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THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, RITUALS, AND VALUES OF THE RINGATU CHURCH

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### ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to understand and to interpret the faith aspects of the Ringatu Church, which is comprised of the followers of Te Kooti, and because both he and his followers have been, and still are much misunderstood, to examine the Ringatu claim to be seen as a part of the Christian Church.

The Introduction surveys how some writers have applied various anthropological theories in their respective studies of the Maori prophetic movements, and by either comparison or agreement, the present writer indicates his own theoretical approach. This approach emphasizes that these Maori movements are primarily a response to revelation, and that they are concerned with expressing meaning, asserting identity, and seeking some measure of control over their environment.

Chapter one provides an outline of traditional or pre-European Maori religion, in order that such elements may be identified in the Ringatu faith.

Chapter two sketches the life of Te Kooti, the background of his times, the events in which he was involved, and the beginning and the development of the Ringatu Church.

Chapter three, describes the Church in its present organization, and the variety and content of its services of worship.

Chapter four attempts to identify traditional, Old Testament and New Testament components in the Church's liturgy and practice, and to assess the Church's claim to be truly Christian.

Chapter five poses some questions and expresses some hopes about the future of the people called Ringatu, in the light of problems faced by them at present.

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## PREFACE

This study of the Ringatu Church has been for me far more than an academic exercise. Rather it has been one stage of a personal pilgrimage covering many years and many places. Though it has involved many separate journeys, these have all been part of one pilgrimage with one purpose - to see for myself a special kind of "tree" which grows out of the soil of Aotearoa, in the forest of Maori spirituality. This tree is the phenomenon of the Maori prophetic movements, and is one that is little known, and even less understood by the majority of Pakeha. The occasional "flowering" and "fruiting" of the tree, expressed in the emergence of particular movements, has more often been regarded as cause for derision, than as an opportunity for understanding and learning.

Observation of the tree, I have felt, needed to be personal. While some help in understanding can be gained from the accounts of others who have made the journey, it is much more satisfying to make the journey for oneself. But because this is an indigenous tree, the way in which its "custodians" are approached is important. Methods of making appointments and of securing information in the Pakeha world, may prove of little help in the Maori sphere, and could even be offensive.

For example, a letter written by a University staff member, himself a Maori, to an acquaintance, known to him to be a leader in the Ringatu Church, introducing me and requesting his cooperation in allowing me to observe the church in action, proved to be quite counter-productive, and would have prevented my access rather than helped, had it not been for other factors working in my favour.

So a well-meant approach may be perceived as insensitive and presumptuous, and may well shut doors rather than open them, or in Tuhoe idiom, may serve to bring down upon the sacred mountain of Maungapohatu an impenetrable, protective mist, to hide its secrets from the inquisitive. It is one thing to desire to observe the tree, but it is another to get close enough to do so. For it must be emphasized, that this is an indigenous tree, growing in Maori territory in what for most Pakeha is an unfamiliar landscape, where there are few signposts to follow. So guides are necessary, but these seldom offer their services unless convinced that one is sincere in one's

search, and not merely a sightseer, or worse, a destroyer of trees.

During one of my early visits to Te Teko, in replying to the welcome given me in the mihi (time of greeting), I rather thoughtlessly said that I had not come as a spy, but as one who really desired to understand their ways of worship. The response was immediate, "If we thought for one moment that you were a spy, you wouldn't still be here!". I

Over the last twenty years, the pilgrimage has taken me to Taiporohenui in South Taranaki where Te Ua's Pai Marire movement was established at what had previously been the centre of the Methodist mission; to Parihaka where the movement led by Te Whiti and Tohu was located; to Peria near Matamata, where Wiremu Tamehana set up his Maori Christian community; to Maungapohatu, Tawhana and Matahi, places associated with Rua Kenana's Wairua Tapu movement; to Whakakii, the location of the Kohititanga Marama movement led by Matenga Tamati; to Ratana, the present centre of that movement; and to many significant places associated with Te Kooti and the Ringatu Church, including Manutuke, Waerenga-a-Hika, Whareongaonga, Matawhero, Ngatapa, Makaretu, Waituhi, Te Karaka, Puha, Mahia, Tokomaru Bay, Ruatahuna, Te Whaiti, Te Teko, Edgecumbe, Ohiwa, Waiotahi, Waioeka, Te Kuiti, Otewa, Pureora, Otoko, Opepe, and Te Porere. All these have contributed to the "feeling background", which I considered essential to my understanding of the movements, and this is particularly true of the latter group, whether birthplace, landing place, now deserted site of previous bitter battle, places of sanctuary, revelation and growth, or present centres of Ringatu's life and worship.

In some instances, "guides" appeared almost mysteriously, not necessarily to literally lead the way, but often to provide information, clues, or valuable contacts.

At Te Karaka, for example, while my wife and I were simply standing on the edge of the marae, looking across at Te Poho-o-Pikihoro the meeting house, a man of impressive appearance came out across the marae toward us, with arms outstretched to welcome us, complete strangers as we were, as though we were there by appointment. Not only did he himself act as a willing informant, but he also provided precious contacts with Ringatu leaders in that area.

At times on the pilgrimage to find the tree, it was tempting to imagine that I was in virgin forest, treading where at least no Pakeha had trod before. However, such romantic illusions are impossible, when it is seen that the ground around the tree has been well trampled by other observers - missionaries, historians, anthropologists, and journalists. Some have left valuable documentation of their observations, while others have just left litter. But even though I soon realised that many others had been there before me, there was, and is, deep satisfaction in having made the journey for myself, in having seen with my own eyes, in having stood on the sites of significant events in the history of past movements, and in meeting face to face the people who make the present movements live.

Any specimen of the tree, or any specific movement mentioned, can be seen to be identified with a particular locality, tribe, and set of circumstances at any given time. But despite its local adaptations and unique characteristics, it appears to belong to the same species found in other parts of the country at other times. And it appears that the custodians in any particular tribal area are well aware that despite local variations, it is the same kind of tree. On occasions, tribal boundaries, while never losing their importance, have been, and still are crossed in order to protect the tree, or to show solidarity among the custodians.

So Pai Marire was centred in Taranaki, but its intentions were supported by many from Waikato, Bay of Plenty and East Coast tribes. The Parihaka movement was located in Taranaki, but also enjoyed considerable Waikato support. The Ringatu movement can be said to have East Coast origins, yet it was widely supported by the Tuhoe of the Urewera, and by the Ngati Awa, Whanau-a-Apanui, and Whakatohea of the Bay of Plenty, and given sanctuary among the Ngati Maniapoto of the King Country. Ratana, though based near Wanganui, has support from throughout the country. Significantly, one of the factors which helped me gain access to Ringatu, was my knowledge of, and sympathy with, the Parihaka movement.

Like the kaikawaka growing on an exposed alpine ridge, or like the manuka growing around a thermal blow-hole, showing a form which is quite different from others of the same species growing in more favourable circumstances, so these movements can be seen to have local variations due to whatever measure of resistance and adaptation was

necessary for survival, in the face of the pressures and changes in the cultural environment, resulting from increasing European settlement. But despite the local adaptations, the tree in each instance is of one, indigenous species, with the seed apparently lying dormant in the soil awaiting the need to grow. As the tawai seems to actually need disturbance of the forest floor to stimulate germination of its seed, and therefore regeneration, so the Maori prophetic movements can be understood, in part, as a regenerative response to disturbance of their environment. Yet while the tree of the Maori prophetic movement is truly indigenous, at the same time it is true that it has been "cross pollinated" with the insights of Biblical Christianity brought by the missionaries, with local examples showing to a greater or lesser degree the measure of such influence.

The C.M.S. missionary William Williams presumed, rather arrogantly, that he was planting the seed of the Gospel among the Rongowhakaata at Manutuke, hence the name "Whakato" (the planting), given to the marae where he based his mission. But if there is truth in the statement that "all non-Christian religions contain revelation and seeds of the Word" <sup>2</sup> more enlightened thought would now suggest that Christian missionaries should not have been so determined to destroy the Maori tree and its seed, in order to plant their own, but should rather have taken the time to understand the indigenous tree, or to encourage the development of that indigenous faith, and to be content with offering Christianity as a means of "cross-fertilisation" in order to "improve" it, in the sense of Christ being seen as the fulfiller or perfecter of faith. <sup>3</sup> Or to change the metaphor a little, the missionary task could have been understood as a "grafting" of the new Christianity on to the "root-stock" of the indigenous religion. <sup>4</sup>

When the tree has been found, its location and form can be described. While this may satisfy some observers, others will feel obliged to ask why the tree has emerged in this particular locality at this particular time, and to enquire as to what change in the climate stimulated the dormant seed to germinate and grow. They will also wish to know why the custodians are so protective of the tree, and what needs of theirs are satisfied by its branches, flowers and fruit. They will also ask why the tree has died out in some localities and why it continues to flourish in others. So there is much to be



understood about Maori prophetic movements. In the case of the Ringatu Church, the particular tree with which I am concerned, it would appear that it is no dead stump, but that it is alive, growing and regenerating. 5

Like a number of trees in the forest, whose juvenile and adult stages are marked either by a different leaf shape, as with the puriri and horoeka, or by a different tree shape, as with the rimu and kauri, some of the Maori movements too, exhibit marked differences between their earlier and later stages of development. So Pai Marire, as implied by its name, "good and peaceful", began with a peaceful phase, and later moved into one of armed resistance. Te Whiti, one of the leaders of the Parihaka movement, turned from armed resistance to peaceful protest. Ringatu similarly began with armed resistance, but moved into a peaceful phase. These two phases or sides of Ringatu may be seen to be symbolised in the two mere pounamu (greenstone clubs) which belonged to Te Kooti, "Mikaere" the war club, and "Kapiti" the peace-maker. However, many Ringatu would see the so-called violent phase as an unavoidable interruption to a peaceful intention, rather than as simply a later stage of settling down.

In recent times, some custodians of Maoritanga have expressed resentment towards Pakeha historians and writers who have published their understandings of Maori people and places. 6 That suspicion and resentment may well be justified in some instances. 7 It is hoped that the day may come soon, when many more Maori will feel that the climate is sufficiently accepting and hospitable to encourage them in writing and publishing their own histories and theologies. However, I have had nothing but encouragement from the custodians of the tree of Ringatu, and during my involvement with them, there has been a repeated re-affirmation of their willingness, stated at our first meeting, "What we have given to Frank, we give to you."8 Incidentally, the only expression of hostility towards me as a Pakeha observer at a Ringatu gathering, was made by a non-Ringatu. However, the trust shown to the observer must be respected, and it is for that reason that I have not identified some people and places. It seems appropriate, indeed essential, that if one is allowed by the custodians to observe their tree, and important occasions associated with it, that one respects the rules or restrictions that they



themselves accept. For instance, the Pakeha observer does not have to "believe in" tapu restrictions, but respect for Maori belief in them is essential, as is a similar respect for belief in kaitiaki (guardian spirits) and makutu (witchcraft).

For example, after learning of a mysterious sickness, and a death, in which it was suggested that makutu could have been involved, I offered to go to the river for ritual cleansing and protection. Although I did not feel the need for such protection, because I was to be involved with some of the people concerned, I felt it important to allow them to "cover" the situation in any way they felt appropriate. In the event, it was stated by way of reply that such a precaution was not considered necessary.

There appears to be a justifiable Maori suspicion, based on bitter experience, that Europeans, who have shown such enthusiasm for chopping down and burning the forest of Tane, will also attack and attempt to destroy the tree of Maori spirituality. Or, in a less war-like age, they will rather adopt an assimilative tactic, saying in effect, "Abandon your (worthless) tree, and come and sit with us under our (much better) tree, (just so long as you dress neatly, don't engage in all that weeping and wailing noise at funerals, and don't have hangis, because we don't want grease dropped on the carpet!)". This attitude is so similar to that which inspires the policy of clear-felling tawai, rimu, rewarewa, matai, tawa and tanekaha of the indigenous forest, in order to replant the landscape with pine. While there is food in abundance for the tui, korimako, kereru and kokako on the miro, totara, matai and tawa, there is none on the pine. Likewise there is food for the spirit of the Maori on the tree of indigenous religion, but very little on the imported tree of Pakeha religion. Most Pakeha, however, find it difficult to understand that many Maori Christians do not want to be part of their middle class European congregations, the exception being in the case of charismatic denominations, for example, but in which membership usually involves the complete abandonment of Maoritanga.

Some custodians of the tree are aware of being faced with a dilemma, caused on one hand by their desire to be hospitable to would-be observers, and on the other by a fear of the risk of having their tree, and their feelings about it, further trampled on. Some Ringatu leaders are aware of being in this position, with the very

willingness to share information about their church, which is considered by some to be essential for its survival, bringing about an interest from "outsiders" which represents a very real threat of "contamination".

Some years ago, technicians at the Forest Research Institute at Rotorua, concerned that the huge redwood trees at Whakarewarewa appeared to be getting smaller in girth, discovered that in fact the bark of the trees within human touching range, was actually being worn away by sight-seeing tourists. Pakeha people, history indicates, find it difficult to keep their hands off Maori religious expression, and appear determined to modify it to make it like their own. The need for me to respect Ringatu traditions was made plain in a polite but firm warning, "don't try and change us, and we won't try and change you!".<sup>9</sup>

When engaged in observation of the tree of Maori spirituality, it is helpful to have an appreciation of one's own Pakeha spirituality, however. As long as the assessment is honest and realistic, personal beliefs and values are not a handicap, and may even be an advantage. Along with having a trusted contact to introduce me, and having a recognised sympathy with the Parihaka movement, a third factor in helping me gain access to the Ringatu, was the fact that I was a minister of a branch of the Christian church. Ringatu leaders have shown a respect for my traditions, in a style of public dialogue in the meeting house, in which a leader speaks across the house saying "This is how we do things in our part of the church...how would you do it in yours?"<sup>10</sup>

There is however, a need to de-mythologize the mission histories of all denominations in this land, and to dispel the one-sided, romantic nonsense with which the stories of the exploits of many missionary agents is loaded. Most of these agents followed a policy of destroying the tree of Maori spirituality. To assume that the Pakeha tree is better than that of the Maori, was not helpful then, nor is it now. But neither is it helpful to say that one's own Pakeha tree is of no value, and that therefore one will abandon that, and choose instead to become a worshipper around the Maori tree. In other words, it is not necessary to join in order to appreciate another religious expression. So one wonders about "conversion" to the religion of a section of another culture being studied, as in the case

of Jules-Rosette. 11

Maoridom is not impressed by Pakeha pseudo-Maoris, who adorn themselves with tiki, mako tooth ear-rings and pullovers with Maori motifs. We are expected to be ourselves, and indeed, can be no other. It is more helpful to show a willingness to understand why the Maori tree is important to those whose tree it is, and to be content that one has been allowed to sit for a time in it's shade and to sample its fruit. However, it is inevitable that as a result of that experience, one's own spiritual perception is re-examined, re-assessed and perhaps re-shaped in places.

So, whatever degree of understanding or sympathy I possessed, as I sought contact with the Ringatu church in the Bay of Plenty, I was a Pakeha, in what is in some ways, a "sensitive" area, since the Ngati Awa, I understand, have never received compensation for lands confiscated. Yet it was made plain, that I did not need to feel guilt for what my ancestors did in taking Maori land, though I could properly feel shame. 12 On a later occasion, however, I was reminded that I was a representative of the Pakeha who took their land. 13 That is an undeniable fact. What matters as being more important, however is that despite that fact, one can be accepted as a trusted observer of their tree. But acceptance cannot be demanded, or claimed. It can only be granted. This was stated in subtle terms by one leader as a group sat in the sun at Te Mapou in 1983, "Our kids will remember this day when we opened our dining hall, and they will say "remember that Pakeha Ringatu joker sitting in the sun talking to our old fellas ...?". The words caused a good chuckle amongst the group, and a warm feeling inside me as the only Pakeha present.

My observation of the tree of Ringatu has taken much longer than I expected. Many times I wished I could make more rapid progress. But now I appreciate the time it has taken to "digest" some of the things I have seen and heard. And the little I have come to understand I regard as but a brief glimpse into the vast treasure-house of Maori spirituality, which no outsider, no matter how many life-times he had at his disposal, could hope to fully explore. In another sense, the tree is itself a treasure house; as in the case of the venerable, hollow tree, in which the sacred adze, "Te Awhi-o-Rangi" of the Nga Rauru people of South Taranaki, is said to have been hidden. If the tree contains such treasure, I suspect the pilgrimage to understand

it will never be finished, but that it will go on, at times leading me to new locations where the tree is said to grow, and at other times leading me back to more familiar faces and places, where a relationship of trust and respect has been established, and where to have come full circle, is to anticipate a deepening of insight and an enriching of experience. This expectation of an ongoing relationship seemed to be expressed in the words addressed to me, "There are two kinds of friends, those who visit from time to time, when they are able, and those who are dead!" 14 I hope Ringatu will continue to rate me among their living friends.

#### Preface Notes

1. W. Tarei, Te Teko 1981.
2. Fr. M. Shirres, quoting a statement from Vatican II, in New Hope For Our Society, 1985 Lenten Studies, P.5.
3. Ibid. P.5.
4. See Romans II/17-24 for the use of this metaphor.
5. See Job 14/7-9 for the use of this metaphor as expressing survival.
6. Michael King, for example, has stated that because of this reaction, he will not write further Maori histories or biographies.
7. I have come across this feeling of resentment and suspicion on a number of occasions, and have been asked bluntly, "are you writing a book?". I discovered strong feelings of this kind among those who had been interviewed by those who have written on Rua Kenana. Such resentment is understandable, since the writer of one such book gave away far too many clues as to the location of burial caves, which I consider was inexcusable. Such resentment was almost certainly the reason why I was told that permission to climb Maungapohatu would be refused by the Tuhoe Trust Board. That I was able to do so, was made possible by the appearance of other "guides".
8. The late Frank Davis, who was asked by the Ngati Awa section of the Ringatu Church to write its history, from documents and information made available to him, and who accompanied me to my first Ringatu gathering.
9. W. Tarei, Te Teko, 1980.
10. W. Tarei, Te Teko, 1981 and since.
11. Jules-Rosette, 1975:301
12. W. Tarei and others, Te Teko, 1980.
13. W. Tarei, Kawerau, 1985.
14. W. Tarei, Te Teko, 1983.

## INTRODUCTION

Every investigator approaches the field of anthropological enquiry with a set of assumptions, personal beliefs, values and prejudices. These may be either valuable equipment, or useless baggage, but unlike baggage, they cannot easily be put aside.

So I am aware that I have approached this study of the Ringatu Church with some "givens" and assumptions. I am a Pakeha, and an ordained minister in a "main-line" Protestant Church. I was not brought up in the church, but was converted as an adult, and therefore can identify some significant "religious moments" and experiences. Since the most important of these involved little if any intervention from other people, I accept the place of revelation or divine intervention. At conversion I accepted, on faith, a set of beliefs, though there has been much re-examining and questioning of many of them since. Yet I have felt comfortable enough in my own beliefs and values, to not feel threatened by someone else's different belief system. I have not felt that I had to justify my position, or attack theirs. On reflection, I am aware that in early teen years I had adopted a fairly positive view of race-relations in general, and had already become interested in the stories of Te Kooti, despite the facts being distorted and his name mis-pronounced. Entry into the Church and its ministry provided a theological framework for attitudes I already possessed, and an acceptance of ideas, which were widely preached, even if not so evident in practice. Early in my ministry, I entered into an unspoken "contract" with a Maori ministerial colleague, to be open to Maori values and experiences and concerns. Thereafter I endeavoured to make contact with the Maori people in areas where I was stationed, and to be informed about their history, and about issues with which they were involved.

My interest in Te Kooti, and the Ringatu Church which he brought into being, was re-kindled by the late Frank Davis and his production of "Face to Face" which dealt with the life and times of Te Kooti, at the South Pacific Festival in Rotorua in 1976. I felt compelled to enquire further, and Frank freely gave me access to his research of more than twenty years, and provided me with contacts in the Church in the Bay of Plenty. I have maintained occasional contact, through attending services, at which I have been reasonably comfortable in an



observer-participant role. I have been received warmly, and I have been aware that much information has been given out of a desire that the Ringatu Church be more widely understood and accepted as a true part of the Christian Family.

Maintaining adequate contact through attending services was, however, made difficult by the distance between the Manawatu and either the Bay of Plenty or Poverty Bay where services were held. This limited the number of trips possible, and the number of personal interviews which could be fitted in as part of any trip. Besides invariably arriving tired, I was aware of the physical strain of keeping up with the programme, including the sheer effort of keeping awake during evening services, and of coping with the smoke and differences in diet. Since I was often the only Pakeha in a gathering of a hundred or more, I was aware of a certain feeling of loneliness involved in my visitor-observer status. The greatest difficulty, however, lay in coping with the fact that the services are totally Maori in form and language, which effectively limits participation. In addition, there was always the problem of knowing what to look for and how to interpret what was experienced.

When one sets out to explore unfamiliar territory, a map is of considerable help. So too, in exploring the religious territory of Ringatu, I was very much aware of my need of an appropriate map to help me find my way, to recognise features of importance, and to understand what I was seeing. I recall an experience of once setting out to find an important pa site in thick bush, and being unable to find it on several expeditions, until aided by a three-dimensional map and viewer which enable recognition of the contours underneath the bush cover. So a conceptual map is necessary to bring meaning out of what may otherwise be a unintelligible jumble of rituals.

But maps are just that. They are simply guides to the countryside, and are not the countryside itself. Conceptual maps are likewise aids in understanding a society or group such as a religious movement, but are not the movement itself. Likewise, just as maps are used, not by locals, but by visitors and strangers, so too, conceptual maps may be quite meaningless to those who belong to a movement, though helpful to the enquirer. 2 Hopefully, however, as the map is followed, it ceases to be just that, and becomes instead a diary of insights and experiences. So some of the actual locations of significance cease

to be just names, and become occasions of enlightenment.

Such a map is necessary in order to understand the relationship of the Ringatu Church to the other prophetic movements which arose among the Maori. For Ringatu is not merely a continuation of Pai Marire, any more than the Wairua Tapu movement of Rua Kenana is merely a continuation of Ringatu. But despite the different locations and times in which they came into being, there are important connections and common concerns.

Ringatu, as a religious movement, was well established as a living reality long before any particular theory of anthropology was used to explain it. This seems one good reason for choosing not to use Ringatu as an example of any one particular theoretical approach, but rather to use any relevant part of any theory to help explain why Ringatu came into existence, and why it has persisted. Reality is always bigger than any theory about it. To see any one such movement completely explained by any one theoretical perspective may indeed glorify the theory, but almost certainly at the cost of doing violence to the movement itself. Maori movements have frequently suffered from, rather than have been helped by, explanations which have seemed to explain away, rather than to understand and to interpret them. Because there is always more to these movements than the theory has explained so far, conclusions are best seen as tentative rather than as definitive, always allowing for further understanding of them. I am aware that some readers may consider that my approach is not sufficiently "anthropological" in terms of their perceived notion of what anthropology is and does. However, it appears that today there is little consensus as to what constitutes anthropology. I would ask, therefore, for the same understanding of what I have written, as I would have wished the missionaries of last century to have shown to Maori religious movements. To be different is not necessarily to be wrong. To have not said something that is expected, may mean only that there are other things that need saying first.

Functionalist theory, as expressed by Spiro, 3 suggests that religion consists of "culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings" - apparently for the satisfaction of culturally acceptable needs. These needs are understood as both wants and desires, which are seen as beneficial to the social group as well as to the individual. Such needs are cognitive (a universal desire

to know, to understand, and to find meaning); substantive ( a desire for tangible satisfaction in the form of rain, abundant crops, good hunting, victory in war, healing); and expressive (a desire to regulate and control painful fears and moral anxieties).

This theory appears to see religion as primarily concerned with needs-satisfaction. However, to reduce religion to such needs-satisfaction alone, is to ignore a major component of religion in many of its forms that is, revelation. This is not to deny that religion can be, and probably should be used to meet legitimate physical, psychological and spiritual needs,<sup>4</sup> but it is to argue that it does not begin with that function.

Burridge's<sup>5</sup> approach appears to be suited to an understanding of the Maori prophetic movements. He considers that religion involves not only belief in spiritual beings, but also concern with "the redemptive process indicated by the activities, moral rules, and assumptions about power, which pertinent to the moral order, and taken on faith... enable people to perceive the truth of things..not only are religions concerned with the truth about power, but..a concern with the truth about power is a religious activity."<sup>6</sup> This definition he says, does not lead us to dismiss other peoples' religions as "bundles of superstition." And "since politics too are concerned with power..no religious movement lacks a political ideology". Millenarian movements, then, are not just "oddities", or "diseases in the body social", or "troublesome nuisances to efficient administration" but "new cultures in the making" and "new religions in the making",<sup>7</sup> or new ways of being human.

Maori prophetic movements can be seen to share many of the characteristics of millenarian movements as he defines them. They have had an exposure to Christianity. The dominant colonial power has not used that power to the full extent to totally destroy indigenous culture. The indigenous people, in a situation of competition with the colonists have been severely disadvantaged and have felt powerless. The deprived have felt a strong desire to have restored or to acquire a sense of personal worth. In each case the movement has been led by a charismatic prophetic figure, who has been the agent of revelation, and who has articulated the myth-dream, usually in supra-tribal terms. The movements with few exceptions have come into conflict with the authorities and those which have survived have experienced a re-defining of the myth-dream and a re-shaping of the movement.



Burridge lists four types of explanations of millenarian movements, 8 but says that "few writers take a standpoint that is exclusively contained in any one...most are eclectics fishing in a variety of psychologies and sociologies..." So of the psycho-physiological interpretation which considers these movements to be a neurotic group reaction to deprivation, he says "those who seek a new integrity are not necessarily psychologically disorientated, subject to fantasy, or unable to explain themselves." In other words they are not sick because they seek to improve their condition - indeed they would be sick if they didn't. So deprivation is to be taken seriously, even if it is unable to allow for divine intervention. The ethnographic approach, being concerned with the descriptive, the historical and the externals of economic and political factors may be limited in explaining the "why" of a movement, but it does supply the "what", without which the "why" is just a theory, or bones without flesh. The Hegelian explanation allows a place for revelation, and is open-ended rather than dogmatic, and assumes that there is always more to be understood. "If we are confronted with the evidence of a divine revelation, we cannot declare it irrelevant, or irrational, or fantasy, or wishful thinking. We must take it seriously, and try to account for what actually occurs. Even if our own assumptions do not admit such a thing as divine revelation, we must admit that for others it does exist...we know that because of it, activities cohere into an organised movement." 9,

Crick's 10 contribution complements and extends this perspective. He considers that the present stage of anthropology is post-functional and post-structural. He also subscribes to the view that human beings are "meaning-makers". 11 It is assumed that meaning exists, because the world itself is a meaningful place, and that meaning has existed long before we decide to seek to understand that meaning. Though we may well have a need to find meaning, our need does not create the meaning.

Crick sees anthropology as being concerned then with the translation of one way of being human to another way of being human, or with the translation of one group's understanding of meaning to another group's understanding of meaning. "There can be no final definition of the relation between "ourselves" and "others". 12....to be stuck with a stark "our/their" dichotomy is to be denied the mutual benefits

which are to be derived from an exchange of meaning...There has been a virtual monologue in which the only definition of "us" and "them" has been given by us" 13.

Such a definition or interpretation is very important for a study of someone else's religion, for religion is above all else concerned with meaning, and this view helps us in being delivered from those explanations which reduce religion to simple needs-satisfaction alone. In particular, it allows revelation, as a major component in the Maori prophetic movements, to be taken seriously. Revelation is itself meaningful, in that it conveys meaning about a meaningful cosmos. And if anthropology is concerned with becoming aware of someone else's religion as their understanding of meaning, hopefully it will involve an exchange, in which the someone else group is also receptive to the understanding of meaning we have, that is, our religion. This is precisely however, what the European missionaries did not permit, for they would not allow to the Maori the same right to revelation as they claimed for themselves. Yet the practical possibility of that exchange taking place has been demonstrated in the setting of Ringatu gatherings, in which one of the leaders, Wiremu Tarei, seated on his tangata whenua side of the house, has spoken directly to me where I was located on the manuhiri side, saying something like: "I don't know what people in your Church believe about this...but this is what we Ringatu believe, because.....tell us what you believe....".

