

The Māori Conversion and Four Early Converts

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Preface

I first became interested in the topic of this thesis while reading William Williams's *Christianity among the New Zealanders* as an undergraduate in 1991. The book had recently been republished by Banner of Truth and it kindled an interest in the Māori Conversion that has stayed with me ever since. In 2008, I had the opportunity to develop that interest further when I received a writing grant from the Latimer Trust. This allowed me to travel to England and visit the University of Birmingham's Cadbury Research Library and access their large collection of CMS archives. The resulting essay, *To Plough or to Preach: Mission Strategies in New Zealand During the 1820s*, was later published by the Latimer Trust in 2010. A return visit in the same year allowed me to gather a set of digital images in preparation for my doctoral research, which commenced in 2012. Digital photography has revolutionised the study of the missionary archives and it has given researchers the freedom to study them in detail without the usual constraints of time or travel. Since then I have managed to amass a collection of over 30,000 archival images from various repositories around the world. It should be noted, however, that many of these archives have recently become available online and where possible I have indicated references to these online sources in the footnotes.

My thanks to the Theology Department at the University of Otago and the community of faculty and students that have given support and encouragement to me while studying on campus in Dunedin. In particular, I would like to thank my supervisors, Associate Professors Tim Cooper and Hugh Morrison, for their patient guidance, astute comments, and wise council. Lastly, I would like to thank my wife, Sue, and family without whose sacrificial love and support this project would not have been possible.

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to understand the extent and nature of the Māori Conversion that occurred during the first half of the nineteenth century in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the absence of an agreed scholarly definition of conversion, this thesis formulates an original definition to serve as an important interpretative tool:

Conversion is a profoundly religious experience of reorientation in which an individual or group embraces a gradual, though at times appearing sudden, process of change in patterns of belief, identity and practice, resulting in a stable and viable way of communal life that has recognisable continuity with the past, yet is distinctly new.

This definition is then used as a model to analyse the conversion of four early converts: Ruatara, Māui, Te Rangi, and Taiwhanga.

The extent of the Māori Conversion is estimated using the statistical information reported to the Church Missionary Society by their missionaries and is shown to be more extensive than previously acknowledged by historians, with some 90 percent of Māori having converted to Christianity by 1852. The nature of the Māori Conversion is assessed by considering the lives of the four early converts. The thesis draws on a number of previously underutilised archival sources, including autobiographical material written by Māui in 1816, a series of transcripts of conversations held with Waitangi Māori by Henry Williams from 1823–1825, and four letters written by Taiwhanga before his baptism in 1830. This bottom-up approach has the advantage of highlighting the active agency of these Māori converts in the conversion process and provides an important indigenous perspective on the Māori Conversion. By identifying common themes and connecting narratives, these four converts are also shown to be far from exceptional or isolated cases, but typical of the wider movement of which they were a part.

The thesis concludes that the Māori Conversion was indeed a profoundly religious movement that can be understood and conceptualised around three interwoven strands of belief, identity and practice. Māori converts were attracted to Christian ideas because they provided them with a satisfying and alternative way of living in the changing world opening up to them through Western contact. Christianity enabled Māori converts to form new allegiances and identities based on the Bible as a source of spiritual authority, allowing them to dispense with the divisions and animosities of the past and to pursue new forms of peace. The practice of Sabbath

observance, Christian prayer, and baptism (among others) reinforced for Māori converts their new Christian beliefs and identities, leading to the transformation of traditional Māori society and the emergence of a distinctly Māori expression of Christianity.

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Abbreviations

ADAA	Anglican Diocese of Auckland Archives
ACL	Auckland City Library
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
AWMML	Auckland War Memorial Museum Library
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CRL	Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham
DL	Dixson Library, State Library of New South Wales
HL	Hocken Library, University of Otago
LMS	London Missionary Society
ML	Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales
NA	National Archives, London
NLA	National Library of Australia
NZDL	New Zealand Digital Library
SOAS	School of Oriental and Asian Studies, University of London
WMS	Wesleyan Missionary Society

Glossary

Aotearoa	New Zealand
Atua	God, supernatural being
Hahunga	Ceremony for uplifting bones of the dead
Hangareka	Deceive
Hari	Joyful dance
Hapū	Kinship group
Iwi	Tribe, extended kinship group
Kāinga	Village, settlement
Kākahu	Cloak
Karaitiana	Christ
Karakia	Prayer, ritual chant
Kuki	Cook, servant, slave
Kūmara	Sweet potato
Māketu	Malevolent incantation, spell
Mana	Power, prestige
Muru	Ritual compensation
Ōhākī	Dying wishes
Pā	Fortified settlement
Pākehā	Person of European ethnicity
Pōwhiri	Ceremonial welcome
Rangatira	Person of chiefly status
Rā Tapu	Sacred day, Sunday
Raupō	Bulrush
Tapu	Sacred, prohibited, or restricted due to spiritual status
Taua	War party

Taua muru	Plundering party
Te Rēwera	The devil, Satan.
Te Rēinga	Place of departed spirits. The place of departure for the dead at the North Cape.
Te reo Māori	The Māori language.
Teretere	Travelling party.
Te whānau a te Karaiti	The family of Christ.
Tikanga	Protocol, custom, correct procedure.
Toa	Warrior.
Tohi	Child dedication rite.
Tohunga	Sacred expert, priest.
Toki	Item of trade.
Tūpara	Double-barrelled shotgun.
Ture	Law.
Utu	Payment, compensation, retribution, reciprocity.
Waiata	Song.
Whakatapu	Made holy, consecrated.
Whānau	Family.
Whare	House, dwelling.
Whiro	An atua associated with evil, darkness and death.

1 Introduction

The Māori conversion to Christianity was one of the most remarkable features of nineteenth-century New Zealand. This thesis seeks to understand the nature and extent of that conversion by examining the lives of four early converts: Ruatara, Māui, Te Rangi, and Taiwhanga. While the social, economic, and political dimensions of the Māori Conversion have been widely canvassed, relatively little attention has been paid to the individual Māori who chose to embrace the new missionary religion. This thesis will argue that these early converts, rather than being isolated individuals who were dislocated from their traditional culture and hence incidental to later developments, were in fact more typical of the general Māori response to Christianity than is often acknowledged. The social, political, and cultural contexts of the four converts will be analysed in order to assess both the extent to which they were active agents of their own conversions and the degree to which they became pioneers of a Christian way of life for other Māori.

In this Introduction, the concept of conversion will be outlined in the light of recent scholarly discussion before an account is given of the way in which the Māori Conversion has been understood by New Zealand historians. The value of examining the lives of individual converts will be presented along with the reasons for selecting these four converts in particular as the focus of the thesis. Lastly, the archival resources available for this research will be considered to show that the missionary archives remain an underutilised resource for the study of the conversion process among Māori. The result will be to situate both the four Māori converts and the broader Māori Conversion of which they were a part, within the context provided by a close reading of the missionary archives and other primary documents.

1.1 Recent Studies in Conversion

The topic of conversion in the history of Christian missions has attracted renewed interest in recent years due in large measure to the dramatic demographic changes that have occurred in global Christianity during the second half of the twentieth

century.¹ As an illustration of those changes, it is estimated that in 1910, the year of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, 82.2 percent of the world's Christian population resided in what has been called the Global North (defined as North America, Europe, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand). Yet by 2010 that percentage had fallen to 39.2 percent as the demographic centre of world Christianity shifted further south.² These profound changes have led scholars to reconsider the origins of the churches in the Global South and to reassess the nature of the conversions that led to their rapid growth.³ As many of these churches are the spiritual heirs of Western missionary movements, there has been a renewed interest in the historical encounters between indigenous peoples and European missionaries.⁴

In its British expression, the Protestant missionary movement became particularly significant from the 1790s onwards with the formation of voluntary missionary societies, such as the Church Missionary Society (CMS).⁵ It was the CMS, founded in 1799, that established the first Christian mission to New Zealand in 1814 under the oversight of Samuel Marsden, the Senior Chaplain to the penal colony of New South

¹ For a discussion of the demographic changes, see Scott W. Sunquist, *The Unexpected Christian Century: The Reversal and Transformation of Global Christianity, 1900–2000* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), xv–xviii; John Stenhouse, "Religion and Society," in *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009), 353; J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 1.

² "Global Christianity—A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population," Pew Research Center, <https://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/>; *Atlas of Global Christianity, 1910–2010*, ed. Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 48–59; Wilbert R. Shenk, "Reflections on the Modern Missionary Movement: 1792–1992," *Mission Studies* 9, no. 1 (1992): 62. For the significance of that World Missionary Conference of 1910, see Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 1–17; Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002), 49–71.

³ Richard Fox Young and Jonathan A. Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, ed. Richard Fox Young and Jonathan A. Seitz (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 6–7. Young and Seitz comment: "one simply cannot discount the fact that conversion ... is a factor among others ... transforming Christianity into a predominantly post-Northern (or, post-Western) religion of the Global South, growing in Asia and not only in Africa."

⁴ Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*; Brian Stanley, *Christianity in the Twentieth Century: A World History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018), 57–78; Andrew F. Walls, "The Eighteenth-Century Protestant Missionary Awakening in Its European Context," in *Christian Mission and the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 22–24.

⁵ Michael Gladwin, "Mission and Colonialism," in *Oxford Handbook of Nineteenth-Century Christian Thought*, ed. Joel D. S. Rasmussen, Judith Wolfe, and Johannes Zachhuber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 283–85; J. C. S. Mason, *The Moravian Church and the Missionary Awakening in England, 1760–1800* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2001), 176–192; Kevin Ward, "'Taking Stock': The Church Missionary Society and Its Historians," in *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity 1799–1999*, ed. Alan Ward and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 21–24.

Wales.⁶ As well as bringing a renewed interest in religious conversion, the new mission histories that have emerged in recent years have also sought to revise the terms and categories in which conversion is usually understood. Four such areas will be discussed here before turning to the problem of defining the term “conversion” itself.

1.1.1 Religion

Firstly, there has been a greater appreciation of the role played by religion in the process of conversion.⁷ As Lewis Rambo points out in his seminal book, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, “However scholars may choose to delineate its causes, nature, and consequences, conversion is essentially theological and spiritual.”⁸ A greater appreciation of the religious nature of conversion has caused scholars to integrate religion more fully into their analysis, in order to properly account for the phenomena. In many ways this has been in reaction to a previous tendency to describe conversion in purely secular and ulterior terms in which the experience of the individual or group is downplayed or ignored.⁹

“Phenomenologically speaking,” says Rambo, “interpretations that deny the religious dimension fail to appreciate the convert’s experience, and attempt to put this experience into interpretative frameworks that are inappropriate, even hostile, to the phenomenon.”¹⁰ Instead, Rambo calls for a new respect for a convert’s religious motivations: “Taking religion seriously does not require *belief*, but it does imply

⁶ Craig Schwarze, “Richard Johnson and Samuel Marsden: Missionaries to the South Seas,” in *Launching Marsden’s Mission: The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, Viewed from New South Wales*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and David B. Pettett (London: The Latimer Trust, 2014). The Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) began a mission in New Zealand from 1823, while a Roman Catholic mission was begun in 1838. For an outline of events, see Allan K. Davidson, *Christianity in Aotearoa: A History of Church and Society in New Zealand* (Wellington: New Zealand Education for Ministry Board, 1991), 7–19.

⁷ For the resurgence of interest in religion among historians in general see John Coffey and Alister Chapman, “Introduction: Intellectual History and the Return of Religion,” in *Seeing Things Their Way: Intellectual History and the Return of Religion*, ed. Alister Chapman, John Coffey, and Brad S. Gregory (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009).

⁸ Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 10. Similar points are made by Laura Rademaker, “Going Native: Converting Narratives in Tiwi Histories of Twentieth-Century Missions,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 70, no. 1 (2019): 103; Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 89; Brian Stanley, “Conversion to Christianity: The Colonization of the Mind?,” *International Review of Missions* 92, no. 366 (2003): 320.

⁹ Lamin Sanneh, “World Christianity and the New Historiography: History and Global Interconnections,” in *Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History*, ed. Wilbert R. Shenk (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 99–100; Robert Strayer, “Mission History in Africa: New Perspectives on an Encounter,” in *Religious Conversion: An African Perspective*, ed. Brendan Carmody (Lusaka, Zambia: Gadeson, 2018), 6–7.

¹⁰ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 10.

respect for the fact that conversion is a *religious* process involving an elaborate array of forces, ideas, institutions, rituals, myths, and symbols.”¹¹

A similar attention to the religious dimension of conversion is advocated by Brad Gregory who challenges what he considers reductionist interpretations of the past.¹² For Gregory, it is not that religion should be studied in isolation from other factors such as social relationships, political institutions, or cultural practices: “The point is rather to problematize purported answers to the question of why past people did what they did.”¹³ Consequently, Gregory calls for a middle way between a hermeneutical suspicion and naive acceptance: “Between naïveté and cynicism lies a critical analysis open to sincerity as well as manipulation on a case-by-case basis, which separates the understanding of past people from both modern value judgments about them or intellectual assumptions that distort them.”¹⁴

Gregory’s call for a middle way is echoed by New Zealand historian, John Stenhouse, who draws attention to the “loud silence” with regard to religion in New Zealand historical writing in the second half of the twentieth century.¹⁵ Yet Stenhouse also detects a renewed interest in religion since the 1980s – particularly among scholars of Māori history, and histories of women and gender: “Such work, integrating religion with war, politics, race relations, gender, family, and community, opens up new perspectives on our past and promises to rescue religious believers – the great majority of past inhabitants of the country – from the enormous condescension of

¹¹ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 11. Emphasis in original.

¹² Brad S. Gregory, “‘To the Point of Shedding Your Blood’: The Bible, Communities of Faith, and Martyrs’ Resistance to Conversion in the Reformation Era,” in *Conversion: Old Worlds and New*, ed. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 79–82. See also Jane Samson, *Race and Redemption: British Missionaries Encounter Pacific Peoples, 1797–1920* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2017), 1–3.

¹³ Gregory, “‘To the Point of Shedding Your Blood’,” 81.

¹⁴ Gregory, “‘To the Point of Shedding Your Blood’,” 82. Robert Orsi also notes the need to resist passing judgement on the “defenseless dead”: Robert Orsi, “Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion,” in *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 17–18. See also Gregory’s discussion of the methodological issues involved in the historical study of religion in Brad S. Gregory, “Can We ‘See Things Their Way’? Should We Try?,” in *Seeing Things Their Way: Intellectual History and the Return of Religion*, ed. Alister Chapman, John Coffey, and Brad S. Gregory (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009).

¹⁵ John Stenhouse, “God’s Own Silence: Secular Nationalism, Christianity and the Writing of New Zealand History,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 38, no. 1 (2004). See also John Stenhouse, “Secular New Zealand, or God’s Own Country?,” in *New Vision New Zealand*, ed. Bruce Patrick (Auckland: Tabernacle Books, 2008); Stenhouse, “Religion and Society.”; Peter Lineham, “The Controversy over the Recognition of Religious Factors in New Zealand History,” in *The Spirit of the Past: Essays on Christianity in New Zealand History*, ed. Geoffrey Troughton and Hugh Morrison (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2011); John Stenhouse, “The Controversy over the Recognition of Religious Factors in New Zealand History: Some Reflections,” in *The Spirit of the Past: Essays on Christianity in New Zealand History*, ed. Geoffrey Troughton and Hugh Morrison (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2011).

posternity.”¹⁶ This new scholarly appreciation of the influence of religion in the contemporary world has brought with it a renewed interest in the nature of religious conversion. As Diane Austin-Broos observes, “Modern developments, both intellectual and political, have freed religion from the corral to which it was assigned by Western Europe. Religion now resides in the world with all its previous entanglements both personal and political, both local and transnational. Studies of conversion, therefore, go to the heart of cultural passage in the world today.”¹⁷

1.1.2 *Acculturation*

Secondly, there has been a move away from simple acculturation models of religious change.¹⁸ According to a number of scholars, the problem with earlier acculturation models is that they assume a basic incompatibility between exogenous religious ideas and local indigenous cultures. Consequently, the interaction between the missionary and the missionised is inevitably viewed as a collision between two fixed systems of belief, resulting in an evaluation of indigenous conversions in polar terms – whether they are real and genuine in nature, or merely superficial and nominal.¹⁹ In addition, such models also tend to focus on the Western missionary, whose mission is deemed a success or failure depending on the degree of transformation apparent within their convert’s lives.²⁰ However, as Linford Fisher notes, “there is a growing recognition that the bipolar framing of the question of conversion itself

¹⁶ Stenhouse, “God’s Own Silence,” 53, 64–67. See also discussion in Stuart Lange, “Admiring, Disdainful, or Somewhere in the Middle: Interpretations of Missionaries and Christian Beginnings among Māori,” in *Sacred Histories in Secular New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey Troughton and Stuart Lange (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2016); Gary A. M. Clover, *Collision, Compromise and Conversion During the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission 1827–1855: A Critical Study of Hokianga Māori, Missionary, and Kauri Merchant Interactions* (Nelson: Gary Allan Malcolm Clover, 2018), 1–16.

¹⁷ Diane Austin-Broos, “The Anthropology of Conversion: An Introduction,” in *The Anthropology of Religious Conversion*, ed. Andrew Buckser and Stephen D. Glazier (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 9.

¹⁸ J. D. Y. Peel, “Syncreticism and Religious Change,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 10, no. 2 (1968); Andrew C. Isenberg, “‘To see inside of an Indian’: Missionaries and Dakotas in the Minnesota Borderlands,” in *Conversion: Old Worlds and New*, ed. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2003); Allan Greer, “Conversion and Identity: Iroquois Christianity in Seventeenth-Century New France,” in *Conversion: Old Worlds and New*, ed. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2003); Linford D. Fisher, “Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730,” *Harvard Theological Review* 102, no. 1 (2009); Rademaker, “Going Native.” Acculturation refers to that process of change that takes place as the result of contact between two or more cultures.

¹⁹ Peel, “Syncreticism and Religious Change,” 140; Isenberg, “‘To see inside of an Indian’: Missionaries and Dakotas in the Minnesota Borderlands,” 218–19; Nicholas Thomas, *Islanders: The Pacific in the Age of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 103–4.

²⁰ Greer, “Conversion and Identity,” 176–77.

might be misleading.”²¹ Instead, says Fisher, the interaction between cultures should be viewed as a dynamic interaction rather than a contest between competing views. John Peel is similar in his observations: “The reactions of people to radical social change marked by the availability of totally new cultural systems are not best approached by theories of acculturation which aim to trace each item of behaviour to its cultural source, to add them up, and to pronounce the reaction more or less ‘acculturated’ or ‘traditional’, along a single continuum.”²²

The move away from simple acculturation models has brought with it an understanding of conversion that allows for a greater degree of continuity with a convert’s past.²³ For as mission historian Andrew Walls points out, in order to appropriate the Christian message, converts must first “translate” that message into categories and terms that are meaningful within their own existing cultural framework. In this way, rather than conversion being a simple substitution of one belief system for another, conversion is better considered as the transformation and reorientation of existing beliefs and practices as well as the incorporation of new religious ideas.²⁴ Thus, a greater degree of continuity with a convert’s past values and customs can appropriately be recognised without raising questions as to a conversion’s validity.²⁵

²¹ Fisher, “Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730,” 106.

²² Peel, “Syncreticism and Religious Change,” 140.

²³ La Seng Dingrin, “Conversion to Mission Christianity Among the Kachin of Upper Burma 1877–1972,” in *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, ed. Richard Fox Young and Jonathan A. Seitz (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 109–10; Stanley, “Conversion to Christianity,” 323–27; Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 28–29; Andrew F. Walls, *Crossing Cultural Frontiers: Studies in the History of World Christianity*, ed. Mark R. Gornik (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2017), 35–48; Fisher, “Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730,” 120–21; Erik de Maaker, “Have the Mitdes Gone Silent? Conversion, Rhetoric, and the Continuing Importance of the Lower Deities in Northeast India,” in *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, ed. Richard Fox Young and Jonathan A. Seitz (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 158–59.

²⁴ Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 28–29; Andrew F. Walls, “Eusebius Tries Again: The Task of Reconceiving and Re-visioning the Study of Christian History,” in *Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History*, ed. Wilbert R. Shenk (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 21.

²⁵ Dingrin gives the example of the Kachin people of Burma, who made use of pre-existing concepts to articulate their Christian faith: Dingrin, “Conversion to Mission Christianity Among the Kachin of Upper Burma,” 109–10. A similar response occurred in North-East India: de Maaker, “Have the Mitdes Gone Silent,” 159.

1.1.3 Colonialism

Thirdly, there has been a reassessment of the influence of colonialism on the conversion of indigenous persons and groups.²⁶ The connection between Christian missions and the nineteenth-century colonial expansion has been widely recognised. Yet in its most uncharitable form, the “colonial paradigm” has also viewed conversion as an act of cultural imperialism in which a convert becomes wholly assimilated into an alien religious identity.²⁷ Such pejorative interpretations however, no longer seem as plausible as they once did – particularly given the way that colonial independence movements have often used religious identities in order to challenge the hegemony of their colonial overlords. In more recent studies, scholars have paid greater attention to the complex nature of the colonial “entanglements” involved. Dana Robert, for instance, points out that nineteenth-century missionaries can no longer be dismissed out-of-hand as proxies for their colonial masters:

In the ‘new mission histories’ emerging from scholars in various area studies, the missionary is treated as a concrete actor in specific historical situations, and a participant in relationships with indigenous persons, who coexist in colonialist contexts and mutually influence each other. Although the missionary is justly criticised for conscious or unconscious support of colonialism, scholars are less likely to treat him or her as a faceless imperialist agent.²⁸

Within New Zealand’s colonial history, Tony Ballantyne has adopted a similar approach.²⁹ Regarding the engagement between missionary and Māori, Ballantyne states, “I have attempted to treat both evangelical missionaries and Māori equitably, imagining both of these collectives as complex agglomerations of individuals and interest groups whose actions and worldviews were conditioned by *both* culture and history.”³⁰ Likewise Paul Moon argues that, far from being the unwitting instruments

²⁶ Dana L. Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706–1914*, ed. Dana L. Robert (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 1–20; Andrew Porter, “‘Cultural Imperialism’ and Protestant Missionary Enterprise, 1780–1914,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 25, no. 3 (1997); Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and the British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990); Gladwin, “Mission and Colonialism,” 298–300.

²⁷ Stanley, “Conversion to Christianity,” 316–19; Porter, “‘Cultural Imperialism’ and Protestant Missionary Enterprise, 1780–1914,” 368; Andrew Porter, *Religion Versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 316–30; Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag*, 11–14.

²⁸ Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 3. See also Robert Strayer, “Mission History in Africa,” 15–19.

²⁹ Tony Ballantyne, “Religion, Difference, and the Limits of British Imperial History,” *Victorian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2005); Tony Ballantyne, “Humanitarian Narratives: Knowledge and the Politics of Mission and Empire,” *Social Sciences and Missions* 24 (2011); Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand’s Colonial Past* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2012), 137–58; Tony Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire: Missionaries, Māori, and the Question of the Body* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 1–19.

³⁰ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 15.

of colonial control, the CMS policy of using the Māori language as the medium of instruction placed them at odds with a succession of colonial administrations.³¹

Other scholars, such as Brian Stanley, draw attention to the role played by language and translation in the indigenous encounter with colonial Christianity. The very process of language acquisition and translation, according to Stanley, implies an equality of cultures in which dynamic equivalents are sought to express meaningfully the words and ideas involved. As a consequence, even if unintended by the missionaries, through the act of translation indigenous agents were freed to express the Christian message in cultural terms that were distinct from that of the missionary.³² As the New Zealand historian, Peter Lineham, comments, "The missionary reading of the Bible was doubtlessly narrow and culture-laden. Yet by handing over their authority to those Māori who wanted it, they empowered them to be Christians on their own terms."³³

1.1.4 Indigenous Agency

The final aspect of revision is that new mission histories have a greater emphasis on the role of indigenous agency in conversion.³⁴ There has been a realisation that the "colonial paradigm" often silences indigenous voices, particularly those of converts, in favour of European missionaries or other colonial actors.³⁵ By concentrating on these European influences, the active and conscious participation of converts in

³¹ Paul Moon, "The Rise, Success and Dismantling of New Zealand's Anglican-led Māori Education System, 1814-64," *Studies in Church History* 55 (2019).

³² Stanley, "Conversion to Christianity," 324–25. See also Fisher, "Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730," 120–21; Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 19; Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 47–53. Brian Stanley uses the dynamics of language-learning to counteract the understanding of conversion as a "colonisation of the mind": Stanley, "Conversion to Christianity," 323. This is a process of colonisation described by Jean and John Comaroff where even the linguistic terms of the conversation held with indigenous peoples is controlled by the colonisers: Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). However, it is not clear that the process they describe accurately reflects the dynamics of the missionary relationship. For, as Stanley points out, "Those who attempt to dictate the linguistic terms of the encounter will be very poor language learners." See also J. D. Y. Peel, "For Who Hath Despised the Day of Small Things? Missionary Narratives and Historical Anthropology," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no. 3 (1995): 585–89.

³³ Peter J. Lineham, *Bible & Society: A Sesquicentennial History of the Bible Society in New Zealand* (Wellington: The Bible Society in New Zealand, 1996), 5–6.

³⁴ Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian, introduction to *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ed. Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 7; Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 17.

³⁵ Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 4; Sanneh, "World Christianity and the New Historiography"; Michael McNally, "The Practice of Native American Christianity," *Church History* 69, no. 4 (2000): 836–37.

promoting their own conversions has often been obscured.³⁶ As a consequence, in order to recover an appropriate sense of indigenous agency, more attention has been given to understanding converts on their own terms rather than as passive recipients of religious faith.³⁷ While exogenous factors (such as merchants, missionaries, and militaries) are still an important consideration, they are seen as insufficient in themselves as an explanation of conversion without also including the perspective of indigenous converts.³⁸

This has led to calls for more detailed reconstructions of local conversion narratives upon which a wider assessment of indigenous agency can be made.³⁹ Stanley says, for example, "What is now needed are good models of bottom-up Christian historiography, models which should in the first instance be detailed expositions of local and regional stories. New global Christian histories are already being written, but they can only be as good as the quality of specialist local studies will permit."⁴⁰ This will require scholars to look afresh at the missionary record upon which so much of our knowledge of indigenous converts depends, and in particular, to identify previously underutilised or neglected archival sources.⁴¹ There is a certain irony in this procedure given the widely perceived bias displayed by European missionaries. For this reason, it cannot be assumed that the motivations and objectives of indigenous converts necessarily coincided with those of the missionaries concerned, or that their understanding of conversion was the same. In short, the concerns of the missionary may in fact differ from that of the convert who comes under their observation.⁴² With this caveat in place, however, the missionary

³⁶ Fisher, "Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730," 120–21; Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 10.

³⁷ Rademaker, "Going Native," 102. Rademaker references McNally: McNally, "The Practice of Native American Christianity," 836–37. A similar reassessment is being made of the missionaries themselves. Rather than seeing them as the passive conveyors of Western ideologies, more attention is given to the way they attenuated their message to local situation and circumstances. See Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 3 and 17.

³⁸ Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 15 and 19.

³⁹ McNally, "The Practice of Native American Christianity," 837; Sanneh, "World Christianity and the New Historiography," 99–100.

⁴⁰ Brian Stanley, "Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History," *Studies in World Christianity* 8, no. 2 (2002): 324.

⁴¹ Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 178–89; Rambo and Farhadian, introduction to *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 8; Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 17.

⁴² Rademaker, "Going Native," 118.

archives remain a useful resource for scholars in recovering the voices of indigenous converts.⁴³

1.2 Defining Conversion

Much of the scholarly discussion with regard to religious conversion has centred on the question of definition.⁴⁴ During the twentieth century, beginning with the analysis of William James, conversion in scholarly literature has often been defined in individualistic terms with an emphasis on a sudden, interior change.⁴⁵ This subjective approach, as well as being influenced by the revivalist traditions of Western Christianity, has the difficulty of prioritising one particular class of converts over others whose experiences, though different, seem equally as valid. Indeed, there is a growing realisation that there is an inherent difficulty in formulating one, single definition of conversion, for much depends on the person or group being studied and the perspective and academic discipline adopted by the researcher. As Lewis Rambo and Charles Farhadian point out in their introduction to the *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, the sometimes-contradictory definitions adopted by scholars may simply reflect the differing contexts being studied and the academic methods being applied.⁴⁶

⁴³ See John Peel's discussion of the CMS archives: Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, 9–22. Also Hugh Morrison's discussion of indigenous voices within the Bolivian Indian Mission archives: Hugh Morrison, "Negotiated and Mediated Lives: Bolivian Teachers, New Zealand Missionaries and the Bolivian Indian Mission, 1908–1932," *Itinerario: International Journal on the History of European Expansion and Global Interaction* 40, no. 3 (2016): 439–44.

⁴⁴ Marc David Baer, "History and Religious Conversion," in *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Eugene V. Gallagher, *Expectation and Experience: Explaining Religious Conversion* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1990), 4–6; Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 12–14; Peter Gose, "Converting the Ancestors: Indirect Rule, Settlement Consolidation, and the Struggle over Burial in Colonial Peru, 1532–1614," in *Conversion: Old Worlds and New*, ed. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 141; Fisher, "Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730," 106; Rademaker, "Going Native," 99.

⁴⁵ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience; a Study in Human Nature: Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901–1902* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902), 189; Charles Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Baer, "History and Religious Conversion," 25; Henri Gooren, *Religious Conversion and Disaffiliation: Tracing Patterns of Change in Faith Practices* (New York, NY: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2010), 12–14, 19–42.

⁴⁶ Rambo and Farhadian, introduction to *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 10. Some scholars have questioned whether the word 'conversion' should be used at all. For further discussion, see: Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 14–15; Ines W. Jindra, *A New Model of Religious Conversion: Beyond Network Theory and Social Constructivism* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2014), 8–11.

At its broadest level, the definition of conversion needs to reflect the group being studied.⁴⁷ For each person or group will have their own normative definition of conversion that arises from their aspirations and expectations, and the metaphors and images they use.⁴⁸ These normative models of conversion are actively constructed by the group concerned and have a profound influence on the consciousness and experience of converts who are members of that group. Thus, a plurality of contexts makes it difficult to establish any one normative definition of conversion.

The task is further complicated by the implicit commitments that the researcher brings to the task.⁴⁹ As Eugene Gallagher cautions, "The observer's own interests and assumptions are what give direction to the process of understanding."⁵⁰ Consequently, what is being looked for largely determines what will be found, and the questions asked (both implicit and explicit) will shape the answers that are viewed as acceptable. It therefore becomes important for researchers to be aware of their own normative perspectives. As Gallagher comments, "Not to have some sort of overarching theoretical commitment is impossible; it is possible only to be more or less aware of what it is."⁵¹

While it might not be possible to establish a single normative definition for conversion, there is still merit in pursuing more descriptive approaches.⁵² In such approaches, definitions of conversion are less concerned with defining the experience itself and more with observing the phenomenological changes that take place as a result. An example of a descriptive definition is given by Marc Baer and quoted with approval by Rambo and Farhadian: "I argue that conversion is a decision or experience followed by a gradually unfolding, dynamic process through which an individual embarks on religious transformation ... conversion has an internal component entailing belief and an external component involving behaviour, leading to the creation of a new self-identity and new way of life."⁵³ Baer's definition, while not dismissing the experiential or volitional nature of conversion entirely, places the

⁴⁷ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 7.

⁴⁸ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 40.

⁴⁹ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 142–44.

⁵⁰ Gallagher, *Expectation and Experience*, 148.

⁵¹ Gallagher, *Expectation and Experience*, 5.

⁵² Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 6.

⁵³ Marc Baer, quoted in Rambo and Farhadian, introduction to *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 11.

emphasis on the gradual and dynamic nature of the conversion process as it unfolds over time.⁵⁴ Baer's definition also highlights the connection between conversion and three of its constituent elements: belief, identity, and practice.⁵⁵

1.2.1 Belief

Beliefs are what provide people with meaning to help them negotiate the world in which they live and the spiritual realities that are thought to shape their lives. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that a change in beliefs is often associated with conversion. This is especially true for conversions that are of the type identified as "tradition transition", where an individual or group moves from one religious tradition to another.⁵⁶ Tradition transition involves the movement from one worldview, ritual system, or symbolic universe to another, often in a context of cross-cultural contact – such as that experienced by many Māori in the first half of the nineteenth century. Often the importance of religious belief has been overshadowed in studies on tradition transition by a focus on more utilitarian motivations, such as the worldly advantages that are thought to have been accrued through conversion.⁵⁷ Even if that is the case, the cognitive element of belief will still be present if for no other reason than that, unless coerced, people who convert do so because they conceive of the new religion as being, to some degree, 'true'. For this reason, the attractiveness of Christian ideas for early Māori converts cannot be discounted, despite the material advantages that might be gained, for it was through their new beliefs that Māori converts were able to comprehend and live meaningfully in the world that had opened up to them through European contact. As Richard Young

⁵⁴ Rambo, to emphasise the dynamic rather than punctiliar nature of conversion, would prefer to use the participle, 'converting', rather than the abstract noun, 'conversion', though he concedes the convenience of the latter term: Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 7. See also Thomas M. Finn, *From Death to Rebirth: Ritual and Conversion in Antiquity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 9.

⁵⁵ The triad of belief, identity and practice also occurs in other descriptive definitions: Leslie Newbigin, "Conversion," in *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission*, ed. Stephen Neill, Gerald H. Anderson, and John Goodwin (London: Lutterworth Press, 1980), 147; Alan Kreider, *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 1999), xv.

⁵⁶ Baer, "History and Religious Conversion," 25; Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 12–14; David W. Kling, "Conversion to Christianity," in *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ed. Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 610–14. Change of belief is less a feature of conversions categorised as intensification. The conversion narratives of the missionaries were mainly conversions of intensification, while their Māori converts experienced conversion as a tradition transition.

⁵⁷ Joel Robbins, *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 84–88; Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 18.

comments with regard to conversion in general, “much of the action most worth watching in conversion actually takes place cognitively.”⁵⁸

1.2.2 *Identity*

In addition to new beliefs, conversion is also characterised by the formation of a new locus of identity. A person’s identity is indicated by belonging: who they think they belong to, and who they think belongs to them. Such is the importance of identity, that Robert Hefner even calls it the “analytic minimum” of conversion: “The most necessary feature of religious conversion, it turns out, is not a deeply systematic reorganization of personal meanings but an adjustment in self-identification through the at least nominal acceptance of religious actions or beliefs deemed more fitting, useful, or true.”⁵⁹ A person’s identity is formed through the various relationships that an individual establishes with others, whether they be individuals or social groups. It is these social connections, whether close and personal (family, teachers, intimate friends) or wider and more diffuse (clan, tribe, race), that can be considered as constituting a person’s sense of self.⁶⁰ Consequently, by noting the changing pattern of a convert’s relationships, an insight can be gained into the formation of their new religious identity. The importance of identity for understanding conversion is further underscored by David Bell, who considers religious identity as more fundamental than either religious belief or practice: “Individuals can stop going to religious services, stop reading sacred texts, and possibly even stop believing in core tenets of their faith tradition, and yet their religious identity still remains with them across their lifespan.”⁶¹

Given its enduring nature over time, the change in identity brought about by conversion is highly significant. In fact, Richard Young and Jonathan Seitz argue in their introduction to a collection of essays on Asian Christianity that identity forms the main disjuncture that converts experience with their past: “While the language of

⁵⁸ Richard Fox Young, “Horton’s ‘Intellectualist Theory’ of Conversion, Reflected on by a South Asianist,” in *Beyond Conversion and Syncretism: Indigenous Encounters with Missionary Christianity, 1800–2000*, ed. David Lindenfeld and Miles Richardson (New York, New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 117.

⁵⁹ Robert W. Hefner, “Introduction: World Building and the Rationality of Conversion,” in *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 17. See also Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 26.

⁶⁰ Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 45.

⁶¹ David M. Bell, “Development of the Religious Self: A Theoretical Foundation for Measuring Religious Identity,” in *Religion and the Individual: Belief, Practice, Identity*, ed. Abby Day (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 139.

rupture is commonplace in conversion stories (whether told by missionaries or converts), the studies in our collection emphasize that the primary rupture is one of affiliation (the pre-conversion locus or loci of identity) rather than of culture (language, ethnicity, etc.).”⁶² Interestingly, early Māori converts were often identified as Christians by other Māori before the missionaries had become aware of their public commitment to the Christian faith. For Māori converts, a change in social affiliation, alongside the adoption of religious practices such as Sabbath observance, abstaining from traditional tapu [sacred] practices and engaging in Christian karakia [prayer], could often precede a significant degree of understanding of the Christian message itself. It was this change in identity that meant early Māori converts often became the subject of ridicule and laughter by other Māori, something to which they were very sensitive and found hard to bear, and also became a major obstacle to others to follow their example.

1.2.3 Practice

Changes in belief and identity inevitably lead to the formation of new behaviours, or practice.⁶³ For, as Leslie Newbigin points out, “there is no internal emotional experience that does not also result in changed behaviour.”⁶⁴ There is also a sense in which conversion (and religion in general) can helpfully be understood as ‘performative’, or lived out, just as much as it can be conceived of as a ‘cognitive’ system of belief.⁶⁵ One important implication of this perspective is that religion (including conversion) needs to be considered as more than a bare system of meaning, but rather as a meaningful pattern of practice that is ‘enacted’ (lived out) in people’s lives.⁶⁶

The focus on religion as lived practice rather than as a system of abstract meaning allows greater attention to the role of indigenous agents in their own conversion. As Michael McNally noted with regard to the North American context, “Putting practice first changes the question from ‘What was missionary Christianity and how did it differ from the traditional religion it displaced?’ to ‘What did native peoples make of Christianity?’”⁶⁷ Again in a North American context, Linford Fisher notes the way

⁶² Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 20.

⁶³ Orsi, “Everyday Miracles,” 8–9.

⁶⁴ Newbigin, “Conversion,” 148.

⁶⁵ Finn, *From Death to Rebirth*, 253.

⁶⁶ Orsi, “Everyday Miracles,” 10; Rademaker, “Going Native,” 103.

⁶⁷ McNally, “The Practice of Native American Christianity,” 855.

that taking religious practice into account can broaden an understanding of Native Americans and their engagement with European religion.⁶⁸ He makes the interesting point that there was an experimental aspect to the way Native Americans adopted missionary practices, with aspects added, borrowed or improvised in a way that allowed for a distinctive form of indigenous Christianity to emerge.⁶⁹ Fisher particularly notes the significance of prayer and Sabbath observance in the process of conversion among North American natives, practices that were also significant for New Zealand Māori.⁷⁰

While prayer and Sabbath observance can be seen as particularly religious in intent, other more secular pursuits were equally as significant for early Māori converts. For instance, the practice of growing wheat gained new meaning for Māori once they had become Christians. Although missionaries were always keen to encourage the cultivation of wheat – and Māori certainly experimented with the crop – it was only converted Māori who were willing and / or able to sustain the practice.⁷¹ A similar observation can be made with regard to literacy, where a Māori interest in reading and writing gained a new momentum through Christian conversion.⁷²

1.2.4 Sequence and Coherence

Two further points can helpfully be made with regard to the conversion process. Firstly, the three elements of belief, identity, and practice should be seen as mutually reinforcing with each taking on a different priority over time in no set sequence.⁷³ That is to say, whether changing belief leads to the formation of a new identity, or vice versa, will differ according to circumstances, and the causal connection between the two can be established only on a case-by-case basis. Thus, it is not necessary in the first instance to decide between cognitive approaches, such as that of Robin

⁶⁸ Fisher, “Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730,” 106–7.

⁶⁹ Fisher, “Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730,” 104–5; Orsi, “Everyday Miracles.”

⁷⁰ Fisher, “Native Americans, Conversion, and Christian Practice in Colonial New England, 1640–1730,” 108–10; Lachy Paterson, “Maori ‘Conversion’ to the Rule of Law and Nineteenth-Century Imperial Loyalties,” *Journal of Religious History* 32, no. 2 (2008): 221–22.

⁷¹ Wheat growing by Māori is otherwise without an adequate explanation, see J. M. R. Owens, “New Zealand before Annexation,” in *Oxford History of New Zealand*, 2nd ed., ed. Geoffrey W. Rice (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), 35; Hargreaves, “Changing Maori Agriculture in Pre-Waitangi New Zealand,” 107.

⁷² Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire* (Hounds-mill, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 153, 168; K. R. Howe, “The Maori Response to Christianity in the Thames-Waikato Area, 1833–1840,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 7 (1973): 39.

⁷³ Christian Smith, “Why ‘Why Christianity Works’ Works,” *Sociology of Religion* 69, no. 4 (2008): 485.

Horton where belief leads to commitment, or more utilitarian accounts such as that of Robert Hefner, where commitment and identity are viewed as prior to a process of intellectualisation.⁷⁴ Both approaches are of value, particularly when considered together in a dialectical way rather than used independently.⁷⁵ Interestingly, balancing the cognitive and utilitarian models of conversion is rather reminiscent of the CMS debates with regard to the priority of Christianisation over Civilisation (or vice versa) in the execution of the New Zealand mission.⁷⁶ In the end, both priorities proved vital to the eventual conversion of Māori to Christianity.

Secondly, while a descriptive approach to defining conversion can emphasise the multi-causal nature of conversion, it is still important to acknowledge the cohesive and integrative nature of the conversion experience. That is to say, conversion is more than the sum of its parts. For this reason, Diane Austin-Broos speaks of conversion as being quite different from syncretism or hybridity: "Conversion is a form of passage, a 'turning from and to' that is neither syncretism nor absolute breach ... To be converted is to reidentify, to learn, reorder, and reorient. It involves interrelated modes of transformation that generally continue over time and define a consistent course."⁷⁷ For Austin-Broos, conversion is for the convert a type of passage in which he or she arrives at a new sense of *habitus*, or belonging, in an otherwise turbulent and changing world. Andrew Walls expresses a similar idea by using the theological construct of incarnation as translation: "Conversion is not the substitution of something new for something old (in the great act of translation into humanity, Christ took nothing away from humanity made in God's image); nor the addition of something new to something old (in the great act of translation, Christ added

⁷⁴ Robin Horton, "African Conversion," *Africa* 41, no. 2 (1971); Humphrey J. Fisher, "Conversion Reconsidered: Some Historical Aspects of Religious Conversion in Black Africa," *Africa* 43, no. 1 (1973); Robin Horton, "On the Rationality of Conversion (Part I & II)," *Africa* 45, no. 3–4 (1975); Hefner, "Introduction: World Building and the Rationality of Conversion," 20–25, 118–23; de Maaker, "Have the Mitdes Gone Silent," 138–40; Young and Seitz, introduction to *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, 16–18; Rambo and Farhadian, introduction to *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 7; Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, 3–4; Brendan Carmody, introduction to *Religious Conversion: An African Perspective*, ed. Brendan Carmody (Lusaka, Zambia: Gadeson, 2018), 2.

⁷⁵ Dae Maaker, "Have the Mitdes Gone Silent," 158–59; Richard Fox Young, "Loss and Gain: An 'Intellectualist' conversion and its socio-cognitive calculus in the Hindu-Christian life of Nehemiah Goreth," in *Asia in the Making of Christianity*, ed. Richard Fox Young and Jonathan A. Seitz (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 214–15.

⁷⁶ Malcolm Falloon, *To Plough or to Preach: Mission Strategies in New Zealand During the 1820s* (London: Latimer Trust, 2010), 56–62.

⁷⁷ Austin-Broos, "The Anthropology of Conversion," 2.

nothing to humanity as made in God's image). Conversion is the turning, the re-orientation, of every aspect of humanity – culture-specific humanity – to God.”⁷⁸

1.2.5 A Working Definition

To conclude this discussion on the nature of conversion, this thesis offers the following definition:

Conversion is a profoundly religious experience of reorientation in which an individual or group embraces a gradual, though at times appearing sudden, process of change in patterns of belief, identity and practice, resulting in a stable and viable way of communal life that has recognisable continuity with the past, yet is distinctly new.

Many of the elements of the model have already been discussed in previous sections, but the following seven aspects may provide a helpful summary. First, the model defines conversion as a religious experience and not simply as the product of other underlying causes, whether psychological, economic, or political. This, however, is not meant to imply that other factors are not involved, or that religion can ever be separated from its social and cultural contexts. But it does mean that religious ideas are viewed as being a sufficient explanation for people’s actions unless the context indicates the contrary.

Second, although the model is largely descriptive in approach, it does still contain normative elements, such as the phrase ‘experience of reorientation’. The word ‘experience’ is not to be limited to internal, psychological states, but should be considered more broadly to include, for instance, concepts of journey – whether of an individual or group – or decisions of responsibility for aspects of personal or communal life.⁷⁹

Third, the model views conversion as a process involving individuals and/or groups. This recognises that while conversion involves the individual convert, it is never just individualistic, and that the aspirations and expectations of the social group can profoundly affect the experiences of individuals who are members of that group.

Fourth, conversion is understood as a process of change rather than as a single event, though there might be particular moments that can be identified as ‘sudden’ in an

⁷⁸ Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 28.

⁷⁹ Austin-Broos, “The Anthropology of Conversion,” 1–3; Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 146–48.

otherwise ‘gradual’ process. Converts are also not viewed as being merely passive, but as active agents who embrace the changes taking place in their lives.

Fifth, conversion is described in terms of the changing patterns of belief, identity and practice. The word ‘patterns’ is used here to indicate that not all the changes that a convert makes need to be considered new. This recognises that conversion involves a degree of continuity with the past as well as creating a new direction for the future. For instance, with regard to beliefs, some may remain the same, while others might be repurposed. The use of the word ‘patterns’ also recognises that individuals and groups do not necessarily form complete or consistent ways of life, yet they are nevertheless adequate and sufficient for the immediate needs of the convert or group.⁸⁰

Sixth, the model describes the outcome of conversion in terms of a way of life that is both stable and viable. This recognises that while the process of conversion may involve a measure of experimentation, it is properly termed ‘conversion’ only when those experimentations result in a sustained change in the way a convert or group chooses to live their lives. For example, for Māori to live with the missionaries on the mission stations involved a dramatic change of lifestyle, but that does not mean that they were converted. When, however, those changes had become independently appropriated by Māori for themselves, apart from the presence of the missionaries, then the term ‘conversion’ can appropriately be applied.

Seventh, this model, while allowing for continuity with the past, affirms that conversion has a distinct integrity that goes beyond concepts of hybridity or syncretism. Conversion need not imply that converts have abandoned their inherited culture entirely, nor that they have simply adopted the culture and traditions of their teachers. Instead, the model affirms that conversion will result in a way of life that is unique to the individual or group involved.⁸¹ Thus the phrase Māori Christianity has

⁸⁰ The intention is to incorporate the concept of “mazeway reformulation” as developed by Anthony Wallace and used by Lewis Rambo: Anthony F. C. Wallace, “Revitalization Movements,” *American Anthropologist* 58, no. 2 (1956): 265–66; Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 23. Wallace describes the “mazeway” as “nature, society, culture, personality, and body image, as seen by one person. The mazeway concept is related to concepts of self, world view, and behavioural environment.” Wallace, “Revitalization Movements,” 266.

⁸¹ This follows the distinction that Andrew Walls makes between proselytes and converts: Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 51–53; Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, 67–68.

a real substantive meaning as an identifiable cultural expression of Christianity independent of their missionary teachers.

1.3 Historical Perspectives on the Māori Conversion

The Māori conversion has been the subject of debate from at least the inception of New Zealand as a British colony in 1840. These debates, although at times coloured by various religious, political, and social agendas, underline the continued importance of the Māori Conversion for an understanding of New Zealand history. Beginning with the missionaries, this section will explore these competing perspectives in order to understand the ways in which historical writers have viewed the nature and extent of the Māori Conversion.

1.3.1 *Missionary Expectation and Engagement*

The CMS missionaries who came to New Zealand were part of the British evangelical movement of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and, as such, shared broadly similar expectations as to the nature of conversion.⁸² They understood conversion to be the human experience of God's salvation, inaugurated by faith and repentance, which, although instantaneous in nature, was evidenced by the on-going effects of a changed life. There was a human dimension to this process, but ultimately conversion was understood to be a sovereign work of God within the life of a convert and, as such, did not dependent on any particular external means or methods. Consequently, although the missionaries were open to adopting a variety of mission strategies, they saw the faithful preaching of God's word as the primary means by which God would bring about the conversion of Māori.

Thus, Samuel Marsden displayed his evangelical commitments when he described conversion in the follow terms:

Conversion does not consist in embracing any tenets however scriptural and important. The knowledge of Christ is indeed ... the means of converting us, but conversion [itself] consists in a thorough change in all our tempers, dispositions and conduct, and in the renewal of our souls after the divine image.

⁸² Mark A. Noll, *The rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (London: Apollos, 2004), 249–277; John Wolffe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Wilberforce, More, Chalmers and Finney* (Nottingham, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2006), 91–119; Sean McGeever, *Born Again: The Evangelical Theology of Conversion in John Wesley and George Whitefield* (Bellingham, Washington: Lexham Press, 2020), 190–218; John Newton, "Spiritual Letters on Growth and Grace," in *The Life and Spirituality of John Newton* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Regent College Publishing, 1998), 96–112.

In vain is the moral fitness of things insisted on, yea in vain are the terrors of hell displayed for the conversion of men. No terrors however great can ever work real conversion in any man. Nothing but the knowledge of Christ crucified can ever operate upon the soul so as to produce in it a radical and universal change.⁸³

For Marsden, the imposition of Christian morality, or even a fear of a future judgment would be insufficient to bring about the conversion of Māori. In this Marsden was affirming the mainstream view within the British evangelicalism of his day. This was doubly so, given that the sermon was drawn almost word-for-word from the sermon outline published by his Cambridge mentor and friend, Charles Simeon.⁸⁴

It was these same convictions that shaped the CMS missionary engagement with Māori in the early years of the mission. James Kemp's journal entry for Sunday, 5 March 1826, for example, was typical of their approach:

At our Native Service this morning, many Natives were present, who all appeared very attentive to what was said. After catechising them I endeavoured to shew them the depravity of the human heart and the necessity of a change: I observed, that so long as we remained with our hearts unchanged, we were enemies to God, and if we died in that state there was no hope of our souls being saved & pointed them to that Saviour who was ready and willing to receive all that came to him.⁸⁵

In particular, the missionaries emphasised the link between Christian prayer and the experience of conversion. As Richard Davis, a Paihia missionary, explained to local Māori: "We then pointed out to them the nature of the enlightening grace of God and the manner in which it was to be obtained. We told them that prayer was the channel by which God was pleased, through Christ, to convey blessings into the hearts of his

⁸³ Samuel Marsden, Sermon 38 (Donald Robinson Library, Moore Theological College, *Samuel Marsden Archive*, Sermon Manuscripts, 032/1), 16–17.

⁸⁴ Charles Simeon, "Commentary on Isaiah 11, verses 6–9," in Charles Simeon, *Horae Homileticae* (London: 1832). <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/shh/isaiah-11.html>. For Marsden's extensive use of Simeon's outlines in his sermons, see David B. Pettett, *Samuel Marsden: Preacher, Pastor, Magistrate and Missionary* (Campbelltown, NSW: Bolt Publishing Services, 2016). Marsden has often been associated with a "civilise first" approach to conversion, in which the teaching of the mechanical arts of civilisations (agriculture, construction, and manufacture) were seen as a necessary precursor to the eventual conversion of Māori. Indeed, Marsden was criticised for holding such views by his contemporary, John Dunmore Lang, in 1839: Lang, John Dunmore. *New Zealand in 1839: Or Four Letters to the Right Hon. Earl Durham, on the Colonization of That Island, and on the Present Condition and Prospects of Its Native Inhabitants* (London, 1839), 27. However, while Marsden certainly adopted the strategy of introducing the mechanical arts alongside the preaching of the gospel, his understanding of conversion was, in fact, more conventionally evangelical than later commentators have allowed. For further discussion, see Malcolm Falloon, *To plough or to preach: mission strategies in New Zealand during the 1820s* (London: Latimer Trust, 2010), 56–61; Malcolm Falloon, "'Openings of Providence': The shaping of Marsden's missionary vision for New Zealand," in *Launching Marsden's Mission: The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, viewed from New South Wales*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and David B. Pettett (London: Latimer Trust, 2014), 135–137.

⁸⁵ James Kemp, Journal, 5 Mar 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:138) Kemp was a CMS missionary based at Kerikeri.

people. I requested them to pray to God to enlighten their dark minds, to give them new hearts, that they may enjoy the love of Christ in their souls.”⁸⁶

A number of Māori, particularly those living on the mission stations, responded to this message by engaging in Christian prayer – at least in an experimental way. Yet, as one young man wrote on his slate to William Williams: “How is it that we continue to pray according to your instructions and yet our hearts are not changed?”⁸⁷ This raised the important question for Māori as to whether the new Pākehā God was even willing to answer their prayers. When Māori did convert, it was based on their belief that their prayers had indeed been answered and that they had experienced the new birth of which the missionaries spoke.

As the Māori Conversion gained momentum, the role of the group became increasingly important. This was particularly the case when entire villages decided to put aside traditional customs in favour of the new Christian tikanga [protocol, custom, correct procedure]. Such changes were a matter of negotiation and debate among family members, for it was not possible even for a tribal leader to simply impose their will upon the rest – although the support and advocacy of sympathetic chiefs was often key.

Individuals remained free, however, to convert (or not) relatively independently of their group’s decision. Adopting Christian tikanga, however, did make it harder for those who wished to continue their traditional practices. Keeping tapu, for instance, needed the collective effort of the whole group in order to be maintained – even if simply to have their tapu status acknowledged and respected. Similarly, converts often found it difficult to practice their faith within a traditional setting and, at times, felt obliged to withdraw and form new Christian communities where they could practice their faith with greater freedom.⁸⁸ Usually the greatest impediment faced by individuals was the fear of being ridiculed by family and friends. Yet, when one family member did convert, it was often the case that other members became more responsive to the Christian message as well.

For the missionaries, the mission station community was the template upon which the Christian Māori kāinga was to be modelled. This collective approach to the

⁸⁶ Richard Davis, Journal, 17 Jul 1825, (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:525).

⁸⁷ William Williams, Journal, 14 Jan 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:5).

⁸⁸ This seems to have been especially the case in the Waikato and Rotorua districts.

CMS's mission appealed to Māori, particularly the institution of the Sabbath with its links to peacemaking, and the setting aside of traditional tapu in favour of Christian karakia. The formation of schools and the teaching of the catechism was also a pattern quickly taken up within a local Māori context. The missionary emphasis on using the outward, corporate, 'means of grace' (i.e. prayer and Church attendance) as the pathway to an inner, individual, spiritual change, also had the benefit of including every one, collectively, within the process of religious change and not just a select few. This created, however, the very danger that the missionaries wished to avoid – of Māori adopting the formal aspects of the Christian religion without experiencing the evangelical change that they deemed necessary to be truly converted. It was an aspect of the Māori Conversion that the missionaries were constantly working to counteract and their critics were quick to point out.

1.3.2 *Missionary Assessment*

Up until 1840 there was little need (or opportunity) for the New Zealand missionaries to publish in their own right and make their views independently known.⁸⁹ However, in the lead-up to the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 the CMS came under increasing pressure from their political rivals.⁹⁰ Initially, the secretaries of the society continued to manage the public debate on behalf of their missionaries, but in 1845 they relaxed that policy and allowed William Williams to answer their critics

⁸⁹ An exception was the publication of William Yate's book in 1835, *An Account of New Zealand* – though the initiative for this was entirely his own: William Yate, *An Account of New Zealand and of The Church Missionary Society's Mission in the Northern Island* (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1970); Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 145–48. Yate seems to have perceived the need for a greater level of publicity for the mission while resident in New South Wales supervising the printing of Māori texts. He wrote the book during a five-month voyage to England in 1834. His colleagues back in New Zealand had deep misgivings about the book, which they believed to be an exercise in self-promotion. They had prepared a critical review for the CMS Secretaries (probably written by William Williams) that remained unpublished: A Review of "An Account of New Zealand", 10 October 1836 (Cadbury Research Library [CRL], University of Birmingham, CMS/B/OMS/C N M10:22–26).

⁹⁰ John Dunmore Lang, *New Zealand in 1839: or Four Letters to the Right Hon. Earl Durham, On the Colonization of that Island, and on the Present Condition and Prospects of Its Native Inhabitants* (London, 1839); "New Zealand Mission", 5 Sep 1840, *The Times*, 4–5 (The Times Digital Archive); "New Zealand In 1839", 7 Oct 1840, *The Times*, 6); Joseph Somes, "Letter to R. Vernon Smith, 29 March 1841," *Parliamentary Papers 1841* (311) 141–45, in *Great Britain. Parliamentary Papers relating to New Zealand [Selected]. Volume 3* (1841); William Jowett, Thomas Vores, and Dandeson Coates, *Statement of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society, Relative to the New-Zealand Mission* (London, 1839); William Jowett, Thomas Vores, and Dandeson Coates, *Further Statement of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society Relative to the New-Zealand Mission* (London, 1840).

directly.⁹¹ Indeed William Williams had emerged as the chief spokesman and apologist for the mission, having taken over a secretarial role for the mission from his brother Henry when he arrived in New Zealand in 1826. Consequently, a careful consideration of William Williams's views with regard to the Māori Conversion provides a useful insight into the wider consensus among the New Zealand missionaries. An understanding of William Williams's views also helps to minimise the risk of making generalisations based on the particular perspectives of individual missionaries.⁹²

Williams's first account of the Māori Conversion was given in a lecture delivered before the University of Oxford in 1852.⁹³ Up until this point, as was admitted by the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* who published the lecture, no "connected history" of the mission was available apart from the episodic and fragmentary accounts contained within the various CMS missionary publications.⁹⁴ For this reason, the editor welcomed the opportunity to make Williams's lecture more widely available,

⁹¹ William Williams, *Three Letters Addressed to the Right Hon. the Earl of Chichester, President of the Church Missionary Society, Relative to the Charges Brought Against the New Zealand Mission*. (London, 1845). The Rev. Thomas Scott was the first secretary of the CMS (1799–1803). Upon his resignation, the Rev. Josiah Pratt took over the position until his retirement in 1824. Pratt was assisted from 1816 by the Rev. Edward Bickersteth, who on Pratt's retirement served as clerical secretary from 1824 until 1830, with the assistance of Dandeson Coates. Coates continued to serve as the Lay Secretary from 1830 until his sudden death in 1846. He was assisted during this time by a series of clerical secretaries: Thomas Woodrooffe (1824–32), William Jowett (1832–40), Thomas Vores (1839–41), and Henry Venn (1841–46). In 1846, Henry Venn began his long tenure as the Clerical Secretary, ending with his retirement, aged seventy-five, in 1872. Venn was assisted by the lay secretary, Hector Straith, for seventeen years from 1846.

⁹² This is the difficulty with the conclusions drawn by Owens and Parsonson: J. M. R. Owens, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," *New Zealand Journal of History* 2, no. 1 (1968): 37; J. M. R. Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840" (PhD diss., Victoria University of Wellington, 1969), 672; Ann R. Parsonson, "The Expansion of a Competitive Society: A Study in Nineteenth-century Maori Social History," *New Zealand Journal of History* 14, no. 1 (1980): 59. Owens's analysis of Māori conversions relies on a report by John Waterhouse, the General Superintendant of the Wesleyan South Seas Missions (1838–42). Waterhouse, who was based in Hobart, was reporting on his first visit to New Zealand in 1840, and, while his views are of interest, it is not helpful to generalise beyond his immediate context: *Missionary Register* (London: 1841), 238. Waterhouse's views are also reflected in the perspective of other newly arrived Wesleyan missionaries, such as Gideon Smales, whose testimony is relied on by Ann Parsonson.

⁹³ William Williams, "The New Zealand Mission in Its Earlier Years", *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (1852). Williams also received an honorary doctorate from the university at this time.

⁹⁴ The CMS publications began with the *Missionary Register*, published by the CMS between 1813 and 1855. The *Missionary Register* collated information on the CMS and other protestant missionary societies. From 1830, with the growth of the various missions, the CMS saw the need to produce a separate monthly periodical called the *Church Missionary Record* (1830–76). This was supplemented in 1849 by the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (1849–75). As the *Missionary Register* was limited to financial contributors, the CMS also produced a quarterly pamphlet designed for mass circulation called the *Missionary Papers* (1816–81). From 1833 the *Missionary Papers* were known as the *Church Missionary Paper*. Then, from 1841, the *Church Missionary Gleaner* was also published on a monthly basis as a smaller, more succinct, version of the *Church Missionary Record*.

believing that it would provide a suitable framework for more extended works in the future.

In his lecture, Williams divided the chronology of the mission into two time periods: the first sixteen years, which he described as a period of “difficulties”; and a second, 1830–1840, described as a period of expansion “year after year.”⁹⁵ As to the success of the mission, rather than venturing his own opinion, Williams offered the testimony of George Selwyn, the first Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, whom he quoted as an impartial authority: “We see here,” said Selwyn, “a whole nation of pagans converted to the faith. God has given a new heart and a new spirit to thousands after thousands of our fellow-creatures in this distant quarter of the earth.”⁹⁶

Williams also took the opportunity to respond to those detractors who alleged that Māori Christianity was only nominal and a matter of “mere profession.”⁹⁷ Firstly, said Williams, although false “professors” were to be expected, the number and extent of the Māori Conversion could not be dismissed, especially as it involved such radical changes in belief and practice. Secondly, he pointed to the substantial uptake of Christian literature – 60,000 copies of the New Testament and 20,000 copies of the Prayer Book. What accounted for this thirst, asked Williams, other than a desire to know God’s word? Thirdly, the number of regular communicants and the testimony

⁹⁵ Williams, “The New Zealand Mission in Its Earlier Years”, *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (1852): 47.

⁹⁶ Williams, “The New Zealand Mission in Its Earlier Years”, *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (1852): 47. Selwyn’s quote comes from a sermon preached at Paihia, 26 Jun 1842. See *Proceedings* (London: 1842–1843), 92–93.

⁹⁷ Williams would have particularly had in mind the criticisms of John Dunmore Lang, who in 1839, after a ten-day unscheduled stopover in the Bay of Islands, published a series of open letters addressed to Earl Durham, the Governor of the New Zealand Land Company: Lang, *New Zealand in 1839*, 45. In the letters, Lang accused the New Zealand mission of being the most “monstrous” to have occurred in the history of missions since the Reformation and one that was destined to fail or, at the very least, result in a “mere nominal profession of Christianity”; Lang, *New Zealand in 1839*, 37, 45. Extracts from Lang’s letters were also published by *The Times* “New Zealand In 1839”, 7 Oct 1840, *The Times*, 6). Unlike the previous criticisms of Augustus Earle, Lang’s criticisms were all the more devastating for the CMS coming as they did from an ordained Presbyterian minister who was seen as sympathetic to the missionary cause. The CMS responded with a series of publications: Jowett, Vores, and Coates, *Statement of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society*; Jowett, Vores, and Coates, *Further Statement*; Church Missionary Society, “New-Zealand Mission. Visit of the Bishop of Australia to the Church Missionary Society’s Mission in New Zealand: and Notices of Its State and Progress.,” *Missions of the Church Missionary Society, at Kishnaghur, and in New Zealand* (London, 1840), <http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/document?wid=2613>; George Augustus Selwyn, *New-Zealand Mission. Views of the Bishop of New Zealand Respecting the Church Missionary Society’s Mission in New Zealand*, ed. the Church Missionary Society (London, 1843). Williams had also replied in an unpublished letter to the CMS secretaries: William Williams to the Secretaries, 6 May 1840 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M12:228). Then in 1845, the CMS allowed the publication of a series of letters written by Williams in February 1842 directly answering Lang’s allegations: Williams, *Three Letters*.

of dying converts confirmed for Williams the genuine and extensive nature of the Māori Conversion.

Upon returning to New Zealand, Williams took up the task of turning his lecture into a full-length history, taking the account of the mission up until the year 1847. The book, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, was eventually published in 1867 and has since become the standard account of the Māori Conversion from a missionary perspective.⁹⁸ By this date, however, a new crisis had overtaken the mission due to the land wars of 1860–65 that resulted in large numbers of Māori turning away from missionary Christianity.⁹⁹ In his book, Williams acknowledged that the wars had revived questions over the nature of Māori Christianity and even whether Māori had been converted at all.¹⁰⁰ Williams's response built upon the approach taken in his Oxford lecture and offered four further reflections.

Firstly, Williams compared the plight of Māori Christianity during the 1860s to the pattern of the early church where, though many fell away, a faithful remnant remained. So too, said Williams, “there has been a national recognition of the Christian religion; but, while there have been many nominal professors, we have undoubted evidence that large numbers of sincere Christians have been gathered into the fold of Christ.”¹⁰¹

Secondly, Williams considered the strongest evidence for the Māori Conversion to be the changes that had taken place within Māori society. “The first effect of Christianity,” said Williams, “was to induce the people to give up that system of warfare which for generations had made every tribe the enemy of its neighbours.”¹⁰² The ensuing peace, Williams argued, had led to an upsurge in agricultural production that was further enhanced by trade with the colonial settlements.¹⁰³

Thirdly, Williams candidly admitted that there were many Māori for whom “the change was little more than external.”¹⁰⁴ The reason for this, according to Williams, was that many had retained their “old superstitions” alongside their new faith thus

⁹⁸ William Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1989).

⁹⁹ See, John Stenhouse, “Churches, State and the New Zealand Wars: 1860–1872,” *Journal of Law and Religion* 13, no. 2 (1998).

¹⁰⁰ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, iii-iv.

¹⁰¹ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, v.

¹⁰² Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 349.

¹⁰³ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 350.

¹⁰⁴ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 261.

leading to inconsistency of behaviour.¹⁰⁵ In addition, he thought that Māori often became Christians through social expectation rather than personal conviction. For such converts, said Williams, the temporary advantages of Christianity were soon outweighed by the more irksome aspects of the faith.¹⁰⁶ Williams also considered that Christianity had held a certain novelty value that Māori found attractive: "The excitement which followed upon the first introduction of the Gospel was unnatural," said Williams, "for nearly the whole population became attendants upon Christian worship. It could not therefore be expected that this state of things should be permanent."¹⁰⁷ Yet, even with these somewhat sober assessments, Williams still maintained that the number of true conversions was substantial:

Yet notwithstanding all, after making a fair allowance for the backsliders and the lukewarm in such proportion as they are to be found in every community, there seemed to be a large number who walked as became the Gospel. They were not matured Christians, but there were many babes in Christ, who were anxious to be instructed.¹⁰⁸

For Williams the true indicator of the vitality of Māori Christianity continued to be the number of regular communicants, which he called the "fruit of the tree." Because each communicant was examined by the local catechist and missionary before being admitted, Williams maintained that the number of communicants was the best indicator that converts were still "walking the narrow path."¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, Williams also defended the CMS baptism policy, which he maintained became even more rigorous as numbers seeking admittance increased.¹¹⁰ According to Williams, in order to be baptised by the CMS, a candidate had to demonstrate a sound knowledge of the faith along with a sincere profession and a consistent manner of life. For such candidates, Williams argued, it would have been unreasonable to deny baptism:

It may be thought perhaps that the examination of candidates was not sufficiently strict, but when a native came recommended by his teacher for consistency of conduct, and it was found, after repeated examinations, that he was fully acquainted with the whole scheme of redemption ... when it was found that he professed with apparent sincerity "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," it would have been a matter of serious responsibility to say, "I have no doubt of your present sincerity; but in order the more fully to test it, you must wait another year before you can be received into the Church." The record of the proceedings of the early Church leads to the belief that the apostles would not have hesitated to receive such an one.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 261–62.

¹⁰⁶ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 295–96.

¹⁰⁷ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 309.

¹⁰⁸ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 344–45.

¹⁰⁹ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 345.

¹¹⁰ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 210, 289, 309–10.

¹¹¹ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 309–10.

Lastly, in his final chapter, Williams posed the question, “Where, then, is the Christianity of the native Church?”¹¹² Admitting that the recent wars had brought about a “sifting-time”, Williams believed that if great numbers had fallen away from the faith, so too had great numbers accepted it.¹¹³ He was also aware that, by its very nature, an individual’s conversion is not easily discerned. As a consequence, Williams answered his question with a mixture of confidence and reserve:

During the period of fifty years in which the gospel has been proclaimed to the New Zealanders, who can say how many have received it in sincerity? Of this we are certain, that the multitude is large of those who, after having afforded during life a sufficient reason for believing that they were true converts, have in their last moments given a clear testimony that they died in the Christian’s hope.¹¹⁴

Williams’s answer was consistent with other missionary assessments of the Māori Conversion being made at the time.¹¹⁵ He was alert to the dangers of nominalism without minimising the magnitude of the changes that had occurred within Māori society through conversion. If anything, Williams’s sensitivity to issues of nominalism – a product of his English evangelical heritage – might be seen as being unnecessarily restrictive in terms of the definition of conversion being used in this thesis. Nevertheless, Williams showed an awareness of the difficulties in making cross-cultural assessments of what was, for the missionaries, an inherently inward and spiritual transformation.¹¹⁶

1.3.3 Settler, Colonial and Humanitarian Voices

Debates over the effectiveness of the New Zealand mission to Māori expanded into a multiplicity of opinion within New Zealand colonial society post-1840. In particular, three distinct perspectives, or voices, can be identified within the published literature of the mid-nineteenth century: the Settler, Colonial, and Humanitarian voices.

¹¹² Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 375.

¹¹³ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 375, 377. The complex nature of the Māori engagement with Christianity in the aftermath of the land wars was highlighted by the missionary, Richard Taylor, who commented that if Europeans had formed the impression that Māori had abandoned the Christian faith, likewise Māori “have the same idea of us, and with apparently quite as much show of reason”; Richard Taylor, *The Past and Present of New Zealand with its Prospects for the Future* (London, 1868), 69. See also Lyndsay Head, “Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity,” in *Christianity, Modernity and Culture*, ed. John Stenhouse and G. A. Wood (Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005).

¹¹⁴ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 376.

¹¹⁵ For instance, the Wesleyan missionary, James Buller, and the CMS historian, Sarah Tucker: James Buller, *Forty years in New Zealand: Including a Personal Narrative, an Account of Maoridom, and of the Christianization and Colonization of the Country* (London, 1878), 324–38; Sarah Tucker, *The Southern Cross and Southern Crown: Or, the Gospel in New Zealand* (London, 1855), 253–54.

¹¹⁶ A similar awareness was expressed by the CMS missionary, Thomas Grace; T. S. Grace, *A Pioneer Missionary among the Maoris, 1850–1879: Being Letters and Journals of Thomas Samuel Grace*, ed. S.J. Brittan and A.V. Grace (Palmerston North: G.H. Bennett, 1928), 59.

The settler voice can be distinguished by its generally negative assessment of both Māori Christianity and the work of the missionaries who they regarded as their political rivals.¹¹⁷ These writers were unanimous in rejecting the missionaries as naive and incompetent, and in regarding Māori Christianity as inherently defective.¹¹⁸ In the 1840s both Auckland and Wellington were important centres for settler opinion.

In Auckland, three authors – Samuel Martin, William Brown and John Logan Campbell – were particularly influential as members of the so-called “senate clique” of merchants resident in the city.¹¹⁹ Of the three, Martin and Brown were the most politically active and were for a time members of Governor Fitzroy’s Legislative Council. Far from being supportive of Fitzroy, however, they became strident critics of his colonial policies, particularly with regard to pre-treaty land claims. In 1844, both Martin and Brown resigned from the council and returned separately to England in order to argue their case directly with the British government. During their respective sea voyages they wrote accounts of their experiences in New Zealand. Although Campbell did not publish his views until much later in life, when he did so, he drew on earlier impressions of New Zealand recorded during the 1840s.¹²⁰

For Martin, civilisation was an important preparatory process for the conversion of Māori to Christianity: religion was the fruit of civilisation, not its cause. Hence, while

¹¹⁷ Edward Jerningham Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand from 1839 to 1844 with Some Account of the Beginning of the British Colonization of the Islands*, 2 vols (London, 1845), 1:466; William Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand* (London, 1851), 76; Charles Hursthouse, *An Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth, in New Zealand, from Personal Observation, During a Residence There of Five Years*. (London, 1849); Charles Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia, the Britain of the South*, 2 vols (London, 1857), 1:43–44; S. M. D. Martin, *New Zealand; in a Series of Letters: Containing an Account of the Country, Both before and since Its Occupation by the British Government [. . .]* (London, 1845); William Brown, *New Zealand and Its Aborigines: Being an Account of the Aborigines, Trade, and Resources of the Colony; and the Advantages It Now Presents as a Field for Emigration and the Investment of Capital* (London, 1851); John Logan Campbell, *Poenamo: Sketches of the Early Days of New Zealand*, (London, 1881).

¹¹⁸ Martin, *New Zealand; in a Series of Letters*, 281; Campbell, *Poenamo*, 261; Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:453; Hursthouse, *New Zealand or Zealandia*, 1:160–64.

¹¹⁹ Samuel Martin, William Brown and John Logan Campbell were three Scotsmen who became friends on arriving in New Zealand. Brown and Campbell came in 1840 and became business partners, while Martin arrived in 1842. Martin, after a brief period as editor of the *New Zealand Herald and Auckland Gazette* (a government-controlled newspaper), became the editor of the *Southern Cross*, a newspaper owned by Brown and Campbell: K. A. Simpson, “Martin, Samuel McDonald,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*; R. C. J. Stone, “Brown, William,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*; R. C. J. Stone, “Campbell, John Logan,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*.

¹²⁰ Campbell, *Poenamo*, 265.

he did not wish to directly disparage their work, his main charge against the missionaries was their unrealistic expectations:

They expected all at once to produce the fruits of civilisation (religion and morality), without attempting to bring the natives through the preparatory stages, and they and the friends of the natives are now surprised and disappointed because they find a people professing Christianity almost as destitute of moral principle as when they were avowed heathens.¹²¹

In his view, Christianisation must be considered the end-point of a gradual process of civilisation in which no abrupt change in behaviour was to be expected.

Consequently, he concluded that Māori were “still... under the practical influence of their former superstitions” and that Māori Christianity was necessarily an amalgam of the two religions.¹²²

John Logan Campbell shared a similar view. Campbell considered Māori to have merely exchanged one outward form of religion for another. The Missionaries had taught Māori,

The Scriptures by rule, and the saying of prayers by rote, and the singing of hymns to a hideously discordant noise, but to these outward forms of worship no inward feelings of conviction had been added. It was mere word-worship, not heart-devotion--a mere substitute of one kind of superstition for another in Maori eyes.¹²³

If Martin was concerned by a lack of moral integrity among Māori, Campbell complained of their lack of rational rigour. It was not that Māori were intellectually incapable, said Campbell – quite the contrary; it was that their teachers were inadequate. Like Martin, Campbell did not wish to demean the “humble but brave” missionary, but he considered it to be,

a fatal error to suppose that men with this double qualification would prove the right men in the right place amongst such a highly-intelligent race as the Maories... When respect for mental capacity of the teacher is wanting, small is the effect of the doctrines inculcated, in the mind of the taught.¹²⁴

If someone as intellectually gifted as Bishop Selwyn, said Campbell, failed to make an impression on the Māori mind, what hope did the simple, primitive “mechanic missionary” have of succeeding!¹²⁵ Consequently, for Campbell the Māori profession of Christianity could not have had an intellectual motivation, but was to be attributed to other causes, such as self-interest or natural disposition.

¹²¹ Martin, *New Zealand*, 281.

¹²² Martin, *New Zealand*, 281.

¹²³ Campbell, *Poenamo*, 262.

¹²⁴ Campbell, *Poenamo*, 261.

¹²⁵ Campbell, *Poenamo*, 265.

The third Auckland friend, William Brown, saw Māori as predisposed to the performance of outward displays of religion, being “highly susceptible of religious impressions.”¹²⁶ Brown cited a great love for hymn singing (“notwithstanding their utter want of all musical talent”) and a thirst for knowledge as two further reasons for Māori embracing Christianity:

The mere possession of books, and the superior acquirements of the missionary natives, form a powerful inducement to the other natives to follow their example, as there is no people whatever more desirous to acquire information, or more apt and persevering in the pursuit of it.¹²⁷

Though Brown acknowledged that the missionaries had introduced Māori to the moral qualities of the Christian God and the concept of a future judgment, he did not believe that this was a sufficient substitute for customary Māori law that circumscribed personal behaviour on a day-to-day basis. For Brown, the eradication under missionary influence of the superstitions that underpinned Māori custom had been too sudden. Yet Brown did concede that Māori were surprisingly law-abiding:

No such power [civil law], however, exists amongst the New Zealanders, and their good conduct ought to excite the greater surprise when we find the controlling influence of superstition removed from them almost without any evil result; for it must be admitted that personal security is enjoyed amongst them to an extent unequalled in our own country.¹²⁸

He attributed these circumstances, however, not to the conversion of Māori, but to the general superiority of the Māori character, which was consistent with their “quiet, placid, and passionless nature.”¹²⁹

In Wellington, the political rivalry between the New Zealand Company and the missionaries coloured much of the discussion. This is evident in the writing of three authors connected with the New Zealand Company: Edward Jerningham Wakefield, William Fox, and Charles Hursthouse.¹³⁰ Wakefield declared there to be an “unreasonable war” being waged in England by the Colonial Office and missionary societies against the New Zealand Company, while back in New Zealand, he claimed that government officials and missionaries were arrayed against the Company’s agents and its settlers.¹³¹ Fox was critical of what he saw as the missionary ambition to create a “Levitical republic” along the lines of the Jesuits in Paraguay, while

¹²⁶ Brown, *New Zealand and Its Aborigines*, 82.

¹²⁷ Brown, *New Zealand and Its Aborigines*, 85.

¹²⁸ Brown, *New Zealand and Its Aborigines*, 88–89.

¹²⁹ Brown, *New Zealand and Its Aborigines*, 89.

¹³⁰ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:466; Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 76; Hursthouse, *An Account; Hursthouse, New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:43–44.

¹³¹ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:466.

Charles Hursthouse, echoing similar views, feared a “missionary-government” in the north determined to destroy the “colonising-company” in the south.¹³²

Edward Wakefield had arrived in New Zealand with his uncle, William Wakefield, in August 1839 with the first party of New Zealand Company settlers to arrive at Port Nicholson (Wellington). By 1844 he had returned to England where he published a very popular account of his New Zealand travels. For Wakefield the competition between the missionaries and the Company was more than just political; each side had its own competing missionary strategy toward Māori. The New Zealand Company and her settlers emphasised the importance of civilisation to the process of Christianisation, while, according to Wakefield, the system adopted by the missionaries attempted to keep Māori separate and teach them religion only.¹³³ Consequently, Wakefield invoked the legacy of Samuel Marsden and styled the Company’s settlers as the true “missionaries of civilization and Christianity among the heathen.”¹³⁴

Wakefield claimed to admire traditional Māori tribal society; though “perfectly wild”, he recognised the honour and dignity of the chiefs who used their political authority to provide their tribe with social stability. He also admired those tribes that he termed “partly civilized” through contact with European colonisers. Though traditional chiefly authority had been significantly weakened, it had been replaced by the rule of law adopted from their European neighbours. However, he could not admire those Māori who were the products of the “missionary system”:

The *mihanere* [sic] natives, as a body, were distinctly inferior in point of moral character to the natives who remained with their ancient customs unchanged, and also to those who, in the immediate neighbourhood of Wellington, had acquired some degree of civilization and general knowledge, together with the Christian creed.¹³⁵

These mihihane Māori (the “merely converted” as Wakefield called them) had been segregated from European settlements, yet “the authority of the chiefs was suddenly and totally overthrown, without the substitution for it of any political organization,

¹³² Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 76; Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:43–44. Hursthouse was particularly critical of the permanent under-secretary of the Colonial Office, James Stephen, who he described as “deeply imbued with the anti-emigration fallacies of aborigines-protection societies and a violent missionary partisan.”

¹³³ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:455.

¹³⁴ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:453. A similar view was expressed by William Power in W. T. Power, *Sketches in New Zealand with Pen and Pencil* (London, 1849), 147.

¹³⁵ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:11. Italics Wakefield.

in order to save the tribe from anarchy.”¹³⁶ Given the flaws in the “missionary system”, said Wakefield, the only outcome that could be expected for Māori was, “a strict and rigid adherence to the mere forms of the Christian religion.”¹³⁷

William Fox came to New Zealand in 1842 having been influenced by the writings of Wakefield’s father, Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Fox became the principal agent for the New Zealand Company upon William Wakefield’s death in 1848. In 1851 he returned to England to lobby on behalf of the Wellington settlers, and while there published his views on the state of the New Zealand colonies.

One feature of Māori society that William Fox noted was the rapid decline in the population size. He attributed this decline to both physical and moral causes.¹³⁸ Under physical causes Fox listed scrofula (a form of tuberculosis), the drudgery and degradation of women, polygamy, and infanticide (particularly in those places untouched by civilisation).¹³⁹ Under moral causes, he listed the effect on a savage race of coming into contact with a more civilised nation.¹⁴⁰ Though Fox was aware of counter examples that would weaken his “mental depression” theory, he dismissed these as not being typical of the “great bulk of the people.”¹⁴¹ The only way to alleviate these depressive effects was, in Fox’s view, to strengthen the traditional institution of chieftainship. Yet, this was the very institution that the missionaries had undermined with the result that “the various shades of nobility and gentry subordinate to it, have been allowed to sink into ruin, and carry all along with them to a lower social level than before.”¹⁴²

Charles Hursthouse had disembarked at the Company colony of Nelson in 1842, before walking from Wellington to New Plymouth where he lived for five years. Returning to England in 1849, he published an account of his New Zealand experiences in order to encourage further emigration to what he termed the “Britain of the South.”¹⁴³ Hursthouse became the resident English authority on New Zealand during the middle years of the nineteenth century, strongly influencing the various

¹³⁶ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:15.

¹³⁷ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:11.

¹³⁸ Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 55–6. Martin had also commented on Māori population decline: Martin, *New Zealand*, 277.

¹³⁹ Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 55.

¹⁴⁰ Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 56–57.

¹⁴¹ Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 59–60.

¹⁴² Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zealand*, 57.

¹⁴³ G. H. Scholefield, “Hursthouse, Charles Flinders (1812–76),” in G. H. Scholefield, ed., *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, vol. 1 (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940), 422.

editions of the New Zealand Handbook produced by his publishers, Stanford of London.¹⁴⁴

Hursthouse, like William Fox, had also noted the decline in Māori population, but he rejected Fox's "mental depression" theory along with a number of other explanations.¹⁴⁵ The true cause of Māori population decline, according to Hursthouse, was the lower ratio of females to males in the general population combined with female infertility for which he proffered a number of explanations.

Hursthouse did agree with Fox, however, that "under injudicious missionary guidance" the authority of hereditary Chiefs had been considerably weakened and impaired.¹⁴⁶ That Māori were now operating under British law was a "mere Colonial-Office and Exeter-Hall fiction." Nevertheless, apart from some "turbulent exceptions", Māori as a people were "orderly and well-behaved" and that "life and property are probably safer in New Zealand than in England."¹⁴⁷

Little more than quarter of a century ago, the New Zealanders were ferocious cannibals, gorging at bloody feasts on slaves and war victims, and the terror of every shipwrecked mariner cast on their fatal shores--now, they are professing Christians, pursuing the arts of peace hand in hand with the white man, and owners of corn fields flocks and herds.¹⁴⁸

Although this transformation was "unquestionably" partly attributable to the missionaries, Hursthouse, like Wakefield, was not prepared to give them all the credit. The good done by the missionaries, in Hursthouse's opinion, had been overstated by partisan commentators and in his view the immigrants had contributed at least as much towards the transformation of Māori.¹⁴⁹ Hursthouse, again like Wakefield, also styled these immigrants as "missionaries" albeit of the "civil" variety: "the latter, the Emigrant, bringing the plough, the ship, the mill, the shop, food, clothes, the industrial arts, and the practical example, has probably done

¹⁴⁴ The Handbook was first published in 1858 as the "Emigrant's Bradshaw" and was into its eleventh edition by 1866: Charles Hursthouse, *The New Zealand Emigrant's Bradshaw; or, Guide to the 'Britain of the South'* (London, 1858); Charles Hursthouse, *The New Zealand Handbook: With Practical Information and Advice for all Orders of Emigrants from the 'Capitalist' to the 'Working man'*, 11th ed. (London, 1866). The author of the Handbooks is not explicitly stated, but Bagnall attributes them "substantially" to Hursthouse: A. G. Bagnall, *New Zealand National Bibliography to the Year 1960*, vol. 1 (Wellington: Hasselberg, Government Printer, 1980), 504–5. Hursthouse directly contributed a chapter to the 1866 edition and acknowledged his position of influence with regard to the *New Zealand Handbook*: Hursthouse, *The New Zealand Handbook*, 156.

¹⁴⁵ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:159–60.

¹⁴⁶ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:162–63.

¹⁴⁷ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:163.

¹⁴⁸ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:166–67.

¹⁴⁹ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:166.

as much in converting and civilizing the New Zealand Heathen as the former [i.e. missionary], armed even with the Bible.”¹⁵⁰

Hursthouse believed that the missionaries had adopted a mission strategy that failed to hold Christianity and Civilisation together:

It seems to me that in the work of converting the heathen, Christianity and Civilization should go together: the plough with the prayer-book, the carpenter’s shop with the chapel; and I cannot but think, that if the missionaries had proselytized more in the spirit of this doctrine, and had sought rather to show the native how to live than to teach him how to die, they would now have numbered more sincere converts to Christianity, and been supported by more rich and powerful aboriginal sons of the church.¹⁵¹

Here, Hursthouse exhibited a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between Christianity and civilisation than many of his fellow settlers – one, ironically, closer to the views of the CMS as outlined in their *Statement* of 1839.¹⁵² As it was, according to Hursthouse, the large numbers of Māori professing Christian faith did so not from the influence of true Christianity, but rather from a love of novelty, including a desire for blankets and tobacco.¹⁵³ Hursthouse considered that Christianity had become the fashion, and was seen as a “passport” to the riches of the European:

The novelty has its charm, and they quickly see that, by professing conversion, they more readily obtain the countenance and support of missionaries, and other Europeans, which leads to trade, and the easier acquisition of what they covet. The New Zealander sees Christianity as clothed in blankets, stripped of which, and the novelty gone, it is to be feared that the neophyte would frequently relapse into darkness.¹⁵⁴

Consequently, Hursthouse quoted Fox with approval in declaring Māori Christianity as being only “skin-deep” and, in the *New Zealand Handbook*, described Māori Christianity as consisting of “‘bell-pulling’ and ‘Sabbath-keeping’”.¹⁵⁵ For Hursthouse, the Māori conversion was yet to be achieved:

Yet, if by “conversion to Christianity” be meant... the impregnation of his mind with those great Bible truths which influence actions, and lead men to shun evil and do good, then, it must be seen by all who have lived among the natives, and who have

¹⁵⁰ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:167.

