

Kia ora, gday and welcome to the History of Aotearoa New Zealand, Episode 9: Becoming Maori. Before we get going, many of you may have heard about the tragedy that has happened in Christchurch. A shooting at two separate mosques with approx. 50 dead at time of recording with just under that amount in hospital, some in critical condition including a 4 year old. I don't wish to talk about the politics or the motivations of this as that is not what we are here for but to put that in perspective, that amount of people in New Zealand would equal about 3,100 deaths in a shooting in the US based on population, thank you Di Frances on Twitter for that statistic. This sort of thing is, as many have put it, unprecedented in Aotearoa's history, it just doesn't happen. But it has happened and to a city that has already suffered so much from an earthquake that effectively levelled the city, so we need to band together like we have done in the past. I encourage you all to help your friends and family who may feel unsafe due to these attacks or you can donate to LaunchGood and Givealittle set up to aid the victims and their families, which I will put links to in the description of the episode. Kia kaha, stay strong, Christchurch.

Last time we had a retelling of the Maori creation myth about Rangi and Papa being forced apart and their son, Tane, god of the forests and birds, covering his parents in amazing garments. It also involved a war between the land and sea birds for some reason. The calls I used in that, by the way, are real calls from the birds mentioned, or at least the closest thing to them. Such as in the case of the grey duck, the thinking is that they interbred so much with Mallard ducks and others that there aren't really any left, only hybrids but I thought chucking those in there would be a nice little tidbit. There was also the matter of what I think is pretty obvious Christian influences. I don't know this for certain and I have basically zero evidence to back this up so keep that in mind but the fact Tane is said to have "rested seven days after his mighty labours" I think is suspiciously close to the Christian God resting after making the world in seven days. But again, that's just me. I'd really like to know if you guys are enjoying these retellings of Maori stories. I really like making them and the analytics seems to suggest you guys like listening to them, perhaps even more than the historical episodes but it would be great to hear some more specific feedback. You may have also noticed I did a bit of a rant about tuatara. I was thinking of doing more of that type of stuff, by that I don't mean hastily recorded and poorly edited. I mean more stuff on the native animals and plants of Aotearoa. I do realise that's perhaps a little out of the scope of the podcast but New Zealand's native species are important to our national identity in so many different ways I feel it could be worth talking about the weird and wonderful creatures and flora we have in more focussed episodes. But again, let me know via Facebook, Twitter or email!

Anyway, lets crack into some more history! We left off the Maori settlers in a bit of a bind, a bind which isn't necessarily going to get better. By the end of the colonial period, likely around the early 15th century, moa and other big game were completely extinct, totalling 32 species of terrestrial and freshwater birds, 34% of New Zealand's bird species at the time, along with a species of bat and an unknown amount of invertebrates and reptiles. These birds were the majority of the Maori diet until this point and losing them was a big blow, which meant an increasing reliance on other food sources like berries, bracken fern and other foraged foodstuffs. They also moved onto the smaller birds that had been ignored in the past due to the sheer value for money a single moa could give you, birds like weka, kerereu, tui, kiwi, and others. Snaring was the preferred option to try and catch these birds since using a spear was difficult in the dense forest of Aotearoa and Maori didn't have any other projectile weapons. The main source of protein tended to be fish and shellfish, given its easy access and abundance near most settlements but this depend on the region and area. This movement away from large animals can be seen in the middens of various archaeological sites. Moa and seal remains are usually found at the bottom with fish and shellfish in the upper layers. Protein was still an important part of the diet, but their focus now shifted to more intensive horticulture, specifically

the kumara, which became a huge part of the diet and perhaps the catalyst to the development of Maori culture. The burning of large swathes of forest over the couple of centuries or so encouraged the growth of ferns, which was better habitat for weka and cleared land for more farming. Insects were also quite keen on this new landscape and thrived, which would have sustained water birds and freshwater fish.

Gardening though was still the biggest and most important source of food. With only a few sources of starch, all of which had to be foraged, kumara was a vital resource and Maori were cranking it up to 11. After an area was fired the soil was modified with sand or gravel dug from nearby pits that would be used for storage. This was a huge undertaking as modifying one hectare of soil required digging, transporting in flax kete, baskets, and spreading of 1300m³ of material. 3000ha of gardens, as found in Waikato, would require 4mil m³ of material to be dug up and distributed. To further illustrate how big of an undertaking this was, Atholl Anderson in a 2016 lecture compares it to a 140m² house, which would need 16m³ of sand, gravel and cement for the floor slab. This means that the amount of material these people shifted was equal to 250,000 house slabs or four times the size of the Clyde dam in Central Otago, New Zealand's third largest dam.

