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MAORI

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Maori

Polynesian people of New Zealand. Their traditional history describes their origins in terms of waves of migration beginning about AD 1150 and culminating in the arrival of a "great fleet" in the 14th century from Hawaiki, a mythical land usually identified as Tahiti. Although this tradition has largely been discounted by archaeological discoveries, which have dated habitations at least as early as AD 800 and possibly very much earlier, it still provided the basis for traditional Maori social organization. Members of each tribe (*iwi*) recognized a common ancestry (which might be traced through either or both parents) and common allegiance to a chief or chiefs (*ariki*). Traditionally, at the day-to-day level, the most important social groups were the *hapuu* (subtribe), the primary landholding group and the one within which marriage was preferred, and the extended family (*whanau*).

This social order was in force when Abel Tasman, the first European contact, arrived off the coast of New Zealand in December 1642. He did battle with a group of Maori on the South Island and left the area largely unexplored. In 1769-70 Captain James Cook circumnavigated the two major islands and wrote about the intelligence of the Maori and the suitability of New Zealand for colonization. Whalers, sealers, and other Europeans seeking profit were initially welcomed by the Maori. With the introduction of muskets, disease, Western agricultural methods, and missionaries, Maori culture and social structure began to disintegrate. By the late 1830s New Zealand had been joined to Europe, and European settlers lured by the score.

After the British assumed formal control of New Zealand in 1840, European settlement and government began to alarm the Maori, especially in North Island. In 1845 some Maori chieftains began ravaging the Bay of Islands and other areas of the far north (in what has sometimes been called the First Maori War) and were not finally suppressed until 1847, by colonial forces under Governor Sir George Grey. His victories brought a peace that lasted from 1847 to 1860.

The so-called King Movement was a response to the increasing threat to the Maori land. In 1857 several tribes of the Waikato area of North Island elected as King Te Wherowhero, who reigned as Pōtatau I. In addition to electing a king, they established a council of state, a judicial system, and a police organization, all of which were intended to support Maori resolve to retain their land and to stop the intertribal warfare over the issue.

Not all Maori accepted the authority of the king, but the majority shared with the King Movement the resolve not to sell the land.

Until 1860 the Maori still owned most of the land of the North Island, but a large increase in the number of immigrants in the 1850s led to demands for greatly increased land purchase by the government. Many Maori were determined not to sell. In 1859 Te Teira, a Maori of the Taranaki area, sold his Waitara River land, without the consent of his tribe, to the colonial government, precipitating the First Taranaki War of 1860-61. Only the extremist wing of the King Movement joined in the First Taranaki War.

The war consisted essentially of a series of generally successful sieges of Maori *pas* (fortified villages) by British troops and militia employing a sap trench procedure. The British were defeated during an attack (June 1860) on Puketapuere *pa* when the

Maori executed a surprise counterattack; but the Maori were defeated at Orongomai in October and Mahoeitahi in November. The war ended in a truce after the surrender of the Te Aroti *pa* in late March 1861. The Maori remained in possession of the European-owned Tairānataka block of land.

The fighting resumed in the Second Taranaki War in April 1863 after Governor Grey built an attack road into the Waikato area and drove the Taranaki Maori from the Tairānataka block. While fighting raged in Taranaki once again, the Waikato War began in July 1863; and the Waikato River region, the centre of the King Movement tribes, became the main target of the Europeans. Once again the war was decided by sieges of Maori *pas*, but the Maori also began to employ guerrilla tactics. British troops were aided by gunboats and forest ranger units made up of colonial volunteers. The Europeans won notable victories at Meremere in October 1863 and at Rangiriri in November. The fall of the Orakau *pa* in early April 1864 essentially brought the Waikato War to an end.

The last of the wars, known to the Europeans as "the fire in the fern" and to the Maori as *te riri pakaha*, "the white man's anger," was fought from 1864 to 1872. Hostilities spread to virtually the whole of North Island. The main Maori combatants in the mid-60s were the fanatic Hauhau warriors. The British government wanted to conclude peace in 1864, but the colonial government, wishing to acquire more land, continued the war and assumed an increasing share of the fighting. In July 1865 Grey led the capture of Werorua *pa* in southern Taranaki. European and supporting Maori forces (increasingly numerous after 1864) checked each new effort by the hostile tribes. From 1868 to 1872 the Hauhau were supplemented by a new warrior cult, Kingtutu, founded and led by a guerrilla leader, Te Kooti.

All fighting ended in 1872. Great tracts of Maori land had been confiscated and Maori society permanently disrupted. The supporters of the King Movement retreated to King Country, in the west-central North Island. This area was closed to Europeans and remained under Maori control until 1881, when it was released to the government.

In the latter part of the 20th century, about 9 percent of New Zealanders were classified as Maori, and almost four-fifths of these were urban dwellers. Urbanization has meant full exposure to an urban culture and increased contact with European New Zealanders. The rate of intermarriage between Maori and Europeans steadily increased, particularly in the younger age groups, between Maori men and European women. Economically, however, a disproportionate number remain in occupations of lower status and lower pay. This situation is largely the result of educational deficiencies, and in 1961 the Maori Education Foundation was set up with the aim of improving the standard of Maori education. Although this body has had some success, the educational achievement of most Maori children is still below that of other New Zealanders, with the result that few are able to enter occupations of higher status. There are, however, a sprinkling of Maori at all levels, and discrimination in jobs is minimal.

In other areas of social life, too, Maori are generally accepted by other New Zealanders, although some may have difficulty in finding housing in the cities and others may meet opposition if they wish to marry European New Zealanders. Prejudice is for the most part not deeply ingrained. Many Maori fear cultural domination more than discrimination and wish to maintain their identity as Maori. Nearly all have some European ancestry, and some who identify themselves as Maori actually have a predominance of European ancestry. Their identification is thus cultural rather than genetic.

To most Maori, being Maori means recognizing and venerating their Maori ancestors, having claims to family land, and having a right to be received as *rangatira whanau* ("people of the land") in the village of their ancestors. It means the acceptance of group membership and the shared recognition, with members of the group, of distinctly Maori ways of thinking and behaving. There has been some revival of the teaching of the Maori language, and in 1987 Maori was made an official language of New Zealand.

Many Maori cultural practices are kept alive in contemporary New Zealand. All formal Maori gatherings are accompanied by oratory in Maori; action songs; formal greetings of visitors, accompanied by the *hongi*, or pressing together of noses on greening, and sometimes by ritual challenges; and cooking of food in earth ovens (*hāngi*) on preheated stones. Carved houses, which serve as centres of meeting and