¹⁵¹ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:167.

¹⁵² Jowett, Vores, and Coates, *Statement of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society*, 2. See also the CMS secretaries’ views on this subject expressed to the New Zealand missionaries in Coates to the Brethren, 30 Sep 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N L1:227–39).

¹⁵³ Hursthouse, *An Account*, 33.

¹⁵⁴ Hursthouse, *An Account*, 33.

¹⁵⁵ Hursthouse, *New Zealand, or Zealandia*, 1:165–66; Fox, *The Six Colonies of New Zeal*, 81; Hursthouse, *The New Zealand Handbook*, 22.

not been blinded by bigotry or professional zeal, that the goodly harvest of “Maori conversion to true Christianity,” is a harvest not yet reaped in New Zealand.¹⁵⁶

Taken together, these Auckland and Wellington writers represent a settler voice that was unanimous in rejecting the missionaries as naive and incompetent, and in regarding Māori Christianity as inherently defective.¹⁵⁷ For these writers, true religion consisted in moral integrity and rational thought, free from what was seen as the taint of superstition. They viewed the missionaries as having failed to understand the proper connection between civilisation and Christianity, and, as a consequence, Māori Christianity could only ever be nominal in nature and outward in form. Though it was sometimes conceded that the missionaries had achieved some benefit for Māori, for this group of writers, only the “bray of Exeter Hall” could claim that their conversion was anything more than skin deep.¹⁵⁸

Colonial Voices

Amongst the newly appointed colonial administrators in New Zealand, three writers offered a perspective different to that of the settlers just considered: Felton Mathew, Edward Shortland, and Arthur Thomson.¹⁵⁹ These writers were generally more sympathetic towards the work of the missionaries than the settlers, even if they shared a similarly negative assessment of Māori Christianity.

Felton Mathew came to New Zealand in 1840 and was the acting Surveyor-General until he was replaced in November 1841.¹⁶⁰ On arriving, he found a country polarised in its opinion of the missionaries: “I find that every man I meet is biased one way or the other, and no one gives a purely impartial and disinterested opinion. I therefore do not depend on anything I hear, but reserve my opinion until I can judge for myself.”¹⁶¹ Mathew admitted in his journal to having “imbibed from what I had heard of the Missionaries a great prejudice against them” only to find himself

¹⁵⁶ Hursthause, *The New Zealand Handbook*, 22–23. It should be noted that Hursthause had been absent from New Zealand for seventeen years at the time of writing this summary statement.

¹⁵⁷ Martin, *New Zealand; in a Series of Letters*, 281; Campbell, *Poenamo*, 261; Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:453; Hursthause, *New Zealand or Zealandia*, 1:160–64.

¹⁵⁸ Campbell, *Poenamo*, 259–60; Hursthause, *New Zealand or Zealandia*, 1:44. Exeter Hall opened in London in 1831 and was a popular venue for religious and philanthropic meetings. The hall was demolished in 1907. For an account of the phrase ‘bray of Exeter Hall’ see Buller, *Forty years in New Zealand*, 324, 483.

¹⁵⁹ Felton Mathew, “Views on the Present State and Future Prospects of New Zealand [1845] – Extracts,” in J. Rutherford, ed., *The Founding of New Zealand: The Journals of Felton Mathew, First Surveyor-General of New Zealand, and His Wife, 1840–1847* (Dunedin: A. H. and A. W. Reed, for the Auckland University College, 1940).

¹⁶⁰ J. Rutherford, “Mathew, Felton (1801–47),” in G. H. Scholefield, ed., *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, vol. 2, 71–73 (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940), 71.

¹⁶¹ Mathew, Journal, 18 Feb 1840, in *The Founding of New Zealand*, 56.

“agreeably disappointed” on closer acquaintance.¹⁶² They were not the land-jobbers he expected, but had merely made fair provision for their families while attempting to protect Māori land from “designing Europeans”. Instead, Mathew considered the remarkable change that had taken place among Māori was much to the missionary’s credit.¹⁶³

What was less to the missionary credit, Mathew felt, was their over-estimation of the Māori character. According to Mathew, while the missionaries had done much to “tame” Māori, they had not been able to “civilise them.”¹⁶⁴ He still considered Māori to be “savages”— albeit savages with great potential. For this reason, Mathew advocated a policy of benign, yet firm coercion, whereby the mere threat of sufficient retribution would be enough to deter Māori aggression.¹⁶⁵

Edward Shortland, a trained physician, was persuaded to come to New Zealand in 1841 by his brother, Willoughby.¹⁶⁶ Shortland became Governor Hobson’s private secretary and was later appointed the police magistrate and Sub-Protector of aborigines for the Eastern District based at Maketu. Shortland left New Zealand in 1846 and did not return until 1862. While he was away he published several books, including *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*.¹⁶⁷ Shortland’s aim in writing, as he noted in the preface, was to record the pre-European customs of Māori before they were forever modified by western contact – something he claimed the missionaries had avoided doing for theological reasons. He considered his residence at Maketu had given him unique access to Māori with whom “the influence of the Missionaries had made little or no impression.”¹⁶⁸

With regard to the conversion of Māori to Christianity, Shortland observed that there was still a large degree of overlap with the former ways: “When the New Zealander becomes a professing Christian, it is not a consequence that he at once abandons his

¹⁶² Mathew, Journal, 13 Feb 1840, in *The Founding of New Zealand*, 55.

¹⁶³ Mathew, Journal, 13 Feb 1840, in *The Founding of New Zealand*, 54–55.

¹⁶⁴ Mathew, Journal, 4 Feb 1840, in *The Founding of New Zealand*, 31.

¹⁶⁵ Mathew, “Views on the Present State,” in *The Founding of New Zealand*, 220. Note this last reference dates from 1845 and was written in the light of the armed conflict in the Bay of Islands between the Colonial government and Māori under the leadership of Hone Heke and Kawiti.

¹⁶⁶ Biographical details of Shortland’s life are drawn from Athol Anderson, “Shortland, Edward,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Anderson suggests that Shortland could be regarded as the first anthropologist of Māori.

¹⁶⁷ Edward Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders: With Illustrations of Their Manners and Customs*, 2nd ed. (London, 1856).

¹⁶⁸ Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, vi. The missionaries had in fact been in contact with Maketu Māori since October 1831. See Henry Williams, Journal, 24 October 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:289b).

former belief. He continues, at least in a great majority of cases, to believe in the reality of the Atua of his fathers. But he believes the Christ to be a more powerful Atua, and of a better nature; and therefore he no longer dreads the Atua Maori.”¹⁶⁹ Such was the ease of co-operation between the two religions that Shortland believed it explained the lack of conflict involved in Māori adopting the Christian faith:

When first Missionaries came to preach the Gospel in New Zealand, the Atua were frequently consulted, whether their preaching was true or lying. It is a remarkable fact, that wherever the inquiry was made, the answer invariably given declared Jesus Christ to be the true God. This may account for the little opposition which the introduction of Christianity received in New Zealand.¹⁷⁰

It was Arthur Thomson, however, who provided the most thorough account of Māori Christianity from a colonial perspective.¹⁷¹ Thomson was an army surgeon who served in New Zealand with the 58th Regiment from 1847–1858. His interest in New Zealand history developed out of his comparative studies of disease rates between India and New Zealand, and his observation that the impact of disease on Māori was dramatically different to that on Europeans. He also realised that the New Zealand colony lacked a general history free from partisan interest and so, as his duties were not onerous, he sought out both published and archival sources and engaged with many prominent figures of the day in order to write the colony’s first substantial history.¹⁷² The extensive nature of his historical research is displayed in the bibliography compiled at the end of volume two, which runs to over four hundred entries. Thomson has rightly been called New Zealand’s first historian.¹⁷³

In his history, Thomson sought to explain the widespread conversion of Māori to Christianity. As he saw it, “no miraculous success attended the rise of Christianity in New Zealand.”¹⁷⁴ That is to say, Thomson considered that the number of Māori who were truly converted to Christianity was only ever a small proportion of the overall population. What surprised Thomson was the extensive “nominal” conversion of Māori to Christianity.¹⁷⁵ At the time of writing, Thomson estimated that 64 percent of

¹⁶⁹ Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, 85.

¹⁷⁰ Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, 120.

¹⁷¹ Arthur S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand: Past and Present, Savage and Civilized*, 2 vols. (London, 1859).

¹⁷² Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:iii–iv.

¹⁷³ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, revised and enlarged ed. (London: Penguin, 1980), 36; W. H. Oliver, *The Story of New Zealand* (London: Faber & Faber, 1960), 281; Lange, “Admiring, Disdainful, or Somewhere in the Middle,” 24–26.

¹⁷⁴ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:312.

¹⁷⁵ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:314, 328.

Māori had become Christians, while 36 percent remained “heathen.”¹⁷⁶ While, in common with Mathew and Shortland, Thomson regarded the vast majority of these conversions as nominal, he nevertheless considered it to have been a remarkable occurrence that warranted further explanation.¹⁷⁷

Firstly, Thomson pointed to God’s providential working within Māori “superstition” to bring about a favourable response to the missionary message. Citing Edward Shortland, Thomson maintained that Māori often consulted with their traditional gods as to the truth of the new religion before turning to Christianity.¹⁷⁸ Secondly, Thomson noted the role played by mission schools and pointed to the “necromantic power” of literacy that benefitted Christianity by association. Thirdly, worldly motivations also played a part as Māori recognised the material advantages of having a missionary stationed among them. Fourthly, Thomson highlighted the enthusiasm of former slaves, previously captured by Ngā Puhi and converted by the missionaries in the Bay of Islands, who on returning home taught the faith to their respective tribes. Lastly, Thomson viewed the adoption of Christianity as facilitated by the informal and unstructured nature of traditional Māori religion and by a degree of “analogy” between the two religions.¹⁷⁹ Yet, said Thomson, the combined effect of these influences had resulted only in an outward expression of Christianity that had little inward sincerity: “a rude mixture of paganism and the cross, an adoption strengthened by superstition more than a conversion.”¹⁸⁰

Thomson’s negative characterisation, however, was in large part a reflection of his own understanding. For Thomson, as with other colonial writers, true faith was to be based on rational and moral principles, with conversion understood as the outworking of the process of civilisation. Consequently, because Thomson still considered most Māori to be in an uncivilised state, he judged them incapable of the

¹⁷⁶ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:327, 2:297, 302. Thomson based his estimation on a census conducted by Tracy Kemp in the Wellington district: H. Tracy Kemp, “Reports no.1–4 and Returns for the Native Population of the Wellington District,” *New Zealand Government Gazette (Province of New Munster)* 3, no. 16 (1850). However, as Kemp’s census only counted baptised Māori, there is a difficulty with Thomson’s classification of unbaptised Māori as being “heathen”. For, as Kemp himself noted in his report (and Thomson acknowledged later in his account), large numbers of unbaptised Māori were still regular church attendees, and so were no longer heathen in the traditional sense.

¹⁷⁷ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:314–15.

¹⁷⁸ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:315; Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, 120–21.

¹⁷⁹ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:317.

¹⁸⁰ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:317–18.

moral and rational thought needed to be truly converted.¹⁸¹ Having ruled out the possibility of a genuine conversion, he went on to explain the widespread diffusion of Christianity on other grounds. According to Thomson, “The New Zealanders tolerated strangers, learned to read and write, gave up wars and cannibalism, and became Christians, not from reason and judgment, but from self-interest, imitation, terror, love of novelty, and strong superstitious feelings.”¹⁸² In reaching this conclusion, Thomson was aware that not all his contemporaries shared such a negative assessment.

Humanitarian Voices

One who took a different view to Thomson was William Swainson, who published his history in the same year.¹⁸³ Swainson was one of a number of humanitarian voices that held the work of the missionaries in high regard and viewed the Māori mission as largely successful. Swainson had arrived in New Zealand in 1841 as New Zealand’s second Attorney General, a position he held until 1856. During his time in office, Swainson was a strong advocate for Māori interests, in a way that brought him into conflict with both colonists and the Colonial Office in London.¹⁸⁴ He was also closely associated with the Anglican Church and Bishop Selwyn, who sought Swainson’s help in drafting the constitution of 1857 that gave the colonial church independence from the Church of England.

In the preface to his book Swainson expressed his deeper concern for the long-term welfare of Māori under the impact of colonisation.

Is it possible that two distinct portions of the human race, in the opposite conditions of civilization and barbarism, can be brought into immediate contact without the destruction of the uncivilized race?¹⁸⁵

Swainson was concerned that the Christian missionary, in making colonisation possible, had unwittingly become “the pioneer of the destruction of its heathen

¹⁸¹ Richard Taylor considered this to be a common perception of Māori by European settlers, which Taylor himself rejected. Taylor was in turn criticised by the editor of the *Auckland Examiner*, Charles Southwell: Richard Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or, New Zealand and Its Inhabitants* (London, 1855), 1–5; John Stenhouse, “Imperialism, Atheism, and Race: Charles Southwell, Old Corruption, and the Maori,” *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 4 (2005): 770.

¹⁸² Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:83–84.

¹⁸³ William Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization* (London, 1859).

¹⁸⁴ Graeme Reid, “Swainson, William,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Swainson shared a similar humanitarian outlook to that of other prominent Anglicans, such as Mary Martin, wife of William Martin, the first Chief Justice of New Zealand: Mary Ann Martin, *Our Maoris* (London, 1884), 209; Raewyn Dalziel, “Martin, Mary Ann,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*.

¹⁸⁵ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, vii.

people".¹⁸⁶ The outcome was still pending in Swainson's view, but he hoped that the course of colonisation in New Zealand would be a radical departure from the destructive practices of the past and that Māori would be raised in the "scale of civilization" thereby through peaceful means becoming the "noblest conquests in the annals of our history."¹⁸⁷

Swainson maintained that the greatest barrier to such a conquest was not Māori themselves, or the failure of missionary Christianity as critics suggested. Rather, the greatest barrier lay with the morality and religion of the colonists themselves. "The greatest obstruction to Christianity in heathen countries," said Swainson, "is the palpable and undeniable depravity of Christian nations: the heathen abhor our religion because we are such unhappy specimens of it."¹⁸⁸

Unlike Thomson, Swainson considered that the majority of Māori had become fully Christian and had demonstrated the reality of their faith by their conduct – although he admitted that elements of superstition remained.¹⁸⁹

In the case of adult converts, it is probable that their superstitious belief is never wholly eradicated or altogether superseded by the new religion. As a body, however, the Christian natives are powerfully influenced in the conduct of their lives by the power of the Christian faith.¹⁹⁰

Swainson, however, was aware of the criticism that Māori Christianity had received. In his opinion this criticism had arisen from assuming too close a connection between Christian faith and civilisation. Swainson considered it to be the confusion between the two that accounted for the contradictory assessments made by other writers.¹⁹¹ If, on the one hand, said Swainson, Māori were compared to their former state, then the mission could be hailed a great success. But if Māori were compared to the "lofty standard" of European Christian morality, then there was still much to be lamented. In his view, therefore, a "fair picture" could be obtained only by bringing together both aspects. Quoting the CMS missionary, George Kissling, Swainson summarised

¹⁸⁶ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, viii.

¹⁸⁷ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 72–73.

¹⁸⁸ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 36.

¹⁸⁹ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 30–34.

¹⁹⁰ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 32.

¹⁹¹ Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 25.

his assessment of Māori Christianity as “a church in which we rejoice – but with trembling.”¹⁹²

Other humanitarian voices included Mary Martin who, like Swainson, was closely connected with the Anglican Church and Bishop Selwyn.¹⁹³ Martin was the daughter of a clergyman and was married to William Martin, the first Chief Justice of New Zealand.¹⁹⁴ She retired with her husband back to England in 1874 where her thoughts on New Zealand were published posthumously in 1884 as *Our Maoris*.

In her last chapter entitled “Has Christianity really borne any fruit in New Zealand?” Martin wished to assure her readers that the New Zealand mission had indeed been successful and that genuine conversions had occurred among Māori. She gave this assurance knowing that some commentators appeared to rule out the very possibility of “true conversion among savages.” But she said,

If any such questioners had been in New Zealand sixty years ago, when a handful of brave men and women went out in faith to win it for Christ, and could contrast the state of things then with the condition of the people and the status of the Native Church now, they would be compelled to own that real work has been done.¹⁹⁵

Other writers during the 1870s expressed similar views. Robert Ward (1872), the first Primitive Methodist minister in New Zealand, considered Māori to be still in an “uncivilised state”. Nevertheless, “a great and gracious change has passed over the race.”¹⁹⁶ In a similar way, Hugh Carleton (1874) wrote in his biography of Henry Williams (his father-in-law) that much depended on what is meant by the term “civilisation”.¹⁹⁷ He challenged those who insisted that civilisation must proceed any attainment of religion:

One formula has been adopted with singular unanimity, namely, “Civilisation first; religion when prepared for it.” It is the Cuckoo cry that has been raised throughout against the teachers and the teaching, on the somewhat hasty assumption that civilisation can be imparted by traders alone.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹² Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 72. For other writers who agreed with Swainson’s assessment see: Hugh Carleton, *The Life of Henry Williams, Archdeacon of Waimate*, vol. 1 (Auckland, 1874), 90; J. W. Stack, *Notes on Maori Christianity* (Christchurch, 1874); Robert Ward, *Life among the Maories of New Zealand: Being a Description of Missionary, Colonial, and Military Achievements*, ed. Thomas Lowe and William Whitby (London, 1872), 151; Buller, *Forty years in New Zealand*, 333, 480.

¹⁹³ Raewyn Dalziel, “Martin, Mary Ann,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand.

¹⁹⁴ William Martin was involved with Swainson in establishing the constitution of the New Zealand Anglican Church in 1857.

¹⁹⁵ Martin, *Our Maoris*, 209.

¹⁹⁶ Ward, *Life among the Maories of New Zealand*, 151.

¹⁹⁷ Carleton, *The Life of Henry Williams*, 1:90.

¹⁹⁸ Carleton, *The Life of Henry Williams*, 1:90.

Collectively, these humanitarian voices were in agreement with the views expressed by the missionaries. This was hardly surprising given that many of them had Anglican, if not missionary, connections. Like the missionaries, they did not exaggerate the nature or extent of Māori Christianity, but neither did they wish to downplay the profound changes that had taken place amongst Māori through Christian conversion. For Swainson, in particular, his support for Māori rights was highly patriotic: the very honour of the British Empire was tied to the long-term survival of Māori culture.

1.3.4 A Nineteenth-Century Consensus

Despite the divergences of opinion with regard to the Māori conversion, by the end of the nineteenth century something of a consensus had been established among New Zealand historical writers. In particular, three New Zealand politicians – William Gisborne (1888), Alfred Saunders (1896) and William Pember Reeves (1898) – each published a history of New Zealand in which the Māori Conversion was accepted as both genuine and extensive.¹⁹⁹ Their accounts were written during a time of generational transition in New Zealand colonial society, with many of the older residents of the colony having died, including most of the early missionaries.²⁰⁰

William Gisborne arrived in New Zealand in 1847 and worked as a civil servant before becoming Colonial Secretary as part of William Fox's third premiership (1869-72). He retired from Parliament in 1881 after which he returned to England.²⁰¹ In evaluating the work of the missionaries, Gisborne divided the subject into two: the spiritual work of conversion and the material work of civilisation. With regard to the spiritual work of the mission, Gisborne was aware that a negative assessment of the mission was still widely held, yet he held little sympathy for such views. It was the fashion, said Gisborne, to decry the missionaries for their land purchases, but, despite the occasional error in judgment, they were fully justified in doing so. Even

¹⁹⁹ William Gisborne, *The Colony of New Zealand: Its History, Vicissitudes and Progress* (London, 1888), 43–50, 83–85; Alfred Saunders, *History of New Zealand: From the Arrival of Tasman in Golden Bay in 1642, to the Second Arrival of Sir George Grey in 1861*, vol. 1 (Christchurch, 1896), 95; William Pember Reeves, *The Long White Cloud (Ao Te Aro)*, Third ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1924), 102, 173–74. A fourth history written by George Rusden in 1883 offers a similar perspective: George W. Rusden, *History of New Zealand* (London, 1883), 159.

²⁰⁰ Gisborne, *Colony*, vi; Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, 1:iii. William Williams, for instance, died in 1878.

²⁰¹ Edmund Bohan, "Gisborne, William," in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*.

Henry Williams, the subject of so much public reprobation as the “head and front of this offending,” has since been fully vindicated.²⁰²

Gisborne also countered those who still considered that the number of Maori converts had been exaggerated and that those who were converted, were only nominal. For Gisborne the evidence was conclusive: “it is impossible to deny with truth that the actual extent [of conversions] was comparatively great, and that, in many cases, the conversion was real.”²⁰³ Gisborne did concede that there were a number of nominal professors among Māori, but no more than was the case in even “civilised” countries. And even the “extensive apostasy” from Christianity that began in 1864 as a result of the land wars was, in Gisborne’s assessment, more politically motivated than motivated by a religious movement away from Christianity. He concluded:

It may therefore, I think, be safely asserted that the substantial result of missionary labours in New Zealand has been, under Divine Providence, the conversion of the great majority of the Maori race to the Christian religion.²⁰⁴

Alfred Saunders formed his account of the New Zealand mission around the seven visits of Samuel Marsden, of whom he was a great admirer.²⁰⁵ In particular, Saunders admired Marsden’s faith in the “ultimate capability” of Māori to secure the place in “civilized society” that they now occupied.²⁰⁶ Alfred Saunders had arrived in Nelson in 1842 as one of the first settlers in the region. After a time spent in Australia, he returned to Nelson and was elected to the Nelson Provincial Council in 1855, beginning a forty-one year career in New Zealand politics.²⁰⁷ Saunders wrote his history as the oldest member of the New Zealand House of Representatives at the time because, as he saw it, more worthy writers had already died and existing histories were neither “complete, compendious or reliable.”²⁰⁸

Perhaps Saunders’s high opinion of Marsden allowed him to express his ambivalence towards other missionaries, such as Henry Williams, while still giving a positive account of the New Zealand Mission. For although he admired Williams’s character, he declared him to be a poor statesman: “In fact, he [Henry Williams] was

²⁰² Gisborne, *The Colony of New Zealand*, 45.

²⁰³ Gisborne, *The Colony of New Zealand*, 47.

²⁰⁴ Gisborne, *The Colony of New Zealand*, 47.

²⁰⁵ Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, iv.

²⁰⁶ Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, 103–4.

²⁰⁷ Ian McGibbon, “Saunders, Alfred,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*.

²⁰⁸ Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, iii.

pretty sure to go as far wrong in one direction as Colonel Wakefield had gone in the other.”²⁰⁹ Saunders attributed the Treaty of Waitangi, to which he objected, to the influence of Henry Williams over Captain Hobson: “The first and worst effect of Mr. Williams’ guidance [of Hobson] was perpetuated in the Treaty of Waitangi.”²¹⁰ Saunders considered the “vagueness of the Treaty” as being its “most objectionable feature” that opened the way for subsequent troubles.²¹¹

William Pember Reeves’s history, *The Long White Cloud* (published in 1898), is particularly significant due to its popularity in the early decades of the following century.²¹² Reeves was the first New Zealand historian to be born in New Zealand, albeit only three weeks after his parents arrived in Lyttelton in 1857. Following in the footsteps of his father, he became a journalist, before entering Parliament as the member for St Albans in 1887.²¹³ He was a minister in the Ballance government before moving to England in 1896, taking up the position of Agent General for New Zealand.

In his account, Reeves was influenced by both Thomson and Swainson – as is apparent from the favourable reviews he gave their books at the end of his own.²¹⁴ After briefly outlining the introduction of Christianity to New Zealand, Reeves noted the slow progress made by missionaries up until 1830, after which time the “patient labourers” began to “reap their harvest.”²¹⁵ So much so, said Reeves, that by 1838 a quarter of the Māori population had been baptised.²¹⁶ This claim, however, is at odds with the CMS’s own calculations who gave a total of 838 baptisms for their mission

²⁰⁹ Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, 123.

²¹⁰ Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, 123.

²¹¹ Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, 127.

²¹² Keith Sinclair, “Reeves, William Pember,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*; John Stenhouse, “God, Nation and History: William Pember Reeves and the Writing of New Zealand History,” in *Sacred Histories in Secular New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey Troughton and Stuart Lange (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2016). In Sinclair’s assessment, Reeves’s account became the “standard, largely unquestioned, interpretation” of New Zealand history until the 1950s.

²¹³ Sinclair, “Reeves, William Pember.”

²¹⁴ Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 376. Reeves, in particular, called Swainson’s book “the fairest and most careful account of the time from the official, philo-Māori and anti-Company side, and may be taken as a safe antidote to Jerningham Wakefield, Sir W. T. Power, Hursthous, and others.”

²¹⁵ Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 98–104.

²¹⁶ Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 101. The source for Reeves’s claim is unknown, though it might be based on a misinterpretation of Thomson: Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:313. If so, then it is ironic that Thomson also misunderstood his sources at this point by claiming that in 1838 there were 4000 Māori Christians: *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords Appointed to Inquire into the Present State of the Islands of New Zealand and the Expediency of Regulating the Settlement of British Subjects Therein* (House of Lords, Sessional Papers). Volume 21, (1838), 185–86.

by the year 1838.²¹⁷ On firmer ground, Reeves also recognised the growing missionary influence among unbaptised Māori: "By 1838 a fourth of the natives had been baptised. But this was far from representing the whole achievement of the missionaries. Many thousands who never formally became Christians felt their influence, marked their example, profited by their schools."²¹⁸

In addition, like Swainson before him, Reeves rejected any colonial scepticism with regard to the genuine nature of these conversions. In Reeves's estimation, it is sufficient to point to the manumission of slaves and the enthusiasm of Māori catechists to provide conclusive evidence of the sincerity of Māori converts.²¹⁹ For Reeves, the distraction of missionary meddling in politics and the arcane nature of Māori theological disputes could not diminish the "true and general earnestness" of Māori Christianity.²²⁰

By the end of the century, the consensus of the Pākehā voices was that the Māori conversion was both genuine and widespread, despite a number of nominal professions, and that the missionaries had been honourable and faithful to their calling, though guilty at times of unwarranted political interference.

1.3.5 Twentieth-Century Debates

Two features shaped the way that historians considered the Māori Conversion in the first half of the twentieth century. The first was a surge of public interest in the early missionary period in response to the publication of a number of significant

²¹⁷ Jowett, Vores, and Coates, *Statement of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society*, 2.

²¹⁸ Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 101.

²¹⁹ Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 102–3. Like Saunders, Reeves was influenced by the testimony of Charles Darwin concerning the positive effects of Christian mission on Māori: Saunders, *History of New Zealand*, 95. He also accepted the testimony of Bishop Selwyn as determinative, as did Gisborne and Rusden: Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 173–74; Gisborne, *The Colony of New Zealand*, 83–85; Rusden, *History of New Zealand*, 159.

²²⁰ Reeves, *Long White Cloud*, 103.

missionary archives.²²¹ This interest was also stimulated by the centenaries of the CMS mission in 1914 and the Treaty of Waitangi in 1940.²²² The second feature was the emergence of anthropology as an academic discipline. The early New Zealand anthropologist, however, primarily focussed on recovering accounts of pre-European Māori religion with little attention paid to the conversion of Māori to Christianity.²²³ It was at this time that traditional Māori cosmologies became more schematised –

²²¹ Robert McNab, ed., *Historical Records of New Zealand*, 2 vols. (Wellington: John MacKay, Government Printer, 1908–1914); John Rawson Elder, ed., *Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden* (Dunedin: Coulls Somerville Wilkie, Ltd. and A. H. Reed for the Otago University Council, 1932); John Rawson Elder, ed., *Marsden's Lieutenants* (Dunedin: Coulls Somerville Wilkie, Ltd and A. H. Reed for the Otago University Council, 1934). The *Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden* represented the first major publishing project for the firm of A. H. Reed who, together with his nephew, A. W. Reed, went on to release a series of books during the 1930s featuring the work of Samuel Marsden and the CMS mission: Eric Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions: Prelude to Waitangi* (Dunedin: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1936); A. H. Reed, *Marsden of Maoriland: Pioneer and Peacemaker* (Dunedin: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1938); A. H. Reed, *Samuel Marsden: Greatheart of Maoriland* (Dunedin: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1939). For an overview of Reed publishing at this time see Edmund Bohan, *The House of Reed 1907–1983: Great Days in New Zealand Publishing* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2005), 18–33; A. W. Reed, *The House of Reed: Fifty Years of New Zealand Publishing 1907–1957* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1957), 24–35. A similar interest in Australia resulted in the publication of a biography of Marsden by Samuel Johnstone in 1932: S.M. Johnstone, *Samuel Marsden: A Pioneer of Civilisation in the South Seas* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1932).

²²² For the 1914 centenary, the New Zealand publishers, Whitcombe and Tombs, re-published the 1858 biography of Samuel Marsden by J. B. Marsden: J. B. Marsden, *Life and Work of Samuel Marsden*, ed. James Drummond (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1913). Also published for the centenary was E. M. Dunlop, *A Great Missionary Pioneer: The Story of Samuel Marsden's Work in New Zealand* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1914). A memorial cross had been unveiled in 1907 at Hoihi Bay in the Bay of Islands, the site of the first CMS station of Rangihoua: Marsden, *Life and Work of Samuel Marsden*, v–vi. Interest in the Treaty of Waitangi had been increased by the purchase and renovation of the Treaty grounds (James Busby's former house and farm at Waitangi) by the then Governor General, Lord Bledisloe, in 1932, who subsequently gifted the property back to the nation in 1934: Peter H. Buck, introduction to *Marsden and the Missions: Prelude to Waitangi* (Dunedin: A. H. Reed & A. W. Reed, 1936), ix; T. Lindsay Buick, *The Treaty of Waitangi: How New Zealand Became a British Colony*, 3rd ed. (New Plymouth: Thomas Avery and Sons, 1936), xiii; Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Allen & Unwin New Zealand, 1987), 234–36.

²²³ A possibly exception was Johannes Andersen, "The Missionaries and the Maoris," in *The Cambridge History of the British Empire, Vol 7, Part 2: New Zealand*, ed. J. Holland Rose, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933).

including the claim that at least some Māori practised a form of primitive monotheism that pre-dated the arrival of Christianity.²²⁴

By the mid-twentieth century, then, the influence of anthropological ideas had led to a renewed interest in the Māori Conversion. Two ideas, in particular, became prominent: firstly, the idea of the destructive impact of Western colonisation on Māori society and, secondly, the idea that the missionaries were equally and actively implicated in this process of change as much as other imperial agents. The first of these ideas is commonly termed the “Fatal Impact” theory, after the book by that name by Alan Moorehead.²²⁵ The second was provocatively expressed by Keith Sinclair in his 1959 history of New Zealand where he declared, “Ideas were as destructive as bullets. The traders gave the Maoris the means of self-destruction, the missionaries set out to change the constitution of Maori life.”²²⁶

Both of these ideas became central to the argument of Harrison Wright in his 1959 book, *New Zealand, 1769–1840: Early Years of Western Contact*.²²⁷ There, Wright argued that the primary driver of the Māori Conversion was not the missionary message as such, but social and cultural breakdown. He maintained that such was the pace of

²²⁴ The existence of a monothestic Io cult was advanced by the following writers: S. Percy Smith, *The Lore of the Whare-Wānanga; Teachings of the Maori College on Religion, Cosmogony, and History. Part I. The Kauwae-Runga or 'Things Celestial'*, trans. S. Percy Smith, Memiors of the Polynesian Society Vol 3 (New Plymouth: Polynesian Society, 1913), vi-viii, 110–12; Elsdon Best, *Māori Religion and Mythology: Being an Account of the Cosmogony, Anthropogeny, Religious Beliefs and Rites, Magic and Folk Lore of the Māori Folk of New Zealand. Section I* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1924), 142–61; Elsdon Best, *The Maori*, vol. 1, Memiors of the Polynesian Society (Wellington: The Board of Maori Ethnological Research, 1924), 234–36; Johannes Andersen, “Maori Religion,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 49, no. 4 (1940): 546–50. More recent supporters include: Eric Schwimmer, *The World of the Maori* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1966), 114–16; Michael P. Shirres, *Te Tangata: the human person* (Auckland: Accent Publications, 1997), 107–21; Michael P. J. Reilly, “Te Tamatanga Mai O Ngā Atua: Creation Narratives,” in *Ki te Whaiao: An Introduction to Māori Culture and Society*, ed. Tānia M. Ka’ai, et al. (Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand, 2004), 1–3. However, the claims have been questioned and critiqued by Peter H. Buck [Te Rangi Hiroa], *The Coming of the Maori*, 2nd ed. (Wellington: Maori Purposes Fund Board; Whitcombe and Tombs, 1950), 526–36; J. Prytz Johansen, *Studies in Maori Rites and Myths* (Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1958), 36–43, 193; J. Simpson, “Io as Supreme Being: Intellectual Colonization of the Māori?,” *History of Religions* 37, no. 1 (1997); Jeffrey Paparoa Holman, *Best of Both Worlds: The Story of Elsdon Best and Tutakangahau* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2010), 227–39; James L. Cox, *Invention of God in Indigenous Societies* (Durham, UK: Acumen, 2014), 35–66. For an examination of sources, see D. R. Simmons and B. G. Biggs, “The Sources of “The Lore of the Whare-Wānanga”,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 79, no. 1 (1970): 36.

²²⁵ Alan Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact: The Invasion of the South Pacific, 1767–1840* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965). For a discussion of the idea and its limitations see Richard Lansdown, introduction to *Strangers in the South Seas: The Idea of the Pacific in Western Thought, an Anthology*, ed. Richard Lansdown (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006), 18–24; Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 140.

²²⁶ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1959), 41. The destructive impact of ideas has been questioned by Kerry Howe who views the acculturation of ideas as inherently creative: Howe, “The Maori Response,” 45; K. R. Howe, “Two Worlds?,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 37, no. 1 (2003): 57.

²²⁷ Harrison M. Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840: Early Years of Western Contact* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 143–48.

change from 1830 onwards – due to muskets, trade, and disease – that Māori experienced what he termed “cultural confusion.”²²⁸ In response to those changes, said Wright, Māori turned to Christianity as a remedy for their social and cultural disintegration.²²⁹ “Theoretically the perfect prospect for conversion was a sick, youthful Māori slave, and there were many of them.”²³⁰ Therefore, according to Wright, the missionaries cannot be said to have converted Māori:

In the last analysis the Maoris turned to Christianity and abandoned certain non-Christian practices essentially for traditional Maori reasons. The missionaries did not really induce conversions nor did they make the Maori give up their non-Christian practices. For the most part the Maoris converted themselves, one might say, and gave up their non-Christian practices in the attempt to restore their shaken self-confidence.²³¹

John Owens disagreed with Wright’s analysis and, in particular, the correlation of social breakdown leading to religious conversion.²³² Instead, he spoke of the diffusion of Christian ideas spreading in the wake of a Māori enthusiasm for literacy.²³³ “Literacy,” said Owens, “was the Trojan horse which introduced

²²⁸ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 144. The idea of cultural confusion had also previously been advanced by Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions*, 159–60; Buck, introduction to *Marsden and the Missions*, vii; J. C. Beaglehole, *New Zealand: A Short History* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1936), 17–18, footnote 1; J. B. Condliffe and W. T. G. Airey, *A Short History of New Zealand*, ed. & rev. by W. T. G. Airey, 7th ed. (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1953), 6; Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, 43. The concept is similar to William Fox’s nineteenth-century mental depression theory, which was dismissed at the time as implausible by Charles Hursthouse: Fox, *Six Colonies*, 56–60; Hursthouse, *New Zealand or Zealandia*, 1:160.

²²⁹ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 149. Similar views were also expressed by Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions*, 159–60; Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, revised ed. (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1969), 44–45; Hans Mol, *The Fixed and the Fickle: Religion and Identity in New Zealand* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1982), 26–27.

²³⁰ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 156. See also Michael D. Jackson, “Literacy, Communications and Social Change: The Maori Case, 1830–1870” (Master’s thesis, University of Auckland, 1967), 145. But this stereotype was challenged by Owens and Shawcross: Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 32; Kathleen Shawcross, “Maoris of the Bay of Islands 1769–1840: A Study of Changing Maori Responses to European Contact” (Master’s thesis, University of Auckland, 1967), 325–26.

²³¹ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 183.

²³² Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840.” See also Owens, “The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840,” 538.

²³³ Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 34–35. The view that literacy was the cause of conversion and not vice versa is also supported by the following scholars: Jackson, “Literacy, Communications and Social Change (1967),” 126–27; Lila Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris: The Maoris and the Church Missionary Society’s Mission, 1814–1868” (PhD diss., University of Otago, 1970), 345–46; G. S. Parsonson, *The Conversion of Polynesia* (Dunedin: Hocken Library, University of Otago, 1984), 6; Bronwyn Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream: The Maori and the Old Testament* (Auckland: Reed, 2000), 29; Lineham, *Bible & Society*, 20; Peter Lineham, “This Is My Weapon: Maori Response to the Maori Bible,” in *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the Work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, 1814–1882*, ed. Robert Glen (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship of New Zealand, 1992), 174; Michael D. Jackson, “Literacy, Communications and Social Change: The meaning and effect of literacy in early nineteenth century Maori society,” in *Conflict and Compromise: Essays on the Maori since Colonisation*, ed. Hugh Kawharu (Auckland: Reed Books, 2003), 31–32; Vincent O’Malley, *The Meeting Place: Māori and Pākehā Encounters, 1642–1840* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2012), 166–67. But it is challenged by: Howe, “The Maori Response,” 39; Ormond Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke: A Quarter Century of Upheaval* (Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1985), 123; Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*, 168.

otherwise unacceptable ideas into the Maori camp.”²³⁴ Owens’s most telling argument against Wright’s thesis was the reception of Christianity by Māori in regions south of the Bay of Islands. In those regions, Māori had experienced minimal cultural disruption due to European contact yet had eagerly responded to the missionary message. It was an argument also reinforced by Kerry Howe who concluded that in southern areas, rather than social dislocation or cultural dissatisfaction being the decisive factor, it was the inherent novelty and intellectual interest generated by Christian ideas that had led to the rapid response from Māori.²³⁵

Whereas Owens and Howe questioned the link between social change and religious conversion, Judith Binney sought to reaffirm it.²³⁶ According to Binney, new religious ideas could be received by an indigenous culture only if those ideas are able to fulfil some definite need.²³⁷ Therefore, in Binney’s view, social change created the dissatisfaction with older ideas that formed the necessary context for religious conversion to occur. Binney differed from Wright though, in her depiction of the social change involved. Rather than cultural confusion, Binney reframed the change as a loss of control and dominance over Europeans and their trade goods.²³⁸ This loss of dominance, said Binney, had led to a new respect for the missionaries in their role as peace-makers, as well as a new enthusiasm for literacy as a means “to master the secrets of the European world.”²³⁹ For Binney, Māori were converted because the trade that they eagerly sought had ushered in a new era of European settlement that

²³⁴ Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 37.

²³⁵ Howe, “The Maori Response,” 46. For a view similar to Owens and Howe see Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris,” 345–46.

²³⁶ Judith Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840: A comment,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 3, no. 2 (1969): 143–44.

²³⁷ Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 164–65. This idea was based on Raymond Firth’s cultural transmission theory that says that exogenous ideas are only accepted when they fulfil a definite need, and then when adopted are inevitably modified and moulded by the indigenous culture: see Raymond Firth, *Economics of the New Zealand Maori*, 2nd ed. (Wellington: Government Printer, 1959), 436. For other scholars making use of Firth’s theory, see Janet Murray, “A Missionary in Action: The Rev. Richard Taylor and Christianity Among the Wanganui Maoris in the 1840s and Early 1850s,” in *The Feel of Truth: Essays in New Zealand and Pacific History* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1969), 198; Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris,” 344, 351.

²³⁸ Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 144–45, 165. See also Jackson, “Literacy, Communication and Social Change (2003),” 28–31.

²³⁹ Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 155. For the idea that literacy was seen by Māori as a source of Western power, see also Jackson, “Literacy, Communications and Social Change (1967),” 126–27, 137, 140–41; Lineham, *Bible & Society*, 20; Raeburn Lange, “Indigenous agents of religious change in New Zealand, 1830–1860,” *Journal of Religious History* 24, no. 3 (2000): 283; Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream*, 29; Paul Monin, *This Is My Place: Hairaki Contested, 1795–1875* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), 80; Jackson, “Literacy, Communication and Social Change (2003),” 31; O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 167.

required the adoption of new ways and means to meet the demands of a new age.²⁴⁰ According to Binney, as younger leaders were better able to adapt, conversion became an indication of generational change within Māori society with a disproportionate number of young men featuring among the new converts.²⁴¹

In essence, this mid-century debate centred on the relative priority to be assigned to utilitarian and cognitive accounts of conversion: whether social change through Western contact was the predominant cause, or whether it was the attraction of the new ideas brought by the missionaries.²⁴² In the end, as with the debate between Horton and Hefner discussed in an earlier section, the two factors need not be considered mutually exclusive. As Robin Fisher noted with regard to the New Zealand debate: “Fortunately we are not obliged to choose between the two, for in history in general, and in this case in particular, results are produced by the combination of a number of factors.”²⁴³ Such a possibility was acknowledged by Owens in 1981, who, while still maintaining that social change provided the context rather than the cause, conceded that, “an interchange of ideas does not take place in a social vacuum, and the variety of ways in which Māori came to respond to missionary teaching was the result partly of the interplay of Christian and Māori ideas and partly of the social problems for which religious solutions appeared relevant.”²⁴⁴

²⁴⁰ Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 165. For similar views, see Jackson, “Literacy, Communications and Social Change (1967),” 140; G. W. Shroff, “George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850” (Master’s thesis, University of Auckland, 1967), 163–64; Bronwyn Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven: A Century of Maori Prophets in New Zealand* (Tauranga: Moana Press, 1989), 26–27; Alan Ward, *A Show of Justice: Racial ‘Amalgamation’ in Nineteenth Century New Zealand*, 2nd ed. (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1995), 20.

²⁴¹ Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 156. That there was a generational gap with regard to conversion is also maintained by Angela Ballara, *Taua: ‘Musket wars’, ‘Land Wars’ or Tikanga? Warfare in Māori Society in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2003), 412–35. However, as with Wright’s assertion in regard to slaves and the sick, it is not clear that there was a proponderance of younger converts as Binney claims.

²⁴² Other writers who view social disruption as being the primary driver of the Māori Conversion include: Shroff, “George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850,” 51; Mol, *The Fixed and the Fickle*, 26–27; Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream*, 17–19; Ranginui Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1990), 85–86; Gavin McLean, *No Continuing City: A History of the Stone Store, Kerikeri* (Wellington: New Zealand Historic Places Trust, 1994), 17; Ward, *A Show of Justice*, 20; Ballara, *Taua*, 412–35.

²⁴³ R. Fisher, “Henry Williams’ Leadership of the CMS Mission to New Zealand,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 9 (1975): 150–51.

²⁴⁴ Owens, “New Zealand before Annexation,” 36. A similar view was expressed by K. R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall: A New South Sea Islands History from First Settlement to Colonial Rule* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), 225.

With that acknowledgement, the debate over the cause of the Māori Conversion came largely to an end.²⁴⁵ A minimal agreement of sorts had emerged, which Philippa Mein Smith summarised as follows:

Out of the debate over the extent and nature of the Maori ‘conversion’ a consensus has emerged about the role of former slaves, converted to Christianity during their imprisonment, who spread literacy and Maori versions of the gospel to their tribes on returning home.²⁴⁶

Beyond this, as Howe commented in 1984, “The search for an answer has proven futile and the debate has rather unsatisfactorily fizzled out.”²⁴⁷

One unsatisfactory element of the debate was a lack of clarity and consistency in the use of the term, ‘conversion’. Owens, for instance, took issue with Wright’s claim that by 1845 two-thirds of Māori had been converted. For Owens, Wright was confusing a superficial conformity to Christianity with the theological concept held by the missionaries of conversion as a complete spiritual transformation.²⁴⁸ Using the missionaries’ own criteria, Owens maintained that the number of true conversions was much less than Wright was claiming. According to Owens, the number of communicants, rather than baptism figures, was a better indication of the true level of conversion. On that basis, he estimated that by 1841 not more than 3 percent of Māori could be said to have converted to Christianity.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*, 225; Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 137. In 1987, Kwan Fee Lian sought to revive the debate but was taken to task by Owens for doing so: Kwan Fee Lian, “Interpreting Maori History: A Case for Historical Sociology,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 96 (1987); J. M. R. Owens, “Interpreting Maori history—a Comment,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 97, no. 4 (1988); Kwan Fee Lian, “Reply to Owens,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 97, no. 4 (1988).

²⁴⁶ Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 38. Similar summaries have been expressed by the following: Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream*, 27–28; Allan K. Davidson and Peter J. Lineham, *Transplanted Christianity: Documents Illustrating aspects of New Zealand Church History*, 2nd ed. (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1989), 39; G. Clover, “‘Going Mihinare’, ‘Experimental Religion’, and Maori Embracing of Missionary Christianity: A Re-assessment,” *Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Journal* 121, no. 1 (1990): 53; James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1996), 217; Ballara, *Taua*, 422; O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 162–66. There is perhaps a further consensus as to the role played by tribal competition: Jackson, “Literacy, Communications and Social Change (1967),” 140; Parsonson, “The Expansion of a Competitive Society,” 59; Belich, *Making Peoples*, 217; Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*, 158–61.

²⁴⁷ Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*, 225.

²⁴⁸ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 164–65; Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 21–23. See, also, Sarah Dingle, “Gospel Power for Civilisation: The C.M.S. Missionary Perspective on Maori Culture 1830–1860” (PhD diss., University of Adelaide, 2009), 21–23.

²⁴⁹ Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 22. See also Owens, “The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840,” 673. However, Barbara Mabbett has questioned Owens’s interpretation of communicant numbers, which may only be reporting new admissions rather than active communicants for the year: Barbara Mabbett, “Correspondence,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 3, no. 1 (1969).

This narrowing of the definition of conversion was challenged by Binney, who maintained that Owens was imposing an inappropriate theological category on the social context. Owens, said Binney, was in effect dismissing a large proportion of Māori who had otherwise identified as Christian: "Whatever interpretation or meaning these 'Christian' Maoris derived from Christian teachings, clearly they were now treating seriously what before they had generally ridiculed and rejected."²⁵⁰ As an alternative, Binney suggested that if the term 'conversion' proved too problematic, the expression "*mihanere Maori*" could be used instead.²⁵¹

Yet whatever term or expression is used, the underlying question remains the same. Reframed in terms of the definition used in this thesis, the question becomes: did Māori, through their engagement with missionary Christianity, experience a profoundly religious reorientation that resulted in a distinctly new way of life? In Owens understanding the answer must still be, no. In his doctoral thesis submitted in 1969, Owens argued that the missionary experience of conversion was so closely tied to their British religious upbringing that it was an experience entirely alien and inaccessible to Māori.²⁵² "Their particular version of Christianity," said Owens, "had little chance of establishing a deep rooted and permanent hold on the people they were evangelizing because it was so deeply associated with an alien culture. The

²⁵⁰ Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 159.

²⁵¹ Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 159. Mihinare Māori was the term adopted by Kathleen Shawcross to designate those Māori who followed the teaching and practices of the missionaries [mihinare]: Shawcross, "Maoris of the Bay of Islands 1769–1840," 357, 360-61. Since then, the expression "going mihinare" or "mihinare Māori" has been taken up by other writers: M. P. K. Sorrenson, "How to Civilize Savages: Some 'Answers' from Nineteenth-Century New Zealand," *New Zealand Journal of History* 9, no. 2 (1975): 101; Monin, *This Is My Place*, 80; Clover, "'Going Mihinare', 'Experimental Religion', and Maori Embracing of Missionary Christianity," 48. Note that Shawcross used a variant spelling of mihinare (i.e. mihanere) that appears to be drawn from New Zealand Company publications, who used it in a pejorative sense: Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1:424; Henry Churton, *Letters from Wanganui, New Zealand* (London, 1845), 31; Ernest Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand; with Contributions to the Geography, Geology, Botany, and Natural History of That Country*, 2 vols (London, 1843), 1:162. Mihinare was not a term used by the missionaries to refer to Māori converts.

²⁵² Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 13–20. Owens's analysis of conversion was based on William James, Ronald Knox and Niel Gunson: James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 189; R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 436; Niel Gunson, *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas, 1797–1860* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1978), 47–58. For a similar assessment of missionary conversions see Shroff, "George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850," 104. Owens's observation that missionary conversion narratives were generally an adolescent experience (in agreement with Gunson) has been extended by others as applying to conversion in general: Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 269; Clover, *Collision, Compromise and Conversion During the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission 1827-1855*, 8.

'natives' tried to understand; but for most of them, the result was only confusion."²⁵³ A sizable chorus would agree with Owens's assessment. Yes, there were conversions of sorts, but for reasons other than religion and certainly not with religion as its primary cause.

Consequently, it has become common to view the Māori Christianity that emerged in the 1830s and 1840s as substantially different from the expectations and claims of the missionaries. In addition, the missionaries are often viewed as having naively conflated their English middle-class values with the principles of Christianity, which they then have attempted to impose upon Māori.²⁵⁴ Instead, Māori are understood to have radically reinterpreted the Christian faith in the light of their pre-existing beliefs

²⁵³ Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 673. Similarly, Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 275; Clover, "'Going Mihinare', 'Experimental Religion', and Maori Embracing of Missionary Christianity," 47. Rambo would label the missionary experience as conversion by intensification, whereas Māori conversion would be an example of tradition transition: Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 12–14. For a recent discussion of missionary expectations of conversion and indigenous responses see D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), 326–36.

²⁵⁴ Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions*, 158; Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, 41–43; Oliver, *The Story of New Zealand*, 44; Shroff, "George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850," 50, 66, 89, 104, 109–10, 112; Judith Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: A Life of Thomas Kendall* (Auckland: Published for the University of Auckland by the Oxford University Press, 1968), 13–14, 19–20, 73–75; Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 148, 151–53; Ruawai D. Rakena, *The Maori Response to the Gospel: A Study of Maori-Pakeha Relations in the Methodist Maori Mission from its Beginnings to the Present Day* (Auckland: Wesley Historical Society [New Zealand], 1971), 19; J. M. R. Owens, "The Unexpected Impact: Missionaries and Society in Early 19th Century New Zealand," in *Religion in New Zealand*, 2nd ed., ed. Christopher Nichol and James Veitch (Wellington: Christopher Nichols, 1983), 18–19; Walker, *Struggle Without End*, 85–86; Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream*, 20–22; McLean, *No Continuing City*, 16–22; Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2003), 143; Angela Middleton, *Pewhairangi: Bay of Islands Missions and Māori 1814 to 1845* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2014), 151; Anne Salmond, *Tears of Rangi: Experiments Across Worlds* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017), 78–79.

For a more sympathetic presentation see: Robert Glen, "Those Odious Evangelicals: The Origins and Background of CMS Missionaries in New Zealand," in *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the Work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814–1882*, ed. Robert Glen (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship of New Zealand, 1992); Allan Davidson, "Early Protestant Missionary Beginnings in New Zealand Through Different Lenses," in *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!': Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, "Tuia", of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014), 39–46; D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 1–19; Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 266–73; John ffye, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Wilberforce, More, Chalmers and Finney* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 95–125. For a critique of the assumption that the missionaries confused Christianity with Western civilisation see Dingle, "Gospel Power for Civilisation"; Brian Stanley, "Christianity and Civilization in English Evangelical Mission Thought, 1792–1857," in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001); Falloon, *To Plough or to Preach*, 59–60; Gladwin, "Mission and Colonialism," 287–90.

to form a syncretistic mixture of ideas and influences.²⁵⁵ According to Bronwyn Elsmore, “it was not so much a matter of the Maori being ‘converted’ to Christianity, as their choosing to add to their own beliefs those aspects of the other religion which suited them.”²⁵⁶ James Belich even spoke of Māori being bribed to convert, and labelled many of the early conversions that occurred in the 1830s as “mercenary and superficial”, although he did go on to state that by the 1840s the Māori engagement with Christianity was “real, deep and broad.”²⁵⁷

However, Belich also maintained that both missionary and Māori used the term conversion with a certain flexibility. The missionaries, said Belich, had every incentive to gloss over the differences and not inquire too closely into the exact nature of their converts’ faith. Similarly, Māori recognised the need to present their faith in European terms in order to be acceptable to the missionaries they wished to attract. As a result, said Belich, “In the 1830s and 1840s, the rush phase of conversion, Maori and missionary definitions of Christianity bent towards each other, and Maori were acclaimed as instant converts.”²⁵⁸ For this reason, Belich preferred to speak of the Māori “incorporation” of Christianity rather than use the term conversion.²⁵⁹ “In sum,” said Belich, “what we may have here is a new Maori religion of many variants, which converted European Christianity as much as it was converted by it.”²⁶⁰

As discussed earlier, there is an element of truth in Belich’s summation, in that a greater recognition of the continuity with a convert’s past has been a feature of recent conversion studies. One result of this reframing of the Māori Conversion as a conversion of Christianity is that scholarly attention has been diverted away from the majority of Māori who largely adhered to orthodox forms of Christianity. Instead,

²⁵⁵ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 182; Shroff, “George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850,” 162; Shawcross, “Maoris of the Bay of Islands 1769–1840,” 362; Owens, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 68; Owens, “The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840,” 673; Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 164; Murray, “A Missionary in Action,” 198; Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris,” 351; Frances Porter, “William and Jane,” in *The Turanga Journals*, ed. Frances Porter (Wellington: Price Milburn for Victoria University Press, 1974), 20; Kay Sanderson, “Maori Christianity on the East Coast, 1840–1870,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 17, no. 2 (1983): 166–70; Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, 25, 32; Clover, “‘Going Mihinare’, ‘Experimental Religion’, and Maori Embracing of Missionary Christianity”; Belich, *Making Peoples*, 219; O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 167; Matthew Wright, *Illustrated History of New Zealand* (Auckland: David Bateman, 2013), 45.

²⁵⁶ Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, 32. Ann Parsonson even claimed that throughout the nineteenth century Māori society was little altered and only experienced superficial change: Parsonson, “The Expansion of a Competitive Society,” 58.

²⁵⁷ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 218–19.

²⁵⁸ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 223.

²⁵⁹ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 168.

²⁶⁰ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 223.

greater attention has been paid to the emergence of independent Māori religious movements as the best way of understanding the Māori Conversion.²⁶¹ Such a reframing has also had the unfortunate consequence of rendering Māori Christianity, as Lindsay Head comments, “mana kore” [without honour] among New Zealand historians. For scholars like Belich, said Head, “Māori conversion, is *always* something else – the pursuit of *mana*, money or literacy, or even a testament to the success of more robustly structured missions. We are asked to think that what looks like Christianity among Māori is actually a form of subversion, serving solely Māori ends.”²⁶² For this reason, said Head, the power of Christianity to change lives has become an unfashionable subject among historians of nineteenth-century Māori Christianity.²⁶³

1.3.6 Recent Studies

In recent years, the scholarly neglect of missionary Christianity has been recognised by others. Stuart Lange, for instance, noted that the *New Oxford History of New Zealand* (published in 2009) contained no chapter or section on the Māori Conversion.²⁶⁴ In Kerry Howe’s assessment, studies of missionary Christianity largely petered out in the 1970s leaving significant gaps in our knowledge that are yet to be filled.²⁶⁵ For Howe, New Zealand scholars need to be rethinking the “fatal impact” paradigm that portrays Māori as victims. Tony Ballantyne, in substantial agreement, has sought to challenge both the “fatal impact” and the “cultural

²⁶¹ This approach follows Binney’s 1969 suggestion that the study of syncretic beliefs provides a useful indication as to the reasons for the Māori Conversion in general: Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 160. The methodological weakness of this approach is that the evidence so gathered will invariably support the conclusion that is assumed in the premise, namely, that Māori Christianity is essentially syncretic in nature and distinctly different from the religion of the missionaries.

²⁶² Head, “Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity,” 59–60. Emphasis in original.

²⁶³ Head, “Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity,” 58. See also Lindsay Head, “The Pursuit of Modernity in Māori Society: The Conceptual Bases of Citizenship in the Early Colonial Period,” in *Histories, Power and Loss: Uses of the Past – A New Zealand Commentary*, ed. Andrew Sharp and Paul McHugh (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), 103; Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*, 160; Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 156; Dingle, “Gospel Power for Civilisation,” 8.

²⁶⁴ Lange, “Admiring, Disdaining, or Somewhere in the Middle,” 30.

²⁶⁵ Howe, “Two Worlds?,” 52, 54, 57.

continuity” school (that Christianity had limited impact on a Māori worldview), particularly with regard to literacy.²⁶⁶

In his 2013 book, *The Conversion of the Māori*, Timothy Yates has sought to provide an overview of each of the three missions that operated in New Zealand prior to 1842: Anglican, Wesleyan and Roman Catholic.²⁶⁷ To do so, Yates draws on missionary biographies, collected essays, and studies of individual missions to develop a narrative that includes the trials and setbacks of the missions, as well as their eventual successes in introducing Christianity to Māori. In addition, Yates surveys the concept of conversion and sets it within a wider missiological framework.

The missiological dimension of the book comes to the fore in Yates’s final chapter, where he critiques the idea of Christian mission as a form of cultural imperialism. By emphasising the role of indigenous agency and drawing on his account of the New Zealand missions in support, Yates concludes, “that the agents of conversion were Māori themselves, to whom Christianity proved attractive for a wide variety of reasons, and who, once they had embraced it in their own way and forms, proved adept at propagating it and securing the response of a whole people.”²⁶⁸ For Yates, the missionaries might have been religious and social catalysts, but the true agents of conversion were Māori themselves.

While Yates’s recognition of the active agency of Māori is important, it is less clear that he has struck the right balance between the role of Māori converts and that of the missionaries.²⁶⁹ He does avoid the danger of simply scapegoating the missionaries for the destructive impact of western colonialism, and of regarding the Māori passion for the Bible as merely exhibiting a thirst for literacy.²⁷⁰ But for Yates,

²⁶⁶ A. J. Ballantyne, “Reform of the Heathen Body: CMS Missionaries, Māori and Sexuality,” in *When the Waves Rolled In Upon Us: Essays in Nineteenth-Century Māori History*, ed. Michael Reilly and Jane Thomson (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1999), 31; Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*, 147–49; Tony Ballantyne, “Christianity, Colonialism and Cross-Cultural Communication,” in *Christianity, Modernity and Culture*, ed. John Stenhouse and G. A. Wood (Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005), 23–31; Ballantyne, “Religion, Difference, and the Limits of British Imperial History,” 428, 430; Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 137–41.

²⁶⁷ Timothy E. Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori: Years of Religious and Social Change, 1814–1842* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013).

²⁶⁸ Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori*, 128. Keith Newman expresses a similar conclusion: Keith Newman, *Bible & Treaty: Missionaries among the Māori—a New Perspective* (Auckland: Penguin, 2010), 312. See also Stuart Lange, “The Church Missionary Society in New Zealand: An Overview,” in *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the Work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, 1814–1882*, ed. Robert Glen (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship of New Zealand, 1992), 12.

²⁶⁹ See Falloon, review of *The Conversion of the Māori: Years of Religious and Social Change, 1814–1842*, by Timothy Yates, *Journal of Religious History* 38, no. 2 (2014): 284–85.

²⁷⁰ Yates, 78.

the greater danger is any concession to the view that the Māori conversion might be construed as a “colonizing of consciousness.”²⁷¹ Consequently, he is content to view the missionaries as mostly worthy but ultimately impotent in their work.²⁷²

Part of the difficulty is Yates’s tendency to integrate quite different perspectives on the Māori conversion into his own interpretative framework, with the effect of smoothing over the debates that have surrounded the Māori conversion from its inception. As a result, Yates’s conclusion that “the agents of conversion were the Māori themselves” is in need of a greater level of qualification than he, in fact, provides.²⁷³

Other writers have been concerned about the way in which discussions have been marred by anachronisms and secular, if not anti-religious, biases.²⁷⁴ In particular, there has been a growing dissatisfaction over the way the historiography has treated missionary Christianity. In 2004, for instance, John Stenhouse drew attention to the ideological commitments of a number of prominent New Zealand historians in order to show the way in which those commitments informed their interpretations of religion in New Zealand.²⁷⁵ Stuart Lange concluded in his 2016 survey of historical approaches that a more sceptical and disdainful tradition has now become mainstream within New Zealand historiography.²⁷⁶

For Stenhouse, it is not that the criticism of the missionaries has been too severe, it is that “historians have too often offered generalizations about New Zealand Christianity based on inadequate arguments and insufficient evidence.”²⁷⁷ Stenhouse calls, instead, for more accurate and better-substantiated narratives to be told. In a similar vein, Tony Ballantyne calls upon historians to challenge simplistic views: “Rather than idealising or disparaging the missionaries,” says Ballantyne, “we

²⁷¹ Yates, 128.

²⁷² Yates, 106–7, 128.

²⁷³ Yates, 128.

²⁷⁴ Mark Francis, “Writings on Colonial New Zealand: Nationalism and Intentionality,” in *Histories, Power and Loss: Uses of the Past—a New Zealand Commentary*, ed. Andrew Sharp and Paul McHugh (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001); Dingle, “Gospel Power for Civilisation,” 231; Newman, *Bible & Treaty*, 7, 312; Lineham, “The Controversy over the Recognition of Religious Factors in New Zealand History,” 40–41; Lange, “Admiring, Disdainful, or Somewhere in the Middle,” 29.

²⁷⁵ Stenhouse, “God’s Own Silence.”; Stenhouse, “Secular New Zealand, or God’s Own Country?.”; Stenhouse, “Religion and Society.”; Lineham, “The Controversy over the Recognition of Religious Factors in New Zealand History.”; Stenhouse, “The Controversy over the Recognition of Religious Factors in New Zealand History.”; John Stenhouse, “‘Like Strychnine in Its Bones?’ Puritanism, Literary Culture, and New Zealand History,” *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 30 (2012); Stenhouse, “God, Nation and History.”

²⁷⁶ Lange, “Admiring, Disdainful, or Somewhere in the Middle,” 29.

²⁷⁷ Stenhouse, “God’s Own Silence,” 63.

should aspire to understand them through an examination of their words and an awareness of the cultural forces which shaped their thought.”²⁷⁸

These calls for a greater level of precision in discussing missionary Christianity have yet to be fully heeded. In 2011, Matthew Wright, for instance, continues to claim that Māori conversions were nominal at best and that the missionaries knew it, yet does not provide adequate supporting evidence.²⁷⁹ Similarly, Vincent O’Malley repeats Owens’s thesis that it was a Māori desire for literacy that led to their conversion rather than vice versa. Yet in restating this position, O’Malley does not engage with a growing scholarly tradition that is critical of this view.²⁸⁰ Again, Hazel Petrie’s conclusion that Christianity was an excuse for the emancipation of slaves rather than its contributing cause, simply reinforces a theory of causation that is yet to be adequately established.²⁸¹

Despite the confident assertions of a previous generation of scholars, the causal relationships between the Māori Conversion and, for instance, the end of the musket wars, the rise of literacy, and the release of slaves, need at the very least to be considered open questions today.²⁸² That Christian conversion was the cause of the latter three was, of course, central to the claims of both missionary and Māori alike in the nineteenth century. Among those who continue to argue the contrary – that Christianity was a consequence and not a cause – Geoffrey Troughton is right to detect a certain confusion over the nature of agency; namely, the assumption that if Māori were the primary agents of change, then it cannot be due to Christian influence. “We are told, quite reasonably,” says Troughton, “that, ‘we have to look to Māori themselves’ to find answers for the end of war, but for some reason, in

²⁷⁸ Ballantyne, “Reform of the Heathen Body,” 40–1.

²⁷⁹ Matthew Wright, *Guns and Utu: A Short History of the Musket Wars* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2011), 192. See also Wright, *Illustrated History of New Zealand*, 37, 45. Similarly, he maintains with little justification that Christianity did not end the musket wars as missionaries claimed because few Māori were ever converted: Wright, *Guns and Utu*, 191. See Troughton’s critique: Geoffrey Troughton, “Missionaries, Historians and the Peace Tradition in New Zealand,” in *Te Rongopai 1814 ‘Takoto te pai!’: Bicentenary reflections on Christian beginnings and developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, “Tuia”, of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014), 238–40.

²⁸⁰ Howe, “The Maori Response,” 39; Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*, 153; Head, “Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity,” 71–73; Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori*, 78.

²⁸¹ Hazel Petrie, *Outcasts of the Gods?: The Struggle Over Slavery in Māori New Zealand* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2015), 244–45, 339. The same can be said for her claim that the definition of conversion used by the missionaries changed around the year 1830 under pressure from London to produce more results, or the claim that ‘real’ conversion and the adoption of Christian teachings was necessarily a gradual process; Petrie, *Outcasts of the Gods?*, 251–52.

²⁸² The views of Wright, O’Malley and Petrie are similar to, if not based on, the views of Bronwyn Elsmore: Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, 21–22.

Wright's account, Māori answers could not be deeply Christian. Māori values and agency are thus deemed incompatible with Christian conviction."²⁸³

There are three further themes in recent discussions that are of relevance for the present study. The first concerns the nature of Māori Christianity that emerged from the Māori Conversion. If the missionary narratives have often been inadequately handled, Lyndsay Head thinks that their Māori converts have just as often been simply ignored. As a consequence, according to Head, "Historians have not dealt satisfactorily with the evidence that Māori found personal dignity, social discipline and political empowerment in the faith of the nineteenth century superpower."²⁸⁴ In her 2005 discussion of Wiremu Tamihana, a leading early convert in the Waikato, Head shows that a reassessment of Māori Christianity is long overdue.²⁸⁵

In this regard, Lachy Paterson provides a valuable contribution with his 2008 examination of the relationship between belief and ritual among early Māori converts. By tracing the continuity of traditional concepts such as tikanga and ture [law], Paterson exposes the tensions that developed between missionary expectations and Māori Christianity. It was the Māori propensity to adhere to ritual forms, said Paterson, that often caused the missionaries to doubt whether their Māori converts were truly converted.²⁸⁶ For Paterson, this was an example of Māori continuity with past traditions: "Genuine faith cannot be discounted. However, the conversion of Māori was informed by their traditional worldview, where ritual and belief were concerned with efficacy in terms of providing spiritual and physical protection, and with regulating social life."²⁸⁷

A second theme concerns the nature of the cultural gap between missionary and Māori and whether there is an essential distance between their two cultures. In 2009, Sarah Dingle advanced the argument that these differences have been overstated.²⁸⁸ In discussing the missionary strategy to convert Māori, Dingle rejects the idea that the missionaries were looking to create brown-skinned Englishmen as the precursor for conversion to Christianity.²⁸⁹ Instead, Dingle says, outward transformation was

²⁸³ Troughton, "Missionaries, Historians and the Peace Tradition in New Zealand," 239. Troughton raises similar questions with regard to the emancipation of slaves.

²⁸⁴ Head, "Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity," 59.

²⁸⁵ Head, "Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity," 84.

²⁸⁶ Paterson, "Maori 'Conversion' to the Rule of Law and Nineteenth-Century Imperial Loyalties," 222.

²⁸⁷ Paterson, "Maori 'Conversion' to the Rule of Law and Nineteenth-Century Imperial Loyalties," 222.

²⁸⁸ Dingle, "Gospel Power for Civilisation," 10–11.

²⁸⁹ Dingle, "Gospel Power for Civilisation," 234. The expression "brown-skinned Pakeha" was used by Sorrenson: Sorrenson, "How to Civilize Savages," 103.

always premised upon an inward conversion having first taken place.²⁹⁰ Dingle's thesis offers a helpful corrective to a historiography that in its understanding of nineteenth-century evangelicalism has not moved much beyond the 1950s.²⁹¹

If Dingle has sought to close the cultural gap between missionary and Māori, Anne Salmond has wanted to accentuate it. Traditional Māori philosophy, says Salmond, had a relational logic based on the principle of balanced exchange or reciprocity. Europeans, on the other hand, used reason as the dominant value, dividing mind and matter and separating people, one from another.²⁹² "On the face of it," says Salmond, "Maori and European philosophies ... were so different that they might have been incommensurable."²⁹³ In her 2017 book, *Tears of Rangi*, Salmond continues to emphasise this theme by analysing the influence of the medieval concept of "the great chain of being" on missionary thinking.²⁹⁴ In addition, Salmond describes the missionary enterprise, in contrast to Māori cultural values, as being a "Manichean" struggle between absolute good and evil.²⁹⁵ While Salmond's articulation of the thought-world of pre-contact Māori is helpful, her tendency to idealise that culture is in danger of reintroducing what Lyndsay Head refers to as "insidious versions of the

²⁹⁰ Contra Jackson, "Literacy, Communications and Social Change (1967)," 140; Shroff, "George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850," 51; Porter, "The Nature of the Pre-1840 Christian Conversion," 41; Sorrenson, "How to Civilize Savages," 100.

²⁹¹ Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 3, 581; Niel Gunson, "The Missionary Vocation as Conceived by the Early Missionaries of the London Missionary Society in the South Seas, and the Extent to Which This Conception Was Modified by Their Experiences in Polynesia, 1797–1839" (Master's thesis, University of Melbourne, 1955), 26–38, 71a–74, 147–48; Niel Gunson, "Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797–1860" (PhD diss., Australian National University, 1959), 146–48; Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, 47–51, 195–200; Shroff, "George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850," 4, 109–10; Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, 1–14; Owens, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 31.

²⁹² Anne Salmond, *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges Between Maori and Europeans, 1773–1815* (Auckland: Viking, 1997), 508–14. For another perspective on the influence of enlightenment thinking on the missionary enterprise, see Stanley, "Christian Missions and the Enlightenment: A Reevaluation."

²⁹³ Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 510.

²⁹⁴ Salmond, *Tears of Rangi*, 59–60, 78–79; Sorrenson, "How to Civilize Savages," 97. For the classic discussion of this concept see: Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: a Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953). Salmond's analysis does not sufficiently allow for the missionary use of the doctrine of Providence that largely replaced the concept of the Great Chain of Being in Calvinist theology: Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 148–166; Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 16–18; Malcolm Falloon, "'Openings of Providence': The Shaping of Marsden's Missionary Vision for New Zealand," in *Launching Marsden's Mission: The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, Viewed from New South Wales*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and David B. Pettett (London: Latimer Trust, 2014).

²⁹⁵ For previous uses of the adjective 'Manichaen' with regard to the missionaries see Shroff, "George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850," 109; Gunson, "Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas," 146; Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, 199.

noble savage.”²⁹⁶ Also, her description of the missionary worldview as “Manichean” effectively flattens out any missionary distinctives with regard to their understanding indigenous cultures, and downplays the missionary critique of their own cultural heritage.²⁹⁷

The third and last theme to be discussed here returns to the issue of cultural and religious change, and whether conversion is still a helpful term to describe this process. In his 2014 book, Tony Ballantyne prefers to use the analytical metaphor of entanglement to describe the multiplicity of connections between Māori and British imperial culture, including that of missionary Christianity.²⁹⁸ His use of the metaphor aligns with his earlier discussions of British imperial history but also expresses his dissatisfaction with other terms, such as “meetings” or “encounters”, which have been used by other historians.²⁹⁹ For Ballantyne, those terms serve only to “flatten out” the dynamics of the transformations involved.

In developing his theme, Ballantyne helpfully highlights the way in which cross-cultural friendships (“personal connections and forms of reciprocity”) formed the “often-neglected social context” for the introduction of Christianity to New Zealand. Ballantyne maintains, however, that a “considerable divergence” still existed between the motivation of Te Pahi and Ruatara on the one hand, and Samuel Marsden on the other.³⁰⁰ “Te Pahi and Ruatara,” says Ballantyne, “were certainly interested in Christian practice and cosmology, but their initial interest in their respective connections with Marsden were very much focussed on European technology and farming.”³⁰¹ Yet, it is not entirely clear why Ballantyne does not consider that Te Pahi and Ruatara might also have had religious motivations – especially given the spiritual and non-secular nature of their worldview. As to the reasons why Māori converted to Christianity, Ballantyne offers a similar conclusion to that of Yates: while the presence of the missionaries “precipitated cultural

²⁹⁶ Head, “Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity,” 71. This danger is only heightened by the congruence that Salmond detects between pre-European Māori thought and contemporary social theorists: Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 513.

²⁹⁷ For a more nuanced description of evangelical thinking on race and culture, see Gladwin, “Mission and Colonialism.”; Stanley, “Christianity and Civilization.” See also Ballantyne, “Reform of the Heathen Body,” 41; Dingle, “Gospel Power for Civilisation,” 233.

²⁹⁸ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 16–18.

²⁹⁹ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 16–17.

³⁰⁰ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 61.

³⁰¹ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 61.

change”, it was Māori themselves who were the primary agents of spreading Christianity.³⁰²

Moeawa Callaghan is another scholar who makes use of the entanglement metaphor. For Callaghan, “the notion of entanglement offers a fresh approach to understanding the relationship [between Missionary and Māori] – an approach that is free of attempts to construct an orderliness that does not exist.”³⁰³ Callaghan proceeds to contrast a missionary desire to assimilate Māori into their way of life (which Māori resisted) with a resulting syncretic Christian faith that preserved a true sense of Māori agency.³⁰⁴ Whether or not this process is best described as “entanglement,” it is clear that Callaghan wishes to maintain a clear distinction between Māori expressions of Christianity and those of the missionaries. For Callaghan, “Māori were not simply conduits for assimilation into missionary ways of life and faith, even though missionary activity was extensive and vigorous.”³⁰⁵ Instead, Māori resisted a process of missionisation that would have rendered them subservient and given them a sense of inferiority. Consequently, using her syncretistic model, Callaghan elevates the roles of Papahurihia, Te Kooti, and Te Ua Haumēne as the “main religious leaders of the nineteenth century.”³⁰⁶

The use of the entanglement metaphor by Ballantyne and Callaghan raises the question as to whether entanglement might be a better descriptor for the religious phenomena otherwise known as conversion. From the way both authors employ the term, it is tempting to think that “entanglement” offers a less problematic concept – at least in historical discussions. But can the concept of entanglement adequately describe the sense of cohesion that results from religious conversion? Callaghan solves this difficulty by presupposing that Christian ideas were being incorporated into an already-existing pattern of traditional ideas and values that remained largely unchanged by the process.³⁰⁷ Ballantyne, while not addressing the issue directly, does

³⁰² Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 206; Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori*, 128.

³⁰³ Moeawa Callaghan, “Nineteenth-century Wairoa District Mission: Missionary/Māori ‘Entanglement’,” in *Te Rongopai 1814 ‘Takoto Te Pai’: Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, “Tuia”, of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014), 176.

³⁰⁴ Callaghan, “Nineteenth-century Wairoa District Mission,” 181–82. Callaghan’s views are similar to other writers such as Bronwyn Elsmore and James Belich: Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, 32; Belich, *Making Peoples*, 223.

³⁰⁵ Callaghan, “Nineteenth-century Wairoa District Mission,” 189.

³⁰⁶ Callaghan, “Nineteenth-century Wairoa District Mission,” 183.

³⁰⁷ Callaghan, “Nineteenth-century Wairoa District Mission,” 183; Parsonson, “The Expansion of a Competitive Society,” 58.

hint at the difficulty when he allows for the possibility of “social entanglements that began to knit Britons and Māori together on New Zealand’s frontiers.”³⁰⁸ The two metaphors of entanglement and knitting, however, differ sufficiently from each other as to carry a different range of meanings: entanglement speaks more of chaos and confusion, while knitting allows for a sense of order and pattern. It is hard to see that the accumulation of entanglements, as described by Ballantyne, can produce the enduring sense of cohesion and order that is a feature of religious conversion and which early Māori converts appear to have exhibited. Therefore, this thesis will continue to explore whether conversion, properly defined, is still the best descriptor for the experience of Māori as they encountered and responded to the message of the missionaries and embraced the Christian faith.

1.4 Thesis Overview

This thesis seeks to understand the nature and extent of the Māori Conversion. As has already been discussed, however, considerable debate exists within the historiography over the use of the term ‘conversion’. Consequently, this introduction has been careful to suggest a concise definition of conversion to be used and tested throughout the rest of this thesis. In particular, it provides for a descriptive model of conversion that centres on three interwoven strands: belief, identity, and practice. The role of each of these strands and their interactions will be analysed in the following chapters to demonstrate the utility of this model for historical discussions.

1.4.1 *Nature and Extent of the Māori Conversion*

The first chapter will discuss the extent of the Māori Conversion. As was revealed in the introductory survey, there is a degree of ambivalence over whether the adoption of Christianity by Māori can rightly be termed a conversion. Part of this uncertainty has been generated by a paucity of statistical data upon which to form a proper judgement. The first chapter will therefore seek to establish the quantity and quality of the data available by examining the statistical returns of the CMS missionaries. It will be seen that contrary to what is often assumed, the CMS missionaries were assiduous in their data collection and recorded a series of data sets, including estimations of the total Māori population. The type of data collected, however, varied over time to match the growth and changing circumstances of the mission. On the

³⁰⁸ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 24.

basis of these data sets, chapter one will estimate the proportion of Māori who converted to Christianity during the period 1830–1853 and assess whether it is feasible to speak of a Māori Conversion as a historical phenomenon.

The next four chapters will consider the nature of the Māori Conversion by examining the conversions of four early Māori converts: Ruatara, Māui, Te Rangi, and Taiwhanga. The reason for this focus is three-fold. Firstly, following Brian Stanley, there is a need for more “bottom-up” reconstructions of individual narratives so as to properly assess the role of indigenous agency in the conversion process.³⁰⁹ This approach is also in line with recent trends in mission historiography to engage with religious history from the perspective of individual participants and the groups to which they belong.³¹⁰ Secondly, this focus helps to correct the near-invisibility of individual Māori converts in the historiography.³¹¹ A partial explanation for this invisibility is accounted for by the limitations of previous studies that have been concerned with establishing broader explanatory frameworks for the Māori Conversion rather than detailing the particular circumstances of individual converts. Thirdly, while each individual is unique and care is therefore needed when generalising from particular contexts, a “bottom-up” approach has the strength of highlighting the active agency of converts rather than assuming a merely passive role. At the same time, by being attentive to the continuities involved, a focus on individual converts is still able to contribute to the formation of more general conclusions.

³⁰⁹ Stanley, “Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History,” 324.

³¹⁰ See Cathy Ross, *Women with a Mission: Rediscovering Missionary Wives in Early New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2006); Hugh Morrison, “Representations of Māori in Presbyterian Children’s Missionary Literature, 1909–1939,” in *Manā Māori and Christianity*, ed. Hugh Morrison et al. (Wellington: Huia, 2012), 159–78; Lachy Paterson, “The Rise and Fall of Women Field Workers within the Presbyterian,” in *Manā Māori and Christianity*, ed. Hugh Morrison et al. (Wellington: Huia, 2012), 179–204; Emily J. Manktelow, *Missionary Families: Race, Gender and Generation on the Spiritual Frontier* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); Hugh Morrison and Mary Clare Martin, eds., *Creating Religious Childhoods in Anglo-World and British Colonial Contexts, 1800–1950* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

³¹¹ For example, in Vincent O’Malley’s recent book, *The Meeting Place*, there is only cursory mention of individual converts: O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 70–87, 162–94. Similarly, Timothy Yates’s book, *The Conversion of the Māori*, makes only passing references to individual converts: Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori*, 46–47, 53–54, 58, 100. In older histories, even when a Māori convert is the subject of a narrative, they are often treated in an ahistorical way as, for example, with Tārore of Matamata: David J. Calder, *Tarore: The Story of a Maori Girl and her Gospel* (Wellington: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1933). For a discussion on the ways in which the Tārore story has been altered and embellished over time, see Malcolm Falloon, “The Tārore Story: Sorting Fact from Fiction,” in *Sacred Histories in Secular New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey Troughton and Stuart Lange (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2016), 40–53.

The conversion narratives selected for discussion cover the period between 1806, when Ruatara and Māui first appear in the missionary record, until 1837 when Samuel Marsden visited Taiwhanga's farm at Kaikohe during his last visit to New Zealand. The four converts have been selected for three reasons. Firstly, their conversions and / or baptisms all took place before 1830 and, consequently, before the commencement of widespread conversions of Māori to Christianity. This was a period in which Māori were engaging with Christian ideas primarily from within a traditional cultural setting, thus bringing into sharper relief the cultural differences involved. Secondly, with the partial exception of Ruatara, all four were among the first to be acknowledged by the CMS as converts. Three of the four (Ruatara, Māui, and Te Rangi) had either a memoir or an obituary published upon their deaths, while the fourth, Taiwhanga, had an account of his conversion published by the *Missionary Register* upon his baptism in 1830.³¹² The partial exception is Ruatara who, although not publicly acclaimed as a convert, was privately regarded as such by Samuel Marsden.

The third reason for selecting these four converts is that a sufficient body of archival evidence exists with which to analyse the nature of their conversions. It was a feature of this early period that the missionaries recorded detailed accounts of their encounters with Māori, particularly those who expressed an interest in their message. These archival accounts include verbatims of conversations and other encounters that were recorded in missionary letters and journal entries. In addition, in the case of Māui and Taiwhanga they also include first-hand testimony in the form of autobiographical fragments written in English (by Māui) and personal letters written in te reo Māori [the Māori language] (by Taiwhanga). Often the significance of these missionary and autobiographical sources has not been fully recognised by historians and as a consequence they have remained an underutilised resource for understanding the Māori Conversion. Given the importance of the missionary archives for this present study, a brief overview of their nature and extent will help clarify their value as a resource.

³¹² Samuel Marsden, "Memoir of Duaterra, A Late Chief of New Zealand", *Proceedings* 5 (1816–1817); Basil Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee, a Young New Zealander, Who Died at Paddington, Dec. 28, 1816", *Missionary Register* (Feb 1817); Henry Williams, "Obituary of Christian Ranghi, a New-Zealand Chief, Who Died Sept. 15, 1825, the Day after His Baptism", *Missionary Register* (April 1826); "Baptism of Three Converts, 7 February 1830," *Missionary Register* (London: 1830), 373.

1.4.2 Missionary Archives

In a number of ways, the study of the Māori Conversion has been shaped by the nature of the archives themselves, particularly their dispersed geographical location.³¹³ The CMS archives, in particular, are spread across a number of repositories with the two largest collections being held at the Cadbury Research Library (University of Birmingham), and the Hocken Library (University of Otago).³¹⁴ Other significant missionary collections include those held by the Alexander Turnbull Library (Wellington), the Auckland War Memorial Museum Library, and the Mitchell Library (Sydney). A small portion of the missionary correspondence is also available in published form.³¹⁵ It is the geographical spread of these archival collections that presents the greatest challenge for the researcher, although the task has been greatly eased in recent years by the use of digital photography and the increasing availability of the archives from online databases.³¹⁶

³¹³ See Tony Ballantyne's discussion on how archives shape the way researchers approach their subjects: Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, 190–204.

³¹⁴ The Cadbury Research Library is the repository for the whole CMS archive, having been transferred there from London in 1981: Rosemary Keen, "The Church Missionary Society Archives: Or Thirty Years Work in the Basement," *Catholic Archives: The Journal of the Catholic Archives Society*, no. 12 (1992): 23. For a description of this archive see Rosemary Keen, "Church Missionary Society Archive: Editorial Introduction," http://www.ampltd.co.uk/digital_guides/church_missionary_society_archive_general/editorial%20introduction%20by%20rosemary%20keen.aspx. In 1903, however, while the archive was still held in London, Thomas Hocken, a Dunedin physician, managed to secure a large section of correspondence relating to Samuel Marsden and bring it to New Zealand. This collection was later deposited in the Hocken library. A portion of this collection is now available online: (Marsden Online Archive, <http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz>.

In 1959, a New Zealand librarian, Michael Hitchings, together with the CMS archivist, Rosemary Keen, prepared a micrographic record of the Australasian material within the CMS archive. In New Zealand, the resulting microfilms are available at the Hocken, Alexander Turnbull, and University of Auckland libraries. These microfilms have recently been digitised by the National Library of Australia and are now available online: <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1350490952/findingaid>.

³¹⁵ For instance: McNab, *Historical Records of New Zealand*; R. J. Barton, ed., *Earliest New Zealand: The Journals and Correspondence of the Rev. John Butler* (Masterton, 1927); Elder, *Letters and Journals*; Elder, *Marsden's Lieutenants; Ramsden, Marsden and the missions*; Lawrence M. Rogers, ed., *The Early Journals of Henry Williams, Senior Missionary in New Zealand of the Church Missionary Society, 1826–40* (Christchurch: Pegasus Press, 1961); Frances Porter, *The Turanga Journals*, ed. Frances Porter (Wellington: Price Milburn for Victoria University Press, 1974); Caroline Fitzgerald, ed., *Letters from the Bay of Islands: The Story of Marianne Williams* (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 2004); Caroline Fitzgerald, ed., *Te Wiremu—Henry Williams: Early Years in the North* (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2011).

³¹⁶ This thesis has been greatly assisted by a collection of over twenty thousand digital images that this researcher was able to take during visits to the Cadbury Research Library. The two major online archival collections are maintained by the Hocken Library and the National Library of Australia: Marsden Online Archive, <http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz>; Records of the Church Missionary Society (as filmed by the AJCP), 1799–1914: [M173–M243, M1825–M1827], <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1350490952/findingaid>.