With the concentration of food in smaller areas and the need to be near these gardens, population density increased as communities grew around a common cause. These associations were also partly based on kinship and began the process to developing the ideas of the whanau, hapu and iwi, family, sub-tribe and tribe. With kumara being a plant that only produces a crop once a year at the same time of year, the need for storage was vitally important and so was the need to protect that store. By that I mean, if the neighbouring community didn't have a very good harvest one year, but you did, it was only natural that they were going to attempt to take your kumara. You would naturally defend yourself and, win or lose, you would naturally try to retaliate eventually. This became more and more frequent as competition for resources increased and the need to defend self or group mana meant a development into a more martial culture. And there was no escape from it, once your neighbours started developing these ideas then you either had to conform to defend yourself or risk losing it all. Part of this was the rise of the pa, fortified hilltop settlements originally used to defend stores of kumara from attackers, construction beginning around the mid-16th century. Pa concentration was the highest in the northern North Island, which coincides with the region that had the highest kumara production, which would make sense. I'll put a picture on the website with this episode that shows you where these pa were located. This ties back into the increasing population density as people came together in larger communities with a need for mutual defence though it has been thought that perhaps pa were more than just practical structures with military purposes. Like a medieval castle, a pa could be used to show status and strengthen mana but more than that they could have had a religious element too as the pa was likely where religious items like ancestral carvings were held, making the pa a sanctuary for the spirits of the whanau, hapu or iwi. Within these settlements we also see in the arrangements of the buildings that there was likely a central meeting house, marae or at least the precursor to what would become the marae.

The problem with talking about this period is that the pressures and responses of the population weren't always uniform across the country, pretty much everything we have talked about so far took place in the northern North Island, by that I mean north of about the Taranaki region. As we have discussed before, the lower South Island, south of Banks Peninsula was a much colder and harsher environment than the more northern regions and that was only getting worse due to climate change from the Little Ice Age occurring in the northern hemisphere. This climate meant they relied much more heavily on the big game birds to feed the population. This can be seen in the large amount of

moa butchery sites found along the east coast. With the loss of these birds, settlements in Otago and Southland region were being fragmented with some areas, particularly on the southern coast, being abandoned entirely. We have evidence that shows kumara growing in the Kaikoura region prior to this period but in the late 17th century we see a 150km retreat north to Tasman Bay-Kapiti Coast-Castlepoint line. We do see evidence of forest regrowth in the Marlborough Sounds though which gave rise to an idea that there was an ancient race in Aotearoa prior to Maori when the areas were cut down again in the 19th century.

With changes in population density and abandoning of settlements, people were moving and migrating. These migrations began at the start of the transitional period in the early 1500s or so. In the areas with a large amount of horticulture, like in the north, migrations tended to be short and in a variety of directions, likely to wherever the closest pa was. In areas lacking major horticulture, particularly in the Hawkes Bay, people tended to migrate south east and into the South Island. Now, this is interesting as I've just told you it was pretty shit down there right about now, we even see settlements being abandoned in the Wellington region too so why move that way? It could have been due increases in population, as some regions were seeing, meant people had to move somewhere to find resources, especially as Hawkes Bay was experiencing lower temperatures and wetter conditions at this time resulting in a lower crop yield. Archaeologists still aren't sure though what the causes may have been. Another social change that may have occurred in this period is the appearance of slavery. Slavery is an interesting thing, it's terrible and awful but it's something humans have done pretty much since we discovered that we could. There are many different types like the Roman style where the person could sell themselves into slavery and later buy their freedom or the chattel slavery that most will be familiar with where a person is considered property, afforded no rights and can be bought and sold like an object. Slavery also blurs into other systems like serfdom but we don't want to get too into the weeds of it here. We know there was slavery in the early 19th century which increased as a response to greater need to farm potatoes to trade for muskets and it has been suggested that this could be indicative of a similar rise in the Maori transitional period, although historians aren't sure and we don't know much about it. The thought is that due to the land producing large amounts of food and with more land that could be used to expand on that, there wasn't enough free people to perform all the work necessary. This, combined with an increasingly marshal society which was already fighting neighbouring groups, likely created an ideal situation for the development of the practice. This potentially eased off as populations increased, giving access to more free labour.

