

The Whence of the Moriori¹

THIS PAPER addresses a widely-held misconception about the role of the native people of the Chatham Islands, who are referred to as the Moriori,² in the culture history of the New Zealand region. This is the Maruiwi or Tangata Whenua myth; also known as the Great New Zealand Myth.³ Although rejected by scholars over three decades ago,⁴ it persists in the public mind and in some school curriculae.

The first part of the paper outlines the four important elements of the myth and introduces evidence which refutes each of them. The second presents a recently developed alternative view of the origin of the Moriori. The conclusion argues that the origin of the Muruiwi is to be found in the concepts brought to Oceanic anthropology by European scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, rather than in any enduring evidence.

The Great New Zealand myth was developed by Stephenson Percy Smith⁵ and Elsdon Best.⁶ For the purposes of this paper the differences between the accounts published by the two are not important.⁷ The

1 The title of this paper is adapted from S. P. Smith, 'Hawaiki: The whence of the Maori' *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (JPS), VII (1898), pp.137-77, 185-223, VIII (1889), pp.1-48; W. E. Gudgeon, 'The Whence of the Maori', JPS, XI (1902), pp.179-89, 247-56; and M. P. K. Sorrenson, 'The Whence of the Maori: some nineteenth century exercises in scientific method', JPS, LXXXVI, 4 (1977), pp.449-78.

2 The native people of the Chatham Islands have been referred to by various names: Maoriori (S. Natusch, 'Maori and Maoriori', *New Zealand Listener*, 25 May 1974, p.14; Mouriuri (Te Whatahoro cited by H. D. Skinner, 'The Morioris of Chatham Islands', *Memoir of the Bishop Museum* (MBM) XI, 1 (1923), p.34; Mooriori (H. W. Williams, 'The Maruiwi Myth', JPS, XLVI, 3 (1937), pp.105-122); Maiorioris (G. Mair, 'Notes on the Chatham Islands and their Inhabitants', *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* (TPNZI), III (1870), pp.311-13) and Moriori. The last is used here, after Skinner. Later in this paper it is used to refer to the post-1500 A.D. phase of the prehistoric sequence in the Chathams.

3 D. R. Simmons, *The Great New Zealand Myth*, Wellington, 1976.

4 Skinner; Williams.

5 Smith, and his *Hawaiki: the original homeland of the Maori*, 3rd ed., Christchurch, 1910.

6 E. Best, 'Maori and Maruiwi', TPNZI, XLVIII (1915), pp.435-47; 'Maori and Maruiwi. First Polynesians at Whakatane', JPS, XXXVII, (1928), pp.175-225.

7 Best called the supposed initial occupants of New Zealand Maruiwi, emphasised their Melanesian origin, the unintelligibility of their language to the Polynesians and their physical and cultural inferiority. Smith referred to them as Tangata Whenua, believed their origins to be in a mixture of Polynesian and Melanesian stocks and their language to have been comprehensible to the Polynesians.

statements made by both belong within a single school of thought, which saw evidence in New Zealand for the existence of 'an aboriginal, pre-Maori race, perhaps Melanesian in origin and certainly inferior to the Maori'.⁸ Such theories have lingered in anthropological thought about the origin of the Maori since the eighteenth century.

The four major elements of the myth are that:

- (1) the first occupants of New Zealand were either Melanesian or of mixed Melanesian-Polynesian origins; that is, they were racially distinct from late settlers arriving from Hawaiki.
- (2) they were also distinguishable from the Polynesians on the basis of language, their lack of horticulture, a nomadic lifestyle and their peacefulness.
- (3) some of these people were forced to flee to the Chatham Islands by the more assertive Polynesians who first arrived with the great navigators Kupe and Toi and then later in larger numbers on the Great Fleet of approximately 1350 A.D.
- (4) finally, the descendants of these refugees maintained a simple, nomadic lifestyle until European discovery of the Chatham Islands. This extraordinary cultural conservatism is variously explained on the basis of their innate (racial) inferiority, the limitations of their technology, the debilitating effects of isolation, and the absence of critical raw materials, such as high quality stone and timber. Skinner mentioned all of these assumed factors, except the first, in his classic work on Moriori material culture of 1923. The racist explanation was put forward by Taylor,⁹ Best,¹⁰ Buick¹¹ and others.

