Gospel Power for Civilization:
The CMS Missionary Perspective on Maori Culture

1830-1860

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Abstract

This thesis is an historical analysis of nineteenth century Protestant Christian mission in New Zealand, with a particular focus on religion and theology, and their role in shaping the perceptions of Church Missionary Society missionaries as they observed and related to Maori people and their culture between 1830 and 1860. It showcases theology as the primary paradigm in which missionaries understood and commented upon Maori, as opposed to other culturally received frameworks. It argues that historians have given too little attention to this theological paradigm and have therefore failed to grasp its significance for accurately portraying the missionary perspective on Maori culture.

The significance of religious worldview is highlighted by an examination of the meaning and role of the Christianity-Civilization nexus in missionary thinking. The following pages explore the relationship between the two terms: why and how they were linked, both in general, and in a New Zealand-specific context. The arguments of this thesis are put forward through a close examination of CMS missionary documents, particularly letters and journals, as well as published source materials. This study highlights the moral and religious basis of CMS missionary notions of civilization, and emphasises their theological outlook as the most powerful factor that impacted on missionary ‘civilizing’ activities in New Zealand. It underscores the reality that missionaries were religious people and often viewed the world around them in a religious way. The implications of this fact mean that historians must give significant attention to the missionaries’ religious worldview in order to portray missionary perceptions of Christian mission, Maori people, culture and civilization in an accurate light.
For family and friends at Coro.

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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Acknowledgements

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And last, but importantly, my thanks to Dr Vesna Drapac, without whose ‘gentle push’ this work would not exist.
Notes and Abbreviations:

Abbreviations

AUL   Auckland University Library
APL   Auckland Public Library
AML   Auckland War Memorial Museum Library
NZETC  New Zealand Electronic Text Centre at Victoria University of Wellington.
NZJH   New Zealand Journal of History

Notes on the text:

Most Maori words have been written in italics, except where they form part of a direct quotation. Although Te Reo Maori is not considered to be a foreign language in New Zealand, because this is an Australian PhD thesis I have decided to italicise the words. Meanings may be located in the glossary in the appendix at the end of this thesis. Also, I have chosen to spell civilization with ‘z’ rather than ‘s’ (this is the preferred form of spelling in the online Oxford English Dictionary), although some quotations which appear in the text use ‘s’ in spelling the word. Also, I have referred to the movement commonly known as the Enlightenment with a capital ‘E’ in order to distinguish it from a general experience of ‘enlightenment.’

Within quotations capitalisation, spelling and punctuation, or seeming lack thereof, have been left as they appear in the documentary source.
Maps

Maori Tribal Areas

NOTE:
This map is included on page vii of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Location of Mission Stations to 1845

NOTE:
This map is included on page viii of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

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Introduction: Limited Missionaries and the Limits of History?

I find the perceptive part of Christianity tends to make men peaceable, honest, sober, industrious, and orderly. These, in my opinion, are the very elements of civilization, in the moral sense of it.1


This thesis deals with the approach of Church Missionary Society missionaries to Maori culture between 1830 and 1860, the years of the ascendancy of Christian faith and thought among Maori people in New Zealand. My major concern in the coming pages is to highlight the theological worldview of the New Zealand missionaries this study encompasses, and how this worldview impacted on missionary perceptions of Maori people. The presence of this theological perspective and its impact should be rather obvious - Christian missionaries are self-evidently religious, and intent on performing religious works. What is remarkable about existing historical scholarship analysing the missionary enterprise in New Zealand is that missionary religiosity, and particularly theology, is attributed with little significance.

Much has been written on the role of Christian missions and their agents in nineteenth-century New Zealand history. Missions are of considerable significance to the nation’s early history in the years 1814-1870, but historical analysis of the era rarely gives more than cursory acknowledgement of the distinct theological interpretation that the missionaries placed on nearly everything they saw and did. The historiographical avoidance of such pervasive religious rationale could, quite logically, be put down to the nature of missionary primary sources themselves: letters and journals written by evangelicals, for evangelical organisations and audiences. However, missionaries were not just writing for a religious audience, but voicing their own deeply held beliefs and perspectives on the world in which they lived. The missionaries’ theological worldview shaped almost everything they did, not least the relationships they formed with the people around them. For historians to neglect such a fundamental aspect of missionary enterprise lends itself to misrepresentation of the nature of New Zealand mission history.

One of the few works to seriously consider the religious paradigm within which missionaries operated is Judith Binney’s monumental study *The Legacy of Guilt: a Life of Thomas Kendall*. Whilst giving considerable place to the influential power of Kendall’s evangelical Christian faith, however, his religious convictions are ultimately negatively depicted by Binney as the source of all the guilt and personal conflict that Kendall experienced as an unyielding Calvinist who had been “seduced” by the appeal of Maori culture. Kendall’s life, according to Binney, was “tragic” because he could not reject his religious and moral absolutes, and he therefore remained trapped by them.²

This is not the only place where Binney conveys the idea that evangelical missionaries were “limited” by their convictions. Those not destroyed by their own religious beliefs are portrayed as being dissociated from Maori and limited by their religious worldview. Binney’s introduction to a 1970s edition of William Yate’s book *An Account of New Zealand* describes the CMS missionary settlements as “tiny fragments of England sheltering behind a ring of picket fences and rambler roses, along the fringes of the ‘Enemy’s Country’”. Although unaware of it, the missionaries apparently faced a choice of either being “involved in the way of life they had come to destroy, and endanger their vocation” or to separate themselves, living apart from Maori people and their environment. Declaring that most of the mission workers “had the confidence, the faith and the limitations to be little affected by the new world”, Binney concludes that missionary relationships with Maori were paternalistic and “always limited by their conviction that man without God was man without hope” (emphasis mine).³ Kathryn Rountree similarly paints CMS missionary women as restricted by their religious convictions, depicting their “worlds” and personal perspectives as “limited” and confined compared with that of Maori women.⁴ This begs the question as to how such a “limited” group of people could have been so instrumental in shaping early cross-cultural relationships in New Zealand. This influence is not a flight of the imagination; its existence is highlighted by some of the arguments put forward by leading historians who are critical of the missionary enterprise.

An interpretation of missionary ‘limitation,’ often implying a negative influence on Maori culture, seems to overshadow much of what is written about missions in New

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Zealand. Keith Sinclair in *A History of New Zealand* and *Origins of the Maori Wars* portrays missionary influence within Maori society as primarily destructive, with missionary ideas held responsible for destroying Maori tradition, and altering the “constitution of Maori life”. Missionaries are accused of working towards the eradication of traditional customs. Sinclair blames missionaries for being unable to dissociate “European manners and morals” from Christianity, instead emphasising their own “puritanical code” in what they taught Maori, a catalyst in the erosion of traditional Maori tribal society. The changes resulting from missionary influence, according to Sinclair, brought “immediate temporal harm” and untied the “strongest bonds of the Maori community … without any substitute being adopted”.\(^5\) Sinclair deems Maori to be “wrecking their own social system” so that by 1840 Maori are described as living in “a disordered world”. Similar thoughts can be found in the writings of Ranginui Walker, who labels missionaries “the advanced party of cultural invasion” for imposing their worldview upon Maori, and destroying many aspects of Maori culture in the process.\(^6\)

Peter Adams brands evangelical policy in relation to Maori culture a “crusade to destroy”.\(^7\) Yet J.M.R. Owens insists that in 1840 the “cultural framework” of New Zealand essentially remained Polynesian; while there were major changes taking place in aspects of Maori life, societies remained traditional in nature.\(^8\)

From another perspective, James Belich has been accused in his histories of having ridden roughshod over differences within colonizing culture to portray Europeans as monolithically ethnocentric and racist.\(^9\) He insists that historians need to understand the lenses of race in order to correctly interpret nineteenth century European attitudes to Maori.\(^10\) Christian conversion does not escape his historical revision, with Belich rendering the missionaries “culturally and economically useful” to Maori, and Christianity and literacy as “currencies of rivalry” within the Maori world. Even though

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Belich allows that “Maori engagement with Christianity was real, deep and broad … by the 1850s, over 60 per cent of Maori counted themselves as Christians”, he questions if the type of Christianity which Maori adopted was the kind that missionaries were looking for, and he is not alone in doing so.\(^{11}\) He goes on to argue for a Maori conversion of Christianity to suit Maori ends.\(^{12}\) While Belich’s interpretations may partially reflect the reality of Maori engagement with Christianity, they also, argues Lyndsay Head, leave behind a depiction of Maori “as either brainwashed dupes of the missionaries or as cunning nationalists who used Christianity for purely instrumental ends”.\(^{13}\) However, assuming that Belich’s statement about Maori making use of Christianity as they deemed fit is at least partially true, this fact directly challenges, and in fact deflates, the ‘culture destroying’ thesis of Sinclair and others. Surely a conversion of Christianity means that Maori culture was vibrant, fluid and adaptable enough to assimilate the new ideas in an effective way, and Maori were in fact the agents of this change rather than victims of missionary power and a perceived cultural fracturing.

In contrast to Belich’s position, I want to suggest that a theological lens, rather than the lens of race, is of far more importance in understanding European missionary perceptions of Maori. In fact, a religious or theological view of life often underpinned missionary cultural mores. There is within Belich’s writing an unfortunate lumping together of missionaries with other Europeans in their worldview and cultural impact. M.P.K. Sorrenson and Pat Moloney, in their articles on civilization in New Zealand, also depict evangelicals as followers of the same scheme of civilization as less-religiously driven and non-evangelical European observers of Maori culture; much of this thesis will be dedicated to showing that this was not so.\(^{14}\) I also offer a different assessment in response to Sinclair’s opinion that nothing replaced receding Maori cultural norms. Indeed, not only was there something new to replace the old, but in some cases much of the old could remain, especially when reinterpreted or reframed in the light of Christian revelation. In addition, the notion that European culture could be

\(^{11}\) This issue will be explored in Chapter One.


divorced from the influence of over a thousand years of Christian stimulus is indicative of a false separation between religion and culture that exists in modern, ‘secular’ historical interpretation, and perhaps explains why Sinclair cannot see the new things which were replacing the old. The difficulties attached to this ‘secular’ way of thinking will be alluded to below. I will instead argue that Maori, from the missionary viewpoint, found something reasonable and positive in Christianity, which not only provided stability and confidence, but, over and above this, contributed a whole new worldview which, though opposed to traditional Maori views at various points, also had a strange congruency with it.15 As will be seen, the missionaries insisted that there were Maori people who inhabited an ordered world during the period under study, though it was set to a different order. In fact, Maori themselves, according to missionary witnesses, “contrasted the uncertainties of their former life with the new order they associated with the missionary”.16

The readings of New Zealand mission history outlined above have their foundation in a way of thinking that is critical of the place of religion, and particularly Christianity, in the rationalisations made of the world and its people; as Judith Binney put it, missionaries were “limited” by their religious worldview. Much of the problem for historians lies in the fact that the missionaries were religious. In the introduction to his book The Silent Revolution and the Making of Victorian England, Herbert Schlossberg highlights the difficulty that many historians have found in relating to the “prevailing religiosity of the period” prior to and throughout the Victorian era. He refers for example to recent studies of Victorian England which exhibit a prevailing modern antinomian interpretation, and points to one particular work which depicts Christian opposition against prostitution as repression. The issue, he says, is not that historians must agree with these viewpoints, but how scholars with so little sympathy for the worldview of an age “can penetrate very far beneath the surface” of what is being described, since they do not believe it contains anything of value.17 One could argue in addition to this that the rise of postmodernism and the eschewing of any kind of meta-narrative in the way we understand the world we live in also presents problems for identifying with people whose outlook on the world, in the case of nineteenth century

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evangelicals, was conditioned by an overarching Biblical interpretation of the nature and
meaning of life.

John Stenhouse has highlighted the existence of similar limitations in New
Zealand historiography by drawing attention to the overwhelming preference for reading
history through “the lens of secularisation theory” in studies by some of some of the
country’s leading historians, who have depicted the nation “as largely secular from its
inception”. Keith Sinclair, for example, in 1959 declared “a simple materialism” as New
Zealand’s “prevailing religion”, and doubted whether the nineteenth century population
was any more religious.18 As a result of this secular lens, few histories of New Zealand,
or of New Zealand mission, despite its essentially religious nature, give serious
consideration to the religious aspects of history. For example, many missionary
biographies fail to adequately demonstrate the profound importance of theological
beliefs in the lives of missionaries.19 Further, there exists a tendency to use missionary
sources in other areas of scholarly investigation, such as cross-cultural studies, colonial
and political history, even economic history, and as a result the characteristic theological
voices that missionary sources primarily capture are lost in the effort to use these
sources to say something else. By refusing to grapple with theological material,
historians have diminished the stature of belief systems as powerful forces in shaping
the complexities of the past.

A recent article by Hugh Morrison has highlighted the paucity of work covering
New Zealand’s role in the international missionary scene which does justice to the
theological basis of missions and missionaries. Despite the plethora of work abounding
in this area, Morrison sees a dearth of theological engagement in many of these studies.
The problem of this “potentially myopic and less than satisfactory understanding of the
missionary phenomenon” also applies to the historiography of nineteenth century
mission among Maori people.20 There remains “much pontification about the
‘missionary factor’ by people who knew little and cared less about what the missionary

18 John Stenhouse, (ed.), Christianity, Modernity and Culture: New Perspectives on New Zealand
History, ATF Press, Adelaide, 2005, and also his article ‘God’s Own Silence: Secular Nationalism,
19 See Noelene Hall, I Have Planted: a Life of Alfred Nesbit Brown, Dunmore Press, Palmerston North,
1981; T.M.I Willament, John Hobbs, 1800-1883: Wesleyan Missionary to the Ngapuhi Tribe of
2006, p.77. This is not just limited to nineteenth century mission history, but includes histories
encompassing recent years.
sought to convey”. 21 The call to develop a deeper knowledge of both Maori and missionary religious paradigms still beckons.

To give a considerable place to missionaries’ theological perspectives in turn challenges the assumption that the cultural change which missionaries were instrumental in effecting in Maori communities was negative and destructive. There is no doubt that missionaries wanted to see cultural transformation taking place in the societies where they proclaimed the Christian gospel. In the missionaries’ eyes, because Christianity made exclusive claims upon the matter of truth, a change in religious allegiance automatically meant a change in culture also. Mission historian Brian Stanley, in contrast to the vast amount of work that criticises the supposed cultural imperialism thought to accompany the modern missionary enterprise has questioned whether it was actually even possible for missionaries to extend a culture-free gospel, which could be painlessly received by non-Christian cultures. He argues that missionaries should not be judged by whether or not they played a part in cultural change, since this was partly their goal, but whether the resulting change was of benefit to the people affected by Christianity’s impact. 22 Cultures are not static or unadaptable, which challenges the assumption that cultural ‘imperialism’ automatically defines Christian evangelism. Cultural imperialism could only be effective, Andrew Porter argues, if premised upon the silence of ‘native’ peoples. 23 As we shall discover, in missionary records Maori were far from silent in their engagement with evangelical missionaries, and in fact Maori evangelists themselves played a heavily influential role in the conversion of other Maori people, and in their ensuing pastoral care. 24

In addition, little work has considered the influence of the evangelical revival on New Zealand society, which Tony Ballantyne terms a great “social and intellectual force that recast European society and moulded New Zealand’s early development”. 25 In his view, the heart of missionary effort was focused on religious, as well as social transformation, and therefore Maori people were “incorporated into a social world

fundamentally reshaped by evangelicalism”. He therefore suggests that if historians wish to comprehend the changes in “Maori mentalities” which stemmed from missionary encounters, the beliefs and values of the missionaries themselves must be explored. The following pages sketch these values, by focusing on the role of evangelical theology in missionary viewpoints in this encounter.

Therefore, it will be argued that the theological beliefs that missionaries brought to New Zealand, which the missionaries believed were appropriated in some way by many Maori people who entered their sphere of influence, played a significant role in not only transforming, but further establishing and prospering the people who appropriated them. The resulting metamorphosis was interpreted by the missionaries as “not a one-way process but a dynamic interaction,” between the God and gospel that they proclaimed, and the people to whom they spoke. Whilst their Christian proclamation “envisaged a clean break with the old”, it also enabled much of what already existed to remain and be strengthened. Orthodox, evangelical Christianity, the missionaries testified, was seen by numbers of Maori people as a viable, real and significant foundation on which they could establish and build their own lives.

Unfortunately, much of the study of Maori encounter with Christianity is based around Maori syncretic adaptations and accommodation of Christianity with Maori belief systems. This method of interpretation has relegated Maori relationship to orthodox Christianity to the discard pile. However, even those histories of mission among Maori which look at a more orthodox approach often exhibit either reluctance, or inability, to deal with the theological issues which lie at the heart of legitimate study of missionary activity in New Zealand.

Moreover, the upshot of giving place to the role played by a theological worldview is recognition of the intrinsic link between religious/belief systems and culture that existed in missionary thinking. Some acknowledgement of the ‘religious’ basis of Maori culture has been made by scholars in recent years, highlighting the fact that every aspect of Maori life was permeated by, and structured according to, their spiritual belief system. Nonetheless, it is not uncommon for scholars to argue that

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26 Ibid, p.32.
missionaries did not understand Maori culture because their own cultural outlook separated their understanding of the world into ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ categories. In doing so historians are guilty of placing their own cultural assumptions on to the missionaries. Bronwyn Elsmore provides one example:

The Rev. Robert Maunsell, in his journal, referred to his ‘disgust’ and ‘abhorrence’ of the practices of Maori, and judged their waiata as filthy and debasing. Henry Williams recorded in 1828 that they were ‘governed by the Prince of Darkness in all their movements’, and told one person that his people were wrong in all their ways’. In such cases the missionaries were guilty of taking their own narrow view of religion and imposing it on a culture vastly different from their own. As a result, they did not see what was present in Maori life. That Maori did indeed have a well-developed religious outlook cannot be doubted. Spiritual beliefs formed the basis of the culture and were implicit in every aspect of daily life. All behaviour was ordered according to the demands of the spiritual world … The difference between the two systems then, was that while Europeans had formulated their views into a formal system which separated the areas of life into ‘religious’ and ‘secular’, the Maori belief system had not been so formalized, and no such dichotomy existed between the sacred and the profane … On the whole, they sought to convert Maori from an external standpoint, rather than becoming one with them and so exerting some influence from within.

We will return to consider this statement in chapter two, but for the moment it is sufficient to note its echoes of earlier references to the “limitation” of missionaries resulting from their religious outlook. There are problems with Elsmore’s perspective for two reasons: first, it assumes that the evangelical missionaries referred to in this statement had the same worldview as Europeans generally, which they did not, their ideas having been radically reshaped by the substance of Christian revelation. Second, while missionaries themselves may have labelled some of their activities as ‘secular’,


they perceived even so-called secular activities as taking place under the sovereign hand of an Almighty and providential God, who reigned over every aspect of human life throughout the whole world. There are numerous references to the sovereign action of God in everyday events recorded in missionary sources. Also, Satan was present and active in the created world: why would Williams say that Maori “were governed by the Prince of Darkness in all their movements” and that Maori people were “wrong in all their ways” if he considered there to be a “dichotomy” between the religious and secular? This directly challenges Tom Griffiths’ assertion that Protestantism may be seen as “an immense shrinkage in the scope of the sacred in reality”. It was precisely because there was no genuine separation between the ‘sacred’ and ‘profane’, because God was perceived to be working in all aspects and places of human existence, that missionaries were even present in New Zealand with their gospel. Rather, missionaries perceived ‘spiritual’ and ‘temporal’ (not secular) spheres as distinct, but not separate from one another. The manner in which a person lived was always a religious matter; and even civilization, as we shall see, was looked upon as being, at its foundations, a religious matter. This separation between sacred and secular is perhaps more in the minds of scholars themselves than in the outlook of the missionaries; for example, the comment of Keith Sinclair previously referred to, who assumed that Christianity, as it was being spread among other people groups by European missionaries, should be separated from European culture.

There was really no such thing as a ‘secular’ sphere of life in missionary outlook. The coming of the Christian gospel into the realm of traditional Maori belief systems was sometimes expressed by missionaries in terms of a ‘clash of kingdoms’, that is, the kingdom of God clashing with the kingdom of Satan and his cohorts, who the missionaries believed lay behind Maori belief and culture (or any ‘heathen’ culture for that matter). The fact that missionaries were constantly looking for a change in all aspects of life, not just religious ideas, demonstrates an underlying assumption that Christian faith applied to the whole of human existence. Because of the absence of this sacred-secular dichotomy, the missionaries identified in this study clearly understood that there was a spiritual basis to Maori culture, and though generally expressing an

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32 Griffiths’ portrays Calvinist theology as the reason why the Williams’ family carefully created and defined the boundaries of sacred and secular in their mission work, in order to deal with the “threat” of the secular. See Tom Griffiths, ‘Boundaries of the Sacred: The Williams Family in New Zealand, 1823-30’, *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 13, no.1, 1984, p.44.
opposition to many aspects, the missionaries were much more closely associated with Maori culture than they have been given credit for. To deny this is to seriously misunderstand the religious outlook of the missionaries themselves. The underlying issue for missionaries in relating to people was ‘who, or what, do you worship?’ because this impacted on the whole of life. Consequently, if historians wish to understand missionary interpretations of Maori life, they must be considered from within the theological context in which their comments have issued.

This is particularly the case when it comes to identifying the meaning of the term ‘civilization’, and why it was so often linked with Christianity. Nearly all histories of New Zealand which comment on this link view the term’s use as a way of delineating the cultural/racial superiority of Europeans over Maori, or as a word used to describe a so-called ‘secular’ interpretation of the development of human society, and a method of ‘raising’ societies or nations which were thought to rank low on the ‘scale’ of humanity. These same perspectives were reportedly held by evangelical missionaries. Nevertheless, whilst evangelical thoughts on civilization involved some of these ideas and terms to a certain extent, what is more clearly discernable is that the Christian/religious paradigm through which the missionaries viewed the world imbued the term ‘civilization’ with a different meaning and emphasis from that of more ‘secular’ and non-evangelical theorists. Civilization from an evangelical standpoint takes on strong moral and religious connotations, and is seen to be the outflow of moral and social change brought about in people who believed the Christian gospel. Some evangelicals went so far as to say that there could be no ‘true’ civilization apart from it being firmly established on Christian faith and gospel. While there were variations on the civilization theme in evangelical thinking, the need for Christian faith as the fountainhead of moral and social functionality, and fruitful human life flowing from this basis, was the common factor in missionary assumptions about human culture and civilization during this period. The development or degeneration of human cultures stemmed from a spiritual basis in missionary thinking. To insist that evangelical missionaries separated sacred and secular spheres does not give adequate weight to these facts.

33 In fact, in contrast to Binney and Sinclair, Jenny Murray has argued that missionaries after 1840, such as Richard Taylor: “Though conscious of differences between their own society and the one in which they were living, missionaries reflected the life around them. They were in the Maori world: and in varying degrees, they might also be of it.” Jenny Murray, ‘Moving South with the CMS’, Robert Glen, (ed.), Mission and Moko: The Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814-1882, Latimer Fellowship, Christchurch, p.131.
Therefore, there is a need to re-evaluate just what CMS missionaries believed about Maori culture, and why they held their distinctive views. This thesis is offered in examination of this theme. I will essentially show that awareness of the missionaries’ theological worldview is necessary for accurately portraying their perceptions of Maori people, and for understanding the evangelical missionary approach to Maori culture. I maintain that because historians have neglected to give adequate attention to the missionaries’ theological worldview they have not understood the nature and significance of the relationship between Christianity and civilization in missionary thinking. My thesis is that the relationship between the two terms is the key to unlocking the evangelical missionary approach to culture, and its transformation, and the crucial claim I make above all is that, because of the theological viewpoint of the missionaries, the term ‘civilization’ was imbued with moral and religious meaning, and this fact separates the evangelical missionary approach to civilization, and by implication their approach to Maori culture, from that of non-evangelical observers and thinkers. I emphasise the need to distinguish the evangelical missionary group from other European commentators because there could often be sharp disagreement between a more ‘secular’ view of civilization, and the missionary standpoint on the issue. As will be made clear, the term ‘European’ does not equate with the term ‘Christian’, nor does either term equate directly with ‘civilization’. My thesis will argue that various aspects of civilization, such as education, agriculture, and human industry were all strongly associated in the missionary mind with Christian faith and its supposed moral, social and practical outcomes. I will also show that while the nurturing of Christianity was thought to change and transform cultures, and the model for this was often the evangelical sphere of British middle-class society, the context familiar to missionaries themselves, it was not European for the sake of being European: civilization was based on Christian principle and not necessarily acceptable European norms. These assertions fundamentally constitute the chief arguments of this thesis. Therefore, examining the link between Christianity and civilization will form the major part of this work, and this exercise will actually function as a vehicle through which missionary ideas about people and culture will be examined and discussed.

In terms of the time period, I have focused on the years 1830 to 1860, decades of considerable Maori interest in, and a positive relationship with, missionary Christianity. Prior to 1830 there was little Maori concern for Christian faith. This delay in Christian impact has been well documented by historians, with few Anglican and no Wesleyan
converts up to this point.\textsuperscript{34} Yet the 1830s witnessed a dramatic change in the situation. It is therefore imperative to begin my study here, which will primarily represent a close reading of a selection of missionary letters and journals, the result of six months’ perusal of journals and archival material at various repositories in Auckland. This study is not intended to be exhaustive in scope, but aims to capture the general outlook of CMS missionaries during the era. The 1860s, the end of this sequence, coincides with the outbreak of conflict in Taranaki and the wars which continued for the next decade, a period characterised by increasing hostility to missionary Christianity among Maori. It will complicate this study too much to bring these years into consideration, so I therefore limit the period under study to prior to the end of 1860.

The first section of this work deals with evangelical theology and theories of civilization, both in Britain generally and then specifically in New Zealand. The first chapter establishes the ‘inward’ significance of evangelical Christianity; that is, that the primary interest of CMS missionaries in New Zealand was spiritual: conversion to faith in Christ was overwhelmingly the foremost aim of missionary enterprise. In the face of so much historiography that deals with everything but the spiritual nature of mission, it seems worth mentioning this significant point at the outset of this study. Proceeding chapters will concentrate on the notable link between religion and culture in missionary thinking, and how CMS missionaries dealt with aspects of Maori culture in this regard. The argument will next move to look at the nature and meaning of civilization in general European thinking, then specifically at how the missionary interpretation of civilization was different from these notions, especially its premise that Christianity was the only basis on which genuine civilization could be established and built. Following this is a section which deals with received aspects of civilization, such as law, government, industry and education, which will discuss missionary viewpoints on these issues, and how they could be developed to constitute a ‘civilized’ community. Throughout these chapters there will also be occasional references to Wesleyan missionaries, as well as Johann Wohlers, a Lutheran missionary on Ruapuke Island in the Foveaux Straits. These examples are used to better delineate the evangelical perspective, and to show that these were ‘evangelical’ ideas, not sectarian ones; that is, they could be found cross-denominationally, and in the case of the German Wohlers, across national boundaries.

\textsuperscript{34} Owens, ‘Christianity and the Maoris to 1840’, 1968.
There is a great need to read missionary sources in the context of their relevant worldview. So often these sources are used to forward an argument about non-religious subjects that the worldview out of which these sources have issued is missed completely. It seems almost acceptable for researchers to think about Christian missionaries without understanding the religious worldview which conditioned their words and actions. While their outlook may to some analysts appear prejudicial and unenlightened, it is nonetheless the worldview of the people being studied, and therefore ought to have the serious, scholarly attention given to it that thoughtful historical analysis demands. In these chapters I unapologetically include missionary theology, in an attempt to better delineate the missionaries’ point of view, although I do not argue that the missionary perspective accurately represents all things as they actually occurred, but reflects missionary interpretations of these actions and events. That theology has an extremely prominent place in the suppositions and rationalisations of missionary experience among Maori cannot be denied, and must be seriously considered in order to most accurately reflect the CMS missionary enterprise in nineteenth century New Zealand.
Chapter One: Missionary Perceptions of Maori Christianity and ‘Saving Faith’.

This chapter examines the distinctive nature of evangelical Christianity, the primary elements which form its unique character, and how they affect the thrust of this study. Understanding the basics of evangelical faith and theology is essential, for these factors underlie issues which will be raised in subsequent chapters. Many recent histories which address mission in New Zealand do their best to avoid ‘theological’ concerns, and seem to prefer a focus on the political, social or cultural issues involved. Historiography, moreover, usually considers missionary notions of civilization from this standpoint too. Such a position is dismissive of the fact that civilization was directly linked with Christianity by evangelicals throughout the nineteenth century. Because the CMS missionaries linked Christianity with civilization it is necessary to consider the nature of the missionaries’ Christian framework. The word ‘mission’ has everything to do with “a passage over the boundary between faith in Jesus Christ and its absence”. Therefore, this chapter provides a basic outline of evangelical Christianity, exploring how CMS missionaries in New Zealand placed primary importance on theological matters, such as conversion and faith. Acknowledging the primacy of these ‘spiritual’ issues in the evangelical scheme is the first step in understanding the relationship between Christianity and civilization in missionary thinking. The major interest of CMS missionaries in New Zealand was spiritual: conversion to faith in Christ was overwhelmingly the foremost aim of missionary enterprise.

The scope of Christian mission history spans close to two thousand years, six continents in geographical terms, and a profusion of various cultures. This thesis is located in the context of British evangelical Christianity, and a revival movement arising in the eighteenth century which was highly enthused with making known the person and action of Jesus Christ. The description ‘evangelical’, being applied throughout these chapters to highlight the distinctive theological position of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionaries referred to, comes from the Greek word euanggelion, meaning ‘gospel’ or ‘good news’, so the term literally means “of the gospel”. In the following chapters, the designation ‘evangelical’ will particularly apply

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to the persons, churches and movements that arose out of the eighteenth-century evangelical ‘revival’ that took place across Europe and North America, but in this case has most to do with the revival movement in Britain which began during the eighteenth century, and its far-reaching effects well into the nineteenth century. Evangelicalism stemmed from earlier movements within the Protestant Christian church associated with the Reformation, but was also the product of the culture and era of the evangelical revival, which shaped the movement in such a way that it differed quite markedly from other facets of the Christian church during this period. This evangelical movement, as David Bebbington explains, was cross-denominational, and distinguished by some common features or doctrinal positions. Recognition of these major features is important, as they will inform arguments made in this and later chapters.

**Defining ‘Evangelical’**

The first of the emphases that characterised nineteenth century evangelical faith was the need for ‘conversion’, based on the understanding that humanity was ‘fallen’, or inherently sinful and depraved, and therefore stood in need of regeneration, or ‘new birth’. William Wilberforce, prominent evangelical politician and humanitarian, wrote in his treatise on “Real Christianity” that a human being was an “apostate creature” who was: “Fallen from his high original, degraded in his nature, and depraved in his faculties … prone to vice … tainted with sin, not slightly and superficially, but radically and to the core”. Therefore, conversion from this sinful state to life in Christ was deemed a most essential matter.

The second of the evangelical emphases, activism, formed another fundamental pillar of evangelical faith, as “faith without works” was considered to be ‘dead’ faith. Throughout the nineteenth century, much evangelical energy was expended in the name of all kinds of causes, such as the abolition of slavery, the humanisation of the prison system, efforts towards improvements in education and public behaviour, the

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2 These major aspects of evangelicalism are put forth by David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, Unwin Hyman, London, Boston, 1989, p.3.

temperance movement, the abolition of Sabbath-breaking, and so on. These were efforts to see the genuine nature of Christian faith manifested in the public sphere. 4

Biblicism, as a third major feature, also played a central role in the evangelical scheme, and involved giving primary place to the authority of the Old and New Testament scriptures above the authority of the church and human reasoning. Biblical primacy and infallibility informed all areas of evangelical faith, often opposing accepted cultural ideologies. 5 Wilberforce put it thus: “it must be conceded by those who admit the authority of Scripture that from the decision of the word of God there can be no appeal”. 6 This should not, however, lead to the assertion that evangelicals did not allow reason a sizeable place in their version of Christianity. As will be seen in another chapter, religion of the heart went hand in hand with a ‘reasonable’ faith.

Finally, evangelical Christianity was characterised by the prominence of crucicentrism, and it was this “enthusiasm for the cross”, in contradistinction to “the mere repression of one’s own sin and depravity” which was held to be the power and “secret of modern evangelical religion”. 7 The Evangelical movement aimed at returning the work and action of Christ’s atoning death on the cross, and all the implications of this event, to the centrality of Christian faith. No aspect of the Christian system was more greatly emphasized by leading evangelical ministers of the period than the meaning and significance of the Atonement. Though this basic outline of evangelicalism is broad rather than detailed, these four emphases, as a whole, go a long way towards sketching the underlying characteristics of the evangelical worldview held by missionaries in early colonial New Zealand, and will be expanded upon throughout coming chapters. 8

The evangelical revival movement, and these distinct theological emphases, were the driving force in the advent of the modern missionary movement. The revival was indispensable for the foundation of the three major English evangelical missionary

4 Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, p.3.
5 Ibid, p.3.

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societies: the London Missionary Society (LMS), Church Missionary Society (CMS) and Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS). Mission historian Andrew Walls depicts the revival as providing a clear rationale for an evangelistic approach to non-European peoples: the spiritual state of non-Christians across the world, unbelieving Europeans (though privileged with a Christian heritage) and non-European ‘heathen’ peoples, was exactly the same, forming a “consistent view of solidarity in depravity”. All human beings, regardless of origin, needed to undergo conversion to faith in Christ. This was one of the motivating factors behind missions to ‘heathen’ nations.

This is why Walls also describes evangelicalism as a “religion of protest against a Christian society that is not Christian enough”. Evangelicals addressed themselves to a British public which declared itself Christian, but in the evangelical view was on the whole unbelieving, and therefore unregenerate and degenerate. This standpoint was based on the fact that Western Europe had primarily been ‘converted’ on a political and social footing, as complete societies, rather than on a personal basis. This superficial form of Christian adherence spawned the idea of Christendom, a national Christian community where every citizen was considered to belong within the church community. Evangelicals wanted to make Christendom a reality, and Britain a realm of true Christian faith, not just an idea espoused by Britons in principle. Evangelical faith championed real, inward Christianity as opposed to nominal religion. Many Britons, according to evangelical interpretation, were deceived in thinking of their society as essentially Christian, when large numbers of people did not actually believe the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, such as those outlined above. Evangelicals contended that the concept of Christendom was inadequate in relation to the demands of God, and in response mixed together the concepts of “individual selfhood and personal decision” with the “traditional framework of the Christian nation and the established church” to form their own idea of Christendom. This made evangelical Christianity, argues Walls, an authentic local version of Christian faith.

These facts partly explain why the ‘Christianity and civilization’ nexus became a part of the evangelical missionary scheme. Evangelical notions of civilization acted both as a protest against popular ideas about European Christianity and associated ideas of cultural superiority, and as an expression of the gospel within European culture. By

10 Ibid, pp.79-85.
11 Ibid, p.85.
implication, evangelicals could be quite critical of their own culture, and not just foreign ‘heathen’ societies. Evangelical Christians saw a need for evangelisation and social transformation within Britain itself as much as ‘heathen’ nations abroad. Recent historical work has also given considerable attention to the influence of evangelicalism within British society itself. Boyd Hilton’s work demonstrating the importance of evangelicalism to nineteenth century British social and economic thought is just one example of this fact. Such an example shows that a separation between ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ spheres did not really exist for evangelicals. The whole of life was to reflect and follow on the inward regeneration that was deemed to have taken place in the life of the believer.

The nineteenth century was in consequence infused with an evangelical atmosphere. In Silent Revolution and the Making of Victorian England, Herbert Schlossberg provides an exposition of the importance of moral and social transformation in the evangelical worldview, concluding that evangelical thought in the period before the reign of Victoria, and for several decades after her succession, “profoundly affected both the ideas and practices of the nation”. Changes in patterns of behaviour as a result of evangelical revival in Britain included the renovation of family life, sexuality, crime, manners, religious observances, the arts, morality, social institutions, education and government. This is clear evidence that evangelicals worked to see a nominal, professing Christian land turned into an actual one: Christian faith was to find its expression in all aspects of life. However, these findings must not draw attention away from ‘inward,’ spiritual nature of evangelical Christianity; the outward transformation outlined in Schlossberg’s book was premised upon an inward ‘spiritual’ change, or conversion.

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14 Herbert Schlossberg, Silent Revolution and the Making of Victorian England, Ohio State University Press, Columbus, 2000; see also Bebbington, Evangelicalism, p.149-150; Thorne, ‘The Conversion of Englishmen’ p.239.
The Spiritual Nature of ‘Faith’

While it is evident that evangelicals were looking for significant outward social change, this should not prevent historians from considering the murkier, less discernable ‘internal,’ or spiritual, nature of evangelical faith. This is particularly needful in the case of New Zealand historiography, which has failed to come to terms with nineteenth century missionary faith and theological thinking, leaving a substantial need to reconsider what missionaries were hoping to see in terms of the reception of Christian faith in Maori communities. The general trend among New Zealand historians has been to depict Christianity in an ‘outward’ sense, as something that could be ‘conformed to’ or ‘taken up’ under the influence of cultural need, opportunity for gain, or curiosity, and that if Maori people did so it could be inferred that they had become Christians. As a consequence, the primary spiritual aims of the missionaries have been dismissed as irrelevant.

New Zealand historians have generally employed a sociological, rather than theological, approach to Christian mission. 15 For example, Harrison Wright and Judith Binney both contend that cultural dislocation and disruption were the reasons for Maori acceptance of Christian faith. Maori needed something to secure them against the onslaught of cultural dislocation, and social conformity to Christianity was the cultural lifeguard at hand, 16 although Kerry Howe has shown that various groups of Maori engaged with Christianity despite the lack of the cultural dislocation others regard as a precondition. 17 Unfortunately, Howe also leaves little room for considering the possibility of a genuine, theologically defined ‘conversion’ of Maori people, concluding that the initial enthusiastic response of Maori to Christianity had been judged by missionaries themselves as based upon novelty, and there had been “no ‘spiritual rebirth’”; it was “strict adherence” to “outward requirements” that had brought the change in Maori culture in the Thames-Waikato area. 18 Both Kay Sanderson and Bronwyn Elsmore take a similar position to Howe, questioning whether there was really

18 Ibid.
much genuine understanding and acceptance of Christian doctrine, such as the atoning work of Christ, among Maori ‘believers’ from the missionary viewpoint, calling into question the presence of genuine conversion, in its theological sense.  

Other historians are not at all sure how to define Maori conversion, as it is difficult to discern the depths of Maori understanding of the Christian gospel. Judith Binney does not consider the theological significance of conversion, as it is too hard to measure. James Belich speaks of a “Maori conversion of Christianity”, which he describes as a “new Maori religion of many variants, which converted European Christianity as much as it was converted by it”, variations of syncretism, and “non-Christian interpretations of the Bible, and new elements that were neither traditional, nor Christian nor biblical”. Belich’s claims, and those of Wright, Binney and Howe do partially reflect the Maori response to Christianity, but they by no means tell the whole story, which is precisely why Lyndsay Head takes issue with this kind of interpretation: “Christianity’s power to change lives is an unfashionable subject in nineteenth century Maori history”, she writes, attributing this attitude to the legacy of British imperial and cultural authority. She believes Maori Christians have been rendered by historians as either “brainwashed dupes”, or those who ‘convert’ Christianity to suit their own ends. However, she insists that Christianity’s association with colonialism represents only one facet of the situation. Head argues that historians have failed to seriously consider the fact that Maori people realised “personal dignity” and “social discipline” in the Christian faith proclaimed by the missionaries, which included the orthodox evangelical viewpoints outlined at the beginning of this chapter.

However, historian J.M.R. Owens has declared that Christian conversion must be “understood in religious terms”. He identifies “profound social changes” as accompanying legitimate theological conversion and not just novel interest, even if he ends up denying the significance of social changes which may occur without legitimate

19 See Kay Sanderson, ‘Maori Christianity on the East Coast 1840-1870’, NZIH, vol.17, No.2, October 1983, pp. 166-184; Bronwyn Elsmore, Mana From Heaven, pp. 22, 32, 44.
24 Ibid.
‘conversion’. But Owens’ point about Wright’s thesis remains pertinent: to explain the missionary impact in New Zealand without defining ‘conversion’ is problematic for historians, who need to clearly define the term in order to distinguish between “superficial conformity” and “religious transformation”. Some of the depictions described above lead to a portrayal of missionaries as looking upon involvement with Christian activities as ‘conversion’. This represents a vast difference between missionary comprehension of Christian faith and the way historians understand missionary Christianity; CMS missionaries portray numbers of Maori ‘Christians’ as genuinely engaging with and ‘believing’ the Christian gospel that the missionaries preached, going far beyond superficial conformity, curious interest or the desire for prestige.

Because it is an ‘outward’ form of Christianity that historians use to discuss the nature and extent of Maori Christianity, few see any point in considering a genuine Maori ‘spiritual’ engagement with, and ‘faith’ in, what may be termed the ‘exclusive truths’ which belong to the Christian scheme, especially in relation to the person and work of Christ. In contrast, the primary concern of missionary efforts was the establishment and strengthening of ‘inward’ Christianity or, more simply, faith. In many ways, this lack of consideration for the ‘spiritual’ nature of Christianity is understandable when noting the seeming impossibility of actually measuring ‘faith’, and weighing the extent to which Christianity had affected Maori persons and communities. Also, missionaries themselves considered outward indicators and weight of numbers as a gauge of the inroads that their message had made within a village or area. However, it was not attendance at services that was of most importance to the missionaries, but faith in hearts, and its expected outward fruit. These facts also impinge on other chapters, as ‘spiritual’ and theological concepts largely inform missionary perceptions of Maori culture, as well as missionary notions of civilization. The significance of evangelical

27 Kay Sanderson, ‘Maori Christianity on the East Coast 1840-1870’, NZJH, 1983, Sanderson does not see a ‘genuine’ experience of Christianity as the missionaries spoke of, but rather a conformity and espousing of such by Maori. She sees Maori developing their own version of ‘Christianity’ along syncretised lines. This is similar to Belich’s idea of Maori “converting” Christianity; see James Belich, Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders, 2001, p.219. For the missionaries, there was no such thing as “trimming” Christianity to “fit the Maori world” (p.168). Also, the “blending” of “missionary Christianity and Maori spirituality” could never constitute ‘true’ Christianity for a CMS missionary. It was not Williams’ “rigid perception of life in two shades” which stopped him accepting this blending, but a belief in the exclusive truth claims of Christian revelation.
conversion is necessary to any legitimate study of mission in New Zealand; missionaries had come to New Zealand essentially to convert, in all the evangelical theological and spiritual significance that this term implies.

Missionaries themselves provide plenty of information on what they looked for in a ‘genuine’ conversion experience. In the CMS missionary view, conversion often involved a personal spiritual and moral crisis, a sense of conviction of ‘sin’, and the need to go through a process of regeneration, to be ‘born from above’. Missionaries themselves were always looking for evidence of this action having taken place in their converts. It was not enough to make a profession of faith; the missionaries wanted to see evidence of what they regarded as ‘true’ repentance, and a life exhibiting ‘true’ faith. As will be outlined below, missionaries were aware of people who seemed to take serious interest in Christian faith, but would then fall away; Christian adherence for them was not representative of ‘saving faith’.  

Because of the perceived ‘spiritual’ nature of these phenomena, even the missionaries themselves found it difficult to discern ‘true’ as opposed to ‘spurious’ conversion, but some of the major indicators they looked for were trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and particularly his atoning sacrifice on the cross; evidence of the ‘presence’ of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life; a hatred of ‘sin’ and a knowledge of personal sinfulness; and love for God and one’s neighbour. As far as the men of the CMS were concerned, the essence of Christian faith was faith in Jesus Christ the person, and not the practice of certain laws or rituals. Lay missionary William Puckey, resident at Kaitaia for more than thirty years, looked for repentance and faith in response to the preaching of Christ. In a Sunday morning sermon in mid-1836, John Wilson spoke to his charges on their “dependence on Christ the living stock. All our good, all our excellence derives from him, the source of existence and life.” These references, along with subsequent paragraphs, exhibit the centrality of CMS missionary ideas of conversion and faith in Christ, which were held to be the result of certain ‘spiritual’ phenomena.

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‘Faith’ in New Zealand

Considerably labour intensive, the work of the missionaries generally involved daily prayers and school, attending to the sick, and various practical jobs around their homes for general upkeep. On top of these activities, missionaries would teach and preach, often visiting widely scattered communities, sometimes on a circuit of hundreds of miles. It is this second form of ‘spiritual’ work, as opposed to what was sometimes labelled ‘secular’ or ‘temporal’ work, such as building and fencing, that receives most attention in missionary records. As the missionaries themselves used terms like ‘secular’ to describe some of the more temporal aspects of their work, it is easy to believe they understood ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ spheres to be quite separate. As will be shown in following chapters, this was far from the case, and it may be more accurate to describe the use of the term ‘secular’ as perhaps reflecting the term ‘temporal’ or ‘material’, and not as an antonym of ‘spiritual.’ Spiritual issues had much to do with temporal and material things in missionary thinking.

The content of CMS missionary preaching is a window onto the spiritual concerns and aims of the missionaries. Everything was based around the issue of faith. Topics discussed included “new birth”, the parables of Jesus, questions on what the “glory of heaven” consisted of, the nature of repentance and faith, loving God, payment for sins and the salvation of sinners, and the destruction of the Devil’s works. John Morgan, stationed at Otawhao, a pa near Te Awamutu in the Waikato area, for most of his missionary tenure, examined his baptismal candidates on topics such as Creation and the Fall of humanity, the promised Messiah, the birth, death, resurrection, ascension and mediation of Christ, judgement, heaven and hell, the nature and work of the Trinity, and benefits for believers such as regeneration, justification, and sanctification. A time of probation and examination was often required before enquirers would be baptised. This was partly to discover whether or not candidates possessed the “scriptural pre-requisites for baptism: repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Benjamin Ashwell catechized every person who took communion and enquired after their moral

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33 Alfred Brown, January 19, 1837, September 11, 1837, July 4, 1839.
35 This in the case of Ngakuku, but commonly required of all seeking baptism. Alfred Brown, March 29, 1839, September 3, 1849.
character, which was believed to undergo reformation after ‘true’ conversion.\(^{36}\) Baptism was often refused for polygamy, or for what the missionaries deemed sexual immorality or adultery.

Other ‘spiritual’ subjects discussed included the resurrection, which often brought interest or incredulity to Maori hearers, as did the idea of coming judgement between the righteous and the wicked.\(^{37}\) The perceived deceitfulness of the human heart, and a belief that “every man in his best estate is altogether vanity” meant that the missionaries would urge people to “seek a change of heart” and “attend to the things of God.” When Henry Williams, leader of the mission during this period, spoke to those at Te Haumi, west of Paihia, Williams emphasised his listeners’ need of a ‘change of heart’, which they had been commanded to receive by the “God of Heaven and Earth”, who had also sent the missionaries. Williams told them that Jesus Christ was calling them to “turn to him; who would give them his Holy Spirit if they asked him for it.”\(^{38}\) He was looking for confession and sorrow for sin, even if many appeared “quite content to remain a people for Satan”.\(^{39}\) When Benjamin Ashwell, a catechist who had also worked in Sierra Leone, went to Rangiriri in March of 1858 to examine candidates for baptism, he looked to see those who were: “baptized not by water only but by water and the Spirit.” They were those who knew with certainty “the depravity of human nature – their total impossibility of saving themselves by any work of their own.” If this was the case, the new converts would “simply rely on Christ as the alone saviour and have clear views that repentance, prayer and baptism and good works are only fruits of the Holy Spirit.” Ashwell thought that many in his district did indeed live by this “simple faith” and likewise relied solely “on God the Holy Spirit to give them the only effectual baptism for salvation, i.e. the new birth.”\(^{40}\)

Every person who experienced spiritual rebirth went through an encounter of “death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness”, which could not be experienced by “natural” or unregenerate and unconverted humanity. In fact, lay missionary and agriculturalist Richard Davis stated that the ‘natural’ man “resembles the infant in its

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\(^{36}\) Benjamin Ashwell, *Letters and journals of the Rev. Benjamin Ashwell, of Kaitotehe, to the Church Missionary Society, 1834-1869*, MSS Archives A172, AUL, December 27, 1858.


\(^{39}\) Benjamin Ashwell, December 27, 1836, October 22, 1838.

\(^{40}\) *Ibid*, March 14, 1858.
mother's womb, having ears but hearing not, having eyes but seeing not.” A young Ngapuhi chief who accompanied missionaries William and Jane Williams from New South Wales to New Zealand Jane described as having a reasonable proficiency in English, a “fine disposition and much intelligence,” and that he was able to comprehend the “very distinct ideas of some of the great truths of Christianity.” But the knowledge he possessed was “that of the head, he does (not) appear to feel them at all”. Conversion was far more than understanding doctrine. Jane Williams also observed that though there seemed to be a zealousness for the missionaries’ teaching, the “requirements of the Gospel” did not sit well with the “ideas of the unconverted heart, whether it be English or Maori”, and interest eventually receded to disinterest with many.

Thus the spiritually unregenerate had “ears to hear the Gospel, and eyes to read the Bible, but until the Holy Spirit comes with Divine power … they cannot discern their lost estate.” Because of this state, Davis argued, only God’s free grace could save the human soul from “eternal death”, raising it from “the death of sin to the life of righteousness.” A person’s regeneration could not come from their own actions, but must be the gift of God. Thus spiritual rebirth was the foundation of evangelical conversion. Richard Taylor’s exacting requirements for baptism included a relaying of an individual’s “new birth” and conversion experience, and an acquaintance with four different catechisms, yet Alfred Brown thought Taylor’s examinations at Motutere were not thorough enough and that he baptised too freely.

The primacy of spiritual faith, and missionary judgement as to whether professors of faith possessed the genuine article, may be seen in the ‘death-bed’ scenes which are common place in missionary journals. The missionaries usually employed stringent ‘spiritual’ criteria for judging conversion. The form used when ministering to sick and dying people, and the comments that issued from the missionaries’ observations, often clearly indicate what missionaries considered to be evident faith in Maori believers, and show that missionaries were critically assessing whether a person

41 Jane Williams, in Letters to Sir George Osborne, Letters and Journals Written by the Revd Henry and Mrs Marianne Williams, and the Revd William and Mrs Jane Williams, 1822-1864, March 3, 1826, MSS Archives A-68, AUL. (Williams Family Letters and Journals)
42 Ibid, March 1, 1844.

