Waiata Pakanga as Living Literature

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Abstract

This article examines *waiata pakanga* as living literature through four compositions connected to Māori experiences of the world wars: *Te Ope Tuatahi*, *Arohaina Mai*, *Hitara Waha Huka* and *Tomo Mai*. While these compositions sit within the broader body of *waiata pakanga*, they perform different functions within Māori communities. They called people forward to serve, petitioned for protection, used humour and satire to respond to the enemy, and welcomed soldiers home. Through these different functions, the article considers what Māori communities were doing through waiata at different points in the wartime experience. It also shows that the function of a waiata was not necessarily fixed, but could develop as circumstances changed and as waiata moved between people, places and generations. I argue that *waiata pakanga* are more than songs about war. They are living forms through which Māori communities record, interpret and carry collective memory and history forward through composition, singing, teaching and performance.

Keywords: Waiata pakanga; living literature; Māori music; collective memory; Māori wartime experience

Introduction

Waiata pakanga do more than tell us about Māori experiences of world war. They show us how Māori understood those experiences, responded to them and carried their memories forward. Through composition and performance, *waiata pakanga* documented the people who served, the whānau they left behind, the emotions of departure and loss, the politics of participation, and the experiences of returning home.

These waiata were created for people, places and particular moments. Some called men to enlist through their tribal affiliations. Some petitioned for the protection of those serving overseas. Some farewelled those leaving for war. Some honoured those who served and returned home, as well as those who died and were buried overseas. Others used humour and satire to comment on people, politics and events. Waiata also helped whānau and communities remember, interpret and pass these experiences to later generations.

That *waiata pakanga* continue to be sung by twenty-first-century generations speaks to the vitality of their function. They have not remained fixed in the time in which they were composed. Each time they are sung, the people, events and experiences they carry are brought into the present. The waiata continue to connect descendants with people they may never have known, events they did not witness, and histories that remain part of their collective memory.

This is why I describe *waiata pakanga* as living literature. Their histories do not exist only in written lyrics, archival records or accounts of past performances. They live through the people who compose, sing, teach, remember and pass them on. The kupu, melody, performance, whakapapa and circumstances in which a waiata was created all contribute to what that waiata carries forward (Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2010, pp. 48–50).

Looking at *waiata pakanga* in this way changes the questions we ask of them. Rather than asking only what a waiata tells us about a particular war or historical event, we can ask what the waiata was created to do. Who was it speaking to? What was happening at the time? What did the composer want people to hear, remember or respond to? How was the waiata used by the people for whom it was composed? What has happened to it as it has been carried from one generation to another?

These questions allow us to consider *waiata pakanga* as more than cultural artefacts, performances or supplementary evidence for histories written elsewhere. The waiata are themselves ways of recording and interpreting Māori experience. They locate events within whakapapa and iwi histories. They also provide ways for Māori communities to express grief, pride, hope, humour, criticism, political opinion and collective identity.

For the purposes of this article, I examine these waiata according to function and practice: what they were created to do, how they were used, and how they were performed within Māori communities (Matthews, 2004). Although the four compositions sit within the broader body of *waiata pakanga*, they served different purposes. *Waiata taritari*, or recruitment songs, called people forward to serve. *Waiata whakapono* petitioned through spiritual belief for protection and care. *Waiata pūhohe* used humour and satire to respond to people and events, while *waiata pōhiri* welcomed people home.

These distinctions provide a way of examining the different functions of *waiata pakanga* rather than establishing fixed or mutually exclusive classifications. They help explain what Māori communities were doing through waiata at particular moments, while recognising that the purpose for which a waiata was composed was not necessarily the same as the purpose it served in later performances. Over time, waiata could also serve to memorialise people and events, elevate their contributions, reaffirm whakapapa connections and carry their histories forward to subsequent generations.

