



**THE NEW
MAORI MYTH**
Revised Edition



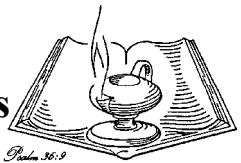
MICHAEL L DRAKE

THE NEW MAORI MYTH

Revised Edition

by Michael L Drake

Wycliffe Christian Schools



"In your light we see light." Psalm 36:9

THE NEW MĀORI MYTH

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MICHAEL L DRAKE
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Timothy 5:18 and Exodus 20:15.

Introduction

E kore a muri e hokia.
There is no turning back.

Māori culture is rooted in mythology. The imagined acts and threats of spirits and demigods give Māori society its foundations and its social order.

There is a new Māori myth. It is recounted with fervour throughout New Zealand. Like all myths, it is believed because people want to believe it. This myth is neither reasonable nor rational. Because this new myth is retold and repeated so often it is becoming almost universally believed.

The new Māori myth is as false a teaching as the old myths. The old myths taught that Maui fished up New Zealand with a magical jaw-bone. The new myth's teaching is just as fanciful – that a return to traditional Māori values will strengthen New Zealand society and heal our social ills.

Like a mythical taniwha¹, this new myth stalks the land, devouring gullible people in all sectors of the community. Ironically, an idolatrous culture has become the idol of New Zealand. New Zealanders seem to be hell-bent on reconstructing our society to incorporate the Māori values of fear, violence and social injustice.

¹ A frightening sea-monster

One Māori Member of Parliament has declared that 'A Māori minority was making romantic, fairy-tale demands for things that had not been historical facts for decades.'² If their claims were accepted, he argued, 'We would be rapidly in a black African situation, with all the nepotism and corruption those situations involve.'³

In the words of one contributor to a recent Department of Education report, 'Māori history neglects to mention that the old ways involved a ruthless caste system down to widespread slavery and cannibalism.'⁴

This is the culture that is to become a compulsory core subject in our schools.⁵

Revival of Māori culture – Taha Māori or Māoritanga – has been made possible because of a falsely romantic view of the ancient Māori. He is remembered as the 'noble savage' whose cannibalism, immorality and brutal suppression of minorities were slight aberrations better overlooked.

What is forgotten is that culture is always an out-working of religious belief. Māori culture was cruel and corrupt because the ancient Māori placed his faith in cruel and hellish spirits. Māori culture was and is a product of pagan religion. A return to a Māori base of our culture is inevitably a return to the same fearful religion. This booklet aims to re-examine those religious beliefs. It aims to show that the 'better-overlooked' aspects of taha Māori were the natural results of the religion of the Māori. These aspects were integral to that society and are already becoming an integral part of our new society.

The teaching of Taha Māori should not be mistaken for simple teaching about Māori culture. It is proper for New Zealand children to be taught about the Māori culture that is part of their national heritage. They should be taught to examine, in the light of the Bible, the old

² Winston Peters, MP for Tauranga, as quoted in the NZ Herald 15/3/88.

³ ibid

⁴ *The Curriculum Review 1986 (Draft Report)* Department of Education, Wellington, 1986, p28

⁵ *Māori Language, Junior Classes to Form 2 Draft Syllabus* Department of Education, Wellington, 1987, p7; etc

culture, its religious roots and its modern influence. Taha Māori goes beyond that however: its objective is to immerse children in the day to day life of Māori religion. The Department of Education says, 'Taha Māori is not a subject of the curriculum. It is a "Māori dimension" which is meant to permeate the school.'⁶ To teach Taha Māori is to make an evil religion a daily practice in our schools.

The cover design illustrates a point frequently made but too frequently misunderstood. Some argue that the Māori gang phenomenon reflects a search for identity by young Māori men who find their roots in a warrior class. Sadly, we must agree. The Māori warrior was a savage who exerted social control through brutality and lawless violence. These modern warriors are hardly less. In 1986 the New Zealand Police reported, 'Gang members had become hardened, often ruthless, criminals responsible for murder, armed robbery, intimidation and drug dealing.'⁷ Gangs accurately reflect both traditional Māori values and what society will become if these values achieve dominance.

The short-sighted pursuit of traditional Māori culture overlooks the significance of the mid-nineteenth century. Then there was a widespread discarding of the old traditions in favour of Christian faith and social order. Peace, forgiveness, justice and growing prosperity marked an indigenous cultural revival which many less radical modern Māori look back to as their true cultural heritage⁸. It is perilous to forget that it is this heritage of the Māori that offers real hope for national unity.

This booklet gives a factual account of the character of ancient Māori religion and its social effects. It is not a comprehensive evaluation of every aspect of Māori culture or contemporary concern. Clearly there

⁶ *Curriculum Review* p29

⁷ NZ Herald 16/9/86. See also Dover Samuels, Māori Representative on the Labour Party Council: Māori gang behaviour is 'Spreading a "violent cancer" throughout the community. ... He said it was also time that Māori leaders stopped making excuses for gang members ... "Gangs did no more than intimidate the public and instil fear in the community" said Mr Samuels. Their antisocial, violent behaviour reflected sadly on the whole of Maoridom.' Quoted in the NZ Herald 16/12/86

⁸ For example, the Hon Mrs Tirikatene-Sullivan, M P for Southern Māori in Parliament 24/6/87

are genuine Māori grievances over land – grievances anticipated by early missionaries who laboured to provide protection and justice for the Māori.⁹ It is equally clear that the spread of Christianity among the Māori was a choice by people living under the system this booklet documents. They recognised and rejected the ancient values and chose Christianity. They too believed that the Taha Māori we are encouraged to espouse is anti-Christian and destructive of social order.

This is not an attempt to eulogize any other national or racial culture for every culture must be judged at the bar of the Word of God, the Bible. Yet it is likely that what a former Minister of Education called 'embittered activists'¹⁰ will challenge the integrity of this work. When, in 1986, the Police drew attention to the disproportionate numbers of Māori being convicted and gaoled for violent crimes, these activists, together with the Race Relations Conciliator attacked the police:

'To describe crime figures as a race issue is the wrong way to go about it ... The real issue is socio-economic ... because there is a high correlation between socio-economic and ethnic factors.'¹¹ This correlation is not an accident – it is a result of beliefs that preclude both respect for law and an economic commitment to the future.

When Dr Rangi Walker, Chairman of the Auckland District Māori Council, attacked the police report as 'wrong, ethnocentric and ...bordering on racist.'¹² there was no public outcry from the Race Relations Conciliator. The lesson is obvious: critical examination of things Māori is racist while critical examination of other cultures is not. The call is now made for separate development of law for Māori – different laws for different races.¹³ Now, which is racist?

This booklet is not racist. It does not reject Māori values because they are Māori, but because they are ungodly.

⁹ For example, see *A N Brown's Journal 1839/1840 CMS* (unpublished)

¹⁰ Hon Merv Wellington *New Zealand Education in Crisis* Endeavour Press Auckland 1985 p123

¹¹ NZ Herald 17/9/86

¹² *ibid*

¹³ Secretary of Justice, NZ Herald 3/4/87

I challenge all readers to read this book with an open Bible beside them. Examine Māori culture in the light of God's Word and you will know what to keep and what to reject. Do so humbly – for we each come with a cultural heritage that must be subject to the same searching scrutiny.

1 RELIGION

Na te moa i takaki te rata.

The moa trod on the young rata and it will never grow straight.

The traditional Māori was very religious. Even today the heritage of strong religious commitment is evident in crafts and customs. Meetings will always open with a karakia or ritual prayer to the gods. These prayers often imitate Christian prayer, but are offered in the context of pantheism. Many Māori households will have a corner displaying photographs of ancestors, functioning in much the same way as carvings in a traditional whare. These 'shrines' are a constant reminder to the family and visitors as they come and go that they live in the real presence of the ancestors.

Artefacts are accorded a status that can only be understood in terms of their spirituality – they have a spiritual essence derived from previous owners. The practice of tapu (sacredness) is rigorously observed.

The whole of Māori life was and is intertwined with the presence and activities of spirits. 'Mauri is the life force or spirit that permeates all things in the natural world and by which all things in nature cohere.'¹⁴ This mauri is active, so that it influences events and gives people and things status and power. A person of great presence will be said to have

¹⁴ *Taha Māori in Social Studies* Taranaki District Social Studies Committee, Department of Education, Wellington, 1985

mauri, implying that he has an impact on people because of the spirit force indwelling him. To a large extent these spirit forces are regarded as ancestral.

When Te Māori Exhibition opened in New York in 1984, much was made by presiding elder, Sonny Waru, of the spiritual nature of the artefacts on display. He explained that the carvings and relics were not mere representations of ancestors – they are 'our ancestors.'¹⁵ So when entering a meeting house, the ancestors are actually present by virtue of their carved images. This is not merely access to spirits through an idol. The idol is regarded as the actual ancestral spirit.