26
had truly believed the gospel, and entered into ‘saving faith’. Wiremu Hapi, who spent considerable time with the Reverend Alfred Brown before his death at Matamata in 1835, had in the days before his death given the missionary “satisfactory evidence of his simple trust for salvation in the blood of Jesus”, and therefore “His end was peace.”45 Brown was so sure of the genuine nature of Wiremu Hapi’s faith, that he told another man he was not too sorry to see him so ill because “God would take his soul to heaven”.46 In another instance, Brown commented on the peaceful death of a baptized believer, which he thought came from “assurance that he was justified by faith”, which apparently only happened when a person genuinely believed the Christian gospel, and knew themselves acceptable to God through their faith.47 William Williams’ account of the death of Christian Rangi exhibits similar faith-filled thoughts and processes. Rangi had been steady in his profession for months, had “professed his faith in Christ as Saviour”, and “appeared to rejoice in hope of eternal life.” The missionaries had “every proof” that he was sincere in his faith, and he was baptised.48

These instances indicate that, in the view of the missionaries themselves, orthodox, evangelical Christian faith and theological views had found a significant place in the lives of Maori people in the 1830s to the mid-nineteenth century, and this fact is further underlined in the particular emphasis placed, by both missionary and convert during these death and sick bed experiences, on Christ’s atoning death, and the foundation of human righteousness in Christ alone rather than in good works. This theological outlook constituted fundamental Protestant reformed evangelical doctrine in the Church Missionary Society during this period, and is a manifestation of the evangelical emphasis on the centrality of Christ’s atoning death. A typical example is recorded by Benjamin Ashwell, and is a study in the missionary examination of the presence and nature of faith:

I went to see Patara, a sick native. I found him very ill and without the least prospect of recovery … What hope have you for eternity? What is your trust? He replied my only hope is Christ. Yes I said but you have been a great Sinner. What satisfaction can you make to a justly offended God for your sins? He replied, I

45 Alfred Brown, October 11, 1836.
46 Ibid, September 4, 1835.
47 Ibid, April 7, 1842.
can make none. What then must you perish – perhaps prayer will be a satisfaction. He immediately answered no … Perhaps repentance and faith? … no, these cannot atone for my sins. I again asked him, if he did not think his baptism was a payment for his guilt – his reply was as above no. Patara – as you depend not on these things for your salvation, what is your dependence? He said with much earnestness the Blood of Christ and this only. This is correct – But then will not God accept prayer, faith, repentance, as part of the satisfaction for your sins? No, they are only a wakaputanga aroha – a showing forth of love to Jesus – the fruits of the Spirit. Christ and Christ only is my trust, Christ and Christ only is my hope, Christ and Christ only is my life and the satisfaction for my sins.49

Ashwell’s examination indicates an attempt to discern whether Patara had really believed the gospel, and the inclusion of this anecdote in Ashwell’s records, as well as Patara’s responses themselves, declare him to be, in Ashwell’s opinion, a genuine believer with an orthodox evangelical understanding of the gospel. Not all death-bed experiences were so positive. Alfred Brown was aware that there could be times when a person professed faith, but evidently did not really ‘believe’, and it was often in these death-bed conversations that things became clear. One woman to whom he spoke said all the right things: “that she was a sinner; that it was her sins which rendered her heart dark; that Christ died for sinners”. However, it soon became clear to him that she possessed “no realizing faith in the Saviour of sinners, and that the valley she was about to enter was indeed a ‘dark valley’ to her.”50

That the CMS missionaries were primarily focused on spiritual issues, and the substance of faith as the basis of human life, is evident in their preoccupation with two things: what they called ‘God’s word’ or the ‘Gospel’, and the perceived human need for ‘salvation’. They certainly gave the words of Romans 1:16 a solid workout in their letters and journals. Reference to this verse occurs over and over again: ‘I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe…’ with particular emphasis nearly always being placed on the gospel being God’s power

49 Benjamin Ashwell, April 4, 1846, p.121-122. For other similar examples, see July 10, 1846, William Puckey, July 19, 1846, and John Morgan, June 14, 1846.
50 Alfred Brown, December 8, 1839.
for salvation. 

For William Yate, this ‘power’ had turned Maori from “darkness to light – from sin to holiness – from ignorance to knowledge – and from the spirit of hatred to the spirit of love.” Therefore it was understood to be through the “Spirit and by his Word”, that “the hearts of the disobedient are turned to the wisdom of the just”, and in this manner had come about “the salvation of many.” As this reference indicates so clearly, the missionaries often expressed themselves in a way which implied that God himself was in charge of sending the gospel out. Faith was to come by hearing, but only God could work the “hearing” in a person, not only by bringing the gospel to them, but by enabling or causing them to hear through the influence of the Holy Spirit. This relationship between “Spirit” and “word” was part of standard evangelical theology. It also implies that human action and belief was subject to God’s action, not the other way round, meaning that the spiritual determined the nature of temporal life.

In fact, the missionaries believed that God was sovereign over the whole world, and ordering events, even wars between tribes, to bring people to hear the word, setting forth the missionary conviction that spiritual issues impacted all aspects of human affairs. This fact essentially rules out a sacred/secular dichotomy. The missionaries believed in a God “who made all things, (and) can produce any change He pleases in the creatures he has formed.” The missionaries worked to spread a general knowledge of salvation in Maori communities, but it was God’s responsibility to “convert the heart, to recall the wanderer, to convince the sinner, to ‘reveal the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement’.”

The fact that the missionaries believed God was concerned with every aspect of human life, that the spiritual and temporal realms were inseparable, finds expression in references detailing what missionaries talked about with their “enquirers”. One of Henry Williams’ early conversations with some of the chief Hongi’s men was along both

53 John Wilson, March 8, 1841.
55 See Alfred Brown, October 1 &5, 1835, January 10, July 3, 1836; see also John Wilson, Letters, January 10, 1836.
56 John Wilson, Missionary Life and Work in New Zealand, 1833-1862, Auckland, 1889, p.7.
57 John Wilson, Letters, September 26, 1838.
temporal and eternal lines; the two spheres clearly intersected for Williams, although his hearers struggled to comprehend the ideas of which he was speaking. Williams contrasted faith being placed in things of a ‘temporal’ nature, rather than faith and ‘security’ being in God and the things which were eternal. This was ultimately, Williams explains, why the people he addressed were at war, apparently placing their security and faith “in their guns”, which meant they could not live in peace, but had to “delight thus in war.” Williams ended the conversation “with the invitation of our Lord, for all to flee to him for refuge.” Williams identified faith being placed in temporal things as the source of restlessness and conflict. ‘Spiritual’ faith in Christ was evidently the solution for such problems.\(^58\)

Both Maori and missionary considered that spiritual things were relevant to all aspects of life. It was not uncommon for Maori and missionaries to disagree over their perception of the character of God, or divine things. These were not just interesting debates: the implication of what was believed was great for both parties. In a conversation with Richard Taylor, the famous Te Heuheu Tukino II, chief of the Tuwharetoa, argued that the Christian God was only a child, for he had just arrived in the land, whereas his ‘god’ had been there from the beginning of time. When Taylor first commenced reading the Bible to the Tuwharetoa they gave him little attention, but later their interest in Taylor’s subject grew: “I told them that there was a God over all, our maker, and that he would bring us all to judgement that there was but one name given under heaven whereby men could be saved, the name of Jesus.” After the service one chief remarked that what Taylor had said was “all wrong, that there were many gods and they made one thing and another as there were many makers of canoes and houses.” He insisted that Taylor’s God “was an angry God to thrust his enemies into hell fire; that he was a god and Tongariro was his great progenitor and he gave me all his generations”.\(^59\) These were not petty intellectual quarrels: the response of the chief in relating his whakapapa, which often encompassed associations of spiritual significance, indicates that the whole matter of identity and human living was caught up in religion, the nature of god/s and creation. Further, just as Maori attributed illness to religious or spiritual issues, such as the anger of the gods for leaving traditional karakia and


attending to missionary instruction, the missionaries also often attributed sickness to
spiritual sources, such as sin, or God’s judgement.\textsuperscript{60}

References by CMS personnel to a ‘clash of kingdoms’, are indicative of the
indivisible relationship between spiritual and temporal spheres in the missionary
worldview. The coming of the gospel of Christ to Maori communities, and the
seemingly responsive reaction John Morgan witnessed at Paihia was declared to be an
example of God “pouring out his Spirit on the people of this benighted land.” Coupled
with this action, the kingdom of Satan appeared to be “tottering on its basis, and the
kingdom of a crucified Jesus, to be erecting upon its ruins.” Both God and Satan were
assumed to be present and active within the created world, and actively involved in
human lives, a clear illustration of how the missionaries perceived the spiritual and
temporal spheres to be united together. These cataclysmic events were occurring
because Maori teachers were moving among far-flung communities and speaking of the
“unsearchable riches of Christ”. Satan was thought to exercise a kind of dominion over
the lives of unbelieving ‘heathen’, and as Morgan has stated, the reign of Satan could be
overthrown by Christ’s reign being extended as people believed the missionaries’
message and were converted. The proclamation of the Christian message was portrayed
by the missionaries as a spiritual action that was inseparable from the created, human
and material aspects of life.\textsuperscript{61}

The events described above indicate that ‘spiritual’ and ‘temporal’ spheres were
distinct, but not separate; it was understood that the things which were ‘spiritual’,
‘eternal’ and ‘unseen’ were of more substance and consequence than the material
realities of life, which were thought to be passing away. That was why Morgan could
argue that “the preaching of Christ and him crucified will, under Divine blessing do
more for the poor and benighted natives of this dark and distant corner of the earth than
the spinning of flax can possibly do”, although the ‘spinning of flax’ was not irrelevant
in the scheme of things, as the chapter on industry and agriculture will explain.\textsuperscript{62} On
more than one occasion Morgan revealed his awareness that Maori had little interest in
the spiritual things the missionaries brought, but wanted only the “temporal advantages”
that seemed to come with a missionary presence. Thomas Chapman, as well as others,

\textsuperscript{60} William Williams, Journal to the CMS, August 1, 20, 1840, Frances Porter, (ed.), \textit{The Turanga Journals, 1840-1850: Letters and Journals of William and Jane Williams, Missionaries to Poverty Bay}, Price Milburn for Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1974, pp.120, 121.

\textsuperscript{61} John Morgan, \textit{Letters and Journals}, vol.1, May 30, 1834, p.4.

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Ibid}, vol.1, April 29, 1834, p.17.
also experienced this problem. However, Morgan quite expected this to be the case. He did not consider “natural” or “unregenerate” minds to have any interest in what the missionaries had to offer: “Tell them of the rich promises of the word of God, but these natural minds can see no beauty in them … they are strangers to him, whom to know is life eternal.” God was not pleased with “lip service”, but “required the heart”, or regeneration. The primary interest of the CMS missionaries was spiritual in nature.

There was indeed an “empty” interest on the part of some: on one occasion lay missionary John Wilson remarked that he often found people to be “interested but not converted”; even if a person could recognise the “reasonableness” of Christian faith, it may not “reach and impress the heart”. Wilson knew of interested parties who yet remained “unsanctified and unholy”. William Puckey wrote in late 1845 that many from the village of Parakirake who were attentive hearers remained just that: hearers only. Puckey didn’t think they necessarily believed what they heard, and in addition there remained “a great deal of superstition among them”. Both men in these cases clearly distinguish between general interest, and the presence of ‘saving,’ spiritual faith.

However, instances of seeming unbelief, or a poor showing in the Christianity of converts, should not lead to the conclusion that there was little ‘genuine’ orthodox Christian faith among Maori people, as has been suggested by Howe, Elsmore and Sanderson. Questions asked and comments made by ‘enquirers’ provide solid evidence of missionary belief in the genuine spiritual nature of the Christian faith of Maori people. Once again, strict theological criteria were used to assess professions of faith. Richard Davis recorded the comments of some men from Paihia whom he thought genuine in their enquiry: They would ask questions along the lines of “what they must do to be saved?” or talk of a need to flee from sin, and to seek God’s grace so that they would be enabled to have faith in Christ, that their “souls might be everlastingly saved”. Such enquirers were deemed genuine. Trust in God would be espoused, along with resulting happiness. Fear of hell and judgement was an element of question and discussion; hardness, or sometimes ‘darkness’ of heart was also remarked upon, as was

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66 John Wilson, December 1, 1833, p.52.
67 William Puckey, December 31, 1845, p.106.
the need for “light” and “peace”. Davis relates an afternoon with some baptismal candidates from Kaikohe:

Their most anxious desire was that they might be delivered from the power of sin. Some enjoyed a glimmer of light, through which they had a faint perception of the love of God. Others were crying out under the burden and power of sin. One seemed to entertain a deep sense of the nature of the Gospel covenant. There were nearly twenty, who all appeared to strive lawfully for the crown of life.

Davis wrote from Waimate in early 1844 to tell of the continuing work at Kaikohe, and new interest at Mangakahia, which he described as a “work of the Spirit” that had become visible, with the hearts of the people being “awakened”. Some were apparently under a more painful conviction of sin, with even their health deteriorating. Yet others were so “affected, that when spoken to of the love of Christ … tears have flowed plentifully, and they have almost for a time lost the power of speech”. Another young rangatira Davis discovered in a solemn, uneasy and thoughtful frame of mind. He experienced “deep and penetrating” conviction of sin, which had given him an “anguish of soul”. The man also reported that many others in his district were in a similar state: “Our hearts greatly desire Christ. We have no heart to work, nor is our food so sweet to us as heretofore.” Davis’ soul “rejoiced in this state of things”. One of the women who had early on attached herself to the station at Paihia exhibited similar experiences to those expressed above. The ‘spiritual’ nature of true faith in Davis’ mind can be clearly seen in these remarks.

Discussion on the Christian scriptures, as Biblicism was a major aspect of evangelical faith, receives episodic attention in missionary journals, with accounts used to inform readers of missionary documents of the nature of faith among Maori communities. A conversation with one of Benjamin Ashwell teachers, Nepe from the Waipa river, clearly demonstrated, in Ashwell’s view, not only a depth of knowledge of the Christian scriptures, the ability to reason about them with his companion, the personal significance that these subjects held for Nepe, and their orthodoxy in relation to
Alfred Brown noted that his Maori companions were quite able to draw good conclusions from what they had read in their New Testaments, and that the meaning of these passages had profound, personal, ‘spiritual’ significance to their readers, often fitting well with the orthodox evangelical theology of the missionary teachers. On a verse from 2 Corinthians chapter 5, “if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked”, Brown was treated to a personal explanation by one of his converts:

“I thought” he said, “of a man travelling through a desert country; he sees signs of a coming storm and hastens to build himself a shelter that he may not be found naked and exposed to rain. Another sees the same sign, but travels on till he is overtaken by the rain, and not being clothed, not having any shelter, he shivers and dies. So a man travelling through the world sees the clouds of God’s anger against sin arising, but taught by his lamp (a common expression of a native for his Testament), he covers himself with faith in Christ, and is not found naked in the storm, while another man sees the same signs, but knowing nothing of Christ he seeks no cover and travels on, naked in his sins, till overtaken by the storm of God’s wrath, he perishes everlastingly.”

The stringent missionary theological appraisal of what constituted genuine, ‘spiritual’ faith and conversion affected CMS missionary perceptions of their Catholic counterparts. Much of the animosity of CMS personnel towards Catholic missionaries sprang from the perception that the Catholic missionaries were leading their converts astray through false teaching, and away from true faith. John Wilson detected a form of syncretism, and tolerance of “native superstitions” in the Roman Catholic approach. He believed the visit of the Roman Catholic Bishop to Opotiki in 1840 to be an exercise in the seduction and purchase of new converts with presents. Richard Taylor felt similarly to Wilson, believing “popery”, as Catholicism was labelled by the Protestant missionaries, “to be grounded on heathenism”; converts were not required to relinquish former rites and practices: “they tattoo, they makutu and observe the tapu the same as

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72 Benjamin Ashwell, April 3, 1846.
73 Alfred Brown, November 17, 1846.
formerly". William Puckey expressed similar sentiments, considering the Christianity of some Catholic converts to “licence their committing the grossest iniquity without fear of future punishment”. This was in contrast to those who became believers through the ministry of the CMS, who required that their conversions be supported by lives which conformed to the moral commands of their new found faith. Puckey had known several rangatira who had given up polygamy for this reason. The “papists”, however, in Puckey’s opinion did not “look for any token of the love of God upon a man’s heart before they baptize him”. John Morgan discovered a clear difference between one of his own baptized women, and a Roman Catholic woman when it came to ideas about salvation: the latter espoused salvation “by my good works”, while the woman of his own congregation stated that salvation was by “the blood of Christ”. Richard Davis was more scathing in his assessment, deeming “Popery” to be “a great apostasy from the faith of the Gospel”.

Despite the specific criteria used for evaluating Christian professions, missionary records still indicate a belief in numerous instances of ‘spiritual’ faith being manifested in Maori communities. The congregations within Octavius Hadfield’s district of Otaki and Waikanae were described as being firmly established in ‘spiritual’ Christianity. Having returned to Kapiti in 1842 after a period of illness, Hadfield was delighted to see that, rather than being adversely affected by his absence, his “beloved people” had in fact “increased in faith towards the Lord Jesus and in mutual union and love”. In addition to this Hadfield found “increasing evidence of real faith manifested by them in their holy and consistent conduct, and in their contempt of worldly goods and wealth”. Hadfield’s concern for the true, spiritual nature of conversion among his congregation was displayed in a letter written in early 1843, describing the baptism of 120 adults, who, “by their apparent interest in heavenly things and disregard to the things of the world give me good hope that they are the people of God”. Some manifested “very decided” faith in Christ: “They feel that Christ has delivered them from the curse having been made a curse for them, and that by His fulfilment of the divine law has given them

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75 Richard Taylor, December 7, 1845, pp.191-192; similarly, Alfred Brown, May 28, 1840, p.35; also in relation to retaining rites, see William Williams, September 28, 1840, in Porter, The Turanga Journals, p.123.
76 William Puckey, Letters and Journals, September 21, 1839.
77 John Morgan, August 23, 1846, p.232.
78 Richard Davis, September 12, 1851, pp.360-361.
He attributed a “steady improvement in their character and conduct” to an “increased acquaintance with the doctrines of the Gospel.”

The strict spiritual and theological criteria employed by missionaries in weighing the nature of faith in Maori converts can also be seen in other ways. Sometimes actions of outward piety on the part of Maori believers were criticised by the missionaries, because they considered these actions did not stem from faith, but were works performed to make their doers more righteous, a repudiation of the doctrine of justification by faith. One noteworthy case was a public weeping aloud for sins that took place at Whatawhata and Horo in Benjamin Ashwell’s district. Maori teachers from another setting had come and taught local Maori to “weep” for their sins, but Ashwell thought “the leaven of self-righteousness and spiritual pride was at work among the people”, and that it was believed “weeping was an atonement for their sins”. Ashwell chided his followers by declaring, “Christ has died in vain if you can by any work of your own deliver yourselves from the guilt and condemnation of sin.”

Chapman declared that he had seen every “grade” of Christian character and attainment in his district of Rotorua, but few “who fully adorn their Christian profession”. It was possible to have believers “tithing ‘mint and cumin’ at a great rate, but weightier matters of the law disregarded”. But this did not necessarily mean that those whose behaviour did not “fully adorn their profession” were not genuine believers: looks could be deceiving.

The missionary records from the 1850s are characterised by increasing comments about a sizeable diminution in the numbers of people attending to “the means of grace” i.e. church services, prayer meetings, and enthusiasm for missionary teaching. The end of this decade was followed by the outbreak of the wars of the 1860s. This period had also witnessed the rise of various syncretistic religious movements, all of which were widely acknowledged by the missionaries to be responsible for luring many away from genuine Christian faith. Some historians see these events as indicating that

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80 Octavius Hadfield, Journals, January 16, 1843, p.31-32.
81 Ibid, Annual Report, July 1, 1843, p.33.
82 Benjamin Ashwell, Journals, February 19, 20, 1846, p.126.
84 For example, Benjamin Ashwell, April 2, 1846, p.131; Alfred Brown, September 29, October 6, 9, 1849.
there was little legitimate ‘spiritual conversion’ of Maori in accordance with the
measurements that the missionaries themselves imposed.\textsuperscript{85}

But this is a far from accurate assessment of the situation. Though some
professors proved to be “like the chaff of the summer threshing floors”, there were
others who the missionaries believed gave much “reason to hope that like good grain
they will be gathered into the garner of the Lord of the Harvest”.\textsuperscript{86} Not all who
professed the gospel had actually embraced it, according to John Morgan, and even
those who had embraced it were not necessarily living in a manner “worthy of their high
and holy calling”. He argued that this was not even the case in the early days of the first
Apostles, according to whom there were “many who loved this present world, and made
shipwreck of their faith.” But Morgan felt sure that “many of the once cannibal New
Zealanders have already joined the Church above, and at present there is a holy seed,
according to the election of grace”.\textsuperscript{87} Despite declension and no shortage of episodes of
“gross depravity” among Christian professors, Thomas Chapman could not help but be
assured that ‘spiritual’ Christianity had become “fast rooted” in New Zealand.\textsuperscript{88} He
could see what he discerned to be the work of God among the Te Arawa people of
Maketu during the 1850s and thought the people themselves could see that they were
“growing into a very different order of beings to what they once were”.\textsuperscript{89}

Octavius Hadfield’s report for 1852 indicated a continuing steady improvement,
and an increased desire for ‘spiritual instruction’ at this time, rather than a falling off.
Though there existed “instances of those whose conduct disappoints our hopes and
expectations”, these it seemed were “comparatively rare.” In actual fact, “on the
contrary there are many who shew by their consistency of life that they are really more
deeply affected by religion than might at first have been supposed”.\textsuperscript{90} Though three
years on Hadfield found it more difficult to convey accurately the state of Christianity in
his district, yet he still believed many converts continued “steadfast in the faith” and
exhibited “a principle within them enabling them to resist the new and various
temptations around them”. There seemed to be less outward profession of religion than
two or three years prior, but “with very few exceptions, those who have declined have

\textsuperscript{85} Elsmore, \textit{Mana From Heaven}, pp.22, 32, 34; also Sanderson, ‘Maori Christianity on the East Coast’,
\textit{NZIJH}.

\textsuperscript{86} Alfred Brown, May 11, 1837.

\textsuperscript{87} John Morgan to Mr Thos Morgan and Mr William Maples, Liverpool, 1849.

\textsuperscript{88} Thomas Chapman, July 20, 1857, p.634., December 13, 1845, p.281.

\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Ibid}, October 10, 1852, p.451.

not been persons in whose consistency a close observer would have had much confidence”. After returning from a trip to England in April 1859, Hadfield gave another assessment of the work, observing an increased interest in religion, “a greater desire to learn; a stronger determination to persevere in the right course; a deeper conviction in the necessity of religion to restrain men from vice, and to produce good conduct … than I had before witnessed”. Some who had previously led “irregular lives” had been “thoroughly reformed”, and these people had attributed their “reformation to the power of the Gospel”. Many of those who came to be baptized impressed him with “the reality of the change” he could see in them. Hadfield’s comments clearly indicate a marked difference between what he labelled ‘outward profession’, and what he perceived as ‘spiritual’ faith.

William Williams wrote in similar sentiment when looking back on the progress of Christianity among Maori, sure that there had been a “national recognition” of Christianity, and that “large numbers” of Maori had genuinely entered into Christian faith. Williams also acknowledged many nominal professors who joined in the outward form of religion, but whose faith in Christ was questionable. In his book *Christianity among the New Zealanders*, Williams perhaps provides the clearest missionary evaluation of the nature and position of the Maori church, most notably in the face of the conflict of the 1860s and a considerable turning away from Christianity by Maori people. He recognised that even in so called ‘Christian’ England, during times of religious fervour there could be “all the outward appearance of religion”, and yet there still remained a “fearful absence of that deeper principle … delight in the knowledge of Christ as the one thing needful”. As Williams reminds his readers, Christ himself had said of God’s kingdom, “‘ye cannot say, lo, it is here, or, lo, it is there … the kingdom of God is within you’”. Williams was aware that the most sincere faith was that which will “most shrink from observation”. In fact, Williams ultimately concluded that the number who received Christianity in a sincere manner cannot really be determined. But he was certain, “that the multitude is large of those who, after having afforded during life a sufficient reason for believing that they were true converts … died in the Christian’s hope”.

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Williams’ sentiments should not be relegated to a flight of fancy or missionary propaganda. The evidence provided in this chapter demonstrates that though, from the missionary perspective, some Maori people engaged with Christianity for self-interest or temporal gain, there were others who, according to missionary criteria, entered into a ‘spiritual’ Christian faith that left the missionaries confident of the heavenward eternal destinies of some of their charges. It is the scale of such that is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to determine. The foregoing paragraphs have especially highlighted the theological emphases of evangelical Christianity which permeated missionary outlook, such as the focus on conversion, Biblicism, activism and crucicentrism, and shown that the primary interest and goal of the CMS mission to Maori in New Zealand was theological and spiritual. The evangelical emphases outlined in this chapter will be regularly alluded to throughout the rest of this thesis. Much historical scholarship dealing with mission fails to give adequate attention to the important dimension of the theological basis and focus of mission, and the ‘faith’ perspective on life which captured within it all aspects of human thought and activity, yet it is this perspective which clearly separates evangelical missionary ideas about Maori culture from more general European references, and really prevents them from being lumped together in general historical examination. Spiritual faith and belief systems lie at the centre of evangelical rationalisations about the world. As will be shown, it is a theological rationale that plays the most crucial role in missionary perspectives on Maori culture, and in determining the foundation and meaning of ‘civilization’, themes which will be taken up in the next few chapters.
**Chapter Two: Religion and Culture.**

Religion for evangelicals was not just another aspect of culture; it was the cultural determining engine *par excellence*. This fact means that sacred and secular spheres were entwined together: furthermore, spiritual issues determined the nature of temporal life. This chapter will highlight the intrinsic link between religion and culture in missionary thinking. Much of the recent criticism surrounding nineteenth century missions to ‘heathen’ nations has to do with the impression of racial or cultural prejudice that is given by many of the comments present in missionary texts. Whilst not attempting to justify evangelical missionaries in their cultural views, this chapter will explore the overarching evangelical interpretation of ‘heathen’ cultures, and why evangelical missionaries held to these ways of thinking. Even in New Zealand, much of the historiographical comment on the missionary enterprise holds to a perspective that is critical of missionary attitudes to Maori culture, and yet in many cases fails to adequately outline what the distinctive missionary position actually was. Little attempt is made to reconcile the characteristic evangelical theological paradigm of the men of the Church Missionary Society with their criticisms of Maori culture. The arguments to follow will demonstrate the importance of the resurgence of biblical theology, a result of the evangelical revival, in helping to shape the paradigm in which other peoples and cultures were perceived by evangelical missionaries. It will be argued, in consequence, that modern historians can have little hope of capturing the core nature of missionary enterprise in New Zealand in an accurate light without giving serious consideration to how evangelical Biblical theology impinged on cultural perception.

**Biblicism and Human Cultures**

As the first chapter explained, the Bible was the major authority for the evangelical worldview. Consequently, all evangelical views of God, life, humanity and relationships had their foundation in Biblical testimony, and the theological rationalisations that it spawned. Anything which did not fit with the Biblical record was rejected, or reframed in the light of Biblical injunctions. This was the same for the evangelical understanding of human cultures. Mission historian Brian Stanley highlights some of the Biblically founded “prior assumptions” that underlay evangelical
missionary attitudes to culture and civilization just prior to and during the nineteenth century. Probably the most important of these, according to Stanley, was the conviction that ‘heathen’ cultures uninfluenced by Christianity were not “religiously neutral”; they were actually pictured as coming under the authority and power of Satan. ‘Idolatry’ and ‘superstition’, considered to be supported by demonic powers, were an expression of the reign of Satan over a people, and responsible for the generation of moral debasement and inhumanity which evangelicals perceived in ‘heathen’ cultures.¹ This assumption was widely prevalent among evangelicals, as the literature of American missionary societies demonstrates: “the condition of the heathen is truly deplorable. Their minds are in gross darkness. They… are strangers to that blessed gospel which ‘has brought life and immortality to light’. They are exceedingly depraved, and enslaved to sin, Satan and the world”.² This last statement is filled with Biblical language and themes.

Evangelicals believed that religion and culture were fundamentally related to each other. As Stanley explains, religious beliefs and values are ultimately expressed via culture, and the systems and institutions which articulate them. These beliefs help to create a cohesive society and provide it with meaning and identity. Beliefs and their resulting cultures are what form a people’s ‘worldview’. This means, Stanley concludes, that the religious conversion of a person or community would have a deep effect upon their culture.³ Spiritual and temporal spheres are entwined in the evangelical worldview.

It is here that evangelical revival in Britain and the resulting focus on Biblicism in evangelical theology fundamentally affected the British missionary interpretation of human nature. Biblical testimony to the ‘fallen’ human state and its depravity meant that evangelicals rejected the prevailing ideas of seventeenth and eighteenth century Enlightenment philosophers and their conception of a “noble savage”.⁴ A belief in the notion of humanity living in a natural and primitive innocence had been a part of Western cultural thought seemingly from its “literate beginnings”, although by the late eighteenth century the idea of noble savages living in paradisiacal bliss had given way to a less positive picture in general European perception.⁵ However, in line with their

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⁴ There is also a vast difference between evangelical and Enlightenment notions of anthropology, as chapter four details.
understanding of Biblical testimony, Evangelicals viewed ‘natural man’ (which was not humanity living in a ‘state of nature’ but unregenerate humanity living in estrangement from God) as ‘inherently sinful’ and denied the fundamental assumption stemming from Enlightenment philosophy that humanity possessed the ability to reason through a remedy for its predicament. As historian Jane Samson has demonstrated, evangelical ethnographic study and racial classification of peoples during the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century were heavily influenced by knowledge of the presence and power of human sin, and not just ‘scientific’ ethnographic criteria. Within this evangelical Biblical worldview, Satan was portrayed as a powerful being responsible for deceiving nations into ‘false’ and ‘idolatrous worship, wielding the power of sin and death as part of his tyrannous reign over the non-Christian peoples of the earth. The position of societies on the ‘scale’ of civilization often had much to do with the Biblical portrayal of universal human sin and depravity, which were able to cause people groups to degenerate into barbarism. For evangelicals, spiritual issues were the primary factors in human existence. This essentially put evangelicals at odds with their own British and European cultural worldview.

The link between sin, idolatrous worship and human degradation in evangelical thinking on human cultures was underscored by the common occurrence of passages from scripture such as Romans chapter one, particularly 1:18ff, in nineteenth century missionary literature. This Romans passage, in general, was expounded to show the rejection of God by humanity, the worship of Him being replaced by the idolatrous worship of created things, “they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped the creature rather than the creator” (1:25), and the attendant divine anger and moral debasement that accompanied a refusal of true worship of God: “God gave them over to degrading passions”. Many evangelicals interpreted so called heathen cultures as reflecting the principles of this passage. Andrew Walls comments that where eighteenth-century humanist philosophers had visualized a “grave, distant, polite people preserving over thousands of years the knowledge of God and pure morality”, the post-revival

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6 Brian Stanley, (ed.), *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, Introduction. It needs to be noted here that the term ‘natural man’ as used by Enlightenment philosophers, commonly referred to simple, undeveloped, or ‘barbarous’ human cultures, as distinct from the evangelical use of the term, which referred to unregenerate, ‘ungodly’ humanity. The Enlightenment notion of a state of nature will be explained in chapter 4. The term used by evangelical thinkers refers back to 1 Corinthians ch.2. Other passages of Christian scripture which relate to this view will be referred to further on in the chapter.


8 *Ibid*.
evangelicals saw a depraved and sinful humanity: human sacrifice, cannibalism, cult prostitution: “Less from a theory of religion than from the effect of observation … the words and phrases of Romans 1:18ff ring out time and again as missionaries view the religion of non-Christian peoples”.9

The Biblical notion of the ‘fallen’ state of humanity, with its accompanying idolatrous religious systems, informed the arguments of William Carey, a Baptist missionary to India, who used Romans chapter one at the beginning of his polemic on the need for missions to ‘heathen’ peoples to demonstrate that humanity had refused to worship God, exchanging Him for the worship of created things, which had led to all kinds of sin and degeneracy being given licence in their societies.10 Nineteenth century preacher John Angell James of Carr’s Lane church in Birmingham, and a major supporter of missionary endeavour, believed that a prevailing facet of idolatry which characterised ‘heathen’ cultures was cruelty, for when human beings refused to know God in his true nature they reformed their deities into forms that were more acceptable to their own imagination and so “animated them with the dispositions of (their) own heart”. The earth then became a place of spiritual darkness and cruelty, and people “never contemplated their gods but with uncontrollable terror”. The response of the Christian was to present the “attraction of the cross”, which would allow sinners to be justly reconciled to God.11 James indicated a typical evangelical response to perceived cultural depravity. An idolatrous religion brought about a debased culture in evangelical thinking, and the antidote to such was Christian faith.

But evangelical preachers were not averse to criticising the great pillars (or perhaps ‘idols’?) of their own culture. Scientific development and increasing knowledge, which were important aspects of the Enlightenment civilization narrative in general European thinking,12 did not make a culture proof against the folly of idolatry, and the debasement supposed to go with it. This is partly why Classical Greece and Rome were so often referred to as examples of spurious civilization by evangelicals:

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12 For an explanation of the stadial ‘civilization’ narrative, see chapter 4.
“even Athens herself, in the meridian of her literary and philosophical glory, was in total darkness”, being idolatrous and morally degraded.\textsuperscript{13}

Missionaries could therefore conclude that, because ‘heathen’ nations were idolatrous and “utterly destitute of the knowledge of the gospel of Christ”, they were “only led by the most childish customs and traditions”. That is, ‘heathen’ religious worship informed cultural practices, which had seemingly become infantile through moral debasement. In some lands, asserted Williams Carey, human sacrifices were known to be offered, and the peoples taking part in such a practise he considered “in general poor, barbarous, naked pagans, as destitute of civilization, as they are of true religion”. However, it seemed to Carey that even ‘pagans’ were capable of knowledge and “uncommon genius and tractableness”.\textsuperscript{14} But the major point to be made here is that Carey believed that false, idolatrous worship caused cultural degradation. Much of this approach to mission was dictated by the values espoused in Romans chapter one and is further evidence of how missionaries themselves were constrained by Biblicism in their understanding of human cultures.

This Biblical chapter informed the evangelical cultural perspective. As a result, ‘pagan’ religious worship was understood to be a source of moral debasement, an assertion made in the Romans passage. William Ellis, a missionary in Polynesia and later leader of the Congregationalist London Missionary Society (LMS), referred to the words of Romans 1:18 ff. in his account of Polynesian culture: “They had changed the glory of God into the image of corruptible things”, and had chosen instead to “worship the creature rather than the Creator”, the result of which was enslavement to their idols. In Ellis’ view, the idolatrous system of worship in Tahiti demonstrated “the distance to which those under its influence departed from the knowledge and service of the true God”, who was the proper object of human worship and obedience. All false worship, no matter how it manifested itself, was in all instances “unfriendly to intellectual improvement, moral purity, individual happiness, social order and national prosperity”.\textsuperscript{15} Although displaying a mild disposition and a cheerful energy, Ellis considered that Tahitians were dark in their moral character: no one had “sunk so low in brutal licentiousness and moral degradation”. He regarded Romans chapter one as a


\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid}, pp.63-64.

faithful portrait of this situation. Ellis linked the fact that the people were “wholly given to idolatry” as the cause of their “moral degradation and consequent wretchedness”. Ellis hoped that if the people of Tahiti became Christians they would “thereby elevate their moral character, diminish their actual suffering, and improve their present condition”. Cultural degradation was caused by religion, according to Ellis, but he believed Christian faith would deliver Tahitian people from religious and cultural misery.

Similar Biblically based criticisms were made about the “moral state” of Hindu culture. An East India Company Chaplain in India, Claudius Buchanan believed Hindu religion was essentially immoral. Hindu mythology seemed to him to be filled with vice and falsehood. He thought the spirit of Hindu worship had therefore a “continual tendency to deterioration”. This, according to Buchanan, determined the culture and character of Hindu devotees. Buchanan was convinced that only the power of the Christian religion that could reform the peoples of India, as conversion to faith in Christ could alone provide a moral basis for society. Another evangelical observer of Indian culture, Charles Grant, partially blamed the “despotic mode of government which generally is prevalent in the East” for the perceived nature of Indian character, however character was not only the product of physical influences like government and climate. From his own observations, Grant had come to the conclusion that Indian people were “caught up in a social system of extreme complexity” which kept them “bound and degraded”. This system had its strength in the local religion, and was in fact “bound up and involved with it at every point”. Grant believed Indians were “a people exceedingly depraved”, and insisted the character of the ‘Hindoos’ stemmed chiefly from moral causes. He prescribed the medicine of the Gospel as the instrument that could make Indian society better and happier.

18 Claudius Buchanan, ‘Memoir of the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India; Both as the Means of Perpetuating the Religion Among our own Countrymen; and as a Foundation for the Ultimate Civilization of the Natives’, London, 1805, Allan Davidson, Evangelicals and Attitudes to India, 1786-1813: Missionary Publicity and Claudius Buchanan, Sutton Courtenay Press, Oxfordshire, 1990.
So to summarize so far, the people of all cultures which remained unpenetrated by Christianity were described in general terms by evangelical missionaries, and ministers and preachers in Britain, as living “in darkness”, and this was due to the prevailing reign of ‘heathen’ and ‘idolatrous’ religious beliefs within their cultures. The categorization of Maori by evangelical missionaries was little different, as Maori cultural beliefs and practices were usually similarly portrayed in a dim light by Church Missionary Society missionaries in New Zealand. Missionary letters and journals are filled with denouncements of the nature of Maori ‘character’ or culture. John Wilson hoped that his journal might enable others to get a picture of the “national as well as individual wretchedness of this people, whose God is not the Lord”. However, it was expected by the missionaries that a proclamation of the Christian Gospel, and conversion to faith in Christ, was the way in which Maori people could be ‘delivered’ from their ‘sin’, ‘idolatry’ and ‘evil practices’. In these ways, the missionaries of this era believed they were being faithful to Biblical principle.

**Sin and Maori Culture**

Missionaries coined terms to better explain the practical implications of their Biblical theology. The term ‘Native character,’ for instance, used by CMS missionaries in New Zealand, was often related to sin and its endemic consequences, thought to exercise considerable influence over what may be termed ‘national characteristics’. National character was traditionally part of Enlightenment civilization discourse, used to highlight the ‘dispositions’ of nations and cultures, often focusing on distinctive national features such as climate, physiology, institutions and government. However, it was often put to use by missionaries to explain the unique influence of sin on a particular culture, as can be seen above in Charles Grant’s discourse on India, where he partially blames the form of government for the national character of the people, but apportions most of the responsibility to sin and the influence of Hinduism. Similarly, Maori people were seemingly in need of a “mild yet firm administration of good” because it was evident that “every man does that which is right in his own eyes”, a characteristic

missionary phrase referring to sin in Maori culture, resulting in continual strife and division. It was Maori estrangement from God which was seen to be the basis of this culturally pervasive sinfulness. Maori had an “independence of character,” one of the most commonly occurring descriptions of Maori ‘character’ in missionary records, in addition to the “enmity of the natural heart to the reception of the Gospel”. The natural, unregenerate heart, argued CMS missionary William Williams, was in a state of “enmity against God, and not disposed to be subject to the law of God”. This language was generally used to describe the sinfulness and depravity of the ‘fallen’ human state, in accordance with the missionaries’ adherence to Biblical conceptions.

CMS missionary John Wilson, stationed at the Thames, Tauranga and Opotiki, spoke of one of his Maori converts as a “most savage” cannibal, who during a bitter war had taken a captive woman for his wife, slain her children and was said to have eaten them. Human nature, he lamented, was bad, but even he could not comprehend how a human being “should be fallen so low”. According to Wilson, anyone who believed in the natural goodness of human beings needed to see them “stripped of all artificial adornments and improvements … ignorant, filthy, hellishly cruel, blood thirsty and profane”, so that the observer may understand the real character of fallen human nature, a sure reproof of the ‘noble savage’ doctrine. Maori were judged to be “poor heathen”, who were “lost in sin and wretchedness”, without clear ideas about heaven, without the knowledge of God’s law and the obedience to Him required of all humanity. To the missionaries it may well have been that Maori were living examples of the scriptural dictates of the book of Romans.

For the CMS missionaries, even the most rudimentary aspects of Maori culture seemed to underscore the need for the intervention of Christian principle. Maori language, reasoned Richard Taylor, who lived and worked in the Wanganui district for decades, seemingly provided a good insight into the level of civilization and culture that could be attained without Christian revelation. Though Maori had names for the “most minute things in nature, for every passion, every vice and every bad feeling of the human breast”, Taylor thought there was “none for any of the virtues which Christianity teaches us of such as hope, gratitude, charity etc,” and the missionaries, therefore,

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thought they needed to introduce and naturalize their own expressions. Many Maori concepts, reported Lutheran missionary Johann Wohlers, took on new meaning under Christian influence:

Sin was then differently understood to what it is now. Cruelty, ignorance, and especially all vices, were then only sin when they disturbed the internal life of the community, but practised against strangers they were deeds worthy of praise. It was no sin to rob and oppress widows and orphans, especially amongst the lower classes. But to burn an old fencing post for firewood on which the clothes of a dead child of noble blood had hung, and cook meals with it, especially when persons of lower caste had eaten of them, this was a deadly sin.

Maori, as ‘heathen’ peoples, were considered by missionaries to be ‘blind’ to the truth because of their ‘unbelief’, however, it was thought that the hearing of the gospel would have a profound affect on Maori lives. On a visit to Tauranga in late 1831, Thomas Chapman recorded that Maori found the Christian proclamation they heard to be “hard sayings”, but, he argued, they were so when Christ first proclaimed them to his followers in Israel, and it would be no different for Maori, not least because he looked upon their “nurtured habits” and upbringing as being directly opposed to God’s holy requirements. But again Chapman depended upon the power of the Gospel to change all that, “that they may soon be taught in the ways of truth and holiness”.

Constrained by Christian religion, its Biblical principles, and resulting cultural perception, Henry Williams, as Wohlers did in the quote above, took a negative view of Maori customary law. While Maori people associated with his settlement at Paihia were seemingly respectable, Williams could say, “Their law is opposite to ours; it is the law of nature, which is sensual and devilish.” But the CMS workers did recognise a moral and ethical basis under-girding Maori culture, although it differed from that revealed in the Christian gospel, as did the culture it supposedly gave rise to.

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27 Richard Taylor, Journals, 1833-1873, March 9, 1836, AML.
In an article in the *New Zealand Church Chronicle* of 1896 about the conversion of Ngati Huia chief Aperahama Te Ruru, Octavius Hadfield recalled how he recognized during the 1840s that Maori people possessed highly sensitive consciences and an acute awareness of ‘law’, distinctions between right and wrong. But in arguing this he did not want to imply that Maori at this time were “guided by any high standard of moral conduct”, that is, in accordance with the lofty heights that Hadfield construed the Christian God as demanding. He wished to convey that Maori possessed strong moral and ethical standards, and that their consciences “testified to the discrepancy when there was any deviation in conduct from the standard of moral right to which they had attained”. Maori recognised the importance and necessity of truth and justice, and were as capable as anyone of conceiving of the existence of a Being “who knew the thoughts of their hearts, whom they had offended whenever they departed from the standard of right which they recognised, and to whom, therefore, they must be responsible”. This, Hadfield maintained, provided an opening for the teaching of Christian truths.

According to Hadfield’s own experience, the people around the station at Otaki could see in the moral nature of New Testament teaching “what commended itself to their minds; they perceived in its special doctrinal teaching on redeeming love and spiritual help what commended itself to their needs”.  

Religion, according to the missionaries, shaped human moral law and conscience, and therefore culture. One scholar of Maori religion has drawn attention to the fact that, traditionally, a violation of *tapu*, a religiously based social injunction, could have such an impact on a person’s conscience that they would sometimes, in guilt, literally lie down and die. Maori consciences apparently became sensitized to different laws after the reception of missionary teachings. William Puckey, who worked mostly in the far north of New Zealand, mentioned the cases of two men, well known to the missionaries, who were caught stealing, and in consequence “their shame was so great they could not bear the idea of being looked upon as thieves therefore they shot themselves”. Puckey believed this reaction to show that the gospel had brought the people involved in this episode to feel that stealing was wrong: “A few years back the person who had stolen anything would go away and boast of his exploit, but it is now

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33 An integral part of Maori culture and religious life, *Tapu* refers to the sacred, prohibited or consecrated nature of a person or object, a spiritual condition.

considered a very great crime amongst those who profess to have embraced the Gospel.”  

One of Richard Davis’ acquaintances remarked to him that before missionaries came “their consciences were quiet, and they were under no apprehension of an offended God, but now, if they did wrong, their conscience reproved them, having been taught by us the nature of the law of God”. Davis partly relates this difference to cultural upbringing, contrasting the moral environment in which children were generally raised in England with that of New Zealand, much of which was obviously attributed to Christian heritage:

In happy England … Principles of conscience are impressed on the infant mind; and a fear of sin is imparted, which can seldom be quite obliterated, even by the most hardened. When God speaks to the soul … the return of the sinner, who has been thus early instructed, is comparatively easy. Olden lessons are recollected … and the lamp of hope in Christ is lighted up. Not so the New Zealander … early initiated in all the barbarous superstitions of their savage forefathers, when brought to the knowledge of the truth, they possess no youthful instructions to enlighten and inform their minds; and Satan endeavours to revive and strengthen the pernicious lessons of evil inculcated in their youth, to enslave their minds, and ensnare their souls.  

This statement also highlights Davis’ belief that conscience, and culture, were the product of religious belief. If the problems which he saw within Maori culture were to be rectified, the people themselves needed to be brought to faith in the Christian God, and taken out of the dominion of Satan.

**Religion and Satan’s Reign**

For the missionaries, it was Maori religious beliefs, and Satan, who was thought to lie behind these beliefs, which were responsible for the apparent depravity of Maori culture. Satan had seemingly led Maori “captive to his will”, training them from birth in

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a belief system that the missionaries termed “gross superstition,” which Maori saw no reason to abandon when the missionaries arrived on their shores.\textsuperscript{38} Spiritual entities, the missionaries believed, impinging upon and shaped all of life. Thomas Chapman, upon his arrival at Rotorua, believed he had seen a manifestation of the description Romans 3:10-18, which details humanity under the power of sin, declaring the people of Rotorua: “as one kingdom, solely under the rule of the Wicked One. There was no exception”.\textsuperscript{39} Again, it was scriptural testimony which informed his views. Marianne Williams at Kerikeri in 1823 thought that, though Maori were a noble race, they were also “fast bound in the cruel chains of Satan”.\textsuperscript{40} Maori ideas about the reinga\textsuperscript{41}, according to Henry Williams, had been revealed to Maori by “the wicked one, who kept them in darkness and had not shown to them that place of true happiness”, or heaven, as the missionaries had taught them. Maori only knew of one place, the reinga, whereas the missionaries taught about two places a person could enter after death: heaven and hell, “One for the children of God, the other for the slaves of Satan”.\textsuperscript{42} William Puckey labelled Maori respect for the idea of the Reinga “the affections of those who had any for their old Dagon”, the name of the Philistine god being borrowed as a pseudonym for Satan.\textsuperscript{43} However, in spite of their errors, Maori, as human beings, were fashioned in the image of God, which Lutheran missionary Johann Wohlers thought could still be seen “in the deepest thoughts of the heart”. He found there a “leaning towards the everlasting nature of God a desire for a share on our part in His eternal love, moral duties, purity of heart, justice and truthfulness, heartfelt pity, and kindness”.\textsuperscript{44}

These suppositions about Maori religion may appear rather harsh to twenty-first century readers. Terms such as ‘idolatry’ and ‘superstition’, which were used to describe Maori belief systems, were not meant to imply that missionaries believed that Maori did not have religious belief and expression, or moral sensitivity; they were more a declaration that these systems, in missionary opinion, were not based upon ontological reality, that is, Maori were portrayed as worshipping gods that did not really exist, and maintaining standards of truth which were in fact false. Evangelicals equated the

\textsuperscript{39} Thomas Chapman, \textit{Letters and Journals}, October 23, 1855.
\textsuperscript{40} Marianne Williams, \textit{Letters and Journals Written by the Revd Henry and Mrs Marianne Williams, and the Revd William and Mrs Jane Williams, 1822-1864}, August 2, 1823, MSS Archives A-68, AUL.
\textsuperscript{41} Place of departed spirits.
\textsuperscript{42} Henry Williams, \textit{Williams Family Letters}, August 10, 1827, p.78.
\textsuperscript{43} William Puckey, \textit{Journals and Letters}, January 9, 1835.
\textsuperscript{44} J.F.H. Wohlers, \textit{Memories}, pp.151-152.
worship of ‘false’ gods with the worship of ‘demons’; if the ‘gods’ did not exist, the ‘demons’ certainly did. In her book on Maori prophetic movements, scholar Bronwyn Elsmore, although acknowledging the different notions of religion of European and Maori people, criticises the missionaries for their viewpoint, hinting that they were ‘limited’ by their inability to see the perspective of others. She writes that the missionaries,

Basing their judgement on their own developed system of religious belief and life, observed the customs of the Maori and seeing no rites they regarded as set apart as sacred observances, concluded the New Zealanders had no religion. To the contrary, Maori religious life was well developed; the problem was merely one of a difference in what made up religion in each of the cultures, with the missionaries seeing the other only from their own viewpoint. Consequently, the message was implied, or even given directly to the Maori that their beliefs were mere superstitions, their opinions absurd, their doctrines heathenish, and their natures depraved.\(^45\)

Elsmore’s point of view is problematic because she does not consider the theological context out of which missionaries commented on Maori religion. She is therefore incorrect in stating that missionaries thought Maori “had no religion”, and missionaries narrow-minded in their understanding of Maori religious views. This was far from the case; in fact, one of the sources which her statement is based on, a discourse by CMS missionary William Colenso, though he explicitly states “Maori had no religion,” does not deny the presence of a Maori religious worldview, or its considerable development and pervasiveness, but simply says that Maori religious beliefs were far removed from what Europeans understood religion to be: Maori were viewed as following no religion according to European notions, as even Elsmore herself states. Ethnologist Elsdon Best makes a similar mistake; even though he recognises Colenso’s “somewhat peculiar definition of religion”, he fails to see the implications and foundation for this definition.\(^46\) J.C. Andersen, in a statement which perhaps echoes Colenso’s thinking, observes that: “the Pakeha is well aware that he has a system of faith and worship: the Maori was unaware that he had one, it being so much an integral part of his actual daily


life”. The problem with these criticisms is that Colenso’s statement “Maori had no religion” comes right in the midst of a whole explanation of notions of Maori spirituality. Colenso, a CMS printer, later stationed at Ahuriri in 1844, provided some examples of what he meant by ‘religion’:

virtue, as founded upon the reverence of God, and expectation of future rewards and punishments; or any system of divine faith and worship. They had neither doctrine nor dogma; neither cultus, nor system of worship. They knew not of any Being who could properly be called God. They had no idols. They reverenced not the sun, or moon, or glittering heavenly host, or any natural phenomena.

This is not a narrow definition of religion, if it is to be criticised as small-minded: it could in fact encompass many of the cultures which Europeans had had contact with, such as those in India, Africa and the Middle East, and even the religious systems of Biblical times, which Europeans knew of through its record in the Bible. Maori religion did not fit with any of these known categories of religious system. Instead, as Colenso continues, he is clearly under the impression, as were many of the New Zealand missionaries, that Maori life was bound up strongly in a ‘system of faith’, but this was purported to be based on fear of what they worshipped, which for Colenso could not constitute ‘true’ worship; “love” needed to be involved in such an action. He points to the “principal beings, or rather personifications” and objects of Maori “worship”, and says Maori supposed them “all alike malignant, and ever hated … as the sole cause to them, of pain, misery, and death”. He asserts these ‘deities’ “were certainly never loved, or reverenced, or worshipped”, in the sense that a European was enjoined to love and worship God.

