

New Zealand Colonial Propaganda: The Use of Cannibalism, Enslavement, Genocide and Myth to Legitimise Colonial Conquest

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ABSTRACT: The eighteenth and nineteenth century European invasion of the Pacific led to many atrocities, but—as a separate ‘internal’ part of the progressive European conquest of Polynesia—none was more brutal or more devastating than the Maori invasion of the Chatham Islands and the subsequent slaughter of the unwarlike Moriori, the indigenous inhabitants of this small isolated island group. Curiously, and for far too long, has the so-called ‘Moriori holocaust’ been manipulated and incorporated into a founding legend that actually legitimises the subsequent British colonisation of New Zealand. It is a fabricated myth, and one that continues to influence modern race relations in that country.

[The Maori] commenced to kill us like sheep. ... [We] were terrified, fled to the bush, concealed ourselves in holes underground, and in any place to escape our enemies. It was to no avail; we were discovered and killed—men, women, and children indiscriminately.

Moriori survivor of initial 1835 massacre¹

We took possession ... in accordance with our customs and we caught all the people. Not one escaped. Some ran from us, these we killed, and others we killed—but what of that? It was in accordance with our custom ... I am not aware of any of our people being killed by them.

Rakatau Katihe, Maori witness in the Native Land Court, 1870²

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¹ Quoted in Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years* (London, Vintage, 1998), p. 53.

² Rakatau Katihe, Maori witness, Native Land Court, Chatham Islands minute book 1, p. 10, 1870, quoted in Michael King, *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* (Auckland, NZ: Viking, 1989), p. 66.

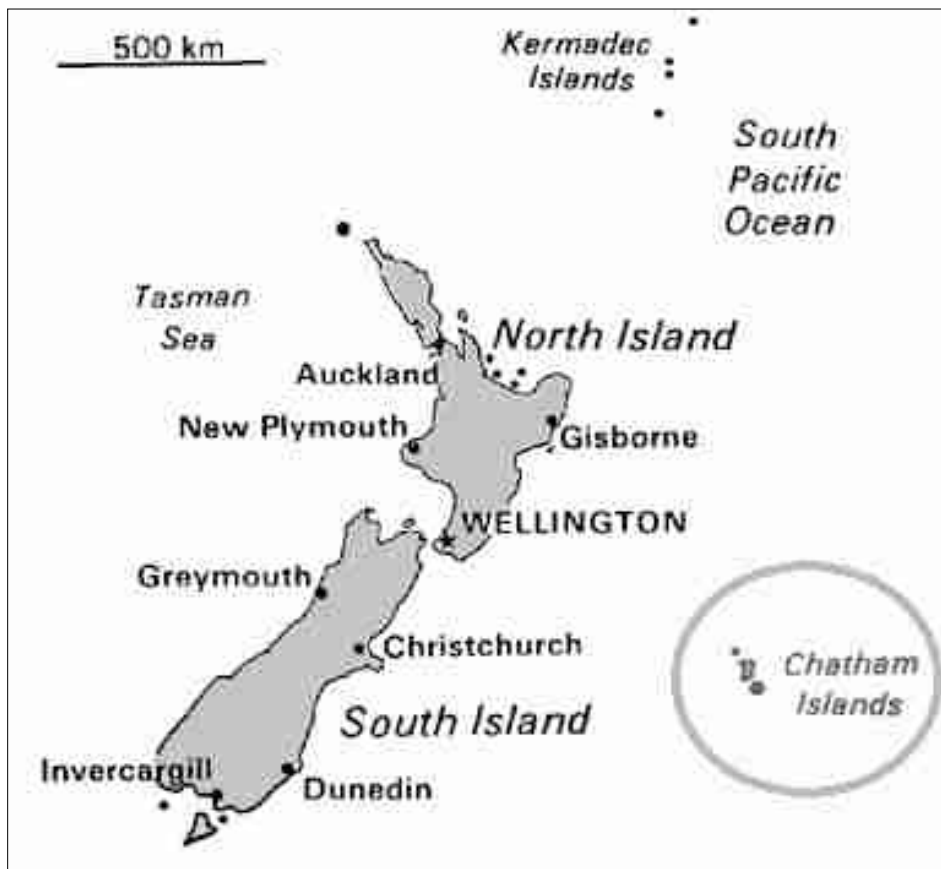
Introduction

Worldwide, the arrival of European peoples upset the internal dynamics of the Indigenous societies they encountered, often causing much internal warfare. In the case of New Zealand, the intensification of contact between Europeans and Maori paralleled and propelled the already existing escalating intra- and inter-tribal Maori conflict. Such was the intensity of this that the period 1815-1840 is generally referred to as the era of the 'Musket Wars'. The challenges posed by increasing European contact, new ideas, the availability of new weapons technology, and a desire to 'settle old scores' resulted in internal warfare on an unprecedented and disastrous scale. The consequence was a substantial population displacement and the associated redistribution of boundaries. Many peoples were forced from their traditional lands. Some clans of the northern Taranaki tribes Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama (collectively known as the Te Ati Awa), in response to pressures from Waikato tribes, then relocated south to Port Nicholson (the future site of Wellington). Here they found themselves challenged by another group of recent Taranaki arrivals, the Ngati Raukawa. Inopportunistically for the Te Ati Awa, these people were close kin of the feared Ngati Toa *rangatira* (chief) and war leader Te Rauparaha, a leading participant in the 'Musket Wars'. As a result, in 1835, the Te Ati Awa chose to leave their ancestral lands and invade the Chatham Islands.³

The Chatham Islands: History and Background to Invasion

The Chatham Islands group is located approximately 870 km east of the southern New Zealand city of Christchurch. They have been part of New Zealand's national territory since 1842. The entire group consists of ten islands, although only two, Chatham Island and Pitt Island, are currently inhabited, and this was almost certainly also the case in prehistory. Archaeological evidence indicates that Polynesian peoples first settled the islands, most likely, approximately seven to five hundred years ago. The Moriori called their islands 'Rekohu', which translates to something like 'sun through the mist', an apt name given the often-bleak weather.

³ Philippa Mein Smith has succinctly described this turn of events: 'Thus encounters with Europe led to displacement of Maori, who in turn used European technology and people to dispossess Moriori.' *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 37.



Location of Chatham Islands⁴

Europeans had encountered the Moriori first when the brig *HMS Chatham* was blown off course on 29 November 1791. The commander of the *Chatham*, Lieutenant William Broughton, had then claimed the islands for Britain. In 1809, the island was mapped and the period of exploitation began.⁵ The Chathams became an important hub in the Antipodean sealing and whaling industry. This was to prove devastating for the Moriori, resulting in the decimation of one of their most important sources for food and clothing—the seals—and the introduced a host of European illnesses. Measles, influenza and venereal diseases all took

⁴ Location of Chatham Islands, reproduced from ScienceBlogs, 'The First South Pacific Island Dinosaurs Unearthed', *Living the Science life (Scientist, Interrupted)* <<http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/2006/03/29/the-first-south-pacific-island/>> [accessed 18 March 2013].