These four propositions are no longer tenable. First there is no evidence from either linguistics¹² or physical anthropology¹³ that the first settlers of New Zealand were other than Polynesian. Second, evidence of early forest clearance¹⁴ and kumara (*Ipomoea batatas*) horticulture¹⁵ shows that gardening was successfully introduced to New Zealand by the initial settlers before the suggested date of arrival of the Great Fleet. Third, all people living in New Zealand during the first centuries of

8 Sorrenson, p.452.

9 R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui*, London, 1870.

10 Best, 'Maori and Maruwiwi' (both).

11 T. L. Buick, *The Moa-hunters of New Zealand: Sportsmen of the Stone Age*, New Plymouth, 1937.

12 R. C. Green, 'Adaptation and Change in Maori Culture', in G. Kuschel ed., *Biogeography and Ecology in New Zealand*, The Hague, 1975, pp.591-641; R. Harlow, 'Regional Variation in Maori', *New Zealand Journal of Archaeology* (NZJA), I (1979), pp.123-38.

13 P. Houghton, *The First New Zealanders*, Auckland, 1980.

14 M. S. McGlone, 'Forest Destruction by Early Polynesians, Lake Poukawa, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand', *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 8,3 (1978), pp.275-81.

15 H. M. Leach, 'Prehistoric Horticulture in Palliser Bay', in B. F. Leach and H. M. Leach, eds, *Prehistoric Man in Palliser Bay*, Bulletin of the National Museum of New Zealand, No.XXI, 1979.

occupation did not have identical settlement patterns and subsistence strategies. Archaeological evidence shows that there was considerable cultural variation between environmentally distinctive regions.¹⁶

The view that the Archaic people were peaceful is also in doubt. It has traditionally drawn strongest support from the apparent late development of earthwork fortifications (pa) and the scarcity of handclubs and other weapons in early sites.¹⁷ For the first, it is interesting that although relatively few pa have been excavated and while those in some large areas are still uninvestigated, there are some early radiocarbon dates which deserve more serious consideration.¹⁸ For the second point — the scarcity of weapons — there have been few handclubs recovered archaeologically from Classic Maori contexts, although there is no doubt about the existence, even common occurrence, of warfare during that period.

It may be that group fission splitting was a common means of dispute resolution¹⁹ during the Archaic phase, particularly in the areas which were peripheral to concentrations of populations²⁰ or where horticulture had already been intensified.²¹ However, pressure on limited areas of highly desirable soil and other resources may have led to intergroup violence during the Archaic phase. There is evidence of death due to violence in the skeletal remains of some Archaic people.²² Further, some relevant ethnographic accounts show that warfare in small scale societies need not involve durable fortifications, lithic weapons, common injury or death, or the deployment of large numbers of men.²³ All of this suggests that the first inhabitants of New Zealand have not yet been proven to have been peaceful.

16 A. J. Anderson, 'Towards an explanation of Protohistoric Social Organisation and Settlement Patterns Amongst the Southern Ngai Tahu', NZJA, II, 1980, pp.3-23, and 'When all the Moa Ovens Grew Cold: nine centuries of changing fortune for the southern Maori', Dunedin, 1983; Leach and Leach; N. J. Prickett, ed., *The First Thousand Years: regional perspectives in New Zealand archaeology*, Palmerston North, 1982, and N. J. Prickett, 'Waitotara, ki Parininihi; aspects of the archaeology of the Taranaki region', in S. Bulmer et al., eds, *A Lot of Spadework to be Done*, Monograph of the N.Z. Archaeological Association No.14, 1983.