It would be useful to consider this point. Love, reverence and worship were tightly bound together in the evangelical expression of religion. The Westminster Confession, influential in Protestant reformed evangelical thought, describes ‘worship’ as directed to: “God, who has lordship and sovereignty over all, is good, and does good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served.” However, the only way to worship God was “instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the

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imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture”.49 Worship which did not fit into this framework was labelled ‘superstitious.’ It would seem that Colenso made a subconscious distinction between anthropological definitions of religion and his own, as later he again mentioned religion in the Maori context as a legitimate cultural category.50 This may be because anthropological definitions of religion only consider content, rather than the reality of divine revelation, which was what made Christianity ‘true’ religion.51 For missionaries, the presence of divine revelation was what mattered. They had a different sense of what defined ‘religion.’ Maori, Colenso argued, “knew better” than to ‘worship’ their gods, and Colenso referred to Maori karakia to what he labelled “imaginary beings” as being done “more by way of exorcism—to order him off—to bind him down”. Maori, he insisted, “never once thought of getting any aid or good from them; they rather hoped (through their “priests”) to overcome them, or their malignancy, by the power of their muttered karakia acting like charms”. These were the very elements which made a religious system ‘superstitious’ in missionary minds.

In fact, Colenso went on to show that Maori religious belief was all pervasive, emphasizing that “observances of the Tapu were in place of religion”, as a European understood religion. It was because of the religious significance of tapu that Colenso believed its laws to have been “so rigidly upheld and enforced. Nothing could set it aside, or alleviate it”. Whilst Colenso actually saw the institution of tapu as being socially beneficial in many ways to Maori society,52 he again associated the idea of tapu with fear and misery, pointing to a violation of tapu bringing with it the anger and punishment of the ‘gods’ or spiritual rulers like Whiro, with many of the more calamitous events of life being blamed on such a cause. So there is clearly an understanding on Colenso’s part of the presence of an all-pervasive religious system in Maori life, which governed everything that was done.53 His belief in the ontological reality, and therefore superiority, of the Christian faith meant that everything he understood of Maori belief systems paled in comparison.

That the missionaries did recognise Maori as being deeply religious, in the anthropological meaning of the term, is clearly evidenced by many references to religious practices and observances. William Williams, based at Turanga for around 25 years and one of the more competent linguists among the CMS group, also stated that Maori did not have a “fixed religious system properly so called”, but he too understood the religious significance of people and places being made sacred (tapu). He observed, like Colenso, that Maori did not have idols, temples or a priesthood as there was in India, but that they knew of “deities whom they thought it necessary to propitiate through fear of the evils which might otherwise befall them”. Williams also believed there was little thought of “a beneficent being who might bless and prosper them” before missionary arrival, “but of one who was austere and revengeful, ever ready to punish for a violation of the accustomed rites”.  

These statements underscore the fact that missionaries believed Maori were a deeply ‘religious’ people. Richard Taylor regarded the institution of tapu to “be most correctly defined as a religious observance, established for political purposes”, an acknowledgement that the sacred and political were intertwined, and consisted of people, places and things being made ‘sacred’ for both short and extended periods of time. His view was also fairly negative, portraying tapu as a basis of some of life’s insecurities, which: “completely placed the life and property of everyone in the power of the priests and chiefs however outrageous its acts and requirements”. All of these instances relayed above clearly indicate an understanding of the all-pervasive nature of ‘religious’ thought and practise in Maori culture. This is precisely why missionaries labelled Maori ‘superstitious’. It was not just because missionaries did not understand Maori culture and religious systems, although many knew their relative ignorance in such matters.

In the sense supplied by their own definitions of religion and worship, missionaries reasonably called Maori spiritual life ‘superstitious’, always referring to the worship of any being who was not the Christian God using this term, with depravity being the outcome of all ‘false’ forms of worship, which, as has already been spelled out

54 William Williams, Christianity, pp.19-21.
above, was the perspective taken with all non-Christian belief systems. ‘Heathenism’ and ‘superstition’ were often interchangeable terms. This was why missionaries also attributed Maori beliefs to an unwitting ‘worship’ of Satan, who was deemed by evangelicals to be responsible for deceiving human beings into ‘false’ worship and belief systems. It is interesting to note that a refusal to worship the Christian God did not make a person ‘secular’; a person still had to worship something, whether they knew they were doing so or not. Again, this is an indication that missionaries characterised such Maori views in terms of Biblical understanding.

The opinions expressed by Richard Davis are a good example of this. He viewed Maori tohi ceremonies, a dedication ritual in water, as a kind of dedication to the Devil, despite the fact that Maori had no idea of ‘Satan’ and were actually reciting karakia to the atua who they believed would imbue a child with certain desired qualities. Davis stated that prayers and incantations said over a baby during the rite were so that “the child may grow up a courageous warrior, and amply revenge all affronts to himself, and … to his ancestors”. 57 Brown held a similar opinion: “the natives were so cruel and wicked, as they were dedicated in infancy to Satan, to whom they prayed on behalf of their children that they might be brave and angry and cruel etc”. He contrasted Maori rites at the tohi ceremony with “the incomparable service used by our church at the baptism of infants”. 58 Divination, and the “speaking” of Maori ‘gods’, was thought to be aided by the “Prince of Darkness”. 59 “Darkness” was purported to cover Maori in their ‘heathen’ state, “a darkness which may be felt”, but they would yet be “light in the Lord”. 60

These links between divination, spiritual beings, Satan and darkness, various cultural practices and the need for Christian gospel to ‘liberate’ and bring ‘light’, were a web of inextricable notions that bring into sharp relief the inseparable nature of religion and culture, and therefore so called sacred and secular, in the evangelical worldview. The upbringing of children was therefore depicted by the missionaries as being adversely affected by these spiritual allegiances, as children were “gradually initiated into all their barbarous customs, and consequently become hardened and senseless …

57 Richard Davis, Memoir, April 11, 1833, pp.156-157.
58 Alfred Brown, Journal, September 27, 1835. The references to Satan as the underlying person and power behind ‘heathen’ cultures are too numerous to document here and do the topic justice, although other references will be added throughout this chapter.
These children, thus initiated into evil, will practise and delight in what would horrify the most hardened European”.

In view of this conviction that Satan was ultimately working to deceive ‘fallen’ humanity into, and through, ‘false’ forms of worship, William Williams spoke of the work of religious tohunga as being “properly the black art, and, in the education given to a person who was afterwards to hold the office, pains were taken to increase the natural disposition for evil”. Richard Taylor taught that Christ could stop the devils from speaking, being Lord over all, and that Maori atua “were only devils” which possessed “no power to makutu and deceive as before”. It is helpful to note here that missionaries did not deny the presence of spiritual entities, but believed the spiritual beings referred to were evil and deceitful in nature. Similarly, Thomas Chapman declared to Maori that while they prayed to Wiro, who gave them “their heart’s desire – filling them with all lusts”, they were “dead in trespasses and sins” and enslaved to such spiritual entities.

The tyranny of the gods was demonstrated by the disaster that befell the feared chief Te Heuheu, as Taylor interpreted the event, when a landslide buried the great chief and his village. Though reported to have offered food daily to a taniwha, he neglected to do so for two days preceding the disaster, and “his god indignant at the slight destroyed him and his people and fled across the lake to Motutere”.

Therefore, a Maori person who became a Christian was not looked upon by the missionaries as giving up “superstitions” for a secular lifestyle, but “turning from idols to serve the true and living God”. The ‘worship’ of Maori gods was often portrayed as a tyrannical reign, such as accounts of “bloody offerings” to Wiro, whom the missionaries labelled ‘the evil spirit’ or ‘the devil’. Some Maori people thought the God of the missionaries was a new god who would soon be overtaken by the old ones, but this turned out not to be the case in the experience many. Those who lamented the decline of their people and culture began to see such as “proof their old gods cared very little for them or else had very little power to help them”. But neither did they believe the new god was able to help them: one man questioned, “What can the new God do, the

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63 Richard Taylor, Journals, November 12, 1845.
64 Thomas Chapman, Letters and Journals, December 13, 1835.
65 Richard Taylor, Journals, June 11, 1846.
66 See Alfred Brown, Journal, January 20, 1837 and John Wilson, Letters, February 21, 1836, for example.
67 Benjamin Ashwell, Letters and Journals, March 15, 1841.
Missionaries speak of his power his goodness and his love, can he make alive, great was his grief when he saw all the old chiefs thus dying away.” The reply of Richard Taylor was:

although our God was a new one to him he was from everlasting that his power was infinite that he could kill and make alive, that when the Saviour appeared on earth he raised the dead, healed the sick and displayed his infinite power in various ways, that … death is turned into gain to the believer by becoming the door of admittance to heaven, that thus death is gain since it is immediately swallowed up in victory, that God’s word had arrived amongst them to remove their sorrows and give them hope and consolation, that this day I stood before them as the servant of Xt the living God to exhort them to flee from the wrath to come and turn to God, that I preached Xt to them that they might be saved, and become the children of God.  

Missionary work in New Zealand, and varying Maori responses, virtually constituted a contest over religious worldviews.  

Culture and religious beliefs were intrinsically linked in the missionary worldview: the nature of a religion determined the nature of a culture. Maori customs, as Alfred Brown indicates, were often thought to be products of the “proud arch” of religious system, or “superstition” which Satan had thrown over a ‘benighted’ people. Events such as a person being buried with Christian ceremony he regarded as the “pulling out of successive stones … by the mighty energy of the blessed Gospel, and the hateful fabric fall(ing) to ruins”.  In fact, cannibalism was portrayed as a worship feast of Satan, “a portion of their horrid repast for their father the Devil”, said Alfred Brown, a demonstration of the “desperate wickedness of man under the full power of Satan”.

Satan, the missionaries evidently believed, like God, was active in the temporal sphere: those who were deemed to be living “fast bound in misery and vice” were doing so because they were “obeying Satan as their Lord and Master, and apparently delighting in his ways”. Thomas Chapman, in his annual report of 1841, spoke of Rotorua as “one of the last strong holds of the ‘wicked one’ in New Zealand”.  

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was still much opposition to the Gospel from religious *tohunga* in his district, but “their influence is gradually wasting away, and truth is silently undermining the fabric of their superstitions”.\(^{72}\) Satan and his ‘powers of darkness’ could sometimes “stir up the natives” to resist or ridicule what the missionaries were saying, or to physically interfere with mission activities. Many Maori would attribute the deaths of kinsmen to the missionary presence, considering them sorcerers who killed through their prayers: “They punish sorcery with death, and we understand that our lives have been threatened.” At times such as these the “powers of darkness are very active. I have always expected a combat with the enemy of souls, before the Gospel takes effectual root in this country”. Chapman could confidently state, though, that “Satan trembles for his kingdom, knowing that his time is short”.\(^{73}\) These are explicit examples of a ‘clash of kingdoms,’ a religious contest, which missionaries perceived to be taking place.

‘Heathen’ religious beliefs, sin and cultural degradation were inseparable in missionary minds. William Williams suggested that in the early days of the mission Maori were indifferent to the missionaries’ teaching, and did not see Maori and Europeans as having anything in common: “all they thought of was eating and fighting”. This was because Maori possessed “their own traditions about the origin of the world”. Their customs and language, and especially the beings they worshipped were different, and many were sure that rejecting traditional customs and rites for those of “a foreign race” would prove fatal. Maori thought like this, Williams asserts, because they were: “dead in sin, and it was only the power of God which could give them life”.\(^{74}\)

Religious beliefs, tradition and culture, no matter how benign they may have appeared to be, were therefore, according to missionary observers, all to change upon the reception of Christianity. In his discussion of Maori mythology in his account of missionary work among Maori on the island of Ruapuke, Johann Wohlers hinted that Maori religious traditions could perhaps at one time have been sublime, having risen from poetic inspiration, even though essentially ‘heathen’. Maori mythology, he contended, pointed to a previously existing higher degree of culture, so that Maori could even prosper as ‘heathen’ if they lived in accordance with these “sublime conceptions”. But this was not to hold that a heathenish religion was sufficient, he added. ‘Heathen’ religions were unable to “elevate a people so that it can compare with enlightened


\(^{73}\) Richard Davis, pp. 119-120.

\(^{74}\) William Williams, *Christianity*, p.58.
Christian nations in progress of useful and higher knowledge and science … the external life always lingers far behind the poetic aspiration”.

Though mythology could in some respects be admired and appreciated, the “inward corruption” mixed in with it could not be overlooked by the missionaries, and apparently encouraged “cruelty, the vices, as well as the outward and inward uncleanness of the mass of the people”. A ‘heathen’ religion could espouse the highest virtues, but apparently “always lacks strength to turn people to what is good in practical life. There is no purity of heart, no intelligent probity, no heartfelt pity, for one’s own fellow creatures, and, above all, no peace in life, no comfort in death in the natural man”. Moral failings, Wohlers agreed, could also be found in Christian nations, but these were far from the scale of depravity found among the ‘heathen’, and existed primarily because Christianity was only adhered to externally. The gospel was sent so that ‘heathen’ peoples could turn “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God”. By the Gospel’s power “raw savages are made into respectable men, so that they are prepared for useful and beautiful progress”. In this way a “new-born manhood is developed from a lost one”. Christianity needed to be “inwardly accepted, and the heart will, unhindered, enter into a junction with Jesus Christ”. This would cleanse people “from all wickedness, and renews us in the image of God”. The Christianity of these evangelical missionaries then worked its way “from inwards outward into practical life … into the mass of the people”. It was on the basis of Christian faith that the missionaries looked for cultural transformation.

In the mind of the CMS missionaries, religion and culture were inextricably linked, each reflecting the other; the beliefs of a society shaped their culture, and vice versa. Considering the great extent to which theology formed the basis on which missionaries assessed Maori culture, this crucial fact must be incorporated into historical assessments of missionary activity among Maori. The critical statements made in missionary documents all reflect the Biblically-based religious worldview that lay at the heart of evangelical rationalisations of the basis and purpose of life. They were not just made to highlight European notions of superiority, but to draw attention to what was believed to be a genuine denial of spiritual realities, as evangelicals comprehended the situation. Chapter ten will show that similar critical statements were made about

75 J.F.H. Wohlers, pp. 135-137.
Europeans who remained impervious to Christian faith. The CMS missionaries understood Maori to live within an overarching religious system that ruled their lives, and which formed the basis of their cultural assumptions and practices. Although highly critical of Maori religious beliefs and culture, the whole point of proclaiming the Christian gospel to Maori was so that they might not remain in their ‘depraved’ state, but instead turn “from the power of Satan to the Kingdom of God”. Maori people could be ‘redeemed’. For a nation to change its ‘gods’ meant a change in culture also, and a realisation of this fact should deal with persistent notions that missionaries divided their understanding of the world into ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ categories; whether a person worshipped the Christian God, or unwittingly gave allegiance to Satan, as the missionaries portrayed things, religious issues affected every aspect of human existence in the missionary worldview. Why would a missionary like Henry Williams say that Maori were “governed by the Prince of Darkness in all their movements and wrong in all their ways” if he considered there to be a dichotomy between the religious and secular? Precisely because of the absence of this sacred-secular dichotomy, the missionaries identified in this study clearly understood that there was a spiritual basis to Maori culture, and, though generally expressing an opposition to many aspects, missionaries were much more closely associated with Maori culture than they have been given credit for, even if they themselves admitted they would be learning about Maori beliefs for years to come. To deny this is to seriously misunderstand the religious outlook of the missionaries themselves. Consequently, if historians wish to understand missionary interpretations of Maori life, they must be considered from within the theological context in which their comments have issued. Once this is firmly grasped, new light can be thrown on the question of why the missionaries would so inextricably link civilization with Christianity. As the following chapters will show, neither could truly exist without the other in the missionary worldview.
Chapter Three: Gospel and Attitudes to Culture.

Whilst the previous chapter highlighted how religion and culture were linked together in the broader nineteenth century evangelical worldview, as well as the microcosm of mission in New Zealand, this chapter will deal specifically with what CMS missionaries believed the implications of the Christian message were for the varied aspects of Maori culture they observed, and the change which the reception of Christianity was thought to convey. These changes were reported by the missionaries to be of both temporal and eternal significance. Many of the cultural aspects which were directly challenged by missionary teaching, such as *tapu* and *utu*\(^1\), were believed to be opposed to Christian revelation, and there was a general missionary consensus that they needed, in their present form, to be given up. Missionary opposition to Maori worldview was located in the proclamation of a Christian worldview, and encouragement of those who discovered something useful in the new worldview to live in accordance with it. Missionaries had no power, apart from presenting their own perspectives and repudiating opposing ones, to change Maori outlook on the world. But this did not mean that there was a blanket desire to extinguish these aspects of Maori culture.\(^2\) Once again, the missionary evaluation of cultural concepts was subject to their understanding of how these concepts related to their overarching Christian interpretation of human life in its relationship to the Christian God: theological and spiritual beliefs, not a desire to Westernise, determined missionary attitudes to Maori culture and lifestyle.\(^3\) Indeed, missionaries believed that ideas such as *tapu* and *utu* took on new meaning in the light of Christian revelation.

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1 *Tapu* refers to the sacred, prohibited or consecrated nature of a person or object, a spiritual condition. In being consecrated to an *atua* the person or object is removed from the profane realm and made sacred. *Tapu* controlled the way people related to each other and their surroundings. *Utu* is an action of reciprocity, payment or revenge, which was important for maintaining order and balance within Maori society and interpersonal relationships. It could be carried out through exchanging gifts, or the exchange of hostilities. The reciprocation of kindness was also an aspect of *utu*.


Destroyers of Culture?

In light of the cultural clash between missionaries and Maori, it is evident that any transformation effected by the presence of the new Christian ideas and convictions was primarily the result of Maori instigation and affirmation and not missionary cajoling. As the later chapter on education will show, for instance, much dissemination of Christian knowledge was dependent upon Maori Christian teachers, who, along with most of the missionaries, used Maori language and cultural concepts to spread the new teaching.\textsuperscript{4} The journals of Richard Taylor are littered with references to metaphors and similes used by his converts and teachers to explain Christian concepts, and Taylor himself began to take on the practice.\textsuperscript{5} The use of vernacular language in mission contexts, in the opinion of Catholic mission historian Lamin Sanneh, is in fact almost identical to adopting the criteria of local cultures in order to make Christian faith intelligible. Sanneh sees this as an act of indigenisation which contradicts claims of direct cultural imperialism.\textsuperscript{6} Whilst he acknowledges that modern historiography has an established tradition which depicts mission as the surrogate of Western colonialism and destructive of indigenous tradition, he suggests that the evidence provided to support such claims lacks empirical support. For Sanneh, the translation of the Christian message into local language means primarily the “submission of Christianity to the terms of local culture”.\textsuperscript{7} This action also brings into question the assumption that Christianity and Western culture were synonymous to Maori, an idea essentially undermined by vernacularisation. Maori themselves were principal actors in accepting and moulding missionary culture and Christianity.

Historians who insist that missionaries were imperialist agents of Western culture must distinguish accurately between the evangelical approach to missions and other forms of perceived European cultural imperialism. Apart from the fact that the term “cultural imperialism” is rarely defined or explored conceptually,\textsuperscript{8} Stuart Piggin argues that evangelical missionaries were concerned with “humanization”, with its associated

\textsuperscript{5} For just a few examples, see Richard Taylor, Journals, November 8, 1843, p.303, December 23, 1844, Vol.3, p.46, May 24, 1845, Vol.3, p.114, December 6, 1847, p.150, AML.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid, pp. 4-6.
religious meanings, rather than “Westernization”. Missionary concern targeted the alleviation of human suffering in cultural settings, but this was never the major missionary interest. Rather, their first concern was the perceived need for ‘heathen’ peoples and cultures to be released from their apparent bondage to sin. The argument that missionary activity automatically equals cultural imperialism can only stand to the extent that they aimed to replace “inhuman customs” and “heathen religious beliefs” with Christian thought and practice. Missions were therefore a “cultural threat in intention” because religious beliefs and customs were integrated within culture, that is, their primary aim was not the destruction of traditional indigenous cultures, but religious conversion. It does not logically follow that missionaries were deliberately seeking to Westernise. Any study which ignores this “religious factor” is doomed to misinterpret the facts. In this sense, historians must take issue with religion itself and religious proselytizing if they wish to pursue this line of logic. Although CMS missionaries were in some way influenced by their cultural milieu, their adherence to a Biblical theology which stressed conversion and the adoption of a renewed life meant that their intent was first religious, and only cultural through the social outworking of accepted religious beliefs. Much of this thesis is given to demonstrating that this was indeed the case.

Attitudes to Aspects of Culture

While seeing many cultural traditions in a negative light, the CMS missionaries in New Zealand respected certain aspects of Maori tradition, and sometimes embraced them, so long as they did not interfere with missionary work or clash with evangelical Christian beliefs. This was the case with the issue of tapu, for sometimes the missionaries observed and adhered to the distinctions which came with things and people declared tapu, and at other times they refused to do so. The missionaries occasionally viewed the use of tapu as fickle, and subject to whim, and would in these instances be prepared to violate its laws. When missionary Alfred Brown, while at Matamata, had on one occasion purchased potatoes, he recorded that one of the local principal chiefs was angry because “the potatoes were not all purchased of his tribe, and

perceiving a heavy rain coming on he went and tapued my house in order that the potatoes might not be put under shelter”. Feeling that this conduct was an attempt to control him, Brown went to the Chief and said to him: “though the Missionaries did not violate their sacred places, we could not allow the natives to tapu ours”. Brown then went into the house that had been rendered tapu by the chief and deliberately violated the sacred restriction, “after which the natives who had before refused to carry in the potatoes went in without hesitation”. In a similar case, Maori living quarters at Brown’s settlement which had been made tapu after a man had died within, took several months to be made “common” by the chief who had made it tapu, whom Brown believed had been “trying to get a payment from us for the ceremony, but finding that he could not do so, and wanting to sell us a pig for a blanket, his scruples, much to our satisfaction, gave way and he went through the ridiculous rite of taking off the tapu, without being paid for it”.11

But where it was legitimate to do so, sensing that adoption of key cultural principles could assist them in spreading their Christian message, the missionaries sometimes followed the laws of tapu out of courtesy to the people among whom they lived. When pulling the teeth of a rangatira whose head was sacred, Richard Taylor sent for the man’s son to hold the man’s head during the procedure, as no one else present was able to do so under the conditions of tapu. The man’s teeth were carried away to be disposed of in a sacred place, and Taylor agreed to wash the blood off his fingers according to the strict injunction given by his Maori assistants.12 Taylor believed the institution of tapu was quite notable in its relation to Maori society, being “politic and wise”, providing a “bond of union which … kept them from committing greater excesses”, keeping in mind the fact that Maori were ‘heathen’ and “knew not God”, and committed their sins “not against light and knowledge, but … with darkened understandings”.13 The missionaries would sometimes use the principles of tapu to their advantage. On one occasion, John Morgan asked a chief to make a road tapu to prevent a ‘war party’ from going to take utu, a request which was acceded to.14

In the majority of cases, though, missionaries considered tapu a part of those ‘native’ customs which were ‘evil’, and argued that it had to be laid aside in the light of

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10 Alfred Brown, *Journal*, April 14, 1835, MSS Archives A-179 AUL.
11 Ibid, May 16, 1836.
13 William Colenso makes a similar statement in ‘Maori Races of New Zealand’, *TPNZI*, 1868.
14 John Morgan, *Letters and Journals*, October 13, 1839, SC 266.3 M-84, APL.
Christian revelation and conversion. Benjamin Ashwell considered the idea of tapu, and other “heathen customs”, to be part of “the design of Satan … to inflict pain and to destroy our best feelings here, and eventually to ruin our soul”. Ashwell perceived that so-called superstitions were interfering with the true expression of human relationships.\(^{15}\) The Maori idea of tapu, and the custom associated with it, was often attributed by missionaries to Satan’s scheming, and those who followed its laws condemned as being “in Satan’s bondage held”.\(^{16}\) This was typical of missionary endeavour to interpret Maori culture through their theological and scriptural filters.

The problem for the missionaries was not just the ideas of Maori spirituality themselves, but, according to Christian revelation, the perceived subjection to spiritual powers which the whole Maori religious system was thought to entail. For example, Benjamin Ashwell knew of a father whose son had been near death through illness, but the father refused to speak to his newly recovered son, as he was considered tapu. Ashwell saw this as part of Satan’s design to destroy the soul. Ashwell “remonstrated with him on the folly of still adhering to his Heathen customs, and said that the (design) … of Christ was to sanctify our hearts and feelings, and prepare us for eternal happiness”. This constituted a question, argued Ashwell, of “which Master will you follow?” The father later, “forgetting his tapu ran to meet him (the son) and gave full vent to his feelings”. Ashwell interpreted this as an example of the power of his Almighty God “to overthrow the power of Satan, and break the chains of his deluded vessels”.\(^{17}\) It was religious, not cultural, constraints which determined Ashwell’s attitude to the practice of tapu.

The problems of sin and “heathen cruelty” were also part of the mix of missionary endeavour. John Morgan records the story of how a young woman had come to a decision to kill her child. A leading chief and tohunga had lent her one of his mats, which was tapu, to sleep in. The mat was lice-infested and the woman, in her frustration at being bitten, trapped some of the lice and ate them. On the following day she and her child became ill. Fearing that the atua were angry with her for eating sacred lice out of the chief’s garment and were about to destroy her, the woman strangled her child to propitiate the atua. Once this was done she recovered from her illness. Morgan commented that: “It is quite awful to hear a mother with a smile tell that because she

\(^{15}\) Benjamin Ashwell, *Letters and Journals*, October 20, 1839.


\(^{17}\) Benjamin Ashwell, *Journals*, October 20, 1839, MSS Archives A-172, AUL.
had eaten some sacred lice and fleas she had to appease the anger of the native god strangled her own child.” He thought few Europeans understood the “horrid cruelties of the heathen”. Morgan’s thoughts in this account are similar to those relayed by Colenso in his discourse on Maori religion referred to in the previous chapter. In this instance, Morgan clearly sees the action taken to bind or ward off the perceived malicious action of the *atuatia* to be against the principle of ‘worship’ that stemmed from love.

However, the notion of *tapu* was re-interpreted by the missionaries in the light of Christian revelation. Missionaries recorded that it still had a place in Maori Christian life, although not in its original sense, and had instead taken on ideas of Christian holiness and sanctification. Ultimately, if Maori people became Christians, it was because the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ had “laid his tapu on them all”. Manihera and Kereopa, Christian teachers who shared in Richard Taylor’s ministry in the Taranaki and were later martyred, in a similar way felt, according to Taylor, “they were tapu in the Lord”. Another convert inquired of Taylor “what was meant by St Paul calling himself the prisoner of the Lord whether it meant that he was wakatapu (had been consecrated) to preach the gospel”. This was to Taylor a clear attempt by a Maori person to understand Christian thought and relate it correctly to Maori terminology, and *vice versa*. George (Hori) Kingi from Putiki, a leader of Ngati Ruaka, came to Taylor declaring that he and his companions had been made *tapu* “to the Lord” and so could not be involved in fighting. Thus Taylor sensed that Maori culture and Christian thought were melding well together.

Likewise, in regard to the practise of *utu*, the missionaries trusted that through the influence of religious persuasion the significance of the custom would change. The missionary Alfred Brown recounted an occasion when a man brought him a pig as payment (*utu*) for an insult. Brown commented, “It would be a happy thing if the feature of revenge which is usually prominent in native “*utu*” were changed to that which this *Utu* assumed, viz. restitution for injury – a marked indication of a repentant state.” Brown most often interpreted *utu* to be “a melancholy proof of the iniquitous way in which justice is administered among the heathen”, as in the case of a man who was the

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21 *Ibid*, April 7, 1847.
cause of a woman being shot, who, having committed adultery with her, gave a “payment” to her husband for his offence in order to make peace. Brown was disgusted at the way that “the husband shoots his wife, and then condescends to receive from her paramour a trifling present as a token of peace”. Brown hoped that this idea of restitution for injury could eventually become the dominant aspect of exacting utu, as there was biblical foundation for such an approach, particularly in relation to the laws given by to Israel by their God in the Old Testament, according to which the Jewish nation was to be governed.

Missionaries were therefore quite happy with, and even encouraged, the settlement of disputes with a ‘payment’ being made to an injured party. This was often a central part of missionary peace-making efforts. An end to the conflict between Waharoa, principal leader of Ngati Haua in the Waikato, and Ngakuku and the people of Rotorua was sought through a “payment” being made for the killing which had been the initial cause of the struggle. Alfred Brown could see the good sense, as well as a form of justice, in a payment being made for murder and then a peace settlement. Here the still more important aspect to Brown, though, was “their making peace with God”. His view of the settlement was dictated by religious understanding, not just his own culture’s prevalent ethic or practice.

Again, utu was also reinterpreted for Maori in the light of Christian revelation, Christ being proclaimed as the utu or “payment” for sins, which would have had far reaching implications in the light of the account above. This was the basis for the missionary insistence on peace with God and other human beings, a key issue that will be dealt with in chapter six. Benjamin Ashwell believed that this conviction had taken some root in his district, and commented: “Christ and Christ alone is the utu payment for my sins is the constant expression and I believe the all pervading feeling of numbers of our poor people.” Ashwell conceived that it was Christian dictate and Maori acceptance of it that had brought about this transformation of cultural practice.

It should be acknowledged, though, that the Maori worldview was often repudiated in the missionary assertion that Christian truth was exclusive and absolute. John Morgan related that when a party of Maori from Ngaruawahia in the Waikato tried to strip him of his belongings, he discovered that they adhered to very different ideas of

26 Benjamin Ashwell, Letters and Journals, March 11, 1855.
right and wrong from his own. Morgan believed the Maori reasoned that because he had come from the Thames, the country of their enemies, it was therefore quite “straight” to plunder his things as payment for the plundering of their own chief some weeks before. Although Morgan declared them to be “acting wrong”, they rejoined that, “It (was) quite straight according to native custom”. Morgan, in turn, answered, “God says ‘thou shalt not steal!’” and insisted they were listening to the words of Satan, not God.  

Richard Davis also expressed his opposition to the Maori worldview by insisting on the “pretending” activities of Maori mediums, the falsehood of the atua and their “many fabulous traditions”. He, too, believed that these concepts and traditions should be transformed by Christian knowledge and understanding.

Polygamy was another subject on which missionaries and Maori disagreed, although missionaries provided some concession for those who expressed an interest in Christianity:

One chief enquired whether if he “believed”, it would be necessary for him to put away all his wives but one. I could not point him to any decided command on this subject, (opposed as I believe polygamy to be to the genius of Christianity), but I referred him to the conduct which had been pursued in this respect by Broughton and other Ngapuhi chiefs, and told him that if he embraced the Gospel, the Holy Spirit would soon teach him what the proper course was for him to pursue in this matter. I was afterwards informed by Ngakuku that Ngataha, who for the last ten months has been a very regular attendant at Divine Service, had without speaking to me on the subject, put away four out of his five wives because he believed it to be wrong to have more than one wife. And Ngakuku also from the same conviction put away one of his two wives immediately on his professing a desire to become a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This example provides clear indication of missionary belief that Maori, upon becoming Christian believers, were convicted to act of their own accord in relation to their new-found faith. In contrast, the apostasy of believers was often accompanied by a return to “native superstitions”. In one case which occurred in Richard Davis’ sphere of

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influence, a teacher who had for several years “apparently walked according to the Gospel, appeared to be a zealous teacher, and a great disciplinarian” had then “fallen into sin … taken a second wife, and is now living in open sin with his two women, to the great disgrace of the Gospel. And it is reported that he has again returned to his native superstitions”. The freedom with which Maori returned to traditional cultural practises emphasised the fluidity of movement available to those interested in the missionary faith, although these instances often left the missionaries with a sense of failure.

Nonetheless, the CMS missionaries insisted that the presence of faith did matter, and they taught that the lack of it had negative consequences in both religious and social terms. At Motutere near Lake Taupo, Richard Taylor had to deal with one of his ‘native’ teachers who had “fallen into sin and drawn nearly the whole pa after him”. Taylor in response exhorted the people of the pa: “that it was by the wakapono (whakapono, faith) only they could prosper”. He used the example of Hone Heke’s victory over the British and their Maori ally Kawiti to illustrate his point, and argued that it was Heke’s faith which had ultimately delivered him; for even though his negativity towards the Europeans was not good, he had trusted in God and God had saved him. Kawiti, on the other hand, was “routed” because he had “continued his heathen practices.”

In the face of these missionary attitudes to Maori culture, it is interesting to turn to their views on tattooing. Once again the missionaries sought Biblical guidance to better deal with cultural matters. As in the case of polygamy, there was no strict New Testament injunction which directly prohibited the practice, yet missionaries were generally opposed to it because of a perceived association with religious thought and custom, as well as Old Testament injunctions prohibiting the practise. Tattooing was practised by many people groups in various parts of the world, as Wesleyan missionary Thomas Buddle pointed out. He also noted that it was a feature in ancient times among the peoples of the near east and Palestine, a fact which may have explained the Mosaic command of Leviticus 19:28 “Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you.” Tattooing, Buddle reasoned, was utilised by Israel’s idolatrous neighbours, and connected to their forms of worship. Tattoos, in this Old Testament sense, gave honour to the gods of pagan nations. Hence, reasoned Buddle, many Polynesian customs, including tattooing, had their origins with the gods – a fact

30 Richard Davis, Memoirs, July 31, 1846, p.313.
31 Richard Taylor, Journals, November 17, 18, 1845, p.174, 175.
testified to by William Ellis in his *Polynesian Researches*. Though the Maori case, as far as Buddle could see, seemed different - the only reasons given for tattooing, according to Buddle, were its supposed attractiveness to women and the fact that a tattooed face ensured the preservation of the head\(^{32}\) - nevertheless, despite the fact that a sure knowledge of its origins had been lost, Buddle was still glad to see the custom disappearing and believed that “in proportion as Christianity reaches their hearts and civilization spreads, like every other pagan custom it must perish”.\(^{33}\) Buddle obviously still associated the custom with ‘superstitious’ religion.

There could also be differences in missionary perception of certain customs. For example, to *tangi*\(^{34}\) was often thought to be an insincere expression of love: as Alfred Brown recounted, “they pretended to be very glad to see me and shed not a few crocodile tears”.\(^{35}\) Yet John Wilson, at a reunion of family members, could not deny that at the sound of the *tangi* “there was something when connected with the circumstance truly affecting, and I could scarce resist betraying an impulse to have cried with them”.\(^{36}\) But on another day Wilson observed:

four natives lamenting … One of the party (an old woman) who was besmeared with blood wherever her person was uncovered, presented a dreadful spectacle to a Christian eye, and strongly illustrated to my mind those passages of the Old Testament which allude to the idolatrous practice of cutting for the dead, which occasionally existed among the Jews … In this manner they continued to mourn for about three hours during which period their cries were truly lamentable and without hope.\(^{37}\)

It is worth stressing that hope and death were important to missionaries and their evangelical scheme. Much significance surrounded the event of death, and drew extensive comment from the missionaries. Christianity was delivering Maori from the fear of death, declared Richard Davis. Along with his colleagues, Davis considered

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\(^{33}\) Thomas Buddle, *The Aborigines of New Zealand: Two Lectures*, Williamson and Wilson, 1851, NZETC.

\(^{34}\) Mourning ceremony, weeping.

\(^{35}\) Alfred Brown, *Journal*, January 18, 1837.

\(^{36}\) John Wilson, *Letters*, July 3, 1836, MSS Archives A-173, AUL.

Maori ideas about eternity, and what he thought to be their lack of true eternal hope, to
be the source of their customs and rituals surrounding death, a reflection of what it
meant to die without hope of eternal life. When a chief died the people killed his slaves
and buried them with him to accompany their master to the other world and continue to
serve him there. Those remaining to mourn would then eat the chief’s pigs and potatoes,
and “lay waste his place”. Following this came expressions of mourning and grief,
including crying and cutting the flesh, and finally, to end the ritual, a feast was held.
Davis associated these actions with Maori notions about the “eternal world”, which he
thought they envisioned as being “like this earth, where they shall have wives, and
sweet potatoes, and go to war … after a time they shall die in that world and migrate to
another”. 38 He told some Maori who believed Christian Rangi’s death to be the result of
the anger of their gods, that “Satan was the god of New Zealand, and the principal chief
of the great fire (hell) but that he had no power to kill Rangi, or to afflict him after
death, because the great God protected His people from the assaults of Satan during life,
and at death received their souls to glory”. 39 Davis’ perception of death and opposition
to Maori death ritual were founded on his religious view of reality.

In similar manner Maori people were scolded by missionaries for their constant
talk about dreams, visions and their interpretations - an important part of predicting and
understanding events in Maori culture. Those taking part in the telling and
interpretation of dreams, thought by Maori to contain omens of good and evil, were
deemed by John Wilson to be “delusive visionaries whom Satan leads captive at his
will”. 40 However, the missionaries also gave worth to such events where they were
associated with their perception of Biblical faith. There are a handful of accounts in
missionary journals of people having dreams or visions of fire and hell, or of Christ
speaking and instructing the dreamer to listen to the missionaries’ message. These were
deemed to have been revelations given by God. 41

The missionaries also sought Biblical advice in relation to the supposed activity
of spiritual beings. On one occasion Richard Taylor spoke with a woman, who was
known, even by Christian Maori, as a taipo, a person who was visited by a supernatural
being. She described to Taylor what the spiritual visitor looked and sounded like, and

38 Richard Davis, Memoirs, p.85.
39 Ibid, pp.73-74.
40 John Wilson, Letters, July 22, 1836.
41 For just a few examples, see Richard Taylor, Journals, October 4, 1845, Vol.3, p.156, Benjamin
Ashwell, January 6, 1846, p.106, and Richard Davis, October 23, 1836, pp.81-82.
the occasions when it visited her. Taylor recorded that she reminded him of a girl in the
book of Acts in the Bible who apparently had a “spirit of divination” (See Acts 16:16
ff.). The Maori woman “averred that she spoke the truth I told her if she did it only
proved she was intimate with the evil spirit whose only object was the destruction of her
soul”.42 Further, Richard Taylor was aware “an ariki is supposed to have an atua”,
which he termed a “demon”, within him “which renders him during life an object of
reverence and after death a deity possessing power in proportion to the influence he
enjoyed when living”.43

Although often hearing about the presence of spirits or atua in a person or thing,
and preferring to call such ideas ‘superstitious’, the missionaries did not necessarily
reject the idea of the presence of spiritual entities in the people or things around them.
After all, they believed in God, and in the existence of Satan, and the presence of both
not only in heavenly realms but also in the creation. Moreover, if they believed a report
from a Maori person that an atua or taniwha was present, they generally called it an
‘evil spirit’, or a ‘demon’. In this regard their religious values, rather than their cultural
mores, were forever dictating their treatment of Maori cultural values.

Gospel Power to Save

The ascendancy of Christian proclamation from the 1830s, and throughout the
following two decades, brought with it increasing interest in the missionary worldview.
Maori, the missionaries declared, were finding that “their own machinery never worked
well – and that if ours is not quite to their mind, it is far better than theirs”. Thomas
Chapman during the 1850s argued that he could now “appeal to their own ways to trace
the effects” of traditional customs, and underline the “life-giving power” of Christianity.
Chapman also described other tribes which, even when they did “see the evils of their
system” seemed to prefer to maintain it. His conclusion to this train of thought was:
“How perverse is Man!”44

That some change was inspired in Maori attitudes by missionary activities was
often stated by missionaries in their journals. At Otumoetai pa near Tauranga, Alfred
Brown reminded his congregation of a discussion occasioned by his preaching on a

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43 Ibid, May 26, 1849.
44 Thomas Chapman, *Letters and Journals*, June 127, 1834, and February 24, 1850, MSS A-180, AUL.
passage from Philippians; Brown had spoken of “Priests and Chiefs bowing the knee at
the name of Jesus Christ, and confessing Him as Lord”, a thought then ridiculed by
those present: “Women and children and slaves they thought, might be induced to
believe, but no one else. The time however had now arrived, when I could appeal to
their own experience that ‘the word of the Lord standeth sure’”, for their principal chief
had recently become a Christian, and their Christian teacher, Matthew, had originally
been their principal tohunga. Matthew had for many years been “adorning by a humble
walk and consistent conversation, the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God”.45 For
the missionaries it was the Gospel – the thrust of the Biblical message – and not
themselves or their cultural appendages that brought decisive change to Maori people
and culture.

Furthermore, missionaries loved to discourse on the change they believed the
Gospel to have wrought in people who had once been “bloodthirsty warriors” and
“superstitious heathen”, but who, through the “grace of God”, became “gentle as
lambs”, and as “bold and useful in the cause of the Redeemer”.46 These were those,
wrote John Wilson, “who once glutted their hellish malice by feeding on the flesh of the
v vanquished”, and he asked, “Whence this amazing revolution in both their sentiments
and habits?” Of course, the typical missionary answer was “Christ and Him crucified.”47
There are many missionary reflections of this nature. Richard Davis for instance, spoke
of an old chief who had been “a most wicked man, but had lately come to feel his guilt
and many sins”. Davis emphasised to him “the efficacy of the Saviour's blood, and the
freeness of a Saviour's love”.48

But the Gospel was not just for forgiveness of sins. It was also the power for
righteous living. Davis opined that “The power of the Gospel is not sufficiently insisted
on. Too much allowance is made for what are termed constitutional failings.” By this he
meant a habitual resort to the idea that believers would constantly find sin a problem,
and missionaries should not get too demanding in their expectations. Davis thought this
demeaned the nature of faith, “as though the Gospel was deficient, and had lost its
power to subdue the power of sin”. Davis was convinced the gospel maintained a “soul-
pacifying dominion” and power which animated a “regenerate heart”.49 It was on this

45 Alfred Brown, Journal, April 30, 1848.
46 William Puckey, Journals and Letters, December, 1834, MSS A-174, AUL.
47 John Wilson, Letters, April 14, 1833.
48 Richard Taylor, Journals, September 6, 1845, pp.147-148.
basis that the missionaries expected the transformation of Maori lives. Yet, not just the preservation and transformation of Maori in this life was of concern, but their transformation for an ‘eternal’ future in the ‘life to come’. John Wilson would reason with the people of Opotiki on the “necessity of forsaking sin, of living righteously, and the certainty of judgement to come”.

Those remaining in ‘heathenism’ were often associated in missionary records with theft, fighting and tattooing, along with poor living standards. Richard Taylor sometimes visited the pa Te Araro, which he called a “grand stronghold of heathenism”, and which was “almost entirely inhabited by the worst characters”, who were “notorious thieves, fighters and still observe the native religion”. Some were apparently also involved in hostilities at nearby Porirua. Te Araro was a village Taylor deemed “openly given up to every sin”. Here he had a conversation with some young men “who had been tattooing their faces and who had been guilty of thieving and adultery”. Taylor told them that because the gospel had been among them, though they had previously lived in “sin and ignorance”, this was no longer an excuse. They had in Taylor’s opinion turned back from following Christ. Taylor here associates commencing the process of tattooing with a return to heathenism. In fact, the principal chief of the pa insisted that “they could not and must not return to Christianity as they had drawn their blood to Satan and were his”. Upon leaving, Taylor commented on the wretchedness of this “heathen pa, human excrement and filth in every direction”, which was exacerbated by “wretchedness in every form; women all but naked … crying and dirty children running about in a state of nudity all combine to form as wretched a whole as can well be imagined”. 50

As Taylor’s comments indicate, Maori religion and resulting worldview were held responsible for much of the degradation which missionaries perceived in Maori living conditions, and for the customs which were blamed for perpetuating the situation. Maori people were often portrayed as being on the verge of extinction, not least because of the ‘degraded’ form of living attributed to them, and able to be delivered from such a fate only by the ‘saving’ effects of the gospel. Johann Wohlers argued that Maori “groaned” under their “heathenish” religion, which had outlived its usefulness. The gospel had come to them before they “completely died out under their hopeless views of life”. 51 When Wohlers arrived in New Zealand around 1840 he found a dwindling population, a social problem he thought had discouraged many and exacerbated their

50 Richard Taylor, Journals, June 19, 1846.
51 J.F.H. Wohlers, Memories, p.165.
“state of helpless poverty”. But Christianity gave “the mind a cheerful and hopeful upward swing”, and therefore “the general elevation which the Maori people experienced is explainable … the anxious seeking of the creature that finds its desire in Christianity”.  

Richard Davis also detected a high mortality rate, and considered that apart from entering into Christian faith the Maori population would have died out within a few years. Davis believed it was only through “proclaiming redemption through the blood of Christ, that the Maoris may be preserved to glorify God in this world, and to rejoice in Him for ever!” In this way the missionaries’ gospel, not European cultural trappings, would influence and shape Maori culture, and provide the social salvation and elevation which missionaries deemed necessary.

Forsaking ‘native’ customs

When Maori became Christian believers it meant that life could no longer operate as it had under “native custom”. Becoming a Christian involved throwing away “my native ideas of rectitude and my native thoughts”. In disputes between believing parties, the urge to seek *utu* was still close at hand, and both missionaries and believing Maori leaders often urged their people to desist from seeking “payment”.  

The chief Taiwanga, wrote William Williams, spoke of “untying the rope of the Devil and it is shaken that it may fall off, and the evils will fall off.” A Maori person was to “openly renounce the faith of his ancestors in which he had obstinately lived”. One of Alfred Brown’s inquirers, who had been “a great priest”, alarmed at his coming death, seemed to have begun to think “that all his ritenga maori is a refuge of lies”. The wife of prominent Christian teacher William Marsh endured a long illness, which having been “sanctified by the Holy Spirit, appears to have changed that once noisy heathen woman to a humble and patient Christian. She died exhorting those around her to forsake all native customs and to keep near to Jesus”. Another two enquirers demonstrated the sincerity of their interest in Christian things “by their refusal to take any further part in the war, by renouncing their native tapus and ritengas, by living in the Christian pa and

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52 Ibid.
54 Alfred Brown, *Journal*, April 5, 1847.
57 Alfred Brown, October 3, 1843.
58 Ibid, October 13, 1849.
conforming to its rules in attending the public services and schools”.\(^{59}\) The leading chief Hikairo was found to be sincere in his profession of faith because Alfred Brown could not otherwise account for “his throwing away tapus and ritengas to which he has formerly clung for nearly half a century, and in spite of the taunting jeers of his old companions in wickedness … constantly seeking information of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God”.\(^ {60}\) One of the reasons for the criticism of Roman Catholic methods of evangelism as opposed to Protestant evangelical attitudes was that priests did not “object to your retaining your bad native customs, if you only profess his ritenga along with them”.\(^{61}\) This is in contrast to the CMS missionaries, who insisted that true conversion meant putting aside traditional customs because they did not fit with missionary ideas of a life of faith in Christ.

Brown also reported that when Maori lost interest in Christian faith, they would return to “native customs”.\(^ {62}\) Suffering and difficulty, it appeared, was often accompanied by a ‘temptation’ to return to traditional Maori cultural practices: one woman had placed herself under the ministry of Alfred Brown at Matamata, but after the death of her child had been made ‘sacred’ and returned to traditional practices. She had it seems “long been a professor and her general conduct has been consistent – but the loss of her child appears to have been made use of by Satan to shake her trust in God and make her again look for consolation to cisterns which can hold no water”.\(^ {63}\)

That a change was taking place within Maori communities was clearly evident to many, and the missionaries did not refrain from speaking of these changes in effusive terms:

We passed over ground which brought vividly to my remembrance scenes that were fearfully distinguished … Infanticide, murder, suicide, cannibalism, the common occurrences of past years, have nearly passed away. Superstition and priestcraft are crumbling to ruins … the natives instead of being huddled together in filthy pas, and living in continual dread of attacks from their enemies, are now scattered in small parties over the face of the country, enjoying Peace and its attendant blessings.\(^ {64}\)

\(^ {59}\) Alfred Brown, *Journal*, February 21, 1841.

\(^ {60}\) *Ibid.*, November 8, 1841.


\(^ {62}\) *Ibid.*, May 1, 1845, October 15, 1845.


The missionaries insisted that it was the gospel, or God Himself, who was causing the change in Maori culture. Chapter one highlighted the missionaries pervasive use of Romans 1:16, which insisted that the gospel was “the power of God to salvation”. Part of this salvation, according to the missionaries, not only included the end of the traditional customs outlined above, but domestic and social improvement, partly brought about by the severance of certain practices. The Gospel itself was causing “their tapus and other superstitious observances [to] fall into disuse”, a notable event, as the missionaries knew the hold such laws had had upon Maori minds. Domestic happiness was apparently on the increase, and added to this was the “suppression of many inhuman and superstitious practices”. Those foremost in cannibalism and war had now been “born anew” and appeared anxious to work in the service of Christ. Under the Gospel’s influence, peace began to spring up. Those regularly placing themselves under missionary teaching “had almost lost their ferocious appearance”, and rather than being constantly in conflict and looking to revenge an insult, came instead to ask missionary advice on how to settle disputes with difficult neighbours. Those who stuck to old traditions were thought to notice the difference, and were, said William Williams, “not ignorant of the untenable nature of their superstitions”.

Comments were often made by non-evangelicals, such as Captain William Hobson, later Lieutenant Governor of New Zealand, in the north around Kerikeri, about the difference between Christian Maori and those who remained living as ‘heathens’. Brown reported that “He expressed himself much pleased …with the striking contrast which the professedly Christian natives afforded in their general appearance and manner, to those natives whom we saw at Cloudy Bay.” Other Europeans who were not a part of the evangelical party were willing to detail the fair dealings they now

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65 Refer back to chapter 1, and the missionary idea that God was in charge of sending the gospel, and not the missionaries themselves.
67 Ibid, pp. 175, 242-243.
68 Alfred Brown, October 15, 1838.
69 William Williams, Christianity Among the New Zealanders, p.58.
70 Alfred Brown, July 3, 1837.
experienced with Maori communities. Various non-missionary visitors and travellers in New Zealand also commented on the transformation.

Indeed, it was quite common for missionaries to look back on the past and wonder at the change, as “scenes of murder and cannibalism” gave way to the reception of the gospel and to lives “renewed by the omnipotent energy of the Holy Spirit … in the service of the Prince of Peace”. The changes that occurred were determined by Henry Williams to mean that “native wildness” had given way to order and quietness. School was well attended and strict attention given to missionary instructions, prayer and conversation, as well as understanding parts of the Bible, and many felt free to “relate the state of their minds and ask our advice. We can then regard them as our children in Christ Jesus, and our souls are more knit to them in the bonds of Christian love”. For the missionaries this was one of many “proofs” that Satan had been overthrown, and circumstances in which missionaries inadvertently violated traditional practices in a way which would normally have been offensive now caused no consternation, there instead being a conviction of the foolishness of these customs. Such a comment would seem to indicate that there had been at times considerable opposition to missionary teaching and this had now given way to sizeable interest.

The conflict between traditional ways, and their opposition to the new Christian ways, was considered a serious issue for Maori converts. In cases of sickness, there was often a ‘temptation’ to consult Maori tohunga and healers, or to blame illness on ‘witchcraft’. Some professing Maori Christians still believed there was “mana in witchcraft”. Benjamin Ashwell called this kind of talk “folly”, for it took the power of life and death from God. Instead of this perception, Maori converts apparently needed to understand that only Christ was “the supreme Disposer of life and death”.

