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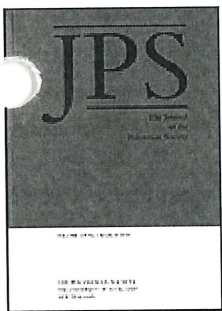


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JOURNAL ARTICLE

MAORI AND PAKEHA

ORMOND WILSON

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Journal Information

The early issues of the Journal contain a rich repository of indigenous texts and traditions contributed by Pacific peoples, as well as by missionaries and other sojourners, often published in local languages with English translations. Among the scholars who have long contributed articles to the Journal are social/cultural anthropologists, archaeologists, historians, linguists and physical/biological anthropologists working in Micronesia and Melanesia, as well as Polynesia. More recently they have been joined by sociologists, political scientists, economists and other scholars.

Publisher Information

The Polynesian Society is a non-profit organization based at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Founded in 1892, the Society's aim was the scholarly study of past and present New Zealand Māori and other Pacific Island peoples and cultures. It has pursued this aim primarily through the Journal of the Polynesian Society, a quarterly publication begun at the Society's inception and enduring to the present. The Society's affairs and activities are administered by a Council consisting of the officers of the Society and eight elected members.

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MAORI AND PAKEHA

By ORMOND WILSON

IN THE FIRST VOLUME of the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, in 1892, a discussion was opened by A. S. Atkinson on the development of meaning of the word 'Maori'. This was followed by notes and articles in Vols. 2, 3 and 5. Much later, in Vol. 54, 1945, two further articles appeared, one by Sidney J. Baker, the other by E.H.S. of Kawhia. Though there were some differences between the writers of the earlier articles, the general pattern of changing usage has now become clear. 'Maori' derives from a common Polynesian word signifying ordinary. The inflexion of meaning varies from translator to translator: ordinary, common, usual, normal, native, indigenous, have all been given, and perhaps it has meant all of these. After the arrival of Europeans it was used in association with *tungata* to distinguish the native people of New Zealand from the strangers. It was in this connection that W. L. Williams summarised its significance: *tungata maori*, he said, was an expression used by the Maori 'to denote a man of the description to which they had always been accustomed'.¹

The name Maori was therefore originally an adjective. By the middle of the 19th century, while remaining an adjective, it also came to be used in isolation as a noun, signifying both a Maori person and the Maori language. I have recently come across a number of examples of the word during its period of transition which amplify and in some details correct what was written in previous articles in the *J.P.S.*

I am indebted to J. W. Davidson for noting, in an unpublished thesis, what is almost certainly the earliest recorded use of the word Maori in New Zealand.² In 1801, a number of missionaries travelled from Port Jackson to Tahiti in the *Royal Admiral*, calling at New Zealand on the way, and spending some two months in the Hauraki Gulf. The missionaries kept a joint journal, and at the end of their stay in New Zealand they wrote a summary of their impressions. In almost the last sentence of this appears the phrase: 'Tongata Mauri (New Zealanders)'.³

The next appearance of the word, and the first printed one, is in the work of Thomas Kendall, the missionary, *A Korao no New Zealand or, the New Zealander's First Book*, printed in Sydney in 1815. This consists mainly of a vocabulary (arranged in a series of lessons) and a series of sentences. The odd thing is that Maori appears only in the sentences, not in the vocabulary, and is given two different meanings: on page 20, the sentence 'Tara te whi maoude' is translated as 'Fetch some good water', and on page 22, in a longer sentence of religious significance, 'na tungata maoude' is translated as 'black men'.

¹ Williams 1893:63.

² Davidson MS.:53n.

³ *Royal Admiral* MS: entry for 19 June, 1801.

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