

European style schooling for Maori: The first century

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ABSTRACT

It is often assumed that the Education Act of 1877 signalled the beginning of State involvement in education in New Zealand. In fact, the State had begun a system of schooling for Maori children ten years before that, with the Native Schools Act in 1867. However, even *this* was not the beginning of State involvement in schooling in New Zealand. Twenty years earlier, in 1847, the Governor had begun giving subsidies to the schools run by the missionaries for Maori children. An important question we need to ask is: *Why did the government make provisions for the schooling of Maori during this period?* Many who know something about the early Maori schools might respond to this question by saying that schooling was provided for Maori in order to *assimilate* them to European culture. This is quite true but by itself is an inadequate explanation. It simply leads to another question: *Why did the government want to assimilate Maori to European culture?* To answer this we need to consider what the notion of *assimilation* involves and examine some of the implications it has as a social policy.

Introduction

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Assimilation

The notion of assimilation as a social policy developed out of nineteenth-century European beliefs about 'race' and 'civilization'. Most Europeans of this time perceived the 'races' of the world in hierarchical terms ranging from inferior to superior, from 'savage' races through to 'civilized' races. The British in particular perceived themselves as representing the pinnacle of civilization. The

missionaries in New Zealand were predominantly British and perceived civilization and Christianity as closely bound up with each other. Hence they set out to 'civilize' the Maori to prepare them to receive the Christian gospel. 'Civilizing' the Maori involved persuading them to give up their customs, habits, values and language, and take on those of the European - in other words, *assimilating* them to European culture.¹

Statesmen were also anxious to assimilate the Maori to European culture. At the time of the Treaty of Waitangi (1840), and in the early years of colonisation this concern, to a large extent, reflected a humanitarian but paternalistic desire to protect the Maori from the disasters that other 'native' peoples had suffered through contact with colonists (see Ward, 1974: 36). So convinced were these statesmen of the superiority of their own way of life that they genuinely believed they were bestowing benefits upon Maori by 'civilizing' them.

At the same time, however, statesmen were concerned to establish British law in the country. Assimilating Maori to European values and customs was one means of getting Maori to accept that law. Because British law was used to facilitate European access to Maori land, the policy of assimilation also served the colonists' interests. While the establishment of British law and the policy of assimilation were represented as benefiting Maori in those early years, in later years they were to be more openly employed to support settlers' interests. Both the missionaries and the government saw schooling as the primary means of assimilating or 'civilizing' the Maori.

The mission schools for Maori

The first mission school in New Zealand was opened in 1816. After failing to generate much interest amongst Maori, it closed within two years. Maori interest in schooling, however, began to develop in the 1820s. By the early 1830s a growing enthusiasm for reading and writing became apparent.

To a large extent the interest of Maori in schooling arose from their admiration for European technology. They wanted to have access not only to that technology but, more importantly, to the knowledge and thinking that produced it. In other words, they wanted access to 'Pakeha wisdom' (Jackson, 1975: 31). While stressing the superiority of European culture in their teachings, the missionaries linked European skills and technology to Christianity. As explained by Judith Binney (1969: 152): 'One approach was to make the Maoris realise that Christian society was the result of God's favour; that the material prosperity of the Europeans was directly connected to their religion'. It is not surprising therefore that in their search for 'Pakeha wisdom', the Maori turned to the missions. After all, as Jackson (*ibid*: 31) observes, "they had the book".

The mission schools during this period all used the Maori language as the medium of instruction. By 1827 the gospels had been translated into Maori and by 1830 the missionaries had their own printing press and were able to produce printed materials in greater quantities. The curriculum for the schools around Paihia at this time consisted of reading, writing, arithmetic and catechism and, in the girls' schools sewing and housekeeping skills were included.

With the enthusiasm for literacy developing, trade with Europeans, which a few years earlier had centred on clothing, became concentrated on books and printed matter. Slates and pencils were also in demand (Jackson, 1975: 33). Yate (1832: 231) recorded that Maori were prepared to receive books as wages or in exchange for other goods. Morley (1900: 47) reported an occasion when five bushels of potatoes had been offered for one copy of a 117 page book of scriptural readings. While conversion to Christianity increased during this period, conversions were surpassed by the spread of literacy and the demand for books (Jackson, 1975: 33).