Missionaries understood that it was difficult to banish many traditional cultural ideas from Maori minds, and Richard Taylor often had to counsel converts in relation to the presence and power of atua, and their influence over believers. Ideas surrounding the presence and power of spirits, particularly the thought that they could enter the

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71 Alfred Brown, June 24, 1839.
73 Alfred Brown, December 26, 1839.
74 Henry Williams, *Williams Family Letters and Journals*, August 27, 1830, MSS A-68, AUL.
75 Thomas Chapman, June 28, 1832.
76 Benjamin Ashwell, January 6, 1846.
bodies of believers, proved difficult to “banish”.\textsuperscript{77} Maori people had concerns about whether the spirits of their ancestors were able to cause them injury. Some of them tried to use a combination of traditional Maori and Christian ceremony to destroy the sanctity and power of places (\textit{wakanoa}). Taylor ended up admonishing them for “trying to unite their old system with that of Christ; that such conduct was very deplorable in those who professed to be the servants of the living God to suppose that he would let evil spirits injure his people”.\textsuperscript{78} These were some of the difficulties attached to Maori rising “from the lowest depths of every possible degradation to an acceptance of Christianity; and with it, a casting away such things as were abhorrent to its dictates”.\textsuperscript{79}

Old customs, such as giving a man a new name when he had killed in battle, took on new meaning and significance when Maori people believed the Gospel. Taylor noted one man as saying: “when we enlist as soldiers of Christ or are baptised he gives us a new name”.\textsuperscript{80} Traditional \textit{karakia} before fishing and similar activities commenced was replaced with Christian prayers, which Taylor interpreted as “invoking as it were the divine blessing on all their labours, that they may be enabled to throw their nets in on the right side. Even in their heathen state they never thought of hunting or fishing without first offering up prayers to their gods”.\textsuperscript{81}

Furthermore, there were many ‘grey areas’ where it was hard to discern the appropriate course of action for Christians within a Maori context. At traditional ceremonies such as feasts it was difficult for new believers to know the right course to adopt in relation to their faith. A group of believers from Maungatapu had attended a large feast, in honour of a principal chief who had been exhuming the bones of his wives, and eaten the food “in common with their heathen countrymen”, although the Christians had not partaken of food which had been consecrated. They had a question as to whether it was “lawful” for them to have partaken of the feast, considering its religious significance. A question was put to Brown as to whether the Christians were ‘wrong’ for eating the food. Brown referred to the eighth chapter of 1 Corinthians to explain his answer, which outlines the issues of eating meat sacrificed to idols in a Greek cultural context. He encouraged the believers to take care that their strong faith did not create difficulties for those weaker in faith, or affect their example to non-

\textsuperscript{77} Richard Taylor, \textit{Journals}, October 9, 1848.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Ibid}, June 14, 1851.
\textsuperscript{79} Thomas Chapman, January 2, 1860.
\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Ibid}, October 13, 1848.
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Ibid}, December 10, 1849.
believers. Brown concluded that while their actions were not necessarily wrong, they may have given others the impression that there was “no difference between Christianity and heathenism”. This incident underscores the religious reasoning which lay behind missionary perceptions of Maori cultural practices.

The missionaries looked to Christian pas as a form of sanctified community, away from ‘heathen’ ways of living, and “out of the way of hearing the filthy native songs and witnessing the obscene dances etc.”, although residing in a separated pa like this could mean being open to ridicule from others, including relatives. Alfred Brown long desired to see a Christian village established in the vicinity of Matamata so that local believers could “come out from the midst of their degraded countrymen and by living together in one place bearing a more decided testimony for Him Whom they profess to be seeking” than they could do if living with those “who are working all uncleanness with greediness”. So far, Brown believed, shame, fear and half-heartedness had held them back, but, having recently been exposed to ridicule from the “baser sort” of their own community, a group of 88 men had now determined to build a separate pa. Other believers wanted to build a new pa near Otawhao “in order that they might be separate from the unbelieving natives and not be obliged to witness their abominable wickedness”. Ashwell was obliged to form some rules and regulations at Maori behest which would accord with righteous living, and he came up with something specific for the occasion based on Biblical commands: “that no man guilty of adultery, theft, falsehood, swearing, Sabbath breaking should be allowed to remain in their Pa, also that Tatooing, disfiguring of the face, and all their ancient customs should be abolished for ever for it should be a Pa for Christ”. These new laws were all based on Biblical testimony, and the implications of this fact are explored in chapter eight.

There was undeniable Maori interest in many of these cultural change; they were not usually instituted in a despotic way by the missionaries. Despite having considerable influence in Christian communities, sheer weight of numbers would suggest that any enforced changes would be impossible. In a letter to the CMS written by Maori Christian leaders from the Taranaki region where Richard Taylor was stationed, many in fact expressed gratitude for the efforts of the missionary organization in bringing the gospel to them, and particularly described its effects on their attitudes to cultural

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82 Alfred Brown, June 16, 1842, Vol.2, p.64.
84 *Ibid*, July 18, 1838.
85 Benjamin Ashwell, October 27, 1839.
practices. These converts, Taylor recorded, spoke of how “they had seen and felt the power of the gospel since all their old customs had been given up through its instrumentality”, and it was to the missionaries, who “first drew their feet out of the mire and placed them on a firm foundation”, that Maori “owed their present state of civilization”. Many of the believers at this meeting had once been “strongly attached to all our old customs and the superstitions of our forefathers”, and when asked, says Taylor, “what was it that made you forsake those ancient customs to which you were formerly so much attached” the reply came “it was the word of God which sunk deep in our hearts … opened our eyes to see the folly of them”. Taranaki Maori were apparently once “dwelling in darkness”, but from the missionaries they had “learned to love God and to bless those good Englishmen who have been the means of working such a change in our favour”. One local teacher, writes Taylor, said he “had been overwhelmed by sin” and he and his people were “only just emerging from our ancient thraldom. This place has been covered with unrighteousness but now the gospel is bringing about a new order of things”. These statements recorded by Taylor represent an explicit appreciation of missionary influence, and the differences within their own communities that Maori people themselves acknowledged to be beneficial and welcome. The ‘disorder’ that Keith Sinclair has spoken of had obviously been replaced by a new order of a different kind.

To argue that CMS missionaries were Western cultural imperialists who championed the destruction of Maori culture is too simplistic in the light of the evidence supplied above. Whilst it may be undoubtedly true that there were many traditional aspects of Maori culture that missionaries insisted needed to be laid aside, some things could remain through being re-evaluated by Christian truth and revelation. The missionaries’ attitudes to aspects of Maori culture were principally determined by how these were perceived through the Protestant evangelical Biblical worldview. It is important to differentiate at this point between European and Christian practices. Maori people were not encouraged to exchange *ritenga maori* for European practices, but Christian ones, although at times these may have been one and the same. It is from here that the study of ‘Christianity and civilization’ will take its departure. But the very fact that these changes were presupposed to take place on the heels of faith in Christ must

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surely dispose of persistent notions that the missionaries primarily equated Christian conversion with Europeanization or Westernization, and presents a bold challenge to arguments which depict missionaries as overt destroyers of culture. It also undermines the assumption that civilization can be equated with Europeanization, an issue the following chapters will tackle. As has been demonstrated in this chapter, nothing was forced upon Maori; Maori themselves were partner agents in cultural change. In fact, it could even be argued that missionaries were the weak ones in the cross-cultural encounter. Their great weapons, as described in missionary journals and diaries, were things like faith, prayer, and the gospel of ‘Christ crucified’, seemingly weak in their power to actually affect anything. Some Maori people, as chapter one alluded to, rejected the gospel the missionaries declared, and ridiculed their ideas, and the missionaries were certainly vastly outnumbered. Therefore the question can be asked, were the missionary ideas as “destructive as bullets”, to refer again to Sinclair’s words? What constituted ‘change’ which was well-received, cultural evolution, and what constituted ‘destruction’? Does it matter if aspects of culture were ‘destroyed’ if the people who adopted these changes believed that they constituted an improvement for themselves? Certainly during this period some Maori hailed the changes that came through the missionaries’ proclamation as a good thing, whilst others believed it would be the downfall of their people.
Chapter Four: The Nature and Meaning of Civilization.

As the previous chapters have demonstrated, the evangelical missionary view of the world was primarily refracted through the lens of Protestant Christian faith. This faith-based worldview encompassed all areas of human living, and fostered a deep concern with personal and societal moral and social transformation. Ameliorating the condition of people in need, whether personal, social or physical, was an important part of evangelical faith, as activism was one of its pillars. Evangelicals were very much concerned with social change as the long term effect of a profound spiritual and moral metamorphosis. At this juncture there is a clear indication of the connection between religion and culture in the evangelical worldview: religious beliefs determined culture; Christian faith secured a godly, morally upright society; and it is here also that we find a strong, definitive relationship between Christianity and civilization is located. The relationship between the terms is extremely important, for it underscores the moral and religious elements that not only inform evangelical notions of civilization, but actually characterise them. Judith Binney once wrote that “the missionary purpose had always been deliberate interference in Maori society, a purpose based on very questionable assumptions about the connection between Christianity and civilization”. However, the link between the terms is not at all questionable when the theological basis of the missionary perspective on civilization is taken into account, a theme which occupies this chapter and the next. Though general theories of civilization during the nineteenth century often included a moral element, and some philosophers even saw Christianity as providing some benign impetus for society, it was the primacy of moral and religious elements within evangelical notions of civilization that set them apart from Enlightenment-based notions of civilization.

A Civilizing Rationality

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced considerable societal debate within Britain about the meaning and importance of ‘civilization’, and particularly its place in attempts to ameliorate the cultural deprivation identified with indigenous

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peoples in Britain’s colonies, although the term ‘civilization’ had only recently become widespread in English. Though historian Andrew Porter writes that British “capitalist culture” became the measure and constitution of civilization in British thought, this chapter will argue that evangelical missionaries took a different and more nuanced approach to the issue.

The evangelical missionary organizations which came into being at the end of the eighteenth century gave significant time and effort in the first half of the nineteenth century to debunking the myths of a ‘civilize first’ approach to mission, and argued instead for the place of civilization as an expected and sequential outcome of the proclamation and acceptance of the Christian gospel.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had witnessed fervent debates over the place and priority of either ‘civilizing rationality’ or an apostolic preaching of the gospel in missionary methods. James Montgomery, a famous evangelical hymn writer and author, in an introductory essay to Jonathan Edwards’ popular work on the missionary efforts among Native American peoples of David Brainerd in New England, insisted: “The wisdom of man says, ‘First civilize, and then Christianize barbarians’; but the wisdom of man has proved itself foolishness … The counsel of God is the reverse; ‘Go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles … you will civilize them by Christianizing them’.” That this perspective had become the prevailing evangelical viewpoint is evidenced by the claims of the Aborigines Protection Society, which by 1838 had declared that the ‘civilization first’ position had been “well nigh universally exploded” by all available evidence.

That a ‘civilizing rationality’ could have some part to play in the evangelical missionary scheme is highly important. Evangelicals like all Britons were affected by the age in which they lived; Enlightenment assumptions pervaded eighteenth and nineteenth century British intellectual culture, and evangelicals referred to in this current

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study were influenced by the prevailing intellectual milieu. The evangelical revival is sometimes treated as a reaction against reason and rationalism, and evangelicalism portrayed as essentially anti-intellectual; it could therefore seem almost logical that the movement should be resistant to Enlightenment influences. This was in reality far from the case.

Whilst evangelicals like Jonathan Edwards pointed to the role of “religious affections” in true Christian faith, it was just as true, as Edwards’ treatise on creation displays, that evidence and reason were required to demonstrate the validity of religious truths: true faith for evangelicals was reasoned faith. David Bebbington notes that the Evangelical movement itself “was permeated by Enlightenment influences”. Theologians appealed to scripture, but also universal observation and experience, to support rational argument. Much nineteenth century evangelical missionary literature was written in this vein. Evangelicals could be pragmatic and utilitarian in their approaches to ministry and mission. Missiologist David Bosch has gone as far as saying: “the entire modern missionary enterprise … was predicated on Enlightenment assumptions”. Andrew Porter notes that the principles of operation at the inception of the missionary societies were coloured by Enlightenment ideals: “rationality, progress, and the uniformity of both human nature and laws of social and economic development”. Evangelical mission during this era could be construed as inclusive of both eighteenth-century Enlightenment assumptions as well as evangelical theological suppositions. Recognising the place of Enlightenment thought in missionary thinking partly explains why evangelicals could include a civilization/savagery discourse in their approach to missions, as stadial civilization theory was the primary framework in which many Britons comprehended other cultures.

But there is a word of caution required here: Historians should beware of over-generalising the extent to which evangelical missionary attitudes mirrored prevailing

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12 Andrew Porter, ‘“Cultural Imperialism” and the Protestant Missionary Enterprise, 1780-1914’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 25, no. 3, September 1997, p.376.
attitudes within their own cultures. The difficulty for evangelicals was that broad facets of the ‘Enlightenment’ perspective on civilization did not fit well with aspects of their ‘reasoned’ faith, and they were forced to take a different, and certainly more Biblical, approach to understanding other peoples and cultures. The problems caused by their own cultural rational framework can be seen in the evangelical approach to ethnography, where many evangelicals, though seeing a need to differentiate and rank people groups, more often than not fell back on the evangelical foundations of the universal presence and power of sin, and human redemption through the gospel of Christ, to explain human societies.

This fact also highlights the many ways in which evangelical theology had the ascendency over various culturally-received viewpoints in evangelical thinking. The concept of civilization in missionary thinking is a great example of this, and is explored below.

General eighteenth century British opinion of non-European peoples was usually characterised by an assurance of moral, intellectual, political and technological superiority. European interpretations of ‘primitive’ societies during previous centuries, often critical of the European approach to life, were at this time giving way to an increasing confidence in European culture. ‘Savage’ life was no longer a romantic alternative for those disillusioned with European civilization, but rather represented a retrograde form of living resulting from undesirable social conditions. This apparent realisation was coupled with an increasing awareness of variations in the strength and durability of other societies and cultures which, coming into contact with Europeans, usually fared poorly. Such seeming fragility was taken as a sign of cultural weakness.

The demarcation of a superior people has often been affirmed as the major function of the twin concepts of savagery and civilization. At this same time, it became almost proverbial in the European mind that civilization and Christendom shared a common boundary: “utilitarians designated as civilized the very area that others simultaneously labelled as Christian”.

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17 Ibid.
the two. One historian has defined civilization as “British religion and social customs”. Unfortunately, such an attempt to explain ‘civilization’ does not do justice to evangelical notions of the term, especially when considering the evangelical critique of British culture outlined in chapter one.

**Civilization and its Contents**

The genesis of British theories on civilization, often characterised as a “stadial view of societal development”, was in eighteenth-century Scotland, where thinkers such as Adam Smith, William Robertson and Adam Ferguson mapped societal development through certain stages of progress, from nomadic hunters, through to shepherds, agriculturists, and commercial societies. Europe was the epitome of the civilized ideal. British notions of civilization were also informed by other intellectual traditions, including French ‘national character’ discourse and Lockean and Vattelian views on property. In the “stadial view”, different human societies and nations were located at various stages of societal development between savagery/barbarism at one end of a social spectrum, and civilization at the other. The effect of certain factors placed these societies in either progressive, static or degenerating states. Development of ideas on property, law, manners and forms of government primarily marked these stages, along with the multiplication of arts and skills. Barbarism was marked by a nomadic lifestyle, a paucity of ‘comforts’, and exposure to the elements. Geographical location and interrelationships via trade mattered considerably, along with moral rectitude. Civilization, the antithesis of savagery, was usually characterised by a settled lifestyle, the reclamation and cultivation of land, and the use of natural resources to sustain and develop an industrial society. Progress in civilization demanded the exchange of traditional tastes and customs for those of commercial societies. Civilization implied urban settlement, international networks of commerce and communication and sophisticated manufacturing.

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Nineteenth century utilitarian political philosopher John Stuart Mill, who contributed substantially to debates over civilization, thought savage life consisted of “a handful of individuals”, who lived a wandering lifestyle over a vast land mass. A concentrated population which lived in fixed abodes, forming villages, towns and cities he labelled as ‘civilized’. A savage existence was marked by a paucity of commerce, manufactures and agriculture, whilst a country richly endowed with these attributes could be designated as civilized. Savage society was thought to contain little or no communal law or judicial administration, along with little use of collective strength to protect from harm and to pool knowledge and wealth so the community could proper and progress. Savagery could be characterized by “incapacity of organized combination, or co-operation”. 22

Some examples of what constituted civilization in general European thinking are available in published materials from mid-nineteenth century observers of New Zealand. Author and historian George Craik, who wrote for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, painted a savage as “a child in intellect, and, at the same time, in physical powers and passions a man”. Craik believed that any progression beyond savagery required both intellectual and moral improvement. 23 Civilization could be traced through the “intellectual condition of society”, which aided the improvement of human labour and manufacture. Contact with more civilized peoples encouraged barbarous societies towards improvement, but the “common arts of life” Craik thought were the main criteria for distinguishing between barbarous and civilized peoples, and education was the primary means of improvement in this area. Working of metals, agriculture, and the manufacture of clothing were all indications of progress in civilization. 24 The influence of climate, religious beliefs, the presence of individual property rights, and interaction with civilized nations, were all factors which affected the quality of social life. In the New Zealand context, Craik thought Maori displayed “many of the vices and virtues of the savage state”. They remained “ignorant” of “common arts”, wore “rude” clothing, adhered to an “imperfect” form of agriculture, and had no knowledge of metals or writing. But, in their favour, Maori had recognised the benefits of civilization as revealed to them by Europeans. 25 Craik partly attributed

24 Ibid, pp.1-5.
25 George Craik, The New Zealanders, 1830, pp.6-16.
the degeneration into savagery to emigration and settlement in distant lands, with societal institutions and ideas of polity being lost through a wandering lifestyle.\textsuperscript{26}

Some observers depicted Maori as improving in civilization since European contact had begun. Edward Shortland, a sub-protector of aborigines in New Zealand, maintained a more positive view of Maori as standing on “the confines of the savage and civilized states”, demonstrated by an apparent eagerness to adopt civilized practices. Maori, according to Shortland, lived in comfortable housing that had been ornamented with carving, were gathered into fortified villages, had extensive gardens, and possessed a considerable knowledge of horticulture. Their forms of agriculture exhibited “intelligence and industry”, and sometimes even involved the reclamation of land, through the draining of swamps or cutting down forests. Maori “mechanical skill” was exhibited in the sophistication of houses and canoes, which could cater for large numbers of people.\textsuperscript{27} J.S. Polack, a trader and advocate of colonization, commented that though Maori once wasted time in “sloth and idle games”, or in carrying out “predatory incursions upon their neighbours”, since European contact Maori had branched out in industry, supplying visiting ships with masts, and flax, ropes, and corn being exported to Europe and Australia. Polack envisioned that the “example of British industry in this department” would be a major thrust behind Maori industry, putting an end to war through “masculine employments”.\textsuperscript{28}

For others, such as William Fox, a lawyer and politician who supported the colonization theories of Enlightenment thinker Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the degree of civilization attained by Maori appeared “very superficial and limited”. Fox envisioned three stages in the attainment of civilization: the first was to “tolerate the presence of the civilizer”; the second was a stage of barter and trade, and the final, a constructive stage. He judged Maori to have only progressed to stage two, concluding that if Europeans left New Zealand Maori would “lapse … into absolute barbarism almost the next day”.\textsuperscript{29} E.J. Wakefield, an explorer and agent for the New Zealand Company, and the son of systematic colonizer Edward Gibbon Wakefield, envisaged that European settlers would become “missionaries of civilization and Christianity among the heathen”. He castigated the missionaries for their “objection to civilized colonization, as a means of overcoming

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid, pp.6-16.
\textsuperscript{29} William Fox, \textit{The Six Colonies of New Zealand}, Saville & Edwards, London, 1851, pp.60-61.
its irregular predecessor and as a necessary step to Christianity”. But his notions on the Christianity-Civilization relationship were the opposite of how the CMS missionaries approached things, as this chapter and the next will explain.

The evangelical position exhibited some continuity, but also notable discontinuity with these Enlightenment-based notions of civilization. These perspectives were heavily informed by the materially based Scottish conjectural civilization theories which pervaded eighteenth and nineteenth century views about societal development. The foregoing views on civilization help to highlight its material basis, the agricultural, political, juridical, commercial, and technological factors that went together to make a people ‘civilized’. However, to lump evangelicals together with those who held to these Enlightenment-based theories of civilization is to miss significant differences in their thinking. Upon closer consideration distinct ideas about civilization begin to emerge which were strongly imbued with moral and religious meaning. Notions relating to material development receive some attention, but moral advancement empowered by Christianity obtained the strongest emphasis. Common ‘stadial’ elements of civilization were present within evangelical thinking, such as geographical location, settled abodes, the presence of common overarching juridical power and commercial development. However, their emphases differed from those outside of the evangelical fold, especially as they envisaged religious and moral elements forming the basis of material societal development.

**A Differing Version of Events**

Historian Peter Mandler has shown that evangelicals tended to unite notions about material development emphasised within Scottish conjectural histories of civilization, which presumed a ‘natural’ progression from primitive to advanced states, and which Mandler labels the “civilisational perspective”, with “a more powerful moral component”. This natural progression towards civilization was based upon an assumption that God as Creator had “constitutionally embedded” progress within humanity, and would strengthen this progression through revelation. Mandler notes:

The civilisational perspective was thus not tutelary – it gave much scope to individual conscience and action – and required only a minimum of exclusive political institutions (particularly churches, to disseminate a proper understanding
of revelation) for its smooth functioning … adding to older Scottish requirements for ‘commerce’ and ‘manners’ a narrower Protestant idea of ‘character’, the civilisational perspective remained potentially universal.\textsuperscript{30}

The universal availability of civilization is worth taking note of here, along with the idea of character as a moral element in the recipe for civilization; a point which Mandler notes “limited its resort to the vocabulary or conceptual apparatus of ‘race’ and ‘nation’”. The evangelical emphasis was on moral, rather than material development.\textsuperscript{31} In theory at least, all human beings were created, structured and motivated for ‘civilization’, so other forces needed to be present to inhibit this progression, and for the evangelicals it was sin that was seen as the major factor in the degeneration to, and maintenance of, barbarism, along with general stadial elements such as geographical isolation, war and social breakdown, although even these elements were usually thought to have their genesis in sin. Finally, the Christian community was seen as the primary body by which God’s revelation, and therefore civilization, could be disseminated. The presence of these religious and moral elements will be addressed throughout the rest of this chapter.

Roxann Wheeler, a scholar of eighteenth century British literature and culture, has highlighted the existence of a long-term association of civilization with Christianity, and barbarism with unbelief and paganism, in European thinking throughout the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{32} Wheeler asserts that for much of the eighteenth century “Savage” was a religious, cultural and political category, often called on to designate European Christian superiority, and encompassed various features which included heathenism, cannibalism, social turmoil and nakedness. Christian tradition, she asserts, encouraged the equating of “Christianity with humanity and savagery with sinfulness”. Britain was viewed as being nationally Christian. Ultimately she concludes:

Christianity had provided the basis of belief in the possibility of a humanity gone wild by suggesting that men might degenerate into an animal state in this world through sin. Even though it held out the prospect of redemption to any such

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid.}
degenerate humanity, through the operation of divine grace … Christianity nonetheless did little to encourage the idea that a true humanity was realizable outside the confines either of the Church or of a ‘civilization’ generally defined as Christian.\(^{33}\)

It is clear from Wheeler’s statement that the realization of civilized or ‘true’ humanity, from a Christian perspective, had moral and religious connotations attached to it. It is important to remember though, that Wheeler’s comments make no distinction between evangelical and non-evangelical Britons; evangelicalism constituted a movement of protest against a self-perceived Christian society which did not measure up to its Christian name. While some Britons did indeed believe that ‘British equals Christian equals civilized’, evangelicals did not conceive of British ‘Christendom’ as truly Christian. The evangelical belief in a universal ‘solidarity in sin’ also meant that savagery and barbarism, theoretically, could be found just as much in Britain as in other lands.

Even more obviously evident is the fact that much evangelical distinction stemmed from an opposing anthropological perspective. Enlightenment civilization perspectives had very different notions on the origin, nature and purpose of humanity to that of evangelical Christians. Seventeenth century Enlightenment thinkers on anthropology constructed the idea of a “state of nature”, which J.G.A. Pocock describes as: “a primeval condition of human existence in which individuals were depicted as without rights, without mechanisms of distributive justice, and without civil government”. Civilization in the Enlightenment narrative increased as rights, law and government were instituted, as “individuals” living in this “state of nature” moved from wandering over an empty land mass to “appropriating” the land as individuals, and then banding together to form a “system of institutionalized values”. These values included ideas of individual property, of rights, and to protect these rights, government. The presence of these elements essentially constituted civilized society. An “individual” who had not appropriated was therefore not yet truly “individual”, fully “human” or, it may be added, civilized.\(^{34}\)

These ideas were incompatible with the evangelical Christian system of anthropology. The intrusion of sin into the created world was of significant

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\(^{33}\) Ibid, pp. 67-70.

consequence. Evangelicals believed that God had created human beings in his image, with a mandate to exercise dominion over the earth for a specific purpose which had been foreordained. The “fall” of humanity and corporate rebellion in Adam had seriously interfered with creational bliss and glory, resulting in human degeneracy and depravity in all forms of existence and social life. This situation could only be reversed through the dissemination of Christian revelation, and faith in Christ as saviour of humanity.\(^{35}\) This was the great evangelical source of personal, moral and social elevation. Evangelical ideas about civilization and savagery, and their association with Christianity, tended to emphasise much more the relationship between paganism, idolatry and “social turmoil”, to borrow Wheeler’s phrase, compared to a definite assessment of savagery and civilization along lines consistent with material, commercial, political and technological development emphases in non-evangelical thinking. This is why barbarism equates more easily with primitivism or backwardness in Enlightenment-based theories of civilization than it does in evangelical suppositions.

Whilst general notions of civilization could, and often did, include a moral or religious element, it was the strong emphasis of this point that set evangelicals apart. In the evangelical view, all human social development, even the technological aspects, could only be soundly generated when they had their foundation on a sound moral base. Only Christianity could supply this base. Mission historian Neil Gunson says civilization in evangelical mission thought could therefore be termed “the social doctrine of the cross”, a statement which makes use of a quote from nineteenth century preacher J.A. James. For the evangelicals, “social progress was inextricably bound up with the message of the atonement” meaning that the problem of human sin needed to be addressed.\(^{36}\) As Pocock has explained, Scottish Enlightenment narratives detailing human social development in jurisprudence, history and political economy gave little place to the effects of sin in human social life and history, and instead developed a “science of morality” which was fundamentally opposed to the Calvinist position that truly moral living required human relationship with God, through the extension of divine grace toward repentant sinners. This departure implied that morality and

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sociability were realizable outside the confines of divine revelation. Whilst God’s grace may still have had some role to play, its role was never explained, and Enlightenment narratives could function well without it: divine will no longer really mattered, for these narratives supplied a history, and a moral philosophy, quite consciously apart from the confines of religion.  

Humanity in the Enlightened narrative was no longer “natively depraved”, as evangelical Christians insisted, but able, through the light of experience and reason, to perfect an earthly existence. The Enlightenment notion that morality and sociability were realizable outside of Christian faith directly contradicted the evangelical position.

The primary concern of evangelical ‘civilizers,’ in contrast, was sin and its attendant moral debasement, which destroyed and prevented social development. This implied the need of faith in Christ as the only basis of true moral living. Indeed, the term “temporal happiness” often constituted much of what evangelicals considered to be civilization, but this happiness was not thought to exist apart from Christian faith.

Whilst Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson conceived of national and individual happiness as an element of civil society, in Ferguson’s history Christianity had little import. Happiness, for many evangelicals at least, was not actually a matter of economic, commercial and scientific achievement, as evangelical minister of the day J.A. James once preached: “men without Christ are in the very depths of misery, though they may stand in other respects upon the summit of civilization, literature and science”. Personal and societal happiness for James was unachievable outside of the knowledge of Christian revelation.

Evangelicals felt the need to distinguish their ideas of civilization from that of their non-evangelical counterparts. John Beecham, secretary of the Wesleyan missionary society, was convinced that Christianity was the parent of true civilization, which could not exist without it. He stressed the term “TRUE civilization”, acknowledging the presence of a “certain kind of civilization which could exist without

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38 *Ibid*


connection to Christianity”, such as that of ancient Greece and Rome, examples often used by those who promoted a civilization which could exist apart from Christian faith. Beecham determined that “all true civilization includes the humanities of life”, and so he concluded “these celebrated nations had not attained to it”, making reference to Rome’s gladiatorial arena and the city’s lack of hospitals, almshouses and asylums, the existence of “none of those humane and charitable institutions which adorn our own Christian land”. This meant the “civilization of the classic heathen” was nothing better than “splendid barbarism.” True civilization, therefore, could not be generated “but by means of Christianity”.43

As the aforementioned quote demonstrates, civilization in missionary thinking had strong moral and religious significance, and its social significance was based on its moral sense. Brain Stanley perhaps explains the situation most accurately, arguing that while British evangelical Christians believed that non-Christian peoples were in need of “comprehensive regeneration,” which would occur through “the process of ‘civilization’”, this transformation process was not independent of the action of the gospel, but “its necessary and inevitable consequence: the gospel in itself was held to be the civilizing agent”. The pattern of civilization which missionaries understood was that shaped by their own experience of lower-middle to middle class evangelical Christianity.44

In light of this fact, Neil Gunson’s statement that missionary converts would “promptly assume the social system of northern Europe” has difficulties attached to it.45 To assume that the missionaries equated being European with being ‘Christian’, or vice versa, does not do justice to the evangelical understanding of either term. Whilst it is true that Europeans were believed to possess a rich Christian heritage within their own culture, and much of that heritage was utilised by the missionaries in their interaction with Maori communities, it is too simplistic to argue that missionaries aimed at Europeanizing Maori people. We must remember that evangelicalism was reacting against a society that was deemed to be unchristian, though perceiving itself to be within the realm of Christendom. There were many aspects of European life that the evangelical missionaries did not want their converts to conform to, and as will be

43 D. Coates, John Beecham William Ellis, Christianity the Means of Civilization: shown in evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons, on Aborigines, R.B. Seeley & W. Burnside, London, 1837, p.122-123.
44 Brian Stanley, Bible and the Flag, p.171.
demonstrated in Chapter ten, missionaries in New Zealand regularly lamented Maori conformity to what they deemed to be unchristian European behaviour.

The fact that the gospel was seen to be “the civilizing agent” explains why J.A. James insisted that ‘Religion is strictly and essentially a civilizing process’. This is not a statement suggesting that the gospel was thought to make ‘heathen’ peoples adopt European ways. In order to fully understand James’ statement, it must be pointed out that he was actually referring to a moral renovation that the gospel was supposed to bring, civilization being the outflow of the newly established sound moral foundation. The context of this quote by James is his argument that true religion had within it “the seed of all that is polished, as well as all that is excellent”, because it was through faith and union with Jesus Christ that:

the mind is raised above the debasing tyranny of sensible objects, and sensual gratifications; by hope, the influence of pressing and present impulse is controlled by the prospect of future benefits; love establishes a law of kindness in the bosom, by which the irascible passions are subdued. And thus the elements of barbarism are expelled whenever the soul is brought into union with Christ.

So when Gunson determines the “social doctrine of the cross” to be that belief in Christ “supplied a better motive”, and that those led to Christ were led to the “better life” in every respect, this “motive” must be understood as religious and moral influence propelling a person forwards into the religious, moral and temporal/physical aspects of a “better life”. The evidence given by the leaders of the three major evangelical missionary societies in England, to the committee of the House of Commons on Aborigines in 1837, makes it clear that it was the moral sense of ‘civilization’ that missions were primarily concerned with: “If civilization be intended to mean the moral and social improvement of a people, my opinion is distinctly that Christianity is the instrument by which to bring it about.”

Historian Kerry Howe’s thesis on Christianity and civilization in the upper Waikato is one of the few studies to take into account the religious and moral basis of

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46 This is also a repudiation of Gunson’s statement that the Gospel would “affect men’s minds so that they would promptly assume the social system of northern Europe.” Neil Gunson, Messengers of Grace, p.269.
47 J.A. James, A Sermon, preached before the London Missionary Society, 1819.
49 D. Coates, Christianity the Means, p. 99.
civilization in New Zealand evangelical mission thought. He sees the evangelical idea of civilization as meaning:

that all Maoris would be devout Calvinists living in the light and freedom of the gospel. Underlying these premises was the notion that a social framework was to be imposed based on the values and codes of conduct of the ‘respectable mechanic’ of the British lower-middle classes, and (after 1840) the imposition of the whole structure of British government, law and order. In effect, the Maori was to be transformed from a ‘savage’ to a God-fearing, industrious, brown-skinned European. 50

This definition captures the religious priority of the missionaries in their ideas on civilization, however missionary interest lay more in a general moral and social conformity to a life of Christian blessing and morality, not on “values and codes of conduct” of certain classes of society, and neither was British government insisted on for its own sake, i.e. because it was British, a theme taken up in chapter eight. 51 His assumption that the missionaries set out to form godly, “brown skinned Europeans” does not do justice to missionary efforts to convey their understanding of Christianity within a Maori cultural context. As other chapters will highlight, there were usually solid religious and moral reasons, rather than a distinct Europeanizing aim, for the introduction of seemingly ‘European’ habits or traits, and often Maori people themselves highly regarded European paraphernalia.

Many nineteenth century British evangelical Christians believed that wherever the Gospel went, civilization would follow in its train. This meant both a conviction that the Christian message, when received and believed in, would “exert a civilizing and benign influence”, and an expectation that missionaries themselves should encourage those living around them to adopt “civilized” practices. 52 The major difference in assumption with non-evangelical view-points was that cultures of heathen nations were given over to the presence and power of sin, and had become degraded through sin’s

51 See Chapter 8, ‘Godly Governance’, for an examination of this subject.
influence. The Christian gospel was the only remedy powerful enough to elevate situations of such cultural depravity; attempts to ‘elevate’ through education or scientific development alone were useless. So-called heathen nations needed to “renounce all their systems of error for the revelation of Christ as our divine prophet; to abandon their rites, sacrifices and penances, for his one oblation as our great High Priest; and to forsake their wicked customs and immoral habits, for obedience to his laws as King in Zion”. Stanley however contends that whilst missionaries were working towards a “complete transformation of pagan society through the civilizing agency of the gospel”, most found that their own experiences of different cultures enabled them to recast their own understanding of what constituted civilization according to the “limited extent that their moral and theological convictions allowed”.  

The Civilization of New Zealand

This recasting of civilization in missionary understanding can be seen in the experience of CMS missionary Richard Taylor in New Zealand. While historian J.M.R. Owens sees Taylor as learning to reject the term ‘savage’ in his understanding of Maori culture, this is not strictly true. Taylor actually adjusted his thinking as to what made a culture ‘civilized’, and began to see barbarism within the moral shortfalls of British society. For example, Taylor saw the Maori practise of covering the body in ochre and oil as barbarous and unclean, but came to look upon English ladies who painted their faces as being little different from their Maori counterparts. In 1846 Taylor began using the term ‘civilized heathenism’ to describe Europeans who seemed morally debased. This does not mean that Taylor no longer saw Christianity and civilization as “synonymous or even compatible”, as Owens argues. From the beginning, civilization and savagery to Taylor were primarily moral and religious matters.

Taylor’s early association of Christianity, morality and civilization is indicated by early statements in his journals that fitted well with the general evangelical view of this time, that ancient nations and cultures, such as Greece and Rome, which were held by many in Europe to exemplify the epitome of civilization, knew nothing but a

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54 John Angell James, *A Sermon*, 1819.
‘civilized barbarism’, because they remained morally base, and without the Gospel of Christ. Maori society also represented to Taylor an example of “that kind of civilization which he is able to attain without the aid of revelation”. Taylor thought the Maori situation was similar to that of “the highly civilized inhabitants of Pagan Greece and Rome whose languages celebrated as they were for their copiousness and beauty had no words to express those Christian graces which the Son of God revealed unto men”. Taylor effectively placed “civilized” Greeks on par with “savage” Maori in regard to the inability of their languages to easily express certain moral qualities associated with the gospel. This apparently proved to Taylor that “all of every age and clime and nation are by nature the same corrupt unholy and unrighteous beings”. 58 This was an example of the level of civilization attainable by a society without the assistance of Christian revelation. 59

Quite early on in his journals Taylor associated order and regularity with civilization, and nakedness and uncleanness with savagery. There are moral undercurrents in these comments - the nature of Christian faith could be seen in cleanliness, dress and manner: the “barbarian character was to be laid aside for that of the Christian”, a comment which directly opposed barbarism with Christianity. 60 However, we must be careful to not take the implications of this statement too far. Taylor identified positive, ‘civilized’ elements within Maori culture, even in its more ‘barbarous’ stages: quite early on he commented on the neatness and orderliness of plantations; he commended the strength of parental love for children within Maori society; Taylor also compared the elegant wearing of the ‘native mat’ to that of a Roman toga: it was clean and handsome. 61

Barbarism for Taylor was not a matter of primitive backwardness, although he did not completely exclude elements of stadial development, but of moral degeneracy, and the absence of Christian revelation, which held the key to moral and social

58 Richard Taylor, Journals, March 9, 1836, vol.1, p.88. This statement occurs near the beginning of his journal entries on New Zealand.
59 William Colenso also found Maori language copious in terminology and clarity, ‘On the Maori Races of New Zealand’, TPNZI, p.45. Octavius Hadfield also had difficulty with communicating Christian truth in Maori language: “Again, the enormous difficulty of grasping the full force of the teaching of the holy gospel, stands in the way of those whose language was almost utterly devoid of terms fitted to deal with the spiritual truths and mysteries of our holy religion”; Octavius Hadfield, ‘Sermon on the Maori Mission’, N.Z. Church Chronicle, July 1885, Maoris of By-Gone Days, Te Rau Press, Gisborne, 1902.
61 Ibids, April 8, 9, 1839, vol.2, p.91, 94.
elevation. This remained the case in the 1850s and 1860s when Taylor published his books *Te Ika a Maui* and *Past and Present of New Zealand*, publications which again underlined the moral and religious emphasis of ‘true’ civilization in Taylor’s thinking. Taylor did not reject the notion of savagery, as Owens argues, but acknowledged that European depravity was just as much a sign of ‘savagery’ as Maori depravity had been. The fact that Taylor no longer viewed Maori as ‘savages’ at this point of moving through a ‘transition stage’ into ‘civilization’ was due to the years of Gospel work among them. It is notable that at this time Taylor wrote as though Maori once were savages. In remembering what Maori converts had once been, Taylor was not averse to referring to Maori as a “savage and debased” people who would shock the sensitive minds of British Christians. His characterisation of Maori life depicted a “horrid state of society … every man’s hand was against his neighbour”.

In *Te Ika a Maui*, Taylor appears aware that Maori people were not deficient in those arts and skills which were essential for daily comfort and productivity: “Houses were made with great skill and elegance, garments with much beauty … plantations cultivated with care”. This, he reasoned, was not the character of a savage: “it must be in his social state; their cruel and bloody wars, their cannibal feasts, - these mark the savage … but”, he asked, “is not human nature in its unrenewed state, much the same everywhere? Are there no European savages as well?” Taylor here directly identifies savagery with unregenerate, non-Christian, human nature.

That civilization had profoundly moral significance is clearly demonstrated by Taylor, as he followed these remarks with an explanation of how he believed Maori had degenerated morally, and descended down the scale of humanity. He combined common elements of stadial civilization theory, such as geographic isolation, political conflict and war, as well as moral and religious explanation, to put forward a theory explaining the ‘degeneration’ of Maori culture. Taylor identified a time when a more progressive form of civilization existed, to which Maori memories apparently testified: of a kingly form of government, and a rich language which seemed to hark back to a period when literature was not unknown. Difficulties associated with migration, war, and geographical isolation were all put forward as possible explanations for degeneration, all

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64 *Ibid*, pp.4-5.
65 Richard Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or, New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, Wertheim and Macintosh, 1855, NZETC.
of which accorded well with an Enlightenment ‘stadial’ view. But Taylor also attributed degeneration to moral and religious issues. Geographical isolation enabled accumulated evil to overtake Maori societies. Taylor likened the situation of Maori to that of the prodigal son in a parable of Jesus in Luke 15, who “from being clothed in fine apparel, with a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet … he leaves his father's house, falls step by step, morally and physically, until he would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat”. Maori, he posited, had abandoned the worship of God, refused His word, adopted a wandering lifestyle and thereby gradually fallen in their level of civilization. Taylor’s history conceived of Maori becoming:

nomadic wanderers over the steppes of Asia, a bye-word and a reproach among the nations … driven by winds and currents, and various causes, they finally reached New Zealand, and there fallen to their lowest state of degradation, given up to the fiercest passions, consumed, and being consumed, they are enabled to reflect, repent, and amend, and resolve to arise and go to their Father.\(^{66}\)

Taylor here noted that repentance, faith and reconciliation with God were the way out of degeneration and moral and social degradation.

Savagery was clearly not limited to non-European peoples in Taylor’s thinking. He compared Maori warfare with that of so-called “civilized”, “polite” and so-called “Christian” peoples in order to question who were really the “cruel ones”, the implication being that Europeans were often more “savage” and “barbarous” in their warfare, despite their Christian history, than the despised Maori. Maori were “naturally noble”, endowed with mental and physical prowess, and likened to “the exterior of a fair-built house, which only requires to be suitably furnished” and they would progress towards Britain’s own “highly advanced position in the scale of nations”. But the Maori example was a clear demonstration of how human beings when left to their own devices, apart from the knowledge of God, “without the means of being cultivated and enlarged, becomes deteriorated, loses its manly character, and falls into a childish frivolity … the mental powers are impaired, the fierce passions of the savage, brute force and violence, increase”\(^{67}\).

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Uncivilized, barbaric, savage, low on the scale of humanity – these ideas were often attributed by CMS missionaries in New Zealand to the rampant effects of sin, and the depravity of the human heart, rather than to a lack of societal development and the premise of philosophical theory. John Wilson in 1836 recorded the outcome of a battle between the tribes of Tauranga and those of Rotorua, during which many lives were lost, and afterwards some of the defeated were eaten: “So much for human nature”, Wilson scorned, which “the philosophers (so termed) deem noble, innocent, and pure”. Rather, Wilson insisted Maori society knew nothing of true religion; their “simplicity ha(d) never been intruded upon by civilized men … in all of nature’s rudeness, vileness and depravity; destitute of all those imaginary virtues which the wise have dreamt about; possessing in themselves no good thing …’hateful and hating one another’” (Biblical allusions to Romans 7 and Titus 3:3). These facts, he believed, contrasted greatly with prevailing philosophical theory which sought to highlight the nobility of humanity in nature’s simplicity, who could be ‘civilized’ simply through education and other civilizing remedies, denying human wickedness and depravity. Wilson believed the situation could not change until “the heathen shall be given to the Son for his inheritance”, a reference to Psalm 2 and Christ’s reign over the nations of the earth. Then Maori would possess “a comparatively dignified nature”, the idols of their heart being destroyed, and “every unruly will and passion …brought into captivity to his will”. This meant that those “whose ancestors were sunk into nature’s lowest grade” could be transformed to “adorn the gospel of God his Saviour in all things, by casting off the works of darkness, and practicing those things that are true”.68

Within missionary records, as the above reference indicates, there is often a coalescing of language associated with Enlightenment civilization theory, and Christian ideas of sin, moral rectitude and human depravity.69 Many are the anecdotes which referred to Maori who were once “savage cannibals”, evil, and unbelievably low in nature, who then became Christians and examples of order, civilization and piety. Perceived evils committed by Maori are often termed “native barbarity”, particularly cannibalism and murder.70 Another term often used to describe ‘heathen’ Maori in relation to perceived bad deeds is “lawless savages”. It is difficult to know whether the term “lawless” here is in reference to the Biblical record, or ideas about theories of

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68 John Wilson, *Journals*, May 9, 1836, MSS A-173, AUL.
69 Ibid
civilization and stages of societal development, within which legal and political organization had a prominent position. Lawlessness in the Bible was equated with sin, and has moral, not social/governmental law in view, although obedience to rulers was also a part of good Christian living.\textsuperscript{71} Savagery was often equated in general European thinking with war, social turmoil and lawlessness, but each also has a moral as well a developmental or political basis. When Richard Davis first arrived in New Zealand, he found Maori to be “savages in every sense of the word”. He primarily attributes this to a wasting of human life and the habit of killing slaves for the purpose of food.\textsuperscript{72} The wife of Herekiekie, deemed to have been an instigator of the murders of Maori martyrs Manihera and Kereopa, was spoken of by Richard Taylor as having a “very savage heart”, reflecting her moral state.\textsuperscript{73} John Wilson recorded coming across a post-warfare scene near Maketu in 1834, with body parts strewn across the ground, which were “left a sacrifice to Whiro, the god, or spirit of war”. In reflection, he comments on how “extreme the barbarism where God and His laws are unknown. In these dark regions there is no cruelty, no crime, however great, which men do not commit with impunity”.\textsuperscript{74} Here Wilson directly associated human estrangement from God with barbarism.

For CMS missionaries, civilization encompassed not just “outward trappings” which Maori were able to acquire, but “their moral and religious culture”.\textsuperscript{75} When Thomas Chapman first arrived in Rotorua he came to “a people utterly debased by everything that was savage”. This he contrasted with the situation in early 1849, where there was not a community in the vicinity “where the morning and evening bell does not call to prayer and praise, and where the Sabbath is not observed”.\textsuperscript{76} Chapman saw Maori Christians “lately rising out of barbarism, and its many attendant soul-destroying customs and rites”.\textsuperscript{77} In enjoying the fruits of Chapman’s apple orchard, Richard Taylor bid his Maori companions “compare that fruitful garden with the fruitless wilderness we had passed over, that they might see what civilization could effect, and then draw the comparison between the natural heart and the new man”. This was a call to compare

\textsuperscript{71} John Morgan, \textit{Journals}, April 27, 1837, SC 266.3 M-84, APL; see John Wilson, \textit{Journals}, May 24, 1836; and Chapter 8 of this thesis.
\textsuperscript{72} Richard Davis, \textit{Memoirs}, pp.346-347.
\textsuperscript{73} Richard Taylor, \textit{Journals}, March 13, 1849.
\textsuperscript{74} John Wilson, \textit{Missionary Life}, pp. 29-30.
\textsuperscript{75} Alfred Brown, \textit{Journals}, December 14, 1839, MSS A-179, AUL.
\textsuperscript{76} Thomas Chapman, \textit{Journals}, January 13, 1849, MSS A-180, AUL.
unregenerate humanity with that which had been ‘born anew’ through Jesus Christ, and relate such to the fruitfulness which accompanied civilization. John Morgan found the desire to advance in civilization to be widely present in the Otawhao area, with many acres of wheat, carts, ploughs and horses, a mill that produced flour and a brisk oven. Morgan was pleased to see Maori, who he thought only a decade previously “were sunk in the lowest depths of barbarism and cannibalism, raised through the preaching of the Gospel … to their present state of civilization”, and hoped it would “please the God of all grace … abundantly to bless the preaching of his Gospel, and to grant to the Aborigines a sanctified civilization … a people fearing God and working righteousness”. This wisdom was partly echoed by Richard Davis’ opinion on the matter. While the salvation of souls was important to Davis, so was the temporal improvement of Maori. He would not “omit any opportunity of raising them as speedily as possible in the scale of true Christian civilisation. It is my ardent wish that they may become a Christian, a happy, and a free people”. These statements highlight the fact that, for the CMS missionaries, civilization was moral in nature, and truly secured only in Christian faith.

William Williams wrote his *Christianity Among the New Zealanders* partly to counter the argument that the missionaries were foolish for attempting to convert and civilize Maori people. He was convinced that Christianity and civilization were intimately related, although a kind of civilization could exist without Christianity, but he labelled this a “spurious kind of civilization, which consists in the promiscuous adoption of foreign ideas, in which there is often a larger proportion of evil than good”. He was of the opinion that Christianity gave rise to advancement in civilization, particularly because education was essentially joined to it, creating the desire for an improved state of living. However, the present kind of civilization that he deemed Maori in the vicinity of the towns to be deceived into accepting he believed to be of the spurious kind, and “religion was needed to modify those evils, and to fortify the native mind by the inculcation of right principles, preparing it to reject the evil and to choose the good”.

Alfred Brown had seen this problem coming twenty years earlier. In 1848 he commented in his journal on the problems that the seeming ungodly example of

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80 Richard Davis, p.169.
Europeans was posing for the conduct of his converts. He found many Maori people, who often sought to imitate European habits such as card-playing, horse racing, drinking alcohol and pursuing wealth for its own sake, to be in a transitional state “from comparative barbarism to miscalled civilization”, which he believed was endangering their spiritual state i.e. it was not civilization based on Christian belief and principle. It demonstrated “that they were too young in Grace for the full tide of colonization to rush in upon them, and raises the question whether their civilized barbarism was not preferable to their present barbarized civilization”. Brown’s statement clearly indicates the moral and religious significance of civilization in his mind.

The narrative of William Barrett Marshall also provides some interesting clues on the evangelical perspective on civilization. He was an evangelical surgeon who visited New Zealand in 1834. The reader of his account was asked to consider: “the happy progress of an infant society from the savage to the civilized state; from ignorance to knowledge; and from vice to virtue; under the mild and benignant influences of our holy religion”. But Marshall also insisted that being European did not automatically exclude a person from savagery. Maori required protection from Europeans, whom “civilisation separated from Christianity hath rendered a hundred thousand times more savage than the most degraded of the aborigines of heathen lands ... more degraded, more immoral, and more irreclaimably savage”. Marshall’s explanation of what constitutes savagery is instructive: Maori had elements of “national character …which moral philosophy excludes from all part in her definition of a civilized people … they portray[ed] the prince of darkness and the author of evil, even Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning, a liar and the father of lies”. There is no mention of primitivism here; this explanation is of a moral and religious nature.

New Zealand was to the evangelical Marshall “a country just emerging from the darkness of heathenism into the light of Christianity and civilization”. Yet physical development also had a place within Marshall’s concept of civilization. Barrenness, lack of development of the landscape, as George Craik expounded earlier, was considered one of the features of a barbarous country in stadial civilization theory. But whilst Craik attributed these things to barbarous development, as George Craik expounded earlier, was considered one of the features of a barbarous country in stadial civilization theory. But whilst Craik attributed these things to ignorance, laziness and backwardness, Marshall thought the ultimate origin of barrenness was a consequence of humanity’s refusal to know and

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84 Ibid, pp.302-303.
85 Ibid, p.56.
worship God. Humanity, according to Marshall, had been created in the image of God, and given the task of spreading the knowledge of God within the creation. Any place that was then “left desolate” by humanity became waste, “no longer a well watered garden, but a wild and weary wilderness … seemingly deserted by man and by man's Maker”. Barrenness was a result of a curse being laid “by a merciful but holy God, upon a world of his own making, on account of the sin of man … to whom the dominion of that world had been given”. However, the earth would again be made fruitful when the knowledge of Christ as redeemer of humanity became known; God would come to bless and abide in the land, restoring it to its original liberty and fruitfulness. This was what Marshall construed was happening in New Zealand.86 Chapman equated “this once dreadfully barbarous people” with the state of Maori when he first arrived in New Zealand, “when the hearts of all were alike; when no one either knew or desired to know, their Creator”. But by the 1850s things were very different, for now there were places throughout the land “where the holy and blessed Trinity is worshipped and adored”.87

Evangelical notions of civilization did indeed make use of generally accepted theories of civilization to a limited extent. This chapter has shown the common elements generally present in British civilization theory to also be present in evangelical thinking: things like geographical location, the use of land, the development of political and juridical systems, and commerce. But there was also an emphasis present in their thinking that was quite different - a concern for the moral and religious foundations of human societies. As we shall see in the next chapter, in contrast to Enlightenment notions of civilization, which stressed that morality and sociality were achievable outside of Christianity, a people or culture that was considered ‘uncivilized’ needed to first find its moral basis within Christian faith, and then all the issues of civilization and its attendant blessings could flourish. All of the material elements of civilization referred to in this chapter were thought to have their sound genesis only when issuing from Christian faith and its associated moral soundness. This explains why there was sometimes a coalescing of language between the elements of civilization and elements of Christian morality. It also perhaps underscores the influence of Christianity within British culture, and why it is problematic to try and separate one from the other, and yet

86 Ibid, pp.72-75.
87 Thomas Chapman, Journals, December 31, 1850, pp.423-424.
why also difficulties arise when conflating the two together. These facts present the historian who refuses to consider the all pervasive religious and theological factors present in missionary thinking with serious difficulties. The relationship between Christianity and civilization in missionary thinking, and therefore missionary perceptions of Maori, can only be accurately portrayed when adequate consideration is given to the missionary theological worldview.
Chapter Five: Christianity the Means of Civilization.

