

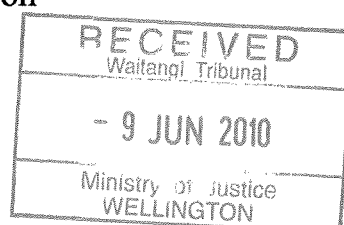
OFFICIAL

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC, POLITICAL & CULTURAL DECLINE OF
NGATI RORA/NGATI MANIAPOTO
AN ORAL HISTORY

Mihi

Ruia ruia, tahia, tahia kia hemo ake te ka korokoro
Kia herea mai te kawau karoki
E taki mai ana i roto tana i pukoro whaikoro
E kuaka marangaranga ko tahi manu
E huatu, ki te tahuna
Tau atu, tau atu
Te he maoriora
Ko Wharehuia Hemara taku ingoa
Tainui te waka, Ngati Maniapoto te iwi, Ngati Rora, Ngati Matakori, Ngati
Rereahu nga hapu.
Ko Tuwhakaririka raua ko Huingariri aku tupuna
Rangitoto ki Ngahape taku whenua
Ki nga manuwhiri o te tuarangi tk, tk, tk kia ora koutou katoa
Ki aku whanaunga aroha mai ki a koutou

1. Ngati Maniapoto/Ngati Rora Management of hereditry estate (1842 – 1860)
2. Ngati Maniapoto/Ngati Rora & the Colonial Wars
3. Ngati Maniapoto/Ngati Rora Recovery & Successful Management of What remained of Their Estate
4. Resource Alienation



THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC, POLITICAL & CULTURAL DECLINE OF NGATI RORA/NGATI MANIAPOTO

According to my Papa, Charlie Taare **Barton** and some of his whanaunga and contemporaries, that at around about the beginning of the 19th century Ngati Maniapoto and in this case Ngati Rora had adopted some well chosen foreign farming and commercial practices in which they excelled. This created viable community affluence.

I later found out (and I don't know how and where from) that by 1843 our tupuna owned six operating mills, which were built by them, at a cost of about 1,160 pounds.

My Papa claimed that later in the century our tupuna's prosperity lay in ruins. This claim was confirmed by, J.W,Fox, who wrote in an article for the *N.Z. Geographer*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Oct 1950 entitled *Te Kuiti and the Northern King Country: a region of agricultural transition*,

. . .when pioneer farmers arrived...nothing remained but a few rotting mill timbers and tumbled sod walls, crops and animals gone wild, exotic grasses and a few graves. . .

By 1862 the stage was set for inter-racial and in this case Ngati Rora and Pakeha competition, conflict and war.

In my Papa's opinion the Pakeha were jealous and wanted to grab what our tupuna had and any other resources that allowed them (i.e. our tupuna) to reach their goals and fulfill their ambitions. This opinion was confirmed by various observers and government reports.

. . .it is necessary in order to establish [some] authority to which the Natives will submit and to which they will look up as a governing power to arm the Magistrate with very extensive Jurisdiction. He must be able

to administer Justice on the spot and at the instant, in order to wean the Native from his own barbarous habits of enforcing rights or redressing wrongs. . .(Sewell, H, 1862)

Again, according to my Papa and others, the Pakeha started spreading a barefaced lie that our tupuna were stupid, mad and impossible. His opinion of what they were doing was confirmed by an AJHR report (1863 - E3)

. . . the Ngatimaniapoto are gone mad. . .They do not care for friendship with Europeans; they do not desire law and order, and they are afraid of the introduction of English Magistrates. . .(AJHR 1863 : E4)

Following the Land Wars, our tupuna had recovered enough to work what was left of their estate and as a result prevent wholesale starvation, sickness and death. According to another informant we weren't doing too badly

. . .The difference between the Kingites and the Maoris that Europeans are accustomed to see is very marked. The men and women are healthy-looking, while the number of children playing about, and of fine stout infants to be seen in the arms of their mothers, is remarkable. It is sad to think that those natives who have least to do with Europeans are in every respect the best of their race; but so it is. It is sad to them, because the separation which at present exists cannot continue for ever. . . (New Zealand Herald, 9 May 1878 : 3)

After that report and the entry of the Native Land Court and the establishment of Native Schools, socio-economic and cultural deprivation began to find a comfortable home among Ngati Maniapoto generally and for the purposes of this hearing, Ngati Rora specifically. Between 1870 and 1900 Tangi were sometimes considered a backstop for softening the effects of impending famine.

negatively impacted on our communities. There are a number of graves of victims of influenza, tuberculosis, pnerferal sepsis and pneumonia.