This article explores these functions through four *waiata pakanga*: *Te Ope Tuatahi*, *Arohaina Mai*, *Hitara Waha Huka* and *Tomo Mai*. Together, they trace different

points in the Māori wartime experience, from recruitment and protection through to humour, homecoming and remembrance. Their histories also show how the meanings and purposes of waiata developed as they moved between people, places and generations.

The discussion draws particularly on *waiata pakanga* connected to my whakapapa and inter-tribal relationships with iwi. The selection also reflects a strong Ngāti Porou compositional tradition and the dialectal preferences of Te Tairāwhiti, including local forms of language and expression preserved within the waiata. The four waiata were composed, adapted or carried through the work of composers and performers closely connected with Ngāti Porou, including Sir Apirana Ngata, Paraire Tomoana, Tuini Ngawai and Henare Waitoa. The authorship history of *Hitara Waha Huka* is less certain and is discussed later in the article. This is therefore a deliberately situated selection rather than an attempt to represent the full range of *waiata pakanga* across all iwi.

Working with these waiata carries responsibilities. Access, interpretation, reproduction and translation are guided by tikanga, including permission, reciprocity and care. Waiata remain connected to composers, whānau, hapū and iwi, even when they are held in archives, published in collections or performed beyond the communities from which they came.

This article was developed from research undertaken for my doctoral thesis and substantially reworks material from one chapter of the thesis for publication as a standalone article (Karini, 2025). My interpretation is also informed by my experience as a practitioner of waiata, particularly the relationships between kupu, melody, movement and collective performance. Drawing on four *waiata pakanga*, I examine how their different functions and performance histories demonstrate the ways Māori communities record, interpret and transmit wartime experiences. The discussion is grounded in local histories, whakapapa and the communities through which these waiata have been carried.

Waiata Taritari: Calling People to Serve

Waiata taritari, or recruitment songs, called people forward, but they did so in ways that made sense within Māori communities. Recruitment was organised through people, purpose and place.

Te Ope Tuatahi, composed by Sir Apirana Ngata and Paraire Tomoana, provides a good example. Importantly, it was not composed as a complete waiata from the outset. The waiata grew alongside the Māori war effort. As Māori contingents were recruited and sent overseas, further verses were added in response to the people who answered the call, the places they came from, and eventually what happened to them. The waiata therefore follows the developing chronology of Māori recruitment and wartime experience.

The opening verse reflects the early recruitment call. The repeated possessive *nō* (meaning from or belonging to) places the men geographically and tribally before identifying them collectively as *Te Hokowhitu Toa*: *Nō Aotearoa, Nō Te Waipounamu, Nō ngā tai e whā* (*Te Ope Tuatahi*, 2005, verse 1). The repetition reinforces tribal identity, locality and the responsibility of hapū and iwi to uphold the mana of their people and rohe (region). The men are not presented as an anonymous group of soldiers. They are located through the places and people to whom they belong, carrying those relationships and responsibilities into military service. In this way, whakapapa sits within the recruitment call, connecting service to hapū, iwi and rohe. The first batch of reinforcements left in September 1915 (Walker, 2001, p. 187).

As recruitment continued, the waiata grew with it. Successive verses were added to record the involvement of new iwi and regions supporting the recruitment drive. The second contingent, for example, is acknowledged through the naming of Te Aitanga a Mahaki, Te Aitanga a Hauiti and Ngāti Porou, iwi connected to Te Tairāwhiti, on the East Coast of the North Island. By the ninth contingent, the naming includes Te Arawa, Te Tairāwhiti and Ngāti Kahungunu. These verses were not simply extending an already completed song. They responded to successive stages of Māori recruitment, giving each contingent and the communities from which its men came a place within the developing waiata.

This means *Te Ope Tuatahi* can also be read chronologically. As successive contingents were recruited and deployed, the waiata recorded who answered the call and acknowledged the communities from which they came. The collective Māori response was built through the contributions of different iwi, with each additional verse recognising their place in the wider war effort. Following the Gallipoli campaign, the contingents were brought together within the New Zealand Pioneer Battalion, later renamed the New Zealand Māori (Pioneer) Battalion in October 1917 (Soutar, 2019, p. 13).