⁵ H.D. Skinner, *The Moriori of Chatham Islands, Memoirs of Bernice P. Bishop Museum of Ethnology and Natural History*, 9.1 (1923), p. 30.

their toll of the Moriori, with an estimated population loss of four hundred persons by the early 1830s.⁶ It also saw knowledge of the peaceful Moriori and their lands transmitted to their martial ‘cousins’ the Maori. The Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama, who were resident in the Wellington region of New Zealand in the 1830s became aware of ‘a fertile land where potatoes grew readily, fish and other foods abounded, and the inhabitants would offer little resistance to an occupier.’⁷

The Moriori, like the Maori of southern New Zealand, were hunter-gatherer-fishers, because the prevailing climatic conditions had prohibited the cultivation of any of the plants that the earlier East Polynesians brought with them to New Zealand and they lacked the usual assortment of Polynesian small animals. Their hunter-gatherer-fisher subsistence economy had meant that the islands were probably unable to support a pre-European population of more than about 2000 people.⁸ Adaptation to this lifestyle had necessitated other structural changes in their society, changes that enabled them to adapt and develop a new culture over many centuries. One principal development was the renouncing of warfare and the development of a system for maintaining social order, without resort to destructive violence. This was known as the Law of Nunuku after the chief, Nunuku Whenua, who initially instigated this covenant of peace. Under this system of dispute resolution, combat had to cease immediately following the drawing of first blood. As the geographer Jared Diamond maintains, the Moriori had become an ‘unwarlike population with simple technology and weapons, and without strong leadership or organization’—the complete opposite of the Maori.⁹ Once the Maori learned of their ‘long lost’, peaceful cousins the fate of the Moriori was sealed.

Invasion

In 1835 the Ngati Mutunga had resolved to leave the Port Nicholson region and invade the Chatham Islands. The Ngati Tama also determined to be party to this venture. According to most histories, these Maori seized a trading brig, the *Rodney*, in what is now Wellington harbour and compelled its commander to transport them and their possessions to the Chatham Islands, this beginning the genocide of the Moriori by the Maori. An initial party of five hundred men, women and children, and which included warriors armed with guns, tomahawks and clubs, had reached the Chatham Islands on 19 November 1835, with an ensuing

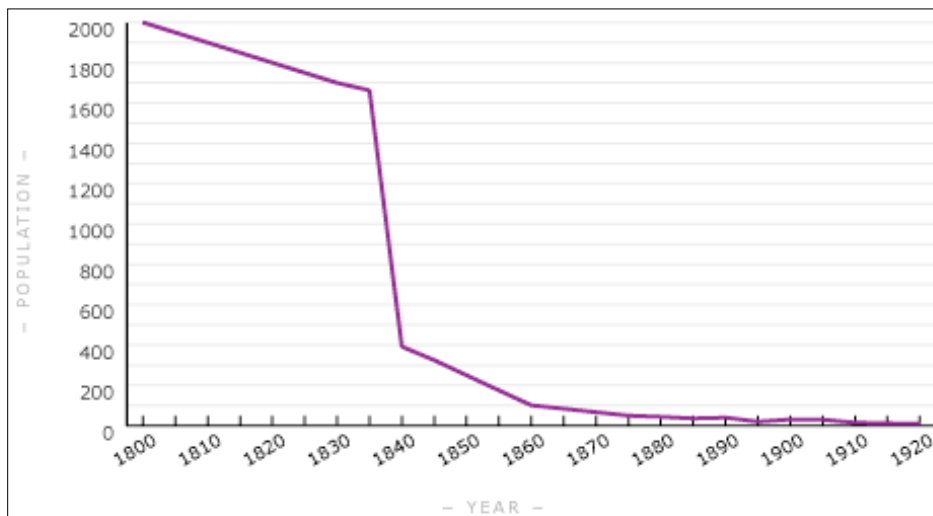
⁶ Waitangi Tribunal, *Rekohu: A Report on Moriori and Ngati Mutunga Claims in the Chatham Islands*, 2001, p. 37.

⁷ *Ibid.* See also Michael King, *Moriori*, pp. 53-55.

⁸ R. Richards, ‘A Population Distribution Map of the Morioris of the Chatham Islands, Circa 1790’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 81 (1972), pp. 350-374.

⁹ Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, p. 56.

group of some four hundred arriving shortly after, on 5 December 1835. The Maori proclaimed themselves the rulers of the islands. While younger Moriori warriors had wanted to fight the invading Maori, the counsel of elders was that they should adhere to their custom for resolving disputes; and this tradition prevailed. The Maori then attacked *en masse*, killing several hundred over a period of some days, many of whom, in accordance with ritual, they cooked and ate. Evidence presented at an 1870 Native Land Court hearing ‘puts the number killed in 1835–36 at around 300—about one-sixth of the population.’¹⁰



This graph illustrates the dramatic decline in the Moriori population after 1830.¹¹

The remaining Moriori had been enslaved and, over the next few years, most were killed.¹² The survivors of the Maori invasion were forced to reside in wretched squalor, and were ‘poorly fed, compelled to undertake extreme labour, brutalised, made to respond to everyone’s bidding (including even Maori children), and, for a time, gratuitously killed at whim.’¹³ They were also prohibited from marrying one another or having children, and, in a departure from normal Maori conquest custom, Moriori women ‘were not taken as wives, not even as secondary wives ... Nor were the children of the sexual exploitation by Maori men of Moriori women accepted by their Maori fathers.’¹⁴ It was not until

¹⁰ Waitangi Tribunal, *Rekohu*, p. 42.

¹¹ Reproduced from King, *Moriori*, p. 74.

¹² Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, p. 53.

¹³ Waitangi Tribunal, *Rekohu*, p. 4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

1862 that Maori enslavement of the Moriori ended. At that time, the Moriori had chronicled the names of 226 of their countrymen who had been killed and another ‘1366 who, they wrote, had died of ‘despair’’.¹⁵

Moriori oral tradition suggests that, at the time of the arrival of the Maori, they numbered 1561 people. The names of these people are today inscribed on a *pou* (pole) located at the Kopinga Marae on Chatham Island.¹⁶ Bishop Selwyn had conducted a census when he visited the islands in 1848, and it identified only 268 Moriori.¹⁷ At a census conducted in 1862, they numbered only 101.¹⁸ In the intervening twenty-seven years, war and pestilence had descended upon the Moriori. Maori massacre, enslavement and cannibalism of the Moriori—not challenged by any European intervention—played a direct role in the ninety-four per cent reduction in Moriori numbers between 1835 and 1862. In 1889, Edward Tregear recorded only twenty-seven ‘full-blood’ Moriori and five ‘half-caste’. By the early 1890s, Alexander Shand reports that the number of ‘full-bloods’ had dropped to twenty-five.¹⁹ The numbers continued to decline, so that, by 1901, there were only twelve full-bloods living on the Chathams, and when Skinner visited in 1920, only two, with another two living on the mainland of New Zealand.²⁰ Many New Zealanders believe that the race died out with the death, in 1933, of Tame Horomona Rehe Solomon, better known as Tommy Solomon, the last ‘full-blooded’ Moriori.