The attendance during the past year, has been anything but encouraging, a great many of the scholars have not even been half time, true the weather has been bad, the great trouble we have to face, is the frequency of Tangis. . .(Education Dept. 1902)

. . .The last winter will long remain a sorrowful memento of the merciless diligence with which death has exacted his annual tribute among the Maoris. Most severely so in the smaller coin of the children. There is scarcely a village which he has spared. . .I personally know of three out of a household of five. And reports from different parts are all burdened with the melancholy tale. . . Since the introduction of measles this district has been a continual travelling route of tangi parties. . .(Baucke, W. 1928 : 127)

. . .I have been practising in this district for over 2 and 1/2 years and in that time have attended a great many Maoris, who in this district seem to be more hopelessly poverty-stricken than in many others. Owing to their poverty, many Maoris when they fall ill, neglect to call in medical attention, and thus run a greatly increased risk of incomplete recovery with the subsequent ill health, as in pneumonia, or pnerferal sepsis(sic) or tubercle(sic). Personally I am quite willing to attend Maoris for nothing if that is necessary, since in most cases here they have not the money to pay. . .The reason why I am writing this at the moment is that yesterday I attended a native child of 2 years, ill a week with pneumonia, who died a few hours later - another child of 4 months, ill 8 days with pneumonia - about 2 weeks ago the confinement of a Māori girl with tubercle(sic) - which had apparently developed during her pregnancy. I have also in mind numerous Māori children who have been brought here with pneumonia - colar(sic) or broncho(sic) and taken away again to hovels in the country - and no more of their progress. . .(Health Dept. 1930).

27th October. . . Today there is a tangi and as the relatives are rich there is plenty good food consequently nearly half the school has gone to it. . . (Education Dept. 1890)

My Papa once expressed his chagrin and sorrow by telling those who would care to listen that our people were hungry because they had lost the land that would sustain them and their communities.

Six years into the 20th century there were the first whispered reports of famine in the region.

. . . owing to the almost total failure of their potato-crops through the blight. . . (AJHR 1906 : H36A)

. . . The other day a halfcaste woman friend (Ruita Te Mihinga also known as Mrs Lucy Josephs) of Oparure – [who lived in] a village near Te Kuiti – begged me, as a writer of these articles, to lay before the public and others whom it may concern, the following distressing facts, and endeavour to enlist the white man's sympathy for their amelioration. . . In this village there are 43 native children of a school age, who are growing up in abject ignorance. . . Are these 42 bright, intelligent-featured lads and lasses to swell the crowd on the downward grade? We have their parents' land – all but a paltry papa kāinga of seven acres per house! It would surely be a greater mercy to kill these people, and snap up their few remaining acres than let them decay before our eyes! For the whole family cannot live on these plots when the children grow up. . . (N.Z. Herald, 16th July 1904)

. . . attendance has not been good owing to very bad weather and also some of the families having to shift through losing land in the Land Court. . . (Education Dept. 1889)

Several of the parents have left the place and taken their families with them leaving only a few to keep up the required attendance

Well into the 20th century living conditions for many had not changed.

The most striking feature of this survey is that out of 174 homes visited 92 were found to be grossly overcrowded. Looking a step further the real reason is found. . .What is overcrowding these homes, such as they are, is firstly the inability of the younger married Maoris to house themselves and secondly, the parents and in many cases the grandparents, are all forced because of their financial instability, to live under the same roof. . .We then find three generations of Maoris all living under the same roof, a roof that has gradually crumbling for years; a house that has no proper drainage, in fact the basic requirements of the Housing Improvement Regulations would make it a palace. A very short car ride around this Borough of Te Kuiti will find thirty such establishments with little trouble. Unfortunately many of these places have been here so long that the local residents, prominent people of the town and such organisations as the Church, Red Cross etc., accept them without true realisation. . .(Health Dept. 1961)

From 1945 to 1949, because of ill health my mother gave birth to three of my brothers who died before I was born. I am my parents only surviving child.

By 1957 the Crown could triumphantly proclaim

that there is. . .a marked tendency among Maori people to decry all things Maori as being somewhat inferior. . .(AJHR 1957: E1)

I think that this short report could be aptly called "From Rich to War – From Rich to Poor".

No reira, ka mutu taku korero, kia ora koutou katoa.

entry of the of Native Land Court and results operations that led to economic deprivation

5. Diminishing of Cultural Practices

entry and outcomes of Native School operations that included the imposition of Government created and sponsored pedagogies and curricula that had as one of its major aims to reduce cultural practices to cultural pastimes and entertainment

6. The Stalking of Ngati Maniapoto by a Combination of Poverty, Socio-economic disruption and Bad Health

. . .(Education Dept. 1890)

Combined with resource alienation was the Crown's draconian efforts to isolate Maori from their culture. This can be confirmed by Government reports from the time.

14th July. . .On account of the Quarterly Meeting (Pokai{sic}) very few children are present. These meetings give way to nothing seemingly. Threats of expulsion of the children only cause a shrug of the shoulders as much as to say "well so be it; we are sorry, but the pokais must be attended to. . ." (Education Dept. 1897)

23rd August. . .The children are beginning to return from the tangi. I have put up a bad mark list in each room and anyway the "reasons for bad marks" I have added non attendance at school for any other cause but sickness. . . (Education Dept.. 1898)

Papa built on that story by claiming that our people were lost because they were beginning to lose their culture and language.

themselves & their reo

A particularly disturbing and eventually influential strategy was the renaming of children. Naming was probably one of the first lessons in whakapapa. A name was given either in memory of a tupuna, incident or location. A loose file note (Education Dept. 1904) carries the suggestion that children should be given Pākehā names to improve their facility in English. Over time many Māori names were extinguished in favour of names that bore little relationship to either ancestors, location or whakapapa.

Attendant community bad health and death began stalking Ngati Maniapoto.

Yesterday my cousin and I visited our urupaa up the hill behind this whare and couldn't help noticing how young our tupuna were when they died. I have bibliographic evidence that confirms how various illnesses and disastrous epidemics were and how they

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