The *ā-ringa*, or hand gestures, of the performers also reinforce these connections (Ngata & Armstrong, 2002, pp. 16–37). In performance, each gesture has a purpose. As localities are named, the hands extend outward in acknowledgement of the hapū, iwi and regions from which the men came, then draw inward to symbolise their inclusion within the collective. These movements give physical expression to the naming of people and place and their contribution to the collective Māori response. The naming sequence, *ā-ringa* and collective singing therefore work together to reinforce the recruitment call.

But the developing waiata also came to serve purposes beyond recruitment. As the war progressed, it carried further experiences of those who served and the communities they left behind. Recruitment and loss began to sit alongside one another. In the fourth verse, the naming of *Māhaki, Hauiti* and *Porourangi* acknowledges the iwi and communities contributing to the war effort. The fifth verse moves into remembrance of

Henare Kohere, who died following the Battle of the Somme in 1916, and the men who served alongside him (*Te Ope Tuatahi*, 2005, verse 5).

The reference to his death brings the consequences of war into the waiata. Verse six extends this sense of loss by asking who will survive to carry the sad news home. The focus here extends beyond recruitment to the responsibility of those serving to carry news of their whanaunga (relative) back to their whānau waiting at home (*Te Ope Tuatahi*, 2005, verse 6).

By the time the ninth contingent was formed, another dimension had been added to the waiata. The mood shifts from the anticipation of travelling overseas to the emotional reality of leaving home and loved ones behind as reinforced in verses seven to nine (*Te Ope Tuatahi*, 2005, verses 7–9). The voice becomes that of someone departing for war, watching home and loved ones disappear from sight. The personal consequences of answering the call to serve now sit alongside the earlier recruitment message.

Te Ope Tuatahi was therefore never a fixed account of recruitment. It grew as Māori responded to the call to serve and as the consequences of that service became known. Each additional verse carried another part in that unfolding history. What began by calling and locating the men through iwi and place came to carry further experiences of departure, service, battlefield loss, grief and remembrance. These additional meanings did not replace the original recruitment purpose but broadened what the waiata recorded and communicated about Māori wartime experiences.

The life of *Te Ope Tuatahi* also continued beyond the First World War. Members of the 28th Māori Battalion sang the waiata from the Middle East in a broadcast on Christmas Day 1943, with the recording later broadcast in 1946 (Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision, 1946). Another generation of Māori servicemen was singing a waiata composed during the previous world war, bringing its history into their own wartime experiences.

This continued use is part of what makes *Te Ope Tuatahi* living literature. Its performance during the Second World War demonstrates how a waiata could retain its original historical significance while acquiring additional meaning through use by another generation. The waiata survived because people continued to sing it, use it and carry its history forward.

Waiata Whakapono: Petition and Protection

Waiata whakapono, or spiritual songs, provided another way for Māori communities to respond to war. They created space to seek protection, comfort and spiritual support, particularly for those facing the uncertainty of having loved ones serving overseas. For soldiers and whānau, *waiata whakapono* provided a way of petitioning for care when there was little control over what might happen.

Arohaina Mai, composed by Tuini Ngawai, was written as a petition for the men of the Māori Battalion serving in World War Two, and for the loved ones they had left behind.

Its opening words make that petition clear: *Arohaina mai e te Kingi nui, manaakitia rā ō tamariki e*. The request is for love, care and protection. The men are referred to as *ō tamariki*, your children, placing them within a relationship of care as they face the dangers of war (Pewhairangi, 1985, p. 14).