It is important to establish the priority of revelation in the Maori movements. In each case the movements were brought into being by the prophet who was the recipient of revelation, or agent of meaning, in whatever form. The prophet created the movement by enlisting a following, and in no case did the movement come into being and then choose a leader. Also in some instances, the movement did not long survive the demise of its leader. Whatever the movements accomplished by way of meeting legitimate needs, they began with revelation.

The importance of the prophet as the agent of divine revelation is indicated in most if not all of the studies on Maori prophetic movements to which I now refer briefly, even though the writers in some cases make other emphases as well.

Clark, 14 in analyzing the Pai Marire movement, which began in Taranaki in 1862, describes the emergence of the prophet Te Ua Haumene, following his experience of "divine selection". He considers the

movement to be a positive response to the challenge of colonial settlement, with its alternatives of assimilation or extermination 15 , and an adaptation to Western culture, but on Maori terms, so preserving Maori identity. It combined, as did the other movements, both Maori and Biblical elements, and though not necessarily rejecting Christianity as such, it certainly rejected the missionary packaging of Christianity. While being primarily religious in form, and initially peaceful in intention, it also exercised a political function 16 expressed in armed resistance, in which role it was more usually called Hauhau.

Greenwood's 17 study of the Ringatu Church, written in 1942, is descriptive and historical, rather than analytical, but it provides a very valuable record of information verified by a generation of leaders, of whom many have since died. The movement began in 1867 on the Chatham Islands, and was at that stage, comprised of Maori prisoners of war, who were considered to have been Hauhau supporters, but who became followers of Te Kooti, a fellow prisoner who experienced divine revelation. Ringatu then, though comprised of ex-Hauhau, emerged as a separate movement under the prophetic leadership of Te Kooti. It is surprising that though there has been considerable writing on the mainly historical aspects, comparatively little has been attempted by way of a serious interpretation of the faith of the movement.

Misur 18 writing of Te Kooti, rightly emphasizes that he was not only a prophetic leader in his own right as the recipient of revelation, but that his very birth was also the subject of revelation by an earlier prophet, Toiroa. She also adds that he was the agent of revelation in that his inspired utterances (kupu whakaari) were regarded as forming the basis for the formation of liturgy, and for teaching 19

In Lyons 20 essay on the Papahurihia, Hauhau, and Parihaka movements, the writer states that they were religious responses to charismatic leadership, economic dissatisfaction, confused values, and a quest for identity. In the first case, charismatic leadership was provided by a prophet of the same name, from about 1833 in the Hokianga area. In the third case, the main leadership was provided by the prophets Te Whiti and Tohu, in Taranaki, from 1870. Though Te Whiti had earlier supported the Hauhau movement, he withdrew from it to set up a new, pacifist community.

Elsmore 21 has written of the little-known Kohititanga Marama movement which dated from 1893 at Whakakii near Wairoa. She sees it as being concerned with Maori survival in the face of material deprivation, social disruption and religious dissatisfaction, but most importantly, as a "revival of revelation of God to his people". Revelation in this case was given to and mediated through the prophet-leader Te Matenga Tamati, who after the death of Te Kooti, experienced a divine call to continue the work of Te Kooti, and so the movement he founded has been regarded as a "second Ringatu".

Webster 22 in his study of Rua Kenana and the Wairua Tapu movement which developed from 1904 in the Urewera region and which was centred mainly on Maungapohatu, has as his key concept the theory that colonial domination created conditions of relative deprivation, and anxiety/frustration on the part of Tuhoe. The prophet offered hope which transformed maladaptive anxiety into meaningful action, and this hope can be seen as meeting a desperate need to have a reason for their existence and a defence against the "terror of meaninglessness" 23. He states that the prophet's charisma is seen to be not just a matter of personality, but having divine or at least supernatural origin 24, though he does not develop this aspect.

Binney's 25 research into the movement of Rua Kenana is mainly and intentionally historical, yet she gives the revelatory aspect sympathetic treatment, describing his visions on Maungapohatu of Christ appearing to him, the revealing of the "diamond", and the rainbow. The diamond clearly is seen to represent much more than just material wealth or power for the Maori, and is variously interpreted as being the Kingdom 26, the Holy Spirit 27, and the means of redemption. 28 In other words it has a divine origin, it is revealed, and it is given. This emphasis on the revealed is taken further in her detailed examination of the significance of the kupu whakaari for Ringatu. 29

Sinclair 30 has researched the Maramatanga movement, which developed in the early 1900's as a Maori elite within the Catholic Church, which makes it somewhat different to the other movements which arose in areas of Protestant missionary influence, and which in some ways can be understood as reaction to that influence. This movement began at Bulls with a charismatic leader Mere Rikiriki, and later developed other centres at Ohakune, Taihape and Levin. It is

seen to have strong links with the Parihaka, Kingite and Ratana movements. She states that religion, along with art, language and other aspects of culture, has been used for the Maori to resist assimilation. So religion is seen to be concerned, not just with spiritual salvation, but with providing a Maori identity distinct from that of other New Zealanders. 31 Unlike most of the other movements, in Maramatanga there has been a succession of leaders who have experienced revelation, and indeed continued divine guidance is expected and sought, through dreams, music and natural phenomena. Through these, followers are provided with the means by which the cosmos can be both understood and controlled. 32

Though all these writers in their accounts give consideration to the place of the prophet and therefore to the place of revelation, this emphasis in some studies appears to be lost in the theory of meeting needs, for instance in those of Lyons and especially Webster. I wish rather to emphasize the priority of the prophet, both in the sense that in each case he emerged before the movement comprised of his following, and in the sense that the divine revelation of which he was the agent, provided the most powerful driving force. Webster speaks of the importance of finding meaning, but in terms of need satisfaction, rather than in terms of understanding the meaning that already exists. Clark, Lyons, and Sinclair respectively suggest that the movements are concerned with a "search for", "preserving of", and "quest for and providing of" identity. That too, is an emphasis I wish to make, but as with meaning, I would rather understand religion as expressing identity, rather than searching for it. To say that the Maori tangata whenua were searching for an identity seems rather arrogant on the part of Pakeha manuhiri. It is true that Pakeha colonial policy, both political and missionary, hoped to destroy Maori identity, but I think the Maori generally, and especially those involved in these movements, were very much aware of their identity. Their problem was not to find their own identity, but to have the Pakeha recognise and respect that identity. This emphasis on identity is important for my study, because it is one being made in contemporary Maori discussion and theological writing. Sinclair also speaks of religion as providing a means of controlling the universe, which seems a very functionalist interpretation. Nevertheless, so long as religion is not seen as beginning with this purpose, this function may be seen as very necessary. However, I



would want to express it rather as coming to terms with the environment, or as cooperating with a meaningful cosmos, and not just fighting to subdue a hostile one.

Despite the variety of interpretations in the works of these writers, one thing is clear, whatever their separation in time and locality, and despite their apparent failure to achieve much by way of measurable political or economic benefit for their followers, these movements did succeed in keeping alive a dream, a vision, and a hope. What Sinclair says of Maramatanga is equally true of the other movements, including Ringatu. "Members.....find themselves looking upward to the heavens for guidance, backward to the past to search for their roots, and forward to the future, where there will be a new era of dignity and equality".<sup>33</sup>

#### Introduction Notes

1. The Rev. Rua Rakena, currently Tumuaki (Superintendent) of the Methodist Maori Division.
2. Bourdieu 1977 : 1-2
3. Spiro 1966 : 108-122
4. See Matt. 25/31ff and James 2/17, in which there is a demand for faith in action.
5. Burridge 1980
6. Burridge 1980 : 6-7
7. Burridge 1980 : 9
8. Burridge 1980 : 118ff
9. Burridge 1980 : 117
10. Crick 1975 : 1
11. Crick 1975 : 2
12. Crick 1975 : 165
13. Crick 1975 : 167
14. Clark 1975 : 10
15. Clark 1975 : 102, 109
16. Clark 1975 : 110
17. Greenwood 1942
18. Misur 1975:102
19. Misur 1975 : 105
20. Lyons 1975 : 55-71
21. Elsmore 1983 : 99
22. Webster 1979 : 270
23. Webster 1979 : 269
24. Webster 1979 : 64
25. Binney and others 1979 : 20
26. Binney 1984 : 361
27. Binney and others 1979 : 49
28. Binney and others 1979 : 18
29. Binney 1984 : 345-398
30. Karen Sinclair 1976
31. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 5,260
32. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 255
33. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 256

## CHAPTER ONE TRADITIONAL MAORI RELIGION

### THE SOIL AND THE FOREST

In order to understand the tree of Maori prophetic movements in general, and of the Ringatu Church in particular, it is necessary to know something of the soil and the forest in which the tree has grown, that is, of traditional or pre-European Maori religion. Such understanding is essential in identifying pre-European elements as distinct from Biblical, missionary components, in Ringatu belief and liturgy.

If it is accepted that there is meaning in the world, because it is a meaningful place, and that its human inhabitants are meaning-seekers or meaning makers, and that religion, whatever its other functions, is above all concerned with the human search for, or expression of meaning, then it can be expected that pre-European Maori religion too, was primarily concerned with making sense of the world, and of the place of the Maori in it. Indeed it would appear that traditional Maori religion did in fact present a very comprehensive and logical explanation of the creation of the world, of its creatures including man, and of man's responsibilities and relationships.

In pre-European, pre-literate Maori society, such religious explanations of course did not exist in formal philosophical or theological statements, but were contained within myths and legends which were preserved and transmitted orally, like its history.

While it can be assumed that the religion of the Maori, like the rest of their culture, will in some respects reveal links with an Eastern Polynesian heritage, in others there are suggestions of a development unique to Aotearoa. This development of religious ideas, indicates an openness on the part of the Maori, both to the meaning inherent in the world, and to a developing understanding of that meaning. Such openness is important, for it allowed the possibility of the formulation of new concepts in pre-European religion, such as a belief in a supreme God, Io. It also made possible the acceptance of new ideas involved in the Christian religion brought by the missionaries.

Early descriptions of Maori religion by missionaries and other European observers were clearly coloured by their own cultural presuppositions. Most missionaries were more interested in attacking and destroying Maori religion than they were in understanding and

looking for common ground on which to build religious bridges. (With a few notable exceptions like Richard Taylor). "Missionaries (unlike anthropologists) are explicitly and purposively agents of change", and are intent upon securing "a metanoia....that change of mind and heart...including...a definite 'no' to the past."2 But even those who were inclined to be more sympathetic, simply lacked the "tools" to assess the indigenous religion. It can be assumed that many Maori informants had already been influenced to some extent by the new religion, and in any case could be expected to be as selective in offering information, as the European observers were in accepting or understanding it as important or otherwise. Fortunately, the early descriptions, with their inevitable omissions and distortions have been balanced by the contributions of more competent Pakeha observers, and of Maori informants with authority to speak of their own tribal traditions.

For the purpose of attempting a brief summary of traditional Maori religion, I have relied on the contributions of ethnographers like Elsdon Best 3 , who though a Pakeha, was able to "get inside" the oral traditions of the Tuhoe in the 1920's, and Sir Peter Buck 4 , who combined the personal experience of belonging tribally to Ngati Mutunga in North Taranaki, with considerable academic and professional skills in the 1920-40's; and also on the contemporary writing of clergy like Maori Marsden 5 , who represents the traditions of his Te Aupouri tribe and the Ngapuhi wananga, and Jim Irwin 6 , who though a Pakeha, expresses insights gained from forty years ministry among the Ngati Kahungunu and Tuhoe people. Both Marsden and Irwin state that these religious beliefs are not just pre-European but that they are also retained in the present, by some at least. So in this summary, I have chosen to write of Maori religion in the present tense wherever that is appropriate, rather than in the past. In the contributions of those named above, differences of tribal traditions and emphasis are apparent. However, when these and other writings are considered together, it is possible to see a great deal of agreement on what could be called a common core of traditional Maori belief. My summary is more concerned with the general body of agreed belief, than with details of particular tribal traditions, except where these are relevant for an understanding of Ringatu.



#### a. The Maori View of the World

The world is regarded as no cosmic accident, but as a purposeful, therefore meaningful creation of divine origin. This creation is not just a past, completed event, but is also an ongoing, evolutionary process expressed in the metaphors of plant growth and human conception, gestation and birth. 7 The world is understood as being ordered in three tiers or realms, Te Rangi (the heavens, the sky) as a realm of the gods, Te Ao Marama (the world of light) as the realm of the human, and Te Po (the dark, the night) as a realm of the dead, or as the underworld. However, like the Biblical concept of Sheol, Te Po is merely the resting place of the dead, and is not seen as a place of judgement or punishment. Likewise, Te Rangi is not seen as a place for rewards or favours in the after-life. Te Rangi and Te Po are each divided into either ten or twelve levels, depending on the tradition. The three-tiered world itself is encompassed by Te Korekore (literally, "the nothingness") which however, is understood as not completely negative, but rather as the stuff from which the world emerged, hence as the realm of the potential, the womb of the universe.<sup>8</sup>

The Maori view of the universe is holistic, and though the world is understood as being three-tiered, at the same time there are no fixed barriers between the realms. The spiritual realm of Te Rangi influences and penetrates into the material realm of Te Ao Marama, and to a certain extent, so does Te Po. In other words, the Maori world is not divided into fixed categories of sacred and secular, spiritual and material, but the spiritual permeates the material. Though the world is understood as being subject to natural laws, on occasion these may be over-ruled by spiritual or supernatural forces. Marsden goes further and says that "the temporal is subordinate to the eternal, the material to the spiritual".<sup>9</sup>

The structure of the world is understood as being a system of complementary opposition, sometimes being seen as the balancing of a positive with a negative, and sometimes as a balancing of space, or of time. The basic complementarity is between Te Rangi and Te Po, but the concept applies universally, including the balancing of ora (health, life) and mate (sickness, death); runga (above) and raro (below); matau (right) and maui (left); mua (in front) and muri (behind); tapu (sacred, restricted) and noa (common, unrestricted).<sup>10</sup>

These are not just philosophical abstractions, but are very much part of the real, everyday business of human relationships and responsibilities.

The concept of mua and muri is relevant to the view of history 11. While references to the past are often made in the term "nga wa o mua", the word mua provides the clue to the fact that the past is actually viewed as laid out in front. It is as though the Maori walks into the future with a cosmic rear-view mirror providing a constant projection of the past with the present. Practical expression of this concept is seen in the whare nui (meeting house) with its carved pou (posts) representing significant ancestors. The Maori goes back into the past tracing his own relationship generation by generation to these tupuna (ancestors) through his whakapapa (genealogy), yet at the same time invoking these tupuna and nga mate (the many more recent dead) to be present.

This awareness of the past being re-called into the present is implicit in the concept of Te Ao Hurihuri (the world that turns), a dynamic world that moves on even as it revolves.

#### b. Creation and the Gods

It needs to be stated that the Maori word "atua", which has been commonly, and rather inadequately translated as "god", in Maori understanding refers to any supernatural being, benign or malevolent, which evokes feelings of wonder, awe, or fear. In what follows, the terms "atua" or "god" are used in the Maori, not in the Christian sense.

##### i. The Departmental Gods in Creation. 12

The usual, common, or popular account of Creation deals only with the bringing into being of the various forms of life on earth, and appears to assume that by some cosmic process, Te Rangi, Te Ao Marama, and Te Po, have already emerged from the void of Te Korekore. In the myth, Ranginui (personification of Te Rangi, so the sky-father) who lived in the lowest of the heavens, was attracted to Papatuanuku, (personification of the Earth, so the earth-mother) descended, mated with her, and remained locked together with her. Numerous, all-male off-spring resulted, ( as many as seventy in some versions) but they were confined unwillingly in the darkness between the bodies of their parents. Determined to break out into the daylight of Te Ao Marama,

the brothers attempted to force the bodies of their parents apart, with little success, until one Tane, lying on his back and pushing with his feet, forced Rangi up off Papa. The parents were then kept apart by posts erected by the brothers, and the tears of the grieving Rangi became the rain, and those of Papa the mists and the dew of earth. Some say that it was at this point, the separation of Rangi and Papa, with the violence involved, that sin entered the world.

A power struggle then developed between the brothers, which resulted in their emerging as so-called departmental gods, or as ministers responsible for separate portfolios. 13 Tawhirimatea, who alone opposed the separation of the parents, stayed with Rangi, becoming the god of the winds, and constantly seeking to destroy his brothers. Tumatauenga appeared to relish the conflict, and becoming the god of war, succeeded in subduing all the brothers except Tane. Tane became the god of the forests, its birds, and other creatures, and was regarded as the chief of these gods, representing life, light, mankind, as well as being seen in some traditions as the personification of the sun. Tangaroa sought refuge in the sea, becoming the controller of tides and the guardian of all fish-life. Haumiatikitiki identified with the earth itself, becoming the god of uncultivated food such as fern-root, while Rongomatane became the god of cultivated food such as the kumara, and also the god of peace. In a sense, the ministers are so identified with their areas of responsibility, that they appear to become what they are responsible for: for example, Tane is the forest. 14. Another of the brothers, Whiro, after failing in his contest with Tane, retired to the underworld, and so became identified with darkness and death. Another, Kiwa, apparently shared responsibility with Tangaroa as the guardian of the sea. Ruaumoko took charge of earthquakes and volcanoes. Uru-te-ngangana was responsible for the stars. So every part of nature, and every relevant human activity, came within the jurisdiction of a specific atua or deity.

Because the children of Rangi and Papa were all male, Tane began a search for the uha (female element) and in the process produced all kinds of trees, birds, insects and natural phenomena, though he still could not find the missing element. Eventually he was advised by Papa to take red earth, and to shape it into human form. This he did, and breathed the hau ora (life force) into it, where upon it sneezed, and came into life as the first woman, who after purification rites, he

named Hineahuone (the earth-formed maiden).

Tane then mated with Hineahuone, and a daughter Hinetitama (the dawn maiden) was born, followed by a number of others. Next, Tane mated with Hinetitama, who, when she later discovered that her husband was also her father, fled in shame to the underworld, where she became known as Hinenuitepo, the goddess of death, who welcomed her mortal descendents and guided them safely past Whiro.

In some tribal variations of the creation myth, Tiki is a god who is the creator of the first man, while in others he is the first male offspring of Tane. Buck suggests that Tane may represent the male principle and Tiki the personification of the male organ. 15.

Another set of myths involves a demi-god Maui, a hero figure, who in the last of his remarkable exploits, which had included snaring the sun to slow down its progress in order to lengthen the day, obtaining fire from an ancestress Mahuika in the underworld and fishing up Te Ika Nui a Maui (the North Island), also attempted to secure immortality for mankind. He endeavoured to enter the vagina of Hinenuitepo while she slept, in order to destroy her. However, she was awakened by a fantail, and she crushed Maui between her legs. Not surprisingly, the female genitals are referred to as te whare o aitua (the house of death, or misfortune),<sup>16</sup> So, though man could claim to have descended from the gods, he remained mortal.

## ii. Io, The Supreme God.

In the esoteric account of the gods and creation, the existence of a supreme God, Io, is postulated. The nature and role of Io will be discussed later in this section, but first attention needs to be given to the debate as to whether or not the pre-European Maori possessed a concept of a supreme God. Discussion has focused on material recorded between 1865-7 at a whare wananga (tribal school of learning) in the Wairarapa, where Te Whatahoro acted as scribe for two aged tohunga (priests) of the Io cult, Te Matorohanga and Nepia Pohuhu. These two belonged to an exclusive group of priests associated with Io worship, who had taught in their respective tribal wananga, but had witnessed the spread of Christianity. Their lips had been sealed, though they had seen obvious parallels in the Christian account of Creation. Then apparently, these two at least, decided that it was time to reveal details of the ancient belief in Io, according to

Kahungunu traditions.<sup>17</sup> Sceptics claimed that because both informants had become Christians, their material was heavily influenced by missionary teaching, and in particular by the Biblical creation account.<sup>18</sup> But others have insisted that belief in Io was centuries old.

Ngata said the Io cult existed in at least seven different tribal areas, Ngapuhi, Ngati Whatua, Ngati Maru of Thames, Upper Whanganui, Ngati Kahungunu, and Ngati Porou, but known only to an inner circle of priests, and not to the common people. However, he says the cult was known in the 1850's to at least four Pakeha in the North, including Judge Maning, who after accidentally stumbling upon a tohunga reciting karakia to Io, was forced to become an adept, but kept the teaching secret, even on his death bed.<sup>19</sup> Best accepted that the Io school was pre-European, and quoted an old informant, "all gods are one, but the people must not be told so!" Buck at first dismissed the cult as a post-European invention, but later modified his views. Marsden obviously believes it to be of ancient origin, while Irwin keeps an open mind.

Pei Te Hurinui Jones suggested in a letter to Peter Buck that the Io tradition had been preserved by Maori immigrants from Polynesia, whereas it had declined in the hub of Polynesia itself, in times of tyrannical oppression.<sup>20</sup> In another letter he indicated that after he had written up the Creation Story according to Tainui traditions, some 184 pages in Maori, he had made much of this available to Buck in 1946. As a result, Buck revised some material in "The Coming of the Maori", but was prevented from doing a more thorough revision by ill-health and printing dead-lines.<sup>21</sup> This explains the apparent contradictions in Buck's accounts, and Jones' statement implies that had Buck more time, he may well have been seen to accept the Io concept as pre-European.

Support for the existence of a pre-European concept of Io may be seen in the magnificent Te Miringa Te Kakara building which stood at Pureora until destroyed by fire in 1983. Emery, a Ngati Maniapoto elder, former Maori Welfare Officer, and now an Anglican minister in Te Kuiti, says that this house has associations with Io worship going back centuries.<sup>22</sup> He says that during the early settlement period, four whare wananga were established at Tamaki, Kawhia, Whatawhata, and Pio Pio, all associated with Io. As the population grew, four others were established about 1550-1600, including Te Miringa Te Kakara.



All were re-built a number of times, and the "present" Te Miringa was built between 1850-70. It was apparently located on the meeting point of a number of tribal boundaries, and was regarded as a place of peace. Te Kooti visited the place while seeking sanctuary in the King Country. The design of the house which was cruciform in shape, is said by some to be the result of revelation through the dream of a kuia (old lady) in which she saw a house which came down from heaven, which she described by taking two fern fronds, and laying them on the ground, one crossed over the other. The house lies on exact North-South, and East-West axes, with the four wings of the house said to be directly open to nga hau e wha (the four winds), that is to all local hapu (sub-tribes) and perhaps to all other tribes. The house has been desolate since the last tohunga, Te Ra died in 1949. The sole purpose of Te Miringa and other wananga was to maintain the old religion of Io. However, Te Miringa has often been mistakenly described as a Pai Marire house, possibly on account of some Pakeha mistaking the term "pao-miere" (to refuse honey) which was used by adherents of the cult at the time the house was built, because they boycotted the Te Kuiti land court, refusing to sell their land for the "honey" of quick cash. These details are confirmed by Jones. 23

Shirres, 24 who began researching the Io cult in 1974, suggests that in the North, because of strong missionary influence, the Io school went "underground", whereas in the Tainui and Takitimu tribes, the impact of Christianity actually encouraged a comparison of Io and Christian teaching. So Te Wherowhero of Tainui, himself an ariki (chiefly priest) of Io, was installed as the first maori king, Potatau, with Io karakia. 25 However, he welcomed Christianity for his people, as compatible with the esoteric Io beliefs, which as an ariki, he could not teach to commoners 26. Commenting on the material recorded by Te Whatahoro, he says that though the informants were Christian converts, very few specifically Christian elements are to be seen. Shirres also gives the earliest reference to a supreme being as contained in statements made by a Hokianga chief, Te Pare, to Governor King in Sydney in 1806. 27 He also suggests that the ancient origin of the Io school is reflected in place names like Hikurangi, Whitianga, and Rangiatea, brought from "Hawaiki" the home-land, but which were derived from the Io tradition, in which they are used of temples of Io. Also, given the strict requirements for admission into the wananga, and given also the wide distribution of Io teaching



in different tribal areas, several of which developed quite different traditions, there simply wasn't time enough for the Io teaching to have been a post Christian response. "To present Maori culture without the Io tradition is like presenting Greek culture without Greek philosophy".<sup>28</sup>

Ngata suggests that Maori religion had for centuries been in a process of development.<sup>29</sup> There seems no reason to doubt that Maori religion could not have developed the concept of a supreme God, without European influence, for there are a number of other Maori concepts which could be seen as having Biblical parallels, but which are obviously developed before contact.

Assuming then that belief in Io, the supreme God, did exist in pre-European Maori religion, even if restricted to a select group, then that belief can be seen to provide an explanation of the Creation of the world itself, as outlined by Marsden.<sup>30</sup> In the beginning then, Io existed alone in Te Korekore. His nature is described by his many names, as unchanging, parentless, the first parent, the first cause etc. He communed with himself, for he possessed a double nature, active-positive and passive-negative. He was supreme, eternal, omnipresent, all seeing and all wise. He commanded the iho (essence, umbilical) of the darkness, light, earth and water, reciting the names of night and day, earth and sky etc, as things took form. The different planes of Te Po were created, next the night lights, and then Te Ao Marama emerged.

Io then established several Hawaiki as abodes for the Gods in Te Po, Hawaiki Nui (great), Hawaiki Roa (extensive), Hawaiki Pamamao (distant) and Hawaiki Tapu (sacred). The Hawaiki were for gods and heroes, but only Io and his assistants could enter Hawaiki Tapu.<sup>31</sup>

Next, Io created the first gods Rangi and Papa. Rangi was intended to continue creating the heavens, but after forming the first, became attracted to Papa, with the same result as in the popular version. In this account however, Tane was eventually assigned the task of completing the heavens, with Io giving him the mana (authority, status) taken from Rangi for his disobedience, and the other brothers were assigned the task of continuing creation in their various departments.

In addition to the temples in the Hawaiki, Io established for

himself, others at the uppermost heaven, Te Toi a te Rangi, at Tokerau (North), Rarotonga (South), Whitianga (East) and Hikurangi (West). He is thus omnipresent. Obviously there is some difficulty in putting together a composite description of the various traditions, with some discrepancy regarding the abode of the gods, as being in either Te Po or in Te Rangi. However, both Te Po and Te Rangi were of the spirit world, and joined together beyond the horizons. From Te Ao Marama, one path, Te Ara Whanui a Tane (the broad path of Tane) led down to Te Po, and another, Te Aratiatia a Tane (the staircase of Tane) led up to Te Rangi.<sup>32</sup>

Apparently, Io communicated with the departmental gods in Te Rangi by means of heavenly messengers, whatukura (male) and mareikura (female), somewhat like Biblical angelic messengers. Io's messengers in Te Po were mairihau. In some respects the whatukura appeared to have been like gods, in others, more like guardians.

It was to the upmost heaven, where Io dwelt at Matangireia, that Tane was summoned to receive nga kete a te wananga (the baskets of sacred knowledge) which were kept in the treasure house of Rangiatea. They were te kete aronui (knowledge of everything good and peaceful), te kete tuatea (knowledge of all things evil), and te kete tuauri (knowledge of ritual), though the names vary in other traditions, and the two sacred stones to be used in the activities of the wananga on earth.<sup>33</sup>

While little is known by outsiders of what was offered to Io as worship, it is believed that it contained no gross practices, sacrifices or placations.<sup>34</sup>

### iii. Tribal and District Gods.

As well as the first category of a supreme God, Io, and a second of departmental gods, a third consists of tribal or district gods, which could be expected to look after tribal interests, such as Maru, a local war god chosen by Titokowaru in South Taranaki when he abandoned Christianity to join the Hauhau against the colonial forces. Some of these are also associated with natural phenomena or forces, such as Uenuku and Kahukura, identified with the rainbow, and Hinetuira with lightning.<sup>35</sup>

#### iv. Family and Lesser Gods.

A fourth category of lesser gods <sup>36</sup> consists of those best described as spiritual beings, both benign and malevolent. Kehua are considered to be the restless spirits of the dead who have not been properly farewelled. Especially feared is the spirit of an aborted fetus. Kaitiaki, however, are district, tribal or family guardian spirits, which often appear in the aria (form) of birds, fish or insects. A common form is that of the ruru (owl). I well remember attending a hui on a marae at Rotorua in about 1974, at which a well-known Maori academic on the staff of a university was speaking. He had learned of the death of a relative at Waikaremoana, and was intending travelling on to the tangi (mourning ritual) later that night. About 4 p.m. an owl appeared in broad daylight, and settled on the top of the right hand amo (upright front support) of the meeting house, and apart from fluttering a few feet and settling again, it remained there, until the man concerned left at about 9 a.m. The owl disappeared at the same time presumably to "guide" him on his way. Tipua are regarded as hostile evil spirits or demons, and apparently birds, fish, animals and even inanimate objects can become possessed by evil forces. Taniwha are usually understood as monsters of rivers and lakes, hostile and dangerous to strangers and trespassers, though also seen sometimes as guardians by the locals. Patupaiarehe on the other hand are nocturnal spirits or fairies of human form and great beauty.