17 R. S. Duff, *The Moa-hunter Period of Maori Culture*, Wellington, 1956.

18 See for example Figure 20, in A. Fox 'Tiromoana Pa, Te Awanga, Hawke's Bay, Excavations 1974-1975', Vol.XI, *University of Otago Studies in Prehistoric Anthropology*, Monograph of the N.Z. Archaeological Association No.8, 1978.

19 See J.S. Savishinsky, *The Trail of the Hare*, New York, 1974, for a contemporary ethnographic example.

20 A. P. Vayda, 'Expansion and Warfare among Swidden Agriculturalists' in A. P. Vayda, ed., *Environment and Cultural Behaviour*, New York, 1969, pp.202-20.

21 J. Golson, 'No More Room at the Top: agricultural intensification in the New Guinea Highlands' in J. Allen, J. Golson and R. Jones, eds, *Sunda and Sahul*, London, 1977, pp.601-38.

22 D. G. Sutton, 'The Prehistoric People of Eastern Palliser Bay' in Leach and Leach.

23 N. A. Chagnon, 'Yanomamo Social Organisation and Warfare', in M. Fried, M. Harris and R. Murphy, ed, *War: The Anthropology of Armed Conflict and Aggression*, New York, 1968, pp.109-59; K. G. Heider, 'The Dugum Dani: A Papuan Culture in the Highlands of Western New Guinea', *Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology*, 49, 1970; Vayda, *passim*.

The third element of the myth is also rejected. The Maruiwi were said to have fled as a result of confrontations with the Polynesians who supposedly arrived with Kupe, Toi and then the Great Fleet. In his examination of the reliability of the sources used by Smith, Simmons concluded that there never was a navigator named Toi who arrived in New Zealand about 1150 A.D. Simmons' studies show that the largest number of canoes which could have sailed together (and probably from a Hawaiki no further away than the north of the North Island of New Zealand) was two — the Arawa and Tainui.²⁴ The aboriginal inhabitants of the Chatham Islands were not, therefore, refugees as argued in the Maruiwi myth if for no reason other than that the external military force from which they are supposed to have fled did not exist.

The fourth and final element of the myth to be discussed is the view that the culture and economy of the native peoples did not change from initial settlement until European discovery. The results of recent archaeological research in the Chathams, reviewed in the following section, shows that this was not the case.

The first people to make a landfall on the Chatham Islands drifted out there from New Zealand at some time within the interval 800–1000 A.D.²⁵ Their precise geographical origin cannot be established at present. Irrespective of the location of their homeland they faced substantial problems. Principal amongst these were the risks implied by small population size,²⁶ as well as the effects of distance back to the nearest, inhabited landmass and the practical difficulties of adapting to life on a subantarctic archipelago. There may have been a number of accidental drift voyages from New Zealand in the early period. However, chances of survival and a landfall on the Chathams for those on such a journey were always *very* low.²⁷ The onset of the Little Ice Age about 1400 A.D. effectively moved the Chathams area further out from New Zealand by causing a deterioration in sea conditions. From about that time the Chatham Islands was a closed system. There was no significant input from the outside world. Those who lived there were not able to leave.

24 'A New Zealand Myth: Kupe, Toi and the Fleet', *New Zealand Journal of History*, III (1969), pp.25, 28.

25 Evidence in support of this model is presented elsewhere (D. G. Sutton, 'A Culture History of the Chatham Islands', *JPS LXXIX*, 1 (1980), pp.67–93. It will be clear to readers that the interpretation of evidence for prehistoric culture change and the reconstruction of social organisation is problematical. The geographical isolation of the Chathams, the short duration of the prehistoric sequence, relatively intact archaeological landscape, and the availability of written records of the early contact period helped to make it possible in this case. However, the description and explanation offered here will undoubtedly change as research proceeds.

26 N. McArthur, I. W. Saunders and R. L. Tweedie, 'Small Population Isolates: a micro-simulation study', *JPS LXXXV*, 3, (1976), pp.307–26.