The petition then becomes more specific. *Horahia mai rā te mārie nui ki te Hokowhitu-a-Tū Toa* (Pewhairangi, 1985, p. 14). Peace and protection are being sought for the Māori Battalion. The waiata provides those at home with a means of responding to the uncertainty of war. They cannot control what is happening on the battlefield, but they can gather, sing and petition for the protection of their sons, brothers, husbands and relations.

The waiata also gives voice to the pain carried at home. *Ngā mamaetanga me ngā pōuri nui* names the hurt and deep sadness of separation. Rather than carrying that pain within individual whānau, collective singing allows the mamaetanga to be expressed together. The call, *ka karanga ki te Matua, auē, aroha mai* (Pewhairangi, 1985, p. 14), places that worry within the petition and asks for care when the people themselves cannot provide it from such a great distance.

The collective nature of the waiata is strengthened through *Ngā hapū katoa o Aotearoa e* (Pewhairangi, 1985, p. 14). The petition reaches beyond individual families and calls to hapū across Aotearoa. Like *Te Ope Tuatahi*, the composition moves between the individual and the collective. The men belong to whānau and hapū, but concern for their wellbeing is shared more widely.

Performance adds another layer. In the 1947 recording at Uepōhatu Marae in Ruatōrea, the waiata is sung collectively with a steady and solemn delivery. The voices carry the petition together. Recorded only two years after the war ended, the solemnity of the performance may also reflect memories of separation, uncertainty and loss that were still fresh for those singing. The effect comes from the plea carried in the kupu, the collective voice and the seriousness of the delivery (Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision, 1947).

There is also something important in how the waiata has changed through continued performance. A contemporary Ngāti Porou expression of the waiata can be seen in a *Ngāti Porou Iwi Anthems* episode, recorded 66 years after the 1947 performance. The delivery is less solemn than the 1947 recording. This difference may reflect a different generation and a greater distance from the wartime experiences that gave rise to the composition. Many of those performing in 2013 would not have been born when the war ended. The words remain recognisable, but the musical and performance expression has shifted. The comparison shows that a waiata does not have to remain musically fixed in order to carry its history. Each generation can inherit the waiata while continuing to interpret and express its meaning through performance (Raukatauri Productions, 2013).

Arohaina Mai adds another part to the wartime story carried through *waiata pakanga*. *Te Ope Tuatahi* called men forward. *Arohaina Mai* petitioned for their protection while they were away. Through *Arohaina Mai*, we also hear the concern of those left behind at home, their worry, their hope and their collective call for protection.

This is another way that *waiata pakanga* operate as living literature. *Arohaina Mai* carries the circumstances in which it was composed, but the petition has continued beyond the war. When later generations sing it, they give voice again to the call for protection, the pain of separation and the relationships between those who went away and those who waited for them at home.

Waiata Pūhohe: Humour in Wartime

Humour also had a place in *waiata pakanga*. *Waiata pūhohe* used satire, ridicule and exaggeration to respond to people and events during wartime. Māori humour drew on practices such as *whakatoi*, playful provocation, *whakakata*, humorous performance, and *whakahawea*, scorn or deliberate disrespect. These practices provided ways of challenging people and power through humour.

Hitara Waha Huka, or 'the Foaming Mouth of Hitler', is a good example. The authorship history of the waiata is less straightforward. An oral account provided by Ata Pedersen identifies Rev. Wii Moana as the composer and places an early performance at Takitimu Meeting House in Wairoa in mid-1941 by a concert group of the Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (28 Māori Battalion, 2013). The same archival record preserves commentary from Sir Apirana Ngata in 1943 that the waiata was reported to have originated at Nuhaka. Elsewhere, the 28 Māori Battalion archive attributes the Māori lyric to Tuini Ngawai and describes the waiata as publicly performed by massed Ngāti Porou schoolchildren at the Ngarimu Victoria Cross Investiture in Ruatōrea in 1943 (28 Māori Battalion, 2009). These different accounts are themselves part of the history of the waiata. Rather than choosing one account over another, I read them alongside each other.