#### c. Man's Relationship With The Gods

As already said, the Maori world is not a closed system, but the spiritual realm penetrates the material world. This implies that if the earthly is influenced by the heavenly, through revelation for example, so the earthly human may have access to the heavenly atua, through karakia. So there is a vital relationship between mankind and the atua, but it is carefully regulated relationship, involving a number of interlocking concepts.

The concept of mauri-mana-tapu-noa is at the heart of Maori religion. Mauri is the life-principle given by the gods to all created things, but in persons it is mauri-ora or te hau ora (living breath). It is roughly equivalent to the soul, and is the container for the person's mana. If one is damaged, so is the other.<sup>38</sup>

Mana is a supernatural force or power bestowed by the gods upon a person, place or object. In personal terms it is charisma, or spiritual authority, and status. It is imparted at birth when a father or a tohunga performs the tohi rite. It can also be transferred from father to son, teacher to pupil, and likewise withdrawn. Mana is a spiritual force as distinct from ihi, psychic force. Because it is a potent force it requires the protection of tapu restrictions.

Tapu is a ritual prohibition or restriction acting as protection for the person or thing possessing mana. It is bestowed by the gods as part of the contract entered into by personal dedication involved in the tohi rite. Since it comes from the gods, it involves the sacred, but not in the Biblical sense of holiness or moral righteousness. Tapu itself is not dangerous, but when it is breached, the mana which it protects may then be uncontrolled. Tapu restrictions involve the whole of Maori life, especially concerning persons of rank, female sexuality, the dead and their possessions, burial places etc. Infringement of tapu is regarded as punishable by the god concerned. Poke (ritual uncleanness) is a secondary sense of tapu, and applies to such circumstances as menstruation, childbirth etc. "Tapu spells out the Maori law, and is for the Maoris what the Mosaic law is for the Jews".<sup>39</sup>

Noa is being common, not tapu, or unrestricted. Whakanoa or pure rituals are intended to both remove tapu, as on a newly built house, and to counter the consequences of a breach of tapu, as in an inadvertant violation of a burial ground. The two common elements used in whakanoa are water, used for instance by those involved in a tangi (funeral) to wash hands on leaving the urupa (cemetery), and cooked food such as bread, either eaten or placed on the head. The process of cooking releases the mauri, making it noa, and therefore objectionable to the atua since the noa state is destructive of the tapu (atua-given) state. A special ahi (fire) or umu (oven) may be used for the cooking. Because like tapu, the noa state can be transmitted by contact, there is an aversion to ironing clothes or putting a hat on a kitchen table, lest the wearer have his tapu diminished by contact with food. Apparently the male is regarded as more tapu, and the female as more noa, a distinction having more to do with male-female roles than with male-female worth, since the male traditionally has been involved in restricted activities like warfare, fishing, tree-felling, hunting, house-building etc. For this reason, at the opening of a meeting house for example, either a

puhi (pre-pubertal girl) or a ruahine (woman past child-bearing) of rank (so possessing mana but without the tapu associated with menstrual blood) is the first to cross the threshold, to make the building, which has been under tapu while being built and carved, safe for use.

Karakia is understood as being a ritualized, verbal calling upon the atua, much more in the sense of incantation, than in the sense of Christian prayer. Best says, that the pre-European Maori did not worship their atua as Christians do, and though they were acknowledged, appealed to, and placated, they were not adored. Karakia has ritual rather than ethical significance, and is comprised of a precise verbal formula requiring exact repetition, with mistakes or omissions considered to have dire consequences. Karakia are appropriate to the atua concerned, who is appealed to, to act on behalf of the suppliant, without any sense of submission involved. Irwin says that so far as is known, karakia directed to Io however, are much nearer Christian prayers.<sup>40</sup> Shirres sees karakia as a means to control the universe, and suggests that the first karakia were devised by Tumatauenga to control his brothers. So to use karakia is in a sense to unite with Tu in controlling the brothers and their departments, that is, the environment.<sup>41</sup> While Irwin classifies karakia as plagation, invocation, intercession, incantation and exorcism, Shirres sees the basis of classification relating to the child, warfare, death, canoes, kumara, weather, sickness, hunting, fishing, gardening, tattooing, carving, love, travel and makutu.<sup>42</sup> While some karakia are known generally, others are known only by the appropriate tohunga involved in important events or enterprises.

Tohi rites of birth and life involve a wide range of ceremonial actions and karakia, and are seen by Marsden as similar in intention to Christian sacramental acts.<sup>43</sup> "Tohi" means both to cut or divide, and to endue with mana.

The tohi associated with birth involved the cutting of the umbilical cord, followed by its burial in a special place, so identifying the child with the land of its tribe. Shirres sees the birth ritual as the naming of the child, a dedication to male or female roles, the bestowing of mana, and the removal of tapu associated with birth.<sup>44</sup> Tohi iriiri involves the child being held over running water, while the names of various departmental gods are invoked. A sneeze, cough or yawn at any point indicates that the child is to be dedicated to



that particular god whose name is being recited, whereupon the child is then dipped in the water or sprinkled, and so placed under the tapu of that god. The Maori had no initiation rites, for at birth a child was considered to be made a full member of its tribe.

Marsden mentions other tohi rituals,<sup>45</sup> such as tohi whakaha for replenishing diminished mana, and for initiating novice tohunga; te whakapa, used by a father before he died to transfer the family mana to the eldest son, and involving laying hands on the son's head, a declaration of function to be fulfilled, and a blessing; and te kairarawa, a ritual cannibalism in which a portion of the enemy was consumed to appropriate his mana and so to diminish that of the enemy.

Tangihanga involves rituals relating to death. Irwin<sup>46</sup> sees death accounted for in three myths, involving Whiro's departure to the underworld; Hinetitama's assuming of the role of Hinenuitepo in the underworld; and Maui's failure to reverse the death process. Death is seen as an intrusion to be "requited" in some appropriate way.<sup>47</sup> Formerly, if death was the result of war or murder, it was followed by utu (revenge). Death was accompanied by the laceration of mourners, the suicide of a wife, the sacrifice of slaves, and much weeping and oratory.

Tangihanga involves the ohaki (farewell speech of the dying), the tuku (release of the spirit of the deceased), preparation of the marae by the tangata whenua (locals), treatment of the kiri mate (family of deceased) as involved in the death, the arrival of manuhiri (visitors) in karanga (call), tangi (weeping), poroporoaki (farewell to deceased and all dead), whaikorero (speechmaking), hongiri (pressing noses in greeting), the nehunga (burial) and disposal of possessions of the deceased, the hakari (post funeral meal), takahi whare (trampling of house of deceased to remove its tapu ready for re-occupation) and the hahunga (formerly exhumation of bones now replaced with the unveiling of a headstone or memorial). Though much of this ritual is now addressed to the Biblical God, rather than to traditional atua, the form remains much the same.

The spirits of the dead are believed to depart to the spirit world, without judgement, punishment or reward. After they have travelled the ara whanui a Tane, those who sympathize with Papa descend to the Po, while those who identify with Rangi ascend to Te Rangi. The dividing point is Te hono-i-wairua at Hawaiki nui, the meeting place of the four



spirit winds from north, south, east and west. <sup>48</sup>

Rituals involving human sacrifice, te ika tapu, were formerly associated with the conception of a child by a chief, the death of a chief, dedication of a whare wananga, building of a whare tupuna (meeting house), the setting out of a taua (war party) the dedication of a new pa (fortified village) and the launching of a waka pitau (ceremonial canoe). Such sacrifice usually involved the killing of slaves, and was probably intended as a placation of the gods, and as an increase in local mana. <sup>49</sup>

Rituals associated with the forest, fishing, and agriculture are important. Because the forest supplied a vast range of essentials, in the form of timber for building, fibrous plant material for weaving, and berries for food, and material for medicines, great care was taken to protect its resources with a range of tapu. Its fertility was ensured by placing a mauri such as a special stone, in a special place in the forest. Pure rakau is the ritual associated with tree felling, involving the seeking of Tane's permission, and the ceremonial burning of the first chip as propitiation. <sup>50</sup>

Bird snaring began with the tohunga designating specific hunting grounds, and lifting tapu restrictions. Snares were made under tapu conditions, and the first birds taken by the men were cooked in a special oven, a portion offered to the mauri of the forest, and the rest eaten by the women. On returning to the village, the tapu which had been placed on the party, was lifted. <sup>51</sup>

In the case of fishing, karakia were directed to Tangaroa, seeking permission to enter his domain, the safety of the fishermen, and the continued productivity of the sea. Apparently the first of the catch, as with kahawai on the East Coast, was cooked and eaten by the women.

Agriculture had its own elaborate rituals, involving a mara tautane, a small plot dedicated to the kumara god, and planted with selected tubers. When these were established, the tapu was lifted so that women could attend to the main crop. At harvest, the tubers from the small plot were lifted first, offered to Rongo, cooked, a portion eaten by the tohunga, and the rest buried. Only then could the main crop be harvested. <sup>52</sup>

Tohunga ahurewa were those religious experts involved in all these rituals as priests, mediators, advisers, and experts in genealogy.

By contrast, tohunga taura were those identified with the black arts, and usually were rejects from the whare wananga, Tohunga whakairo were specialists in carving, tohunga ta moko specialists in tattooing.

Pre-European Maori religion was life-centred, so its organisation was different from that of church-centred European Christianity. Nevertheless, it had its sacred places, sacred rituals, and religious experts. Many of its concepts and values still survive, and are not necessarily incapable of being reconciled with those of Christianity. Given more understanding, it should have been possible for the missionaries to have seen some parallels between Maori and Biblical religion, and to build some bridges between the religious ideas of the two peoples. Gudgeon for one, suggests that there were many such parallels, such a Flood to punish sin brought about by Tane, an Ark, and a worthy Survivor, Tupu-nui-a-uta, and an attempt at a doctrine of atonement seen in Tawhaki's casting of his still-born child from heaven to earth as expiation for sin.<sup>53</sup> In the event, it was left to the Maori prophetic movements to accomplish this, at least in part.

#### Chapter One Notes.

1. Crick 1975 : 2, also Berger 1973 : 28
2. Burridge 1975 : 9-10
3. Best 1973, Dominion Museum Monographs Nos. 1 and 2.
4. Buck 1974 : 431-536
5. Marsden 1978 : 191-220
6. Irwin 1984
7. Marsden 1978 : 216
8. Marsden 1978 : 216
9. Marsden 1978 : 218
10. Irwin 1984 : 9-10
11. Irwin 1984 : 7
12. Irwin 1984 : 13-16, also Buck 1974 : 433-443, 449-460
13. Shirres 1984 : 6, also Buck 1974 : 455
15. Buck 1974 : 451-452
16. Irwin 1984 : 16
17. Ngata 1950 : 336, and "The Religious Philosophy of the Maori":7-9  
Buck 1974 :443-444  
S. Percy Smith, "The Lore of the Whare Wananga: Part I for a detailed account.
18. Buck 1964 : 526
19. Ngata 1950 : 336, and "The Religious Philosophy of the Maori":9-11
20. Pei Te Hurinui Jones, extract from letter to Peter Buck, copy supplied by M. Shirres.  
Ngata, "The Religious Philosophy of the Maori" : 16
21. Pei Te Hurinui Jones, letter to Shirres, recalling meeting with Buck in 1949, and discussion on unfinished revision of the material dealing with Io.

22. Robert Emery, quoted in file on Te Miringa Te Kakara, Historic Places Trust.
23. Jones 1959 : 393-394
24. Shirres, "In Search of Io", paper.
25. Jones 1959 : 221
26. Jones 1959 : 158,166
27. Shirres, "In Search of Io" : 5
28. Shirres, "In Search of Io" : 6
29. Ngata, "The Religious Philosophy of the Maori" : 15
30. Marsden 1978 : 209-210
31. Marsden 1978 : 211
32. Marsden 1978 : 214
33. Best, Dominion Museum Monograph No. 6 :11
34. Irwin 1984: 34
35. Irwin 1984 : 37-38 also Buck 1974 : 460-462
36. Irwin 1984 : 39-41 also Buck 1974 : 462-464
37. Irwin 1984 : 21 ff
38. Marsden 1978 : 197 ff
39. Shirres, personal correspondence
40. Irwin 1984 : 34
41. Shirres, "Karakia", paper : 4
42. Shirres, "Karakia" : 9
43. Marsden 1978 : 201-202
44. Shirres, "Karakia", : 7
45. Marsden 1978 : 204-205
46. Irwin 1984 : 50
47. Irwin 1984 : 50
48. Best, Dominion Museum Monograph No. 1 : 20-22
49. Irwin 1984 : 66-67
50. Irwin 1984 : 64-66
51. Irwin 1984: 70
52. Irwin 1984 : 69
53. Gudgeon, Journal of the Polynesian Society, Vol. 14 : 117-119  
Buck 1974 : 443

CHAPTER TWO TE KOOTI AND THE BEGINNINGS  
OF THE RINGATU CHURCH  
- THE PARTICULAR TREE

a. Toirua the Prophet

The story of the man known to history as Te Kooti, begins long before his birth, with the words and actions of Toiroa Ikariki, a prophetic figure who lived at Nukutaurua, Mahia, but who was influential throughout the Rongowhakaata territory. A Ringatu document states that the supreme God, the Creator, known traditionally by the Maori as Io, is really Ihowa, the Biblical Jehovah. This God "did not make a special choice among the different peoples of the world, whether fair, red, black of skin or brown....but what He did consider were the thoughts within...of love for God...and of love for mankind by men, and the regard of each race for the other." As this God had spoken through the biblical prophets, so he spoke through the Maori prophet Toiroa also, and Toiroa in turn spoke to the people. <sup>1</sup>

In 1766, Toiroa began to experience visions, and for the next two years he apparently spoke only in "tongues". He predicated that soon a new race of people would arrive, the Pakerewha, with white and pink skins. He frequently sang two songs. The first,

Tiwha, tiwha te po  
 Ko te Pakerewha  
 Ko Arikirangi tenei ra  
 Te Kaere nei.

Dark and gloomy is the night  
 'Tis the Pakerewha  
 'Tis Arikirangi (the Lord of Heaven)  
 Who is coming this day.

is understood as referring to the coming of the Pakeha, and the emergence of Arikirangi, as Te Kooti was named prophetically, with a hint of the "dark" conditions of the times. The second,

Ko Nukutere, ko Nukutere,  
 Ko Tawhiti, ko Tawhiti  
 He Atua, he Atua  
 Ko te Pakerewha, ko te Pakerewha.

'Tis Nukutere, tis Nukutere,  
 'Tis (from) the Distance, tis  
 (from) the Distance,  
 A God, A God,  
 'Tis the Pakerewha, 'Tis the  
 Pakerewha.

is understood as referring to the arrival from a distant land of the Pakeha and their new God. <sup>2</sup>

These Pakerewha would bring things previously unseen by the Maori, but because his people could not understand his strange words, he made

models of these things, and demonstrated their use.<sup>3</sup> So he made a flax hat; a suit of clothes of dog-skin including pants; painted cloaks to represent a red blanket and a white sheet; a pipe carved of pumice smoked with dried leaves'; cooking pots carved from pumice; knife, fork and spoon; a sailing ship with masts and rudder and funnel; houses with dividing walls; "dogs" that carried men and which pulled burdens (horses and bullocks); bullock wagon; muskets, cartridge belt and bullets.

The strangers would also bring a new religion, Te Tama-i-rorokutia, (the Son-who-was-killed).<sup>4</sup> Toiroa's words about the Pakerewha God are understood to mean that He was to become the Ringatu God.<sup>5</sup>

After two years, Toiroa regained his natural voice, and the next year, 1769, James Cook sailed into Poverty Bay. According to the same document, Toiroa also prophesied the birth of Te Kooti.<sup>6</sup> Two male cousins, Te Rangi Patahi, and Te Turuki, would each take a wife and father a child. If Te Rangi Patahi's child, to be called Arikirangi, was born first, the Pakerewha would do good. If however, Te Turuki's child, to be called Te Hui a Kama, was born first, the Pakerewha would do great evil. If the dating of the prophecy is correct, it was nearly fifty years before it was fulfilled, with the children being born in 1814, and with Arikirangi ("the Lord of Heaven") being born a day after Te Hui a Kama. Toiroa was present at the births.<sup>7</sup>

The confirmation by Toiroa of the name Arikirangi was made to Turakau, his mother, during her pregnancy, in an utterance "my child is within you, lightening in hell, lightening in heaven, the Lord of Heaven is his name".<sup>8</sup> Some five years later, Toiroa summoned Turakau to bring the child from Turanga (Gisborne), to him at Mahia, and there he greeted him with a prophecy. "My Son, I saw you drifting across the waters on a raupo raft...you were crying...in a short time I see you returning with a faith...your hand upraised."<sup>9</sup> He further prophesied that Arikirangi would be "tuahae", (the victim of jealousy), and "reo ke", (that is, or a strange tongue). These were said to be fulfilled when as a troublesome child of twelve, Arikirangi was buried in a kumara pit by his father, but enabled to escape by miraculous means, following signs in the form of a rainbow, and a bird on the gable of the house, which appeared to Toiroa, who again was present. Shortly afterward, Arikirangi began to speak in tongues.<sup>10</sup> Toiroa then anointed Arikirangi, and said, "My God is in the heaven

above; your God is coming across the sea. His name is Ihoura (Ihowa) of Thousands." <sup>11</sup>

#### b. Early Life.

So Arikirangi was born at Pahau, (or Pakahu) near Gisborne about 1814, of the Ngati Maru hapu of the Rongowhakaata tribe. <sup>12</sup> Little is recorded of his early years, after the above events. Though having been named prophetically as Arikirangi, he was normally known by his family name, Te Turuki, after his uncle, and this was the name he always used of himself.

By 1850, he had attended the Church Missionary Society school at Whakato, Manutuke, where he had shown himself an able pupil, with an outstanding facility for remembering Scriptures. At some stage he had been baptized "Te Kooti" after the C.M.S. General Secretary, Dandeson Coates. He had also sought to serve the Mission as a catechist, but had been rejected by William Williams as unsuitable. Thereafter he apparently avoided the Mission, and chose to reject the name "Te Kooti", and to use again his own name Te Turuki. However, to avoid confusion, the name Te Kooti is used in the rest of this study.

Te Kooti seems to have had a mixed reputation as a young man, being regarded by many as a good worker, an excellent horseman, a skilled sailor and captain of a trading schooner, and as one having a shrewd business sense capable of persuading local Maori of the advantages of direct trade with Auckland. Some of the Pakeha settlers, particularly the Ross, Uren, and Dunlop families, spoke highly of him. He joined in family prayers with the Uren household, and was taught to read the Bible by Mrs. Uren. <sup>13</sup> In the early days of Hauhau activity, Te Kooti was allowed to take the Dunlop children to watch the dancing around the niu pole at a near-by marae, in which the Dunlop children joined. However, he never joined in the proceedings himself, and whenever the level of excitement began to rise, he took the children home. <sup>14</sup>

Some, however, like Captain Reade, a local trader and supplier of rum, regarded him as a rival and a threat; others deplored his reputed taste for liquor and the ladies; while others again like some of his own conservative elders were jealous of his facility in Pakeha ways and resentful of his assumptions of leadership. The undesirable side of Te Kooti has frequently been described and repeated, apparently



without much substantiation.<sup>15</sup> Others, like Fowler have sought to defend him by a fairer assessment.<sup>16</sup> Regardless, however, of whether his reputation was warranted or not, the events which were soon to occur provided an opportunity to have him removed.

### c. Events Leading to Conflict.

Within a short time of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, many Maori were expressing concern over European competition for land. It became increasingly clear that the settlers and the colonial government claimed the right, even divine right, to acquire land by almost any means. While pious settlers may have enjoyed a sense of divine blessing as they dispossessed the Maori of land, for the Maori that loss of land was accompanied by a threat to traditional leadership, language, customs, art, health, dignity, independence and identity. Many were not prepared to allow that threat to go unchallenged. Legislation which accompanied and followed the Land Wars of the 1860's made nonsense of any supposed guarantee in the Treaty to protect Maori rights. For instance the 1863 Land Settlement Act authorized confiscation of 3¼ million acres of "rebel" land in Taranaki, Waikato, and the Bay of Plenty, while the 1865 Native Land Court Act, by individualizing title, widened the scope for alienation of Maori land in all tribal areas.

There is ample documentation of the circumstances leading to the beginning of the Land Wars;<sup>17</sup> of the part played in resistance by the Pai Marire movement;<sup>18</sup> of details of the various battles which were fought;<sup>19</sup> of the legislation which was enacted;<sup>20</sup> and of the missionary support for Government military action and confiscation, rather than of defence of the Maori they had come to convert,<sup>21</sup> so only brief mention needs to be made of those events which directly affected Poverty Bay.

Probably because of bitterness over confiscations already announced, the Pai Marire cult gained considerable support among the Ngaiterangi and Whakatohea people in the Bay of Plenty, despite the "rebel" defeats at Rangiaohia, Orakau and Gate Pa in 1864. The Poverty Bay Maori had until this time appeared totally "loyal", but when the Hauhau emissaries Kereopa and Patara entered the area, they soon gained enough support among the Aitanga-a-Mahaki around Waituhi and Te Karaka to pose a serious threat, sufficient to cause Bishop Williams to abandon the Waerenga-a-Hika mission station and the military to plan an operation

against them. Several months later in 1865, the Hauhau were besieged at Waerenga-a-Hika, and defeated by colonial troops and loyalist Ngati Porou led by Ropata Wahawaha. Lieutenant Biggs was appointed Resident Magistrate, and he immediately proceeded with a policy of retaining the Ngati Porou, who were traditional enemies of the Turanga tribes, as an occupation force; of confiscating the lands of Hauhau followers and apportioning them to military settlers; and of facilitating this confiscation by deporting prisoners taken in action and "other trouble makers", "to keep them out of the way".<sup>22</sup>

#### d. Arrest and Deportation.

During the action against the Hauhau, Te Kooti served with the Government forces, though his brother fought with the rebels. He was accused by a loyal chief, Paora Parau, of passing information to the enemy, and court-martialled, but completely cleared of the charge. Almost immediately, he was re-arrested and charged before Major Biggs with the theft of Captain Reade's horse, but again the charge was dismissed. Incredibly, within a week he was arrested again, even though the previous charges had been dismissed, and no further charges made. Despite the fact that no further trial was held, and despite three appeals made by him to Donald McLean, the District Superintendent, for a trial or an explanation of why he was being held, he was deported to Wharekauri (the Chathams), along with 200 Hauhau prisoners and 128 women and children. Te Kooti's own account of these events was written in a letter to Governor George Grey in February, 1867, in which he stated, "I was a true Government man, and not a Hauhau in any sense of the word."<sup>23</sup>

This was a plain miscarriage of justice, and quite illegal, and it is significant that there was no outcry from the public or church. Te Kooti himself believed that Captain Reade was responsible, that Major Biggs was an accomplice, and that Paora Parau and others like Paratene Turangi were in collusion. Cowan states that Biggs gave the order. Toiroa's predictions were being fulfilled. The Pakerewha were doing evil, and Te Kooti was a victim of it. As Fowler says, while Te Kooti lacked influential friends, he did not lack influential enemies!<sup>24</sup>

#### e. Experience at Wharekauri

Details of the imprisonment are not clear. But apparently Te Kooti continued the practice begun at Napier while awaiting deportation,

of reading C.M.S. prayers to the prisoners daily. He was evidently regarded as a model prisoner, and was put in charge of the boats unloading provisions.

Early in 1867, he took sick, and was isolated in a hut, and cared for by an old woman. While some say he was suffering from some disease like T.B., others believe that this was a physical-psychological-spiritual crisis, experienced by many prophets, amounting to a "conversion" or "divine call".

From February to June 1867, he experienced a series of visions, which he later recorded in a small note-book, and which was found after the battle at Te Makaretu in 1868.<sup>25</sup> He recorded that on February 21st he experienced a great sense of sin and weakness, accompanied by a call from God to be his spokesman, together with a promise of healing. Thereafter he was too sick to remember anything until March 21st, when he heard God's voice again. On April 10 he was like a tree struck down. Again he heard God's voice on April 21st, commanding him to be his spokesman, and the deliverer of his people. In an accompanying vision he was given a green lizard, a common symbol of evil, death or tragedy. His outstretched hand was cleansed of divine fire, which destroyed the lizard, but which did not burn him. Until May 13, there was a period of talking with God, and on May 30th, he was instructed to call the people together. On June 4th he gathered the people, and he explained his mission to them.<sup>26</sup>

This conversion experience was followed by a time of Bible study, and of selecting and re-shaping a number of scripture portions to form the components of morning and evening services which he led. He also wrote a number of prayers, some of which have been preserved in another note-book, which "was his constant companion" until it too was taken among the spoils of war by Government troops.<sup>27</sup>

#### f. Escape.

Just as Moses planned and led the Israelite escape from slavery in Egypt, so Te Kooti believed that now God was about to deliver the prisoners from imprisonment on Wharekauri, and he planned accordingly.

By now it was clear that an early release was unlikely. Some internees had been returned to the mainland, but Te Kooti and many others were considered to be "hard-core" and "not fit for rehabilita-

tion". By June 1868, he had been separated from other prisoners because of his dangerous religious influence. Apparently by now he had a large following, not because he had become Hauhau, but because the Hauhau prisoners had been converted to the form of faith he taught.

Te Kooti predicted the day of deliverance would be accompanied by a set of favourable circumstances, including rain, thunder, and of course a ship. On June 30th 1868, the schooner "Rifleman" and ketch "Florence" arrived with supplies. In a well-planned operation, the ships were seized, with the loss of only one life. The "Florence" was set adrift, and the "Rifleman" with stores, arms, and 163 male prisoners, 64 women and 71 children, and the 5 European crew, set sail for the mainland on July 4th. When a violent storm threatened the ship, Te Kooti ordered all greenstone tiki to be thrown overboard, saying "from now on your God is the God of hosts", the biblical Jehovah. Te Wairihi, a hard-core Hauhau who refused to comply with the order, was thrown overboard, and the storm immediately subsided. The ship landed at Whareongaonga on July 10th, and after the escapees, arms, and provisions were landed, the crew were allowed to sail her on to Wellington, where they raised the alarm.<sup>28</sup>

It is clear that Te Kooti's intention was simply to seek refuge either in the interior of the Urewera, or in the King Country, but unfortunately he was persuaded to allow the people to rest up, a decision which he regretted to the end of his days, since the delay put him in a position which left him with no option but to surrender or fight.<sup>29</sup> There is a statement, held in the Gisborne Museum, signed by Wi Pere and other Poverty Bay chiefs, which declares to the Government that Te Kooti and his followers were entirely on the defensive, and had no desire other than to return home.<sup>30</sup>

#### g. The Campaign Period.

Within days, Biggs had sent a force to demand that Te Kooti and his followers surrender, and rely on Pakeha justice. Te Kooti requested that they be allowed to pass inland. Biggs refused, and again demanded surrender. Not surprisingly, Te Kooti had little faith in Pakeha justice, after his experiences of it. By now he would also have heard of the 1866 confiscations of land in Poverty Bay and elsewhere. On the third day, after Te Kooti had retreated twice, Biggs attacked. Several encounters took place over the

next few months, with Te Kooti maintaining the initiative. When it was clear that peaceful retreat was impossible, he warned that he would go on the offensive in November. Consequently, on November 10th his followers attacked Matawhero, killing 33 Europeans and 37 loyal Maori, including Biggs and his family, and Paratene Turangi who had given evidence against him. This raid was clearly perceived as utu (revenge). The Dunlop and Uren families were not attacked. Had the motive been simply slaughter, then that slaughter could have been much greater than it was. Matawhero was a military settlement, and as such could have been considered a fair target. There is a story that Te Kooti buried a military revolver at the Makaraka cross-roads, as an aukati (boundary line) between his troops and the infant township of Turanga (Gisborne), indicating that he did not intend to attack civilians.<sup>31</sup>

From late 1868, Te Kooti led his followers in a series of engagements against the Government forces, mainly in the Ureweras. The bulk of prisoners on the Chathams were of Aitanga-a-Mahaki. These now formed his "matua", or bodyguard, with Tuhoe supporters as "te mua" or forward scouts, and with Whakatohea and Ngati Awa as "te muri" or rearguard.<sup>32</sup>

His most relentless pursuer was Major Ropata Wahawaha of Ngati Porou, who had been captured as a child by Rongowhakaata, and who therefore was driven as much by a desire for revenge as by loyalist sympathies. Much criticism has been directed at Te Kooti's brutality, but his was more than matched by that of Wahawaha and his mainly Anglican followers, who, for instance, at Ngatapa, lined up and shot 130 prisoners, and who on another occasion dragged a prisoner behind his horse through the burning embers of a destroyed village.<sup>33</sup> Details of the campaigns are described by several writers.<sup>34</sup>

By May 1872, it was obvious that Te Kooti and his surviving supporters had escaped from the Ureweras into the King Country, a decision hastened by the terrible cost to Tuhoe for their support of Te Kooti, in terms of the merciless destruction of their villages and crops by Government forces, with survivors facing starvation.