Along with immaterial culture, material culture was changing too. All throughout the podcast I've called Tangata Whenua Maori but that isn't strictly true. Prior to this period the people I have been calling Maori would have resembled more closely to East Polynesian cultures in their art, tools and ideas than Maori encountered by Europeans. This period is called the transitional phase in part due to these East Polynesian people transitioning into a society more closely resembling what you today might recognise as a Maori culture. This period is where we see hei-tiki arise, pendants worn around the neck depicting people, usually women, and was associated with fertility. Made from pounamu and occasionally whale bone, these were highly prized. In general, we see a move away from larger necklaces and pectoral ornaments to smaller ear and neck pendants. We also see changes in the styles of combs, tattooing chisels, rock art and other objects from an East Polynesian style to a South Polynesian, that is Maori, style. Part of the reason art and tools were changing into a more unique flavour was due to Maori now being mostly isolated from their Polynesian cousins and having to adapt to a totally new environment with different materials and mediums available such as flax to make fibre for clothes, new types of wood for carving and different types of food that needed new ways of preparation and storing. As the generations passed and Maori became distinct from other

Polynesian cultures, oral knowledge of the homelands along with stories of heroes and ancestors diminished. They were now being replaced by stories about the more recent migration and survival in the new land. This isn't to say they forgot where they came from, it just changed into the more mythical Hawaiki rather than a defined place. That also isn't to say that their former culture had no influence on the way they interpreted the world around them, many places in Aotearoa were named after places in Hawaiki, the gods of Maori were brought with them from East Polynesia, they just had a slightly different form. Maui is found all throughout Polynesia in many stories but he took on a unique Maori flavour when they brought him to New Zealand, like fishing up the North Island.

As the population density increased we also see the social distance increase too, you could no longer know everyone who lived around you as there was just too many people living in the same area and combined with increased territoriality meant long distance interaction was hindered. This in particular affected trade and flow of goods. We no longer see the obsidian pieces from Mayor Island make it all the way down to the South Island, instead South Island Maori were reusing older pieces or breaking down larger blocks to create the all important cutting implements. In the North Island, local resources were being favoured over those that were no longer coming in from further afield. As mentioned in Episode 6, adzes from Wairau Bar and the wider Marlborough region were used all over New Zealand but by this period much of the supply of material had dried up. This resulted in adzes that seem to be modified from their original design into forms that would become characteristic of the Maori of future generations. Adzes in the past reflected status and ancestral coherence with them being passed down from one generation to the next but during this period they transitioned into being just a tool for a particular job, no longer could you claim your special adze came from a place renowned for its top quality pounamu and skilled crafters because everyone knew your adze was made of local basalt and made by Wiremu down the road. Wrapped into this was the loss of village crafting centres we saw in the past and the collapse of entire industries. For example, one piece fishing hooks were usually made of moa bone and the southern silcrete blade industry was held up by large butcheries, all of which relied on an animal that no longer existed.

We have spent a long time talking about what these people were like, what they believed, what they ate but lets look at one person in particular. Remains of a woman in Palliser Bay, south east of modern Wellington, have been studied by Helen Leach and Philip Houghton of the University of Otago and have given us an interesting look into the life of a person in this period. They found her teeth had significant wear on them, indicating an abrasive diet, likely one relying on starchy plants rather than protein, indicating she lived in this period. She was 35 to 40 years old when she died, which was not uncommon given her likely physically demanding lifestyle, 162cm tall, fairly robust build, was right handed and gave birth to two to four children. By the time of her death she was also suffering arthritis in the spine, again likely due to her harsh and physically demanding lifestyle. She lived in a village on the north bank of the Makotukutuku River, near the east coast of the bay, but seasonal trips were likely made to catch birds like tuis or parakeets and to gather berries. Like other parts of the country, their gardens grew mostly kumara which was harvested in autumn and stored in enclosed pits near cooking sheds. These gardens were made clear by firing the forest on the ridges behind the village and their proximity to the village meant it was occupied year round. When she wasn't gardening, she likely gathered paua, limpits, crayfish and other foraged seafood from the nearby bay. As she did this, she would likely be able to see the men on a good day out in their waka catching fish like barracoota and kahawai by pulling lures behind them. In the summer months, these fish would have been dried to store them. These summer days would have been spent splitting eels and other oily fish, hanging them up for drying and weaving kete from flax for storage. As the warmer summer months gave way to harsh winters, her workload would have reduced and she was

lucky to have fresh water and firewood close at hand. When she did pass she was buried next to her whanau and a pet dog.

These couple of centuries or so was a time of dramatic change for the early Maori settlers. They had spent considerable effort and resources changing the land to fit their needs and in response the land was pushing back, changing their way of life. Now these East Polynesian explorers were becoming South Polynesian Maori, the children of Tūmatauenga, the God of War. What they didn't realise, of course, is that elsewhere in the world a Spanish funded, Italian explorer by the name of Christopher Columbus had found the New World, fuelling the Age of Discovery, setting Europe and the soon to be British Empire on a collision course with the Tangata Whenua of Aotearoa.

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. It helps us grow and reach more people to hopefully get us all the way to the number one history podcast in New Zealand! As always, haere tu atu, hoki tu mai. See you next time!

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