Some, however, have raised concerns at having to rely on missionary sources.³¹⁷ O’Malley, for example, calls the missionary reports, “painfully pious, repetitious, seemingly devoid of real insight at times and frequently prone to exaggerate the missionaries’ own influence over Māori society.” Such an overly suspicious approach needs to be mitigated by the following considerations.

Firstly, the missionary accounts were written with the primary intention of informing the London-based parent committees. In fact, the whole missionary enterprise depended on the transmission of reliable information between New Zealand, London, and New South Wales. To achieve this objective, the CMS, in particular, emphasised the writing of journals as a basic missionary discipline.³¹⁸ For example, the CMS committee instructed John and Anne Wilson as they embarked for missionary service in New Zealand:

Let a faithful and minute Journal be constantly kept and regularly transmitted to us. Such Journals are the groundwork of future suggestions and plans for yourselves and other labourers in the field. Without them we should not accurately know the state of the Mission; and without the habit of thus observing and recording what happens, you would yourselves often be ignorant of your own position.³¹⁹

Because the CMS committee in London was entirely dependent on the information being supplied to them, quality control was further reinforced by regular quarterly meetings, where each missionary reported on their work to their peers.³²⁰ These reports were then subjected to further review by Samuel Marsden and the Corresponding Committee in New South Wales, before being submitted to London. With this chain of review, the CMS sought to ensure that they were supplied with reliable and realistic reports of the mission. As a result, the missionary correspondence now provides a rich source of information concerning the Māori with whom the missionaries interacted in the course of their daily lives. As Tony Ballantyne comments: “Their discourses reflected their desire to understand Māori society and order their knowledge in a comprehensible way. Their texts often display

³¹⁷ O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 3.

³¹⁸ Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, 9–11.

³¹⁹ Dandeson Coates to John and Anne Wilson, 18 Sep 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N L2:220). See also Josiah Pratt to Samuel Marsden, 20 Aug 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N L1:61).

³²⁰ The missionaries also looked to correct any false or misleading impressions that may have been created by their reports: Samuel Marsden to Josiah Pratt, 10 Feb 1820 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1; Samuel Marsden’s note to Josiah Pratt, 21 Apr 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_150); Henry Williams, Journal, 2 Jan 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:235); William Williams, Journal, 27 Jun 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:209); Richard Davis to Dandeson Coates, 31 Jan 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:168); William Williams, Journal, 14 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:465).

the detailed description and concern with accuracy which later came to characterise scientific ethnography.”³²¹

Secondly, the missionary narratives were written within a context of cross-cultural friendship. Not only did the missionaries write first-hand contemporaneous accounts, they also displayed in them an everyday intimacy and familiarity with Māori that belies the modern stereotype of them as culturally insensitive and socially isolated. In fact, it is by recognising the deep and genuine engagement of the missionaries with local Māori that voices of indigenous agency can be discerned, albeit mediated through their cross-cultural interpreters. Such an approach is compatible with the new historiography described by Lamin Sanneh, which views Western missionary engagement as more nuanced than simply the missionary domination of incompatible local cultures. The problem, says Sanneh, with such “conspiratorial” views of Christianity is that “Christian contact tends to be construed only as political imposition and cultural interference, never as genuine local appropriation or even transformation.”³²² By attending to the friendships forged, the archival texts are able to reveal indigenous voices that would otherwise be silenced.

Thirdly, it is often the incidental and unintended observations made by the missionaries that are of the greatest value. The CMS London committee had themselves anticipated this by requesting their missionaries to fill their journals with the trivia of life. They understood that, in the moment, their missionaries were not necessarily in the best position to judge what might prove significant over the course of time. Similarly, historians should be alert to the possibility that particular observations can take on a greater significance than what might have been appreciated at the time.³²³

Lastly, although the first-hand testimony from Māori converts is slight, what is available provides a useful cross-reference with the missionary perspectives. This is particularly the case with Taiwhanga, whose letters can be matched with the observations of, for instance, Richard Davis, the missionary who worked closely with him. Similar checks can be made from verbatim accounts of conversations, though, as

³²¹ Ballantyne, “Reform of the Heathen Body,” 41.

³²² Sanneh, “World Christianity and the New Historiography,” 99–100.

³²³ Care needs to be taken, however, as Geoffrey Elton warns, not to see the exceptional in the commonplace or to find the unusual ordinary: G. R. Elton, *The Practice of History* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1967), 17. For a discussion of the meaning and intentionality of texts see Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Volume I: Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 57–102.

previously discussed the concerns and interests of the missionary may differ from that of the convert.³²⁴ With these four mitigating considerations, it can be concluded that the missionary archives remain a valuable resource for historians and, when carefully read, provide valuable insights and contexts for the subjects of this thesis.

1.4.3 *Contemporary Contexts*

It does not take long for a historian of New Zealand's missionary past to realise that many contemporaries have a deep interest in how these stories are told and by whom. This is to be expected, for it is by telling stories of the past that we are able to understand the world in which we live; our sense of connection with the past is integral to our sense of identity in the present. Consequently, to have others from beyond our group question cherished narratives can be a painful experience, particularly if we are left powerless to respond. This has often been the experience of Māori in the retelling of New Zealand history.³²⁵ The same also applies for other groups, such as the descendants of the missionaries.³²⁶

This does not mean that historians should refrain from discussing these narratives through fear of causing offence. But it does mean that it is important to handle these texts with a compassionate sensitivity and to recognise the differing, yet overlapping, contexts within which the narratives are situated. Firstly, these narratives are part of the Māori story, and so there is a need for careful listening to how Māori receive and respond to the way these narratives are used. Secondly, they are part of the bicultural story of New Zealand, which necessitates the engagement of different perspectives, Māori and Pākehā [person of European ethnicity], in respectful conversation.

Thirdly, they are part of the universal story that New Zealand shares with other parts of the world. In this regard, there is much to learn from the ideas and academic debates taking place both within New Zealand and further afield. Finally, the narratives of this thesis are part of a religious story, specifically the Christian story, in which people of different cultures and traditions find through their faith a common identity in te whānau a te Karaiti [the family of Christ].

³²⁴ Rademaker, "Going Native," 118.

³²⁵ See, for instance, Walker, *Struggle Without End*.

³²⁶ Caroline Fitzgerald has recounted her experience of finding her ancestor, Henry Williams, the subject of contention: Caroline Fitzgerald, preface to *Te Wiremu—Henry Williams: Early Years in the North*, ed. Caroline Fitzgerald (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2011), ix–x.

2 The Extent of the Māori Conversion

2.1 Introduction

The CMS mission to New Zealand commenced in December 1814, but it was not until the early 1830s that Māori responded to Christianity in significant numbers. By 1854 however, such was the extent of the Māori response that no less a figure than Sir George Grey reported that there were “not more than 1000 that did not make a profession of Christianity.”¹ Grey had recently returned from his first term as Governor of New Zealand (1845–1853), and so the CMS committee in London were greatly encouraged to hear from “one so competent to judge, and so unbiased by any previous prejudices.”² For the London committee, Grey’s testimony gave independent corroboration of the reports they had been receiving from their New Zealand missionaries. In these reports, the missionaries used a variety of statistical measures, that, when set within their historical context, provide a valuable insight into the engagement between Māori and the CMS mission over the course of what can be termed the Māori Conversion.

Yet this is not the conclusion that others have drawn from a review of the missionary statistics.³ Harrison Wright, for instance, maintains that the statistical habits of the missionaries were “fairly hit and miss.”⁴ He singles out baptisms, in particular, as being “even more haphazardly recorded.”⁵ James Belich goes further in concluding that the missionary numbers are “not to be taken very seriously.”⁶ He likens their reporting to that of American body counts during the Vietnam War, implying that they were exaggerated to accommodate an overly-inflated “soul count.”

These criticisms raise important questions as to the nature and scope of the missionary statistical reporting, and the extent to which they can be considered reliable. An investigation of these questions will also provide an overview of the Māori response to Christianity in the period 1814–1852 and allow an assessment to be made of the CMS claim that by the early 1850s approximately 90 percent of Māori

¹ *Proceedings* (London: 1853–1854), 153–54; also reported in Tucker, *The Southern Cross and Southern Crown*, 253–4.

² *Proceedings* (London: 1853–1854), 153–54.

³ Such views were expressed as early as 1851 by Fox, *Six Colonies*, 51.

⁴ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 162.

⁵ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 163.

⁶ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 217–18. For similar views see Ballara, *Taua*, 423; Wright, *Illustrated History of New Zealand*, 37.

had converted to Christianity. If this claim is at all justified, then a substantial reappraisal of the nature of the Māori Conversion is needed, one that provides a more adequate account of the conversion process and takes into consideration the experiences of individual converts.

2.2 Missionary Statistics

The missionary statistics that the CMS missionaries supplied to London changed over time as the mission developed. Initially, it was sufficient simply to report on progress through letters and journals. The CMS expected that each of their missionaries would keep a journal of their daily life and work and that copies of these be submitted to London on a regular basis along with a covering letter. It was from these letters and journals that the CMS hoped to build up a picture of the activities and circumstances of their missionaries, and to offer advice and encouragement where necessary. From October 1821 the process was extended to include the presentation of a brief report from each missionary to a quarterly meeting of their peers, and the minutes of this local committee were forwarded to London by one of their number acting as secretary. In addition to these regular reports, from July 1832 the missionaries also submitted an annual report along with a statistical return for each station – selected parts of which were then incorporated into the CMS's own annual report, published each year in the *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*. Taken together, these statistical reports chart the course of the CMS mission from its beginning in 1814 on through the growth of mission in the 1830s to the wider spread of Christianity among Māori in the 1840s.

2.2.1 Quarterly Meetings

Quarterly meetings of the local missionary committee were held in January, April, July, and October of each year until they were replaced by half-yearly meetings in 1834. When mission schools became more firmly established in 1824, most of the statistical information reported to the quarterly meetings were concerned with the number of Māori under instruction at each station. This manner of reporting reflected the priority being given to education in the overall CMS strategy. While the “grand end” was bringing the Christian gospel to Māori, education was seen as an important “subordinate” means of preparing Māori to receive the Christian

message.⁷ The CMS also anticipated that, once converted, the training received would better equip converts to communicate their faith to other Māori.⁸ Table 1 summarises the figures for mission schools given to the July quarterly meetings for the period 1824–1833.⁹

Table 1: Attendance at CMS Schools, 1824–33

Year	Rangihoua	Kerikeri	Paihia	Waimate	Total
1824	14	10	7		31
1825	11	9	10		30
1826	20	33	34		87
1827	23	36	50		109
1828	41	64	101		206
1829	41	79	113		233
1830	27	70	118		215
1831	21	69	97	110	297
1832	24	59	118	134	335
1833	17	78	126	149	370

Two features of Table 1 illustrate the growth of the mission during this period. Firstly, by 1826 Paihia had emerged as the largest of the mission schools but was itself overtaken in 1831 by the school at Waimate. As school attendance was a requirement for Māori living on mission stations, the growth in the schools also reflected the growing number of Māori living with the missionaries at each settlement. For example, at the beginning of 1831 the Paihia station appears to have had a resident population of 238, consisting of 155 Māori, 29 missionaries, and 54 missionary children – a ratio of Māori to Europeans of approximately two to one.¹⁰

⁷ *Instructions of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society, Delivered August 6, 1822: To the Rev. Henry Williams, Proceeding as a Missionary to New Zealand*, (London, 1822), 6. For an overview of the early CMS schools in New Zealand see Valerie Carson, "Submitting to Great Inconveniences: Early Missionary Education for Maori Women and Girls," in *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the Work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, 1814–1882*, ed. Robert Glen (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship of New Zealand, 1992).

⁸ Edward Garrard Marsh, "Address of the Rev. Edward Garrard Marsh to the Rev. Henry Williams and Mrs Williams," in *Instructions of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society, Delivered August 6, 1822: To the Rev. Henry Williams, Proceeding as a Missionary to New Zealand* (London: 1822), 24–25.

⁹ Table figures have been drawn from the Quarterly Meetings of Missionaries: 5 Jul 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:279); 5 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:373); 10 Jul 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:210); 3 Jul 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:473); 7 Jul 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:239); 6 Jul 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:394); 6 Jul 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:30); 4 Jul 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:281); 2 Jul 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:506); 1 Jul 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:344).

¹⁰ William Williams to Edward Bickersteth, 21 Feb 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:82); Henry Williams's Report, Quarterly Meeting, 27 Dec 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:167).

Secondly, there was a general increase in attendance across all schools from the year 1828. Yet in the previous year, both Henry and William Williams had been lamenting the restricted numbers able to be accommodated due to a lack of food. This shortage of food was exacerbated by a Māori refusal to trade with the missionaries except for guns and powder – something they were not prepared to do.¹¹ But in 1828, following the missionary peace-making efforts in the Hokianga in March, Māori relaxed this policy and became more willing to supply the mission, particularly in exchange for the missionary grey blankets.¹² This enabled the CMS mission schools to double in size between 1827 and 1828.¹³ By June 1832, Alfred Brown reported that from the commencement of the Paihia School, 472 Māori children (263 boys and 209 girls) had been enrolled in the school.¹⁴ Given the population of the Bay of Islands at the time (6–8,000), this suggests that 10–15 percent of local Māori may have at some stage attended a CMS mission school.¹⁵

In the early 1830s the context of missionary education was changing with schools increasingly being located in local kāinga [villages]. An illustration of this change was given by the missionary William Yate in his final report before leaving New Zealand in 1834. Yate reported that 500 students had successfully passed the annual school examination held at Waimate in May.¹⁶ Of those 500, only 150 were directly connected with the Waimate station, with the rest coming from schools in the surrounding area under the supervision of Māori catechists.¹⁷ These kāinga schools, first appearing in 1831, had become a significant feature of the CMS mission by 1834,

¹¹ William Williams to Richard Hill, 16 Mar 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:100); Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 3 Nov 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:524).

¹² Henry Williams, Journal, 23 Apr 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:147); William Williams to the Secretary, 3 Oct 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:119).

¹³ Additional food supplies were also secured by the mission ship *Herald*, which was built by Henry Williams at Paihia. From its launch in January 1826, the *Herald* made four trips to New South Wales, four to Tauranga, and two to Hokianga, before being wrecked on the Hokianga harbour bar in May 1828. Judith Binney identifies the economic independence achieved by the missionaries in this period as the “first crucial steps” towards their later effectiveness as missionaries: Binney, “Christianity and the Maoris to 1840,” 146–49.

¹⁴ Alfred Brown’s Report on Paihia, 30 Jun 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:523).

¹⁵ This estimate is based on William Williams’s 1831 population estimate for the Bay of Islands of 6–8,000 and assumes the Paihia school had enrolled half of the CMS students: William Williams to Edward Bickersteth, 21 Feb 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:82).

¹⁶ William Yate’s report to the Quarterly Meeting, 10 Jun 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:33).

¹⁷ William Yate’s report to the Quarterly Meeting, 7 Apr 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:528).

yet their numbers were not included in the quarterly reports.¹⁸ Consequently, the quarterly reporting on mission schools beyond July 1833 is limited in interpretative significance.

2.2.2 *Baptism Registers*

CMS baptisms were conducted by the clerical members of the mission who were also responsible for entering the details into a register kept for that purpose. Table 2 lists the number of CMS baptisms administered in the Bay of Islands for the years 1823–1834.¹⁹

Table 2: CMS Baptisms, 1823–1834

Year	Rangihoua	Kerikeri	Paihia	Waimate	Total	Running Total
1823	1				1	1
1825			1 [†]		1	2
1828		1			1	3
1829		1	5		6	9
1830		8	16		24	33
1831	4	7	7	10	28	61
1832		1	11	7	19	80
1833		3	12	14	29	109
1834	1 [‡]	2	6	107	116	225

[†] Te Rangi's baptism in 1825 at Waitangi was not recorded in the Paihia Register: Henry Williams to Dandeson Coates, 10 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:537–38).

[‡] The baptism of Rōpāti's child in 1834 at Te Puna was not recorded in the Paihia Register: Henry Williams, Journal, 9 Mar 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:191–92).

For this early period in the Bay of Islands, it is possible to cross-reference the baptisms appearing in the registers with those mentioned in the various missionary journals. Doing so reveals that, far from being haphazard as Wright claims, the missionaries were in fact quite systematic and consistent in their record-keeping.²⁰ For instance during the period 1823–1834, out of a total of 225 baptisms

¹⁸ William Williams, Journal, 18 Feb 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:120); Henry Williams to unnamed correspondent [probably Samuel Marsden], 25 Mar 1831 (National Archives [NA], London, CO 209/1, 64); Henry Williams, Journal, 8 Apr 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:150); Henry Williams to the Secretary, 3 May 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:147); Charles Baker to the Secretaries, 5 Dec 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:79).

¹⁹ As recorded in the Paihia and Waimate Registers: Register 1153 [Paihia & Kororāreka], Bay of Islands, 1823–1912, Anglican Diocese of Auckland Archives [ADAA]; Register 750 [Waimate], Bay of Islands, 1815–1835, ADAA. See also Judith Binney who uses the Bay of Island registers to give a similar list of baptisms for the period 1823–42: Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 158.

²⁰ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 163.

administered, only two were mentioned in the journals that were not also included in the registers.²¹

The first baptism recorded was that of Maria Ringa on 4 March 1823. She was baptised by Thomas Kendall in preparation for her marriage to Philip Tapsell, a Danish sailor working on the whaler, *Asp*. The marriage dissolved eighteen months later when Maria disappeared the night before the *Asp* sailed for England only to reappear once the ship had departed.²² The second baptism administered by the CMS, though not recorded in any of the registers, was that of Karaitiana Te Rangi on 14 September 1825.²³ As with a number of other early converts, Te Rangi was baptised upon his deathbed and died shortly afterwards. By the end of 1829 only one further adult had been baptised, Rōpata Urunga, on 15 November 1829.²⁴ He also died shortly afterwards. It was not until February 1830, with the baptism of three relatively healthy adults (most notably Rāwiri Taiwhanga), that a small community of baptised Māori began to form.²⁵

Between 1830 and 1834 most of the baptismal candidates were drawn from among those Māori already living on the mission stations. After 1834, however, increasing numbers of Māori were applying for baptism from surrounding kāinga. The first significant occasion for such baptisms took place at Waimate on 8 June 1834 when

²¹ These were the baptisms of Te Rangi on 14 Sep 1825 at Waitangi, and a child of Rōpata, 9 Mar 1834, at Te Puna: Henry Williams to Dandeson Coates, 10 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:537–38); Henry Williams, Journal, 9 Mar 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:191–92). On six occasions the registers recorded baptisms that had no corresponding mention in the journals.

²² Henry Williams, typescript extract of letter, 3 Nov 1826 (Auckland War Memorial Museum Library [AWMML], MS 91/75 A(ii), box 9, item 14, 140); Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, 111–12. Tapsell had been a frequent visitor to the Bay of Islands on the whaler, *Catherine*, which had made three expeditions to New Zealand waters between August 1814 and January 1822. Tapsell then returned to the Bay of Islands on the *Asp* in December 1822, which stayed in New Zealand until departing for England on 7 January 1825: William Hall, Journal, 19 Dec 1822 in Malcolm McLennan, ed., *Son of Carlisle—Maori Missionary: The Diary of C.M.S. Missionary William Hall 1816–1838* (Kellyville, Australia: Privately published, 2012), 82; Entry for 10 Jan 1825 in Rhys Richards and Jocelyn Chisholm, *Bay of Islands Shipping Arrivals and Departures 1803–1840* (Wellington: The Pare mata Press, 1992). For a different version of events based on Tapsell's later recollections, see Jocelyn Chisholm, *Brind of the Bay of Islands: Some Readings and Notes of Thirty Years in the Life of a Whaling Captain* (Wellington: J. Chisholm, 1979), 16–17.

²³ Henry Williams to Dandeson Coates, 10 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:537–38). Te Rangi's conversion is the subject of Chapter 5 of this thesis.

²⁴ William Williams, Journal, 15 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:489); Richard Davis, Journal, 15 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:433). There were also six Māori children associated with Māori living at the mission stations who were baptised during this period.

²⁵ Taiwhanga is the subject of Chapter 6 of this thesis. The first Wesleyan convert, Hika Tawa, was baptised in the Hokianga on 16 January 1831: Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 395–96; J. M. R. Owens, *Prophets in the Wilderness: The Wesleyan mission to New Zealand 1819–1827* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1974), 73; Clover, *Collision, Compromise and Conversion During the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission 1827–1855*, 137–39.

William Yate baptised 54 Māori from the kāinga of Mawhe, Kaikohe, and Waitangi. Kawakawa, a district associated with the Paihia station, was another important centre for early Māori baptisms.²⁶

2.2.3 Annual Reports and Returns

In July 1832, the stations of the Bay of Islands (forming what would eventually be called the Northern District) began presenting annual reports in addition to the usual quarterly ones. The writing of annual reports also became the pattern for other mission districts as they formed throughout the North Island over the coming decade. Along with their annual reports, each district also submitted an annual return of statistical information. Extracts from these reports and returns were published in May of the following year in the annual *Proceedings*. Not all the information from the returns, though, was included for publication. Initially, only the school statistics were included. Then from 1832 the number of communicants was added and, for a short period between 1836 and 1843, attendance figures were also published. It was not until 1849 that baptism figures for each mission were included for publication.

Baptisms

In the absence of officially published figures, the number of baptisms for the period prior to 1849 needs to be drawn instead from the annual reports of the clerical missionaries. These reports, as might be expected, varied in the manner of their reporting. Some missionaries were quite regular in their reporting, while others omitted baptism figures entirely, presumably because they had already provided the information in their annual return.²⁷ Despite these limitations, the annual reports still remain the best available way of estimating CMS baptisms for the years prior to 1849.²⁸ Table 3 summarises those baptisms for the years 1832–1843.²⁹

²⁶ William Williams, Journal, 22 Mar 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:91).

²⁷ Henry Williams, for instance, did not report any baptism numbers for Paihia in the years 1836–39. Judith Binney, using the Paihia Register, has given the baptisms at Paihia for those calendar years as 15, 1, 6, 104, respectively: Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 158.

²⁸ In August 1838 the total number of baptisms to date for the CMS mission was given as 838: Jowett, Vores, and Coates, *Statement of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society*, 2. This figure, published by the CMS in 1839, was probably based on the annual returns for that year. If so, it demonstrates that the annual reports generally underestimated, rather than overestimated, the actual numbers being baptised.

²⁹ As drawn from annual reports to the district committees and transcribed into the CMS mission books (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6–14). Where an annual figure was not reported, the combined half-yearly figures (where available) have been used instead.

Table 3: CMS Baptisms, 1832–1843

Year	Northern District	Middle District	Eastern District	Western District	Total	Running Total
1832	8				8	8
1833	15				15	23
1834	102				102	125
1835	75				75	200
1836	172 [†]				172	372
1837	79				79	451
1838	144				144	595
1839	119	33			152	747
1840	1090	340	39		1469	2216
1841	906	584	1178	25 [‡]	2693	4909
1842	1043	862	933	42	3122	8031
1843	474	571 [§]	1331	642	3018	11049
Total	4227	2390	3481	709		

[†] Henry Williams did not provide baptism numbers for Paihia in the years 1836–39.

[‡] Octavius Hadfield did not provide baptism numbers for Kāpiti in his annual reports for the years 1840–42.

[§] Robert Maunsell reported that his baptism register was destroyed in a house fire. This reduced the number of baptisms he reported for the year.

As Table 3 shows, from 1840 onwards CMS baptisms markedly increased as numbers from the southern districts began to feature in the annual totals. There was also a significant increase for the Northern District in the same year. This was not an unexpected situation, for William Williams had previously signalled that large numbers of Māori were starting to come forward as candidates.³⁰ This significant increase in baptisms was in contrast to the lower numbers reported for the year 1837, as might be expected for a year in which armed conflict had enveloped the Bay of Islands.³¹ Generally speaking, by the year 1843 upwards of 11,000 baptisms had been performed across all districts, representing perhaps 25 percent of those Māori connected with the CMS mission.³²

Schools

The published returns for schools demonstrate the continued priority of education for the CMS and the expansion in schooling throughout the 1830s and 1840s was a reflection of the increasing response of Māori to missionary Christianity during this period. It can be noted that the figures drawn from the annual returns show a degree

³⁰ William Williams, Report for Waimate, June 1839 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M11:666).

³¹ Henry Williams, Report of Paihia for year ending June 1837 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M10:398–400).

³² This proportion is calculated using George Clarke's 1845 estimate of 42,700 Anglican Māori (see Table 9) while ignoring any attritions due to death.

of overlap with the quarterly reports considered earlier. In fact, during the period 1823–1832 it is possible to discern a link between the quarterly meeting figures from the previous July and those published in the *Proceedings* the following May. That said, there is enough variation to suggest that the returns were generally completed independently of the quarterly meetings. Table 4 gives the figures for the CMS mission schools as reported in the *Proceedings* for the years 1830–45.

Table 4: CMS Mission Schools, 1830–1845*

Year	Stations	European Clergy	European Catechists & Teachers	European Female Teachers	Native Catechists & Teachers	Native School-mistresses	Number of Schools	Scholars [Students]
1830	3	4	10	13			4	199
1831	4	4	11	13	1		5	222
1832	4	4	10	15	1		8	317
1833	4	4	14	18			9	418
1834	5	4	14	17			13	420
1835	9	3	20	21			18	400
1836	10	7	24	10	15	1	30	1007
1837	12	6	28	2	23	11	51	1555
1838	11	5	28	2	28	6	54	1431
1839	11	6	26	2	21	2	53	1351
1840	12	8	24	2	43		72	1796
1841	16	8	22	2	127	22	149	7236
1842	18	12	21	2	352	21	241	13736
1843	19	12	22	2	321	27	268	16246
1844	22	12	18	3	268	27	283	15431
1845	24	17	14	1	323	27	299	15461

* As reported in the *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*, 1830–45.

It is evident from Table 4 that from 1832 onwards the published figures for schools starts to diverge significantly from those being reported to the quarterly meetings (see Table 1). This reflects the different scope of the two reports. The quarterly figures reported only on those schools that were located at each station, while the annual returns also included the schools located in the surrounding kāinga. This difference can be illustrated, for instance, in 1836 when the *Proceedings* listed Paihia and Waimate as together accounting for 24 of the 30 mission schools and 629 of the

1007 scholars, whereas the quarterly reports for July 1835 listed only six schools and 168 scholars for these two stations.³³

As the CMS mission expanded beyond the confines of the Bay of Islands and new stations were established throughout the rest of the North Island, so too the number of schools began to increase, but at a proportionately faster rate. Between 1840 and 1845 the number of stations doubled from 12 to 24, yet the number of schools increased four-fold from 72 to 299. The growth in schools also saw a corresponding growth in the number of Māori working as catechists. In 1836, Māori catechists and schoolmistresses made up 28 percent of the teachers and clergy. By 1840 that percentage had increased to 56 percent, and by 1845 Māori represented 92 percent of the teachers and clergy working in the CMS schools. Consequently, at least from an educational perspective, by 1845 the CMS schools had become an overwhelmingly Māori-initiated and led organisation that operated predominantly within the cultural context of the local kāinga.

This shift in the locus of CMS education during the 1840s was also accompanied by a change in the role of the missionary, as the pioneering work of mission gave way to the care of an increasing number of Māori who identified themselves as Christian. This new pastoral context was also evident in the growing clericalisation of the European missionaries at this time. Table 4 shows that in 1840 there were eight clergy and 24 lay catechists, making ordained missionaries 25 percent of the total number. By 1850, that percentage had increased to 74 percent, with 20 clergy and seven lay catechists. This change in the clerical ratio was facilitated by the arrival of George Selwyn as the first Bishop of New Zealand in May 1842.³⁴ Selwyn's episcopal policy of ordaining suitable European lay catechists also reflected the changing nature of the missionary role in response to an emerging indigenous church.

Communicants

In 1832, the *Proceedings* published the first communicant figures for CMS missions. Māori had been admitted to communion for the first time in February of that year, though it was not until the following year that New Zealand figures appeared in

³³ "Table of Missions, Stations, Teachers, Communicants, Schools and Scholars," *Proceedings* (London: 1835–1836), unpaginated; Minutes of Half-Yearly Meeting of Missionaries, 31 July 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:76–83).

³⁴ For Selwyn's engagement with the missionaries, see Allan K. Davidson, "Selwyn as Missionary and Colonial Bishop," in *A Controversial Churchman: Essays on George Selwyn, Bishop of New Zealand and Lichfield and Sarah Selwyn* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2011), 46–66.

print.³⁵ Communicants represented those baptised Māori who not only wished to receive communion but whose character and behaviour also met the expectations of their Christian leaders and community. This exercise of communion discipline, although uncommon in England, was routinely practised by the CMS in New Zealand. For this reason William Williams considered communicants to be the “fruit of the tree.”³⁶

Table 5: Communicants for CMS Mission Fields, 1836-1852*

Year	New Zealand	West Africa	North India	South India	Ceylon	West Indies	North West America
1836	64	643	12	285	105	11	195
1837	160	707	12	279	102	43	211
1838	178	902	32	314	120	88	267
1839	202	1,075	341	417	133	234	300
1840	233	1,177	330	599	131	280	300
1841	584	1,362	285	1,214	135	645	378
1842	1,292	1,414	429	1,467	92	919	437
1843	1,822	1,275	481	1,639	111	533	451
1844	2,851	1,330	644	2,103	182	636	456
1845	3,838	1,560	640	2,348	212	570	457
1846	4,823	1,648	688	2,718	239	1,046	501
1847	4,454	1,876	814	3,263	322	642	530
1848	4,826	2,047	1,035	3,521	322	624	535
1849	5,012	2,018	1,123	3,552	306	770	464
1850	5,213	2,061	1,134	3,733	296	428	489
1851	5,701	2,061 [†]	1,072	3,877	327	436	474
1852	5,794	2,732	1,087	4,180	371	430	454

* As reported in the *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*, 1836–52.

[†] Figure repeated from previous year.

In comparing the increase in communicant numbers for New Zealand with those from other missions, it becomes clear why the CMS regarded New Zealand as such a success story. Originally, one of the struggling and underperforming missions in 1836, in less than ten years New Zealand had become the largest of the CMS missions, making up 40 percent of the total number of communicants worldwide. It was little wonder then that the editors of the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* felt justified in 1852 to proclaim: “No more remarkable change is to be found upon the page of history than that which has taken place amongst the natives of New Zealand.”³⁷

³⁵ Henry Williams, Journal, 12 Feb 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:376).

³⁶ William Williams cited in *Proceedings* (London: 1850–1851), ccxvi.

³⁷ “New Zealand, Its Present State and Future Prospects”, *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 3 (1852): 147.

Although communicant numbers for the CMS indicated the growing maturity of the Māori church, it did not mean that non-communicants were regarded by the missionaries as merely nominal in their faith. In 1850, William Williams, having recorded 801 communicants at Tūranga (Gisborne), commented, "This, out of a population not exceeding 2400, is a large proportion, and yet there are very many who, from various causes, have been kept away from this ordinance."³⁸ Because of the practice of communion discipline, the infrequent nature those services, and the difficulties the missionaries had in gathering people together for that purpose, CMS communicant numbers do not fully express the extent of Māori Christianity in this period.³⁹

Attendants

Lastly, for the relatively short period between 1836 and 1843 the *Proceedings* also published attendance figures for mission services. Table 6 lists these together with communicant figures for comparison.

Table 6: CMS Public Worship, 1836–1843*

Year	Communicants	Attendants on Public Worship
1836	64	1,530
1837	160	2,300
1838	178	2,476
1839	202	2,203
1840	233	8,760
1841	584	29,320
1842	1,292	35,000
1843	1,822	35,000 [†]

* As reported in the *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*, 1836–43.

[†] Figure repeated from previous year.

Attendance figures listed in Table 6 show clearly the limitations of using communicant numbers alone as a measure of the extent of Māori Christianity during this period. Particularly from 1840 onwards, the rapid increase in attendance at CMS

³⁸ William Williams cited in *Proceedings* (London: 1850–1851), ccxvi. Williams's total population estimate of 2400 was probably based on the 1845–6 CMS census figure of 2481. See, Register of Native Population, 1846 (AWMML, Auckland, MS-63, item 6 & 7).

³⁹ The difficulties the missionaries had in gathering Māori for Communion seems to have been due to the often dispersed and migratory nature of Māori settlements combined with the missionary policy of requiring the examination of each communicant before being eligible to attend.

services indicates that dramatic changes were taking place in the way Māori were engaging with missionary religion.⁴⁰ It should be noted, however, that the particularly large increase in attendance figures between 1840 and 1841 may simply reflect changes in the way that those figures were being reported. Up until this point, the missionaries had apparently been limiting their reporting to include only those congregations directly under their supervision. But as William Williams told London, if congregations not directly connected to their work were to be included, then the total number of Māori attending services would be at least 27,000.⁴¹ The difference between the published figure for 1840 (8,760) and the actual attendance according to Williams (at least 27,000) suggests that at this time more than two-thirds of the services connected with the CMS mission were being conducted by Māori catechists operating independently of missionary supervision. It was perhaps due to the ongoing difficulty of gathering accurate data from these more scattered congregations that the CMS ceased publishing attendance figures for New Zealand in 1843.

2.2.4 *Summary*

This statistical overview has shown the way in which the missionary reporting developed and changed over time to reflect the growth of the mission. Through their statistical reports, the CMS missionaries ensured that the London committee was supplied with the most accurate information available in order for them to support the mission and to advocate on its behalf. Initially that information related only to the progress of the schools, then during the 1830s baptism figures became more prominent in their reports. By the 1840s, the CMS mission had established an extensive network of schools and chapels throughout the whole of the North Island predominately led by local Māori catechists. At the end of the 1840s, the missionary statistical reports indicate that a significant majority of Māori had embraced missionary Christianity in some form and were regularly attending mission services.

⁴⁰ This increase in attendance was also noted by Harrison Wright: Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 162–63.

⁴¹ William Williams to the Secretaries, 6 May 1840 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M12:228). Henry Williams also claimed on a similar basis that total church attendance in 1840 was not less than 30,000: Henry Williams to the Lay Secretary, 25 Jul 1840 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M12:213).

2.3 Population Estimates 1834–1845

Statistical reports were not the only form of information being supplied to London by the missionaries. During the 1830s, in order to plan for the mission's expansion beyond the Bay of Islands, missionaries were increasingly interested in finding the centres of Māori population and estimating its total size. Conventional wisdom thought that the Māori population was anywhere between 100,000–200,000.⁴² In revising these estimates, the missionaries made use of the traditional Māori practice of identifying the fighting strength of each tribe.⁴³ This was intelligence commonly gathered by Māori and the missionaries found it to be surprisingly accurate and free from exaggeration.⁴⁴

2.3.1 Traditional Māori Censuses

In March 1830 a battle occurred at Kororāreka that gave the missionaries their first opportunity to observe the full fighting strength of the Bay of Islands, which they estimated to be about 2000 men.⁴⁵ Having obtained this number, the missionaries then looked to extrapolate to the total population size by using a suitable multiplier to account for women, children, and slaves. There was no consensus among the missionaries as to what that multiplying factor should be: some thought three was the best value, others preferred to use four. Much depended on their individual intuition as to the size of the average Māori family unit, but these early observations did at least provide an upper limit of 10,000 for the Bay of Islands population.⁴⁶

With the influx of new missionaries in the early 1830s, further impetus was given to CMS expansion plans, particularly after peace was established between the Bay of Islands and Tauranga in October 1833.⁴⁷ In order to ascertain the best sites for new stations with access to centres of Māori population, the missionaries conducted a

⁴² Ian Pool, *The Maori Population of New Zealand 1769–1971* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1977), 48–55; Gordon Lewthwaite, "The Population of Aotearoa: Its Number and Distribution," *New Zealand Geographer* 6, no. 1 (1950): 37.

⁴³ Marsden to Good, 15 Nov 1809, cited in *Proceedings* (London: 1810–1812), 121. For the use of the word "census" in this context, see William Williams, Journal, 26 Dec 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:326); Alfred Brown, Journal, 26 Mar 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:605); Alfred Brown, Report on visit to Waikato, 27 May 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:532).

⁴⁴ William Williams, Journal, 26 Dec 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:326).

⁴⁵ William Williams to Edward Bickersteth, 21 Feb 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:82). This estimate was facilitated by the Māori practice of "parading" their forces as a demonstration of their strength. See Henry Williams, Journal, 5 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:459).

⁴⁶ William Williams to Edward Bickersteth, 21 Feb 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:82).

⁴⁷ Among the missionaries who arrived at this time were Alfred & Charlotte Brown (November 1829), Thomas & Maria Chapman (August 1830), James Preece (February 1831), Joseph Matthews (March 1832), John & Anne Wilson (April 1833) and John & Maria Morgan (May 1833).

series of exploratory trips throughout the North Island. William Williams led a party to the North Cape (November–December 1832) prior to the formation of the station at Kaitaia. Henry Williams then explored the Thames area (October–December 1833) leading to the formation of the Pūriri Station. In December 1833, William Williams (along with William Yate and others) made an even more extensive exploration of the East Cape while returning Māori captives to Hick's Bay. Alfred Brown and James Hamlin also made an important journey through the Waikato in February–May of 1834. The last of these early expeditions occurred in December–January 1840, when Henry Williams returned overland to Tauranga through the centre of the North Island, having delivered Octavius Hadfield to his new station on the Kāpiti coast.⁴⁸ On each of these journeys, particular attention was given to the collection of population data as conveyed to them by local Māori leaders.⁴⁹ Additional information was also gleaned from various ships' captains and other European traders.⁵⁰

The first population estimate based on these traditional Māori census figures was made by William Williams in February 1834.⁵¹ Williams divided the North Island into eight districts and used a multiplying factor of three to conclude that the North Island population did not exceed 106,000 (see Table 7). "This estimate," wrote Williams, "gives a population much smaller than it has been supposed to be, but I am persuaded the numbers are not greater."⁵²

⁴⁸ Rogers, 468–474. As early as 1834, the CMS missionaries had also looked to establish a South Island station on Banks Peninsula, but the plan did not eventuate. See Henry Williams to the Secretaries, 17 Jun 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:587); Henry Williams to the Lay Secretary, 11 May 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:447).

⁴⁹ Charles Baker, Journal, 1 Dec 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:49); William Williams, Journal, 26 Dec 1833, 2 & 11 Jan 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:326, 328, 333); Alfred Brown, Journal, 26 Mar & 12 Apr 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:605, 609, 611).

⁵⁰ Alfred Brown, Journal, 4 Jul 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:237); William Yate, Journal, 4 Jan 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:363).

⁵¹ William Williams to the Secretaries, 20 Feb 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:505).

⁵² William Williams to the Secretaries, 20 Feb 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:505). Later, for the sake of argument, Williams used the figure of 120,000 as an upper limit for the North Island population: William Williams to the Secretaries, 28 Nov 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:89). Williams had little information with which to assess the South Island's population, though he later stated 200,000 as an upper limit for both islands combined: William Williams to the Secretaries, 4 Sep 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:71).

Table 7: William Williams's Population Estimates, 1834*

Population	
Kaitaia	4,000
Bay of Islands	12,000
Hokianga	6,000
Thames	4,800
Waikato	18,000
Bay of Plenty (to Hick's Bay)	15,600
East Cape (Hick's Bay to Hawke's Bay)	27,000
Entry Island [Kāpiti]	18,000
Total	106,000 [†]

* William Williams to the Secretaries, 20 Feb 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:505)

[†] Williams has rounded up this sum. The actual total is 105,400.

Other missionary estimates were also made. In 1835, William Yate gave a total of 160,000 based on a fighting strength of 40,000 and a multiplying factor of four.⁵³ James Hamlin's 1842 estimate of 120,000 also used a fighting strength of 40,000 but with a multiplying factor of three.⁵⁴ In making his estimate, Hamlin had divided the country into twenty-three districts and also supplied geographical and tribal descriptions for each area, displaying the increased level of demographic knowledge the missionaries had gained by the early 1840s.

The first non-missionary estimate using the methodology of fighting strength was published by Ernst Dieffenbach in 1843.⁵⁵ He had sourced his data from a number of journeys he had undertaken around New Zealand during the years 1839–41.⁵⁶ Dieffenbach divided the country into twelve regions and used a factor of four to arrive at an estimate of 114,890:

In this census I do not pretend to anything like accuracy; but I have visited nearly all the tribes myself, and if, as I think is the case, the data which I obtained of the

⁵³ Yate, *Account*, 164.

⁵⁴ James Hamlin, "On the Mythology of the New Zealanders," *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, &c.* 1, no. 4 (1842): 356–8. Hamlin, however, also allowed for an additional 640 fighting men "supposed to be inland and imperfectly known to Europeans" in order to reach the rounded figure of 40,000. This suggests that the figure of 40,000 for the fighting strength of Māori was a shared convention among a number of the CMS missionaries. See, however, Hamlin's missionary colleague in the Manukau district, Robert Maunsell, who considered the total population in 1840 to be between 80,000–100,000: Maunsell to the Lay Secretary, 30 Mar 1840 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M12:318).

⁵⁵ Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, 2:83. Dieffenbach was a doctor who had been contracted by the New Zealand Company to work as a naturalist.

⁵⁶ Alfred Brown met Dieffenbach in the vicinity of Taupō, "exploring the neighbourhood for scientific purposes." See Alfred Brown, *Journal*, 20 May 1841 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M13:328).

number of fighting men and the average of the rest of the population are to be relied on, my estimate is entitled to some credit.⁵⁷

Then in 1845, the missionary George Clarke, working for the colonial government as the Chief Protector of Aborigines, divided the country into twenty-two districts to give a total of 109,550. Clarke does not tell us how he arrived at his estimate, though in a side-note to his figures he commented: "No complete or accurate census has yet been made of the native population; this can, therefore, only be considered an estimate of the probable number of inhabitants."⁵⁸ This suggests that he may have had access to some early census figures or other data with which to supplement the usual practice of counting the fighting strength.⁵⁹ Even so, as all but one of his district totals are factors of four, it is probable that Clarke was still using the traditional counting method.

In comparing these various population estimates it is helpful to first divide by the different multiplying factors that have been used. When this is done, it can be seen that the estimates of underlying fighting strength given by Williams, Yate and Hamlin are largely comparable, while those of Dieffenbach and Clarke are somewhat lower.⁶⁰ Table 8 summarises these results.⁶¹

Table 8: Māori Population Estimates, 1834–1845

	Population Estimate	Number of Divisions	Multiplying Factor	Implied Fighting Strength
Williams (1834)	106,000	8	3	35,300
Yate (1835)	160,000	—	4	40,000
Dieffenbach (1841)	114,890	12	4	28,700
Hamlin (1841)	120,000	23	3	40,000
Clarke (1845)	109,550	22	4	27,400

⁵⁷ Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, 2:81. For Dieffenbach's choice of multiplying factor see Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, 2:74 and 2:77.

⁵⁸ George Clarke, "Return of the Native Population of New Zealand, as Far as It Has Been Ascertained," in *Great Britain. Parliamentary Papers relating to New Zealand [Selected]. Volume 6* (1845), 47.

⁵⁹ Clarke may have used, for instance, the preliminary figures from the CMS censuses as discussed in the next section. The earliest of these is dated as 1843 and was conducted by Richard Taylor in the Whanganui and Taranaki area: "Census by Revd R. Taylor. 1843" (AWMML, MS-63, items 1–3). Alternatively, he could have incorporated earlier figures gathered by the New Zealand company: John Ward, *Supplementary Information Relative to New Zealand* (London, 1840), 151.

⁶⁰ Most of the variation of Dieffenbach's survey from that of the missionaries stems from his estimations for the Cook Strait region.

⁶¹ For other compilations of population estimates, see Lewthwaite, "The Population of Aotearoa," 51; Pool, *Maori Population*, 234–36.

Although adequate for missionary purposes at the time, the most problematic aspect of these early estimates was not so much the quality of the Māori sources but the choice of multiplying factor.⁶² As the missionaries gained in demographic knowledge, they realised that the size of the Māori family unit varied considerably from region to region. Alfred Brown, who favoured a factor of four, found one Waikato kāinga with nine fighting men, forty children and thirty-three women and slaves, which would have resulted in a factor of nine!⁶³ On the other hand, William Williams was alarmed to find that one area of the East Cape (Opotiki to Hick's Bay) had only two children for every five men.⁶⁴ Consequently, by the middle of the 1840s there was a growing need for more accurate demographic information such as might be provided by a European-style census.

2.3.2 Early European Censuses

The first government-sponsored census of Māori was not undertaken until 1857–58.⁶⁵ Before then, however, the CMS missionaries had initiated their own series of censuses during the middle of the 1840s. Complete coverage was not achieved – perhaps due to the armed conflict in the north against the British crown led by Hōne Heke and Kāwiti – but records are known for three of the four mission districts of the CMS.⁶⁶ George Kissling, a missionary in the Eastern District, described the way the census was administered in his area:

⁶² Contra Pool who points to the lack of reliable informants rather than the multiplying factor: Pool, *Māori Population*, 54.

⁶³ Alfred Brown, Journal, 13 Apr 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:610).

⁶⁴ William Williams, Report of the Eastern District for the year ending 31 December 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M16:405–6). Williams was commenting on the CMS census of 1845 conducted by George Kissling. Kissling's figures for the area give a multiplying factor of 2.2: George Kissling, Report of Hick's Bay for the half year ending 1 July 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M15:504–5). More generally, Williams noted that the East Cape region as a whole had an equal ratio of children to men and a ratio of women to men of 3:4. This would produce a multiplying factor of 2.75 for the region as a whole. In 1850, William Fox analysed figures from two provincial censuses of the Wellington district conducted in 1847 and 1850. These figures gave multiplying factors of 2.27 and 2.29 respectively, which are similar to those calculated by Williams for the East Cape: Fox, *Six Colonies*, 53.

⁶⁵ Shirley Ann Dixon, "The New Zealand Census: Some Technical and Historical Aspects" (Master's thesis, Massey University, 1989), 21–25. The province of New Munster, however, had undertaken a census of their region in 1847–48 administered by Tracy Kemp (the son of the CMS missionary James Kemp). The New Munster province covered the areas of Port Nicholson [Wellington], Waikanae, Ōtaki, and Wairarapa: Kemp, "Reports no.1–4 and Returns for the Native Population of the Wellington District."

⁶⁶ For the Eastern and Western Districts see Register of Native Population, 1846 (AWMML, MS-63, items 1–31). Data from the Middle District (Waikato) was included in the Government census of 1859: F. D. Fenton, *Observations on the State of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of New Zealand* (Auckland, 1859), 3. Davis may also have been referring to the census for the Northern District in his annual report for Kaikohe in 1846: Richard Davis, Kaikohe Annual Report, 30 June 1846 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M16:354). Pool is therefore too sweeping in his claim that there were no systematic attempts to enumerate Māori prior to the 1857–58 census: Pool, *Māori Population*, 48.

I adopted the following method in taking the Census. The native teachers and schoolmasters of the district were supplied with paper, on which they were requested to write the names of all persons permanently residing at their respective Settlements according to their families and tribes. On my visiting these Settlements the lists of names were presented to me, and then called over in the presence of 6 or eight well informed individuals, and the requisite corrections and additions being made, I copied them into my book in the presence of the people. The total number therefore will be found pretty correct; some discrepancies may have crept in as regards the distinction of the sexes of children; and young persons from 15 to 20 years of age have frequently been ranked with the adults owing to matrimonial engagements in which they far too early involve themselves.⁶⁷

The CMS census was not entirely welcomed by Māori – at least not on the East Cape. At a time of heightened tensions, the missionaries were accused of having political motivations and in some areas Māori simply refused to be counted. James Stack reported the reaction at Rangitukia: “These people were most violent in their threatening for my attempting to take a census of population saying I wanted to sell their names for gold. They are opposed to the Queen’s government and are ripe for joining popery; being in communication with the padre at Opotiki.”⁶⁸ For those areas that refused to be counted, the missionaries substituted an estimated figure. Such estimates made up 23 percent of the final tally for the East Cape region.⁶⁹

The missionaries realised, after conducting their censuses, that previous population estimates had been too high. They were also able to confirm their suspicions that overall the Māori population was in decline. In reviewing the 1845 census of the Eastern District, William Williams concluded: “A census of the population has been completed during the past year, which presents us with facts of much interest. It is probable that the number of inhabitants of the whole islands is smaller than has been estimated, and there is reason to fear that of late years it has been on the decrease.”⁷⁰

As early as 1833, Williams had been aware of Māori complaints that the presence of Europeans had caused a decline in their numbers.⁷¹ In 1834, the missionary Richard Davis expressed a similar concern: “Thus far would I go in my assertions, and I believe I may go much further, that there are not more than two thirds of the natives in this part of the island [Waimate in the Northern District] that were to be found

⁶⁷ George Kissling, Report of Hick’s Bay for the half year ending 1 July 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M15:502–3).

⁶⁸ James Stack, Report for the half year ending 30 June 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M15:495); For Kissling’s account see, George Kissling, Report of Hick’s Bay for the half year ending 1 July 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M15:499–500).

⁶⁹ A similar opposition from Māori was also a feature of the first Government census in 1857–58.

⁷⁰ William Williams, Report of the Eastern District for the year ending 31 December 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M16:405).

⁷¹ William Williams, Journal, 22 Sep 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:321).

here 10 years ago!"⁷² For Davis, it was not so much the musket wars or other violent causes that were responsible, but "pulmonary consumption" that resulted from "illicit intercourse with wicked, dissipated Europeans." What puzzled Williams in 1845, however, was that evidence for decline had come from a part of the country that had had little direct contact with Europeans. Consequently, Williams discounted the European presence as a factor and pointed instead to the impact that diseases such as whooping cough and influenza were having on what he considered a weaker Māori constitution.⁷³

When Francis Fenton conducted the official government census in 1857–58 he also found a declining Māori population. Like the missionaries before him, he also encountered considerable distrust and suspicion from Māori.⁷⁴ But, by carefully comparing the 1844 CMS census for the Waikato with his own in 1858, Fenton was able to establish that a 19.42 percent decline had occurred over the previous fourteen years, which represented an average decrease of 1.53 percent per year.⁷⁵ Fenton's final population count of 56,049, however, is generally considered too low and was

⁷² Richard Davis to the Secretary, 18 Nov 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:82). Davis's observation that the population had decreased by a third over ten years implies a rate of decline of about 4 percent per year.

⁷³ William Williams, Report of the Eastern District for the year ending 31 December 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M16:406).

⁷⁴ There were difficulties in administering the census in six of the eleven regions, see Pool, *Māori Population*, 55.

⁷⁵ Fenton, *Observations*, xxii; For further discussion see Pool, *Māori Population*, 195. Fenton's rate is better supported by the empirical evidence than other proposed rates. For instance, another estimate of 4 percent per year was suggested by William Fox in 1850, based on evidence from the Port Nicholson [Wellington] area: Fox, *Six Colonies*, 53–54. Fox obtained his rate by comparing figures from 1847 with Kemp's census for the same area in 1850: Kemp, "Reports no.1–4 and Returns for the Native Population of the Wellington District," 84. The 1847 figures came from an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, probably written by Charles Hursthouse, who was known to Fox and shared similar views: Anonymous, "Polynesia and New Zealand," *The Edinburgh Review* 91 (1850): 451; Charles Hursthouse, *The New Zealand Handbook: With Practical Information and Advice for all Orders of Emigrants from the 'Capitalist' to the 'Working man'*, 11th ed. (London, 1866), 17–18. Yet given its small sample and short time period, Fox's rate cannot be considered as robust as Fenton's. In addition, Fox's figures do not exclude the possibility of migration – something that Fenton was careful to mitigate. By way of contrast, the missionary Richard Taylor reported a slight increase in population for some areas of Taranaki for the period 1843–53: Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui*, 256.

criticised at the time by the CMS who were concerned that his findings would be used to legitimise further Māori land sales.⁷⁶

2.4 Christian Profession

When George Clarke, in 1845 estimated the Māori population at 109,550, he also gave figures for the number of Māori connected with each of the three missions.⁷⁷ Table 9 summarises his results.

Table 9: Government Survey of Māori Profession, 1845*

Church of England	42,700
Wesleyan	16,000
Roman Catholic	5,100
Pagans	45,750
Supposed number of souls in each tribe	109,550

* Clarke, George. "Return of the Native Population of New Zealand, as Far as It Has Been Ascertained." *Parliamentary Papers* 1846 (337) 47

In giving his figures, Clarke also attached this qualification:

In my estimate of the probable number of the professed converts in the Anglican church, Roman Catholic and Wesleyan faiths respectively, I find it impracticable to obtain sufficiently accurate data upon which to form it with complete satisfaction to myself, on account of the daily diminishing number of the Pagans.⁷⁸

Although Clarke does not make clear the criteria he used for identifying "professed converts", it is unlikely to have been based on baptism figures.⁷⁹ More likely, Clarke was using attendance figures supplied by each of the missions.⁸⁰ It also appears that Clarke has calculated the number of "pagans" by subtraction rather than by a direct count. Even so, Clarke's estimate that 58 percent of Māori identified as Christian was

⁷⁶ Fenton, *Observations*, iv–vii; "Maori New Zealand", *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 12 (1861): 19. For a discussion of the accuracy of Fenton's census, see Dixon, "The New Zealand Census," 23–24; Pool, *Maori Population*, 55–57. Pool suggests that it is unlikely that the 1840 population was "much in excess of 90,000" and that by Fenton's census of 1858, the population was "probably" in the range 56–65,000: Pool, *Maori Population*, 195; see also his discussion in Ian Pool, *Te Iwi Maori: A New Zealand Population Past, Present & Projected* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1991), 53–58. If Pool's estimate of 90,000 for 1840 is accurate, then his range for Fenton's 1858 census figures would require a rate of decline of between 1.79–2.60 percent. This is significantly higher than the rate found by Fenton, himself. Using Fenton's rate with Pool's 1840 estimate would have produced a 1858 population figure 68,000.

⁷⁷ Clarke, "Return of Population," 47.

⁷⁸ Clarke, "Return of Population," 47.

⁷⁹ By 1845 the CMS, for instance, had probably baptised only a third of the number assigned to them by Clarke.

⁸⁰ Wright also takes this view: Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 165. Clarke's figure for Roman Catholic profession compares favourably with reported numbers of Roman Catholic neophytes [new converts] for 1846: Philip Turner, "The Politics of Neutrality: The Catholic Mission and the Maori 1838–1870" (Master's thesis, Auckland, 1986), 146–47. Clarke's figures are more credible than Bishop Pompallier's claim of 45,000 catechumens by 1841: Belich, *Making Peoples*, 217.

consistent with other estimates made for smaller regions at this time. William Williams, for instance, reported in 1841 that the number of Māori attending services in the Middle District was 8,680.⁸¹ If the total population of this region remained similar to that reported in the 1846 CMS census (13,503), then the proportion of Christian profession would be 64 percent.⁸² Again, Robert Maunsell reported in December 1840 that the congregations gathered at the Waikato Heads numbered 1,073 out of a population of 1,700, which equates to 63 percent.⁸³ Like Clarke, Maunsell also cautioned his readers not to draw false conclusions with respect to non-attendees:

It must not however be concluded, that the others not enumerated are not ‘worshippers’: for in the whole district there are very few who do not claim that character. They have not however been recorded, because it is difficult to reduce them to any one congregation in consequence of their scattered and wandering mode of life.⁸⁴

By the end of the 1840s, the percentage of Māori Christians had increased even further. When William Williams was interviewed in London by the CMS in 1852 he told the committee, “A census of the native population has been taken in some districts with great accuracy, but not in all.”⁸⁵ With this caveat, Williams then estimated the total Māori population to be 80,000 as the “extreme amount,” of whom he counted 65,000 as Protestant and 5,000 as Roman Catholics.⁸⁶ He calculated the remainder who had “no profession” as being 10,000. When combined as a percentage, Williams’s estimate of Christian profession represented 88 percent of the total Māori population.

⁸¹ William Williams, Annual Report, June 1841 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M13:226).

⁸² Register of Native Population, 18461, Archdeaconry of Waiapu (AWMML, MS-63, items 4–19).

⁸³ Robert Maunsell, Report, 31 Dec 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M15:646).

⁸⁴ Robert Maunsell, Report, 31 Dec 1845 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M15:646).

⁸⁵ *Church Missionary Record* (London: 1852), 106–7. These statistics were also reported in the *Missionary Register* (London: 1852), 238–39.

⁸⁶ The CMS portion of this total was variously reported by Williams to be 45,000 or 50,000, which indicates that he was not intending these figures to have a high degree of precision: *Missionary Register* (London: 1852), 238–39; *Proceedings* (London: 1851–1852), 168; William Williams cited in *Missionary Register* (London: 1853), 227. The Wesleyan figure is not a large increase over the 1845 levels reported by Clarke. Although there was probably a degree of overlap between the two protestant missions, it also appears that the Wesleyan mission was in decline during this period due to the combined effects of Hone Heke’s war in the north and the demands of ministering to a growing influx of European settlers. See Clover, *Collision, Compromise and Conversion During the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission 1827–1855*, 331–55. The figure of 5,000 for Roman Catholic profession is also similar to that given by Clarke and consistent with the 5184 neophytes reported for the mission in 1846: Turner, “Politics of Neutrality,” 146–47.

2.5 Discussion

This estimate by Williams marked a transition in the thinking of the CMS as they looked to establish an indigenous ministry for Māori congregations and bring the mission to a close.⁸⁷ As the editors of the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* observed, “there is another object to be attained, of paramount importance, in order that the reception of Christianity by the native race may be permanent and lasting – the formation of a native ministry, to which may be eventually deferred the care of the native flocks.”⁸⁸ Only when that goal had been accomplished, said the editors, could the work in New Zealand be considered complete. Given the significance of Williams’s report, two questions warrant further discussion: firstly, how reliable was Williams’s estimate and, secondly, to what extent can a Māori profession of faith be equated with Christian conversion?

2.5.1 How Many Māori Identified as Christian?

Williams’s estimate of Māori profession, like that of Clarke’s, appears to be based on attendance figures for mission services. Yet it also seems that Williams was intending to offer the CMS only a general indication of the current situation. For instance, Williams grouped together the CMS and Wesleyan figures to give a total for Māori protestants of 65,000. In doing so, he gave the Wesleyans a range of between 16–18,000 and thus, by subtraction, leaving the CMS numbers in the range of 47–49,000.⁸⁹ Yet later in the interview, Williams also gave the number of Māori connected with the CMS as being “about 45,000.”⁹⁰ From these variations a simple range of 66–70,000 Māori Christians can be constructed based on the figures provided by Williams.⁹¹

With regard to population size, Williams was probably basing his estimate on figures drawn from the CMS censuses conducted in the mid-1840s. Although incomplete, these censuses help to explain why Williams offered a radically lower population figure than had previously been given.⁹² The accuracy of his estimate, however,

⁸⁷ *Proceedings* (London: 1851–1852), 168; see also William Williams to the Secretaries, 18 Jan 1855 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M20:411–13).

⁸⁸ “New Zealand, Its Present State and Future Prospects”, *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (1852): 161.

⁸⁹ *Missionary Register* (London: 1852), 239.

⁹⁰ *Missionary Register* (London: 1852), 239.

⁹¹ The range of Protestant Māori being between 61,000 ($45,000 + 16,000$) and 66,000 ($47,000 + 18,000$), together with the addition of 5,000 Roman Catholics. The range has a mean of 68,000, and a spread of ± 2.9 percent.

⁹² In 1855, Williams’s fellow-missionary, Richard Taylor, also gave a population figure of 80,000 as the best estimate available: Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui*, 257–58.

given the declining population, would have been greatly affected by the time interval between reviewing the censuses in 1846 and reporting the result to London in 1852. If Fenton's rate of 1.53 percent decline is at all accurate, then the population would have been reduced by a further 7,000 over this six-year interval – in which case Williams's population figure of 80,000 would indeed be an “extreme amount” and can therefore be considered the upper value in a range of 73–80,000.⁹³ Combining the ranges for Williams's estimates of Christian profession and total population results in a Christian profession of 90 percent, with a range of 84–94 percent.⁹⁴

This percentage of Christian profession, however, is significantly higher than several more recent estimates of the number of Māori Christians.⁹⁵ James Belich, for instance, concludes that by the 1850s only a little over 60 percent of Māori counted themselves as Christians.⁹⁶ But in arriving at this lower percentage, Belich has relied on figures published by Arthur Thomson in 1859.⁹⁷ Thomson, in a table illustrating the “progress of civilisation,” compared the number of Christians in 1836 with those in 1859 to show an increase from 1,500 to 35,000. This latter figure, when combined with Fenton's population estimate of 56,000 (also listed in Thomson's table), produces the proportion of 63 percent that Belich has used to support his lower value. It is unlikely, however, that Thomson ever intended for his figures to be anything more than indicative of the progress being made by Māori. After all, he had already established in his first volume that by 1859 approximately 75 percent of Māori had received baptism. It also appears that Thomson was sourcing his figures from the returns for public worship published by the CMS in the *Proceedings* (see Table 6 above). This explains the source of Thomson's figure of 35,000 for the year 1859. Because the CMS had not published attendance figures for the years 1844–1859, Thomson has simply substituted the entry for the year 1843 instead.⁹⁸ While this

⁹³ This range has a median of 76,500 and a spread of ±4.6 percent. As a heuristic cross-check, Williams's estimate can be compared to Ian Pool's 1840 population estimate of 90,000. Using Fenton's rate, a calculation based on Williams's 1852 range would produce an 1840 estimate of between 88–96,000, which is compatible with Pool's 1840 estimate. Pool, *Maori Population*, 195–96. See also the discussion in footnotes 75 and 76 above.

⁹⁴ This percentage was calculated from the means of the two ranges (68,000/76,500) and combining the percentage spreads of each range as the root of the sum of their squares, i.e. $\sqrt{(2.9^2+4.6^2)}$.

⁹⁵ Alan R. Tippett, *People Movements in Southern Polynesia: Studies in the Dynamics of Church-Planting and Growth in Tahiti, New Zealand, Tonga, and Samoa* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), 59; Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, 95, 163; Belich, *Making Peoples*, 219; Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori*, 122.

⁹⁶ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 219.

⁹⁷ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 2:294–96.

⁹⁸ The figure of 35,000 for 1859 is otherwise inexplicable apart from this scenario. Note also, that the CMS figures do not include Māori associated with the other two missions.

adjustment might serve Thomson's immediate purpose, it does render his figures unworkable for calculating the percentage of Māori Christians. Therefore, Belich's lower estimate of Christian profession for the 1850s is unlikely to be as reliable as the one supplied by Williams to the CMS in 1852.

2.5.2 *Were Christian Māori Converted?*

To what extent is Christian profession an appropriate measure for the Māori Conversion? John Owens is one scholar who considers that the two categories have little in common and should be kept distinct.⁹⁹ For Owens, the general diffusion of Christian ideas must be distinguished from the theological expectations of the missionaries, whose concept of conversion necessarily involved the complete religious transformation of a believer. Consequently, said Owens, "If we are looking for converts we must ignore those who are simply listed as attending services."¹⁰⁰ Owens turns instead to the number of communicants (CMS), society members (Wesleyan), and neophytes (Roman Catholic) as reported by each of the three missions. Using these figures Owens estimates that in 1841 no more than three percent of the population could be regarded as having been converted.¹⁰¹

As noted in the Introduction, Owens has so tied his definition of conversion to a British cultural context that it becomes inconceivable for him to consider that Māori might have experienced the same religious phenomena as the missionaries. Yet, as Judith Binney points out, this has the problematic effect of disregarding a significant percentage of Māori who, while not meeting Owens's criteria, nevertheless identified themselves as Christian.¹⁰² In addition, even the missionaries, despite their undoubtedly culturally conditioned expectations, recognised that a large proportion of the Māori population had come to share the same Christian experience of conversion as themselves.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ See also Clover, *Collision, Compromise and Conversion During the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission 1827-1855*, 356-77.

¹⁰⁰ Owens, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 22.

¹⁰¹ Owens's method, however, creates the incongruous situation of attributing barely one-fifth of the converts to the CMS at a time when the mission was attracting two-thirds of the church attendance (see Table 9).

¹⁰² Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 159.

¹⁰³ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 344; Grace, *Pioneer Missionary*, 59. There is little evidence to suggest that the missionaries changed their view of conversion in order to create "instant converts" as Belich suggests: Belich, *Making Peoples*, 223.

A similar problem of underestimation also affects the use of baptism numbers as a measure of conversion.¹⁰⁴ Although baptism figures give a more realistic estimation, they still exclude a significant group of Māori Christians due to the delay that often occurred between a convert's public profession and their subsequent baptism. So, for example, while Thomson estimated in 1859 that approximately 75 percent of Māori had received baptism, he also had to concede that many of those he had labelled as "heathen" were still recognisably Christian with regard to their religious practices.¹⁰⁵

In this sense, Williams's use of Christian profession was more attuned with how Māori themselves conceived of the conversion process. It was the keeping of a Christian Sabbath that often marked out the early converts in the eyes of other Māori, even if the missionaries themselves wished to be more cautious in claiming them as such. Then as Christianity spread, regular Sabbath practice continued to be a characteristic of Māori Christianity. While it is possible that Māori might have had a variety of other reasons for attending Christian services, because of the radical nature of the change involved, religious conversion provides the best explanation as to their primary motivation. Consequently, Māori Christian profession expressed through Sabbath practice remains the most reliable measure of that process whereby Christianity transitioned from being the religion of that "strange tribe" of English missionaries in the 1820s, to the living faith of approximately 90 percent of Māori by the early 1850s.¹⁰⁶

2.6 Concluding Comment

Given the conclusion of this chapter as to the extent of the Māori Conversion, a substantial reassessment of the nature of the Māori Conversion is now warranted. Such a study needs to be based on a careful definition of conversion and take into consideration the conversion experiences of individual converts. Consequently, the following chapters will examine the conversions of four early converts using the

¹⁰⁴ This is the approach advocated by Binney in response to Owens: Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 157, footnote 75.

¹⁰⁵ Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:327. In his second volume, however, Thomson was not as careful when he cited Tracy Kemp's 1850 census of the Wellington region to show that 36 percent of Māori still were "heathen:" Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 2:297, 337. Thomson does not make clear that Kemp had only counted baptised Māori and specifically noted that many unbaptised Māori were regular church attenders: Kemp, "Reports no.1–4 and Returns for the Native Population of the Wellington District," 88.

¹⁰⁶ It was the Hokianga rangatira, Nene and Patuone, who used the phrase "strange tribe" to describe the early missionaries: Henry Williams, Journal, 12 May 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:150).

definition of conversion developed in the Introduction. By identifying common themes and connecting narratives, each convert will be linked to the Māori Conversion as a whole in order to gain an insight into the nature of the movement. This “bottom up” approach also has the advantage of highlighting the active agency of Māori converts in the conversion process.

3 Ruatara: The Gateway for the Gospel

3.1 Introduction

Ruatara is commemorated by the New Zealand Anglican Church as “Te ara mo te Rongopai ‘The Gateway for the Gospel’.”¹ This title was given in recognition of his partnership with the Reverend Samuel Marsden in establishing the first CMS mission station in the Bay of Islands at Rangihoua in 1814. However, a number of recent writers have claimed that Ruatara had little interest in Christianity and was more concerned with acquiring the trading advantages that would accrue from having a European settlement under his control. Which understanding of Ruatara’s motivation is better supported by the historical evidence? This chapter will examine what can be known of Ruatara’s reasons for sponsoring the CMS mission and investigate the extent to which he intended to introduce Christianity to his people. It will also explore the extent to which Ruatara himself was open to the Christian faith and whether he can be considered a Christian convert.

3.1.1 Sources

Most of the details of Ruatara’s life come from the accounts written by Marsden. The first reference to Ruatara by him was in a letter to the CMS secretary, Josiah Pratt, dated 28 August 1809.² Marsden was on board the *Ann* off the coast of the Isle of Wight, about to return to New South Wales, and had discovered that Ruatara was on board the same vessel. Ruatara was being returned to New Zealand after a brief visit to England. On arriving at Rio de Janeiro, Marsden wrote another letter giving an extended account of his conversations with Ruatara while crossing the Atlantic. This letter, addressed to a friend in London, was published as an appendix to the CMS annual report for 1810.³ Over the next four years Marsden made frequent mention of Ruatara in his letters to the CMS as plans developed for a mission to New Zealand.⁴

¹ *A New Zealand Prayer Book, He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa* (Auckland: Collins, 1989), 18.

² Marsden to Pratt, 28 Aug 1809 (Hocken Library [HL], University of Otago, MS-0498/001, item 21).

³ Samuel Marsden, “Some Account of New Zealand, Obtained by the Rev. S. Marsden, from Duaterra, a Young Chief of that Island; and Communicated to a Friend in London”, *Proceedings* 3 (1810–12). A. T. Yarwood identifies the friend as John Mason Good: A. T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden: The Great Survivor*, 2nd ed. (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996), 125.

⁴ Two significant letters from this period were, Marsden to Pratt, 25 Oct 1810 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_237); Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

When the mission was finally launched in 1814, Marsden kept a daily journal of his voyage to New Zealand (November 1814 to March 1815) that was later published in the *Missionary Register*.⁵ A parallel journal was also kept by John Liddiard Nicholas and published in 1817.⁶ Nicholas was a free settler who had accompanied Marsden as a travelling companion. After the sudden death of Ruatara in March 1815, Marsden wrote a memoir of his life that was published as an appendix to the CMS annual report for 1817.⁷ Some years later (between 1835 and 1836), Marsden consolidated his accounts of Ruatara into a new document entitled, "Observations on the Introduction of the Gospel into the South-Sea Islands."⁸ Although Marsden wrote these "Observations" for publication, it was not until the early twentieth century that they first appeared in print.⁹

3.2 Ruatara's Invitation

Three lines of evidence help explain Ruatara's reasons for inviting the missionaries to live with him at Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands. Firstly, his relationship with Samuel Marsden and the cross-cultural friendship that formed between them.

⁵ Marsden to Pratt, 20 Jun 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_004); Samuel Marsden, "Proceedings of the Rev. S. Marsden", *Missionary Register* (1816).

⁶ John Liddiard Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2 vols (London, 1817).

⁷ Marsden to Pratt, 28 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_039); Marsden, "Memoir of Duaterra", *Proceedings* (1816–1817). Marsden's memoir was also published by Nicholas as an appendix to his second volume: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:380–97. When Ruatara died, Marsden had only just sailed from the Bay of Islands on 26 February 1815 having launched the New Zealand mission on Christmas Day, 1814.

⁸ Marsden, "Observations on the Introduction of the Gospel into the South-Sea Islands" (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0176_001). Marsden had prepared similar manuscripts for his other voyages to New Zealand and sent them to England with a covering letter dated 14 Jul 1836: Samuel Marsden to Dandeson Coates, 29 Feb 1836 (HL, MS-0057/019, item 248); Samuel Marsden to the CMS Committee, 14 Jul 1836 (HL, MS-0057/019, item 251). Marsden told Henry Williams that after the death of his wife Elizabeth he found comfort in preparing the manuscripts: Samuel Marsden to Henry Williams, 11 Apr 1836 (HL, MS-0057/019, item 249). The watermark on the manuscript of "Observations" sent to England (now in the Hocken library) bears the date of 1833: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 555. What appears to be an original draft of "Observations" is also held in the Mitchell Library, NSW: Samuel Marsden, "Observations on the Introduction of the Gospel into the South Sea Islands", 5–24 (Mitchell Library [ML], State Library of New South Wales, *Samuel Marsden Papers, 1794–1838, Letters and reports by Reverend Marsden, 1810–37*, A1993:5–24). According to S. M. Johnstone, this manuscript bears a watermark for the year 1834 and is written in the hand of Marsden's daughter, Mary, with alterations and additions in Marsden's own hand: Johnstone, *Samuel Marsden*, 64–65. It is known that Mary and her husband, John Betts, were living at the Parramatta parsonage in early 1836 and so the draft in the Mitchell library may have been completed around this time.

⁹ McNab, 1:331–399; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 57–131. It should be noted that John Elder freely edited the text of the original in his edition. For accounts of Ruatara's life based on these two published sources, see Patricia Bawden, *The Years before Waitangi: A Story of Early Maori/European Contact in New Zealand* (Auckland: P. M. Bawden, 1987), 43–55; Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 405–507.

Secondly, his desire to embrace Western forms of agriculture for the improvement of his people. Lastly, his experimentation with the Christian Sabbath and, in particular, his ambition to “make a Sunday” in New Zealand.¹⁰ Taken together, the evidence suggests that Ruatara’s interest in the CMS mission was more than that of a traditional chief looking to enhance his personal mana [power, prestige], but rather a young leader’s desire to initiate transformational change for his people in the light of the world he had experienced beyond the shores of New Zealand.

3.2.1 *Friendship*

Ruatara’s friendship with Marsden formed while the pair were returning from England to New South Wales on the *Ann* in 1809. Marsden was surprised to find Ruatara on board but was also concerned with the poor state of his health. Marsden had travelled to England on the HMS *Buffalo*, departing 10 February 1807, with the intended purpose of gaining the support of the CMS for a mission to New Zealand. Ruatara, meanwhile, had arrived in England on 14 July 1809 with the hope of seeing King George III.¹¹ In this ambition Ruatara was to be frustrated, for he saw little of the country and having been unceremoniously transferred to the *Ann*, departed for New South Wales on 25 August 1809.¹²

Their meeting on the *Ann*, however, was not their first. According to Marsden, he had met Ruatara in New South Wales about two years after the first visit of Te Pahi to Sydney.¹³ But as Te Pahi left Sydney on 24 February 1806 and Marsden sailed for England on 10 February 1807, Ruatara and Marsden must have first met during this shorter time interval.¹⁴ Ruatara had in fact visited Port Jackson twice during that period. The first was in April 1806 on the whaler, *Argo*, after having spent the

¹⁰ Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

¹¹ For Ruatara’s arrival date in England, see A. G. E. Jones, *Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade 1775–1861* (Canberra: Roebuck Society, 1986), 41. Note, Jones lists the ship as the *Anna* rather than by the ship’s full name, which he gives in the Index on page 3. See also Marsden, “Some Account of New Zealand”, *Proceedings* (1810–12): 112.

¹² Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 61.

¹³ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 60.

¹⁴ Robert McNab, *From Tasman to Marsden: A History of Northern New Zealand from 1642 to 1818* (Dunedin: J. Wilkie, 1914), 106; Marsden, “Some Account of New Zealand”, *Proceedings* (1810–12): 111.

previous five months fishing off the New Zealand coast.¹⁵ The second visit was in September 1806 when the *Argo* returned from a further five-month fishing expedition along the New Holland coast.¹⁶ On returning to Port Jackson, Ruatara was discharged without pay and transferred to the *Albion*, which then departed 12 October 1806 for another six-month cruise. Eventually, upon the *Albion* entering New Zealand waters, Ruatara was able to land back in the Bay of Islands.¹⁷ Ruatara's third reported voyage took him to England. According to Marsden, Ruatara had joined the crew of the *Santa Anna* in July 1807 only to be left for five months with thirteen other crew members on Bounty Island. The conditions were so harsh that three of Ruatara's companions had died as a result. The passing of the *King George* in November 1807 had brought some relief and eventually, after a further two weeks, the *Santa Anna* returned to collect them before departing for England.

Thus, Marsden could have met Ruatara in either April and / or September of 1806 when the *Argo* was berthed at Port Jackson in Sydney. He later acknowledged that it was through meeting Māori visitors to Sydney, particularly Te Pahi and Ruatara, that he had formed his resolve to establish a mission to New Zealand.¹⁸ His original intention was that the mission would be under the sponsorship of Te Pahi, but soon after arriving in Sydney from England in February 1810, Marsden received news of Te Pahi's death, which made him thankful for what he now considered to be the

¹⁵ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (NSW: 1803–1842), 13 Apr 1806 (Trove Digitised newspapers, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-title3>). Ruatara joined the *Argo* in October 1805 and arrived in Port Jackson six weeks after Te Pahi had embarked from Sydney on the *Lady Nelson*. This rules out the possibility that Ruatara had accompanied Te Pahi on his visit, contra David Pettett, "Samuel Marsden—Christmas Day 1814. What Did He Say? The Content of New Zealand's First Christian Sermon," in *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!': Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, "Tuia", of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014), 73.

¹⁶ *Sydney Gazette*, 21 Sep 1806.

¹⁷ *Sydney Gazette*, 12 October 1806; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 63–64.

¹⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 60; McNab, *From Tasman to Marsden*, 104–108.

providential friendship he had formed with Ruatara during his return voyage on the *Ann*.¹⁹

When the pair were reunited on board the *Ann* in 1809, Marsden considered Ruatara's poor state of health to be part of a wider pattern of mistreatment and exploitation suffered by Māori and Pacific Islanders while working on British ships. This concern was reflected in the level of detail that Marsden obtained from Ruatara chronicling his misadventures at the hands of European sea captains. Ruatara, for his part, expressed his gratitude for the care he had received from Marsden and Captain Clarke of the *Ann*. Ruatara had come on board from the *Santa Anna* with an inflammation of the lungs that caused him to cough up large quantities of blood.²⁰ He had lost his appetite and could scarcely move from his hammock, to the point that he thought, as did Marsden, that he was dying. Marsden took Ruatara into his own cabin in order to care for him and within a week or two the worst had passed. By the end of the voyage, Ruatara was sufficiently recovered to be working as a member of the ship's crew.²¹

During the voyage, Marsden took the opportunity to have Ruatara teach him the Māori language. Likewise, Ruatara with Marsden's help was able to improve his proficiency in English. It meant that by the time the *Ann* reached Rio de Janeiro (a period of two to three months), Marsden claimed to have a degree of fluency in the language: "By daily conversation with Duaterra [Ruatara], and asking him a thousand different questions, I am able to converse with him on any common subject, and can make myself clearly understood."²² In addition, Marsden drew up a Māori vocabulary with Ruatara's assistance, in order to help others learn the

¹⁹ Te Pahi was wounded in March 1810 when European sailors attacked his residence in reprisal for the destruction of the whaler, *Boyd*. For an account of the destruction of the *Boyd* and Te Pahi's involvement, see Peter G. Bolt, "The *Boyd* Set-Back to Marsden's Mission: The View from New South Wales," in *Launching Marsden's Mission: The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, Viewed from New South Wales*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and David Pettett (London: The Latimer Trust, 2014); McNab, *From Tasman to Marsden*, 138–147. Marsden reported that Te Pahi received seven shots during this reprisal raid and that he had died of his wounds: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 61–62, 85. But other reports indicated that, while seven shots passed through his clothes, only one wounded him, and not mortally: Thomas Kendall, Journal, 4 Jun 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_023); John King, Dinah Hall and William Hall to Josiah Pratt, 4 Oct 1810 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_236); McNab, 1:301; Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 390–391. It seems that Te Pahi managed to escape his attackers only to die a few weeks later in battle with Whangaroa Māori.

²⁰ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 64–5; Marsden, "Some Account of New Zealand", *Proceedings* (1810–12): 113.

²¹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 65.

²² Marsden, "Some Account of New Zealand", *Proceedings* (1810–12): 124.

language and to assist Māori with their learning of English.²³ It is probable that by the end of the voyage, Marsden had acquired at least a working knowledge of the Māori language and, more importantly for the future prospects of the New Zealand mission, had established with Ruatara an open channel of communication.

Marsden had formed a high opinion of Ruatara's character, which he also extended to Māori as a whole:

I do not believe that there is in any part of the world or ever was a nation in a state of nature superior to the inhabitants of New Zealand in mental endowments & bodily strength nor any who wod [sic] in a shorter period render themselves worthy of being numbered with civilized nations provided they were favored with the ordinary means of instruction in those civil arts by which men are gradually refined and polished.²⁴

For Ruatara's part, he was grateful for the attention given to him by Marsden and had freely engaged in conversation with him about religion and culture.²⁵ Just as Marsden had formed a high regard for Ruatara, Ruatara too had learnt to make a distinction between the Europeans he had encountered. He had observed, said Marsden, "the wonderful difference between men who fear God and those who do not."²⁶ It was Ruatara's friendship with Marsden that formed the context for Ruatara's openness to Christian ideas and beliefs.

3.2.2 Improvement

On arriving back in New South Wales, Marsden invited Ruatara to stay with him at Parramatta, during which time he learnt how to cultivate wheat using Western agricultural techniques.²⁷ Interestingly, the initiative to learn new agricultural techniques had come from Ruatara himself. On board the *Ann*, Ruatara had spoken to Marsden of his ambition to introduce new plants into New Zealand and had shown Marsden a small package of seeds that he hoped to sow on his return home.

²³ Marsden, "Some Account of New Zealand", *Proceedings* (1810–12): 114. An acquaintance of Marsden, John Savage, had constructed a similar vocabulary in 1805 while on a voyage to England from New South Wales. On the way, the ship stopped at the Bay of Islands where a young Māori named Moehanga was invited to come on board. In a similar experience to that of Marsden, Savage said, "By the help of the native I brought to England with me, I acquired as much practical knowledge of their tongue as would enable me to make myself understood upon most subjects." See John Savage, *Some Account of New Zealand* (London, 1807), 72–79.

²⁴ Marsden to Pratt, 28 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_039).

²⁵ In this regard, Ruatara was more forthcoming with Marsden than Moehanga had been with Savage on the subject of religion: Savage, *Some Account of New Zealand*, 21–22.

²⁶ Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

²⁷ See also, R. P. Hargreaves, "Changing Maori Agriculture in Pre-Waitangi New Zealand." *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 72, no. 2 (1963): 106.

Marsden, realising that the seeds were peppercorns and unlikely to grow in New Zealand's climate, had promised to supply him with something more suitable when they arrived in New South Wales: "this promise highly gratified him," wrote Marsden.²⁸

Arriving in Parramatta, Marsden allocated a parcel of land for Ruatara to work in order to learn how to cultivate wheat. Marsden observed, "During the time he had lived with me he labored early and late to acquire useful knowledge, and particularly that of agriculture."²⁹ It appears that news of Ruatara's endeavours had spread back to the Bay of Islands, for when the young rangatira [person of chiefly status], Kawiti, visited Parramatta in November 1811, he expressed a desire to see "Duaterra's farm."³⁰ Ruatara stayed in Parramatta a total of nineteen months before making his first attempt to return home in October 1811.³¹

Marsden had obtained a working-passage for Ruatara and three other Māori on the whaler *Frederick*, with an assurance from Captain Bodie that he would leave them in the Bay of Islands at the end of the voyage.³² The *Frederick* departed Port Jackson on 8 October 1811, but despite coming within sight of their destination, the Captain turned away and deposited Ruatara and his companions on Norfolk Island instead.³³ From there Ruatara was returned to Port Jackson by Captain Gwynn of the *Ann*,

²⁸ Marsden, "Some Account of New Zealand", *Proceedings* (1810–12): 123.

²⁹ Marsden to Pratt, 28 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_039).

³⁰ Marsden to Pratt, 20 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_241). Contra Salmond, it is unlikely that Kawiti was in Parramatta at the same time as Ruatara: Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 420. Marsden wrote that Kawiti and one other chief arrived at Parramatta on 19 Nov 1811. Kawiti's account of having been left on Macquarie Island identifies the *Perseverance* as the ship on which he took passage, which did not arrive in Sydney until 31 October 1811: *Sydney Gazette*, 2 Nov 1811. By this time Ruatara had already sailed for New Zealand on the *Frederick*, 8 October 1811.

³¹ If the dates in Marsden's "Observations" are used, Ruatara stayed in Parramatta for only seven months: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 65; Bawden, *The Years Before Waitangi*, 47. However, the "Observations" give the date of Ruatara's departure as being in November 1810. This date cannot be correct for Marsden had written in November 1811 of obtaining a passage for Ruatara and three other Māori on the *Frederick* under Captain Bodie: Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240). William Hall also refers to Ruatara returning to New Zealand at this time: William Hall to the Secretary, 2 Nov 1811 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N E, item 4). Although the *Frederick* did indeed sail from Sydney in November 1810, it was under a different captain, Eber Bunker having replaced Bodie due to the latter being ill: R. Hodgkinson, *Eber Bunker of Liverpool: "The Father of Australian Whaling"* (Canberra: Roebuck Society, 1975), 27.

³² Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

³³ *Sydney Gazette*, 12 Oct 1811.

arriving on 1 August 1812.³⁴ Ruatara's second attempt to return home proved more successful. This time Marsden engaged the services of the *Mary Ann*, a ship newly arrived from England and owned by Birnie & Co., local Sydney merchants.³⁵ Ruatara departed for New Zealand again on 4 October 1812, and Marsden was relieved to hear confirmation of his safe arrival in early 1813.³⁶ Marsden had anticipated that Ruatara's return voyage would be five months in length, but it must have been of shorter duration given the report of the healthy state of Ruatara's wheat crop.³⁷

Upon returning to Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands, Ruatara had assumed the leadership role that had once been Te Pahi's.³⁸ He had also distributed the wheat seed given to him by Marsden for other chiefs to plant, although only Hongi Hika allowed the plants to reach maturity.³⁹ Many were sceptical that the resulting harvest of wheat was able to produce the familiar biscuits that were eaten on board the European shipping. Ruatara was not helped by the lack of a flour mill, and his attempts to use a pepper mill borrowed from the *Jefferson* produced results that were too coarse. Marsden, meanwhile, was attempting to send further agricultural supplies to him via the *Queen Charlotte*. As it turned out, the ship did not stop at the Bay of Islands on the first leg of its voyage but sailed directly to Tahiti where it was plundered of its supplies by the locals. It was these frustrations that contributed to Marsden's decision to purchase the mission ship *Active* in order to maintain a secure line of communication with New Zealand.⁴⁰

³⁴ *Sydney Gazette*, 1 Aug 1812. Note, this was a different ship to that which returned Ruatara and Marsden to NSW in 1810.