27 M. R. Levison, G. Ward, and J. W. Webb, *The Settlement of Polynesia: a computer simulation*, Canberra, 1973.

An attempt may have been made, as late traditional sources suggest,²⁸ to introduce kumara. If so, it failed, probably in the first season, due to the cold and overcast climate. This failure left the settlers with only the natural resources of the islands. A similar course of events occurred at the same time in the North Atlantic where the Viking settlers of Greenland became isolated from Scandinavia by worsening sea conditions and faced increased risks in their inner fiord meadowland farming due to increased precipitation and cold. Their response was one of 'single-minded conservation and loss of adaptive resilience'.²⁹ Mismanagement of the real world by an ecclesiastical elite appear to have caused this rigidity.³⁰ The Norse population of Greenland was extinct by 1500 A.D. 'In short they managed badly and their society died out as a result'.³¹

By comparison the culture history of the Chatham Islands is a tale of sustained flexibility and successful adaptation. After some population increase, widely-separated settlements were established in creek or harbour mouth situations as the east coast of the Chatham and Pitt Islands. Canoes were maintained and used to transport stone and other resources from distant parts of the archipelago. The spacing, contents and sizes of the early settlements suggest that the groups which occupied them competed with one another for access to and control of what resources the islands had to offer. Grave goods and other evidence indicate that social organisation of these early settlements was hierarchial. Some individuals inherited positions of high status and had considerable arbitrary power.

This hierarchial form of socio-political organisation was not well suited to the Chatham Islands. Within Polynesia it is most developed on high tropical islands, where food production per unit area of land can be increased through such measures as irrigation and garden mulching.³² Hierarchial organisation may also exist where the supply of a major resource is restricted and can, therefore, be controlled. In hunter-gatherer cultures such control is possible where occurrence or accessibility of a resource is restricted either in spatial distribution or seasonality or both.³³ In other situations control may involve, for instance, 'the

28 A. Shand, 'The Occupation of the Chatham Islands by Maoris in 1835', *JPS*, I (1892), pp.83-94, 154-63; II (1893), pp. 74-86.

29 T. McGovern, 'The Economics of Extinction in Norse Greenland', in T. Wigley et al., eds, *Climate and History*, Cambridge, 1981, pp.404-33.

30 See K. V. Flannery, 'The Cultural Evolution of Civilisation', *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 3 (1972), pp.399-426, on the 'pathology of hypocoherence'.

31 McGovern, p.428.

32 M. D. Sahlins, 'Social Stratification in Polynesia', *American Ethnological Society Monography*, 29 (1958); T. Earle, 'Economics and Social Organization of a Complex Chiefdom: Halelea District, Kaua'i, Hawaii', *Anthropological Papers, Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan*, 63 (1978).

33 Hierarchial socio-political organisation is too often thought to be restricted to cultures in which food is cultivated, perhaps particularly since the publication of R. B. Lee and I.

development of a monopoly over the production of pottery'.³⁴

Neither increase in food production per unit area nor resource control by discrete social groups was possible in the Chathams. First the abundance and seasonality of all the major food resources were determined by climatic and bio-geographic factors, which were quite beyond the control of Polynesian hunters. Second, the most economic food resources present, the New Zealand Fur Seal (*Arctocephalus forsteri*), was available all year around at numerous points along the coast. In this context centralised population and political authority ceased to be advantageous. An alternative settlement pattern was developed. This change, which occurred before 1500 A.D., marks the beginnings of Moriori culture per se.

The Moriori people lived year round in small settlements located near the Fur Seal breeding colonies. The average group size of the settlements appears to have been in the range of 30–50 individuals. The assumed size of the Moriori population at 1800 A.D. Figure 1 suggests that at that time there were 40 such settlements.³⁵ Seals were hunted at intervals throughout the year and they were overwhelmingly important in subsistence. Residents supplemented their diet of gathering shellfish, vegetable foods, by fishing and fowling, and particularly the mass-capture of marine bird fledglings. Each group had proprietary if not exclusive rights to all the resources available within a small hunting territory, which centred on the seal colony. Groups tended strongly to be localised, sedentary and self-sufficient, at least in terms of their subsistence and durable raw material needs.