There are a number of contemporary accounts of the ease with which Maori acquired the skills of literacy and numeracy. Brown, an early trader, claimed for example that Maori were able to master the skills of literacy within a fortnight (Brown, 1845: 98). Although his claim may have been exaggerated it nevertheless indicates that by European standards, Maori aptitude in acquiring the

skills of literacy was remarkable. This claim is supported by Bishop Pompallier who wrote: 'They easily learn to read and write without the necessity of constant teaching. It is only necessary to give them a few leaflets of easy reading, and to write some characters on bits of slate to enable them to read and write their own language within three months' (Pompallier, 1888: 47). The Wesleyan missionary, Turton, further claimed that while the ability of the Maori to learn to read was equal to that of the Europeans, their perseverance in mastering the skills was much greater (Parr, 1961: 439).

In their enthusiasm for literacy, Maori were soon teaching each other and setting up their own village schools (Angas, 1847, II: 10-11). Brown made the following observation:

If one native in a tribe can read and write, he will not be long in teaching the others. The desire to obtain this information engrosses their whole thoughts and they will continue for days with their slates in their hands ... (1845: 98).

Jackson gives some indication of the extent of the spread of literacy during this period:

The spread of books (and with them literacy) by direct and indirect diffusion meant that a large number of Maori people were soon literate in their own language. Markham (in March 1834) estimated that there were 'not less than Ten Thousand people in the island that can read, write and do sums in the Northern end of the island,' More impressive still are the figures available for book production in New Zealand. From 1835 to 1840 William Colenso printed about 3 500 000 pages of religious material and in 1840 produced over 2 000 000 more. In 1841 the newly-established British and Foreign Bible Society printed 20 000 New Testaments; in 1843 and again in 1845 other lots of 20 000 were turned off the press. This meant that by 1845 there was at least one Maori Testament for every two Maori people in New Zealand (1975: 33).

Particularly significant about the Maori in this period is the remarkable facility and perseverance they demonstrated, as a previously non-literate people, in acquiring the skills of literacy and numeracy. More important, however, is the fact that this enthusiasm for gaining these new skills and knowledge arose from Maori themselves perceiving them to be of relevance and value to their lives. They sought them in order to enhance their traditional way of life.²

Yet the introduction of the skills of literacy was also to bring profound changes to Maori culture and social structure. Jackson (1975: 37) shows how a focus on literacy, the Bible and European values during the 1830s served to marginalise Maori traditional culture and knowledge. He observes that although Maori returned their attention to this knowledge by 1850, it was never fully regained. The recent work of Kuni Jenkins (1991) also shows very graphically how in the processes of gaining the skills of literacy, Maori were subjected to and influenced by European values especially the missionaries' beliefs about the inferiority of Maori culture. Jackson also notes that significant changes to the traditional status system of Maori came about when ex-slaves and commoners who had learnt to read and write were seen to command 'the secrets and sources of European knowledge and religion'. By standing outside the traditional status system, he explains, such people implied direct challenge to Maori codes of tapu and mana (1975: 37). It can be argued nevertheless that while literacy clearly had profound effects upon Maori social life Maori themselves were largely in control of these changes at this stage.

Maori interest in and enthusiasm for literacy began to wane in the mid-1840s. While there are a number of reasons for this, one major reason was Maori frustration with the missionary policy of teaching - and printing - only in the Maori language, thus restricting reading material almost entirely to the Scriptures. Of great significance was the fact that by this stage the Treaty of Waitangi had been signed and a steady migration of British settlers who were anxiously seeking land had begun. Maori needed to be able to deal with both the settlers and government administrators. To do this they saw a need to learn English. The knowledge and skills they sought were not to be found in the Gospels written in Maori.

The missionaries responded to this declining interest in their village day schools by setting up larger boarding schools called 'central institutions'. It was hoped that removing the Maori children away from their parents, would hasten the assimilation process. English was included in the

curriculum of these schools. A number of Maori responded with enthusiasm to this new move and provided land and money for establishing these schools.

Government funding of the mission schools

Government funding of the mission schools began with the Education Ordinance of 1847 and 'was continued through the Native Schools Act of 1858. In seeking to understand why the government provided this support for the schools we need to look more closely at the wider social relations prevailing at that time.

