

# Paradoxical Mobilities

**Sharemilking with Te Raparahi Lands Trust  
(Te Wāotū)**

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# Sharemilking in Aotearoa NZ

- **Contractual arrangement developed over time that shares the costs and benefits of operating a dairy farm**
- **34% of NZ's dairy herds are in the Waikato, 28% of national total land**
- **Approximately 1,488 sharemilkers, 5.9 % of total regional employment, contributing 9.8 % regional GDP [NZIER, NZ Statistics 2014]**
- **The average operation milks 285 cows**
- **Moving Day – 1<sup>st</sup> June**



# **(Im)mobilities of land**

- **Mobility and landscape seem to be ‘counter-posed’ concepts**
- **We challenge the ‘static pictorialism’ of place and landscape and ‘ahistoricism’ associated with some studies of mobility (cf. Merriman et al. 2008, 192)**
- **(Rose & Wylie 2006) argue that landscapes are always in process, they are tensioned, and always in *movement*, always being made (after Bender 2001, 3)**
- **Place (lived & fluid) and landscape (materiality & aesthetics) – joined concepts (place-scapes?)**
- **Land is rarely immobile or static, rather it moves, is shaped by time, and shapes those who live and work upon it**

# **A restless landscape** (Stephenson 2010)

- **An estimated 16,000 cubic kilometres of detritus & earthy material were hurled up and out of the Central Volcanic Region**
- **Big bangs fleshed out the bones of the landscape with a skin of volcanic rocks and dust**
- **Pyroclastic flows solidified into ignimbrite rocks which left spectacular rocky outcrops**
- **Among the burnt and barren landscape a solitary and ancient stand of bush 10km long 1km wide**  
*He wā tū tahi ngā rākau –*  
**“place of high trees standing by themselves”**

# Te Wāotū as place

- **Terminology:**

**A number of related hapū (subtribes) usually share adjacent territories forming a looser tribal federation (iwi)**

- **The tangata whenua 200+ years -Raukawa Iwi**

- **Pikitū Marae – Ngāti Huri hapū**

- **Stories of gardens and pathways on and across Te Wāotū**



# Colonial impacts - land mobilities

- **Felling of timber**
- **Native Land Court (Land Taking Court)**
- **Confiscation and land apportionment for farming**
- **Crown management of Māori land**
- **A changed focus of the Māori Land Court**
- **Formation of Lands Trust placing the land back in the hands of beneficial owners**

# Te Raparahi Lands Trust

- **Farming in perpetuity**
- **Educational grants for local community**  
(Sharing wealth)
- **Relationships**



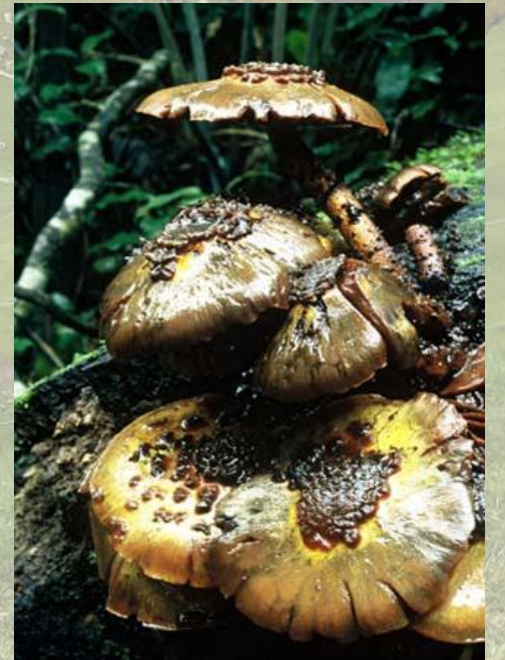
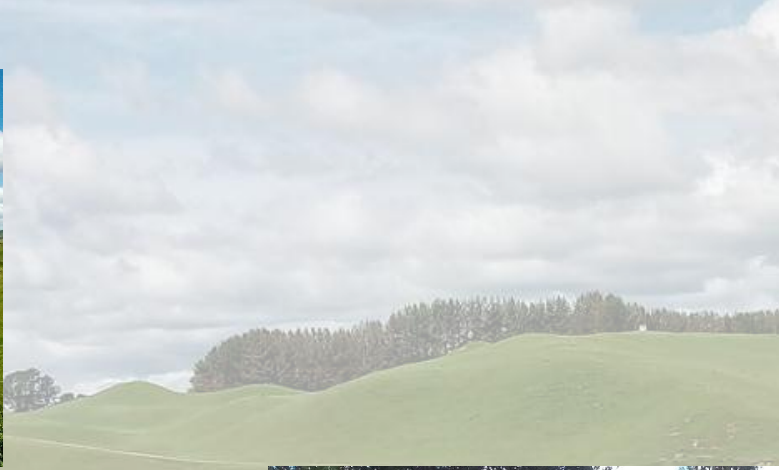
# Miraka Milk Company