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The Myth of the Moriori

In New Zealand, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, there was considerable interest in collecting and interpreting Maori oral traditions, especially their origin stories.²¹ While much valuable ethnographic material was collected, at least some of the oral traditions recorded were of ‘doubtful authenticity’.²² Likewise, the interpretation of this material, particularly by some of the leading luminaries of this ethnographic

¹⁵

Ibid.

¹⁶

Kopinga is the first modern Moriori *marae* (communal meeting place) on Chatham Island. It was opened in 2005. For a summary of the population decline, see Skinner, *The Moriori of Chatham Islands*, p. 8.

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Cited in Skinner, *The Moriori of Chatham Islands*, p. 8.

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Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand*, p. 37.

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Skinner, *The Moriori of Chatham Islands*, p. 8; and, Alexander Shand, ‘The Moriori People of the Chatham Islands: Their Traditions and History’, *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 3.2 (June 1894), p. 77.

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Skinner, *The Moriori of Chatham Islands*, p. 8.

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For instance see George E. Grey, *Ko nga mahinga a nga tupuna Maori*, London, George Willis, 1854; and, Edward Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders; With Illustrations of Their Manners and Customs* (London, Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1854).

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Janet M. Davidson, ‘New Zealand’, in *The Prehistory of Polynesia*, ed. by Jesse D. Jennings (Canberra, ACT: Australian National University Press, 1979), p. 226.

movement, such as S. Percy Smith and Elsdon Best, was seriously flawed. Smith, in particular, has been accused of misinterpreting, embellishing and manipulating ‘existing authentic oral traditions to make extravagant claims’.²³ Even so, the early and general public acceptance of some fallacious traditions about the Maori and the Moriori origins has proved enduring. Many dubious origin theories were rejected very early, or were subsequently greatly amended by scholars working in the field of New Zealand prehistory, yet they have found fertile ground in the imagination of many New Zealanders.



Among these Moriori people, photographed in 1877 by Alfred Martin, were survivors of the 1835 Maori invasion. Hirawanu Tapu (second left, standing), Rohana (second left, sitting) and Tatua (second right, standing) were adolescents at the time, and endured over two decades of slavery. Descendants of survivors include Wari Tutaki (left), Teretiu Rehe (third left, standing), Rangitapua Horomona Rehe (fourth left, standing), Piripi (far right), Ngakikingi (middle, sitting) and Te Tene Rehe (next right).²⁴

²³ Rawiri Taonui, ‘Polynesian Oral Traditions’, in *Vaka Moana: Voyages of the Ancestors: The Discovery and Settlement of the Pacific*, ed. by K.R. Rowe, (Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), p. 35.

²⁴ Canterbury Museum: 411A Martin Album 1, p. 28, reproduced in King, *Moriori*, p. 61.

In particular, one set of discredited origin interpretations has had considerable influence. Known as the ‘Mori or Maruiwi Myth’, this narrative contends that: ‘New Zealand was first settled by an inferior race known as Mori (confused with the Chatham Islanders) or Maruiwi [a made-up mixed Melanesian/Polynesian people] who were conquered by later Maoris’.²⁵ This tradition had wide circulation in the mid-1860s, when educated Victorian gentlemen and scholars began avidly collecting and recording Maori oral traditions.²⁶ By then, however, many years after first contact with Europeans, and with the New Zealand Wars in full swing, traditional Maori culture had changed substantially, to an extent that it is difficult to accept the standard ‘Mori or Maruiwi Myth’ as an accurate reflection of pre-contact traditions. Nevertheless, as late as the 1930s, respected writers on New Zealand history and Maori traditions were still advocating the presence in New Zealand of a pre-Maori people. In 1930, for example, James Cowan, in his popular *The Maori: Yesterday and To-day*, re-iterated the pre-Maori people hypothesis, in a manner that also exhibited overtones of racial superiority. It proved to be an appealing theory, widely accepted by many New Zealanders—both *Pakeha* and Maori. Cowan had contended that:

More than a thousand years ago, centuries before the sailing canoes of the eastern Pacific made landfall on these shores [New Zealand], there were people here—a race closely resembling the Maori, in fact, Polynesians of an earlier and more primitive stage of culture than the Hawaikian Maori, with a strong element of Melanesian blood. Some of these tribes came from the north, probably from the New Hebrides, and Fiji. The later migrations which mingled with these peoples were purely Polynesian.²⁷

According to Cowan, the ancient pre-Maori people of his version of Maori origins were one and the same as the Maruiwi.²⁸

S. Percy Smith’s interpretation of the Maori occupation of New Zealand, as published in a series of books just before, and immediately after, the commencement of World War I, was to have the greatest impact in terms of popularising and substantiating the myth of the Maori conquest of an earlier people.²⁹ In Smith’s version, New Zealand was

²⁵ Davidson, ‘New Zealand’, p. 226. Also see Peter Clayworth, ‘‘An Indolent and Chilly Folk’: The Development of the Idea of the ‘Mori Myth’’, thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History at the University of Otago, 2001, pp. ii, 5.

²⁶ For example, J.A. Wilson, *The Story of Te Waharoa*, (Christchurch, NZ: Whitcombe and Tombs, [1866] 1907).

²⁷ James Cowan, *The Maori: Yesterday and To-day* (Auckland, NZ: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1930), p. 37.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²⁹ See S. Percy Smith, *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast, North Island of New Zealand prior to 1840*, *Memoirs of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 1, New Plymouth, T. Avery, 1910; S. Percy Smith, *The Lore of the Whare-wananga, or, Teachings of the*

initially settled by ‘a mixed Melanesian-Polynesian group from western Polynesia with a Polynesian language. They settled only the North Island, and later the Chathams’.³⁰ He contended that the main fleet of Maori settlers had arrived around AD 1350, after an initial vanguard had arrived in about AD 1175. His long-time fellow colleague in the Polynesian Society and friend, Elsdon Best, ably assisted Smith in the dissemination of the ‘Moriuri Myth’. Best had further developed and publicised Smith’s original theory. He and others postulated the idea of a pre-Maori, inferior Melanesian people called the Mauriwi or the Mouriuri, who were effectively exterminated by the more advanced Polynesian Maori.³¹ Best’s widely published work, *The Maori As He Was*, was still in print in the mid-1970s. He had contended that, as the Maori became more numerous in New Zealand:

quarrels arose between them and the Mouriuri people, and finally the latter were attacked and harassed until exterminated. We are told that some sought refuge in the interior, and in forest areas, such as Maungapohatu, while some went and settled at the Chatham Islands...³²