Leadership roles were bestowed on individuals of exceptional ability, rather than being inherited.³⁶ The power of these leaders was very limited. They were not set apart from the other members of the community by either personal decoration, such as tattoo or other body art, or 'insignia of rank' such as personal jewellery, weapons or fine clothing.

De Vore, eds, *Man the Hunter*, Chicago, 1968. There has been a tendency to equate hunters with those who, like the !Kung Bushmen, hunt relatively unpredictable and scattered continental, as opposed to coastal, fauna. However, forms of hierarchical organisations do tend to develop in hunter-gatherer contexts, where resource control is possible. (D. G. Sutton, 'Towards the Recognition of Convergent Cultural Adaptation in the Subantarctic Zone', *Current Anthropology*, 23, 1 (1982), pp.183–90). This factor may help to explain the so-called Inuit communal house period in Labrador (see R. M. Jordon and S. A. Kaplin, 'An Archaeological View of an Inuit/European Contact Period in Central Labrador', *Inuit Studies*, 4 (1980), pp. 35–45). In that case, aggregation of some Eskimo groups appears to have been a response to the arrival of European trade goods at a few points along the coast of Labrador.

34 G. J. Irwin, 'The Development of Mailu as a Specialised Trading and Manufacturing Centre in Papuan Prehistory', *Mankind*, 11, 3 (1978), pp.406–15.

35 R. Richards, 'An Historical Geography of the Chatham Islands', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury, 1972.

36 D. G. Sutton, 'Polynesian Coastal Hunters in the Subantarctic Zone', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Otago, 1979; E. A. Welch and B. Davis, 'An Account of the Chatham Islands, Their Discovery, Inhabitants, Conquest by the Maoris and the Fate of the Aborigines', *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, 8 (1870), pp.xcviii–cviii.

Nor were they disengaged from the food quest. The territories of these discrete social groups were aggregated into seven 'tribal areas'³⁷ on the basis of common descent from specific founding ancestors. However, there was not the strong sense of corporate identity and separation from other groups which was characteristic, for instance, of tribes in northern New Zealand.³⁸

These changes were reflected in the archaeological record by a reduction in both 'boldness' in art³⁹ and in the number and variety of 'insignia of rank' found in sites dated to after 1500 A.D. There is also good historical evidence which indicates that warfare was not practised by the Moriori, although a form of ritualised combat, which is known ethnographically to occur within lineages, was present.⁴⁰ This involved cessation of combat as soon as first blood was drawn.⁴¹ These changes in socio-political organisation and material culture involved reduction in the degree of differentiation present between and within parts of the system, that is, simplification. In this case, as in some instances from biological evolution, simplification can be shown to have had positive adaptive value.⁴² The nature of resource distribution was such that production could not be intensified⁴³ and so an alternative adjustment was made.⁴⁴ In this the 'costs of separation'⁴⁵ between the hunter and his most economic resource were minimised when the Moriori population adopted a distribution which was similar to that of the Fur Seals. Sedentary and relatively self sufficient small groups of both species were resident all year round at numerous points along the coast. The intensifica-

37 R. Richards, 1972 A Population Distribution Map of the Morioris of Chatham Island circa 1790, *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 81(3):350-374; Figure 1.

38 A. P. Vayda, *Maori Warfare*, Wellington, 1960.

39 S. M. Mead, 'The Origins of Maori Art: Polynesian or Chinese?' *Oceania*, XLV, 3 (1975), pp.198ff.

40 J. Dalton, 'Aboriginal Economies in Stateless Societies', in T. K. Earle and J. E. Ericson, eds, *Exchange Systems in Prehistory*, New York, 1977, pp.191-212.