³⁵ Janette M. Holcomb, *Early Merchant Families of Sydney: Speculation and Risk Management on the Fringes of Empire* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2013), 51. Marsden also called this ship the *Ann* – the third ship so named in his narrative!

³⁶ *Sydney Gazette*, 10 Oct 1812; Marsden to Pratt, 18 Jun 1813 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_008). The news was most likely conveyed to Marsden by the *King George*, arriving 15 Feb 1813. On hearing the news, Marsden attempted to send further supplies via the *Queen Charlotte* (another Birnie & Co. vessel), which sailed in the week following 17 April 1813. The *Jefferson* was also reported in New Zealand waters during that year, but as it arrived in Sydney on 28 April 1813 after the *Queen Charlotte* had sailed, it could not have been the means by which Marsden first heard the news concerning Ruatara: Richards and Chisholm, *Shipping Arrivals*.

³⁷ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 67–68.

³⁸ Marsden to Pratt, 18 Jun 1813 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_008); Jack Lee, 'I Have Named it the Bay of Islands...' (Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983), 61.

³⁹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 67–69.

⁴⁰ See Malcolm Falloon, "Mission Trading in the South Pacific by the Active (1814–1822) and the Accusations of Philo Free," in *Freedom to libel? Samuel Marsden v Philo Free: Australia's First Libel Case*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and Malcolm Falloon (Sydney: Bolt Publishing Services, 2017), 108–9.

With the purchase of the *Active*, Marsden was able to send the missionaries Thomas Kendall and William Hall in March 1814 to resupply Ruatara and provide him with a suitable flour mill. Marsden also sent Ruatara a letter inviting him to return to Parramatta to finalise the plans for the New Zealand mission.⁴¹ The letter was written in English and Kendall states that he placed it into Ruatara's hands, suggesting that Marsden expected Ruatara to understand the letter, at least when read to him. Kendall also observed that the name of Marsden had become well-known throughout the Bay: "The natives make mention of him in their songs and speak of him with respect."⁴² Having received Marsden's invitation (and with a little persuasion from Hongi Hika), Ruatara agreed to return on the *Active* to Port Jackson, arriving there on 21 August 1814.⁴³

According to Marsden, agriculture was still a constant topic of Ruatara's conversation: "He told me with much triumph and joy, 'I have now introduced the cultivation of wheat into New Zealand; New Zealand will become a great country in two years more, I shall be able to export wheat to Port Jackson to exchange for Hoes, Axes, Spades, Tea Sugar &c'."⁴⁴ From this statement it can be seen that agriculture formed just one part of a larger vision that Ruatara entertained for the transformation of Māori society. In this respect, Ruatara shared a similar "civilising" agenda for his people to that of Marsden's.⁴⁵ Yet Ruatara also appears to have shared Marsden's "Christianising" agenda as well, particularly in relation to the Christian Sabbath.⁴⁶

3.2.3 Sabbath

Ruatara had first spoken to Marsden about the Sabbath while on board the *Ann* in 1809: "What seems to have made the deepest impression on this Young Chief's mind, was the observance of the Sabbath-Day in England."⁴⁷ This is somewhat surprising given that Ruatara was in England for only six Sundays and apparently had little

⁴¹ , *Missionary Register* (1819): 58; Thomas Kendall to Pratt, 6 Sep 1814 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_066).

⁴² , *Missionary Register* (1819): 59.

⁴³ Ruatara's decision was against the wishes of his head wife and the advice of his tohunga. Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:76.

⁴⁴ Marsden to Pratt, 28 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_039).

⁴⁵ For Marsden's view of the relationship between Civilization and Christianization, see Falloon, *To Plough or to Preach*; Falloon, "Openings of Providence," 135–137.

⁴⁶ Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

⁴⁷ Marsden, "Some Account of New Zealand", *Proceedings* (1810–12): 118.

time on shore to observe English Sabbatarian practice. It seems likely, however, that Ruatara was speaking more generally, for Marsden also reported Ruatara as saying, "They [Māori] would have had one [a Sabbath] before now ... but they did not know how to make a Sunday."⁴⁸ This suggests that Ruatara's interest in the Sabbath had begun while still in New Zealand, and that Sabbath observance was already of interest to Māori in the Bay of Islands before the arrival of the first missionaries in 1814. If this was the case, it would explain Ruatara's confidence that he would be able to introduce the Sabbath upon his return to New Zealand having obtained sufficient knowledge to "make a Sunday."

Marsden, of course, was keen to assist Ruatara in this task for he himself saw Sabbath observance as the first principle upon which all truly civilised nations were based.⁴⁹ Marsden promised to provide Ruatara with "colours" to signal the day and encouraged him to establish Māori names for the seven-day week. Ruatara's interest in the Sabbath continued throughout his stay in Parramatta, as did his interest in the Christian religion: he participated in family devotions, attended public worship, and engaged in conversation with Marsden "upon divine Subjects."⁵⁰ According to Marsden, Ruatara's interest in Sabbath practice was also linked to an interest in the Christian god:

His moral character is blameless, his mind is wholly [sic] bent upon establishing a Sabbath day at New Zealand and upon introducing the knowledge of the supreme Being. While he lived with me he acquired all the knowledge he possibly could with a view of imparting it to his People; and understands many of the operations of Agriculture.⁵¹

The "knowledge" that Ruatara wished to impart upon returning to New Zealand, while certainly including agriculture, also included the new spiritual ideas associated with the Christian faith. This explains Ruatara's eagerness for the missionaries Hall and King to return with him not only to impart new skills but also "to preach to his

⁴⁸ Marsden, "Some Account of New Zealand", *Proceedings* (1810–12): 118.

⁴⁹ See the instructions written by Marsden on behalf of the CMS to the missionaries concerning the proposed mission in New Zealand: Appendix II, "Address from the Committee of the 'Society for Missions to Africa and the East,' to William Hall and John King, on their sailing to form a Settlement at New Zealand," *Proceedings* (London: 1810–1812), 104–5; Andrew Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil: The life and opinions of Samuel Marsden in England and the Antipodes, 1765–1838* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2016), 289.

⁵⁰ Marsden to Pratt, 16 Aug 1813 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_013).

⁵¹ Marsden to Pratt, 18 Jun 1813 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_008).

people.”⁵² It also explains why, during his stay in Parramatta, Ruatara had taken such an interest in Christianity and, according to Marsden, attained a “very considerable knowledge in the Christian Religion, and revered it much.”⁵³

Ruatara’s actions upon returning to the Bay of Islands towards the end of 1812 confirmed Marsden’s assessment. At that time, Ruatara not only planted wheat but had also attempted to establish a pattern of Sabbath observance. By his own account, Ruatara’s attempt to keep a Christian Sabbath lasted only for the first five months, perhaps no longer than the length of the wheat growing season.⁵⁴ When he returned to Parramatta in 1814, Ruatara told Marsden of his difficulty in convincing Māori that Europeans did in fact observe a Sabbath given the indifference shown to the institution by most of the European sea captains. Only with the arrival of the mission ship *Active* with its strict embargo on trading on a Sunday was Ruatara able to regain the ear of local Māori. Despite these setbacks, however, Marsden was pleased to note that Ruatara was still undeterred in wanting to establish a Sabbath in New Zealand and, together with Hongi Hika and Korokoro, the two chiefs accompanying him, had taken a continued interest in the way the Sabbath was observed in Parramatta.⁵⁵

3.3 The Launch of the CMS Mission

Ruatara’s friendship with Marsden, his desire for economic improvement, and his wish to observe the Sabbath in New Zealand, provided the context for the launch of the CMS mission on Christmas Day 1814. The mission, however, was almost abandoned before it began. While the *Active* was delayed in Sydney harbour due to adverse easterly winds, both Marsden and Nicholas noticed a change in the demeanour of their Māori passengers. This was particularly noticeable with regard to Ruatara, who Marsden observed was “much dejected and cast down; and a constant

⁵² Marsden to Pratt, 29 Jul 1810 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_235); Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

⁵³ Marsden to Pratt, 19 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_240).

⁵⁴ Marsden to Pratt, 30 Sep 1814 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_055).

⁵⁵ Marsden to Pratt, 30 Sep 1814 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_055).

melancholy upon his countenance.”⁵⁶ For Nicholas the contrast was stark: “This strange alteration was particularly observable in Duaterra, who, on all former occasions, was lively and communicative: he appeared quite dejected, a kind of morose melancholy overspread his countenance, and it entirely lost that vivacious animation which it used to display before.”⁵⁷

With much difficulty, Marsden was able to discover the reason for the change. It transpired that a European opponent of the CMS mission had given Ruatara a private warning, telling him that the missionaries were not to be trusted, that they planned to increase in numbers, and that their real intentions were to gain possession of land at the expense of Māori – by armed force if necessary. As proof, Ruatara was told to observe the treatment aboriginal Australians were receiving from Europeans. “This suggestion,” said Marsden, “darted into his mind like a poisoned arrow destroyed his confidence in the Europeans, and alarmed his fears and jealousy [sic] for the safety of his country, for which he had the most unbounded love.”⁵⁸

It was a malicious report calculated to damage the trust that had developed between Ruatara and Marsden. Māori rangatira, like Ruatara, were always alert to the hidden motives of others and were normally very careful judges of character. “He told us plainly,” said Nicholas, “he regretted, from his heart, the encouragement he had given us to go to his country.”⁵⁹ Nicholas realised the impossibility of the situation: “To proceed, while the chiefs entertained such unfavourable impressions respecting us, would be madness, and to be obliged to return . . . provoking in the extreme.”⁶⁰

The heart of the accusation concerned Marsden’s motivation in proposing the mission:⁶¹

Mr. Marsden, after assuring Duaterra that the Missionaries were prompted by no motives either of ambition or avarice, to visit his country, but, on the contrary, were

⁵⁶ Marsden to Pratt, 26 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_034). Marsden did not mention the incident in his journal accounts, but wrote subsequently in explanation of comments made by Thomas Kendall in his journal: Kendall, Journal, 8 July 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012).

⁵⁷ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:39.

⁵⁸ Marsden to Pratt, 26 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_034).

⁵⁹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:40–41.

⁶⁰ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:42.

⁶¹ Opposition in New South Wales to Christian mission in the South Seas came to a head in 1817 with the Philo Free libel trial in which Marsden successfully took a court case against Governor Macquarie’s private secretary, John Thomas Campbell. See Peter G. Bolt, “The Letter Signed Philo Free,” in *Freedom to Libel? Samuel Marsden v Philo Free: Australia’s First Libel Case*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and Malcolm Falloon (Sydney: Bolt Publishing Services, 2017).

actuated by the most disinterested and benevolent solicitude for the happiness of the New Zealanders, told him he would soon convince him of his own and their sincerity, by instantly ordering the vessel to return to Sydney Cove, where the Missionaries and their families should be landed, and never more think of holding any intercourse with his country.⁶²

The reassurances were enough to allow the mission to proceed, and Nicholas observed that Ruatara quickly “resumed all his usual good humour.”⁶³ But Marsden realised that the damage had been done: “I frequently endeavoured to remove his fears but to no purpose. The poison infused into his mind was too subtle, and infectious ever to be removed.”⁶⁴ That the mission was able to proceed despite this crisis was a testament to the friendship that had developed between Ruatara and Marsden.⁶⁵

3.3.1 *New Forms of Peace*

The *Active* took four weeks to reach the coast of New Zealand and, after making contact with Māori at the North Cape, it continued down the coast to Whangaroa. Ever since the destruction of the *Boyd* in 1810 by Te Puhi there had been conflict between Whangaroa and the Bay of Islands that had resulted in a number of deaths, including that of Te Pahi.⁶⁶ As a consequence, Marsden was anxious to take the opportunity to establish peace between the two tribal groups in order to ensure the safety of the missionaries. He also wanted to investigate the incident of the *Boyd* first-hand because it was his view that the root of the conflict had been the misconduct of British sailors rather than the treachery of Māori. Marsden’s fear was that Māori would not differentiate between the sailors and the missionaries and that future abuses by the former would lead to retaliatory strikes against the new mission. Marsden’s hope was that Māori would appeal instead to the British Governor in New South Wales and, to that end, he had been distributing Governor Macquarie’s

⁶² Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:42.

⁶³ Marsden was not attempting to get Ruatara to back down, but to offer reassurances of his good intentions. Contra to Vincent O’Malley’s claim, it was not a matter of “brinkmanship” on Marsden’s part: O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 76.

⁶⁴ Marsden to Pratt, 26 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_034).

⁶⁵ Ruatara never divulged the identity of the European who gave him the report, though it bears close similarities to the views expressed by Campbell before whom Ruatara had had to appear in order to pay his departure tax. See Marsden to Pratt, 26 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_032); Falloon, “Mission Trading in the South Pacific by the Active,” 111.

⁶⁶ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 85. Te Puhi attacked the *Boyd* leaving only four survivors in retaliation for the mistreatment of his brother, Te Āra, while working as part of the crew. For accounts of the attack, see Wade Doak, *The Burning of the ‘Boyd’: A Saga of Culture Clash* (Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), 90–102; Bolt, “The Boyd Set-Back to Marsden’s Mission,” 61–78; McNab, *From Tasman to Marsden*, 125–148.

Instructions to Masters of Vessels to provide Māori with a peaceful means of redress should such abuses occur in the future.⁶⁷

For Marsden, a successful resolution of the conflict between Whangaroa and the Bay of Islands would also signal the peaceful transformation of Māori society that he envisioned as being the fruit of the Christian mission. Marsden had written in his journal, “I had often told Duaterra and Shunghee [Hongi] that it would be to the interest of all parties to make peace, and that I wished to see it established before I quitted New Zealand.”⁶⁸ At this point Marsden’s journal diverges somewhat from that of his companion, Nicholas. Marsden maintained that it was he who persuaded Ruatara to join him in making peace and that Ruatara was at first reluctant to cooperate: “I did all I could to induce him to try the experiment. He was not afraid of himself but was apprehensive that some accident might happen to me or to the persons of my party. He at length consented to go on shore with me.”⁶⁹

According to Nicholas, however, it was while he and Marsden were exploring the Cavalli Islands that Ruatara had gone ashore and confronted Te Āra (Te Puhi’s brother, known as George by the Europeans). Ruatara, in Nicholas’s account, held Te Āra at gunpoint while he explained his desire that their two tribes make peace:

He [Ruatara] then informed him [Te Āra] that it was his wish that a reconciliation should take place between them, and that all existing hostilities should cease, while they should pledge themselves to live for the future in peace and amity with each other. To convince George [Te Āra] that he was sincere in this declaration, he made him acquainted, he told us, with the nature of the establishment which we were about to form, and with the many good things which Mr. Marsden had in view for the New Zealanders.⁷⁰

While Marsden might have correctly perceived that Ruatara needed some persuasion as to the feasibility of making peace – Ruatara being more aware than Marsden of the cultural complexity involved in such negotiations – Nicholas’s account reveals Ruatara’s commitment to the success of the mission. Ruatara was instrumental in assigning Marsden the key role of peace-maker, though Marsden was himself probably unaware of the cultural significance of Ruatara’s actions.⁷¹ It was a role that could be exercised only by a person with the mutual agreement of both contending parties. As the appointed mediator, Marsden was able to move freely between the

⁶⁷ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 111. Marsden’s view was also supported by Ruatara, who urged the North Cape Māori to take the same course of action: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 82.

⁶⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 85.

⁶⁹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 86.

⁷⁰ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:123.

⁷¹ Ballara, *Taua*, 158–160.

two groups and he even safely spent the night within the opposition camp. The peace was sealed the next day on board the *Active*. That Ruatara was prepared to forego the traditional demands of utu [retribution, reciprocity] and make peace with Te Puhi and Te Āra, indicated that he understood the social and political implications of hosting the mission and the new imperative for peace that it brought.⁷²

3.3.2 New Forms of Justice

The *Active* arrived in the Bay of Islands at Hohi Bay on Thursday, 22 December 1814, and spent the next day unloading goods and animals.⁷³ What Marsden omits to mention was that the missionaries chose not to go ashore in the morning but to remain on board the *Active* until the afternoon. Nicholas explains the reason for the delay: one of Ruatara's three wives had committed adultery with a man named "Warree" [Whare], who had been apprehended by Korokoro (to whose tribe he belonged) while the *Active* was anchored at the Cavalli Islands.⁷⁴ Korokoro had then handed Whare over to Ruatara to face the consequences of his crime.⁷⁵ The missionaries, knowing that Ruatara intended to change the way such matters were handled, were keeping a discreet distance to allow Ruatara to deal with the case without their interference.⁷⁶

The changes that Ruatara wished to make were based on observing Marsden in his role as Magistrate in Parramatta and the subsequent conversations with him regarding "Civil Government."⁷⁷ Ruatara, it seems, was now determined to apply these new judicial principles in New Zealand. The expectation of Māori was that

⁷² Dorothy Cloher suggests that it was only a temporary reconciliation to satisfy an "overly ambitious and naive Marsden": Dorothy Urlich Cloher, *Hongi Hika: Warrior Chief* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003), 83. But this judgement seems to rely more on the alleged defects in Marsden's character than it does on the attendant circumstances. That both parties were willing to use Marsden as a peace-maker at least indicates that more than Ruatara's self-interest alone was involved in the resolution of the conflict.

⁷³ Hohi (also known as Oihi) Bay was located next to Rangihoua Pā in the Bay of Islands: Angela Middleton, *Te Puna – A New Zealand Mission Station: Historical Archaeology in New Zealand* (London: Springer, 2008), 52–58; Middleton, *Pēwhairangi*, 8. Elder dates the arrival at Hohi Bay as the "24th", but this is an editorial addition and not part of Marsden's original text: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 91.

⁷⁴ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:183–84.

⁷⁵ That Korokoro had handed over one of his own tribe to Ruatara indicated his own commitment to the missionary agenda.

⁷⁶ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:183–185.

⁷⁷ Marsden to Pratt, 30 Sep 1814 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_055). Similar conversations were reported by Marsden while in New Zealand with Pomare and his people: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 113–114.

Whare should be killed for his crime.⁷⁸ But Ruatara, having consulted with Marsden, decided to impose a sentence of thirty lashes followed by three years' bonded service on the *Active* and banishment from Ruatara's territory on pain of death.⁷⁹ Nicholas was impressed by Ruatara's clemency, though he also realised that Māori were scandalised by so lenient a punishment.⁸⁰

Ruatara's actions, however, had major consequences. Within three weeks Whare had managed to escape from the *Active* and was later observed by Nicholas conspicuously dressed in a sailor's jacket and trousers, and carrying a musket.⁸¹ Whare had modelled himself on the British seafarer – men, said Nicholas, "who are at once the pride and disgrace of the British nation."⁸² Whare's dress suggests that Ruatara was not the only rangatira looking to assimilate European ideas and technology. Indeed, it might well have been no accident that Whare had targeted one of Ruatara's wives for his sexual advances.

Furthermore, two leading rangatira, Tupi and Te Morenga (and probably others), later attributed Ruatara's illness to Whare's spiritual attack:

In speaking to this man [Tupi] respecting the illness of Duaterra, we could learn that both he and Themorangha [Te Morenga] ascribed the origin of it entirely to the resentment of Warree, the seducer of his wife; who they said never ceased invoking his Etua [Atua, god], to take vengeance on the chief for the flogging he had given him, till his prayer was granted.⁸³

Tupi and Te Morenga, it can be assumed, remained unconvinced of the wisdom of Ruatara's departing from traditional tikanga. Nevertheless, Ruatara's endeavours to remodel traditional forms of justice along British lines is further evidence of the profound changes that were taking place in his thinking and of the new vision he had for the transformation of Māori society. These changes reached their fullest expression in Ruatara's hosting of and participation in the first Christian service held in New Zealand on Christmas Day, 1814.

⁷⁸ The traditional approach to such disputes was exemplified the following month when the adultery of Henou's wife with Wiveeah of Waikare led to an armed confrontation: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:76, 91–113.

⁷⁹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:185. Whipping as a punishment was also introduced by Te Pahi: Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 359.

⁸⁰ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:185.

⁸¹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:103–4.

⁸² Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:183.

⁸³ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2: 217.

3.3.3 New Forms of Prayer

Although the first Sunday after the *Active's* arrival in the Bay of Islands coincided with Christmas Day, this festival would have been a secondary consideration for Ruatara. His primary concern was to "make a Sunday," and so following the pōwhiri [ceremonial welcome] for the missionaries on Christmas Eve, Ruatara spent the rest of the day making preparations for the Sabbath. He enclosed half an acre of land with a palisade, constructed a pulpit and reading desk, and even provided some old canoes as seating for the Europeans. Both Marsden and Nicholas emphasised the initiative of Ruatara in making the arrangements. "These preparations he made of his own accord," Marsden wrote, "and in the evening informed me everything was ready for Divine Service. I was much pleased with this singular mark of his attention."⁸⁴ Nicholas echoed Marsden's remarks by noting that Ruatara's efforts had "originated entirely in the suggestions of his own heart" and were "the finest testimonies of his inward worth."⁸⁵

The following day, Ruatara raised a flag given to him by Governor Macquarie on the flagstaff within his pā [fortified settlement] to signal the day.⁸⁶ At ten o'clock, Marsden and all but two of the Europeans proceeded to shore and were met by Ruatara, Korokoro and Hongi Hika dressed in the British regimental uniforms given to them by Macquarie. The twenty or so Europeans took their seats on either side of the pulpit, while Korokoro and Ruatara positioned their men on the right and the left. Together with the women and children from the pā, a congregation of around a thousand might have gathered for the occasion.⁸⁷

The service began with the singing of the "Old Hundred Psalm" [All People That On Earth Do Dwell], after which Marsden read the Prayer Book service – Korokoro

⁸⁴ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 93.

⁸⁵ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:203.

⁸⁶ A flagstaff still remained within the pā for that purpose: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:176. Nicholas credits a passing sea captain for giving Ruatara the colours.

⁸⁷ Nicholas estimated the participants in the haka at the end of the service as three to four hundred, the same number of warriors he said were present the previous day: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:198, 206. Nicholas had earlier estimated the population of Rangihoua at 150–200 people, though this seems too low to account for the 200 men that he had observed under Ruatara's command at the welcome: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:177. The estimate given here of around a thousand, is based on the number of warriors under Ruatara's command multiplied by a factor of three or four to account for the women and children. It is assumed that Korokoro's men had come without their families. Hoterene Keretene gives the size of the congregation as 1500 based on Ngāpuhi oral tradition: Hoterene Keretene, "The Sermon of Samuel Marsden," in *Our Story: Aotearoa: The Story of Mission in Aotearoa Through the Lens of the New Zealand Church Missionary Society*, ed. Sophia Sinclair (Christchurch: New Zealand Church Missionary Society, 2014).

indicating with a cane for Māori to sit or stand, following the example of the Europeans.⁸⁸ Marsden then stood and preached from the text of Luke 2:10, “Behold I bring you tidings of great joy.” Marsden said of the experience, “I never felt more real happiness and joy than when I viewed the delighted Countenances of these poor Heathens – in the Gospel being for the first time preached unto them.”⁸⁹ How much of the sermon was understood by Māori has been the subject of recent debate and will be discussed further in a later section of this chapter.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, according to Marsden, Ruatara was actively involved in explaining the message to the Māori congregation:

After reading the service ... I preached from the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, the tenth verse: 'Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy.' The natives told Duaterra they could not understand what I meant. He replied they were not to mind that now for they would understand by and by, and that he would explain my meaning as far as he could. When I had done preaching he informed them what I had been talking about.”⁹¹

Nicholas gave a similar report:

When the clergyman had finished the morning service, he addressed himself to his rude congregation, through the medium of Duaterra, explaining to them the great importance of what they had heard, which was the doctrine of the only true God, whom they should be all anxious to know and worship; and should therefore take all the pains in their power to understand the religion that was to be introduced among them. Duaterra was ready enough to act as interpreter in the communication of these ‘glad tidings,’ but to several importunate questions from his countrymen, regarding the minute particulars of the subject, he made no other reply, than that they would be fully acquainted with them at a future time.⁹²

It was a fitting sermon for the occasion with Marsden explaining the mission’s purpose and urging Māori, in Nicholas’s words, to learn more about “the religion that was to be introduced among them.” The fact that Nicholas was able to report a precis of the sermon’s content suggests that Marsden was speaking in English – though the possibility that he also used te reo Māori, at least in part, cannot be

⁸⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 93. The Mitchell Library draft of Marsden’s “Observations” has the singing of the hymn after the reading of the service: Marsden, “Observations” (ML, A1993:24). The Mitchell draft also makes it clear that the “Old Hundred Psalm” referred to the metrical version of Psalm 100 by William Kethe from the Anglo-Genevan Psalter of 1561.

⁸⁹ Marsden, “Observations” (ML, A1993:24).

⁹⁰ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 143–144; Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins, *Words Between Us—He Kōrero: First Māori-Pākehā Conversations on Paper* (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2011), 82–88; Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil*, 394–395; Pettett, “Samuel Marsden—Christmas Day 1814,” 74–77.

⁹¹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 93. As Pettett points out, the issue for the Māori congregation seems to have involved Marsden’s *meaning* and his inability to communicate his ideas with clarity, rather than providing evidence that Marsden spoke exclusively in English: Pettett, “Samuel Marsden—Christmas Day 1814,” 75.

⁹² Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:205.

excluded.⁹³ That Marsden's congregation understood the import of his message was confirmed by the reception he and the Europeans received at the end of the service. Nicholas recounted the scene:

The service ended, we left the enclosure; and as soon as we had got out of it, the natives, to the number of three or four hundred, surrounding Mr. Marsden and myself, commenced their war dance, yelling and shouting in their usual style, which they did, I suppose, from the idea that this furious demonstration of their joy would be the most grateful return they could make us for the solemn spectacle they had witnessed.⁹⁴

Although Nicholas assumed this joyful demonstration was another war dance, or haka, similar to the previous day's welcome, Māori tradition in the Bay of Islands has remembered the dance as "Te Hari a Ngāpuhi, the Dance (of Joy) of Ngāpuhi."⁹⁵ The traditional words of the hari [joyful dance] spoke of the need to create space for the new season heralded by the arrival of the migratory pīpīwharauroa [shining cuckoo] and was traditionally associated with the planting of kūmara [sweet potato] in September. In speaking about the significance of this oral tradition, Te Kitohi Pikaahu states that "it is the foundation for our understanding of the Māori response to the gift of the gospel to our tūpuna, particularly at Oihi, and within the tribal groups of the immediate area – Ngāti Torehina, Ngāti Rēhia and Ngāpuhi."⁹⁶ For Pikaahu, it was a calculated response orchestrated by Ruatara, and supported by Korokoro and Hongi Hika, and based on their shared experience in Parramatta:

They had an idea, certainly, and plenty of time to articulate their understanding and some kind of response. Te Hari a Ngāpuhi is a statement of affirmation of what our tūpuna heard. A statement of the power of conversion; of the transformation that happened within our tūpuna.⁹⁷

With the completion of this act of Christian worship, Ruatara had fully and intentionally identified himself with the CMS mission and the Christian message that it embodied.

⁹³ This is the view of Pettett who argues that "Marsden...spoke in Māori and Ruatara was prevailed upon to explain those parts of the Christian message his fellow countrymen did not understand": Pettett, "Samuel Marsden—Christmas Day 1814," 75.

⁹⁴ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:206.

⁹⁵ Te Kitohi Pikaahu, "Word & Dance," in *Our Story: Aotearoa: The story of mission in Aotearoa through the lens of the New Zealand Church Missionary Society*, ed. Sophia Sinclair (Christchurch: New Zealand Church Missionary Society, 2014), 12; Te Kitohi Pikaahu, "Prologue: Te Hari a Ngāpuhi—The Dance (of Joy) of Ngāpuhi," in *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!': Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, "Tuia", of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014), 24; Keretene, "The Sermon of Samuel Marsden," 78–81; Hoterene Keretene, "Te Kauwhau a Hamuera Matenga: Te Hari a Ngāpuhi," *Te Ao Hou* 1956; Bawden, *The Years Before Waitangi*, 87.

⁹⁶ Pikaahu, "Prologue: Te Hari a Ngāpuhi—The Dance (of Joy) of Ngāpuhi," 25.

⁹⁷ Pikaahu, "Prologue: Te Hari a Ngāpuhi—The Dance (of Joy) of Ngāpuhi," 27.

3.3.4 A Traditional Death

If Ruatara's engagement with Western ideas was on full display at the first church service, then his continued connection with a traditional Māori worldview was demonstrated during his final illness and death. Over the course of three weeks, Ruatara's illness made plain the ways in which he was caught between two worlds with their often-conflicting demands. While he did not give himself fully into the hands of his tohunga [sacred expert], neither did he entirely reject a traditional explanation of his illness.

Ruatara became ill on Monday, 13 February 1815, two weeks before Marsden sailed for New South Wales. The previous day Ruatara appeared well and had attended the missionary service dressed in his European clothes – an indication of his continued identification with the missionary karakia.⁹⁸ Hearing that he had become unwell, Nicholas visited him on the Tuesday and found that he was suffering a “severe illness and very feverish.”⁹⁹ Because of his illness, Nicholas found that Ruatara had been placed in an open-roofed enclosure, or “shed”, away from his usual house and was attended by Rahu (his head wife) and other family members. In addition, Ruatara’s access to food and water had been restricted due to the requirements of tapu [sacred, prohibited].¹⁰⁰ Ordinarily, tapu would also have prevented him receiving visitors, but Ruatara’s tohunga had made an exception with regard to the missionaries.¹⁰¹

Ruatara must have approved of this relaxation of the rules for he welcomed his visitors and was happy to eat the sustenance they supplied.¹⁰² Ruatara in fact talked confidently of regaining his health, though his family, and later the missionaries,

⁹⁸ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:144. Ruatara had earlier attempted to have his wife, Rahu, also attend worship dressed in the clothes given to her by Elizabeth Marsden, but she refused his request due to having previously been ridiculed for wearing them: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:319–320. The wearing of European clothes at Christian acts of worship became a common pattern for later Māori converts; see, for example George Clarke, Journal, 23 Mar 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:562).

⁹⁹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:150. Nicholas described him as having a violent cold, attended with inflammatory symptoms. Given the course of his illness, the symptoms were consistent with the final stages of tuberculosis, which was known as consumption. It had been a particularly wet Sunday and the rain continued for a number of days, making life miserable for the missionaries in their make-shift hut: *Missionary Register* (1819): 97.

¹⁰⁰ The prohibition at this stage may have only been his handling of food and feeding himself. Later on, from the Saturday, all food and water was withdrawn.

¹⁰¹ Kendall names Ruatara’s tohunga as “Tapapa” or “Taoppopo”, and states that he was constantly with Ruatara until his death: Kendall’s Journal, 8 July 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_023).

¹⁰² Nicholas fed him rhubarb, in addition to the more usual tea, sugar, rice, and wine.

realised that his end was near. Ruatara may have been hopeful that he would be restored to health just as he had been five years previously on board the *Ann* when cared for by Marsden. That was not how his family viewed the situation and they wanted him removed from Rangihoua to another location before he died.¹⁰³ Yet Ruatara refused to be moved and even kept two loaded pistols by his side to make the point.¹⁰⁴ This was perhaps another indication that Ruatara believed he would soon recover. On the Saturday, however, Ruatara's condition took a turn for the worse, and as a consequence, the concession made for Nicholas's daily visits was withdrawn, despite his strenuous protests.¹⁰⁵

On Sunday, Marsden, who had been away attending to the *Active*, arrived to visit his sick friend. This was the beginning of the second week of Ruatara's illness. To Nicholas's amazement, Marsden was not only able to gain entry ("after some serious expostulation") but was also permitted to have the missionaries provide food for Ruatara. "These concessions," said Nicholas, "which were in direct violation of the taboo, would not, I am convinced, have been granted to any other individual but himself; and the authority of my friend with them must have been powerful in the extreme, else they would never have consented to an infringement which they considered so heinous."¹⁰⁶ Ruatara was again happy to receive the food offered him by the missionaries.

When Nicholas attempted to resume his visits the next day, however, he found that the prohibition had been re-imposed and his way blocked.¹⁰⁷ Even Marsden, when he

¹⁰³ Māori did not want Ruatara to die at Rangihoua, for, as Kendall explained, "it is customary at New Zealand not to suffer a native to die in one of the Villages. The natives say if this should be allowed, Atua would be angry and a heavy calamity would befall them." Kendall to Marsden, 27 May 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012).

¹⁰⁴ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:167; John King to Daniel Wilson, 4 July 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_015).

¹⁰⁵ Nicholas believed that he would have been killed on the spot if he had attempted to breach the ban: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:165–167. The tohunga, it seems, had concluded that it was the breach of tapu by allowing the missionaries to visit and care for Ruatara that had exposed him to a greater degree of spiritual attack. Thomas Kendall later explained: "I learn from the Natives that a few days after Duaterra's illness took a serious turn a watch was set during the night to observe whether a Star could be discovered falling from the Heavens, or ratherly one of those meteors falling which is often in England termed the shooting of a Star: And upon the day he was seized with a kind of momentary delirium his priest concluded this event had taken place. Atua had then as it was conceived entered into him. Hence he was Taboo himself or a sacred person. No New Zealander was permitted to come near him except the Tohunga a priest and those of his own family." Kendall to Marsden, 27 May 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012).

¹⁰⁶ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:168. Nicholas records two separate visits by Marsden to Ruatara, while Marsden, it seems, has conflated the two visits into one: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 120–121.

¹⁰⁷ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:169–170.

attempted his second visit, having returned for the final time on the *Active* from Kawakawa, was initially unable to gain admittance. Marsden argued that Ruatara, who had been without food or water for five days, would die unless proper sustenance was provided for him. Such was the level of Marsden's concern, that he even threatened to turn the ship's cannon on the pā in retaliation if he was not granted access.¹⁰⁸ Ruatara's attendants were apparently rather shaken by the threat, yet unmoved. They believed the opposite to be true: that it was the very missionary provisions that Marsden wished to supply in breach of tapu, that was killing Ruatara. It was a stand-off between two worldviews that, on this issue at least, advocated diametrically opposed courses of action.

The stalemate was resolved by the intervention of Te Uri-o-Kanae, a rangatira with considerable authority at Rangihoua, who agreed to use his influence to mediate. According to Nicholas, Gunnah (as he was called by the Europeans) not only urged the missionary visits to resume, but also questioned the relevance of traditional tapu in general:

Gunnah, the young man in question, now spoke in a bold strain of sarcastic eloquence, not only against the impropriety of refusing free access to Duaterra, but against the taboo itself, which, as he expressed it, was "no good in New Zealand, but only henerecka [hangareka, to deceive];" and he told them openly, that it ought not ever again to be feared or regarded.¹⁰⁹

Te Uri-o-Kanae's stance must also have reflected that of Ruatara, for although Nicholas considered Marsden's threats to be the deciding factor, it was probably Ruatara's permission that determined the outcome. Marsden observed, "After several consultations between those who were with Duaterra and the messengers who came to the chief [Te Uri-o-Kanae], permission was granted for my admission." Again, Ruatara welcomed his European visitors and willingly resumed the treatment

¹⁰⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 120. Nicholas maintained that Marsden never intended to carry out his threat: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:178–180; see also, John King to Daniel Wilson, 4 July 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_015). Nicholas's comment was probably made in the light of the consternation caused among CMS supporters when Marsden's journal was published in the Missionary Register. For instance, William Hey, an intimate friend of William Wilberforce and Josiah Pratt's uncle, wrote to express his concern on this point: William Hey to Pratt, 21 Sep 1816 (HL, MS-0498/002, folder 2, item 59); Charles Hole, *The Early History of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East to the End of A.D. 1814* (London, 1896), 631. Interestingly, Marsden's stance perhaps made more sense within a Māori context than a European one.

¹⁰⁹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:179–180. Nicholas wrote that "the other natives looked upon Gunnah as a blasphemous sceptic for making this declaration." Te Uri-o-Kanae later requested a set of European clothes in order to attend church services. Marsden commented, "he did not like to attend Divine service in his native dress, thinking it improper." Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 124.

offered by the missionaries, indicating that he himself had not been supportive of the ban.¹¹⁰

Ruatara still entertained hopes of his eventual recovery and spoke of going with Marsden to mark out his new town.¹¹¹ Ruatara had previously spoken with Marsden concerning his plans for a town laid out along European lines with provision for a church. He had spent much time since his return from New South Wales implementing his agricultural plans and had returned from his gardens only shortly before this final illness – agriculture, though, was only a part of the changes that he had intended to implement.¹¹²

Marsden visited Ruatara twice more before departing on the *Active* at the end of the week. Although Ruatara had willingly received food and wine from the missionaries, he was adamant that the containers and decanters were not to be taken away, as they were subject to tapu. Marsden realised the difficulty Ruatara faced in freeing himself from what Marsden considered the root of “superstition.”

Though he [Ruatara] had been about three years in my family before, and had acted with great propriety all that time, and willingly received religious instructions on all proper occasions, yet the superstitious notions of the religion he had imbibed from his infancy at New Zealand were deeply rooted in his ideas. He had great confidence in what the native priests asserted and in the effects of their prayers.¹¹³

Ruatara’s confidence in his tohunga showed that he had not entirely rejected his past patterns of belief, and that although he had embraced a number of new European ideas he did not view them as being incompatible with his previous traditions – even if Marsden did. On Marsden’s last visit Ruatara did, however, surrender the tapu items back to the missionaries, including the pair of pistols that he had kept by his side.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ It is also significant that Ruatara accepted food when neither his wife or tohunga were prepared to do so due to their tapu status: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:182–183.

¹¹¹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 121. It is possible that this conversation occurred on the previous Sunday during Marsden’s first visit to Ruatara’s sick-bed.

¹¹² Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 121.

¹¹³ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 69.

¹¹⁴ The contrasting perspectives between Māori and European views of tapu were illustrated when Nicholas was almost killed by one of the pistols misfiring due to it being overloaded with powder by Ruatara. Nicholas considered it a result of his lack of prudent care in firing a pistol with unknown contents, while Māori considered his injuries to be a direct consequence of handling an item that was highly tapu. “Far from expressing any regret at the accident,” wrote Nicholas, “[they] only upbraided me with my impiety for meddling with a pistol that was tabooed, and considered me as justly punished by the indignant wrath of the Etua [sic] who could not behold such a flagitious act, without giving some immediate token of his vengeance.” Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:190–192.

Marsden left New Zealand with a heavy heart, knowing that there was little hope for Ruatara's recovery. He wrote: "This unexpected affliction of Duaterra, which was to me very distressing as upon the wisdom, zeal, industry and influence of this serviceable man I had calculated upon many advantages to New Zealand."¹¹⁵

Marsden attributed Ruatara's final illness to having overexerted himself in attempting to put into effect his ambitious agricultural plans.

Even with Marsden's departure, Thomas Kendall was still able to continue Ruatara's care during his final week. On Thursday, 2 March, he was so close to death that he was finally removed from Rangihoua to Te Puna, to the very hill (as Kendall noted) where he had planned to build his new town.¹¹⁶ He died the next day. To the shock of the missionaries (though not to Māori), Rahu, Ruatara's head-wife, hung herself in order to join her husband in death. Kendall described the burial:

The remains of Duaterra and his wife were laid upon a stage which was erected upon the spot where the former died. The apparel they wore at the time of their decease and the taboo'd articles were deposited with them; Shunghee enclosed their tomb with boards and railing.¹¹⁷

Six weeks later, on 15 April, Ruatara and Rahu were carried to their final resting place on "Motoo Terra", which Kendall described as being fifteen miles from Te Puna.¹¹⁸ Kendall was amazed at the outpouring of grief exhibited by Māori:

We could hear their cries every day. Numbers of natives came from all parts to join them in their roaring. Friends and enemies visited the tomb, some of them leaving part of their garments behind them. The veneration of the New Zealanders for the dead is extraordinary. A native who can speak English tells me it is like our going to Church. I can not say the dead are worshipped. As I become acquainted with the language I shall better understand the purpose of the funeral ceremony.¹¹⁹

The ceremony surrounding Ruatara's funeral arrangements and the honour paid to him by rangatira such as Kangaroa and Hongi Hika, was an affirmation of his mana and stature at Rangihoua.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 121.

¹¹⁶ Kendall to Marsden, 27 May 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012).

¹¹⁷ Kendall to Marsden, 27 May 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012).

¹¹⁸ Kendall to Marsden, 27 May 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012). The location may be Motuterahiki Island in the Bay of Islands.

¹¹⁹ Kendal, Journal, 6 July 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_023).

¹²⁰ Contra Jones and Jenkins who claim that he was not a particularly powerful chief in his own right: Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 86. Contra, also, Hamilton who claims that Ruatara "was by no means the powerful man the missionaries imagined him to be." Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 10.

3.4 Discussion

3.4.1 Ruatara's Friendship with Marsden

It was the cross-cultural friendship between Ruatara and Marsden that undergirded the introduction of Christianity to New Zealand. As Tony Ballantyne observes:

"These personal connections and forms of reciprocity enabled the establishment of the mission, and they provide an often-neglected social context for understanding the mission's foundation."¹²¹ Friendship for both Māori and Europeans at this time, but particularly for rangatira such as Ruatara, could be no casual acquaintance. Friendship necessarily involved the formation of alliances and obligations that required careful consideration before being entered into.

Pikaahu rightly highlights the way in which the abstract ideas of Christianity found concrete expression in the friendship Ruatara formed with Marsden.¹²² His friendship with Marsden and his openness to Christianity would not have been regarded by him as being two separate matters. His sponsorship of the CMS mission was also an expression of his commitment to the spiritual objectives of that mission. This is probably why Ruatara's confidence was so shaken by the malicious report he received on the eve of the *Active*'s departure from Port Jackson in November 1814. If it was simply a matter of weighing up the risks of trading with Europeans, the accusations would have been of little import – he already knew the exploitative nature of Western sea captains. Rather, Ruatara's concern ran deeper and challenged his commitment to forging a new direction for his people.

Ruatara's friendship with Marsden also provides the context for understanding why he was often wary of other rangatira gaining access to the missionaries.¹²³ Ruatara would have recognised that his alliance with Marsden and the CMS came with mutual obligations and loyalties that needed to be protected from potential rivals. Ruatara was acutely aware that his life was constantly under threat even at the hands of former allies – a point that Nicholas, for example, did not fully appreciate when he criticised Ruatara for being suspicious of the motives of other Māori leaders.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 59.

¹²² Pikaahu, "Prologue: Te Hari a Ngāpuhi—The Dance (of Joy) of Ngāpuhi," 26.

¹²³ Nicholas takes this negative view with regard to Ruatara's suspicions concerning Te Morenga: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:80–81, 84–86.

¹²⁴ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:294–295; Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:87–88.

3.4.2 Ruatara and Marsden's Mission Strategy

A number of influences on Marsden's mission strategy have been identified: the early Moravian missions, European "enlightenment" ideas, the failures of the early LMS mission to Tahiti, as well as his own personal experiences of growing up in Yorkshire.¹²⁵ What has not been sufficiently explored, however, was the way in which Māori themselves helped shape Marsden's plans for the New Zealand mission. Marsden openly acknowledged the role of Māori in proposing the mission to the CMS in 1807:

From the different reports we have had of the natives of New Zealand; and the late communication with one of their Chiefs [i.e. Te Pahi], who visited Port Jackson, and who appeared a very extraordinary man, possest [sic] of the greatest natural abilities, and expressed the most ardent desire to improve his subjects, according to human estimate this Island seems to afford some prospect for missionary labors.¹²⁶

It was Te Pahi's "most ardent desire to improve his subjects" that provided the context for Marsden's proposal to the CMS. In the same way, Marsden later acknowledged the influence of Ruatara. When the pair first met in 1806, Marsden recalled, "the young chief Duaterra accompanied by several of his countrymen, came to Port Jackson, which gave an opportunity to me of having frequent communication with this very interesting people. The more I examined into their national character the more I felt interested in their temporal and spiritual welfare."¹²⁷

The influence of Te Pahi and Ruatara, however, appears to have extended beyond being objects of Marsden's humanitarian concern. That Te Pahi and Ruatara, in particular, were collaborating with Marsden is evident by the type of missionary that Marsden sought to recruit:

I . . . recommend that three Mechanics be appointed to make the first attempt . . . One of these Missionaries should be a Carpenter; another a Smith and a third a Twine Spinner. The Carpenter would teach them to make a Wheelbarrow; build a Hut, Boat, &c. – The Smith would teach them to make all their edge Tools, Nails, &c. – and the Twine Spinner would teach them how to spin their Flax or Hemp of which

¹²⁵ Mason, *Moravian Church*, 189–192; Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 48–52; Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil*, 704–718; Stanley, "Christianity and Civilization," 183–190; Falloon, *To Plough or to Preach*, 4–10; Falloon, "Openings of Providence," 135–137.

¹²⁶ Marsden to Pratt, 24 Mar 1808 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_001). This letter has been published in *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission: Sixteen Letters*, ed. W. P. Morrell (Dunedin: University of Otago Press in association with A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1961), 11–14. A number of years later Marsden reflected that, "[Te Pahi] was wont to converse much with me about our God, and was very regular in his attendance at church on the Sabbath and, when at public worship behaved with great decorum." Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 59–60.

¹²⁷ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 60.

their Clothing, fishing Lines, and Nets are made. These Trades would apply to their immediate wants, and tend to conciliate their minds, and gain their Confidence.¹²⁸

Although the CMS would later claim that lay missionaries were sent to New Zealand only because of the lack of available clergy, Marsden's intention was that the mission be tailored to the "immediate wants" of Māori. Marsden's strategy of recruiting lay mechanics with specific skills, rather than being the result of a lack of clerical volunteers, can be seen as an attempt to respond to the desire of Māori to benefit from the introduction of Western technology. Likewise, Marsden's insistence that "the Arts and Religion should go together" can be seen as having been shaped by the way in which Te Pahi and Ruatara, in particular, were engaging with the Christian message.¹²⁹

However, Ballantyne maintains that Marsden was mistaken in assuming that Te Pahi and Ruatara shared his desire to bring the Christian message to New Zealand.

According to Ballantyne, Marsden "presumed a congruence between his motivations and those of Te Pahi and Ruatara."¹³⁰ While Ballantyne concedes that Te Pahi and Ruatara were "certainly interested" in Marsden's religion, he maintains that it was not from a desire to "radically refashion the ideological basis of their own society." Instead, he says, their focus was firmly focused on European technology and farming alone.

Part of Ballantyne's concern is that only technology and agriculture would have made sense in a traditional chiefly context governed by the imperatives of maintaining and increasing personal mana. Yet Ballantyne does not make it sufficiently clear why religious ideas could not also have enhanced Ruatara's mana in the eyes of other Māori. This seems to be one of the implications of the hari performed by Māori at the conclusion of the Christmas Day service. Ruatara's repeated attempts to establish a Christian Sabbath in the Bay of Islands also suggests

¹²⁸ Marsden to Pratt, 7 Apr 1808 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_003). This letter is also published in *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission*, 14–17.

¹²⁹ Marsden to Pratt, 7 Apr 1808 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_003). In this way, Te Pahi's and Ruatara's aspirations were closely aligned: both experimented with new forms of agriculture; both introduced new forms of corporal punishment; and both had plans for building European-styled towns: Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 359. Marsden referred on several occasions to "the great Te Pahi": Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 171, 201, 205. Similarly, Marsden described Ruatara as an "extraordinary man": Marsden to Pratt, 26 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_034).

¹³⁰ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 61. A similar view is adopted by Lila Hamilton in her thesis: Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 10–12.

more than just an expression of interest. Consequently, it is unlikely that Marsden did misread the intentions of Te Pahi and Ruatara for both the spiritual and temporal improvement of their people.

3.4.3 Ruatara and the Introduction of the Gospel

A related question is the extent to which Ruatara intended to introduce Christianity to New Zealand. In evaluating this question, much depends upon the nature of Ruatara's involvement in the first mission service. It is argued here that Ruatara's preparations for the service and his subsequent involvement as translator signalled his support for the CMS mission and the Christian message. As Pikaahu rightly highlights, "Significantly Maori heard Marsden's sermon through Ruatara's translation. What they heard and understood we do not know. What is significant is that Maori were hearing Marsden's message from a Maori."¹³¹

Others, though, claim that Ruatara had no intention of conveying Marsden's words to his people and that Christianity was simply a "side-effect" of Ruatara having secured a trading monopoly with the missionaries.¹³² James Belich, for instance, noting that it was "his words, not Marsden's, that Maori understood at the first sermon," insists that Ruatara would have translated Marsden's sermon "as he chose."¹³³ In a similar vein, Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins are adamant that Ruatara would not have even mentioned Christianity: "it defies belief that Ruatara would have judged this to be the moment to explain such weighty and complex matters."¹³⁴ Instead, they say, Ruatara would have spoken of the importance of welcoming the Pāhekā and not allowing potential rivals to take away their advantage – "an imperative", say Jones and Jenkins, "far more pressing to him and his people than explaining the strange spiritual beliefs of an exotic people."¹³⁵

¹³¹ Pikaahu, "Word & Dance," 13. Patricia Bawden also reports the oral tradition given to her by Sir James Henare in 1978: "Ruatara began, 'Kaua e wehi', 'Fear not', and explained to them the great importance of what they had just heard." Bawden, *The Years Before Waitangi*, 87.

¹³² Belich, *Making Peoples*, 143.

¹³³ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 143.

¹³⁴ Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 86.

¹³⁵ Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 86. Jones and Jenkins are following Pat Hohepa who claims that the acquisition of muskets was the over-riding concern of Ruatara and Hongi Hika: Pat Hohepa, "My Musket, My Missionary, and My Mana," in *Voyages and Beaches: Pacific Encounters, 1769–1840*, ed. Alex Calder, Jonathan Lamb, and Bridget Orr (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 198. Jones and Jenkins also make the further claim that, because Marsden spoke exclusively in English, there was in fact no sermon preached at the service. Their reasoning is that for a sermon to be delivered it also needs to be heard, and yet "the New Zealanders assembled at Rangihoua that day could not hear Marsden's words." Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 86–87.

Nevertheless, downplaying the religious significance of the service is unconvincing for three reasons. Firstly, Ruatara's involvement in the preparations for the service was consistent with his aim of "making a Sunday" in New Zealand, an ambition that pre-dated his friendship with Marsden. Further, although Ruatara's arrangements were modelled on his observations in Parramatta, they also incorporated elements that made greater sense within a Māori context, such as enclosing the space within a palisade and having Māori stand and sit in unison with the Europeans.¹³⁶ These additional elements, whatever they might have meant to Marsden, also sent a clear message to those Māori gathered that they were participating in a sacred act of Christian karakia. It also seems likely that the hari performed at the end of the service, as suggested by Pikaahu, was not a spontaneous gesture for the benefit of Marsden but one calculated by Ruatara to reinforce the religious significance of the occasion to his people.

Secondly, there is little evidence that Ruatara was anything other than a faithful interpreter of Marsden's words. Prior to arriving in the Bay of Islands, Ruatara and others had been involved in explaining and clarifying Marsden's words when they made contact with Māori at the North Cape and, again, at Mātauri Bay. So, there is no reason to assume that Ruatara did not accurately convey Marsden's words on this occasion as well.

This assumption is only strengthened when the extent of Marsden's te reo Māori is taken into account. Although Marsden's facility with the Māori language has at times been questioned due to his use of Māori interpreters, a close reading of his journals reveals that he was in fact a relatively accomplished Māori speaker.¹³⁷ Yet, being conscious of his diplomatic role, Marsden made use of interpreters to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and help with points of clarification rather than to

¹³⁶ The sacred use of fences by Māori is illustrated by Hongi Hika later fencing off the place where Ruatara's body laid: Kendall to Marsden, 6 July 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_012).

¹³⁷ Contra, for instance, Andrew Sharp, who concludes that Marsden's knowledge of that language was limited: "he was never to understand their language well and was always to rely on an interpreter when he travelled. He may have improved his grasp after 1814, but was never able to translate with ease, or to speak with any fluency." Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil*, 395.

provide word-for-word translation.¹³⁸ Consequently, it is likely that Marsden would have had at least some awareness of how his message was being translated.

Thirdly, Marsden's religion would not have been as strange or exotic as Jones and Jenkins suggest. Not only had discussions about the Sabbath taken place among Māori for a number of years, but given the other changes introduced by Ruatara, the spiritual aspects of the CMS mission would have been of keen interest to his listeners. Nor can Marsden's words be deemed inappropriate for such a context. As Nicholas's outline of the sermon indicates, Marsden had tailored his message for a Māori audience. The fact that Nicholas then observed Ruatara fielding a number of questions from Māori, even if he refrained from answering them at the time, indicated, as Pettett notes, "a situation where new and interesting things are being heard for the first time and those hearing are keen to understand."¹³⁹

On these grounds, therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that Ruatara was in fact a faithful interpreter of Marsden's words and that his support for the CMS mission at Rangihoua also extended to the new religious ideas that they hoped to teach.

3.5 Was Ruatara a Convert?

If Ruatara was intentional in introducing Christianity into New Zealand, what then can be said about his own religious beliefs? That is to say, to what extent can Ruatara be considered a Christian convert? For his part, Marsden never publicly claimed Ruatara as such, although he did use the language of Christian discipleship to describe his life. In his memoir of Ruatara, Marsden stated, "No doubt he had done his work and finished his appointed course, though I fondly imagined that he had only begun his race."¹⁴⁰ Marsden also indirectly referred to Ruatara in a later comment on the life of Māui: "I have little doubt from what I have seen in that island that several of his [Māui's] countrymen have died since in the full assurance of faith, and are now in glory to the everlasting praise of the Redeemer."¹⁴¹ Who these other

¹³⁸ See, for example, his use of an interpreter during his visit to Kawakawa in February 1815: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 114. On at least one occasion during that visit Marsden found himself in an isolated setting without an interpreter and still able to communicate freely: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 116. On Marsden's third visit to New Zealand in 1820, he made three references to being assisted by Te Morenga and on each occasion Marsden was clearly speaking in Māori and only turning to him when he got into difficulty: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 256, 259, 292. On later visits, the role of language helper was filled by the missionaries themselves: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 480–1, 485, 491.

¹³⁹ Pettett, "Samuel Marsden—Christmas Day 1814," 76.

¹⁴⁰ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 70.

¹⁴¹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 72.

“countrymen” were, Marsden does not state explicitly, but it is most likely that he was including Te Pahi and Ruatara in their number. Consequently, while Marsden did not publicly claim Ruatara as a Christian convert, it is reasonable to assume that that was his private opinion.¹⁴²

The CMS missionaries who settled in New Zealand were less certain. Both Thomas Kendall and John King, while conceding that Ruatara was a “well-wisher,” stopped short of assigning any personal faith to him.¹⁴³ King wrote to his former vicar, Daniel Wilson, “Without doubt he [Ruatara] was a well wisher of his own people, and to the English, at the same time it was evident he had no knowledge of Religion [*sic*].”¹⁴⁴ King’s comments, however, cannot be separated from his conflicted relationship with Samuel Marsden and his anxiety at having to live within what he perceived to be an alien and threatening environment.¹⁴⁵

Kendall, although he considered Ruatara’s “professions” to be sincere, was disappointed by Ruatara’s change in behaviour once he returned to New Zealand: “When I first saw him I thought him in a fair way to shake off his heathenish customs altogether and he seemed to dispute those principles which had in his early years been implanted in his mind.”¹⁴⁶ Yet as soon as Ruatara had landed back on New Zealand soil, “he joined the natives eagerly in their heathenish customs.” That Ruatara retained many of his traditional beliefs upon returning to New Zealand was enough, as far as Kendall was concerned, to raise serious doubts over his conversion. Kendall’s views, as well as displaying a particular understanding of conversion, were also coloured by his relationship with Marsden and his discontent at not having

¹⁴² The CMS in their annual report followed the example of Marsden and described Ruatara as being, “not far, at least, from the kingdom of God, and of whom we cannot but hope that he has found mercy”: *Proceedings* (London: 1816–1817), 468–69.

¹⁴³ John King to Daniel Wilson, 4 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_015); Thomas Kendall to Pratt, 8 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_023). The third CMS missionary, William Hall, did not refer to the subject of Ruatara’s religious beliefs in his letters.

¹⁴⁴ John King to Daniel Wilson, 4 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_015).

¹⁴⁵ For instance, he told Wilson, “Ever since the death of Duaterra we have been exposed, left to the mercy of all parties, both far and near.” John King to Daniel Wilson, 4 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_015). At the beginning of this letter, King also made a veiled criticism of Marsden’s leadership: “There has been a great deal said about Duaterra and a great deal expected from him, by some, who I trust wishes well to the natives.”

¹⁴⁶ Thomas Kendall to Pratt, 8 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_023).

full control of the mission.¹⁴⁷ In the light of Kendall's comments, Marsden defended his friend to the CMS: "I have thought it necessary to explain that part of Mr Kendall's Letter which I have mentioned as it cast a cloud over the character of a very great, and extraordinary man, and whose memory will long be precious to them who knew him."¹⁴⁸ It would seem, therefore, that rather than being impartial assessments of Ruatara's religious beliefs, both King's and Kendall's comments need to be understood in the light of the internal debates taking place within the New Zealand mission at the time.

The different perspectives of Marsden and the newly arrived missionaries as to Ruatara's conversion have also been a feature of more recent discussions. Jones and Jenkins, for instance, simply assert that "Ruatara was not converted to Christianity."¹⁴⁹ While no particular reasons are offered for their view, it could be supposed that the lack of a formalised act of Christian confession by Ruatara would lend support to their stance. Yet Hoterene Keretene is equally convinced that Ruatara *was* a convert. Pointing to the care that Ruatara received on the *Ann* from Marsden, Keretene maintains, "No konei, ka whanau te Karaiti ki roto i a Ruatara tae noa ki tonā matenga [From this event, Christ was born in Ruatara, right through to his death]."¹⁵⁰ Pikaahu, in supporting Keretene's views, explains: "He's [Keretene] talking about conversion, not to show a kind of degree of conversion. That is a statement of conversion, change of the heart, planting the gospel within the Māori heart is conversion."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Kendall had earlier expressed his dissatisfaction with Marsden to his former vicar, Basil Wood: Kendall to Basil Wood, 13 Feb 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_081). Kendall had wanted the New Zealand mission to be free from the oversight of Marsden and had written a letter to the CMS detailing his plans and suggesting that the mission be supplied directly from England: Kendall to Pratt, 19 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_021).

¹⁴⁸ Marsden to Pratt, 26 Oct 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_034).

¹⁴⁹ Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 86.

¹⁵⁰ Keretene, "Te Kauwhau a Hamuera Matenga."; Translation in brackets by Te Kitohi Pikaahu from Keretene, "The Sermon of Samuel Marsden."

¹⁵¹ Pikaahu, "Prologue: Te Hari a Ngāpuhi—The Dance (of Joy) of Ngāpuhi," 26. A third perspective offered by Belich is that Ruatara allowed himself to be considered a convert in order to manipulate Marsden and Nicholas to his own advantage. He speculates that, "Behind the admirably convertible Maori of the missionary and humanitarian lies the ghost of Ruatara." Belich, *Making Peoples*, 147–148. As a matter of method, however, it is better to take historical agents at their word unless there is good evidence to the contrary. In the case of Ruatara, while his words and actions did not always match the expectations of Marsden or Nicholas, they were nevertheless consistent with a rangatira undergoing profound changes in his religious beliefs.

Behind these conflicting perspectives lies the question as to whether conversion can be understood as occurring at the beginning or the end of the process. For some, including Jones and Jenkins (if their views have been correctly inferred), the absence of a definite experience or testimony marking the end of such a process is evidence that Ruatara was not a convert. For Keretene, on the other hand, conversion can be understood as having taken place at the beginning with Ruatara's subsequent words and actions understood as the outcome of that initial religious experience.

In the light of the conversion model presented in the Introduction, Keretene's approach is to be preferred as giving a more coherent account of the changes in Ruatara's belief, identity and practice. Ruatara's close identification with the CMS mission and the changes he adopted with regard to peace-making, judicial process and Sabbath observance, can be adequately explained only by the incorporation of Christian ideas into his traditional system of belief. As a consequence, Keretene's claim that Ruatara stood before his people on Christmas Day 1814 as a Christian has much to commend it.

It can also be noted that the conversion model adopted here does not necessarily require that a moment of conversion be identified. Of more significance for the model is to identify a process of reorientation for either the individual or the group to which he or she belongs. Consequently, although Keretene points to Ruatara's recovery from illness while on board the *Ann* as a significant turning point, this does not need to be understood in explicitly psychological terms. For Ruatara it would appear that this experience of recovery resulted in the formation of a new friendship with Marsden that in turn led him to embrace a new experimental direction for him and his people. As such, Ruatara's engagement with Christianity conforms more to the concept of "passage", as described by Diane Austin-Broos, whereby a convert undergoes a process of reorientation and thereby gains a new sense of belonging (*habitus*) in an otherwise turbulent and changing world.¹⁵²

This is not to say that Ruatara's experience was not also a profoundly religious one. For Ruatara the spiritual and material aspects of Western culture would have been held together as a seamless whole, which explains why he was as committed to "making a Sunday" as to trading wheat with New South Wales. Whether his experimental engagement with Christianity would have resulted in a viable and

¹⁵² Austin-Broos, "The Anthropology of Conversion," 2.

sustainable way of life, as required by the model, is harder to assess due to his death. It was perhaps for this reason that Marsden was hesitant openly to affirm Ruatara's conversion. That Ruatara had reverted to his traditional way of life upon returning to New Zealand, however, is not sufficient grounds in itself to question his conversion, as Kendall asserted. A degree of continuity with the past is to be expected, even if elements of that continuity are deemed inconsistent with a convert's new system of belief by an outside observer. What is needed is that the new way of life that results from conversion is in some measure distinct from a convert's past manner of living. The potential was certainly there for Ruatara to have charted a new and distinct direction for him and his people, but the viability of the vision was unable to be fully realised before his death.

Accordingly, it can be concluded with Keretene that Ruatara was indeed a Christian convert. Yet, his untimely death and the lack of direct testimonial support from Ruatara himself must render this conclusion tentative from a historical perspective. Nevertheless, given both Marsden's private view and Ngāpuhi Anglican tradition, it can still be affirmed with a degree of confidence that Ruatara was indeed an intentional agent of religious change and rightly regarded by the Anglican Church as "Te ara mo te Rongopai 'The Gateway of the Gospel'."

4 Māui: The First Fruits of New Zealand

4.1 Introduction

Māui was approximately twenty years of age when he died in London on 28 December 1816 – a little over seven months after arriving in England from the Bay of Islands. But despite the short duration of his stay, the CMS had become confident of Māui's Christian conversion, which they hoped represented the "first-fruits of New Zealand."¹ Māui had made quite an impression upon his host, the Reverend Basil Woodd, who after his death wrote a memoir of Māui's life that appeared in the February 1817 issue of the *Missionary Register*.² Then in 1818 the CMS gave wider circulation to Woodd's memoir by publishing an abridged version in the *Missionary Papers*, a popular and inexpensive periodical designed for mass distribution.³ In this way, the CMS made extensive use of Māui's story and conversion in promoting the missionary cause to the wider British public.⁴

In spite of the significance given to his conversion by the CMS, Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins were able to write in 2011 that Māui "remains virtually unknown."⁵ He received the barest of mentions in Sarah Tucker's 1855 account of the New Zealand mission and was not mentioned at all by William Williams in 1867.⁶ So, although he

¹ *Proceedings* (London: 1816–1817), 469. Towards the end of his life Samuel Marsden also echoed this phrase in his account of Māui: Marsden, "Observations on the Introduction of the Gospel into the South-Sea Islands" (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0176_001, page 39). Marsden probably wrote his account around the year 1836, see Chapter 3, Footnote 8, for details. Note, Marsden and the CMS spelt Māui's name as "Mowhee", which was the same spelling used by the missionaries for the Māui of Māori legend.

² Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 71–79. Woodd's memoir was also published in September 1817 as a separate tract: Basil Woodd, *Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee, a Young New Zealander, who Died at Paddington, Dec. 28, 1816* ([London], 1817). The September edition was the same as that which appeared in the *Missionary Register* apart from a reference to Māui having been baptised while in New South Wales. Unless stated otherwise, all references to Woodd's *Memoir* will be to the version published in the *Missionary Register*.

³ Basil Woodd, "Memoir of Mowhee, a Young New Zealander, Who Died at Paddington, Dec. 28, 1816", *Missionary Papers*, no. 10 (1818).

⁴ John Nicholas also included a biography of Māui in his 1817 account of his visit to New Zealand: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:255–257.

⁵ Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 54.

⁶ Tucker, *The Southern Cross and Southern Crown*, 81; Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*.

has garnered some recent attention, Māui largely remains a curious footnote in the history of the New Zealand mission.⁷



Figure 1: Engraving of Māui by William Austin, 1817⁸

One possible explanation for this apparent neglect may be due to Māui leaving New Zealand at around age ten and (apart from a short stay in New Zealand at eighteen) living most of his life within a European cultural environment, away from the land of his birth.⁹ Māui tends to be viewed, therefore, as having been assimilated into a Western context and disconnected from his culture of origin. Tony Ballantyne, for instance, draws attention to the image of Māui drawn by the contemporary artist, William Austin.¹⁰ Austin, according to Ballantyne's analysis, depicts Māui as the

⁷ Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 427–428; David A. Chappell, *Double Ghosts: Oceanian Yoyagers on Euroamerican Ships* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 125–26, 139; Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 45–54; O'Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 75; Vincent O'Malley, *Haerenga: Early Māori Journeys Across the Globe* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2015), 64–67; Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 222–228; Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 143; Chris Brickell, *Teenagers: The Rise of Youth Culture in New Zealand* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017), 22–23. Keith Newman and Timothy Yates are examples of more recent writers who do not mention Māui in their accounts of the New Zealand mission: Newman, *Bible & Treaty*; Yates, *The Conversion of the Maori*.

⁸ *Missionary Papers*, no. 10 (1818)

⁹ David Chappell refers to oceanian travellers, such as Māui, as "double ghosts" due to their memories being largely lost to their cultures of origin and only pieces of their stories preserved by Western chroniclers: Chappell, xi.

¹⁰ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 222–226. Austin's engraving featured on the covers of both Woodd's published *Memoir* and the *Missionary Papers*.

“transformed man” in contrast to the “semi-naked warrior” of previous Māori representations.¹¹

Given this Western context to Māui’s life, what can be known of his conversion to Christianity and to what extent was it simply an expression of his assimilation to Western colonial culture? Woodd’s *Memoir* provides much that is of value in answering these questions, containing as it does first-hand accounts from those who knew and conversed with Māui. Perhaps even more remarkably, the *Memoir* also contains autobiographical material written by Māui himself. Less than two weeks before his death, Woodd had asked Māui to write an account of his life:

Just before we got out of the coach [after an evening with Woodd’s friends], I said, “Mowhee, you can now write a tolerably good hand, – I wish you would, at your leisure, write down what particulars you can recollect of your history. – I will keep it, to remember you, after you have departed for New Zealand.” Accordingly, in the course of the week, he undertook this narrative; and had proceeded in it as far as his return to his native island, at the close of 1814, when his unexpected death prevented farther progress.¹²

Although no longer extant, Māui’s autobiographical account represents the earliest known text to have been written by a Māori in their own words, albeit in English. Fortunately, however, Woodd decided to incorporate much of Māui’s narrative into his own account, substantially unchanged: “From this narrative, and from occasional conversation, I have collected the following interesting facts: and, so far as I am able, I shall insert the statement in his own plain and unaffected words.”¹³

The extent to which he might have achieved this purpose can be gauged by comparing Māui’s memoir to others written by Woodd.¹⁴ These earlier memoirs reveal that Woodd based his accounts on previously recorded conversations and, in doing so, appears to have allowed his subjects to speak with a degree of freedom and with minimal editing. It seems reasonable to assume that he has followed the same

¹¹ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 225. Ballantyne’s analysis of Austin’s portrait of Māui, however, is not entirely convincing. While it is true that Māui is presented as well-groomed and dressed in European clothes, he had probably been dressing in such a manner for the previous ten years. The image that Austin produced may only have been intended to give an accurate portrayal of his subject. The contrast between the *Missionary Paper*’s cover images of Māui in 1816 and that of Tuai in 1826 seems to be more determined by the context in which each of the portraits were drawn than by any implied cultural assumptions as to the effects of conversion on native peoples: “Memoir of Mowhee,” *Missionary Papers*, no. 10 (1818); “Some Account of Tooi, a Late Chief of New Zealand,” *Missionary Papers*, no. 42 (1826).

¹² Woodd, “Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee”, *Missionary Register* (1817): 72.

¹³ Woodd, “Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee”, *Missionary Register* (1817): 72.

¹⁴ Before Māui’s memoir, Woodd had written memoirs for his first wife and son. He went on in subsequent years to write memoirs for two of his daughters and his second wife. These memoirs were mostly published in the *Christian Observer*, but were also later published by his family as a separate collection: *A Family Record or Memoirs of the Late Rev. Basil Woodd, M.A.*, (London, 1834).

pattern in his memoir of Māui. Consequently, unless there are reasons to suggest otherwise, it can be assumed that Woodd has incorporated Māui's autobiographical material into the *Memoir* without substantial alteration.¹⁵ This also corresponds with Woodd's intention stated in the conclusion to the *Memoir*: "thus we may say of Mowhee, *By it, he, being dead, yet speaketh.*"¹⁶

4.2 Māui's Life

4.2.1 Bay of Islands 1806

Māui's first contact with Christianity came in the year 1806 when he was aged about ten.¹⁷ An unnamed Māori traveller had returned from Port Jackson (Sydney) and, according to the *Memoir*, "told his countrymen 'what a fine place the English People had, and the wonderful news of our Saviour dying for sinners and the world.'"¹⁸ The traveller also urged Māori to send their children to New South Wales. According to the *Memoir*, therefore, the Christian gospel – albeit in rudimentary form – had been first introduced into New Zealand in 1806. The source for this claim appears to have come from Māui's own autobiographical account. The identity of the Māori traveller is not given, but it was likely to have been the chief, Te Pahi, who returned from New South Wales on HMS *Lady Nelson* in April 1806.¹⁹ Te Pahi was also known to have left one of his sons, Matara, behind in Sydney under the care of Governor King.²⁰

Māui's father, according to the *Memoir*, as well as hearing the Māori traveller, also met with a friendly sea captain around this time who spoke to him of his Christian faith. Woodd gives an account of the interaction:

¹⁵ It is hard to know what to make of Thrush's claim that Woodd's narrative is "self-serving" as he offers no critical examination of the text. The interest of Woodd and the CMS is clear, but it does not necessarily follow that they have invented or distorted a narrative of Māui's life such that it bears no relationship to Māui's own experience. See Thrush, 143.

¹⁶ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 79. The emphasis is Woodd's and references Hebrews 11:4 in the Bible.

¹⁷ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72. In Marsden's memoir Māui is said to be about eight: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 70. Woodd's estimate, however, better fits with the overall context of Māui's life. It also matches with John Nicholas's estimate of Māui being eighteen years old in 1814: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:258.

¹⁸ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72.

¹⁹ Te Pahi had left the Bay of Islands the previous August on the *Venus* bound for Norfolk Island to express his thanks to Governor King for his gift of a number of pigs.

²⁰ An account of Te Pahi's visit was preserved in waiata [song] by local Māori, suggesting the continued significance of the trip. John Nicholas heard this waiata being sung on board the *Active* in 1814 by the Māori delegation bringing the CMS missionaries to New Zealand: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:84.

By the character Mowhee gave of him [the sea captain], he appears to have been a man of a very friendly disposition, and of a religious state of mind. He frequently conversed with Mowhee's father, and endeavoured to impress on his conscience the value of his soul, the importance of eternity, and the leading truths of the Christian Religion.²¹

As a result of these conversations, Māui's father asked the sea captain to take Māui with him on his return voyage.²²

The unnamed sea captain may tentatively be identified as Lieutenant James Symons, the commander of the *Lady Nelson*, the ship that had returned Te Pahi to the Bay of Islands.²³ Symons had been entrusted by Governor King with Te Pahi's safe return, and as such would have been aware of King's benevolent policy of building stronger trade links with Māori.²⁴ He also had a sufficient knowledge of Norfolk Island that would facilitate placing Māui with a suitable English family.²⁵ Given the ease of

²¹ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72.

²² Marsden suggests that Māui had a desire to visit New South Wales having heard the reports of Huru and Tuki, who had been taken from the North Cape to Norfolk Island in 1793: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 58–59, 70. This suggestion is followed by Chappell, 113.

²³ The *Lady Nelson* was in the Bay of Islands from 25 April to 7 May, during which time the ship's crew erected a house for Te Pahi on his island residence. The ship also obtained a cargo of spars and samples of New Zealand flax: Ida Lee, *The Logbooks of the 'Lady Nelson' with the Journal of Her First Commander Lieutenant James Grant, R.N.* (London: Grafton & Co., [1916]), 285–294; *Sydney Gazette*, 22 Jun 1806. Although there were a number of ships reported in New Zealand waters during 1806, the *Lady Nelson* was the only vessel known to have visited the Bay of Islands and then to have returned to New South Wales via Norfolk Island, as indicated in the *Memoir*: *Sydney Gazette*, 15 Jun 1806; Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72. The *Memoir* makes mention of two ships entering the bay at this time. If one of them was the *Lady Nelson*, the other ship could have been either the *Richard and Mary* (Captain Lucas) or the *Star* (Captain Bierney), with the former the more likely. It should be noted, however, that the logbooks of the *Lady Nelson*, do not mention the presence of another vessel in the Bay of Islands during their visit: Lee, *The Logbooks of the Lady Nelson*, 285–294.

²⁴ King had first encountered Māori in 1793 when Huru and Tuki were brought from the North Cape to Norfolk Island where he was the Lieutenant-Governor. Then in 1805, as Governor of New South Wales, King recognised that increasing numbers of ships were visiting New Zealand waters and so he gifted a breeding population of pigs to Māori in the Bay of Islands to enable greater trading opportunities: *Sydney Gazette*, 1 Dec 1805. It was the reception of this gift that had inspired Te Pahi to pay Governor King a return visit in order to thank him in person. Unfortunately for Te Pahi, he had been poorly treated during his voyage to Norfolk Island and as a consequence, King was particularly concerned to ensure that Te Pahi was returned home unharmed – not an easy task given the cultural misunderstandings that were bound to occur: Lee, *The Logbooks of the Lady Nelson*, 283.

²⁵ Symons made regular supply trips to Norfolk Island as the commander of the *Lady Nelson*, a government ship. It was during one of these voyages in 1804 that Symons made his first, albeit unintended, visit to New Zealand, having been driven off-course by a severe gale: *Sydney Gazette*, 15 Jul 1804.

Māui's placement, Symons had probably pre-arranged with the Drummond family for that very possibility should a suitable candidate present himself.²⁶

4.2.2 Norfolk and Sydney

The Sea Captain gave Māui the name of Thomas during the voyage to Norfolk Island. Then with his reception into the Drummond household, Māui became known within the colony as Tommy Drummond. Māui's sponsor, John Drummond, had himself arrived in Australia with the first fleet in 1788 as a sailor on HMS *Sirius*, and had taken up the position of beach-master and pilot on Norfolk Island.²⁷ In 1796 Drummond also formed a de facto marriage with Ann Read, a former convict who had arrived with the first fleet on the *Lady Penrhyn*.

The *Memoir* records that "Mr. Drummond received him [Māui] with great kindness; and assured him that, if he was disposed to reside with him, he should be treated like one of his sons."²⁸ He also placed Māui in an English day-school for "near a year" where he learnt to read and write.²⁹ That Māui reported attending for only a short period fits well with the situation on Norfolk Island at the time. When Māui arrived on the Island, the decision had already been taken to close the settlement and to relocate the free settlers to Tasmania.³⁰ The last wave of settlers departed the island

²⁶ The practice of Europeans fostering indigenous children was not uncommon at the time. A number of leading citizens in the colony (including the chaplains, Richard Johnson and Samuel Marsden) had already taken aboriginal children into their households. Samuel Marsden had at least one aboriginal boy, Tristan, living with him – as did John MacArthur, another prominent resident. John F. Cleverley, *The First Generation: School and Society in Early Australia* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1971), 101–105; Meredith Lake, "'Promoting the Welfare of These Poor Heathens': Contextualising Marsden's Attitudes to Indigenous Peoples," in *Launching Marsden's Mission: The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, Viewed from New South Wales*, ed. Peter G. Bolt and David B. Pettett (London: Latimer Trust, 2014), 116–124; Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil*, 140–141.

²⁷ Carol Liston, *Pictorial History: Liverpool & District* (Sydney: Kingsclear Books, 2009), 9. According to Liston, Drummond was the quartermaster on HMS *Sirius*, but see Lea-Scarlett who reports that Robert Watson was the quartermaster: E. J. Lea-Scarlett, "Watson, Robert (1756–1819)," from the Australian Dictionary of Biography, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/watson-robert-2777/text3949>. The dates of Drummond's arrival means that he was likely to have been present when Huru and Toki were brought to Norfolk Island by then Lieutenant-Governor King in 1793.

²⁸ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 73. If Māui was about ten years of age, he would have been a similar age to Drummond's eldest son by Ann Read.

²⁹ A school had been established on Norfolk Island by then Lieutenant-Governor King in 1793: G. Burkhardt, "Convict and Emancipist Teachers," in *Dictionary of Educational History in Australia and New Zealand*. King supplied the school with convicts who had teaching experience, such as Thomas Macqueen and Susanna Hunt. Both Macqueen and Hunt were later supported by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in order to continue teaching once their sentences had finished: Cleverley, *The First Generation: School and Society in Early Australia*, 26–28.

³⁰ Norfolk Island had experienced regular drought conditions, with the 1806/07 season being particularly difficult. The scarcity of food was such that the *Lady Nelson* had to be despatched from Port Jackson with emergency supplies: *Sydney Gazette*, 8 Mar 1807. Settlers began to withdraw from the Island in 1807, with the biggest group departing in May 1808. It was these departures that probably necessitated the schools to close: *Sydney Gazette*, 12 Jun 1808; *Sydney Gazette*, 13 Nov 1808.

in February 1813 and, given his official position, John Drummond is likely to have remained on Norfolk Island until that date. Rather than relocating to Tasmania, however, he moved his family to Sydney where he regularised his marriage to Ann Read in May 1813 and purchased a hundred-acre farm at the satellite town of Liverpool.³¹

As a member of the Drummond household, Māui had regular instruction in the Christian faith through his participation in the family prayers led by Drummond. As Woodd records in the *Memoir*:

Mr. D. had adopted the pious and venerable custom of having all his family and servants, every Sunday Evening, in his parlour. He heard them read portions of the Holy Scriptures and then familiarly explained them, according to their capacities.³²

Then when Māui came to New South Wales with the family, he also received more formal Christian instruction from a certain Rev. Mr. G—:

During this period, it appears that Mr. Drummond, and the Rev. Mr. G— used to explain to Mowhee the general principles of the Christian Religion, the meaning of going to Church, the nature of the worship due to Almighty God, and the redemption of man by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.³³

Woodd then provides a summary of his religious instruction using Māui's own wording:

Here, to use his own words, he frequently was taught that the Son of God came into the world to save sinners, and that whoever believed in Him should inherit everlasting life.³⁴

In Liverpool, Māui was put to work on the Drummond farm as a shepherd, but he soon found the work to be "lonesome" and expressed a desire to see more of the world. It was at this time that Samuel Marsden met Māui for the first time and arranged for him to come and stay at his residence in Parramatta. The move to Parramatta seems to have occurred between March and August 1814, as the *Memoir* mentions that Thomas Kendall was away on his first exploratory visit to New

³¹ Liston, *Pictorial History: Liverpool & District*, 9. The decision to settle at Liverpool may have been influenced by the presence there of Eber Bunker, a sea captain and frequent visitor to Norfolk Island. See also William Freame, *The Early Days of Liverpool* ([Liverpool, NSW]: Liverpool News Print, 1916), 11–12.

³² Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 73.

³³ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 73. The identity of the Rev. Mr. G— is unclear as there were no clergymen with the initial "G" in the colony at the time. Despite the different initial, the most likely candidate for the clergyman is the Rev. William Cowper, who was based at St Philip's, Sydney where John and Ann Drummond were married. There were only three other clergymen in the colony at this time: Marsden (Parramatta and Liverpool), Fulton (Castlereagh), and Cartwright (Windsor): Marcus L. Loane, *Hewn from the Rock: Origins and Traditions of the Church in Sydney* (Sydney: Anglican Information Office, 1976), 22–29; Freame, *The Early Days of Liverpool*, 20–21.

³⁴ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 73. Māui's words reflect the language of the King James Bible, particularly John 3:16 and 1 Timothy 1:15.

Zealand. It was probably also around this time that Māui received Christian baptism, although the precise date of the ceremony is unknown.³⁵

4.2.3 *Return to New Zealand*

Māui, who by this stage was around eighteen years of age, would have met Thomas Kendall for the first time when the latter returned from his exploratory voyage to New Zealand. As much as Woodd might have wished to emphasise the connection between the two – Kendall being a former parishioner – their acquaintance could only have been brief, as plans were already well advanced for the establishment of the CMS mission at Rangihoua. Marsden decided to take Māui with him, even though he was not directly connected with the official Māori delegation. This was perhaps an expression of Marsden's confidence in Māui's maturing Christian faith. As Marsden explained in his own memoir of Māui's life:

He accompanied me when I sailed to New Zealand in the Active and possessed, at that time, as clear a knowledge of civil life and of the Christian religion as human instructions could well communicate to one just emerging from savage life.³⁶

Māui accompanied Marsden on the *Active* as his personal servant, though it seems he did not perform his duties particularly well. Nicholas reported that both he and Marsden were somewhat neglected: "Poor Tommy was so much taken up with the songs and tales of his countrymen, which most probably awakened in his mind some early recollections of a pleasing nature, that, during the whole voyage, he was of no service to us that signified; and we were obliged, in consequence, to wait almost entirely upon ourselves."³⁷ Beyond being his servant, Marsden's intention was that Māui would remain in New Zealand as a language assistant for the missionaries.³⁸

Māui's proficiency in English has led a number of commentators to assume that he also acted as Marsden's personal interpreter while in New Zealand, and that he was the unnamed Māori sailor from the *Active* mentioned several times in Marsden's

³⁵ See further discussion of Māui's baptism below. Ballantyne thinks that Māui was tutored by Thomas Kendall and was baptised in 1813, but as Kendall did not arrive in NSW until October 1813, it is better to follow the chronology that is given in the *Memoir*: Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 223.

³⁶ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 71.

³⁷ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:256.

³⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 71.

journal.³⁹ However, although he was listed as part of the *Active*'s crew, Māui was too well known to both Marsden and Nicholas to go unnamed within their accounts.⁴⁰

Although Marsden's intention was that Māui would assist the missionaries, he did not settle with them at Rangihoua. Instead, he was to reside in the southern part of the Bay at Kororāreka, closer to the timber district of Kawakawa. As Nicholas explained:

From the first moment of his coming on board, he [Māui] appeared determined to settle in his native country, and Mr. Marsden intended him to act as an agent for the missionaries to procure timber from the Cowa-cowa [Kawakawa], and to have it in readiness for the arrival of the vessel.⁴¹

Sourcing timber was part of Marsden's plan to offset the cost of the mission, and so it was advantageous to have Māui placed at Kororāreka – particularly given that he was related to Tara, the senior rangatira of that settlement.⁴² Marsden was aware of the "jealousy" displayed by rival rangatira toward one another with regard to the location of the CMS mission at Rangihoua, and so Māui's placement may have been an attempt on Marsden's part to maintain good relations with Tara:⁴³

This district [Kawakawa] belonged to another chief named Terra (Tara), an old man apparently seventy years of age. Terra is the head chief on the south side and a native of considerable influence, from which I judged it prudent to wait upon him to obtain his permission to cut what timber we wanted in the first instance, in order to prevent any misunderstandings.⁴⁴

³⁹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 80, 87; Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 452, 458–9, 498; Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 223; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 114. Nicholas also made mention of this individual: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:82, 1:142.

⁴⁰ For instance, Nicholas mentioned Māui by name at Matauri Bay (as Tommy Drummond) while also mentioning the presence of "the Māori sailor" who acted as Marsden's interpreter. They are clearly two separate individuals in Nicholas's narrative: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:139, 1:142. From the list of the *Active*'s crew appearing in the *Sydney Gazette*, the unnamed interpreter may have been "Warrakee" [Waraki], whom Kendall rescued from the *Spring* while the *Active* was in Hobart on its first voyage: "Claims and Demands", *Sydney Gazette*, 12 Nov 1814; "Reverend Thomas Kendall 'Journal of My Proceedings During a Voyage from Port Jackson to New Zealand Commencing March the 7th in the Year of Our Lord 1814 [...]" (ML, DLMSQ 300, 4–5). Waraki belonged to the tribal area of Waitangi, led by the chief of the same name: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:235–236. A less likely candidate is Jackey Mytie (Jacky Miti, perhaps also known as Pyhee or Pahi) whom Marsden described as Ruatara's servant: Marsden to Josiah Pratt, 12 Oct 1814 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_061).

⁴¹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:257.

⁴² Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 95. Māui's kinship with Tara aligned him with the southern alliance within Ngāpuhi, based around Kororāreka, Kawakawa and Waikare. Whereas Ruatara and his pā at Rangihoua, along with Hongi Hika, were connected with the northern alliance: Jeffrey Sissons, Wiremu Wi Hongi, and Pat Hohepa, *Ngā Pūriri O Taiamai: A Political History of Ngā Puhi in the Inland Bay of Islands* (Auckland: Reed Books, 2001), 36–52. A third division within the Ngāpuhi confederation was that of Ngāre Raumati, associated with the leadership of Korokoro.

⁴³ Nicholas records several instances of rivalry between rangatira in the Bay: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:208, 1:238, 2:80–81, 2:84–86. Nicholas was also aware of the importance of establishing good relations with Tara: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:207–208.

⁴⁴ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 95.