The Moriuri Myth as Proffered to the Pakeha

It is now recognised that the ‘Moriuri Myth’ was constructed as a result of collaboration between Maori and *Pakeha*. Maori informants and Maori ‘knowledge’ influenced both Smith and Best in forming their ideas. In particular, it was writings of Hoani Turei Whatahoro, a Ngati Kahungunu scholar, which had carried considerable weight with them. It was Whatahoro who furnished Smith with the ‘Lore of the Whare Wananga’ (‘school of learning’), as supposedly taught in the 1860s, presenting it in a manner that, as Peter Clayworth has argued, ‘fitted easily into Western discourses of power, race, folklore and migration

*Maori College on Religion, Cosmology, and History: written down by H. T. Whatahoro from the Teachings of Te Matorohanga and Nepia Pohuhu, Priests of the Whare-wananga of East Coast, New Zealand. Part I: Te Kauwae-runga, or ‘Things Celestial’, Memoir of the Polynesian Society, vol. 3 (New Plymouth, NZ: T. Avery, 1913); and, S. Percy Smith, The Lore of the Whare-wananga, or, Teachings of the Maori College on their History and Migrations, etc.: written down by H. T. Whatahoro from the Teachings of Te Matorohanga and Nepia Pohuhu, Priests of the Whare-wananga of East Coast, New Zealand. Part II: Te Kauwae-raro or ‘Things Terrestrial’, Memoir of the Polynesian Society, vol. 4 (New Plymouth, NZ: T. Avery, 1915). He had though first published his hypothesis in the late 1890s, see S. Percy Smith, ‘Hawaiki: the whence of the Maori’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 7-8 (1898-99).*

³⁰ Peter Bellwood, *Man’s Conquest of the Pacific* (Auckland, NZ: William Collins Publishers, 1978), p. 383.

³¹ Elsdon Best, ‘Maori and Maruiwi’, *Transaction of the New Zealand Institute*, vol. 48, 1915, pp. 435-47; and, T. W. Downes, ‘Maruiwi, Maori and Moriuri’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 42 (1933), pp. 156-66.

³² Elsdon Best, *The Maori As He Was: A Brief Account of Maori Life as it was in Pre-European Days*, 3rd edn (Wellington, NZ: A. R. Shearer, Government Printer, 1974), p. 29.

history, thus explaining their easy acceptance by *Pakeha*.³³ At the beginning of the twentieth century few scholars had evaluated critically the ‘Lore of the Whare Wananga’ or sought to consider the reasons Whatahoro had for drafting it, and thus the bias in this work was not exposed for many decades. A false, or invented, tradition was accepted as authentic. Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger, in their *The Invention of Tradition* have highlighted that this was not unique to New Zealand or to the late-nineteenth century.³⁴ Hobsbawn had stressed the point that: ‘Traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented.’³⁵

It is also worth noting Allan Hanson’s contention, that tradition is ‘an invention designed to serve contemporary purposes’, also applies to the ‘Mori Mori Myth’.³⁶ Moreover, the ‘Mori Mori Myth’—especially its denigration of the Mori Mori as an extinct, inferior pre-Maori people driven from New Zealand and forced to seek refuge in the Chathams—was perpetuated by being taught to generations of New Zealand school children. In particular, the *School Journal*, a magazine-style instructional series supplied by the government to all primary schools, and A. H. Reed’s school book *The Coming of the Maori to Ao-tea-roa* were responsible for perpetuating and enshrining this fabrication in New Zealand’s wider culture.³⁷ It was not until 2011 that a new edition of the *School Journal* was published that gave an account of Mori Mori history based on modern scholarship.³⁸

The nineteenth-century historian and ethnographer, Arthur Thompson, had rejected this hypothesis as early as 1859.³⁹ It was also challenged by

³³ Clayworth, ‘An Indolent and Chilly Folk’, p. 12.

³⁴ *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger, Canto edn, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996).

³⁵ Eric Hobsbawn, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions’, in Hobsbawn and Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 1.

³⁶ Allan Hanson, ‘The Making of the Maori: Culture invention and Its Logic’, *American Anthropologists* (new series), 19. 4 (Dec. 1989), p. 890.

³⁷ See for example, ‘The Coming of the Maoris’, *School Journal*, part 1, February 1916, pp. 10-16; ‘How the Maoris Came to New Zealand: Toi and Whatonga’, *School Journal*, part 3, March 1916, pp. 41-46; ‘The Passing of the Mouriuri’, *School Journal*, part 3, July 1916, pp. 184-191; and A.H. Reed, *The Coming of the Maori to Ao-Tea-Roa* (Dunedin, Reed, 1934). Jacinta Blank has a fine discussion on the impact of educational readings on disseminating and maintaining the prehistoric Maori/Mori Mori myth, as well as a helpful list of references which perpetuated this myth (Jacinta Blank, ‘Imaging Mori Mori: A History of Ideas of a People in the Twentieth Century’, thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in History at the University of Canterbury, 2007, pp. 64-69, 131-132).

³⁸ See Imogen Neale, ‘Rewriting the History of Mori Mori’, Stuff.co.nz, 20 March 2011 <<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/4789044/Rewriting-the-history-of-Mori-Mori>> [accessed 26 July 2012].

³⁹ Arthur Thompson, *The Story of New Zealand, Past and Present, Savage and Civilized*, vol. 1 (of 2) (London, 1859), p. 61, cited in James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, (Auckland, NZ: Penguin Books, 1996), p. 26.

the work of Smith and Best's contemporary colleague, the ethnologist Alexander Shand, who was fluent in both Maori and Moriori, having spent his life on the Chatham Islands since arriving as a fifteen-year-old boy in 1855. With the assistance of the Moriori Hirawanu Tapu, (who after gaining his freedom from slavery had recorded much of the surviving lore of his people), he published a significant treatise on the Moriori which did not corroborate the Smith-Best legend.⁴⁰ H. D. Skinner and H. W. Williams more than comprehensively challenged the Smith-Best hypothesis.⁴¹ Skinner, who had conducted extensive analysis of the material culture of the Moriori, in public and private collections through New Zealand and internationally, concluded that the 'traditions relating to 'Maruiwi' that are associated with these stories of [pre-Maori] discovery have been shown to be worthless.⁴² He went further, when he stated that he regarded 'the information about Mauriwi given by Whatahoro's informants as quite unreliable.'⁴³ Indeed, he was the first to make an assertive challenge to the orthodoxy of the 'Moriori Myth' and the reliability of the 'Lore of Whare Wananga'.⁴⁴

The Corrective Historiography

Later, in the 1950s, the New Zealand born archaeologist Roger Duff challenged the Smith-Best model, and he built on the earlier work of Skinner in disputing what had been the orthodox understanding of the settlement of New Zealand.⁴⁵ The dismantling of the 'Moriori Myth' was continued by a number of scholars, but, in particular, C. Andrew Sharp and David Simmons, who then systematically deconstructed Smith's hypothesis.⁴⁶ In particular, Simmons exposed Smith's manipulation of 'oral tradition and other evidence to produce a 'coherent' account.'⁴⁷ In 1980, the archaeologist Doug Sutton studied sites and carried out

⁴⁰ Alexander Shand, *The Moriori People of the Chatham Islands* (New Plymouth, NZ: Polynesian Society, 1911).