41 S. J. Deighton, John White Papers, Mss B75/27, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington; G. Mair, 'The Early History of the Morioris, with an Abstract of a Moriori Narrative', TPNZI, 37, (1904), pp.156-71; A. Shand, *The Moriori People of the Chatham Islands*, Memoir of the Polynesian Society, Wellington, 1911.

42 See B. Rensch, *Evolution Above the Species Level*, London, 1959, for a discussion of this general issue and S. L. Olsen, 'Evolution of the Rails of the South Atlantic Islands' (*Aves: Rallidae*), *Smithsonian Contributions to Zoology*, 152 (1973) on the evolution of flightlessness bird species on islands in the South Atlantic Ocean.

43 in the sense of C. Geertz, *Agricultural Involvement: the process of ecological change in Indonesia*, Monograph of the Association of Indonesian Studies No.11, 1963, and Earle.

44 Attempts by Maori horticulturalists and European wood farmers to maintain hierarchical socio-political organisation on the Chatham Islands also failed: D. G. Sutton, 'Four Cultures — man:resource relationships in the Chatham Islands, initial occupation to 1920 A.D.', Mss. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, n.d.

45 H. D. Brookfield, 'Intensification and Disintensification in Pacific Agriculture', *Pacific Viewpoint*, 13,1 (1972), pp.30-48. See also G. A. Johnson, 'Information Sources and the Development of Decision-Making Organisations', in C. L. Redman et al, eds, *Social Anthropology: beyond Subsistence and Dating*, New York, 1978, pp.87-112.

tion of man: resource relationships is at the centre of the Moriori cultural adaptation. The availability of most food and other resources within a small distance of each seal colony allowed the development of localised and self-sufficient groups operating within small territories. Very little energy was wasted in transporting resources to people and vice versa. This efficient, perhaps optimum, use of the landscape is reflected in the large size of the Moriori population at contact (Figure 1).

The adaptive value of a particular cultural system must be judged in relation to contemporary selective pressures. Moriori culture was a successful adaptation to pre-European resource distribution in the Chatham Islands. However, it could not withstand the catastrophic changes which followed Broughton's chance discovery of the islands in 1791. The Moriori population declined very rapidly after 1835 (Figure 1). The aboriginal economy was ruined before that date by the decimation of the Fur Seal population. The language was last spoken about 1860.⁴⁶ The last Moriori died in 1933.

It has been argued here that the origin of the Moriori is in the Chatham Islands. But what of the Maruiwi, these inferior, nomadic peaceable and fictitious first inhabitants of New Zealand and the Chatham Islands? Simply stated, they were an invention of the nineteenth century.