The government's funding of the schools was part of its 'native policy' and a major concern of government 'native policy' at this time was acquiring Maori land (Oliver, 1988: 4). Maori, to a large extent, had been willing to sell land during the first few years of colonisation but became reluctant to do so as more and more settlers poured in and demands for their lands increased. By the 1850s Maori began to explore ideas of inter-tribal unity as a means of resisting the pressure to part with their lands. In the Waikato this led to the establishment of the Kingitanga (King Movement). At about the same time, New Zealand gained 'responsible government' which meant that it was no longer a Crown Colony and was self-governing. Thus, by the 1860s 'native policy' was being driven largely by the demands of the settlers and the land-speculators (ibid).³ Mounting tensions between Maori and settlers eventually culminated in wars throughout the 1860s.

While war proved to be one effective means of separating Maori from their land, another means that proved to be even more effective was *the law* (Kelsey, 1984). In 1862 and 1865 Native Land Acts were passed. These represented the first stages of the government's efforts to put an end to Maori communal ownership of land. They made way for the individualisation of the titles to Maori land and the setting up of a Native Land Court to make it easier for Europeans to purchase Maori land. In 1863 legislation was passed to allow the government to confiscate huge tracts of 'rebel' Maori land. In selecting the land for confiscation, however, the government paid more attention to fertility and strategic location than to the owners' part in rebellion (Sorrenson, 1987: 185). As Sinclair explains:

The fact is that the government took whatever land it had occupied and wanted. It was the most ruthless act in New Zealand's European history, and the source of bitterness to the present day (1991: 20).

As a result, by the end of the century, Maori were both politically and economically marginalised. They were reduced to 4% of the population and Pakeha were in full control of the country (Department of Statistics, 1988: 50).⁴

It is clear then that the period in which the government made provisions for the schooling of Maori was a period of crisis in Maori-Pakeha relations - a period when Maori and Pakeha were locked in a struggle for sovereignty and control of resources. If we look more closely at some of the conditions the schools were required to meet in order to get funding we see that the government was using the schools to support its own and the settlers' interests in this struggle. These intentions are made even more apparent when we examine the reports of the inspectors of the schools.

Government subsidies were given to the boarding schools of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Wesleyan missions on condition that the schools teach English, provide 'industrial training' as well as religious training, and be subject to government inspection annually. Boarding schools were favoured over day schools because they removed the Maori child from the influence of their families and villages. This, together with the requirement that English be taught, can be seen as intended to help assimilate Maori to Pakeha cultural customs.⁵ We also see from the inspectors' reports that this assimilation aim was clearly intended to facilitate the establishment of British law.⁶ Hugh Carleton, in one report spoke of schools 'aiming at a double object, the civilisation of the race and the quieting of the country' (AJHR, 1862, E-4: 17). George Clarke, a missionary who was also Civil Commissioner for the Bay of Islands stated that 'schools will give the government an immense moral influence in

the country such as is not attained in any other way' (AJHR, 1863, E-9: 18). Carleton also suggested that prizes should be given to Maori students for 'the best examination' in the book *Ko Nga Ture* - a precis of English law, compiled by order of the Government 'for the use of the Native race' (AJHR, 1858, E-1: 77). Later he suggested that prizes should be given also for proficiency in the English tongue, adding that 'as a further inducement to exertion, hopes of employment in the Government service might be held out' (AJHR, 1862, E-4: 16).

A very clear indication that the assimilation agenda was intended to support and facilitate European access to Maori land can be found in the report of Henry Taylor, in 1862. Taylor asserted that the 'most serious impediment to progress' in 'carrying out the work of civilization' within the schools was the Maori custom of communal ownership of property. He complained in his report that 'tribal rights destroy personal ownership' and that 'few attempts had been made by the Natives to individualize property'. He then argued for the ideas of individual ownership to be developed within the classroom (AJHR, 1862, E-4: 35). This report was made in the same year as the Native Land Act, intended to encourage Maori to individualize the titles to land holdings in order to make it easier for Europeans to purchase them.

From these reports it is clear that, at a time when the government and Maori were locked in a power struggle, government aid to the mission schools was directed towards the establishment of British law in order to strengthen the power of the government, to facilitate alienation of Maori land and to secure social control.