⁴¹ Skinner, *The Morioris of Chatham Islands*; and H.W. Williams, 'The Maruiwi Myth', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 46, pp. 105-22.

⁴² Skinner, *The Moriori of Chatham Islands*, p. 129; also see pp. 17-21.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Roger Duff, *The Mōa-Hunter Period of Maori Culture*, (Wellington, NZ: Department of Internal Affairs, 1950).

⁴⁶ C.A. Sharp, 'The Prehistory of the New Zealand Maoris: Some Possibilities', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 65 (1956), pp. 155-60; C.A. Sharp, 'Maori Genealogies and Canoe Traditions', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 67 (1958), pp. 37-38; C.A. Sharp, 'Maori Genealogies and the Fleet', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 68 (1959), pp. 12-13; D.R. Simmons, 'The Sources of Sir George Grey's *Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna*', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 75 (1966), pp. 177-188; D.R. Simmons, 'A New Zealand Myth', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 3 (1969), pp. 14-31; and, D.R. Simmons, *The Great New Zealand Myth: A Study of the Discovery and Origin Traditions of the Maori* (Wellington, NZ: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1976).

⁴⁷ K.R. Howe, *The Quest for Origins: Who First Discovered and Settled New Zealand and the Pacific Islands?* (Auckland, NZ: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 161.

excavations on Chatham Island, subsequently analysing the recovered artefactual material and publishing his findings.⁴⁸ His was ‘the first study of Moriori culture since Skinner’s work’, and he argued that ‘pre-contact Moriori had developed a society responsive to the environmental constraints of life in the Chathams.’⁴⁹ Thus the apparent simplified state of their culture at contact was not the result of them being an inferior or more primitive people when compared to the Maori, but was rather a result of environmental factors beyond their control. A climate that prevented the cultivation of crops and a lack of environmental resources, such as trees and certain stone suitable for tool making, had forced them to make changes and simplify aspects of their culture.

The most significant cause for change in the popular understanding of the origins, history and continued survival of the Moriori came in 1989 with the publication of Michael King’s *Moriori: A People Rediscovered*.⁵⁰ King has himself been identified as ‘being instrumental in bringing challenges to the old orthodoxy into the public domain.’⁵¹ It was this history, unlike any of the previous scholarship, that challenged the ‘Moriori Myth’, that captured the public’s imagination and brought real change to its understanding of this aspect of the nation’s accepted narrative. This work, along with a number of subsequent portrayals of Moriori history and culture, such as the 1998 Te Papa (Museum of New Zealand) exhibition ‘The First Chatham Islanders’, produced in partnership with Moriori, and the 2000 documentary film, *Feathers of Peace*, it created by the Ngati Apa filmmaker Barry Barclay, had lifted the profile of the Moriori in the New Zealand consciousness.

Within academia there was also significant revisionary research conducted in the recent past. The two foremost were Peter Clayworth’s ‘An Indolent and Chilly Folk’: The Development of the Idea of the ‘Moriori Myth’, and Jacinta Blank’s ‘Imaging Moriori: A History of Ideas of a People in the Twentieth Century’.⁵² Clayworth focuses on the development of the ‘Moriori myth’ from the 1840s to the 1920s, and explains how it had become entrenched as an orthodoxy. Blank’s work complements that of Clayworth by charting the history of ideas about Moriori origins, settlement and culture across the course of the twentieth century. To these works can be added Ross Clark’s analysis of linguistic evidence concluding that it was:

⁴⁸ Douglas Sutton, ‘A Culture History of the Chatham Islands’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 89.1 (1980), pp. 67-93; Douglas Sutton, ‘The Whence of the Moriori’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 19.1 (1985), pp. 3-13.

⁴⁹ Blank, ‘Imaging Moriori’, p. 123.

⁵⁰ King, *Moriori*.

⁵¹ Blank, ‘Imaging Moriori’, p. 123.

⁵² Clayworth, ‘An Indolent and Chilly Folk’; Blank, ‘Imaging Moriori’.

... consistent with the commonly held view that the ancestors of the Moriori and the Maori were the same people, who lived in New Zealand for some time after its original settlement, and that some centuries ago a group of these people discovered the Chatham islands, settled there and became the ancestors of the Moriori.⁵³

The archaeological and ethnographic evidence excavated and collected from the Chatham Islands exhibits remarkable parallels to the material culture associated with the early period of the Maori occupation of the South Island of New Zealand.⁵⁴ Indeed, the artefact evidence overwhelmingly points to the Chatham Islands being settled from southern New Zealand during the period archaeologists refer to as the 'Archaic Phase' of Maori culture, with little, if any, subsequent contact. Almost the entire suite of artefacts which define the 'Archaic Phase', such as adze types, ornaments, pendants, necklaces, hunting weapons and fishing gear, were all found on the Chatham Islands. The Moriori are, in all likelihood, the descendants of South Island Maori who very early left southern New Zealand and settled in the Chathams, with little if any subsequent contact between the two groups.

There is debate as to exactly when the first settlement had occurred. A NZ \$830,000 grant awarded in 2011 to the Hokotehi Moriori Trust, Dr Janet Wilmshurst from Landcare Research and Professor Athol Anderson from the Australian National University, is being used to attempt to resolve the question of just when the Moriori first arrived.⁵⁵ It is hoped that, by integrating archaeological, palaeoecological and ancient DNA evidence, a more precise timing of when first settlement occurred will be forthcoming, as well as a better understanding of the Moriori relationships with the Maori and other East Polynesian cultures. It is however, beyond doubt that, if the Chathams were not settled from New Zealand, then they were first peopled by the same East Polynesian peoples from which the Maori also originated.

Justifying British Colonisation

The New Zealand colonial government, through the Compensation Court and the Native Land Court, had used the Maori conquest of the Chathams to justify and legitimise the confiscation of Maori lands in Taranaki and its subsequent redistribution to European settlers. During

⁵³ Ross Clark, 'Moriori and Maori: The Linguistic Evidence', in *The Origins of the First New Zealanders*, ed. by Douglas G. Sutton (Auckland, NZ: Auckland University Press, 1994), p. 133.

⁵⁴ Bellwood, *Man's Conquest of the Pacific*, p. 383.

⁵⁵ For further details on this grant see: The Royal Society of New Zealand, Marsden Funding 2011, 'Solving a Prehistoric Enigma: Moriori Settlement on the Chatham Islands', 6 October 2011 <<http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/2011/10/06/wilmshurst-2/>> [accessed 15 August 2012].

the New Zealand Wars, Maori and Europeans engaged in three major campaigns over land in the Taranaki.⁵⁶ These are generally referred to as the First Taranaki War (1860-61), the Second Taranaki War (1863-66) and Titokowaru's War (1868-69). A major repercussion of the First Taranaki War was the confiscation of large tracts of Maori land under the punitive *New Zealand Settlements Act 1863*. This legislation was the principal causal agent of the Second Taranaki War and of Titokowaru's War.

