

Kia ora, gday and welcome to the History of Aotearoa New Zealand, Episode 10: Social Structures. Just a couple of things before we get going, first is that you may have heard something a little extra before our usual intro. Well, we are big enough now that people are starting to take notice and want to swap promos! I think it's a really cool indication that the story we are telling is amazing enough for people outside of Aotearoa to take notice. Chris is a cool fella with a cool podcast so I definitely recommend you give it a look! Just in case you are worried, this isn't set to become a too regular thing but we may have the odd episode starting out with a quick little ad for another podcast every now and again. The podcast community has been very supportive of me in this whole endeavour and I think it's great to help each other out like this. Rest assured though, any promos you hear on this show have been vetted by me and is something that I would recommend. I'm not just going to advertise any random person with a show that asks. The second thing is that there are now transcripts on the website! There seemed to be a lot of interest in it so it was really easy to just chuck them up there since I script the episodes nearly word for word. So, if that is something you are interested in just go to the website, historyaotearoa.com and click the menu on the right where you will see a link for transcripts.

Anyway, I should apologise for the long absence, hopefully you haven't been too starved of Kiwi history over the last few weeks! I've been busy researching and putting these first few deep dives into Maori culture together and I have a wealth of cool stuff to share with you all about how pre-European Maori society was organised and how it operated, or at least as close to pre-European as we can get. I say as close to pre-European as we can as a lot of our sources come from European explorers observing Maori culture from an outside perspective. That's important as Europeans would note down certain things that if Maori were writing their own histories may not think is worth writing down, things like the mundane or what they might have thought to be a given and so obvious it wouldn't be worth writing down. For example, today if you were writing a history of New Zealand culture you might just say 'it's common to pop 2mins down the road to the dairy to grab some bread and milk.'. For those of you who aren't Kiwis, a dairy is a corner store. When you get that image in your mind there are probably a few things you assume about what this person is wearing, if you are from New Zealand. In particular, you probably assume for a short jaunt to the dairy that this person is barefoot, or wearing jandals (flip flops). This to us is so mundane, normal and assumed that it isn't really worth mentioning but for those of you outside New Zealand, you are likely shocked at this revelation of sans-shoes and you would likely fill that gap of knowledge with someone wearing shoes, which might give you the wrong idea of Kiwis being less laid back and carefree than we probably are. It's a fairly low key example, and not really a great one but the idea I'm trying to get at is that despite European observers not really understanding a lot of parts of Maori culture, they are able to see parts of society that Maori might just assume are mundane and not worth thinking about but are vitally important to their way of life. In saying this, Europeans didn't understand a lot of what they were seeing so there is some hefty salt to be taken here with some of the stuff we are talking about being heavily generalised. So be ready for a lot of exceptions and me saying one thing and then saying 'but not always.' I'd also add that a lot of what we will be talking about in these episodes is going to be interconnected with many things influencing each other in a variety of different ways. So if something isn't entirely clear, it's likely we will cover another portion of it in the near future. But if you are confused about anything please let me know through Facebook, Twitter or email and I can clear it up for you or ensure that I cover it in another episode.

So, we know that Maori lived in chiefdoms and other than warfare their time was mostly focussed on food cultivation, foraging, tool making and maintenance of dwellings, waka and pas. Foraging and agriculture was a communal activity with there being a division of labour through gender, men

