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Marriages and Alliances

Precise details about Patuone's marriage to his first wife, Te Wheke are not known. Since his first born Toa was thought to have been in his early thirties when he died in 1828, it would suggest that the marriage occurred at some point after 1795, comparatively late in general for Māori but not so for a warrior priest for whom teachings and war required focus and dedication beyond the everyday and the immediate obligation to procreate. In order, Patuone's other wives were Te Hoia, Takarangi and Rutu. The wider affiliations and *hapū* of both Te Wheke and Te Hoia remain unclear although Te Hoia certainly traced ancestry from *tūpuna* who were Ngāti Kahu and also shared other connections similar to Hongi back to the Whangaroa area. Takarangi was Ngāti Paoa and while Rutu's connections are also unclear, she was described as a chieftainess of Ngāti Hao [1](#). The other issue with Patuone's marriages was how they overlapped. Angas, in referring to his first visit to Patuone's village in the Hokianga, indicated that:

.... and all his wives came from their occupations to welcome us [2](#).

While the accuracy of the Angas statement cannot be guaranteed—Angas may have assumed that all of the women accompanying Patuone were his wives when they could have been daughters and other relatives—it is almost certain that Patuone was married to Te Wheke and Te Hoia at the same time. Patuone's first-born son Toa had two wives and this probably reflects prevalent custom, just as upon Toa's death in 1828, his two wives strangled themselves in accordance with custom in order to accompany him to the afterlife.

While Patuone's four wives were to bear him a total of twelve children—and within the norms of the time, this was a substantial outcome and legacy—children were conceived at a time of great danger. Aside from the realities of war, *pākehā* diseases, for which Māori had no capacity to resist, and life choices arising from substance abuse, exacted a terrible price. It was an assault upon Māori health which would continue to the present day but in Patuone's time would eventually leave one surviving child. The children to outlive Patuone were Hori Hare Patuone (died 1878), another unnamed Patuone who died in 1886, Patuone's *whāngai*, Timoti (son of Matetakahia) who died in 1896 and Hohaia (died 1901). Hapi Waka has been suggested as a daughter of Patuone from Te Hoia (and therefore a sister of Hohaia) but currently, there are few clear details about her descent. Her descendants are available in the **additional whakapapa** section. Also, Hone Waka (known as Hone Pane as well), was described as a grandson of Patuone and also as grand nephew and heir to Tamati Waka Nene, so this adds another interesting detail. It is possible that Hapi Waka was married prior to her marriage to Horace Earle Hanley and then, also, following on from the "Pane" connection, the correct name might be "Hone Pani". This could in turn provide a connection through Wi Pani, son of Tarapata who was Patuone's nephew and son of sister Tari and Te Wharerahi. This would, however, make Hone Waka a grand nephew of Patuone and Nene and not a grandson. Another explanation, however, is that the name "Panei" was conferred on him by Nene. A further interesting detail is that Hone Waka was the captain of a 19 ton trading vessel called the "North Shore", operating between the Bay of Islands and Auckland in the early 1850s. On 7 June, 1869 in fact, Hone Waka was tragically drowned during a squall in the Bay of Islands while bringing a load of *Kauri* gum from Kerikeri to Russell. The boat capsized and as well as Hone Waka, another two of the five-man crew either drowned or died of exposure. It is also possible that another son of Patuone was called Te Rore, brother of Hohaia. The details of these and other connections need fuller exploration and verification and will be shared in due course.

The importance of children to Patuone was no different to that belief and expectation applied by other *rangatira*. The fact that Takarangi took a while to conceive, remembering too that at this point, Patuone was already well into his sixties, was certainly the topic of concern for Patuone, and while in the light of current knowledge, this might have been potentially a fertility 'issue' relating to him, it also needs to be remembered that Rutu, Patuone's fourth wife was also to bear a child subsequent to Takarangi who eventually did produce another heir to consolidate the critical alliance between Ngāti Paoa and Ngāpuhi. *Mana* was after all, all-pervasive and required preservation in lines of descent.

Another important issue is that Patuone had many 'informal' liaisons with women other than his official wives. There was nothing unusual about this: a *rangatira* of great fame had to expect the attention and offers. While these liaisons ceased with his baptism on 26 January 1840, it is known that Patuone fathered children born to other Ngāti Paoa women; women in the Taranaki/Wanganui area; and women in Ngāti Toa. Patuone and Nene were very close friends with and *toa rangatira* to Te Rauparaha and Te Rangihaeata. There is also a supposed Ngāti Porou connection. It is also suggested from oral history that Patuone had two sons from a liaison with a Ngāti Uru woman called Ngakirikiri, daughter of Patuone and Nene's *whanaunga*, Ngahuruhuru. Ngahuruhuru fled to seek Patuone's protection after the sacking of the Wesleyan Mission at Whangaroa in 1827 as Ngāti Uru were afraid of Hongi and his intentions to throw them out on the area. (The connections between Patuone and Ngahuruhuru go back to a common *tupuna* called Mumanga who comes down the Rungai line from Rahiri). Again, these connections will continue to be explored and as any specific details emerge, will be shared. For Māori, there is no stigma attached to what is termed, birth 'illegitimacy'.

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1. Ballara (1998) mentions Rutu in relation to a feast given at Te Kāretu by Pomare on Christmas Day, 1854 and attended by many *wāhine rangatira*, their husbands being otherwise engaged. This event was also reported in Te Kāreere Māori, Vol.1, No.1., 1 January 1855. This designation of Rutu as Ngāti Hao probably reflects her marriage to Patuone. ([back](#))
 2. From Angas, cited in A.W. Reed (Ed.), (1979). Māori Scenes and Portraits. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed, p.52. ([back](#))

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