The rituals surrounding death illustrate both the intensity of this spiritualistic religion, and the fear and bondage that come with it. While many admire the openness of the expression of grief in the tangi, or funeral time, few realise that it is for the benefit of the dead rather than the living that weeping is so evident. The dead person is present at the tangi. He is addressed directly by the mourners because he is present. The tangi is a means of sending this spirit on to the place of spirits with respect and dignity.

This was clearly demonstrated to me when at a tangi. At the appropriate time I rose to speak. Knowing this ritual to be deceptive and unbiblical, I attempted nonetheless to show respect and grieved with the mourners over their loss without causing offence. So I spoke to them, rather than to the dead man. Sharing with them in their grief and encouraging them to remember their lost one for his contribution to their lives, I pointed them to God as their hope for the future. Immediately I finished an elder rose to make good my omission – he spoke to the dead man, taking up what I had said and making it a personal commendation to him.

Other rituals surrounding death are even less well known outside of Maoridom. On some occasion a year or so after the death a grave stone is 'unveiled'. The stone has previously been covered, perhaps with a flag and feather cloak, in a secretive ceremony. During the unveiling service,

¹⁵ NZ Herald 12/9/84

prayers are made and the coverings removed. Harry Dansey links this custom to the ancient custom of removing the bones from their burial site before cleaning and hiding them to prevent enemies finding them and thereby overcoming the spirit of the dead.¹⁶

To the observer these ceremonies are picturesque. Yet they indicate a real participation of the Māori in the realm of spirits – a participation that binds with ritual, and with fear both for the dead and of the dead.

From the 'gift' of mata-kite or second sight clairvoyance¹⁷ to the tapu accorded to table-cloths and head coverings¹⁸, Māori culture is today as it was hundreds of years ago, controlled by reverence for supernatural forces.

It is difficult to differentiate between gods and the spirits of ancestors in Māori religion. Indeed, all men are ultimately descendants of the gods (or is it that the gods were all once men?). This rules out the possibility in Māori thought and practice of a God who is greater than men. The gods, the spirits, have influence but are always susceptible to manipulation by men.

There is however Io (or Io-mata-ngaro), the supreme god dwelling in twelve heavens.¹⁹ His name means 'Io of the Hidden Face' – a god inaccessible and hidden. Out of fear not even the tohunga or priest could normally mention his name.

How this contrasts with the gospel of grace in Jesus Christ – a supreme God who can be approached by sinful men, not because he can be manipulated but because he brings freedom. His name can be mentioned with reverent love, because he is our Father. As we trust in this one, all powerful, ever present and unchangeably gracious and righteous God, we need fear neither spirits nor death.

Had the Apostle Paul come to New Zealand instead of Athens he might well have preached the same message! For he would have found a nation of people worshipping idols and fearful of a great unknown god:

¹⁶ Harry Dansey *Māori Custom Today* Shortland, Auckland, 1978 p62

¹⁷ *Caltex Book of Māori Lore* p23f

¹⁸ Dansey p17

¹⁹ *Caltex Book of Māori Lore* p23

I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and observed your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: To an Unknown God. ... The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth ... but now he calls all people everywhere to repent.²⁰

The need we face today is not to re-infest society with the fear of spirits but to repent of every work of darkness.

Māori religion can be summed up in three words: it is animist, spiritist and ancestral. Māori animism believes that all objects possess spirits or spiritual forces that have to be reckoned with in every day life. Spiritism is occultism by another name – communicating with and attempting to use or manipulate the spirits of the dead. The worship of ancestors is nothing less than an attempt to deify man, thereby gaining the power Adam sought in man's first rebellion.

Such religion has nothing to offer. Yet this religion is actually practised in the nation's schools, and, it is advocated, should be a compulsory part of every child's schooling. Schools are encouraged to make use of such fear of the spirits to make parts of the playground tapu (sacred) to protect them.²¹

Is it possible to study Taha Māori or Māoritanga without these spiritual values being communicated. Of course not. Every aspect of Māori culture and Māori values derives from the beliefs at the root of Māori life.

²⁰ Acts 17:22-30. All Bible references are taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version* 1973, 1978 by the International bible Society

²¹ *Taha Māori*

2 MORALITY

Te umanga a nehe ma he whawhai.
The old days were employed in fighting.

True morality is a code of conduct based on the holiness of God. Right and wrong are determined on the basis of God's revealed righteousness. Such a morality is unchanging and beyond man's manipulation. In this sense Māori culture was and is completely immoral.

Māori morality rejects God as the unchanging, righteous and just declarer and judge of good. Māori values of acceptable behaviour (for there were not absolutes of right and wrong) were based on strength, sacredness, standing and appeasing the gods.

The Bible teaches that God is righteous and good. He is the judge of all that men do. He rewards good and punishes evil. He is always just.

Truly moral behaviour is behaviour that meets God's standards. Truly moral behaviour imitates God. Morality is therefore unchanging.

Strength is one factor governing the Māori concept of morality. In many senses the strong ruled. Authority and moral judgement were not therefore values binding on all. The man who had the greatest strength imposed his will without the constraint of superior moral law. The tribe that was strongest in battle took possession of the land until vanquished

– without regard to justice. Acceptable conduct therefore shifted according to the whim of the strongest.

In the family, the eldest and strongest imposed their whim on the younger and weaker. Work, anger and responsibility could be passed down the line arbitrarily. In the tribe, the same values prevailed, just as they did between tribes.

This commitment to strength is so clearly demonstrated today in Māori gang dynamics. The place of the member in the gang is determined on strength. Initiation into the gang, gang activities and the demands of the gang on society are all exercised in terms of strength displayed in violence.

Sacredness, or tapu was perhaps the greatest moral constraint. Tapu was not an absolute value but a comparative one. Stronger tapu could overcome the weaker. Thus the tapu of, say, a canoe, that related to its owner could be overcome by someone with greater tapu. Accounts are given of chiefs taking possession of another's canoe simply by calling it by his own name. The name of the original owner gave it tapu to protect it from theft by equals, but the chief had greater tapu – by giving the canoe his name (which he could do from his position of strength) he gave it greater tapu. The original owner must quietly relinquish his claims.

Tapu controlled people by the fear of suffering as a result of supernatural forces. It ruled many daily routines. Food was tapu and was therefore surrounded by a host of rules. The head was tapu. Touching the head of others violated this tapu; stepping over food did the same. These and many similar rules of tapu are still observed, often rigorously, today. The fear of spiritual forces governs conduct and keeps people in bondage. Imposition of Māori culture upon New Zealand would bind all New Zealanders.

Some aspects of tapu of course, were socially helpful. Tapu could prevent over-cropping of resources, or prevent the spread of disease. Despite this, tapu is based on myth and whim rather than on righteousness and unchanging justice as revealed in God's Word.

The standing or respect a person has is called mana. Mana is a rigidly class-based social structure. People with the lowest mana have the lowest social standing. Much criticism has been levelled at what is conceived of as the working-class, employing-class society that is said to prevail in New Zealand. The Māori system however was far more rigid and structured. At the bottom of the scale were slaves, who were kept as servants and well-preserved food. This was a caste system that locked the lower classes into servitude. It abused the weak. It abused minorities. It abused women.²²

The impact of this on children indicates the abhorrent quality of this fickle morality. Infanticide was common.²³ Mothers would kill their children when expressing grief over the loss of a husband. One Thames woman murdered seven of her children so that she could more easily run away should she be attacked!²⁴

The spirit gods were in many respects like men. They were not there to oversee unchanging righteousness. Instead, these self-centred spirits would approved if made happy and punish if offended.

The fear of Tane prevented the arbitrary cutting down of forest trees. Of course this did not mean that the silent idol Tane had revealed his law for felling trees. Only the true God of creation has spoken, revealing his standards of right and wrong in man's use of creation. Tane had to be appeased. Do enough to win his fickle will to your side and you could mill to your heart's content!

The gods gave no standard of morality. They simply had to be appeased or deceived by karakia, ritual, sacrifice or plain trickery. They were as pliable as the men who served them. Immorality was excused by shifting responsibility to gods that men had created for their own convenience.

Again the Apostle Paul could have preached the same message he wrote to the Romans:

²² *Taha Māori*

²³ Richard Taylor *New Zealand and its Inhabitants* Wertheim & MacIntosh, London 1855 p165

²⁴ *ibid*

'Although they knew god, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. ... He gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice ...'²⁵

Paul shows that a depraved morality is God's judgement on a society, an on-going judgement revealing the wrath of God against all godlessness and wickedness of men. It should not surprise us then when we see those modern Māori who are still committed to rejecting the knowledge of God suffering moral deprivation.

All sorts of excuses are made for the fact of the highly disproportionate conviction rate for Māori in our courts. It is simply not good enough to excuse this as a result of discrimination or Pākehā law. The fact is that traditional Māori morality gives no place to law. It only recognises force, spiritual fear, status and appeasement of changing gods. It cannot be called morality at all. When modern men put these principles into practice they must fall foul of any society structured by law.