The humour in *Hitara Waha Huka* is direct and visual. Wartime audiences were familiar with newsreel images of Hitler delivering fervent public speeches, shouting and gesturing before large crowds. Read against those familiar images, *Hitara Waha Huka* draws attention to how Hitler appeared to foam at the mouth when delivering his rhetoric, immediately turning the feared dictator into a blathering and ridiculous spectacle. He is presented as *he upoko mārō*, meaning a hard-headed, opinionated and narrow-minded person. The waiata takes the public image of a powerful and feared leader and turns it against him. Hitler becomes someone to ridicule rather than fear (28 Māori Battalion, 2009).

The insults become stronger as the waiata continues. *Karia te kauae*, break his jaw, turns Hitler into the target of verbal attack. Mussolini fares little better. With *Te Hokowhitu Toa* approaching Rome, there is nowhere for him to run and his *papa*, or

buttocks, shake with fear. The image is deliberately ridiculous. Hitler and Mussolini are reduced from powerful political and military leaders to figures who can be mocked and laughed at. That humour served a function beyond the words themselves. In performance, ridicule became a collective response to the enemy as people sang the insults together (28 Māori Battalion, 2009).

This can be seen in the performance of *Hitara Waha Huka* at the Ngarimu Victoria Cross Investiture at Whakarua Park, Ruatōrea, in 1943. Approximately one thousand schoolchildren performed the waiata together (28 Māori Battalion, 2013). The scale of that performance matters. The words became a shared public response through the collective voices and movements of the school children.

The movement of the waiata between people and places is also important. An early account places it at Wairoa in 1941 (28 Māori Battalion, 2013). By 1943 it was being performed collectively by schoolchildren at Ruatōrea. Later in the same year, the 28th Māori Battalion was recorded singing *Hitara Waha Huka* in Cairo (Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision, 1943). In a short period of time, the waiata had moved between communities, generations and settings, from home in Aotearoa to Māori soldiers overseas.

Hitara Waha Huka shows another way that *waiata pakanga* functioned during wartime. *Te Ope Tuatahi* called people forward through iwi and localities. *Arohaina Mai* petitioned for their protection. *Hitara Waha Huka* used humour to challenge the image of a powerful enemy. These waiata gave Māori communities different ways of responding to a war taking place far from home through language and performance practices that were familiar to them.

The movement and performance of *Hitara Waha Huka* across different communities and wartime settings also demonstrate its place as living literature. The humour carried through its language and performance allowed Māori at home and soldiers overseas to respond to the same enemy through a shared composition. As the waiata moved between these settings, it carried the people, politics and events of the war into collective expression.

Waiata Pōhiri: Welcoming Them Home

Tomo Mai was composed in 1946 by Henare Waitoa of Ngāti Putaanga to welcome home the survivors of the 28th Māori Battalion. The story of its composition shows how quickly waiata could be created in response to the needs of the moment. Ngarimu Parata in *Aotearoa Songbook* (n.d.) and Te Kapunga Dewes (1974, pp. 95–97) recount that Henare was cutting brushwood with his brother-in-law Maru Karaka when he began humming a tune. Henare called out, asking what the correct response was when he called in the bush. Maru replied, *E tama, i tomo mai*. Henare put down his axe, went home and by the following morning had composed the words.

The waiata was performed at the Gaiety Theatre in Ruatōrea in 1946 as part of the welcome for returning soldiers. Henare Waitoa and the Ngāti Putaanga kapa haka had been asked by Sir Apirana Ngata to prepare a waiata for the occasion, with Peta Awatere leading the returning men (Aotearoa Songbook, n.d.; Dewes, 1974).

The opening words tell the men exactly what to do: *Tomo mai e tama mā ki roto, i ngā ringa e tuwhera atu nei*. Come in, boys, into these arms that are open to you. The welcome is physical as well as spoken. The image of open arms places the returning men back among their people. The repeated *hoki mai*, meaning 'welcome home,' strengthens that call. They are being called home, not only to a physical place, but to the routine of life at home (Dewes, 1974, p. 96).