The moral basis of civilization in nineteenth century evangelical missionary thought meant that Christianity itself was seen as the civilizing power by the majority of CMS missionaries during this period: in their view, religious beliefs determined the nature of culture. The foundation of true civilization was Christianity, and anything else that supposedly formed its basis was believed only to result in a ‘spurious’ form of civilization. The supposition that barbarism was synonymous with primitivism in the evangelical scheme is called into question by this assumption. Barbarism, in the eyes of the missionaries, was usually construed as resulting from moral debasement, which was the sure companion to idolatrous and superstitious belief systems. Therefore it was only the ‘medicine of the gospel’ which could truly lift a people from the depths of barbarous depravity to the heights of enlightened civilization. The assumption that civilization could be directly equated with Europeanization in missionary thinking is wholly inadequate to describe the detailed rationalisations which lay behind missionary ideas associated with social improvement and deterioration. The problem underlying an appearance of primitivism was not finally backwardness due to lack of development, but a situation which resulted from a degrading belief system that held a people in bondage to a debased form of life, and provided no impetus to extricate a society from such a situation. This chapter will examine the way in which Christianity was thought to establish and develop civilization in missionary thought.

Considerable confusion exists among New Zealand historians as to exactly what constituted civilization in nineteenth century CMS missionary thinking, and how missionaries understood its relationship to Christianity. Sometimes explanations are vague; at other times they are quite wrong.¹ Missionary critic William Fox had no

¹ For a lack of clarity see Paul Moon, Fatal Frontiers: a New History of New Zealand in the Decade Before the Treaty, Penguin, Auckland, 2006, p.47. He equates any kind of Europeanization with the missionary idea of civilization: “Alcohol, prostitution and muskets were just as much part of the civilization process as were reading, preaching and conversions.” The previous chapter has shown this idea to be false. Also, ‘civilization’ was not primarily to do with European material culture. See also Jenny Murray, Moving South with the CMS, Robert Glen, (ed.), Mission and Moko: The Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814-1882, Latimer, Christchurch, pp.126-127. For an example of incorrect understanding, see Kathryn Rountree, ‘Remaking the Maori Female Body: Marianne Williams’ Mission in the Bay of Islands’, The Journal of Pacific History, vol. 35, no.1, 2000, p.52. Rountree gives no indication of the importance of Christian faith for the civilizing process, nor the need for conversion, or the moral basis of civilization in evangelical thinking. Also, she does not take into account the distinct change in missionary policy with the arrival of Henry Williams, and its
qualms about accrediting the missionaries with an influence which encouraged Maori advances. But he held the opinion that the missionaries wished to make Maori into “a sort of Levitical republic”.\footnote{William Fox, \textit{The Six Colonies of New Zealand}, Saville & Edwards, London, 1851, pp.70, 76.} This is a clear concession that the Christian civilization that the CMS missionaries were seeking to promote was quite different from that of Enlightenment-based civilizers such as Fox. A broad consultation of nineteenth century evangelical and missionary writings on this matter, and an acknowledgement of the missionary preoccupation with religious issues, could help clear up much confusion.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Christianity and Moral Power}
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As the previous chapter was at pains to show, and the evidence given by the leaders of the three major evangelical missionary societies in England to the House of Commons Select Committee on Aborigines in 1837 made clear, it was the moral sense of ‘civilization’ that evangelicals were primarily concerned with: “If civilization be intended to mean the moral and social improvement of a people, my opinion is distinctly that Christianity is the instrument by which to bring it about.” This was purely because Christianity was thought to be the only means by which a person could be made “peaceable, honest, sober, industrious, and orderly”. These formed “the very elements of civilization, in the moral sense of it”. The impression on the human heart of the great principles of Christian faith, such as the state of humanity fallen through sin, its redemption in Christ, regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, and the prospect of eternal judgement, would tend to make a human being “humble, self-denying, philanthropic, beneficent”, the moral and social states being inextricably bound together, and the social actually determined by the moral.\footnote{D. Coates, John Beecham, William Ellis, \textit{Christianity the Means of Civilization}, London, 1837, p.99.}

Neil Gunson, in his seminal work on Evangelical missionaries in the South Pacific, says civilization in evangelical mission thought could be termed “the social doctrine of the cross”.\footnote{Neil Gunson, \textit{Messengers of Grace}, 1978, p. 269.} During the nineteenth century evangelical ministers in England focused on the preaching of ‘Christ and Him crucified’ (1 Cor. 2:2) as the power of God for the salvation of humanity, whilst, Gunson argues, missionaries themselves placed complete faith in the power of this doctrine \emph{alone} to change the hearts of ‘heathen’
peoples. This doctrine set evangelicals apart and “thwarted the philosophical approach to the missionary enterprise”. This theological principle was held by evangelicals to be the key to the welfare of humanity: “social progress was inextricably bound up with the message of the atonement”.

However, it needs to be stipulated that although the preaching of “Christ crucified” was thought to bring about a transformation of both individual and society, this change involved more than an advancing from primitivism to civilization. Missing this fact seems to be a problem with Gunson’s argument, as he appears to see barbarism and savagery in evangelical thinking as limited to social, political and economic development; he does not give sufficient attention to the religious basis on which society was thought, by evangelicals, to be built. This position is more akin to general, non-evangelical theories on civilization, and does not adequately take into account the moral and religious basis of civilization in evangelical thinking outlined in the previous chapter. According to William Ellis in his *Polynesian Researches*, “The dominion and extent of delusive and sanguinary idolatries, with their moral debasement”, and human wretchedness as the supposed product of such idolatrous worship, was the major issue needing to be dealt with, not primitivism. Ellis in this work was interested in exhibiting what he saw as “the essential characteristics of idolatry, and its influence on a people”. Having spent time himself as a missionary in Tahiti, living with people in a paradisiacal environment which should have been “peculiarly favourable to happiness”, he found the exact opposite to be the case. Idolatry had made such a state utterly impossible. A multifarious number of “malignant deities” were deemed responsible for what Ellis perceived to be the Tahitian’s misery. Therefore, the “extension of true religion, as the only solid basis of virtue and happiness” was to be the primary aim of the evangelizing Christian.

Dandeson Coates, Secretary for the CMS, described how the gospel was supposed to work in addressing both temporal and eternal issues. If the gospel was indeed the “power of God”, which according to Coates implied that God’s influence accompanied its proclamation, this constituted a powerful agency by which the human mind could be transformed. Coates believed the Christian scheme was a “revelation from God” and therefore, as God was supreme in goodness and wisdom, making this

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revelation known to other human beings was akin to promoting “their temporal welfare, as well as to provide for their eternal salvation”. It was to be by the “foolishness of preaching”, that the Christian missionary was to affect the world, not by social policy or political engineering.

Part of the problem for evangelical civilizers was that there rarely seemed to be any interest on the part of ‘savage’ peoples in advancement in civilization. John Beecham, head of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, did not believe that civilization of itself was an attractive proposition to ‘savage’ communities. Civilized lifestyles were “too tame, too insipid to charm the roving barbarian”, and, what was more, “superstitions are generally found opposed to any change in his accustomed course of life”. Higher motives which stemmed from the influence of the gospel needed to be born if a person was to “discover anything desirable in the quietness and sobriety of civilized life.” Beecham was certain that only if gospel truths worked powerfully on the hearts and minds of pagan peoples could they give any thought to their higher, eternal destinies, and as a result “dare to break through the bondage of their superstitions, and forsake their paternal customs, which are generally bound up with the superstitions themselves”.

These links between superstition, cultural customs and the gospel, as explored in earlier chapters, were the reason for the heavily theological basis of evangelical perspectives on civilization. As the Congregationalist Minister John Angell James stressed in a sermon preached in 1828, the great weapon of the missionaries was the ‘word of the cross’, to “make known the death of him who descended to … wrest the keys of empire from the king of terrors. The weapons of our warfare are … spiritual”. These thoughts again resemble the matrix of religious notions that attributed perceived moral and social degradation to human sinfulness and unseen spiritual forces.

The problem was not really primitivism, but a world under the dominion of Satan, who, along with the presence of sin, apparently prevented human beings from realising their full potential. It was through the proclamation of Christ’s victory on the cross that humanity was to be delivered from Satan’s power and dominion. Upon this

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8 D. Coates, Christianity the Means, p.100.
9 John Harris, The Great Commission: or, the Christian Church Constituted and Charged to Convey the Gospel to the World, Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, Boston, 1842, p.xxix.
10 D. Coates, Christianity the Means, p.126.
11 Ibid.
12 J.A. James, A Sermon, preached before the London Missionary Society’, at Surrey Chapel, Wednesday, May 12th, 1819.
deliverance a prosperous civilization could be built. Religion was not the enemy of knowledge according to evangelicals, as it seemed to proponents of Enlightenment notions of civilization, but the opposite, the only way that civilization could be firmly established. James maintained that humanity’s need was primarily a moral and spiritual one, which could only be satisfied through the gospel. Reformers and philanthropists who believed education and science were the basis of human improvement had no understanding of “man’s spiritual degradation and exposure to eternal misery”. Knowledge was powerless to “ascend to the seat of moral principle”, and rectify it, unable to “cure the spiritual taint of our nature, and expel the venom of sin from the heart”. Evangelism was really the only way to civilize, and Christian faith the only mechanism which could establish knowledge.

The gospel of “Christ crucified” was the source of “the world’s moral and intellectual renovation, the panacea for its evils”. Ellis, Beecham and Coates all agreed that civilization was the natural accompaniment and product of Christianity; as Christian principle began to exert itself over the human mind, a person’s “condition as a civilized being advances, and hence Christianity and civilization advance pari passu”. Civilization would progress to the extent that the Christian gospel was the focus of human populations. This was why, in the eyes of James, it was where the gospel poured out its moral power that “decent habitation, the springing corn, the budding garden; and above all the undisturbed quiet of the scene” could be found, along with “the chapel bell and the hum of schools ... the sound of the axe, the creak of the printing press ... the appearances of civilization spreading out”.

Moral Transformation, Social Transformation

The aim of the evangelical Christian missionary enterprise was to proclaim the gospel, but Christian proclamation was also thought to bring other benefits which applied to the whole of human life, apparently including “all other schemes of beneficence itself”. This was why James deemed that a missionary society could also act

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14 John Angell James, “The Advantages and Obligations of Youth, in Reference to the Cause of Christian Missions Stated and Enforced”, a sermon preached at the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Youth Missionary Society, May 12, 1828.
as “a civilization society, and a Mechanics institute … introducing all the common arts
of life into the dreary wilds of barbarism”. Missionary endeavours were “mercy of the
most comprehensive kind”, encompassing “all that ingenuity has invented, or that
benevolence can employ, for the numerous interests of the human race”. Such a scheme
provided an exegesis of the words of the Apostle Peter: “Godliness is profitable for all
things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come”. True religion could not be restricted to one’s heart, but was to affect the whole of life.17

Many evangelicals in Britain drew on their own nation’s past to underscore their
belief in the primacy of the gospel as the driving force behind civilization. Britain saw
itself as a model of Christian culture and society, and an example of the change that
civilization could bring to a nation, as Britain had once been as idolatrous and barbaric
as the nations to which missionaries were being sent.18 But evangelicals insisted that
Britain owed what it had become to God and the influence of the gospel. The first
missionaries who arrived in Britain came to “the very temple of Druidism … saw the
obscenity of its lascivious rites, and beheld its animal and human victims”.19 But God
had, according to evangelical interpretation, made Britain His, especially through the
evangelical awakening of the eighteenth century. In consequence, according to the
Reverend John Harris, Britain’s social system had been slowly on the rise, reflecting the
growth of Christian faith. He believed the influence of the gospel, since the evangelical
revival, had quietly penetrated throughout society. Harris described the gospel as
attacking social corruption, “rendering law more protective and power more righteous”.
Christian faith, thought Harris, was modifying Britain’s philosophical systems,
replacing them with its own philosophy. Evangelical reformers such as John Howard,
William Wilberforce and Thomas Raikes were simply, in carrying out their social
reforms, diffusing the knowledge and demands of the Christian message throughout
society.20 Evangelicals believed the Christian gospel had historically exhibited a
prominent moral and social effect on European societies: the Gospel had brought
“humility” to Athens, and “humanity” to Rome, “evincing that her boasted civilization
had been only a splendid barbarism”. The Huns and Scythians all learned war no more
and instead learned to “sing the praises of God”. The Visigoths received “law” through

18 Stanley, Bible and the Flag, p.160-161.
19 John Harris, Great Commission, p.197.
20 Harris, Great Commission, p.197.
the Gospel, and the German “barbarian” was made into a “man;” the gospel that had “elevated the wandering hordes of the Saxons … into civilized communities”.21

John Harris, principal of Cheshunt College, Cambridge, and an evangelical preacher in London, believed that evangelical missionary activity had brought “social and moral advantages” to heathen communities, rescuing them from barbarism and instead clothing them with benevolence, “retrieving the character and dignity of the slandered human form”. The gospel, according to Harris, revealed “the deformity of vice”, restored a sense of shame, and as a result brought about a reduction in crime rates and elevated the moral nature of society.22 Harris’ own civilizing scheme envisaged societies used to roaming from one place to another abandoning wandering ways of living for a settled lifestyle from a desire to hear the gospel. Harris called this the “first step in their transition from a horde of the wilderness to a civilized community”. Settlement in turn produced ‘wants’ that had not previously existed and Christianity created new habits of industriousness and honesty as against “habitual idleness, one of the most prolific evils of savage life”. Useful arts and trades thought to constitute ‘civilized’ life would therefore be the natural accompaniment of the success of the gospel. These adjustments brought spare time, which could be given to education, enabling the illiterate to read the Bible, preventing a return to barbarism and forming the “foundation of national cultivation and future mental greatness”. Education also created a desire for new laws, enlightening minds to evils resulting from want of law, quickening and humanizing the moral nature. The principles of Christianity were to form the blueprint of legal codes, and thus as the New Testament became the basis of civil law the resulting government would place itself under the protection of God, who would secure “lasting national prosperity”. Mental character would be redeemed, and people restored to the “rank of our common humanity”.23 Harris’ civilizing scheme provides a good example of how evangelicals mixed elements common in general stadial civilization philosophy, such as settled abodes, political and technological development, with Christian ideas of the gospel as foundation and motivation for a moral, civilized society.

21 Harris, Great Commission pp.193-194.
Attaining Civilization

The opinions expressed above found their way into the thoughts of the second wave of CMS missionaries in New Zealand. But the first group of ‘godly mechanic’ missionaries, laymen and artisans Thomas Kendall, William Hall and John King, had maintained a conspicuous focus on a ‘firstly civilize, but Christianize as you go’ policy under the leadership of Samuel Marsden, with their trades as a joiner, a shoemaker and in rope-making. However, from the arrival of the Reverend Henry Williams onwards, there arose considerable criticism of the position taken by mission founder Marsden in not giving gospel proclamation clear priority over various ‘civilizing’ enterprises.

Despite being evangelical in his theological stance, Marsden appears to have been one of the last exponents of a belief that some form of civilization needed to precede Christianity, an approach which had permeated missionary attitudes throughout the prior two centuries. In Marsden’s view, the presence of commerce and the arts had a “natural Tendency to inculcate industrious and moral Habits, open a way for the introduction of the Gospel, and lay the foundation for its continuance once it has been received”. In Marsden’s estimation there was nothing that was able to “pave the way for the Introduction of the Gospel, but Civilization, and that can only be accomplished amongst the Heathen by the Arts”. However, civilization was not evangelization; being civilized, Marsden insisted, could not convert a person to faith in Christ. Missionary artisans could spend some of their time in manual work, but this was not to prevent them “from constantly endeavouring to instruct the Natives in the great Doctrines of the Gospel”. Religion and the arts needed to make progress together, and this especially because “the attention of the Heathens, can only be gained and their vagrant Habits corrected, by the Arts. Till their attention is gained, and moral and industrious Habits are induced, little or no progress can be made in teaching them the Gospel”. Marsden did not mean to imply that, “a native should learn to build a Hut or make an Axe before he should be told any thing of Man’s Fall and Redemption”, but he thought these topics could be discussed while the arts were being learned and practiced. Marsden did not believe that preaching the gospel, “without the aid of the Arts”, could make progress.

amongst ‘heathen’ peoples for any significant time. So it seems he was not quite an orthodox exponent of the ‘civilize in order to Christianize’ school of the previous century, but rather saw both elements proceeding together.

It seems as though Marsden hoped “the arts” would function as an attraction to Christianity. Though this view did not fit with the received evangelical wisdom and approach to missions by the early nineteenth century, it still captures within it the idea that civilization had moral and religious significance. Robin Fisher writes: “The changes that Williams advocated in 1826 were not so much ‘a reversal of policy’ as a change of emphasis”. The evangelization of Maori, according to Fisher, was the main aim of both Marsden and Henry Williams. Unfortunately, Fisher construes both Marsden and Williams as being incapable of separating their “Christian message from the context of their own culture”. Although the issue here was not “unable” but ‘unwilling’, that is, the missionaries had good reason for refusing to separate belief and culture, the point still stands: the gospel message gave itself to certain cultural expressions of its truths, but the evangelizing emphasis, in Williams’ eyes, was not to be on the cultural expressions, but on the power of the gospel to establish and foment those expressions.

Whilst maintaining considerable respect for Marsden as the driving force behind the establishment of the New Zealand mission, Henry and William Williams criticized Marsden’s approach upon their arrival in New Zealand. Ten years of mission had passed with little spiritual progress. Henry found that there had been too much emphasis placed on “secular efforts”, and not enough time given to declaring the Christian gospel. As yet there were no Christian congregations, but much among missionary activity itself to distract Maori from “attending to the one thing needful”. It was maintained by Henry that the “universal opinion” of the new wave of missionaries was: “the shackles with which this people is enslaved cannot be broken but by the sword of the spirit”. Henry reasoned that the CMS missionaries had come to New Zealand “to direct this people to the law of God,” and the only way this could be done was to thoroughly learn the language, in order to communicate the gospel. All efforts needed to be redirected to this cause, and Henry’s strategy accorded with the sentiments of the general body of CMS

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25 Revd S. Marsden to CMS Secretary April 7, 1808, No.96, Marsden and the Mission, pp.14-15.
27 Henry Williams, Williams Family Letters, March 31, 1826, p.18, MSS A-68, AUL.
personnel. He concluded that at the present time Maori were “perishing for lack of knowledge, but not the knowledge of making nails or planting corn”.  

The evangelical surgeon William Barrett Marshall, having visited New Zealand in 1834, had come to similar conclusions. Marsden, Marshall writes, had always followed a scheme “for elevating their moral by the previous exaltation of their social character”, which produced no spiritual effect. Though Maori who associated with the mission became quite skilful in European arts, it was clear that most enquirers had no interest in “the truth by which a moral renovation of their characters was to be brought about”.  

But when the plan of the mission was changed, and Christian conversion given priority, and civilization “regarded only in its place as a sequence of it”, transformation was underway, and individual change soon ballooned out to a national one. Marshall’s experience in New Zealand had convinced him that only the Christian religion had power enough to civilize a ‘savage’ people. Christian conversion, he thought, had not only elevated the Maori moral condition and saved from sin; it had in turn instructed Maori minds in practical knowledge, such as learning to use a plough.  

Williams’ and Marshall’s critical analyses of the situation reflected the opinions of other missionaries. Richard Davis, who came originally to New Zealand as an agricultural instructor, found upon his arrival that Maori wanted none of the agricultural knowledge he offered them, but were willing to “listen with attention to the Word of Life”. He too thought that “secular concerns” had occupied the mission far too much up to this point in the late 1820s, and he with his colleagues were now of the unanimous opinion that only a “preached Gospel” would have any effect on Maori. Davis was appalled that so many resources had been spent on promoting the civilization of Maori, as if the “axe was the best missionary for New Zealand”. He could not fathom how a Christian minister could think this was so.  

Davis believed that the power of the Gospel produced “consistency of life”, and provided a principle which refined the manners and purified the heart: “The poor savages of this land expose their persons in the most disgusting manner. After

conversion to God they become more and more careful not to do so. They become modest and chaste, and, in every sense of the word, are new creatures in Christ.” With some Maori now looking for salvation in Christ he declared a great “alteration in these savage tribes. Twelve months ago they were perfect savages, now they are teachable and mild, and many are willing to sit at the feet of the Saviour to be clothed and to possess right minds”.

Here is a marked difference between Christian faith on the one hand, and savagery on the other. In 1835 Davis linked the reception of the Christian Gospel by Maori around Waimate with the conclusion that “this part of New Zealand may be said to have been civilized, and is a pleasant country to live in”. Davis made this statement in the light of what he perceived to be moral developments: peace and security were now pervasive, with little need to keep possessions under lock and key, as there no longer seemed to be a penchant for stealing. Davis held the Gospel responsible for the perceived moral change, and it was the improved moral character of Maori life that he most strongly associated with civilization.

The relationship between the coming of God’s kingdom on earth and the putting off of savagery in exchange for a heavenly inheritance could not be separated, as John Morgan was at pains to show:

The God of heaven [shall] set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed …

That kingdom will have within it a countless multitude from all people and nations and kindreds and languages; and there, too, will be found the New Zealand Church, composed of a goodly company of those who once were savages, but who, having been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, will be made partakers of the heavenly inheritance.

It was no insignificant matter to the Reverend William Yate, stationed primarily at Waimate and Kerikeri until his dismissal over rumoured homosexual liaisons in 1837, that the “warlike, thievish practices of the natives are giving way to more settled, honest, and peaceful habits, wherever the Gospel prevails”. In Yate’s thinking, the Christian Gospel brought civilization. This civilization was characterised by the building of better homes, with comforts to encourage prolonged settlement, rather than a wandering lifestyle. But these physical improvements were produced by a moral

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34 Ibid, March 19, 1835, p. 186.
36 John Morgan, Journals, p.378, SC 266.3 M-84, APL. This is a direct reference to Daniel 2:44.
reformation. The Christian Gospel had “reformed their minds; and has taught them, that comfort may be found at home, and that it is not necessary to gratify their vagrant inclinations in order to make themselves happy”. Since the gospel took hold, people were making domestic improvements, building chapels and fences, and cultivating land. Yate now saw increased discipline, regularity and industry, along with a “desire to make improvements in their land, their habits, and customs”. To Yate, these changes represented a sizeable step “towards the civilization of New Zealand”.37

Belief systems and religious affiliation accounted to a large extent for national character in missionary thinking. According to the German Lutheran missionary Johann Wohlers, nations which possessed and made use of the Bible became “the wisest, most cultivated, and noble of all the nations upon the earth”. The Bible had an “ennobling” effect, and though other ideas and teachings may have fostered “a certain civilization and philosophy” they were ineffectual in comparison to the “ennobling of the human heart” which faith in the Bible’s message could produce.38 Wohlers’ arrival on the island of Ruapuke had been marked by an overwhelming sense of misery among the people who lived there. Though Christianity in what he called an outward form, “still without its spirit”, was already present, and people were already relinquishing “all cruel and gross sins which had formerly existed amongst them as something quite common”, most seemed still “wild heathen … a class of men sunk so low that they disgust one who has been brought up in Christian customs. They are so dirty in their whole method of life that they stink of it”.39 But Wohlers considered it was then a Christian’s duty to love them, “to make them into men, after the image of God”. To place more stress on Enlightenment and civilization, rather than spiritual instruction, just did not work.40

This was because civilized life, according to Wohlers, demanded hard work, to which “raw heathens” were not accustomed, and often did not understand the need for. Money had to be earned to supply needs, and civilized living required personal washing and grooming, mending clothes, constructing and maintaining buildings, and many other daily “troublesome matters”, all, says Wohlers, quite foreign to Maori during this early period. The ‘heathen’ needed firstly to receive repentance, to believe the gospel, to “turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and obtain the forgiveness of sins”. Forgiveness and the blessing of God would evoke a desire for decent standards

37 William Yate, Account of New Zealand, pp. 247-248.
39 Wohlers, pp.103-106.
40 Ibid, pp.103-106.
of living, along with a willing and strong work ethic. The gospel was the source of temporal improvement.\textsuperscript{41}

Wohlers did not believe that full civilization immediately accompanied conversion. Rather, the Spirit of God awakened a person, and worked inwardly in the heart, and then “manners, as a fruit of the Spirit, must be learned by sustained effort”. Such an outcome would be impossible apart from conversion and previous “renewal of a heart in truth”. Wohlers depicted “wild” savages as feeling at home in “dirt and untidiness”. Working for a “civilized life” appeared to be foolish in this state, requiring much work and trouble. But if Maori people were “born again by the Grace of God to a lively hope in the resurrection from the dead in Jesus Christ”, they would receive power for improvement, which accompanied conversion. After conversion Maori, in Wohlers’ opinion, naturally wanted to “enter the ranks of civilized man and people, and were willing to undertake the labour and trouble that a civilized life requires”.\textsuperscript{42} Christianity was able to “condescend to the sunken heathen”, but would not allow them to remain in “their filthy condition”; rather it would be at work to “elevate them into civilized human beings”. Conversion evoked a desire for Christian manners, and fashioned a “wild” people into “respectable members of human society”.\textsuperscript{43} It was in coming to know the power of God in the gospel that Maori became “from inwards outwards civilized men”.\textsuperscript{44}

\textbf{Slow and patient progress}

Christian conversion had been the means, in missionary thinking at least, by which many beneficial changes had been wrought in Maori communities, but it was acknowledged that change took considerable time, and involved what was known as a transition state, a period of time during which Christian principle and civilized practices slowly worked their way into Maori living. Ingrained habits could not be easily done away with, and the gospel itself took time and effort to understand. Conquering the power of “degrading superstitions” was no light matter; the missionaries hoped that faith would empower the lives of converted Maori to overcome such difficulties. Faith was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid}, pp.152-153.
\item \textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid}, p. 163-164.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Wohlers, p.31.
\item \textsuperscript{44} \textit{Ibid}, pp.172, 178, 189.
\end{itemize}
not just the means by which civilization was established, but the way in which it was built up and brought to flourish.

According to Octavius Hadfield, missionary at Otaki, there were sizeable difficulties which interfered with Maori progress in “religion and social habits”. A great difference apparently existed between the civilized person who has been raised among people “for many generations civilized and Christian”, and Maori who, though truly people of faith, still carried with them “the marks of that barbarism and heathenism which they have inherited from a long line of ancestors”. While critical Englishmen could look upon Maori as an “inferior race, unfitted for civilization”, most failed in Hadfield’s view to realise that the Greeks had previously considered Britons to be irreclaimable barbarians. Europeans needed to be more aware of the slow progress of Christianity and civilization in their own history.45

The period of time between the reception of the Gospel and the cementing of civilized practices was often referred to as a ‘transitional state’. Richard Davis wrote of a time in which “much pastoral care is necessary … in which the natives are passing from a state of savage barbarism to that of civilisation”. Watchfulness during this transition state required being mindful of those who appeared to have been doing well, but had then fallen into sin, the primary ones being adultery and fornication.46 There is an implicit association here of sin with barbarism.

Although the Gospel had been preached to Maori, and many, Richard Taylor thought, had known a heartfelt reception of the gospel, these converts were still in a transition state, just emerging from barbarism. Maori were learning to stand alone in the new teaching they had received, and although they were now “mingled with the people from whom they have received light … the very sins which they are told they must renounce or perish they see indulged in without shame or compunction by Europeans”.47

The danger was that some sins would be seen as acceptable in the light of the settlers’ example, and Maori had to learn that being Christian in name was not equivalent to living in Christian faith. Hadfield, Davis and Taylor all understood that Christian faith only worked its way into civilized living with time and trial.

The way in which faith worked out in temporal situations was a difficult issue, even for the missionaries. Hadfield repudiated the idea that upon conversion a person

47 Richard Taylor, Journals, December 24, 1849.
must become immediately clean and orderly. The scriptural view of conversion seemed to him to be marked by “deadness to worldly things, and carelessness about the things of the body”. Any convert who turned “from the world to the Lord” normally shunned those things which would allure his attentions from God and back to the world. Yet improvement in cleanliness, dress and manner were important, as outward manifestations of inward moral transformation, though there remained a danger that outward issues like “cleanliness of person and decency of habit” could draw a convert’s attention, particularly in the Maori case, away from faith.48 It took time for new believers to work through the appropriate implications of their conversion.

The slow improvement around Otaki and Waikanae was clear evidence to Hadfield that “visible religious or moral change” could only be effected over a period of time. By 1853 he had noticed significant change “in the habits of the people … great progress in civilization”. He had been paying considerable attention to these changes, and had come to the conclusion that “everything which tends to raise them above their old native habits must be good in the main”, particularly when reminded of the “state the natives of this country were in previous to their conversion.” The baptism of local Maori women pleased Hadfield immensely because it was “proof that women are not so degraded … but that they are interesting themselves in Christianity, and may be expected ere long to occupy that position which is always afforded them wherever our holy religion produces any permanent impression.” Christian faith apparently fostered the social elevation of women in Hadfield’s mind. Local Maori had only recently come to see the real benefit of having schools, but these were now “highly appreciated” and a solid foundation laid for what “may with the Divine blessing become a valuable instrument for the evangelisation of these people”. The “fruit” of this work was now clearly discernable; with considerable difference being visible between those who had come under missionary care, and those who had not.49

While Hadfield acknowledged that civilization could draw Maori minds away from religious faith, he thought it foolish to look for “unmixed good”. His own opinion on the subject had changed somewhat. Though the general idea of civilization had originally been for a “barbarous people, led by the influence of religion to abandon their own usages, and substitute in their place some simple code of laws, and continue in a

48 Octavius Hadfield, Letters to Church Missionary Society from Rev. Octavius Hadfield. May 1838- November 1868, October 8, 1841, SC 266.3 H13, APL.
simple, peaceable state, unencumbered with the many wants of civilized life”, the situation of the late 1840s had altered this: Maori were now British subjects, and in constant contact with “civilized people”. Extending Maori civilization could in certain ways, Hadfield admitted, have an adverse effect on Christian faith, but Hadfield could not imagine “a community organized and living as a Christian church without it.” This was a salient issue if the Maori community was not to be reliant on constant outside support to supply their needs. Hadfield could not understand how this would happen apart from substantial improvement in civilization. He therefore now held that after instruction in the gospel, “the object of the Missionary ought to be civilization and improvement of the natives in every way”, encouraging Maori to be as resourceful, self-sufficient and able to meet their own needs as was possible.\(^{50}\) He felt the need especially with establishing an effective group of Maori ministers, who needed funding for their permanent support. Hadfield also held the opinion that those entering holy orders “ought to be removed from the temptation of relapsing into the slovenly and dirty habits to which those who have only lately emerged from savage life are so prone”.\(^{51}\) Thomas Chapman had also gauged an urgent need for self-supported Maori ministers by the end of the 1850s. European missionaries remained unable to “dovetail” in with Maori communities as Maori teachers could; a Maori minister could carry out pastoral responsibilities in places that were “hardly attainable by a foreigner”. There was a need for “native ministry” to arise that was self-sufficient, but the “native mind” needed to be brought to desire independence and resourcefulness to be able to support the ministers independent of European aid.\(^{52}\) Civilization was therefore imperative for the continued progress of the Maori church.

How temporal concerns related to “spiritual duties” was also of concern to John Morgan. He thought a missionary in New Zealand had three major areas of responsibility, the first and most important of which was to preach the gospel of Christ, “that the heathen may be made partakers of the riches of Christ”. To be nourished in God’s word, and “renewed in their inner man … in righteousness, and in true holiness” was the greatest need. Following this in importance was a Bible-based education for young people, “that the young growing up with knowledge of the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel may … be fruitful branches in Christ’s true vine, fearing God”. He

\(^{50}\) *Ibid*, March 8, 1847, p.55.


perceived that all the CMS missionaries were in agreement on these two issues, however the third point was a moot one, and that was the advancement of civilization, which Morgan believed would “tend to the preservation of the Maori race, to the promotion of the glory of God, and to the establishment of the people in the faith of Christ”. He held this third duty to be imperative: “for every missionary amongst barbarous and savage tribes, to use every lawful means God may put within his reach, for leading and bringing his people from a state of heathenism and barbarism, to a state of Christianity and civilization”. 53 This is one of the clearest missionary associations of barbarism with unbelief and paganism, and Christianity with civilized life.

But the main spring of action, Morgan stressed, needed to be the love of Christ; civilizing activities were only encouraged with the “ultimate view of spiritual improvement and establishment”. Morgan was convinced that it was “impossible for a savage people to embrace the Gospel and to continue Christians at heart, while they remain barbarians in manners”. The power of Christian faith “elevates the mind and softens the manners of all who embrace it”. So if a barbarous people received the Christian gospel but then neglected the areas of education and improvement in civilization, Morgan feared that as the first excitement of new faith faded, many would return to heathenism, “and their last state will become worse than their first”. Morgan did not want to limit the power and action of God’s grace in the lives of people, but he believed there was a requirement to “walk in the steps of our Lord who went about doing good”. While aware that certain aspects of civilization could draw the minds of believers away from Christ, he also believed “leaving them in an uncivilized state will not secure their union to Christ, but on the contrary it would expose them to many temptations to which if civilized in manners they would not be exposed to”. 54

Though Morgan’s ideas pertaining to civilization aroused the suspicions of the Midland District Committee, in actual fact his thinking was little different from that of his colleagues. In 1852 he received a letter from them highlighting their concerns over his attitudes to civilization and its place in his ministry. The committee of his fellow missionaries was particularly concerned that his efforts to advance the civilization of those in his district were interfering with the spiritual priority of his duties. Whilst pleased with his civilizing efforts, there was a worry that Morgan had allowed the “external and secular branches connected with your station” to concern too much of his

54 John Morgan, Letter to Henry Venn, March 24, 1851.
time, whilst “visiting the people under your charge and preaching to them the gospel, loses its high and prominent order of usefulness”. Morgan was warned not to forget that civilization could not of itself dispel the “darkness of the heart … and that large barns and stacks of corn cannot give your people the peace of God which passes all understanding”. Maori could have good housing and increased wealth, but “the Spirit of grace may have produced little of the image of Christ in their souls”. Morgan was asked to consider his priorities, and to ensure that his “spiritual labours” outweighed his “secular undertakings”, and that his so called secular activities should have the goal of furthering the gospel.55 The warning here was mostly to remind Morgan that the gospel itself was the renovating power and source of civilization; civilizing activities themselves were not the basis of ‘true’ civilization. Morgan was also being warned not to mistake outward progress as a sure sign of inward, spiritual maturity. Morgan’s response to these charges emphasised the inseparability of temporal and eternal issues in his mind: his goal was to “become ‘all things to all men that I may by all means save some’”. He quotes here a statement by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 9:22). The driving force behind his encouragement of civilization was his “hope that under God’s blessing the Gospel of Christ may be more permanently established thereby”. Morgan could not believe that he should “preach the Gospel and baptize the converts, but leave them the same dirty, idle, uncivilized people we found them”.

Faith lent itself to entirely practical issues in Morgan’s opinion, including that of colonization, and Maori relationship with the growing European presence. British settlement in New Zealand had brought him to the conclusion that the missionaries needed to promote improvements in civilization as well as Christianity, as this would facilitate Maori in being united in interest with the arriving European settlers who would provide a market for their goods and crops, enmeshing the people together, and establishing a relationship that would encourage them to “avoid war and to cultivate peace and friendly relations with the British”. Such an interest was in Morgan’s estimation entirely necessary. Christianity needed to be followed with civilization if Maori were to support themselves as a people, educate their children, supply the needs of their own ministers, and encourage the progress of the gospel.56 Morgan saw Maori as having traditionally been “a restless warlike people”, and though Christianity had brought war to an end, “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do”, and for

56 John Morgan, March 4, 1852, pp.543-545.
this reason Morgan wanted to encourage Maori in industry. Maori were an agricultural people, and Morgan saw this as “an opening of Providence” which the missionaries should make the most of, “and endeavour by God’s blessing to lead them on until by his blessing … they become a happy, useful industrious and civilized Christian people”. Faith and temporal living were obviously inseparable in Morgan’s thinking.

Benjamin Ashwell agreed with Morgan’s view that a missionary of true principle was charged with both the eternal and temporal welfare of those under his care. Like Morgan, he sought to secure this through the preaching and teaching of the Gospel and “endeavouring to raise their Social Condition by Civilization”, particularly in his case through the establishment of missionary villages. The command of scripture was “To seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added”, meaning that if the things of faith were pursued, the fruits of civilization would follow. By civilization he did not mean “a spurious and superficial state of social advancement viz Better Houses and Better clothes with the vices also of the white man”, for this was only “a mere transfer of vices, the bloodthirsty barbarian has become the cunning Knave or licentious Profligate”. His remarks were founded upon his own experience of ‘spurious civilization’ among Maori people. Failed attempts at civilization Ashwell put down to a “want of Christian principle” which caused an ungrateful recession into barbarism. Christian faith and truly civilized living were inseparable in Ashwell’s mind. As a result the “benefits of civilization are questionable if bestowed where no Christian principle exists or where that principle is but slightly grounded”. Ashwell thought of missionary villages as a way to partly counter this problem.57

Ashwell, in a letter to Sir George Grey, outlined his theories on the establishment of “missionary villages” of Maori Christian communities. Ashwell regarded Biblical precepts as encouraging separation from “ungodly” neighbours, “who still retain their native customs and habits”, as imperative for improvement and increasing godliness, though his plans excluded those who acted as preachers of the gospel to their countrymen. Ashwell felt that a nearness to “Heathen Habits” would retard growth in Christian faith and advances in civilization. His point of reference is found in 2 Corinthians 6:17, “Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord”. Ashwell supported the idea of “Christian Villages, with all the

57 Benjamin Yate Ashwell to Sir George Grey, September 6, 1868, Grey New Zealand Letters (GLNZ). A13 (3), APL.
loveliness of Christian Principle and Christian Civilization thus alluring the Heathen to embrace the blessings of the Gospel so tangibly set before them”. The excellence of Christian community and civilization would therefore claim the respect of ‘heathen’ Maori, and could act as a refuge for those experiencing the “evil of the native pa” and aid the temporal and eternal welfare of Maori.”

However, contrary to Ashwell, John Morgan believed there was danger in Maori becoming attached to missionary settlements, which was a mode of living that did not encourage Maori to build up “temporal advantages” associated with their traditional homes: “But if on the contrary by the blessing of God we can settle and bind them to their Maori homes”, and this by building up at their places “so many exciting, interesting and lawful scenes and engagements, and thus train Maori youth up in habits of honest industry and sobriety”, Morgan hoped this would help to avert conflict, and promote the cause of the Gospel. Morgan was “convinced that the pursuit of agriculture and pastoral life is much more favourable to the growth of piety than working upon the public roads, exposed to all the temptations of a European town”. His plans were not to put Maori in a position to establish great wealth, but his goal was to:

raise them from savage and revolting cannibalism, to the position of happy and civilized cottagers each village with its little church and school. Each family with their neat boarded cottage, surrounded by orchards and wheat fields, the men employed in … following their ploughs, tending their flocks, and manufacturing their own woollen cloth, and their women … engaged with their sewing, their knitting needles, and their spinning wheels, training their children in habits of honest industry.

Morgan felt a burden to exert his energies in temporal matters only as these efforts complimented his work in the preaching of Christ: “I desire to carry them on only as means subservient to promote the spiritual interests of my people, and to establish them in the faith of Christ”.

Temporal matters had everything to do with faith. Thomas Chapman lamented that the domestic situations of Maori believers required improvement, yet many seemed

58 Ibid.
59 John Morgan, March 4, 1852, pp.545-548.
contented with their situation of “dirt, poverty – no laws – no regulations”. The village of Kenana in Chapman’s district was ‘case in point’: he held long talks with the people there who were “very desirous to raise a scale higher in society”, but there were arguments over pigs, possessions and boundaries to land, neighbouring people, and so on. How the place was to attain a semblance of order and needed prosperity Chapman could not imagine, though their resources were by no means insignificant, possessing a “beautifully situated and fruitful land with a fine deep river running thro’ it … yet almost garmentless and in the spring almost foodless!!!”

It was precisely for this reason that the missionaries blamed moral atrophy for underdevelopment.

Chapman, along with many of his colleagues, considered Maori to be in a transition state in the mid-1850s, characterised by a general desire for improvement in standards of living, and to Chapman the need for civilization seemed quite pronounced. It is interesting to note Chapman’s use of Christian language with that of stadial civilization theory. He spoke of Maori as being “lords of the soil”, but their land lay waste without improvement. This use of language denoting the possession of land without use is classic stadial civilization theory. Barbarism characterised a state of nomadic existence without reclamation and use of the land. Chapman also hoped that if Maori were under a government which “righteously administered” its laws, Maori “might quickly rise”. Unfortunately, few Maori communities seemed interested in either “laws or government – grubbing on and muddling their lives away, wandering from spot to spot – cultivating here and cultivating there and yet literally possessing nothing, because nothing is improved, nothing established”. There were moral pitfalls associated with these things in Chapman’s mind: the “natives have been to school, but they have not finished their education!” By this Chapman meant that Maori had become Christian believers, “but their Christian profession is ‘ahead’ of their social condition”. Chapman associated social improvement with advancement in faith. Chapter seven will explore why Chapman took this attitude. Here, Chapman associated the “one dark night picture” which Maori life, to him, once was, “all heathenism in its godless form”, and contrasted this with what he now saw: “Christ, the way, the truth, and the life”, believed upon.

Obviously, the forms of living that Chapman just described were enmeshed in his mind with “heathenism in its godless form”. The coalescing of Christianity with aspects of

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60 Thomas Chapman, February 9, 1845.
61 Ibid, September 25, 1846.
Enlightenment civilization language highlights the indivisibility of Christianity and civilization in missionary thinking. The following chapters will shed more light on the relationship between the commonly occurring elements of stadial civilization theory in missionary journals, and how and why these were associated with Christian faith.

For evangelical missionaries, the ‘word of the Cross’, as the gospel was sometimes known, had significance for every aspect of human living: Spiritual issues impacted upon temporal life. Evangelicals sought to see the gospel’s power exerting itself in all aspects of human life. True civilization was manifest by the gospel’s influence in every part of society: trade, government, domestic life, education, and industry, and it is to these areas that we will turn in the next few chapters. The argument that the missionaries were in error for not separating their beliefs and religious teachings from culture falls to the ground when it is acknowledged that culture is the very vehicle by which beliefs are articulated. However, conceivably problems could arise with an expectation that the effect of the gospel among a community would be given the same expression that it had had in the development of British society, especially where there had been other factors, besides Christianity, that had contributed to that development. The following chapters will explore the practical outworking of the Christianity-civilization theme in the Maori cultural context. Though there were to be many common elements that belonged to the ‘culture’ of the ‘kingdom of God’, especially in a moral and ethical sense, there were surely distinctive elements of Maori culture that meant that the gospel’s influence there would leave unique and distinguishing marks.
Chapter Six: Swords into Ploughshares, Part One: War and Peace.

We turn now to consider some of the aspects of social life which informed European notions of civilization, the presence, quality and nature of which were measurements of what constituted savage and civilized society. Each of these facets of ‘civilization’ were common in general European thinking as well as being present in evangelical notions on the subject, but, in their distinctive theological way of thinking, were imbued with moral and religious significance for the CMS missionaries in New Zealand. This chapter deals with the one aspect of civilization that was essential for all other areas: the establishment of peace. Theological reasoning was of first importance in missionary criticisms of Maori warfare. Although even civilized societies went to war, it was the on-going presence and nature of Maori warfare, and the volatility of any season of peace, which was seen as the major impediment to rising in the scale of civilization. Henry Williams acknowledged: “We are seated amongst combustible matter”.¹

One of the notable characteristics of civilized society in Enlightenment thought was that war was supposed to be conducted according to certain agreed to conventions, laws of waging warfare which were “designed to soften its rigours”. Civilized people had apparently “learned to make war under the stipulations of treaties”, force being employed, according to eighteenth century philosopher Adam Ferguson, only to secure justice where it was needed, and to safeguard national rights.² In Scottish Enlightenment civilization narratives, as Bruce Buchan explains, the sovereignty of the state, its military monopolization and the practice of war were given great prominence. Enlightenment thinkers envisioned civilization as giving rise to militarily powerful states. The state might be peaceful domestically, but it would be “mighty abroad”. One of the foundations of civilization in Enlightenment thought was the state’s monopoly and co-ordination of violence. Civilized polities were described as being more militarily powerful than barbarous ones. Pacification was achieved by a sovereign state which monopolised violence. Commerce and the arts contributed to the state’s pacifying power: civilization was achieved through the discipline instituted by commercial self

¹ Henry Williams, Early Journals, January 29, 1827, p.42.
interest and its pre-requisite peace. Arthur Thomson, a surgeon with the British Army who believed that capitalism rather than Christianity was the surest method of civilizing Maori, wrote, perhaps echoing this perspective, that while firearms had “promoted peace and civilisation” in the early years of European settlement in New Zealand, the situation in the 1850s would be better if Maori had no access to them and this power instead lay solely with the government. But war, when conducted by civilized states, was not a bad thing. Though civilized states aimed at maintaining a pacific domestic population, warfare as a matter of national pride and power was a different matter.

This perspective differs markedly from evangelical missionary rumination on the subject. Warfare, especially if “interminable” in nature, was considered by the CMS missionaries in New Zealand to be the result of moral debasement and the judgement of God, and was attributed with a de-civilising, barbarising impact. The presence of peace, in contrast, created the basis for a stable, prosperous and civilized society in missionary reasoning. Only Christianity, rather than commerce and the monopolisation of military power, was attributed with real peace-making power.

A basic outline of the missionary position is provided by CMS missionary William Williams. Considering the CMS mission from his vantage point during the wars of the 1860s, Williams believed the first outcome of Christian influence in Maori communities had been to “induce the people to give up that system of warfare which for generations had made every tribe the enemy of its neighbours”. This had led to peace, and an increase of agriculture, as people were able to reap the fruits of their labour without fear of incursion. Upon societal stability rose an increase of production, consumption and commerce. This change, constituting the activities of civilized society, began with Christianity, resulted in peace, an increasing “attention to quiet pursuits” and further “intercourse with civilized man”, encouraging active Maori minds “to habits of greater industry”. Williams determined that a relatively short span of a few years, thanks to the influence of Christianity, had produced a “vast change in their general appearance and pursuits … and, next to the immediate necessaries of life, the proceeds of labour were successively spent in the purchase of steel flour-mills, horses, cattle, ploughs”.

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5 William Williams, Christianity among the New Zealanders, p.351.
William’s view, Christianity had brought peace, which had enabled the establishment of ‘civilized’ and peaceful practices, aiding the prosperity of the Maori community.

The Gospel Brings Peace

The place of Christian faith as the power to end hostility was the most prominent aspect of the evangelical approach to war, peace and civilization. Peace was an important part of both the Christian gospel and missionary ideas about civilization. A society constantly in conflict could never rise in civilization in any significant way. The place of missionaries as mediators between warring Maori communities has been well documented.\(^6\) What is less well known is the basis on which missionary efforts were exercised in attempts to bring conflict to an end. It was not enough for hostilities to cease and peace to be established, but the aim was that “the Prince of Peace … [would] cause their hearts to embrace that Gospel which preaches Glory to God in the Highest, peace on earth and good will to men”. The goal was not just peace with one’s neighbour, but much emphasis was placed on what was considered to be a need for reconciliation and peace with God, signifying the missionary belief that outward hostilities were a manifestation of inward, spiritual hostility against the Creator.\(^7\) The conversations held between the leading men of Rotorua and CMS missionary Alfred Brown were not just on the subject of their making peace with Waharoa and the Waikato people, but also included “the still more important subject of their making peace with God”.\(^8\) In fact, in Brown’s eyes, war could not be ended by “enticing words of man’s wisdom”, but only through the power of “the Spirit of God”.\(^9\) The Gospel itself was often referred to as, “the message of reconciliation”, firstly between God and humanity, and then on the basis of this primary cessation of hostility, between human beings.\(^10\) Christ himself was termed both “Counsellor”, and “The Prince of Peace”.\(^11\)

As Alfred Brown considered measures that might bring an end to fighting between the hostile tribes of Tauranga and Rotorua during 1833, he held to the belief


\(^7\) Alfred Brown, *Journals*, January 23, 1836.

\(^8\) *Ibid*, January 23, 1836 and June 22, 1839.


that “the grand instrument for inducing the New Zealanders to beat their spears into pruning hooks will be not so much civilization as evangelization”, a theory which opposed those who espoused European colonization as the grand instrument of civilization.\(^\text{12}\) The “spears into pruning hooks” statement is quite common in missionary journals, and has its Biblical source in Isaiah chapter two, and Micah 4:1-4, which provide a picture of the nations of the world coming to worship God, learn his ways, and be taught the law of God, causing them to, “beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks”. The result of this event is that the nations never again learn war (Isaiah 2:1-4). This statement is also common in evangelical notions about war and civilization. Barbarous peoples gave up warfare for the worship of God, peace, and peaceful pursuits like agriculture, and their associated prosperity, and by doing so advanced in the scale of civilization.

The preaching of the gospel was “the power of God unto salvation”.\(^\text{13}\) John Wilson believed it was the Christian gospel, and its “ministry of reconciliation”, which dealt with human sin and brought “peace by the blood of Jesus Christ”. Wilson’s statement showcases the idea that sin was the basis of human hostility, especially against God, and the gospel the source of peace and reconciliation. It was by this power, the missionaries freely boasted, that war had ceased for a period around the missionary settlements during the mid-1830s, and it was hopefully through the “instrumentality of missions established at Waikato, Rotorua, Tauranga and Matamata, that the power and spirit of war may be depressed”.\(^\text{14}\) The message of the missionaries had a reputation among Maori themselves for bringing people to, “break in two our clubs to blunt the points of our spears to draw the bullets from our muskets and to make this tribe and that tribe … love one another, and sit as brothers and friends”, and this was also the effect that the missionaries themselves expected to see.\(^\text{15}\) The peoples of Tauranga, though in 1831 yet to have a missionary in residence, had been “acquainted with the missionaries’ message, at least so far to discover that it was the voice of peace and not the blood-spilling whoop of war”. The visit of Thomas Chapman and others to Tauranga resulted in people from that place visiting the Bay of Islands specifically because of hearing about, “the good missionaries were doing, how they were teaching the natives to leave

\(^{12}\) Alfred Brown, August 16, 1842. For similar sentiments see John Morgan, Journals, September 9, 1833.