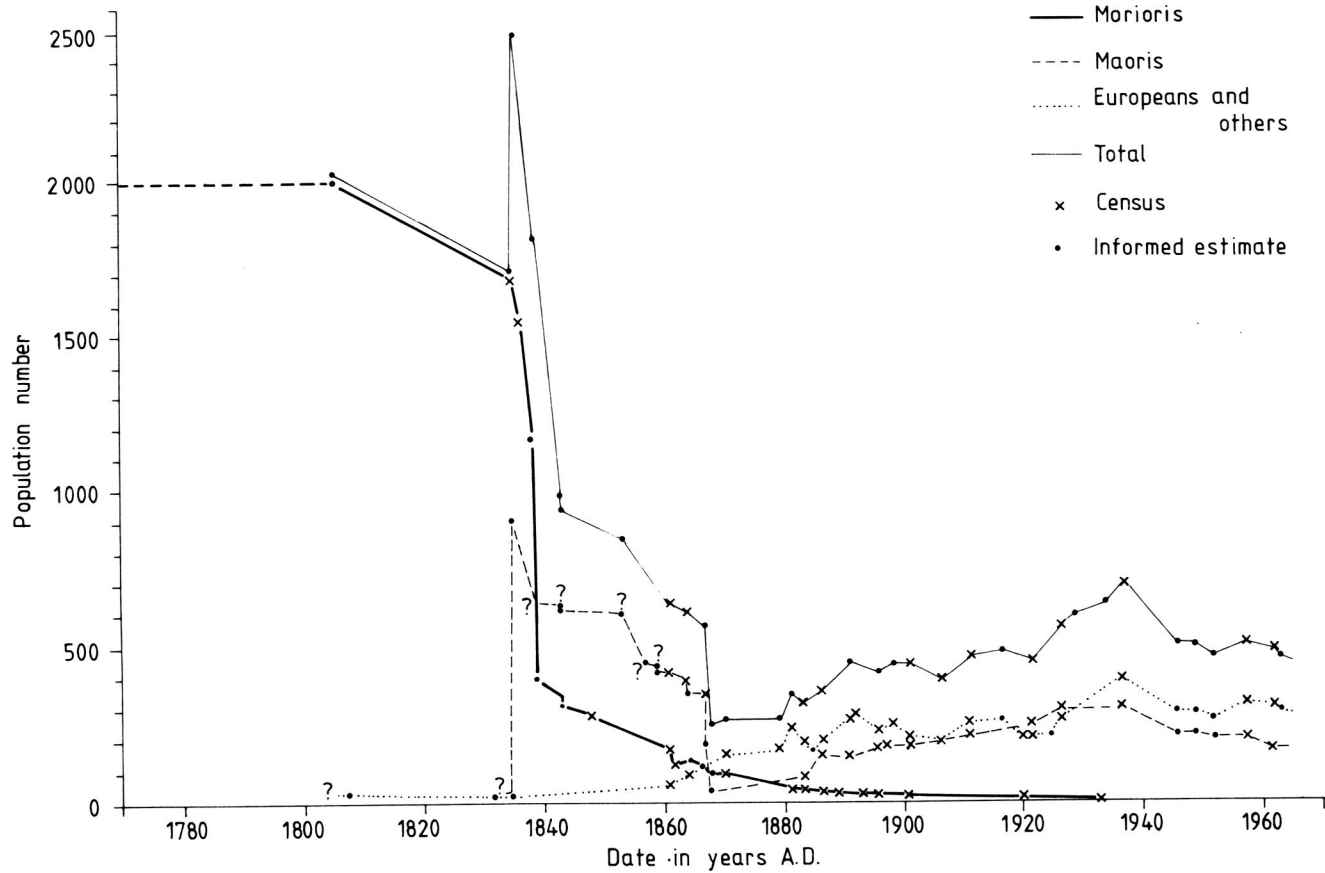
The 'great age of exploration' brought Europe into contact with native peoples from all over the globe. This precipitated various attempts at the classification of races and cultures. Those which were to persist used evolutionary theory, which was then the most topical and powerful organising concept at hand. One very influential nineteenth century scholar⁴⁷ held that the cultures of the world could be organised into three essential categories: barbarism, savagery and civilisation and that these were the three essential stages of social evolution. Cultures in the lowest categories were thought to be inert, that is, unlikely to change except by adopting new skills or technology from an external source. Therefore geographical isolation was an evolutionary cul-de-sac for hunter-gatherer cultures.⁴⁸ The view that race determines status was also widely held,⁴⁹ and such views were current when the Maruiwi myth was

46 M. Walters, 'An Examination of the Literary Evidence for the Existence of Discrete Groups of Moriori in the Chatham Islands in the 19th Century', *Working Papers in Chatham Islands Archaeology*, No.9, Anthropology Department, University of Otago, 1977.

47 Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881) published his most important work, *Ancient Society*, in 1877. The evolutionary doctrine he advocated influenced Marx and Engels.

48 This assumption has been used recently by Rhys Jones, 'The Tasmanian Paradox', in R. V. S. Wright, ed., *Stone Tools as Cultural Markers*, Canberra, 1977, pp.189-204, and *ibid*, 'Why Did the Tasmanians Stop Eating Fish?' in R. Gould, ed., *Explorations in Ethnoarchaeology*, Albuquerque, 1978, pp.11-48, to explain simplification of material culture and the cessation of fishing through time in Tasmania.