There is no place in today's New Zealand for such anti-morality –it should be left buried in the past where it belongs.

²⁵ Romans 1:21-29

3 LAND

He waka eke noa.
A canoe for everyone.

Tangata Whenua means 'people of the land'. It originally meant that people born in the land were counted as sharing rights and privileges. The lesser meaning related to tribal rights to the land.²⁶ The term has been used to denote the people who inhabited the land before the Māori.²⁷ These true 'people of the land' were driven into extinction by the out-working of invading Māori culture.

This concept is one of the most significant in the arena of Māori political action today. By virtue of birth, a Māori has a spiritual link to the land that cannot be set aside. Occupancy and legal ownership may change, but the spiritual link to that land cannot be totally alienated.

Links to the land are basically tribal rather than individual. Among other things this makes the transfer of ownership difficult – it must normally be done on a tribal basis. This undoubtedly caused difficulties in the early days of European settlement. Land was transferred by those who had no status to make a sale. Sometimes sales were made, without a commitment to permanency by the vendor.

²⁶ I H Kawharu *Orakei* NZCER Wellington, 1975 p15

²⁷ Brougham & Reed *Māori Proverbs* (Revised by T S Karetu) Reed Methuen, Auckland, 1987, p73

These difficulties have been compounded by the dishonesty frequently found in large scale trading. Some sold land for personal gain without consulting their tribe properly.²⁸ Others sold land for less than its value through European deceit.

Among the missionaries, Māori and the agents of the Crown there were those who worked to establish law in New Zealand that would protect the innocent and ensure justice in land deals. Largely because of their work, an attempt can be made to sort out these issues today.

One of the most prominent land disputes has centred on Bastion Point at Orakei in Auckland. Orakei is today recognised as the turangawaewae of the Ngāti Whātua tribe: the place where they stand firm and secure.²⁹ In other words, the Ngāti Whātua are the tangata whenua, the people of the land of Orakei.

As the development of Auckland crept into today's Eastern Suburbs, the Orakei marae and settlement was surrounded. The flat, low land it was built on at Okahu Bay was swampy and damp. Conditions became dirty and insanitary. Though given land on Bastion Point, overlooking the bay, many were reluctant to leave their land. A fire, widely believed to have been deliberately set, swept through the settlement forcing even the most reluctant to leave. Today the tribe possesses only a small church and burial ground at the Bay, while on Bastion Point it has a large marae complex and a housing settlement.

During World War 2 some of the land on Bastion Point was taken by the Ministry of Defence. This land is probably the most spectacular undeveloped land in Auckland. When in the 1970s the Government proposed sub-division of the land for private housing, the Ngāti Whātua were bitterly opposed. They called for the return of the land to the tribe.

In a spectacular confrontation, a protest camp was established on Crown land by some of the local people and supporters in 1976. After many months of negotiation, a huge police contingent, supported by army and air force transport, moved onto the site and arrested all who

²⁸ James Belich *The New Zealand Wars* Auckland UP, Auckland, 1986, p302f

²⁹ Joan Metge *In and Out of Touch* Victoria UP, Wellington 1986, p158

still would not move. Although the camp was destroyed, the dispute has still not been resolved.

The claim to the land at Bastion Point is based on the idea that the Ngāti Whātua are the tangata whenua. However, in his book on Orakei, Professor Kawharu, presently a member of the Waitangi Tribunal, makes two very important points. The first is that the concept of tangata whenua did not originally have the meaning now given it. The second is that the Ngāti Whātua have hardly possessed the land in its entire history.³⁰

The first point has already been made. The original meaning of tangata whenua was 'common ties of descent and kinship'. That is, being part of the people. Such a meaning would imply that not only Māori could claim today to be tangata whenua, for it is similar to the modern view of nationality. All New Zealanders, since they belong to the people of the land, must be tangata whenua.

As to Ngāti Whātua occupancy of the land? They first settled at Orakei about 1750 by wiping out the original occupants, the Waiohua. These poor souls, truly the Māori tangata whenua, fell prey to the Māori morality of 'might is right' and were completely wiped out.

Less than 100 years later, in 1820, the Ngāti Whātua deserted the land, hiding in Waitakere and in the Waikato. They now experienced the other side of 'might is right'. The stronger Ngapuhi had become the 'people of the land'. The Ngāti Whātua were able to occupy the land again in 1835, just five years before the Treaty of Waitangi. In other words, the Ngāti Whātua claim to being the tangata whenua of Orakei is based on just 75 years of occupation in the thousand or more years of Māori history before 1840!

The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi is very significant in understanding this land issue. Before 1840, the Māori had religious links with the land that necessitated constant savage warfare. For hundreds of years they had butchered each other to gain or maintain possession of the land they favoured. Morality, based on strength rather than justice under law,

³⁰ Kawharu p5f

ensured that there was no such thing as a permanently recognised right to the land. The only land rights the Māori had were rights of possession by force and conquest. If you could beat and eat your enemy, his land was yours.

Māori custom settled land disputes by force. Is this one of the aspects of Māoritanga to be copied today?

The Christian missionary, Henry Williams, was appalled by this. He was equally appalled at the disreputable land grabbing of the New Zealand Company and other Europeans. He used his good offices with both the Māori and the Crown to help bring about the formulating and signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Not only did this treaty establish a basis of peace between Māori and European, it enforced a peace between Māori and Māori. With the stroke of a quill, each tribe became the permanent tangata whenua of the land it occupied in 1840. It is evident that the Ngāti Whātua had this very much in mind; three chiefs – Te Kawau, Te Tirora and Te Rewiti – signed the Treaty to protect themselves and their land-holdings from their enemies.³¹ By a happy accident, the Ngāti Whātua now had what would become prime land in Auckland City.

It was therefore British law, and not Māori spirituality, that entrenched the concept of tangata whenua and permanency of claims to the land. And what was the basis of British law? Behind the natural weaknesses of any human administration lay the biblical principles of peace, permanent ownership, law and justice.

The bringing of peace to the Māori, the settling of the various tribes in their present lands, was brought about by a religion that was opposed in every point to the traditional religion of the Māori. He despised peace, because his was religion of fear and vengeance. He recognised no ownership as permanent because his religion rewarded the strongest with whatever he coveted. He bowed to no law because his gods were whimsical. He had no justice because justice was alien to a lawless spirituality controlled by spirits and tapu.

³¹ Claudia Orange *The Treaty of Waitangi* Allen & Unwin, Wellington, 1987 p69

4 MISSIONARIES

Haere mai ra, e te manuhiri tuarangi.
Welcome, guests from far away.

On Christmas Day 1814, in response to the invitation of a local chief, Ruatara, Samuel Marsden began the evangelisation of the Māori. Over the next half century, the message of the missionaries was to radically transform much of the Māori way of life. But this was no colonial invasion – in the words of modern historian James Belich, Christianity was 'an invited guest'.³² Christian missionaries were welcomed because they brought what the Māori lacked: freedom from spiritual fear, peace, education, economic reform and social justice.

Behind this missionary movement was a group of godly men who included the reformed slaver John Newton and the social reformer and parliamentarian William Wilberforce.³³ The Calvinistic Christianity of these men saw a compassion for socially and spiritually enslaved people united with a confidence in God who assured success in the proclamation of his gospel. Despite the appalling bondage and deprivation of the Māori, they knew God could transform him. Their confidence was not in their abilities of persuasion but in the promise of

³² Belich p303

³³ A T Yarwood *Samuel Marsden* Reed, Wellington, 1977

God to save men as the gospel was proclaimed. This Calvinism compelled their vigorous missionary outreach.

Calvinism has often been caricatured by secular writers as hard and unloving. The mythology of this view is clearly displayed in the practical Christianity of these men. They pioneered the evangelisation of the South Pacific at great and frequently fatal personal sacrifice. They also established schools, provided medical help and social works whose impact is still felt today. The missionaries were never able to meet the overwhelming volume of requests by chiefs and their tribes to establish mission stations around New Zealand. Such requests arose because these compassionate men had something to offer that the Māori of the day recognised as invaluable.

The initial missionary thrust faltered as Marsden, convinced of the necessity of 'civilising' the Māori in preparation for his reception of the gospel, concentrated on social works. His schooling and agrarian reforms came to little because European culture could never survive as an appendage to Taha Māori. It was not till the arrival of Henry Williams in 1823 that Christianity began to make a real impact.³⁴ The next forty years saw a widespread conversion of Māori to the Christian faith. Two reasons account for this: firstly, Williams spearheaded a new strategy, making preaching salvation through Ihu Karaiti (Jesus Christ) a priority. It is significant that social reform not only became possible following conversion, but was to a great extent an indigenous movement.

