The Invention of Papahurihia

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in History
at
Massey University, Albany,
New Zealand.

Judith Ward
2016
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Abstract

Historians portray Papahurihia as the first Māori prophet and founder of a syncretistic religion that combined elements of Judaic and Christian theology with Māori beliefs. They also say he observed a Saturday Sabbath and that his followers were known as Jews. This thesis disputes those conclusions. It re-examines the commentaries of the CMS missionaries in the Bay of Islands from the context of 1830s Protestant evangelicalism and draws on the texts of the Wesleyan and Roman Catholic missionaries and European settlers to show how Papahurihia behaved in various situations. It argues that historians have failed to take account of the way that Protestant and Catholic writers saw Papahurihia through the lenses of their own religions. The thesis recreates Papahurihia in the context of the Ngāpuhi seasonal cycle and links him to the persistence of ceremonies like the hahunga. It argues that historians have overlooked the extent to which he operated on a Māori concept of time and how the missionaries and Europeans made assumptions about the behaviour of Papahurihia and his followers based on the Christian calendar. The thesis concludes that Papahurihia responded to the advent of Christianity in a way that was consistent with the behaviour of tohunga at the time, rather than as the founder of a syncretistic religion. It also concludes that the historiography on Papahurihia ultimately went awry because historians interpreted the missionaries’ comments about him from a secular perspective.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Michael Belgrave and Professor Peter Lineham for steering my development as an historian and supporting my doctoral journey. I would also like to express my profound gratitude to Massey University for the Doctoral Scholarship that made this research possible.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACL</td>
<td>Auckland Central Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJHR</td>
<td>Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AML</td>
<td>Auckland Museum Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANU</td>
<td>Australian National University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATL</td>
<td>Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUL</td>
<td>Auckland University Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Church Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL</td>
<td>Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNZ</td>
<td>Heritage New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPS</td>
<td>Journal of the Polynesian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCMG</td>
<td>Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>London Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Master of Arts Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHR</td>
<td>Member of the House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCEA</td>
<td>National Certificate of Educational Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZJH</td>
<td>New Zealand Journal of History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHR</td>
<td>Pacific Historical Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPG</td>
<td>Society for the Propagation of the Gospel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TK</td>
<td>Te Kaharoa: The e-Journal on Indigenous Pacific Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMS</td>
<td>Wesleyan Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Glossary of Māori Words

ahuahu ....................... mounds or hillocks of soil into which kūmara shoots were planted
ariki .............. used interchangeably with atua to denote a chief considered a god by his people
atua ...................... a chief, a dead body, a deified ancestor, items belonging to the deceased
haka ....................... war dance to embolden warriors & intimidate their enemies
hākiri .......................................................... feast or harvest festival
hahunga.......................... cleaning or scraping of bones of the deceased
hapū .......................................................... pregnant, modern word for sub-tribe
Hātana ...................................................................... Satan
iwi .......................................................... bone, modern word for tribe
kai-karakia.......................... person who recites karakia, minister, preacher
kākāriki .......................... green lizard, considered an omen of death by Ngāpuhi
karakia .......................... formula recited by tohunga to invoke atua, modern word for prayer
kararehe .......................................................... a quadruped or four legged animal
kaumātua............................. an elder but not necessarily a repository of esoteric knowledge
kēhua .......................................................... ghosts
kirikiri .......................................................... gravely sand
mana .......................................................... modern word for prestige or standing
mātāmua .......................................................... senior wife
mitineri .......................................................... Māori word for missionary
moko kauae ............................................. the chin tattoo on women of rank
nākahi .................................. transliteration of the Hebrew word ‘Nachash’ or ‘Serpent’
ngahuru .................. ancient Ngāpuhi word for ten, the tenth lunar month in Ngāpuhi
ngahurutanga ...................... tenfold, the quantity of kūmara expected at harvest-time
ngārara .......................................................... a crawling thing but not exclusively a reptile
Papatūänuku ......................... the Earth Mother in the Māori Creation Myth
poutokomanawa .................. principal supporting posts of the wharenui or meetinghouse
rahurahu ........................................ foliage from the battlefield used by tohunga
Ranginui ........................................ the Sky Father in the Māori Creation Myth
rā tapu.......................... sacred day, used by the missionaries to refer to the Lord’s Day
Rereng a Wairua ..........place where the wairua or soul of Māori goes after death
rāhui ............... to place a ban on the use of a resource by invoking atua & rendering tapu
rākau........................................ divination sticks used by tohunga to foretell the future
raumati ....................... a dead leaf or the fall of the leaf, signified the passage of one year
rēwera .................................................................. devils
ritenga .................. Māori customary practice, ritual or way of doing things
rūnanga................................ council of chiefs established by Governor Grey
takahī....................................................... to trample or breach tapu
taniwha........................ an atua or water spirit which dwells in lakes and rivers
tāpapa........................ seedbeds in which immature kūmara shoots were raised
tapu...... sacrosanct because one is a chief/ariki/atua or because an atua has been invoked
tiriti............................. treaty, refers to the Māori text of the Treaty of Waitangi
tohu ................................................... sign or signs read by tohunga
tūpāpaku ............................................. the body of the recently deceased
urupā ................................ place of burial, usually caves or volcanic craters, sometimes trees
waka ............................................. a person who is the canoe, vessel or medium of an atua
wairua.............................. originally two waters, modern word for soul
wata.................................... raised stages onto which mature kūmara were stored at harvest
wera.................................................................. hot
whakapapa............ genealogy, recitation of descent from an eponymous atua/ancestor
whakawai ........................................................ sinners
whānau ...................... to give birth, modern word for extended rather than nuclear family
whare wānanga........................ modern word for a school of learning
whiowhio...................... whistling sound made by atua or Māori gods invoked by tohunga