did the clearing and digging of the land with women planting and weeding. As we talked about last episode, life was short and reaching the age of 30 or so is likely when an individual reached kaumatua status, an elder. To reach the age of 50 was pretty much unheard of. Many suffered from malnutrition and from their late 20s onward most would have arthritis, infected gums, and loss of teeth from an abrasive diet. James Cook actually commented on the 'elderly' men that he saw on his first voyage saying they looked healthy but they were likely only around 40 years old. He also guesstimated that the population of Maori when he arrived was about 100,000-110,000, with more recent studies suggesting a number at the higher end of that scale being more likely. So that is a little bit of what we already know about their more tangible life but what about the more intangible aspects? Well, let's talk about the basic social and political units of Maori society, the whanau, hapu, iwi and waka. These neat labels are the idealised model of stratification of social units and reality didn't always fit nicely into them but they are good way of understanding Maori social structure. The whanau was the smallest of the three, many of you will be familiar with this term today, meaning family. This would include your basic what you might call nuclear family, mum, dad, kids, grandparents who lived under the same roof. The next level up, which would include more of your extended family, was the hapu, commonly translated to sub-tribe or clan, made up of about 200-300 people. A hapu was a group of whanau who all whakapapa back to a common ancestor and was the main operational unit in Maori society. By that I mean a kainga, village would be a single hapu and most of the people they would interact with in their life would be of the same hapu. Both the whanau and hapu were obviously based on kinship, that link that they were related in some way but there were also some other requirements to be part of any particular hapu. With all the intermarriage between hapus to secure land, alliances and resources, you would very soon have a hapu that numbered in the thousands with many of those people having claims to the same land, potentially despite not living near the land in question. So being local was something that would have been required along with potentially owning or having access to resources, being willing to participate in group activities that benefitted the hapu or having some leadership qualities, particularly in war. The next step up was the iwi or tribe. This is another term many of you are likely familiar with as many iwi are legal and corporate entities with all the rights that that entails. But the Treaty and Tribunal are a while away yet and during this period iwi weren't much more than confederacies of allied hapu and weren't necessarily related in any way, although they could be. Iwi were quite fluid depending on the changing political and military landscape given in a culture where a high importance is placed on kinship it was quite difficult to keep a group of hapu together when there was none to be had in the iwi as a whole. As warfare and migration increased, they eventually led to consolidation of power and to the formation of modern iwi further down the line. The largest unit was the waka, Maori tracing their whakapapa back to the founding canoes of the Great Fleet. It wasn't really recognised anywhere though except in areas where a particular hapu had resided since the time of the Great Fleet and even then, your relation to various hapu via waka wasn't really something you would base alliances on when things like common ancestors or the current political climate were much more important.

In short, whanau and hapu were kinship-based structures and were really the basis for most of Maori daily life with the iwi being a mostly political structure for much more high-level politics. Again, these are neat boxes that Europeans at the time set and possibly didn't reflect exactly what the structure of Maori kinship was at the time but it's better than nothing. The hapu structure itself is really interesting as we don't exactly know how hapus formed. Mainly because by the time anyone actually looked into it the hapu system severely fragmented and distorted by the expeditionary wars or more commonly known as the Musket Wars. We will talk more about them in future but the general gist of them is when Europeans arrived, they naturally traded muskets to

hapu they encountered. These hapu then used their new found military technology to smash their enemies until they got muskets as well to even the odds. Despite this, it was thought that the keystone to membership was the connection to a common ancestor, as I mentioned before. Another idea for how hapu were formed is due to a chief having multiple wives, something we will talk about later. Children would sometimes prefer to distinguish themselves by using their maternal line rather than their shared paternal line and form new groups around that, leading to new hapu. This might sound bad by fracturing the hapu into smaller groups but it was found this might actually be good for the original hapu and the others that were formed as they would form hapu-clusters. These clusters would naturally have a tendency to work together based on their shared whakapapa and in a time with changing alliances, war, migration and politics they had a much longer lifespan than any one hapu on its own. This is only one way hapu could have been born and there are other hypotheses out there as to how hapu got their start and how often each hypothesis occurred, but no one really knows for sure.

As the traditional phase went on, kinship became less important to the hapu as they were increasingly being made up of more and more unrelated people. This came as increased warfare led to increased migration and hapus being spread across a wider area and forming multi-hapu kainga. Climate change also influenced this as it was getting colder, rainier and windier in the 16th and 17th centuries likely resulting in a lower crop yield, which would also likely have driven an increased need to take food from their enemies. Hapu who lost battles were better off to scatter and seek protection among allies and those who had to migrate due to climate change generally just joined the communities of those in the area they entered. This would have encouraged increased cooperation and tolerance of those they wouldn't likely consider the same as them and pushed them to connect more through their allegiance to a chief.