Secondly, the Bay of Islands became to a degree tribally cosmopolitan. The local Ngapuhi, the first tribe to arm themselves with muskets, swept through the North Island settling old scores with a vengeance. Each war party returned to the Bay with its compliment of slaves – children and adults whose flesh was to be kept for future feasts. Many of these slaves were converted, and under the changing conditions

³⁴ Wilson p121f. Wilson appears bemused by the willingness of Māori to respond to the gospel: "It is less obvious how ...tribes remote from Europeans, missionary or otherwise, would be attracted by these new and apparently alien ideas and religious exercises." p123

of the age were subsequently able to return to their tribes with the gospel of peace and hope. Effectively the Māori was thus largely evangelised by Māori, with missionary expansion supporting and developing the work of the native evangelists.

Taha Māori was certainly ripe for the gospel. Any concept of the integrity of man created in the image of God was totally missing. Barbaric cannibalism was such a feature that its omission or mere passing reference in so many modern histories must be regarded as the result of a policy of deliberate suppression of the truth. A chief by the name of Tareha punished a slave girl by 'stringing her up by the heels, stabbing her in the neck, and gorging himself on her blood – Tareha and his wife drinking alternately until she was dead.³⁵ Hongi Hika displayed his contempt for an enemy by swallowing his eyes whole before consigning him to an oven.³⁶ Human heads, both trophies of war and objects of mourning, were also the play things of children.³⁷ Marsden reported that though 'the natives generally speak of [cannibalism] with horror and disgust, yet they expect that this will be their own fate in the end, as it has been with their forefathers and friends.'³⁸

Women suffered a social oppression typical of all societies that reject the fatherhood of God. Infanticide minimised the problem – girls would frequently be killed at birth, the mothers pinching their noses then hypocritically mourning a death over which they claimed to have had no influence!³⁹ (Most 19th century half-casts suffered the same fate.) Women were given as gifts to men, treated as spiritually contaminating, subject to polygamous marriages and even when recognised as able to make contributions to the economy and warfare, treated as chattels.

Into this Taha Māori the missionaries brought the gospel. Its immediate impact was to free the Māori from bondage – bondage to evil

³⁵ *ibid* p29f

³⁶ Taylor p312

³⁷ Wilson

³⁸ William Williams *Christianity Among the New Zealanders* Seely Jackson and Halliday, London 1868,p27

³⁹ Wilson p68

spirits, bondage to sentiments of revenge, bondage to social abuse and injustice – in short, bondage to sin and fear.

The missionaries also provided education. 19th century Māori eagerly sought after learning. For centuries what little learning was passed on from generation to generation was predominantly the preserve of privileged casts. In any case, it suffered all the difficulties of a lack of written language. It was the missionaries who produced then taught the written Māori that made knowledge accessible to all. Despite the impact of this, times of reasserting Taha Māori have inevitably seen a rejection of formal learning and an increased reliance on imprecise oral tradition. There is an evident correlation between periodically poor performance of Māori in schools and heightened identification with traditional Māori values.

Peace and knowledge opened the way to unprecedented economic growth. So important is the development of the new economy that the following chapter is devoted to it. There is however one very important point to make: in all these development, the missionaries made no attempt to replace Māori culture as such. As Māori took up the Christian faith and applied their new-found knowledge, they revised their practices and initiated the development of an indigenous Christianity. For example, it was they, not the missionaries, who insisted on ending polygamous marriages on conversion. Throughout the period of greatest missionary influence the development of Māori culture was so much in the hands of the Māori that the missionaries found themselves overtaken by developments on numerous occasions.

Another area of major impact was the establishment of a Christian based system of justice. Again Belich asserts the law 'was an invited guest.'⁴⁰ William Williams records one case that illustrates both the value of law and the injustice of traditional Māori values:

A young chief of some rank at Opotiki had committed some misdemeanour, which led the Runanga (tribal assembly) to impose upon him the fine of a horse. He set them at defiance, saying that he

⁴⁰ Belich

was a chief, and he would have no more to do with the Runanga. He would be "puta ki waho," walk outside their jurisdiction. "You declare yourself to be no longer under the Runanga?" said the authorities;" Yes, I do." "Then we will deal with you according to our old custom." They then took from him two or three horses, a canoe, and all the property he possessed.⁴¹

Without doubt one of the most significant moves in the field of justice was the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. As already indicated, Henry Williams was influential in persuading Māori and the Crown to sign the treaty, primarily as a means of establishing justice for the Māori. The Treaty established a legal basis for a system of justice hitherto unknown to the Māori. Despite appearances to the contrary, Taha Māori cannot appeal to the Treaty – the Treaty and its law have no place in traditional Māori values.

The Christian gospel brought peace, education, economic affluence and justice to the Māori – all of which could not be known under traditional Māori religion. By the middle of the 19th Century thousands of Māori were professing faith in Christ and living a radically different life style. What led to the reversal from which Māoridom has still not recovered? Firstly, the missionaries were not the only Europeans making contact with the Māori. Land traders and colonial settlers frequently did little to encourage godliness, while sealers, whalers, seamen and escaped or freed convicts from Australia mostly discouraged Christian living. Strife over land, leading to the New Zealand Land Wars revived traditional Māori values. The supplanting of biblical evangelism with formalism and ritualistic psuedo-chrsitianity under the tutelage of Bishop Selwyn made possible a semblance of Christianity without conversion or holiness. While the faith of many proved able to withstand the fire of trials, from about 1860 the impact of Christianity

⁴¹ Williams p359 This is an example of the application of Muru or plunder, whereby an exhaustive "fine" was imposed on an offender. All property was plundered by others in the tribe. The offence could be real or an imagined 'spiritual influence'. This totalitarianism in place of justice had obvious implication for social and economic order.

declined rapidly. The old syncretism easily accommodated a superficial Christianity, and the old social values reasserted themselves.

The history of Christian missions in New Zealand clearly demonstrates two basic factors. Firstly, life styles and social values, the culture of a nation, arise from the religion of the people. Secondly, the aspirations of New Zealanders for social justice and a cohesive society lie in a religion of peace and freedom. When the Māori of last century came to faith in Christ, their society was transformed and a foundation was laid for true cultural harmony. Sadly, the reassertion of Taha Māori can only compound today's problems.

5 ECONOMY

Ahakoā kai tahi, tera a roto te hahae ke ra.

Although the meal is shared, there is jealousy inside them.

The Māori lived with a subsistence economy. He produced only sufficient food and goods for the present. There was no surplus for a 'rainy day.' There was no inheritance to pass on to the next generation. There was no development of either an individual or community capital reserve with which to prepare for the future.⁴²

Such an economy arose from the values and beliefs the Māori was committed to, and illustrates the sort of economy that would prevail if Taha Māori become a fundamental part of our modern society. The Māori had an orientation to the future that justified a plundering of resources for present pleasure; combined with his fear of the gods, his prime commitment to revenge and warfare, and his lack of technology, no other economy was possible.

An economy is not simply a reflection of a willingness or otherwise to work – it is also an indication of what is worked for. The values of traditional Māori culture encourage hard work for present self-indulgence but do not encourage hard work for God's honour or

⁴² Belich p17, p22

preparation for the future. This attitude to the future is well expressed by Rangi Walker:

'The future is unknowable and is conceived of as being behind us. So we travel backwards into time.'⁴³ Reporting on an interview with Walker, Steven Crandell of the New Zealand Herald explains Walker's view, 'The past is seen stretching out in front of you. First come your parents, then ancestors, then the culture heroes (such as Kupe), then the gods and finally earth and sky, makers of the universe.'⁴⁴

The Christian recognises the value of the past. The Bible is a record of God's past work; not in a vacuum of academic interest, but in a revelation of the work of God as he redeems for himself a people to enjoy his blessing. Such a history therefore points forward to better things to come – it gives hope and incentive to build on the past and improve, to set aside difficulty and failure because something of far greater worth is certain to be attained. The Christian sees the past as the sweep of history leading to the redemption of man and creation: a new heaven and a new earth in which God's people will enjoy all the wonder of the friendship of the living God. The value of the past is not found in returning to it, as if social and technological regression represents some wonderful new freedom – but in the help it gives in moving to something better. The Māori belief that the greatest value is in the past prevents hope and ensures that there is no value in preserving what you have today: use it and enjoy it now, because tomorrow is just another step back to the ancestors.

This clearly has an impact on the education of the Māori. It is more than evident that Māori are not succeeding in New Zealand schools.⁴⁵ They cannot succeed however, so long as Māori are unwilling to sacrifice the present for the future. It is noteworthy that many Pacific Islanders succeed in a school system that is supposed to discriminate

⁴³ NZ Herald 5/1/86

⁴⁴ *ibid*

⁴⁵ see NZ Herald 16/1/77 & Tirikatene-Sullivan *op cit*

against Polynesians⁴⁶ – part of the reason for this is the strong Christian heritage of many of the Island communities, which display a willingness to make sacrifices to achieve an education that will be of value some time in the future. The fault does not lie with the education system, appallingly inadequate though this is – but with the attitudes of parents and students who will not work at anything that does not give immediate reward.

