



TE PUA O TE RIRI KORE – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ngāti Hāua is an ancient iwi whose traditional lands extend north and west from Mount Ruapehu and include the upper reaches of the Whanganui River. Some Ngāti Hāua hapū had also settled in Heretaunga (the Hutt Valley).

In the 1840s, the Crown negotiated with another iwi to purchase land in Heretaunga on behalf of the New Zealand Company and ordered Ngāti Hāua to leave under threat of military force. After fighting broke out in 1846, the Crown captured and court-martialled Ngāti Hāua tūpuna.

One tupuna, Mātene Ruta Te Whareaitu, was sentenced to death and executed by hanging. Another tupuna, Te Rangiātea was sentenced to confinement for the rest of his life and died soon thereafter in prison. Another five tūpuna were exiled to Australia. These events served as a catalyst to further fighting between Ngāti Hāua and the Crown in Whanganui in 1847.

From the **late 1850s**, Ngāti Hāua joined the Kīngitanga movement and supported their whanaunga in fighting the Crown in Taranaki from 1863. In 1865, the Crown ordered an attack on the Kīngitanga at Ōhoutahi pā and confiscated land in Taranaki in which Ngāti Hāua asserted interests. Ngāti Hāua supported the peaceful protest at Parihaka against the Crown's attempts to enforce its confiscation. In 1881, the Crown invaded Parihaka, arrested Ngāti Hāua people, and destroyed their property.

In the 1860s, in order to facilitate colonisation, the Crown promoted laws which provided for the Native Land Court to individualise the previously tribal land tenure of Ngāti Hāua. Ngāti Hāua boycotted the Native Land Court at times, but had to engage with it to protect their interests. The Crown began purchasing Ngāti Hāua land interests in the 1870s.

In 1886 the Native Land Court awarded a title for Waimarino even though most Ngāti Hāua were not aware of the Court's hearing. The Crown then quickly purchased 91% of the block without paying a fair price to individual owners whose legal shares were not located on the ground within the huge block. The Native Land Court's subsequently awarded the Crown land which included kāinga of Ngāti Hāua who became squatters on their own land.

Meanwhile, Ngāti Hāua defended the southern aukati of Te Rohe Pōtae. In 1885, the Crown secured the agreement of Ngāti Hāua to lift the aukati for the construction of the North Island Main Trunk Railway by making promises that it did not honour. This included that the Crown would only acquire as much land as it needed for constructing the railway.

But once Te Rohe Pōtae was accessible to the Crown it purchased vast areas of land for settlement. Ultimately, the Crown acquired so much land from Ngāti Hāua that it was unable to provide for present and future generations. Ngāti Hāua became virtually landless.

In the early 1900s, Ngāti Hāua gave conditional agreement for the establishment of the Taumarunui Native Township on some of their remaining land, though the Crown did not honour those conditions. The Crown promoted legislation which drastically reduced Ngāti Hāua influence over its management, and prioritised settler interests by allowing perpetual leases and purchasing township sections on behalf of the lessees.

In 1907, the Crown established the Tongariro National Park without any engagement with Ngāti Hāua. The Crown did not provide Ngāti Hāua with a role in Park management and the environmental impact from the development of infrastructure has been distressing for the iwi. Furthermore, the Crown utilised the waterways in the Ngāti Hāua rohe, including the Whanganui River, for the Tongariro Hydro-Electric Power Development Scheme from 1971.

The Crown also failed to fairly consider Ngāti Hāua interests when it compulsorily acquired their land along the banks of the Whanganui River for scenic reserves in the early twentieth century. The Crown compounded this prejudice when it included that land in the Whanganui National Park in 1987.

Since the 1860's, Ngāti Hāua have endured and carried the intergenerational stigma of being labelled hauhau rebels by the Crown. The extent of Ngāti Hāua's loss of land through confiscation and the Native Land Court the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries meant that the iwi's economic base was eroded, along with their ability to sustain themselves.

Consequently, Ngāti Hāua have suffered poor housing, low educational achievement, and a lack of opportunities for social and economic development. This, in turn, has led to a dispersal of the Ngāti Hāua population to urban centres, and a loss of community, te reo Māori skills, and traditional cultural practices.

The extensive loss of Ngāti Hāua lands has eroded tribal structures, created severe poverty, and damaged the physical, cultural, and spiritual health of generations of Ngāti Hāua people and left them unable to exercise kaitiakitanga over their forests, waters, kāinga and wāhi tapu.

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