It was at Kororāreka that Māui was reunited with his relatives. Whether Māui first recognised them or they recognised him is not clear. Marsden recorded their reunion: "When we landed I found the chief [Tara] sitting upon the beach with some of his chiefs and people. He received us very cordially and wept much and particularly at the young man's [Māui's] return, as did many more, and some wept aloud."⁴⁵ Nicholas also recalled the joyful welcome that Māui received: "We now returned to the old chief [Tara], and found him weeping, together with two women, over Tommy Drummond, whom, in our absence, they recognized as a distant relative."⁴⁶

Five days later, Māui was also reunited with his mother after an absence of eight years. Nicholas found the scene deeply moving:

Tommy was deeply affected, and stood weeping over his mother, while she still clung to his feet without uttering a word. The strong claims of nature were never more visible than on this occasion; and the powerful sensations of parental attachment, were met by the reciprocal endearments of filial affection.⁴⁷

It was probably at this stage that Māui learnt of his father's death. Woodd's *Memoir*, based no doubt on Māui's own account, recorded what he had learnt concerning his father:

Some months after [Māui's departure for Norfolk Island], a fatal epidemic sickness was brought from a distant part of the island. Numbers caught the infection and died; and, among them, the affectionate parents of our young friend.⁴⁸

Given the emotional nature of his family reunion, it is somewhat surprising that within one week of Marsden's departure, Māui was seeking the permission of Thomas Kendall and Tara to work his passage to England on the whaler, *Jefferson*.⁴⁹ The *Jefferson* under Captain Thomas Barnes had had a rather turbulent history with

⁴⁵ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 95.

⁴⁶ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:212.

⁴⁷ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:255–258.

⁴⁸ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72. Note that Woodd states that both parents had died while Nicholas described Māui being reunited with his mother. While it is possible that Nicholas misunderstood the familial relationships involved, the discrepancy is best resolved by assuming that Māui's original words, on which Woodd's narrative appears to be based, referred only to his father's death, and that Woodd generalised Māui's reference to include both parents.

⁴⁹ Kendall to Pratt, 5 March 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_085). Māui's motivation for going to England will be addressed in the discussion. In granting permission for Māui to travel, Kendall was exercising his role as a Justice of the Peace appointed by Governor Macquarie and ensuring that the terms of the Governor's proclamation were being implemented. The proclamation, issued 1 December 1813, was Macquarie's attempt to mitigate the abuse and exploitation inflicted on Māori by European shipping. For the wording of the proclamation see McNab, 1:316. Marsden had asked Māui to make copies of the proclamation for distribution in New Zealand, including one copy sent to the CMS in London: "[Notice to] Natives of South Sea Islands" (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_022). For further discussion of Marsden's involvement in the proclamation's formulation see Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil*, 377–379.

Māori in the area, which makes Māui's decision all the more surprising. Both Marsden and Nicholas had been drawn into mediating disputes shortly after the *Jefferson* had come to anchor at Kororāreka. Tara himself at one point vowed never to board the ship again.⁵⁰ Yet not all on board had the same difficulty in establishing friendly relations with Māori. The first mate, James Jones, was described by Nicholas as "a young man of an excellent disposition" and had on a previous visit established a friendship with Ruatara.⁵¹ So Māui's passage on the *Jefferson* was not made without sympathetic friends, and given his knowledge of European customs would have carried the same risk of hardship as that experienced by his fellow crew members.⁵²

4.2.4 England 1816

The date of Māui's departure from New Zealand is uncertain due to the incompatibility of the accounts between Woodd and Marsden. Woodd's *Memoir*, provides the most consistent timeline, with Māui arriving in England in May 1816 after a ten-month voyage.⁵³ That would have entailed the *Jefferson* departing New Zealand waters around July 1815.⁵⁴ Marsden, however, stated that Māui did not depart New Zealand until twelve months after his own departure in February 1815, though this timing would be possible only if the *Memoir* was incorrect with regard to the length of the voyage.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 118–119; Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:154–164. Marsden had also received complaints about the *Jefferson* from North Cape Māori: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 81–82; Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:80–82.

⁵¹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:156. Jones, hearing that Ruatara was currently ill, had visited him accompanied by Nicholas and Kendall: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:154–156. Jones's previous contact with Ruatara was in April/May 1814 when the *Jefferson* delivered a letter to Ruatara from Marsden. Ruatara had also borrowed a pepper mill from the *Jefferson* in an attempt to produce flour: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 67–68; "Ship News" *Sydney Gazette*, 27 Aug 1814.

⁵² Nicholas emphasised the precarious nature of the voyage and the hardships it would involve: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:257.

⁵³ Woodd's date of May 1816 for Māui's arrival is consistent with the CMS having received Kendall's letter of permission at their committee meeting of 13 May 1816: Kendall to Pratt, 5 March 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_085). The reception of Kendall's letter also makes unlikely the suggestion of Jones and Jenkins of an arrival date in June 1816: Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 51.

⁵⁴ The *Jefferson* had left New South Wales with the intention of returning to England once it had completed its cargo of whale oil on the coast of New Zealand: *Sydney Gazette*, 8 Oct 1814. Presumably Māui was employed as a member of the crew from March (when he gained Kendall's and Tara's permission to go on board) while the *Jefferson* continued its whaling operations off the coast of New Zealand. The missionaries remaining in New Zealand made no further mention of Māui after the letter of permission was issued by Kendall, which is consistent with him being away from the Bay of Islands from early March: Kendall to Pratt, 5 March 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_085).

⁵⁵ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 71. Jones and Jenkins hold to both chronologies at this point without appearing to notice their incompatibility: Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 51.

Despite Nicholas's fears of the potential hardships involved, Māui does not appear to have suffered any abuse during the voyage.⁵⁶ On arriving in London, Māui was presented to the CMS committee, who in turn entrusted him to the care of the Rev. Basil Woodd, the minister of the Bentinck Chapel in which Thomas Kendall had formerly been a member.⁵⁷ Woodd, having ensured that he was well housed and clothed, also placed Māui in a day-school run by a Mr. Hazard.

Here Māui was instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as the basics of the Christian religion. Woodd was particularly concerned that Māui be taught those sections of the Church catechism that concerned the "Divine Law" (the Ten Commandments), for, as Woodd made clear in the *Memoir*, he saw an important connection between a knowledge of God's law, knowledge of personal sin, and true Christian conversion.⁵⁸ Woodd also arranged for a friend, Mr. Short, to take Māui to Bentinck Chapel on Sunday mornings and to attend Sunday School classes in the afternoon. Woodd considered it not only a "golden opportunity" but an "imperious duty" to equip Māui with as much knowledge as possible before his return to New Zealand:

Our earnest desire and prayer was, that, when he returned to New Zealand, he might carry back with him a competent acquaintance with the arts of civilisation, the general principles of Christian Morality, and the sublime truths of the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God.⁵⁹

Woodd's intentions for Māui's education were clear and, according to him, Māui willingly embraced every opportunity that was presented:

[Māui] discovered great tenderness and humility of mind, an ardent thirst for all useful knowledge, a perfect readiness of compliance with the advice of his instructors, and a devout ambition to qualify himself to be useful in his native country.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ George Craik's 1830 account of Māui arriving in "almost complete destitution" is overly dramatic and is not supported by Nicholas or Woodd on whom he seems to rely: George Craik, *The New Zealanders* (London, 1830), 316.

⁵⁷ Woodd was a member of the Eclectic Society and, as such, was an associate of John Newton, Charles Simeon, John Venn, Josiah Pratt and William Wilberforce (among others): *Memoirs of the Late Rev. Basil Woodd, M.A.*, 20–21. The members of the Eclectic Society were instrumental in the formation of the Church Missionary Society: Henry Venn, "Origination of the Church Missionary Society," in *Memoir of the Rev. Josiah Pratt, B.D.* (London: 1849), 460–472.

⁵⁸ This was a common view among evangelicals at the time. See, for instance, John Welsey's letter to Ebenezer Blackwell, 20 December, 1751 in John Telford, ed., *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, vol. 3 (London: Epworth Press, 1931), 78–85. The use of the Ten Commandments to teach Christian morality and inculcate a knowledge of sin was also a characteristic of later missionary teaching in New Zealand.

⁵⁹ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75.

⁶⁰ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75.

As it happens, Woodd was away from London for several months during the latter part of 1816 at his annual residency at Drayton Beauchamp, Buckinghamshire.⁶¹ When he returned in November 1816, he was surprised by the progress that Māui had made:

Mr. H. [Hazard] gave me a very satisfactory account of our young friend. I found that he had improved surprisingly; and that, under the kind attention of his instructor, he had gained more information than I had anticipated. He had acquired a knowledge of the first principles of drawing and perspective, had done several of the first problems of Euclid, and had drawn various plans and elevations for building of houses.⁶²

Such was Woodd's astonishment at Māui's progress that he requested Hazard to prepare a written report for the benefit of the CMS committee, which he later used in the writing of the *Memoir*.

It is interesting that Hazard reported that Māui had been learning the basics of technical drawing and geometry, as this was not part of Woodd's original prescription of reading, writing, and arithmetic.⁶³ This suggests that it may have been an area of particular interest for Māui, beyond the curriculum set for him by Woodd. That Māui was studying these subjects in the evenings rather than at the school during the day would support this view.⁶⁴

In the *Memoir*, Woodd also emphasised Māui's Christian faith and his commitment to Christian mission. This assessment was based on Hazard's report that said: "He often declared his astonishment at the goodness of God, in bringing him from a state of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel." Hazard also highlighted Māui's desire to return to New Zealand as a missionary: "He was, while thus engaged, all attention and obedience; frequently expressing his anxiety to improve, that he might be able to instruct his countrymen, and that especially in the knowledge of a Saviour." When asked by Hazard whether he wished to stay in England, Māui had

⁶¹ Woodd spent part of the summer and autumn each year as the parish minister: *Memoirs of the Late Rev. Basil Woodd, M.A.*, 57–58.

⁶² Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75.

⁶³ Woodd's mention of the "first problems of Euclid" was most likely a reference to the first three propositions of Euclid's *Elements*, which involve the drawing of triangles and lines using a compass and straight edge. This fits the context of Māui learning to draw in perspective. Euclid's propositions were commonly divided into 'problems' and 'theorems', so it was unlikely that Māui was learning Pythagoras's theorem (Proposition 47) as Jones and Jenkins suggest: Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 52.

⁶⁴ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75.

replied, "Oh, no! I can do no good here; but I may do some good in my own country."⁶⁵

Along with Hazard's report, Woodd also obtained (presumably after Māui's death) the testimony of Mr. Short and Mr. Coates as to Māui's spiritual progress.⁶⁶ Both Short and Coates had ample opportunity to engage Māui in conversation, and, like Woodd and Hazard, they highlighted the clarity of Māui's faith and the depth of his missionary zeal. Of the eight direct quotations attributed to Māui by these four sources, four of them related to Māui's missionary commitment while three were concerned with his Christian faith.

By the end of the year, Māui was being prepared by the CMS for missionary service back in New Zealand. He was given the opportunity to teach a Sunday School class of young boys – "that he might learn how to teach the Children in New Zealand" – and shown the "practical simplicity of Dr. Bell's System of Education" to the point where "he thought he understood it sufficiently to attempt to instruct upon that plan."⁶⁷ When Woodd returned from Drayton Beauchamp in the November, he also took Māui to the Philological School together with "Sultan Kategerry" to learn the first principles of geography. Sultan Kategerry was a Tartar from Crimea who had been converted by Henry Brunton, one of the Edinburgh Missionary Society missionaries stationed at Karass, Georgia. The Sultan had travelled to England in the company of another missionary from Karass, Alexander Paterson, in order to "qualify himself to become an instrument of good to his own countrymen."⁶⁸ That Māui and Sultan Kategerry were given similar opportunities by Woodd provides further confirmation of Māui's missionary status in the eyes of Woodd and the CMS:

At this period I [Woodd] was indulging the pleasing hope that Mowhee would, in a short time, return to New Zealand, moderately qualified to instruct and assist his countrymen in building their small houses; to improve them in civilisation and the

⁶⁵ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75.

⁶⁶ Mr. Short was possibly William Short who had recently completed his training at Oxford University and who would later go on to be ordained. Mr Coates was almost certainly Dandeson Coates, who would later have a distinguished career as the lay secretary for the CMS, joining the CMS Committee from 1817.

⁶⁷ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75. For the development of monitorial systems of education and their use by British Christian missions, see Helen May, Kaur Baljit, and Larry Prochner, *Empire, Education, and Indigenous Childhoods: Nineteenth-Century Missionary Infant Schools in Three British Colonies* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014), 21–69.

⁶⁸ "The Edinburgh Missionary Society", *Missionary Register* (May 1813). The Sultan addressed the Bible Society meeting of 12 December 1816, a meeting that Māui could well have attended: "British and Foreign School Society", *Missionary Register* (Dec 1816).

duties of justice and mercy, and to assist in teaching the sublime and holy truths of the Gospel of our God and Saviour.⁶⁹

Unfortunately, by the end of the year Māui had also become seriously ill with tuberculosis, or as the condition was called at the time, consumption.⁷⁰ Woodd immediately placed him under the care of a medical relative, Charles Woodd, and, although Woodd was pleased to report that the “alarming symptoms” were completely removed, it was decided that Māui should return to New Zealand as soon as possible for the sake of his health.

4.2.5 Māui’s Death

Māui’s illness in November 1816, however, was more severe than Woodd’s account of recovery might imply, for John Nicholas, who had recently returned from New South Wales, reported on Māui’s parlous state:

He [Māui] had a good figure and pleasing features; but when he dined with me last November, on my return, he was so much altered that I hardly knew him to be the same person. A pallid hue had overspread his countenance, his eyes were hollow and dull; a short cough, with difficulty of breathing, shewed him to be in a rapid consumption; and his emaciated frame was fast approaching to that “bourne from whence no traveller returns.”⁷¹

Even though the acute symptoms of tuberculosis had abated, his weakened condition had left him vulnerable to other infections. On Christmas day 1816 he complained of a “great pain in his head and back”, and by the next morning (Thursday) his face was swollen and he had diarrhoea. By Friday, a severe sepsis had developed causing a general bleeding and a foul-smelling odour. Woodd was shocked by his condition:

I went up stairs, and the scene was the most distressing and dreadful that I have ever witnessed. The floor of the chamber was as it were covered with blood, as appeared also the countenance of my poor young friend. He seemed totally debilitated; and spoke very faintly, and with extreme difficulty. The room also was offensive in the extreme. The disorder appeared to me quite unintelligible. I had never seen, among the many cases which I have visited, anything of the kind before.⁷²

⁶⁹ Woodd, “Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee”, *Missionary Register* (1817): 77. Note that in the abridged version of the *Memoir* that appeared in the *Missionary Papers*, Māui was made the subject of this sentence instead of Woodd; “Memoir of Mowhee,” *Missionary Papers*, no. 10 (1818).

⁷⁰ Until the development of the germ theory of disease in the late 1850s by Louis Pasteur, and the subsequent identification of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* by Robert Koch in 1882, tuberculosis was often thought to be an inherited condition exacerbated by environmental conditions; see for instance Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:212–13; Geri Clark, “The Battle against Tuberculosis: Robert Koch, the Development of TB Sanatoriums, and the Enactment of Public Health Measures,” in *Science and its times: Volume 5, 1800–1899*, ed. Neil Schlager and Josh Lauer (Farmington Hills, MI: The Gale Group, 2000).

⁷¹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:257. Nicholas departed Port Jackson on the *Northhampton*, 8 Nov 1815, and arrived in London (via China) early September 1816: Marsden to Pratt, 6 Nov 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_040); “Ship News”, *Sydney Gazette*, 11 Nov 1815.

⁷² Woodd, “Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee”, *Missionary Register* (1817): 77.

Woodd again sent for Charles Woodd who diagnosed his condition as being "one of the most rapid and most malignant, putrid fevers that I have ever met with."⁷³

Having been told that it was not safe for him to remain in the room, Woodd left Māui briefly only to return, for "it ... struck me," said Woodd, "that it was not right to leave this young stranger to die, solitary and unattended by ministerial consolation. I therefore judged it to be my path of duty to return to him." Then ensued a four-part conversation, directed by Woodd, and concluding in prayer.⁷⁴

Woodd's first question to Māui concerned his spiritual well-being despite his physical illness.

I said, "Mowhee, you seem very ill. Life is always uncertain. If it be the will of God, I pray that you may recover; but if not, I trust you have got good by coming to England."—He lifted up his bleeding eyes and said, "I trust, Sir, I got good to my soul before I came to England, when I was at Norfolk Island, and in New Holland."

After a pause, he added, "Also, since I have attended the School, Mr. Hazard has been very kind, and has taken great pains. He often read the Scriptures with me, and explained them."

Of interest in this exchange was Māui's conviction that his Christian understanding had commenced in Norfolk Island while he was residing with the Drummond family.

With his second question Woodd sought to ascertain Māui's awareness of his need for God's grace:

I said, "I trust, my good friend, you are sensible of your state as a sinner before God."—He shook his head, and replied, in his usual manner of assent, "Oh yes!—oh, yes!—very sensible of that."

In answer to Woodd's third question, Māui demonstrated the close connection between his faith and the words of scripture with which he had been instructed, in this case, a paraphrase of John 3:16.⁷⁵

I then said, "I hope all your dependence for pardon and mercy at the hand of God is wholly and entirely built on the death and merit of your Blessed Saviour." He again shook his head, which was his ordinary custom when any thing interested him, and replied, "Oh, yes!—oh, yes!—on Him alone.—He, that believeth on Him, shall have everlasting salvation."

⁷³ Māui's condition was consistent with having contracted rapidly progressive tuberculosis soon after arriving in England, which, in his weakened state, terminated in his last days with a severe acute gram-negative bacterial infection, such as meningococcal septicaemia: Dr Jim Faed, Senior Lecturer, Department of Pathology, University of Otago. Private correspondence.

⁷⁴ The quotations in each case are taken from Woodd's memoir published in the Missionary Register: Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 77–78.

⁷⁵ Māui had used John 3:16, along with 1 Timothy 1:15, to describe the teaching he had received from John Drummond and the Rev. Mr. G—. Māui had also quoted 1 Timothy 1:15 in answer to a question put to him by Mr. Short.

Woodd's final question was designed to elicit a response concerning his assurance of salvation:

I again observed, "I trust you endeavour to submit to the will of God, your Heavenly Father; and I hope, that, in your present situation, you feel the support and consolation of the Gospel of Christ."—He replied, "Oh, Sir, I cannot express what I feel. I have not words; but it is in my imagination—it is in my thoughts."

At this point Woodd brought the conversation to an end with a prayer:

Perceiving that he was greatly exhausted, and, from the blood which collected in his mouth, spoke with difficulty, I then said, "Mowhee, would you wish me to pray with you?"—He instantly said, "Oh, yes!—I should be very glad."

In his prayer Woodd reaffirmed Māui's Christian faith and looked forward to the prospect of being reunited on some future day. At the end of the prayer Woodd had one last request:

I then said, "Mowhee, when I write to Mr. Marsden, have you any message to send to him?"—He immediately said, "Oh, tell him I am under everlasting obligations to him, for his great kindness to me, and to my poor countrymen." I then added, "Mowhee, what shall I say to Mr. Kendall?"—He instantly replied, "Tell him, that I never forgot his instructions."

Whereupon the conversation ended and Woodd pronounced a blessing before withdrawing for the last time. Māui died early the next morning.

In the concluding paragraphs of the *Memoir*, Woodd reflected on God's mysterious providence: "I had fondly conjectured that it might eventually happen, that ... Mowhee, under the patronage of the Church Missionary Society, might be employed in New Zealand, and direct his Fellow-Natives to Him who is the *propitiation for the sins of the whole world*."⁷⁶ Yet although Māui had died, Woodd was not discouraged, but was eager to reaffirm his own commitment to the missionary enterprise. He also hoped that through the publication of the *Memoir*, Māui would still achieve his missionary ambitions in the manner of the heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11: "Let Mowhee's family be especially considered. Perhaps they may read, or at least hear it, with some interest; and thus we may say of Mowhee, *By it, he, being dead, yet speaketh.*"⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Words italicised by Woodd come from 1 John 2:2.

⁷⁷ Words italicised by Woodd come from Hebrews 11:4.

4.3 Discussion

4.3.1 Why Did Māui Travel to England?

In a footnote to their chapter on Māui, Jones and Jenkins write, “There are conflicting accounts of Maui’s motives in going to England – some report he wanted to ‘improve’ his countrymen; others assert he preferred to live in European society.”⁷⁸ The former of these motives will be discussed further below, but the latter motive – a preference for European culture – was unlikely for two reasons. Firstly, Nicholas was of the view that Māui had every intention of settling in New Zealand upon his return in 1814, and that he still retained that intention when they again met in London in November 1816.⁷⁹ This suggests that throughout his life, Māui never lost the desire eventually to return home to his people in New Zealand.

Secondly, Nicholas noted that in London Māui had reverted to his Māori name of “Mowhee” and no longer used the name Tommy Drummond. That Māui reclaimed his Māori name implies a strengthening of his Māori identity rather than a wish to assimilate to European society. Interestingly, Kendall used “Mowhee” in Māui’s letter of permission sent to the CMS, which shows that Māui had changed his name while still in New Zealand rather than on his arrival in England, as Nicholas thought.⁸⁰ Despite the depth of Māui’s engagement with Western culture, then, the desire for assimilation cannot adequately explain his motives for travelling to England.

Vincent O’Malley makes the suggestion that Māui made the trip due to the effects of “wanderlust”.⁸¹ This conclusion may have been influenced by George Craik’s 1830 retelling of Māui’s story in *The New Zealander*.⁸² In Craik’s narrative, Māui is portrayed as being infatuated by European society:

But his passion for seeing the wonders of civilized life had only been strengthened by the imperfect opportunities he had yet enjoyed of gratifying it. While residing at

⁷⁸ Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 207 n78. Jones and Jenkins do not provide sources for either assertion, though the first might be inferred from Woodd’s *Memoir*.

⁷⁹ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:257.

⁸⁰ Nicholas also use the name “Mowhee” when listing the crew of the *Active*, as did Marsden. Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:371; Marsden to Pratt, 28 November 1814 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0054_077).

⁸¹ O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 75.

⁸² Craik, *The New Zealanders*. O’Malley uses Craik as one of his sources: O’Malley, *Haerenga*, 66, 152. Craik, in turn, sourced his information from Woodd’s *Memoir* and Nicholas’s *Narrative*: Craik, *The New Zealanders*, 317.

Port Jackson, he had of course heard a great deal of England; and the desire of visiting this land of wonders still haunted him incessantly.⁸³

It is true that Māori were often astonished at first encountering European technology, and the *Memoir* itself described Māui's amazement at seeing a brig being constructed on Norfolk Island.⁸⁴ Yet Craik's view of Māui's motivation was more premised on the perceived superiority of European civilisation over that of Māori and the sense of wonder that he thought it must rightly inspire in the "uncivilised".⁸⁵

In addition, although Māui's desire to leave the Drummond farm was described in the *Memoir* as a wish to "gratify his curiosity in seeing more of the world", Māui's actual conduct in London was notable for not conforming to this pattern of behaviour. Instead, Māui rather surprised his hosts by his lack of interest in the sights of London. Woodd, for instance, failed to entice Māui into viewing the Lord Mayor's grand procession, even though he was told it was "such a sight as he might never see but at this time." "But," wrote Woodd, "if invited to go and see a new school – an examination of Children – a meeting of a Society for Christian Benevolence, the distribution of Bibles, or the support of a Mission to the Heathen – he was all life and attention."⁸⁶ Consequently, O'Malley's suggestion that wanderlust formed the substance of Māui's motivation must be regarded as little more than an updated version of Craik's nineteenth-century stereotype.

Nearer the mark, perhaps, were Māui's three contemporary biographers – Woodd, Marsden, and Nicholas – who each attributed Māui's travel to a desire for self-improvement: Woodd spoke of his "unbounded thirst after knowledge"; Marsden thought him "anxious to improve his knowledge"; while Nicholas considered he possessed a "restless spirit of curiosity".⁸⁷ For these biographers, Māui exemplified a model of self-improvement-through-civilisation that they hoped would be followed by other Māori. Yet at the same time, they were also concerned that Māui still retained a somewhat unstable and impulsive nature due to his "native mind." That is to say, although Māui was a model student, he retained an independence of purpose that at times did not conform to the expectations of his European benefactors.

⁸³ Craik, *The New Zealanders*, 316.

⁸⁴ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 73. A similar instance was recorded by John Savage of Moehanga's experience in London; Savage, *Some Account of New Zealand*, 102.

⁸⁵ Craik, *The New Zealanders*, 15.

⁸⁶ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 76.

⁸⁷ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 74; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 71; Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:257.

This can be read as an implicit acknowledgment of Māui's own personal agency. While Marsden brought Māui to Parramatta because it better suited his "turn of mind," he also acknowledged that Māui had expressed a wish to "see and learn more of civil life." Then when Marsden travelled to New Zealand he took Māui as his personal servant, but Nicholas alerted his readers to Māui's determination to remain in New Zealand and to settle with his family. Again, Marsden expressed his intention to make Māui an agent of the CMS for the procurement of timber, but Māui himself felt under no apparent obligation to fulfill Marsden's intentions and relatively quickly made plans to embark for England. Once in England, Woodd had intended for Māui to study the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but Māui seems to have added the study of geometry and drawing as well. In each instance Māui's agency is apparent and the cumulative effect points to a young man working to fulfill his own agenda rather than the expectations of his well-meaning European friends.

Given the level of Māui's independence, the question arises as to whether Māui's desire for self-improvement was for personal advancement alone or whether he harboured wider ambitions. As to the former of the two motivations suggested by Jones and Jenkins – wanting to improve his countrymen – it is possible that Māui had travelled to England with the intention of acquiring the skills he thought necessary to improve the lives of Māori in New Zealand, both materially and spiritually.

That Māui saw himself in a quasi-missionary role is illustrated by two circumstances. The first is contained in the report of Mr. Short, who accompanied Māui to the Bentinck Chapel and recalled Māui saying in response to a sermon on the atonement, "Alas! my poor country knows no better; but, I hope, before long, they will have these glorious truths revealed to them; and how happy shall I be, if I should be able to return and assist in teaching them!"⁸⁸ Although this represents Short's account of Māui's words, there is no reason to suppose that he had fabricated Māui's response.

The second circumstance concerns Māui's desire to draw buildings. This aspect of Māui's study had pleasantly surprised Woodd when he returned from his summer residency, and it is likely that the initiative had come from Māui himself. The building of houses might not seem an obvious missionary vocation, but Woodd was

⁸⁸ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 76. In this regard, Māui differed significantly from Tuai and Titeri, who visited England in 1818 and were keen to introduce the benefits of Western civilisation, but showed little interest in the Christian message itself.

happy to include it as part of Māui's role had he lived. It is this association between the building of houses and the work of a missionary that helps explain Māui's interest in drawing "various plans and elevations for the building of houses."⁸⁹ Tuai, another Māori visitor to England hosted by the CMS, made a similar association. Upon arriving in New South Wales in 1819 after visiting England, Tuai wrote to Josiah Pratt and told him of his intention to "go home and get my countrymen [to] help me to build a Church and houses; Mr Marsden told me I [can] be foreman over the work people."⁹⁰

Māui's and Tuai's interest in Western-styled buildings was also shared by other Māori connected with the CMS. When Te Pahi returned from Sydney in 1806, he had had a house erected for him by the crew of the *Lady Nelson* as a gift from Governor King.⁹¹ Ruatara, who sponsored the CMS mission at Rangihoua, had spoken with Marsden in 1815 about his plans for constructing a Western-styled town complete with a church.⁹² Marsden then reported in 1815 that two of the rangatira he had brought back with him on the *Active*, Tupi and Te Morenga, had been amazed at the sight of the nearly-completed General Hospital in Sydney.⁹³ Indeed, Marsden made the observation that:

They would acquire more knowledge in one month's residence in New South Wales than they could for a long time in their own country though the Europeans were with them. A single view of our houses with their furniture, our public buildings, His Majesty's stores and granaries, together with our arts and cultivation, would so much extend their views that they would never lose the impression.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 75.

⁹⁰ Tuai to Josiah Pratt, 12 July 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_179). The awkward grammar and sentence structure are part of the original. The letter was probably dictated by Tuai to Francis Hall in English, as was the case with his previous letters: Tuai to Josiah Pratt, 17 Sep 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_096); Tuai to Edward Bickersteth, 14 Dec 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_112); Tuai to Edward Bickersteth, 8 Jan 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_127); Tuai to Edward Bickersteth, 8 Jan 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_128).

⁹¹ It was subsequently destroyed by Western shipping in reprisals over the *Boyd* massacre in 1810.

⁹² Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 121.

⁹³ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 128. The two rangatira had accompanied Marsden on his return from New Zealand and stayed five weeks in Sydney before going back in May 1815. It is possible that Māui had contact with Tupi and Te Morenga before his own departure for England.

⁹⁴ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 128.

Māui's interest in Western-style buildings, and its association with missionary work, suggests that Māui had come to see himself as an indigenous missionary preparing himself for service in New Zealand.⁹⁵

4.3.2 *The Origins of Māui's Missionary Vocation*

In the *Memoir*, Māui recognised the beginning of his Christian faith as having taken place on Norfolk Island and while living in New South Wales. Yet his sense of vocation appears to have arisen prior to that when his father first decided to send him to Norfolk Island. According to Woodd, "Mowhee always spoke of his father as a man who had learned of the Captain to worship the True God; and he trusted he should meet him again, *to part no more.*"⁹⁶ Woodd's observation suggests that Māui had a settled conviction that both he and his father shared the same Christian faith. His father's decision to send Māui to Norfolk Island was, according to the *Memoir*, a response to the message brought by the unnamed Māori traveller and his conversations with the sea captain about the Christian religion. For Māui, therefore, being sent to Norfolk Island may have engendered a sense of having been commissioned by his father to learn more of the Christian faith and to bring that knowledge back to New Zealand. This explanation would be consistent with Māui's apparent determination to return and settle in New Zealand.⁹⁷

Nevertheless, within weeks of having been welcomed home, Māui was preparing to board the *Jefferson* to leave for England. This decision probably reflected the influence of Tara, his senior relative at Kororāreka. As discussed earlier, Māui would have needed the permission of Tara in order to officially travel on board the *Jefferson*. But Tara may also have encouraged Māui to make the journey because of his ambition to obtain missionaries of his own to settle at Kororāreka. Tara had expressed this desire to Marsden in the strongest possible terms as the latter was preparing to return to New South Wales.⁹⁸ In the end he had to be content with having his brother, Tupee [Tupi], accompany Marsden back to Parramatta as a guest.⁹⁹ It is possible, therefore,

⁹⁵ Early Māori interest in western architecture was also a feature of other Polynesian travellers, such as Kualelo, a Hawaiian visitor to London in 1789. See Thrush, 139–40, 143.

⁹⁶ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72. Emphasis in original.

⁹⁷ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 1:257.

⁹⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 125.

⁹⁹ Tara's son, Cawetee Teetooa [Kawiti Tītua], had also previously visited New South Wales and was particularly interested in seeing Ruatara's farm at Parramatta: Marsden to Pratt, 20 Nov 1811 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0498_241).

that Tara intended to make use of Māui as his envoy in order to directly appeal to the CMS for more missionaries to be sent out to New Zealand.

While Tara's role in Māui's departure for England must remain somewhat speculative, it is interesting to note that Māui's autobiographical section of the *Memoir* commences by stating his relationship to Tara: "Mowhee was a relation of Terra, a Head Chief, and a man of considerable influence, on the south side of the Bay of Islands."¹⁰⁰ While Māui's mention of Tara may simply be a way of reinforcing his renewed sense of Māori identity and connection with New Zealand, it may also indicate that he was conscious of having been sent to England by Tara and in some sense coming under his authority.

Whatever Māui's intentions in mentioning his connection to Tara, his credentials failed to impress the CMS Committee. Josiah Pratt, the CMS Secretary, writing to Marsden in September 1816, noted that Māui appeared to be a person without rank or influence:

Mowhee, mentioned among the crew of the Active, is come to this country; we have placed him for instruction, under the care of the Rev. Basil Woodd; and, had we known that you had adopted our hint of a New Zealand Seminary in New South Wales in sufficient time, we should have probably have got him a passage by the Sir Wm Bensley. It seems right, however, that a check should be put to this disposition in the New Zealanders, to visit this country unless they are men of character and influence, and whom it may be worth while to bestow Labour and expence [sic]. Mowhee, I believe, behaves well.¹⁰¹

Perhaps Māui's relatively low status was also the reason for his sense of self-doubt as to whether he, as a Māori, would make a suitable missionary to his people:

On one of these occasions when Mr. Coates pointed out the extensive blessings which he might be the means of conveying to New Zealand, by religious instruction, civilisation, and various branches of useful knowledge, for which distant generations might have cause to render thanks to God, his countenance assumed great animation, and he seemed to realize the prospects which had been opened to his view;—but, in a moment, it passed away; and he observed, with a dejected air, "But my countrymen will not attend to what I tell them."¹⁰²

Although the origin of Māui's missionary vocation can be understood as having originated in his father's decision to send him to Norfolk Island and later influenced by Tara, Māui may not have fully anticipated that he himself would be the missionary that the CMS would wish to send back to New Zealand.

¹⁰⁰ Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 72.

¹⁰¹ Pratt to Marsden, 5 Sep 1816 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_010).

¹⁰² Woodd, "Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee", *Missionary Register* (1817): 76.

4.3.3 Was Māui Baptised?

When Woodd's *Memoir* was published in the *Missionary Register* in February 1817 it contained no reference to Māui having been baptised. Yet when the *Memoir* was later published as a separate document in September of that year, the otherwise identical version had one significant addition: "About this period he was admitted to the Christian Church by the Sacrament of Baptism."¹⁰³ Similarly, when extracts from the *Memoir* appeared in the *Missionary Papers* in 1818 they included a similar reference to Māui having been baptised: "and about this period, after due preparation, he was admitted a Member of the Church of Christ, by the Sacrament of Baptism."¹⁰⁴

The inclusion of these references to Māui's baptism are best attributed to Woodd himself, and they probably formed part of his original text. For it is easier to suppose that the sentence had been removed by the editors of the *Missionary Register* when it first appeared than that Woodd made a later insertion of such a significant claim. Furthermore, it may be presumed that Woodd had either seen the reference to his baptism in Māui's autobiographical narrative or that he had been told directly by Māui himself. That Woodd was relying on his general conversations is more likely for two reasons: firstly, the insertion occurs toward the end of the material sourced from Māui's autobiography; and secondly, the use of the phrase, "About this period", indicates that Woodd was not sure of the exact chronology of the baptism in relation to other events.

What is clear though, is that apart from Māui, Woodd was unlikely to have had other sources of information on which to base his claim. Marsden, the clergyman most likely to have performed the baptism, made no mention of the fact in any of his letters to the CMS, nor did he mention it in his later memoir of Māui's life. This might explain why the CMS felt obliged to omit any reference to Māui's baptism when the *Memoir* appeared in the *Missionary Register*. It should be noted, however, that Marsden's silence on the subject may not have been particularly significant, for neither did he mention the baptism of Tristan, an aboriginal boy taken into his household, though he too, according to the *Sydney Gazette*, had been baptised.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Woodd, *Memoir and Obituary of Mowhee*.

¹⁰⁴ Woodd, "Memoir of Mowhee", *Missionary Papers*, no. 10 (1818).

¹⁰⁵ *Sydney Gazette*, 2 December 1804.

Māui was unlikely to have been mistaken about his own baptism, particularly after having witnessed that of the first missionary child in New Zealand on 24 February 1815. Thomas, the son of John and Hannah King, was baptised two days before Marsden and the *Active* returned to New South Wales.¹⁰⁶ The ceremony caused a great sensation among Māori, with Nicholas commenting that Māori “evinced during the ceremony, a kind of fearful apprehension for the safety of the infant, mingled with astonishment at the rites they beheld.” On balance, it is best to accept Woodd’s claim that Māui had been baptised in New South Wales and to attribute Marsden’s silence to his being unaware of the growing emphasis that was being placed upon the sacrament by the CMS.

The ambiguity surrounding Māui’s baptismal status may have prompted Pratt to write to Marsden not long after the publication of Māui’s *Memoir* and inform him of the views of the CMS Committee: “we think it important to mention to you, that it is the decided opinion of the Committee that no Adult should be baptised, but upon an intelligent profession of Christianity.”¹⁰⁷ Although Pratt was primarily referring to the recent arrival of Tuai and Titeri in London, he may also have been implying that the baptism of Māui was a premature act on Marsden’s part.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the CMS’s concern over baptism helps explain why the phrase “after due preparation” was inserted in the abridged version of Māui’s *Memoir* that appeared in the *Missionary Papers* of 1818.

4.3.4 Māori Visitors Hosted by the CMS in England

Māui was just one of a series of Māori who had travelled to England during the early years of the nineteenth century and were in contact with, if not hosted by, the CMS (see Table 1). He was followed by Tuai and Titeri (February 1818–January 1819), Meiri (May 1819–December 1819), Taurua and Towrou (who both died during the outward journey to England) and Hongi Hika and Waikato (August 1820–December

¹⁰⁶ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 123; Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, 2:195.

¹⁰⁷ Pratt to Marsden, 12 March 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_074). Underlining in original.

¹⁰⁸ Marsden to Pratt, 2 March 1817 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_044); Pratt to Marsden, 12 March 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_074). Note, Tuai’s and Titeri’s names were spelt as Tooī and Teeterree by the CMS.

1820).¹⁰⁹ This group had a variety of reasons for travelling to England and while the CMS could see value in their visits, they also saw at least two downsides: the vulnerability of their guests to sickness and the potential for cross-cultural misunderstandings to cause offence on both sides.¹¹⁰

Rather than having Māori visiting England, the CMS were encouraging Marsden to establish a Māori seminary in New South Wales. Had they known that Marsden had already made a start on the seminary, they would probably have returned Māui to Parramatta by the next available vessel.¹¹¹ As it was, they cautioned Marsden to allow only Māori of significant influence to follow in Māui's footsteps. This letter was received in New South Wales just as Tuai and Titeri were themselves about to embark for England, prompting a hastily written note of endorsement from one of Marsden's clerical colleagues.¹¹² Even so, the CMS were greatly concerned for Tuai's and Titeri's health while they were in England, which further reinforced their support for the seminary that Marsden was establishing in Parramatta.¹¹³

Following the lead of the CMS, Marsden had determined that Taurua and Towrou were to be the last pair of Māori to visit England under the auspices of the CMS. Given their subsequent deaths on the outward voyage, the CMS agreed.¹¹⁴ In New Zealand, however, the missionary Thomas Kendall had unilaterally decided to take Hongi Hika and Waikato with him to England – a decision of which the CMS strongly disapproved.¹¹⁵ "You will hence perceive," Pratt wrote to Marsden in

¹⁰⁹ Of these additional travellers, only Meiri was considered by the CMS to be a convert. He was heralded, alongside Māui, as "the first fruits of New Zealand." Meiri (or, as his name was spelt at the time, "Mayree") was returning to New Zealand on the *Saracen* in the company of the missionaries John and Maria Cowell, but died 9 April 1820, two weeks out from Port Jackson: John Cowell to the Secretaries, 31 Aug 1820 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:220–221); "New Zealand", *Missionary Register* (Feb 1821). On the circumstances of Taurua and Towrou's deaths see: Pratt to Marsden, 20 Jul 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_184); Pratt to Marsden, 3 Aug 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_188).

¹¹⁰ For a brief discussion of the motivation of Māori travellers to London, see Thrush, 145.

¹¹¹ Pratt to Marsden, 5 Sep 1816 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_010).

¹¹² John Youl, Robert Cartwright and Marsden to Pratt, 2 Mar 1817 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_047).

¹¹³ Pratt to Marsden, 12 Mar 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_074); Malcolm Prentis, "A Thirst for Useful Knowledge: Samuel Marsden's Māori Seminary at Parramatta, 1815–1827," in *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!': Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, "Tuia", of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014).

¹¹⁴ Marsden to Pratt, 26 Sep 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_098); Pratt to Marsden, 3 Aug 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_188).

¹¹⁵ Pratt to Marsden, 16 Dec 1820 (HL, MS-0175/001, item 23).

response to Kendall's action, "that the Committee decidedly discountenance the visits of New Zealanders to this Country." Marsden's travel ban, however, directly disrupted the plans of four rangatira from the Thames who had arrived at Port Jackson on 14 June 1821 bound for England on the HMS *Coromandel*.¹¹⁶ It would not be until 1851, when Tāmihana Te Rauparaha accompanied William Williams on his trip to England, that the CMS would host another Māori rangatira from New Zealand.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Marsden was accused by Captain Downie of the *Coromandel* of interference with his crew: Marsden to Frederick Goulburn (Colonial Secretary), 24 Jul 1821 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0057_037); Marsden to Pratt, 24 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:527); Capt. Irvine to Assistant Secretary, 24 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:516–517); Capt. Irvine to Assistant Secretary, 25 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:513–516); George Graham, "The Fall of Mokoia and Mauinaina and the Death of Kaea. 1821," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 32, no. 126 (1923). One of the rangatira involved was Te Hinaki who resided at Tāmaki. Expressing a similar desire to that of Tara, Te Hinaki was going to England in an attempt to obtain a missionary for his people. He had previously offered to sell the missionary, John Butler, an island in the Hauraki Gulf on which to live if he would relocate from the Bay of Islands. See "Minutes of the Corresponding Committee", 2 Mar 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:315–317); "Minute of Capt. Irvine on a missionary's possessing real and personal property", 3 Mar 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:318–322).

¹¹⁷ J. W. Stack, *More Maoriland Adventures of J. W. Stack*, ed. A. H. Reed (Dunedin: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1936), 75–76.

Table 10: Māori Visitors to England Known to the CMS, 1805-1821

	Depart NZ	Depart NSW	Arrive England	Depart England	Return NZ	Date of Death
Moehanga	Oct 1805	–	Mar 1806	A few weeks later	Mar 1807	>4 Jul 1827 (last mentioned)
Matara	Aug 1805	10 Feb 1807	Nov 1807	18 May 1808	Feb/Mar 1809	Dec 1809
Ruatara	July 1807	–	July 1809	25 Aug 1809	Nov 1811	3 March 1815
Māui	5 Mar 1815	–	May 1816	–	–	28 Dec 1816
Tuai	11 Jul 1815	9 Apr 1817	Feb 1818	27 Jan 1819	12 Aug 1819	17 Oct 1824
Titeri	11 Jul 1815	9 Apr 1817	Feb 1818	27 Jan 1819	12 Aug 1819	>20 Jan 1828 (last mentioned)
Meiri	23 Dec 1818	–	May 1819	12 Dec 1819		9 Apr 1820
Taurua	11 Jul 1817	18 Aug 1818	–	–	–	Apr 1819
Towrou	11 Jul 1817	18 Aug 1818	–	–	–	May 1819
Hongi Hika	2 Mar 1820	–	4 Aug 1820	22 Dec 1820	11 Jul 1821	5 Mar 1828
Waikato	2 Mar 1820	–	4 Aug 1820	22 Dec 1820	11 Jul 1821	17 Sep 1877

4.3.5 Māui's Legacy

Although Māui died in England, he had a continued influence on the CMS mission in New Zealand. Indeed, his life had spanned the introduction of the gospel into New Zealand through Te Pahi and Ruatara, and went on to influence the second wave of CMS missionaries who arrived in New Zealand in 1819 and established the next mission station at Kerikeri. Josiah Pratt, the CMS Secretary, commented to Marsden in June 1817 that "his history has awakened fresh sympathy & feelings for New Zealand."¹¹⁸ The missionaries John Butler and James Kemp both attributed their decision to serve in New Zealand either to having met Māui or having read his memoir.¹¹⁹

Māui's legacy also continued to influence Māori back in New Zealand. Copies of Woodd's *Memoir* had been sent out to New Zealand and were shared with Europeans and Māori alike, particularly among those living on the mission stations. The fact that John Butler had personally met Māui enabled him to establish stronger

¹¹⁸ Pratt to Marsden, 7 Jun 1817 (HL, MS-0175/001, item 13).

¹¹⁹ Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, 224–225.

links with local Māori, particularly with the surviving members of his family.¹²⁰ Marsden recorded Butler's encounter with them in 1819:

The conversation turned upon Terra and the former time when I was there. ... Mr. Butler inquired if they knew Mowhee (Maui): he did not know at the time he was speaking to Mowhee's relations. The fine youth [Rakau] was Mowhee's first cousin, and his mother Mowhee's mother's sister. When she heard his name she was greatly agitated and wept bitterly, as did also his other relations, and told us that his mother was dead. The account Mr. Butler gave them of Mowhee having been at his house, etc., was very gratifying to them, and they did not know how to express their affection for Mr. Butler.¹²¹

Butler's personal connection with Māui, as well as the written account of his life in Woodd's *Memoir*, would have been particularly significant for Māori who lived with Butler at the Kerikeri mission station, the most prominent of whom was Taiwhanga, the subject of Chapter 6.

4.4 Concluding Comments

How, then, are we to understand Māui's Christian faith and the nature of his conversion? Was it simply an expression of his assimilation to Western colonial culture? It is true that Māui's experience of conversion was a gradual process that largely coincided with his maturing as a young man growing up in New South Wales and England. As far as can be known, Māui had no sudden or dramatic experience of conversion, yet by the age of twenty he had nevertheless profoundly reorientated his life around the central themes of the Christian faith as taught to him by his European hosts.

From what can be discerned from the *Memoir*, Māui's beliefs were formed by a small number of Bible verses such as John 3:16 and 1 Timothy 1:15. The prominence of these verses in the *Memoir* reflects the pattern of religious instruction he had received. His Christian identity was mostly shaped by his European mentors, yet it was not completely assimilated to that of European Christianity. There is also evidence to suggest that his Christian faith – including a sense of missionary vocation – had led to a strengthening of his Māori identity: he had reclaimed his Māori name as a young man; he was eager to re-join his family in New Zealand; and

¹²⁰ Butler was for a time a Superintendent of the Bentinck Chapel Schools, which Māui used to attend: Josiah Pratt and Edward Bickersteth to Samuel Marsden, 14 Dec 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_105).

¹²¹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 159.

when in England his training was focussed on returning to New Zealand to serve his people.

Similarly, although Māui's Christian practice generally aligned to the expectations of his hosts, he did at times surprise them with his diligence in study and his eagerness to attend Church services and other religious gatherings. This suggests that Māui's pattern of life was exemplary even by European Christian standards. Whether Māui's conversion would have been able to produce a stable and viable way of life once he had returned to New Zealand must remain a matter of conjecture.

Presumably he would have needed the support of the local missionaries, if not that of Tara, if he was to sustainably live at Kororāreka rather than residing with the missionaries at Rangihoua.

The difficulties that Māui might have faced could have been similar to those experienced by Tuai after having made professions of faith in England. When he returned to New Zealand, Tuai found himself unable to sustain his Christian profession, particularly once he had taken on the obligations of tribal leadership. This was perhaps one of the main reasons why Tuai became so urgent in his appeal for a missionary to be placed with his people.¹²²

Lastly, although Māui's experience of conversion appears to have created a complete break with his earlier childhood in the Bay of Islands, on closer inspection there were also continuities. Māui seems to have seen his conversion in the light of his father's own nascent Christian faith. So perhaps Māui would not have viewed his conversion as representing a break with his family of origin. Rather, in receiving Christian instruction and baptism, Māui may have viewed himself as simply gaining the skills that his father had sent him away to learn. In this sense, Māui's conversion was just as connected to its New Zealand context as his religious reorientation was shaped by his engagement with European culture and religion.

¹²² For Tuai's professions of Christian faith, see Tuai to Edward Bickersteth, 14 Dec 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_112); Tuai to Edward Bickersteth, 8 Jan 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_127&MS_0056_128). Between returning to New Zealand in August 1819 and his death in October 1824, Tuai made no less than seven appeals for a missionary to be placed with his tribe, including an attempt to forcibly relocate James Shepherd from Whangaroa: James Shepherd, Journal, 16–19 Jul 1823 (ML, A1965, 29–32); James Shepherd to John Butler, 4 Aug 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:146–47).

5 Karaitiana Te Rangi: A Brand Plucked from the Burning

5.1 Introduction

Karaitiana (Christian) Te Rangi was the first Māori to be baptised as a convert in New Zealand.¹ The baptism was conducted by Henry Williams, the leader of the CMS mission in New Zealand, on 14 September 1825 as Te Rangi lay gravely ill with tuberculosis. He died the following day. Far from expressing frustration at the death of his first convert, Williams was exultant: "To us it was a season of joy and gladness ... What shall we say to these things? Is it not a brand plucked from the burning?"²

Yet, despite Williams's elation, Te Rangi's baptism has received little attention from New Zealand historians. If he is mentioned at all, it is usually as an exception that proves the rule that little headway was made in a period of Māori dominance during the first two decades of the mission. Keith Sinclair, for instance, writes, "It was nine years before the first Maori was baptized – a girl about to marry a European; eleven before the next and death-bed conversion. No substantial progress was made until the eighteen-thirties."³ Similarly, Lila Hamilton, while conceding that Te Rangi's baptism was good for missionary morale, considers that it was an "isolated incident" with "no discernible effect on later events."⁴ While it can be agreed that little numerical progress occurred for the CMS mission until the beginning of the 1830s, nevertheless, Te Rangi does appear to have set a pattern of conversion that other

¹ This chapter develops material first published as Malcolm Falloon, "Christian Rangi: 'A Brand Plucked from the Burning'?", in *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!': Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Allan Davidson, et al. (Auckland: General Synod Office, "Tuia", of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014). The name "Te Rangi" will be used throughout this chapter in preference to the post-baptismal missionary practice of naming him "Christian Rangi". The usage follows that of Rev. Matiu Taupaki in "The Native Monument to Archdeacon Williams" *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, Vol 12b, No. 21 March 1876, 65 (The New Zealand Digital Library [NZDL], www.nzdl.org). Te Rangi was not the first Māori to receive Christian baptism – that distinction probably belongs to Māui (1814). Nor was Te Rangi the first Māori to be baptised in New Zealand – Thomas Kendall had previously baptised Maria Ringa in the Bay of Islands, March 1823. This latter baptism, however, was not conducted with the intention of baptising a convert, as was the case with Te Rangi.

² Henry Williams, Letter to the Assist. Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:513–40).

³ Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, 38.

⁴ Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 67–68. For other accounts of Christian Rangi see Williams, "Obituary of Christian Ranghi", *Missionary Register* (1826); Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 60–5; Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 151; Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 105–6; Davidson and Lineham, *Transplanted Christianity: Documents Illustrating aspects of New Zealand Church History*, 41–42; Newman, *Bible & Treaty*, 67–69.

Māori sought to follow. For this reason, it is worth examining more closely what can be known of Te Rangi's beliefs and the nature of his conversion.

Most of the information concerning Te Rangi's conversion is contained within a series of six letters that Henry Williams wrote to the CMS Committee in London during the period November 1823 to December 1825. In each of these letters Williams included at least one transcription of conversations he had held with Māori during his Sunday visits to Waitangi in the Bay of Islands. Of the ten dialogues Williams recorded, five of them were with Te Rangi. These Waitangi Dialogues, as they will be designated in this chapter, were a distinctive feature of Henry Williams's early correspondence with the CMS and form a unique, but largely unrecognised, collection of texts within the missionary archives.⁵

Williams's purpose in recording these verbatim was to give the CMS a sense of the conversations he was having with Māori – "a specimen of our general mode," as Williams termed it at one point.⁶ Although the dialogues were held with individual Māori, they were not private conversations but were witnessed by up to thirty or forty others sitting in a circle in front of the leading chief's whare [dwelling].⁷ Williams gave the conversations a quasi-liturgical structure by either beginning or ending with a hymn and prayer in te reo Māori. Sometimes the conversations took the form of a debate, which Māori at times appeared to find highly entertaining. On other occasions, the dialogues follow a question-and-answer pattern reminiscent of catechetical instruction. With Te Rangi however, Williams adopted the form of a pastoral interview. As a result, there is more archival material available concerning Te Rangi's religious beliefs than for any other Māori during this period of early missionary contact.⁸

5.2 Who was Te Rangi?

Te Rangi first appears in the missionary correspondence as a recently displaced rangatira from Whangārei, having arrived in the Bay of Islands sometime in early

⁵ Transcripts of the ten dialogues have been included in Appendix I for ease of reference.

⁶ Waitangi Dialogue III.

⁷ Waitangi Dialogue VI.

⁸ Henry Williams discontinued the practice of including transcripts in his letters from the end of December 1825: Henry Williams to Mary Williams, 16 Oct 1826, in Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 75; Henry Williams, transcript dated 3 Nov 1826 (AWMML, MS 91/75 A(ii), item 14, page 139).

1824.⁹ He lived, until his death in September 1825, at a kāinga on the banks of the Waitangi River with perhaps up to seventy members of his extended family.¹⁰ This location brought him into close proximity to Henry Williams and the other CMS missionaries based two to three kilometres away at Paihia.¹¹ Just before Te Rangi's death, Henry Williams indicated that he had been visiting him at Waitangi for the last year and a half, which suggests that his first contact with Te Rangi was made sometime around March 1824.¹²

Despite his close proximity to Paihia, there is no record of Te Rangi having ever visited the station. This was due to Te Rangi having a significant degree of paralysis, which may have been the result of tuberculosis affecting his spine, a condition known as Pott's Disease. When Marianne Williams first mentioned Te Rangi in her journal (5 September 1824) she described him as being "the lame chief of Waitangi."¹³ That Christmas, in the course of lamenting the general disinterest of Māori in their celebrations, Marianne Williams again referred to Te Rangi's paralysis and lack of mobility: "The only chief who would perhaps have felt some spiritual interest in the

⁹ Percy Smith identifies him as belonging to Te Para Whau, a hapū [kinship group] of Ngāpuhi, living at the entrance of Whangārei harbour in Bream Bay: S. Percy Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1910), 313. Smith uses William Williams's account as his source: Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 60–1. Like an increasing number of Māori during the 1820s, Te Rangi had probably been forced to relocate to the Bay of Islands due to escalating levels of inter-tribal warfare: Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 311–313; R. D. Crosby, *The Musket Wars: A History of Inter-Iwi Conflict 1806–1845* (Auckland: Libro International, 2012), 150; Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 60.

¹⁰ The missionaries gave a variety of names to Te Rangi's kāinga at Waitangi, including "Wytarra" and "Tiwattiwatti": Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 31 Dec 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:299); Charles Davis, Journal, 23 Jan 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:506). Richard Davis reported visiting three locations: in addition to Te Rangi's kāinga, he reported visiting a settlement headed by "Apatahi" [Hepatahi]: Richard Davis, 10 Jul and 4 Sep 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:524, 529). William Williams noted in August 1826 that there were five "stations" (i.e. preaching places) at Waitangi which he visited on Sundays: William Williams, Journal, 13 Aug 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:196).

¹¹ In September 1825 there were three missionary families and one single missionary living at Paihia. Henry and Marianne Williams had arrived, together with William and Sarah Fairburn, in August 1823. The Fairburns had previously resided at Kerikeri where William Fairburn worked as a carpenter (August 1819 to May 1822). Also at Paihia at this time was William Puckey with his nineteen-year-old son, William Gilbert Puckey. Puckey worked as a carpenter assisting the mission and had come to New Zealand with his wife (Margery) and two children in August 1819. The Puckey family had also been based at Kerikeri, but Puckey and his son had come to Paihia to assist with the construction of the mission ship *Herald*. Richard and Mary Davis, the third missionary couple at Paihia, arrived in the Bay of Islands in August 1824, together with the single missionary, Charles Davis (no relation). Richard and Mary Davis were based at Kerikeri until relocating to Paihia, 17 Mar 1825, with the intention of establishing a farm at Kawakawa. Charles Davis moved to Paihia the week beginning, 17 Jan 1825.

¹² Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:533). Te Rangi's relocation may have been facilitated by the return of Hongi Hika from an expedition to the Kaipara at around that time: James Kemp, Journal, 22 March 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:562).

¹³ Marianne Williams, Journal, 5 Sep 1824 (Alexander Turnbull Library [ATL], Wellington, qMS-2225, vol 1, 82).

day, our interesting friend at Wytanghee [Waitangi], is lame, and never visits the settlement."¹⁴ Consequently, although he lived relatively close to Paihia, his contact with the missionaries was restricted to their visits to his kāinga at Waitangi, usually on a Sunday.

These visits may not have been Te Rangi's first introduction to European culture and religion. Given that Moehanga had lived at Ngunguru just north of Whangārei, Te Rangi was likely to have known of his voyage to England in 1805.¹⁵ Moehanga had been selected by John Savage, the ship's surgeon, to accompany him back to England on the *Ferret*. He returned to the Bay of Islands on the same vessel after a stay of only a few weeks, arriving home in 1806. Samuel Marsden met Moehanga while visiting the Whangārei coastline in February 1815.¹⁶ Marsden visited the area again in August 1820, which suggests that Te Rangi may have at least heard of the Principal Chaplain, if not met him, on those two occasions.¹⁷ Then in May 1823, missionaries from the Bay of Islands spent seven days exploring the Whangārei harbour as a potential mission site for the Methodists under Samuel Leigh and William White.¹⁸ Therefore it can be assumed that Te Rangi had had previous, albeit limited, exposure to the missionaries prior to his arrival in the Bay of Islands.

5.3 What did Te Rangi Believe?

Te Rangi's beliefs can be assessed by evaluating the changes that took place in his religious practice in response to his contact with the missionaries. The three most discernible changes were his Sabbath observance, the setting aside of traditional tapu, and the adoption of Christian prayer.

5.3.1 Sabbath Observance

Te Rangi's attention to the Sabbath marked him out among Waitangi Māori. Marianne Williams noticed this when, together with Sarah Fairburn and the children, they had followed their husbands to Waitangi on a Sabbath visit:

I saw for the first time this interesting chief. He was seated in the midst of a little village on the banks of the Wytanghee, surrounded by a group of natives. A red flag

¹⁴ Marianne Williams, Journal, 25 Dec 1825 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6).

¹⁵ Savage, *Some Account of New Zealand*, 38–39; 94–110.

¹⁶ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 109–10.

¹⁷ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 301–2.

¹⁸ William Hall, Journal, 27 May–4 Jun 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:305–7); George I. Laurenson, *Te Hahi Weteriana: Three Half Centuries of the Methodist Maori Mission, 1822–1972* (Auckland: Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, 1972), 5–6.

waved over them, the sign of the Sabbath. Several pieces of wood were laid for seats; and the man's countenance and sparkling eyes showed the deepest interest in what passed.¹⁹

The hoisting of a red flag to mark the day reflected the practice of the Paihia mission, itself. On the mission station, of course, the Sabbath could be rigorously observed: no work was performed, and any visitor who came to trade was kept waiting until the following day. For Henry Williams, the Sabbath was intended as a defining feature of their family and community life. He also saw it as a first step for Māori to form a settled way of life and to come to a knowledge of the true God. Hence, in his first months there, he was pleased to report the attention given by Māori at Paihia to the Sabbath day: "Their observance of the Sabbath is, for them, very great; they know when it arrives as well as we do, and distinguish the day by wearing their European clothes and abstaining from work; our Settlement on that day is perfectly quiet: The head Chief [Te Koki] with his wife and many others, generally attend our Services, and frequently family prayer."²⁰

It was a different matter for Māori living beyond the bounds of the mission station. At times, Māori living in local kāinga were prepared to acknowledge the day, though it was by no means universal – particularly when missionaries were absent.

Attitudes ranged from simply ceasing to work when the missionaries approached (proffering a variety of excuses) through to a decided embarrassment when they had miscalculated the day.²¹ Māori interest in the Sabbath may have stemmed from being wary of a new and unknown Atua [god, supernatural being] and a desire to incorporate this new tapu into existing patterns of thought. But it could also have been motivated by a desire to extend hospitality towards their strange new neighbours whose presence was considered a valuable asset and resource.

The missionaries, however, recognised that Te Rangi's attitude toward the Sabbath was different.²² His particular attention to the Sabbath had two consequences. Firstly, it allowed a bond of friendship to form between himself and the missionaries. Henry Williams routinely referred to Te Rangi as "our old friend" – a designation that suggests a certain bond had formed between the pair. It was also a friendship that Te

¹⁹ Marianne Williams, Journal, 10 October 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6).

²⁰ Henry Williams to the Secretaries, 10 November 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:479).

²¹ Missionaries, such as Richard Davis, even supplied villages with simple wooden calendars with a peg to mark the day of the week: Richard Davis, 7 Aug 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:526).

²² Something Charles Davis noticed, for instance, when he first started visiting Waitangi: Charles Davis, Journal, 23 Jan & 13 Feb 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:506–7).

Rangi appeared to reciprocate. When Marianne Williams first met Te Rangi, he asked whether he could shake her hand: "His heart was well again," Marianne wrote in her journal, "now we were going to stay. He had been very bad. He feared we should leave him, and he should forget all the white people had told him."²³

Te Rangi's anxiety had been caused by an attack on the Paihia mission the previous week by Waitangi Māori led by Hepatahi and Moka.²⁴ Their intention had been to subject the mission to muru [ritual compensation] for a curse uttered by a European carpenter against Te Koki, the principal chief resident at Paihia.²⁵ At issue was whether the mission station was free to operate under its own tikanga, or whether it must submit to Māori customary law. In the aftermath of the conflict, Williams threatened to withdraw the mission entirely unless restitution was made by Hepatahi and Moka for their attack. Peace was eventually settled at a conference held three days prior to Marianne Williams's meeting with Te Rangi. His warm reception of Marianne Williams and his relief at the outcome was a reflection of Te Rangi's growing friendship with Henry Williams.

Secondly, Sabbath observance allowed Te Rangi to receive regular Christian instruction from the missionaries, particularly Henry Williams. Interestingly, Williams seems to have used the Sabbath as his starting point for introducing Christian ideas to Māori, such as the idea of God as the great Atua. This approach can be seen in the first two Waitangi Dialogues and probably shows the kind of instruction received by Te Rangi. For instance, Waitangi Dialogue I begins with Williams asking two questions of an anonymous Waitangi chief:

This is the Sabbath: did you know it?
No, I knew nothing about it.
Do you know what is the cause of the Sabbath Day among the white people?
No, I do not. I never heard the reason.

From this starting point, Williams introduced the Genesis narratives of creation to speak of the Christian God as "the great Atua," who created all people, including both European and Māori. Williams explained that it was this universal, creator God who had proclaimed a day of sacred rest for all to observe, both Pākehā and Māori. It was a universal claim, however, that was rejected by Williams's interlocutor: "No,

²³ Marianne Williams, Journal, 10 October 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6).

²⁴ Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 46–51; Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:44–49.

²⁵ Marsden had noted the serious consequences of a curse uttered against a chief: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 478.

your Atua is a strange Atua to us, he is not the New Zealand Atua, neither did he make New Zealand, nor the New Zealand men.”

The question as to the number of gods and their respective jurisdictions was a matter of debate between missionary and Māori. In general, Māori were very aware of the differences that existed between Pākehā and Māori in terms of dress, housing and material technology. It therefore made good sense from their perspective to posit a multiplicity of gods, each giving different gifts to the peoples under their jurisdiction. Williams’s response was to highlight their common humanity rather than the external differences:

Friend, you are wrong in your opinion, look for instance at your hands and feet, the same number of fingers and toes, the same marks in the hands, and lines in the face and elsewhere. Look at our eyes, they are the same as your own. Look at your noses, and mouths – the veins in the body. You are made in every respect as we are. We then are all the work of one great Atua, who dwells in Heaven, and who sees into our hearts whether they are good or bad, and if we die with a bad heart, we shall go to a bad spirit below. But if we believe in this one great Atua, and obey him, we shall rest with him in Heaven.²⁶

Williams used the idea of a universal God as the basis for warning Māori of the coming judgment upon all who rejected the claims of the “one great Atua.” In doing so he linked the idea of Sabbath with God’s invitation for all believers to “rest with him in Heaven.” It was an idea that would later feature in Te Rangi’s own conversations with Williams.²⁷

5.3.2 *Setting Aside the Tapu*

Te Rangi not only adopted new religious practices, he also relinquished the old, namely, the customary practices associated with tapu. Two weeks after first mentioning the “lame chief at Waitangi”, Marianne Williams received a report from her husband that Te Rangi was conducting an extraordinary experiment. She wrote in her journal:

I walked to meet the party returning from Waitangi. The interesting chief was beginning to ask how he could love the Saviour. He has planted some kumeras without the tapu. If they grow well, he will believe the white people have the truth.²⁸

²⁶ Waitangi Dialogue I.

²⁷ The Sabbath was also the starting point for the discussion in Waitangi Dialogue II. In this case, Williams used the annual Sabbath of Good Friday to introduce the death of Jesus as an atonement for sin. The dialogue took place on 16 April 1824, and so, depending on the date of Te Rangi’s arrival at Waitangi, it is possible that he was present for this discussion.

²⁸ Marianne Williams, Journal, 19 Sep 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6); also found in Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 89.

The experiment was taking place in September, the season for planting kūmara, the success of which was vital for the well-being of the tribe. It is remarkable that Te Rangi, after being in contact with the Paihia missionaries for less than six months, was prepared to dispense with the karakia associated with this important crop.²⁹

Four weeks later, in October, Te Rangi took the further step of abandoning the tapu altogether. Henry Williams wrote, "This man has stated his intention not to kārākēa over his koomaras (sweet potatoes); and to set aside wholly the taboos, so prevalent amongst these people. We understood he had not been tabooed for several days."³⁰

For a rangatira such as Te Rangi, maintaining the requirements of tapu was an essential discipline in order to protect himself from spiritual attack. This was doubly the case for Te Rangi, who was suffering from the effects of tuberculosis, which many Māori would have inevitably viewed as a consequence of breaching tapu.

Why then did Te Rangi decide to set aside the tapu? Williams was hopeful he had observed a softening of attitudes among Māori – although Te Rangi himself may have partly caused his optimism:

Some of their superstitious notions I hope are giving way, such as their Taboos upon a sick person, as we will not attend them while that is the case; also in two or three instances, defeating their supposed power of witchcraft, which they universally believe some to be possessed with.³¹

If Williams's assessment was accurate, then it suggests two contributing factors behind Te Rangi's decision. Firstly, Williams had the policy of refusing medical treatment to Māori who abided by the traditional practices of tapu. When someone was ill, the rules of tapu required that, among other things, they were to be removed from their whare and abstain from a normal diet.³² Williams's refusal to treat patients under such circumstances may have motivated Te Rangi's decision to "set aside" the tapu.³³

²⁹ Hargreaves, "Changing Māori Agriculture in Pre-Waitangi New Zealand," 102.

³⁰ Waitangi Dialogue III.

³¹ Waitangi Dialogue II

³² Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 210–11.

³³ Note, however, that there is no record of Williams having given any medical treatment to Te Rangi, though that seems likely to have been the case.

Secondly, Williams had successfully withstood a traditional form of spiritual attack made by the noted tohunga, Tohitapu.³⁴ It was during an altercation with Tohitapu in December 1823 that Williams found himself “karakiad”, or cursed, along with the other residents at Paihia. In traditional Māori belief, a powerful tohunga was capable of inflicting physical and psychological harm – even death – through malevolent incantations or mākutu.³⁵ The incident bore the hallmarks of what some mission scholars have termed a “power encounter”, in which a contest between two protagonists becomes a test of strength between their respective spiritual powers.³⁶

A few days after the altercation, a Māori servant girl living with the Williamses named Riu became ill and her condition was generally considered by Māori to have been caused by Tohitapu’s curse.³⁷ Williams, however, proceeded to treat her by bleeding, and despite the grave concerns harboured by her relatives at Waitangi, she recovered and resumed her normal duties. There was also a second case attributed to the same cause that had a similar outcome.³⁸ Williams was fully aware of the implications:

The two cases may appear of little moment at first sight, but remembering under what superstition these people labour, I consider that in this neighbourhood the art of bewitching has received a considerable shock. Many have expressed their astonishment, and have said, that, when they are ill, they will come and be bled also.

³⁴ Tohitapu resided just south of Paihia at Te Haumi, and had a reputation as a powerful tohunga. The incident occurred 12–13 December 1823 and was reported in detail by Henry Williams: Henry Williams to the Secreatry, 21 November 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:81–84). Marianne Williams also gave an account in a letter to her sister-in-law Lydia Marsh: Mrs Henry Williams to Mrs E. G. Marsh, 12 January 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:198–203). An edited version of Marianne Williams’s account was subsequently published in *Missionary Register* (London: 1826), 614–16. Other edited versions were also later published: Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 49–57; Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:39–43; Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 72–80; Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 30–5.

³⁵ Marsden gives a brief description of mākutu in Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 478.

³⁶ Charles H. Kraft, “What Kind of Encounters Do We Need in Our Christian Witness?,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, revised edition, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1992), C-71–78; Tippett, *People Movements in Southern Polynesia*, 160–1; Matt Tomlinson, “Try the Spirits: Power Encounters and Anti-Wonder in Christian Missions,” *Journal of Religious and Political Practice* 3, no. 3 (2017): 168–182. After the altercation was resolved, Tohitapu became a firm supporter of the mission and gave away his practice as a tohunga. Over the following years, Tohitapu adopted a number of missionary practices, though the missionaries did not regard him as a convert. He died 14 July 1833 at Paihia where he had come for treatment during his final illness.

³⁷ Henry Williams to the Secretary, 21 Nov 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:83–84). Marianne Williams spelt the servant girl’s name as Adeu: Mrs Henry Williams to Mrs E. G. Marsh, 12 January 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:203). William Williams adopted the form of Riu: Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 50. Fitzgerald, based on transcripts by Algar Williams, spells the same name as Aden: Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 67.

³⁸ The second case was the wife of a friendly chief. This may have been the person mentioned by Marianne Williams as being hired to work alongside Riu, in which case, both apparent victims were closely connected to the Williamses’ household: Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 67.

These two factors – Williams's policy of treating the sick and his having withstood Tohitapu's attack – may well have contributed to Te Rangi's growing confidence in the ability of the missionaries to counter the spiritual powers he believed were responsible for his illness, and thus emboldened him to lay aside the tapu. The radical step of relinquishing the practice of tapu also seems to have allowed Te Rangi the freedom to explore the radically new ideas brought by the missionaries, as seen in his first recorded dialogue with Williams: the nature and origin of sickness, the nature and location of Heaven and Hell, and the reality of spiritual conflict.³⁹

The Nature and Origin of Sickness

Knowing that Te Rangi had been free from tapu for only a matter of days, Williams began his first recorded dialogue with him by raising the question of his illness. This would have been a topic on the minds of many of those who had gathered to listen to the conversation: "Did you consider it in consequence of violating the taboo?" Te Rangi's answer was understandable: "I was rather inclined to think so." Williams sought to reassure Te Rangi that this was not the case in two ways. Firstly, by pointing out that he had been ill even before his break with tradition:

Were you ever ill in the same way before?

Yes.

Was that in consequence of breaking the taboo?

No.

Then you can have no reason for supposing this illness to have proceeded from breaking the taboo. We must all soon expect to be numbered with the dead.

Yes, yes, I know.

Next, Williams explained the origin of sickness from a Christian perspective. Sickness and death were not to be understood as a violation of the customary codes but were a consequence of an original violation of tapu as recounted in the Genesis narratives of the Bible. Sickness, said Williams, entered the world when our ancestral parents ate the fruit from the tapu tree in the Garden of Eden. In this way, while not dismissing the traditional concept entirely, Williams radically reinterpreted tapu in the light of the Genesis account. It was as a remedy for sickness and death, said Williams, that God had sent the missionaries to New Zealand: "We have come here to tell you of that new country, this is, a Heavenly Country, where there will be neither sickness nor sorrow, but all perfect happiness. For all who will be admitted there will dwell in the presence of the Great Attua [sic] and of his Son Jesus Christ."

³⁹ Waitangi Dialogue III.

This description of Heaven must have been of particular interest to Te Rangi, for it prompted him to pursue the topic further.

The Nature and Location of Heaven and Hell

In hearing of the attractions of a “Heavenly Country”, Te Rangi expressed the wish to visit that place: “I should like my spirit to see that country before I die, so that I may know well before hand.” Williams knew enough of traditional Māori beliefs to anticipate Te Rangi’s reasoning:

Do any of the spirits of the New Zealanders go to the North Cape to see that country before they die?

Yes, they go while the body sleeps, and afterwards come back and can tell who they have seen.

For Māori, the afterlife was a present reality that was able to be accessed through dreams, and so it was not surprising that Te Rangi should seek confirmation of a new heavenly destination in this way.⁴⁰ Williams, however, downplayed the role of dreams in connecting this world with the next, or indeed as a primary source for any spiritual truth. For Williams, dreams were to be supplanted by the Bible as the only reliable source of metaphysical and spiritual knowledge, and so Williams attempted to convince Te Rangi of the unreliable nature of dreams.⁴¹ That Māori dreamt of travelling to Te Rēinga [place of departed spirits], said Williams, did not mean that they did so in reality, any more than having dreamt that one has flown in the air.⁴² Although at this stage Te Rangi was prepared to concede Williams’s point, a little over a year later, his wish to receive a confirming dream was to be fulfilled.⁴³

Two weeks after this visit, Williams was again speaking to Te Rangi of Heaven.

Marianne Williams recorded the exchange:

All walked to Waitangi. A most interesting conversation took place respecting the superstitious notion of the spirits after death, going to the North Cape.

⁴⁰ For Māori perspectives on the connection between the afterlife and dreams see John King to the Secretary, 1 Dec 1820 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:281–84); Henry Williams, Journal, 23 Dec 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:191); Owens, “The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840,” 309.

⁴¹ See Williams’s caution to Māori converts concerning dreams: Henry Williams, Journal, 5 Sep 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:214). Dreams were also used by Māori as a way of countering missionary claims: Owens, “The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840,” 420. The missionaries, however, were not altogether negative in their attitude towards dreams. William Williams told Tohitapu that a dream he had might be a call from God: William Williams, Journal, 14 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:598). Tohitapu had had several dreams that influenced him toward Christian faith before his death in July 1833: William Williams, Journal, 22 Jun 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:319).

⁴² Te Rēinga was also an actual locality at the North Cape known as the departing place of those who had died.

⁴³ Richard Davis, 9 Sep 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:530).

[Williams] "God is inviting all men to come to Heaven. If they will not come, while they are living, after they are dead, it will be too late."

[Te Rangi] "New Zealanders think of none of these things," replied the chief. "They only think, I will eat; and bye and bye I will go and do some work; and bye and bye I will go and fight, and distress some poor people, and take their children, to make them slaves."

[Williams] "All we tell you is written in the great book; and that book was written by men, who were taught by God."

[Te Rangi] "You are like gods to us. We cannot read these things."

[Williams] "My heart would be very sad to think that after having been so long telling you these things, I should not see one New Zealander in Heaven."

[Te Rangi] "You must not think so. Though only one man believes what you say now, bye and bye many will."⁴⁴

Interestingly, Te Rangi responded to Williams's invitation to Heaven by expressing dissatisfaction with the current modes of Māori living. The attraction of Heaven for Te Rangi was not just in providing a solution to the problem of sickness, but also the possibility that it offered Māori a different way of life – one based on peace rather than war.

Te Rangi's peaceful vision found further expression when Williams was conversing with visitors from Tauranga.⁴⁵ Williams was speaking of the way the people of Tahiti had embraced Christianity when Te Rangi interrupted him with a plea for Māori to give up war: "Here our friend the old chief remarked with considerable energy, that if Shunghee and some other head chiefs were to believe, they would have plenty of followers to listen to them as they have now to go to the fights." It is clear from his interjection that Te Rangi, following the example of Tahiti, associated the acceptance of Christianity with the embracing of peace and the abandonment of traditional patterns of warfare.⁴⁶

Not all Waitangi Māori were as open to these ideas as Te Rangi. On 7 November 1824 (three weeks after the first dialogue recorded with Te Rangi) Marianne Williams reported that her husband had gone to the "usual place at Wytanghee" (i.e. Te

⁴⁴ Marianne Williams, Journal, 31 Oct 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6). Marianne Williams does not explicitly identify the chief, but it was most likely to have been Te Rangi.

⁴⁵ Waitangi Dialogue VI.

⁴⁶ Pomare II, the king of Tahiti, publicly embraced Christianity 18 July 1812 and was baptised by the LMS, 16 May 1819: Graeme Kent, *Company of Heaven: Early Missionaries in the South Seas* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1972), 41–55. Local Māori in the Bay of Islands were aware of events taking place in the Society Islands as ships regularly called in on their way between Tahiti and Port Jackson. Many of these ships had Tahitian Christians as part of their crews, particularly those vessels owned by Pomare III (*Governor Macquarie*, *Queen Charlotte*, and *Hawea*) or the Leeward Island Chiefs (*Endeavour*). In particular, the *Hawea*s had arrived the month previous to Williams's conversation with the Tauranga visitors. Around this time, James Kemp also used the example of Tahiti when talking with Hongi Hika in an attempt to dissuade him from pursuing his wars: James Kemp, 17 Aug 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:21–22). An example of the contact that Māori had with Tahitian Christians was recorded by Thomas Kendall in 1819: Thomas Kendall to Josiah Pratt, 20 May 1819 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_162).

Rangi's kāinga) and had "a long argument with several about the north cape."⁴⁷ The reference to the "north cape" indicates that the argument concerned Te Rēinga, the place of the departed spirits. Williams later explained the general attitude of Māori:

When we speak to the aged that death will soon seize them, they reply, yes, they know that. When we ask them where their souls will go afterwards, they tell us to the Reinga, a place of darkness into which they descend from the North Cape. We tell them that is Hell, the place of the Evil Spirit, who keeps them from hearing of the good place of which we are come to tell them.⁴⁸

Williams's identification of Te Rēinga with the Christian doctrine of hell was the most controversial of the missionary doctrines and the one most likely to have caused offense to Māori. To speak of Te Rēinga as a place of burning and enslavement for the wicked was considered by Māori to be a form of curse for which *utu* was required – particularly by those of great mana.⁴⁹ At Waitangi, however, the response was more good-natured: "sometimes [they] listen, at other times they laugh and say they do not wish to go to our place, but to be with their friends and relations who have gone before them." Yet their responses also highlighted Te Rangi's predicament: to accept this new teaching would mean surrendering his inherited beliefs concerning the afterlife. He had initially conceived that the difficulty could be resolved by means of a dream. In Williams's view, Te Rangi's uncertainty was not caused by a lack of evidence, but was the result of spiritual conflict.

The Reality of Spiritual Conflict

The reality of spiritual conflict was the third topic addressed in Williams's first dialogue with Te Rangi.⁵⁰ Williams said to him, "These thoughts which you have respecting the North Cape, are given to you by the Evil Spirit, which is desirous of keeping you for himself, and giving you these ideas that you may not attend to the message of the Great Attua." Williams's view was that Māori were not so much wrong in their beliefs as they were deceived. For him, the Māori *atua* who deceived them was identified with the devil of Christian belief: "Your Attua is the Devil, the evil spirit, who leads you to all kinds of evil, of whom you speak no good." The

⁴⁷ Marianne Williams, Journal, 7 Nov 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6).

⁴⁸ Waitangi Dialogue IV.

⁴⁹ As Williams noted in Waitangi Dialogue X: "It is considered by these people as a curse to threaten them with suffering by fire." This was exemplified by Williams's clash with Te Kohikohi, who sought *utu* for being told about the doctrine. Williams deliberately raised the subject with Te Kohikohi, however, as many thought he would be too afraid to address the topic with such a great chief. When Te Kohikohi arrived at Paihia with two hundred men to claim *utu*, his plans were thwarted by Waitangi Māori who had arrived during the night to protect the mission: Henry Williams, Journal, 16 Sep 1827 and 30 Oct 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:355–56, 528–29).

⁵⁰ Waitangi Dialogue III.

Great Atua, on the other hand, the “God of the White people”, was “a Good God, the Author of all good...who has commanded us to come and tell you about him, and how you may be able to get to Heaven.”

Williams was aided in making this identification with the devil by a general acceptance among Māori as to the malevolent nature of their atua, particularly Whiro, the atua associated with evil, darkness and death.⁵¹ A year earlier (November 1823), in the first Waitangi Dialogue, Williams had pointed out to his listeners the largely negative terms with which they spoke of their atua.⁵² In contrast, Williams had commended to them the positive benefits, both material and spiritual, that were supplied by the Pākehā God. His interlocutor at the time was willing to concede the point: “Your Atua is very good to you, but he is strange to us, and we know nothing about him.”⁵³ In this way, Williams used the material and spiritual advantages of Western civilization to bolster his contrast between the European God and the Māori atua as traditionally conceived.

Williams also utilised the image of a Māori kāinga to explain the nature of the devil. In Waitangi Dialogue II (April 1824), Williams identified the devil as being the “chief” of the place called hell, who, following the familiar pattern of traditional chiefs, sought to capture people in this life and take them to hell as his slaves. At the time, Ngāpuhi under Hongi Hika’s leadership were engaged in a series of inter-tribal conflicts in which many were being killed or taken captive. Williams, however, was warning Māori of a darker, more powerful, spiritual enemy that was seeking to destroy and enslave them. In this way, Williams urged Māori to relinquish one form of conflict in exchange for another: a false conflict involving muskets was to give way to the true spiritual struggle against the devil. In fact, Williams considered the very desire for war to be a strategy of the devil to enslave Māori in death. Thus, the missionary endeavours to deter Māori from war and promote peace were grounded in an understanding of the present age as an arena of spiritual conflict.

In his first dialogue with Te Rangi, Williams reinforced the reality of this conflict with three brief arguments.⁵⁴ Firstly, Williams pointed to the general indifference

⁵¹ Henry Williams, Journal, 23 Jun 1833 and 10 Sep 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:232, 270); William Williams, Journal, 14 Sep 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:239); Te Rangi Hiroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 460; Elsdon Best, *The Maori As He Was: A Brief Account of Maori Life as it Was in Pre-European Days* (Wellington: R. E Owen. Government Printer, 1924), 73.

⁵² Waitangi Dialogue I.

⁵³ Waitangi Dialogue I.

⁵⁴ Waitangi Dialogue III.

displayed by Māori (apart from Te Rangi) to the missionary message. With regard to their reluctance to listen, Williams said, “It is the wicked Spirit [who] tells them not to come.” Secondly, he pointed to the inner voice of conscience. Why was it that Māori were prepared to kill, steal, and traffic their women to the shipping? “Do not they feel within them that they are doing wrong?” Williams asked. Interestingly, Te Rangi agreed that Māori knew it was wrong and against the voice of conscience. It was the “wicked spirit” that made Māori disregard that voice, explained Williams. Thirdly, only two weeks prior, Waitangi Māori had attacked the Paihia station in retribution for the insult to Te Koki.⁵⁵ For Williams, this was further evidence that the evil spirit was at work, driving the missionaries away to prevent Māori from hearing the Gospel message.

The three topics contained within Williams’s first recorded dialogue with Te Rangi all flowed from Te Rangi’s decision to set aside the tapu: that sickness and death were the result of human sin; that the ultimate answer to both lay in God’s invitation to rest in Heaven; and that unbelief and conflict were the weapons of the devil, who sought to enslave the human soul in death. Although the ideas were new to Māori, the manner in which they were conveyed made them readily understandable: the origin of sin was explained as a breach of tapu by ancestral parents; the dwelling place of the great Atua in Heaven was understood as the realm of light; and the evil spirit, Whiro, was identified as the devil and portrayed as a spiritual rangatira who sought to destroy and enslave.⁵⁶

5.3.3 *Practice of Christian Prayer*

The third religious practice that shaped Te Rangi’s belief was that of Christian prayer. A week after Williams’s visit, Te Rangi complained to William Fairburn and William Puckey that his heart was “dark” about two things: that he had prayers only once a week instead of every day, and that he did not know how to say grace before and after meals.⁵⁷ In the same way that he had sought to imitate the missionaries with regard to the Sabbath, Te Rangi was now seeking to follow their pattern of karakia as well.

⁵⁵ Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 46–51; Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:44–49.

⁵⁶ Note, however, that in their translation of the Scriptures, the missionaries used the transliteration, Te Rēwera, for the English word, devil, rather than using the name of any particular atua; see, for example, Matiu [Matthew] 4:1, Church Missionary Society, *Kenehi* (Sydney, 1830), 12.

⁵⁷ Marianne Williams, Journal, 24 Oct 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6).

In the months that followed, Te Rangi continued to become more confident in his Christian faith. When Richard Davis met him in July 1825 he was pleasantly surprised to discover how much Te Rangi had been “growing in knowledge and grace.”⁵⁸ Henry Williams, likewise, reported that Te Rangi had “frequently given strong evidence of more than natural feelings, with regard to spiritual things.”⁵⁹ By this stage, however, Te Rangi’s health was also deteriorating. Charles Davis had reported a bout of illness in February 1825 from which he had recovered, but when Henry Williams recorded his second dialogue with Te Rangi on 17 July 1825 his symptoms had returned.⁶⁰

Given Te Rangi’s poor state of health, it was natural for Williams to begin the dialogue with an enquiry as to his health.⁶¹ Te Rangi responded, “I have been poorly with a cough and sore throat.” Williams then asked his view as to the cause of his illness: “Do you not remember the cause of pain and sickness?” asked Williams. Te Rangi’s reply was more confident than previously: “Yes,” said Te Rangi, “it was owing to our first parents breaking the command of God.” Williams then asked, perhaps sensing that his condition might be terminal, “What are your thoughts of death?” “My thoughts,” said Te Rangi, “are continually in Heaven, in the morning, in the daytime, and at night, they are continually there. I have no fear of death, my belief is in the Great God and Jesus Christ.” It was a reply that suggested that Te Rangi had already made a significant commitment to Christian faith at this point. Williams’s final question, however, was more probing: “Do you not at times think that our God is not your God, and that you will not go to Heaven?”