Within these overarching social structures of whanau, hapu and iwi were more complex layers from the powerful and important to the not so much, or at least that is how they were viewed by their peers. At the top of a hapu was the rangitira class, chiefs or nobles, who were usually closely tied to the founding ancestor through descent with the first born and most highly ranked of this class being the ariki, high chief. Well, not quite. I've seen ariki referenced as the first born of the rangitira class or as the high chief of an iwi. It would seem that, like most of what I am telling you, these structures were very fluid, with an ariki of an iwi potentially also being the rangitira of a hapu and kaumatua, leading a whanau, all at the same time. A chief's authority relied on this descent as well as being able to demonstrate their leadership ability and their willingness to heed council. Rangitira also had to have four main qualities, mana, tapu, ihi, wehi. We have mentioned mana every now and again as it, along with tapu, permeate every part of Maori life is arguably one of the most important qualities. Mana is a hard word to define, it's one of those words that doesn't really have an exact English translation. You will commonly see it translated as power, authority, prestige or influence and although those are all sort of true none of them really capture the supernatural force that is mana cause it is a complicated idea. Mana is inherent in your lineage. As I've talked about in previous episodes, linking yourself to a prestigious ancestor increased your mana so if your parents had lots of mana, at least some of that was transferred to you. Other ways to increase mana was to do great deeds or show distinction in war but one could also gain mana by becoming a tohunga. In the past I have said a tohunga is a priest but that isn't strictly true, it more means expert or master of their art, if you want to put it that way, of which spirituality was one of them. So by being knowledgeable, even the best, at what you do would increase your mana and standing. By being a rangitira and having lots of mana, one could partially control tapu, what is sacred and taboo. This meant a chief could call rahui, a restriction on certain actions on people, resources or just general stuff on pain of death and if you were one of the lucky few who were exempt from this, that would

also increase your mana. The other two terms are a bit more straight forward, ihi is essentially your power and personal magnetism whereas wehi is the dread and fear you instil. These ideas overall would contribute to a rangitira's gravitas and through them they could demand utu, compensation, when transgressed, which was something they did often. Samuel Marsden, a British born priest, would later tell a ships' master "the New Zealanders will not be insulted with impunity and treated as men without understanding, but resent to the utmost of their power any injury heaped against them," so mana and respect were paramount for a chief and Maori as a whole.

Despite all this, rangitira had very little power. According to Louis Duperrey, French commander of the La Coquille during its mission to circumnavigate the globe, chiefs were only recognised during times of war. In particular, chiefs who were considered ariki of the iwi had very very little power. Hapu would regularly ignore them on virtually any matter, generally favouring their local rangitira in war and peace. Just to further illustrate this point, Samuel Marsden wrote "There are chiefs who hold large tracts of land in NZ as their hereditary right, yet their authority over the persons and property of those who live within their jurisdiction is very circumscribed and confined to their own family, domestics and slaves, over whom they have the most absolute power. Upon their lands were a number of inferior chiefs generally reside by permission... over whom the principal chief has no authority whatever. Besides these there are free persons who are poor, and who possess neither land nor slaves... Over these the chief has no authority whatever. They go as they please and live as they please without interruption from anyone... Were the principal chief to call upon any class of free people within his jurisdiction to labour, they would pay little attention to his commands... The principal chiefs as well as the inferior ones are all extremely jealous of the authority they possess, though individually very small."

Under the rangitira class was the tutua, freemen or commoners. This group could still trace their whakapapa back to the principle ancestor, same as the rangitira but the tutua were from junior descent lines, rather than the senior ones the nobles traced their lineage to. As we have talked about before, whakapapa was very important for status in the community and was taken from both the mother and father, though the male lineage tended to be favoured. How closely related you were to an ancestor determined the seniority of your line by analysing the relationships between individuals, families and other groups. Things like direct vs indirect descent, male vs female lines, first and last born. This created a stratified system based on mana whereby the junior descendants of the tuakana, senior, line were often superior to the senior descendants of the teina, junior line. Confused? Good cause I'm about to make slightly more complicated. At the lower end of the tutua class was those who had been of some standing but had been disgraced in some way, for example by being taken in war and released. This sub-group could still hold land and generally had reciprocal relationships with higher ranks but they did have to work a bit harder to increase their mana once again. Another sub-group below the tutua were those who were only, kinda, sorta free. Can you guess who? If you said women, you would be right. Junior women in particular as they didn't inherit property and were generally at the whim of their superiors, that is to say their father and brothers. We will talk more about women in a future episode as Maori women had a bit of a different way of life compared to their European counterparts. At the lower end of this social stratum were those that were captured in war but were reasonably high born. In fact, you might even say this group were higher on the ladder than women as they were generally left to their own devices and made to pay tribute in labour or goods so they were potentially fairly well off, all things considered.