\(^{13}\) Octavius Hadfield, ‘Sermon on the Maori Mission’, Maoris of By-Gone Days, 1902, p.21.

\(^{14}\) John Wilson, Letters, June 2, 1835.

\(^{15}\) William Yate, Account of New Zealand, p.248.
war and live peaceably – they also wished to know about the word of God … that they wished to be instructed in these peaceable and better things and to be told what they ought to do”.16 Alfred Brown was eventually to begin a new station at Tauranga.

**Sin and War**

Once again, the primary emphasis of the missionaries was placed on their Biblical view of the nature of fallen humanity. In relation to war and hostility, the scriptural verses most commonly referred to are from Romans 3:10-18.17 As outlined in previous chapters, it was sinful human nature, and the human cultures which sprang form human depravity, which were believed to explain the “dreadful state” which missionaries perceived Maori people to be in, and particularly the seemingly constant conflict between persons and tribes that missionaries reported they beheld. “Natural disposition”, or human nature at enmity with God, manifested itself among Maori as an eagerness for war: “as soon as an opportunity is afforded they shew their warlike propensity or rather, their thirst for blood”.18 The comments of William Williams in his history of Maori Christianity were rather blunt: “War had been the glory of the New Zealanders from the earliest times”, he declared, with the memory of wrong done against an individual or tribe long remembered over generations: “there was still the record handed down from father to son of some old grievance which was to be avenged whenever an opportunity should occur”.19 The observations of Alfred Brown were also in this vein: “Bloodshed appears to be the only theme on which they delight to dwell. Speak to them on any point connected with the expected war and they will listen eagerly to you, but a Gospel of peace, love, goodwill has no charms for them”. 20 For one rangatira, his attachment to war was expressed in the highest terms, as a “wife and children and tobacco to me”.21

Thomas Chapman was one missionary who spoke of the “interminable character of Native wars”. He associated the nature of war in Maori society with “bad customs”, and endeavoured to demonstrate to those Maori people he knew “how unsafe life must

17 Alfred Brown, March 21, 1836. November 22, 1836, and John Morgan, August 24, 1842. This passage also expounds human evil, and states for the context of this chapter: “their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their paths, and the paths of peace they have not known”.
18 Henry Williams, *Early Journals of Henry Williams*, February 24, 1827, p.44.
20 Alfred Brown, April 15, 1838.
ever be so long as these prevailed … how wretched it made them. I exhorted them to believe in God”. It was ‘native ritenga’, and particularly the belief in utu that the missionaries blamed for many of the conflicts that took place: “If the chiefs were asked when their wars would be at an end, they replied never, because it is the custom of every tribe which loses a man not to be content without satisfaction, and nothing less than the death of one individual can atone for the death of another.” Wrongdoing needed to be avenged for the good of Maori society. But seeking and attaining utu was labelled a “barbarous practice” by William Williams. John Wilson, when joining a party of Waikato Nui Maori on their way to Rotorua for the sake of utu, discovered they possessed a deep feeling that there could be no peace with their enemies, the Ngati Whakaue tribe, until some satisfaction had been made for committed wrongs. Similar sentiments were expressed during debates over the need for a “fight” from Waikato to proceed against Rotorua, because of a ‘murder’ that had been committed: “None of them attempted to palliate the conduct of Huka, the murderer of Hunga. They all said it would be “straight” for Waharoa to take a fight against Rotorua, and that no permanent peace could be effected until he had done so.” However, in this case attempts were being made to make an alternative ‘payment’ for the murder through missionary mediation.

Not only the presence, but also the nature of Maori warfare caused the missionaries to associate war with barbarism. Peace between the people of the Thames and Waharoa of Waikato and his principal chiefs was spoken of as: “the cessation of those hostilities which have for so long been fearfully distinguished for treachery and bloodshed”. The problem was not only the presence of warfare, but the perceived nature of that warfare which is indicative of missionary attitudes on this subject. The experience of Richard Taylor informed him that Maori law “is strictly an eye for an eye”; on one occasion a fighting party would not let a series of retaliatory strikes end while “they have had five wounded of which two were great chiefs whilst the other party only had one shot”, so it could not be a “sufficient satisfaction or as they term it, payment”. Situations like this led William Williams in hindsight to recount that

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22 Thomas Chapman, June 18, 1848.
23 William Williams, Christianity Among the New Zealanders, p.79.
24 William Williams, Williams Family Letters and Journals, July 18, 1830.
25 John Wilson, Letters, July 15, 1836.
26 Alfred Brown, January 22, 1836.
27 Alfred Brown, September 19, 1835.
28 Richard Taylor, Journals, August 20, 1841.
something like a “new principle” was at this time required to end the “interminable acts of treachery and bloodshed”, a principle which would come from outside Maori custom and worldview. This was needed because under the then current system he judged it possible for any “wicked” person to commit “murder”, but Maori custom would not “visit the murderer as among civilized nations”, but the whole tribe of the murderer would be the targets of visitation, and the outcome of this course of action, Williams deduced, was that “vengeance fell upon the innocent”. 29 Civilization has a long history of association with fair and non-arbitrary administration of justice by the state. 30 However, in Williams’ mind it was Christianity, not the state, which would act as the “new principle” for regulating justice, Jesus Christ being upheld as the utu or satisfaction for wrongdoing, as alluded to in chapter three, and Christian principles would then provide the right system of justice by which punishment for the crime could be levelled. Indeed, it was Christianity which became the basis of the new ‘legal’ codes which were to be set up in the new professing Christian communities, as chapter eight argues.

Savage Warfare

Moreover, Maori forms of hostility were considered to be a reflection of a ‘depraved’ state, and it is interesting to note that the terms ‘savage’ and ‘barbarous’ often accompanied missionary denunciations of Maori forms of warfare. John Morgan described the murder and mutilation of a woman by a party of 70 men from Rotorua as being: “part of the horrid system of savage warfare. The 70 who barbarously murdered the poor woman would return home with hearts filled with hellish joy and gladness and exult in their works of darkness, receiving the praise of their friends for having accomplished so heroic an act”. 31 “Savage warfare”, “barbarous murder” and “works of darkness”, a biblical phrase associated with people who live under the reign of Satan, are connected together in Morgan’s description.

Missionaries were not averse to describing the gory details of war expeditions, and these descriptions highlight what made Maori warfare of ‘barbarous’ or ‘savage’ nature in missionary eyes. Richard Davis in his Memoirs used the term ‘barbarous’ to

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29 William Williams, Christianity Among the New Zealanders, p.183.
31 John Morgan, February 12, 1840.
describe a taua from Waitangi that went to exact utu. After going to the Thames to fight, the group then went to a place near Paihia to “punish the misdemeanour of a young man. They broke his arm, and beat him cruelly. They then butchered a poor slave girl in the most barbarous manner before the young man.” Davis continued to detail the mutilation of the girl’s body, and the taunting of her captors: “The merciless barbarians then cut off her legs while she was alive, and finally roasted and ate her. They told the young man that they had done this as a punishment for his crime.”

These detailed descriptions of death and gore no doubt helped to highlight the difference between pre-Christian days and Maori after they had ‘heard’ the gospel. In reporting the effect of the gospel on one tribe, Davis claimed that Maori history was once, “little else but war in all its savage forms - rapine, murder, and desolation”. On another occasion Davis remarked: “Their cruelties on fighting expeditions are most horrible. They do not, like Europeans, stand up to fight each other, but prowl about to cut off and murder small detached parties.” Those who were not killed were made into slaves, “and if in these expeditions they fall in with a person who has killed any of their friends, they use him horribly”. Such was indicative of ‘savage’ forms of warfare. “Sometimes they cut the flesh from the body, and roast and eat it, while their victim is yet alive. This is rarely done, and only upon extraordinary revengeful occasions”. These passages clearly indicate that it was not just conflict, but the nature of that conflict, that made a people savage or barbarous in missionary perceptions.

**War and Satan**

As explained in a general sense previously, the missionaries believed the Maori obsession with war was not just action on a solely human level, but that warfare was the manifestation of the action of spiritual powers, indeed, of Satan himself. William Williams spoke of the famous Ngapuhi chief Hongi and his war party as exercising “their savage propensities”, at the same time as their “being under the influence of the evil one …willingly (doing) his bidding”. The action of this war party, he narrated, was, “a melancholy picture of the extreme degradation and cruelty to which human nature may be reduced when left to itself”. Again he commented, “They were the willing

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34 *Ibid*, May 18, 1829, p.126.
slaves of Satan, and the more they gave themselves up to his power, the stronger was the influence which he exercised over them …The people were bent upon deeds of blood; and it was unwelcome to them to be reminded that their whole course was wrong”. 35 This passage clearly associates ‘savage’ desires with human degradation, evil and the power of Satan.

Williams was not alone in attributing the unsettled state of constant violence, and the nature of that violence, to the schemes of Satan. Due to the threat of possible attacks by different parties, one missionary commented that he dwelled “where Satan’s seat is”. 36 Brown also referred to the outbreak of warfare as the “triumph of Satan” because it scattered interested parties from the mission settlements, and rendered “their minds less susceptible to the impressions of Divine Truth by the hardening, debasing and brutalizing scenes of savage warfare”. 37 In 1830 Richard Davis reported battles taking place on every side of his settlement at Paihia, which he too deemed the result of the stirring of “our great adversary”. 38

Those who professed Christianity were often tempted to take up arms and defend what they felt to be their rights, but this instead proved to be a “prejudicial influence on our labours and are hindrances to the cordial reception of the Gospel”. 39 Those professing Christians caught up in conflict were viewed by William Puckey as “poor deluded creatures”, who had been deceived by the Devil. 40 There is the implication here that the powers of darkness, and therefore the savagery thought to be a part of this so-called evil system, stood in direct opposition to Christianity and the message of the gospel. Savagery in these instances had nothing to do with primitivism and backwardness, but had moral and spiritual ties to its meaning. The temptation was always present for Christian believers to seek utu or retaliate and seek vengeance, as the missionaries viewed things, and this was especially so when it seemed a believer had been murdered. The idea that believers would be justified in seeking utu was attributed to the scheming of Satan by the missionaries. It was not uncommon for such occasions to spark a return to “native ritenga”. At Otumoetai pa near Tauranga there was a considerable falling away from steadfast Christian faith due to a murder, but in addition to this, “the Satanic idea possesses them that as their relatives belonged to the believing

36 Alfred Brown, May 21, 1836.
37 Ibid, March 20, 1838.
38 Richard Davis, Memoirs, March 15, 1830, p.128.
39 Benjamin Ashwell, Journals, Letter, October 25, 1845.
40 William Puckey, Journals, July 14, 1852.
party, they ought to murder some believers belonging to the tribe of Taraea as an Utu”. This was not the end of the matter, however, for the strong opinion of many CMS personnel was that, “as many as are ordained to eternal life will … hold fast the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, notwithstanding the fearful power still maintained in the world and in the heart by our great spiritual enemy”.41

Finally, the events that were happening in the material world were to the missionaries a manifestation of a kind of ‘clash of kingdoms’ or battle that was also happening in an unseen realm. John Morgan is perhaps the most explicit in his explanation, remembering the situation south of the Bay of Islands during the 1830s:

Darkness covered the earth and Satan reigned without a rival. The Thames Station was established that year and Mangapouri, Tauranga, and Rotorua Stations quickly followed. Satan could not allow such an encroachment upon his kingdom without resistance. War and bloodshed followed with all its attendant horrors – and for a season dark, dark indeed were our prospects … even then Christ had a little church and he added to that church daily those who were to be saved. The good work among natives commenced just before war broke out, but neither the malice of Satan, nor the working of ungodly men could arrest the work of the Lord.42

However, as much as the works of war parties and a persistent belief in the need for utu was attributed to the reign and rule of Satan, the missionaries believed the true antidote to such a conundrum was the reign and rule of Christ replacing it. So again, all hope was placed on the power of the gospel. In many lamentations over the bloody scenes that filled missionary eyes, the stock answer seems to have been something along the lines of: “Oh Lord! Hasten the time …when men shall learn war no more, when Thy Kingdom shall come, and Thy will be done with as much delight in this miserable world, even as it is done in heaven”.43 In another survey of the apparent evils of human nature by John Wilson after the men of Tauranga were defeated, and he feared probably ‘barbarously’ dealt with by Rotorua Maori, he immediately looked to the hoped for day when, “the heathen shall be given to the Son for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession”, a reference to Psalm 2 and the promise of Christ’s reign

41 Alfred Brown, August 28, 1842.
42 John Morgan, August 24, 1842.
43 John Wilson, Letters, August 25, 1835; also John Morgan, September 29, 1836.
over the nations.  

John Morgan articulated the same idea in a situation akin to that of Wilson, maintaining that “through the preaching of the ‘cross of Christ’ the kingdom of Satan in the hearts of these poor heathen may be broken down and the kingdom of God’s ‘beloved son established upon its ruins.’”  

Ultimately, though Satan “strives for the mastery … he is chained, and Christ must reign until he hath put all enemies under His feet.”

The missionaries commonly interpreted the events of war as a form of God’s anger or judgement. Richard Taylor believed that judgement had been upon Tahana Turoa, a Wanganui leader, for his persistence in war after the gospel had been introduced. He had apparently, according to Taylor, invited some men from Taupo to come down and “cut off” the people of Waitotara. After this event the chief’s health had declined quite dramatically, which Taylor attributed to his persistence in going to war after he had heard the gospel. Taylor was not remiss in his duties, reminding Turoa’s men that “nearly all the great chiefs who persisted in war since the introduction of the Gospel have been successively cut off”. Taylor also brought to their attention that it was from “the very time Turoa invited the hostile natives to come down God’s hand had been upon him”. This was also the case when Alfred Brown learned of attempts to enlist the tribes of Waikato, Kawhia and Whangaroa to join another in attacking Rotorua: “The Rider on the Red horse seems to be travelling throughout the length and breadth of this benighted land “to take peace from the earth and that they should kill one another.” This statement is a reference to a passage from the book of Revelation which depicts God’s exercise of judgement upon the earth through the presence of warfare.

All peace that came was attributed to the work of God, and not missionary efforts, or circumstances. Indeed, even the waging of war itself was seen as the activity of God’s sovereign reign over the islands of New Zealand. There were often far too many complexities involved for it to appear likely that peace could ever be made. At Rewarewa pa in Alfred Brown’s district, the principal chief, though willing for peace, “did not know how peace could be made, there being so many persons to consult who

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44 John Wilson, *Letters*, May 9, 1836.
45 John Morgan, April 29, 1834.
46 Alfred Brown, December 13, 1839.
48 Alfred Brown, May 16, 1836.
wished to continue the war, and then the relatives of those persons were compelled to take an active part whatever their own inclination on the subject might be”.  

William Williams described the “grand and wonderful” change, which he thought the Christian gospel had effected upon Maori communities, as one of Maori being transformed from being “by nature the children of wrath” to those who were “children of God”. This transformation was all the more striking because Maori were originally “savage heathens … the very lowest grade of human beings.” Williams made this statement in the light of Maori conversion and baptism, and again this should be seen as a correlation between “savage heathenism” and the history and nature of Maori forms of conflict, contrasted with Maori conversion to Christian faith: “the tide of ages, dark ages, bloody ages, ages of murder and treachery, cruelty and hatred … and yet here stand the children of murderers, accepting offered mercy”.  

In William’s mind the ‘savage heathens’ noted for blood, treachery and cruelty, had been transformed into civilized beings through Christian conversion.

**War Brings Barbarism**

Barbarism was also considered by the CMS missionaries to be one of the major effects of conflict. The term did not just point to the nature of conflict, but also to what was left behind afterwards. The meaning of barbarism in such cases has more to do with underdevelopment and primitivism, but this is again traced back to the propensity and driven-ness to war, a moral failing. Poverty and a lack of prosperity among the communities that Richard Taylor visited in the Taranaki region he often attributed to a willingness to go off to war. In a meeting with a man called Taratoa relative to a conflict over claims to the Rangitikei river, Taylor reminded him that he had “counselled them to have nothing to do with the war then raging, that they had listened to me and the consequence was that they had wonderfully prospered in temporal things whilst the hostile natives had become impoverished although they had plundered the pakehas”. ‘Temporal happiness’, which it would seem could not exist whilst conflict continued, was often equated with civilization by the missionaries. The state of peace in the Maori communities where William Puckey was stationed was a cause for great encouragement.

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50 Alfred Brown, July 3, 1839.
51 William Williams, *Christianity*, p.90.
There was no desire to be involved in war, “for they are convinced that it is more profitable to live at home with their families, and enjoy the fruits of their labours”. Few from this place went off to join in the war between Heke and the government, and those few who went and returned wounded were jeered by their relations.  

The famous Wanganui chief Te Heuheu insisted on retaining the right to use armed conflict to defend what he believed were his rightful possessions. In a conversation with Taylor, Te Heuheu alluded to Hone Heke’s defiant action of pulling down the British flag at Kororareka, insinuating that war was a good thing, and good for the prosperity of Maori: “it arose from the Ngapuhi having their eyes open and their being resolved again to being their own masters”. Taylor reasoned with him on the “wickedness of war” and interestingly claimed that, “by fighting with his own countrymen he most effectually assisted in hindering their advancement”.  

Later, a crisis meeting was called by the people in Taylor’s district to discuss the tensions with the government in the area, and the desire of some to pursue a war over the dividing up of their land under the Wanganui land sale arrangements. Iwikau, having very recently assumed the name Te Heuheu, visited Taylor and the people of the pa where he resided, to garner support for a war with the British government over the unfair nature of the arrangement. Manihera, one of Taylor’s teachers who would later be martyred, at the meeting convened to discuss the matter insisted on Maori forsaking war as one of the old customs that now needed to be rescinded. Taylor recorded him as stating: “the old seed potatoes are of no use, they are rotten … old customs are bad and must be abandoned [,] we must look to the new law which God’s word has made us acquainted with”. Another of Taylor’s teachers, George Kingi, supported Manihera in his opinion, insisting that they should no longer “fight against God”. Taylor instead exhorted the Wanganui tribes “to walk in the light whilst they had it and to forsake darkness”, alluding to both the wickedness of war itself, and the social degradation which resulted from it.

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53 William Puckey, *Journals*, no date recorded, 1846.  
Civilizing Christianity

Christianity was attributed with a countering, civilizing capability by the missionaries. Often missionary documents contain reflections on the contrast that the missionaries perceived between the nature of Maori communities prior to Christian faith taking hold, and the scenes after its establishment. The resistance of professedly Christian Kawakawa Maori to the provocation of Waikato in early 1836 was related by Benjamin Ashwell to the power of the Gospel, “for they said, since we have heard the gospel, we will not fight … One chief who had eight sons said he would buy eight books, i.e. the gospel of St. Luke instead of eight guns for his sons, for they would do them more good”.  

Ashwell also attributed the peace-making attitude, during a dispute with Ngatipou, of William Tawaitai, whose previous “notoriety as a voracious cannibal and brave warrior is known throughout NZ”, to the influence of the gospel. That the dispute over an eel fishery near Wangape which Tawaitai was involved in trying to settle did not end in bloodshed was solely attributed to Christian influence: “All were unanimous in saying that only for the Rongopai (Gospel) much blood would have been shed, to the God of that blessed Gospel be all the glory.”

The coming of Christianity did not put an end to disputes, but was effectual in providing a pacific basis upon which grievances could be addressed. After Benjamin Ashwell held discussions over a dispute between warring professing Christian parties, he addressed the gathering from Psalm 51, emphasising the need for the parties to repent of their sin and forsake any resort to war. After prayers and classes with the groups the next day, the problem was still not adequately dealt with, and Ashwell could not be certain of how things would turn out, “there being a few badly disposed natives in both parties”. Yet Ashwell was assured that the gospel had had some effect on the parties in bringing them to pray before they assembled for discussions together, in “inducing something like courtesy in their conduct to each other”, and also in “preventing bloodshed in the moment of confusion and disorder”. He was afraid that only a few of the professors in the parties were “really and truly changed characters”, but there were at least some, and anyway, he supposed, even “the blessing which the mere outward profession of Christianity (as regards this world) has brought to this people contrasted

with their native customs and superstitions is great”, and this especially when one remembered that previously the entire population along the river where they were situated would normally have been involved in war under “far less provocation” than was present in this instance.59

The ‘barbarous’ nature of Maori warfare seemed to have subsided by the mid-1840s. Having by the experience of circumstance been “led to notice the horrible cruelties which used to be practised by the New Zealanders in every war which they undertook”, William Williams could mark a difference between Maori conduct in war before Christianity had extended itself with that of Hone Heke’s struggle in 1845, “when a conflict no less fierce and determined was carried on with the English government, but modified in its character by the benign influence of Christianity”.60

The convincing power of Christianity to put down war had been proven to Richard Davis. He knew of an “aggravated murder” that had been perpetrated against a young woman belonging to a party living at Kaikohe, and that some of the people there who had not “received Christianity in the love of it” were stirred up to take revenge for the attack. But Davis thought “even this was overruled for good, as the power and spirit of Christianity were by this circumstance manifested”. For the Christian party to have allowed the murder to go unnoticed would not, in Davis’ view, have been a manifestation of faith at all, but a sinful thing to do. But dealing with the circumstance without war was extremely difficult. The party from Kaikohe assembled with the people of Waimate, among whom the killer had resided, “to make peace with them, and (to use their own expression) to make the surface of the country peaceful”. The chiefs carried on a “most gratifying” meeting in Davis’ presence: “The speeches evidenced the most complete triumph of the Gospel of a public nature I ever witnessed. In former times all would have been wild confusion in the army … and all store-houses broken open and plundered amidst musket-firing and dancing”. But now everything was conducted with order and discretion, and the visitation took place in quietness: “Not a gun was fired. Not an angry word was spoken … but in the evening the voice of prayer and praise was heard throughout the camp. You will rejoice with me in this victory of the cross.” Davis thought, “such a scene of peace and good-will was an ample reward for all our past

60 William Williams, Christianity, p.40.
toil”, and such an event constituted, “a signal manifestation of the power of religion over the savage mind”.  

Several years later, at a meeting of leading chiefs at Waitotara, many acknowledged the “power of God in bringing to naught” a recent war expedition, and one of Taylor’s teachers, George Kingi, felt it incumbent upon himself to declare that whilst “great is the power of Satan amongst men his power must decrease whilst that of Christ must go on increasing until all obey it”. This was because God had apparently “conquered us, we must obey him … our Taua is against sin, that peace may prevail”. John Williams, a teacher under the watchful eye of Richard Taylor once remarked to him that the gospel “enabled them to go about into every hole and corner of the land fearless of danger”, although previously only war parties had had this privilege. Whether Christianity had actually affected this change is irrelevant: what matters is that both missionaries and converts believed this was so, which helps us to better comprehend how Christianity and civilization could be linked in the evangelical worldview.

The idea that believers were not to take vengeance themselves, but allow God to do so, became a constant theme in missionary counsel to Maori during discussions over grievances. The missionaries believed that allowing God to dispense utu would have powerful consequences, not just in punishing perpetrators of injustice, but even in bringing repentance and conversion to some. In the event of the murder of Manihera, a teacher and martyr from Taranaki, Richard Taylor took this stance. Manihera, from the Ngati Ruanui people in the Taranaki region, was for many years the head teacher of the noted coastal pa of Waokena, near current day Hawera and Whareroa, and as a ‘teacher’ was highly respected by both Christian believers in Taranaki, and Richard Taylor, the CMS missionary in the area. Though believing he would die, Manihera proceeded to share the gospel as a ‘missionary’ with his hereditary enemies of Ngati Tuwharetoa at Tokaanu. Taylor described Manihera’s mission to proclaim the Gospel to his “hereditary enemies” at Taupo as one of love: “the blood of the saints is indeed the seed of the church and Taupo and this nest of murderers too must now become the possession of the Most High”. Taylor’s words perhaps did not fall too far from the mark. Taylor met
with the people involved in the death of Manihera, and finding Te Huiatahi of Ngati Waewae there, who had carried out the killings, Taylor discovered that he “did not wish to continue the evil or carry it further”, and all was now in agreement with their ritenga. Taylor told the gathering that Manihera had been God’s servant, carrying out his duty, and therefore Taylor “left judgement to Him who has said vengeance is mine I will recompense … I trusted they would be led to see the enormity of their crime and repent of it”. Taylor did not want any to attempt to avenge Manihera’s death, as he had been killed “in accordance with their ancient customs let their blood be the price of a permanent peace between the tribes and henceforth let love prevail”. Interestingly, Taylor allowed traditional Maori custom to stand at this point. Some at Oroua, as friends of Manihera, recommended war in response to his death, but Taylor questioned their motives, telling them they were not talking as believers in Christ. Apparently, war “was not the business of Christ’s people”; they were not to fight with “an earthly weapon”, but a “spiritual one – the word of God. I bid them cleave to Christ and leave this to him. We were the members only of his body he was the head, and he said vengeance is mine I will recompense and repay”. It would seem that strong theological reasoning lay behind Taylor’s ideas of warfare and justice.

Barbarism was concomitant with warfare as far as CMS missionaries were concerned, both in the nature of the warfare itself, and the social situation which sprang from warring endeavours. Missionaries depicted Maori culture itself, under the designs of Satan, as responsible for the continual nature of conflict in Maori communities. But it was Christianity which provided a basis on which peace could be negotiated and established, first between human beings and God, and then between human beings themselves. Christian faith encouraged acts of vengeance to be left with God, who would repay the offender, for justice supposedly was his to exercise. Upon these thoughts the Christian believer was to forsake bloodshed, and instead give their energies to productive activities which could build up civilization rather than destroy it. These are not the ways an Enlightenment-based civilization theorist imagined the pacification of barbarous communities. Often pacification was thought to follow political evolution and commercial development, but for CMS missionaries it was religion that held the key to beginnings of peaceful society. Peace could only be maintained on this basis too.

While historians may be reluctant to attribute the ensuing peace that happened simultaneously with the extension of the Christian gospel to Maori people to the Christian message itself, there is little doubt that this is the way the missionaries themselves perceived things. Christianity provided an alternative rationale, a means by which the usual response of utu could be avoided through negotiation and payment for wrongs committed. After the infiltration of Christianity the missionaries detected a change of conduct in the action of war when it did break out. The end of warfare, whether it was through the influence of the gospel as the missionaries saw things, or just due to favourable circumstances, created an environment in which Maori society could again establish itself, and formed the basis for future prosperity. It was on this solid foundation that the other changes which missionaries hoped to see within Maori society, such as improvements in industry, education, government and domestic life, were to be built.
The CMS missionaries in New Zealand hoped that once lasting peace was established, intended to exist not just on a temporal basis but also a spiritual one, other areas of social improvement could be more thoroughly attended to. One of the major associations with peace in missionary thinking on Maori community life was civilization on the domestic front: the ability to improve industriousness, augment domestic living, and foster the pursuit of agricultural development. Though considerable significance was attached to the place of work and industry in general European ideas on social development and the civilization of ‘barbarous’ cultures, and the missionaries regarded Enlightenment-based ideas on the practical and physical aspects of social development, such as settled abodes and technological and commercial development to be important, the missionaries’ theological worldview insisted there was a moral and religious significance which underlay these aspects of social development in the missionary civilizing scheme. Once again, this set missionary ideas on civilization apart from other European settlers.

It was not as though technology, agriculture and commerce did not matter to the missionaries; they did. Enlightenment notions of civilization, as referred to in chapter four, had indeed filtered into missionary thinking and informed their understanding of civilization. The difference between evangelicals and their non-evangelical counterparts was that these aspects of civilization depended upon a moral and religious reformation in order to function well, and the missionaries thought a morally upright and godly form of living was the primary goal of such development. Sometimes this moral focus had to do with being able to provide for family and community, and not being dependent on others for support; at other times it was associated with living a settled and productive lifestyle; in other instances it was seen as a way of employing one’s time in a useful manner, which helped to waylay the presence and action of sin in both personal life, and that of the community. A mind intent on productivity was apparently less concerned with ‘petty quarrels’ and more wary of becoming involved in conflict. However, the other thing to be avoided besides the sin of ‘indolence’ was the sin of ‘covetousness’, and it was not uncommon for missionaries to interpret work ethic and increasing prosperity as a sign that the latter was gaining an ascendancy.
Perhaps the most obvious example of contrasting, non-evangelical perspective is provided by the non-evangelical British Army surgeon Arthur Thomson. Though he regarded Christianity as having a civilizing influence, this was far from the morally renovating attributes attributed to Christian faith by the missionaries. In fact, Thomson gave commerce, industry, the ability to speak English, intellectual attainments, the presence of English settlement, law and the institution of individual property far more credence in their civilizing power than Christian faith itself. For Thomson, civilization was achievable outside of evangelical Christian faith. Although the missionaries also considered commerce, law, agriculture and industry as important aspects of civilization, this was because they played important roles in living a morally upright and fruitful life, helping to keep sin at bay, than because they enabled constant material gain and consumption, which was what Thomson was interested in:

Men cannot, like instinctive animals, remain stationary; nations go back in knowledge, if they do not advance. It is therefore a necessary element of true civilisation, that one generation have more of this physical and moral wealth than that which preceded it ... the best test of civilisation is progress; and such progress can only be measured by the amount of free labour the people exchange in purchasing articles of usefulness and gratification.

Both evangelical and Enlightenment civilization theories attached importance to settled forms of living, but their reasons for doing so were quite different. The want of a settled abode was a classic signifier of barbarism, a theme almost universal in theories of civilization. George Craik associated a wandering lifestyle with primitivism, and the lack of political institutions, as did utilitarian philosopher John Mill. Societal development was never far from evangelical practical and moral priorities, and a settled rather than nomadic lifestyle was considered an aspect of civilized community in missionary thinking too. But the evangelical missionaries of the CMS in New Zealand provided theologically-based reasons for advocating a settled abode in their civilizing

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scheme. One of the reasons Alfred Brown gave for having concentrated settlement was religious: Brown wanted those groups of people who normally came together for worship at different locations on a mountain to live together in a central location for the sake of their own faith and Christian maturity. Although one Maori chief thought it “of little consequence whether they lived together in one body or continued in their present scattered state”, insisting that God was with them whichever state they lived in, others agreed with Brown’s thoughts, that the community would be spiritually stronger if they united together in one place:

In our native state … when an attack is made on a distant tribe, or when we are expecting an assault from our enemies, we all assemble from distant parts and live together in a pa. We are now … always exposed to a great enemy (Satan) and we should be stronger to resist him if we lived together and consulted together and prayed together.⁵

The hearing of the Gospel was also John Morgan’s reason for advocating the concentrated settlement of Christian Maori at Otawhao. The “migratory” and “unsettled” state of the people led him towards planning for their “settlement and civilization”. This was primarily because “their wandering habits prevented their advancement in civilization and Christianity”. Morgan believed God’s blessing and gospel had brought war to an end, but in consequence Maori had “scattered themselves” over a large area, making it extremely difficult for their missionary to keep up with their changing locations in order to “keep each little party continually under the sound of the Gospel”. This fact created the “necessity of endeavouring to concentrate, settle and bind them to certain favourable localities”.⁶ Cultivating industriousness was also aided by concentrated settlement.⁷ Work and fruitful productivity were of both moral and religious importance; the missionary to Tahiti William Ellis insisted the industry and commerce were necessary for religious and moral improvement.⁸ Therefore, the missionaries advocated a settled lifestyle for the sake of maturing in Christian faith, which included industriousness and fruitfulness, part of godly living in the missionary mind.

⁶ John Morgan, March 4, 1852, p.542.
Of course, the hearing of the gospel was of first importance, as only Christian faith was believed to possess the moral power to motivate barbarous peoples in living in an industrious, and therefore righteous, manner. Marshall argued that attempting to civilize without first evangelizing ‘savages’ would prove to be impossible, especially when it came to living a disciplined life:

The unsettled conduct and unsteady pursuits of the savage, without the means or the necessity of constant occupation, unexposed to the exigencies of civilized modes of life, and unaccustomed to the corresponding enjoyments resulting from their orderly disposal, and regular employment of time and labour could not become steady and persevering and attentive, and so cannot hold down regular employment.  

It was only Christianity which could supply much needed “motives and principles”. If the ‘savage’ became a Christian, through conversion and faith the love of God would fill the believer with “an unfailing, undying, undecaying principle of industry”. A wandering lifestyle and lack of industry were primarily moral issues, not an index of primitivism per se. Therefore, says Marshall, if a person came to know the love of God, “it will constrain him to constancy in well doing, as well as to good works”. It was evident to Marshall that God’s blessing caused a group of people to produce “wholesome habits of industry” through employment in productive occupations, and to also benefit from education and an “acquisition of much and varied knowledge, to which they were previously strangers”. This knowledge included “practical application to the improvement of their own social condition” and envisaged Maori attaining the skills of artisans such as carpenters, bricklayers and smiths. As a consequence of these ‘improvements’, missionaries would often employ “native lads” to do work around the stations, such as gardening, fencing, sawing, building etc. So the Gospel was held to be the source of Maori improvements in industry and productivity.

For the missionaries, technological improvements were also traced to gospel influence. Chimney building heralded the arrival of civilization for Alfred Brown in his district, indicating that he allotted technological development a place in his personal

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12 Alfred Brown, April 13, 1835, p.3.
theory of civilization. This “new and strange” technology was so interesting to local Maori that Brown was heralded a *tohunga* for his chimney building skills, “although the veriest bricklayer’s labourer would have pronounced me a burglar at my work”. In stark contrast to these perceived primitive beginnings, by 1849 the people of Maungatautari had become “on a very extensive scale, practical farmers, millers and bakers”. Yet new techniques and technologies weren’t the only difference; some leading chiefs of Ngatihaua “who had been among the most bloodthirsty and desperate cannibals NZ has produced”, were now “clothed and in their right mind” thanks to the influence of the Gospel, and had “determined to serve the Saviour”. These men were now “anxious for a water mill. So sure is it that civilization will follow the reception of the Gospel”. This link between conversion and advancing technological and commercial development highlights the distinctive moral and religious basis of civilization theory in evangelical thinking. Social advancement in these practical areas, like everything else in missionary considerations, stemmed from moral and religious bases.

Industriousness and usefulness were considered moral qualities, and also stemmed from Christian faith. Thomas Chapman observed over the years something of an improvement in Maori ‘help’ around his station, a pleasing outcome of mission work. Local Maori supplied considerable help with fencing and carpentry work, and were seemingly “bending in greater or less degree to our wills and requirements”. This was to Chapman quite remarkable when taking into account the “inverteracy of native habits and the unyielding disposition of the savage mind”. Chapman’s statements indicate that to him regular industry and productivity were both essentially civilized in nature; but he attributed improvements in these to the influence of the gospel over time.

It took time and example for Christian principle to work its way into areas of living, and industriousness presented certain problems, as Jane Williams alluded to. From Turanga and Poverty Bay in mid 1840, Jane made the observation that there existed few willing workmen in the area despite the fact it was a well-populated district. She and her husband William were finding it “very difficult to get any one to work, the two great national characteristics, indolence and covetousness having quite the ascendancy at present”. But even the Christian Maori who had been under religious

13 *Ibid*, June 12, 1835, p.11.
15 Benjamin Ashwell, January 16, 1849.
16 Thomas Chapman, June 28, 1832.
instruction for a long time, “cannot see the benefit and necessity of industry, so we cannot be surprised here to see the aversion to regular employment”.\textsuperscript{17} She wanted a few “helpmates to set an example” of godly industry.\textsuperscript{18} According to Thomas Chapman, the establishment of farming and agriculture under the auspices of a missionary employee would also be an opportunity to provide local Maori communities with the moral and practical example of the “noiseless industry and effective operations of a pious English labourer”, as well as food for the mission.\textsuperscript{19} An English labourer was not enough; a pious one, with his moral and religious qualities, would enable others to follow the example of godly labour.

These two excerpts with their focus on “godly industry” capture something of the attitude of missionaries towards industriousness, and its relationship to civilization. Indolence and covetousness, essentially considered to be sin or moral problems by the missionaries, were the two major issues which needed to be addressed if Maori were to ‘rise’ in the scale of civilization in missionary eyes. Healthy living was connected with an industrious lifestyle. The cultivation at Te Kupenga of kumera, potatoes, and wheat much pleased Chapman, as this provided the people with “the means of preparing from the above a food nourishing and easy of digestion”. However, it appeared to him that Maori people were wary of the trouble it took to prepare this kind of food, which was “rather too much. These New Zealanders might live, if they were thoro’ly industrious”.\textsuperscript{20} Some Maori, though, came to see benefits in the missionary doctrine of an industrious lifestyle. The orchard in Chapman’s garden often produced an abundant harvest of fruit, which Maori around the settlement came to partake of, and some now wanted orchards of their own. But Chapman found that though he supplied many with trees, they were “seldom taken care of”. When he first established his orchard, he was laughed at by local Maori, who expected little return for all Chapman’s trouble and expense: “Now, they cry, “Give, Give! – Altogether I must have had 100 bushels of fruit – consisting of gooseberries, cherries, raspberries, peaches, nectarines, plums, apples, almonds and a very few pears.”\textsuperscript{21}

Godliness was considered by the missionaries to be intensely practical. The provision of healthy and comfortable living conditions for the sake of family was not

\textsuperscript{18} Jane Williams to Catherine (Kate) Heathcote, May 18, 1840, in Frances Porter, (ed.), \textit{The Turanga Journals}, 1974, p.115.
\textsuperscript{19} Thomas Chapman, June 28, 1832, pp.58–59, ad November 3, 1832, p.61.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid}, December 4, 1845, pp.277, 278.
\textsuperscript{21} Thomas Chapman, March 30, 1846, p.288.
excluded from godly living. Christian faith demanded a positive social and domestic condition in Thomas Chapman’s mind. Chapman’s own words effectively showcase the inseparability of Christian faith and temporal living. He associated improvement in the “social and domestic condition” of Maori, and “their homes [being] made in some degree to harmonise with the Christianity they profess” with expressing, living out, or “adorn(ing) the gospel of Christ”. 22 Efforts towards this end were made from an early period, when clothing was provided by charity organisations back in England. This was to add to the comfort of what Richard Davis perceived to be destitute families. God was apparently concerned about health and wellbeing. Davis was convinced “that the native population is in danger of annihilation” but was of the firm opinion that “much may be done, with God's blessing, for their preservation”. 23 William Puckey was of the firm opinion that many people in his district died “for want of proper food and clothing”. Through the growing of wheat and construction of mills Puckey hoped that after some years Maori “cottages” would be more comfortable than he presently found them. 24 Maori around Kaikohe often fell ill to consumption or scrofula, which Richard Davis thought was due to lack of proper care. Children being weaned lacked appropriate food for this transition. In addressing these problems Davis hoped the mission would “be a blessing to the natives both in body and soul”. 25

Johann Wohlers pronounced living conditions as deplorable when he first arrived on the island of Ruapuke. He labelled the interior of most dwellings as filthy. 26 But, Wohlers recounted, by 1848 Maori people from Ruapuke would travel regularly to Otago, “partly to get work and earn something, in order to buy European clothes and household utensils, for the desire for Christian manners – the result of their conversion – made itself felt more and more”. The progress of conversion on the island he described as having awakened a “new spirit” within the people of the area, making many “willing to work for a civilized life”. This was especially noticeable with the women, “amongst whom there were indications of an ardent desire for a decent house and family life”. 27 The outcome of conversion Wohlers described as a desire to see Christian manners and cultivation manifest in Maori lives. He goes on to describe what this meant. Changes to family life were foremost. Household cleanliness needed to be established. Wohlers

23 Richard Davis, Memoirs, pp.164-165.
24 William Puckey, March 20, 1845, p.82.
26 J.F.H. Wohlers, Memories, p.103.
remarked that if a husband was away then his wife normally considered it good manners not to wash. Everyone was in the habit of smoking tobacco. Wohlers believed that, because of the ‘degradation’ he thought Maori had fallen into, many had lost “even the courage to wean their children” and because of this, impurities from tobacco smoking and other sources, and what he judged to be “deficient nourishment”, the birth rate was extremely low. Wohlers also held the opinion that many parents “dared not punish the children, no matter how disobedient and naughty they were, because the parents in their then heathenish, brutal condition, were liable to such fits of rage … that it often ended in their striking them dead”.\(^{28}\)

Some of these statements could seem to imply a direct championing of European ways. The missionaries testified that European things often became fashionable in Maori communities.\(^{29}\) William Puckey reported that Noble, a chief at Kaitaia, had “become quite a European in his habits”. He possessed a “neat little weather boarded cottage which is furnished with tables and chairs like our own, and his food is much the same, he has purchased tea, sugar and rice from the European settlers”. This was all commendable, as Noble was “as cleanly (with his wife) as any white persons, and are in all respects also as comfortable. He assembled his servants and the people about him morning and evening for prayer, and all his concerns are conducted with the utmost order”.\(^{30}\) Quotes like these, when divorced from their context, can deceive the reader into thinking that a Maori person who appeared to be “European” in habits was an example of what mission in New Zealand was about, transforming “Maori savages” into “brown-skinned Europeans”. In contrast, a close reading of missionary sources paints a different picture. The quote referred to above is perhaps better understood as an example of what may be termed “order, civilization, and piety”, an outward manifestation of the inward order that was believed to be established through faith in Christ. Noble was a noted believer. Neat cottages, furniture and cleanliness were all considered to be essential parts not only of civilization, but exemplified its associations with sound moral nature and godly living. There may have been a particular European hue to these expressions of religious value, but they were not primarily part of an attempt to make Maori into Europeans. Missionaries also saw value in things which were ‘Maori’ in


nature, but were part of the expression of Christian godliness, as references to ‘native’ clothing and buildings imply.

One clear example is provided by Johann Wohlers’ wife, Elise Palmer, who dedicated herself to the inculcation of “enlightened Christian ways into family habits and household customs”. This included, but was not limited to, introducing comfort into huts, encouraging orderly and neat clothing for women and children, not just for appearance, but importantly for the sake of health, for “in the transition from heathendom to Christianity, and the passage from savagery to civilization, the children were at one time covered with two warm rags, and at another left exposed to the weather without any”. Community houses, seeming to encourage “a very disorderly method of lying about”, fell out of favour for family huts which allowed a “commencement towards cleanliness and order” to take place. Comfort, health, order and cleanliness were a part of godly Christian living, and improvements in these areas constituted a move from heathen ways of living to Christian ones, and a “passage from savagery to civilization”. 31

Wohlers himself had much to say on the domestic impact of the gospel. He thought the Maori form of “marriage”, and infanticide, were closely linked to Maori ideas on marriage, which he stated, were quite different from Christian-influenced European ones: “Affairs of love, as they are carried on by young people of civilized races in honour and modesty, were quite unknown to the heathenish Maoris.” Parents and old people were said to have arranged marriages without asking young people involved. This did not deter some, “when so inclined, from indulging their fleshly lusts”. Wohlers wrote that the children who were born “of such unhallowed unions” were “put out of the way as kittens are put out of the way”, and sometimes married women would do the same: “either because they did not like them or because attending to them was troublesome”. But, he insisted, the Christian gospel changed all this:

in the space of a lifetime, these cruel New Zealand savages, by the simple preaching of Christ crucified … are so changed that … a weak missionary, who could command no earthly power, can lead the changed, erstwhile cruel savages, and can live in friendship and love with the formerly treacherous and unclean heathen. 32

31 Ibid, pp.182-186.
32 Wohlers, Memories, p.144.
Industry, agriculture, civilization and Christian faith were inseparable in William Puckey’s mind. Maori people in Puckey’s district by the mid-1840s had been “highly blessed” in their wheat crops, which represented to the missionary “an important step in their civilization”. Mills were under construction in his district also, some communities had sheep, and others had the desire to purchase them. There was a general wish with many local Maori to be taught how to weave their own clothing, and Puckey hoped that if they learned from someone “in a persevering manner for a length of time” they could achieve a desirable “advance to their present state”. Long association with the people of his district had brought him to the conclusion that if Maori people who had become Christians were not “gradually brought forward in the blessings of civilization”, and were encouraged that such was achievable for them, then they would “to their own ruin, and to the pain of the Christian public retrace their steps to heathenism”. Christian maturity was hereby attached to healthy living, moral progress and social improvement. Civilized living, in the way the missionaries understood it, was essentially opposed to heathenism.

The missionaries therefore encouraged the development of agriculture, which was traditionally an integral part of Maori life. Many of the missionaries saw problems with traditional forms of Maori agriculture, and so efforts were made to improve and supplement these practices. As peace began to prevail in the late 1840s in the central part of the north island and around Tauranga, Thomas Chapman hoped to introduce European agricultural implements and the raising of cattle. The growing of wheat had already commenced and hand-mills were slowly increasing, and Chapman sincerely hoped that the “present mode and kind of cultivation”, growing potatoes which seemed to fail for three months of the year, would soon be superseded by more productive European methods and a more settled form of lifestyle, as their present “erratic course of life” appeared neither good for Maori health, or commercial productivity.

Although Richard Davis believed too much attention had given to agriculture at the expense of Christian proclamation in the beginning of the CMS mission in New Zealand, this did not prevent him from instructing those who were willing to learn in the arts and skills of English agriculture. Davis was of the opinion that Kaikohe was the most fertile district in New Zealand and he hoped to make good use of it, planning a

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34 Thomas Chapman, January 27, 1847, p.323.
mill for the place, as the local people grew wheat and continued “making progress”.

Davis’ Maori friend Paratene was cultivating his land at Kaikohe, and doing rather well: “His herd of cattle increases. He makes butter, sends it to the Bay … My soul is much strengthened by his consistency. I hope to provide him with a plough when his herd shall be strong enough to work one”. Davis described Paratene’s faith as finding expression in his industrious and productive lifestyle.

European agriculture was introduced by Johann Wohlers to the people of Ruapuke, and he encouraged the cultivation of corn and wheat. The spade and hoe were introduced, and later carts, ploughs, harrows and mills, along with oxen were added, thanks to the donations of an English benefactor who “took an active interest in the Christian civilization of the Maoris”. Though the people of the island were, in Wohlers’ eyes, “willing to work for advance in civilization”, they appeared not much impressed with the hard work involved: “Men who could sail their boats on the high seas work with oxen! This was too much for their high pride … Indeed, if the chiefs had not become Christians themselves and experienced the strength of Jesus Christ in their hearts, the battle for civilization would have been lost”. Though few Maori men wanted to work with oxen, many used spades and hoes, and sizeable wheat fields were planted, producing abundant harvests, in which both men and women were involved in harvesting. Bread, milk and butter were also provided via means of mills and cows. Wohlers notes that health standards began to improve, which was attached to a rise in the birth rate, and a decline in the number of deaths. The island was eventually producing more than it could consume, the excess of carrots and potatoes being exported to the mainland. Exports of cattle and horses were later added, which augmented the prosperity of the local community. These activities were later abandoned when a market for mutton birds was discovered further south. Clothing and household utensils were purchased with the profits, and Ruapuke became “the central point from which these advances in industry and manners radiated, but they extended to the scattered villages elsewhere, as visitors often came from thence to look at the new mode of life, and took back with them a desire to copy it”. These are good examples of how Christianity, as the foundation of moral and social life, and civilization and commerce

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37 Wohlers, Memories, pp.184-5.
were connected in missionary minds. Maori willingness in these activities Wohlers attributed to “the fresh zeal of conversion to Christianity”. 38

Mills had become the “general desire of the natives” in John Morgan’s district in the second half of the 1840s. Morgan was pleased with this, because it formed: “one of the most substantial and decisive proofs we can have of the progress of civilization among the natives”. When Morgan had first come to reside in Otawhao there existed “not the slightest trace of civilization, and each one was anxious to shed his brother’s blood”. But the last five years had been different: “by the blessing of God we have been kept in peace. Numerous congregations have been gathered, numbers have been baptized, and many are regular communicants”. The people of his district now owned horses, and were growing and harvesting wheat. 39 Morgan reported in 1849 that agriculture and the construction of mills were forging ahead and that he had introduced horticulture into the district, instructing some of the people in budding and grafting so that they were now “becoming possessed of orchards, adding very much to their comfort; and to the appearance of civilization at their respective homes”. Domestic comfort and provision for family constituted a sizeable aspect of civilization in Morgan’s thinking, but this was accomplished by the “blessing of God”. 40

By 1851 there were 1200 acres of wheat ripening at Otawhao, and the people of Rangiaohia owned 15 carts and 17 ploughs, having also bought cart horses and harnesses to match. There seemed to Morgan to be a “general desire” to “advance”. Two thirds of the 150 tonnes of flour produced in the mill was sent to Auckland market, and a brick oven had been constructed. Morgan was most satisfied “to see the Aborigines who only 12 to 15 years ago were sunk in the lowest depths of barbarism and cannibalism, raised through the preaching of the Gospel and the labours of the CM society to their present state of civilization” and he hoped that it would “please the God of all grace, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, abundantly to bless the preaching of his Gospel” so Maori could enjoy a” sanctified civilization”, enabling them to “survive the evil effects of European Colonization, and become a people fearing God and working righteousness”. 41 This statement represents the epitome of what the CMS missionaries were about in their civilizing ideas and efforts. The temporal “blessings” of civilization, such as agriculture and mills, and the moral qualities such as

40 Ibid, Report for 1848, received October 26, 1849, p.305.
41 Ibid, Report for Otawhao, 1851, p.495-6.
industriousness required to make use of them, were seen to be the “blessings” of the God of grace, and part of his sanctifying work in Maori communities.

This last quotation illustrates that civilization was not really a matter of attaining ‘European’ possessions, but of moral, godly living. This is made evident by further comments of Morgan later on in his work at Otawhao. Morgan depicted the “trappings” of civilization as being essential to the wellbeing, morally, spiritually and physically, of his congregation, who were at this time unable to support their families, let alone build churches to augment their maturity in Christian faith. Their inability to provide for themselves in this way was attributed to their lack of civilization. The income of Maori households was unable to meet expenditure for basic necessities; providing for self and family were considered a part of godly living. Morgan discouraged the “wearing of native clothing”, which again often had to do with health issues such as keeping warm in winter, and ideas of Christian modesty, and so people had to provide first for their clothing and basic necessities, such as axes and iron pots, for their families. Unfortunately, their “entire income is unequal to this expenditure, and hence the adults are often poorly clothed, and the children naked”. Mills, small sailing vessels, horses and cattle were also required so that families could “derive an income”, but they were “not yet equal to the burden”. 42

Part of the perceived need for civilization stemmed from this lack of resources enabling people to provide for their families. But it was also civilization itself which had increased demands on the family income. Clothing, axes and cooking utensils were considered indispensable to healthy family life. Morgan found it to be a rather vicious cycle: families were not civilized enough to provide a substantial income, and there was no substantial income to aid an increase in civilization. The missionaries thought the situation required a paternalist intervention. 43 Morgan felt that if the Bishop granted financial assistance for the building of churches to European communities, “whose parents have been blessed with the Gospel for 1800 years”, there was much more reason for the church to “encourage those who … by the labours of the CMS are endeavouring to advance from savage barbarism to Christianity and civilization”. 44

The important moral benefits attributed to an industrious lifestyle were the primary interest of missionary efforts in this area. Morgan wanted to “direct the

42 John Morgan, March 24, 1851, pp.500-504.
43 Ibid.
attention” of Maori people to the “arts of civilized life” because he reasoned that if they were busy with agriculture, spinning, and weaving, then Maori would have less time and energy to expend on “their petty land quarrels”. Morgan went even further, feeling “convinced that if we confine our attention solely to the preaching of the Gospel and leave their hands unemployed, that Satan will find some mischief still for idle hands to do”. Clearly, in Morgan’s eyes the disciplines of a civilized lifestyle were a part of godly living and an aid to avoiding sin.