As colonists took up the confiscated land, the land upon which the Maori cultivated their subsistence crops, the latter were left with little option but to resist further encroachment or starve. But there were other factors involved in the continuing cycles of warfare. The 1860s saw many Maori who had been displaced or enslaved by the earlier Musket Wars return to the Taranaki in an attempt to reassert ownership of their traditional lands. Taranaki Maori enslaved by Waikato tribes were freed and they returned home. Similarly, other displaced Taranaki Maori, including the Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama of the Chatham Islands, had returned with the hope of reclaiming their traditional lands. These returning Maori, together with the ever-increasing numbers of colonists, had further contributed to the rising tension over the land issue. In an attempt to ease some of the tension, a Compensation Court, made up of judges from the Native Land Court, was then established to return some of the confiscated land to the Maori.⁵⁷ However, by this time, there simply was not enough arable land available to meet all the then demands.

The return from the Chatham Islands of the Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama was not warmly received by the colonial government which believed that there were too many Maori already in the region. More Maori meant less land for settlers, and potentially, more Maori to fight. Nevertheless the Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama appealed to the Compensation Court for a land grant. They were unsuccessful, due to what is referred to as the '1840 rule'.

The Treaty of Waitangi

In 1840 over five hundred Maori Chiefs and the British Crown had signed the Treaty of Waitangi. This accord is the basis upon which Britain claimed sovereignty over New Zealand. The Treaty had included clauses guaranteeing the Maori certain rights in respect to their lands and the resources associated with those lands, as well as the rights and

⁵⁶ See James Belich, *The Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland, NZ: Penguin, 1986); and, James Belich, *I Shall Not Die: Titokowaru's War, New Zealand 1868-1869* (Wellington, NZ: Allen & Unwin, 1989).

⁵⁷ Waitangi Tribunal, *Rekohu*, p. 3.

privileges of British subjects and the protection of the Crown. The colonial government then decreed that, for land disputes between the Maori, it would take the tribal boundaries existing at the time of the Treaty as the basis on which to adjudicate. As the Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama were absent from the Taranaki in 1840, the Compensation Court ruled against them. However, later in 1870, when the Native Land Court approached the question of land ownership in the Chatham Islands, the Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama were successful and the Moriori lost badly. The Maori were granted ninety-seven per cent of Chatham Island and all the outer islands. The Moriori were only awarded three per cent of Chatham Island. The ‘reason’ given was that by 1840 the Maori had won the Chathams by conquest.⁵⁸ As a consequence the Moriori were effectively rendered landless.

In apportioning land ownership in the Chatham Islands, the Native Land Court had made its decision ‘in accordance with custom, not according to any higher principles of British justice, such as might have been gleaned by reference to the Treaty of Waitangi.’⁵⁹ The practicalities of war and the seemingly insatiable *Pakeha* demand for land rode roughshod over ethical considerations. Indeed, as highlighted by the Waitangi Tribunal, a modern official juridical body established to scrutinise and resolve claims of Treaty of Waitangi breaches:

Any thoughts of higher justice fell prey to the war years. Settlers and many politicians spoke openly of effecting a conquest at that time, claiming that conquest was good Maori law and gave the right to confiscate the land. The Chathams case had so shown, in their view.⁶⁰

The Maori dispossession of the Moriori land in the Chathams was embraced by *Pakeha* as the rationale for their conquest and seizure of Maori land on mainland New Zealand. It was a nice neat theory—settlement by successive waves of increasingly more culturally advanced peoples—that fitted well with late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century mainstream racial thinking which asserted British notions of cultural superiority. This principle was effortlessly and enthusiastically adopted and it has proved difficult for the *Pakeha* to abandon.

White New Zealand’s Guilty Conscience?

A possible reason for *Pakeha* still believing that they had a superior claim to the land because of the ‘right of conquest’ is the growth in Maori activism since the 1970s, especially in respect to land claims and

⁵⁸ For a more detailed discussion of these events see *ibid.*, especially pp. 1-5.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Pakeha fears and doubts over the legitimacy of their land ownership. Massey University of Manawatu's eminent Professor of History, William Oliver, had hinted that this might be the case in the mid-1960s. When he ended his entry on 'The Moriori' in the 1966 publication *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, in which he refuted the idea of the Moriori being an inferior pre-Maori people in New Zealand, he posed the questions:

And yet, one may be permitted to wonder, is not this 'error' strangely related to the myth of the possessors? If the Maoris themselves could be represented as an invading, conquering, expropriating people, would not this story serve to justify the activities of a race of subsequent conquerors, to turn the charge of expropriation upon the victims themselves?⁶¹

Conflict within the realm of identity politics is not new in New Zealand. Deep divisions still exist, especially in relation to colonialism, ethnic identity, land ownership and the consequences of the colonial misappropriation of Maori land by European settlers. Debates such as a controversy that developed around comments made by the Tariana Turia, Associate Minister of Maori Affairs, in late August 2000, when she suggested that the social problems modern Maori experienced, were the result of a form of post-colonial traumatic stress disorder resultant from colonialism and that 'some aspects of New Zealand history might best be labelled a kind of 'holocaust' ', have become increasingly proffered in New Zealand.⁶²

It is within these debates that we can identify the resilience of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century social Darwinian ideals and justifications for European hegemony in New Zealand. Michael Goldsmith, for example, had identified three forms of backlash in New Zealand newspapers in relation to the 'Turia PCTSD/holocaust' fall out—denial of the severity of colonial impact; acceptance of consequences but rejection that they were 'the result of systematic and intentional policies'; and, the 'very time-honoured argument ... the Maori themselves had slaughtered each other with abandon before and after European contact.'⁶³ It was within this latter form of response that the Maori massacre of the Moriori was raised as an example of the fact that Europeans behaved no differently than had the Maori themselves.

⁶¹ William H. Oliver, 'The Moriori', in A.H. McLintock (ed.), *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Government, 1966), pp. 83-88.

⁶² Michael Goldsmith, 'Maori Assertions of Indigeneity, Post-Colonial Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Holocaust Denial', in *Politics of Indigeneity in the South Pacific: Recent Problems of Identity in Oceania*, ed. by Eric Kolig, Hermann Mückler and Kenneth Maddock (Münster, Germany: Lit Verlag, 2002), p. 86. Also see David B. MacDonald, 'Daring to Compare: The Debate About a Maori 'Holocaust' in New Zealand', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5.3 (2003), pp. 383-403.

⁶³ Goldsmith, 'Maori Assertions of Indigeneity', p. 88.

This was an attempt to legitimise modern New Zealand hegemonic hierarchies and to nullify Maori protest regarding the consequences of colonialism—specifically that European colonisation of New Zealand represented a ‘Maori holocaust’. This matter caused considerable debate both within, and outside, the academy.