#### h. Sanctuary in the King Country.

Ngati Maniapoto, after the battle of Te Porere in 1869, had declared that though they would not support Te Kooti in further



battles, they would offer him sanctuary should he need it. Consequently he made his way with a small band of followers to Te Kuiti, where accepting the protection of the Maori king, he made his first base at Tokangamutu. In April 1880 he shifted his base to Otewa at Otorohanga, perhaps to avoid either friction with, or embarrassment to King Tawhiao, since the King was regularly visited by Pakeha negotiators seeking to open up the King Country for completion of the main trunk railway and for settlement.<sup>35</sup>

Despite his experience of British justice, he was not anti-Pakeha, anti-Government, or anti-law. In fact he stressed the importance of upholding the law in at least 17 pronouncements, and said at Te Kuiti, "Kia ngawari! Ko te waka hoehoe e tatau, ko te ture!" ("Take it easy! The law is a canoe paddled by us all!"). In addition to supporting the law, his followers themselves were expected to conform to a set of 42 strict rules governing the whole of life and operated by means of a kind of court. However, after a leader was caught flouting these rules at Otewa, Te Kooti, in a dramatic gesture, tore them up, and declared that from then on the people would live, not by regulations, but by a new way (of faith).<sup>36</sup> During this sanctuary period, Te Kooti concentrated on shaping this faith, which had its origins in Wharekauri, being guided in doing so by kupu whakaari (inspired utterances).<sup>37</sup> The services were formed not by planned selection, but by revelation from the Holy Spirit, and often "in tongues". The secretaries who wrote them down had wisdom to interpret the utterances.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the price of £5000 on his head, he apparently ranged well beyond the King Country, and just as in 1870 he had visited Firth at Matamata to seek support for an amnesty, so in this period he ventured to Tauranga, Katikati, Porangahau, Feilding in 1879 and Kokohinau in 1882.<sup>39</sup> Te Kooti supposedly rode a legendary white horse, but there have been suggestions that when the white horse was seen, on some occasions it was being ridden by someone else, while Te Kooti himself was miles away in another direction!

#### i. Pardon and Consolidation

In 1878, Tawhiao agreed to the survey through the King Country, but on condition that all rebel leaders, including Te Kooti, were pardoned. This was done in the Amnesty Act of 1882, but the Government appeared to act more out of a desire for more land for settlement,



than out of any more noble sentiment. Eventually on February 12th 1883, Bryce as Native Minister, called on Te Kooti at Manga-a-rongo to convey the news of his pardon. Te Kooti responded with "Truth arises from mother earth, and righteousness descends from heaven - truth and righteousness have met together - mercy and justice have kissed each other! My people shall never more fight against you!"<sup>40</sup>

After this maungarongo (peace), Te Kooti was theoretically free to move at will around the country. However, he was forbidden to return to Poverty Bay on threat of being shot on sight! There is evidence that an extensive system of spying on him, and of reporting his movements to successive Native Ministers, McLean, Bryce and Ballance, continued well after his pardon.<sup>41</sup> In 1885, Te Kooti was invited to visit Wairoa, but was warned by Hoani te Wainohu, the Anglican minister at Wairoa, that he was forbidden access through Mohaka, where the "loyalist" locals had been defeated by Te Kooti in 1869. The Bishop of Waiapu, Stuart, reported this to the Native Minister Ballance, who in turn advised the Bishop that Te Kooti was a free man, and that therefore he was holding the Bishop responsible for controlling his people.<sup>42</sup> In January 1889, despite the prohibition on returning to Poverty Bay, Te Kooti set out for Waituhi for the opening of the house Rongopai, one of several built in his honour in the area. However, on being warned of a trap laid for him, and of the raising of a military force against him, he turned back, but was arrested by Colonel Porter and a military detachment at Opotiki. He was gaoled in Auckland, but released on a surety of £1500 raised by concerned Aucklanders.<sup>43</sup> His only comment was "How long O God, before you bring to judgement those who judge?"<sup>44</sup> About this time he composed the waiata "Pine, Pine te Kura" while in Gisborne, one of the few sympathetic Pakeha, Arthur Desmond, wrote his song "Exult for Te Kooti the Bold", and was apparently tarred and feathered for his trouble by the hostile citizenry.<sup>45</sup>

Though Te Kooti did not return to Poverty Bay, his Aitanga-a-Mahaki followers were filtered back, icognito, to establish the Ringatu faith there. He himself spent much time travelling, and building up a considerable following in areas of support. The records list places where Ra (worship days) were held, including as well as Te Kuiti and Otorohanga, Orakau, Tarawera, Petane, Te Hauke, Porangahau, Greytown, Feilding, Wanganui, Waioeka, Whakatane, Rotorua

and Tauranga.<sup>46</sup> Significantly, the Ringatu faith was taken to Whanau-a-Apanui in defiance of Wahawaha's threats, through the initiative of one from that tribe who had fought against Te Kooti, but who later went to live at Otewa.<sup>47</sup> The faith was even established at Tokomaru Bay, inside Ngati-Porou (Wahawaha's) territory. Similarly, though the Wanganui people had fought against Te Kooti at Te Porere, the Ringatu faith was taken to that area by an invitation made in 1887 by Te Ture Poutama, as a result of a vision. Te Kooti himself did not go there until 1891, but at that meeting he met, and was reconciled with Taitoko, (Major Kemp), who had led the Wanganui people against him in the fighting.<sup>48</sup>

Before his pardon, Te Kooti's followers had built wharenui (meeting houses) such as Tokanga-nui-a-noho at Te Kuiti in 1874 as a gesture of appreciation to Tawhiao for his hospitality, and Ruataupare at Kokohinau, Edgecumbe in 1882. Such building continued with Eripitana at Te Whaiti in 1884, Tane Whirinaki at Waioeka in 1886, and Te Whai a te Motu at Ruatahuna in 1888. In addition, at least four houses were built in Aitanga-a-Mahaki territory for Te Kooti's hoped-for return, such as Ngawari at Mangatu, Te Aroha at Puha, Whakahau at Rangatira, and Ereopata, now Rongopai at Waituhi. These houses, as indicated later, were built on tribal marae where there was sufficient local sympathy. With one or two exceptions, they were apparently intended to serve both tribal and church needs, as many still do. Other houses were built for the use of Te Kooti and his followers at their bases, such as Whakaarorangi at Otewa and Te Here-o-te-ra at Hokianga Island. Prophetic utterances were made in association with the building or opening of these houses. Some had traditional carving, others featured a new style of representational carving, while others again had even more innovative pictorial, painted rafter patterns like Te Whai a te Motu, and extensive pictorial and symbolic art as in Rongopai.

In 1891, the Government granted 600 acres of Crown (confiscated!) land to Te Kooti and his followers, at Wainui between Whakatane and Opotiki. Somewhere about that time, he shifted his base from Otewa to the Bay of Plenty, apparently for a time living on Hokianga Island. Also about this time, he set out on what was to be a last round of

visits to places where the faith had been established, and it was on this journey that many important predictions were made, through Kupu whakaari, or inspired utterances.

j. The Importance of Kupu Whakaari.

Revelations received and prophetic words spoken by Te Kooti are regarded as of utmost importance in his formulation of the liturgy of the Ringatu faith. He had spoken in tongues as a boy. On Wharekauri he had experienced visions which were the beginning of the faith. It is not known to what extent he received revelation during the campaign period, though it was during this time, at Oputao in the Urewera, that he predicted that the locals would betray him, try to kill him but fail, and that he would not die by the hand of man but by accident.<sup>49</sup>

But in the King Country, he began to experience a new phase of frequent revelation, which he expressed in kupu whakarite, cryptic utterances like the Gospel parables, the meaning of which was intended only for the inner circle. These were frequently introduced by kupu whakaari, which because they were spoken "in tongues", were incapable of translation, though they were interpreted.<sup>50</sup> These utterances began in 1874 at Te Kuiti, but from 1877, Matiu Paeroa, one of his secretaries, carefully recorded some 125 of these kupu whakaari, together with place, date and intention.<sup>51</sup> While some are dated for the 1st and 12th of any month, coinciding with set times for worship gatherings, most are at other times, suggesting perhaps that inspiration came at times of rest or solitude. Many of these are stated to be the source of choice of particular scriptures, prayers etc. to be included in the liturgy. Some others can be seen more as teaching, encouragement, warning or correction.

Included in this period are seven predictions or "seals" of hidden meaning, but understood as referring to a future leader, "my child".<sup>52</sup> Greenwood quotes other prophecies referring to leadership.<sup>53</sup> There were several claims to be the predicted leader, such as by Te Matenga Tamati at Wairoa about 1895;<sup>54</sup> by Rua Kenana in the Urewera from 1906;<sup>55</sup> and by one named prophetically as "Ohana" from Wanganui, about 1920.<sup>56</sup> However, none was able to gain sufficient support from those who had given Te Kooti their allegiance, to be regarded as his successor.

While recognising the importance of these kupu whakaari for Ringatu, it is likely, however, that they will remain largely a mystery to the Pakeha enquirer, unless he possesses special insight, or a great measure of acceptance by present Ringatu leaders who are able and willing to interpret them. Several such leaders have stated however, that an understanding of the kupu whakaari is essential for a full understanding of Ringatu. <sup>57</sup>

Revelation was also conveyed through Te Kooti to the people by means of waiata (songs), which were topical, referring to contemporary or future events, and expressed in poetical, metaphorical language. Some 70 of these have been recorded by place, date and theme, but most are incomplete, the assumption being that at that time the followers would be familiar with them. They include a song of longing for home written on Wharekauri, sorrow over continued land sales, regret at the hostility of Anglican loyalists at Mohaka, sorrow over inability to return to Gisborne, of peacemaking with Wanganui, and his dying song. <sup>58</sup> These waiata are not used as parts of the services, but may be used during mihi. <sup>59</sup>

#### k. Death

True to his own prediction, he died as the result of an accident at Ohiwa, in which the wheel of a loaded cart, under which he was sheltering from the sun, suddenly rolled on him. He lingered for several days longer at Waiotahi. The memorial at Wainui states simply:

In memory of Te Kooti Rikirangi,  
Prophet and General,  
Died 17 April 1893, Aged 79 years.

His tangi was held at Hokianga Island in the Ohiwa harbour. His body had been taken by horse and cart to the beach, and while his body was being conveyed to the island, the horse and cart were left in a tapu state on the shore to be dealt with later. On returning to "cleanse" the cart, the people found the horse dead.

Mystery surrounds his burial. Some say people from Gisborne came to Hokianga to claim the body, but while they were being fed, his body was uplifted by his secretary and others of his inner circle, hidden, later buried in secret, and later still, removed and re-buried in some other location. After his death, a tangi was held at Whakato, where

his pipe and hat were laid out, to represent his missing body.<sup>60</sup> Ringatu leaders say that he was, however, pursued in death, as he had been in life, and that many attempts were made to find his remains.<sup>61</sup> His great grand-daughter tells of a number of attempts to use her, as a child, in such searching, as when on one occasion, she was taken by boat at night, presumably to Hokianga Island, the party being guided by a mysterious rainbow, in the hope that by some supernatural means she might lead the searchers to his remains. However, any such expectation was foiled by her falling into an unnaturally deep sleep, as she apparently did whenever such pressure was applied.<sup>62</sup> Te Kooti is said to have directed that his bones should be exhumed and taken back to Gisborne. The matter was discussed at Wainui in 1895 and again in 1925, with Scriptures used to support exhumation. However the matter was unresolved. Apparently, the last leader said to have known the whereabouts of Te Kooti's remains, Rikirangi Hohepa, died in the late 1930's.<sup>63</sup>

The secrecy of his burial was evidently intended to avoid his remains falling into the hands of his Ngati Porou enemies, or ending up in a museum, or becoming associated with some shrine to his memory, or perhaps to be mis-used by some false claimant to be his successor. Apart from the liturgy Te Kooti formulated, and his sayings recorded by his secretaries, and the inscribed stone at Wainui, the Church appears to possess no physical memorials, shrines or relics. There are no pictures of him; his two note-books are in museums; a wahaika (whale-bone club) which may have belonged to him is supposedly in the Gisborne museum; his two mere are in family hands; his cartridge belt which was in the Palmerston North museum has been lost; his flag "Te Wepu" was torn up and used as a museum duster; places and buildings with which he was associated are not readily identifiable as such by the curious public; only three battle sites are marked; his landing place is unmarked though there is a plaque some distance away; and even an attempt to secure a few bricks from the old gaol in the Chathams was foiled by bulldozing.

But such an absence of shrines, memorials or relics is no accident according to Ringatu, who maintain that what Te Kooti wanted to have remembered was not his bodily remains, but the truth that was revealed by God through him.



## Chapter Two Notes

1. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.2, quoting original held by M. Delamere.
2. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.2, Also Binney 1984:352
3. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.2.
4. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.2.
5. Binney 1984:353
6. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.2.
7. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.2.
8. Tarei 1978:62
9. Tarei 1978:62
10. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1.
11. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me:11
12. Tarei 1978:62
13. Margaret Uren Notes.
14. Fowler, Unpublished Papers, quoting Fergus Dunlop
15. For example, Ross 1966, Greenwood 1942, Porter 1914, Mackay 1966:299-303
16. Leo Fowler was officer-in-charge of the N.Z.B.C. mobile recording unit, and later manager of the Gisborne radio station. Because of his integrity in documenting Maori and other ethnic group histories, he was approached by the local people who offered material which probably would never have been available otherwise. This local Maori support contributed in large measure to the setting up of the Gisborne museum, of which he became director. In his unpublished notes, Fowler describes Ross 1966 as a book "expressing an emotive attitude which should be foreign to the historian."  
In Fowler 1957:19, he states that the Uren and Dunlop families maintained it was Te Kooti's championing of the rights of his fellow Maori, that was his downfall.
17. Keith Sinclair 1957
18. Clark 1975
19. Cowan 1923
20. D. Sinclair 1975. Also Kawharu 1977.
21. Porter 1974. Also G. Brazendale thesis "John Whiteley, Land, Sovereignty and Wars."
22. Verified in letters between Biggs, McLean and Haultain in Te Kooti papers, National Archives, Special File 24
23. Letter included in Te Kooti Papers.
24. Fowler, Unpublished Papers.
25. Te Kooti's Notebook of Visions, in G.H. Davies MSS, Vol.3, Alexander Turnbull Library.
26. Te Kooti's Notebook of Visions.
27. Te Kooti's Notebook of Prayers, in Napier Museum Library.
28. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1.
29. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1.
30. Fowler 1957:21
31. Fowler 1957:21
32. Informant Ruaumo Kingi, 1983.
33. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vols, 1 and 10
34. For example, Porter 1914, Cowan 1923, and Ross 1966.
35. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol. 1.
36. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol. 10, quoting Biddle and Emery.
37. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol. 1, quoting Biddle, and Vol. 3.
38. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me :2, and personal communication 1984.



39. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.9.
40. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1.
41. Te Kooti Papers, Special File 24, National Archives.
42. Te Kooti Papers, Special File 24, National Archives.
43. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1.
44. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.10.
45. Davis, personal communication. Words of the song are in Appendix 1.
46. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.9.
47. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1, quoting Delamere.
48. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1, quoting Tarei.
49. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.1.
50. Binney 1984:348
51. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.3.
52. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.9.
53. Greenwood 1942: 68-72
54. Elsmore 1983 : 40
55. Binney 1979:15, and Webster 1979:158
56. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.9.
57. For instance, W. Tarei and R. Biddle, personal communication 1984
58. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.5.
59. Tarei, personal communication 1984
60. Margaret Uren Notes, Gisborne Museum
61. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol. 1.
62. Tihei Algie, personal communication 1985
63. Tarei, personal communication 1982. Also Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti Vol. 9. Scripture quoted : Jer. 8/1, Gen.50/25, Ex.13/19

### CHAPTER THREE     RINGATU ORGANIZATION, WORSHIP AND BELIEFS

#### - THE APPEARANCE OF THE TREE

In the previous chapter, the Ringatu faith was seen as beginning with, and being shaped by, revelations received by Toiroa, and later by Te Kooti. In this section, consideration is given to how the followers of Te Kooti, mindful of the revelations received by him, have ordered the Church, since his death, to the present.

##### a. Organization and Leadership.

During the periods of the campaigns, sanctuary, and post-pardon consolidation, Te Kooti's own dynamic leadership held together his followers from Poverty Bay, the Urewera, the Bay of Plenty, Wanganui, Hawkes Bay, the Wairarapa, and elsewhere. Loyalty to the prophet and his faith was at least as great as, if not greater than, loyalty to tribe.

Apparently towards the end of his life, Te Kooti said "A new generation shall rise up, and it shall fall to their lot to revise and settle the true teachings of our church."<sup>1</sup> He also made some plans for a hierarchical system of government to replace his own leadership,<sup>2</sup> but though he appointed several district leaders, he did not nominate anyone to succeed him as over-all leader.<sup>3</sup> This can be seen as the reason for the divisions which developed and which have persisted, between tribal districts. Yet it is debatable whether an allegiance to leader or church could, or should have eliminated allegiance to tribe. Indeed it can be argued that Ringatu has survived as a completely Maori church just because it does have a tribal base to its pan-tribal faith. In the first years following Te Kooti's death, a continuity of leadership was in fact provided by Hamiora Aparoa, one of Te Kooti's secretaries, until a more "rational structure of authority" could be developed. When chosen by Te Kooti to act as secretary, Hamiora could neither read nor write, but was told by Te Kooti that God would help him learn, and the speed with which he did so was regarded by many Ringatu as miraculous.<sup>4</sup> Hamiora, as one of the secretaries, carefully recorded and protected the prophecies and other sayings of Te Kooti, including a number understood to refer to future leadership. They are too numerous and too involved to be adequately considered in this work, but several can be mentioned. The first, in 1878: "The star is showing plainly in the East. I now foresee the leader coming

closer and closer." <sup>5</sup> Then in 1880: "Behold two stars instead of one, the one striving against the other...the star in the East is a good star, but the star in the West is evil...." <sup>6</sup> Some have conjectured that the star in the East could be Apirana Ngata, while that in the West could be Ratana. There is another prophecy said to warn against Ratana: "A garden of flowers shall come forth from Whanganui; it shall visit all parts of this island, and it has a very persuasive manner; so beware, do not be enticed by it." <sup>7</sup> Then again: "A prophet shall appear, and he shall trample underfoot this faith. Others also will appear and they shall bring forth schisms and lead astray many of my people." This is understood to refer to Rua Kenana. It would appear that Te Kooti was aware of competing claims to be his successor. Greenwood makes an interesting suggestion that perhaps Te Kooti was reluctant to appoint a human successor, <sup>8</sup> believing in his heart that the real leader of the Church was, and must be, Christ himself. So he suggests that the star in the East in the first prophecy mentioned, could be seen as Christ, rather than a human leader. This suggestion could be supported by another utterance of 1892, "There is a sign in the heavens whose glory shall remain, and a voice shall be heard from the heavens, saying: This is my beloved Son, follow Him.", which is clearly a reference to Luke 9/35. It is further suggested that the one to whom Te Kooti cries out in his dying song: "Come quickly, let us be together, be my friend, until the end", could also be Christ. <sup>9</sup>

On the human level, however, a seven-tiered hierarchy, directed by Te Kooti, was to have as head a poutikanga (main support), but the first to hold the office, Matiu Repenga, was not appointed until 1914. <sup>10</sup> He and his successor, Eru Tamutere, were called "bishops", and the next Kopu Erueti, "president". <sup>11</sup> In 1915, the Ringatu Church and its tohunga were registered under the Marriage Act. <sup>12</sup> Greenwood says important steps were taken in 1926 to re-organize the Church on a modern basis, though it is not clear what exactly these steps were. However, they must have been sufficiently important to warrant the wording, "Wainui 1926" on the official seal. <sup>13</sup> Two branches of the Church, "Te Hahi O Te Kooti Arikirangi", and "The Ringatu Church Incorporated", were registered in 1931. Then in 1938, against a background of conflict between tribal divisions, in part caused by disagreement over the Wainui land, a meeting at Ruatoki produced a Constitution, and established a General Assembly comprised of

two representatives from each of the seven "parishes", and which was to meet biennially. The Poutikanga, General Secretary (the only paid officer), and Treasurer, with two Trustees, are appointed by the Assembly. Central authority is balanced by a measure of parish autonomy exercised by Parish Assemblies with their own officers.<sup>14</sup> Paora Teramea of Whanau-a-Apanui was appointed Poutikanga that year, and remained in office until his death about 1979. Robert Biddle was appointed the first secretary that same year, 1938.<sup>15</sup>

Ringatu, unlike some other prophetic movements, has survived the crisis occasioned by the death of the prophet, deciding firmly in favour of democratically elected leadership, and rejecting all claimants to be Te Kooti's successor in terms of charismatic leadership.<sup>16</sup>

There appears to be some confusion in terminology in describing the organization. Misur says above, that there are seven "parishes", but these seem to be tribal districts. Greenwood says a parish consists of a number of hapu.<sup>17</sup> Tarei speaks of there being six parishes in the Ngati Awa area, and the names given : Tu te Ao, Raihona, Kokohinau etc. indicate that these are groups based on the marae named.<sup>18</sup> It can be said then, that there are (or have been until recently), three major sections or branches of the Church, comprised of seven sub-sections of tribal districts. Te Hahi o Te Kooti Arikirangi includes Ngati Awa, Tuhoe and Whakatohea; The Ringatu Church Incorporated is comprised of Whanau-a-Apanui; and Te Hahi a Te Wairua Tapu (the name originally used by Te Kooti) embraces Ngati Kahungunu, Wanganui and Ngati Raukawa. These tribal districts are in turn divided into a number of parishes. The Church has been constantly reminded in its divisions, that Te Kooti placed great emphasis on the unity of his followers, and indeed stated that some of his predictions could not be fulfilled unless his people were united.<sup>19</sup> In 1984, a decision was made to re-unite the three sections, and Eruera Manuera of Ngati Awa was appointed to fill the Poutikanga vacancy left by the death of Paora Teramea.

Services of worship are arranged within the Parishes, and are all marae-based, and held in tribal wharehau (meeting houses), the Church having no special "church" buildings, with the exception of Rongopai at Waituhi, and Eripitana at Te Whaiti, which are intended for worship only. But these two also stand on tribal marae, as do all the houses

built by Te Kooti's followers. The relationship of the Church to the marae is such that the Ringatu leaders who have control of the services and associated activities, are almost always of the hapu (sub-tribe) or whanau (extended family) owning the marae being used. For the duration of the services, it appears that the marae is in the hands of the Ringatu leaders, rather than of the tribal elders, though frequently these may be the same persons. In the Ngati Awa area, twelve marae are currently used, services being held at two of these each month. The close working relationship between the Church and the whanau and hapu of any locality, means that to a certain extent the Church both shapes the kin group, and is shaped by it. Certainly recruitment and support is largely from the kin group, and the Church, through its members, is actively involved in local kohanga reo (language nests) and work schemes. Given the marae-based, and kin-linked nature of the Church's organization, it is doubtful that the Church could successfully exist in its present form in most urban situations, except where a tribal group has a marae base, as Tuhoe do in the form of the Mataatua marae, situated in the city of Rotorua, in the heart of Arawa territory.

The seven tiers of leadership are called "Nga Wairua E Whitu O Te Atua," (the Seven Spirits of God), (Rev. 1/4), with biblical references describing their functions. <sup>20</sup>

The Poutikanga is the head, and is to be the pillar of the Church (Rev. 3/12) a mouthpiece for God (Ex. 4/16) and a teacher (1 Tim. 3/14). The term is also used of district leaders, who generally supervise the Church's affairs, arrange services, and appoint tohunga to lead them.

The Ture-Atua is an acknowledged leader in terms of Church law and liturgy, being responsible for the conduct of services, and for the direction of tohunga who assist. He must know all the services word perfectly, and though others assist, he frequently opens and closes the services himself. He is also a spokesman for God (Ex. 4/16) and a man of wisdom (Prov. 13/14).

The Tohunga are priests (Ex. 28/1), but in the Christian sense of being ministers, rather than in the traditional Maori sense. They too have committed the services to memory, and are licensed to conduct marriages. At least one section of the Church allows women to act as tohunga, such as the late Ngoi Pewhairangi at Tokomaru Bay, on the grounds of there being no distinction between men and women (Gal. 3/28).



At Waioeka, a Pakeha Scotsman, who is married to a local woman, has the unusual distinction of being a tohunga.

The Takuta are those recognized as having a ministry of healing (James 5/13). While accepting medical explanations of and remedies for sickness, there is also belief that evil spirits may cause illness. There is no official support for belief in makutu (witchcraft) or mate Maori (sickness resulting from breach of tapu), but there is awareness that others hold such beliefs. But in all cases, healing is believed to be achieved or assisted by prayer.

The Rangatira do not appear to have any liturgical function, but are wise managers, overseers (Gen. 41/39-42), men of judgement and "mana".

The Pirihimana are literally doorkeepers (Ps.84/10), watchmen (Ezek. 3/18) and act as policemen during services, and generally as stewards, having control of the domestic arrangements on the marae. They are frequently tohunga in training.

The Hahi Katoa is the whole church, followers from all tribes (2 Chron 11/16). The participation of the people demands that they too memorize the liturgy, since the use of books is discouraged.

#### b. The Variety of Services of Worship

In Chapter 2, as part of the discussion on kupu whakaari, it was stated that the revelation which had begun at Wharekauri, was experienced more frequently by Te Kooti from 1874 in the King Country; that they were carefully recorded by his secretaries from 1877; and that in many cases they were understood as referring to specific scriptural components to be included in the services to be used by the Church. Presumably then, the services were being formulated throughout the King Country, and post-pardon stages, perhaps even right up to his death in 1893. But whatever the cut-off point in formulating the liturgy, it appears that it has remained unchanged in content since.

The various kinds of services are described in the Faith Book of Te Hahi of Te Kooti Arikirangi, as "Nga Hiri E Whitu O Te Whakapono", (The Seven Seals of the Faith). <sup>21</sup> In Rev. 5/1, the seals are opened by the Lamb (Christ), so there seems to be the implication that through these acts of worship the mind of God is



revealed through Christ.

The Hapati is the Sabbath, (Deut. 5/12) observed on Saturday as the Biblical seventh day, rather than on Sunday, the Lord's day. It is regarded as important, because it was the first thing blessed by God. In the Ngati Awa area, it is used mainly for instruction in, and memorizing of the services in the morning, and for sport in the afternoon.

The Tekau-ma-rua is the twelfth day of each month (Deut. 22/1-22) and is the main worship occasion. It is frequently referred to as the "ra". Some 66 Biblical references are given in support of this day. but it is commonly understood to commemorate two significant events : the "Passover" celebration held by Te Kooti on 12th July 1868 at Whareongaonga after the escape from Wharekauri (seen as a parallel to the Israelite escape from Egypt), and the pardon announced to Te Kooti on 12th February 1883 at Manga-a-rongo. The Tekau-ma-rua will be considered later in greater detail.