Morgan was aware, though, that the “temporal concerns of our people” could possibly “interfere with our spiritual duties”, and was wary of being drawn away from that which was of first importance, believing that temporal blessings flowed out of spiritual establishment. Still, the missionary endeavours of gospel preaching, education and civilizing activities all required the “main spring of action” to consist of “love to Christ and our fellow-men”. All missionary civilizing duties were to be carried out “with the ultimate view of spiritual improvement and establishment, for I conceive that it is impossible for a savage people to embrace the Gospel and to continue Christians at heart, while they remain barbarians in manners.”

Spiritual and social improvement was inseparable; the ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ were likewise inextricable.

A large amount of wheat was grown at Pukehika in 1848, and Richard Taylor recorded that four mills were at constant work, a sign of prosperity which quite surprised him. This setting provides further insight into the link between Christianity and temporal prosperity in missionary thought. In speaking to the people of the pa Taylor alluded to their prosperity, pointing out how different their situation was from that of others in the area who were hostile to the government, “who had lived on thistles and fern root and been very much pinched, whilst they had enjoyed abundance of the best food, and told them that when we did not forget God He did not forget us”.

Abundance, blessing and peaceful industry were entwined in Taylor’s thinking. He attributed the “extraordinary quantity of wheat” and the rich abundance of food at another place near Pipiriki in the Wanganui region to that community’s honouring of God, which included their avoidance of war, and God’s blessing being upon them. In reply to his comments, the people informed Taylor that “the Patutoke tribe once so formidable and having so many great chiefs seemed now to be ‘rupeke ki te mate’ counted out to destruction”. These people had apparently once followed Christian

45 John Morgan, March 24, 1851, p.504.
teaching, but had abandoned it, “and from that time they had not prospered, that they had built pas but never inhabited them”. Several influential chiefs had also died, and others were ill, “and their tribe was dispersed about having no fixed abode”. Peace, agricultural development and the worship of the Christian God were inseparable in Taylor’s outlook. Those who did not worship the Christian God were scattered, warlike, poor and miserable, what may be termed ‘barbarous,’ in Taylor’s thinking.

Peace, industry and self-sufficiency went together in William Puckey’s mind too. The people at Kaitaia tried to stay out of the war during the mid-1840s, and preferred instead to be “very anxious to live in peace, and provide food and clothing for their wives and families”. Puckey thought the speculation in Kauri gum was a fortunate event in the crisis, as it provided “employment both for body and mind; for when they are not digging they are speculating on the profits they will receive for what they have dug”. But Puckey acknowledged that the people were very poor: they could not afford to support their own teachers because they could not provide the necessities of life for their own families. They raised pigs and grew corn, potatoes and wheat, but much of this was sold in exchange for trade, which Puckey deemed to be of low quality anyway. Yet for all this, in Puckey’s judgement, “destitute as they really are, still they are not so much as they once were. Their condition is certainly improving, although slowly”. Puckey helped the people of Kaitaia to set up a bee-breeding operation “that our natives might obtain some of the European comforts as ourselves”. Puckey also taught budding and grafting: “They are exceedingly fond of fruit but we have not had an opportunity of knowing the way of obtaining it until lately.” When not engaged with schooling operations Puckey worked at “making wheels and implements to teach the scholars to spin and weave”. There were obviously many avenues to becoming a self-reliant, healthy, prosperous community in Puckey’s scheme of things.

Unfortunately, an increase in the benefits of civilization, according to the missionaries, also had its problems. The issue of Maori not melding temporal benefits with spiritual gain was to plague the missionaries throughout their civilizing efforts: at Kaikohe in 1841 Taylor found gratifying progress in agriculture, with herds of cattle, flocks of sheep and weatherboard houses springing up; a place was being found for a

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48 William Puckey, January 22, 1846, p.92, 95.
51 Ibid, July 8, 1848, p.207.
mill, and some of the men he discovered “busily employed in sawing timber for it”, but
couldn’t help fearing that “the natives think more temporal than spiritual prosperity”. 52
The benefits and problems attached to temporal prosperity often went hand in hand with
missionary observations of the “vices” associated with the “trappings” of civilization. In
a visit to Maketu Thomas Chapman’s attention was captured by the productivity
exhibited in the port. The advent of coasting vessels had enabled Maori to take their
produce direct to Auckland, yet Chapman feared the effect this might have, believing
local Maori may be captured by the “cares of this world”, and that continued interaction
with the scene in Auckland “is doing them serious injury”. On a more positive side,
Maketu was a symbol of the industriousness of the local people, who were labouring in
the fields, and planting kumera, potatoes, corn and taro, which Chapman pronounced a
good thing, if only they “could keep the native character entire, in its former progressing
state”. Chapman lamented that “the white man’s vices are stealing their way among us –
a poison more deadly because authorized by those whom too many of the natives desire
to imitate”. 53 Temporal improvement without spiritual gain was a threat to civilization
in both Taylor’s and Chapman’s thinking.

In early 1850 Chapman reported that commerce was assuming “an importance
which has hitherto been unknown”, manifested in the growing number of vessels which
were owned by Maori and used for trade on the coast. Maori, in being able to sell their
flour and wheat in the markets of Auckland and other places, were therefore “realizing
the blessings of industry and peace”. 54 Yet the introduction of ‘new’ things could not
necessarily overcome the power of ‘old’ ways. Chapman noted this transition period as
a time when new objects and thoughts captured Maori attention, but though old habits
and ‘superstitions’, and everything associated with them, were receding, and peace,
security and comfort were being established “as the natural consequence of the gospel
influences”, Chapman often sensed that in certain cases Maori people still had a desire
to retain ‘old’ ways. But he hoped that the upcoming, younger generation would soon
discover that they were established in a new and stable circumstance as “the result of
Christianity and civilization”. Chapman directly attributed improvements in commerce,
comfort and civilization to the influence of Christianity. 55

Chapman was of the opinion that the people in his district were wasting opportunities to firmly establish themselves, because of the maintenance of “bad customs whose tendencies are only to hinder and devastate”. He understood Maori to be “a people of wonderful resources. Fish, birds, roots, berries, weeds, grubs, rats, come in as auxiliaries to their pork, shell-fish, potatoes, kumeras, pumpkins and fern root”. But even with such resources, and improvements in civilization, problems persisted: “with all their daily labours, none possesses little more than their daily bread. Their system is a miserable one, their improvement must be a work of time … a NZer should be drawn, one side idleness is full; the other side doing a day’s work in five minutes”. Maori communities apparently possessed all the physical requirements needed to prosper, however many seemed to lack the moral and religious power needed to motivate improvement: “If truly Christian thought I, few might be said to be more happy. No cares, no burdens, none to oppress….A bountiful providence richly supplies all your wants – the extent of your landed possessions you never saw and the sea stretched before you teems with food for every season.” Chapman’s knowledge of local Maori communities had led him to believe that “many ‘a crook in their lot’, arising out of petty quarrels, the absence of laws and ill-defined boundaries – and more than all their loose morals!” The people of Tokata he saw as uniquely supplied with all they could need:

seated on the banks of a beautiful river – with hundreds of tons of firewood lying around, brought down by the floods, their plantations of food near at hand, and the sea teeming with fish, having the means of rearing abundance of pigs – and (at present) no enemy to fear – what a happy people ought these to be! Chatting and a little enquiry soon proved that these too had a “crook in their lot”. The people at Otamarora were no different. Though always having been a poor community, they possessed a “noble river and a rich district”, but constant disputes over land Chapman saw as just one of many reasons for their lack of prosperity, the feuds “rendering them unsettled and without aim”. Most of the problems encountered seemed to stem from moral and spiritual shortfalls, not from the lack of material

56 Ibid, October 21, 1853, p.494.
57 Thomas Chapman, December 1858, pp.681, 685.
abundance. There remained in Chapman’s eyes a need for Christian principle to work its way through into the domestic situation of the Maori communities he was observing. This would enable them to make good use of all the resources they possessed, rather than see them dissipated through ungodly living.

At Ohinemotu Taylor marvelled that the people there could evidently take such pride in their history and ancestry, and yet remain “clothed in rags and filth”, which he took as “a picture of human folly and blindness – making good the saying pride and poverty go hand in hand”.\(^\text{60}\) These people remained resistant to Christian faith. Taylor had much to say about cleanliness, or lack thereof, as a signifier of barbarism.\(^\text{61}\) Yet not everything traditionally Maori was bad and dirty: Taylor described an in-ground cooking process, observing as a woman “carefully removed the earth and leaves … the food was found beautifully steamed”.\(^\text{62}\) While he did not think female tattooing of the lips added to “their natural charms”, he did think the men were sometimes “improved” by the custom. Pitawa, where there was a thoughtful and considerate congregation, Taylor declared to be “a lovely alpine village a pattern of native neatness”.\(^\text{63}\) Taylor observed on one occasion that a man dressed with a “piece of carpet tied around his loins by a bit of green flax leaf” gave him a “noble appearance”. Note the irregular and non-European nature of this form of dress. Another European observer may have scoffed at the man and labelled him a barbarian: not so Taylor. A few days after this, he admired a man wearing a “regular crown of feathers on his head”.\(^\text{64}\) Maori in his district he also deemed to “form the finest mats”, which a little later he described as “very handsome being surrounded by a deep border of different colour patterns”, there having also been added “beautifully worked borders of different coloured worsted, some wear them with considerable grace and then they remind me somewhat of a Roman toga”.\(^\text{65}\) Things which were traditionally Maori could be admirable in Taylor’s mind.

Items which were ‘Maori’ in nature were not intrinsically barbarous. In describing a carving on the door of a house, Taylor noted the detail and colour, and its “very singular appearance betokening a degree of skill which would not be expected among savages”, although the carvings portrayed “hideous” and “ugly” figures. Some “native buildings” Taylor discerned to be “of the strongest make”, and the chapel at

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\(^\text{61}\) *Ibid*, May 4, 1839; February 17, 1841; April 5, 1841; September 8, 1843; March 13, 1845.
Otaki was “extremely neat” and “finished in the best native style”.\textsuperscript{66} The church at Waikanae which the local men were building was looking as though it would become “a noble edifice when completed”. The roof was also patterned and ornamented, and Taylor could not help commenting that the building was: “really a noble edifice and shows what the natives can do when their capabilities are drawn forth, the labour is immense the boards being adzed the centre board is hewn out of one log and so are the eave boards”.\textsuperscript{67} Taylor also took note of neat cultivations and fencing in the plantations, and especially the fact of each plantation having “its cottage in it, and really they present the appearance of belonging to market gardeners”.\textsuperscript{68} These comments all indicate that things did not have to be European in nature to be considered civilized, and admired.

Things which were of a traditional Maori nature Taylor also perceived as being augmented through Christian faith. He was not blind to the high degree of skill employed in the construction of Maori dwellings. Taylor found the church at Parikino to be: “a masterpiece of native work … lattice work with which the interior is lined is really beautiful. It is a specimen of the degree of perfection the native building is capable of”. When Taylor compared this building to the size of their usual buildings he thought “it certainly appears as though Christianity had enlarged their ideas as such buildings never had been erected before they embraced Christianity”.\textsuperscript{69} It is noticeable that Taylor attributed this intellectual enlargement to Christian faith, and not to education or general European forms of knowledge.

The gospel apparently affected all areas of human living, and adapted itself to areas of cultural need. Maori on Ruapuke, when Wohlers had first met them, were “sunk in ignorance, poverty, and hopelessness, and for that reason were nearly dying out”. However, the “Gospel of Jesus Christ is a power of God to the salvation of all who believe, and able to lift them\textit{ in this life} out of their sunken condition”. To explain this, Wohlers remarked that Maori ways of living had originally seemed dirty, but through Christian conversion cleanliness and “decent customs” were established. But these improvements did not happen all at once. Conversion came first, and the Holy Spirit worked in the heart. Then “manners, as a fruit of the Spirit, must be learned by sustained

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid, August 24, 1843, vol.2, pp.276-277.
\textsuperscript{67} Richard Taylor,\textit{ Journals}, August 27, 1843, p.277.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid, September 5, 1850, Vol.7, p.227.
effort”, but Wohlers deems such actions utterly impossible without previous conversion and “a renewal of a heart in truth”.  

Wohlers argued that many Maori had been dying “under their hopeless views of life”, until Christianity had been established. He had been aware of the high death rate among Maori when he had arrived in New Zealand, which he believed had instituted a kind of hopelessness: “even for savages, they were in a state of helpless poverty”. Families did not have required clothing and food to enable them to survive the harsh weather. But upon the arrival of Christianity, “especially when conversion takes place”, the mind was given “a cheerful and hopeful upward swing”. This apparently explained “the general elevation which the Maori people experienced”. 

Cleanliness and personal attire had greatly improved according to Wohlers. Where it had not been uncommon for people to come to church unwashed, or men to attend church dressed only in a shirt and waistcoat “and nothing else”, at the end of this transition period Ruapuke Maori would no longer allow such a thing: “All came washed and combed, in clean and respectable European attire. If some clothes were patched, it was done neatly, and it did not look at all bad.” Dwellings were now well constructed, and “cleanliness and respectability” were being maintained inside them. Cooking had also improved, as had health standards, so much so that birth rates began to exceed death rates. Wohlers considered that those who had been “previously wild” had now “emerged from the low scale of society in which they had so shortly before lived and became fit to rank with Europeans”. Religious and social improvement had advanced together. Wohlers also noted that a distinct “worldliness” had accompanied the rise in civilization among younger people, i.e. “a taste for cleanliness and neatness soon expanded into a love of fine clothes and new fashions”, but he still considered that “the worldliness of the young people, with Christian life and conduct, was far preferable to the early uncleanness and ignorance of the old people”.

It was the belief of the Church Missionary Society personnel that an upright and godly life manifested itself in all aspects of human living. It was characterised as clean, orderly, and industrious; productivity and prosperity followed, and upon these foundations civilization was established and encouraged to steadily increase. Health,
wellbeing and general living conditions would also improve. These facts explain why civilization was equated with humanitarianism and “temporal blessings”. Improvements in agriculture, diet, cleanliness, commercial enterprise and viable commercial skills, stemming from the influence of Christian faith, resulted, in the view of the missionaries, in increased prosperity in Maori communities, and provided a means by which Maori could deal with their European neighbours, and even benefit commercially from their presence. These improvements and accoutrements formed part of what the missionaries called ‘civilization’, but material consumption was never an end in itself, as it was for Arthur Thomson and other Enlightenment-based civilizers; these changes were all thought to have their genesis in Christian faith, believed to provide the moral impetus and desire for social improvement, and these improvements were also considered to be part of an expression of godly living, and mature Christian faith. Theological reasoning determined the missionary approach to these issues. This explains why Christianity and civilization went together in missionary thinking, and why the missionaries believed neither could truly exist without the other.
Chapter Eight: Godly Governance.

Ideas of law and government were conspicuous in European notions of societal development, having perhaps central place in debates over what constituted savagery and civilization. Yet again, however, there were distinct differences between evangelical and non-evangelical conjecture on this subject. The missionary perception of good government in Maori communities was refracted through a theological lens, and primarily consisted of two things: the first was obedience to God and his laws, and following this, the establishment of laws based on scriptural precepts for the extended community. The second ingredient in the missionary scheme of government, particularly after colonization had begun, was submission to ruling authorities, in this case the British government, and obedience to its laws. This was not to be a blind obedience: the reason for supporting the authority of British government was the belief that British laws were godly ones, based upon Christian principle. Also, this did not mean cursory acceptance of injustice; the redressing of wrong perpetrated by settlers and government receives considerable attention from CMS missionaries in their journals, but this was to take place in a peaceful and ordered way; armed resistance to right a wrong had no place in their conception of righteous obedience to governing authorities.

In the late seventeenth century, John Locke had assessed the “Civiliz’d part of Mankind” to be those “who have made and multiplied positive laws to determine property”. For Locke, civilization began when law, and the state, came together to “defend the natural right to property”; this meant that civilization went hand in hand with the rule of law.¹ Leading utilitarian and legal mind Jeremy Bentham considered “the principle object of law” to be “the care of security. That inestimable good, the distinctive index of civilization, is entirely the work of law. Without law there is no security; and, consequently, no abundance, and not even a certainty of subsistence”.² Law was seen as both a means and a measure of civilization by British Colonial authorities during the nineteenth century.³ George Grey, twice-governor of New Zealand, who maintained a considerable interest in indigenous welfare and development

² Ibid.
throughout his career, interestingly based much of his early personal civilizing scheme on bringing indigenous peoples under the administration of British laws and government. Being subject to British laws, and removing the jurisdiction of ‘native’ laws, which Grey considered barbarous and responsible for locking societies into primitivism and degradation, would enable a people to rise in the scale of civilization as no other means could.4 Much of the scholarship associated with the European idea of civilization, and its opposite, savagery, is bound up with the seemingly twin concepts of law and land. Many discussions about the meaning and place of civilization in New Zealand historiography centre on this area.5 Bruce Buchan argues that the perceived lack of good government and behaviour among indigenous peoples in Britain’s colonies was mostly attributed to insufficiently “developed” property relations. ‘Property’, government, and society were a nexus of thought bound together in conceptions of a civilized people.6

This is not surprising, considering the appropriation of land, concepts of property, and legal protection lie at the heart of Enlightenment theories of civilization.7 Yet the twin concepts of law and land, though to some extent present in missionary thinking, do not figure in the same way in missionary discourse on the relationship of law and civilization. Rather, law has much to do with godliness, morality, justice and social cohesion. Some common elements of Enlightenment-based legal thought are evident within missionary views of civilization, such as government protection of the rights of its citizens or subjects, yet there also remains a distinctly overarching evangelical theological paradigm where these elements of legal thought have only secondary significance. Primary importance was allotted to the ‘law’ of God, and human conformity to its demands. Civilization arose when human beings lived in accordance with the moral laws of God, with human governments based on these.

4 George Grey, Journals of two expeditions of discovery in north-west and Western Australia, during the years 1837, 38, and 39, under the authority of Her Majesty’s Government, T&W Boone, London, 1841.
Despite agreeing with Grey on the helpful and civilized nature of British laws, CMS missionaries on the whole assumed a different, and heavily theological, approach to the nature of law and government in civilization. Much of it may not be far from William Fox’s disparaging comment about a missionary “Levitical Republic”, society operating under the authority of religious principles and precepts. These did not necessarily equate with British laws, though missionaries occasionally drew upon aspects of the British legal system. With the reception of Christianity and the rejection of ‘native ritenga’, an action assumed to accompany faith, and the fact that religious beliefs were inextricably bound with social laws in Maori culture, as in the nature of tapu, there was a need to introduce new laws for general living in Maori communities, and it was the missionaries who were sought out by Maori for advice on how Maori leaders should now govern their people. Villages which were predominantly professedly Christian, as well as specifically Christian pas set up as ‘sanctified communities’ away from those who continued to espouse the ‘old’ ways, usually took scriptural precepts as the basis of law and governance. In addition to this, there was from the missionaries a general encouragement of Maori to embrace British government and laws, as these were seen to be generally Christian in nature and basis, as contemporary observer Ernest Dieffenbach commented.

The Law of God

There are many examples throughout their letters and journals of missionaries advocating Biblical principles as the basis of governance in Maori Christian communities. Alfred Brown long harboured a wish that the believing people of Matamata would separate from “their degraded countrymen” and establish a professing Christian village. It was by “living together in one place” that Matamata Christians could bear greater testimony to the truth of the gospel, “than they could do if shut up in a pa with those who are working all uncleanness with greediness”. Christian Maori at Matamata had been “exposed to much ridicule and contempt from ‘the baser sort’ amongst their countrymen”, and Brown finally got his wish in mid July of 1838. Wiremu Tamihana Tarapipipi, the son of Ngati Haua principal leader Te Waharoa and a

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devout Christian, and others concerned with the establishment of the new village, met with Brown to discuss “some simple code of law for their governance”. Brown believed that “if they meant to follow heathen customs after their professed separation from their unbelieving countrymen, the blessing of God would not rest upon them”. The community commenced with a few laws, though not intended to be a complete code, based on the Ten Commandments: “the very first of them recommend expulsion from the Pa on commission of the besetting and master sin of the natives – adultery”. 11 Obviously the Christian Maori at Matamata drew these laws from the Christian scriptures. Laws based on Biblical principles were to form the foundation of governance in Maori Christian communities.

Missionaries sometimes acted as ‘judges’ among those people with whom they enjoyed significant influence. Missionaries were repositories of Christian knowledge and were sought out by Christian Maori for counsel. Brown himself often received “delicate and difficult cases” for advice from those who dwelled at or near the missionary settlements at Matamata and Tauranga. He believed there was a clear need for the establishment of good law and governance among the people of his district: “What a blessing the mild yet firm administration of good laws would be to this people. Now every man does that which is right in his own eyes, and as the natural and unavoidable consequence there are continual strifes and divisions amongst them.” 12 Brown, in referring to people doing “right in their own eyes” which was noted in chapter two as a characteristic way of speaking of sin, obviously believed that Biblical laws would help to control sin in the community.

Many of the issues which missionaries, and others who carried the responsibility of authority in Maori communities dealt with, were of relational and moral nature, and Biblically-based laws were framed to deal with these issues. Cases of what were regarded as sexual immorality and adultery were dealt with quite severely when they transpired in Christian communities. Paratene, a Christian chief well known to Richard Davis, was reported to have disciplined a baptized believer in his village by publicly dismissing the man, taking away the new name he had received at baptism, and then ordering the guilty couple to be removed from the village until they repented. 13 Some from Maungatautari in Alfred Brown’s district did not know how to rightly deal with

13 Richard Davis, Memoirs, December 12, 1835, pp.198-199.
offences committed against them, as they “wished to forsake the native ‘ritanga’ (ritenga), but had nothing to substitute for it”, and so Brown was sought out for advice. Brown even found himself engaged advising on fair measures of punishment for offences committed in the enclaves of those purporting to be Christian believers. However, in the absence of another system of justice, he tried in vain to tell them he was not a judge: “You must give an opinion and they will act upon it, nor do I know how, in the absence of all law, any other course can be adopted.” Thomas Chapman commented that he often felt “more like a constable than a Missionary – such a redresser of grievances was I”.

A significant amount of Richard Taylor’s time and energy was also spent in resolving disputes and passing judgement on offending parties throughout the Taranaki and Wanganui area in accordance with his knowledge of the scriptures. Personal sins were treated as a violation of community law in Christian villages. On one occasion Taylor publicly excluded three teachers for committing adultery, and another person “for roasting a pig alive and on the Sabbath day”. One of Taylor’s teachers, Hapurona, according to Taylor left Tonuhaerae pa to build a new one because ten people in his village had apparently committed adultery, and finding himself without the power to expel the perpetrators, Hapurona expelled himself and was followed by other believers. His actions must have affected the community he left because when another couple was found guilty of adultery the people of this same village: “took them and tied them neck to neck and ducked them in the river”. Taylor found on a separate occasion that a man in this village had been fined for lying, and had either to give him a pig or make a new post for the church as a consequence.

Taylor considered the sensitivity of Christian Maori to the new moral and juridical stance to be highly developed, with great importance attached to the new scriptural laws. One of the issues which arose when Bishop Selwyn took over authority for the Anglican Church in New Zealand was that adulterers were no longer dealt with in a satisfactory way according to Maori believers at Pipiriki, allowing guilty parties to attend church after their offence. The church at Pipiriki complained to Taylor about the situation: to Maori minds this was wrong because offenders did not receive a just

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14 Ibid, June 27, 1839.
penalty for the wrong they had committed. Prior to the coming of Christianity, says Taylor, Maori had often punished law-breakers, especially adulterers, with death, and in nearly all cases “with confiscation of personal property”. The Christians at Pipiriki attributed a recent rise in cases of adultery in their area to the Bishop’s leniency, with people being led to think “adultery therefore cannot be so great a sin as they were formerly told it was”. Bishop Selwyn had informed the leaders of the church that only he had the authority to excommunicate guilty parties. One of the teachers replied to Selwyn by inquiring, “are we then to write to you in Auckland every time?”

How believers were to relate to sin under the new laws presented certain difficulties which Taylor needed to address. At a meeting of influential chiefs of the Patutokotoko people and parties from Rangitikei and Manawatu in 1846, the question of how one was to reconcile the punishment and forgiveness of offenders was put to Taylor. In answer he pointed out that though believers were commanded to forgive one another’s sins, this did not mean offenders should go unpunished, because there would then be nothing to prevent the increase of sin in the community. Justice did require punishment, but “this proceeded from love to the community at large and to the sinner in particular by making manifest his sin and causing him to feel the necessity of repentance”. He gave the example of God barring Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, which he interpreted as “a chastisement of love”, and so the Apostle Paul could command believer not to “eat or drink with the adulterer that our hearts which are to be the habitation of the Holy Spirit be not defiled with the intercourse of the wicked”. Laws within the Christian community were to be wholly based on Biblical principles in Taylor’s mind.

From the beginning of 1848, Taylor established several laws of conduct for his teachers to follow. These included having a house that was tapu in which divine service could be carried out, that each teacher would take a turn running daily adult and infant schools for a week at a time, that there must be attendance at the Sacrament, that no one was to smear their body or clothing with red ochre and oil, and that all must fulfil the promises they make. These measures were not just to establish a Christian community which was characterised by order, peace and godliness, but to provide an example for others to follow. There was some protest against the new laws. Te Mamaku, a convert to

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Christian faith in the late 1840s, used scriptural reasoning to argue against one of the laws. He attempted to show Taylor that a law the teachers had made against eating “stinking corn” was not right, and that there was no biblical injunction against it. In fact he quoted the words of Jesus to prove his point: “It is not what entereth in but what goeth out of the man which defileth him.” However, Taylor argued in reply that the teachers “were examples to their people, and it was right they should commence the leaving off of this pernicious habit”.22 Taylor’s idea of a Christian ‘teacher’ acting as an example to their ‘flock’ also had scriptural reasoning behind it.

The teachers in Taylor’s district were also given new roles as ‘magistrates’ in their communities, mostly to deal with ‘sin’ in an appropriate way, and to prevent its cancerous spread in believing villages. One of Taylor’s appointed teachers, Wiremu Kingi, principal chief of Utapu near Pukehika, was chosen by his people to act as judge of his tribe, with two other chiefs assisting him. They were to consider any case of dispute that arose, for the purpose of putting “an end to evil and to keep the doors … of the Pa so that no wickedness might enter into it”. Kingi had at this time sentenced a woman to pay several blankets for lying, and her European companion, guilty of perjury through swearing falsely on the word of God, to pay a fine. Taylor noted a general desire among the people of his district “that each place should have its judge to put down evil”. Taylor had eagerly awaited such interest, hoping for “a commencement of a better state of society, although it must be confessed as far as morality goes it is already far beyond that of a more civilized people.”23 The practise of appointing a principal chief as a judge spread to other communities, with Ngati Ruanui among those who “generally adopted my recommendation to appoint the principal chief of each place as a kind of judge to try the cases in his own district in order to put an end to sin”.24 It is clear from these examples that the new Christian laws were primarily instituted to deal with sin, not the Europeanization of Maori communities.

About a thousand people of Taylor’s district met together at the end of 1848 to appoint magistrates for themselves, one for each community, who were charged to “preserve order and put down all sin and wickedness”. Two chief magistrates were also chosen at this time and given the responsibility for the new body of “judges”. An agreement was reached which gave Hori Kingi jurisdiction over a district of about 80

miles, and Pehi the son of Turoa an adjoining district: “To these all the chief matters were to be referred but each place had its subordinate one also for minor cases.” This situation was not too different from the early arrangements that Moses organised for the government of the Israelites in Exodus 18. In this way the moral standards of Christian conduct as recorded in the Bible became the basis of law and systems of justice in these Christian communities. Disputes over land were also brought before the ‘magistrates’, and Taylor notes on one such occasion that in days prior to the new system of justice a disagreement would probably have ended in bloodshed, “but now the principal chief of the river is content to submit the case to a court of native judges. I see every day reason to be satisfied with the good results of this new system”. Such examples explain how Christian faith informed missionary notions of law and civilization in Maori communities.

The British, with the missionary supported signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, exerted sovereignty over New Zealand from 1840. The CMS missionaries had originally opposed the colonization of New Zealand, especially because “the general consequence of colonization by a ‘civilized race’ among a barbarous people has been, that the latter have gradually dwindled away, until they have almost disappeared from the face of the earth”. But Government presence was believed to be better than the Wakefield Plan, the probable colonization alternative, which the missionaries feared was “based on the assumption that vast areas … of New Zealand would be bought for a trifle, the real payment to the people of the land being their ‘civilising’ through colonization”. The Church Missionary Society obviously believed their form of civilization was quite distinct from that proposed by English colonists. However, missionary thoughts on colonization did change with time. By the 1860s, William Williams believed it “unreasonable” to expect that a country the size of “the whole of the British Isles should be reserved for the sole occupation of a race of people, who numbered no more inhabitants than are to be found in a moderate-sized English town”. There was after all, thought Williams, the Divine mandate given in Genesis 1:28 to fill and replenish the earth, and subdue it, which meant to Williams that the whole earth should be filled with humanity, “and that its wild wastes should be subdued by

cultivation, and made serviceable for the human race”. Once again it was Biblically-based thinking which informed Williams’ view on this matter.

As colonization proceeded, large numbers of colonists began heading to New Zealand and it was soon deemed necessary by the missionaries that British citizens be subject to government authority. This was the reason William Williams gave for the negotiation of the Treaty of Waitangi with Maori, who would cede sovereignty of their lands, enabling colonization to occur under the authority of the state. The CMS missionaries, most notably Henry Williams, considerably aided the efforts of the government, gaining the signatures and approval of local Maori leaders for the treaty, securing the presence of the government. Missionaries supported the treaty because, as Richard Davis hoped, it would preserve Maori ownership of lands and property rights. If some did wish to sell their land it would need to be sold to the Government, “a necessary restriction, to guard the natives from imposition.”

**British Law and Christian Faith**

When colonization became inevitable, and then a reality, the CMS missionaries took the opportunity to demonstrate to Maori how the influence of British government related to Christian faith, and could assist the civilization of Maori communities. There was a common acceptance of the Queen’s authority and British laws among Maori Christians. A *korero* which was called to settle affairs with the British after the murders of four members of the Gilfillan family near Wanganui in 1848 was the scene of expressions of Christian support for the peaceful presence of Europeans in the district. John Williams (Hoani Wiremu Hipango), an influential chief of the Wanganui tribes and a respected teacher in Taylor’s district, declared at the meeting, according to Taylor, that Europeans came to do good for Maori, and had taught Maori many good things. The problem was that Maori had instead “chosen the evil; we have made money our God ...we left off worshipping the true God and turned to the Pakehas’ *taonga* (goods, possessions) which has been the source of all this evil to us”. To demonstrate his point he alluded to land disputes all over the North Island. Waikato Maori had fought about their land, but had now decided to let the governor settle their land issues. He urged the

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29 Ibid.
30 Richard Davis, February 8, 1840, pp.247-248.
people of his own tribe to do the same and respect the authority of the Queen.\textsuperscript{31} Taylor included this account in his journal because it concurred with his own thoughts on the matter. Taylor’s opinion was that the Christian believers and leaders in his district, like Williams, should, and indeed did, respect and value British authority.

Considerable resentment of and resistance to the British assertion of sovereignty arose amongst sizeable Maori groups. The year 1845 was characterised by skirmishes in the Bay of Islands, including another felling of the British flag at Kororareka by Hone Heke Pokai, his continued rebellion against British government, and fears of the outbreak of all-out war.\textsuperscript{32} Nearby, Tauranga and Rotorua Maori were worried: Thomas Chapman reported that while some of the Christian believers “warmly urged” acceptance of the Queen’s sovereignty, “as until then, no laws could be enforced, no order continued, no peace certain”, there were others who felt it might mean “their ruin as an independent people”. Those standing in angry opposition directly associated the sovereignty of the British government with the fact that the Christian believers “are continually calling upon us to acknowledge one Head, Christ – let Him be the Head of the Church, as you say – but we want no other head, we want no one over us”.\textsuperscript{33} To acknowledge the Lordship of Christ seemed to imply that there must also be submission to British authority in Maori ideas about missionary teaching.

It seems they were quite correct. Once the British government had exerted sovereignty over New Zealand, coming under its authority was inescapably joined in missionary exhortation with the concept of righteous Christian living. But the major reason for this was that Christian faith required peaceful co-operation with ruling authorities. Richard Davis sorrowed when he was informed of one of his accredited teachers from Mangakahia disserting his post to join “the wicked rebels” who had joined Heke and his resistance movement. This teacher had for years apparently lived and ‘walked’ as a Christian, and at one point in the previous year Davis had found him “in what appeared a very gracious state”. But it had become clear to Davis that this teacher and his people “were under the influence of their native superstitions. They spoke of God with becoming reverence … but they appeared entirely under the influence of the god of this world”. A return to “native superstitions” was deemed in some way linked to sympathy for and involvement with ‘rebellion’ against the British

\textsuperscript{32} Thomas Chapman, May 26, 1845, p.263.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid}, September 25, 1845, p.250.
government. With proclamation of peace, Davis wrote of his assurance that the CMS missionaries had remained faithful to the government in the midst of all their dealings with Maori during the uprising, loyally doing all in their power to serve their Sovereign as good British subjects. To do so was not just national loyalty, but an expression of faith.

This fact was highlighted by Richard Taylor, who, during the conflict over disputed lands in the Hutt Valley between Ngati Toa Maori and settlers in the mid-1840s, and the consequent sending of British troops to the area, preached from the New Testament passage in 1 Timothy chapter 2 “on the duty of yielding obedience to Governors and ruler”. Taylor claimed that everything that took place was ordered by God, and it was He who had sent the gospel to New Zealand, along with the ministers who preached for the salvation of their souls, “that their temporal interests might be secured as well”. He stated that though a governor ruled over them in reality it was “the Lord who ruleth over all and directed the counsels of men”, and the goal of God’s rule was that “New Zealand should be a Christian country and that its inhabitants should enjoy the same temporal blessings which his servants did in England and other parts, and therefore that his will might be fulfilled in their favour”. They were therefore to “love and obey the Governor God had given to them”. When some Maori questioned whether their situation was not like that of the Jews being occupied by the Romans in New Testament times, Taylor reminded them: “the wicked and rebellious Jews were indeed destroyed in great numbers, but the Christians by yielding obedience to the commands of the Lord were all saved”.

From Taylor’s viewpoint, submission to British authority was also tied to Christian faith in the minds of Maori believers. In 1846, at Rewarewa on the Manawatu River, a council was also held on the subject of the conflict in the Hutt Valley. Taylor thought the ‘principal chiefs’ present at the meeting made some fine speeches in relation to the issue, and he recorded a selection in his journal. One Maori leader had argued that if they decided to take part in the war then that would be the equivalent to leaving behind their “books” and “ministers”, and returning to their “former evil courses”. But, he argued, they had left these “evil” ways because “we knew them to be bad and therefore now having turned to the living God we must remain firm in his service”.

Another rangatira also gave “a very long and excellent speech” expounding the benefits of maintaining peace with the English.\(^{37}\) At a meeting of chiefs at Ahipara in 1861, where a council was being held on the Taranaki conflict, William Puckey exhorted all in attendance to “be firm, to trust all their affairs with their Father in Heaven and He would turn all to His own glory”. Puckey tried to assure Ahipara Maori that the government had their welfare at heart, and could not “take their lands from them nolens volens as some people wished to make them believe”. He thought the chiefs here were “loyal”, and that “the only weapon they intended now and always to use was the word of God, the Queen was their Mother”.\(^{38}\) The support for British government, under missionary exhortation, was therefore directly linked by the missionaries with Christian faith.

**British Laws and God’s Law**

But it was not just because Britain had claimed sovereignty over New Zealand that the missionaries encouraged respect for British government among their converts. Explorer Ernest Dieffenbach, though not evangelical, had observed that Maori who had “adopted Christian laws adhere most strictly to them, as they do also in the case of our civil laws”, which he thought to be founded on Christianity anyway.\(^{39}\) The missionaries shared his perspective. This link between Christianity and British civil law is quite important. Thomas Chapman could not see how Maori people could ‘rise’ as a nation, unless they willingly placed themselves “under righteous laws”, such as the British government could offer them. In reflecting upon the death of a woman carried out by another tribe as utu, Chapman “reflect[ed] on the misery of a people, who have neither a ruler nor laws that they acknowledge”.\(^{40}\) In relation to this killing, he visited Pukemaire pa where relatives of the man responsible lived, who were expecting retaliatory action, and Chapman addressed the leaders. He spoke of the “wickedness” and uselessness of trying to gain revenge, and attempted instead to underline the benefits of peace, law and government, endeavouring to “impress upon their minds the necessity there was for their at once casting away their former bad customs ... how low it kept them – how wretched it made them. I exhorted them to believe in God and to join the Christian party”. Again, the rule of “bad customs” was linked to conflict and barbarism, and

\(^{38}\) William Puckey, January 11, 16, 1861, p.433.
\(^{40}\) Thomas Chapman, June 17, 1848, p.351.
believing in God spoken of as the remedy. The Christian believers of this party, according to Chapman, afterwards declared that they would like to find somewhere else to live together, “which would unite them more closely as a body and lead them to place themselves under the protection of the B[ritish] Government”.  

Christian faith, the rule of ‘righteous’ British law, and social prosperity were all linked together in Chapman’s mind.

At Otamarakau, the pa belonging to the people who carried the grievance against Pukemaire, Chapman talked to the Christian party about the murders committed, and reiterated the same things, arguing that “previously to these diabolical acts, they were living in peace and security. Now their food was rotting in and on the ground”. He tried to demonstrate to the Christian people in the village, as he had often done in other villages with similar difficulties, the need to establish good government and law in their community, and of the difficulty of their improvement “either in Christianity or civilization without these”. Nothing could be protected while “wicked men” were free to do as they pleased, and the innocent on both sides of the quarrel left to suffer under injustice. British laws could provide a ‘righteous’ way to deal with such issues, and stem the tide of ‘wickedness’.

The missionaries hoped that some Maori would come to see the benefit in coming under British law and government. While at Rotorua, Chapman at first perceived the Governor’s authority to be most offensive to the people of the district, yet, during 1848, Chapman also recognised a change developing in the thinking of Rotorua Maori, who were “beginning to see that they cannot much longer keep on without either ‘law or rule’”. Chapman himself had been at pains to “point out to the natives the benefit of just laws and the necessity for a ruler”, and he now understood there to be an increasing desire to acknowledge the authority of the British government. Chapman obviously conceived of British law as being just. He often wondered at the fact that a people so often caught up in interminable “pig and land quarrels” could live as quietly together as they did, and admired that they did so “without any acknowledged power or law”, although he perhaps underestimated the power of traditional Maori leadership and ritenga at this point. Other Maori also saw benefit associated with European law.

Nuka Taipari, a leader and tohunga of Ngai Te Rangi of Tauranga, had an experience of

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41 Ibid, June 18, 1848, p.353.
42 Ibid, June 1848, p.348.
43 Thomas Chapman, July 4, 1848, p.360.
44 Ibid, November 12, 1854, p.540.
a law court in Auckland which was positive, as he was able to recover some money for pigs he had sold to a European, who had dishonestly avoided paying him. Alfred Brown records: “Our mode of settling affairs of this sort he acknowledged to be very superior to the native custom, which had it been resorted to on this occasion could only have ended, he observed, in the shedding of blood.”

Moreover, Chapman was convinced the “absence of law and organization is a deplorable state of things”, resulting in clanship, and “interminable” quarrels over the borders of lands, and moral confusion. He believed paying millions of pounds, as the British government did, for the firm administration of laws was better than having no law “and no law’s appurtenances”. A law-less state of affairs was having a negative effect on the “infant churches”, tying up the missionary in sorting out numerous disputes, and threatening “the very edifice he has thro’ God’s assistance been instrumental in raising”. In Chapman’s eyes, the prosperity of the churches required the presence of good laws.

English law was believed to be morally superior to Maori forms of justice in missionary minds, especially in relation to preventing the punishment of innocent people, and also in recommending punishments that fitted crimes, something which both Henry Williams and William Puckey saw as stemming from the influence of Christianity upon their legal system. After a robbery of the sailors of the Herald in the Bay of Islands, and the capture of those responsible, Henry Williams advised those dealing out the punishment of the offenders to consider the English form of justice: “we always try prisoners by jury and that they must consider the case before them and say what punishment ought to be his portion”. Apparently the offender would have been shot apart from his intervention and “what we had said upon the subject of taking away life”. The men proposed his flogging instead, and after lengthy discussions this punishment was carried out. “All the natives were present and expressed their satisfaction.”

But the superiority of English law was attributed to its congruence with Christian faith. At Wairere, William Puckey tried to highlight the difference between Maori and English ‘law’. He judged that as long as Maori sought justice through ‘seeking payment’ (utu), there always remained the possibility that innocent blood might be shed. Under

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45 Alfred Brown, February 16, 1847, Vol.4, p.2.
46 Thomas Chapman, April 9, 1855, p.570.
47 Henry Williams, Early Journals, Tuesday, 26 Feb, 1828, p.107.
English law, he declared, life was only taken “under certain circumstances, that the innocent must not suffer for the guilty”, and that if this happened it would bring “pain to the Englishman or the Christian mind … even the guilty could not be allowed to suffer till every circumstance had been thoroughly scrutinized”. When the reply came that that made no difference to Maori, Puckey countered by arguing that such a position “did not at all agree with the precepts of the religion of Jesus Christ, or partake of his Spirit and must not be allowed by the professing community”.  

The perceived Christian heritage apparently evident in British legal systems fostered a missionary welcome of British government. Once it became clear that the presence of Europeans was on the increase and colonization underway, the majority of the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society genuinely believed that a ‘righteous’ administration of British government in New Zealand could be highly beneficial to Maori society. This was not because of a genuine benevolence attributed to British authorities, but because its administration was supposed to be based on ‘righteous laws’.

A somewhat paternalistic attitude pervaded missionary opinion in relation to what the government could do for Maori. Missionaries looked to law and government to stem the tide of settler European ‘wickedness’ held partly responsible for the diminution of indigenous peoples across the world. Richard Davis thought the “political state” of New Zealand in 1836 was bad, and could not be remedied until “the British government will legislate for the natives” because the settler population was rapidly increasing, some of whom he thought “would disgrace a prison”, and because “wickedness gains ground among the tribes and people hostile to Christianity”. Davis feared that what he saw as an increase in evil and wickedness would be learned by Maori from some of the settlers, and the ships which docked there. He believed that: “The intervention of our Government can alone stem this torrent of wickedness. As of old, those born after the flesh persecuted those born of the Spirit, so is it now in New Zealand. Our Christian natives need protection.” Davis apparently found it difficult to understand how Christian Maori could successfully resist this tide of ‘wickedness’. Chapman wished the government would intervene and prevent alcohol from being introduced in Maori communities. He thought the arrival of liquor in Whakatane had affected the place to “a most sad extent”, and wished Maori people to also be delivered from the influence of tobacco, filth, horse racing, gambling and bad food, not knowing what the future could

48 William Puckey, September 9, 1855, p.313.
hold if they were not.\textsuperscript{50} The missionaries obviously hoped that ‘righteous’ British laws would help to keep ‘wickedness’ at bay.

Thomas Chapman believed that the establishment of British government in New Zealand would ‘save’ Maori as a people, and enable them to retain ownership of their lands. Without the interference of the British government, Chapman surmised, they would have been “swallowed up” by all kinds of people wanting to force their way into their country, “finally driving them from their possessions”.\textsuperscript{51} Davis hoped that if Britain extended “her guardian hand”, and legislated to protect Maori and maintained a police force sufficient to enforce those laws, this would go a long way towards helping Maori “become an enlightened nation”, but on the other hand he was concerned that “colonization, under almost any modification, will not fail to effect their destruction … I feel anxious for the welfare of my people and adopted country”.\textsuperscript{52}

**British Government and Failure of Hope**

In addition, a pessimistic attitude also characterised missionary assumptions about British government, even though the missionaries believed that, if it exercised its authority well, the government could do much to aid the welfare of Maori people. John Morgan worried that without missionary intervention Maori would probably “sink lower and lower in the estimation of the Government, until they are altogether lost sight of”, as he believed had happened to indigenous nations in Canada and Tasmania. Morgan feared the body of protectors established to protect Maori would ultimately be useless, as they themselves were only servants of the government. He thought that rather than trying to purchase Maori lands, the government should be more concerned with ‘raising’ Maori, and that the missionaries themselves should not relax in similar endeavours.\textsuperscript{53} In 1846 Octavius Hadfield remarked that the situation with the protectors was clearly inadequate for building relations with Maori, because the protectors ended up being “mere agents for the purchase of land, and interpreters … wholly distinct from that which was professed”.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{50} Thomas Chapman, August 1855, p.586.
\textsuperscript{52} Richard Davis, p.236.
\textsuperscript{53} John Morgan, October 26, 1840, Vol.1, p.127.
\textsuperscript{54} Octavius Hadfield, ‘Relations Between British Government and the Native Tribes of New Zealand – 1846’, \textit{Memo to Sir George Grey}, Grey New Zealand Manuscripts, GNZ MSS 18, Sir George Grey collection, APL.
Hadfield recognised that with the increase of Europeans in New Zealand it was necessary to have “some organised government”, without which he believed Maori would be “exterminated”, and a “code of exceptional laws” introduced among the Maori population which would be in force for a set period of time, and about which they would be taught. Strong and efficient government was required to prevent confusion, maintain peace, order and stability, and ultimately foster the preservation of Maori life. But Hadfield hoped the government would accomplish this through an “investigation of the laws, usages, and customs of the natives” so that the law would suit Maori conditions. He did not expect the government to succeed without doing so.

This paradoxical faith in the power of government intervention coupled with pessimistic expectations of how government would help in reality characterised much of the CMS missionary attitude to British governance. Hadfield portrayed the British administration as having a moral responsibility to protect Maori people from attacks from both European and Maori sources, which was necessary to place race relations on a solid foundation to ensure that future disputes could be avoided. But at the time of writing in 1846 Hadfield perceived that nothing had been done to educate Maori on what it meant to be British subjects, their obligations to obey British laws, or the benefits to be obtained by doing so. As a result, “wars, murders, infanticide, cannibalism &c, have been allowed to continue without any effort being made on the part of government either to punish or repress them”. Hadfield obviously believed that a ‘righteous’ administration of British law would help to control traditional practices which he saw as ‘ungodly’: Hadfield thought “intelligent & reflecting natives”, in the light of what they had learned “through the influence of religion, to abhor these practices” would therefore see the government as either too weak or too uncaring to take action in addressing these “atrocities”. He asserted that the government would enjoy no moral influence with Maori while the situation remained, especially as Maori offences against European colonists were severely punished. Hadfield believed that Christian faith and morality, and righteous government to support such, were inseparable.

Incidents of settler-Maori violence, such as the Wairau ‘massacre’ in 1843 which erupted after a land dispute, Hadfield insisted led Maori to lose “much of their confidence in our wisdom and prudence,” eroding the general willingness of many

55 Octavius Hadfield, *Letters to Church Missionary Society*, October 6, 1838, p.3.
56 *Ibid*, May 18, 1847, p.60.
57 Hadfield, ‘Relations Between British Government and the Native Tribes,’ GNZ MSS 18, APL.
58 Octavius Hadfield, ‘Relations Between British Government,’ GNZ MSS 18, APL.
Maori to submit to British law, and therefore Maori civilization under ‘righteous’ laws.59

Alfred Brown also believed there was a need for “the fostering and protecting care of a well regulated Government” for the sake of persecuted Christian communities, as the case of the ‘professing party’ at Matamata, who had been attacked by their “unbelieving countrymen”, seemed to call for. The Christian party appeared under “strong temptation” to “rise up and seek a ‘payment’” for recent killings. Brown urged those who had grievances to bring them before the aboriginal Protector or appropriate government officers, but the government often refused to intervene in what appeared to be ‘domestic’ disputes and punish those deemed to be guilty, leaving supporters of victims “altogether much dissatisfied with Government”. Brown sympathised that such situations brought “great trial. They are forbidden to follow their native ritenga, and yet nothing is given them in its place”.60 Government intervention would conceivably not only protect Christians in need, but enable them to continue in the way of faith and prevent them from returning to their ‘native’ ritenga.61

Hadfield feared that the course the government was pursuing was actually undermining the progress of religion, and its civilizing power: “for the natives who received Christianity, laying aside their arms, & adopting habits of peace, found themselves at once, exposed to all the aggressions of the lawless - wholly unprotected”. All work towards aiding long lasting improvements in civilization would be futile until Maori understood that they were British subjects, amenable to British law, as well as under its protection. Hadfield even went so far as to say that Christianity could not be expected to succeed in its civilizing effects while those who received it were afforded no protection of person and property, which “they have no means of protecting but by abandoning the principles they profess, & proceeding to violence and retaliation”.62 Hadfield saw the righteous administration of British law and Christian faith as inseparable from each other, even if he questioned the government’s willingness to actually enforce these laws.

Hope in government measures to ensure peace, justice and protection for Maori people did not prevent the missionaries from being critical of government shortfalls.

59 Hadfield, Letters, September 1, 1843.
61 Ibid, September 6, 1838, p.150.
62 Hadfield, ‘Relations Between British Government,’ GNZ MSS 18, APL.
when their hopes were disappointed. Maori people were the victims of injustice under the presence of European law, so much so that Taylor lamented: “I fear that the native race will have but a poor idea of European justice.” Taylor considered the unjust judgements of Major Wyatt as a possible cause of Ngati Hau Maori taking up arms against the British. Wyatt was reported to have fined a young boy “five shillings for merely knocking off the cap of an English lad”, and then fined him further for not paying up immediately. He was also accused of acquitting two British soldiers “who nearly killed a native who was actually assisting one of the native police in executing the laws”. There were many other acts of injustice carried out under Wyatt that were “alluded to”, among which was the fact that when quarrels arose during trade with Europeans “they were immediately seized and put in prison although Europeans were suffered to wrong with impunity”. But Taylor also, when dealing with injustice, attempted to encourage Maori “to live peaceably with all men and to be careful of giving offence themselves”, and to turn to God as He “would make everything else turn to their good”. Taylor’s reaction to such situations was tempered by his religious outlook.

Octavius Hadfield was extremely critical over the action taken by Governor Gore Brown against Wiremu Kingi, who resisted the surveying of his land at Taranaki after it was unscrupulously sold to the government without Kingi’s permission. Hadfield did not foresee the hostile actions of the government, which, according to Hadfield, rather than investigate the grievance, sent soldiers to the disputed land at Taranaki and authorized martial law. Hadfield was “astounded at such an act of injustice”. Hadfield supported moves among local Maori to remove Gore Brown and have him replaced by someone who would act in “accordance with the law, and not repudiate it whenever he takes it into his head to do so”. The many rangatira who supported Kingi, with Hadfield’s encouragement, wrote a letter to the Queen, asking for a new governor. They stated that they had been living in the “enjoyment of peace, and have obeyed your Majesty’s laws”, and lauded Governor Grey’s just punishments and necessary use of force. But Gore Browne, they complained, had not behaved toward Maori “in the same

63 For example, in relation to rumoured breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi, see John Morgan, August 4, 1847, p.276; and Richard Davis, Memoirs, October 19, 1847, p.334.
64 Richard Taylor, Journals, March 27, 1848, p.201.
65 Ibid, Journals, April 7, 1848, pp.205-206.
66 Taylor, Journals, April 7, 1848, pp.205-206.
67 Octavius Hadfield, Journals, March 31, 1860, pp.149-150.
just and considerate manner”. Hadfield encouraged the writing of the letter as it constituted a form of protest that fitted with the demands of faith. The letter also highlighted a significant support for British law in the Maori communities in Hadfield’s district.