A number of the mission schools, however, had been established by endowments of land and money from Maori themselves. It is unthinkable that Maori would have, knowingly, provided for schools to support this government agenda. There is a need for further research into the views of Maori at this period but the evidence that is available indicates that Maori expectations in regard to schooling were very different from those of the government.

Some insight into what Maori wanted from schooling is provided by the statements of Maori chiefs who endowed the mission school run by Archdeacon Octavius Hadfield at Otaki. At a meeting with commissioners enquiring into the schools in 1858, Tamihana Te Rauparaha explained that he and other Maori had donated the land for the school - 700-800 acres as well as providing money for it - £389 18s 11¼ in total. He added that he had told the archdeacon at the time that there should be a 'really good English master to take charge of the school'. He had stressed that 'the master is the main thing'. He also expressed some dissatisfaction with the way the school was being run. Chiefs Matene Te Whiwhi and Hukiki are also recorded as expressing similar sentiments at the meeting (AJHR, 1858, E-1: 54-55).

Both Tamihana Te Rauparaha and his cousin Matene Te Whiwhi were involved during this period with attempts to establish kotahitanga - inter-tribal unity - to combat the threat posed by European demands for land. We can assume therefore that the reason they wanted their children to gain European 'knowledge' and fluency in English was to help them deal with such threats. A similar outlook can be seen amongst Maori such as Wiremu Tamihana who were behind the establishment of the Kingitanga (AJHR, 1862, E-4: 5). Ward (1974: viii) contends that this view was widely shared by Maori at that time. On the surface then, the intentions of the government in regard to schooling appear to be similar to those of the Maori. Yet when we look more closely we see that they are essentially different. Maori embraced schooling as a means to maintain their sovereignty and enhance their life-chances. The government, on the other hand, sought control over Maori and their resources through schooling. Maori wanted to *extend* their existing body of knowledge. The government, with its assimilation policy, intended to *replace* Maori culture with that of the European.

This raises another question: *Did the government, in setting out to 'civilize' the Maori, intend them to learn enough of European culture to compete on equal terms with Pakeha in government and control over resources?*

The industrial curriculum

The missionaries had included 'industrial training' in their schools as a means of training Maori in the skills needed to enable the missions to be self-supporting (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974: 3). Grey, in stipulating 'industrial training' as one of the conditions for the provision of government funding to the mission schools saw it as a necessary requirement for the 'children of an almost barbarous race or ... the children of hardy colonists, who had a country to create'⁷

However, the industrial training in the schools became a cause of much dissatisfaction for Maori parents. A report on Otaki school in the mid-1850s indicates that the pupils aged between 8 and 15 spent only two-and-a-half hours daily in lessons and up to eight hours in hard labour on the land (AJHR, 1858, E-1: 54-55). Both school inspectors and missionaries recorded strong resistance from Maori parents to such regimes. Paora Tuhaere of Orakei expressed his indignation to W. Rolleston that Maori children 'were set to work as servants' (AJHR, 1867: A-3: 1) and the Reverend J. Whiteley spoke of Maori parents complaining in words such as: 'We thought you took our children from us to give them schooling but instead you are making slaves of them' (ibid: 15). Henry Taylor, the government school inspector, however, contended that Maori had been entering schools with the mistaken impression 'that they came only to learn and not to work' (AJHR, 1862, E-4: 38). Carleton, in a school report of the same year, asserted: 'It will scarcely be maintained that education consists only of book learning' (ibid: 15).

From all the reports it seems abundantly clear that intellectual development was given a low priority by both government and missionaries in the native school policy of this time. Instead, the assimilation agenda and industrial training were treated as the major concerns. It seems apparent from this that the government intended the schools to prepare Maori for labouring class status. This view is supported by the following statement from Henry Taylor:

I do not advocate for the Natives under present circumstances a refined education or high mental culture; it would be inconsistent if we take account of the position they are likely to hold for many years to come in the social scale, and inappropriate if we remember that they are better calculated by nature to get their living by manual than by mental labour (AJHR, 1862, E-4: 38).

We can see from this that the government was not just concerned with replacing Maori traditional knowledge and culture with that of the European. It was concerned also to *limit* the amount and type of European knowledge to which the Maori was to be given access. To rationalise this limited curriculum, Taylor was employing the racist claim that Maori were suited *by nature* to manual work.