Finally, at the bottom of the social pile, were taurekareka, slaves. Generally prisoners captured in war of a low status, slaves had it really rough. They were made to menial tasks by their masters but weren't restrained physically as it wasn't often a slave attempted to escape since their hapu would

generally consider them dead and make no attempt at rescue. Slaves were often called mokai, pets, and as might be indicated from the use of such a derogatory term, tauekareka were subjected to beatings, torture, murder and even cannibalism if they pissed off the wrong people. If they weren't performing physical labour or being subjected to violence, slaves were eating the worst food and living in the worst shelters available to the hapu. Really the only upside of being a slave, is that any children born of a union between slave and rangitira or tutua were considered free, so they had that going for them, which is nice, I guess. Overall, just remember that like the whanau, hapu, iwi system we have talked about, this isn't exactly like what the stratification of Maori society was like. In fact, it wasn't really a stratification, more like a gradient but it's much easier to think of this way and we don't want to complicate it more than it already is.

Sort of separate from these structures and ideas was the class of tohunga, experts as I mentioned earlier. Like the roles of ariki, rangitira and kaumatua, a tohunga could hold one or even all these roles, although it was unlikely. There were different grades of tohunga depending on what they specialised in. The first were the artists and artisans which some whanau tended to specialise in, including waka builders, house builders and those who did ta moko, tattooing. Another group included the tohunga ahurewa, high priests and tohunga makutu, shamans. Both of these were taught in their own whare wananga, house of learning, a name now used for modern universities. The tohunga ahurewa were trained in these schools during the winter months over a period of up to seven years. Here they learned things like astronomy, whakapapa, faith healing and various chants and karakia, prayers, for planting, building houses and waka, making war or peace and all sorts of other things. They also learned the arts of what you might call white magic, commanding the elements and summoning supernatural forces, like we saw Ngatoro do to try sink the Te Arawa waka. To be fully considered part of this prestigious group, a prospect apparently had to pass difficult tests like killing a bird by the power of karakia alone, which is pretty intense. However, where there is light, there is always darkness and the tohunga makutu were the darkness to the tohunga ahurewa's light. They were often rejects from the whare wananga and taught in their own house. These shamans were greatly feared for their ability to wield their namesake, makutu, witchcraft. This word was also used to mean inflicting harm of the supernatural variety as these men used their abilities to make people sick or kill them. Despite this power and fear, tohunga makutu were generally tolerated as a necessary evil of life as hapu and iwi could use them to weaken their enemies.

Through all of these structures comes an interesting little tidbit from scholars which, depending on which way you swing, is either legitimate hypothesis or just some fun historical 'what if'. It's thought that had Europeans not arrived, or arrived much later than they did, that Maori may have formed a more centralised governance by iwi and prominent chiefs, similar to what was seen in Tahiti and Hawaii. The same process that would have potentially resulted in this is also thought to be the beginning of a class society, indicated by movement towards the more political structures like iwi and away from the kinship structure of hapu. Maori were also moving towards community ordered societies focused on chiefly mana rather than direct warrior leadership as indicated by the proliferation of the marae, meeting house which had more emphasis on public displays of wealth, diplomacy, feasting and political persuasion. We know this was happening before the arrival of Europeans as large, 15m long houses have been found in pre-European settlements. Imagine how different New Zealand would be if Maori already had some sort of central governance. Would be something similar to an absolute monarchy? Or would it lean towards something more democratic, like they sort of had already? How would this affect their relations with the British Empire and the Treaty? All questions we will never know the answer to but they are fun think about.

Next time, we talk about land holding and how Maori viewed their own borders as well as whare, houses, the marae and some the rituals that took place in and around it like powhiri and tangihanga along with how to build one. It's going to be a lot more interesting than you might think! We may not quite fit it all in so I may break it up a bit or might just make a longer episode, we will see how we go.

If you want to send me feedback, ask a question, suggest a topic or just have a chinwag you can reach me through email at historyaotearoa@gmail.com or Twitter at History Aotearoa or Facebook at History Aotearoa New Zealand Podcast. If you like the podcast or not, it would be much appreciated if you could give us a review on iTunes or your preferred podcast provider. It helps us grow and lets me know you are enjoying all this! As always, haere tu atu, hoki tu mai. See you next time!