Hanuere is the 1st of January, the "first day of the first month" (Ex. 40/1), a "pillar of the year", as is the Hurae.

Hurae is the first of July, the "first day of the seventh month" (Lev. 23/4). The pattern of worship for these two days is the same as for the Tekau-ma-rua. However, these two dates are "kotahitanga" occasions, that is of gathering leaders and representatives from all the districts at one location, and provide the opportunity for conducting important business, for example at the 1st July 1984 at Mahia, it was agreed to re-unite the three major sections and to appoint the poutikanga.

Huamata is the service of blessing of seed for the new season's crop, (Ex. 34/22), celebrated on 1st June. Apparently each family brings a sample of seed potatoes, kumara etc. and after a brief service which includes prayers for the success of the crop, the tohunga takes the seed, early in the morning, and plants it in a specially prepared plot. After this, the people may plant their own crops, which remain tapu until after the Pure. <sup>22</sup>

Pure (or Hauhake) is the harvest of first fruits (Ex. 34/22) held on 1st December, or 1st November in some districts. At this time, some of the crop from the special plot are dug by the tohunga early in the morning, some offered to God, and used in the hakari

(feast). The main crop may then be harvested.

Kupu whakaari though included in the Faith Book list are not services, but as already described, are prophetic utterances (Dan. 5/25) which guided the choice of various components in the services.

In addition to the communal services described above, Ringatu followers engage in household daily prayers, morning and evening, using appropriate sections of the karakia.

The Christian festivals of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost are not observed as such, on the grounds that their dates are unproven. Holy Communion is not celebrated in its usual Christian form, as Te Kooti rejected the interpretation of eating Christ's body and drinking his blood as cannibalistic. The hakari, the meal on the morning of a Tekau-ma-rua is regarded however, as a love-feast or fellowship meal, and at this time, the only offering of money is received. The service which follows is regarded as a spiritual communion. Baptism (as tuaa) does not usually involve the use of water, but is mainly a naming, dedicatory service, and is usually part of the Tekau-ma-rua.

Extra to the cycle of services described, marriage services of a very simple form are conducted. Funeral services too are conducted by tohunga, but these would usually involve as well, people other than Ringatu.

During visits to the Te Teko area, I have heard many references to "the river" presumably the Rangitaiki. Its waters were used not only for bathing, but also ritually for baptism (as iriiri), cleansing and healing, and still are.<sup>23</sup> Also, a portion of the hakari offering, and coins offered as tokens of penitence or requests for prayer, are taken by a tohunga and cast into its waters. No doubt other rivers like the Whakatane are used by other groups. However, the Gisborne people have discontinued this practice, saying "no other sacrifice than that offered by Jesus is necessary."<sup>24</sup>

### c. The Conduct and Content of the Services.

The uninformed Pakeha witnessing a Ringatu service will feel utterly bewildered, seeing no familiar Church interior; no ecclesiastical furniture, vestments, hymn books, Bibles, or symbols; no movement to give a clue as to what is happening; no other Pakeha face, probably; and hearing no familiar hymns or instrumental

accompaniment, but only the monotonous (to him or her) chanting in a language he or she cannot understand. Yet, what is happening is one of the most Biblically-based acts of worship in existence!

Though the services are entirely committed to memory, by the tohunga and others, such learning now usually takes place from printed service books, whereas in earlier days this would have been done orally, or from carefully guarded hand-written note books. Each of the three sections of the Church seems to have its own service book, different only in lay-out and ordering of components, but virtually the same in the content of the component parts. "Te Pukapuka O Nga Kawenata E Waru Me Nga Karakia Katoa O Te Hahi Ringatu." (The Book Of The Eight Covenants And All The Services Of The Ringatu Church), was produced in 1968 at the Centennial of the Church and is used by the Whanau-a-Apanui section. The Covenants contain the nearest to any statement of faith by the Church, and I understand help in their formulation was given by several trusted Pakeha friends of the Church, such as Sir Norman Perry.<sup>25</sup> Use of these books in the services, however, is frowned upon, at least in Ngati Awa territory, though in the Tai Rawhiti area (East Coast) the rule appears much more relaxed. It is said that if it is bad form to refer to notes while engaging in whaikorero (speechmaking) on the marae, then how much worse is it to rely on notes or books when addressing God!<sup>26</sup> In any case, it is only when Scripture is committed to memory, that it becomes part of the person.<sup>27</sup> Young people are encouraged to learn the services, even if they do not understand either the language or the meaning. Understanding comes later.<sup>28</sup>

The content and conduct of the services may best be considered in a description of a typical Tekau-ma-rua. While I am aware of slight variations in format in different locations, I will describe what I have observed on a number of occasions, in the Bay of Plenty, and to a lesser extent on the East Coast.

Participants will assemble during the late afternoon of the 11th of the month, at the marae designated at the previous Ra. Because those attending are almost always tangata whenua (locals), they are not usually welcomed formally on to the marae, but move as groups or individuals toward the front of the house, where the bell is rung briefly, and where a tohunga says prayers, giving thanks

for safe arrival. Formal ceremonial welcome is reserved for occasions involving manuhiri (visitors) such as at the 1st July "kotahitanga" at Mahia in 1984. Places are allocated in the house, friends greeted, and a meal shared.

The slow tolling of the bell at about 7.30 p.m. signals that the Ra is about to begin. From this point until the final service on the 12th, the marae is considered closed. In earlier days this closure was rigidly enforced, but now men are permitted to go to work, and children to school, though they are expected to return to the marae without "deviation". When all have assembled, and not until, the door is closed, signifying the closing of the house for the duration of the service, and "policemen" stationed at either end of the house ensure that only strictly necessary exits and re-entries take place. The people will be seated on mattresses in typical marae style. Most will be dressed very casually, with jeans, bush shirts, football jerseys, or boiler suits being common male attire. Many women will have already changed into night attire, and young children may already be asleep. A policeman will announce that the bell has rung (finished ringing) and so declare the house closed. The tohunga beginning the service will stand, and others participating will stand in turn to lead. The order of participation is a reversal of the normal clockwise order of speaking in the house, the anti-clockwise progression during services apparently declaring the precedence for the time-being of the faith over tribe, and the sacred over the profane.

The first service is one of welcome, thanksgiving and praise, conducted by local tohunga, and seeking blessing upon the rest of the Ra.

After a short break, the bell is rung again (as it is for every service), and the second service begins. This may be quite long, sometimes over two hours, and involving many participants, such as at Te Teko with some forty two people taking part on one occasion, including many teenagers and quite young children reciting memorized prayers. The purpose of this service is to cleanse from sin, with an emphasis therefore on penitence, so that all may share in the blessing of the Ra. This service may also include prayers for healing, as happened on several occasions at Te Teko. The sick were taken out onto the verandah for the prayers of healing, presumably so that any expelled evil spirits or influences would not trouble

those inside, while the service continued.

After the second service, mihimihi (greetings) are exchanged, with, as in all intervals, the speaking order reverting to clockwise. General discussion may take place. Generally no supper is served, since a fast is observed until the hakari (feast) the next morning, though at Puha both supper and morning tea were available. After the mihi, most people settle down to sleep, though a third service may take place about midnight.

During the early morning of the 12th, a fourth service may take place, usually involving tohunga only. At Mahia, this was at 3 a.m. A fifth service of thanksgiving for protection during sleep, is held at daybreak. At Mahia this involved tohunga only, while at Puha it was held at 7 a.m. and involved all.

The first meal on the 12th is the hakari, usually a hangi, with lavish trimmings, and as stated, it is a love feast, and a substitution for the usual Christian Holy Communion.

The sixth service at about 10 a.m. on the 12th, is a "spiritual communion", and may last an hour. The offering taken at the hakari is announced, and an invitation made for holding the next Tekau-ma-rua.

After lunch, the seventh service takes place mid-afternoon, and usually includes baptism. As already mentioned, a distinction is made between "tuaa" which is a naming, or christening, in which water is not used, and "iriiri" which uses water, and is usually for adults joining the church. In the services I witnessed, most have been infants, with a few older on one occasion. After the naming, the tohunga may lay hands on the heads of those christened.

After the evening meal on the 12th, there is apparently an eighth service for tohunga only, related to the "offering up" of a portion of the koha (offering) taken at the hakari, and the token offering made by those seeking restoration, healing etc. In Ngati Awa, this follows the return from the river.

The ninth service begins about 7 p.m. and is a long service, with many taking part. After a short break, the tenth service of tuku (release) and poroporoaki (farewell), conducted by local tohunga, follows. After farewell speeches, and supper, most will depart, though in earlier times the expectation was of staying until the morning of the 13th.



In the above, I have numbered the services as I have observed them in a number of locations or have been told of them. Some lists give up to twelve services, while in actual usage, seven or eight would be common. While reformists argue for a shortening of the Ra on the grounds of efficient use of time, traditionalists say that three days represent a tenth of the month, or a tithe of one's life.

Every service, whatever the length or location, appears to commence with an opening inoi (prayer) of "honour, glory, and peace on earth, and goodwill to all men", <sup>29</sup> and the announcing of the theme. The rest of the service is a cycle of four components in fixed order:

Himene, "hymns", are drawn from Biblical material, either intact or blended, and represent the most important part of the service. These are led by tohunga, "sung" to traditional chant tunes, and all must stand for them. The himene is always followed by the inoi waahi, a prayer of separation, dividing the sacred from the secular.

Panui are selections of Biblical verses, selected and re-arranged according to themes in groups of 8-12 units. These are the equivalent of Scripture lessons. Anyone may lead them, and they are all chanted to one tune.

Waiata are selections of Psalms, though somewhat adapted. These may be led by anyone appointed, all are sung to one tune, and all are expected to stand for them.

Inoi are prayers, largely Biblical in content and language. Extempore prayers may also be included. Every prayer concludes with "glory to your holy name, Amen.", accompanied by the only liturgical action in the service, the raising of the right hand, open, in an act of praise to God. (Neh.8/6, Psalm 141/2). It is this gesture, "ringa tu", which has given the Church its name. It is in no way a carry-over from the Hauhau movement, where the raised hand had a quite different significance.

The cycle of himene, panui, waiata and inoi may be repeated several times, but once begun, it must be completed. For this reason, Ringatu participation in ecumenical events is in the form of a "block" of the four components, as witnessed at the opening of Te Kupenga A Te Matauranga house in Palmerston North in 1981.



Though the whole service is basically Biblical in content and language, Bibles are rarely seen in the services, (again the exception being Puha), though they are apparently treated with great reverence at home. Though provision may be made for preaching,<sup>30</sup> in the services I have attended, I have not heard sermons preached, except on those occasions when I have been asked to be the kaikauhau (preacher), a function visiting ministers are commonly asked to fill.

The casual dress of the people is matched by that of the tohunga, who in the Bay of Plenty at least, do not wear vestments, though I understand some Kahungunu tohunga do. Some of the latter also wear distinctive cardigans. But generally, the impression is that Ringatu services are not "dress-up" occasions, and there is a marked absence of the pullovers with Maori designs, and the special rugs which are frequently seen at marae gatherings. There is also a noticeable absence of pounamu (greenstone) tiki and other pendants. While there may be a reason for this, such as Te Kooti's ordering on the escape from Wharekauri, that all such tiki be thrown overboard, it also appears to be part of the desire to avoid anything ostentatious.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, the reciting of the service by those leading is usually quite fast, and sometimes barely audible, and is usually accompanied by a stance which is clearly not intended to impress the congregation, the conclusion being that everything is directed toward God, and that what matters to Him is the genuineness of faith in the heart. Even in the intervals between the services, while there is greeting, speechmaking and business, and often laughter, there is an absence of the guitars, Maori "pop" music, and the light-hearted entertainment frequently experienced in the evenings in a marae setting. Again this suggests the seriousness with which the whole Ra is viewed.

Each service concludes with four, brief, set prayers, including a thanksgiving for mercies received, a shortened Lord's prayer, a prayer for deliverance from confusion, and the last opening the way to truth and faith, and signifying the opening of the house to normal intercourse.<sup>32</sup>

A translation of one of the services of the Tekau-ma-rua is given.  
<sup>33</sup> The content, language, and "style" is typical of any of the services.

Chapter Three Notes.

1. Greenwood 1942:49
2. Misur 1975: 107
3. Greenwood 1942: 49
4. Greenwood 1942:49
5. Greenwood 1942:69
6. Greenwood 1942:69
7. Greenwood 1942:71
8. Greenwood 1942:75
9. Greenwood 1942:73
10. Misur 1975:108
11. Greenwood 1942:50
12. Misur 1975:108
13. Greenwood 1942:81
14. Misur 1975:108-109
15. Greenwood 1942:50-51. Also Misur 1975:109
16. Greenwood 1942:75
17. Greenwood 1942:73
18. Tarei, personal communication 1982
19. Misur 1975: 107
20. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.7 for all this section.
21. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vols. 6 and 8 for all this section.
22. Greenwood 1942:61
23. Tarei, personal communication 1984
24. John Ruru, personal communication 1984.
25. Sir Norman Perry, personal communication 1984
26. Tarei, personal communication 1983
27. Tarei, personal communication 1983
28. Tarei, personal communication 1983
29. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me transcript : 5
30. Tarei, personal communication 1983
31. When asked about this, informants gave answers like:
  - a. The Ngati Awa people are very poor and don't own much greenstone
  - b. They do have greenstone, but they wear it under their clothes, not out on show.
  - c. You wouldn't notice (as a middle-class Pakeha!), but the women go to great trouble to be dressed nicely, and many have special "nighties" which are used only for such occasions!
32. "Opening the house" at the end of a service also means for many opening a packet of cigarettes, the physical consequences of which habit being most noticeable in persistent coughing during the services - a subject to which I return in the final chapter.
33. See Appendix 3.

CHAPTER FOUR ASSESSMENT AND INTERPRETATION  
OF THE RINGATU FAITH  
- UNDERSTANDING THE TREE

a. Widespread Misunderstanding, Then and Now.

Te Kooti the man was, and still is, misunderstood. There is general agreement as to his physical appearance - about 5'9" in height, athletic in build, with well-formed features, his face not tattooed, but with "Rikirangi" tattooed on his chest.<sup>1</sup> But he remains "faceless", since he refused to be either painted or photographed, though photographs of his son Weteni are said to be very like him.<sup>2</sup> His refusal to be photographed is in keeping with his instructions for his burial place to be unidentified, his faith to be his only worthwhile memorial.

But there is far less agreement about his character as indicated in Chapter 2. For many the man was, and is, an enigma. Some have regarded him negatively as a scallywag, troublemaker, rogue, and bloodthirsty fiend. Others have seen him positively as hard-working, intelligent, reliable, resourceful, and kind to children. Davis gives four possible views: that of the Pakeha man-in-the-street dependent on soldier-settler folk lore; that of the Pakeha liberal who sees in Te Kooti a heroic resistance fighter; that of the Maori loyalist who regards him as a non-rangatira upstart and troublemaker; and that of the Maori follower of whatever tribe, who honours him as a true prophet, and founder of a genuine faith.<sup>3</sup> These attitudes were expressed in Te Kooti's own district around Manutuke, where his son, Weteni, found that being recognised as such, was so uncomfortable an experience, that he and his family chose not to be identified with Ringatu.<sup>4</sup>

This enigma is symbolized by his two mere pounamu (greenstone clubs) "Mikaere" (Michael), his fight weapon, and "Kapiti" (Gabriel) his peacemaker.<sup>5</sup> Holding them in my own hands, I concluded that while they represent the violent and the peaceful respectively, that these were not so much two sides to his nature, as they were two stages in his life - the latter chosen, the former thrust upon him by circumstances. But at the same time, they do represent two phases in the life of almost every Maori prophetic leader and movement.

The Church of Te Kooti too, has been, and is still misunderstood, mainly by Pakeha who have been taught a prejudiced view of N.Z. history, who have little knowledge of Maori culture in general, and less of the language and religious ideas in particular, for only by understanding the language can the true Biblical content of the karakia be recognised. However, there was also considerable misunderstanding on the part of non-Ringatu Maori.<sup>6</sup>

i. There has been a one-sided presentation of history reflecting an inability or unwillingness to understand the gross injustice in the background to the wars of the 1860's, and suffered by Te Kooti personally. This has been reflected in very selective language used by historians like Cowan, who in describing war, rate European and loyalist actions as "gallant", while Te Kooti's troops "savagely bayoneted", were "murderous" and engaged in "slaughter".<sup>7</sup> Best, though an able ethnographer, indicates little understanding of the political situation at the time. These attitudes reflect a common "blame-the-victim", or "he-has-been-arrested-therefore-he-must-be-guilty" philosophy.

Worse, is the use by Hon. James Richmond of an entry in Te Kooti's note-book, which came into his possession, which read, "My wrath will always abide on those who oppress my people. I will punish the parents unto the children. It will not be removed for ever." It is clearly reminiscent of a number of Old Testament passages in which God is the speaker, but though in the note-book it is written without comment or application by Te Kooti, his critics have obviously understood it as a statement of his own attitude. So Richmond used it to justify the military campaign against Te Kooti, quoting in support an extract from Archdeacon Williams, "there is no question that the people meant mischief when they landed (as shown in) the hostile attitude which they assumed from the first...".<sup>8</sup>

Considering the injustice of his unwarranted arrest, lack of trial, and unjust imprisonment, Te Kooti's identification with the anger of God would seem quite understandable! The attitude of Richmond and others like him, seems to expect that Te Kooti should be forgiving without any repentance on the part of Pakeha authorities responsible. Evangelical Christianity has always insisted that God forgives our sin, when and if we confess and repent, but here the expectation seems to be that Te Kooti must be more forgiving than God himself!

ii. The most common mistake made by politician, soldier, missionary and average citizen, has been to label Ringatu as Hauhau, forgetting that all anti-government protest then was not Hauhau, any more than all such protest now is Communist. Sinclair, a recent writer on Maori religion said that Te Kooti became an important figure in "modifying the more frantic aspects of Pai-marire ritual... into something more like a church", but gives no evidence of what ritual was modified.<sup>9</sup> But Te Kooti never was Hauhau, and any ex-Hauhau of his followers were converted to the faith he taught, and his services were not based on Hauhau rituals, but completely on the Bible. In a waiata, he describes the "death" of the Pai-Marire god, Tama-a-Rura, at Waerenga-a-Hika, where the Hauhau were defeated, and this is seen as a rejection of Hauhauism.<sup>10</sup>

iii. There has been a pre-occupation with the "violent" period of the Urewera campaigns, forgetting that the Wars of the 1860's were not started by the Maori. In any case, there is no nice way to fight a war, and Te Kooti and his followers, were fighting for their freedom, or survival, as thousands of Pakeha Christians did in two world wars. It is rather unfair to judge a movement with a hundred years history, by a four year period at its beginning,<sup>11</sup> a period which has been deliberately "put away" in the sense that it is not celebrated by Ringatu, as directed by Te Kooti. It also needs to be remembered that before his imprisonment he had fought for the Government, supporting it in violence against his own relatives, but soon to become a victim of that same Pakeha violence. In the campaign period, any atrocities committed by Te Kooti were more than matched by pro-government troops, especially those led by Wahawaha. If during that time, Te Kooti invoked God to protect him, so too have we in war time sought Divine protection, presumably asking in effect, that our violence may be more successful than that of our enemies.

Misur says, without substantiating her claim with any reference or example, that the "central themes, repeated in Te Kooti's later compositions of waiata and himene, were the iniquities of the Pakeha, and the righteousness of the Maori people".<sup>12</sup> She also refers to the first kupu whakaari on Wharekauri, connected to 1 Sam.15/3, "Now go and strike down...utterly destroy...you must not have compassion... but put to death man as well as woman, infant and suckling..." with the message "There shall always be within me anger toward those who



caused the death of my people...and there shall be no peace." <sup>13</sup> The simple fact is that Te Kooti did not fight until forced to, and he lost many more of his own men, women and children than did those who opposed him. And again, a translation of services shows no evidence of anti-Pakeha sentiments being included, or if they were originally, they must have soon been edited out.

Gibson claims Te Kooti took passages from the Old Testament "of an incendiary character devoted to war and violence" <sup>14</sup> but offers no evidence or example.

Even Greenwood <sup>15</sup> says that in order to stimulate his troops before the attack on Matawhero, Te Kooti recited Joshua 23/5-6, "And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and you shall possess the land, as the Lord your God has promised you. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left." However, he neither gives his source of information, nor shows any understanding of the background to that decision to go on the attack.

Most would agree that a burglar who is prepared to do violence to further his aims, is hardly a fit judge of the character of the householder he is in the process of robbing. Likewise the Pakeha settler with his eye on land; the soldier who hoped to be rewarded for his action with land; the Government minister implementing a policy of confiscation of land; the missionary who almost always finally sided with settler, soldier and government, are not really credible critics of the character or faith of those whose treasures they violated.

iv. Criticism has also focussed on the use of the term "Ihowa" (Jehovah) in Ringatu liturgy, the implication being that acts of worship were directed to a wrathful, avenging, bloodthirsty Old Testament God, and therefore that this reflected Te Kooti's own nature! But the word was not a Maori or Ringatu choice, but a Pakeha given, in that it was the name for God used by William Williams and others in translating the Old Testament into Maori. It is unlikely that Williams intended to convey, with the name, the characteristics associated with it by critics. Other terms, like "atua" and "ariki" also created difficulties. "Ihowa" has since been used consistently in the Maori services of the main denominations, including quite recent Anglican revisions, in which the Bishop of Aotearoa assisted.



v. There has also been much misunderstanding of the choice of religion as an area in which to express a separate Maori identity, a subject which will be referred to later.

vi. The majority of missionaries, even though most understood the language, have appeared unwilling to see anything good in, or to be learned from, Maori culture, least of all from Maori religion, regarding it only as a challenge to the Faith they themselves were offering. Church Missionary Society, and later, Presbyterian agents, expressed a great deal of criticism, but one suspects, less out of real theological consideration, than out of pique, because Ringatu were resistant to conversion or re-conversion to "real" Christianity, as they are still!<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, most missionaries were guilty of a kind of religious colonialism, with less interest in the real welfare of the Maori, than in possessing them for Christ, or better, for their particular brand of Christianity.

At Tauranga in 1923, A Salvation Army Captain Moore, complained to the Under Secretary of Internal Affairs about the character of the Ringatu "bishop" and others who were conducting marriages and funerals. The following year, Moore asked the Registrar-General that he be appointed as Registrar of Maori Births and Deaths, and was agreed to. Within days, Moore requested a police report on the moral standing of Ringatu ministers on the officiating list, because he considered them unfit. Eventually, police reports from Tauranga, Opotiki, Whakatane and Te Whaiti came in, ranging from "he is a drunken waster", "a noted liar", a "fairly decent sort of native of good character", to "nothing is known against him" ! Over the next three years, another eighteen items of correspondence followed, but the conclusion was that without an Amendment to the Marriage Act, the Department had no authority to refuse to add, or to delete, any name from the list.<sup>17</sup>

Then in 1939, J.G. Laughton, a highly respected pioneer Presbyterian missionary among the Tuhoe, described Ringatu as being a mixture of Maori pre-Christian religion and Old Testament Jehovah ideas, with no understanding of salvation. "In war days, the vehemence of their religious zeal was to secure success in battle ...then there were other benedictions sought from his gods, security in journeying...success in crops etc." But then he points out that he doesn't want this criticism published, lest it prejudice the

success of the ten Presbyterian mission stations "in the domains of the Ringatu Church", where "the fuller light of the great day is undoubtedly rising on these people who have so long sat in arrested twilight." <sup>18</sup>

An essay offered in 1979 by a student in the Social Anthropology and Maori Studies Dept. of Massey University betrays a very strong prejudice. <sup>19</sup> The writer contrasted the prayers of Te Kooti with his own character, saying, "one can detect....a fanaticism, even bordering on madness...a strong resemblance to Hitler." Labelling him a Hauhau, she continued, "he was a man noted in history for his cunningness, ability, and treachery", and quoted Apirana Ngata, "Te Kooti is the last and greatest representative of the worst side of the Maori character - its subtlety, cunning and treachery; its cruelty and love of bloodshed; and its immorality and fanaticism..." She seems to have been unduly influenced by the Ngati Porou loyalties of Ngata.

In 1982, a N.Z. Presbyterian minister, <sup>20</sup> but on the staff of a well-known university overseas, hearing of my interest in Ringatu, wrote suggesting a possible sharing of information. But he, like Laughton, betrayed a rather doubtful motive, stating that he was proposing to the Joint Board of Mission (Presbyterian and Methodist) that since there was a serious decline in overseas missions, that they explore new religious movements in primal societies (presumably including Ringatu) as a possible new field of mission. I indicated that I could not be party to that suggestion.

In 1981, a suggestion that the Ringatu minister be invited to become a member of the Palmerston North Ministers' Association, provoked a totally negative response. Most members remained silent, acknowledging their ignorance of the Ringatu movement. The Baptist minister wrote a critical paper in which he concluded that Ringatu was a movement "in search of a faith...with which we should keep a dialogue going", though he still didn't support the suggested invitation. An Anglican vicar was most vocal in opposition, declaring that we didn't know enough about them, and implying that they weren't really Christian, despite the fact that his Maori Anglican colleague had recently shared with the Ringatu minister in several services. <sup>21</sup>

At the end of 1982, members of a committee interviewing me in relation to my possible appointment to their Taranaki parish, expressed considerable reservation about my interest in Ringatu, which they considered was not really Christian, and I suspect this was one reason for my not being acceptable.<sup>22</sup> The next year, the minister who was appointed, and who was of evangelical, charismatic persuasion, knowing of my interest, declared that all Maori culture was pagan, because they (the Maori) did carvings of their gods etc. When such charges were refuted, he replied that well, they worshipped their ancestors anyway.<sup>22a.</sup>

Then in 1984, another Methodist ministerial colleague, and again of evangelical and charismatic persuasion, knowing of my involvement, warned me of the great danger I was in, because of the evil spirits and influences associated with Ringatu activities and presumably believing himself to be spiritually superior both to them and me, he offered to accompany me on my next visit, in order to provide me with spiritual protection!<sup>23</sup>

That same year, a Ringatu married to a Roman Catholic, reported criticism of Ringatu in his home area, where the Catholic priest described Ringatu as the goats in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, (Matt 25/31-46), the goats of course being excluded from the Kingdom.<sup>24</sup> This was not regarded as a joke, but as a definite, prejudiced attitude against Ringatu.

It was because the official Pakeha history concerning Te Kooti and the events in which he was concerned was so different from what he learned from his own father, that Wiremu Tarei began to make a personal enquiry into the faith. And it is the continuing misunderstanding, of the kind outlined above, that he is eager to have corrected.<sup>25</sup>

#### b. A Synthesis of Traditional, Old Testament, and Christian Elements.

Because the missionary church did not appear to support the Maori people in the injustice they suffered, and because it "did not provide a theological system fully acceptable to the Maori," prophetic leaders created a more acceptable adaptation, "a synthesis of traditional beliefs, Old Testament teachings, and Christian values."<sup>26</sup> This would appear to be generally true of Ringatu, but any attempt to identify and categorize the respective elements demands feeling and

"hunch", more than dogmatism.

### i. Traditional Beliefs.

The critic of Ringatu who claims that it is just a heathen hang-over, or a violent pre-Christian sect, can reasonably be expected to be specific in indicating what elements of traditional Maori religion he understands are included in Ringatu belief, liturgy and practice. It is for this reason that the chapter on Traditional Maori Religion has been included. Identification of such pre-Christian elements by the critic, may well prove more difficult than the statement on "synthesis" suggests.