Warfare was a dominant feature of Māori economy. Young boys were baptised into the service of gods of war⁴⁷ and grew up to value the mores and behaviour of the warrior above all else. Life centred around the pa, the Māori fort, to such an extent that agricultural development was seldom managed at any greater distance from the pa than workers could safely run when an enemy attacked. What surpluses may have been produced were soaked up in fighting. So critical was the economic lack of reserve that, as James Belich records,⁴⁸ when fighting the New Zealand wars in the mid 1800s Māori were limited in the time they could give to fighting the Crown's forces before they had to return to the tribal lands for harvest, planting or maintenance. In contrast the British could field full-time troops supported by the surpluses of a highly efficient productivity.

Above all, the dominance of warfare negated any tendencies to permanence that might have arisen. As noted earlier⁴⁹ the most common way a Māori expected to die was at the hands of an enemy: in such a context permanency was an illusion.

⁴⁶ see Quentin Tapsell, Māori Principal of Tuakau College: "The fascinating point ... is the care and concern displayed by Pacific Islanders to the progress of their young people in this country in the area of education, as against the pitiful political thrust that is being followed by a certain section of the tangata whenua towards their young people. It alarms me to note how a minor ethnic group has effectively been able to organise themselves to take advantage of the opportunities in this county while I observe an almost total lack of provision for our Māori students to further their education." Quoted in the NZ Herald 21/12/87

⁴⁷ Taylor p76

⁴⁸ Belich p22

⁴⁹ see p check page

Utu, or revenge, was an appallingly destructive value that permeated the entire economic and social structure of traditional Māori society. It is a value that is still very much to the fore in gang dynamics and would inevitably become part of a society based on Māori Tanga.

Utu requires the repayment, with 'interest', of whatever is received.⁵⁰ If what is received is good, it must at some time be repaid with a bonus. If what is received is bad, it too must be repaid with a 'bonus'. Of course, where good was given, the mana of the recipient depended on displaying generosity and abundant 'interest' – and as this compounded backwards and forwards, there would certainly be a drain on limited resources. But of far greater impact was the need for revenge for hurt received.

When offence was given, offence had to be returned with 'interest'. An insult had to be returned with added insult, and injury with added injury, death with additional death. A tribe suffering a member killed by an enemy had to avenge the death by more killing. There could be no place for forgiveness, for humility, for peacemaking. One had been killed: two or more had to die in response. Of course, this now compounded, for the original offenders were now in their turn offended and had to exact utu! The killing must go on, with increasing numbers being butchered for the sake of primitive pride each time.

While some amusement could be found in watching the television 'Beverly Hillbillies', there was nothing amusing or noble about this compounding of hatred upon hatred, butchery upon butchery, to satisfy perverted 'honour'. Taha Māori demands that all available resources be directed to the satisfaction of hate and capitalising of brutality. A society built on ancient Māori values is a society built on hatred and committed to perpetual violence.

Tapu was also a significant economic control. Its use preserved resources for the privileged. Those with sufficient mana could adapt the laws of tapu to their own purposes,⁵¹ while the lower castes were kept in

⁵⁰ McLauchlan (Ed) *NZ Encyclopaedia* Bateman, Auckland, 1984, p560

⁵¹ See p check page

perpetual bondage, unable to avail themselves of resources often never fully utilised. In the same way, fear of the gods crippled economic development. Innovation was not possible: the gods must never be offended, so who planted, when crops were harvested, the way in which the kumara were placed in the ground – every aspect of activity was controlled by an inflexible tradition set to spiritual rites and omens. The Māori lived in a perpetual Dark Age.

Technologically, the traditional Māori culture lacked not only resources but development. It is evident that the skills, weapons, tools and methods used at the beginning of the 18th century were the same as those used 1,000 years earlier. It is interesting to note that the European Dark Ages saw many technological advances: the stirrup and horse collar, the chimney and water wheel, for example,⁵² but the Māori Dark Ages saw nothing of significance. Traditional Māori culture as we know it represents a regression from the culture of tribal ancestors. Those ancestors navigated the Pacific and colonised New Zealand in such a way as to demonstrate they must have had a technology the tribes of New Zealand never enjoyed.

Economic and technological development, whether at the level of primary production or of capitalisation and exchange, depends on there being sufficient flexibility for innovations to be tried and tested. The Māori was so bound by spirits and customs, mediated through the tohunga,⁵³ that his economy could never break away from its primitive subsistence level. Development is also dependent upon sufficient capital reserve to enable such innovation to take place without depleting essential resources. Māori values precluded capital reserves and thereby entrenched technological ignorance. Any reversion to a Māori base for society would at best fix New Zealand's technology at the represent point of development; it might precipitate the same regression that led the earlier Pacific colonisers into the Māori Dark Ages.

⁵² see *Medieval Industry & Social Change* White; quoted by James Nichol in an address to NZ Christian School Association 14/5/87

⁵³ General term applied to learned person, but usually applied to a priest

Communal ownership of property was another significant factor in the Māori economy. Apart from a small number of items, nothing was owned by individuals. There was, as a consequence, a willingness to share. At the same time lack of private ownership lessens individual responsibility and removes individual incentive. In contrast, the Bible establishes the principle of private ownership to encourage and reward hard work.

Possibly the most significant aspect of this custom however, is not in its immediate impact on ancient Māori economy but on social tensions today as people with a heritage of communal ownership live in a society dependent upon private ownership. In ancient Māori society anyone was free to take and use anything lying around or not being used by someone else. This practice can cause considerable difficulty today!

It is often postulated that the Māori was a conservationist. Conservation involves a balanced use of available resources to ensure that in future years they are still available for the best over-all benefit. This the Māori never attempted or achieved. Such apparent forms of conservation that were used, such as the laws of tapu, preserved resources for the use of the privileged – not for the future.

Today we are told that the spraying of weed killer in Taranaki, and the discharging of industrial effluent into the Manukau Harbour cause 'spiritual affront' to local tribes.⁵⁴ We should not doubt that a people so steeped in spiritualism could be offended by such things – but in no sense do they represent a conservationist spirit. A people who are offended by effluent, not because of its chemical nature but because of its mixing of tapu, yet who could kill their own children and eat each other can hardly be noted for conserving their most precious resource! One might also ask what happened to the moa? This unique bird was driven to extinction by chiefs who prized its feathers for their cloaks and flesh for their bellies.

The Māori proved to be a willing trader, readily exchanging what he had for what he wanted from the European. Yet this trading was marked

⁵⁴ NZ Herald 8/8/86

by a pursuit of immediate satisfaction to the detriment of future needs.⁵⁵ Nothing illustrates this better than the propensity of chiefs to sell land for instant profit, yet at the same time bewail the transfer of land into European hands. The whole issue of land sales that was so important in the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi highlights this. The chiefs who were concerned to reduce land sales were the ones who had previously satisfied their lust for immediate pleasure by selling their land. In effect, their request for Crown control was an admission that they were morally powerless to preserve a heritage for their children in the face of short term profit.

Once a European peace was imposed on the tribes of New Zealand, their economy began to develop. For the first time, they could seriously cultivate crops, especially the flax the European was eager to obtain, by moving away from the protection of the pa. The cessation of fighting, coupled with European capital injection, mean the Māori tribes were able to produce more than their immediate needs, sell the surplus and hold capital for investment in the future. If these capital resources were expended on short term material comforts so that their children still lacked an inheritance, the fault lies not in the new economy but in the lust of men for pleasure before prudence.

The impact of Māori values on the economy of New Zealand would plainly be nothing less that totally disastrous.

⁵⁵ Belich p303

6 COLONISATION

He iwi kotahi tatou.
We are now one people.

The concept of a Māori race, of a united people sharing a common culture, evolved through the mid-nineteenth century. There was no such thing as the Māori race before the diverse tribes of New Zealand natives were confronted with European settlement.⁵⁶ There was no national identity, no common political structure, no shared aspirations and little more of a common culture than was known throughout the rest of Polynesia.

The Polynesian colonisation of New Zealand appears to have resulted from numerous unrelated migrations over a long period of time.⁵⁷ Each part of New Zealand was settled by people who carried with them the language and culture of their home island. These settlements were initially as isolated and diverse as the islands of the Pacific as a whole. They may have shared the same land-mass, but that was all.

⁵⁶ See Janet Davidson *The Prehistory of New Zealand* Longman Paul, Auckland, 1987, p11

⁵⁷ *ibid*

From these roots developed the tribes Europeans came to know as Māori. In many respects these tribes resembled the tribes of ancient Europe. While some aspects of culture and language were shared there never developed a united identity.