- Mokai -30km North West Taupō
- Geothermal power
- Small carbon footprint



- <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/shows/country-calendar/episodes/s2016-e32>

# Seeing and being at Te Wāotū & Te Harore a Kapu



# **The long game – a positive focus on immobility of land**

- **“Being in Māori ownership it’s about perpetual ownership – setting the operation up for sustainability, the Trust is not so worried about production/profit in the short term, but you have to be successful, otherwise what’s the point? I mean successful across the board, as in success in finance, sustainable practice, environmental impact, cow health, soil health – it all ties in together – and we’re all in it together.”**

**[Interview 17 November 2016]**

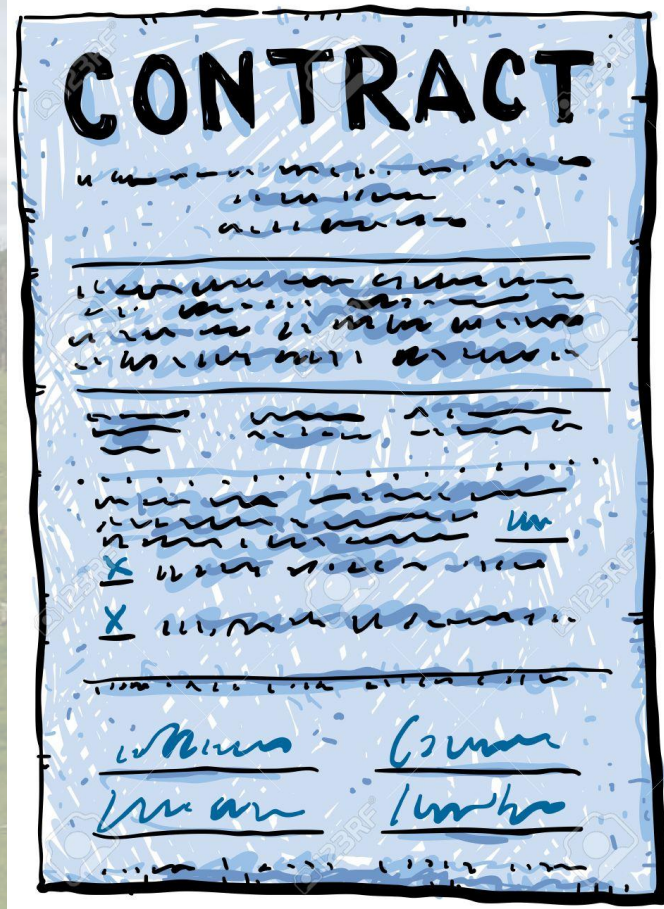
# Importance of relationships and ownership

- **‘Traditional’ model sharemilking = vulnerabilities**
- **“The farm was sold within a month and the sharemilker that was on the farm, he’s been on there 15 years – and just like that, 15 years work within one month was gone [clicks fingers], destroyed – because the people who bought the farm said, “We don’t need a sharemilker” – so that was it! That would be soul destroying//”**