James Stack, a C.M.S. missionary, said in 1874, in explanation of his annual Waiapu Diocesan report, that it was necessary to understand pre-Christian ideas held by Maori converts, because "Old beliefs will cling to a people after adopting in all sincerity a new faith... like an indelible dye...and will continue to exercise an influence through many generations." He argued that conversion should not be expected to result in a complete rejection of the old, because "sincere and complete as the Gospel is...there are certain peculiarities of race which affect his belief, and he can no more influence these, than he can the colour of his skin." He then completely spoiled that amazingly sensitive observation by describing these pre-Christian ideas as "low and grovelling" ! <sup>27</sup>

Te Kooti believed that it was possible to be Christian without a wholesale rejection of traditional Maori practices. There is contemporary support for that view, as indicated by Shirres, who quotes Pope Paul VI as expressing the official Catholic position regarding revelation and non-Christian religions and therefore applicable to pre-European Maori religion: "The Church respects and esteems these non-Christian religions...they carry within them the echo of thousands of years of searching for God...They are all impregnated with innumerable 'seeds of the Word' and constitute a true 'preparation for the Gospel', to quote a term used by the second Vatican Council."<sup>28</sup> Shirres maintains that there must be revelation in Maori religion if it contains seeds of the Word and is a preparation for the coming of Christ. He says that all history is salvation history, including that of the Maori. <sup>29</sup> For the Maori to see where he is heading, he cannot cast off the past, but must be able to see where he has come from. Ringatu, then, in retaining elements from the past, do not go backwards,

but forwards, in a way consistent with their understanding of history as present and as in front, and engaging in a process of adaptation on their own terms, as they proceed. Though Te Kooti rejected Christian missionaries and their interpretation of Christianity, he did not reject Christianity itself. Unlike Titokowaru in South Taranaki, he did not go back to the old atua, nor did his followers. Indeed on one occasion, he said to some followers who were discussing the old ways "Your gods didn't create heaven and earth - they got lost between heaven and earth!" <sup>30</sup>

Though not going back to the old atua, followers were allowed to feel comfortable in many aspects of the traditional world view, simply because they were no longer told they must reject that view. The old views and mythologies were not so much carried over as conscious beliefs, but rather as a total, familiar, "feeling" background, or base on which to build new Biblical understanding. Missionary Christianity attacked the life-centred, traditional Maori religion, seeking to impose a church-centred system in its place. Ringatu resisted, retaining the traditional life-centred view, but expressing it in Christian terms - an example of "indigenizing the Gospel". <sup>31</sup>

If it can be accepted that Ringatu do not invoke the old atua; that any departmental god functions can readily be understood as varied aspects of the activity and concern of God; that in their understanding of God, the Io concept is probably included and that He is seen as one and the same as the Old Testament Jehovah and New Testament Father; that God's direction is to be known not through divination, but revelation; that concepts of tapu and noa are ways of recognising links between the material and the spiritual; that tohunga are really seen more as Christian ministers than as either traditional or Old Testament priests; that karakia which were formerly seasonal and occasional are now partly seasonal, but more regular than occasional; that the memorizing of karakia may be traditional, but the content is Biblical; and that chant tunes may be traditional while the content is Biblical; then it can be assumed that what is traditional is the form, while the content is almost, if not entirely Biblical.

There is support for this assessment in the comment, that the Ringatu gathering was "in all respects the ancient Maori runanga (assembly) conducting its devotions...all that appeared new was the theme of chant and invocation." <sup>32</sup>



Ringatu maintain that their religion is not a return to the traditional atua, or a re-emergence of Hauhau or any other movement, but a continuation of God's revelation.

## ii. Old Testament Scriptures.

There is no doubt that quantitatively, the Ringatu services contain a greater proportion of Old Testament material than New Testament, but it is suggested that there are understandable reasons for this.

Though the complete Old Testament in Maori was not available until 1858, whereas the New Testament had been available from 1837, earlier missionary scripture printing had included small portions of the Old Testament from 1827. The missionaries themselves were responsible for Maori interest in the Old Testament, for while their emphasis was supposedly on the New, their journals record frequent preaching from the Old, a use of references to the Old in general speech, and the bestowing of Old Testament names on their converts at baptism.

Some C.M.S. missionaries, including Marsden, Kendall, Maunsell, and Hadfield, promoted the idea of cultural parallels, particularly in language structure, between the Old Testament Hebrews, and the Maori. Kendall was convinced that the Maori were descendents of the Egyptians, and Stack in 1846 in the Waiapu district reported a revelation that the Maori were Jews.<sup>33</sup> Taylor at the same time talked of the Maori being a lost tribe of Israel. Interestingly, Bishop Selwyn had been opposed to the publication of Old Testament portions, because of the danger of the Maori misunderstanding them. From the 1840's, the missionaries also began to teach reading and writing in English, so it was possible for Maori who then possessed these skills to have access to English Bibles, as Te Kooti himself did in the Uren household.<sup>34</sup> Maori interest in the Old Testament was apparently intensified by the very fact that though it was used by the missionaries, it was not available in Maori until 1858, the interpretation being that the missionaries were withholding important information.<sup>35</sup>

The Maori frequently appeared to show a clear preference for the Old Testament, leaving the New to the missionaries and Europeans. W.L. Williams reported that "At Te Teko we were told by one of their leaders that they had abandoned the way of the Son, and had taken the way of the Father."<sup>36</sup> But this could have been said as much to irritate the C.M.S. missionaries, as to convey any real rejection of Christianity, and there is much evidence to suggest the missionaries



were very easily irritated! As Elsmore says, even when the Maori appeared to most completely accept Christianity, it was unlikely that he completely rejected his old beliefs. Likewise, when he became disillusioned with colonial government and missionary Christianity, it was unlikely that he did or could completely reject all of the new faith.<sup>37</sup>

If this is true, it may well be that in the process of adaptation, identification with the Old Testament was a necessary first step, or a relatively secure middle ground.

It needs to be stressed that an emphasis on the Old Testament is not a rejection of New Testament Christianity as such, though it may be a rejection of missionary packaging of that Christianity. Rather it is to be seen as an awareness and acceptance of that which was familiar in the plight of the Old Testament Israelites. "Any religion which is divinely inspired will be geared to the people for whom it is intended and be appropriate to their condition and situation."<sup>38</sup>

The Maori found the Old Testament "fitted" him, because it reflected his situation as similar to that of the oppressed Israelites and God's deliverance. For the Maori, the Old Testament was not simply a book of reference but of remembrance.<sup>39</sup> But identification with the plight of the Jews, and the occasional use of that name, as reported by several missionaries, in no way indicated an embracing of Judaism.

Elsmore lists a number of ways in which the Maori could have seen important points of interest in the Old Testament, or parallels between themselves and the Old Testament people: The importance of genealogies; laws similar to the tapu system, with punishment or reward immediate rather than in some future hell or heaven; with spiritual significance of land; warrior heroes in great battles; similarity between waiata and psalms; similarity between Io and Jehovah described as God of gods; the implication of the existence of lesser gods, atua; the appeal of Jehovah as an interventionist God compared with a passive Christ of the New Testament; no representation of God or the gods in images or carvings; the sabbath law appearing to be contradicted by the missionary Sunday; the importance of the number twelve, with twelve sons of Jacob; twelve names of Io, twelve heavens etc.; the importance of dreams as revelation; the sacredness of the head and hair; an eye-for-an-eye concept, like utu, preferable to New Testament forgiveness; a lunar

calendar day of sunrise to sunset; membership of tribe by birth rather than initiation; similarity of marriage and allowance for polygamy; a father's blessing to transfer mana and inheritance; death customs with tapu restrictions, exhumation, and re-burial; plus problems with quite new concepts from the New Testament such as the Incarnation (Tane, not Io, would be expected to produce offspring), and the Resurrection (Christ succeeding where Maui failed).<sup>40</sup>

But the main parallel seen by the Maori was that they, like the Jews, were oppressed, but worse, that they were oppressed in their own land. Their hope was that this Old Testament Jehovah, who had delivered the Jews, would also deliver them, not from the personal sins emphasized in the New Testament, but from the sins of the Pakeha oppressors.

What is important, assuming that Ringatu too made this connection, is not the fact that they used, or even preferred Old Testament scriptures, but the kind of scriptural material that was selected, and the themes and sentiments expressed. On the basis, not of hear-say, guess, or oft-repeated misinformation, but of translation of the services used, it can be said that the main themes are praise, penitence, prayers for guidance and deliverance, and proverbial moralizing. There is nothing violent, subversive, sinister, anti-Christian or anti-Pakeha to be found in the Biblical material that is used.

### iii. New Testament, Christian Values

Given that Ringatu services are just that, offerings of worship, and not intended to be theological statements; that the proportion of New Testament material used is obviously less than that of Old Testament; and that other reasoned theological statements have so far not been formulated by the Church, then the claim to be Christian needs to be supported by some other evidence, such as in the expression of Christian beliefs or values in personal statements, or in the quality of followers' lives. The majority of Ringatu that I have talked with certainly represent a stance that is pro-Christian rather than anti-Christian or non-Christian. Of course religion is very much more than a set of beliefs, but we under-estimate the Ringatu Church if we consider that it expresses only some Christian sentiments or values, and not Christian beliefs as well. But the beliefs are often implicit

rather than explicit. Some examples of belief and values can be seen in the following:

The seal of the church depicts an open Bible with one side inscribed "Te Kawenata Tawhito" (the old covenant) and the other "Te Kawenata Hou" (the new covenant), indicating that Ringatu officially accept both the Old and New Testaments. Included also is the wording "Te Ture A Te Atua" (The Law Of God), "Me Te Whakapono O Ihu" (and the Faith of Jesus), indicating a claim to be Christian.

Maka Jones, a Ringatu tohunga, spoke of "preparing herself with Christ" before going to be involved in services of healing, and of the use of water blessed by invocation of the Holy Spirit, and of the centrality of repentance and forgiveness in healing.<sup>41</sup>

In answer to a question as to whether Ringatu still believed in kaitiaki, a leader said, "maybe some do, but really there is only one Kaitiaki, the Lord Jesus Christ".<sup>42</sup>

Another leader of one section of the Church commented, "those over on the other side (that is, of the island, in another section of the church) are still in the Old Testament", implying that his own section had long ago moved into New Testament beliefs and ways!<sup>43</sup> This kind of comment was repeated by others in one form or another.

The names of three houses built for Ringatu in the Gisborne district bear names associated with New Testament values. Elders from four areas in the district rode to Te Kuiti to request that the next Ra be held in their district. Te Kooti told them that they would have to wait, but that meantime, "Whakahaungia te rongopai i runga it te ngawari me te aroha." (Raise up the Good News in gentleness and love). So each elder built a house bearing one of the names, Whakahau at Te Karaka, Rongopai at Waituhi, Ngawari at Mangatu, and Aroha at Puha, where they still stand.<sup>44</sup>

Though qualities such as aroha (love), awhina (to help), manaakitanga (hospitality), atawhai (kindness), tautokotanga (support), whanaungatanga (family-ness) etc, are traditional Maori values, they may be understood as being specific Christian or New Testament values as well.<sup>45</sup>

Long after his pardon, Te Kooti, hearing that Capt. Gilbert Mair, who had led Arawa loyalists against him during the Urewera campaign, was staying at the Matata Hotel, "paraded" his followers equipped with borrowed guns, outside the hotel, and invited Mair to

inspect his "troops". Then Te Kooti presented Mair with a fine cloak, saying, "This is my token of regard for you...wear this in memory of me...and if it is not large enough, let me clothe you with my love!" <sup>46</sup> That kind of love is in the New Testament a "fruit of the Spirit" - and is an indication that the Ringatu tree, influenced by the Spirit, was producing the right kind of fruit.

It seems that many Pakeha Christians create a difficulty where there need be none, by inventing an artificial opposition between the Old Testament (which is seen to represent the material, the political, the this-worldly) and the New Testament (which is seen to represent the spiritual, the other-worldly). The Maori recognize no such distinction. It would appear that Jesus had a great deal in common with the Old Testament prophets. It is significant that at the Transfiguration (Luke 9/26-36), he is seen in the company of two of the greatest of them, Moses and Elijah. He certainly shared the Old Testament prophetic concern for the oppressed, as expressed in his speech in the synagogue at Nazareth, as recorded in Luke 4/18-21, and as predicted by his mother in the Magnificat (Luke 1/46-54).

Our Pakeha Christian problem seems to be our unwillingness to recognize Christian faith and values if accompanied by any Maori cultural expression, rather than by our own familiar European ones. But as Pope John Paul II said, "The Church comes to bring Christ... not the culture of another race." <sup>47</sup> And as Pope Paul VI said, as already quoted, "non-Christian religions...are impregnated with innumerable seeds of the Word." But in consistently rubbishing Maori culture, including traditional beliefs, missionaries have hindered the development of the seed of the Gospel hidden in these beliefs. Shirres says that a 1958 Roman Catholic Maori Prayer Book declared that the first sin was to have any belief in Maori religious chants, in the works of tohunga, in customs concerning tapu involving the dead, the sick, or anything else, and that before receiving communion, the Maori was required to renounce his Maori religion right to the depths. <sup>48</sup> Apparently an Anglican Maori Prayer Book similarly listed twenty three sins against the first commandment like those mentioned, but included carving, use of Maori language etc. <sup>49</sup>

Jesus, however, said he had "come not to destroy (the law and the prophets of the Old Testament) but to fulfil them" (Matt 5/17). So he can be seen, not as the destroyer of Maori religion, but as the one who fulfils it.<sup>50</sup> Evidence of the "seeds of the Gospel" being present in the soil of Maori religion before any sowing was done by the missionaries can be seen in the "Tama-i-rorokutia" (The Son-who-was-killed) prophecy of Toiroa, referring to the new God who would be brought by the Pakeha, and which would appear to throw the door of Maori religion wide open to the coming of the Christ of the Gospels. In a sense, this Christ already had his foot inside the door of Maori religion, and was there to welcome the European missionaries. However, because the missionaries perceived the Jewish Christ as an Englishman, they found it difficult to understand that the same Christ would be perceived as a Maori by the Maori. Shirres argues for "Incarnational Pluralism", rather than for syncretism, saying that we will not overcome our religious differences by asking people to drop what they hold to be true. Incarnational pluralism insists that just as Christ became a Jew, so must Europeans allow Him to become a Maori.<sup>51</sup>

Commenting on primal religion, which includes Maori religion, Turner says, "Christianity has made most impact on areas of primal religion, not because it is an easy knock down...but just because there is so much common ground...an affinity expressed in welcome to the missionaries with 'this is what we have been waiting for'".<sup>52</sup>

So the coming of Jesus in the New Testament was a natural insertion into Maori salvation history,<sup>53</sup> or we may say, in the case of some Ringatu at least, was a recognition, realization, or affirmation of the "potential" Christ hinted at in the "tama-i-rorokutia" prophecy.

Whereas the Christian missions failed to encourage the expression of Christian faith within the Maori cultural framework, Ringatu did however "indigenize" or "contextualize" the Gospel.<sup>54</sup> Rakena describes Ringatu as a good example of a "particularizing of the Gospel",<sup>55</sup> in which Christ is perceived, not just as a man, but as a Maori. Because the Gospel is understood by those receiving it (even if not by those delivering it) as both universal and particular, they will want to re-interpret Gal. 3/28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek...for you are all one in Christ Jesus", as "There is both Jew and Greek, Englishman and Maori...and we are all one in Christ Jesus."



c. Assessment of the Claim To Be Christian.

Ringatu leaders claim that their Church is Christian, and wish it to be more widely recognised as such, though they are not willing to have it taken over by, or made to conform to, Pakeha religious institutions.

Because of the apparent lack of doctrinal statements, regular preaching, or Bible Study, the only material which can be used to test the claim is that contained in the services. Here the majority of Pakeha are faced with the obstacle of language. To satisfy myself as to the validity of the claim, and of the kind of Pakeha criticism already mentioned, in 1983 I attempted an English translation of the main services, which while not being a literary gem, was sufficiently accurate to enable identification of material as either Old or New Testament in source, or as expressing sentiments which could be judged as violent, anti-Pakeha, anti-missionary, or anti-New Testament. On the basis of that exercise, incomplete as it may be, I can say that with one possible exception (which can still be understood as a prayer for survival in time of war), no such "anti" attitudes appear to exist. In other respects, the attempt to assess the claim cannot usefully proceed on the basis of seeking proof, but rather on the basis of being open to suggestions, feelings and hunches.

In previous sections, mention has already been made of points which may now be used to support the claim that Ringatu is a true part of the Christian Church, including : Toira's prediction regarding the coming of Tama-i-rorokutia (the Son who was killed) (p71); the Vatican II statement that all religions contain seeds of the word (p70); Te Kooti's offer to serve as a C.M.S. catechist (p30); his reading of C.M.S. prayers to prisoners awaiting deportation (p32); his conversion experience on Wharekauri (p33); his replacing the rule of legalism with the way of faith and mutual compassion at Otewa (p36); the deliberate non-celebration of the violent period (p59); the commencing of all services with "honour, glory, and peace on earth, and goodwill to all men", Luke 2/14 (p54); the inclusion of New Testament material in services; the statement referring to Christ, "This is my beloved Son, hear him" (p45); Te Kooti's song referring to the death of the Pai Marire god (p59); his rubbishing of the Maori atua who "got lost" (p65); the inclusion of the New Covenant and The Faith of Jesus in the official seal (p69); the names



of three houses in Gisborne (Chap 4 p 69); "the Lord is the only Kaitiaki" statement (Chap 4 p 69); and many traditional values are also New Testament values (Chap 4 p 69).

There are in addition, a number of other points to be made in support of the claim.

i. Any expression of religion will be culturally "contaminated", so it is futile trying to assess Maori Christianity against European Christianity, as though the latter was the only true or perfect standard. Such an exercise is like trying to judge the straightness of one warped board by using another equally warped board as a supposed straight edge. Missionary Christianity was contaminated with attitudes and values inherent in colonialism, just as contemporary Pakeha Christianity is also contaminated with racism, materialism, nationalism and patriotism. Greenwood warns of assuming the right to try to remove the mote in the Maori eye, while having a beam in one's own Pakeha eye (Matt. 7/3-4) and reminds us that many so-called Christian festivals have a pagan origin.<sup>56</sup>

ii. Some critics have suggested that Te Kooti was very selective in his choice of scripture, though Ringatu say this was not selection, but revelation. But even if it was selection, Pakeha Christians Catholic, Protestant, Fundamentalist, Charismatic and Liberal, have all done the same. Had Te Kooti really wanted to be selective, in order to justify defence against the "enemies" (which critics have assumed to be the Pakeha), he could have done a great deal better than he did! But the term "enemies" in the prayers is quite non-specific, and "could refer to disease, Satan, a human oppressor, or almost anything at all."<sup>57</sup> But even if the prayers do refer to human enemies, they are little different in intention from prayers in the Book of Common Prayer, for example.

iii. In answer to the charge that Ringatu have no sense of sin, and therefore of the need for salvation, the evidence strongly suggests that in fact, penitence or unworthiness, which is an evangelical requirement, is a constant theme of the services.

iv. Te Kooti may have discontinued using that baptismal name, but there is no record indicating that he rejected his Christian baptism. And while he did reject the C.M.S. presentation of Christianity, he nevertheless advised his followers, that if ever they wished to

leave Ringatu, they should return to the Anglican church as the parent.<sup>58</sup>

v. The early name of the Church, "Te Hahi A Te Wairua Tapu", (The Church of the Holy Spirit) may be seen in itself to indicate not only its origin in revelation, but also openness to the guidance of the Spirit, which is very much a New Testament attitude.

vi. Te Kooti demonstrated a remarkable spirit of forgiveness in agreeing to the faith going to Wanganui, which involved making peace with Major Kemp who had fought against him, and in honouring Capt. Mair who had also fought against him, as already described (Chap 4 p 69). It could also be argued that he showed more spirit of forgiveness than did Bishop Williams, who while he preached the Christ of the New Testament, was said to often demonstrate attitudes more related to the Jehovah of the Old Testament, such as an angry judgementalism, and who, even when dying, refused to either see or forgive his old friend Colenso, who came to see him for the last time.<sup>59</sup> Te Kooti also showed more forgiveness than did Hoani te Wainohu, the Anglican priest at Wairoa, who in 1885 refused him passage through Mohaka, on pain of death, (Chap 2 p. 37) and also more than Wahawaha, who threatened Whanau-a-Apanui with death if they welcomed the Ringatu faith in their area. (Chap 2 p. 38).

vii. Criticism of Ringatu addressing prayers to Jehovah, rather than to God the Father, or to Christ himself, may be countered with the warning of Jesus, that not all who say "Lord, Lord" will enter the Kingdom, implying that those who believe themselves superior to those who use the name hardly at all, may be in for a shock. Are Ringatu really less acceptable than those who do use the name of Christ a great deal, but who for instance may be guilty of profiting from exploitation, racism, plain indifference, or selfishness?

Jesus talked of judging, not by words spoken, but by actions, or in the tree idiom, not by a show of leaves, but by the quality of fruit. If the fruit is good, so is the tree. (Matt 7/16-20, Matt. 21/18-19). In terms of caring for one another, and in other areas of practical morality, Ringatu can at least match Pakeha Christians. The quality of a changed life on the part of his father, was a significant factor in Tarei's interest in the church.<sup>60</sup>

It is also rather unfair to criticise Ringatu for what they do not

say or use, by way of New Testament material. In what they do say, they do not attack the New Testament, or deny it, or reject those who do use it.

viii. Informed Pakeha observers of Ringatu, like Jim Irwin and Norman Perry, who have spent the whole of their ministries amongst these people, consider that the Church has undergone considerable change in the last forty years, and say that it is now much more Christian than it was.<sup>61</sup> In many ways, the change has been assisted by their association with the Church, yet that change could not have happened without Ringatu willingness for it. Davis in 1980 commented on tremendous changes over the previous five years.<sup>62</sup>

Compared with the length of the period covered by Old and New Testament periods and the history of the Church until now, Ringatu has made remarkable progress in living through the Old and New Testament phases in a short 115 years. It is certain that current Ringatu thinking is much more Christian than the fixed, largely Old Testament content of the services would indicate .

ix. There is considerable openness to Bible study, which must mean openness to the New Testament as a basis for contemporary Christian action. Several years ago a Ringatu tohunga enquired about the possibility of his attending such Bible study in my church, and two women reported recently that they had been sent as girls to attend a Presbyterian church, for the sole purpose of learning the Scriptures, and to come back to Ringatu in due course.<sup>63</sup>

x. Many Ringatu today also have some measure of involvement with other denominations, any Ra including people who are also at home in Catholic, Anglican, and Presbyterian services. This must help those who feel they need more Biblical, especially New Testament, teaching or preaching, and it may mean again that many Ringatu people are much further ahead in their thinking and acting than would be indicated by the largely Old Testament liturgy of their own Ringatu Church. It is apparently possible even to be a Presbyterian elder "away", and a Ringatu "at home and at heart", as in the case of one Maori leader.<sup>64</sup> I was told of an Anglican evening service somewhere on the East Coast, which was stopped because the people could not see to read, due to a power failure, but which was then continued by a Ringatu, in the

dark, because he had memorized the Anglican service as well as his own.<sup>65</sup>

xi. There is general agreement on the part of a number of responsible, informed, non-Ringatu observers, who say, "The Ringatu Church is essentially a Bible Church. There is no other Christian organisation which uses the Bible so fully."<sup>66</sup> ; Ringatu is "a genuine Maori variant of Christianity"<sup>67</sup> ; "the Ringatu Church fully accepts Christ...and is more scriptural than most Western Christian churches"<sup>68</sup>, "really the Ringatu faith is based on Christianity".<sup>69</sup> These agree with Ringatu leaders who maintain that, "Christ is central...the faith is just a way to Him "<sup>70</sup>. ; "all words that pray to God are also praying to Christ as well as to the Holy Spirit ...we too pray to the Trinity...you cannot separate these aspects and say 'this prayer is for God alone, and does not concern Jesus or the Holy Spirit'"<sup>71</sup> ; and "unity already exists in the Church, with Christ at the centre".<sup>72</sup>

xii. The kupu whakaari and songs of Te Kooti, represent an area in which I think Pakeha students should be very cautious about making dogmatic statements about meaning. Like parables, they may be expected to have much meaning for "insiders", but be "veiled" to "outsiders", and therefore I consider them to represent an area for sensitive, specialist study beyond the scope of this work. Nevertheless, some general impressions of emphases made by Te Kooti can be gained from identifying some apparent themes. The first impression is of a concern for peace, the importance of which appears to have been overlooked by the critics. Evidently, Te Kooti acknowledged that he had been greatly influenced by King Tawhiao in this emphasis on maungarongo, (the word for peace, now used consistently in Ringatu services), though it was seen as coming from God. A song written in Ruatahuna in 1870, at the height of the bush war, speaks of this peace; others in 1890 refer to it in relation to the reconciliation between Te Kooti and the Wanganui chiefs, Taitoko and Metekingi, who had led troops against him; while another in 1885 declares that his (Te Kooti's) truths are of peace, bids his followers listen to the law, to keep it, and not to talk of hatred. The second impression is of a concern for law-abiding morality, from a statement in 1893, that the law is a canoe to be paddled by all, and from another in 1890, that righteousness is the only real protection. The third

impression is of racial tolerance, from a saying in 1892 that his successor may be black, red or white. King Tawhiao also made use of such colour imagery. The fourth impression is of religious tolerance from sayings in which the Anglican, Catholic and Ringatu Churches are to be strong; that these three are like canoes being paddled in the same direction, alongside each other, but not to be crashed into each other; and that a binding is to be plaited for them, to be held by the helmsmen, hinting at an ideal relationship of unity-in-diversity. The fifth impression is of a social concern, from a statement in 1887, warning against divisions in families, chiefly rivalry and privilege, and contempt for the lowly, common people. These are just impressions, but they suggest that Te Kooti possessed considerable Gospel insight. They also suggest that even if before his deportation, Te Kooti was as bad as his critics say he was, then the change brought about by his conversion was all the remarkable and genuine. If these insights were possessed by Te Kooti, there is no reason why they could not also have been accepted by the followers he taught, and carried over into the present Ringatu Church. I believe they have been.

Xiii. There is evidence that the Huamata (June 1) Dedication of Seed Tubers, and the Pure or Hauhake (Nov. 1 or Dec. 1) First Fruit of the Harvest rituals, are more than just karakia for the success of the crop, and thanksgiving for the crop to be harvested. They are also seen as "types" of, or symbols of the death (the planted tuber) and the resurrection (the new tubers) of Christ. This is not so apparent from the Biblical material set down for the services concerned, but it is stated by way of explanation in the services of the Ringatu Church Incorporated. In this, the people are bidden to be one with Christ in his death and resurrection, to die to self and to participate in the new life he gives. This appears to be an example of using the traditional form of a karakia, but combined in this case with new Christian content, if not in the Biblical material actually used, then certainly in the meaning and interpretation of what is done. In short, it has become a Christian ritual.

xiv. At Otewa, on 11/5/1885, Te Kooti's words were recorded by a secretary, Matiu Paeroa, "On this day we have committed to writing... as a permanent record...and explanation of the origins of this form of worship, and of God's revelation to mankind...of the greatness



of God's love for mankind....Ihova is the supreme God of heaven and the earth beneath; there is no other God...He alone...is... the living God, the God of Hosts....God's love continues to pour forth upon his creation like gentle rain upon the new growth. Nor will God ever deny the work of his hands, he will ever show his mercy and love towards mankind in distress."

And at Petani on 24/11/1885, "These words are written...that forthcoming generations may come to know...the kind deeds of the Lord, for the Lord does not conceal his love for mankind, indeed it was proclaimed in the Gospels...although man was very wicked, He thought not of the wickedness, but of his good, settling love upon man...that we should be of one body. There is no separation of people in Christ Jesus, whether Maori or Pakeha, all peoples of the world have been brought together to be one, by the blood of Christ. He sent His Son into the world to firmly establish His Gospel, and also to show the greatness of God's love..." <sup>73</sup>

The true Christian spirit in these words is undeniable.

xv Tarei records a life-changing dream experienced in boyhood, of Christ with up-stretched arms, appearing to him against the background of the evening sky, across which words were formed, "I will be with you always." <sup>74</sup> This is a specifically Christian example of the acceptance by Ringatu of dreams as revelation, or warning, <sup>75</sup> but more importantly, it is a specific example of an acceptance, by a Ringatu, of the Lordship of Christ.

xvi And finally, there is the moving testimony of another Leader, Ruru, who told me as his wife lay dying in January 1985, that she had said to him a few days before, "John, there are two loves in my life...you, and the Lord Jesus Christ, but unfortunately for you, you come second." Dare anyone say that she as a life-long Ringatu was not also truly Christian?

Some may argue that these statements or examples do not prove that the Ringatu movement is a Christian Church. But then, to try to prove it seems a futile exercise, as futile as trying to prove that the tree in whose shade one is sitting, and whose fruit one is enjoying, is really a tree. However, when these statements and examples are considered together, I believe they present a quite different assessment of Ringatu, from that frequently made by its

mainly Pakeha critics. While desiring to be understood and accepted as being truly Christian, the Ringatu Church has enough sense of its own worth to survive such criticism. To judge it as less than Christian, is however, as much our loss as it is Ringatu's.