The question cut to the heart of Te Rangi’s dilemma: was the God of the White man also the God of the New Zealander? In his first conversation with Williams, Te Rangi had expressed a desire to settle the question through receiving a dream – a desire discountenanced by Williams.⁶² Yet Te Rangi was still uncertain, caught between the traditions of his birth and the new faith of which the missionaries spoke. Te Rangi candidly replied:

⁵⁸ Richard Davis, 15 Jun 1825 [15 Jul 1825], in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:524).

⁵⁹ Henry Williams to William Williams, 3 Oct 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:93–94).

⁶⁰ Charles Davis, Journal, 13 Feb 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:507).

⁶¹ Waitangi Dialogue V.

⁶² Waitangi Dialogue III.

This is the way my heart sometimes thinks when sitting alone. I think perhaps I shall go to Heaven, and I think perhaps I shall not go to Heaven; and perhaps this God of the White people is not my God and perhaps He is. And then after I have been thinking in this way and my heart has been dark for some time, then it becomes lighter and the thoughts of my going to heaven remain last.

For Williams, Te Rangi's lack of certainty was evidence of spiritual attack from the devil: "These are the temptations of the Devil to drive you from the thoughts of Heaven." What was required, said Williams, was a spiritual solution: prayer.

You must ask God to give you His good Spirit to enlighten your heart that you may discover this to be the device of Satan. Do not let your heart be jealous or doubtful that God will not give it you, for he gives His spirit to all who ask Him.

It was only through receiving God's Holy Spirit to bring about a new heart within that Te Rangi's faith could rest secure. Te Rangi responded by assuring Williams that that was indeed his prayer: "I pray several times in the day," said Te Rangi. "I ask God to give me his Spirit in my heart to sit or dwell there." It would be Te Rangi's prayer for a new heart within and his experience of answered prayer that led to a public profession of his Christian faith on 7 August 1825.

Praying for a New Heart

The call for Māori to pray for a new heart was increasingly emphasised by the missionaries over the course of the 1820s. This may have been in response to their lack of success in using a simple catechetical method – even with Māori who had lived with the missionaries for a number of years. For instance, in April 1825 the missionaries at Kerikeri, George Clarke and James Kemp, held a long conversation with Māori who were living with them.⁶³ How was it, the missionaries asked, that they remained largely ignorant of the Christian faith, even after having been exposed to its message for so long? Among the replies, one responded, "How can it be otherwise, when our Fathers, Grandfathers, and their Grandfathers were the same?" "They had heard," George Clarke concluded, "much about Jesus Christ, but they could not tell how it was, for as soon as they left the Chapel door they forgot all that had been said about Him, and their minds were as dark as ever"⁶⁴ Yet, as Marianne Williams reported on her arrival in 1823, Kerikeri Māori were well versed in the prayers and dialogues of the New Zealand Grammar.⁶⁵

⁶³ George Clarke, Journal, 19 Apr 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:542).

⁶⁴ George Clarke, Journal, 19 Apr 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:542).

⁶⁵ Marianne Williams, Journal, 10 Aug 1823 (AWMML, MS 91/75 A(ii)).

It became increasingly apparent to the missionaries that an educative strategy on its own would not be sufficient to address the spiritual realities needed for conversion to take place. This seems to have been Williams's conclusion, too, when he urged Te Rangi to pray. The missionary emphasis on prayer came with two corollaries: firstly, Te Rangi's conversion needed to depend on whether he believed that God had answered his prayer, and not on whether he had sufficiently learnt a catechism or kept the Sabbath.⁶⁶ Secondly, because conversion was conceived of as being the unmediated answer to prayer for a new heart within, it was not possible (as far as the missionaries were concerned) for Te Rangi to convert himself, let alone be coerced by the missionaries, apart from receiving just such an answer as the basis for his faith. The missionaries believed that conversion was, in the end, the work of God alone.

5.4 Christian Profession

Two weeks later, it was clear that Te Rangi had responded to Williams's call to prayer. In their third recorded dialogue (7 August 1825), Williams asked Te Rangi whether he was still of two opinions with regard to his final destination.⁶⁷ Te Rangi still admitted to some wavering thoughts, but that in the end his confidence in the Christian God remained: "Sometimes, when sitting alone, I feel my heart gloomy or dark, and think the God of the white people is not our God, and that the Rainga [Rēinga] is the only place we have to go to. Then my heart feels enlightened and again becomes gladdened with the thought of going to Heaven." When Williams asked concerning the love of Christ, Te Rangi responded, "I think of the love of Christ and ask him to wash this bad heart, and take away this native heart and give me a new heart."

5.4.1 *Scrutinising Te Rangi's Faith*

At this point in the dialogue, Williams began a more thorough examination of Te Rangi's faith. As he told his brother William, his intention was "to scrutinize the real sentiments of his mind" in an attempt to uncover Te Rangi's true spiritual condition.⁶⁸ Williams was looking for outward signs that would indicate a genuine

⁶⁶ Some Māori had mistakenly concluded that keeping the Sabbath was itself the defining mark of being a Christian: James Shepherd, Journal, 7 May 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:435); William Williams, Journal, 7 Oct 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:534); William Williams, Journal, 20 Feb 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:120).

⁶⁷ Waitangi Dialogue VII.

⁶⁸ Henry Williams to William Williams, 3 Oct 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:93).

inner work of the Holy Spirit. He explored three such signs. The first was whether Te Rangi spoke about his faith to others. Public testimony was seen by the missionaries as important evidence of a firm faith, particularly when it was given in the face of opposition and ridicule. Williams asked him about his wife: "What does your wife think of Heaven?" Te Rangi's wife, answering for herself, denied any knowledge of the subject. Undeterred, Williams asked Te Rangi whether he taught his own children and others living in the same settlement. He answered positively on both counts, though he frankly admitted that "they will not listen to what I have to say." Williams sought to encourage him with the example of Jesus Christ who was also "laughed at and mocked and called a liar" – the implication being that Te Rangi (and Williams, for that matter) had endured just such responses from Waitangi Māori.⁶⁹

The second sign that Williams explored was Te Rangi's spiritual experience. "Have you never any rejoicing of Heart?" Williams asked. He was seeking some indication that Te Rangi was experiencing the joy that Williams expected would accompany true conversion – especially as the prospect of death approached. "Yes, indeed," said Te Rangi, "when I think of Heaven and Jesus Christ, I am glad, because when I die I shall leave this flesh and bones here and my soul will go to Heaven." Evidence of spiritual joy at the time of death was particularly valued within the evangelical tradition of which Williams was a part.⁷⁰ It was considered the consummate sign of a believer's triumph, by God's grace, over the terrors and uncertainty of death. Consequently, it was a question that Williams would repeatedly put to Te Rangi in the weeks leading up to his baptism and death.

The third sign concerned the changes in Te Rangi's conduct. Williams was particularly interested in Te Rangi's ability to resist the temptation of stealing. It was a question he had put to him the previous week as well, thus indicating the

⁶⁹ Henry Williams's brother, William, reported the following year that though some Māori at Waitangi were prepared to listen, the majority turned "a deaf ear, and are ready to ridicule or to cavil at what is said." William Williams gave as an example the man who declared he would not believe unless the missionaries could command the tide not to flow on the Sabbath. They also admitted, however, that Te Rangi had preached to them "as we did" before his death, and Te Rangi's widow said that her husband had spoken with her frequently concerning prayer: William Williams, Journal, 21 May 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:191–92).

⁷⁰ Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England*, 256–59.

importance that Williams attached to the question.⁷¹ Te Rangi replied that although he himself would not steal, he was unable to prevent his wife and children from doing so, nor could he force them to return stolen property – something that Williams conceded was not a realistic expectation.

Williams understood theft in straightforward moral terms as a breach of the eighth commandment. But Māori had a different understanding based more on the laws of tapu. Chiefs did not accumulate large amounts of property, but what they did retain for personal use was kept safe by the power of their mana to render objects tapu, or restricted.⁷² For Māori to take a tapu object was to invite retribution either from the rangatira concerned or from other unseen spiritual forces. According to the missionaries, Māori distinguished two kinds of theft: common and sacred. The latter was often punished by death (especially if the perpetrator was a slave) while the punishment for the former could vary according to circumstances.⁷³

The missionaries often complained of the Māori propensity to steal from the mission.⁷⁴ Sometimes these thefts occurred for cultural reasons such as utu for offences committed wittingly, or unwittingly, by the missionaries or their associates. At other times, property was simply desired for its own sake. Samuel Marsden put these thefts into perspective: with a total value of no more than £40 over a nine-year period, he considered the material cost to be insignificant compared to the overall hospitality and respect shown by Māori to the missionaries and their property.⁷⁵ But for Henry Williams these thefts were more than a threat to mission security, they also created an economic disincentive for individual Māori to reap the rewards of their labour. By stealing from one another, Māori were frustrating a missionary agenda that sought to transform the Māori economy from one based on conflict to one that promoted peace.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Charles Davis, Journal, 31 July 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:517). Charles Davis did not mention that Williams was present on this previous occasion (31 July), nor, for that matter, did he mention that Williams was present on 7 August when this dialogue was recorded. It can therefore be assumed that Williams visited Te Rangi more frequently than was recorded in the missionary journals. In all likelihood, Williams's visited Te Rangi weekly from at least 17 July up until the time of his death.

⁷² At times, a chief could also extend their mana to other property, as for example when a chief made a hut tapu for the use of the missionaries when the Paihia mision was being established: Henry Williams to the Secretary, 10 November 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:474).

⁷³ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 409.

⁷⁴ Marsden, for instance, remonstrated with leading chiefs about thieving from the mission in Sepember 1819: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 162–64.

⁷⁵ Samuel Marsden to the Missionaries, 11 Nov 1823, in Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 421–22.

⁷⁶ Henry Williams, Journal, 14 Jan 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:238); Dandeson Coates to the Missionaries and Settlers in New Zealand, 30 Sep 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N L1:229).

5.4.2 An Open Confession

Williams finished this third recorded dialogue with Te Rangi by broaching the subject of baptism for the first time.⁷⁷ In doing so, Te Rangi responded by making a public declaration of his faith in Christ and expressing his desire to receive baptism. Williams explained the ceremony in terms of taking a new name:

Attend now to what I am going to say to you. The people who believe in Jesus Christ are all called by one name after him, which is Christian. We who are here now are called so, that is the Europeans. But those who do not believe are called Heathens. The New Zealanders are Heathens. Those who believe in him take his name as a sign that their hearts are washed in his blood.⁷⁸

The taking of a new name was to emphasise the new Christian identity that believers received through baptism. Believers, Williams told Te Rangi, are called by “one name after Him”, that is “Christian”, as a sign of a new heart within. With this emphasis, it was hardly surprising that Te Rangi chose to take the name Karaitiana [Christian], when he was baptised the following month.⁷⁹

Te Rangi responded positively to Williams’s invitation: “The old man appeared much pleased with this and expressed his wish to be called after Jesus Christ.” Williams’s description was typically understated. For Charles Davis, who accompanied Williams, Te Rangi “spoke very boldly before his Countrymen, who were then present, and said that it was very good, and that he should like to be as they [the missionaries] were, and at his death to be buried after the manner of the white people.”⁸⁰ It is clear from both Williams’s and Davis’s descriptions that they understood Te Rangi’s response to have been a public profession of faith in Christ. Certainly, that was the report they gave to the other missionaries at Paihia upon their return. Richard Davis, for instance, wrote in his journal that evening: “I was happy to

⁷⁷ Williams did not use the word “baptism” but that was the intent of the conversation as understood by Charles Davis who was present: Charles Davis, Journal, 7 Aug 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:517).

⁷⁸ Waitangi Dialogue VII.

⁷⁹ Changing names due to significant events in a person’s life was not unknown within traditional Māori society: Best, *The Maori as He Was*, 114. John Nicholas reported that Korokoro, having met the Governor of New South Wales in 1814, wished to be known from then onwards as Governor Macquarie: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, I:49–50. Nicholas also noted that the prominent Bay of Islands’ chief, Whetoi (also known as Whiria), had changed his name to Pomare in 1815, after hearing of the exploits of the King of Tahiti of the same name: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, I:241; “Shipping News”, *Sydney Gazette*, 19 Aug 1815.

⁸⁰ Charles Davis, Journal, 7 Aug 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:517).

hear that C. [Chief] Ranghi of Waitanghi had made an open confession of his faith in Christ in the presence of many of his Countrymen.”⁸¹

Te Rangi confirmed the report himself the next day when he requested Richard Davis to visit. Davis was sorry to see Te Rangi so unwell, “but exceedingly glad to find him, as I hope he is, ripening for glory.”⁸² Te Rangi again declared his faith in Christ: “He told me,” said Davis, “his heart was very full of love to Jesus Christ, that he was very ill in his body but that he hoped to be soon in the good place.”

5.4.3 *A Dream*

Two weeks after his public profession, however, Te Rangi’s faith was wavering. A crisis of faith had been brought on by a deterioration in his health due to the final stages of tuberculosis, commonly called consumption. His relatives, realising that he was now gravely ill, had gathered around and had taken him in hand. When Henry Williams visited, he was concerned to find Te Rangi not only in a poor state of health, but at a spiritually low ebb. Williams described the situation to the CMS:

This poor man appeared very much reduced and his mind disposed to wander. We could not speak much to him. He told us he was very ill, and that he forgot what we said to him. Many of his relations were near him, whom we could not but regard as messengers of Satan to buffet him. We were prepared in some measure for this.⁸³

Te Rangi’s family had no doubt sought to impose the customary restrictions of tapu as required for someone in his condition, and so he had become surrounded by supportive but, nonetheless, unsympathetic relatives. It was little wonder that Te Rangi found it difficult to maintain the confident faith he had expressed two weeks earlier.

For Williams it was not an unexpected situation. As he later explained to his brother, the root of the problem was Te Rangi’s neglect of prayer:

A month since, he grew worse in health, and the enemy had evidently been endeavouring to weaken his faith: our visits were seasonable to him at that time – we told him he must have neglected prayer: he said he was very ill and had omitted to pray. He received our admonitions with thankfulness, acknowledging that it was the Evil Spirit who has suggested the thoughts which he had had, and disturbed his peace. We believe him to have lived in the constant exercise of prayer, except on the above occasion. On our subsequent visits his mind had reassumed its pleasing tone.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Richard Davis, 7 Aug 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:527).

⁸² Richard Davis, 8 Aug 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:527).

⁸³ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:536–37).

⁸⁴ Henry Williams to William Williams, 3 October 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:93–95).

It appears that Te Rangi had found it difficult to maintain his usual pattern of Christian prayer when he came under the care of his family. Following Williams's admonishment, however, Te Rangi renewed his efforts and was rewarded a fortnight later by an extraordinary experience that affected him deeply. Not only had his faith been strengthened, but he had also had a dream of being in Heaven and meeting Jesus Christ.

Te Rangi immediately sent word to Paihia for the missionaries to visit. When Richard Davis arrived he found Te Rangi "sitting without his house, sheltered from the wind by some reeds against which he leaned himself. He looked very ill and appeared thoughtful."⁸⁵ After greeting him, Davis enquired as to the state of his soul. "My heart is filled with light and love," said Te Rangi. Davis was pleased that Te Rangi's persistence had paid dividends: "I said, if you persevere in prayer you will find the light of the Holy Spirit shine into your heart, but if you neglect prayer you will find your heart very dark." Te Rangi agreed and indicated that he had known the danger, but that God had now answered his prayer: "This he said he had experienced, as he had prayed much and the great God had enlightened his heart, so that his love to Jesus Christ was very great."

But then the conversation took an unexpected turn as Te Rangi told Davis of his dream: "He told me that he had had a dream in which he thought he was in heaven with Jesus Christ. He also told me that the Spirit of the great God spoke very much to his heart. The countenance of this poor Savage spoke the inward peace of his mind and set the seal of truth on all he said." The reporting of ecstatic dreams upon the deathbed of believers was not unknown within Davis's evangelical tradition but it would have been highly significant for Te Rangi and other Māori with whom he shared his experience.⁸⁶

Te Rangi had previously expressed a desire to receive just such a dream, which Henry Williams had considered misguided.⁸⁷ He had instead urged that Te Rangi confirm the truth of the missionary's claims through prayer. Indeed, Te Rangi had

⁸⁵ Richard Davis, 9 Sep 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:520–31). That Davis found Te Rangi outside was consistent with Māori protocols for someone seriously ill.

⁸⁶ Hindmarsh gives the example of the Methodist preacher, John Pawson: Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England*, 259; see also, Henry D. Rack, "Evangelical Endings: Death-Beds in Evangelical Biography," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 74 (1992): 48.

⁸⁷ Waitangi Dialogue III.

done just that and his subsequent experience of answered prayer for a new heart within was a significant factor leading to his public profession of faith. But now he had also received a dream that provided for him a tangible confirmation of his welcome into the Christian heaven. Davis reinforced the mutual hope they now shared:

I now spoke to him of the riches of God's love in Jesus Christ to His people in the strongest manner, and to him as interested therein. I told him (for my heart was full) that I rejoiced in the happy prospect of meeting him in glory in the presence of Jesus Christ.⁸⁸

Te Rangi, according to Davis, expressed a similar response in return: "He said that he had wished very much for me to come to him, as he had great love. Oh! The dear uniting love of the adorable Saviour!" Davis was left ecstatic: "Oh! What a precious season was this to my soul. I left him with a sweet smile settled on his tattooed face. My feelings were such as I shall not attempt to describe."⁸⁹

5.5 Baptism and Death

Despite the elation of the other missionaries, Henry Williams proceeded with caution. The following Sunday (11 September) he again interviewed Te Rangi, and, even though Te Rangi's body was "wasting fast," he did not raise the subject of baptism.⁹⁰ Williams may well have been aware (at least in general terms) of the advice given to Samuel Marsden in 1818 that, "it is the decided opinion of the Committee that no Adult should be baptised, but upon an intelligent profession of Christianity."⁹¹ In addition, Williams knew that the first Māori baptism on New Zealand soil had not been that of a convert, but one performed by Thomas Kendall to facilitate a Christian marriage between Philip Tapsell and Maria Ringa, the daughter

⁸⁸ Richard Davis, 9 Sep 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:530).

⁸⁹ Richard Davis, 9 Sep 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:530).

⁹⁰ Waitangi Dialogue VIII.

⁹¹ Edward Bickersteth and Josiah Pratt to Samuel Marsden, 12 Mar 1818 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0056_074). Emphasis in original.

of the Taiamai chief, Te Ape.⁹² Consequently, Williams would have wanted to gather sufficient evidence for Te Rangi's conversion to withstand the scrutiny of the CMS leadership back in London.

Williams again began by asking Te Rangi about his health, to which he replied: "I think I shall soon die. My flesh is all gone off my bones, and I am now nothing but skin and bone."⁹³ Having heard Te Rangi's reply, Williams rehearsed once again – perhaps more for the benefit of his relatives – the origin of sickness as a result of human sin. Of more importance to Williams were Te Rangi's thoughts concerning life after death. Since his public profession in August, Te Rangi had come through a crisis of faith and had received a dream confirming his new convictions. Now, in answer to Williams's question, Te Rangi expressed a firmer confidence: "I think I shall go to Heaven above the Sky because I have believed all you have told me about God and Jesus Christ."

Te Rangi's other answers, however, were less convincing – at least, for Williams. Firstly, he asked him what payment he would bring to God for his sin, to which Te Rangi replied: "I have nothing to give him, only I believe he is the true God, and in Jesus Christ." The answer did not satisfy Williams who asked who it was that paid the price for sin. "I don't quite understand that," said Te Rangi. Once the expected answer was given, however, Te Rangi was in full agreement and reaffirmed his desire to go to Heaven: "Ay, ay. I remember you told me that before, and my whole wish is to go and dwell in Heaven when I die."

A second area of concern for Williams was Te Rangi's attitude towards death. "Do you feel any fear of death?" Williams asked. Te Rangi replied with an uncertainty that again suggested he did not know the expected answer: "No perhaps." Williams then assured Te Rangi that a true believer should be able to face death with a degree

⁹² Maria Ringa's baptism was conducted on 4 March 1823 shortly after Kendall had been dismissed from the CMS and relocated to Matauwhi, near Kororāreka: Thomas Kendall, Marriages, Baptisms & Burials at Bay of Islands, 1821–1823 (HL, MS-0071, item 57). The marriage was solemnised 23 June 1823: Thomas Kendall, *Banns of marriage between Phillip Tapsell & Maria Dinga (native)* (HL, MS-0071, item 55). Williams had disapproved of the marriage because he did not believe it was undertaken with a sufficient degree of mutual understanding and commitment to Christian marriage: Henry Williams to [Mary Williams], 3 Nov 1826 (AWMML, MS 91/75 A(ii), box 9, item 14, p140). See also, Judith Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: A Life of Thomas Kendall* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2005), 222, n48; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 553; Chisholm, *Brind*, 16–19.

⁹³ Waitangi Dialogue VIII. Rapid weight loss is a common symptom during the last stages of tuberculosis.

of joy.⁹⁴ Having heard the answer, Te Rangi then recounted his own experience: "I have prayed to God and Jesus Christ and my heart feels full of light." Williams could only agree and affirm Te Rangi's experience as the work of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps because of these two uncertain answers, Williams did not renew his discussion of baptism – quite a risk given a candidate so close to death.

5.5.1 Baptism

Williams might have rued his decision to delay Te Rangi's baptism when news arrived three days later that he had died.⁹⁵ Not taking the report at face-value, Williams and the other missionaries went to ascertain the facts for themselves. As they approached Waitangi, they heard cries of mourning: "I feared all was over," wrote Williams. Te Rangi, however, was not yet dead – though he had declined significantly since their Sunday visit. Williams described the scene:

On our arrival at his Hut we observed with joy that the vital spark was not extinct. His bones stood through his skin, and ulcers had broken out in various parts of his body. It was evident he could not last long. He turned his head and looked with satisfaction upon us. His voice was faint.

Williams's final conversation with Te Rangi was of necessity brief and followed a similar line to that of Sunday. On this occasion, however, Te Rangi was more resolute in his answers:

Well friend, how do you find yourself?
I shall soon be dead.
What are your thoughts of heaven?
Oh, my heart is very, very full of light.
What makes your heart so very full of light?
Because of my belief in Jehovah and Jesus Christ.

Williams pressed Te Rangi further only to receive an irritated response:

And are you still firm in your belief in Jesus Christ?
Are you deaf? Have I not told you over and over again that my belief is steadfast?⁹⁶

One final question remained:

Have you no fear of death before you?

⁹⁴ Williams's expectation was consistent with evangelical deathbed conventions for the time, in which it was thought a dying person of faith would have a sense of inner peace and express a confidence in their salvation: Rack, "Evangelical Endings," 42.

⁹⁵ Waitangi Dialogue IX.

⁹⁶ The CMS omitted the phrase "Are you deaf?" from its published transcript in the *Missionary Register*: Williams, "Obituary of Christian Ranghi", *Missionary Register* (1826): 187.

No, none, not in the least.⁹⁷

Williams was satisfied and reassured Te Rangi that his suffering would soon be at an end: “We are happy to find that; all real believers rejoice in the prospect of death knowing their pains are all then ended.” To this, Te Rangi replied with a familiar refrain: “Ay. I shall go and sit above the sky with Jesus Christ.”

At this point Williams again broached the subject of baptism which had been discussed the previous month. Williams asked if he had remembered the name that is given to those who believe. Te Rangi admitted to not knowing in detail, though the circumstances were “fast in my heart.” Williams then ascertained Te Rangi’s willingness to receive such a name:

How should you like to be called by that name?
I should like it very much indeed.

With Te Rangi having again expressed his consent, Williams turned and formally consulted with his colleagues. The grounds for their decision, outlined by Williams for the benefit of the CMS, were three-fold. Firstly, Te Rangi’s assent to the “substance of the Articles of belief” combined with his steadfastness of faith, particularly as his death approached. Secondly, his “steady resistance” to the traditional customs connected with sickness and death against the wishes of his wider family. Thirdly, the precedent in Scripture of the Ethiopian Eunuch, who in the Acts of the Apostles was baptised after a brief encounter with Philip the Evangelist.⁹⁸ The missionaries, having reached their formal decision, sent for Prayer Books and a basin.

When everything was ready, Williams explained the nature of baptism as “an emblem of the cleansing of the heart from sin.” Next he read through the liturgy in English (probably the service of *Baptism for such as are of Riper Years*) with William Puckey providing a translation of “certain parts” – presumably for Te Rangi to answer the four questions required of the candidate.⁹⁹ He was then given the

⁹⁷ The missionary evidence suggests that Māori had a general apprehension of death: Thomas Kendall, 21 & 24 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_023); James Shepherd, Journal, 19 Feb 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:429); James Hamlin, Journal, 27 Sep 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:429). This is contrary to the claim made by Te Rangi Hiroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 516. The missionary perception is supported by the way Māori admired the peaceful death of Te Rangi and other converts: Waitangi Dialogue X; Church Missionary Society, “Conversion and Death of Dudidudi, a Young New-Zealander, Who Died at Ranggeehoo, August 14, 1827”, *Missionary Register* (March 1828): 152.

⁹⁸ Acts 8:26–39.

⁹⁹ William Gilbert Puckey was the twenty-year-old son of the carpenter, William Puckey Snr., and had resided in New Zealand for six years. He was probably the best speaker of te reo Māori among the missionaries at the time: George Clarke, Journal, 10 Jul 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:547).

baptismal name of Karaitiana: “The name given to him was Christian, in addition to his native name Rangi, which he repeated several times with energy.”¹⁰⁰

Williams reported that Waitangi Māori appeared “somewhat impressed” by the baptism. It would not have been a ceremony altogether strange or dissimilar to the sacred rites that were a traditional part of Māori tikanga. For instance, in tohi [child dedication] ceremonies a newborn child was dedicated to an atua by being sprinkled with water by a tohunga, who prayed that the child might be endowed with the qualities of that god.¹⁰¹ A similar rite involving the sprinkling of water was also administered to groups of toa [warriors] before going into battle.¹⁰²

Following the baptism, Te Rangi was asked how he would like his children to be “disposed of” and what was to be done with his body:

He told us he wished the children to live with us and calling his daughter who now lives with Mr Davies to him, said to her, “I am going to Heaven, Mary, but Mr Davies will be your father, be a good girl.” He wished his body to be removed to our place.

After encouraging Te Rangi to keep his mind fixed on Jesus Christ in Heaven, the missionaries sang a hymn and closed in prayer, and then departed.¹⁰³ For the missionaries, Te Rangi’s baptism was a triumph. Williams called it a “season of joy and gladness.” Richard Davis declared, “Such a season as we then enjoyed I shall not attempt to describe, it was a full reward for all our toil.”¹⁰⁴ Williams was confident that the CMS would also share their elation: “What shall we say to these things? Is it

¹⁰⁰ It is unlikely that Te Rangi would have used the English word “Christian” when repeating his name, but rather the Māori transliteration, “Karaitiana”. This is consistent with later baptisms that transliterated English names into Māori. Interestingly, until this point, Williams had refrained from naming Te Rangi in his correspondence with the CMS, preferring instead to use the circumlocution “our old friend”. Williams generally avoided naming Māori in his official correspondence, particularly those showing signs of promise who had not yet been sufficiently tested.

¹⁰¹ Nicholas first heard of the tohi ceremony from Ruatara: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, I:61. William Williams heard the same from Te Morenga: William Williams, Journal, 10 Feb 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:307). William Williams later witnessed the ceremony for himself: William Williams, Journal, 2 Oct 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:304). Marsden also describes the ceremony in April 1830: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 478–79. See also, William Yate, Journal, 10 Jan 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:367); Brown, Journal, 31 May 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:591); Te Rangi Hiroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 352–53; Best, *The Maori as He Was*, 108–9; Māori Marsden, *The Woven Universe: Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*, ed. Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (Otaki: The Estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003), 10–11; Hirini Moko Mead, *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori Values* (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2003), 327–29.

¹⁰² George Clarke was told of this ceremony by Te Pākira: George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:556).

¹⁰³ Henry Williams to William Williams, 3 October 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:95).

¹⁰⁴ Richard Davis, 14 Sep 1825, in Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 14 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:531).

not a brand plucked from the burning?"¹⁰⁵ His confidence was not misplaced, for the CMS gave their endorsement by publishing Te Rangi's obituary in the April edition of the *Missionary Register* calling it a "manifestation of Divine Mercy to the uttermost parts of the earth."¹⁰⁶

5.5.2 Death

Williams was not to see Te Rangi again. He died in the evening of the following day, 15 September 1825. His family at Waitangi prevented the missionaries from hearing of the death until his body had been removed. Williams, it seems, had wanted to crown Te Rangi's new faith with a Christian burial at Paihia. His whānau [family], however, wished to maintain the traditional tikanga – presumably in the hope of sending Te Rangi's spirit to Te Rēinga and not to Heaven.¹⁰⁷ Williams remonstrated with them over the "impropriety" of their actions and appealed to Te Rangi's īhākī [dying wishes] – something the family themselves would ordinarily have sought to uphold.¹⁰⁸ He also told them that the treatment of the body after death would not affect the final outcome: "We told them it was of no consequence as to his salvation, for his body was all corruption, but that his soul was in Heaven." Williams consoled himself with the knowledge that Te Rangi must have maintained his faith to the end, for had it been otherwise, the family would have certainly told him so.

5.6 Legacy

In the weeks that followed, the missionaries were keen to discover how Te Rangi's death had been perceived by Māori. There were a variety of responses. In general, while there was admiration for the peaceful manner of his death, Māori still

¹⁰⁵ The phrase, "a brand plucked from the burning" was drawn from Zechariah 3:2 – a familiar saying within British evangelicalism at the time. It spoke of a person being providentially rescued by God's grace from the destructive power of sin. Francis Hall used the phrase when commending himself to the CMS for missionary service to New Zealand: Francis Hall, Letter to the Secretary, 23 May 1814 (HL, MS-0498/002, folder 2, item 52). Susanna Wesley famously used it when her six-year-old son, John Wesley, had been rescued from the burning Epworth rectory: John Pudney, *John Wesley and His World* ([London]: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 13; Roy Hattersley, *A Brand From the Burning: The Life of John Wesley* (London: Little, Brown, 2002), 27. Compare with Hazel Petrie's rather confused understanding of the phrase: Petrie, *Outcasts of the Gods?*, 239–241.

¹⁰⁶ Williams, "Obituary of Christian Ranghi", *Missionary Register* (1826): 185. Williams letter reporting Te Rangi's baptism was sent directly to England by the *Sarah Ann*, departing 20 September 1825. It was received by the CMS 18 February 1826.

¹⁰⁷ Te Rangi's family's attitudes would have been similar to the family of Hae Hae, an early Wesleyan convert who was buried on the Mangungu station in the Hokianga: Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 444–45.

¹⁰⁸ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:539); Te Rangi Hiroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 415–16.

considered that his breaching of tapu had been the cause.¹⁰⁹ One interesting response occurred in October when a comet appeared.¹¹⁰ This was interpreted, at least in one settlement, as Te Rangi now resident in Heaven.¹¹¹

5.6.1 *Te Rangi's Family*

Before his death, Te Rangi's immediate family had given no indication of sympathy with his Christian faith. Yet after his death they showed a greater interest. On 2 October 1825, three Sundays after Te Rangi's death, Williams recorded the last of his Waitangi dialogues with members of his family.¹¹² During the conversation, they not only expressed their admiration for the manner of Te Rangi's death, but also a desire to follow in his footsteps. Williams had arrived with a party that included Te Rangi's daughter, who his widow and sister greeted with tears, but not tears of mourning, as Williams had presumed: "We do not cry for Rangi," they said, "he is gone to the good place in Heaven."

Similarly, Tioka, Te Rangi's elder brother, declared his intention to follow his brother into Heaven. "What do you think of Rangi's death?" Williams asked him. Tioka replied, "It is very good. I'll go too to the same place that he is gone to." When Williams pointed out that he could do so only if he had a heart full of love for Jesus Christ, Tioka responded, "Come and teach me, and I will believe too. I wish to believe." Williams was pleased with Tioka's enthusiasm, although he was also aware that his pattern of life often took him away from Waitangi and the opportunity to receive consistent instruction.

The missionaries maintained their contact with the family into the following year. Henry Williams's newly arrived brother, William, reported several positive interactions with Tioka in 1826, as well as with another brother, Wini.¹¹³ William Williams had encouraged them to follow the example of their brother and pray for a new heart, which they had endeavoured to do. Yet, despite their diligence, their

¹⁰⁹ Charles Davis, Journal, 18 & 25 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:109).

¹¹⁰ The same comet was first observed in July by James Dunlop in Parramatta, New South Wales, though it became particularly prominent during October: J. S. Hubbard, "On the Orbit of the Fourth Comet of 1825," *The Astronomical Journal* 6, no. 123 (1859).

¹¹¹ Charles Davis, Journal, 16 Oct 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:110). At Kerikeri the comet was given a different interpretation by Māori, who thought it represented Hongi Hika's eldest son, Hāre (Charles), who had died earlier in the year at the battle of Te Ika-a-Ranganui: James Kemp, Journal, 17 Oct 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:127).

¹¹² Waitangi Dialogue X.

¹¹³ William Williams, Journal, 16 Apr 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:188); William Williams, Journal, 10, 14 & 21 May 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:191).

prayers remained unanswered. In August, Wini spoke with William Williams about their frustration:

"Perhaps," said Wini, "God will not hear us: we have called upon him for a long time without perceiving any great change." I then reminded him of those declarations of our Saviour: "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts etc." and, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek, etc."—"Aye," said he, "God will hear if we ask him, but perhaps he is like us, when any one asks us for a thing and we say to him Tishore (i.e. "By and bye, I will do it")."¹¹⁴

All William Williams could do in response was to explain again the "scheme of salvation through Christ" and encourage them that God would fulfil his promises as given in the Bible.¹¹⁵ Wini told Williams, "I am bad with vexation for the exceeding fixedness of my bad heart." At the end of the year their discouragement remained. William Williams's considered opinion was that they still lacked an appropriate sense of personal sin: "Some of the people last mentioned [i.e. "Rangi's people"] manifested a great want of that sense of sin which leads the Sinner to cry out 'What shall I do to be saved?' but I trust the Spirit is working in them."¹¹⁶

On Christmas Day 1826, the Wesleyan missionary, James Stack, accompanied William Williams to Waitangi and met Te Rangi's family. He wrote, "They seemed much disposed to cavil and said they had been praying a long time to Jehovah for his Spirit but had not yet received it."¹¹⁷ According to Stack, their unanswered prayers had caused them to reconsider whether Te Rangi had in fact been received into Heaven: "They said Christian Ranghi had returned from the invisible world and that he was not gone to Heaven but to the Reinga."

By 1828, Te Rangi's family had relocated to Waiomio near Kawakawa, perhaps as a result of the tensions between Hongi Hika and Te Koki during the previous year. Itinerant preaching to Kawakawa from Paihia had commenced from September 1827 and by 1835 the district had become a thriving centre of missionary Christianity.¹¹⁸ Henry Williams's last recorded contact with Tioka and Wini was in 1832.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ William Williams, Journal, 13 Aug 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:196).

¹¹⁵ Luke 11:9–13.

¹¹⁶ William Williams, Journal, 24 Dec 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:244). William Williams's evaluation of a lack of personal conviction of sin was a new emphasis. It was not a feature of Henry Williams's conversations with Te Rangi.

¹¹⁷ James Stack, Journal, 25 Dec 1826, in Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 231.

¹¹⁸ Henry Williams, Journal, 28 Sep 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:525); William Williams, Journal, 22 Mar 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:91); Henry Williams, Report of Paihia for year ending June 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:480).

¹¹⁹ Henry Williams, Journal, 21 Oct 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:186).

5.6.2 Mission Māori

Te Rangi's conversion and baptism had a particularly significant effect on those Māori living with the missionaries at Paihia. William Williams, writing in later years, spoke of the changes that occurred around this time:

The baptism of Rangi served to cheer the drooping spirits of the missionaries; and although it did not appear that any even of his own family were likely to follow his steps, yet there was about this time a manifest improvement in the conduct of many of the New Zealanders.¹²⁰

Marianne Williams also noticed the changes. In writing to her sister-in-law, Jane, she spoke of the good effects caused by the "ray of light" that shone forth from Te Rangi:

[It] seems as it were to glimmer on all around us, for the circumstance seems to have roused a diffused spirit of inquiry – and the general good conduct and improved discipline of our own native boys and girls in connection with this spirit of inquiry and increased interest in the means of instruction have given me a rejoicing of heart which would alone more than compensate for all the privation, trial and trouble much of which is now lessened or past.¹²¹

This change in attitude eventually culminated in the baptisms of Taiwhanga, Pita, and Mary on 7 February 1830. Taiwhanga and Pita were likely to have been eyewitnesses of Te Rangi's baptism and were probably present for a number of the prior dialogues.¹²²

The first Wesleyan convert, Hika Tawa, was also influenced by Te Rangi's conversion. He had joined the Wesleyan mission in Whangaroa when he was taken into the household of John Hobbs as a promising fifteen-year-old in August 1825. The following month, around the time of Te Rangi's baptism, he had accompanied Hobbs to the Bay of Islands.¹²³ On returning to Whangaroa, Hika observed to Hobbs concerning Te Rangi: "The spirit of God...came down from Heaven into his heart and changed it and took away the fear of death and that is the reason why he was not afraid to die."¹²⁴ After the Whangaroa station was plundered in early 1827, Hika had accompanied the missionaries to New South Wales before returning with them in 1828 to establish a new mission in the Hokianga. He was baptised 16 January 1831

¹²⁰ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 64.

¹²¹ Marianne Williams to Jane Williams, 30 November 1825 (AWMML, MS 91/75 A(i)a, item 761).

¹²² In Waitangi Dialogue VI, Williams made reference to the presence of two Māori dressed in European clothes given to them by the mission. Marianne Williams reported at Taiwhanga's baptism in 1830 that he had shown a changed life for nearly five years. That places the change to the year 1825 in which Te Rangi was baptised.

¹²³ Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 186–89. It is not clear whether Hika was actually an eyewitness of Te Rangi's baptism, though it is possible.

¹²⁴ T. M. I. Williment, *John Hobbs (1800–1883): Wesleyan Missionary to the Ngapuhi Tribe of Northern New Zealand* (Wellington: V. R. Ward, Government Printer, 1985), 56.

upon his deathbed and died the same night.¹²⁵ The second Wesleyan baptism was that of the rangatira, Hae Hae, on 5 February 1832. His conversion shared a number of similar features to that of Te Rangi, particularly his experience of being filled with light and joy as a result of Christian prayer.¹²⁶

The missionaries, too, were influenced by Te Rangi's conversion, which for them seemed to set the standard by which other conversions were to be compared. For example, James Shepherd compared the conversion of Rurerure, a former war-captive who died at Rangihoua on 14 August 1827, to that of Te Rangi.¹²⁷ Although Rurerure died before he could be baptised, Henry Williams described him, like Te Rangi, as a "brand plucked from the burning." In his interviews with Rurerure, Williams used a similar set of questions to those he had put to Te Rangi.¹²⁸

Although Te Rangi had come to faith within his own settlement, after his death most of the interest in Christianity came from among those living with the missionaries on the mission stations. By the end of 1830, of the fourteen baptisms that followed Te Rangi's, all had been living with the missionaries – a feature that did not escape the notice of Richard Davis:

The work of divine grace at present, seems restricted to those Natives only who are living with us in the different Settlements, as I do not know a case in which saving faith has shewn itself in a saving way out of the Settlement, save the case of Christian Rangi.

It was not until September 1832 that a rangatira living independently of the mission was baptised, namely Nikora Paratene Ripi.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 395–96; Williment, *John Hobbs*, 93. Owens assumes that Henry Williams witnessed Hika's baptism and in a footnote wonders why no mention was made in his journal. But Owens has mistaken the dates: Williams and Alfred Brown arrived at Māngungu with the three Wesleyan missionaries bound for Tonga on 11 January and departed the evening of 13 January. The confusion is caused by Henry Williams's journal dates being out by one week: Henry Williams, Journal, 17 Jan 1831 [10 Jan 1831] (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:108).

¹²⁶ Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 435.

¹²⁷ James Shepherd to the Secretary, 15 Aug 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:382–84); Henry Williams, Journal, 13 Aug 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:407); John King to the Secretary, 9 Aug 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:378); John King to the Secretary, "A Short Account of a Native who departed this life Aug 14, 1827", 21 Sep 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:379–82). An account of Rurerure's conversion and death was published in the *Missionary Register: Church Missionary Society*, "Conversion and Death of Dudidudi", *Missionary Register* (1828). See also Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 80–1.

¹²⁸ Church Missionary Society, "Conversion and Death of Dudidudi", *Missionary Register* (1828): 150–1.

¹²⁹ Nikora Paratene (Nicholas Broughton) Ripi was the principal chief at Mawhe, an inland settlement near Waimate, and became a leading Māori advocate for Christianity until his death in 1838.

5.7 Why did Te Rangi Convert?

Te Rangi was an elderly chief who had lived all his life within a Māori cultural framework. Why did he decide to make such a radical break with tradition and embrace the new religion of the missionaries? Harrison Wright maintains that Te Rangi's conversion was motivated by a fear induced by the missionaries who had adopted a two-fold preaching strategy. Firstly, they used the superiority of Western culture to appeal to the material interest of Māori and, secondly, they threatened Māori with the terrors of eternal punishment by God. "They informed the Maoris," says Wright, "not only that Christianity was directly responsible for all the scientific miracles, the peaceful habits, and the intelligence of the white people, but that continued observance of the Maori paganism would bring disastrous consequences."¹³⁰ Consequently, in Wright's view, Henry Williams rather cynically exploited Te Rangi's vulnerable condition in order to gain a convert: "Who would not consider Christianity under such conditions."¹³¹

A similar argument is made by Ormond Wilson – only in more pejorative terms. "Using this threat [of hell]," Wilson writes, "they played unscrupulously and unmercifully on the fears of those already ill, warning them of worse horrors to come."¹³² According to Wilson, it was therefore no wonder that most early converts were on the point of death. The delay in Te Rangi's baptism, for instance, only confirms for Wilson that the Williams brothers (in particular) were "devoid of any note of sympathy for the physical and mental torments of the dying."¹³³ Wilson attributes this callousness to an increasing sense of desperation brought on by the mission's lack of success: "After long years of tribulations and the failure of other efforts to win converts, even the thumbscrew and the rack might have appeared justifiable."¹³⁴

The evidence from the Waitangi Dialogues, however, suggests that Te Rangi was not primarily motivated by fear – nor was the idea of divine judgement a prominent feature of Williams's recorded conversations with him. It can also be said that while

¹³⁰ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 151. Wright provides a number of references to the missionary archives (including a reference to Waitangi Dialogue IV) but relies mostly on an essay by Johannes Anderson, particularly his characterisation of the missionary method as "a bribe and a threat": Andersen, "Maori Religion," 543–44.

¹³¹ Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 151.

¹³² Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 105.

¹³³ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 105–6.

¹³⁴ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 105.

Williams clearly held to a doctrine of divine judgment and often warned Māori of the dangers of ignoring his message, the general response of Māori to Williams's preaching, at least in the Dialogues, was more likely to have been laughter than fear.¹³⁵ If Te Rangi's conversion was not motivated by fear, what can be said concerning his reasons for converting?

It would appear, firstly, that Te Rangi was motivated by a recognition that the missionaries had brought a source of new spiritual knowledge. As his friendship with the missionaries grew, so too did his confidence in their spiritual authority – particularly that of Henry Williams. It was this confidence that most likely led to his radical decision to set aside the tapu. Given that the missionaries emphasised the authority of the Bible, Te Rangi's confidence in the missionaries was also implicitly a confidence in the Bible as a source of divine truth. In responding to Williams telling him of the "great book," Te Rangi replied, "You are like gods to us. We cannot read these things."¹³⁶ Te Rangi's description of the missionaries as being like "gods" (*atua*) highlighted the spiritual authority with which he regarded them.

Secondly, Te Rangi seems to have been attracted by the idea of the Christian heaven as the final resting place for the soul. It was an idea that was linked to his practice of observing the Sabbath in acknowledgment of the Great Atua who dwelt there. The desirability and possibility of Heaven as a destination accessible to Māori was a repeated theme of his discussions with Williams. As well as being a place free from sickness and pain, the attraction of the idea also seems to reflect a desire for new ways of peaceful living. Te Rangi acknowledged the deficiencies of his own culture and had openly criticised Hongi Hika's pursuit of war, something few others were prepared to do at the time. The possibility of a new heavenly destination allowed Te Rangi to articulate his dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, and at the same time explore alternative ways of living both in the present and in the hereafter.

Thirdly, Te Rangi's conversion was motivated by his experience of Christian prayer. For the missionaries, conversion could be experienced only as the unmediated answer to prayer for a new heart within, indicating the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit. It was just such an experience of prayer that led to Te Rangi's public confession of faith on 7 August 1825. For Te Rangi, his experience of answered

¹³⁵ For Williams's use of the theme of God's judgment see particularly Waitangi Dialogues II, III, IV, & VI.

¹³⁶ Marianne Williams, Journal, 31 Oct 1824 (AWMML, MS 93/130, folder 6).

prayer assured him that the Christian heaven was indeed open for Māori to enter as the missionaries had claimed. This assurance of an invitation to Heaven, later confirmed in a dream, cemented Te Rangi's decision to receive Christian baptism.

5.8 Concluding Comments

Henry Williams had asked the CMS a rhetorical question following Te Rangi's baptism: "Is it not a brand plucked from the burning?"¹³⁷ For Williams, Te Rangi's conversion and baptism confirmed his belief that the faithful preaching of the Gospel would eventually bear fruit. That fruit, however, did not come as an immediate harvest – a point conceded by his brother, William, in his 1867 history of the mission.¹³⁸ So it is perhaps understandable that Hamilton should see Te Rangi's conversion as being an exceptional and isolated case. Yet later generations of Māori Christians would remember Te Rangi as "ko te mataika tenei kua mau i te kupenga o te Rongo Pai": the first fish caught in the Gospel net.¹³⁹ As Te Mātāika [first fish], Te Rangi helped shape the way that the Christian message would be presented to and received by the generations of Māori converts who would follow him.¹⁴⁰ An understanding of Te Rangi's conversion thus provides a helpful insight into the experience of other Māori converts.

Using the model of conversion developed in the Introduction, three further aspects of Te Rangi's conversion can be highlighted. Firstly, his conversion had every appearance of being religious in nature, even if other psychological factors are deemed to have been present. In this regard, determining that Te Rangi's conversion was motivated by fear, as Wright and Wilson suggest, does not then mean that the experience of conversion was any less real for Te Rangi. As it is, in Te Rangi's case the most significant motivation was probably his experience of answered prayer for a new heart within. In general, the legitimacy or otherwise of a conversion cannot be determined simply by identifying a convert's motives. More significant is that the conversion results in a reorientation of a convert's pattern of belief, identity, and

¹³⁷ Waitangi Dialogue IX.

¹³⁸ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 64. William Williams wrote, "There was yet a dreary season of labour to be passed through, the great enemy was determined to hold his dominion to the last, and every inch of ground was to be fiercely contested."

¹³⁹ *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, Vol 12b, No. 21 March 1876, 66 (NZDL, www.nzdl.org).

¹⁴⁰ Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 67–68.

practice that in turn leads to a new and sustainable way of life, as appears to have been the case with Te Rangi.

Secondly, Te Rangi's experience illustrates the way in which conversion can involve sudden changes within an otherwise more extended and gradual process. There were three dramatic events that Te Rangi underwent over the course of his eighteen-month interaction with the missionaries: his decision to set aside the traditional tapu in October 1824, his public profession of faith in August 1825, and his response to a dream in September 1825. Each of these events could, in themselves, be considered as a moment of conversion depending on the perspective of the observer.¹⁴¹ But there were also times of spiritual trial that indicated that a more gradual process was taking place: his concern that his continuing sickness was caused by breaching tapu; his doubts as to whether the great Atua of the Europeans also had jurisdiction over Māori; and his uncertainty with regard to his being welcomed into Heaven upon death.

Thirdly, Te Rangi's conversion highlights the importance of religious practice in shaping a convert's belief and identity. It was his practices of observing the Sabbath, abstaining from tapu, and Christian prayer that created the possibility of change in Te Rangi's belief and identity and led to his conversion. In his final weeks when he was taken into the care of his family and had temporarily stopped his habit of Christian prayer, it is significant that Christian faith became more difficult for Te Rangi to sustain. By reinstating the practice, his former confidence returned and he was able to accept Williams's invitation to receive Christian baptism.

In conclusion, Te Rangi's conversion can be viewed as that of a thoroughly traditional rangatira, who, by adopting new religious practices, was able to explore the spiritual ideas presented to him by the missionaries, which in turn led, through an experience of answered prayer, to the formation of a new Christian identity in baptism as Karaitiana Te Rangi.

¹⁴¹ Perhaps for Māori, Te Rangi's decision to set aside the tapu was the decisive moment of conversion. For the missionaries, there was a greater weight given to the public profession of his faith. Williams, it seems, wanted to observe the enduring character of Te Rangi's faith before concluding that he had truly been converted.

6 Rāwiri Taiwhanga: A Fool for Christ

The baptism of Rāwiri Taiwhanga in February 1830, along with the married couple, Pita and Meri, was a turning point for the CMS mission in New Zealand and marked the beginning of what can appropriately be called the Māori Conversion. As such, Taiwhanga is arguably the most significant of the early Māori converts discussed in this thesis. Certainly, his life and conversion have received the most attention from historians, who see that many of the changes which occurred in Taiwhanga's life were also reflected in the wider Māori society of his day.¹ However, the connection of those changes to Taiwhanga's Christian faith has been relatively unexplored.² This chapter examines the nature of Taiwhanga's Christian faith and the extent to which his conversion became a pattern that other Māori followed.

At the heart of this investigation are four letters that Taiwhanga is known to have written prior to his baptism in February 1830. With the possible exception of Māui's autobiography, Taiwhanga's letters represent the first independently written accounts produced by a Māori.³ Yet despite the potential for these letters to provide an insight into Taiwhanga's self-understanding, they have not been utilised by historians for this purpose. Considered as a group, these letters allow an assessment to be made of Taiwhanga's motivations and beliefs at the time of his baptism. Two of the four letters still retain Taiwhanga's original text in Māori, with one appearing to be an original holograph. Of the other two letters, one has survived in translated form while the other was not preserved by the missionaries. Yet, even in the case of this lost letter, the context of Taiwhanga's writing and the missionary reports of its content render it a valuable source of information.

In addition to Taiwhanga's letters, the correspondence of the CMS missionaries also provides a rich source of information about Taiwhanga's life and beliefs. While he lived until at least 1876, most of the information concerning his life is concentrated in

¹ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 109–15, 123; Claudia Orange and Ormond Wilson, "Taiwhanga, Rawiri," in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*; Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 81–91; K. J. Nobbs, *A Great Maori Pioneer: Rawiri Taiwhanga* (Te Kauwhata: K. J. Nobbs, [1988?]); Rayma Ritchie, *Rawiri Taiwhanga (?1790s–c1879)* (Kaikohe: Pukepuriri Publications, 1998).

² Claudia Orange and Ormond Wilson, for instance, simply note that Christianity and European materials and methods "went together" without offering further explanation: Orange and Wilson, "Taiwhanga, Rawiri."

³ An earlier letter written in 1825 as a classroom exercise by Eruera Pare Hongi as a ten-year-old in George Clarke's Kerikeri school, though significant in its own right, is in a different category to the series of letters written by Taiwhanga. See George Clarke to Lay Secretary, 2 Jan 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:60).

a seventeen-year period beginning in 1819. During that time, Taiwhanga was connected with the CMS mission, firstly at Kerikeri (1819–22), then, after a brief stay in New South Wales (1823–24), at Paihia (1825–34). From the end of 1834 onwards, Taiwhanga moved to Kaikohe where he established a farm modelled on the mission farm at Waimate. A careful reading of these archival references provides an important context for understanding the nature and manner of Taiwhanga's baptism in February 1830.

This chapter will show that Taiwhanga's conversion, though gradual in nature, resulted in a radical transformation of his way of life. In particular, it will be seen that this transformation was underpinned by his Christian belief and his practice of Christian prayer. Taking Taiwhanga's religious convictions seriously in this way will also allow for a better understanding of why Māori responded to his baptism in the way they did and what it meant for Taiwhanga to identify himself as a "fool for Christ."

6.1 Kerikeri (1819–22)

Taiwhanga was a rangatira of the Ngā Puhi sub-tribe of Te Uri-o-Hua from Kaikohe, a hapū [kinship group] to which Hongi Hika also had connections.⁴ Taiwhanga first appears in the missionary archives in a journal entry by the CMS missionary John Butler, dated 27 July 1821; at the time, Taiwhanga was probably around thirty years of age.⁵ In his missionary journal, kept as an official record for the CMS in London, Butler described how Taiwhanga, his "native foreman," had just been stabbed with a bayonet while working on the mission farm.⁶ In giving his account, Butler took the

⁴ Nobbs, *A Great Maori Pioneer*, 34. Carleton (using Taiwhanga as a source?) identified Hongi Hika as principally belonging to the hapū of Ngāti Tautahi: Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:63. For Hongi Hika's connection with Te Uri-o-Hua see Sissons, Wi Hongi, and Hohepa, *Ngā Pūriri*, 36. The missionary, Richard Davis, later referred to Taiwhanga as being "a person of considerable note belonging to Shunghi's [Hongi's] tribe": Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106).

⁵ John Butler, Journal, 27 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:73). When the newly-arrived missionary, John Wilson, first met Taiwhanga in 1833, he described him as being about forty: C. J. Wilson, ed., *Missionary Life and Work in New Zealand, 1833 to 1862. Being the Private Journal of the Late John Alexander Wilson* (Auckland, 1889), 3. Ormond Wilson, however, makes a younger estimation based on a report from Sven Berggren, who met Taiwhanga in 1874. At that time, Taiwhanga was reputed to have been one hundred years of age, though Berggren thought him to be only sixty-five to seventy years: Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 110. However, John Wilson's estimation is to be preferred.

⁶ John Butler, Journal, 27 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:73–75); Barton, 139–41.

opportunity to describe the invaluable contribution that Taiwhanga was making to the mission at Kerikeri:

Tywangha, is now, and has ever been, since our arrival at New Zealand, one of the most active and zealous of all the natives, in working for, and assisting the Europeans: he has never flinched from his duty either by night or by day – whether wet or dry. He has accompanied me in all my journeys, has been my guide, and has carried me through Rivers, Swamps, &c. &c. I engaged him soon after our arrival and he has never left us; he has been constantly employed, and has been most diligent and active.⁷

Taiwhanga was particularly employed in two aspects of the mission: farming and, to a lesser extent, building. As to farming, Taiwhanga had quickly embraced the new agricultural practices introduced by the missionaries:

His is quick in discerning, and learns agriculture very fast. He understands very well, breaking up land, burning off the rubbish, laying it out, and trenching, &c. &c. I have taught him to reap, and mow, and thrash, &c. I have, this seed time, began learning him to sow, dibble, &c. and ere these lines reach you I have no doubt, D. V., but he will be a complete farmer. He has a good knowledge of gardening; he can form beds, plant out, sow small seeds, drill pease & beans, dress strawberries, plant potatoes, &c. In short he has been my right hand:- he has not merely wrought himself, but has bro^t. [brought] his friends into the field to labour.⁸

Taiwhanga's interest in European agriculture may have preceded his connection to the Kerikeri mission, for it is possible that he had participated in Hongi Hika's early experiments with cultivating wheat in conjunction with Ruatara.⁹ Whether or not this was the case, Butler clearly appreciated Taiwhanga's enthusiasm:

All Europeans that have visited the settlement, have expressed their surprise at the quantity done of farming, fencing, gardening, &c. in so short a time, and under such peculiar circumstances; but this man [Taiwhanga] has been like the fly wheel in a machine, which puts every other cog in motion.¹⁰

As Butler's foreman, Taiwhanga was responsible for a team of between twelve and seventeen Māori who were employed on the mission farm.¹¹ The farm's productivity had been greatly enhanced by the introduction of a plough, which Taiwhanga had been trained to use.¹² At its peak in 1822, the farm had nine acres of wheat under cultivation along with four acres of barley and oats.¹³

⁷ John Butler, Journal, 27 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:75).

⁸ John Butler, Journal, 27 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:75).

⁹ Hargreaves, "Changing Maori Agriculture in Pre-Waitangi New Zealand," 106–7.

¹⁰ John Butler, Journal, 27 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:75).

¹¹ John Butler, Journal, 26 Apr 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:513); John Butler, Journal, 7 Jul 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:521); John Butler to Samuel Marsden, 25 Aug 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:135).

¹² John Butler, Journal, 5 Jun 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:483). Butler claimed to be the first to use the plough in New Zealand, though he was also assisted at the time by William Hall; William Hall, Journal, 2 May 1820, in McLennan, 64.

¹³ John Butler, Journal, 21 & 22 Jun 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:483–84).

Taiwhanga's involvement with the Kerikeri mission also meant that he, along with the other resident Māori, was required to observe the Christian Sabbath. In addition, during the week he would have been gathered by Butler for regular times of instruction and prayer.¹⁴ This entailed learning by heart the various dialogues and prayers from the Grammar compiled by Thomas Kendall, as well as singing the newly composed hymns of James Shepherd.¹⁵ This was part the mission's strategy to use agriculture and other "civilising arts" as a means of introducing the Christian faith.¹⁶

The result of these endeavours was evident to Marianne Williams when she first arrived in New Zealand in August 1823. At Kerikeri, she had been impressed by the ability of resident Māori to recite extended passages from the Grammar.¹⁷ This did not mean, however, as George Clarke was later to lament, that Māori (including Taiwhanga) had gained any degree of understanding of the Christian faith.¹⁸ Nevertheless, in September 1823 Butler made a list of fifty-three Māori who had lived with him at some stage over the previous two years, marking those who could recite by memory the Lord's Prayer in te reo Māori.¹⁹ Of the forty-one males and twelve females on Butler's list, twenty-one males and ten females were marked as having that ability, including Taiwhanga.

Consequently, given Taiwhanga's significant role and profile, Butler must have been deeply shocked when he learnt of his foreman's stabbing.²⁰ The wound was serious enough to cause Butler grave concerns, though he was relieved to find the next day that no infection had taken hold.²¹ The incident had been precipitated by a disgruntled Māori worker taking exception to Taiwhanga's rebuke for idleness. Finding Butler unsympathetic, the worker had spread a false report implicating Taiwhanga in adultery with another man's wife, which in turn provoked the

¹⁴ John Butler, Journal, 26 Apr 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:513).

¹⁵ Thomas Kendall et al., *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language of New Zealand* (London, 1820). Hymns in te reo Māori were first sung at Kerikeri in October 1822; James Shepherd, Journal, 6 Oct 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:442).

¹⁶ John Butler to Samuel Marsden, 25 Aug 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:135). Butler was in general agreement with the mission strategy advocated by Samuel Marsden, even if he had conflict with Marsden in other areas of mission life. For an account of Marsden's mission strategy, see Falloon, *To Plough or to Preach*, 16–21.

¹⁷ Marianne Williams, Journal, 10 Aug 1823 (AWMML, MS 91/75 A(ii), item 6).

¹⁸ George Clarke, Journal, 19 Apr 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:542).

¹⁹ John Butler to Samuel Marsden, 18 Sep 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:36–37).

²⁰ John Butler, Journal, 27 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:73–75); Barton, 139–41.

²¹ John Butler, Journal, 27 & 28 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:74, 76).

aggrieved husband into making an attack upon him. Upon closer investigation, Butler was satisfied that there was no truth in the allegations.

The attack came at a difficult time for the mission. Hongi Hika had just returned from England (18 July 1821) and was about to embark on his second military expedition to the south, eventually departing 5 September.²² During this seven-week period of preparation the Kerikeri mission came under increasing pressure from local Māori. Exacerbating the situation was Hongi Hika's displeasure with the CMS for what he considered their cool reception of him in England.²³ To make matters worse, he blamed the situation on unfavourable letters written by John Butler and Samuel Marsden.²⁴ The attack on Taiwhanga was just one of a number of altercations that occurred at this time of growing tension between the mission and local Māori.²⁵

6.2 Taiwhanga the Warrior

The stabbing of Taiwhanga must have reminded Butler that, although living with the missionaries, Taiwhanga was still deeply embedded within his traditional tribal culture, with all its incumbent duties and obligations. One of those duties was to be a warrior, a role for which Taiwhanga already had an established reputation. If, as seems likely, Carleton's account of Hongi Hika's early campaigns was based on Taiwhanga's eyewitness accounts, then Taiwhanga's military career commenced in the 1812–14 period when he was aged around twenty years.²⁶ Then in 1818, as later confirmed by Dumont d'Urville and William Colenso, Taiwhanga had participated in Hongi Hika's first major campaign to the south, an expedition to the Bay of Plenty and the East Cape.²⁷ William Colenso, in writing an account of Ngā Puhi's attack on Tapatahi (north of Tokomaru Bay) during that campaign, was told by his sources that Taiwhanga had been "the most courageous and foremost" of the attackers.²⁸ It

²² The expedition was to the Tamaki and Thames region: Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 99–105. Kemp reported that it was the largest and best-armed of any party he had seen leave the Bay of Islands: James Kemp to the Secretary, 13 Nov 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:31–32). The first expedition had been to the Bay of Plenty and the East Cape in 1818.

²³ John Butler, Journal, 21 Aug 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:84).

²⁴ John Butler, Journal, 23 Aug 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:88–89).

²⁵ Ann Salmond overstates the situation, however, when she claims that Taiwhanga was stabbed while defending the mission from attack: Salmond, *Tears of Rangi*, 152. Other attacks on the mission at this time were the plundering of William Puckey's house and the trampling of John Butler's garden in August 1821: James Kemp to the Secretary, 3 Nov 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:30); John Butler, Journal, 19 Aug 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:82–84).

²⁶ Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:63–64; Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 49–50.

²⁷ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 110; Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 56–58; Ballara, *Taua*, 186–88.

²⁸ William Colenso, quoted in Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 110.

would appear that Taiwhanga's enthusiasm for agriculture was equally matched by his enthusiasm and ability as a Ngā Puhi toa.²⁹

In September 1821, therefore, while living at Kerikeri and despite his recent wounding, it is probable that Taiwhanga joined the second of Hongi Hika's campaigns when it departed the Bay of Islands for Tamaki and the Thames on 5 September 1821.³⁰ The same assumption also applies the following year with Hongi's third campaign to the Waikato.³¹ On that occasion Butler reported that a contingent from the Kerikeri mission had joined Hongi's taua [war party], and it can be assumed that Taiwhanga was likely to have been among their number.³² While Taiwhanga's involvement in Hongi's two previous campaigns needs to be assumed, the evidence for his participation in Hongi's 1823 campaign to Rotorua is more firmly established.³³ During this campaign Taiwhanga captured his slave wife, later

²⁹ William Williams later described Taiwhanga as being "a great warrior and a frequent follower of Hongi to the field of battle." Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 99. Williams also claimed that Taiwhanga had "joined Hongi in ten different fighting expeditions, first and last." William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464). Given Williams's personal knowledge of Taiwhanga's background, there is no reason to suppose his assessment to have been unreliable – it certainly does not "stretch the bounds of credulity" as Ormond Wilson suggests: Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 109.

³⁰ For an outline of that campaign see Ballara, *Taua*, 217–20.

³¹ Hongi was away 25 February to 29 July 1822: John Butler, Journal, 25 Feb 1822, in Barton, 216; John Butler, Journal, 30 Jul 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:487); James Shepherd, 28 Jul 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:439); for an account of Hongi's campaign see Ballara, *Taua*, 220–22. Butler's journal entry was for 5 June 1821: John Butler, Journal, 25 May & 5 Jun 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:482, 483).

³² John Butler, Journal, 25 Feb 1822, in Barton, 216. Particularly given that Taiwhanga was probably the owner of the canoe being used. As Taiwhanga was mentioned again by Butler in his journal on 5 June 1822, it appears that he returned from the campaign earlier than Hongi Hika. This was not an unusual circumstance as contingents from the Waikato were returning to Kerikeri from as early as 10 April 1822: James Shepherd, Journal, 10 Apr 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:432–33). Ballara dates the battle of Mātakitaki to April/May: Ballara, *Taua*, 216, 220–22. An early return meant that Taiwhanga had the opportunity to leave after the summer harvest and still return in time to commence ploughing for the next season: John Butler to the Secretary, 28 Feb 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:141–42); John Butler, Journal, 10 May 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:481).

³³ While historians following the lead of Ormond Wilson, have discounted the possibility of Taiwhanga going to Rotorua in 1823 the evidence from the journal of Thomas Chapman leaves little room for doubt: Thomas Chapman, "Narrative of a visit to Tauranga &c.", Oct 1831 to Nov 1831 (ATL, qMS-0425, vol. 1, 19); Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 110; Ritchie, *Taiwhanga*, 13; Orange and Wilson, "Taiwhanga, Rawiri."; Ballara, *Taua*, 199. Chapman was part of the first missionary delegation to visit Rotorua in 1831 and was accompanied by Taiwhanga. Chapman recorded their welcome on Mokoia Island and noted that Taiwhanga had previously participated in Hongi Hika's attack on the island in 1823.

known to the missionaries as Māta [Martha].³⁴ Upon his return from Rotorua, though, Taiwhanga did not attempt to rejoin the mission at Kerikeri, but instead seems to have immediately boarded a vessel for New South Wales.

The name of the ship and the date of his departure is uncertain but it seems likely that he left New Zealand from the Hokianga rather than the Bay of Islands.³⁵ With the withdrawal of the CMS mission ship *Active* in April 1822, the opportunities for Māori to visit New South Wales around this time had become more restricted and so it is unlikely that Taiwhanga made his journey in conjunction with the CMS mission.³⁶ If Taiwhanga had indeed boarded a vessel in the Hokianga, then the most likely candidate was the *Mermaid* under the command of John Kent, which was known to have been in New Zealand waters in mid-1823 and is likely to have entered the harbour during its voyage.³⁷ If so, it can be concluded that Taiwhanga, having captured his slave-wife, Māta, at Mokoia Island in around March / April 1823, had

³⁴ The details of Māta's capture became a matter of some infamy. Alfred Brown, a CMS missionary, provided an account in a letter to the CMS committee shortly after Taiwhanga's baptism in February 1830: "It is said that when he [Taiwhanga] took his present wife in battle as a Slave, he killed and ate the Children which she had by a former husband." Alfred Brown to the Lay Secretary, 23 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:444). See also William Richard Wade, *A Journey in the Northern Island of New Zealand: Interspersed with Various Information Relative to the Country and People* (Hobart, 1842), 16. A separate, but similar, version was given by John Watkins, a ship's surgeon, in testimony before a select committee of the House of Lords in 1838: *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords*, 12–32. In April 1834, while on the *Eliza Francis*, Watkins had been called upon to operate on Māta to remove a "scrofulous tumour" from her breast. Based on this encounter, Watkins informed the Select Committee as to the circumstances of her marriage to Taiwhanga: "Having conquered their Opponents, one Woman had her Husband and Two Children killed. This Man [Taiwhanga] dashed the Children's Brains against the stones, and took the Woman captive, and afterwards took her to be his Wife."

³⁵ The Hokianga as Taiwhanga's point of departure is suggested by Peter Cheal, a former government surveyor who interviewed Taiwhanga in 1872: Peter Cheal, "Rawiri Taiohangā [sic], first New Zealand dairyman" (AWMML, MS-1319, item 19); A transcript of Cheal's account is also provided in Nobbs, *A Great Maori Pioneer*, 19. From the internal evidence, Cheal's account appears to have been written sometime circa 1925. Cheal's dating of Taiwhanga's trip to 1820 is clearly wrong, but that does not mean other details are necessarily unreliable.

³⁶ Falloon, "Mission Trading in the South Pacific by the Active," 26–28. One possibility is that Taiwhanga accompanied John Butler to Sydney at the end of 1823. But when Butler departed with Samuel Marsden on the *Dragon*, 14 November 1823, space was at a premium due to the wrecking of the *Brampton* on 9 September 1823: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 367. As a consequence, a number of Māori chiefs who had been promised a passage could no longer be accommodated. Marsden did note, however, that six young Māori had refused to leave the vessel and were allowed to remain on board as long as they stayed above decks: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 404. It is possible that Taiwhanga was one of their number, though this seems unlikely as it would mean him only being away from New Zealand for a relatively short period of time.

³⁷ The *Sydney Gazette* reported that the *Mermaid* returned to Port Jackson with a cargo of flax and four Māori visitors. The *Mermaid* departed Sydney 7 May and returned 15 August 1823: "Ship News", *Sydney Gazette*, 8 May & 21 Aug 1823. While not specifically stated as having entered Hokianga harbour, this was the most likely source for the flax. Kent had previously been the first captain to crossed the Hokianga bar in March 1820 while in command of the *Prince Regent*: Richard A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Month's Residence in New Zealand* (London, 1824), 85.

returned from Rotorua in around June of that year just in time to obtain a passage to New South Wales on the *Mermaid*, arriving in Sydney 15 August 1823.³⁸

6.3 New South Wales (1823–4)

What was the motivation for Taiwhanga to make this journey? Ormond Wilson suggests it was a thirst for new knowledge and experience: “In the absence of any clue as to his motive for this venture one can only guess that an energetic and enterprising young man, having gained all the agricultural knowledge Butler was able to impart, sought fresh experience.”³⁹ While there may be some truth to this, Taiwhanga’s motivation was probably more traditional in nature. Cheal recalls that Taiwhanga had told him in 1872 that he had gone to procure for himself a tūpara, that is, a double-barrelled shotgun.⁴⁰ Such a weapon would undoubtedly have enhanced Taiwhanga’s status, for a double-barrelled shotgun (or fowling piece) had become a potent status symbol for Māori.

This was even the case for the missionaries themselves. In 1816, William Hall had lost his fowling piece to a taua muru [plundering party] that had attacked his Waitangi house. As a result, he felt compelled to write to the CMS for a replacement; it was not just the inconvenience of losing a hunting weapon, he was also concerned by his loss of status in the eyes of his Māori hosts.⁴¹ In a similar way, if Taiwhanga was able to obtain such a weapon in Sydney, it would have greatly enhanced his reputation as a fighting chief and given his mana a considerable boost.

When Taiwhanga landed in Sydney on 15 August 1823, Samuel Marsden happened to be away. He had just embarked for New Zealand a few weeks earlier on the *Brampton* along with a number of new and returning missionaries.⁴² His absence may

³⁸ For the date of the battle on Mokoia Island, see Smith, *Māori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 243. Taiwhanga was probably among the Rangihoua and Hokianga Māori that John King reported as having returned from the fighting with slaves (i.e. war captives) in June 1823, after having been away four months: John King, Journal, 7 & 11 Jun 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:533).

³⁹ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 111. See also Ritchie, *Taiwhanga*, 11.

⁴⁰ Peter Cheal, “Rawiri Taiohanga [sic], first New Zealand dairyman” (AWMML, MS-1319, item 19); Nobbs, *A Great Māori Pioneer*, 19. That Taiwhanga obtained a musket of some kind in Sydney is consistent with William Williams’s account of Taiwhanga lending such a weapon to Hongi Hika in 1825: Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 99.

⁴¹ William Hall to Josiah Pratt, 16 Jan 1816 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_044). Korokoro was eventually able to return the gun in August 1816 and was given a musket in recompense: William Hall, Journal, 29 Aug 1816, in McLennan, 20. For another instance of the regard in which double-barrelled shotguns were held by Māori, see Richard Davis, Journal, 22 Apr 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:556).

⁴² “Ship News”, *Sydney Gazette*, 24 Jul 1823; Samuel Marsden to Josiah Pratt, 12 Jul 1823 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0057_094).

explain why Taiwhanga formed an attachment to one of Marsden's clerical colleagues, Richard Hill, the Rector of St James, Sydney, in whose honour he later named his first child, Hira [Hill].⁴³ Richard Hill had arrived in the colony in 1819 and quickly became a trusted ally of Marsden in the work of the CMS.⁴⁴ So it would not have been surprising, given Marsden's absence, for Captain Kent to have placed Taiwhanga and his fellow passengers under the care of Hill for the duration of their stay in New South Wales.

Little is known of Taiwhanga's time in New South Wales except for a brief reference later made by William Williams that he had stayed with the CMS missionaries, George and Martha Clarke, at Blacktown.⁴⁵ The Blacktown settlement had been formed in January 1823 as an initiative of the Native Institution, a government-run organisation established by Governor Macquarie for the benefit of the aboriginal population.⁴⁶ As secretary, Richard Hill had been instrumental in getting the Board to relocate their Parramatta school for children twenty kilometres further west to Blacktown where there was greater space for farming initiatives and a larger aboriginal population.⁴⁷ The Institute, in a significant departure from the policy of the Macquarie years, also requested the assistance of the CMS and their agent, Samuel Marsden, in finding a suitable missionary to be placed in charge. Consequently, the

⁴³ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216). It may also indicate that the birth of his son occurred shortly after returning from New South Wales. Taiwhanga went on to name his second son Matenga (Marsden), as he was born during Samuel Marsden's visit to New Zealand in 1827: Taiwhanga to Samuel Marsden, [Sep 1828] (ML, A1994, 68, 147). In a similar way, Hongi Hika renamed his youngest son Poihākena (Port Jackson) after visiting Sydney in 1814: George Clarke to Josiah Pratt, 21 Jul 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:253); George Clarke, Journal, 5 Aug 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:397).

⁴⁴ Richard Hill was a founding member of the first, albeit short-lived, Australasian Corresponding Committee in 1821. The Committee was dissolved later that same year due to internal disputes over its terms of reference: "Minutes of the Corresponding Committee, 2 Mar 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:315–17); "Minutes of Corresponding Committee, 27 Sep 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N L2:154–55). Hill was also the founding secretary of the CMS Auxiliary Society in 1825 and the secretary to the second iteration of the Corresponding Committee established in 1826. The Auxillary Society of the CMS was formed in February 1825 for the purpose of establishing a mission to the aborigines of New South Wales: Richard Hill to Josiah Pratt, 8 Feb 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:292–93). The Corresponding Committee formed in April 1826 was to assist with the New Zealand mission: Richard Hill to Henry Williams, 10 May 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:170).

⁴⁵ William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464).

⁴⁶ J. Brook and J. L. Kohen, *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town: A History* (Kensington, New South Wales: New South Wales University Press, 1991), 57–63; Sharp, *The World, the Flesh & the Devil*, 624–26.

⁴⁷ Richard Hill to the Secretary, 13 Feb 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:302–4). In 1819, Governor Macquarie had awarded a 30 acres (12.1 hectares) land grant to two aboriginal men, Colebee and Nurragingy in return for their government work. The Native Institution was built alongside their land grant on the Richmond Rd. By the end of 1823 there was a Mission house, chapel and six small cottages. Heidi Norman, "Parramatta and Black Town Native Institutions," in *Dictionary of Sydney*, 2015, http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/parramatta_and_black_town_native_institutions; Brook and Kohen, *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town: A History*, 37–38, 83–87.

Clarkes, who had arrived in Sydney, 16 October 1822, instead of proceeding to New Zealand as intended, were appointed to the new Blacktown establishment, where they became responsible for around twelve school children and six family groups.⁴⁸

Taiwhanga's placement at Blacktown was most likely to have been facilitated by Richard Hill. It would also have been welcomed by the Clarkes, for not only did it provide them with an additional worker when labour was in short supply, but it would have helped the Clarkes in learning the Māori language.⁴⁹ It seems that Taiwhanga was not the only Māori living with the Clarkes at this time. Henry Williams, before leaving for New Zealand, had visited the Blacktown settlement and noted that a mild-mannered Māori was living there "of Shunghee's tribe" (i.e. a relative of Hongi Hika).⁵⁰ Williams's visit was too early in the year for it to have been a reference to Taiwhanga – besides, Taiwhanga was not known for his mild demeanour.⁵¹ Williams was probably referring Te Pākira, a chief whom George Clarke later reported as "having spent some months with him at Port Jackson."⁵² Te Pākira may also have been Taiwhanga's unnamed travelling companion on his return voyage to New Zealand in March 1824 on the French ship, *La Coquille*.⁵³

Before his departure, Taiwhanga called on John Butler, who had since returned from New Zealand, to say farewell:

This morning, Tywanga came to bid us good-bye. He is returning to N.Zd. in company with Mr. Clark and Mrs. Clark, in a French ship named "La Coquille." I made him a present of the following articles: one grindstone, one hammer, one

⁴⁸ George Clarke to the Secretary, 28 Jan 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:306–7); Brook and Kohen, *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town: A History*, 134–50; George Clarke to the Secretary, 17 Dec 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:176–77). The Clarkes took up their position on 1 January 1823.

⁴⁹ Henry Williams to the Secretary, 15 Jul 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:470–1).

⁵⁰ Henry Williams to the Secretary, 10 Mar 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:414).

⁵¹ Richard Davis described Taiwhanga as a "regular warrior" and Marianne Williams thought him a man of "naturally strong passions": Marianne Williams to Lydia Marsh, 16 Feb 1830, quoted in Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:77.

⁵² George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:554).

⁵³ The La Coquille also conveyed the Clarkes to New Zealand. Clarke noted that they were accompanied by two New Zealanders and Butler names Taiwhanga as being one of them: George Clarke to Josiah Pratt, 21 Jul 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:251–53); George Clarke, Journal, 19 Mar 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:371); John Butler, Journal, 5 Mar 1824, in Barton, 365; René Lesson, "Voyage Round the World on the Corvette *La Coquille*," in Andrew Sharp, ed., *Duperrey's visit to New Zealand in 1824* (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1971), 54. Brook and Kohen are mistaken in naming Taiwhanga's companion as "Thomas Tooī" [Tuai]: Brook and Kohen, *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town: A History*, 150. Tuai had returned to New Zealand, 12 August 1819. Tuai was, however, the chief at Paroa where the *La Coquille* lay at anchor and a frequent visitor on board the ship: Andrew Sharp, ed., *Duperrey's Visit to New Zealand in 1824* (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1971), 22.

handkerchief, one comb, a quantity of fish-hooks, soap, one bag, one waistcoat, one coat, one saw, and two hoes. He cried very much when he left our house.⁵⁴

Butler's gifts, particularly the clothing, would have been gratefully received by Taiwhanga, perhaps fulfilling Butler's promise two years earlier that he was unable to keep at the time.⁵⁵ Butler was particularly gratified by Taiwhanga's display of tears – a culturally appropriate farewell from a close friend – as a counter to the criticisms of Marsden, who was still concerned that Butler's rough treatment of his Māori workers was limiting his usefulness to the mission.⁵⁶

Taiwhanga also received two further gifts before leaving New South Wales. The first was a military cap given to him by Marsden. Taiwhanga was depicted wearing this cap in a sketch drawn by Jules Louis Lejeune of the *La Coquille* (see Figure 2).

Marsden had sent a number of these caps to New Zealand as gifts for Māori leaders at Rangihoua and Kerikeri, including Hongi Hika.⁵⁷ The second gift, however, would have been his most prized of all: a tūpara. How he obtained this gift is difficult to determine. Given the sensitivities surrounding guns, it was unlikely to have come from the missionaries – though it was possible that Butler had given it to him without acknowledging it openly. The most likely source, however, was Richard Hill on behalf of the Native Institution as payment for his work at Blacktown – perhaps another reason why Taiwhanga named his child after Hill.

⁵⁴ John Butler, Journal, 5 Mar 1824, in Barton, 365.

⁵⁵ John Butler to the Secretary, 28 Feb 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:142). Taiwhanga's pay while working at the Kerikeri mission had been one axe or one item of European clothing per month: John Butler, Journal, 21 Jul 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:75). Butler quickly realised that European clothing had become a valuable item of exchange for Māori living at the mission, who associated the wearing of European clothes with attendance at Sabbath day services: John Butler, Journal, 26 May 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:66–67). John Butler, Journal, 14 Oct 1820 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:374). See also Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, I:319–20, II:144; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 124; John Butler, Journal, 27 May 1820 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M1:365–66).

⁵⁶ Samuel Marsden to James Kemp, 10 Mar 1824 (Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland City Libraries [ACL], NZMS 741, item 4).

⁵⁷ Samuel Marsden to James Kemp, 10 Mar 1824 (ACL, NZMS 741, item 4); Samuel Marsden to Hongi Hika, 6 Feb 1824 (ACL, NZMS 1186).



Figure 2: Portrait of Taiwhanga based on a sketch by Jules Lejeune, 1824⁵⁸

It should be noted that Taiwhanga was not returning to New Zealand to further the interests of the CMS mission. According to William Williams, he had more traditional reasons in mind: "Hearing there that some of his friends had been killed in battle and that Hongi was going to fight with the Enemy, he determined to join him, and accompanied Mr. Clarke to New Zealand for the purpose."⁵⁹ This description of Taiwhanga's motivation was consistent with his previous pattern of participation in Hongi's campaigns and with his motivation in travelling to New South Wales in the first place. Thus Taiwhanga's desire to join with Hongi Hika should not be viewed as a change of heart or a turning away from missionary religion. Taiwhanga would not have seen any inherent incompatibility, at least at this stage, between his involvement with the CMS mission and his obligation to seek

⁵⁸ Jules Louis] fl 1804-1851 [Lejeune, "[Habitants de la] N[ouvel]le Zelande. Etinou Jeune Fille. Taifanga. [Copied 1825 or 1826 by Antoine Chazal from Two Ink Drawings by Jules Louis Lejeune Done in April 1824] N[umer]o 46"(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, Ref: C-082-100 <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22785889>). Note that in the original sketch Taiwhanga is apparently wearing an army greatcoat. This was probably the coat given to him by Butler. The cap also had a feather on its crown.

⁵⁹ William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464).

redress for his tribe. Hence, there is no need to speculate, as Ormond Wilson does, as to whether “the call to war … outweighed devotion to missionaries,” or, as Rayma Ritchie imagines, “Perhaps farming life had been a little dull and the rewards too little.”⁶⁰ The simplest explanation is that Taiwhanga was motived to return to New Zealand for the same reasons he departed, namely, to enhance his identity and mana as a traditional warrior and to help further the interests of his tribe.

6.4 Te Ika-a-Ranganui (1825)

Although Taiwhanga’s motives in returning are likely to have been traditional in nature, that did not prevent him from being of assistance to the Kerikeri mission.⁶¹ While Taiwhanga was not mentioned at the time, Richard Davis recalled first noticing Taiwhanga “on account of his activity” when he and his wife, Mary, first arrived in New Zealand in August 1824.⁶² Davis quickly realised that Taiwhanga’s character and conduct marked him out from the other Māori at the mission:

During our stay at Te Kiddeekiddee [Kerikeri], he was employed at times in the Settlement, and from the manner in which he did his work, together with the manner of his behaviour to the Missionaries, it was evident to me he was a superior man.⁶³

In fact, a close bond of friendship would develop between Davis and Taiwhanga in the years ahead. As a prospective missionary farmer, Davis had spent the latter part of 1824 exploring the wider district of the Bay of Islands in the hope of locating a suitable site for a farm, and Taiwhanga may well have accompanied him on these trips. Certainly, when Davis eventually settled at Paihia with the intention of

⁶⁰ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 112; Ritchie, *Taiwhanga*, 12.

⁶¹ Taiwhanga’s cultural knowledge had already helped prevent one *faux pas* when he and his companion (probably Te Pākira) warned George Clarke to change the name of his dog to avoid causing offense to a Māori chief of the same name. René Lesson, one of the ship’s surgeons, described the rebuke delivered to the missionary: “Mr Clerk, Methodist missionary, had a beautiful dog which he called Típo, in contempt of that fine name, Típo-Saeb, borne with honour by a warlike Indian whose open enmity threatened the power of the English. The two New Zealanders were extremely displeased whenever Mr Clerk happened to call Típo. In the end they informed him that unless he changed this name he would get on badly in New Zealand, for the great warrior Típo would take this prostitution of his name on an animal as a personal insult.” Lesson, “Voyage,” 53.

⁶² Taiwhanga had been assisting James Kemp with the landing of the mission stores at Paihia and ensuring their safe transfer to Kerikeri: James Kemp, Journal, 16–21 Aug 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:004).

⁶³ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:214–20).

establishing a farm at Kawakawa, Taiwhanga joined him there – at least for a few weeks before departing with Hongi Hika to the Kaipara.⁶⁴

Hungi Hika and his taua of 400 men left the Bay of Islands on 20 February 1825 to confront Ngāti Whātua in what was to be the decisive battle known as Te Ika-a-Ranganui.⁶⁵ Although there had been a number of recent provocations on both sides, the root cause of the conflict was the defeat inflicted on Ngā Puhi by Ngāti Whātua at Moremonui in 1807.⁶⁶ Carleton described the defeat on that occasion from a Ngā Puhi perspective as “a grievous blow and sad disgrace … [that] must be avenged at any cost.”⁶⁷ As Carleton was using Taiwhanga as his main informant, this description of Moremonui probably reflects Taiwhanga’s own perspective.⁶⁸

Yet Taiwhanga nearly missed the battle as Hongi’s first expedition to the Kaipara left shortly before his return to New Zealand in April 1824. On that occasion peace was established and Hongi had returned home without fighting.⁶⁹ Rumours continued to spread, however, which caused a Ngāti Whātua delegation to arrive at Kerikeri in late November 1824 to ascertain Hongi’s intentions.⁷⁰ At that time, Hongi denied he was preparing for war and even sent his eldest son, Hare Hongi, to live with his former enemies by way of reassurance. However, not everyone was happy with these peace arrangements and further provocations led Whareumu to embark with a

⁶⁴ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:104–7). The decision for Davis to move to Paihia was made 10 January 1825 and Hongi departed for Kaipara on 20 February 1825: “Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of Missionaries”, 10 Jan 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N O4, item 19, page 3); James Kemp, Journal, 20 Feb 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:011).

⁶⁵ For eyewitness accounts of the battle from Ngā Puhi and Ngāti Whātua sources see James Kemp, Journal, 14 Jul 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:18–9); George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:554–7); Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:64; Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 329–52. For other commentary on the battle see: Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 32–34; Ballara, *Taua*, 225–26; Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 155–57.