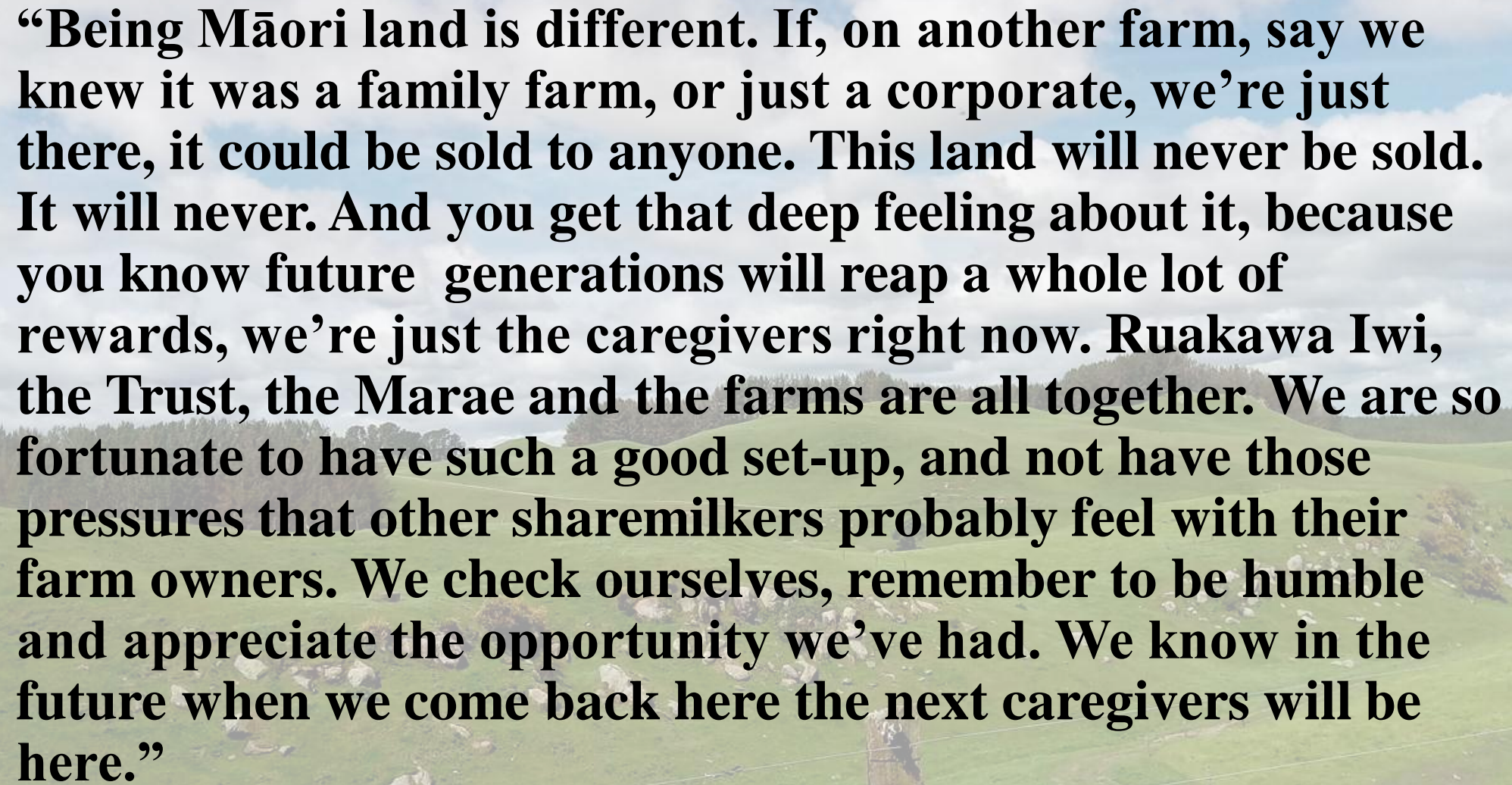
**[Interview December 2015]**

- **Negotiations - miscommunication mistrust & surveillance (power)**
- **Extenuating circumstances and complications between landowners & sharemilkers can be detrimental for both parties**

# Political mobilities – Pākehā as caregivers not owners



- *Kaitiakitanga* (stewardship/guardianship)
- Not just milking cows, sustaining the land
- Knowledge of farming practices, sharemilking valued
- Hui-style meetings (mutual respect)
- A standing in the community, part of place



**“Being Māori land is different. If, on another farm, say we knew it was a family farm, or just a corporate, we’re just there, it could be sold to anyone. This land will never be sold. It will never. And you get that deep feeling about it, because you know future generations will reap a whole lot of rewards, we’re just the caregivers right now. Ruakawa Iwi, the Trust, the Marae and the farms are all together. We are so fortunate to have such a good set-up, and not have those pressures that other sharemilkers probably feel with their farm owners. We check ourselves, remember to be humble and appreciate the opportunity we’ve had. We know in the future when we come back here the next caregivers will be here.”**

**[Interview 17 November 2016]**

# Paradoxical mobilities and place-scapes

- **Cautionary steps that include full histories of place – mobilities of land, place and place names acknowledged**
- **Paradoxical (political) mobilities – going back to communal Māori-held landownership**
- **Focusing on Te Raparahi Lands Trust model unfolds positives, sustainable dairy based on core Māori values in a successful business model**

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