The Auckland Unitec Institute of Technology’s Keith Rankin, a political economist and economic historian, as well as a columnist, has argued in response to Turia’s comments that the ‘years 1820-1840 were years of genocide, ethnic cleansing and conquest’ in New Zealand.⁶⁴ However, rather than Europeans being the perpetrators of a ‘Maori holocaust’ and agents of a genocide, the real culprits were the Maori themselves. He had highlighted the Te Ati Awa invasion of the Chatham Islands as one of the two best-known examples (the other being the Ngati Toa conquest of the Horowhenua *iwi*, Muaupoko). For Rankin, the Te Ati Awa invasion was ‘every bit a holocaust to the Moriori’, and he asserted that the ‘Chathams annexation was pure conquest and genocide for the purpose of colonisation.’⁶⁵

In like vein, the controversial New Zealand politician, former Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the New Zealand First Party, Winston Peters, himself of Maori descent—(his father is a Maori of Ngati Wai, one of the Ngati Tama *hapu* who invaded the Chatham Islands)—in a major political speech, had stated that the only ‘holocaust’ in New Zealand’s history was ‘visited on the Chatham Islands Moriori by Taranaki Maori.’⁶⁶ As he put it: ‘[a]n entire society was wiped out’ when the ‘peaceful people of this remote part of New Zealand were invaded, enslaved and annihilated.’⁶⁷ Peters then challenged all New Zealanders to be honest about their history and the cause of current ills facing the Maori. His comments were particularly directed at what he referred to as Maori ‘separatists and sickly white liberals’, whom he accused of attempting to ‘create a myth of Maori as law abiding, peace loving, brown skinned angels living in some pre-colonial paradise.’⁶⁸

The Myth Further Abused

In early November 1989, in a speech made as part of the launch of the most significant recent publication on the Moriori, Michael King’s

⁶⁴ Keith Rankin, ‘Conquest and Trauma in Our Archipelago’, *Scoop*, 7 September 2000 <<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0009/S00030.htm>> [accessed 14 August 2012].

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Winston Peters, ‘The Way Ahead: One Country, One Electoral Franchise’, New Zealand First speech, 13 September 2000, available at Kiwiblog, ‘The Sep 2000 Peters Speech’ <http://www.kiwiblog.co.nz/2006/10/the_sep_2000_peters_speech.html> [accessed 14 August 2012].

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Moriori: A People Rediscovered, the then New Zealand Governor-General, Sir Paul Reeves, had expressed a hope that the telling of the Moriori story by a widely popular and respected New Zealand historian would help elucidate a history ‘misunderstood by many New Zealanders.’⁶⁹ But, in acknowledgement that the narrative of the Moriori had been manipulated for ignoble purposes, he then lamented that there would also be a ‘group of people only too willing to allow the story to feed their own prejudices about Maoris or anyone whose skin is brown.’⁷⁰

A corollary of the ‘Moriori Myth’ is that, by depicting the Maori as subjugators of the Moriori, it weakens belief in the Maori as the indigenous people of New Zealand. This is a point highlighted by ‘Aridd’ in a Wikipedia discussion board where he had stated:

To my knowledge, the only people who still like to cling on to the old nonsense [the belief that Moriori were pre-Maori inhabitants of New Zealand] are random people who have no expert knowledge of history, and simply want to find a way to deny that Maori are genuine *tangata whenua* [literally means ‘people of the earth’, the first peoples of New Zealand, a term Percy Smith and others applied to the supposed pre-Maori people of New Zealand].⁷¹

The myth of the Moriori, according to Maori academic Dr Ranganui Walker, has also helped to:

... salve *Pakeha* conscience for the betrayal of the Treaty of Waitangi and the oppression of the Maori. The myth has been used to justify the takeover of Maori lands (‘the Maoris did it to the Moriori’) and the suppression of the Maori language.⁷²

In Walker’s 1990 work, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End*, he argues that this is the reason why the false myth of a pre-Maori people, the Moriori, has been so resilient in New Zealand. He contended that: ‘Pakeha need the myth for the endorsement of colonisation and

⁶⁹ Paul Reeves, ‘Rediscovered’, speech given at the launch of *Moriori: A People Rediscovered*, Arowhenua Marae, Temuka, Canterbury, NZ, 5 November 1989 <<http://gg.govt.nz/node/515>> [accessed 26 July 2012]; King, *Moriori*. Another important work which challenged New Zealanders to reassess their understanding of Moriori was the 2000, Barry Barclay, documentary film *Feathers of Peace*.

⁷⁰ Reeves, ‘Rediscovered’.

⁷¹ Aridd, ‘This hypothesis is no longer widely accepted’, in ‘Talk: Moriori people’, Wikipedia, 12 September 2008 <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3AMoriori>> [accessed 30 July 2012].

⁷² Ranganui Walker, 1974, quoted in Anon., ‘Moriori Revival: The Protection and Preservation of Moriori Culture’, Stuff.co.nz, 20 June 2008, p. 2 <<http://www.stuff.co.nz/archived-stuff-sections/archived-national-sections/korero/498166/Moriori-revival>> [accessed 27 July 2012].

Pakeha dominance.⁷³ Considerable evidence can be drawn on to support this conclusion, but there are also other reasons why *Pakeha*, especially in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, were so drawn to the idea of a pre-Maori people in New Zealand. It not only legitimised European conquest of the land, it also provided *Pakeha* with solace regarding the fate of the Maori.

At the end of the nineteenth century two theories, the ‘fatal shore’ and ‘social Darwinism’, became conflated, this resulting in the widely held belief that the Maori were ‘doomed to extinction by immutable natural laws.’⁷⁴ It was held that just as the arrival of the Maori had heralded the demise of the Moriori, so too would the coming of the European colonist supplant the Maori. As Jacinta Blank put it:

Their accounts [Smith and Best’s] of a hapless pre-Maori people conquered by Polynesian explorers and exiled to Chatham Islands, where they slowly dwindled to extinction, provided a survival-of-the-fittest precedent for the British colonisation of New Zealand.⁷⁵

The decline in transfer of the land from the Maori to the *Pakeha*, and the dramatic fall in Maori numbers, did not require reflection within a moral context, what was being observed was merely the forces of nature in action. Nevertheless, this did provide the *Pakeha* with a pretext justifying their colonisation and predicting the prospect of Maori extinction. As Blank points out, the timing of Smith and Best’s narrative could not have been better for gaining public attention, it was ‘an idea whose time had come’ and thus it ‘succeeded in capturing large audiences.’⁷⁶ It was, as Blank argued:

... a time when many *Pakeha* New Zealanders believed that Maori were unlikely to recover from the effects of British colonisation, Smith and Best’s theories offered comfort for those who felt a sense of responsibility for Maori population decline. Late Victorian notions of natural selection at work in human societies through wars and conquests dovetailed neatly with stories of an earlier Maori conquest of part-Melanesian settlers. Maori may have been conquered by British troops and their lands occupied by British colonists, but it was part of a cycle of cultural development in which Maori had also supplanted an ‘inferior’ people.⁷⁷

⁷³ Ranginui Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End*, rev. edn (Auckland, NZ: Penguin Books, 2004 [1990]), p. 42.