Then the waiata changes: *Hoki ruarua mai e tama mā* . You return boys fewer in number (Dewes, 1974, p. 96). The joy of return is immediately tempered by the knowledge of who is missing. The men standing before their people are the survivors, while many of their companions have been left buried on foreign soil. Welcome and grief therefore sit together in the same waiata.

The final verse carries those who did not return into the homecoming. The reference to the Victoria Cross awarded to Te Moananui-a-Kiwa Ngarimu honours his sacrifice while also drawing attention to the other men who did not return. Their names and memories are carried into the homecoming alongside those who survived.

The performance of *Tomo Mai* adds another layer. The open voices and collective singing of whānau and hapū surround the returning men with sound. The *ā-ringa* extend the welcome physically, particularly through the image of open arms already communicated in the words. The people waiting at home are not simply an audience watching the soldiers return. Through singing, movement and gathering together, they actively participate in welcoming them home.

Tomo Mai shows how *waiata pōhiri* could respond directly to what a community needed at a particular moment. The men needed to be welcomed home. Their service needed to be acknowledged. Those who had died needed to be remembered. Their whānau needed space for relief, pride and grief. The waiata holds all of these experiences together within the act of welcome.

The life of *Tomo Mai* did not end with that homecoming. It continued to be sung by later generations and entered Māori popular music through the Howard Morrison Quartet. Their upbeat version, *Hoki Mai*, became one of the group's early hits (Bourke, 2019). The National Library also records *Hoki Mai* as a composition by Henare Waitoa and identifies the Howard Morrison Quartet among those who recorded it (Waitoa & Freedman, 1965). The change in musical style and audience shows how the waiata could move into a different genre while retaining a connection to its original history.

The waiata has also continued within the whānau of Henare Waitoa. In 2012, Kahu Waitoa, a grandson of Henare Waitoa, performed *Tomo Mai* in an interview for RNZ *Te*

Ahi Kaa. That performance is significant because the waiata is not only being remembered through archives or later popular recordings. It is also being carried through whakapapa by descendants of the composer (Radio New Zealand, 2012).

The setting and performers have changed, but the central call remains recognisable: *Tomo mai. Hoki mai.* Come in. Welcome home.

Alongside these performances, the story of the composition has continued to be told. The account preserved by Dewes (1974) and later retold by Ngarimu Parata demonstrates another form of transmission. One carries the history through kōrero, another through waiata and performance. Together, they show how knowledge of the composition and the circumstances surrounding it continues to move between generations.

This is another expression of *waiata pakanga* as living literature. *Tomo Mai* carries the memory of a particular historical moment, but that history is not held only in written accounts or archives. It is carried through *kōrero tuku iho*, through the words of the waiata, through performance and through generations of people who continue to sing and retell its story. Each retelling and performance can recall the men who returned, those who did not, and the whānau and communities who received them home. In this way, *Tomo Mai* does more than tell the story of a homecoming. It continues the act of remembering.

Waiata Pakanga as Living Literature

The four waiata discussed in this article show different ways Māori communities used waiata during and after the world wars. *Te Ope Tuatahi* called men forward through iwi relationships and hapū localities. *Arohaina Mai* petitioned for their protection and gave voice to the worry of those waiting at home. *Hitara Waha Huka* used humour and ridicule to respond to the enemy. *Tomo Mai* welcomed the survivors home while remembering those who did not return. Each waiata served a particular function and responded to the needs of people at a specific time.

They also show that the history carried by waiata is found in more than the words. The naming sequence and *ā-ringa* of *Te Ope Tuatahi* acknowledge the people and places involved in the recruitment drive. The collective voice of *Arohaina Mai* carries a petition for protection and gives shared expression to worry and separation. The insults, exaggeration and collective performance of *Hitara Waha Huka* turn feared political leaders into people who can be laughed at. The repeated call of *hoki mai* and the open arms of *Tomo Mai* bring returning soldiers back among their people while also making space for those who are missing. Kupu, melody, movement, voice and collective performance all contribute to what these waiata carry.