Thus while Maori were seeking through schooling to enhance their life chances, the government was setting out to control and limit those life chances. It seems apparent, however, that Maori eventually became disillusioned with the mission schools. By the mid-1860s they had abandoned them. The government, seeking a more effective vehicle for its assimilation agenda, then began working towards setting up its own schools.

The 'Native Schools' system

Under the Native Schools Act of 1867, the government set up secular village day schools referred to simply as 'Native Schools'. They were controlled by the Department of Native Affairs until 1879 when they were taken over by the newly-established Department of Education. They continued to operate under this Department as a separate system parallel to that of the public schools until 1969.

When the Native Schools Bill was debated in Parliament, some politicians appeared to support it out of genuine concern for Maori interests. However, it won support largely on economic grounds in relation to social control. Hugh Carleton, asserted that 'things had now come to pass that it was necessary either to exterminate the Natives or civilize them' and opted to support the Bill to avoid

the cost of further wars.⁸ Major Heaphy VC stated that '[a]ny expenditure in this direction would be true economy, as the more the Natives were educated the less would be the future expenditure in police and gaols' (NZPD, 1867: 863).

Under the Act, members of a Maori community who wanted schooling for their children were required to form a committee and formally request a school. They were also required, initially, to supply the land, and pay half the cost of the building and a quarter of the teacher's salary. These conditions were relaxed somewhat with an amendment to the Act in 1871. A number of Maori communities responded positively to the move and by 1879, 57 Native Schools had been established. These were mainly in the far north and eastern parts of the North Island, amongst communities that had not been directly affected by the recent wars. On the other hand there was strong resistance to government-funded schools in Taranaki and the Waikato.

In 1879 the control of the Native Schools was transferred from the Native Department to the Department of Education. The Department of Education had been established under the 1877 Education Act which provided for state-controlled schooling throughout New Zealand. Although there were two parallel systems operating, no official restrictions on 'racial' grounds were placed on either Maori or Pakeha children attending schools of either system.⁹ Furthermore it was intended that each Native School would be integrated into the public schools system as soon as the children in it were 'Europeanised'. The policy that the schools should not be 'racially' segregated might be seen to have stemmed from the humanitarian idealism evident at the time of the Treaty (Ward, 1974: 211). McKenzie (1982: 12) points out however that parliamentarians supported the idea of an integrated system primarily because they believed (incorrectly as it turned out) that it would be cheaper to run.

The Department of Education appointed its first inspector of Native Schools, James Pope, in 1880. In the same year Pope prepared the *Native Schools Code* which set out the ways in which the schools were to operate. As explained by Pope, the role of the Native Schools was

to bring to an untutored but intelligent and high-spirited people into line with our civilization and by placing in Maori settlements European school buildings and European families to serve as teachers, especially as exemplars of a new and more desirable mode of life (Bird, 1928: 64).

This clearly spells out that the assimilation policy was to continue to have priority in the schooling of Maori. Under the *Native Schools Code* it was made clear that all teaching was to be conducted in the English language. Teachers were instructed to teach Maori children to read, write, and speak the English language, to 'further instruct them in the rudiments of arithmetic and geography, and generally, endeavour to give them such culture as may fit them to become good citizens' (AJHR, 1880, H-1f: 1). Under Pope's regime provisions were made for some Maori to be spoken in the junior classes - until the children were fluent in English. However, from the time his successor William Bird took office in 1903, the Maori language was forbidden at school.¹⁰

There is no doubt that many Maori were anxious for their children to learn English and gave their support to the idea of teaching being conducted only in English. During the 1870s a number of prominent Maori took petitions to Parliament calling for emphasis on English-language teaching in schools (see Barrington, 1966: 3). As expressed by one group of petitioners, the hopes and intentions behind such requests were that Maori would become "acquainted with the means by which the Europeans [had] become great" and consequently would not hold 'a poor position in the future of the colony' (ibid). This affirms that Maori at this stage largely perceived schooling as a means to their surviving and succeeding in a Pakeha-dominated society. While we have this evidence that Maori were anxious to learn English, we have no evidence that they ever sought to undermine or destroy the Maori language. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that in promoting an emphasis on the English language they ever conceived the possibility that this could place the Maori language at risk. Clearly what they wanted was that their children would become bilingual. This further highlights the distinction between government intentions and Maori aspirations in relation to schooling.