49 See M. Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*, New York, 1969, Chapter 4 for background.



developed. Supporting evidence was drawn from a variety of sources, the best known of which was Smith's highly questionable rearrangement of Maori tradition and genealogy.⁵⁰ One source of evidence which is not frequently mentioned was Smith's experience in the Chatham Islands. He went there first in 1863 to make a cadastral map. When he arrived, the Moriori population was just 10 percent of its pre-contact maximum (Figure 1). The people had suffered a series of contagious diseases from which they had no immunity, disenfranchisement from their land, and very harsh treatment at the hands of the Maori and European invaders.⁵¹ They were a sad contrast to the Maori people Smith had known during his early formative years in Taranaki and to others whom he later visited in tropical Polynesia.⁵² This difference was explained, in the style of the time, by the postulation of two successive migrations from disparate culture areas, which were known to have been inhabited by different racial groups. The result is the Great New Zealand myth.

An alternative, if somewhat less sensational, view is offered here. It is that the Polynesian culture, which came into being on the Chatham Islands, differed from most others in being relatively undifferentiated in its socio-political organisation, material culture and art. But complexity alone does not ensure success⁵³ and the Moriori were successful in their adaptation to the Chatham Islands before contact. This extinct people ought to be regarded a lot more positively than they have been in the past. Elsdon Best, for example, gave a description of the Maruiwi, from whom he believed the Moriori were descended. He said that, 'in appearance there folks are said to have been tall and slim-built, dark-skinned, having big or protuberant bones, flat-faced and flat-nosed, with upturned nostrils, their eyes were curiously restless, and they had a habit of glancing sideways without turning the head, their hair in some cases

50 J. B. W. Robertson, *A Consecutive Account of the Traditional History of the Whakatane District*, Whakatane and District Historical Society Memoir 4, 1965; Simmons, *passim*.

51 W. T. L. Travers, 'On the Destruction of the Aborigines of the Chatham Islands', *Transactions of the Ethnological Society in London*, IV, 5 (1865), p.352. See also Shand, 'Occupation', pp.83-94, 154-168, and n.43.

As readers will be aware it is often believed that the Maori invaders of the Chatham Islands killed off the Moriori. This view was strongly emphasised in the recent Television New Zealand documentary 'Moriori', 1979. It should be emphasised, however, that a significant proportion of the Moriori died in, and because of, a psychological state of despair and despondency and not of the direct effect of either violence or disease. This factor also accounts in part for their low fertility rate after 1840 (R. Richards, 'An Historical Geography of the Chatham Islands', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury, 1962, pp.50ff.) Eric Richards has recently documented the same kind of mortality amongst Highland Scots' immigrants to South Australia in the 1850s: 'Highland Emigrants to South Australia in the 1850's', *Northern Scotland*, (1982), pp.1-29.

52 Smith went on tour of Polynesia to collect medicines. In six months following July 1897 he visited Rarotonga, Tahiti, Huahine, Raiatea, Aitutaki, Moorea, Mangaia, Upolu, Maui, Hawaii, Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu.

53 R. Rappaport, *Ecology, Meaning and Religion*, Richmond, Va., 1979.

stood upright, in others it was bushy'.⁵⁴ At least some of that is hard to believe! He also blamed the Maruiwi for introducing some undesirable traits into New Zealand. The first was human sacrifice. The second was cannibalism. The third was 'an object which may be compared to a flattened tipcat . . . and is beloved to ungodly boys who utilise it for the purpose of destroying windows'.⁵⁵ These novel observations are only as accurate as the premises upon which they were based.

DOUGLAS G. SUTTON

University of Auckland

54 Best, E. T.P.N.Z.I., XLVIII (1915), 435.

55 *ibid.*, p.440.