Much is made of the Māori word 'Aotearoa' – said to be the name for New Zealand. While 'Aotearoa' may have named the land-mass it never had the connotations of Māori or national identity attributed to it today. When such an identity began to emerge it did so in entirely European terms – no Māori word existed for a concept completely foreign to the native tribes. Claudia Orange explains that a territorial concept had developed in the 1820s – known as 'Nui Tirenī' (a transliteration of 'New Zealand').⁵⁸ Orange maintains this preceded common usage of the term 'Māori', which was not used till the middle of the century. Similarly the word 'Pākehā', apparently unknown to early linguists, came into use about the same time to designate Europeans.

Even this slight sense of unity could not have been achieved apart from the context of a European-imposed peace. It was the European, both by his presence and practices coupled with the propagation of the Christian faith, that created a context in which tribal animosities could begin to be set aside. It was, however, a sense of unity that would never result in effective cooperation between tribes. At times of crisis, some tribes would be able to set aside their differences to achieve immediate common goals; the crisis over, tribal antagonism would reassert itself.

Attempts to establish Taha Māori or Māoritanga as a basis for contemporary national identity must therefore be doomed to failure. There never was such a unifying culture. The values and practices of the warring tribes can hardly be expected to do more than fragment the nation along customary Māori lines.

The record of the approach of the British Crown to these tribes is a remarkable one. The idea that the Crown was a land-grabbing, power-seeking invader is a deceit. Rather, the Crown renounced territorial claims based on Cook's discovery in 1769 and not only recognised New

⁵⁸ Orange p23

Zealand's independence but obliged other national powers to do the same. It was with considerable reluctance and constraint that the British Crown ultimately extended its rule to New Zealand.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Māori had established regular trading links with Europeans. Flax and timber as well as food were important items of trade – and preserved heads of enemy tribes also featured!⁵⁹ The Royal Navy made occasional visits, mostly for timber and provisions. In 1814 the Church Missionary Society established its mission – others were to follow soon. It was estimated that in the 1839 however, there were still only 2,000 Europeans in New Zealand.⁶⁰

At first, the British Crown attempted to stay out of New Zealand affairs. Several laws were passed attempting to control the abuse of natives by British citizens, without much effect. In 1817, and again in 1823 and 1828, the British Parliament passed Acts recognising New Zealand's independence.

American and French interests were growing. In 1838 the French established a Catholic mission with close ties to the French Government. In 1839 the United States established a consulate. While the United States were welcome, the French were seen by the Māori as a threat. This became an important influence in encouraging the Māori appeals to the British for protection.

In 1820 Thames Māori formally requested British protection.⁶¹ This was the same year the northern chief Hongi met King George IV in London and exchanged assurances of British-Māori friendliness. In the hope of closer British cooperation, another northern chief, Titore, demonstrated that Māori spirituality was for sale – he placed a tapu on a forest to preserve its timbers for the Royal Navy in any future conflict with the French!⁶² Closer ties with the British were being sought to protect Māori from foreign interests; but the Māori openly

⁵⁹ *ibid* p12

⁶⁰ *ibid* p6

⁶¹ *ibid* p6

⁶² *ibid*

acknowledged that they also greatly enhanced their mana (standing) by association with the Crown.⁶³

A major step was taken in 1831 when a group of northern chiefs wrote a petition to the British Crown for protection from three perceived sources of trouble: foreign powers, other tribes and British subjects.⁶⁴ It is important to note that these Māori, like many of their contemporaries, recognised they could not find peace at home or internationally without the Crown. Māori culture could do nothing to bring 1,000 years of carnage to an end. The appointment of Busby as British Resident in 1832 did little to overcome the difficulties. It did however stress the Crown's attitude of humanitarian interest while preserving Māori independence. Busby was to be an intermediary between the races.⁶⁵

In 1834 Busby helped establish a New Zealand flag which gained international recognition of the independence of New Zealand, particularly in the field of shipping. This was not the action of a colonial power seeking dominion over independent natives!⁶⁶

A Declaration of Independence was signed by a number of chiefs under the title of 'The United Tribes of New Zealand' in 1835. The Crown had encouraged this in the hope that cooperation and lawful national government could be achieved among the warring tribes. While these tribes declared their intent to meet in a congress annually, and to frame laws binding on all, tribal animosities basic to Māori culture ensured they never met again. By 1837 fighting was so serious that Busby successfully called for a Royal Naval presence in the Bay of Islands.

In the same year, influenced by those events and the aspirations of the newly formed New Zealand Company, the Colonial Office reflected on the course of future developments. Strongly influenced by Christian principles⁶⁷ a policy of humanitarian concern for the Māori was

⁶³ ibid p11

⁶⁴ ibid p12

⁶⁵ ibid p13

⁶⁶ ibid p21

⁶⁷ ibid p25

established and predominated through to the eventual signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

The land issue was closely linked to colonisation. Māori had freely sold off sizable portions of their land to European dealers and settlers. While it was consistent with their economic values,⁶⁸ fears were growing that they would alienate all their land. The issue seems not to have been a matter of the spiritual value of the land, so often alluded to today, or chiefs could not have sold land in the first place. Rather, the chiefs were losing both control and mana as their land-holdings decreased. The Māori became anxious to secure British control of land trading to protect their commercial and cultural interest in land.

It was against this back-ground that the Crown set out to obtain 'the free and intelligent consent of the natives'⁶⁹ to a treaty establishing British sovereignty over New Zealand. Generally, those charged with explaining and negotiating the Treaty took pains to make the nature of the agreement clear. Despite this, present debate questions the extent to which Māori understood sovereignty was being transferred. While some technical ambiguity in the translation from English to Māori can be pointed to in support of this argument,⁷⁰ the record of Māori debate over the Treaty clearly indicates the issue of sovereignty was widely understood.⁷¹ It was because they feared a loss of sovereignty that many of those refusing to sign withheld their assent.

Interestingly, the Treaty was not made with the Māori people, but with a variety of chiefs representing their tribes. Again it must be remembered there was no united Māori people with whom such an agreement could have been made. Those chiefs who did not sign, ultimately had their lands annexed to the Crown but were still accorded the benefits given the signing tribes. The vast tracts of land not under tribal control were also annexed; now, for the first time, peaceful coexistence of tribes and races was possible.

⁶⁸ See the previous chapter

⁶⁹ Orange p31

⁷⁰ This is the basic thesis of Orange's book

⁷¹ Orange and others report extensive discussions by chiefs on this point.

The Treaty assigned sovereignty to the Crown, which was then in a position to apply law justly to all – European and Māori alike. Along with this, it awarded British citizenship to the Māori – something unique in British colonial history and an indication of the genuinely humanitarian concern of the Crown. The Treaty also guaranteed what the Māori had asked for: protection from foreign powers, imposition of peace on the tribes, and due legal process in land trading. In addition it guaranteed protection of Māori forests and fisheries. The Māori traded a violent cultural heritage for peaceful law and order – a small price for the British protection they had asked for!

Some of the present debate on land seems to imply a Māori sovereignty existed in an inalienable form before 1840. There was however no Māori land-holding – rather a pattern of land squabbles in which temporary ownership had been violently transferred back and forth for a thousand years. For those who signed the Treaty with Britain, this tradition had given place to negotiation. Those who would not sign lost their sovereignty in the traditional Māori way – the stronger British took control – except this time it was without the barbarism that had been part of that tradition.

That the Crown sometimes failed in upholding its Treaty promises is a matter of record. The same must be said of many of the Māori signatories. But how can grievances be settled? Not by appeal to Māori custom – not only did this ensure perpetual fighting over such issues, but was plainly adapted by the Māori of the day to suit his immediate purposes. Nor can complaints of unfair British colonial policy be sustained – the British did not invade, they came as invited guests.

It is equally plain however that the local representatives of the Crown, supported by Pākehā settler communities, despised the Treaty and when not ignoring it chose to deny it. Throughout New Zealand tribes suffered loss of land as the local agents of the Crown abused their powers: land was purchased under duress, land was purchased for a fraction of its real value, land was purchased and never fully paid for, and contractual agreements to provide resources and support for Māori were never kept. Repeated appeals by Māori from 1840 resulted in

assurances from Britain that the Treaty would be honoured, but denial of those promises on the ground in New Zealand.

For some tribes, the tension resulted in the various New Zealand Wars of 1845 to 1872. Missionaries of the day condemned the wars, particularly in the Waikato and Taranaki, as resulting from local government abuse of Māori. Māori were, they said, protecting their rights as British citizens from the illegal activities of the government. The missionaries were ignored. The Māori tribes lost. The New Zealand government confiscated vast tracts of land, even from tribes who had not been involved in the fighting.

It was such events that gave rise to the principal claims of Māori that the Waitangi Tribunal was set up to address. Those claims were not newly invented (as were some subsequent claims, such as a demand for Māori ownership of radio frequencies). For each of the main claims there is a well documented record of appeals to the Crown, to the Courts, and to Parliament. At times those claims were upheld but not settled, and at others dismissed without due process, or arrogantly ignored. But never were the claims dealt with justly until considered by the Waitangi Tribunal.