⁶⁶ James Kemp to the Secretaries, 25 Mar 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:351). For an account of the battle of Moremonui see Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 46–49.

⁶⁷ Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:63.

⁶⁸ Carleton considers that the defeat at Moremonui was behind Hongi Hika’s motivation in travelling to England with the aim of obtaining muskets: Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:63.

⁶⁹ James Kemp, Journal, 16 Mar 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:561); Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:64. The peace had been mediated by Te Hihi, who had kinship connections to both sides of the conflict. For accounts of Māori peace-making, see Ballara, *Taua*, 153–62.

⁷⁰ George Clarke, Journal, 28 Nov & 2 Dec 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:412). According to the CMS missionary, Charles Davis, Ngā Puhi war preparations had been underway at Kerikeri since 26 October 1824. Davis was also under the impression that Hongi was intending to take up Marsden’s invitation to visit New South Wales instead of fighting: Charles Davis, Journal, 26 Oct 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:472).

force of approximately two hundred toa to confront their traditional enemy: Hongi Hika, Carleton recorded, "felt himself bound to follow."⁷¹

The battle itself probably took place in the middle of April 1825, with estimated numbers on each side ranging from between five to eight hundred Ngā Puhi and eight hundred to over a thousand Ngāti Whātua.⁷² While it is common to emphasise the disproportionate number of muskets possessed by each side – Ngā Puhi reportedly had around three hundred muskets while Ngāti Whātua had as few as two – these estimates need to be tempered by contemporary eyewitness accounts.⁷³ In general, these accounts highlight the desperate nature of the struggle rather than the superior fire-power of Ngā Puhi forces.⁷⁴ Indeed, two prominent Ngā Puhi chiefs, Wharepoaka and Moka were wounded and Hongi Hika's eldest son, Hare Hongi, was killed by Ngāti Whātua musket fire.⁷⁵

According to George Clarke's eyewitness, Te Pākira, "a very severe contest ensued, which lasted many hours, attended with considerable loss on both sides, and ended in the total overthrow of the enemy, who fled with the utmost precipitation, leaving the greater part of his Muskets in the hands of his conquerors."⁷⁶ As was generally the case, most of the casualties were probably inflicted during the rout – particularly given Hongi Hika's orders to execute all the prisoners (numbering about one

⁷¹ Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:64. Percy Smith suggests it was the murder of a chief named Kōriwhai that prompted Whareumu's action: Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 332.

⁷² A mid-April date is consistent with the narrative provided to George Clarke by Te Pākira. It is also consistent with the date that first reports of the battle arrived in the Bay of Islands: George Clarke, Journal, 2 May 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:543). For the numbers involved on each side see Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:64; Alexander Strachan, *The Life of the Rev. Samuel Leigh: Missionary to the Settlers and Savages of Australia and New Zealand* (London, 1870), 208; Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 332, 339–40; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 427; Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 155–57.

⁷³ From the Ngā Puhi side, Clarke recorded an account of the battle from Te Pākira, while James Kemp recorded Hongi Hika's account: George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:554–57); James Kemp, Journal, 14 Jul 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:18–19).

⁷⁴ That is not to say that an imbalance in muskets did not exist, but it might not have been as great as has sometimes been claimed. The length of the engagement and the tactics adopted by Ngāti Whātua in meeting Ngā Puhi in the open indicated that they were confident of a victory over their traditional enemy. Consequently, Samuel Leigh's report that Ngāti Whātua had in the order of one hundred muskets is a more reasonable estimate: Strachan, *The Life of the Rev. Samuel Leigh*, 208.

⁷⁵ George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:556); George Clarke, Journal, 19 May 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:544). Moka is not specifically named, but Clarke's description of the chief's "bad conduct" toward the mission makes the reference clear. This identification is confirmed by Charles Davis who noted that Moka had been wounded in the thigh: Charles Davis, Journal, 29 Dec 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:114). Carleton also lists Te Ahu and Te Puhi as among the Ngā Puhi dead: Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:64.

⁷⁶ George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:556). This is consistent with Hongi Hika's account in James Kemp, Journal, 14 Jul 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:18–19). Curiously, John Elder declares that the battle was a stalemate and pronounces a moral victory to Ngāti Whātua: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 357. Though, later, Elder also includes a version of events based on that of Percy Smith: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 427; Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 329–45.

hundred) on account of his son's death.⁷⁷ In the end, Clarke was given the impression that about a third of Ngāti Whātua's army had been killed, which would imply between two to three hundred casualties.⁷⁸ Although this figure is much less than the "over a thousand" of later reports to Percy Smith by Ngāti Whātua survivors, it nevertheless represented a high casualty rate for both sides.⁷⁹

During the battle, Taiwhanga had particularly distinguished himself. When Richard Davis first introduced Taiwhanga by letter to the CMS Secretaries in London, he reported that Taiwhanga had returned from the Kaipara having gained "a great name among the natives."⁸⁰ In a later letter, Davis again emphasised Taiwhanga's military prowess: "In that fight, Taiwanga particularly singularized himself with his bravery; so that he returned much caressed by his Countrymen."⁸¹

William Williams, at the time of Taiwhanga's baptism, referred to this battle to explain his high-status as a warrior: "He joined Hongi in ten different fighting expeditions, first and last, but on this occasion he particularly distinguished himself by killing a principal Chief of the opposite party."⁸² Then, when Williams published his history of the mission in 1867, he again referred to Taiwhanga's reputation as having been established at Te Ika-a-Ranganui through the killing of a Kaipara chief: "His reputation stood so high that, after he had come to the determination to join the missionaries, he was frequently solicited to accompany the fighting expeditions, and when he steadily refused, a request was made that he would allow them to take the musket, with which a celebrated chief at Kaipara had been killed."⁸³

In Carleton's version of events, probably based on Taiwhanga's own testimony, it was not the killing of the Kaipara chief that is mentioned, but the saving of a fellow chief's life.

⁷⁷ George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:556).

⁷⁸ George Clarke, Journal, 19 May 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:544). Hongi Hika estimation Ngāti Whātua losses at about one hundred, while his own losses he said were at least twenty: James Kemp, Journal, 14 Jul 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:18–19).

⁷⁹ Smith, *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, 343. Although the casualty rate was high, it was not exceptionally so – even for the pre-musket era. The battle of Moremonui in 1807, for example, had a similar rate of casualties. John Elder estimates Ngā Puhi casualties on that occasion were between 150 to 300: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 319. In general, Angela Ballara cautions against uncritically accepting reported casualty figures when evaluating the impact of muskets on traditional forms of Māori warfare: Ballara, *Taua*, 41–49.

⁸⁰ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106).

⁸¹ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:214–20).

⁸² William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464).

⁸³ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 99.

Moka, alias Te Kainga-Mata, was severely wounded, hence his second name; his life was saved by Rawiri Taiwhanga, a brave of Hongi's (still living, and from whom this sketch of Hongi's life is obtained). Taiwanga, seeing Moka fall, carried him off the field of battle at the imminent risk of his own life, and threw him into a creek, where he remained till after the battle.”⁸⁴

In either case, Taiwhanga had returned from the battle with his mana greatly enhanced and his reputation firmly cemented as being one of Hongi Hika's most valued lieutenants.

6.5 Paihia (1825–26)

Despite his growing reputation, within weeks of returning from the Kaipara, Taiwhanga had decided to move with his family to Paihia. His decision was the result of a conversation he had had with Richard Davis when visiting Paihia.⁸⁵ The timing of that visit can be narrowed down to sometime in early September 1825, perhaps at the time a number of Ngā Puhi chiefs (including Hongi Hika) came to Paihia to inspect the building of the mission ship on 10 September 1825.⁸⁶ This dating is particularly significant as it would place Taiwhanga at Paihia just before the baptism of Karaitiana Te Rangi on 14 September 1825. He could easily have been an eyewitness of that event, which may have even influenced his decision to move to Paihia.

On the occasion of his visit, Davis spoke to Taiwhanga concerning the “evils of war and the wickedness thereof,” to which Taiwhanga expressed his desire to come and live with the missionaries.⁸⁷ His only concern was that it would exclude his wife and family.⁸⁸ Davis then made Taiwhanga an offer: “I told him, if he would come and live with us, he may bring his wife, and we would build him a house and fence him in a piece of ground for a garden; but at the same time that he must leave off going to fight and conform to our customs.” According to Davis, Taiwhanga readily agreed:

⁸⁴ Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:64. See also George Clarke, Journal, 19 May 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:544); Charles Davis, Journal, 29 Dec 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:114). Te Kainga-matā could mean either “Wounded by a bullet” or “The holder of ammunition”: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/moka-te-kainga-mataa>.

⁸⁵ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106); Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:215).

⁸⁶ In February 1826, Davis reported that Taiwhanga had been living with him for six months which would point to a date sometime in September 1825: Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106). For the date of Hongi Hika's visit, see Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:532).

⁸⁷ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:215).

⁸⁸ Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, 7 Jan 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:223). It was Taiwhanga's change in marital status rather than any ethical scruples that caused his reluctance to move to Paihia, contra Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 110.

"To this he consented, with a seemingly glad heart, and we immediately looked him out a place adjoining our premises, and had a house built for him and a garden fenced in."

Davis's invitation represented a new initiative for the mission, and Taiwhanga's acceptance became a model for other Māori to follow. Davis outlined his revised strategy to the CMS:

The plan which I would strongly recommend, & which I have put in practice, and which we are intending to pursue, is, to build houses and enclose lands for all those Natives who wish to attach themselves to us, on the Mission ground; and to do this at the expence of the Society, that in case a man may not turn out well, we may have the power of turning him out.

I have no doubt but Natives thus attached to us and broken off from their old connections, will, like Taiwanga, have a desire to cultivate their little Paddocks of wheat, &c. exclusive of their gardens. By adopting this, or a similar plan, I believe, through the blessed assistance of the Spirit of God, we shall be enabled to relieve both the temporal & spiritual wants of the Natives, and be a blessing to them both in body & soul.⁸⁹

Davis's proposal to Taiwhanga was consistent with Marsden's original scheme to use the civilising arts of agriculture as a means of introducing the Christian faith. And just as Marsden had adapted his ideas in response to Ruatara's vision, so too Davis had altered his approach to take advantage of the opportunity presented by Taiwhanga.⁹⁰ Davis's invitation, however, came with two conditions: that he renounce war, and change his traditional customs.

6.5.1 *Renouncing War*

Davis's first condition was for Taiwhanga to "leave off going to fight," as Davis termed it.⁹¹ This had not previously been a condition for Māori working for the mission, as much as the missionaries might have wished to discourage their

⁸⁹ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216–17).

⁹⁰ Hamilton also observes the continuity between Taiwhanga and Ruatara: "It all sounds rather like Ruatara's dream, and Taiwhanga's spiritual concerns at this stage matched Ruatara's too." Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 87.

⁹¹ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:215).

participation.⁹² Taiwhanga's acceptance of this new missionary demand was probably itself a reflection of changing attitudes within Ngā Puhi at this time.

A case in point was the example set by the Rangihoua chief, Waikato. He had accompanied Hongi on his trip to England in 1820–21 and upon returning had agreed to join Hongi on a campaign against the Thames. But once that campaign had ended, he had refused any further involvement in Hongi's wars.⁹³ Waikato was not alone in holding to anti-war sentiments; there was a growing disenchantment among other chiefs as well, such as Te Morenga and Te Koki.⁹⁴ For most Ngā Puhi, however, the shame of being identified as a coward or the threat of retribution was enough to secure their compliance.⁹⁵

Taiwhanga's renouncement of war then, while unusual, was understandable to other Māori, even if they did not sympathise with his stand. Hongi, of course, was determined to test Taiwhanga's resolve. A meeting between the pair probably occurred on 26 November 1825, when Hongi and his party visited Paihia to trade for munitions with the nearby shipping.⁹⁶ It had been a little over two months since Taiwhanga had moved to Paihia. Richard Davis described the encounter: "When Shunghi went away to the last, or present war, being loath to leave so valiant a man behind him, he made use of every influence to get the man away with him, but he would not go."⁹⁷

According to Davis, after Hongi had left, Taiwhanga told him, "before you took me to live at your place, I loved my own Country and my Country fashions and

⁹² The missionaries had advocated for peace among Māori from the inception of the mission. It was an integral part of Marsden's civilising strategy: Samuel Marsden to John Stokes , 26 Nov 1811, in George Mackaness, ed., *Some Private Correspondence of the Rev. Samuel Marsden and Family. 1794–1824* (Dubbo, NSW: Review Publications, 1976), 43–46. For the missionaries, the wars engaged in by Māori were a breach of the sixth commandment. But they also appealed to the impoverishment caused by war, a compassion for its victims, and the positive example provided by Tahitian converts (as well as the early history of the English people): John Williams to John Stokes, 22 Nov 1821 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N E, item 5); James Shepherd, Journal, 8 Feb 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:429); John King, Journal, 25 Jul 1822 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:278); James Shepherd, Journal, 28 Dec 1822 (ML, A1965, 3); James Kemp to the Secretary, 24 Jul 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:257).

⁹³ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 386.

⁹⁴ James Shepherd, Journal, 23 Apr 1824 (ML, A1965, 45); Henry Williams, entry dated 24 Jul 1825, in Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:535); Charles Davis, Journal, 5 Nov 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:111–12); Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 26 Dec 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:47).

⁹⁵ John King, Journal, 11 Feb 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:449–50); James Shepherd, Journal, 28 Dec 1822 (ML, A1965, 3); James Shepherd, Journal, 24 Apr 1824 (ML, A1965, 45); William Williams, Journal, 7 May 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:190).

⁹⁶ Charles Davis, Journal, 26 Nov 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:113).

⁹⁷ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106).

customs, but now I have a home and a good garden; I love your manners and customs better than those of my own people, and my heart is also very good for your prayers and instructions.”⁹⁸ As this comment indicates, within two months of moving to Paihia, Taiwhanga was already reporting a growing desire to embrace Davis’s second condition of living at Paihia – “Conforming to our customs.”

6.5.2 *Changing Customs*

Taiwhanga, of course, was familiar with the customs of the missionaries from having lived as a single man at Kerikeri. Davis’s invitation, however, created a new opportunity for Taiwhanga to live with the missionaries at Paihia with his own house and garden. A few months later, at Taiwhanga’s request, a larger area of land had been assigned, which he then planted in potatoes. A year further on, Davis reported Taiwhanga’s progress: “At this time his garden is nearly full of ripe potatoes, and he has besides growing in it, Indian Corn, Cucumbers, Pumpions [sic], Melons of different kinds, Peach trees, Vines, Onions, Shalots [sic], Peas, Turnips, etc.”⁹⁹ In addition, Taiwhanga had planted about an acre of wheat and was working for the mission as a sawyer. He also decided to replace his first house with one that Davis described as being a European-styled house of wattle and daub construction.¹⁰⁰ It closely resembled the house that Davis himself was living in at the time (which may well have been Taiwhanga’s intention) and was completed before the end of June 1827.¹⁰¹

Taiwhanga had also adopted the missionary pattern of Christian prayer. Davis told the CMS in the new year that “[Taiwhanga] and his wife and people attend our daily and Sunday Schools, and also our family worship twice a day.”¹⁰² He was also dressing in European clothes and was raising his son, Hira, “after the European

⁹⁸ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106).

⁹⁹ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216).

¹⁰⁰ The house consisted of three rooms with Taiwhanga making the doors and window frames himself. It represented the first European-styled house built by Māori for their own use. Previous European-styled houses had been gifts constructed by European benefactors. For instance, Te Pahi had had a European-styled house erected for him by sailors in 1806 as a gift from Governor King, and William Puckey (senior) built a house for Hongi Hika on Samuel Marsden’s orders in 1824: Lee, *The Logbooks of the Lady Nelson*, 285–94; James Kemp, Journal, 31 Jul 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:003). Te Pahi’s house was destroyed by sailors in 1810 in reprisal for the Boyd massacre, and Hongi Hika’s house was destroyed by fire in 1828: “Sydney”, *Sydney Gazette*, 25 Aug 1810; James Hamlin, Journal, 16 Sep 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:197).

¹⁰¹ Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, 3 Jul 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N O4, item 19, page 13). Note that Wilson has conflated this house with the second house built by Taiwhanga in 1829: Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 112.

¹⁰² Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106).

fashion.”¹⁰³ As a result of these changes, to all outward appearances Taiwhanga had fully complied with Davis’s conditions and had embraced the pattern of life modelled for him by the missionaries.

Taiwhanga’s outward conformity did not mean, however, a change in his inner demeanour. An example of his violent disposition in these early years was recorded by William Marshall in 1834 when he visited Paihia as a ship’s surgeon on the HMS *Alligator*. On that visit William Williams had told Marshall of his first encounter with Taiwhanga upon arriving in New Zealand in March 1826: “Williams … found [Taiwhanga] quarrelling with his wife, on account as he alleged of her provoking temper. She was lying prostrate in her own blood upon the ground, having been knocked down and wounded by her exasperated and inhuman husband.”¹⁰⁴

Marianne Williams would later describe Taiwhanga during this period as being a man of “naturally strong passions” who had “many and deep struggles.”¹⁰⁵

For the missionaries, it was the inward rather than the outward changes that were the most important and it is clear that the missionaries did not yet consider him to be a convert. In his November letter of 1826, Davis reported on Taiwhanga’s spiritual state:

I wish I could say he was a converted man. Ah! this is the great concern, and I have frequently felt much on this point. In this world these poor Heathen are much attached to us; we are continually receiving kindnesses from them: but, alas, when we look forward to an eternal world, all appears dark and gloomy on their part.¹⁰⁶

Yet, for Davis, there were grounds for hope:

It is distressing to me to consider that Taiwanga’s hopes, although they have a promising and pleasing appearance, are only confined to this world; at least for the present. But I hope better things are in store for him, and for our other poor fellow [Pita], yea, and for all the New Zealanders. Taiwanga is a regular attendant on the means of grace and is in part acquainted with the wickednesses of the human heart, and often laments it. Oh, that he may be soon made acquainted with a Saviour’s love.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216); Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 27 Feb 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:106).

¹⁰⁴ William Barrett Marshall, *A Personal Narrative of Two Visits to New Zealand, in his Majesty’s Ship Alligator, A.D. 1834* (London, 1836), 31.

¹⁰⁵ Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 176.

¹⁰⁶ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216).

¹⁰⁷ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216).

Davis was at least reassured that Taiwhanga appeared to recognise the nature of his sinful condition and was showing the first signs of a genuine repentance.¹⁰⁸

6.5.3 New Leadership

By the beginning of 1829, with the death of Te Koki and his son, Rangituke, and the increasing age of Tohitapu, Taiwhanga had emerged as the leading rangatira living at Paihia.¹⁰⁹ William Williams described him as the “principal Native of our Settlement.”¹¹⁰ In moving to Paihia, Taiwhanga appears to have been able to maintain his status as a Māori chief, and thereby considerably enhance the security of the mission station. Davis said as much to the CMS in his letter of November 1826: “And Natives thus living with us, will strengthen our hands against those refractory mobs that so often disturb us; and will make our residence in New Zealand much more comfortable than it is at present.”¹¹¹ In recognition of his patronage of the mission, Taiwhanga was among the exclusive group of nine chiefs – three of whom were based at Paihia – who received a gift of a heifer from the missionary committee in July 1827.¹¹²

Taiwhanga’s ability to give security to the mission was put to the test in March 1827 when he advocated on behalf of the Paihia mission at a hahunga feast [ceremony for uplifting bones] that took place at Tohitapu’s kāinga at Hāumi, a few kilometres south of Paihia.¹¹³ It was a time of heightened tension for the mission with Hongi Hika having been mortally wounded and the Wesleyan station at Whangaroa recently plundered and destroyed.¹¹⁴ Hahunga were often used as occasions to

¹⁰⁸ As will be seen, Davis’s assessment was echoed by Taiwhanga himself in his letter to John Coleman written about this time: “Letter from Chief Taiwhanga to the author”, in John Noble Coleman, *A Memoir of the Rev. Richard Davis: For Thirty-nine Years a Missionary in New Zealand* (London, 1865), 448–49.

¹⁰⁹ Te Koki died in February 1829 from an abscess on the arm, while Rangituke was killed fighting at the Thames in June 1828: Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 160; Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 115–16; William Williams, *Journal*, 4 Jul 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:209). Tohitapu was to eventually die of an illness at Paihia, 14 Jul 1833: Henry Williams, *Journal*, 14 Jul 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:266).

¹¹⁰ William Williams, *Journal*, 14 Apr 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:311).

¹¹¹ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:217).

¹¹² Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, 3 Jul 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N O4, item 19, page 13). The other Paihia chiefs were Tohitapu and Te Koki.

¹¹³ William Williams, *Journal*, 27 Mar 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:414–5); Charles Davis, *Journal*, 27 Mar 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:371–72).

¹¹⁴ Hongi Hika was wounded in an attack on a Whangaroa pā on 11 January 1827, eventually dying from the wound a year later on 6 March 1828: Henry Williams, *Journal*, 12 Jan 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:237); Henry Williams, *Journal*, 6 Mar 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:589). In a mark of Taiwhanga’s diplomatic value to the mission, it was he who went to Whangaroa to confirm the news of Hongi’s death: Henry Williams, *Journal*, 10 Mar 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:589).

debate redress for the deceased and others, and the feast at Hāumi for Tohitapu's son proved to be no exception. It was attended by upward of six hundred Ngā Puhi, many of whom had arrived from Whangaroa.¹¹⁵ The Whangaroa Māori had already made their intentions known as they passed through Paihia, and many of the speeches at the hahunga had advocated for the plundering of the Paihia station. The potential danger for the mission was heightened by the absence of Te Koki, who had gone to the south with a large contingent to avenge the death of Pomāre.¹¹⁶ Henry Williams was in no doubt as to the seriousness of the threat.¹¹⁷

At the hahunga, two Māori rose to defend the mission, one of whom was Taiwhanga.¹¹⁸ Charles Davis, who witnessed the event, gave a precis of Taiwhanga's speech:

'Are you kindly disposed toward the Strangers (alluding to us)? No, you are not kindly disposed toward them. Te pui [Te Puhi] (the name of the late Chief at Whangaroah) is the man who kills white people: he is a bad man, and if he were dead I should be glad. Is there Mr Turner now at Whangaroah? No, his is gone; and what is the good of the Trees, the Stones, and the Earth (alluding to Whangaroah Settlement). Mr Turner did but just escape being killed, as also the people of the Ship you plundered. The guns & powder are the things which have made you Gentlemen.'¹¹⁹

In his speech, Taiwhanga emphasised the consequences of their proposed course of action, while pointing out the corrupting impact of muskets and powder on their character. The outcome was positive for the mission, for when the Whangaroa returned from the feast, although they plundered a number of houses in the area (including Te Koki's Paihia residence), they left the mission largely unmolested. In this way Taiwhanga was able to use his leadership and mana for the protection and benefit of the CMS mission.

6.6 Four Letters (1826–29)

In moving to Paihia, Taiwhanga may have renounced war and other traditional customs, but what can be known of his religious convictions at this time? An analysis of four letters that Taiwhanga is known to have written in the years 1826 to 1829 leading up to his baptism in February 1830 helps provide an answer. These letters

¹¹⁵ William Williams, Journal, 25 Mar 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:414). Hongi Hika, though seriously wounded, was among their number.

¹¹⁶ Crosby, *The Musket Wars*, 166–67.

¹¹⁷ Henry Williams, Journal, 26 Mar 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:392).

¹¹⁸ The other defender was anonymous, but a likely candidate was Te Pākira.

¹¹⁹ Charles Davis, Journal, 27 Mar 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:372).

form a significant and unique collection of writing from a Māori convert in the period before his baptism and provide considerable insight into the process of Taiwhanga's conversion.¹²⁰

6.6.1 *Letter to Coleman: Learning to Pray*

The first of Taiwhanga's letters was written to John Coleman, a CMS supporter and friend of Richard Davis. The letter was dated 23 October 1826, one year after having moved to Paihia, and was sent to England together with an English translation – presumably by Davis, who also wrote to Coleman on the same date.¹²¹ Although the original is no longer extant, Coleman published a transcript of Taiwhanga's letter in 1865 as an appendix to his memoir on Davis.¹²² Coleman claimed that Taiwhanga's letter represented the first to be sent to England by a Māori. As such, the letter is of considerable historical importance, although of more particular interest for this study is the insight it provides concerning Taiwhanga's religious outlook after one year of living at Paihia.¹²³

Three aspects can be highlighted. Firstly, the letter confirms the reports made by Davis to the CMS concerning Taiwhanga's religious motivations in moving to Paihia. Davis had told the CMS that Taiwhanga was happy to break with his former life and conform to missionary customs.¹²⁴ This was also the view Taiwhanga expressed in his letter. He began by declaring: "My evil works are all done with."¹²⁵ Then further on, he spoke of his commitment to a new way of life: "This is the good thing to me, to believe in God, to cast away my bad deeds, and to turn to Him."

Secondly, the letter also confirms Davis's assessment that Taiwhanga was, "in part acquainted with the wickednesses of the human heart." Taiwhanga wrote how he had

¹²⁰ The three surviving letters have been included as Appendix II.

¹²¹ "Letter from Chief Taiwhanga to the author", in Coleman, 448–49; Richard Davis to John Coleman, 23 October 1826, in Coleman, 81–86.

¹²² "Letter from Chief Taiwhanga to the author", in Coleman, 448–49. For a transcript of the letter, see Appendix II. The letter as published purports to have been penned by Taiwhanga himself, although Davis may have acted as a copyist, or even perhaps as an amanuensis. For the purpose of this thesis it will be assumed that the letter accurately reflects Taiwhanga's own thoughts and words.

¹²³ Another significant letter from this period was written by Eruera Pare Hongi, a ten-year-old pupil at George Clarke's Kerikeri school. Hongi's letter, written sometime between October and December 1825, was submitted by Clark to the CMS as an example of the progress being made by his pupils: Letter of Eruera Parry Hongi with Translation (ATL, MS-Papers-1009-2/71, item 1 & 2); George Clarke to the Secretaries, 2 Jan 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:060). Although Hongi's letter is not without interest, the claim made by Alison Jones' and Kuni Jenkins' that it represents "the earliest example of independent Māori writing" is somewhat overstated as it does not give sufficient weight to its schoolroom context: Jones and Jenkins, *Words Between Us*, 187–88.

¹²⁴ Richard Davis to the Assistant Secretary, 10 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:216).

¹²⁵ For convenience, the English translation will be used in place of the Māori text.

come to understand the “many wicked works of the New Zealanders” and the “deceitfulness of our hearts.” In this regard, Taiwhanga shared a similar religious perspective to that expressed by the family of Te Rangi as discussed in a previous chapter. For instance, Wini, one of Te Rangi’s brothers, had told William Williams at around the same time that Taiwhanga was writing to Coleman, “I am bad with vexation for the exceeding fixedness of my bad heart.”¹²⁶ Like Te Rangi’s family, Taiwhanga may have witnessed Te Rangi’s baptism in September 1825, and he would have had regular contact with them over the subsequent months when accompanying the missionaries on their Sabbath visits to Waitangi.

Thirdly, the letter provides evidence that Taiwhanga, like Te Rangi’s brothers, Tioka and Wini, had begun to pray for a new heart within. It was Te Rangi who, on the urging of Henry Williams, had begun to pray in this way and it was his experience of answered prayer that led to his profession of faith on 7 August 1825. Then, following Te Rangi’s death, William Williams had reported that his brothers, Tioka and Wini, were also seeking to follow his example. Despite their persistent efforts, their prayers remained unanswered: “Perhaps,” said Wini, “God will not hear us: we have called upon him for a long time without perceiving any great change.”¹²⁷ William Williams responded by reassuring them of God’s promise to give the Holy Spirit to those who pray.

These exchanges between Williams and Te Rangi’s brothers provide a helpful context for understanding Taiwhanga’s concerns as expressed in his letter with regard to prayer: “Many are the prayers we pray to God,” Taiwhanga wrote. “But alas! our prayers are only from the lips, they do not come from the heart.” Taiwhanga was not so much concerned with the sincerity of his prayers as that they had gone unanswered, and that he was yet to experience the new heart for which he prayed. Therefore, Taiwhanga would have readily agreed with Davis’s assessment that he was not yet a convert. “By and by,” wrote Taiwhanga, “perhaps, they [his prayers] may come from the heart, by or through the strength of the Spirit of God.” In this way, Taiwhanga’s letter reflects the same religious engagement that the missionaries were having with Te Rangi’s brothers at Waitangi during the latter part of 1826.

¹²⁶ William Williams, Journal, 13 Aug 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:196).

¹²⁷ William Williams, Journal, 13 Aug 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:196).

Although not mentioned in the letter, Taiwhanga's religious perspective may have been influenced by the spiritual experiences of Pita, a fellow chief also living at Paihia. In Davis's own letter to John Coleman on the same date as Taiwhanga's (23 October 1823), Davis wrote of the transformation that had taken place in Pita's life five months earlier.¹²⁸ One morning during family prayers, Davis had observed a joyful change in Pita's demeanour and inquired as to the cause. Pita informed Davis that the previous night he had had a dream in which he saw his deceased sister in the fires of hell and that he had heard a voice telling him to believe the missionary message. Pita's dream was reminiscent of Te Rangi's dream of having gone to heaven and meeting Jesus Christ. Despite the missionary caution with regard to dreams, Taiwhanga may have been influenced by Pita's claims and reinforced his desire, expressed in the letter to Coleman, "to cast away my bad deeds, and to turn to Him."

6.6.2 *Letter Confirming Monogamy*

The second letter written by Taiwhanga concerned the subject of monogamy. Although the text has not been preserved, the circumstances of the letter marked a significant turning point in Taiwhanga's commitment to missionary Christianity. In February 1828, Taiwhanga and Pita had precipitated a major crisis for the mission when they each decided to take one of their slaves as a second wife. Although the missionaries later spoke of Taiwhanga as having given in to temptation, the fact that the two leading prospects of the Paihia mission were reverting to traditional marriage customs indicated a more significant challenge than simply a moral lapse. When their actions became known, Taiwhanga and Pita were given an ultimatum: either send these slave wives away or leave the mission. The crisis was resolved on 9 February 1828 when Taiwhanga wrote a letter to the Paihia missionaries agreeing to their terms.

The immediate trigger for the crisis was the attempt by William Williams to emancipate one of Taiwhanga's slaves who was living in Williams's household.¹²⁹ Presumably, his intention was to reward her faithful service, but instead she responded by running off and taking refuge with Taiwhanga, who took her in as his second wife. She may well have previously had that status – before Taiwhanga's

¹²⁸ Richard Davis to John Coleman, 23 October 1826, in Coleman, 81–86. Pita and his wife, Mere, were baptised with Taiwhanga on 7 February 1830.

¹²⁹ Richard Davis, Journal, 10 Feb 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:16).

move to Paihia made it expedient to remove her from his household and place her with the Williamses. When, on 8 February, the sexual nature of Taiwhanga's relationship became known, Richard Davis saw it as nothing less than a diabolical attack on the mission – one that left them in a difficult dilemma: "As such things could not be allowed in a Mission Settlement and the men both promising characters and far advanced in general knowledge, we were for a time quite at a loss to know what steps to take, in order to separate these men from their second wives so as not to drive them from the Settlement."¹³⁰

The coordination between Taiwhanga and Pita may also indicate that there was a political dimension to their actions. It is possible that they were intending to use their marriages as a means of strengthening their alliance with Rotorua. Both their slave-wives were Rotorua war-captives, and Taiwhanga was hosting a party of prominent Rotorua guests at his house at the time, including relatives of his first wife, Māta.¹³¹ It could easily have been the case that Taiwhanga's second wife also had relatives within the visiting party. It is also known that Taiwhanga had had a number of debates with his Rotorua guests concerning the relevance of traditional customs, and that the issue of monogamy continued to be a central concern for Rotorua Māori when the missionaries arrived there in 1831.¹³² Consequently, given that marriage was often used as a way of cementing peace between former enemies, this may have formed a part of Taiwhanga's motivation when he took the decision to breach the mission rules on monogamy.

The day after the discovery of the second marriage arrangements, the missionaries decided they had to deliver an ultimatum:

I spoke to them in private, explained the evil of which they had been guilty, and told them in plain terms, but feelingly and affectionately, that if they persisted in keeping their second wives they must quit. After a day of painful suspense to us,

¹³⁰ Richard Davis, Journal, 10 Feb 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:16).

¹³¹ The unarmed party of approximately thirty had arrived from Rotorua in August 1827. Upon arrival at the entrance to the Bay of Islands, they had been immediately attacked by Moka and would have been killed but for the intervention of Te Koki. As many of the visitors were relatives of Taiwhanga's wife and still in danger, Taiwhanga came and brought a number of them to Paihia to be under his protection: Henry Williams, Journal, 19–22 Aug 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:408–9); William Williams, 19–23 Aug 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:421, 363–64); Richard Davis, Journal, 20 Aug 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:36). The Rotorua visitors stayed for seven months at Paihia until eventually, in March 1828, with their lives again under threat, the missionaries were forced to secretly evacuate them to Rotorua on the mission ship, *Herald*: Henry Williams, Journal, 4 Apr 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:142). It was this visit in 1827–8 and the hospitality provided at Paihia that opened the way for the missionaries and Taiwhanga to visit Rotorua in 1831.

¹³² Charles Davis, Journal, 13 Oct 1827 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:28); "Narrative of a visit to Tauranga &c., Mr. Thomas Chapman, Oct. 1831 to Nov. 1831" (ATL, qMS-0425, vol. 1, 26–27).

they consented to put away their second wives, and to conform to our rules. May the Lord make us truly grateful for this victory over the prince of darkness!¹³³

Yet, as William Williams later revealed, Taiwhanga was not easily convinced. Far from complying with their ultimatum, he had proceeded to load all his property into a canoe with a “dark and lowering” countenance and displayed every intention of departing the mission for good.¹³⁴ Whether Taiwhanga fully intended to leave, or whether (as may be more likely) he was testing the missionary resolve, Williams reported that, having packed his canoe, Taiwhanga “suddenly renounced his intention, and carried his goods back to the house.” William Marshall, who heard the story when visiting Paihia in 1834, gave a more embellished version of the stand-off:

The day came, and its dawn beheld Taiwangi preparing to depart, and stowing away all his little property in the canoe that waited to convey him across to the opposite shore, where no law prevailed to forbid his marrying as many wives as he chose. He floated his canoe, and with his foot on the gunwale, was about to spring on board and shove off, when, by one of those mysterious movements of the soul which overturn all plans, set aside every previous arrangement, and suddenly decide for a man the whole course and fortune of his future life, the heart of the wanderer sunk within him, his mind misgave him that he could not be happy if he quitted the settlement: a brief pause sufficing for a moment’s reflection and forethought, he decided to deny himself, and remain with the missionaries.¹³⁵

Having given up their intention to leave, Taiwhanga and Pita confirmed their decision in writing: “The eyes of all the Settlement were on us anxiously looking to see how the matter would end,” wrote Richard Davis. “Late in the afternoon, to our no small joy, they wrote to us to say they had come to the conclusion to put away their second wives and conform to our rules.”¹³⁶ Although the text of the letter no longer exists, the intention behind it has been preserved. The incident was also noted by the missionaries as a significant turning point in Taiwhanga’s commitment to missionary Christianity. In giving an account of Taiwhanga’s baptism two years later, William Williams pointed to this moment as the time from which a change had gradually begun to take place.¹³⁷ In his history of the CMS mission, Williams remarked that, up until this point, Taiwhanga had contended with “many temptations,” but that afterwards, he had maintained himself on “a steady course.”¹³⁸

¹³³ Richard Davis, Journal entry, 10 Feb 1828, in Coleman, 100. It seems that Charles Davis also had a word with them: Charles Davis, Journal, 9 Feb 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:32–33).

¹³⁴ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 99. William Williams made no reference to this incident in his journal at the time.

¹³⁵ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, 32.

¹³⁶ Richard Davis, Journal, 10 Feb 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:16).

¹³⁷ William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464).

¹³⁸ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 99.

6.6.3 Letter to Marsden: Becoming Thoughtful

Taiwhanga's third letter was written to Samuel Marsden in New South Wales sometime towards the end of 1828.¹³⁹ In the letter, Taiwhanga requested a number of casks of nails to be sent so that he might build a new house. Significantly, the letter seems to have survived in its original holograph – the earliest such example on record.¹⁴⁰ The letter also contains a number of comments that shed light on Taiwhanga's Christian understanding in the year prior to his baptism.¹⁴¹ Although the letter was undated, it was received by Marsden in time to be considered by the Australasian Corresponding Committee in New South Wales at its meetings on 19 and 30 December 1828.¹⁴² Taiwhanga's letter probably accompanied other letters sent to Sydney around this time, either via the *Industry* (arriving 24 October 1828) or the *New Zealander* (arriving 9 December 1828).¹⁴³ Consequently, the letter can be confidently dated to between September and November 1828.¹⁴⁴

In January 1829, the Corresponding Committee sent various building materials and other supplies to the Bay of Islands via the *New Zealander*. In his covering letter, the secretary of the committee, Richard Hill, informed William Williams that, "The Committee of Correspondence approve of 'Taiwanga' being furnished with Nails for his house. If there are not any sent specially for him they had better be furnished on Mr Davis's application from the Store, and some in lieu of them can be sent with the

¹³⁹ Taiwhanga to Samuel Marsden, [undated] (ML, A1994, 68–70b). Note that a date of 1825 has been added to the letter by a later hand. The letter contains a translation written under each line of text but, apart from the first paragraph and occasional word, it is too faint to read. The Mitchell library also has a transcription of Taiwhanga's letter together with a translation: "Taiwhanga to Samuel Marsden", undated (ML, A1994, 147–53). This appears to be the "letter" that Eric Ramsden describes as having been written in "excerise book form" on paper with a watermark of 1821: Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions*, 200. A facsimile copy of the Mitchell library manuscript and transcript are held in the Hocken library: "Letter to Samuel Marsden from the Maori chief Taiwanga," c. 1825 (HL, MS-2267/004). A fresh transcription of the original letter has been provided in Appendix II, together with a new translation provided alongside the one held in the Mitchell library.

¹⁴⁰ Only a facsimile of the document has been sighted, but the remnants of a wax seal are still visible and indicate that it was the original letter as received by Marsden.

¹⁴¹ Contra Hamilton who claims there is little evidence from this period: Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 90.

¹⁴² "Minutes of the Australian Corresponding Committee of the CMS", 30 Dec 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:359–60). The meeting was spread over two sessions, hence the two dates involved.

¹⁴³ Richard Hill acknowledged three letters from William Williams sent to the Corresponding Committee: Richard Hill to William Williams, 13 January 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:351). Both the *Industry* and the *New Zealander* sailed from the Hokianga: "Shipping Intelligence", *Sydney Gazette*, 10 Nov 1828; "Shipping Intelligence", *Sydney Gazette*, 10 Dec 1828.

¹⁴⁴ This corrects a date written on the letter itself (in a different hand) stating "Taiwhanga 1825." In addition to the reasons given here, the date of 1825 is also contradicted by internal evidence from the letter, which refers to Marsden's visit in April 1827 when he witnessed the birth of Taiwhanga's second son and saw the wounded Hongi Hika.

remainder of your order of Supplies for the Mission.”¹⁴⁵ It turns out that Richard Davis had himself been building a house over the summer and reported that Taiwhanga was planning to do the same, which would explain the timing of Taiwhanga’s letter to Marsden.¹⁴⁶

Davis was confident that with a little assistance Taiwhanga would be able to complete the task, though it seems that Taiwhanga did not begin the work straight away. Later in the year, though, he was forced to make a start due to his first house being destroyed by fire.¹⁴⁷ As a result of the fire, Davis recorded that “Taiwanga is now building himself a good European house and I have just removed my family from my rush house into a lathe and plaster one.”¹⁴⁸ When Samuel Marsden arrived in New Zealand on his sixth visit in March 1830, Taiwhanga’s house was still under construction, though the framing was complete and the roof on.¹⁴⁹ When completed, Taiwhanga’s second house (like his first) would have closely resembled the one constructed by Davis.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ Richard Hill to William Williams, 13 Jan 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:351).

¹⁴⁶ Richard Davis to Dandeson Coates, 31 Jan 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:167–69).

¹⁴⁷ William Williams, Journal, 24 Sep 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:487). Taiwhanga’s house was set alight from a fire started in a neighbouring *raupō* [bulrush] hut. Davis’s old house, which was nearby, almost suffered the same fate.

¹⁴⁸ Richard Davis, Journal, 24 Sep 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:433).

¹⁴⁹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 481.

¹⁵⁰ Descriptions of the house differ among observers. Captain William Jacob visited the Bay of Islands for a week in February 1833 and described the house as “a stone house in the English style, without an upper story, but with doors and windows and fire places, floor and ceiling, in very creditable style.” Capt. William Jacob to Rev. Richard Hill, 13 Mar 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:144). Jacob was a captain in the Bombay Artillary and a member of the CMS Corresponding Committee in India. William Marshall, who visited in March 1834, described Taiwhanga’s house as being “built of plank, and the work of his own hands.” Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, 36.



Figure 3: Photograph of Taiwhanga's second house by Russell Duncan, 1903¹⁵¹

After his request for nails, Taiwhanga added a number of other comments that provide useful insights into his religious understanding at this time. Firstly, it is evident that Taiwhanga did not yet consider himself to be fully converted. But neither did he identify with the majority of his peers who disregarded the missionary message. Taiwhanga told Marsden that he had “complete affection” [whaka aroha] for the preaching of the missionaries and that he was conscious of the great evil of those who refuse to listen, whom he designates as “a troublesome people” [he iwi tutu].¹⁵² It appears from these comments that Taiwhanga was now identifying himself with the missionary cause. This was also Davis’s perception of the situation in a letter to John Coleman a few months later. Davis said Taiwhanga “has thrown off all native customs and superstitions, and sits with us as one of ourselves.”¹⁵³

Secondly, Taiwhanga was conscious of the impending threat of God’s judgment on himself and the wicked. Taiwhanga told Marsden that he was “shaken, startled” [korowhiti] and “anxious” [awangawanga] for the “words of God” and the need to

¹⁵¹ Russell James Duncan, 1855–1946: Photograph Albums, “John Fox’s House, Paihia”, Photographed 11 May 1903 (ATL, Ref: PA1-o-142-091 <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22854679>). After Taiwhanga moved to Kaikohe in 1834, the house is thought to have been used as a printery for the mission, 1835–39, and later became known as John Fox’s house after one of its tenants. It was derelict in 1903 and has since been demolished. See also Kay Boese, *Tides of History: Bay of Islands County* (Bay of Islands, NZ: Bay of Islands County Council, 1977), 7.

¹⁵² Quotations are taken from the letter as transcribed in Appendix II. The translation used is my own.

¹⁵³ Richard Davis to John Coleman, 24 April 1829, in Coleman, 124. Davis gave the CMS a similar report: Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 29 Apr 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:313).

heed the warnings with regard to the place of fire. This perspective on heaven and hell would have been reinforced for him by a new missionary catechism written earlier in the year in which the reality of hell was graphically portrayed.¹⁵⁴ Teaching from this catechism would have been a part of the daily education taking place at Paihia, hence Taiwhanga's reference to "many evenings and many mornings." That Taiwhanga was prepared to entertain ideas so opposed to a traditional Māori eschatological framework might also indicate the continuing influence of Pita's dream from two years earlier concerning his deceased sister.¹⁵⁵ In this letter, Taiwhanga conceives of the Māori refusal to listen as being the consequence of their spiritual peril: "They will not listen for their good for they are separated from Jehovah God."

Thirdly, Taiwhanga had become what the missionaries described as "thoughtful." Richard Davis described him in this way in April 1829 and then again in September 1829.¹⁵⁶ In his letter, Taiwhanga described himself as "pondering the things of God" [te noho whakaaro nei ki te Atua] and that he now had only one "thought" [whakaaro]. That thought, he told Marsden, concerned "the salvation that is dawning from heaven above." Taiwhanga's desire to go to the "better place" [te kāinga pai], was again reminiscent of Te Rangi's desire to be with Jesus in heaven. The missionary designation of "thoughtful" would later become a common description for Māori who were sincere in their consideration of the missionary message, particularly in regard to the prospect of heaven.¹⁵⁷

Six months after Taiwhanga's letter to Marsden, Richard Davis described Taiwhanga and Pita to Coleman as being "two stanch [sic], valuable friends to me."¹⁵⁸ Although Davis still regarded Taiwhanga as a "regular warrior," he could see that he was also

¹⁵⁴ Particularly questions 13 and 27–29: Ko Te Katikihama I, in Church Missionary Society, *Kenehi*, 89–93. William Yate drafted this catechism in February 1828 a month after arriving in New Zealand and it was translated into Māori by the missionaries at Kerikeri. It was examined and approved for general use by the language committee in August 1828. There was also an earlier catechism written by James Shepherd that had been in use since August 1826: Ko Te Katikihama II, in Church Missionary Society, *Kenehi*, 94–100.

¹⁵⁵ Richard Davis to John Coleman, 23 October 1826, in Coleman, 81–86.

¹⁵⁶ Richard Davis to John Coleman, 24 April 1829, in Coleman, 124; Richard Davis to Richard Hill, 5 Sep 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:359).

¹⁵⁷ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Sep 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:228); Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 10 Nov 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:571); William Williams, Journal, 14 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:598); William Yate, Journal, 6 Sep 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:259).

¹⁵⁸ Richard Davis to John Coleman, 24 April 1829, in Coleman, 124. Davis gave the CMS a similar report: Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 29 Apr 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:313).

"thoughtful of his eternal state." It is clear, that from the beginning of 1829, the missionary perception of Taiwhanga's spiritual condition had begun to change.

6.6.4 Letter Requesting Baptism for Children

Taiwhanga wrote the last of his four letters on 25 July 1829. The letter was addressed to the missionaries at Paihia and expressed his desire to have his children baptised. Although the original text in te reo Māori has not survived, both William Williams and Richard Davis entered a translation into their journals.¹⁵⁹ Davis later commented that he found it difficult to capture the power of Taiwhanga's expression: "In giving the Native conversations and sayings I have endeavoured to give the meaning in English as near as possible, but in Taiwanga's Letter I know I have fallen short, as the figure is very forcible in the native language."¹⁶⁰

Once again, there are three aspects of the letter that can be highlighted. Firstly, as the opening indicates, Taiwhanga had not initiated the request for his children's baptism but was responding to a prior invitation from the missionaries. That the missionaries had taken the initiative is seen in Davis's translation: "I am thinking of that (He had been spoken to about the baptism of his children), namely, the baptism of my Children." Taiwhanga's fourth child had recently been born and, with the birth of a child to William and Jane Williams, the intention seems to have been to invite Taiwhanga to include his children in the coming baptism service.¹⁶¹

This invitation was consistent with a policy already adopted by William Yate at Kerikeri, where he had baptised the two children of Tawa and Rangi earlier in the year.¹⁶² Yate stated his reasoning to the CMS:

I this morning baptized the infant son of Taua [Tawa] and Rangi by the name of James Kemp. Its parents have lived a long time with Mr Kemp and were both of them particularly anxious to have their child brought up in the principles of Christianity, as they have both thrown off their native superstitions and have long seen the superiority of the Christian Religion. This is the first New Zealand Child that has been dedicated to the Lord by baptism and I trust that both its parents, though not baptized themselves, really feel their need of a Saviour & are not far from the kingdom of heaven.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ William Williams, Journal, 26 July 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:483–4); Richard Davis, Journal, 25 Jul 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:432). See Appendix II for a transcription of their translations.

¹⁶⁰ Richard Davis, Journal, 20 Dec 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:433).

¹⁶¹ The Williamses' third son was born 22 July 1829: William Williams, Journal, 22 Jul 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:483). There is no indication that the missionaries were at all reluctant to baptise Taiwhanga's children, contra Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 88–89.

¹⁶² William Yate, Journal, 6 Apr 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:260); William Yate, 21 Jun 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:418).

¹⁶³ William Yate, Journal, 6 Apr 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:260).

Taiwhanga was in a similar situation to that of Tawa and Rangi. He and Māta had been living with the missionaries at Paihia for almost four years and had also been raising their children in the European manner. As Taiwhanga states in his letter, he had, like Tawa and Rangi, “left off my native rights and my native thoughts also” and was confident that the missionaries were, indeed, “messengers sent from God.” Taiwhanga’s circumstances closely matched the criteria that Yate had established in Kerikeri, and the same standard was likely to have applied at Paihia. Like Tawa and Rangi, Taiwhanga would have been considered “not far from the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁶⁴ In fact by August 1829 Davis was already regarding Taiwhanga as a convert and a suitable candidate for baptism.¹⁶⁵

Secondly, Taiwhanga’s request for his children’s baptism would have been shaped by his understanding of the traditional Māori ceremony of tohi. The customary practice of tohi (literally, to endue), like infant baptism in the Christian tradition, involved the dedication of a child by the sprinkling of water and the recitation of karakia.¹⁶⁶ For Māori, tohi was viewed as essential for the well-being and protection of their children.¹⁶⁷ According to Marsden, Māori considered that a child would be under a threat of death if the ceremony was omitted. It would have been understandable for Taiwhanga, in living with the missionaries, to have regarded baptism in the same way.

However, Taiwhanga would also have contrasted Christian baptism with tohi. When the missionaries discussed baptism with Paihia Māori, Pita pointed out what he considered the difference between the two ceremonies: “The Natives have a baptism for their children, but, as Pita observed, their baptism is intended to make them wicked, while ours makes them holy.”¹⁶⁸ In fact, the missionaries came to believe that in the tohi ceremony, Ngā Puhi were dedicating their children to Whiro, the

¹⁶⁴ William Yate, Journal, 6 Apr 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:260).

¹⁶⁵ Richard Davis, Journal, 23 Aug 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:432).

¹⁶⁶ Te Rangi Hiroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 352–53; Bruce Biggs, *Maori Marriage: An Essay in Reconstruction* (Wellington: Polynesian Society, 1960), 69–73; Marsden, *The Woven Universe*, 10–11. As discussed in the chapter on Te Rangi, the missionaries had first learnt of the practice through Ruatara in 1814, although other chiefs, such as Te Morenga, also described the ceremony to them: Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, I:61; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 478–9; William Williams, Journal, 10 Feb 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:307–8); William Williams, Journal, 2 Oct 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:304). Tohi could also apply to adults at important times, such as warriors going into battle: George Clarke, Journal, 7 Sep 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:556).

¹⁶⁷ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand*, I:61; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 478–79.

¹⁶⁸ William Williams, Journal, 19 Jul 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:483).

traditional Māori deity of darkness and evil.¹⁶⁹ It was Whiro whom the missionaries identified as being the biblical figure of Satan.¹⁷⁰ Ngā Puhi's intention when dedicating their children in this way was to ensure that the tribe would be well-supplied with warriors.¹⁷¹ Taiwhanga's decision to baptise his children, therefore, represented another break with the Ngā Puhi fighting tradition and the gods of his past.

Thirdly, the letter reveals that Taiwhanga understood conversion to be a gradual process that he was presently undergoing rather than an instantaneous event that he was awaiting. In his letter, Taiwhanga wrote of his desire to "untie the cords of the Devil" that they may "fall off together with all sin." These phrases speak of an emerging process rather than a moment of transformation. Taiwhanga was confident that "Christ is near" and beheld his sinful heart and spoke of the ropes of the devil being "shaken." This style of language may indicate Taiwhanga's consciousness of having himself been dedicated to Whiro as a child. The process of breaking one allegiance and forming a new one to Christ was not, it seems, taken lightly by Taiwhanga: "It will be well for me to continue to sorrow for my sins until they are all blotted out." If a new allegiance to Christ was to be formed in his heart, Taiwhanga realised that the old allegiances must first be removed. In short, Taiwhanga understood his conversion to be a process in which the allegiance of his heart was gradually being changed from Satan to Christ, as indicated by a change in his heart's desire from sin to holiness.

On 23 August 1829 Taiwhanga's four children were baptised together with William and Jane Williams's third child, William Leonard Williams.¹⁷² William Williams had spent the previous four days translating the Prayer Book liturgy for infant baptism in time for the service.¹⁷³ He noted in his journal the moving nature of the occasion: "The service was very affecting and the attention of the Natives marked, and I think

¹⁶⁹ This was at least the case in the Bay of Islands, though there is some evidence that the practice of dedicating children to Whiro was more widespread: William Yate, *Journal*, 10 Jan 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:367); Alfred Brown, *Journal*, 22 Jul 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:591); Yate, *Account*, 82–84.

¹⁷⁰ William Williams, *Journal*, 2 Oct 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:304). See also, Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 478–79.

¹⁷¹ See Te Morenga's explanation of tohi to William Williams: William Williams, *Journal*, 10 Feb 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:307–8).

¹⁷² William Williams, *Journal*, 23 Aug 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:485). Taiwhanga and Māta's children were named, in English translation: Richard Hill, Samuel Marsden, Mary Ann Davis and James Davis.

¹⁷³ William Williams, *Journal*, 19–22 Aug 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:485).

this public celebration of the rite in their own language will not fail under the divine blessing, of making some of them thoughtful upon the point.”¹⁷⁴ The service clearly had a profound effect on those attending, for afterwards Pita also declared his wish to be “whakatapu” [made holy, consecrated] to God through baptism.

In the service, Williams explained the sacramental distinction between the outward visible sign of baptism and the inward spiritual work of grace:

In the afternoon in addressing the Natives I explained to them that by baptism a believer is admitted into the visible church, and that none could be considered members of the same without this mark upon them. While at the same time unless the outward sign was accompanied by inward grace, it would be of no avail. I endeavoured also to show the reasons why infants are received.

Williams’s explanation was drawn from the wording of the catechism contained in the Anglican Prayer Book.¹⁷⁵ The catechism, in answering the question as to the nature of the inward grace of baptism, states, “A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.” The catechism also lists the qualification for baptism as being repentance and faith, defined as a forsaking of sin and a steadfast belief in the promises of God. This theological perspective finds echoes in Taiwhanga’s fourth letter and indicates that this catechism was also shaping his understanding of what it meant to be converted.

6.7 Conversion and Baptism (7 February 1830)

In the lead up to Taiwhanga’s baptism in February 1830 there were two events that shed further light on Taiwhanga’s understanding of conversion. The first was a conversation in September 1829 that Taiwhanga had with Te Ripi, a chief from Kaikohe to whom he was closely related. The second was the baptism and death in November 1829 of Rōpata Urunga, a young man who had been living with Gilbert and Elizabeth Mair at Wahapu Inlet, a short distance across the bay from Paihia.¹⁷⁶

On 20 September 1829, Te Ripi had come to Paihia to trade with the shipping for muskets when Richard Davis and Taiwhanga engaged him in conversation. In doing so, Taiwhanga explained to his relative the nature of Christian conversion. Although

¹⁷⁴ William Williams, Journal, 23 Aug 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:485).

¹⁷⁵ Williams commenced his formal translation of this catechism two days after the baptisms: William Williams, Journal, 25 Aug 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:485).

¹⁷⁶ Mair had come to the Bay of Islands in 1824 and had helped with the construction of the *Herald* before becoming captain upon its launch in January 1826. He married Elizabeth Puckey, daughter of William and Margery Puckey, 13 Sep 1827 in Sydney.

a precis of the conversation was only recorded two years later, Te Ripi had frequently reminded Davis of the significance of the exchange for his own conversion. In the conversation, Davis had made the point that the missionaries were not against Māori obtaining muskets, but that they wanted Māori to be more concerned for the salvation of their souls. At which point Taiwhanga added:

"Yes, it will be well for you to think of these things and to pray to God to give you His Holy Spirit." The principal Chief, 'Ripi', said "God will not hear." Taiwanga told him that God would hear, & that He would even listen to his thoughts, etc. and although he might find his desires small at first, yet God would enlarge them. "Did you not," said Taiwanga, "get that musket which you have in your hand from the Ship by asking for it?" "In like manner," said he, "will God give you His Holy Spirit if you ask for it."¹⁷⁷

This conversation is of interest for in it Taiwhanga articulates his own understanding of Christian conversion and, indirectly, his own experience of praying to receive God's Holy Spirit. Taiwhanga's encouragement to Te Ripi reflected the same advice Henry Williams had given to Te Rangi, whose example Taiwhanga and Te Rangi's brothers had sought to follow. Initially, their prayers had not been answered, at least, not in the way they expected. This had led Te Rangi's brothers to complain that God was not listening to their prayers. It was a complaint echoed here in this conversation by Te Ripi. Taiwhanga replied to Te Ripi's scepticism by saying, "although he [Te Ripi] might find his desires small at first, yet God would enlarge them." It is likely that Taiwhanga was speaking from his own experience; that through his practice of Christian prayer he had gradually undergone the changes for which he had prayed.

In conversing with Te Ripi in this manner, Taiwhanga spoke with the confidence of a convert. Richard Davis certainly assumed that to be the case, for in August 1829, following the baptism of Taiwhanga's children, he had stated to the CMS, "Taiwanga continues to live and behave on all occasions in a most exemplary manner; worthy of his profession. He has not yet been baptised with water, but may we not hope or rather rejoice that the Holy Spirit is preparing his soul for eternal joy."¹⁷⁸ It was around this time that the missionaries became convinced that Taiwhanga was a suitable candidate for baptism.

The second event was the baptism of Rōpata [Robert] Te Urunga on 15 November 1829 in the Paihia Chapel.¹⁷⁹ Te Urunga had been living with Gilbert and Elizabeth

¹⁷⁷ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 20 Sep 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:228).

¹⁷⁸ Richard Davis, Journal, 23 Aug 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:432).

¹⁷⁹ William Williams, Journal, 15 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:489); Richard Davis, Journal, 15 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:433).

Mair at Wahapu Inlet but over the previous twelve months had become seriously ill with tuberculous, dying only a few days after his baptism.¹⁸⁰ Little is known of his conversion apart from William Williams saying that he had “for some time manifested a very pleasing change.”¹⁸¹ Williams conceded that his conversion had been a gradual process: “He does not furnish one of those striking instances of conversion which we sometimes meet with, but there is satisfactory evidence that his trust is on the right foundation.”¹⁸²

It seems that Williams intended for Te Urunga’s baptism to set an example for others to follow. Certainly, holding the baptism at the Paihia chapel had ensured an audience of a hundred or more Māori who were living at Paihia at the time. Then, having baptized Te Urunga, Williams observed that there were others whom he also considered to be suitable candidates. After Te Urunga’s funeral, however, he expressed disappointment that his death had not provoked more interest: “His death has not excited much thought among the natives: they are content with thinking that he was a believer and is gone to heaven without desiring the same blessing themselves.”¹⁸³

One who did respond was Taiwhanga. Williams wrote: “One man, Taiwanga, said afterwards that he felt inclined to come forward to be baptised himself, but that he did not like to do so of his own accord.”¹⁸⁴ His reluctance was also matched by a certain missionary wariness of overstating what they considered to be a hidden work of God. Davis, for instance, wrote in December 1829 that “I might write a great deal more upon the character and apparent evidences of the abovementioned Natives [a reference that included Taiwhanga], but my conscience is tender on those points and I am afraid lest I should say too much.”¹⁸⁵ The situation created something of an impasse and highlighted the caution that was being exercised by both parties in reaching a decision to proceed with baptism, particularly for candidates who were not on the point of death!

¹⁸⁰ The funeral was held 30 November 1829 with William Williams translating the funeral service for the occasion. Te Urunga was one of nine Māori associated with the CMS mission who had died since 1824 with some measure of Christian profession, of whom only Te Urunga and Te Rangi were baptised.

¹⁸¹ William Williams, Journal, 15 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:489).

¹⁸² William Williams, Journal, 20 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:489).

¹⁸³ William Williams, Journal, 30 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:489–90).

¹⁸⁴ William Williams, Journal, 15 Nov 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:489).

¹⁸⁵ Richard Davis, Journal, 20 Dec 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:433).

Then in the New Year, William Williams took the initiative and met with Taiwhanga and Pita to discuss the possibility of baptism. Williams briefly explained his reasoning in his journal: "They are both I believe sincere in their professions: the former [Taiwhanga] especially is decidedly different in his conduct latterly."¹⁸⁶ Williams traced the beginnings of those changes back to the monogamy crisis of February 1828, "ever since which time a change in his mind seems gradually to have been taking place."¹⁸⁷ As a result of these discussions, Henry Williams proceeded to baptise Taiwhanga, Pita, and Meri (Pita's wife) on 7 February 1830, with Taiwhanga taking the baptismal name of Rāwiri [David].¹⁸⁸

It was a momentous occasion for the mission. As Marianne Williams remarked, it was the first time that Māori had publicly confessed the Christian faith "in full health, and in the pride of life."¹⁸⁹ "I think I can say," said Marianne, "my feelings were never so powerfully excited." Marianne described Taiwhanga as a man who had "from his rank and influence, and naturally strong passions, many deep struggles," but who has now been "wonderfully influenced":

When I saw him [Taiwhanga] advance from the other end of our crowded chapel, with firm step and subdued countenance, an object of interest to every native, as well as to every English eye, and meekly kneel, where six months before we had, at his own request, all stood sponsors for his four little children, I deeply felt that it was the Lord's own doing.¹⁹⁰

Marianne Williams reported that a number of visiting Māori had come to witness the baptisms, including Te Uri-o-Kanae, the relative of Ruatara who had provided the land for the first CMS station at Rangihoua. She was, however, disappointed to find that they were not as affected as she was by the ceremony.¹⁹¹

6.8 Missionary Leader (1830–34)

After his baptism Taiwhanga assumed a leadership role in the mission on much the same footing as the CMS missionaries themselves. This leadership was exemplified in three ways: his itinerant preaching to surrounding settlements and further afield,

¹⁸⁶ William Williams, Journal, 10 Jan 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:463).

¹⁸⁷ William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464).

¹⁸⁸ William Williams, Journal, 7 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:464); Marianne Williams, 16 Feb 1830, in Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 176–77; Marianne Williams to Lydia Marsh, 16 Feb 1830, quoted in Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:77.

¹⁸⁹ Marianne Williams to Lydia Marsh, 16 Feb 1830, quoted in Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:77.

¹⁹⁰ Marianne Williams to Lydia Marsh, 16 Feb 1830, quoted in Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, 1:77.

¹⁹¹ Marianne Williams, 16 Feb 1830, in Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 177; Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 123. Te Uri-o-Kanae appears to have relocated from Rangihoua to Te Kawakawa: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 162, 169.

his return visit to Rotorua in October 1831, and his confrontation with Tāreha at Kororāreka in February 1833.

6.8.1 *Itinerant Preaching*

Following their baptism, Taiwhanga and Pita both effectively became missionaries to their own people, encouraging others to follow their example. Not only were they initiating and leading prayer meetings at Paihia, but they also undertook itinerant preaching tours to surrounding villages. Taiwhanga, in particular, was instrumental in spreading the Christian message by means of a concerted pattern of preaching tours and letter writing. For instance, in May 1832 Taiwhanga toured the Hokianga and spoke with, among others, Nene (later baptised as Tāmati Wāka Nene) urging him to believe the gospel.¹⁹² He also wrote letters to other Māori leaders, such as his letter of introduction to Te Waharoa on the formation of the Matamata mission in 1835. Alfred Brown described the letter:

Waharoa received us kindly but he seemed deep in thought and very anxious—quite the Statesman—I was the bearer of two letters to him from David [Taiwhanga] and Abraham two baptized natives of the Ngapuhi. They were merely to request Waharoa to listen to what the Missionaries had to say, and to treat them kindly. He seemed pleased with the letters and said that the speech in them was very good.¹⁹³

In this way Taiwhanga's Christian conversion became widely known and helped to smooth the way for further expansion of the mission.

Taiwhanga also offered advice to his European (missionary) counterparts. In April 1830, Taiwhanga accompanied Samuel Marsden on a visit to the Kerikeri station. At the close of the chapel service, Taiwhanga interrupted as they were leaving to say a final word: "Stop, I have one word to say to you before you go. You little boys love the big boys, and you little girls love the big girls; that is all I have to say."¹⁹⁴ It was a simple yet profound statement that had the effect of endorsing the nascent Christian leadership at Kerikeri. After the service, Taiwhanga also questioned James Kemp as to the pattern of worship at Kerikeri:

Afterwards he asked Mr. Kemp if all the natives came in the evening for instruction. Mr. Kemp replied that all who felt a desire to come, came. He observed they all ought to come, for it was only by strong exertions and perseverance that the heart

¹⁹² Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 442–43. Henry Williams noted similar tours to Whangaroa (July 1832) and Puketona (October 1832): Henry Williams, Journal, 22 Jul 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:177); Henry Williams, Journal, 14 Oct 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:186).

¹⁹³ Alfred Brown, Journal, 31 Jan 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:459).

¹⁹⁴ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 489. Hamilton claims this text is the only evidence of Taiwhanga's state of mind at the time of his conversion, which is not the case: Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 90–91.

could be affected and good done. Was it not by strong exertions and perseverance that the Naipo (Ngatipou) took Kororarika in the last battle? The same should be done in religion.¹⁹⁵

In offering advice to Kemp, Taiwhanga was effectively treating him as a colleague with a shared responsibility of spiritual oversight. Taiwhanga's advice also reflected his own personal conversion experience – Taiwhanga's own heart had only been changed by "strong exertions and perseverance" and now he was advocating a similar process for others.

6.8.2 *Return to Rotorua*

A second example of Taiwhanga's missionary leadership was his visit to Rotorua with the missionaries in October 1831.¹⁹⁶ Not only was this the first visit to Rotorua by the missionaries, but it also marked Taiwhanga's first return visit since participating in Hongi Hika's raid there in 1823, during which he captured his wife, Māta. Although it may have appeared a courageous act to face his former enemies in this way, the reality was that he was in little danger.¹⁹⁷ In fact, he had been in contact with groups from Rotorua since at least 1827 when he protected a Rotorua teretere [travelling party] from attack by shielding them in his house at Paihia. These actions, combined with his marriage to Māta, meant that Taiwhanga would have been known to the leaders in Rotorua, as indeed were the missionaries themselves.¹⁹⁸

Nevertheless, when Taiwhanga rose to respond to the pōwhiri at Mokoia Island, Thomas Chapman was aware of the gravity of the occasion:

It was here David [Taiwhanga] took his present Wife a slave – and her Father being alive and present at this meeting, a glance of the mind will shew the peculiar situation in which this individual stood, as it was only a few minutes previous to this, that it was known who he was – rising with some degree of agitation, (perceptible only from a sallow hue "paling" the untattoed [sic] portion of his face) he singularly but beautifully commenced his speaking –
"How come we" said he "to you."

"How come we, are we come as good, or are we come as bad men? But you are the brave men (which may include some connecting idea of wise also, and of course was a glance of former things which he had now cast away) you are the brave men – and we Fools in Christ"

He then set before them the common evils of sin – the wicked intents of the heart – exposed their wicked customs – called on them to consider the end of these things and prayed them to cast away their works of darkness – concluding by setting Jesus Christ as a saviour before them –

¹⁹⁵ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 489.

¹⁹⁶ Henry Williams, Journal, 18 Oct-18 Nov 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:289–97); "Narrative of a visit to Tauranga &c., Mr. Thomas Chapman, Oct. 1831 to Nov. 1831" (ATL, qMS-0425, vol. 1, 1–38).

¹⁹⁷ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 111.

¹⁹⁸ Pita and Meri had also made several trips to Rotorua in 1828–29: Richard Davis to Dandeson Coates, 31 Jan 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:168); Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 29 April 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:313).

"Perhaps," said he as he sat down, "you will believe and perhaps you will not, but still this is truth."¹⁹⁹

It is interesting that Taiwhanga chose to represent himself and his fellow missionaries as "Fools in Christ." The allusion was to the 1830 translation of 1 Corinthians 4:10 in which the Apostle Paul described himself as "He kuware ... mo te Karaiti" [a fool for Christ].²⁰⁰ The word "kūware" can refer to a person of lowly social status, and so by choosing this epithet, Taiwhanga was deliberately adopting a position of humility with regard to his hosts.²⁰¹ In addition, he referred to his hosts as "the brave men," which was also an allusion to the same verse.²⁰² Taiwhanga's choice of language allowed the past categories of division to be replaced with ones informed by the Bible and faith in Christ. He may also have been anticipating the ridicule that any potential converts would have to endure should they too embrace the new missionary religion. The theme of being a fool for Christ clearly resonated with Taiwhanga for he used the same Bible text again the following year at Kororāreka.²⁰³

6.8.3 *Confrontation at Kororāreka*

It was at Kororāreka in February 1833 that Taiwhanga's missionary leadership was called upon to ensure that the mission continued to have a presence in that settlement. Since the Girls War of March 1830, Kororāreka had become the principal residence of Tāreha and his nephew, Tītore, together with Rewa.²⁰⁴ As a consequence, the Paihia missionaries made Sabbath visits there approximately once a month, though with little apparent response. From 1832 onwards, the missionaries noticed a growing interest in their visits among the female Māori, who were being deployed to the shipping as sex-workers in exchange for muskets and powder.²⁰⁵ This new interest, however, was not welcomed by the resident chiefs as it threatened their

¹⁹⁹ "Narrative of a visit to Tauranga &c., Mr. Thomas Chapman, Oct. 1831 to Nov. 1831" (ATL, qMS-0425, vol. 1, 19–20).

²⁰⁰ Church Missionary Society, *Kenehi*, 47.

²⁰¹ "Kūware", in *Dictionary of the Maori Language*, ed. H. W. Williams (Wellington: GP Publications, 1971), 160.

²⁰² The 1830 translation uses the phrase "he hunga kaha" [strong/capable/brave people].

²⁰³ Alfred Brown, Journal, 10 Jun 1832, in Alfred Brown to the Secretaries, 10 Jul 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:401). Other Māori were also influenced by this same theme; see, for instance, Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 8 Apr 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:58).

²⁰⁴ For an account of the Girls War, see Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 451–69.

²⁰⁵ William Williams, Journal, 19 Feb 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:397); Alfred Brown, Journal, 10 Jun 1832, in Alfred Brown to the Secretaries, 10 Jul 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:401); Henry Williams, Journal, 15 Jul 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:176).

partnership with the shipping at a time when Ngā Puhi were planning to renew their attacks on Tauranga.²⁰⁶

Despite the growing opposition, by the end of 1832 Māori residents at Kororāreka had independently established a regular prayer service. In December 1832, Hakiro, Tāreha's son, quietly told Henry Williams that up to thirty were gathering at his place and that they had even started a school.²⁰⁷ Williams immediately visited the school the following Sunday and heard their singing, which he reported as being "some of the best I ever heard in the land."²⁰⁸ The school seems to have been teaching the missionary catechisms and had been established by one of Tītore's fighting men after his return from Tauranga earlier in the year.²⁰⁹

It was not long before the school came into conflict with the resident chiefs, who regarded a number of the doctrines expressed in the catechisms as deeply offensive. In particular, the doctrine of hell was taken as an affront to their mana.²¹⁰ As Henry Williams explained: "This doctrine [it] is observed may do for Slaves and Europeans, but not for a free and noble people like the Ngapuhi; therefore they will not receive it."²¹¹ Things came to a head on 13 January 1833 when, on hearing the school bell being rung, Tāreha gave a beating to one of the students and forced the school to close.²¹²

William Williams was determined to confront the issue and so the following Sunday, in the company of Taiwhanga, Williams visited Kororāreka and directed him to ring the bell.²¹³ The target of Williams's scheme, however, was away at the time, and so

²⁰⁶ Henry Williams, "Report of Paihia Station", 30 Jun 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:411). There were also other reasons for a growing disquiet among the Kororāreka chiefs. They had been told by unsympathetic Europeans, that the missionaries were not as selfless and disinterested as they appeared, but were in fact being paid a financial bonus for every Māori won to their cause: Henry Williams, Journal, 21 Apr 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:222). Henry Williams first heard the allegations in April 1832 and at the time attempted to laugh them off, yet the rumours persisted into the new year: Alfred Brown, Journal, 28 Jan 1833, in Alfred Brown to the Secretaries, 26 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:603).

²⁰⁷ Henry Williams, Journal, 28 Dec 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:192).

²⁰⁸ Henry Williams, Journal, 30 Dec 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:193).

²⁰⁹ Richard Davis, Journal, 23 Sep 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:395).

²¹⁰ According to William Williams, the point at issue was a question in the catechism that referred to Psalm 11:6 and spoke of fire and brimstone. This was likely to have been question thirty-seven of Katikihamo II; "Ko Te Katikihamo II" in Church Missionary Society, *Kenehi*, 99; William Williams, Journal, 20 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:599).

²¹¹ Henry Williams, Journal, 3 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:197).

²¹² William Williams, Journal, 20 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:599). The person beaten was presumably the young man leading the school. That would explain why he moved away from Kororāreka to live with Richard Davis at Waimate: Richard Davis, Journal, 23 Sep 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:395).

²¹³ William Williams, Journal, 20 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:599).

the anticipated reaction did not eventuate. Then, on the next Sunday, Tāreha and Titore made it clear to Williams that they had banned all Christian prayer at Kororāreka:

Tetore received us very coldly, and both he and Tareha made use of a great deal of very bad language. They said that they had ordered away all the natives who have any disposition to attend to our karakia, and that they will not allow any thing of the kind at the place – that those who wished to believe might go to Paihia or Waimate, but that Kororarika should be left as a place for the devil.²¹⁴

When Williams declared his intention to speak freely to whoever would listen, the chiefs conceded that the missionaries would be exempt, but that the ban would still apply to all Māori.²¹⁵

For their next visit, Williams decided to shift the location from Titore's residence to Rewa's.²¹⁶ Rewa agreed to grant them permission, although he also expressed no wish to break the ban imposed by the other chiefs. With the negotiations completed, Williams again directed Taiwhanga to ring the bell. This time Tāreha quickly reacted:

David [Taiwhanga] then rung the Bell, and we commenced service with a moderate number of hearers. But while I was speaking to them, the approach of Tareha was announced, and immediately he came in quite furious with rage. Some of the slaves ran out of the way, fearful of getting a crack on the head, while a number of other natives came in train of the monster to see what great thing was going to be done.²¹⁷

Tāreha was renowned for his intimidating size and, according to Alfred Brown who was also present, he directed an angry protest toward Taiwhanga.²¹⁸ Yet as quickly as the confrontation had erupted, it was over, leaving the observers baffled: "He stormed most furiously for a few seconds," said William Williams, "and then withdrew, leaving many of the chiefs in astonishment at the singularity of his conduct." The reason for Tāreha's about-face was, according to Williams, the response given by Taiwhanga:

Rewa imagined it [Tāreha's conduct] was on account of the assembling of the natives at his place, but the real cause was some expressions which David had used.

²¹⁴ William Williams, Journal, 28 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:600).

²¹⁵ William Williams, Journal, 28 Jan 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:600).

²¹⁶ William Williams, Journal, 3 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:314); Alfred Brown, Journal, 28 Jan 1833, in Alfred Brown to the Secretaries, 26 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:603); Henry Williams, Journal, 3 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:197).

²¹⁷ William Williams, Journal, 3 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:314).

²¹⁸ Alfred Brown, Journal, 28 Jan 1833, in Alfred Brown to the Secretaries, 26 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:603). Brown added that Tāreha was holding a tomahawk at the time. As to Tāreha's intimidating size, Henry Williams referred to Tāreha as "that overgrown butcher": Henry Williams, Journal, 28 Dec 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:192). John King, some years earlier, described Tāreha as, "like a bear as to his person and behaviour he is very tall and stout his long black hair [sic] his tatooed Face & his ruff & obscene behaviour renders his company no ways desireable": John King, Journal, 29 Jul 1815 (Marsden Online Archive, http://www.marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz/MS_0055_027).

He had said merely, that if Titore sought for a name by fighting, we should seek for one by declaring the Gospel of Christ.²¹⁹

It is interesting that Taiwhanga had not responded by defending the rights of the European missionaries, but by advocating for the freedom of every Māori believer to preach the gospel. In doing so, Taiwhanga contrasted and compared himself with Tītore: unlike Tītore, he had given up fighting, but yet, just like Tītore, he still considered himself a warrior – albeit one now engaged in a spiritual battle. It was a perspective that was commonly shared by other Māori converts at this time.²²⁰ Whether or not Williams recorded the full extent of Taiwhanga's response to Tāreha is not clear, but nevertheless it is interesting that Taiwhanga spoke to Tāreha on equal terms and freely compared himself to someone of Tītore's status.²²¹ As it happened, Taiwhanga's intervention on behalf of Māori catechists at Kororāreka was a turning of the tide for the mission work in that settlement.²²²

6.9 Kaikohe (1834–76)

Taiwhanga had become an invaluable member of the Paihia mission in a way that was reminiscent of his involvement at Kerikeri a decade earlier. Henry Williams described him as "one of our substantial hands," who when things went wrong, "is always in the way to put it right."²²³ Yet at some stage towards the end of 1834 Taiwhanga decided to move inland to Kaikohe and established a farm. His move was probably precipitated by the first group of Māori from Kaikohe to be baptised, including that of the principal chief, Atuahaere, on 8 June 1834 at Waimate.²²⁴ Richard Davis was aware of the need to give further support to these new converts and so Taiwhanga's move away from Paihia was probably in response to this need.²²⁵

²¹⁹ William Williams, Journal, 3 Feb 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:314).

²²⁰ For instance, see Ripi Broughton's conversation with Ururoa reported by William Williams: William Williams, Journal, 28 Nov 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:587).

²²¹ Coincidentally, Taiwhanga also followed the speech of Tāreha at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in February 1840: Buick, *The Treaty of Waitangi: How New Zealand Became a British Colony*, 136–39.

²²² Henry Williams reported his largest congregation at Kororāreka later in the year: Henry Williams, Journal, 18 Aug 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:268).

²²³ Henry Williams, Journal, 2 Nov 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:187).

²²⁴ Register 750 [Waimate], Bay of Islands, 1815–1835, ADAA; Richard Davis, Journal, 8 Jun 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:274). Twenty of the fifty-four baptisms were listed as being from Kaikohe. The Christian message had been brought to Kaikohe in 1831 by Te Ripi, the principal chief of Mawe, with the help of the catechist, Aparahama. By 1833, a large congregation of about one hundred and fifty had been gathered and they had out-grown their original chapel, an old potato storehouse: Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Sep 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:228); Richard Davis, Journal, 13 Apr 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:68); William Yate, Journal, 7 Feb 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:445); George Clarke, Journal, 16 Feb 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:560).

²²⁵ Richard Davis to Richard Hill, 27 Oct 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:424).

Taiwhanga's intention seems to have been to establish a model farm at Kaikohe on a similar basis to the one run by Davis at Waimate.²²⁶ This is a better scenario than the one presented by Ormond Wilson, who detects in Taiwhanga's move to Kaikohe a waning of his enthusiasm for the Christian faith and an indication that he had withdrawn from the work of an evangelist.²²⁷ Wilson's thesis, however, is unlikely given that Taiwhanga continued to itinerate on the Sabbath and was running a school with about twenty students, albeit in "bad order."²²⁸ In addition, Richard Davis confided to John Coleman in December 1835 concerning Taiwhanga that, "My soul is much strengthened by his consistency."²²⁹ Again, in 1837 William Wade considered Taiwhanga the example, par excellence, of the Māori convert: "There is no native equal to David as to progress in civilization, & he has hitherto maintained the consistency of his Christian profession. He sometimes conducts the Sunday services at Kaikohi."²³⁰ The evidence suggests, therefore, that apart from relocating to Kaikohe, Taiwhanga's commitment to the Christian faith continued in the same pattern that had been established at Paihia.

As well as responding to the need for Christian leadership in his own tribal area, Taiwhanga's move also needs to be understood in the light of the larger restructuring that was occurring in the CMS mission during 1834. With peace having been established between Ngā Puhi and Tauranga in October 1833, the CMS missionaries were looking to expand their work into the southern districts of the North Island. An integral part of their expansion plan was to make use of Māori catechists who

²²⁶ This is further confirmed by Davis in a letter to Coleman, where he describes the farm as being "under my direction." Richard Davis, Journal, 16 Dec 1835, in Coleman, 197. The letter confusingly names Paratene Te Ripi as the farmer concerned and that Te Ripi was living at Kaikohe. This appears to be an error, for Te Ripi was living at the nearby settlement of Mawhe where he was the principal chief until shortly before his death in 1838: William Williams, Journal, 9 feb 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:177). Given that Taiwhanga perfectly matches the description and circumstances described by Davis, it must be concluded that Taiwhanga was the "old friend" referred to in this instance. This discrepancy is also discussed by Nobbs, *A Great Maori Pioneer*, 17; and Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 301, n51.

²²⁷ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 113–14; Nobbs, *A Great Maori Pioneer*, 25–26. Nobbs also claims that Taiwhanga fell out of favour with the missionaries for taking a second wife in 1837 before his first wife, Māta, had died. However, there is no evidence for this in the missionary archive and the report of William Wade in January 1838 gives no hint that Taiwhanga might have been in disgrace at the time: Wade, *A Journey in the Northern Island of New Zealand: Interspersed with Various Information Relative to the Country and People*, 16–20.

²²⁸ William Williams, Journal, 17 May 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M10:16); William Williams, Journal, 11 Nov 1836 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:544). Samuel Marsden visited Taiwhanga's school in March 1837: Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions*, 198.

²²⁹ Richard Davis, Journal, 16 Dec 1835, in Coleman, 197.

²³⁰ William Wade to the Lay Secretary, 7 Apr 1837 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:570). Taiwhanga also visited Samuel Marsden as the latter passed through Waimate on his way to Kerikeri from the Hokianga.

had been trained at their stations in the Bay of Islands.²³¹ Hence, Taiwhanga's relocation to Kaikohe was consistent with the mission policy at this time of dispersing missionary personnel away from the more established stations to places of greater need.

Within a year of having begun his farm, Taiwhanga was selling butter to the shipping for two shillings a pound. Under Davis's supervision, Taiwhanga had also made himself a plough and was cultivating the ground for wheat; the ironmongery costing him eight pounds. By the beginning of 1837 when Marsden visited his farm during his last trip to New Zealand, Taiwhanga had twenty head of cattle, including seven dairy cows, and was producing tens pounds of butter per week for sale in the Bay. He had apparently earnt two and a half sovereigns from the sale of butter in the previous week.²³² Given these financial transactions, Taiwhanga has rightly been designated New Zealand's first commercial dairy farmer.²³³

²³¹ William Williams, Journal, 27 Oct 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:322); Henry Williams, Report of Paihia, June 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:539); Henry Williams to the Lay Secretary, 16 Apr 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:7); William Williams to William Jowett, 16 Sep 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:233).

²³² Martha Marsden, Journal, 29 Apr 1837 (HL, MS-0380, pages 110–1); William Wade to the Lay Secretary, 7 Apr 1837 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:570). See a similar report in Robert Maunsell to the Secretaries, 22 Jul 1840 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M12:318).

²³³ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 114; Ritchie, *Taiwhanga*, 15; Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions*, 198–99, 222–23; Hargreaves, "Changing Māori Agriculture in Pre-Waitangi New Zealand," 111.



Figure 4: Sketch of Taiwhanga by Thomas Biddulph Hutton, 1844²³⁴

Taiwhanga farmed at Kaikohe until 1845 when it seems it was abandoned due to the outbreak of the northern war. Peter Cheal recorded the circumstances after having met Taiwhanga later in life. According to Cheal, "Hone Heke ... tried to persuade Rawiri to join up with him and fight the soldiers at Korarekareka (Russell). The dispute became acute and was settled by Rawiri pitching Hone Heke into the stream at the settlement."²³⁵ In response, Hone Heke's men drove Taiwhanga's cattle off into the bush. Although both men had supported and signed the Treaty of Waitangi in

²³⁴ William Charles Cotton, 1813–1879, "Volume 8: William Charles Cotton: Journal of a Residence at St John's College, The Waimate, 25 August-15 November 1844" (Dixson Library [DL], State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, Ref: 997470, <http://archival.sl.nsw.gov.au/Details/archive/110363430>). Taiwhanga was probably around fifty years old at the time.

²³⁵ P. E. Cheal, "Rawiri Taiwhanga: First New Zealand Dairyman," in *A Great Maori pioneer: Rawiri Taiwhanga* (Te Kauwhata: K. J. Nobbs, [1988?]). Cheal met Taiwhanga in 1872.

February 1840, Heke was now opposed to the colonial government.²³⁶ For Taiwhanga to join his cause, however, would have meant reneging on a commitment to renounce war made twenty years before at Paihia. That Taiwhanga withheld Heke, when many others were being persuaded to join him, was an indication that Taiwhanga was still strongly motivated by his Christian convictions.

Taiwhanga continued to live at Kaikohe for the rest of his life. Marianne Williams reported that he had come from Kaikohe to attend Kawiti's baptism in February 1853.²³⁷ He was also listed as living at Kaikohe on the electoral role for 1875–6. The last known reference to Taiwhanga in historical records was in January 1876 when he attended the unveiling of the memorial to Henry Williams. On that occasion his son, Matenga [Marsden] Taiwhanga, spoke on his behalf and suggested that his father's death would soon be imminent. That seems to have been the case, for Taiwhanga did not appear to be present at Waitangi in May 1876 to welcome Sir George Phipps, the new Governor of New Zealand.²³⁸ At the welcome, two elderly contemporaries of Taiwhanga, Hōhaia Waikato and Hōri Te Pākira, were both introduced to the Governor. That Taiwhanga was not also introduced probably indicates that he was either too weak to travel or that he had died in the preceding months.

6.10 Concluding Comments

Using the model of conversion developed in the Introduction, Taiwhanga's conversion can be summarised by the following four points. Firstly, his conversion highlights the way that changes in practice are connected to changes in belief and identity. Taiwhanga had been one of Hongi Hika's leading warriors before moving to Paihia in 1825. This decision would have been influenced by his earlier experience at the Kerikeri mission (1819–23), where he had been taught agricultural and building skills and had first been introduced to the Christian faith. Although Taiwhanga conformed to the religious practice of the mission at the time, there was little indication that either his belief or identity had been significantly altered – as evidenced by his continued participation in Hongi Hika's campaigns.