#### d. Interpretation.

Before the coming of the Europeans, the Maori had by means of their religion, come to terms with their world. The earth and sky were not just created by their atua, they were atua. The natural laws, forces, phenomena, and creatures of every kind were the works of other atua. The Maori themselves, as the only known human inhabitants, were not just created by the atua, but they were also descended from them. And it would seem that the concept of a Supreme Atua was being developed. So their religion, which is to be seen as a response to the Creator, rather than as a reaction to circumstances, provided the means of understanding a meaningful universe; of expressing their own identity or belonging; and of controlling or living with its forces.

However, the coming of the Pakeha resulted in many changes in that environment, due to the physical presence of increasing numbers of those of another race, equipped with a new, more powerful technology, and seemingly more powerful religion, exerting increasing pressure on traditional Maori resources, ways, and values. Realism indicated that since the changes in the environment could not be reversed, they would have to be lived with. Faced with either adoption of the new culture, or adaptation to it, most Maori chose the latter, especially in the area of ideology.

There is ample evidence to support Shirres' contention that the missionaries had presented a Christianity which was quite unrelated to the Maori holistic view of the universe; which concentrated on concerns related to a Western interpretation of the faith; with worship which was irrelevant and which addressed Maori life only in the negative; and which was assimilative in intention, and therefore a threat to Maori identity. <sup>76</sup>

This threat was met by the Maori prophetic movements, including Ringatu, who whether they are understood as representing "resistive acculturation" (Ausubel); "self-Christianization" (de Bres); "revitalization" (Wallace); "adjustment" (Elsmore); or "particularization" (Rakana), their intention was to retain or re-affirm the

meaning of, identity in, and a measure of control over, their world. Or, in other words, Ringatu intended to ensure that its indigenous tree continued to grow out of Maori soil, even if it had to adapt to a change in climate. In Jules-Rosette's terms, Ringatu could be seen as revitalistic in its turning back to use the traditional form of karakia, for instance, and as acculturative in adopting the new Biblical material as content for that karakia.<sup>77</sup>

Sinclair states that revival of any aspect of Maori culture helps to counter the negative value accorded by Pakeha legislators, educators, missionaries or popular opinion, and no aspect is more important than that of religion in expressing a positive identity.<sup>78</sup> Religion which reinforces a true Maori identity separate from that of other New Zealanders, provides not only spiritual satisfaction, but also the means of resisting assimilation (in other areas).<sup>79</sup>

Mol says that Maori charismatic movements helped greatly in forging a new identity, after the old one had been shattered by colonial impact.<sup>80</sup> This seems an exaggeration, and an assumption similar to that of Clark and Lyons. (Intro. p.8-9). It was not a matter of searching for, or creating a new identity, but rather, in an environment that contained new factors, of expressing or re-asserting Maori identity. In the case of Ringatu, however, two new components were added to that identity. Mol speaks of adding a supra-tribal vision,<sup>81</sup> while Elsmore deals thoroughly with the adding of identification by the Maori in a state of oppression, with that of Old Testament Israel.<sup>82</sup>

Davis emphasizes the same theme, but applies it to areas familiar to him. "Increasingly the Maori turned not to military leaders, but to spiritual leaders who attempted to reconcile Maori and Pakeha ideas in a manner which re-asserted Maori identity...Te Kooti achieved more than any other...in bringing together Christian faith and Maoritanga...used the Church to preserve and foster art, poetry, songs and oratory...more than anyone else at the time, he promoted a continuation of carving, tukutuku and kowhaiwhai. But he was innovative and used colour rather than relief to delineate its expressive... forms. Tukutuku...and kowhaiwhai became more free and representative, and lettered messages were incorporated."<sup>83</sup>

Similarly Mead, who is of the Ngati Awa people, states that Ringatu served the function of revitalizing Maori identity through

stimulating the building of a number of meeting houses, some of them being among the finest in the country. Carved meeting houses were considered heathen by the mission churches, and their opposition, together with military defeat in the 1860's could have meant the end of such buildings. Ringatu modelled its churches on the pattern of the traditional carved house, but enlarged them to the scale of the missionary church, expressing a return to Maori values.<sup>84</sup>

At the consecration of St. Michael's Anglican Church in Palmerston North on 9/6/1985, the Bishop of Aotearoa declared that the building, in the form of a traditional carved meeting house, though a church, was unique, a first. Ringatu would contend that Te Kooti had beaten the Anglicans by a hundred years. Te Kooti regarded the C.M.S. of his day as being incapable of, or unwilling to preserve Maori identity, and many already quoted, like Irwin, Shirres, Henare, Mead, Sinclair, Elsmore etc. would agree. Whatever else Te Kooti accomplished, he at least achieved an assertion of true Maori identity, and it is argued, in Christian terms.

At Wairoa, in 1886, when invited by Tamihana, the Anglican clergyman there, to take the place of honour on the main (manuhiri, visitor) side of the house, Te Kooti replied that he would leave that side to Tamihana, while he would occupy the small (tangata-whenua, host) side. He was not being self-effacing, or giving pre-eminence to the Anglican church, but rather was claiming the right as a representative of indigenous Christianity to act as host to European Christianity.<sup>85</sup>

The desire to retain that kind of Maori identity is seen as more important than the integration of Maori and Pakeha sections within the main denominations, and this is demonstrated in the setting up of Te Whakawhanaunga I Nga Hahi O Aotearoa (The Maori Council of Churches) in 1978. The establishing of the Bishopric of Aotearoa (Anglican) in 1978 was a similar expression.<sup>86</sup> Current moves to similarly create a Catholic Maori Bishopric stem from the same desire. Significantly, however, Ringatu appear somewhat suspicious of even the Maori Council of Churches, and have so far not joined it.

As already stated, most Pakeha find it hard to understand this desire for a separate Maori identity, and the choice of religion as the area in which to assert it. For many, the suggestion that religion may legitimately have as one of its main aims, the revival-

izing of identity, and that salvation is, at least in part, the renewing or reasserting of identity, will be meaningless, if not blasphemous. But there is much truth in Sinclair's statement that, "Paradoxically, it is only by setting themselves apart from Europeans, that Maori can be prepared and willing to live side by side with their Pakeha compatriates." <sup>87</sup> Shirres maintains that we "can have unity of Faith and Love without uniformity, a unity in which there is no watering down of the Faith, and which fully respects Maori culture." <sup>88</sup>

What Sinclair says of Maramatanga is applicable to Ringatu - that the cycle of Ra provides "an important organizing principle in the lives of its members...the Ra are devoted almost entirely to the taha wairua (spiritual aspect)...(and) reinforce important kinship ties...(and) re-affirm the history of the movement...and express social solidarity.....The Ra are not just commemorative but are effective times of healing and blessing...(and) also have a symbolic function, and look back to a communal past, and forward to a more ideal society, even if in the present they offer only a temporary insulation from the Pakeha dominated world...in the creation of a sacred (Maori) domain, in which normal time and order are replaced by sacred time and order." <sup>89</sup> This concept of the Church as a sacred domain is an extension of the idea of the marae, which is understood as just that - a sacred domain, and much more than just an area of ground in front of a meeting house.

As with Maramatanga, so with Ringatu - its sacred domain is virtually closed to Pakeha, and to a certain extent, to non-Ringatu Maori. It is closed not by fences and locked doors, but by being "completely unintelligible to European shopkeeper, lawyer, doctor, priest, and even Maori Affairs officer...to whom they tell little or nothing of any real consequence..." <sup>90</sup> The creation of such a domain (or micro-climate) is an appropriate way for a minority group to express identity and re-affirm values, with subtlety being more appropriate than direct confrontation. <sup>91</sup> And though those who belong in the domain may be comparatively poor in terms of material wealth, in some cases having lost a great deal of tribal land etc, they are enabled by their religion to believe they possess considerable spiritual, and moral wealth. <sup>92</sup>

Ringatu, then, may be seen as a counter-culture, challenging



the claimed superiority of the Pakeha world. It says to the Pakeha "you have demanded the death of so many things that make us Maori, but here they are, alive and well." I suggest that this is one way in which the unique symbolism of the flower and fruit motifs in the decoration of the Rongopai house can be understood - as a coded declaration of cultural, especially religious life, rather than of death. Much of the art work, especially that on the porch, is representative of native trees, plants and flowers, such as kowhai, flax, puriri, and of native birds such as tui, korimako, piwakawaka etc. One obviously alien element, the Scotch thistle, which was formerly featured inside, and which is said to have been one of the reasons why Te Kooti laid a curse on the house, was removed in the restoration of several years ago.

It must be assumed that the considerable number of middle-aged people who are finding their way back to Ringatu, find satisfaction in doing so. Religion as an expression of identity, may be a well-known and well-used theory among anthropologists, but it is doubtful that any of these returning to Ringatu have ever heard it. Yet significantly, amongst the dozens of people questioned over the last six years, an expression of identity was the most common explanation for their return or continued involvement, though of course the replies were in more colloquial terms like "I feel I belong here", "well it's really Maori", "I'm not rubbished here", "it just feels right somehow", "I guess it fits", "it's time I came home", "When I learned the services, I felt I had achieved something important, and Maori", or as the present Secretary said, "the greatest satisfaction to me is its Maoriness".

Closely related to the Maori concern to re-assert identity, is that of being able to exercise a measure of control over certain aspects of the environment, in the kind of belief expressed by Marsden, that "the material world is subject to natural laws, (but) these could be affected, modified and even changed by the application of the higher laws of the spiritual order." <sup>93</sup>

Ngata said the Maori "strove to understand things, to seek the origins of the universe and of natural phenomena...to find some power to afford him protection and help", <sup>94</sup> and Irwin, that religion "provided structures that kept the people in harmony with the universe ...gave protection from supernatural dangers, provided means to circum-

vent disasters that are normally beyond the control of natural man..."<sup>95</sup> Traditionally then, the atua were involved with karakia, or words of power, in order to gain a measure of protection from, or limited control over dangerous, undesirable or unfavourable natural elements.

Ringatu on occasion still invoke Divine power in relation to such natural forces, i.e. in karakia related to huamata and pure (Chap 3 p.49) but a more spontaneous example was seen at Mahia in 1984, where numbers attending the Hurae could not be fitted into the meeting house, and continuous heavy rain made conditions most unpleasant. On expressing relief when the next day dawned fine and clear, my comment was met with surprise, and "but surely you heard the tohunga pray for a fine day so that we could all meet together outside?" Before that is dismissed condescendingly as primitive, nativistic etc., it may be recalled that the uncanny calm which made possible the evacuation of Dunkirk, was claimed to be the result of the prayers of thousands of Christians, and that Jesus himself used the power of the word to calm the sea and heal sickness.<sup>96</sup> What is sought is a limited power, not to dominate the natural world, but to avoid being dominated by it. It is western civilization, "inspired" by Western Christianity, and its misinterpretation of "go and subdue the earth" (Genesis 1/28-29) that has embarked on a complete domination of nature, with resulting denuding of forest, creation of desert, and poisoning of water, soil and air.

But as seen already, the traditional Maori environment suddenly changed with the intrusion of increasing numbers of Pakeha. Colonial government, settlers, soldiers and missionaries, all sought to dominate the Maori to some degree, whether by legislation, guns, or ideas. The Maori prophetic movements used religion in an attempt to secure a measure of control over, in the sense of protection from this foreign human element in the environment.

So Ringatu also used religious means to help harness the forces of change which threatened their Maori identity, not just by the creation of a sacred domain or sanctuary, but also by actively seeking the assistance of the same God who had long ago assisted Israel to freedom. The prayers of Te Kooti for deliverance, if indeed they refer to the Pakeha, are not violently anti-Pakeha, seeking to dominate them or to have them driven out, but are rather a seeking for power to avoid being dominated by them. In that, they would

appear to have the Jesus of the Gospels, who proclaimed that he was bringing liberty for the oppressed, firmly on their side. 97.

#### Chapter Four Notes.

1. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol. 1, noting descriptions by Sarah Ross, Col. Porter, J.C. Firth and others.
2. Greenwood 1946 : 2,14.
3. Frank Davis, art exhibition handbook.
4. Tihei Algie, personal communication 1985
5. Binney 1985:374
6. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means to Me, transcript : 4
7. Cowan 1923 : 266-268 for examples
8. N.Z. Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 5, 1869 : 198-199
9. Karen Sinclair 1976 : III
10. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol. 6
11. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means to Me, transcript : 4
12. Misur 1975 : 103
13. Misur 1975 : 103 ff
14. Gibson 1964 : 103
15. Greenwood 1942 :25
16. Greenwood 1942 : 34-35; Webster 1979 : 38; Laughton, Ringatuism; and Williams Notes on the Ringatu Religion.
17. N.Z. Native Affairs File, Turnbull Library.
18. Laughton, Ringatuism
19. The sentiment expressed reflects the violent anti-Te Kooti feeling which existed along with equally strong pro-Te Kooti feeling in certain parts of the Maori community around Gisborne, and it was this hostility, along with hysteria on the part of the Pakeha settlers, which prevented Te Kooti's return to Poverty Bay, though pardoned. To a certain extent, the divisions are still felt. This writer, I understand, has tribal connections in one of these areas.
- 20,21,22,22a,23&24. These people and places have not been identified, for obvious reasons.
25. Tarei 1978; 61-66. For this reason, Davis was asked in 1963, to compile his Dossier on Te Kooti, from Ngati Awa documents and traditions.
26. Elsmore 1983 : ii, 30
27. Stack 1874: 2
28. Shirres, New Hope For Our Society - Reflections : 5
29. Shirres, Beyond Religious Differences : 3-4
30. Biddle, personal communication, 1984
31. Rakena 1971 : 33-35
32. Tamapo transcript : 4
33. Oliver, Challenge and Response : 46
34. Margaret Uren Notes, Gisborne Museum Library
35. Elsmore 1985 : 63-71
36. Williams, Notes on The Ringatu Religion : 21
37. Elsmore 1985 : 58-60
38. Elsmore 1983 : 98
39. Irwin 1983 : 16
40. Elsmore 1985 : 72-89
41. Credo TVI Programme 22/7/84
42. Tarei, personal communication 1983

43. This is not so much a put-down of "the other side", as it is an assessment of the strong Christian emphasis on "their side". However, I have heard it said, that after the death of Te Kooti, some groups wanted to go back to the old legalism which was rejected at Otewa.
44. Binney 1984 : 374. Also Ruru, personal communication 1984
45. Henare 1983 : 86
46. Greenwood 1942 : x, quoting Cowan.
47. Shirres, New Hope For Our Society - Discussion Book; 6, quoting Pope John Paul II
48. Shirres, New Hope For Our Society - Reflections : 5
49. Kaa, Credo TVI Programme 22/7/84
50. Shirres, 1982 64-65
51. Shirres, Beyond Religious Differences : 8
52. Turner, Primal Religions of the World : 30-32, 37.
53. Henare, Credo TVI Programme 22/7/84
54. Irwin, Colloquium : 14
55. Rakena, personal communication 1983.
56. Greenwood 1942 : 31
57. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me : 5
58. Greenwood 1942 : 67
59. Frances Porter : 1974 : 608
60. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me : 1
61. Irwin, and Perry, personal communication 1984
62. Davis, personal communication 1980.
63. Personal communication, Kawerau 1985.
64. His employment in a major city means he can return home only occasionally.
65. Personal communication, Kawerau 1985.
66. Greenwood 1942 : 55
67. Keith Sinclair 1961 : 145
68. Shirres, Beyond Religious Differences : 7
69. Rev. T.Takao, the first Maori Moderator of the Presbyterian Church.
70. Reneti, personal communication 1984
71. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me : 17
72. Ruru, personal communication 1984
73. Davis, Dossier on Te Kooti, Vol.3
74. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me : 1
75. Irwin, Dreams and Visions As Religious Experiences. And Tarei, personal communication 1984
76. Irwin, Some Maori Responses To Western Forms of Christianity : 64-66
77. Jules-Rosette 1975 : 188-189
78. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 11
79. Karen Sinclair 1976:5,17
80. Mol 1982 : 78
81. Mol 1982 : 34
82. Elsmore 1985 : 63ff.
83. Frank Davis, in a handbook accompanying an exhibition of his art.
84. Mead, Decorated Houses and Other Structures of the Maori : 5-6
85. Greenwood 1942 : 67
86. Mol 1982 : 37-39
87. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 313
88. Shirres, Towards A Maori Theology : 29
89. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 257-270
90. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 291-311
91. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 299

92. Karen Sinclair 1976 : 299
93. Marsden 1978 : 195, 215
94. Ngata, The Religious Philosophy Of The Maori : 15
95. Irwin, Some Maori Responses To The Gospel : 55
96. Shirres 1984 : 7
97. See Luke 4/18



## CHAPTER FIVE A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

### -WILL THE TREE SURVIVE?

This chapter was written in the Greytown Park, where all around stand venerable totara trees. Not far away is the historic Papawai marae, one of many which hosted Ringatu in the early days. These totara trees would already have been growing for many years before the first Ringatu Ra was held at Papawai, but now, a hundred years or so later, though they appear to be flourishing, they also bear the signs of age and decay. Will they survive? And will the Church which those first Ringatu helped to establish, be able to survive? This chapter indicates some concerns, raises some questions, and expresses some hopes regarding the tree of Ringatu.

On Wharekauri, Te Kooti was faced with limited choices - submit passively or take the opportunity to escape. On landing at Whareongaonga, again the choices were limited - surrender and endure further imprisonment, or fight for freedom. In each case, he chose freedom or survival, and the strategies appropriate to survival. As life-centred traditional Maori religion had done; and as the Israelites, convinced that God was on the side of the oppressed, had also done; as the Biblical prophets believed and advocated; and as Jesus himself had taught and demonstrated; so Te Kooti used, and used increasingly, spiritual means to achieve legitimate practical ends.

The Exodus theme with which Ringatu identified, was not and never can be, just a moving out from one situation, but must be as well a moving on, and into a new situation, with new problems or "enemies" to be dealt with if new advantages are to be enjoyed. Assuming that Ringatu have always been concerned with survival - initially with the physical survival of their fighting troops and their dependents, but also with the survival of their faith, and more generally, with the survival of Maoritanga, are there survival goals and strategies which can be recognised? Interestingly, the first name used by Te Kooti of the liturgy of the Church, was "The Faith of the Survivors".

There are a number of concerns being felt by Maoridom, which presumably are felt by Ringatu also.

Land was the central issue in the Wars of the 1860's, and it continues to be the focus of discontent in many parts of the country, not least among the Ngati Awa, who are unhappy with some aspects of

the leasing by Tasman Pulp and Paper Company of their mountain, Putauaki. It is suggested that Te Kooti was the real source of Apirana Ngata's use of Pakeha legislation, intended to facilitate the alienation of Maori land, to retain it in Maori ownership by setting up Incorporations, for instance.<sup>1</sup> Though one or two individuals have discounted concern about land, saying that it is the spiritual faith that is the main thing, I suspect that there are strong feelings held by the majority of Ringatu, like those expressed in, "we agree wholeheartedly with the kind of things Donna Awatere is saying about Maori rights."<sup>2</sup> It is to be hoped that Te Kooti's church will continue to provide inspiration to the people on this issue.

Then there are concerns which, when expressed in statistics, indicate that the Maori experience a considerable disadvantage in several important areas. 1981 statistics<sup>3</sup> show that while Maori represented 8.8% of the population: in Education, 64.7% of Maori had no qualifications compared with 27.3% of non-Maori, 27% of Maori had passed School Certificate in one or more subjects compared with 36% of non-Maori, and that 8.2% of Maori had passed University Entrance of higher compared with 35.9% of non-Maori. In Unemployment, 27% of the Maori work force was unemployed compared with 6.4% of the Pakeha work force. In Prison, 48.5% were Maori males, and 56.2% were Maori females. In Childrens and Young Persons offending 46.7% were Maori. The proportion of Maori young persons compared with non-Maori who were fined was 34%, given periodic detention 52%, committed to Borstal 69.2%, and placed under Social Welfare 68.8%. In Health, the indication is that life-expectancy for Maori is considerably less than for non-Maori. In 1977, Maori males had an expectation of 63.35 years, compared with 69.37 for non-Maori, while Maori females had an expectation of 67.75 years compared with 75.88 for non-Maori. But by 1983, Maori males had an expectation of only 51 years compared with 66.7 for non-Maori, while Maori females had an expectation of 52.7 years compared with 72.7 for non-Maori.

Given that Ringatu, like other Maori movements, was concerned with survival in both physical and spiritual senses, these statistics are relevant enough.

Of all the things the Pakeha would bring to Aotearoa, according

to the predictions of Toiroa the prophet, and of which he made models (Chap 2 p.28), the most dangerous for the Maori up to and including the time of Te Kooti, were muskets and bullets. In more recent years, however, a far greater threat to Maori health can be seen in the pipe and "tobacco", and the cooking and eating utensils, or rather in what is prepared and consumed by means of them. Recent statistics indicate that smoking and inappropriate diet are claiming many more Maori lives than did bullets. With respect, it is suggested that Ringatu are affected as much as any other section in the Maori population, and probably more than a few groups, such as the Mormon church, which has a specific health emphasis. Indeed, one who was closely involved in the Bay of Plenty area generally, and with its Ringatu people particularly, described with much sorrow and concern, what he considered to be a marked change over a period of some twenty years, in the physical condition of the people, especially of the men, with smoking and obesity being identified as two significant factors involved in their deterioration.<sup>4</sup> Physical fitness must surely have been an important factor in enabling Te Kooti and his followers to endure the rigours of the Urewera campaign.<sup>5</sup> It could be said that many battles were fought by means of physical health and endurance. Today's battle, however, may be for health itself. If it makes little sense for the followers of Te Kooti to have survived Pakeha bullets in one generation, but to succumb to Pakeha smoking and dietary habits in another, the Ringatu Church could reasonably be expected to once again be motivating and mobilizing its supporters to positive action, and in so doing, to once again use spiritual means (Biblical faith) toward practical ends (in this case, Maori physical health).

Clearly, concern for Maori health is widespread. It was reported in 1984 that statistics indicated that New Zealand had the poorest record for post neo-natal mortality of 23 O.E.C.D. countries, while in the Gisborne area, the Maori rate was 50% higher than for non-Maori. Suggested contributing factors were unemployment and its effect on standards of housing, diet, and medical care, together with "unhealthy ways of 'escape', like smoking."<sup>6</sup>

The Maori Women's Welfare League Conference in 1984 sponsored an anti-smoking programme, M.A.S.H. (Maoris Against The Smoking Habit). The 1985 Conference, as part of a Decade of Maori Health, implemented

Rapuora (Search for Health) a research study. Emphasis was laid on diet, non-smoking, exercise. Hourly exercise sessions were even introduced into the Conference programme. A Koha T.V. programme reported "jazzercise" being introduced onto marae, for mothers of children attending kohanga reo, to help combat obesity. Strong emphasis was made on the relationship between health and wairua (the spiritual) as preferable to reliance on Pakeha pills. Elizabeth Murchie who heads the Rapuora study, said during a T.V. programme on Heart Disease (6/10/85), "smoking is a demon in the life of our women", and, "over 60% of Maori women smoke compared with 29% of Pakeha women." Dr Mason Durie, in December 1985, reported the inauguration of a joint Raukawa District Council and Health Department scheme, involving the appointment of five Maori women to deal exclusively with Maori health problems, indicating that similar schemes were being set up elsewhere, in the belief that tribal based health services were desirable.<sup>7</sup>

While Ringatu in recent years have shown an increasing openness in attitude toward other sections of the Church, in its services it has been essentially conservative, the content remaining as formulated by Te Kooti. Ringatu leaders like Tarei, say that Te Kooti's inspired selection of Scriptures omitted only "the ifs and buts" or "the dotting of i's and crossing of t's".<sup>8</sup> But in view of the new threats to Maori welfare, including the welfare of Ringatu supporters, it needs to be asked whether Te Kooti saw his experience of revelation as closed or open, completed or continuing? Did he actually declare that his liturgy must remain fixed for all time, or are new Biblical and other spiritual insights to be allowed to provide new components in the liturgy, and new motivation for action? Can the existing prayers which ask for deliverance from an unspecified enemy, be made specific in current interpretation and use, to identify respiratory and cardio-vascular disease, lung cancer, diabetes and obesity as being enemies of the body, (which is Biblically the temple of the Holy Spirit), and therefore to be resisted by every means? Only Ringatu can answer these questions, however.

Tarei, after conducting baptisms on one occasion, told the mothers of the children involved, of their great responsibility to feed their children with proper food, and not with "dried grass".<sup>9</sup> The interpretation was apparently more "spiritual" than literal, in

that they had a responsibility to feed the children with the spiritual food of the faith. Yet his words could just as appropriately have been used literally, as a direct, practical instruction and encouragement on the responsibility to provide a good diet, and to set an example in not smoking.

Looking forward, it is to be hoped that the Ringatu Church, which has used as one of its names, "The Church of the Holy Spirit", will be open to new revelation from the same Spirit, that it may have sufficient flexibility and adaptability to challenge and overcome these new threats to the life of its people, while truly retaining its own unique identity.

Also looking forward, it is to be hoped that the Pakeha Church, both in its denominational and ecumenical life, will be increasingly informed about the Ringatu Church, and be increasingly sensitive to the legitimacy of its desire to express its own identity in its own way, while at the same time it claims a particular place in the universal family of Christ's people.

As Tarei says : We all worship the same God...it is only the colour of our coats that is different...It is my sincere belief and hope that the churches should stand together, and should work together without losing their individual identity. Though all may wear different coats, we can all come under the same blanket after all."<sup>10</sup>

Or as Crick says so simply, but so profoundly: "...to study another culture seriously - like knowing another individual human being intimately - is to extend one's own life." <sup>11</sup>

For Pakeha Christians of Aotearoa to take seriously the Ringatu expression of the Faith, is not to belittle, diminish, or discredit their own religious life, but rather to enrich it.

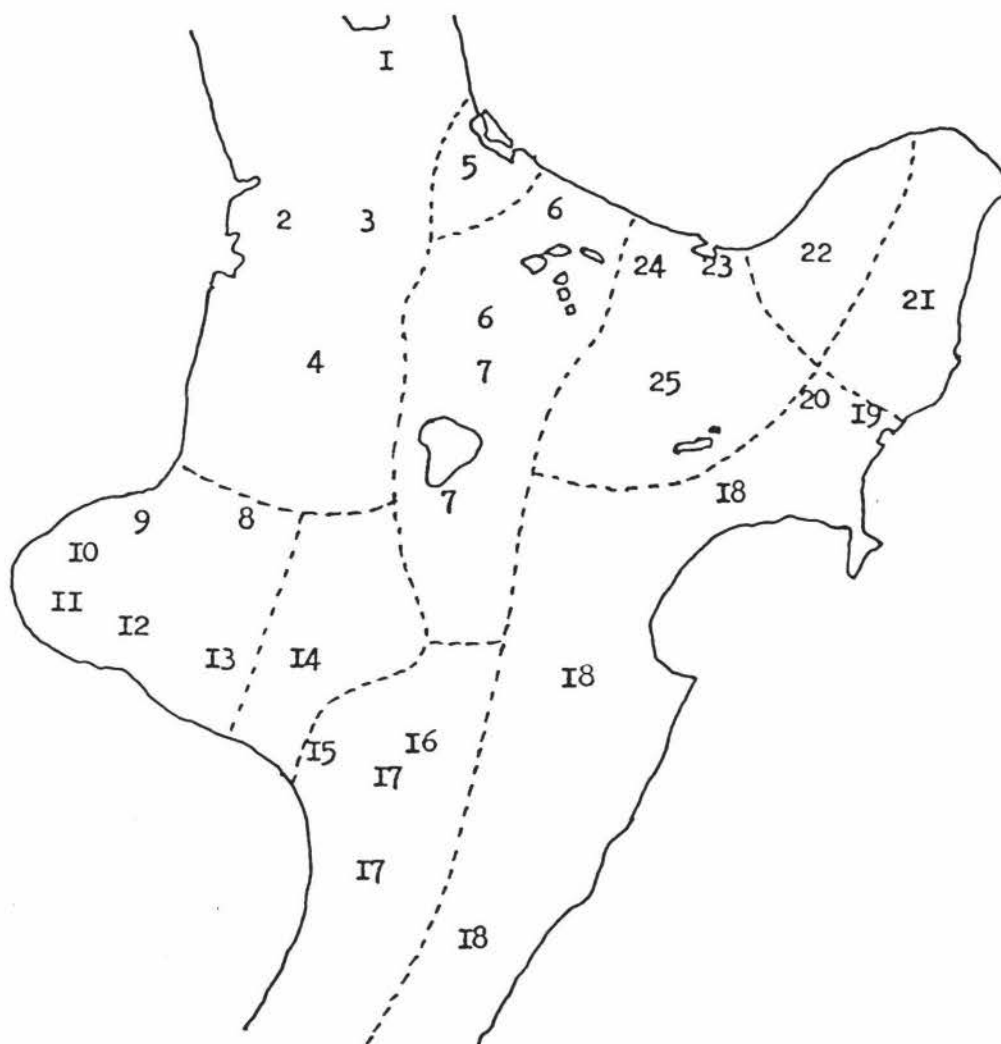
For this opportunity to sit for a time by the tree of Ringatu, I shall be for ever grateful, for the experience has enriched my life. May it long continue to provide shade, sustenance, and satisfaction to those whose tree it is, and to those who from time to time come to it with respect, and with a genuine desire to understand it.