The curriculum in the Native Schools reflects some of the ideas used to support universal education during that period. It did not aim to extend the pupils intellectually but rather it sought to train them to be law-abiding citizens and provide them with 'sufficient' schooling for mainly labouring class roles within the society (see Shuker, 1987: 44). Provisions were made however for a system of scholarships to enable 'clever Maori children' to gain further schooling at the denominational boarding schools. The idea was to develop an educated Maori elite who would eventually return to their villages and spread the gospel of assimilation - thus helping to further Pakeha interests (AJHR, 1881, E-7: 1-11).¹¹

When Pope took office the Maori population was in a critical state struggling against severe epidemics of European diseases against which they had no immunity. Pope addressed himself to these issues and under his guidance the Native Schools became centres for spreading European ideas on health and hygiene into Maori communities and for fulfilling a paternalistic role generally. Whilst this may have benefited the physical health of Maori it also promoted the idea that European knowledge on health was *the* only valid knowledge on health. This not only reinforced the notion of the superiority of European knowledge in general over that of the Maori but at the same time cultivated Maori dependence upon Europeans as the bearers of that knowledge. Thus it served to increase Pakeha power and control over Maori.

While schooling for Pakeha became compulsory in 1877, it was not made compulsory for Maori until 1894. Nevertheless, during the latter part of that century Maori increasingly came to perceive schooling as their one means of surviving in the Pakeha-dominated world and the number of Native Schools increased. By 1907 there were 97 Native Schools and this number grew to 166 by 1955 (Barrington, 1971: 26). At the same time, however Maori children were also attending public schools. In many cases, particularly in the early years, they suffered a great deal of racial discrimination there and were given little or no support in their attempts to learn English (see McKenzie, 1982). Nevertheless by the 1927 the number of Maori children attending public schools was exceeding the number in the Native Schools.

Although the Native Schools had many shortcomings Maori children were probably better off within them than they were in the public schools. Within the Native Schools they at least experienced the security of a predominantly Maori community, and the fact that their fellow pupils were mostly their own siblings and cousins provided them with some support in coping with the culturally alien school programme. Furthermore, some of the Pakeha teachers in the Native Schools were sensitive to Maori values and thinking, and developed good relationships with their communities and pupils which facilitated effective learning. The geographic isolation of the Native Schools also helped the Maori communities to resist the assimilation policy to a large extent and to continue to keep their cultural practices alive - at least until the first thirty years or so of the next century.

Overall, however, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the assimilation policy had proved highly destructive to Maori society. While Maori support for schooling arose from the desire to gain access to 'Pakeha wisdom' and fluency in English the cost of gaining this knowledge was high. Schools promoted the Pakeha way of life while simultaneously denigrating the Maori way of life. Thus in practice, the assimilation policy disempowered Maori by increasing their dependence upon Pakeha. It also demoralised Maori by disparaging the language and the traditions of their ancestors. Although Maori resisted to a large extent the pressure to give up their cultural practices they were unable to avoid being affected by European racial ideas of superiority and inferiority. This is particularly significant when viewed together with the suffering increasingly experienced through the workings of the Native Land Court. By 1892 Maori were left with less than one-sixth of their land (and that was mainly bush-clad and in remote areas). Forced into a precarious subsistence life, they were scarcely able to grow enough crops for themselves and had to depend for their survival upon work as seasonal labourers for European farmers and public works (Sorrenson, 1987: 192). They

were, as Sorrenson (*ibid*) explains, 'in danger of becoming, as they had always feared they would become, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Pakeha'.

Conclusion

Maori had sought Pakeha-style schooling during the early missionary period in the hope of expanding their horizons and gaining 'Pakeha wisdom' that would enable them to fulfil mainly traditional goals. Following the Treaty of Waitangi and the rapid influx of settlers they sought that knowledge as a means of combating the threat that the settlers represented to their sovereignty and resources. In the latter years of the century they were seeking schooling as a means to surviving and succeeding within a Pakeha-dominated world. For a small minority of Maori (mostly those who had retained their lands) schooling *did* fulfil these hopes. For the great majority of Maori, however, that promise was never realised. Schooling served instead to reinforce their subordinate status in their own land. It was a means of furthering Pakeha economic and political interests. By the early years of the twentieth century, many Maori had retreated into a state of despondency and a pattern of under-achievement in schooling was becoming entrenched. This was a remarkable contrast to the enthusiasm and competence that had characterised the Maori response to schooling a century earlier.