Māori complainants have the same recourse to justice as the remainder of New Zealand citizens – due legal process. Selective appeal to aspects of Māori custom is a shallow form of inverted racism that will entrench dispute and bitterness. Sadly, resolution of complaints achieved through due legal process in the Waitangi Tribunal has seen an equally racist response from far too many Pākehā.

There were (and remain) significant difficulties faced by all parties to land disputes. Before 1840 there was no land ownership as is now disputed. While a just, legal system was provided for by the 1840 Treaty, even that date does not give an adequate basis for settling disputes. Not even the Waitangi Tribunal has a list of the tribes represented in the signing of the Treaty, nor do they have evidence of which land was occupied by various tribes at the time.⁷²

⁷² N Z Herald 14/1/88

Claims for land can be perceived more as short-cuts to wealth than attempts to resolve old disputes. A spokesman for one of the claimants said, 'We would not tear apart Christchurch. We would accept cash payment instead to enable Māori to set up schools and businesses ... for our people.'⁷³ In context, however, this was intended to reassure New Zealanders of a willingness to negotiate an equitable settlement: when land could not be returned monetary compensation would be accepted.

In 1987 a member of the Waitangi Tribunal, Mrs Te Heu Heu encouraged the lodging of claims not only for land rights, 'But for rights of tribes to their own tribal land to form their own development programmes.'⁷⁴ Hard work and economic development are to be encouraged, but is there any evidence that simply giving tribes what they once had and chose to throw away will now be used to any long-term benefit? Clearly Māori whose forebears did not use their resources to establish an economic base for the present generation are at a disadvantage. When the past has been squandered there is no resolution in demanding a right to wealth without work. The appearance is of an attempt to liquidate the indolence of the past and capitalise centuries of resource abuse; but indolence and abuse are not normally regarded as saleable assets.

But when there is a just claim for compensation, why should not those who suffered receive it? Indolence should not be rewarded, but injustice should be righted. No one should benefit from what they have thrown away, but everyone from whom assets have been illegally taken should be compensated. In such cases no evidence is needed that tribes will use restored assets well – if they have a right to those assets they should be given them. In any case, the history of tribal management of assets awarded through the settlement process is impressive.⁷⁵

⁷³ Tipene O'Regan, Chairman of the Ngai Tahu Trust Board, Radio N Z News National Programme on the morning of 6/2/88

⁷⁴ N Z Herald 13/5/87

⁷⁵ Among the successes there have been some rather dramatic failures – but despite the publicity given, when compared to non-Māori corporates with similar budgets, enterprises funded by Waitangi Tribunal Settlements have performed remarkably well.

Land squabbles pre-dating 1840 belong to the era of Māori Tanga – never ending inter-tribal war. After 1840, use can be made of New Zealand law. But that does not open the way for exclusive compensation for Māori on the basis of unfair Crown action. Many land-owners have been disinherited by the Crown under the Public Works Act without receiving market rate compensation. Now that Māori tribes who suffered unfair confiscation or purchase have been compensated so late in history, those with more recent grievances with the Crown must be accorded the same redress. The Waitangi tribunal cannot accept claims from non-Māori New Zealanders, and they have no other tribunal to appeal to. That appears to many to entrench racism.

There is a danger of attempting to merely satisfy pride and greed in a culture of grievance. Where legal process has been perverted, our Courts and Tribunals are now proving competent to help. Where it is not a matter of perversion of the law, New Zealanders have a choice: set aside covetousness and jealousy, building on the inheritance we have and proving we can do better; or reverting to the bitterness, jealousy and brutality of the ancient Māori way of settling land disputes.

7 HOPE

Ko te tai rapu, koia te kite.
He who seeks will find.

A revival of ancient Māori culture as a social foundation for New Zealand would involve a reversion to a barbaric, fear-ridden and oppressive society. To say this however, is not to assert that the imposition of any other racial culture would be better. Every culture that refuses to acknowledge God in all its ways is a culture destined for strife, division and collapse.

The Apostle Paul explains this in the first three chapters of the book of Romans in the Bible. In it he demonstrates that when men who know of God reject his pattern for life, God gives them up to their own devices, reserving them for judgement at a later date. At the same time, God is patient, waiting for men to repent or turn from their sin – because as a God of grace he is willing to turn aside his righteous judgement and enter into fellowship with those who repent.

'The wrath of God,' explains God's own Spirit through the Apostle, 'is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen,

being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.¹⁷⁶ A few lines later he asks a critical question, 'Do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realising that God's kindness leads you towards repentance?'¹⁷⁷ Instead of sending judgement upon the people of New Zealand, God looks for the time when they will see the futility of their ways and turn to him. Here is the real hope for a stable and just society – a nation where its people despise the myths and legends of the godless cultures of its past, and rebuild its way of life on a foundation of truth.

Possibly the greatest period of peace and progress in Māori history is to be found in the mid-1800s when the New Zealand tribes actively took up and spread amongst themselves the faith of Jesus Christ. Their new faith opened the way for social reconstruction spontaneously commenced by believing tribes. Even a cursory look at this period demonstrates what the Māori quickly saw for himself – the Christian gospel is a means of establishing a just and peaceful society free of fear, as well as a message of hope for the future. For all New Zealanders, faith and repentance towards Jesus Christ open a way for justice, unity, peace and cultural reform.

In 1987 the Honourable Mrs Tirikatene-Sullivan drew the attention of Parliament to this heritage of Christian Māori culture when she described her own cultural background as essentially Christian.⁷⁸

'I am specifically referring to the generations of Maoridom of my grandparents and parents. There was an assurance in those Christian teachings and the lifestyle that developed from that focal point ... I have referred to the strength of Christian faith that has underpinned so much of Māori society over the past 150 years. Those who would strive to replace that with ideologies which are alien ... are culpable of exploiting unmercifully a people ravaged economically after three decades of ineffective social policies.'⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Romans 1:18-20

⁷⁷ Romans 2:4

⁷⁸ Tirikatene-Sullivan op cit

⁷⁹ ibid

Faith in Jesus Christ involves more than a simple assent to his existence – it involves a belief in his being the living Son of God, who died as a substitute for the sinner. It is a confession that while the sinner deserved God's judgement, Christ took that judgement and suffered God's anger in the sinner's place. It is a heart-felt acknowledgement that what the sinner deserved from God has been fully satisfied in Jesus Christ in his death so that the believer is free from guilt and the threat of punishment. Faith in Jesus Christ brings peace with God, an answer to sin and guilt, and a solution to social strife.

Repentance is part of the same exercise of faith – for a repentant person not only acknowledges sorrow for his wrong-dong but a resolve to change his ways. It is stupidity to claim to believe in Jesus Christ without attempting to live by the principles of his Word, the Bible! The repentant person grieves for his sin – not just for his deeds, but for the in-born tendency he exhibits to keep on sinning – and in dependence upon God begins to put into practice biblical principles of daily living. These principles touch on every aspect of life – from how a person should pray to how a nation should manage its affairs.

What is significant about the Christian faith is that it denies that man has the ability to solve either his own or his nation's problems. Man's sinfulness, his guilt and its practical out-working in the daily life of a nation, can only be dealt with successfully when God himself intervenes. Faith is another word for dependence upon God for what we cannot ourselves do. Only God can put away sin. Only God has the truth and lasting values we need for national harmony. Only God can come in the person of the Holy Spirit to move the conscience, enlighten the mind and empower the individual to do things God's way.

Modern Māori culture has brought from the past a behaviour known as 'whākama'. This is loosely translated 'shame'⁸⁰, although there are a number of other implications of being whākama apart from shame. A person found to be at fault, to have done wrong, to be out of place or such life will be whākama. This can be seen in shyness, withdrawal,

⁸⁰ cf Metge op cit

embarrassment, shame or anger and violence. There is a definite sorrow for being wrong and a shamefacedness involve in being whākama, but it lacks the essential elements of Christian repentance.

Whākama results from a person's perception that his mana, his standing, has been lessened in relation to others – what he has done has reduced his standing. But there is no sense in which the person regards himself as totally sinful. Christian repentance however, is the response of a person who sees himself not simply as of reduced standing but of no standing at all. He has offended God, broken his law and is utterly without worth. It is only when one comes to God in this state of worthlessness that unmerited forgiveness can deal with guilt. On the surface, whākama appears to be like repentance, but in reality the whākama person is still dependent upon his own merits instead of Christ's.

It is only from a position of total guilt that it becomes possible for people to forgive others and live humbly with people who can be freely acknowledged to be better than oneself. The old hatred, the utu, the violence and the fear can all be dispensed with. One of the great barriers to a negotiated peace in the past has been the pride of Māori of various strata who could not sue for peace, forgive or forget without losing standing. The Christian gospel disposes of that problem by reducing all men to the same level of plain sinner – without standing or worth apart from God!

When all New Zealanders turn to Jesus Christ as Saviour from sin and Lord of life, the nation will have found the harmony and unity that has proved elusive since man lived in the land.