### Chapter Five Notes

1. Identity of informant and details of a very interesting story cannot be revealed. However, for an account of the legislation involved, see Kawharu 1977, also D. Sinclair 1975:153-154.
2. Tarei, Kawerau 1985, the same occasion, and same speech in which I was identified as a representative of the Pakeha who had taken their (Ngati Awa) land.
3. Statistics compiled from official sources, and used during 1985 as part of studies in bi-culturalism in the Methodist Church.
4. The late Frank Davis.
5. Another, rather more cynical observer, has commented that if present-day followers of Te Kooti were called into the Urewera to engage in battle, many wouldn't make it up the first hill, while many more would be unable to hide their presence from the enemy, because their coughing would be heard miles away!
6. N.Z. Listener, May 12th, 1984.
7. Manawatu Evening Standard, December 17th, 1985.
8. Tarei, personal communication 1984
9. Tarei, Mahia 1984
10. Tarei, What Being Ringatu Means To Me transcript:6
11. Crick 1975 : 167

Map 1. Main tribal areas involved in the Ringatu and other movements mentioned. Dotted boundary lines are approximate only.



Canoe Abbreviation

Tai	:	Tainui
Mat	:	Mataatua
Ar	:	Arawa
Tok	:	Tokomaru
Kur	:	Kurahaupo
Ao	:	Aotea
Tak	:	Takitimu
Hor	:	Horouta

Tribe

1.	Ngati Maru	- Tai
2.	Ngati Mahuta	- Tai
3.	Ngati Haua	- Tai
4.	Ngati Maniapoto	- Tai
5.	Ngai Te Rangi & Ngati Ranginui	- Tai/Mat
6.	Te Arawa	- Ar

Tribe

7.	Ngati Tuwharetoa
8.	Ngati Tama
9.	Ngati Mutunga
10.	Te Ati Awa
11.	Taranaki
12.	Ngati Ruanui
13.	Nga Rauru
14.	Ngati Hau
15.	Ngati Apa
16.	Rangitane
17.	Ngati Raukawa
18.	Kahungunu
19.	Rongowhakaata
20.	Aitanga-a-Mahaki
21.	Ngati Porou
22.	Whanau-a-Apanui
23.	Whakatohea
24.	Ngati Awa
25.	Tuhoe

Canoe

- Ar
- Tok
- Tok
- Tok
- Kur
- Ao
- Ao
- Kur/Ao
- Kur
- Kur
- Tai
- Tak
- Tak
- Tak
- Hor
- Hor/Mat
- Mat
- Mat
- Mat

Map 2. Location of places mentioned in the text.



Appendix IDIARY OF INVESTIGATION AND RESEARCH.

- 1976 As part of a Maori Studies Group from Rotorua, visited Ruatahuna, and stayed in the Te Whai A Te Motu house. Became aware of the significance of Te Kooti for the tangata whenua, heard Ringatu liturgy being learned, experienced a warm feeling of "being gathered in" by the rafters of the house. Several return trips made that year and the next, to "check out" this experience, with the feeling of warmth confirmed, even when house was empty.
- 1976 During the South Pacific Festival in Rotorua, attended three performances of "Face To Face", a multi-media documentary on "The Life And Times Of Te Kooti", produced by Frank Davis, and others from the Palmerston North Teachers College. Recognised a kindred spirit in Frank, and the great importance of the material he had gathered. At the same time, met and felt accepted by Mac Whakamoe, a Tuhoe elder, who accompanied the group, but who lived in Palmerston North.
- 1976 Visited Te Porere battle site
- 1977 Attended a performance of "Christ The Maori" in Rotorua, written by Father Henare Tait, as a presentation of the Birth, Teaching, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus, in totally Maori terms... an example of "indigenizing the Gospel"
- 1978 Moved to Palmerston North, and renewed contact with Frank Davis and Mac Whakamoe.
- 1979 Decided during Maori Studies at Massey University, that the time had come to study the Ringatu Church formally and intentionally.
- 1980 Sought help from Frank and Wana Davis, learned something of his involvement with the Ringatu Church in being asked to write the history of the Ngati Awa branch.
- Taken by Frank to my first Ringatu "Tekau-ma-rua" at Te Teko, and learned of the confusion amongst local leaders over the Pakeha who was coming as a student from Massey University (to whom they were not going to give much information) and the Pakeha who was coming with Frank (to whom they might give some information). Great relief and some laughter when the two Pakeha turned out to be one and the same, and was told "What we have given to Frank we give to you", but also "Don't try and change us and we won't try and change you".
- Spent several days later in year making a return trip, and following visits to leaders met.
- Visited Wainui.
- 1981 Attended two further "Tekau-ma-rua"
- 1982 Went in May with a large group from the Bay of Plenty to a "Tekau-ma-Rua" at Otewa, where Te Kooti had lived for some years, before and after his pardon. This, apparently the first time a group of Ringatu had officially visited Otewa

since Te Kooti and his followers left, the intention to "sound out" the possibility of celebrating the centenary of Te Kooti's pardon in February 1983 at Te Kuiti.

Visited Tokanga-a-noho house at Te Kuiti, and Te Miringa Te Kakara house at Pureora - the latter burned down soon after in 1983.

- 1982 In August, attended another "Tekau-ma-rua" at Te Teko, then took several weeks leave, in seclusion at Rotoehu, to study the ten volumes of Frank Davis' Dossier. At the conclusion of that period, spent some time with William Tarei, checking details from the Dossier.

Meantime, Frank Davis had taken ill. Told not long after that the Dossier on Te Kooti had been "recalled".

- 1983 Learned of Centenary Celebrations (re Te Kooti's pardon) at Te Kuiti, but unable to attend.

Learned later than William Tarei had been taken ill following this.

Frank Davis died early in 1983. Now "on my own".

Spent this year translating Ringatu Services into English to provide working documents.

In June, spent a week in Gisborne, investigating museum material on Ringatu, and visited Waituhi, Te Karaka, Whareongaonga, Whakato, and Korito. Contact at Te Karaka indicated a "nod" to return.

Made two trips to Alexander Turnbull Library, and National Archives.

Also trip to Napier Museum Library.

In November, renewed contact with John Rangihau.

In December, attended another "Tekau-ma-rua" at Te Teko, and felt I had returned "just in time". Learned of problems of "ownership" of the Dossier on Te Kooti. Reassured of welcome and access to information.

- 1984 In January, attended "Tekau-ma-rua" at Puha, acting on the "nod" of the previous June, and received warm welcome from Digger and John Ruru, and other leaders from the area, also from Joe Tipoki from Wairoa, who unfortunately died soon after. Invitation to July 1st at Mahia.

Visited Ngatapa Hill and Makaretu battle sites, and tramped Rua's old stock track from Waimaha to Maungapohatu, but hindered by weather.

June pilgrimage to Te Teko, Whakatane, Waiotahi, Waioeka, Puha, Te Karaka, Manutuke, visited informants on the way, including Jim Irwin, and attended July 1st at Mahia. Experienced reaction



to my presence from a non-Ringatu.

- 1985 In January, revisited Mahia, Whareongaonga, Ngatapa, and Makaretu Met with Tihei Algie, Reuben Riki, Digger and John Ruru. Visited Whakahau at Te Karaka, and went on to Waioeka, and Roimata and Maromahue marae at Ohiwa. Met with Norman Perry, Boy Biddle, Jim Irwin, and William Tarei. Invited to lifting of tapu from Eripitana house at Te Whaiti in February, but unable to accept.

In March, visited Turnbull Library and Historic Places Trust to investigate the Te Miringa Te Kakara story.

In August, attended "Tekau-ma-rua" at Kawerau, and renewed contacts.

In December, significant contact made by phone with Monita Delamere, with agreement to spend time together as soon as possible.

- 1986 In January, revisited Papawai. Opening of the dining hall at Waituhi postponed until February, making attendance impossible.

The intention is to revisit the Bay of Plenty and Gisborne areas as soon as possible to renew contacts with leaders, and to report progress to date.

APPENDIX 2EXULT FOR TE KOOTI

1. Exult for Te Kooti! Te Kooti the bold!  
So fierce in the onset, so dauntless of old,  
Whose might was resistless when battle wars rolled,  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
2. The Pakehas came with their rum and their gold,  
And soon the broad lands of our fathers was sold,  
But the voice of Te Kooti said, "Hold the land, hold!"  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
3. They falsely accused him, no trial had he,  
They carried him off to an isle in the sea;  
But his prison was broken, once more he was free,  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
4. They tried to enslave us, to trample us down,  
Like the millions that serve them in field and town,  
But the sapling that's bended when freed will rebound,  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
5. He plundered their rum stores, he ate up their priests,  
He robbed the rich squatters to furnish him feasts,  
What fare half so fine as their clover-fed beasts?  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
6. In the wild midnight foray whose footsteps trod lighter?  
In the flash of the rifle whose eyeballs gleamed brighter?  
What man with our hero could clinch as a fighter?  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
7. They say it was murder, but what then is war?  
When they slaughtered our kin in the flames of the pa?  
O darker their deeds and more merciless far!  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
8. They boast that they'll slay him, they'll shoot him on sight,  
But the power that nerves him's a giver of might,  
At a glance from his eye they shall tremble with fright!  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
9. When the darkness was densest he wandered away,  
To rejoice in the charge of the wild battle fray!  
Now his limbs they are feeble, his beard it is grey,  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
10. The Eternal's our Father, the land is our Mother,  
The forest and mountains, our sister and brother;  
Who'd part with his birthright for gold to another?  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
11. We won't sell the land - 'tis the gift of the Lord,  
Except it be bought with the blood-drinking sword!  
But all men are welcome to share in its hoard,  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!
12. Yet, mid the rejoicing forget not the braves,  
Who in glades of the forest have found lonely graves,  
Who welcomed cold death, for they scorned to be slaves,  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!

13. Exult for Te Kooti, Te Kooti the bold,  
So sage in the council, so famous of old,  
Whose war cry's our motto - tis "Hold the land! hold!  
Exult for Te Kooti, yo ho!

SOURCE - FRANK DAVIS

### APPENDIX 3

#### A RINGATU EVENING SERVICE OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

##### NOTE

This service is to be regarded as a "sample" only, and not as one that would be followed in every detail in any particular Tekau-ma-rua, On any such occasion, this order may well be extended by adding extra prayers, or by repeating the cycle with additional himene, panui and waiata components. Some of these components may also be replaced with others of a similar kind.

This particular "model" is taken from the service book of the Church of Te Kooti Arikirangi, as compiled by Matarena Reneti for the Ngati Awa branch, but with the opening inoi, which she does not include, taken from the service book of the Church of the Holy Spirit, as used in the Gisborne district.

The translation only is given, and this has intentionally been left as rather a literal one, rather than "polished", in order that a greater appreciation may be had of the ideas involved.

The reader needs to be aware of an occasional "changes of direction", for example in himene, which are collections of various portions of Scripture rather than complete passages. The result is that sometimes the "speaker" is speaking for the people to God, and at other times about God, or for him, to the people.

The (...) indicates "punctuation" in the chanting of himene and waiata.

Prayer (Inoi) Honour and Glory to God, for peace on earth, and goodwill to all people. We praise you, O God, for your loving kindness which you have bestowed on us, and because you have fulfilled our prayers (requests) which we have placed before you, during days which have now gone by, up until this present night. (Beginning based on Luke 2/14)

Hymn (Himene) O Lord, praise awaits you...you will fulfil your promise... O hearer of prayers. All your churches are coming to you. Oh, he is the creator of the worlds...he is the supreme brilliance of his glory... he is the exact likeness of his eternal being...he has himself completed the cleansing of our sins. Let the words of your mouth be humble, lest proudness of heart be revealed...lest you be like one wandering aimlessly ...for (them) there is no place of rest promised...Alas! O God, give strength to your people, to the remnant of Israel...A prayer of silence does not gladden the heart...(therefore) we praise and bless our Father always. (Based on Psalm 65/1-2, Hebrews 1/2-3)

Prayer (Inoi Wahi, separation of the sacred from the secular) Bless the

name of the Lord, of God, who loads us with good things every day. So be it! O God, you deliver us, by you we are rescued from death. O God, save us, for the waters have come up to our necks. Why have we forsaken you? Alas! O Lord, stretch down your right hand from heaven, as a staff for us, and let your Holy Spirit be enlightenment for our hearts, and the blood of your only Son as forgiveness for all our sins - glory to your Holy name. Amen.

#### Scripture Verses (Panui)

Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, give to the Lord glory and strength (1 Chron 16/28)

Be fearful before him, all the people, the earth with its people, shall not be moved. (1 Chron. 16/30)

In his hands are the spirits of all living things, and the strength of all flesh. (Job 15/10)

A lie is tested by the ear, and the sweetness of food is tasted by the mouth - so wisdom is tested by length of days. (Job 12/12)

From God comes salvation, and his blessings are upon us. (Psalm 3/8)

This is the word of the Lord, "Put an end to weeping, and the tears of your eyes, for your work shall be rewarded by God, and they shall return from the land of the enemy." (Jeremiah 31/16)

Maintain hopefulness in your future, says the Lord (that) the children will return to their own land. (Jeremiah 31/17)

Seek the Lord, you meek of the earth, who obey his commands, seek glory and strength, that you may never enter into the day of his anger. (Zephaniah 2/3)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but the wicked will be cut off from the earth. (Proverbs 1/7, 2/22)

Although a just man falls down seven times, he will rise again, but if your enemy falls, don't you rejoice. (Proverbs 24/16)

Prayer O God, create clean hearts, and renew right spirits within us; don't drive us away from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us a willing spirit, and our mouths will declare praise and glory to your holy name. Amen. (Based on Psalm 51/10-12,14)

Psalm (Waiata) Praise God, Praise God in his holy place...praise him in his power in the highest heaven, praise him for his mighty deeds, praise him according to the excellence of his greatness...Praise him with the sound of the trumpet, praise him with the psaltery and harp. Listen,



my child to the teaching of your father, and don't forsake the law of your mother. Oh, let it be a beautiful garland for your head...and a chain of adornment for your neck. My child, if you are tempted by evil people, don't agree with them. (Psalm 150/1-3, Proverbs 1/8-10)

Prayer Befriend us, O Jehovah our God, just as you did in the days of our ancestors. Do not separate yourself from your people, O God. Therefore kindle our hearts towards you, to follow in your ways, to obey your commands and requirements, that we be close to (you), God, by day and by night. Glory to your holy name. Amen.

Hymn O God, many are your acts of mercy...Direct me...with your righteous judgement, and your reviving of me...There is great peace...belonging to those who love your law...Their feet will never stumble...And there are some...who are first, who shall be last...and others who are last who shall be first...I rejoice in your word...like a man...who has found great treasure...Now if a man has trust...in me, then he will trust...in the one who sent me...That exceedingly small (trust) which is within you all...shall become great. Praise him for ever and ever.

Prayer May the God of hope fill us with joy and peace through faith, that hope may abound through the power of the Holy Spirit. When will you be understood, O confused of the people - when will you be wise, O foolish people? Will not the one who formed the ear, hear? And he who created the eye, will he not see? God knows the thoughts of the man who is false. Indeed, let there be great praise to our God for ever and ever. Glory to your Holy name. Amen. (Romans 15/13, Psalm 94/8-9,11)

#### Scripture Verses

Be on the watch in all things, offer your suffering to God, do the work of a preacher of the Gospel, fulfil your work as a minister. (2 Tim 4/5)

The time has come for me to be offered up, likewise the time for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have run the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Tim 4/7).

In the time to come, there is a crown of righteousness reserved for me, which will be given to me on that day by the Lord, the righteous judge, and not only to me, but to all who long for his appearing. (2 Tim 4/8).

Do your utmost to come to me soon, for I have been abandoned by Demas, because he loves this world. He is going to Thessalonica, and Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. (2 Tim. 4/9-10).

Only Luke is with me. As for Mark, bring him as a companion, for he also is helpful to my work as minister. (2 Tim. 4/11)

I have sent Tichicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring the cloak I left behind at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. (2 Tim. 4/12)

Many were the evils done by Alexander, the brass-worker, against me. The Lord will reward him according to his works. (2 Tim. 4/14)

Beware of him also, for he has widely opposed our work. (2 Tim 4/15)

Prayer. You are to be praised, O Jehovah our God, for yours is the greatness and the power and the victory and the honour; by you were all things in the world created; yours also is the kingdom which shall never end; so we give thanks and praise to you; for you remain as head over all the world. Bless and praise our Father forever. Glory to your holy name. Amen. (Based on I Chron. 29/11)

Psalms. How beautiful are your temples, O God of hosts...my spirit longs and languishes for the courts of God. My heart cries out, and my flesh also, to the living God; happy are those who dwell in your house, who praise you continually. Happy is the man whose strength is in you, for there are highways there in the heart to you. They move joyously from strength to strength. They will see the face of God in Zion. O Jehovah, O Lord of hosts, listen to my prayer, incline your ear, O God of Jacob...Behold us, O God our shield. Look down also on the face of the one anointed by you, because strangely, a day in your house is better than a thousand (elsewhere). Far better for me to be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to live in the tents of the wicked. The Lord Jehovah is a sun, a defensive shield; the Lord bestows kindness and honour. He will never refuse a single good thing to those who act rightly...O Jehovah, Lord of hosts, happy is the man who trusts in you. (Based on Psalm 84)

Prayer On that day you said I should praise you, O God, and although you were angry with me, you have turned away your anger, and have made peace with me. You are the God of my salvation, I trust in you, I will never be afraid, for God is my strength and my song, and he is also my salvation, and we will all rejoice when we arrive at the spring of our salvation. It was also said on that day, praise God, call upon his name, so that his works may be known among the people. Declare that the elevation (celebration) of his name has been completed; sing to the

Lord because his mighty works have been known throughout the world.  
Glory to your holy name. Amen.

Prayer You are worthy to be praised, O Jehovah, in this assembly, because you are our Creator. The God of Hosts is your name, the Holy One of Israel, and our saviour. You are the God of all the earth, and by you we were protected in the years that have passed by, and it is promised by the angel of God, the one who lives for ever, that for many years to come, you will be encircled by his holiness. It was also the Christ who said, seek the Kingdom of God, and his ways, and all these things shall be added on for us. Indeed, let our prayers to our Father be increased, that he may protect us throughout this year. Glory to your holy name. Amen.

Prayer O God, incline your ear, listen to me, regard us also, and behold our weakness in which we are not worthy to offer up our prayers before you, but how great is your mercy. O God, forgive our sins, O Lord hear us, act for us, do not destroy us. O God, remember us at this time. Glory to your holy name. Amen.

Prayer (Tereina Whita) O God of the holy ones dwelling in heaven, let your right hand be near to save us. O gracious Jehovah of mankind, (how) abundant are your saving mercies, and you put aside your anger. Manifold are your mercies. You are good to all people, so let your loving kindness be upon us. Glory to your holy name. Amen.

Prayer (A te Ariki, Lord's Prayer, shortened and adapted) Our Father in heaven, let your name be holy. May your kingdom come. May your will be done on earth as in heaven. We have given you our thanks, and we have glorified your holy name. Amen.

Prayer (Pokaikaha, for deliverance from confusion) O God, incline your ears to our prayers, lest you withdraw from us who are sorrowing here. Face towards us, look down on our confusion as we weep here. Glory to your holy name. Amen.

Prayer (Whakatuwhera, to conclude service, and to open the way for normal proceedings) O God, open to us the doors of righteousness, faith, enlightenment and power, and we will give thanks to you and glorify your holy name. Amen.

Appendix 4

THE SEAL OF THE RINGATU CHURCH



GLOSSARY

ahi	: fire
aituā	: misfortune, accident, death
amo	: front corner post of meeting house, supporting barge-boards.
aria	: visible form of tribal or family spirits
āriki	: high chief, sometimes chiefly priest
Āriki	: used Biblically as Lord for God, Christ
atawhai	: kind, kindness
atua	: god, or spiritual being
Atua	: used Biblically as God
āwhina	: help
hahunga	: disinterment of bones
hākari	: feast, in Ringatu in lieu of Holy Communion
hāngi	: earth oven, and the meal cooked in it
Hānuere	: January, meaning in Ringatu the January 1st service
Hāpati	: the Sabbath (Saturday)
hapū	: sub-tribe
Haumiatikitiki	: god of uncultivated food
Hawaiki	: mythical place of origin of the Maori, also dwelling places or temples of the supreme God, Io
himene	: hymn, but in Ringatu is chanted portion of Scripture
Hineahuone	: the first-born woman, the "Earth-Maid" created by Tane
Hinetitama	: daughter of Hineahuone and Tane, the "Dawn-Maid".
Hinenuitepo	: role of goddess of death, assumed by Hinetitama, after discovering husband was also her father, Tane
hongī	: pressing of noses in greeting
horoeka	: indigenous tree, "lance-wood"
Huamata	: Ritual for dedication of seed tubers, on June 1st or just before
Hurae	: July, meaning in Ringatu the July 1st service
ihi	: vital personal force or "charisma"
iho	: the umbilical, "heart" or essence
Ihowa	: used Biblically to translate Jehovah
inoi	: prayer
iriiri	: ritual cleansing, or baptism, using water
Kahukura	: personification of the rainbow
kaikauhau	: preacher
kaikawaka	: indigenous tree, N.Z. cedar

kaitiaki	: guardian, guardian spirit
karakia	: chanted invocation etc, liturgy, now a "service"
karanga	: the call of the host people to visitors to come on to the marae.
kauri	: indigenous tree
kēhua	: ghost, usually of the dead who have not been properly farewelled
kererū	: indigenous pigeon
kirimate	: chief mourners
Kiwa	: associate god of the sea
koha	: offering, gift, "collection"
kōhanga-reo	: pre-School "language nest"
kōkako	: indigenous bird, crow
korimako	: indigenous bird, "bell-bird"
kotahitanga	: one-ness, unity
kōwhaiwhai	: painted rafter designs
mākutu	: witchcraft
mana	: personal charisma, authority etc, but bestowed spiritually
manaakitanga	: hospitality
manuhiri	: guest or visitors
mara	: garden
marae	: the area in front of a tribal meeting house
Maru	: a tribal war god
mātai	: indigenous tree, "black pine"
matau	: right hand side
mate	: sickness, death
maui	: left hand side
Maui	: legendary demi-god, of "trickster" character
maungarongo	: peace between people, i.e. after war, used particularly by Ringatu of period after Te Kooti's pardon
mauri	: life-principle given by the gods to all created things
mere	: stone fighting club, with sharpened edge
mihi	: greetings
miro	: indigenous tree, "brown pine"
mua	: in front
muri	: in the rear
ngā hau e wha	: the four winds, but used of "all tribes"
ngā kete a te wānanga	: the legendary three baskets of knowledge
ngāwari	: gentle, gentleness



nehunga	: burial of the dead
niu pole	: focus of worship around which Pai Marire worshippers danced
noa	: common, not tapu
ohāki	: dying speech
ora	: life
Pai Marire	: literally "the good and peaceful". The religious movement comprised of followers of Te Ua Haumene, and also known as Hauhau
Papatuanuku	: personification of the earth, earth-mother
pānui	: In Ringatu, a component of the liturgy comprised of a number of selected verses of Scripture
patupaiarehe	: fairy folk
pirihimana	: the "policeman" or steward who controls non-ritual functions in a Ringatu gathering
poke	: ritually unclean
poroporoaki	: a farewell to the living or the dead
pounamu	: green-stone, or jade
poutikanga	: main support, used metaphorically of the over-all leader of the Ringatu Church
puhi	: a young, virgin girl
pure	: in Ringatu, is the November 1st or December 1st thanksgiving for the first of the new tubers to be harvested
pūriri	: indigenous tree
rā, Rā	: a day, The Day, referring to the "Tekau-ma-rua"
rangatira	: chief
Rangi, Ranginui	: personification of the sky, the sky-father
raro	: under, down
rewarewa	: indigenous tree, N.Z. honey-suckle
rimu	: indigenous tree, "red pine"
Ringatū	: religious movement comprised of the followers of Te Kooti but literally "the raised hand"
Rongomātane	: god of cultivated food, and of peace
ruahine	: woman beyond child-bearing age
Ruaumoko	: god of the underworld, associated with volcanic action and earthquakes
runanga	: assembly
runga	: above, or up
ruru	: indigenous bird, owl
takahi whare	: ritual of "trampling the house" to free from tapu associated with death

tākuta	: "doctor", a Ringatu tohunga or minister with a gift of healing
Tama-a-rura	: The Paimarire god
Tama-i-rorokutia	: "The Son-who-was-killed", the new God to be brought by the Pakeha
Tāne	: the god of the forests and its creatures, and of mankind
tānekaha	: indigenous tree, "celery pine"
tangata whenua	: the host, local people
Tangaroa	: the god of the sea, and its creatures
taniwha	: monsters of lake, or stream
tapu	: ritually restricted or reserved in order to protect mana
taua	: work, hunting, or war party
tautokotanga	: support
tawa	: indigenous tree
tawai	: indigenous tree, beech
Tāwhirimātea	: god of winds and weather
te ao mārama	: the world of light, i.e. the land of the living
te ika tapu	: the first of the enemy slain in battle
Tekau-ma-rua	: the twelfth day of the month, the focus for regular Ringatu worship
Te Korekore	: cosmic "nothingness", void, space
Te Pō	: the underworld, abode of the dead, but no judgement implied
Te Rangi	: the sky, the heaven, the spirit world, but no reward implied
Tiki	: a god, in some traditions the first created male, and in others the personification of the male organ
tipua	: hostile evil spirits
tohi	: birth ritual of dedication of child to a god
tohunga	: priestly adept, but in Ringatu, a minister
tūa	: ceremony of dedication or naming of child, without using water
tuku	: ritual release of the spirit of the dead from the body
tukutuku	: woven interior wall decoration of a meeting house
Tumatauenga	: god of war
tūi	: indigenous bird
tupuna	: ancestor
ture	: the law, regulation etc.
Ūenuku	: god associated with the rainbow
umu	: oven, often associated with ritual cooking of food

urupa	: burial ground
utu	: compensation, revenge
wahaika	: whale-bone club
waiata	: song, but in Ringatu is a chanted Biblical psalm
waka	: canoe, vessel
whaikōrero	: speechmaking, oratory
whakapapa	: genealogy
whakaponu	: faith
whanau	: family, extended family, also used figuratively
whanaungatanga	: family-ness
wharenuī	: meeting house
whare-o-te-aitua	: literally, "house of death", but figuratively refers to the female genitals, from Maui's death attempting to enter Hinenuitepo
whare-wānanga	: traditional house of learning

Additional terms omitted from above.

hau	: wind, breath
hau ora	: breath of life, life force
kūmara	: sweet potato
mairihau	: Io's spirit assistants in Te Po
mareikura	: Io's spirit messengers (female) in Te Rangi
mate Maori	: sickness caused by breach of tapu
piwakawaka	: indigenous bird, fantail
poutikanga	: main supporting post, term used of over-all leader
uha	: female element
whatukura	: Io's spirit messengers (male) in Te Rangi

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