²³⁶ Buick, *The Treaty of Waitangi: How New Zealand Became a British Colony*, 138–40; William Williams, "Plain Facts Relative to the Late War in the Northern District of New Zealand," in *The Life of Henry Williams, Archdeacon of Waimate*, vol. 2, appendix C (Auckland, 1877), xvi–l.

²³⁷ Carleton, *Life of Henry Williams*, vol. 2 (Auckland, 1877), 293.

²³⁸ Two of Taiwhanga's sons, Matenga and Hirini, spoke at the welcome. There was a Rawiri Taiwhanga of Ngatikura listed as being in attendance, but this was probably another person: *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, Vol 12b, 13 June 1876 (NZDL, www.nzdl.org).

With his relocation to Paihia, Taiwhanga was required to give up any further involvement in these tribal conflicts and adopt the manners and customs of the missionary community. By breaking with his past in this way Taiwhanga was able to pursue a number of practices, both secular and religious, that would have been untenable for him otherwise – such as praying for a new heart within, following the pattern of Karaitiana Te Rangi. It was not until 1828, however, after precipitating a crisis for the mission by taking a second wife, that Taiwhanga began the gradual process of change that led to his conversion and baptism in February 1830.

Taiwhanga's beliefs at that time were expressed in the four letters he wrote in the years 1826–29. As might be expected, these letters expressed similar themes to those contained in the missionary catechisms of the period, including his desire to go to heaven, the need for faith in Christ, and warnings concerning God's judgement on the wicked in the place of fire. From these letters it can be seen that Taiwhanga viewed his conversion as a gradual process that involved the spiritual struggle of freeing himself from the bonds of Satan that he believed had enslaved him. As a consequence, although Taiwhanga no longer considered himself a warrior in the traditional sense, he nevertheless saw himself as engaged in a spiritual conflict that for him was no less real.

In addition to these letters, it is significant that on at least two occasions Taiwhanga made use of 1 Corinthians 4:10 to identify himself as a “fool for Christ.” In this regard, literacy played an important role in forming Taiwhanga's new Christian identity. Although initially access to the Bible was mediated through the missionaries, from 1827 onwards with the production of printed texts, it was literacy that allowed Taiwhanga independent access to those texts. By using the phrase a “fool for Christ,” Taiwhanga acknowledged the ridicule associated with his new identity, even as he urged others to join him in the spiritual struggle against the devil. By appropriating this biblical text, Taiwhanga was also asserting his qualification to preach the Christian message as a missionary in his own right and on the same basis to that of the European missionaries.

Secondly, Taiwhanga's conversion illustrates the inherently religious nature of the conversion experience. This is not Ormond Wilson's perspective, who concludes that

Taiwhanga's Christian faith was merely a by-product of his interest in European agriculture.²³⁹

Taiwhanga came to 'belief' by way of an interest in European agriculture. He might, one feels, have taken equally well to other European pursuits, such as whaling. He could have become as skilled a mariner as he proved to be a farmer, and in association with seamen he would have learnt to blaspheme rather than to pray.²⁴⁰

In Wilson's view, Taiwhanga's conversion was but one response to the wider social changes that were occurring in the Bay of Islands in the 1830s as a result of European contact. Wilson, however, seems unwilling to allow religious ideas – particularly those which he deems inherently "alien" – to be a sufficient explanation for Taiwhanga's conversion.²⁴¹ Yet it is clear from Taiwhanga's letters that religious ideas were at the forefront of his thinking at the time of his baptism. In addition, as he himself concedes, Wilson is also unable to explain the intrinsic appeal that the Christian message held for Māori living beyond the Bay of Islands, such as those to whom Taiwhanga spoke when he revisited Rotorua in 1831.

Thirdly, Taiwhanga understood his conversion to have been a gradual process that was nonetheless a genuine experience of religious transformation. Lila Hamilton, though, suggests that Taiwhanga's decision to be baptised was more pragmatic in character: "He had long since made his decision to remain in the settlement, and the formal commitment, the step the missionaries saw as the most important, may well have seemed no more than a logical progression."²⁴² For Hamilton, Taiwhanga's move to Paihia allowed him to eschew his tribal obligations and develop further his interest in European agriculture. Then, having had his children baptised, Hamilton considers Taiwhanga's own baptism to have been inevitable: "While Taiwhanga had presumably had his children baptised as a guarantee for their future, once this had been done, there would have seemed to be little reason why he should not join them himself."²⁴³

Hamilton does not suggest that Taiwhanga was insincere in doing so, but she does imply that Taiwhanga's decision to be baptised fell short of what could be considered a genuine conversion. Hamilton does not use the word, but she discounts the possibility of conversion by finding no record of Taiwhanga having experienced

²³⁹ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 123.

²⁴⁰ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 123.

²⁴¹ Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke*, 123.

²⁴² Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 89–90.

²⁴³ Hamilton, "Christianity among the Maoris," 89.

a “sudden crisis,” or by detecting any “discernible effect” from the missionary instruction he received prior to his baptism.²⁴⁴ As a result, Hamilton concludes that Taiwhanga’s apparent conversion was a consequence of having removed himself from his former way of life and gradually becoming assimilated into the life of the mission.²⁴⁵

The lack of a “sudden crisis,” however, is not a sufficient basis for calling into question the transformative nature of Taiwhanga’s conversion.²⁴⁶ The model of conversion being used here does not require that a sudden change always be present. In fact, gradual conversions have the advantage of highlighting for the observer the active participation of the convert in the process as, for instance, with Taiwhanga’s commitment to Christian prayer.²⁴⁷ For Taiwhanga such prayer could be answered, as he told James Kemp, only “by strong exertions and perseverance” in order for “the heart to be affected and good done.”²⁴⁸ Consequently, the gradual nature of Taiwhanga’s conversion should not be taken to imply that it was in some way less genuine in nature.

Lastly, Taiwhanga’s conversion resulted in a stable and viable way of Christian living that was distinctly different from his traditional past. This is perhaps best shown in the farm he was able to establish at Kaikohe. His cultivation of wheat and diary production would have held little interest for those Māori maintaining a traditional way of life. But having renounced his involvement in tribal wars, Taiwhanga was able to use Western forms of agriculture and trade to sustain a way of life that differed significantly from his past yet was independent of the missionaries. Running a local school for his children also meant that he had the capacity to pass on his faith to another generation without needing a European missionary presence.

²⁴⁴ Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris,” 90.

²⁴⁵ Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris,” 124.

²⁴⁶ In general, the missionaries were more interested in the outcome of the conversion process than the form it had taken: Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 148–49, 210.

²⁴⁷ For a discussion of the differences between passive and active convert models, see Larry D. Shinn, “Who Gets to Define Religion? The Conversion/Brainwashing Controversy,” *Religious Studies Review* 19, no. 3 (1993): 197. As Shinn points out, a “passive convert” model, tends to accentuate the sudden, religious experience of a relatively passive subject, while “active seeker” models allow a more conscious and active role for the convert, and consequently their conversion can appear more gradual and developmental in nature.

²⁴⁸ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 489.

Taiwhanga's baptism represented a turning point for the future success of the CMS mission. Together with that of Pita and Meri, his baptism marked the beginning of a community of Māori Christians that eventually flowered into the large-scale movement known as the Māori Conversion. By being baptised, Taiwhanga not only expressed his confidence that he had indeed experienced the transformation of which the missionaries spoke, but also gave expression to a new identity as a "fool for Christ" that was radically different from his traditional past.

7 Conclusion

This thesis has sought to understand the extent and nature of the Māori Conversion in the nineteenth century by examining the lives of four of its early converts: Ruatara, Māui, Te Rangi, and Taiwhanga. Using the definition of conversion developed in the Introduction, an account has been given of each convert's experience and the way in which their conversions were connected to the wider Māori response to Christianity. An outline has also been given of the extent of the Māori Conversion through an analysis of the CMS statistical reporting. In doing so, this research has made particular use of five sets of archival documents that until now have been relatively overlooked or neglected. Firstly, the statistical reporting of the CMS missionaries has been collected together for the first time to enable an accurate picture of the mission's development. Secondly, the autobiographical material written by Māui in 1816 has provided evidence of Māori engaging with Christianity in 1806, even before the arrival of the CMS mission in 1814. Thirdly, the journals of Samuel Marsden and John Nicholas shed light on Ruatara's conversion in a way not previously recognised. Fourthly, the account of Te Rangi's conversion has relied on a series of Waitangi Dialogues that have been identified by this thesis as forming a unique literary genre within Henry Williams's general correspondence with the CMS. Lastly, this thesis has made use of a series of four letters written by Taiwhanga, including one written to Marsden in 1828 for which the holograph is still extant. These letters provide a unique insight into Taiwhanga's understanding of Christianity in the period leading up to his baptism in 1830. Taken together, these five sets of documents demonstrate the continued value of the missionary archives as a source of information about the lives of early Māori converts.

7.1 The Extent of the Māori Conversion

The extent of the Māori Conversion has been discussed in Chapter Two using the statistical reporting of the CMS missionaries and, in particular, William Williams's report to the CMS in 1852. The extent can also be described using the connecting narratives that link the four converts of this thesis with the Māori Conversion as a whole. This approach has the added advantage of providing an important indigenous perspective on the course of the Māori Conversion.

According to Māui's autobiographical account, Christianity was first introduced into New Zealand by an anonymous Māori chief returning from a visit to New South Wales in 1806. This chief was likely to have been Te Pahi and, according to Māui, he returned to the Bay of Islands with news of the Christian Saviour. It was this message, as well as a conversation with an English sea captain, that prompted Māui's father to send him to Norfolk Island to be raised by the Drummond family. Māui's exposure to Christianity in this setting led to him becoming the first Māori to receive Christian baptism sometime prior to December 1814. He later travelled to England with the intention of becoming a missionary to his own people but died in London (December 1816) before he could return.

In 1814, Ruatara accepted Samuel Marsden's invitation to settle three missionary families at Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands under his patronage. The friendship between the two had been cemented by Ruatara's recovery from a serious illness under Marsden's care while returning from England on the *Ann* in 1809. Marsden had gone to England to recruit lay missionaries for a New Zealand mission with the aim of introducing Māori to the benefits of Western civilisation, along with instruction in the Christian faith. It was a strategy that Marsden appears to have developed in consultation with Te Pahi and Ruatara, both of whom he seems to have privately regarded as converts. The mission was launched at Rangihoua on Christmas Day 1814 with a service hosted by Ruatara, who also acted as Marsden's interpreter for the occasion. The joyful hari at the conclusion of the service formed a public endorsement of both Ruatara's initiative in bringing the missionaries to the Bay of Islands and his vision for a Māori society transformed by Christian ideas and Western technology.

A second CMS station was formed at Kerikeri in 1819 under the direction of John Butler, who relied extensively on a team of Māori workers under the supervision of Taiwhanga to develop the land and erect buildings. The CMS, however, saw little spiritual fruit for their labours until the baptism of Te Rangi by Henry Williams in September 1825. Williams, who established the third CMS station at Paihia in 1823, recorded a series of dialogues with local Māori living at Waitangi as part of his regular Sabbath-day visits to the area. Of the ten Waitangi Dialogues that he transcribed, five of them were with Te Rangi. Through these conversations, Williams was able to refine the way that the missionaries presented the Christian message to Māori. Of particular significance was Te Rangi's experience of answered prayer for a

new heart within, which confirmed for him his entry into the Christian Heaven. Although Te Rangi died shortly after his baptism, other Māori began to pray in a similar way – particularly his immediate family and those living with the missionaries at Paihia (including Taiwhanga).

One further adult baptism took place before 1830 – that of Rōpata Urunga in November 1829. Like Te Rangi before him, Urunga died only a few days after his baptism due to a chronic illness. But, with the baptism of Taiwhanga, Pita, and Meri in February 1830, a small community of Māori Christians began to form. Although the wider community remained indifferent, the effect on Māori living at Paihia was immediate. By the end of the week, four more Māori had written to Henry Williams requesting baptism.¹ Williams met with this small group each evening for further conversation and prayer, and as the month went on the numbers attending increased. Williams saw this as an indication of their sincerity, for usually Māori living at Paihia would spend their evenings in dancing, singing, and talking. But “this appears altogether laid aside, and now they assemble in each other’s houses for prayer, and I trust the Lord is with them.”²

7.1.1 The Night that Transformed a Mission

This gathering interest in Christianity culminated on 24 February at the Wednesday evening chapel service led by Richard Davis. At the end of his sermon, Davis noticed that his congregation had been especially attentive – so much so that he invited those “particularly desirous for the salvation of their souls” to follow him home for further conversation.³ Thirty men and boys responded to his offer: “I had,” wrote Davis, “the pleasure of spending such an evening as scarcely falls to the lot of mortals.” There was a similar response among the women and girls who met separately with Davis’s oldest daughter, Mary Ann.

Davis recorded snatches of their conversation in a letter to London the following week:

I requested them as we were met to be free in their conversation and make me acquainted with the state of their minds in order that I might be enabled to give them a suitable word of advice.

After we had supplicated a throne of grace for a blessing one of the newly awakened Natives stood up and spoke in a very affecting manner. He requested all present to be seriously attentive to the things which were told them by us, whom he stiled [styled] Messengers of God, to leave off and forsake all sin, and to go to God

¹ William Williams, Journal, 14 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:465).

² Henry Williams to the Lay Secretary, 23 Feb 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:443).

³ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:447–48). See also Richard Davis to John Coleman, 15 Mar 1830, in Coleman, 127–28.

continually by prayer for grace to enable them so to believe that their souls may be eternally saved, etc.

Another said, "yes let us all do as you say; let us live to God and then we shall be happy."

Peta spoke next in a very pleasing way and said, "Yes it is a happy thing indeed to believe in God, for I have found it is; it is the only good thing in the world, etc.

Another said, "Since I have continued to pray and to think upon God my heart has been full of light, consequently I am happy."

Another said, "I am very much afraid of everlasting fire; at times, it seems as though I were near to it, etc".

Another said, "My heart is hard, and it has been so for a long time. Some time ago my heart was not dark but light; this was when I used the means of grace, but having been home for a time (he being a Native from Tauranga), and having also neglected the means of grace, my heart has become hard like a stone."

Some said they had a great desire, others said they had a little desire to believe in God, etc.

At the close of their several conversations I endeavoured to give each person a suitable word of advice, and from what I have heard from them since at recent Meetings, I have reason to hope that my labour has not been in vain.⁴

The week following the chapel service, William Williams observed that the interest of a few had become general, surprising even some Māori who lived at Paihia: "One youth observed to me this evening that a fortnight ago in the house in which he lives there was nothing but bad language. He went away to see his friends for a week and on his return this language was no longer heard."⁵ Even more surprisingly, the spiritual awakening continued into the March, despite the whole of the Bay becoming engulfed in the conflict known as the Girls War.⁶ The small company of new converts at Paihia continued to meet together undisturbed by the commotion going on all around. "Our little settlement," wrote Davis, "is the only spot for miles round where people are not living in terror and dismay."⁷ At the end of March, Henry Williams reported:

The conduct of the Natives belonging to the Settlement is most pleasing, all circumstances considered: each at his occupation through the day, and in the evening the greater part assembling at one house or other for spiritual instruction and prayer: the Natives without gaze and wonder.⁸

By April, the transformation at Paihia also began to affect Māori living at Kerikeri and Rangihoua, though as yet the wider population still remained indifferent.⁹ Samuel Marsden, who arrived 8 March 1830 on his sixth visit to New Zealand,

⁴ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:447–48).

⁵ William Williams, Journal, 3 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:466).

⁶ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 451–69. The conflict left two hundred Māori killed or wounded.

⁷ Richard Davis to John Coleman, 15 Mar 1830, in Coleman, 127.

⁸ Henry Williams, Journal, 24 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:463); also reproduced in Rogers, 160.

⁹ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 485–86.

witnessed the next four baptisms on Easter Sunday at Paihia.¹⁰ George Clarke observed Marsden's surprise at the changes that had taken place: "The good old Gentleman's heart seemed to overflow with love and gratitude to God for what He had done. He said he could hardly have expected to see so much done in his days, knowing as he did the difficulties which were in the way of benefitting them in a spiritual point of view."¹¹

Taiwhanga's wife, Māta, was among the next group of six who were baptised at Paihia on 19 September 1830.¹² In November 1830, Henry Williams reflected on the transformation that had taken place in the mission that year: "When we look back and compare the present day with those we have witnessed, we cannot but thank God and take courage. His promise is sure, we have found it so: and His arm has been very manifest on our behalf, for nothing but the Spirit's operation could have wrought upon the minds of this people."¹³

Williams's positive assessment of the mission's progress also echoed a change of tone in the missionary correspondence around this time. Prior to 1830, the CMS missionaries could report only gradual progress (at best) and had to be content with looking forward in expectation of better prospects to come. But after that date their correspondence was full of thanksgiving for what had already been accomplished amongst Māori. William Williams, for instance, in reviewing the year 1828, wrote: "The past year has been an eventful one, but it has not been marked by any change among the Natives: yet we must acknowledge that the prospect brightens before us."¹⁴ In March 1830, however, his tone was distinctly different: "We have now abundant cause for gratitude to our heavenly Father for what he is carrying on among us ... now I trust the time is arrived when poor New Zealanders shall receive the Gospel of Christ."¹⁵ This, along with other similar examples, clearly indicate the

¹⁰ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 482–3; William Williams, Journal, 11 Apr 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:586).

¹¹ George Clarke to the Secretaries, 6 Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:10).

¹² William Williams, Journal, 19 Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:49). Hoani Rape had also been baptised on 15 August 1830, just prior to his death: William Williams, Journal, 15 Aug 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:590). The first six adult Māori baptisms at Kerikeri occurred on 26 September 1830 and were conducted by William Yate: William Yate, Journal, 25 [recte 26] Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:39).

¹³ Henry Williams, Journal, 11 Nov 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:44–46).

¹⁴ William Williams, Journal, 29–31 Dec 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:217).

¹⁵ William Williams, Journal, 3 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:466).

year 1830 as a significant turning point in the way Māori were engaging with missionary Christianity.¹⁶

A feature of these early Māori converts was their desire to become missionaries to their own people. In September 1830, Richard Davis was delighted to overhear Māori converts praying that God might enable this to happen: "In fact," said Davis, "some of them already act the part and do the work of a Missionary."¹⁷ Both Taiwhanga and Pita regularly visited local kāinga on the Sabbath and also conducted preaching tours in districts further afield. Their example was followed by others and it was not long before Māori living away from the mission stations begin to profess the Christian faith. Most prominent among these was Paratene Te Ripi of Mawhe, the first leader of a Ngā Puhi hapū to be baptised.

7.1.2 *Conversion of Paratene Te Ripi and Te Uri o Hua*

Te Ripi was the principal chief of Te Uri o Hua, a hapū based at Mawhe near Lake Omāpere, about six kilometres south-west of Waimate. According to Te Ripi's own testimony, his interest in Christianity was first awakened by a conversation in September 1829 with Richard Davis and Taiwhanga while on the coast trading for muskets.¹⁸ Davis had reassured him, "We have no desire that you should not possess muskets & powder, but that you should use them with discretion, and not suffer your minds to be thus engrossed by them, but to think of the salvation of your souls as well as the salvation of your bodies." To this, Taiwhanga added: "Yes, it will be well for you to think of these things and to pray to God to give you His Holy Spirit." Te Ripi replied that God would not hear his prayer. Taiwhanga responded, "Did you not get that musket which you have in your hand from the Ship by asking for it? In like manner, will God give you His Holy Spirit if you ask for it." For Davis, it was

¹⁶ See also Henry Williams, Journal, 31 Dec 1828 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:217); Henry Williams to the Secretaries, 3 Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:585); Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 28 Dec 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:430); Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 1 Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:3); Alfred Brown's Report of Paihia to June 30 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:522). Harrison Wright also points to this year as being a turning point for the mission: Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 152. Other proposed turning points have been offered by historians. Judith Binney thinks that the launching of the missionary schooner *Herald* in 1826 gave the Missionaries a degree of economic independence that led Māori to treat them with a greater level of respect: Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 146–47; McLean, *No Continuing City*, 54. Others opt for a later period, perhaps after 1835, when the missionaries were able to distribute printed portions of the Bible in sufficient quantities for the first time: Owens, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 34–35; Ballara, *Taua*, 413, 420.

¹⁷ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 1 Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:3).

¹⁸ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Sep 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:228).

just one of numerous conversations that he had had with visiting Māori over the years, but Te Ripi remembered it as the starting point of his Christian conversion.

In October 1830, Te Ripi began to receive visits from another relative, Aperahama Pi, who had recently been baptised at Paihia. Aperahama, along with other Māori from the mission, were making a new road from the coast to the newly-established mission station at Waimate.¹⁹ While in the area, Aperahama visited Te Ripi's eldest son who was seriously ill and spoke to him about the Christian faith. Although the son died two weeks later, Aperahama was convinced that he had died a believer. Te Ripi too, Aperahama reported, also held "straight thoughts" with regard to God. Then, a little over five months later, Te Ripi made a public profession of faith and was eventually baptised by William Yate, 2 September 1832, as Paratene (Broughton) Ripi.²⁰

Davis first visited Mawhe on 17 April 1831 shortly after having moved to Waimate with his family from Paihia.²¹ Under Te Ripi's leadership, the kāinga of between 100–150 people had begun a pattern of daily prayer and Sabbath observance. In November 1832 a school was established in the village, and in February 1834 a new chapel was opened that could accommodate 200–300 people.²² Such was the influence of Christianity that when a prominent chief died in July 1833, Te Ripi was successfully able to persuade the hapū to abandon traditional funeral practices in favour of Christian burial.²³ By June 1834 a total of twenty-two adults and ten children had been baptised with many more coming forward as candidates.²⁴

Te Ripi's conversion represented a significant transition between the four early converts considered in this thesis and the wider Māori Conversion. Like the four early converts before him, Te Ripi had some direct contact with the missionaries, particularly Richard Davis based at Waimate. But unlike the earlier converts, Te Ripi's Christian faith had been initiated and formed by visiting Māori catechists while still living within a traditional Māori social setting. Yet his conversion showed remarkable similarity to those previous conversions: conviction of sin, prayer for a

¹⁹ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Sep 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:228–29).

²⁰ William Yate, Journal, 2 Sep 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:564); Richard Davis, Journal, 2 Nov 1832, in Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 9 July 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:568–69).

²¹ Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 5 Sep 1831 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:228–29).

²² Richard Davis, Journal, 2 Nov 1832, in Richard Davis to the Lay Secretary, 9 July 1832 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:569); Richard Davis, Journal, 23 Mar 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:267); William Yate, Journal, 9 Mar 1834 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:449).

²³ Richard Davis, 21 Jul 1833 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M7:307).

²⁴ Register 750 [Waimate], Bay of Islands, 1815–1835, ADAA.

new heart, rejection of tapu, keeping the Sabbath, monogamy, and a commitment to peace. Moreover, his conversion was also similar to those experienced by other members of his hapū who came to share his Christian profession. In this way, Te Ripi's conversion bridged between the group conversion of Te Uri o Hua and the experience of the four early converts considered in this thesis and reinforces the paradigmatic nature of those early Māori conversions.

7.1.3 *Indigenous Agency*

Like Taiwhanga before him, Te Ripi almost immediately began itinerating to promote the Christian message, particularly to places with which he had family connections, such as Kaikohe, Hokianga, Mangakahia and Whangaroa. Perhaps his most notable success was the conversion of Te Morenga, the great Taiāmai leader and friend of Samuel Marsden, in early 1833. It was often Te Ripi's diplomatic engagement with other tribal leaders that opened the way for Māori catechists to follow.

The CMS had long recognised the value of indigenous agency and, with the increasing level of support being received from their converts, the missionaries realised they were now able to extend the mission beyond the Bay of Islands.²⁵ The Christian message was also spread in unexpected ways: unbaptised Māori who had previously lived with the missionaries but had since returned home, used their literacy skills to teach others the Christian faith. They were assisted in this task by the increasing availability of Scripture portions, catechisms, and other missionary texts being produced by the mission's printing press at Paihia. Their ability to read and write, combined with a belief in the Bible as the Word of God, gave these unintended catechists an authority that allowed them to operate independently of the missionaries.²⁶

Such was the rate of conversions over the next twenty years that William Williams was able to inform the CMS Committee in 1852 that 70,000 Māori had become professing Christians, representing around 90 percent of the Māori population.²⁷ By this stage, the CMS mission had formed an extensive network of Māori catechists

²⁵ George Clarke to the Secretaries, 4 Sep 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M9:70).

²⁶ William Williams, Journal, 23 May 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:587); Charles Baker to the Secretaries, 22 January 1835 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M8:64–65). With regard to the arrival of the printing press in the Bay of Islands, Baker commented, “Never was there a more effective missionary than this.”

²⁷ *Church Missionary Record* (London: 1852), 106–7.

who ran the majority of their schools and congregations. By mid-century, the CMS in New Zealand had become, for all practical purposes, an indigenous-led organisation – albeit under the continued supervision of a relatively small group of European missionaries.

In 1867, the year of his brother Henry's death, the now Bishop William Williams published his account of the CMS in New Zealand entitled *Christianity among the New Zealanders*. He wrote to refute those who, in the light of the recent terrible conflicts, charged that Māori were never really converted and that the efforts of the missionaries were all for nothing. In doing so, he made particular reference to the events of February 1830 and the evening prayer service led by Richard Davis that had led to the transformation of the CMS mission. Williams described it as, "a time of peculiar encouragement, a season of peaceful calm, and it seemed as though the hour of triumph was at hand."²⁸ Williams was only too aware of the many trials that lay ahead for the nascent Māori church, but he also realised that a "tender sapling" had taken root in New Zealand soil that summer's evening that would eventually mature to become one of the "trees of the forest."²⁹

7.2 The Nature of the Māori Conversion

European colonial observers often dismissed Māori Christianity as being largely nominal in nature. They considered many Māori converted for ulterior motives while retaining traditional beliefs deemed incompatible with Christianity. Similar views have been expressed by more recent historians as outlined in the Introduction. The conversion model developed in this thesis, however, challenges such perspectives and allows for a more positive assessment to be made of the Māori Conversion.

Firstly, the Māori Conversion needs to be seen as a fundamentally religious process of transformation that encompassed Māori as both individuals and as a society. Over a relatively short period of approximately twenty years, Christianity went from being the faith of a tiny community of converts in the Bay of Islands to being the religion of over 90 percent of the Māori population. The suddenness of the conversion, particularly in the southern regions, undermines explanations based solely on social disruption or cultural assimilation.³⁰ It also makes the claim less

²⁸ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 104–5.

²⁹ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 103.

³⁰ Owens, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840," 27–28; Howe, "The Maori Response," 46.

convincing that Christianity represented an alien set of beliefs that could only be distorted by Māori, if accepted at all.³¹ This is particularly the case given that the faith expressed by most converts was entirely consistent with the missionary catechisms they had been taught.

Secondly, the self-identification of Māori as Christians must be considered more than a bare nominal conformity to European religion. While some colonial settlers caricatured Māori Christianity as consisting largely of “sabbath-keepers and bell-pullers,” given an appropriate definition of conversion, it is difficult to maintain that the outward expressions of Christianity by Māori (such as Sabbath observance or church attendance) were merely superficial and skin-deep.³² For the early Māori converts, outward practice shaped and sustained their inward belief and identity, thus making the dichotomy between nominal and genuine religion a problematic distinction.

Thirdly, the presence of ulterior motives is not sufficient grounds for questioning the legitimacy of the Māori Conversion. Given that individuals and groups convert for a variety of reasons, all conversions can be said to have a particular socio-economic context and a mixture of motivations. Yet the presence of these other influences does not invalidate a convert’s active choice to embrace religious change. That Ruatara was hoping to benefit his people by the introduction of Western trade does not mean his conversion was necessarily “mercenary.”³³ Nor does the fact that large numbers of Māori began to convert after 1830 make their conversions only “fashionable.”³⁴

Fourthly, while the Māori Conversion displayed elements of both continuity and discontinuity with past beliefs and practices, there is little evidence to suggest that this represented a Māori subversion of Christianity or the “conversion of conversion.”³⁵ Conversion properly understood does not require that there be a complete break with a convert’s past; some beliefs and practices will be supplanted, while others will be affirmed or repurposed. For example, although early converts ceased observing traditional tapu, the concept was not entirely abandoned but

³¹ Contra Owens, “The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840,” 673; Hamilton, “Christianity among the Maoris,” 275.

³² Hursthouse, *New Zealand or Zealandia*, 1:165–66; Hursthouse, *New Zealand Handbook*, 22; Fox, *Six Colonies*, 81; Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:83–84, 312, 315, 317–18; Shroff, “George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824–1850,” 162.

³³ Contra Belich, *Making Peoples*, 219.

³⁴ Contra Wright, *New Zealand, 1769–1840*, 163.

³⁵ Contra Belich, *Making Peoples*, 223; O’Malley, *The Meeting Place*, 194; Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, 1:105–6. But not Swainson, *New Zealand and its Colonization*, 32.

became associated with Christian baptism and the idea of being whakatapu to the Lord. Neither does a convert's beliefs need to be entirely consistent before his or her conversion can be recognised. Some beliefs will change straight away while others might take years, or even generations to be influenced by a Christian worldview.³⁶ In general, worldviews are revised and corrected by a convert rather than abandoned and replaced.³⁷

Fifthly, the Māori Conversion led to an interest in new forms of peace, agriculture, and literacy. The direction of historical causality is difficult to establish with certainty, but the evidence gathered in this thesis supports William Williams's claim that the "first effect" of Christianity was the giving up of traditional forms of warfare.³⁸ Ruatara, Te Rangi, and Taiwhanga were all noted for their rejection of war and advocacy for peace. The adoption of a Christian peace in turn allowed for the development of new forms of agriculture and trade.³⁹ Although Māori leaders such as Hongi Hika experimented with the growing of wheat when first introduced, it was seriously pursued as a crop only by converts. In a similar way, the missionary emphasis on the Bible made literacy an important skill for Māori converts to acquire. Until the conversion of Te Rangi, Māori beyond the mission station showed little interest in literacy.⁴⁰ Even on the mission stations, it was not until after 1830 that a Māori enthusiasm for literacy became evident.⁴¹ Literacy allowed new converts like Taiwhanga to access the Bible as a source of spiritual authority and to establish a Christian identity that did not depend on the presence of the missionaries for its viability.

³⁶ Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 51–53.

³⁷ See Walls, *Crossing Cultural Frontiers*, 37–40.

³⁸ Williams, *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, 349.

³⁹ Contra Hargreaves who excludes religion as a motivation: Hargreaves, "Changing Maori Agriculture in Pre-Waitangi New Zealand," 115.

⁴⁰ John King made the comment that to most Māori literacy appeared to be "more a novelty than a benefit": John King to the Secretaries, 9 Nov 1826 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:230).

⁴¹ Charles Baker to the Secretaries, 6 Sep 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:12). The relationship between literacy and conversion, however, is contested by historians: Owens, "The Wesleyan Mission to New Zealand 1819–1840," 444; C. J. Parr, "Maori Literacy 1843–1867," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 72, no. 3 (1963): 212; Jackson, "Literacy, Communications and Social Change (1967)." ; Parsonson, *The Conversion of Polynesia*, 6; Jackson, "Literacy, Communication and Social Change (2003)." It is simply noted here that literacy and conversion did not appear to be confused by early Māori converts. For example, William Williams reported a comment by one Māori enquirer to the effect that he would not be able to believe because he could not write. But he was answered by another saying that "writing has nothing to do with enlightening the heart": William Williams, *Journal*, 3 Mar 1830 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:466).

7.3 The Causes of the Māori Conversion

Why did Māori convert to Christianity in such numbers? While a multiplicity of answers might be given to this question, past explanations have tended to focus on exogenous factors (such as the impact of Western contact), which also tend to view individual converts as passive rather than active agents of their own conversions. This thesis has adopted a different strategy: starting with individual converts and then, by identifying common themes and connecting narratives, extrapolating to the wider movement.

Ruatara's conversion appears to have resulted from his experience of recovery from serious illness while on board the *Ann* in 1809 and his subsequent friendship with Samuel Marsden. Even prior to that time, though, Ruatara had been looking to reform Māori society along Western lines and had expressed a desire to "make a Sunday" in New Zealand. Māui's profession of faith seems to have been determined by confidence in his father's prior conversion in 1806 as well as the instruction he received while resident in Norfolk Island, New South Wales, and England. For Te Rangi, his baptism in 1825 was the outcome of his engagement with missionary ideas and practices, and his experience of answered prayer for a new heart within – an experience later confirmed for him by a dream. Taiwhanga, in a similar way to Ruatara, was attracted by the alternative way of life offered by the mission station and, following Te Rangi's example of persistent prayer, believed that he had experienced the new birth of which the missionaries spoke. It was his baptism in 1830, along with Pita and Meri, that marked the beginning of the Māori Conversion.

Common themes from each of these conversion narratives can be summarised under the headings of belief, identity and practice.

7.3.1 Belief

The cognitive dimension of faith was an important aspect for each of the four converts studied here. This was particularly so for Te Rangi, whose discussion of Christian ideas was recorded by Henry Williams in the Waitangi Dialogues. These discussions reflected the wider debate and contest of ideas that was taking place between the CMS missionaries and Māori in the mid-1820s; including the nature and origin of sickness, whether there was one God or many, the reality of spiritual conflict, and the possibility of Māori entering the Christian heaven upon death.

Christian ideas were also important for Māui and Taiwhanga. Māui's beliefs were shaped by the Bible verses he had been taught as part of the Drummond household. Taiwhanga's beliefs, too, reflected the catechisms he had learnt at Paihia. These Christian ideas formed a new map of reality for Māui and Taiwhanga in which the drama of Christian redemption was actively being worked out. The present age, particularly for Taiwhanga, was understood as one of spiritual struggle in which the soul was in danger of enslavement by the devil unless it was able to experience the new birth by the Holy Spirit.

Even for Ruatara, who is often characterised as being more utilitarian in his engagement with Christianity, new ideas played a prominent part. Although Ruatara showed a particular interest in Western forms of agriculture, he was also known to have discussed with Marsden a range of other topics including religion and civil government. It was Christian ideas that lay behind Ruatara's willingness to make peace with Whangaroa, to adopt new judicial practices, and to institute the Sabbath at Rangihoua. For Ruatara, also, part of the utilitarian attraction of Western civilisation was the alternative explanation of the world that was offered by Christianity.

7.3.2 *Identity*

Identity highlights the relational aspects of conversion as a convert's identity undergoes varying degrees of adjustment and new allegiances are formed. A characteristic feature of each of the four converts was the friendships they formed with European missionaries. Ruatara's friendship with Samuel Marsden was forged during his recovery from illness in 1809. Māui's Christian identity was established through his being received into the Drummond family. Te Rangi formed a particularly close friendship with Henry Williams, while Taiwhanga's friendships first started at Kerikeri with John Butler and continued at Paihia with Richard Davis.

These cross-cultural friendships enabled a process of adjustment to take place involving elements of both continuity and discontinuity. For Te Rangi, his decision to set aside the traditional tapu marked a clear break with his past, as did his desire to make the Christian heaven his destination after death. Taiwhanga's decision not to join Hongi Hika's war expeditions was a break with his previous identity as a Ngā Puhi warrior. Ruatara's identity, however, evolved in continuity with his tribe as he advocated for new religious practices, such as Sabbath observance. Māui's identity

too, was one of continuity with his family of origin, given his belief that his father had become a Christian before him.

This process of adjustment led to the formation of new allegiances. There were hints of Ruatara's new allegiance in his willingness to receive the visits and care of the missionaries during his final illness, despite the wishes of his tohunga and family. For the other three converts, their new allegiance was primarily expressed in being baptised and the taking of a new name, signifying that they now belonged to a new community of faith. Māui was probably baptised with the name of Thomas, the name given him by the anonymous sea captain. Te Rangi's choice of name Karaitiana affirmed his connection to Christ, who he believed had invited him to enter the Christian heaven. This caused some consternation to his family, for while Williams wanted Te Rangi's burial to reflect his new Christian identity, they were determined to maintain their traditional burial practices without missionary interference.

Taiwhanga was conscious of having been dedicated to Whiro from birth to be a Ngā Puhi warrior. Baptism symbolised his release from that past allegiance and his freedom to take on a new identity as a "fool for Christ."

7.3.3 *Practice*

For each of the four converts, Christian practices were perhaps adopted experimentally at first, such as when Te Rangi planted kūmara with and without the appropriate karakia. Over time however, these Christian practices also came to give meaningful expression to their Christian beliefs and identity. Ruatara's desire to "make a Sunday" at Rangihoua gave expression to his vision for a Christian transformation of Māori society. Māui's adoption of the religious practices of his hosts reinforced his identity as a missionary to his own people. The practice of Christian prayer enabled Te Rangi to experience the new heart within of which the missionaries had spoken. Taiwhanga, following the example of Te Rangi, also persisted in prayer and eventually experienced a freedom from the evil desires that he believed had entangled his heart since birth. Other practices adopted by these four converts, which later became important markers of Christian identity, include: discarding traditional tapu, wearing European clothing on Sundays, saying grace before meals, and the adoption of monogamous marriage.

7.3.4 Contributing Factors

This summary of common themes suggests the following four factors as being important for explaining the cause of the Māori Conversion.

Firstly, the strength of the cross-cultural friendships that formed between Māori and missionary was able to catalyse social and religious change. This relational aspect of conversion has at times been overlooked by historians who have tended to downplay the role of the missionaries. But this thesis has shown that the friendships formed between the four early converts and the missionaries were a significant factor in their conversions. This same pattern also appears to have been true for the wider reception of Christianity by Māori, where the arrival of a missionary was often the signal for initiating change. By having a resident missionary, Māori were able to experiment with Christianity in a way that shielded them from the ridicule of relatives and minimised the threat of attack from rival tribes. For instance, it was difficult for a tribe in the midst of an active conflict to forego the requirements of utu unilaterally without exposing themselves to attack from their tribal enemies, who would be likely to interpret their actions as a sign of weakness or fear. As a consequence, when the CMS expanded the mission beyond the Bay of Islands, they attempted simultaneously to establish mission stations, if at all possible, on both sides of a conflict, in the hope of ensuring a peaceful transition for both parties.⁴²

Secondly, Māori were attracted to Christian ideas that were able to provide a satisfying account of the world now available to them through European contact. Christian ideas were an important feature of the conversions studied in this thesis, even when other, more utilitarian, motives could be said to have been present. The attraction of a Christian worldview also appears to have been an important feature of the wider Māori Conversion. Christianity allowed Māori to set aside the burden of maintaining traditional tapu and experiment instead with an alternative way of living. Equally, it was able to offer a viable alternative for those Māori who had a growing desire to make peace with their traditional tribal enemies. It was not coincidental that Christian Māori were at the forefront of those opposing the longstanding divisions and animosities of the past.

⁴² This policy did not always prove successful. In 1836 the conflict between Tauranga and Rotorua forced the evacuation of the CMS stations at both Rotorua and Matamata.

Thirdly, Māori accepted the Bible as the Word of God and as a source of spiritual authority. The recognition of the Bible's authority by the converts studied in this thesis was mostly mediated through their confidence and trust in the missionaries who taught them its message. So too, the later reception of Māori catechists by Māori communities reflected a general confidence in the missionaries and the truth of their message. That the Bible had a great appeal to Māori, whatever their rank or social status, was demonstrated by the high demand for the Scriptures and the great interest in learning to read its text for themselves. The authority of the Bible disrupted the traditional social hierarchies based on the obligations of tapu and utu. As converts discarded the conventions of the past, the Bible provided for a new system of law and order that allowed a distinctly Māori Christian society to emerge.

Fourthly, the Māori experience of Sabbath observance and Christian prayer led to personal and communal transformation. Sabbath observance was an important first step for the converts in this thesis and symbolised their openness to the missionary message. Their experience of Christian prayer was also transformative, especially for Te Rangi and Taiwhanga. Their belief that they had experienced a spiritual new birth in answer to persistent prayer was a key reason for their public professions of faith. Likewise, the enthusiasm and commitment of Māori catechists had its source in their confidence in the experiential truth of Christianity, and was a major factor in their effectiveness in spreading the Christian faith to others. Sabbath observance allowed Māori to reinterpret the traditional laws of tapu as obedience to God's commands – particularly the fourth Commandment to keep the Sabbath holy. Abstaining from work on a Sunday also reinforced the idea of 'sitting still' and not rising up to seek redress from their tribal enemies. As Sabbath observance transformed Māori communities, so too did the practice of Christian prayer, which reinforced the Christian ideas of utu having been satisfied by the atonement of Christ and the coming day of divine judgment on human sin. Former warriors now embarked on a new quest, through the practice of Christian prayer, to wage spiritual warfare against the trials and temptations of the devil and the desires of a sinful heart.

7.4 Summary Statement

Using the definition of conversion developed in the Introduction together with the statistical reporting of the missionaries, this thesis has been able to conclude that by 1852 the Māori Conversion had extended to some 90 percent of the Māori

population. It has also been able to show that the four early converts studied were not isolated or exceptional cases, but that their conversions formed a template that shaped the experience of other Māori converts and significantly influenced the nature of the movement as a whole. Māori converts were attracted by Christian ideas as providing a satisfying and alternative way of living in the changing world opening up to them through Western contact. New allegiances and identities based on the spiritual authority of the Bible allowed converts to dispense with the divisions and animosities of the past and to pursue new forms of peace. Their practice of Sabbath observance, Christian prayer, and baptism (among others) reinforced those beliefs and identities leading to the transformation of traditional Māori society and the emergence of a distinctly Māori expression of Christianity.

Appendix I: Waitangi Dialogues

Table 11: Waitangi Dialogues

Dialogue	Dialogue Date	Letter Date	Date Received by CMS
I	Sep–Nov 1823	21 Nov 1823	22 Jun 1824
II	16 Apr 1824	9 Jul 1824	11 Apr 1825
III	17 Oct 1824	31 Dec 1824	21 May 1825
IV	27 Mar 1825	31 Mar 1825	5 Aug 1825
V	17 Jul 1825	10 Sep 1825	18 Feb 1826
VI	24 Jul 1825	"	"
VII	7 Aug 1825	"	"
VIII	11 Sep 1825	"	"
IX	14 Sep 1825	"	"
X	2 Oct 1825	26 Dec 1825	12 Jun 1826

Dialogue I

September–November 1823¹

You will like to hear something as to the way in which the reception the Natives give to the Gospel message. Mr Fairburn and myself visit them on the Sunday and when opportunity offers we talk to them also on the week days. They seldom object to anything we have to say in the main, tho' now and then we are told we tell a lie in plain English.

The following is the substance of a conversation we had some time ago at a village a mile distant, which was exceeding pleasing to me, both from the interest the party expressed, and also from the picture they composed – the greatest variety of countenances were assembled I have yet beheld – young and old – Chiefs and Slaves – sick and blind, or nearly so. Mr Fairburn and myself having taken our station on the ground, the people formed a circle.

We then addressed ourselves to one.

How do you do friend?

Very well I thank you.

¹ Henry Williams to the Secretary, 21 Nov 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:78–88). The reference is to the transcription of Williams's letter entered into the CMS mission books upon the letter being received in London. The dialogue itself is found on pages 84–86. For a typescript of this letter see HL, MS-0285/A:48–68. For a digital image of the holograph, see National Library of Australia [NLA], <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670163157>.

This the Sabbath, did you know it?

No, I knew nothing about it.

Do you know what is the cause of the Sabbath Day amongst the white people?

No, I do not. I never heard the reason.

The great Atua who made all the world, the sea, the fish, and birds, and caused the vegetation to spring forth. Who also made you and me and all mankind, finished the whole in six days. The seventh day he rested from all his work, and proclaimed it a day of sacred rest to be observed by all men.

No, your Atua is a strange Atua to us, he is not the New Zealand Atua, neither did he make New Zealand, nor the New Zealand men.

Friend, you are wrong in your opinion, look for instance at your hands and feet, the same number of fingers and toes, the same marks in the hands, and lines in the face and elsewhere. Look at our eyes, they are the same as your own. Look at your noses, and mouths – the veins in the body. You are made in every respect as we are. We then are all the work of one great Atua, who dwells in Heaven, and who sees into our hearts whether they are good or bad, and if we die with a bad heart, we shall go to a bad spirit below. But if we believe in this one great Atua, and obey him, we shall rest with him in Heaven.

I do not believe it to be so, for our Atuas are evil spirits that have power to enter into men's insides, and devour them; and to cause them to die, and to take their spirits down into the earth: and there is one of the same kind a little distance in a large hole that devoured a canoe and all the men for pulling up some flax which had been tabooed: he also broke the Ship Mr Marsden was going to Port Jackson in.

The Ship Brampton ran ashore near the place alluded to.²

No, my friend you mistake. The day on which the Ship was lost was the sacred day, and the Captain did not fear the Great Atua. He broke the Taboo and the Great Atua caused the Ship to run on shore.

At this was a general laugh.

Moreover, the Ship on the opposite side of the Island in the Shukeangha [Hokianga] was lost for the same sin, it being the Ra Taboo or Sacred day when she was lost.

They again had a hearty laugh.³ It is a remarkable circumstance that these vessels were lost on the Sabbath, and should serve as a warning amongst thousands of others, to those who despise or lightly esteem the Word of the Lord upon this very subject.

² The *Brampton* was wrecked on 7 Sep 1823: Elder, *Letters and Journals*, 366.

³ The American schooner, *Cossack*, was wrecked on 27 Apr 1823 at the entrance to Hokianga harbour: John Butler, Journal, 3 May 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:513). King was told by a Māori informant that the chief-mate of the *Cossack* had deliberately violated a local tapu which caused the loss of the ship. King was told, "The Atua, or God, called Taneewa [Taniwha] had killed thousands of New Zealand men, and he was much pleased that he served the white people no better than he did them." John King, Journal, 5 May 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M2:531).

Will you shew us the place where this Atua of yours dwells, and we will pull up some of the flax – because we are not afraid and are confident there is no such thing.

Yes, come along with us – but you will be sure to be devoured by the spirit, and if he has not power over you on account of your Atua – he will destroy all the Natives with whom you dwell.

Well, we do not believe there is any such thing, and if you will shew us the place, we will go into it purposely to convince you there is no such thing as a spirit there.

That is the Road, but it is very muddy – it is [a] very little way – but you had better come tomorrow in the boat.

If those spirits are so bad as you say, why do you not cleave to the Atua of the white people, and he will give you a good spirit, and all things necessary for this world, such as you see we have, and moreover, a sure hope of everlasting happiness when you die.

Your Atua is very good to you, but he is strange to us, and we know nothing about him.

Many little circumstances transpired which greatly increased the interest of the scene. Their attention was very great. They appeared to be impressed that their Atuas do not supply them with anything, and in complying with their superstitions they seek only deliverance from death, and from the destruction of their potato crops &c. One old woman particularly observed the evil disposition of their Atuas – that they were bad spirits. We had abundant satisfaction upon the whole.

Dialogue II

16 April 1824 [Good Friday]⁴

Our intercourse with the Natives is regular on the Sunday and on other occasions, as opportunity offers. In the neighbourhood of the Settlement, they profess not to work on the Sabbath day. On some occasions we have been much delighted with the interest they appeared to feel in our conversation with them, at other times they seemed quite indifferent as to anything we had to say, and would frequently turn the subject to something of a worldly nature or to their filthy ideas. Some of their superstitious notions I hope are giving way, such as their Taboos upon a sick person, as we will not attend them while that is the case; also in two or three instances, defeating their supposed power of witchcraft, which they universally believe some to be possessed with.⁵

⁴ Henry Williams to the Secretary, 9 July 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:259–66). The dialogue itself is on pages 260–63. Williams described the location as being “Wyeterra, a village a mile on our left.” This is consistent with the village being located at Waitangi. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:70–83. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670164714>.

⁵ The reference is the Tohitapu affray when he “karakia’ed” Henry Williams and the mission. Although two Māori residents became ill, they recovered with treatment. The incident occurred on 12–13 December 1823 and was reported in detail to the CMS by Henry Williams: Henry Williams to the Secretary, 21 November 1823 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:81–84). Marianne Williams also gave an account of the altercation in a letter to her sister-in-law Lydia Marsh: Mrs Henry Williams to Mrs E. G. Marsh, 12 January 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:198–203). A transcript of Marianne Williams account is given in Fitzgerald, *Letters*, 72–80.

The nature of our conversation you will see by the following which took place on Good Friday, extracted from my journal.

After Dinner Mr Fairburn and myself proceeded to Wyeterra, a village a mile on our left, and assembled a considerable number of men women and children. The head Chief was absent.

Our conversation was nearly as follows:

How do you do friends. We are come to talk to you about the sacred day. Are you all agreeable?

Yes, as soon as our food is cooked, which is in the fire and we have eaten, we will listen to you.

During the interval, which was about twenty minutes, we had little attention, and could not but contemplate the scene before us, seated on a bank of cockle shells, with several groups of Natives around us squat upon the ground, eating with both hands – with several Cookies [kuki: cooks, slaves] scattered up and down beating fern root. The thought of our ancestors having been in nearly the same state, filled our hearts with thankfulness for ourselves, and with pity for these who knew not their sad condition.

After most of them had eaten, we gave a general summons, when many of them assembled round, Mr Fairburn as Interpreter gave out a hymn for the first time in the native language.⁶ They behaved very well, tho' some were disposed to laugh, but still it was suppressed by others calling silence.

After the hymn the following conversation took place.

This is the day when Jesus the Son of the Great Attua was murdered by being nailed to a tree, as a satisfaction to the great Attua his Father, for the crimes or bad things of you and all of us, both White people and New Zealanders and the people of all other places in the world.

What is the name of the Father of Jesus Christ?

Jehovah, he is the Great Attua.

How was he killed?

He was nailed to a tree, both hands and feet, and a spear was thrust into his side, when his blood came forth, which was received by his Father as the satisfaction for the sin of the world – do you understand?

Yes, yes, we understand.

The great Attua made you and all of us, we sprang from one Father and Mother. He made also the sea and land, and every thing you see. He placed our first parents in a beautiful garden called Eden.

What were the names of our first Parents?

Adam and Eve. The Great Attua gave to them happiness and abundance of everything that was good for food, only one tree in the midst of the garden he tabooed, and commanded them not to touch the fruit of it for if they did they

⁶ The hymn was probably one of the seven hymns written by James Shepherd in the period 1822–23 and printed in 1827: Church Missionary Society, *Kenehili* (Sydney, 1827), 25–31. Given the Easter context of this second dialogue, the first hymn from this collection, "Ko wai ra te Atua?", would have fitted the occasion well.

should die. But an evil spirit in the form of a Serpent, came to Eve, when the man was not present, and tempted her to take the fruit of the tree, and eat it, for it was very good, and she did so, and thereby broke the taboo, and she gave also to the man, and he did eat, and after they had eaten they became very much afraid of the Great Attua, for their hearts told them they had done very wrong, and they went amongst the trees of the garden to hide themselves from the face of the Great Attua – but the Great Attua knew what they had done, and came into the garden and called them before him, and after they had told him all the particulars, he said they should not remain there, and that in some time hence they should surely die for their great sin; and this was the way death first came into the world, through the wickedness of our first parents – pain, sickness, sorrow and death have been ever since.

Death has removed our Parents and Friends, and in a short time we must expect to follow them, but those who forsake their evil practices and desire to do what God hath said in his Holy book, and love the Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Attua says he will receive them into Heaven when they die, where they shall be for ever happy.

Now after they were turned out of this beautiful garden called Paradise, they multiplied exceedingly, and became very wicked. The great Attua pitied them because there was no person to ransom them, but the Lord Jesus said he would become their ransom, that his spirit should descend upon a virgin, and he would become a young child, grow up to manhood, suffer death upon the cross or tree for a satisfaction to the Great Attua for our sins and wickedness and a saviour to all who should believe in him, all which he did.

He was killed on this day, eighteen hundred years since, and he rose on the third day afterwards alive and continued for forty days with his friends. He was then taken up into Heaven where he now is, and will by and by return again to judge all men, both New Zealanders and White people from his great book, where he has the names of both good and bad, and the account of everything which has been done since the days of Adam. Those who have done evil will be taken to a place of endless night and continue burning, and those who have lived in the fear and love of the Great Attua and in the belief of the Lord Jesus Christ, will go with him into eternal happiness, in Heaven.

What is the place of burning?

It is called Hell, and he who is the Chief, is called the Devil, and those whom he takes will become his Slaves, however great they may have been in this world.

Perhaps you may think this all gammon we have been telling you?⁷

Do we indeed? We believe it to be true enough, but this is the first time we have been told about it.

Considerable attention was paid during the whole of our visit. Mr Fairbairn closed with a prayer in the native language, and we returned greatly gratified, and not without hope that the Great Shepherd would ere long collect a few to his fold in this long neglected land and from amongst this noble people. Tho' at times we feel considerably tried by the natives from their occasional insolent conduct and thefts:

⁷ The word "gammon", with the meaning of nonsense, may well have been an expression that Māori had learnt on board Western shipping.

we are enabled soon to pocket the affront, and look forward to better days, or to that period when this land shall know the Lord, and praise him from the least even to the greatest. At present it is truly the case that darkness covers the land and gross darkness the people.

Dialogue III

17 October 1824⁸

Intercourse with the natives is generally pleasing. On the Sunday we have three native services – that is, singing, and prayer, and conversation; and two services of our own. Many of them would be highly interesting, but my interruptions are so numerous, that I fear I shall not be able to copy them off. At one settlement we visit on the Sunday we are welcomed in a most gracious manner, and the old Chief has always a red flag flying on that day to give notice to all around that it is a day of rest. At this place we generally have from thirty to seventy to attend: other places are within reach of us but we require more help.

An outline of one of our conversations I shall add as a specimen of our general mode with them. (It took place shortly after the Natives had made a rush upon my house to the number of eighty, without giving us any notice of their intention, the account of which is stated in the minute book.)⁹

Oct-17. After dinner, visited our old friend at Wytarra [Waitangi]; he had hoisted his red Kākāhou [kākahū, cloak] as a flag to denote the rā tāboo [rā tapu, sacred day]. This man has stated his intention not to kārākēa [karakia] over his koomaras [kūmara] (sweet potatoes) and to set aside wholly the taboos so prevalent amongst these people. We understood he had not been tabooed several days.

The following conversation as nearly as I can recollect took place –

How have you been this last week?

N. I was very bad two nights and days – could scarcely breathe.

Did you consider it in consequence of violating the taboo?

N. I was rather inclined to think so.

Were you ever ill in the same way before?

N. Yes.

Was that in consequence of breaking the taboo?

N. No.

Then you can have no reason for supposing this illness to have proceeded from the breaking the taboo. We must all soon expect to be numbered with the dead.

Native. Yes, yes, I know.

Don't you know what was the cause of sickness coming into the world?

⁸ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 31 Dec 1824 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:295–301). The dialogue itself is found on pages 299–301. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:84–96. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670166753>.

⁹ Henry Williams Quarterly Report, 4 October 1824, CNO4, item 2, [page 11–12].

N. I forget.

When our first parents eat of the tabooed tree, the Great Attua was very angry with them, and told them they should be subject to these things, and that in time they should die. Since that time, all people have been subject to sickness and death, in every country. We have come here to tell you of that new country, that is, a Heavenly Country, where there will be neither sickness nor sorrow, but all perfect happiness. For all who will be admitted there will dwell in the presence of the Great Attua and of his Son Jesus Christ.

N. I should like my spirit to see that country before I die, so that I may know well before hand.

Do any of the Spirits of the New Zealanders go to the North Cape to see that country before they die?

N. Yes, they go while the body sleeps, and afterwards come back and can tell who they have seen.

Did you ever, while sleeping, suppose yourself flying in the air?

N. Yes.

Did you believe yourself to have flown in the air because you had thought so while sleeping?

N. No.

So is it also with those who say they have been to the North Cape and seen their relations, they dream of them as they do of any improbable thing.

N. Yes, yes.

These thoughts which you have respecting the North Cape, are given to you by the Evil Spirit, which is desirous of keeping you for himself, and giving you these ideas that you may not attend to the message of the Great Attua. Your Attua is the Devil, the evil spirit, who leads you to all kinds of evil, of whom you speak no good: the Great Attua, the God of that White people, is a Good God, the Author of all good; it is he who gives food and clothing; it is he who has commanded us to come and tell you about him, and how you may be able to get to Heaven.

Why do not the rest of the people come and attend to these things [and] come and hear of Heaven and the way to it?

N. They do not care about it.

True. It is the wicked Spirit tells them not to come that he may lead them away to his own place when they shall die, and there make them his Slaves.

Why do the New Zealanders steal and kill and the girls go on board the Ships, when they know the Great Attua is angry with them? Do not they feel within them that they are doing wrong?

N. Yes.

It is the evil spirit which tells them not to be afraid, but go on and do these things that he may be sure of them when they die.

Do you know who told the natives to come and make a fight with us the other day?

N. Yes; Sheppetāhi [Hepatahi, a Waitangi chief].

True. He was the man. But the evil spirit told him and the rest of the people, in order that we might leave the place and that you might not hear of Heaven, and know the only way to obtain it.

N. Yes indeed. We should have been very sorry if you had gone.

Do you feel a desire to hear more of these things?

N. Oh yes. But I should like you to come more frequently – all week is too long.

No one has any time to lose upon such important subjects; we must all soon expect to die and appear before the Great Attua, and not at the North Cape as the people believe.

N. Yes, we believe the White people to know better than the New Zealanders.

We will endeavour to see you soon.

N. Very good. Good bye.

This is our general mode – but I might fill a tolerable volume.

Dialogue IV

27 March 1825¹⁰

Our visits to the Natives are as usual. They generally lend an ear and appear interested with any of the historical passages of Scripture; but are as dead and insensible to the necessity of redemption as the very brute beasts.

On Sunday last [27 Mar 1825], we asked a Chief where we visited why the people did not attend as they knew we were coming?

He replied,

they did not care about such things; all they thought of was eating and drinking and fighting; that he had told them, but they would not come: he said, if we had come to talk about any thing else or to give tokis [item of trade], that is articles of trade, we should have had numbers.

This is very true. We addressed some serious words to them;

that tho' they would not hear, what we told them would certainly come to pass; that should they die in their present state they must everlastingly be banished to the place of darkness and fire.

They pointed to a Boat passing at the time, which had been trading for pigs, and asked,

where they would go to for trading on the Rā tāpu.

We said that,

¹⁰ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 31 March 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:332–35). The dialogue itself is found on pages 334–35. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:97–104. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670170767>.

it was of no consequence whether it were White men or New Zealanders who acted in this way, contrary to the will of God. They would perish, unless they came to God through Jesus Christ.

Speaking upon the work of Redemption,
they said they could not understand it,

and would immediately, as it were, retire into their dark places of abode regardless of what was said.

The dominion of Satan was never more visible to me, and that this great work could be accomplished only by Divine power.

When we speak to the aged that death will soon seize them,
they reply, yes, they know that.

When we ask them where their souls will go afterwards,
they tell us to the Reinga, a place of darkness into which they descend from the North Cape.

We tell them that is Hell, the place of the Evil Spirit, who keeps them from hearing of the good place of which we are come to tell them; sometimes [they] listen, at other times they laugh and say,

they do not wish to go to our place, but to be with their friends and relations who have gone before them.

Dialogue V

17 July 1825¹¹

The Natives receive us with kindness and hear what we say with attention, but the dominion of Satan over them is very apparent; yet are there very many circumstances which concur to encourage us, and convince us that the Lord despiseth not the day of small things.¹²

The following will no doubt afford you as it has done us considerable gratification, being an outline of several conversations with an old Chief (in the presence of others) belonging to Wangari [Whangārei], but who removed hither from the attacks made upon them by fighting parties to their way to the Southward.

This Chief we have been in the habit of visiting for a year and a half, and we have narrowly examined his conduct. He has been in declining state of health.

On Sunday the 17th of July we visited him and found him as usual ready to receive us, and with his red cloth flying as a signal of the sacred day.

Our conversation as follows –

How do you do today?

¹¹ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:531–40). The dialogue itself is found on pages 533–34. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:105–126). For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670171997>. The dialogue is also printed in Williams, “Obituary of Christian Ranghi”, *Missionary Register* (1826): 185–88, and in Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 55–56.

¹² This is an allusion to Zechariah 4:10.

I have been poorly with a cough and sore throat.

That is what we are subject to: do you not remember the cause of pain and sickness?

Yes, it was owing to our first parents breaking the commands of God.

What are your thoughts of death?

My thoughts are continually in Heaven, in the morning, in the daytime, and at night, they are continually there. I have no fear of death, my belief is in the Great God and in Jesus Christ.

That is very good, for there is no pain in Heaven, either in mind or body, no fear of the enemy coming to kill you, not bad for food, but a quiet rest for ever.

Do you not at times think that our God is not your God, and that you will not go to Heaven?

This is the way my heart sometimes thinks when sitting alone. I think perhaps I shall go to Heaven, and I think perhaps I shall not go to Heaven; and perhaps this God of the White people is not my God and perhaps He is. And then after I have been thinking in this way and my heart has been dark for some time, then it becomes lighter and the thoughts of my going to heaven remain last.

These are the temptations of the Devil to drive you from the thoughts of Heaven. You must ask God to give you His good Spirit to enlighten your heart that you may discover this to be the device of Satan. Don't let your heart be jealous or doubtful that God will not give it you, for he gives His spirit to all who ask Him.

I pray several times in the day, I ask God to give me his Spirit in my heart to sit or dwell there.

Dialogue VI

24 July 1825¹³

Sunday June 24¹⁴

On arriving at the settlement we observed our old friend with his wife and child sitting in his hut, and a party of thirty or forty natives from beyond the river Thames sitting at a little distance. We beckoned to them to attend – when they arose and sat in a circle in front of the Hut. As they were strangers, we addressed ourselves to them.

From whence came you?

From Tou ranga [Tauranga].

Did you hear anything of the Great God up there?

How should we hear or see Him? Are we visited by White people?

How many Gods are there amongst you?

It was observed that some person whispered to the leading man to say one, which he answered.

Where is he and what is his name?

With some confusion he answered,

I don't know.

Do you suppose a strange God made you and a strange God made us?

Yes.

Why? Do you observe any difference between us and yourselves excepting the colour of the skin?

Yes, your clothing is better and different from ours.

What difference can the clothing make? You see two of your own country men in our clothing, does that make them different from yourselves?

They were clothed by you: but yours is a different language.

¹³ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:531–40). The dialogue itself is found on pages 534–36. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:105–126. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670172171>. The dialogue is also printed in Williams, “Obituary of Christian Ranghi”, *Missionary Register* (1826): 185–88, and in Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 56–58.

¹⁴ Williams has dated this dialogue as taking place in June rather than July as might be expected by the order of the dialogues within the letter. Williams's June date is also reflected in the transcription made by the CMS in their Mission Book: Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:534). However, as 24 June was a Friday and the expected date of 24 July was a Sunday (the normal day for visiting), Williams has probably mistaken the month in copying it from his journal. This is confirmed by the internal reference in the dialogue to Hongi Hika having left on an expedition to Whangaroa: George Clarke, Journal, 21 July 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:549). Williams has a similar journaling error in January 1831 where his dating is out by a factor of one week: Henry Williams, Journal, 17 Jan 1831 [10 Jan 1831] (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M6:108). Therefore, the *Missionary Register* has rightly corrected Williams's date for this dialogue to 24 July 1825: Williams, “Obituary of Christian Ranghi”, *Missionary Register* (1826): 185.

We will tell you presently how that came to pass, but we must first go back to the commencement of all things.

They listened very attentively while we related the creation of the world, the fall of man, the flood, of Noah leaving the Ark, the building of the Tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues. That in Europe and in the number of Islands in these seas each speaks a different language from the other, for we know this by a sacred book which was written by the spirit of God in the hearts of our forefathers, therefore if our hearts or memories forget today, we can look into the book, and there it tells us over again.

What do you think of all this?

We have no White people amongst us to teach us, perhaps were there any with us we might soon learn. The White people have been and sold us muskets and have shewn us how to use them, and we can shoot straight, and we have learnt how to hoist casks up out of the Ships, and perhaps we should learn this also.

The people of Tahiti a short time since were as you are now, they are of a strange language, had tapoos amongst them, had wooden Gods which they worshipped, but after the Missionaries went amongst them they attended to their instructions and believed in the Great God, and he gave them his Holy Spirit and they split up their wooden Gods and cooked their food by them, and now they have become missionaries themselves and teach their countrymen and neighbouring Islands, and build large houses for prayer.

Here our friend the old chief remarked with considerable energy, that if Shunghee and some other head chiefs were to believe, they would have plenty of followers to listen to them as they have now to go to the fights.

They have just returned from one War, and they have now gone to Whangaroa, and all the natives round about the Bay with them for the same purpose.

They paid great attention and gave their assent.

All men, both those of New Zealand and White people, are born with bad hearts until God gives them his good spirit, which his book shews us how to obtain, and shews us also the straight path to Heaven.

Those who do not believe in it are the Devil's servants here and will be his slaves in the Rainga [Rēinga], where they will dwell in fire and brimstone for ever and ever. It is impossible for the tongue to describe the pain and torment they will endure. Those who believe in the Great God will be taken to Heaven, and it is impossible for the tongue to describe what happiness they will there enjoy for ever.

The Great God sent His Son into the world to die on account of our sins, as a payment for us, that we might be taken to Heaven.

As it was drawing towards sunset we felt it necessary to conclude as usual by singing a hymn and prayer. We afterwards told them that by and by we might perhaps visit them at their place when the vessel should be finished.

Many pleasing remarks took place during the conversation, which it would be impossible to note down in writing.

Dialogue VII

7 August 1825¹⁵

Sunday 7th Aug. 1825.

In conversation with the Chief at Waitangi.

How do you feel today?

I have been very unwell.

How do you feel in your mind?

Sometimes, when sitting alone, I feel my heart gloomy or dark, and think the God of the white people is not our God, and that the Rainga is the only place we have to go to. Then my heart feels enlightened and again becomes gladdened with the thought of going to Heaven.

What is your judgement of the love of Christ?

I think of the love of Christ and ask him to wash this bad heart, and take away this native heart and give me a new heart.

What does your wife think of Heaven?

She made answer – I do not understand.

Do you teach your children?

I do.

Have you never any rejoicing of Heart?

Yes, indeed, when I think of Heaven and Jesus Christ, I am glad, because when I die I shall leave this flesh and bones here and my soul will go to Heaven.

Attend now to what I am going to say to you. The people who believe in Jesus Christ are all called by one name after him, which is Christian. We who are here now are called so, that is the Europeans. But those who do not believe are called Heathens. The New Zealanders are Heathens. Those who believe in him take his name as a sign that their hearts are washed in his blood.

The old man appeared much pleased with this and expressed his wish to be called after Jesus Christ.

Suppose you had an opportunity to steal any thing that might be in your way and knew nobody would see you, what think you of that?

I should not steal anything myself, but perhaps my wife or children might steal if I were not present.

Would you not make them return the stolen things?

¹⁵ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:531–40). The dialogue itself is found on page 536. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:105–126. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670172631>. The dialogue is also printed in Williams, “Obituary of Christian Ranghi”, *Missionary Register* (1826): 185–88 and in Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 58–59.

If they were stolen from the ware school [i.e. mission schoolhouse] I should make them return them.

But why should you not make them return them to the ships if stolen from thence?

I should desire them to take them back again, but I believe they would not. They would say let my things be, what are my things to you?

It should here be observed that parents have little or no control over their children; nor do I believe that they can by the custom of the land inflict any chastisement upon them. The children of this man might steal and he have no absolute authority over them to oblige them to return the articles. So also with his wife.

Do you never attempt to teach the rest of the natives about this Settlement?

Yes I do, but they will not listen to what I have to say.

You must still continue to teach them. The Lord Jesus endured for you and was laughed at and mocked and called a liar. Keep your thoughts on Heaven and look to him to support you.

Concluded as usual.

Dialogue VIII

11 September 1825¹⁶

Sep. 11th. Our old friend seemed better in mind, tho' in his body he was wasting fast. He looked upon us cheerfully and expressed his pleasure at our coming.

Our conversation as follows:

What are your thoughts of your approaching end?

I think I shall soon die. My flesh is all gone off my bones, and I am now nothing but skin and bone.

You know this has come upon you in consequence of sin, and every person you see here present will shortly be the same as you are now.

But what do you think of the next place for the soul?

I think I shall go to Heaven above the Sky because I have believed all you have told me about God and Jesus Christ.

But what payment have you to give to God for your sins against him?

I have nothing to give him, only I believe he is the true God, and in Jesus Christ.

Don't you know who was the payment for our sins?

I don't quite understand that.

¹⁶ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:531–40). The dialogue itself is found on page 537. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:105–126. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670172910>. The dialogue is also printed in Williams, “Obituary of Christian Ranghi”, *Missionary Register* (1826): 185–88, and in Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 60–1.

Have you forgot that we told you that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and that he came into this world and suffered death for us?

Ay, ay. I remember you told me that before, and my whole wish is to go and dwell in Heaven when I die.

Do you feel any fear of death?

No perhaps.

The man who believes in Jesus Christ with all his heart and sees his death approaching, feels glad that he is so shortly to leave this body of pain and misery and the spirit to take its flight to Heaven.

I have prayed to God and Jesus Christ and my heart feels full of light.

That is very right. Let your heart lay hold continually on Jesus Christ and God will fill your heart with his good spirit. The people who are here now may laugh at what we are telling you, but when they die and their spirits are gone to the Rainga they will then cry, being in perpetual torment, and wish that they had like you believed what the white people had said to them. Therefore let your mind be continually stayed on God.

Dialogue IX

14 September 1825¹⁷

On Wednesday the 14th some Natives told us our old friend was dead. We were much cast down as we had not seen him since Sunday, and knew not how he had borne his last moments. But as their reports are not to be relied on, we all went to his settlement in hopes of still speaking a word with him. On our approach we heard weeping and lamentation. I feared all was over.

On our arrival at his Hut we observed with joy that the vital spark was not extinct. His bones stood through his skin, and ulcers had broken out in various parts of his body. It was evident he could not last long. He turned his head and looked with satisfaction upon us. His voice was faint. We were enabled to hold a little conversation with him, as follows.

Well friend, how do you find yourself?

I shall soon be dead.

What are your thoughts of heaven?

Oh, my heart is very, very full of light.

What makes your heart so very full of light?

Because of my belief in Jehovah and Jesus Christ.

And are you still firm in your belief in Jesus Christ?

¹⁷ Henry Williams to the Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M3:531–40). The dialogue itself is found on pages 537–39. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:105–126. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670173045>. The dialogue is also printed in Williams, “Obituary of Christian Ranghi”, *Missionary Register* (1826): 185–88. and in Fitzgerald, *Te Wiremu*, 61–63. There is a parallel account of the baptism in Henry Williams to William Williams, 3 October 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:93–95).

Are you deaf? Have not I told you over and over again that my belief is steadfast?

Have you no fear of death before you?

No, none, not in the least.

We are happy to find that; all real believers rejoice in the prospect of death knowing their pains are all then ended.

Ay. I shall go and sit above the sky with Jesus Christ.

Have you forgotten what was told you sometimes since respecting the name which is given to all those who believe in Jesus Christ?

I have forgotten the name but I have not forgotten the circumstance about which you spoke. It is fast in my heart.

How should you like to be called by that name?

I should like it very much indeed.

Here all of us present, viz. Messrs. R. Davis, C. Davies, Fairburn, and myself consulted as to whether it was considered that the man now before us was a proper candidate for baptism. We had seen him many months, and had observed his walk and conversation; when each gave it as his opinion, that more satisfactory evidence could not be given in the early state of things here, to the substance of the Articles of belief.¹⁸ We considered he firmly assented, and from his steadfastness at this time now on the verge of the grave, and his steady resistance of all the native superstitions peculiar to his present situation, did consider that he should be baptized, taking for example the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch.¹⁹ Accordingly the prayer books and a basin were sent for. The interval was improved by addressing ourselves occasionally to the sick man, but generally to those around.

When everything was ready, we again called the attention of our sick friend describing to him more fully the nature of baptism, as an emblem of the cleansing of the heart from sin. I went through the Church Service. W^m. Puckey as having the most thorough knowledge of the language interpreted certain parts. The name given to him was Christian, in addition to his native name Rangi, which he repeated several times with energy.

We asked him how he would wish his children to be disposed of, and what should be done with his body after death. He told us he wished the children to live with us and calling his daughter who now lives with Mr Davis to him, said to her, "I am going to Heaven, Mary, but Mr Davis will be your father, be a good girl." He wished his body to be removed to our place.

Many natives were sitting around, and appeared somewhat impressed by what they saw and heard. To us it was a season of joy and gladness. It was a period to which I had been looking with interest, surrounded by those who would gladly draw him back, he in the presence of all and with boldness, declares the darkness which once hung over him, but now the sure and certain hope of soon being in Glory. What shall we say to these things? Is it not a brand plucked from the burning?

This was the last time we saw Christian Rangi, tho' we heard of and from him. He died on Thursday night. We intended to have visited him on Thursday but could not;

¹⁸ Williams may be referring to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion from the English Prayer Book.

¹⁹ Acts 8:26–39.

and the first account we had was a Canoe passing the Settlement on Friday morning with his body. His relations fearing we should be round would not let any one inform us of what was about to take place. We reasoned with them upon the impropriety of taking him away contrary to his dying wish, but could not prevail. It is a considerable satisfaction however, that they did not utter a word as to his faltering from the time we last saw him, which they would certainly have done gladly, had they heard a word upon which to ground their hopes. We told them it was of no consequence as to his salvation, for his body was all corruption, but that his soul was in Heaven. We felt sorry that we could not comply with his last request, but perhaps it may be well, it is, as it is.

I have endeavoured to give the conversation as near the literal words as I could, that you may judge of the case yourselves. Many incidental pleasing remarks occurred which are not here inserted, nor indeed under present circumstances, could we note.

Dialogue X

2 October 1825²⁰

The account of Christian Rangi in my last will no doubt give you much gratification. With regard to him our views are still the same. Much conversation has taken place amongst the Natives in consequence and many questions asked us. I will copy a conversation which took place Oct^r. 2, 1825, a few days after the death of Christian Rangi.

When we arrived at the house of our old friend, we found his widow and sister crying over his daughter. We said to them,

Are you crying for Ranghi who is dead?

No we are crying with his children, for the love we have for them. We do not cry for Rangi, he is gone to the good place in Heaven.

We then addressed ourselves to his brother Tioka.

What do you think of Rangi's death?

It is very good. I'll go too to the same place that he is gone to.

You cannot go there except your heart is full of love to Jesus Christ, for he has said in his book that no man can go to Heaven unless their hearts are full of belief in him.

Did you ever see any New Zealanders die without being afraid of Death?

No. They were always frightened, they were always afraid of approaching death.

Rangi was not afraid of death. He told us the day before he died that he was not afraid of death, but was going to leave his sick body down here, and his soul was going to Heaven to sit with Jesus Christ; and that his heart was full of love and light.

Come and teach me, and I will believe too. I wish to believe.

²⁰ Henry Williams to the Secretaries, 26 December 1825 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M4:44–48). The dialogue itself is located on pages 46–47. For a typescript of this letter, see HL, MS-0285/A:127–135. For a digital image of the holograph, see NLA, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2670175351>.

Those who believe in God are happy here and are rec'd into eternal happiness above; but those who believe not have no happiness here and are in misery ever after in fire at the Reinga like a stone in the fire, never consumed, and servant to the Devil. God will, in a future day, destroy this world and all that is in it, and those who do not believe in Jesus Christ will with the Devil be turned in to the Reinga to dwell in everlasting fire.

NB. It is considered by these people as a curse to threaten them with suffering by fire.

Do you know anything of the origin of Jesus Christ?

No. I have only heard it necessary that we must believe in Jesus Christ.

Here followed a description of the fall of man and his redemption by Jesus Christ.

Do you not love God and Jesus Christ, who so loved you as to suffer death for you, who was crucified, had his side pierced and blood spilt as a satisfaction for our sins, and said his work was finished and God's anger appeased to those who believe on him?

Yes I do love, and wish to be taught and to go to Jesus Christ. We believe we are wrong but we had no one to teach us.

Well, Jesus says you must believe now, today. You must leave off all your bad actions and native tapoos. What say you to your tapoos? Are you willing to go to the Reinga?

Indeed, no. I will go where my relation is gone. I will go to Heaven.

When leaving we desired him to let his heart hold fast the truth, that he must pray to Jesus Christ, ask him for a new heart and let his good spirit dwell within him, that God could see and know whether he wished to believe or not.

This Chief Tioka was the elder brother of Rangi and tho' his profession was pleasing, he has been deterred from attending and has been generally absent fishing or at his plantation inland.

Appendix II: Taiwhanga's Letters, 1826–1829

Letter to John Coleman (23 October 1826)¹

Rev. John Noble Coleman, a friend and supporter of Richard Davis, introduced the letter as follows: "LETTER from the Chief TAIWANGA to the AUTHOR, in Maori and English. The FIRST Letter ever written to England by a Native of New Zealand."

MARDENE PELE, Octr. 23d, 1826.

E MARA E KOMENE,—Te nei ano taku korero.

Kia koe, kamahue ano taku nei i'anga Kino.

Ka nui ra oki taku nei matakuranga ki nga mahi kino o te tangata maodi.

Ko te mivonari kuakina ki au te tini i'anga omatou nei ngakau.

Ka tini o matou karakia ki te Atua.

Awe! ki te ngutu kau omatou karakia, ki hai tu ki te ngakau.

Me aki e tu pea i te kaha o te waidua o te Atua.

Ko te pai oki tenei ki au. Kia waka pono ki te Atua, kia wakarerea te tini mea Kino, kia tahaudi atu kia Ta.

E mara ka mate taku ngakau kia kia ho atu tetahi kai taka mou. Ko te Reweti i mea mai a mua atu.

E mara ka mate taku ngakau ki tetahi kahua ra tapu moku, kotahi koti, kotahi tanautete, kotahi weketi, koti potai, me tetahi i'ou, me te tokena.

E pai ano adua paraikete matoutoudu ki au mo taku mo enga.

Te na kikata koutou ki taku nei tuhituhi.

KO TAIWANGA

SIR, MR. COLEMAN,—These are my words to you.

My evil works are all done with.

My understanding is indeed great of the many wicked works of the New Zealanders.

The missionaries have revealed to us the deceitfulness of our hearts.

Many are the prayers we pray to God.

But alas! our prayers are only from the lips, they do not come from the heart.

By and by, perhaps, they may come from the heart, by or through the strength of the Spirit of God.

This is the good thing to me, to believe in God, to cast away my bad deeds, and to turn to Him.

Sir, my heart is very bad to send you some mats, but Mr. Davis says, at a future time.

Sir, my heart is very bad for some clothes for the sacred day; one coat, one trousers, one waistcoat, one hat, with some shoes and stockings.

Two thick blankets would be very acceptable to me for my bed.

Don't you laugh at my writing.

KO TAIWANGA

¹ Coleman, 448-449.

Letter to Samuel Marsden (September 1828)

Taiwhanga's letter transcribed from holograph in Mitchell Library²

Translation in Mitchell Library³

My translation

No Paihia

E kara e te Matenga,

E kore ranei koe e pai kia homai i te tahi kahowao kia au kia ko tahi ano kahowao popoto kia ko tahi ano kahowao roroa hei titi i te tahi Ware paru moku. Nau hoki i mea kia au kia noho marie.

Na te nei ano ahau te waka aroha nei ki nga korerotanga o nga Metinare o te nei kainga katoa nei.

e rahi te kino o nga tangata katoa o te nei kainga o Nutirenei,

e kore e rongo ki nga waka ako, e kore e ronga ki nga korerotanga, heiwi tutu hoki ratou.

Na e korowiti ana ahau, Na e awangawanga ana ahau ki nga korero o te Atua i korerotia i te tini ahiahi, i te tini ata,

menga korerotanga katoa tanga mai, e ao ko te karawiunga o nga tangata maori ki roto ki te kapura kouira ra ia kite ai ua mate te tangata maori he oi ano te haere mai o te hunga waka ako kia ora ai

e kore e rongo ko tana pai hoki ki a tura kina e Ihowa te Atua e kore ratou e pai kia haere ki Kung ki te Kangi ki te kainga pai.

Na koia hoki ahau i hua ai i te ingoa o taku Tamaiti ko te Matenga

I say Mr Marsden

Is it not good for you to give me one cask of nails one only cask of nails short ones one only cask of nails long to fasten a house for me to teach in You send them for me and I will be quiet

This is it I like to hear the exhortations of the Missionaries at this Settlement.

very bad are the people all at this settlement of New Zealand

they will not hear the teaching or they will not hear the Preaching, a people deaf are they

hear is a speaking every morning to us all,

they will not hear for their good. Towa turns a deaf ear to the word of God, they are not good they will not hear of the good place.

Now see how I gave the name to my boy with Mr Marsden

From Paihia

My dear friend Marsden,

Would it not be kind for you to give me a cask of nails. Also a cask of short nails and one of long nails, that I might construct my thatched house. If you can do this for me I shall be content.

Now this: I have complete affection for the preaching of the missionaries of this settlement.

Great is the evil of all the people of this place of New Zealand.

They will never listen to the teaching. They will never listen to the preaching. They are a troublesome people.

Now I am shaken, now I am anxious for the words of God being spoken many evenings and many mornings.

and all the preaching concerning the day of punishment for Māori in the place of fire, indeed perceiving the death of Māori without the coming of the teachers in order to live.

They will not listen for their good for they are separated from Jehovah God. They will never approve of going to the good place in heaven above.

Now, it is the case that I have called the name of my child, Marsden

² Taiwhanga to Samuel Marsden, [undated] (ML, A1994, 68–70b).

³ "Taiwhanga to Samuel Marsden", undated (ML, A1994, 147–53).

kua kite ano koe i te wanautanga i tou taenga mai ki Paihia a i muara i tou kitenga i te matenga o te Hongihika i muara i tona tunga i te mata	you saw the birth when you were at Pyhea some time ago when you saw the wound of shunghi, before in his body, was the wound.	You saw the birth when you came to Paihia before the death of Hongi Hika and saw his bullet wound.
e aroha ana ahau ki a Ia no te mea hoki he tangata pai i a ki nga metinare	Sorry was I a man good was he to the Missionaries	I was sorry for him because he was good to the missionaries.
e kore e rite te a roha o nga tangata katoa o te ao nei ko te warerahi ana ke te tangata e pai ana ki nga tangata maori ki nga pakeha hoki,	but he was not so to all the people when they went into the large house the good people both natives and white people.	It can never be compared to the love of all the people of this world for Te Wharerahi. Indeed, he is a good man to Māori and Pākehā alike
Na heoi ano aku korero kia koe	That is all I have to say to you	I have no more to say to you.
tenei ano maua ko toku ho a ko te Rewete te noho waka aro nei ki te Atua	this is ours to my friend Mr Davis that place that makes us well on account of god.	This is from my friend Mr Davis and myself pondering the things of God.
kahore ake hoki he waka aro ke ake ko tahi tonu ano waka aro ko te oranga ki runga ki te Kangi ki a ata,		Indeed, there is no more thought but the one thought concerning the salvation that is dawning from heaven above.
waka aro marie mai koe ki taku tuhituhinga atu kia koe	Think consider you my writing to you.	Kindly consider my writing to you.
e kore ranei koe pai kia homai no a i te tahi kakahu moaku tamariki ka tokorua tane ko tahi ano mea wahine	Is it good for you to give me for nothing a garment for my children two boy and one girl;	Would it not be good for you to give a garment for my children, two boys and one girl.
Ina hoki koe i tuhituhi mai kia ahau i muara hoatu anaana e rua kakahu maori kiakoe	you wrote to me some time ago and I gave two native mats to you	As you have written to me before, I give two Māori garments to you.
naku te na tuhituhi atu kia koe na tou Tamaiti na Taiwhanga	mine was that writing to you and to your Boy. Tupunah	This writing is from me to you and your boy Taiwhanga

The letter is addressed on the last page to "Revd S Marsden Parramatta New South Wales". Another hand has also written "Taiwhanga 1825".

The reverse sheet has in another hand, "Native letter to Rev Marsden".

Letter Requesting Children's Baptism (25 July 1829)

In giving his translation, Richard Davis was conscious of the difficulty in capturing the sense: "In giving the Native conversations and sayings I have endeavoured to give the meaning in English as near as possible, but in Taiwanga's Letter I know I have fallen short, as the figure is very forcible in the native language."⁴

William Williams⁵

Richard Davis⁶

Mr Davis and Mother Davis: Big Mr Williams and Mother Big Mr Williams:
Brother and mother brother: Mr Fairburn and Mother Fairburn.

Here am I thinking of the day when my son shall be baptised.

You are messengers from God therefore I wish that he should be baptised according to your ways.

I have cast off my native ideas of rectitude and my native thoughts.

Here I sit thinking and untieing the rope of the devil, and it is shaken that it may fall off: and the evils will fall off.

Jesus Christ perhaps is near to see my evils, and to look into the hearts of men.

It is well perhaps that the heart should grieve in the morning, in the evening, and at night that every sin may be blotted out.

I am thinking of that (He had been spoken to about the baptism of his children), namely, the baptism of my Children.

I know you are Messengers sent from God, therefore I wish my Children to be baptised according to your straightness or righteousness.

I have left off my native rights and my native thoughts also,

and am now thinking how I may untie the cords of the Devil and (so) loosen them that they may fall off together with all sin;

for Christ is near, perhaps, beholding my sinfulness - he looks into the hearts of all men.

It will be well for me to continue to sorrow for my sins until they are all blotted out.

⁴ Richard Davis, Journal, 20 Dec 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:433).

⁵ William Williams, Journal, 25 Jul 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:483–84).

⁶ Richard Davis, Journal, 25 Jul 1829 (CRL, CMS/B/OMS/C N M5:432).

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