As those who believe in Jesus Christ put his ways into practice, peace and justice will become more evident – it is not necessary to wait till every New Zealander is a Christian! Christians are called to be the slat of the earth – those who by their faith being put into practice not only savour society with righteousness and truth, but show their unbelieving fellow-citizens that the Gospel of Jesus Christ offers real answers to the problems of today and eternity.

EPILOGUE

to the 2005 revision

I wrote this short booklet *The New Māori Myth* in 1988 to challenge the imposition of a pagan religion on the school children of New Zealand. No-one could have guessed how great a storm a little booklet could stir. The Race Relations Office took me to task publicly in a process not unlike that used by the ancient Star-Chamber: I was not allowed to know what I was accused of, could not be told who my accusers were, and, when I refused their command to apologise to the tangata whenua (of whom I am one) and to never again publicly declare the Gospel of Jesus Christ, could not be prosecuted because the law they accused me of breaking did not exist.

The cost to me and my family, emotional and material, was considerable. Were it not for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the support of a multitude of New Zealanders – Māori and Pākehā alike – I might well have caved in. However the publicity provoked interest, and the booklet went through several reprints. Interest has continued, with the last of the old stock running out last year.

The decision to reprint has been made in the light of continuing demand and constant correspondence from new readers who have found it helpful. The text has been re-set so that it can be published electronically. We have retained the original unaltered apart from minor corrections, the removal of a brief portion of chapter 6, and an improved layout.

There have been many developments in the intervening years, not least the making of settlements between the Crown and a number of tribes. Some read what I had written as critical of settlements unforeseen at the time of writing. I am unchanged in my view that dwelling on the wrongs of the past is not a basis for social harmony in the present. That is well evidenced by the disdain with which most New Zealanders regard the settlements that have been achieved. Nevertheless that does not diminish the need for a society – and Christians within that society in particular – to be committed to justice.

Due process under law, which I advocate in this booklet, has exposed significant injustices that the settlement process has sought to remedy. *The New Māori Myth* offers no support to ill-informed criticism of that process. To make that clear I have revised parts of Chapter 6 to remove its original imbalance and to reflect the significant settlements that have now been achieved. I have also addressed those issues in greater detail elsewhere.⁸¹

The original text retains its integrity as a tract asserting two simple things, as I have written in the final chapter: "A revival of ancient Māori culture as a social foundation for New Zealand would involve a reversion to a barbaric, fear-ridden and oppressive society" in contrast to which "When all New Zealanders turn to Jesus Christ as Saviour from sin and Lord of life, the nation will have found the harmony and unity that has proved elusive since man lived in the land."

One section of the original text was wrong. In chapter 6 I asserted that Section 8d(2) of *The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975* licences the

⁸¹ See Michael Drake *Māori Culture in a Christian Worldview* Wycliffe Christian Schools, Auckland, 2005

Waitangi Tribunal to be discriminatory in its rulings. In fact, that section simply allows the Tribunal to endorse an agreement reached between the Crown and a tribe without having to determine if there was substance to the original disagreement. My distortion of a sensible clause is a result of lazy scholarship for which I apologise. I have removed the two offending sentences.

Most opposition has related to one of three issues:

Firstly, I have been accused of racial bigotry. This has been primarily rooted in a bigotry of its own – claims that I am Pākehā and should therefore not comment on Māori issues. Paul Holmes in a national television TV1 interview expressed that sentiment in the words, "Who the hell are you to say that Māori spirituality was evil?" I'm of the persuasion that it doesn't matter who says something: if a babe speaks wisdom we ought to listen. It is of no consequence whether I am Māori or not: what I write should be evaluated in terms of what is written, not in terms of who wrote it.

Along with that I was accused of being racist by stating that ancient Māori were cannibals. That sort of nonsense is not worthy of debate. But the Race Relations Office took up and vigorously pursued both prejudices. That the Office charged with bringing about racial harmony should disparage my writing and demand my silence on racial grounds, without even once asking about my ethnicity, is sad.

So to put the record straight, I am Māori. I am Ngai Tahu and I have never hidden the fact. And the Christianity in which I was nurtured as a youngster was a heritage of my Māori tupuna rather than my non-Māori forebears. This information was not listed in the booklet's credits because, unless ideas are to be evaluated on the basis of racial prejudice, such information is an irrelevancy to and a distraction from the message of the booklet.

As to the Race Relations Office, it is noteworthy that almost every step it took in its prolonged attempt to force my silence was communicated to me by reporters from a daily newspaper days before the Office contacted me. The whole process confirmed a deep distrust of any state that seeks to control the thoughts and free-speech of its

citizens. Democracy is in grave danger, if not lost already, when an organ of state is given powers to oppress citizens because of what they think. When that organ is so "leaky" that the press has inside information at every turn, bringing the added pressure of trial by media, it is difficult to respect the Office.

Secondly, it was objected that I criticised Māori religion and culture but not that of the European or Pākehā. But it was Māori religion that was being imposed on the state education system which by law is required to be secular. On all sides we were being presented with arguments, training and syllabus materials to propagate Māori religion in secular state schools. The thought police would not allow any debate on whether or not that should be so.

In any case, it is not a valid argument to deny a point because others are not dealt with. There may well be other cultures that should not be imposed on secular state schools – that doesn't mean we can't critique one without critiquing all. If that were the case, none could dispute this book without disputing every other such book at the same time.

But to put the record straight, I have consistently written and spoken against all unbiblical cultures being taught in our schools. For example, in 1985 – three years before *The New Māori Myth* was published – I published a similar sized booklet *Schools Need Christ* in which I exposed the pernicious and pervasive imposition of the religion of western humanism on children in state schools. Apart from the fact that *Schools Need Christ* contained exactly the sort of critique of other cultures I was supposed to have failed to make, it is notable that the *Office of Humanistic Relations* orchestrated no protest.

Thirdly there was a small number of Christian Māori who were genuinely but mistakenly disturbed that *The New Māori Myth* attacked their present culture and worship. The argument of this booklet is that adoption of ancient Māori religion is no answer to today's needs. So far as contemporary Māori culture and worship gives expression to the old paganism, yes, I am critical, just as I am critical of other pagan practices brought into our national life and Christian worship. But only that far:

there is plenty of scope for Christians to live and worship with diverse languages, hymnology and variation – so long as it is biblical.

One prominent Christian periodical refused to run a serialisation of *The New Māori Myth* someone wanted to sponsor because in it I argue "every culture must be judged at the bar of the Word of God." Well, I unashamedly reaffirm that position. I have freedom in Christ to be a New Zealand Christian, whatever that means. But that is subservient to a greater freedom, to be Christian. Those who would bind us to ethnic practices and synthesise paganism with Christianity are like the headless prophets of Colossians 2 who, having lost their connection with Christ, take people captive with vain and deceptive philosophy.

Christians are to expose the fruitless deeds of darkness.⁸² When we come to Christ all things become new⁸³ and we are to no longer regard things from a worldly point of view.⁸⁴ So far as pagan practices are concerned

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.⁸⁵

⁸² Ephesians 5:11

⁸³ 2 Corinthians 5:17

⁸⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:16

⁸⁵ 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1.

It is not just Māori who have adopted an evangelical syncretism: the church in New Zealand is captive to non-Christian culture. In its crudest forms this is seen in simple imitation of the world. In a more sophisticated way "biculturalism" has become an excuse for imposing non-biblical values and practices on Christians. So we now have distinctively Māori and distinctively non-Māori practices or even churches. But when the early Church faced the same pressures for biculturalism, God said, "There is neither Jew nor Greek ... for you are all one in Christ."⁸⁶ Western "ethnocentricity" in the church is not to be countered by a parallel or more dominant Māori ethnocentricity, but Māori and non-Māori alike are given a new citizenship⁸⁷, a new hapū⁸⁸, and become a new body⁸⁹ and a new building⁹⁰: all images of a oneness in Christ that ought to find its own distinctive cultural expression.

This does not mean Māori are to give up their identity and become Pākehā. It means that *all* who come to Christ take up a new identity and a new culture.

⁸⁶ Galatians 3:26

⁸⁷ Philippians 3:20

⁸⁸ "family" – Galatians 6:10

⁸⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:14-27 & Ephesians 4:12

⁹⁰ Ephesians 2:19-22

There is a popular myth that a return to traditional Māori values will strengthen New Zealand society and heal our social ills. Māori values are embedded in the school curriculum in the vain hope this will make a better nation.

The New Māori Myth demonstrates that in its religion, morality, land claims and economy traditional Māori values were inseparable from fear, violence and social injustice. It also exposes the myths surrounding the history of missionary work and European colonisation in New Zealand.

It highlights the benefits Māori gained in the 1800s when vast numbers sought peace with God and fellow men in the Christian gospel. It is this gospel, not Māori culture, that alone can form the basis of lasting national unity and racial harmony.

THE NEW MĀORI MYTH

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