⁷⁴ K.R. Howe, ‘Ideas of Maori Origins: 1880s-1970s: Moriori Origins; the Great Fleet’, Te Ara: *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, last updated 4 March 2009 <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/ideas-of-maori-origins/4>> [accessed 27 July 2012].

⁷⁵ Blank, ‘Imaging Moriori’, pp. 121-22.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.125.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

The Current and Popular Public Perceptions

While the hypotheses of Smith, Best and other advocates of a prior people are no longer accepted academically as a valid representation of New Zealand prehistory, this myth has proved to be remarkably resilient among the general public. The main reason for this is that it persisted in the New Zealand education system well into the 1970s. Thus, to this day, many New Zealanders believe that the Moriori were racially different to the Maori and that they were present in the country before the arrival of the Maori, and that they were a culturally inferior people who, unlike the Maori who farmed and settled in villages, instead based their survival on hunting moa and lived a nomadic existence. Further, on arrival in New Zealand the Maori killed and ate the Moriori, forcing the surviving vestiges of this people from the mainland to the Chatham Islands, where they completed the Moriori genocide when they invaded the Chathams in the 1830s. The extinction of the Moriori people is a fallacy for the 2006 New Zealand census recorded 945 people (albeit of mix descent) who then identified as Moriori.⁷⁸

Evidence that the above myth is prevalent and widespread, complete with racial overtones, is very evident in so many non-academic wikis, web pages and blogs. A particularly vituperative example can be found in the 'Urban Dictionary', where readers are informed that: 'Fish n Chips are now the replacement of Moriori for the Maori'.⁷⁹ This so-called 'dictionary' includes an entry, one worthy of quoting in length since it includes nearly all elements of the original myth. The Moriori, are deemed to be:

An extinct race of native people that used [*sic*] to live in New Zealand.

The cause of their extinction was the arrival of the Maori. As soon as the Maori landed in NZ, their ferocious appetite for native speices (*sic*) wiped out firstly, the moas (peaceful 3 metre tall native flightless birds).

Then the kiwis (another native flightless bird) neared extinction until the dormant cannibalism of the Maori kicked in.

The Maori realsied [*sic*] that Moriori were a far better game than small meatless kiwi, so the Maori hunted down the Moriori, fed upon thir [*sic*] internal and sexual organs to grow bigger, stronger and blacker. The poor Moriori were forced to flee their homeland to a remote island of Chattam [*sic*].

⁷⁸ Statistics New Zealand, '2006 Census', Table 18: Iwi Total Responses — for the Maori Descent Census Usually Resident Population Count, 2006 <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2006CensusHomePage/classification-counts-tables/about-people/~media/Statistics/Census/2006-reports/Classification-Count-Tables/People/iwi.ashx>> [accessed 15 August 2012].

⁷⁹ Urban Dictionary, 'moriore' <<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=moriore>> [accessed 15 August 2012].

This day, the Moriori cease to exist, but only in myths they are spoken of.

Moriori were eaten by the smelly Maori.⁸⁰

Similar views, although better expressed, can even be found at times on more respectable websites, such as Wikipedia. A recent entry on the Moriori people has stated that: 'They [the Moriori] were systematically hunted and eaten by Maori on mainland New Zealand until they were wiped out there'.⁸¹

The history of the Maori conquest of the Moriori is also cited in blogs as evidence of *Pakeha* compassion and superiority when compared to the Maori in the treatment of peoples they colonised. An example of this can be found in a posting by Sam on Virtual New Zealand's discussion of 'Moriori Culture'. In this posting, Sam writes:

Maori often talk about the injustice of the British due to colonisation. But the truth is that the British signed a treaty to allow Maori to live as British subjects, whereas when the boot was on the other foot, the Maori ruthlessly wiped out the Moriori to extinction. The British were more reasonable/compassionate than the Maori because the Maori wiped out the Moriori in accordance with their customs and the British did not wipe out the Maori.⁸²

In a similar vein 'Hopefully Fair', refuting Maori radicalism in a 2009 New Zealand newspaper blog, had stated:

Boat people are boat people whether they came here 200yrs ago or 1000yrs ago. What happened to the original people before Maori arrived, or does that upset the stomach ...⁸³

There are even some Maori in New Zealand, such as the activist John Wanoa, who claim descent from the *tangata whenua* (the supposed original Moriori pre-Maori inhabitants of New Zealand) as a means to claim financial recompense from the Crown as part of the still relevant Treaty of Waitangi settlement process.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Aridd, 'Unsourced edit', in 'Talk: Moriori people', Wikipedia, 12 September 2008 <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:%3AMoriori>> [accessed 30 July 2012].

⁸² Sam, comment posted on 'Moriori Culture', Virtual New Zealand, 2011 <<http://www.virtualoceania.net/newzealand/culture/moriori/>> [accessed 27 July 2012].

⁸³ 'Hopefully Fair', cited in 'The Myth That Won't Go Away', Reading the Maps, 21 April 2009 <<http://readingthemap.blogspot.com.au/2009/04/myth-that-wont-go-away.html>> [accessed 27 July 2012].

⁸⁴ See for example 'The Myth That Won't Go Away', Reading the Maps, 21 April 2009 <<http://readingthemap.blogspot.com.au/2009/04/myth-that-wont-go-away.html>>

Hopes for a Better Future

Not all contemporary reactions to the myth of the Moriori are negative. There have been many positives in recent years such as the opening of the Kopinga Marae in 2005 and the awarding of a six million dollar grant by the New Zealand government in 2008 for the preservation and promotion of Moriori heritage, culture and language.⁸⁵ These perceptive and wise initiatives were a significant step towards reconciliation between Moriori, Maori and *Pakeha*. Indeed, it could be said that the twenty-first century is witnessing a revival of Moriori culture. We can but hope that this will finally see the end of the old fallacious myth as the basis for understanding New Zealand's pre-*Pakeha* history.

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⁸⁵ Anon., 'Moriori Revival: The Protection and Preservation of Moriori Culture', Stuff.co.nz, 20 June 2008, p. 1 <<http://www.stuff.co.nz/archived-stuff-sections/archived-national-sections/korero/498166/Moriori-revival>> [accessed 27 July 2012].

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National Native Title Conference

Alice Springs Convention Centre, 3 – 5 June 2013

The National Native Title Conference 2013 is co-convened by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and Central Land Council (CLC) in Alice Springs on the traditional lands of the Central Arrernte people, the native title holders of the Alice Springs area. The conference is organized around four themes:

The Native Title Act 20 years on, where to from here?

- Native title and social justice
- Native title rights and recognition in an international context
- Emerging issues in native title

The Indigenous Estate and Development Options

- Planning and investment priorities
- Natural resource management
- Culture and Country

Indigenous Governance

- Getting the right cultural fit
- Taking the long-term view, strategic planning
- Building capacity

Building a Future

- Economic and community development
- Keeping culture strong
- Education and jobs

Conference presentations will be in five formats: keynotes and plenary speeches, debate forums (a new format), technical workshops, topical workshops and Indigenous talking circles. For further details, and for Registration, see the conference website:

<http://wired.ivvy.com/event/ntc13/>