This is what I mean by living literature. Waiata hold history, but people give that history life through practice. They sing it, move with it, teach it, adapt it as circumstances

change, and pass it to another generation. In doing so, they carry more than an account of what happened. They carry how people responded to what happened.

The movement across these four waiata also tells a larger story. Men are called forward through the people and places to whom they belong. Those at home petition for their protection. Communities use humour to respond to an enemy and events far from home. Those who survive are called back into open arms, while those buried overseas are brought home through memory. The experience of war is carried from recruitment, through separation and conflict, to return and remembrance.

The continued life of these waiata matters, although their histories of transmission differ. *Te Ope Tuatahi* was sung by another generation of Māori servicemen during the Second World War. *Arohaina Mai* continues to carry its petition for protection, although its performance has changed over time. *Hitara Waha Huka* moved between communities and performers during the war, carrying its humour and political commentary into different settings. *Tomo Mai* moved beyond its first homecoming performance into popular music and continued to be sung by descendants of the composer. Each demonstrates how waiata could travel beyond the immediate circumstances of composition while retaining connections to people and events that gave rise to them.

Reading *waiata pakanga* as living literature asks us to listen differently. The waiata are not supporting material for a history that sits somewhere else. The history is already being carried in the waiata: in the people and places they name, the stories behind their composition, the way they are performed, and the memories attached to them.

More than a century has passed since the earliest of these waiata were composed, yet their histories continue to be encountered through singing, performance, recordings and remembrance. These practices are themselves part of the historical record. Through them, successive generations connect with the people and experiences held within the waiata. In this way, *waiata pakanga* continue to carry people, memory and history forward through song.

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Glossary

Te reo Māori terms are explained according to their use within this article. Dialectal forms and expressions associated with Te Tairāwhiti have been retained where they occur in the waiata and historical accounts. English explanations are provided to assist international readers and are not intended to replace the cultural meanings and relationships carried with the original language.

Term	Meaning in the context of this article
Ā-ringa	Hand movements and gestures used in performance to communicate and reinforce meaning.
Hapū	Kinship group, often described as a subtribe, with its own whakapapa, identity and relationship to place.
Iwi	A larger kinship group or tribal community connected through whakapapa and shared histories.
Kapa haka	Māori performing arts involving collective singing, movement, haka and other forms of cultural expression.
Kōrero tuku iho	Knowledge, histories and narratives passed down through generations.
Mana	Authority, standing, prestige and influence associated with people, groups and places.
Rohe	Tribal area, territory or geographical locality associated with an iwi or hapū.
Tikanga	Māori customary practices, values and principles guiding appropriate conduct and relationships.
Waiata pakanga	Songs associated with war and wartime experiences.
Waiata pōhiri	Songs of welcome, used in this article to examine the return of servicemen.
Waiata pūhohe	Humorous or satirical songs, used here to examine ridicule and political commentary during wartime.

Waiata taritari	Recruitment songs, used here to examine calls for Māori participation in military service.
Waiata whakapono	Songs expressing spiritual belief, including petitions for protection and care.
Whakahawea	Scorn, disparagement or deliberate expressions of disrespect.
Whakakata	Humour, laughter or making others laugh.
Whakatoi	Teasing, playful provocation or mischievous humour.
Whakapapa	Genealogy and the relationships connecting people, ancestors, places and histories.

Author's Profile

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Angela Karini is a longstanding practitioner of music and voice in Māori performance whose experiences in performing, teaching and transmitting waiata have informed her academic research. She completed her doctoral studies in November 2025, exploring how the waiata traditions of Te Aitanga a Hauiti and Ngāti Porou function as living systems of knowledge,

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