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Rebel Discourses: Colonial Violence, Pai Marire Resistance and Land Allocation at Tauranga

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of resistance and power in a colonial situation, based on the ethnography of a confiscated-land claim of three hapu who had been Kingitanga supporters and Pai Marire adherents in the 19th century. It draws on archival material and insider ethnography and is arranged into four parts. The first part looks at the relationship between anthropology and colonialism, particularly the role of Sir George Grey, a Governor who used anthropological knowledge to facilitate colonial domination of Maori. Grey instigated the establishment of learned societies which introduced the use of ethnology and anthropology to study Maori. This led to the development of colonial anthropology and its emphasis on salvage anthropology in the late nineteenth century, which in turn gave rise to an intellectual tradition of Maori anthropology. The first proponents of Maori anthropology, Te Rangihiroa and Apirana Ngata, emphasised the role of anthropology for cultural recovery and 'insider' ethnographer. The second part examines the Kingitanga and Pai Marire political and religious expressions of resistance. Political resistance to colonialism was met by legislation by the settler colonial government to punish 'rebellion', a system of collaboration or cultivation of 'loyalty' amongst 'friendly' Maori, and other policies directed at suppressing indigenous expressions of rebel consciousness. This programme had a major bearing on the ongoing existence of these hapu into the twentieth century. Pai Marire was a rebel religious phenomenon that became the object of a campaign of coercion, surveillance, and violence by the settler colonial government. The adherents were subject to policies of exclusion from the redistribution and allocation of confiscated land by local government officials and civil commissioners. The government supported, instead, the land claims of 'friendly' and 'surrendered rebel' chiefs. The third part is hapu ethnography. Key transformations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries related to changing political and kin alliances for one hapu, Ngati Kahu, while another hapu, Ngati Pango which was involved with Pai Marire, suffered from claims on their traditional lands leading to the undermining of its identity and existence as a socially operating hapu. The fourth part uses historical and ethnographic fragments to consider what Pai Marire meant to its adherents. The colonial construct of Pai Marire and Hauhau was forms of savagery and a mix of Christian syncretism, an image that has little changed from the nineteenth century.