World, 1820-1920*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Calman, R. (2015, September 16). *Rangitawhiro's copy book*. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz/en/document/34871/rangitawhiros-copy-book>
- Cameron, W. J. 1958. "A Printing Press for the Māori People." *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 67, no 3: 204–10. <http://www.jps.auckland.ac.nz/>
- Coles, S., and E. Spiekermann. 2016. *The geometry of type: The anatomy of 100 essential typefaces*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Colenso, W. 1891. *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute 1891* [electronic resource]. Retrieved July 17, 2018, from http://rsnz.natlib.govt.nz/volume/rsnz_24/rsnz_24_00_003790.html
- Cowan, J. 1922. *The New Zealand Wars: A History of the Māori Campaigns and the Pioneering Period*. Vol. 1, 1845–1864. Wellington: Govt. Printer.
- Curnow, J. 2002. "A brief history of Māori-language Newspapers." In J. Curnow, H. Hopa & J. Mcrae (Eds.), *Rere Atu, Taku Manu!: Discovering History, Language, and Politics in the Māori-language*

- Newspapers*, 17-41. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Haami, B. 2004. *Pūtea whakairo: Māori and the written word*. Wellington, N.Z.: Huia in association with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage.
- Jahnke, R. H. 2006. *He tataitanga ahua toi: The house that Riwai built, a continuum of Māori art* (Unpublished master's thesis). Palmerston North, New Zealand, Massey University. doi:<https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/984>
- Jones, A., and K. Jenkins. 2011. *Words between us first Māori-Pākehā conversations on paper = He Kōrero*. Wellington, N.Z.: Huia.
- Kennard, J. (2014, January 03). The Story of Our Friend, the Fat Face. Retrieved from <https://fontsinuse.com/uses/5578/the-story-of-our-friend-the-fat-face/>
- King, M., and D. Filer. 2007. *The Penguin history of New Zealand illustrated*. Rosedale, North Shore, N.Z.: Penguin.
- McMillan, K. (2013, August 13). *Te Karere o Nui Tirenī, 1842*. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz/en/zoomify/35750/te-karere-o-nui-tireni-1842>
- McRae, J. (2017, June 20). *Māori newspapers and magazines – ngā niupepa me ngā moheni*. Retrieved from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/maori-newspapers-and-magazines-nga-niupepa-me-nga-moheni/page-44> (accessed 16 August 2018).
- Mikaere, A. 2011. *Colonising myths—Māori realities: He rukuruku whakaaro*. Wellington, N.Z.: Huia and Te Wānanga o Raukawa.
- . 2016. "Te Harinui: Civilising the Māori with school and church." In *Decolonisation in Aotearoa: Education, research and practice*, 48-57. Wellington: NZCER Press.
- O'Malley, V. 2016. *The great war for New Zealand Waikato 1800-2000*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Park, S. 1992. "Te Peeke o Aotearoa: The Bank of King Tawhiao." *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 26, no. 2: 161-183. Retrieved from <http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz>
- Said, E. 1982. "Opponents, Audiences, Constituencies, and Community." *Critical Inquiry*, 9, no. 1: 1-26. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343271>"1343271
- Sedivy, J. 2017. "The Rise and Fall of the English Sentence." *Nautilus*, 1, no. 23: 21-31.
- Simon, J. (ed.). 1998. *Ngā Kura Māori: The Native Schools system 1867-1969*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Shunghie [Hongi Hika]. Sample of Writing by Shunghie [Hongi Hika] on board the Active. Marsden Online Archive. Last modified October 3, 2014. http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_068.
- Smith, L. T. 2012. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed.
- Sorrenson, K. 1981. "Māori and Pākehā." In *The Oxford history of New Zealand*, edited by W. H. Oliver and Bridget Williams. Wellington: Oxford University Press.
- Sowersby, K. (2018, May 7). Email conversation on Maori Engagement with Type [kris@klim.co.nz].
- Thiong'o, Ngugi Wa. 1986. *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London: James Currey.
- Walker, R. 2004. *Struggle without end*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books.
- Walker, S., A. Eketone, and A. Gibbs. 2006. "An exploration of kaupapa Maori research, its principles, processes and applications." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9, no. 4: 331-344. doi:10.1080/13645570600916049

Author

Dr. Johnson Witehira is a designer, artist, and researcher of Ngāpuhi (Ngaitū-te-auru), Tamahaki (Ngāti Hinekura), and Pākehā descent. He graduated from the Whanganui School of Design in 2004, completed his master's degree in 2007, and completed his doctorate in Māori design in 2013 at Te Pūtahi-a-Toi (Massey University). As a designer, Witehira has worked on a wide range of projects, including creating the first Maori-alphabet block set and Maori typeface development. Witehira's particular field of research is design and tinorangatiranga. His pedagogical focus is on how we might decolonise methods of teaching art and design at the tertiary level. As an artist, he uses digital technologies to tell Maori stories. In 2012, Witehira's work was exhibited in Times Square, New York, in the first ever synchronised display of digital content. In his Land of Tara (2014) series, Witehira created a collection of graphic representations of Maori ancestors for New Zealand's Capital city. As a designer, Witehira's work explores themes around decolonisation and self-determination, exploring how design can be used to change the mono-cultural landscape of Aotearoa, New Zealand.