Notes

1. During the early missionary period the missionaries did not seek full assimilation of the Maori. They did not attempt to teach them the English language but instead chose to learn the Maori language themselves.
2. D.F. McKenzie contests claims regarding the extent of Maori literacy during this period, arguing that 'early missionaries and recent historians alike misread the evidence' (1985: 15). This came about, he says, largely because the missionaries 'reported what they knew their London committee wished to hear' (*ibid*: 16). McKenzie claims that most Maori responses to print did not constitute reading but rather 'oral repetition from memory ... masquerad[ing] as reading' (*ibid*: 17). He challenges also the reports of the quantities of material printed, and points out that the quantity should not be taken as a indicator of literacy since many Maori sought books because they perceived them to possess a mystical quality. While the assertion regarding the missionaries' reports may be true, the fact is that many reports about Maori interest in and aptitude for literacy came from traders and travellers such as Brown and Angas who had no reason to support the missionaries. Whilst it seems clear that Maori did seek books for their mystical quality, as McKenzie claims, this does not negate the fact that many Maori also sought books for more utilitarian reasons. Jackson (1975: 34) points out that there were two parallel modes in the Maori use of books and printed material, the 'mystical' and the 'pragmatic' with the latter dominant. Jackson also points out that from 1840 literacy as a mode of communication was immensely important to the Maori. He cites ample evidence of the use of literacy in communications of Maori with European, and Maori with Maori, to show that its 'pragmatic' use was extensive (*ibid*: 38-44). The recent work of Sinclair (1991: 34) demonstrates also that literacy amongst Maori was widespread by the 1850s.
3. While New Zealand was a Crown Colony, the British Foreign Office was able, to a certain extent, to safeguard Maori interests. It was under pressure to do so from a powerful lobby group - The Aborigines Protection Society. After 'responsible government' was achieved, however, this group no longer had the same influence on policy.
4. It is estimated that at the time of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi Maori outnumbered Pakeha by about forty to one. By the end of the 1850s the two populations were almost the same size (1991: 61).
5. Barrington (1966: 1-2) states that Grey believed assimilation would be more speedily achieved by removing Maori children from the 'demoralizing influence of the villages'.

6. The inspectors, to begin with, were people already holding public office - government officials and Members of Parliament etc. (Carleton and Rolleston were two inspectors who were both Members of Parliament.) The first full-time inspector, Henry Taylor, was appointed in 1862.
7. Despatch from Governor George Grey to Lord Grey (Colonial Office, London) regarding the 1847 Education Ordinance.
8. By this stage the major wars over land had been fought in Taranaki (1860-61) and the Waikato (1863-64). However, between 1864 and 1868 there were a further twelve distinct campaigns being fought in districts throughout the North Island (Belich, 1986: 203). There was, therefore, still considerable unrest in Maori-Pakeha relations throughout the country.
9. McKenzie (1982: 5) points out, however, that there was scope under the 1877 Education Act for teachers to refuse children entry to public schools on such grounds as 'want of cleanliness', gross misconduct' or 'incorrigible disobedience'.
10. This was because the Department was following a new method of teaching English - the 'direct method' - based upon the understanding that a second language would be learnt more quickly and effectively if the first language was not used at all (see Bird, 1930: 8, 18).
11. Space does not permit a detailed discussion here on secondary schooling for Maori. Mention should be made however of Te Aute College where the principal John Thornton adopted a policy of coaching his most promising students for the matriculation examination of the University of New Zealand. This led, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, to the first wave of Maori university graduates, beginning with Apirana Ngata and including Te Rangi Hiroa (Peter Buck), Maui Pomare, Rewiti Kohere and Tutere Wirepa. A paper by John Barrington, 1988: 45-58) provides insights into the agenda of the Department of Education in regard to the secondary school of Maori pupils at the beginning of the twentieth century.

References

Abbreviations

AJHR - Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives.

NZPD - New Zealand Parliamentary Debates.

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