But as Maori protest, in this and other situations, escalated into all out resistance against the government, John Morgan took a different view on things, being of the opinion that the war in Taranaki had gone from being a conflict over rights to a piece of land to being a war aimed at establishing the “sovereignty of the Maori king”. He saw the Waikato King Movement as “a delusion of Satan, to urge on the people to destruction and arrest the work of God amongst the Aborigines”. Morgan was convinced that the King movement could not progress “without seriously affecting the best interests of the natives. The Aborigines cannot advance in civilization until they submit to British law”. Having earlier noted the link between Christian faith and British law, Morgan’s position should not be surprising, and again underlines the fact that religion was the paradigm in which Morgan viewed relationship to law and government.

However, this could also be the case for Christian Maori; even those involved in the King movement in some cases maintained a deep respect for God and British laws. Wiremu Tamihana Tarapipipi, a devout Christian from the Hauraki district, was one of the most influential Maori leaders of the 1850s and 60s. He denied hating the Queen even though opposed to her sovereignty over his people. Rather, he deemed a Maori King necessary for bringing Maori tribes in unity together, “in order that they might do for themselves what had not been done for them, namely, make laws to take the place of their old Maori customs, which were obsolete or injurious”. Tamihana hoped that the Maori king would act in a similar way to what a Governor did with Europeans, but with Europeans and Maori “united by one law” with the Queen “a hedge around them all”. But Maori, he insisted, would not be British subjects; instead Maori would “administer English laws themselves, that is, take our laws so far as suitable to their circumstances, and carry them out among themselves without being responsible to any higher authority”. Tamihana saw a continued need for, and great value in, the moral nature of

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British law in Maori life, and its association with Christian faith. His problem rested with the persons, the government, who enforced their interpretation of this law.

As Maori people became Christian believers, missionaries encouraged a whole new outlook to law and government. Functional Christian community was based around scriptural laws and precepts on the advice of missionary mentors, and the CMS missionaries reported that on many occasions Maori themselves took responsibility for instituting and administering them. Punishments for law-breaking were handed out not only by missionaries, but also by Maori “magistrates”. Communities only abided by these laws if they wished to place themselves under them. British government, on the other had, was a different matter. There came a time when British authorities had power over Maori communities whether they wanted it or not. The missionaries encouraged submission to British authority as a result of their Biblical worldview, and for what they thought was the general good of Maori people. British laws and government were thought by the missionaries to be based on “righteous” principles, and submission and obedience would lead to the well-being and prosperity of Maori communities. The relinquishing of ‘native’ ritenga for Christian precepts in Maori villages provided a new basis on which Maori communities could build a functional society, and British law, presumed to be relatively ‘righteous in nature, provided an avenue for redressing wrongs on a larger scale. Unfortunately, British government did not turn out to be the ‘righteous’ administrator of British law that missionaries hoped they would be. Yet the missionaries were not blindly obedient; aware that other indigenous peoples had fared badly under British administration, the CMS missionaries tried to hold on to the hope that the New Zealand situation could prove to be different, especially because so many Maori had come under the sound of Christian teaching. Certainly among Christian believers there was some support for the arrival of British government, and hope for the benefits this might bring, but ensuing years would leave many with a bitter taste in their mouths.


The subject of education, particularly in its relation to intellectual improvement, was common to both evangelical and Enlightenment-based notions of civilization in nineteenth century New Zealand. Yet missionary notions of just how education aided civilization are once again distinguished by the primacy of religious and moral formation. Education became a primary means of the dissemination of Christian thought, both in teaching rudimentary principles of faith, and in equipping teachers to instruct in Maori communities. It was also a means by which, under the influence of Christian principle, moral habit and godly living could be firmly established in Maori lifestyles. Missionary education was very broad: it could span from conversation and recitation of catechisms to forms of ‘higher’ learning, such as algebra. The missionary aim was not just intellectual development which would help to spawn social advancement, as it was in Enlightenment-based civilization theories, but advancement in faith and the strengthening of the Maori church. The object of the Church Missionary Society was ultimately the “development of Native Churches, with a view to their ultimate settlement upon a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-extending system”.

That the focus of evangelical missionary education was different to Enlightenment-based thinkers on civilization is evidenced by the opposition aroused by the religious focus of missionary education. The missionary approach drew notable criticism from non-evangelical European observers during the 1840s and 1850s. Contemporary nineteenth century critics of the New Zealand missionaries, says historian Tony Ballantyne, usually non-evangelical and supporters of systematic colonization, rather than seeing missionaries as agents of Western cultural imperialism instead “attacked evangelical missionaries as obstacles to cultural assimilation and social modernisation”. A general zealousness existed among British colonizers for encouraging Maori to forget their own language, and for enforcing knowledge of English. For Edward Gibbon Wakefield, heavily influenced by Enlightenment notions

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of civilization, the “true, the only way, to really and not nominally Christianise the aborigines, is to first teach them our language; by degrees they will adopt our habits, they will amalgamate, civilization will follow, and Christianity”. For him, ‘real Christianity’ was equated with British culture and the assimilation of Maori into British norms; he despised the notion of an indigenous Maori Christianity. Such a position would have been anathema to a CMS missionary during this era.

In the opinion of his son, E.J. Wakefield, the outcome of missionary education was unsatisfactory precisely because the instruction with which the missionaries supplied Maori was “merely religious and in the native language”. Charles Heaphy, a draughtsman for the New Zealand Company during the early 1840s, complained that the missionaries had exhibited a “systematic neglect” in their education of Maori because they did not insist on English as the medium of communication. One of the main missionary reasons for this was their fear that English language would open up a whole world of interaction with English colonists and English sins. Heaphy considered the exclusion of Maori language, which he regarded as “meagre and inexpressive,” and the introduction of English, a “copious and powerful language”, as beneficial, rather than injurious. Apparently for Heaphy the “very lowest orders” of Europeans were more “decorous” than Maori, and the missionaries should encourage their cultural influence. But the missionaries possessed a very different, and rather negative, conception of many European settlers, as the next chapter will demonstrate.

The Christian emphasis of missionary notions about education and civilization made them distinct from other European theorists. According to Enlightenment-based thinker George Craik, whose work The New Zealanders was published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in 1830, a society without writing was, in Craik’s mind, on par with “a herd of the lower animals” because knowledge could not be stored and passed on to the next generation, securing social progress. The absence of writing meant the non-existence of books, empiricism and science. For evangelicals, Christian faith formed the foundation of true knowledge, and civilized society. Evangelical preacher John Angell James, as referred to earlier, believed a society could possess great knowledge, empiricism and science, and yet remain in misery and moral degradation.

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4 E.J. Wakefield, Adventure in New Zealand, 1845, p.453-455.
An English education could by no means deal with the moral and religious problems which, according to evangelicals, lay behind social backwardness. Craik in contrast did not see Christianity as a civilizing force per se, but Christianity was helpful because literature and the arts were often associated with it. In fact, in Craik’s view, religious knowledge owed itself to education, not the other way round. Education was second only in importance to food and clothing in terms of temporal needs.

Even New Zealand education scholars Barrington and Beaglehole have found fault with missionary education for neglecting broader instruction in English which would allow Maori to ‘integrate’ with Europeans to a greater extent, especially after 1840. But they do emphasise that missionary educational endeavour aimed at Christian evangelization, with the main missionary interest being the establishment of a Maori Christian community. The scholars also note that the missionary emphasis on education resembled religious strategies used in England, explaining why schools were so important in the plan of the missions; evangelicals in Britain used Bible-based education in their evangelizing and christianizing efforts. Barrington and Beaglehole also note that instruction in industrial skill and English usages was not indicative of a desire to destroy Maori culture, but were part of efforts to make communities self-reliant. Until the advent of British colonization, the scholars argue, missionaries encouraged the independent existence of Maori people, and advocated European customs only as they directly correlated with the expression of Christian faith; the schools were focused on religious instruction, not the direct championing of European culture. Judith Nathan notes that Robert Maunsell, like his CMS colleagues, looked upon these schools “primarily as a religious institution to consolidate Christianity”, and that Maunsell “thought that boarding schools were essential to train the Maoris in the high standards of Christian living which he hoped to inculcate”. The growth of Christian faith was what associated education with civilization in missionary thinking. It was with the arrival of

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6 J.A. James, ‘The Adavantages and Obligations of Youth,’ a sermon preached, May 12, 1828.
8 Ibid, p.399.
government education policy that a more radical change in ‘educational theory’ was introduced, an approach which advocated a sizeable break with tribal-based education, which was no longer religious in nature with its primary focus on Christian faith as the great goal.\(^\text{12}\)

In contrast to Enlightenment-based theorists on civilization, the CMS Missionary education plan gave prominence to social progress which was secured by Christian faith and its associated morality, not an accumulated store of knowledge (although knowledge was not unimportant). The missionaries lauded the potential of Maori minds,\(^\text{13}\) but placed strongest emphasis on a Christian education which heavily favoured moral and religious outcomes. The men and boys around Paihia who in the early 1830s learned something from the missionaries then taught others: numbers of young men were sent home to friends and whanau to share the gospel, indicating that Christian faith formed part of the curriculum, and Henry, acknowledging the “astonishing” progress in learning some of the men had made, hoped this would be the general method of evangelisation adopted, with Maori communities scattered and at times difficult to access by the small group of European missionaries.\(^\text{14}\) The fact that evangelisation was directly associated with the schools highlights the religious focus of mission education policy. Unfortunately, the circumstances of the girls were different, as they were regarded as being “much exposed”. Many were taken by their families to the shipping as “prostitutes”, and Henry and his companions had “frequently been distressed at witnessing the degradation of these poor things, and have at length come to a determination to commence a school for any little girls”. Education which stressed Christian conversion and faith was seen to have redemptive qualities, and was not just there to inform.\(^\text{15}\)

**Religious and Moral Formation**

Missionary schooling aimed at the moral and spiritual renovation of its pupils. Infant schools were considered to be a means of helping to assuage “predatory and unsettled habits,” and visiting surgeon William Barrett Marshall hoped they might


\(^\text{13}\) William Williams, *Williams Family Letters and Journals*, November 6, 1826, p.55.

\(^\text{14}\) Henry Williams, *Williams Family Letters*, February 25, 1831, p.188.

\(^\text{15}\) *Ibid*, December 14, 1826, p.70.
“occasion a complete change in the moral aspect of New Zealand society,” even if conversion did not occur in every student. Infant schools were “capable of turning instrumentally an entire generation to God”. Christian faith, and associated moral renovation, not just intellectual training or restructuring, was the ultimate aim of evangelical education. The lessons given needed to “inform the mind, enlighten the understanding, and improve the heart at the same tune”.  

Missionary wives, in Marshall’s opinion, were important not only for instructing Maori women in reading and writing, but also “housewifery”. Their female example of “godliness with contentment being great riches” was thought to be a sizeable asset. Marshall believed that women exerted great influence on the moral temperament of society, having responsibility for instructing children and shaping their character. He went so far as to portray national moral standards as reflecting the example that a ‘civilized’ woman provided. Therefore, when dealing with ‘savage’ women whom Marshall characterised as “unchaste, and neither gentle nor kindly affectioned” because of their “degradation,” the presence of Christian women was important for raising moral standards, and rescuing other women from “the twofold degradation of social inferiority and personal impurity”. The implication here is that the moral nature of society, and the ability of a Christian education to address its problems, was the first priority in Marshall’s mind; women were important for the conversion and civilization of other women. Marshall clearly had a much higher regard for the influence of women on social circumstances than has been attributed to them by historians. Women were not “marginal” to the work of the mission, but a central part of it; the role of women in society affected the whole in Marshall’s opinion, not just a part.

Despite the fact that near the end of 1828 none of the Maori women involved with the mission at Paihia had been converted, Jane Williams still found the girls to be “much improved and improving” in other respects. The young women were instructed in reading, writing, sums, tables and the catechism, along with needlework and domestic chores. The twelve months prior to this observation were characterised as noisy and contentious. But now, “order, submission and obedience” could be found in the

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17 Ibid.
This link between moral and educational improvement was to prove very significant in CMS educational efforts.

Resistance may have partly characterised Maori women’s reactions to missionary instruction, as numbers would regularly dwindle: “many who have resided for a length of time with us have returned to their native places, and former habits. Others who have come in, after a few days have run off”.  

Yet some appreciation of Christianity, according to Marianne Williams, was also sparked in women’s lives in these educational settings. Maria, a student of Marianne, in 1830 requested Marianne to speak with her on “the repentance of her heart and her great desire after the things of God”. In answer to the questions Marianne put to her she intimated: “that her heart had been dark and full of sorrow for many weeks … her heart had only just become light within a few days, and that at night great was the rejoicing of her heart in the thoughts of Christ”. This had apparently happened because Richard Davis had addressed the people in the settlement about Jesus Christ and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Maria claimed to have “lost all love for native ways and native pleasures, and wished for nothing but the things of God”. It was upon conversion experiences like Maria’s that missionary hopes for Maori education and social improvement largely rested.

Industriousness was an important facet of moral formation and education, hence the use of other “branches of female education,” which included ironing, scrubbing and sewing. At an examination in 1829, each student “produced a specimen of her abilities … a respectable assortment of shirts, frocks, trousers, pinafores etc”. This had much to do with providing “constant employment to keep them out of mischief, dirt and idleness”. Marianne Williams kept pieces of sewing at hand, some for school and some for keeping employed outside school hours. Gowns to be worn only at school were provided for “neatness and cleanliness”.

Much of the ‘schooling’ was informal, and was religious in nature: basic, rudimentary education included learning to repeat the catechism. Informal ‘conversation’ on religious subjects between the missionaries and those who engaged

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19 Jane Williams, Williams Family Letters, November 20, 1828, p.120.
22 Marianne Williams, Williams Family Letters, February 16, 1830, vol.2, p.12; other examples see this date p.13; see also March 20, 1830, p.150; September 7, 1830, p.167; April 10, 1830, p.171; September 18, 1830, p.175; September 24, 1833, vol.2, p.28.
23 Jane Williams, Williams Family Letters, February 2, 1829, p.122.
them in discussion played a vital role. The daily school established at Puriri on the
Thames River existed to enable the people there “to learn to read those scriptures, which
are able to make them wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus”. More formal schooling in Benjamin Ashwell’s district encompassed reading the New Testament and Scriptural history, all in Maori, then English covering the basic monosyllables. Pupils also learned a general geography of the world, and then a more detailed geography of Palestine and the Holy land, arithmetic, and writing. All learned the catechism. Scripture history involved giving a “connected history from Adam to Christ – the principal prophecies respecting the Messiah and an account of the miracles, parables and discourses of the Saviour etc”. The end of the year 1828 brought with it the first public examination of schools at Paihia. The event showcased what was being taught and encouraged others attending the event to consider taking advantage of what was on offer. Numbers increased in the following year from 170 to 290 students under examination, this time at Kerikeri. Needlework and carpentry were on display. Davis wrote: “Hats, tailoring, and carpentry were exhibited by the lads, and garments made by the girls. The order and cleanliness of their gardens and houses were examined, likewise their general behaviour and conduct.” This event represented a considerable break with the past for William Williams:

Here were a number of cannibals collected from the tribes around, who a few years before were ignorant of every principle of religion, many of them, like their fathers, had feasted on their fellow-creatures, and gloried in the practice, but now there was not an individual who was not in some degree acquainted with the truths of the Christian religion, which, with the blessing of God, might be the means of his conversion. Not long before they had commenced on the simple rudiments of instruction; now many of them could read and write their own language with propriety, and some were masters of the first rules of arithmetic. But a few years before a chisel made of stone was their only implement; now they had not only the tools of civilized man, but were learning to use them. It is true that this was but a day of small things; still greater and more permanent blessings awaited New Zealand. The Gospel was preached; the Bible was translated; scriptural precepts

26 Richard Davis, Memoirs, 1865, p.113.
were taught, and would, it was to be hoped, be soon practised; and then the whole
train of blessings which follow a preached Gospel would be theirs also.\footnote{27}{William Williams, \textit{Christianity Among the New Zealanders}, pp. 97, 101-102.}

The references to primitivism, religious ignorance, moral debasement and the aid of
Christian education within this passage make for interesting reading, detailing the
complexities which came together to inform evangelical missionary thinking on
Christianity and civilization.

Missionary schools primarily existed to provide a scriptural education. Nine
children in Sarah Fairburn’s school could read in class a chapter in St Paul’s Epistle to
the Ephesians.\footnote{28}{Alfred Brown, \textit{Journals}, November 22, 1835. Sarah Fairburn was the wife of CMS missionary William Fairburn.} The schools under the oversight of William Puckey were still
continuing to teach the New Testament and the catechism in the second half of the
eighteen fifties.\footnote{29}{William Puckey, May 14, 1855, p.311, May 25, 1857, p.350.} At Waimate in the Bay of Islands, Richard Davis had a notable
Sunday school, with a large Bible class of around eighty regulars. Davis remarked the
“pleasing and good-humoured vivacity, which is displayed by the intelligent natives
when under examination in the Scriptures”, and considered the school to be beneficial to
those in the local vicinity, as well as those at greater distance. People who could not
read were not neglected; Davis conversed with them on religious topics of various kinds
“as it regards its operation in their heart”, and although among these “much consummate
ignorance is displayed … this ignorance is combined with much apparent
earnestness”.\footnote{30}{Richard Davis, \textit{Memoirs}, April 30, 1842, p.270.}

Alfred Brown, along with others, used the Islington circulating system. Writing
from dictation was used, often from the Bible, and others would learn basic
mathematics, through doing an addition sum or something similar. Order throughout the
classes was important.\footnote{31}{Alfred Brown, February 24, 1838, p.132.} Again, all was predominantly Bible based. Reading was usually
from chapters in the New Testament. Maori Christian teachers, “whom so large a share
of the religious instruction of their countrymen devolves”, would often teach these
classes, which aimed at not only developing reading skills, but primarily in bringing
scholars to an understanding of the Bible.\footnote{32}{Alfred Brown, March 31, 1841, p.44.} Even if only reading and writing were
taught, these activities would be based on scripture, and therefore “may be considered

\footnote{27}{William Williams, \textit{Christianity Among the New Zealanders}, pp. 97, 101-102.}
\footnote{28}{Alfred Brown, \textit{Journals}, November 22, 1835. Sarah Fairburn was the wife of CMS missionary William Fairburn.}
\footnote{29}{William Puckey, May 14, 1855, p.311, May 25, 1857, p.350.}
\footnote{30}{Richard Davis, \textit{Memoirs}, April 30, 1842, p.270.}
\footnote{31}{Alfred Brown, February 24, 1838, p.132.}
\footnote{32}{Alfred Brown, March 31, 1841, p.44.}
an important education to a native”.\textsuperscript{33} Richard Taylor’s first school in 1839 was a slightly crude affair, attended by about two hundred men, women and children together. Some learned the alphabet, while others repeated and memorised the catechism. As a result, Taylor excitedly predicted: “surely soon this people will lay aside their barbarian character for that of the Xtian”. This statement explicitly opposed barbarism to Christianity. It was in the religious nature of this educational scene that Taylor envisaged the expulsion of barbarism.\textsuperscript{34}

This method of Christian education seemed to work for the mission. The schools did not just exist for intellectual improvement, but for the progress of the Christian gospel in Maori communities. Upon his arrival at Paihia, Thomas Chapman commented on the impact that the schools were having: “many are inquiring the way to Zion … among those in connection with the schools and Establishments – but these … will return to their homes and to their brethren, bearing I think the precious seed with them and thus become fellow helpers with us in Christ Jesus”.\textsuperscript{35} Schools were an integral part of the gospel going out from the settlement at Paihia to the surrounding scattered communities. Part of the reason for the success of the spread of the catechisms was due to the men and women who came to the mission settlements to learn to read, and were employed and taught by the missionaries. Upon returning to their families and friends, all brought something to share. Chapman freely acknowledged the help given by Maori “lads and girls” who had assisted in their work; by 1833 communities were beginning to build their own chapels and hold their own schools.\textsuperscript{36} The important role of education at the missionary settlements is visible in the example of Tupuki from Owae. The people of his village were rarely visited by missionaries, but Tupuki, commented Benjamin Ashwell, wanting to learn to read, went to Paihia, and after three years returned to Owae to read the scriptures to the people of his village, supplying slates and books from Paihia. Prior to this the ‘enquirers’ in the village had only gathered together to repeat the Lord’s Prayer and the Confession, but being able to read now opened up a whole wealth of Christian knowledge.\textsuperscript{37}

An improvement in “character and conduct” of the people of Waikanae, Otaki and surrounding areas during 1843 was traced to an increased understanding of the

\textsuperscript{35} Thomas Chapman, \textit{Letters and Journals}, September 27, 1830, vol.1, p.1b.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, September 14, 1833, pp.66-67.  
\textsuperscript{37} Benjamin Ashwell, October 26, 28, 1838, pp.33-34.
Christian gospel. But it was to the schools that had been founded and kept in these places that Octavius Hadfield attributed much of this advancement, as many now possessed the “power of searching the scriptures for themselves”. As a result, he had noticed the last remains of the “heathen party” at Otaki and its vicinity “turn from their former ways and come to the house of God, not only to seek instruction, but to bow themselves down as worshippers of the true God”.  

William Williams in his historical account of the CMS mission stressed that schools of “simple character” were of considerable importance from the beginning of missionary labours. Wherever a village welcomed the missionaries school would be held every morning after prayers, and through such a method much of the population learned to read and write. But before too long “the novelty wore off”, and it proved more difficult to get the children in to receive instruction, with even parents who were able to read being “indifferent about securing the same advantages for their children”. Therefore, central schools were founded by the CMS with government financial support, at Waimate, Auckland, Waikato, Otaki, Tauranga and Poverty Bay in order to “counteract this evil”. The idea was to provide a general education to promising scholars, “which might fit them to become useful members of society, and also to raise up a superior class of teachers who might carry on the work of schools in the villages, as well as prepare candidates for the ministry”. These schools were based on the “industrial system”, where men and boys would work on the school farms ploughing, reaping, and threshing. Octavius Hadfield also thought industrial schools were the “only possible way of educating and civilising the Maori population”. Yet these educational advancements remained inseparable from Christian faith in missionary thinking.

By the mid-1840s, when the dissemination of Christian knowledge had increased, the primary concern had become the education of children, which Benjamin Ashwell regarded as being of “vital importance” in preventing many of the children from “growing up baptized heathen”. He wanted the Church Missionary Society to give its full support to schools which gave precedence to a religious education in Maori language. Later, branches of ‘industry’ and agriculture were also taught, partly to provide for the boarding schools, and partly to encourage Maori in gaining ‘habits’ of

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industry, for moral as well as practical reasons, so they could provide for themselves and their families. Skills taught included ploughing and cultivating the soil, as well as spinning and weaving. At the boarding school in Ashwell’s district, children learned “English, ciphering, writing, scripture history, history, geography, singing, needle work and knitting”, as well as daily prayers and Biblical knowledge. The children were also supplied with clothing. Ashwell’s wife assisted him in the boarding school, and taught singing, among other things, which was also scripturally based, with songs based on the book of Isaiah sung at a public examination in 1858. But above all the Ashwells were “anxious to hear the music of a broken and contrite heart, in some cases this has been our privilege and the joy which the peace speaking blood of Jesus alone can give”.

Just like his colleagues, Octavius Hadfield, working down at Otaki, was intent on instituting a “sound scriptural education” for all students under his charge. He hoped eventually to have another establishment of higher learning for a small portion of boys from his current school who demonstrated scholastic promise. The new school would be for the education of young people and not for Maori teachers, however he thought even these would eventually benefit in an indirect way. The idea was to select promising youngsters from within the school for Christian ministry. Self-supporting and industrious habits, forming an important part of a basic education, would prove useful in later stages of schooling when students would need to give time and energy to support themselves through more advanced phases of learning. The other benefit of such an approach was that it could prevent the “great evils of establishing a College according to European notions”, and prevent the later problem of having to detach the Maori teachers they trained from relying upon the CMS for support and “European comforts”. William Puckey at Kaitaia also insisted that the schools encourage their students to be independent of European comforts. These facts appear to indicate that “European comforts” did not constitute civilization in missionary thinking.

This new boarding school which was established under Hadfield’s headship at Otaki was supported by funding from the government, and particularly with the personal endorsement of Governor George Grey. The school was regularly attended by an

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43 Benjamin Ashwell, Journals, June 1852, pp.231, 232.
46 William Puckey, Annual Report for Kaitaia, June 30, 1845, p.89.
average of around one hundred children from surrounding villages. In this school the children were taught about the Christian faith, and received instruction in English language, writing and arithmetic. Those boarding at the school employed extra time in growing their own food to support themselves, which was also designed to augment their living skills. Hadfield expressed to the CMS leadership that he knew of nothing which would benefit local Maori more, because the scheme promoted national preservation as well as improvement in civilization. Hadfield believed this would happen alongside “religious advancement”, tending to the scholars “eternal welfare”. Hadfield reported extensive support for the idea from the people of the surrounding villages, which he attributed to the knowledge that the children had benefited from the already existing school.⁴⁷

Ignorance of Christian child-rearing methods and the perceived “evil” of baptised children being raised in “ignorance and heathenism” was the reason for Thomas Chapman’s anxiousness to begin a permanent boarding school for the Tauranga region.⁴⁸ By September 1850 a girls’ boarding school that had been established at Maketu was keeping Chapman and his assistants very busy, as the girls would “cause us at times very much uneasiness and vexation, from their restlessness and dislike to any restraint”.⁴⁹ Chapman began his full boarding school in 1852 with twelve boys as boarders, and two girls, but thought that though they received every care and attention, they seemed to “think little of it, wither on their own part, or on the part of their parents”. He reasoned that they needed to “first feel the advantage of education before they can appreciate it”.⁵⁰ The school was fairly well attended, but Chapman could comment that though the school children appeared “outwardly, a pleasing contrast to the half-wild children of the pa”, he did not think they really differed much at all.⁵¹ Chapman mourned over the “many hundreds of baptized children no more cared for or better instructed than those of their heathen neighbours”. Though the numbers of Maori Christians appeared sizeable to Chapman, there seemed little strategy in place to encourage the upcoming generation in “a love to, and knowledge of, that God to whom they have been dedicated in Holy baptism.⁵² It is obvious from this example that

⁵¹ Thomas Chapman, January 9, 1853, p.470.
religious and moral development was what mattered most to the missionaries in their educational efforts.

During the mid-1840s John Morgan at Otawhao also placed increasing importance on the “imperative necessity” of schools, which again stemmed from seeing many baptised children “growing up in ignorance” and appearing little different from those who preferred ‘heathenism.’ There seemed to him little interest on the parental side to either “teach or restrain their children”. Morgan was convinced this was because Maori were only beginning to emerge from barbarism and so did not “value the benefits of early training and education, and hence arises their carelessness in reference to their offspring”. Morgan at this time, just like Ashwell, thought it well not to teach in English, partly because the use of the language he believed would expose Maori to the wickedness of Europeans.53

From the late 1840s onwards, Morgan became more strongly convinced that any future success of the mission depended now on efforts made to improve schooling. This was because the current state of the people was in transition “from heathenism to Christianity, and civilization”, and Morgan’s experience had shown him the ease with which people in this state could “retrograde”. Therefore if Maori were to prosper in the face of the evils associated with European settlement, and were to “rise as a nation, and become a people fearing God and working righteousness”, and this “glorious and important change” continue in coming years, then there existed a need to bring young people into “proper institutions” where they would be given “a sound English education combined with religious and industrial training”. Considering the environment of many Maori communities as unsuitable, Morgan thought such training could only happen in mission schools: “Rude, uncivilized, untrained and uninstructed, the youths must be taken from their respective tribes, and being brought under the influence of the Gospel and of civilization they must be trained and instructed and led forward step by step with the greatest care until they are prepared to act by the blessing of God.” As far as Morgan could see, a successful mission required this kind of schooling if the upcoming generation was to be saved from “Christian heathenism”. Morgan presents this as a choice between the upcoming generation either going back to heathenism, or pressing on to civilization and Christianity. Morgan believed the advancement of British colonization during this period called for increasing efforts toward the protection of

53 John Morgan, March 11, 1846, p.198-199.
Maori people from becoming extinct under its onslaught, and this would not happen unless “Christianity and civilization proceed together,” or, as Morgan stated in another way, Maori needed to progress “from barbarism and heathenism to civilization and Christianity”. Note the direct religious connotations of both barbarism and civilization in Morgan’s comments.

Morgan also supported an industrial system of schooling which undertook to teach students required skills for work in farming, shoemaking, spinning and weaving. The girls would learn domestic duties and sewing before they could start on industrial branches of learning, and Morgan viewed carpentry and farming as the most important branches of industry, as these would enable students to become farmers and squatters, and establish “neat and comfortable” homes. Morgan considered the advantage of this system to be that every boy and girl on leaving school would at once be able to fill and occupy a useful position in society. Morgan viewed advancement in Christianity, education and civilization as “the only chance under God of saving the Aboriginal tribes from destruction by the onward rush of civilization,” as long as it was “scriptural education”. Morgan was of the steady conviction that education would help to “prevent a relapse into heathenism”.

Much of the schooling had a dual goal of instilling ‘moral’ discipline and Christian moral foundation in Maori lifestyles. Samuel Williams in his school report for 1856 was able to speak of “a great improvement in the industry and good conduct of the scholars”. Though their intellectual improvement had not been as rapid, Williams viewed this as “almost of secondary consideration, when compared with the necessity of breaking them off from the indolent and disorderly habits they have most of them been accustomed to in their native villages”. The adult students training as teachers at the Turanga school were achieving good progress and as much “intellectual attainment” as Williams thought possible. By 1858 the school had 66 students in three schools, twenty-one of whom were men who had come for instruction with the hope that this would lead to preparation for ordination to the ministry. The pupils received instruction in Biblical knowledge, English language, writing, arithmetic, singing and geography. Yet Williams

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55 Ibid, October 20, 1852, p.560.
56 Ibid, April 21, 1853, pp.569, 578.
57 Ibid, Letter to Henry Venn, April 20, 1854, p.595.
58 Samuel Williams, Report of Ahuriri Industrial school, 1856, Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, p.29.
59 William Williams, Williams Family Letters, May 1, 1858, vol.2, p.5.
recognised the more difficult part of the students’ education to be their learning to  
“break off the habits of idleness and selfishness which they acquire at their own homes,  
and to make them feel the force of St Paul’s injunction, ‘Whatsoever ye do, do it  
heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men.’” But even here he had been sure of  
improvement and he hoped that, “with God’s blessing on the means used, they may  
become more impressed with the necessity of striving to please God in everything, and  
of exhibiting true Christian spirit and principle, even in the most ordinary occupations of  
every-day life”. 60 Improvement in faith was what missionary education was really all  
about.

Many of the girls who attended school at Turanga were deemed by Jane to be  
lacking in moral discipline, having had the unfortunate experience of being “allowed  
from babyhood to have entirely their own way, become totally unmanageable at home,  
and consequently their friends bring them to us, urging as a reason … that if we do not  
receive them, they must be ruined”. Jane thought the girls’ most pressing need in these  
situations was to be instructed in the “first principles of religion and to be trained in the  
decencies of Christian life. Habits of obedience and cleanliness … shall soon bring them  
into good order”. 61

Not everyone in the communities where schools were established supported the  
educational venture. Richard Taylor recorded how he followed a run away student from  
the school at Wanganui home, and returned her “by force”. Some of her relatives did not  
appreciate her being sent to school. Taylor found this “disheartening” as he thought it  
displayed the “indifference” of the older people in the village “to the welfare of their  
children” and the “blindness” of many to the “great privilege of having their children  
fed, clothed, and taught gratis. The old women actually seem to rejoice if they can  
induce a child to run away as though they had succeeded in delivering it from something  
evil”. There was obviously a vast gulf between the things which Taylor valued, and  
some local Maori attitudes to education. On another occasion, an old ‘heathen’ chief at  
Otamarakau pa near Rotorua “accused the Missionaries of making slaves of their  
children”, and ridiculed what the missionaries believed and taught. 62 The parents  
sometimes took issue with the schools for their disciplinary actions: Alfred Brown in  
one instance was “obliged to attend a stormy meeting at the pa in consequence of some

60 Samuel Williams, Reports on Native Schools, Auckland, 1858, Appendix to the Journals of the  
House of Representatives of New Zealand, pp.5-7.
of the natives withholding their children from school because they had been mildly punished for disobedience”. 63

A seeming moral or religious apathy among parents was deemed a problem too. Ashwell was still faced with a baptismal class at the end of 1847 he found “sadly ignorant of the simplest truths of religion. Neither parents nor sponsors seemed duly impressed with the responsibility of bringing up their children ‘in the nurture and admonition of the Lord’”. 64 Ashwell considered a lack of parental authority being exerted over the children as a “hindrance” to the progress of the gospel, and this especially so in relation to education: “the children are masters, this is the great bar to education”. Not many parents would insist on their children attending; the children seemed free to come and go as it pleased them, and this “just when they have learned to read and are making progress in knowledge”. However, Ashwell hoped this situation would change as the parents came to understand the value of education. 65 Ashwell found it a “real trial” to send home “promising native children to their villages, to be comparatively neglected, or to grow up in ignorance and sin”.

At the station at Taupiri ten years later Ashwell was in a different situation, pleased with the increasing interest of parents in their children’s education. The people seemed “anxious” to have their children attending the mission schools, and there was a determination to have boarding schools in their own villages, run by “native teachers”. Four were already operating, and Ashwell hoped they would endure. This demonstrated that: “it has thus pleased God to give his blessing upon the constant preaching to my people of their responsibilities as parents”. 66 By the early 1850s, William Puckey ran schools at Kohanga and Wairoa, both of which were situated a few miles from Kaitaia. There were more than forty children attending school at Wairoa, along with many adults, while Kohanga boasted about fourteen young students. Puckey he felt himself “highly privileged to be able to go there at all”. A few years previously there had been little enthusiasm for the presence of missionaries, but parents now felt more positive about the schools, and the chief of the people in this village even built a schoolroom, attending the services and schools himself, and reproving “any of the children whom he

64 Benjamin Ashwell, December 12, 1847, vol.4, p.22.
sees idle”. All of the examples outlined above underscore the moral and religious basis, and aims, of missionary education.

**For Maori Educators**

Maori teachers played an essential role in the “drama of conversion and religious change among the tribes”. They had influence in Maori communities in ways that missionaries did not. Some conversions took place quite apart from a European missionary, and the associated pastoral care of new converts often fell to ‘native’ teachers. Teachers often had great authority among Maori communities, and became a means by which “civilization” could be disseminated and improved. “Native teachers” lived in nearly every village community, acting as catechists and worship leaders, pastors and preachers, as well as school teachers, and many had “a continuing impact on local life and facilitated the steadily proceeding incorporation of Christian ideas and practices into Maori society”. But as Christianity took hold in New Zealand, there was increasing missionary acknowledgement of a need to improve the ‘native’ ministry which was occurring.

Education for these essential players in this religious drama was indispensible. Wohlers had found the “native teachers”, though helpful in aiding the spread of Christianity across New Zealand were also, according to European conceptions, “naturally very ignorant, for they had received no instruction worthy of the name”. Many appeared unable to read fluently, and often missed the meaning of what they were reading. Wohlers detected presumption and ignorance, and clever designs to catch him “with useless questions”, but he believed that behind this lay an “earnest striving after the kingdom of God”. Wohlers would gather “native teachers” of both Wesleyan and Anglican extraction for instruction, and would expound the scriptures with them, an activity he reported the teachers came to value: “They were pleased to understand what they read. They often thus found material for their discourses, which often consisted of matters that had no connection with one another and were quite meaningless.”

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67 William Puckey, November 4, 1852, p.268.
Well taught Maori teachers were important in the fight against heresy. Sometimes Wesleyan and Catholic teachers were portrayed by the missionaries as uninstructed and ignorant, leading people astray from the truth of the gospel.\textsuperscript{71} Hadfield believed “ignorant self-taught, self-sufficient and self-constituted teachers” caused divisions among the congregations, and taught erroneous things which were not just incorrect points of view, but “under the pretence of furthering the gospel scatter and extend heresies, by uniting native notions and superstitions to the Word of God”. This apparently made them unwitting emissaries of Satan, and Hadfield found opposing and stopping such people to be the hardest part of his work.\textsuperscript{72}

In an assessment of education in the late 1850s, William Williams bemoaned the fact that after forty years of gospel work in New Zealand there were few well prepared Maori ministers “who are suitable teachers of their countrymen”. The aim of the mission had by this time changed to training a body of Maori ministers who could replace the missionaries. Ordination candidates from Turanga were in Auckland during this period undergoing preparation for ministry.\textsuperscript{73} Maori ministers had in fact effectively operated in their own communities since the first arrival of Christianity. It was common for those who had been educated by the missionaries to conduct schools themselves, often taking place around a church service or prayer meeting. But Alfred Brown, aware that the ongoing work of the mission in New Zealand largely depended upon the “native teachers,” in a report for 1843-44, conveyed the opinion that the present system being used for the instruction of Maori in Christian faith was “wholly inadequate” for present needs. The people of his district had attained a certain level of ability, but it was difficult for them to proceed beyond this: Many of the teachers gave “very good instructions in the elementary principles of Christianity, and there they necessarily stop”. This raised certain difficulties for the mission, as, Brown believed, Maori people were naturally inquisitive, but as a result entered into “the consideration of subjects which they are quite unable to comprehend,” which ended in disputes that produced trouble and presented “a stumbling block in the way of enquirers after truth”.\textsuperscript{74} The “sad sample of ignorance and neglect” which Thomas Chapman saw in the school at

\textsuperscript{71} Octavius Hadfield, \textit{Journals}, July 22, 1840, p.7.
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Ibid}, February 1, 1841, p.10.
\textsuperscript{73} William Williams, \textit{Williams Family Letters}, Rev. William to Elizabeth, February 25, 1858, vol.2, p.84.
\textsuperscript{74} Octavius Hadfield, \textit{Journals}, Report for year ending June 30, 1844, p.43-44.
Umuhika pa he put down to the quality of teachers available. In 1858, ten years after Brown’s comments, George Kissling reiterated the urgent need for well trained Maori teachers. The health of the missionaries was failing, and the “old native teachers, whose experience and stability of character have in a great measure made up for the lack of better information and higher knowledge” were also “rapidly entering into their rest”. The younger teachers were in need of more training before they could be entrusted with responsibility for the churches. Therefore Kissling looked upon all efforts to train Maori ministers as indispensable for the supply of schoolteachers and offices within the church.

Some of the missionaries had been working throughout the 1840s and 1850s towards improving the standard of the ‘native’ teachers, mostly in areas of religious knowledge. Octavius Hadfield had in early 1850 devised a plan for the “education and improvement” of the teachers in his area. He lived at Otaki for two months and had seventeen teachers come and live with him for a few weeks so he could instruct them, after which he thought most were pleased with what they had learned. During this time Hadfield gave lectures on the Apostles Creed, the early life of Jesus Christ and his ministry and “endeavoured to instruct them in minor matters which should assist them in teaching others”. He thought it worked so well that he planned to make it a regular fixture, and have twenty five men for about six weeks at a time in this form of schooling. Seeing as each village had both a head teacher and secondary teacher, each would take it in turns to come and learn, while the other could remain at work in the village. Through this scheme Hadfield hoped that he might also be able to identify some young men who would come and remain with him on a permanent basis in order to become “proficient teachers”. John Morgan differed slightly in his opinion on things, however. He had reasoned that Maori ministers would require the oversight of European missionaries for some time to come, and therefore believed that the future effectiveness of the mission did not lie in the building up of a Maori ministry, but rather in Europeans being sent out to minister “jointly to the European and Maori races”.

Taylor’s work with his teachers in many ways resembled Hadfield’s efforts. Once again, the educational content was thoroughly religious. One of Richard Taylor’s senior teachers was taught about “the nature of the circumcision of Abraham”. Another

75 Thomas Chapman, December 21, 1852, p.460.
76 G.A. Kissling, St Stephen’s School, Reports on Native Schools, Auckland, 1858, Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, p.5.
77 John Morgan, February 22, 1854, p.590.
of Taylor’s teachers submitted a paper to him outlining the questions he had drawn up to use with his students in the school he ran, which dealt with “what is repentance, for what are we baptized, what was the character of the apostles preaching, Acts 2:38, do good things float to (or bechance) men of their own accord, what is the nature of prayer etc”. 78 Taylor would on occasion catechise students from the sermon that had been preached, which on one day in August 1844 was on the rending of the veil to the Holy of Holies in the Jewish temple, and how this had been fulfilled in Christ. 79 He would hold sessions in which he would get the teachers of his district to preach before him, and in his eyes they were not just ‘teachers’ but “native ministers”, because they really stood in this capacity in their communities. Taylor assessed them on fluency, content and their adherence to the scriptural text they had been given, keenly aware of “how important it will be to obtain a well-taught body of teachers”. 80 It was not uncommon for Taylor to get his teachers to preach from texts they did not know, as the exercise constituted a good test of where the teachers were at in their ministerial abilities. What was spoken did not solely depend on what the teachers had been taught, but how they understood it related to their own cultural context: “One in speaking of Xts birth showing how he humbled himself said that one great proof was his being laid in a manger, a receptacle of food which according to their ideas is very degrading no chief formerly would carry food or sit near it.” 81 On another morning Taylor had his teachers preach from a section from Numbers 28, using texts to interpret the passage with which the teachers were unacquainted. The instruction which missionaries supplied Maori teachers was, according to the instances above, quite involved and comprehensive. Taylor at least was assured his teachers were “able to proclaim the gospel with effect to their fellow countrymen”. 82

Education provided a means for the dissemination of religious truth, and enabled Maori to access the Christian scriptures themselves. This was the major focus of missionary education in the 1820s and 1830s. The emphasis changed in the 1840s, with a greater interest in providing a means of practical moral instruction in the ways of Christianity, as understood by the missionaries themselves from within their own

cultural context. It was believed that a Christian education was the foundation on which a morally upright, prosperous and industrious society could be built, and this was the hallmark of missionary associations of education with civilization. The other change during the 1840s was caused by an increasing awareness among CMS personnel of the need for well-equipped Maori teachers to minister both Christian faith, and the civilization associated with it, to their own people in a substantial way, and to secure the foundations of a future Maori ministry. Education also provided a range of skills and aptitudes which equipped Maori for dealing with the increasing settler presence. Considering much of the teaching was carried out in Maori language and much of the educational and ministry responsibility fell upon Maori teachers, not to a European missionary, the influence of European ways of thinking in this transference of knowledge should not be overrated. In fact, Barrington and Beaglehole were critical of the missionary schooling system for not providing adequate instruction to enable Maori to ‘integrate’ more easily with the surrounding European presence. Maori people accessed education on their own terms, but in these interactions also engaged with and were influenced by the missionary religious worldview.
Chapter Ten: Europeanization and Cultural Change.

The religious, moral and social preoccupation in the missionaries’ “civilizational perspective”, to borrow Peter Mandler’s phrase, and their emphasis on the power of the Christian message to transform ‘savage’ societies, meant that there was no essential difference between Europeans and non-European peoples in missionary thinking. Previous chapters have detailed the efforts of evangelicals to transform society in Britain itself. Sin and degeneration were present in Britain as well as far flung ‘heathen’ lands, and it was not uncommon for Europeans to be the subject of scathing evangelical criticisms of moral and social behaviour. In fact, New Zealand missionary sources from 1830-1860 are partly characterised by an inversion of roles, with ‘degeneration’ attributed to ‘ungodly’ Europeans, while at the same time Maori were ascending the scale of civilization. Moreover, as Maori increase in civilization continued, it was accompanied by a general concern among missionaries that the “trappings” of civilization were leading Maori away from godly living, a sign that civilization was not necessarily determined by European accoutrements. Also, in many cases, missionaries could be quite scathing about European cultural characteristics. The latter half of the period under study exhibits an interesting inversion in missionary opinion of those who were considered savage and those who could now be called civilized.

Ascending and Descending

Missionaries were appalled that Maori were often opposed by the ungodly example provided by other Europeans in “the progress of civilization and Christianity”. Arthur Thomson, on the other hand, who saw commerce as the foremost measure of civilization, regarded sailors, sealers, whalers and Pakeha-Maori as the great early agents of civilization among Maori. These planted “true progressive civilisation” and were the “pioneers of civilisation, and the introduction of Christianity and letters into the country”. These so-called agents of civilization were the very same people the missionaries blamed for hindering the progress of Christianity and civilization. In fact, CMS missionaries held Europeans generally responsible for many of the “evils” that

1 John Morgan, Letters and Journals, August 31, 1846.
Maori people encountered during the period of Christianity and civilization, rather than acting as appropriate emissaries of civilized society. In the early stages of the mission in the Bay of Islands, Henry Williams and his co-workers were often grieved by young Maori women who, having come to live at the missionary settlement, would then “run away” and “frequent the shipping.” The most distressing thing for Henry was that the girls actually wanted to “pursue so abandoned a course”, and were urged into ‘prostitution’ by their relatives. Apparently few women anywhere seemed “faster within Satan’s grasp than these”. However, Williams also attributed just as much blame to the European captains and crews of the ships, who would “offer them that which to a New Zealander is irresistible - muskets, powder and oil”. He labelled the actions of his fellow countrymen “shocking: they are the destroyers to this people, both soul and body”. In this sense these Europeans were considered worse than Maori in their depravity and abandonment.¹ As referred to in earlier chapters, problems arise when historians portray missionaries as directly equating European habits and culture with Christianity and civilization. This does not accurately represent the missionary perspective in their letters and journals.

The missionaries feared the moral and social influence of ‘ungodly’ Europeans. A proposal to remove the mission to Australia due to difficult circumstances and outbreaks of fighting which surfaced during 1827 was voted down partly for this reason. Australia was to provide a safe-haven and a better situation for many of the Maori ‘slave’ class who had an interest in Christianity. However, William Williams did not see the plan as a viable option partly because “the natives would contract much evil from a promiscuous intercourse with Europeans”. He wanted a sizeable grant of land to exclude other Europeans from dwelling near Maori, “at least 100 miles from any English colony.” The CMS missionaries at Paihia during the early 1830s also did not want their children to be educated in New South Wales; in fact, according to William Williams, the idea filled them with horror: “The best class of society is degraded in the extreme with very few exceptions, and even those families where religion is professed are so loose in their ideas of propriety that I could not on any account entrust a child in whom I had an interest even to visit any one of them for a single month.”² Williams here places degradation and Christian religious conviction at opposite ends of the spectrum.

¹ Henry Williams, Early Journals, February 13, 1827, p.42.
² William Williams, Williams Family Letters, August 27, 1830, p.162.
Moreover, time spent among “civilized” people did not necessarily render any ‘savage’ or ‘barbarous’ person more civilized. William Williams found the great chiefs Waikato and Hongi perfect examples of this fact, as both had visited England, but each remained as “superstitious” as any other Maori person William Williams had come into contact with. On a visit to Waikato’s people near Rangihoua he discovered that Hongi “would not on any account neglect his taboos … the whole of the sea in the immediate neighbourhood of Rangheeehoo (Rangihoua) is now sacred and no canoe is allowed to pass under any pretence”.\textsuperscript{5}

On the other hand, there were Europeans who, despite being born into ‘civilized’ communities, were a far cry from living up to their civilized name. A Scotsman who lived at Te Toro earned the unflattering title as owner of the “most filthy place” that Richard Taylor had ever seen, whether Maori or European.\textsuperscript{6} One European man, who was the son of an ex-CMS employee, had married a Maori woman of high rank, whom Taylor rated as “very respectable”, but he thought this European man had “quite descended to her rank of civilization, his house and premises are indeed in some respects behind those of many of the natives, dirty and slovenly”.\textsuperscript{7} Two Europeans living with Ngati Tuwharetoa Maori were “styled” by the people as slaves of paramount chief Te Heuheu Tukino II, which Taylor regarded as a rather disgraceful position to be in: “It appears sad that any of our countrymen should be content for the sake of their food thus to live as slaves of a native chief … they resembled the prodigal when sent to feed swine who was fain to eat the husks which the very swine did eat.”

There were moral associations for Taylor with this kind of living: this was a form of degradation reserved for Europeans who had “abandoned their tender parents’ home and the soft lap of plenty that they might unchecked riot in a far land”;\textsuperscript{8} Both these statements are again linked to the Biblical parable of the prodigal son, who had all the privileges of a ‘son of the kingdom’, but gave them up for immoral, rebellious living. Taylor depicted the outcome of these actions as moral and social degradation. Thus Europeans who forgot their God may be described as sliding down the social scale into barbarism.

The conflict between Te Mamaku and Europeans in the Wanganui region led Taylor to weigh up the role of Europeans in the conflict, apparently an example of “how

\textsuperscript{5} Williamd Williams, \textit{Williams Family Letters}, September 20, 1829, pp.141-142.
\textsuperscript{6} Richard Taylor, May 9, 1849, vol.6, p.83.
\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Ibid}, March 29, 1853, vol.8, p.91.
\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Ibid}, April 22, 1847, vol.5, p.39.
entirely men forget God”. It was not “the poor uncivilized natives but our own
countrymen who have cast off all form of religion and in open profanity seem to court
the anger of God to bring the threatening destruction upon them”, and this because “as
Judah formerly trusted in Egypt so now do the settlers solely trust in the military for
safety and think it unnecessary to call upon God for aid”.9 When considering the
soldiers, sailors, and policemen who attended an English church service which he
presided over in early 1847, Taylor asked himself “who are the heathen in this
country?”

Taylor knew of many unbaptised Maori who “not only are infinitely more moral
in their living than our countrymen but are constant attenders on the means of grace”,
whilst Englishmen who were strictly raised in England, after arriving in New Zealand
“not only neglect public worship but even the appearance of religion, as though in this
distant land it were a matter of no importance”.10 The “deadness” and “indifference”
toward Christianity that Richard Taylor perceived in Englishmen in New Zealand he
deduced to be a worse situation than that which Maori knew because “they have not
even the concern of the heathen natives for their souls’ salvation”.11 Several years later,
a domestic dispute between a British sergeant and his wife, which ended with a threat of
murder, led Taylor to make the contrasting comment: “Without religion what better is
the civilized man than the savage? Even the natives regard these miserable beings with
contempt.”12

There was no essential difference for the missionaries between the spiritual state
of ungodly Europeans and unbelieving Maori. The same language used to describe
Maori in their state of sinfulness was used to describe the CMS missionary William
Yate after his homosexual affairs were uncovered: “what an awful instance of this is
human depravity truly the heart of man is deceitful above measure and desperately
wicked who can know it.”13 John Wilson referred to other ‘unbelieving’ Englishmen
who he met during his journey out to New Zealand as “our degraded countrymen”,
demonstrating that “degradation” was solely to do with human living and behaviour
outside of the worship of the Christian God, and was not limited to any particular racial

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9 Richard Taylor, Journals, June 1, 1847, vol.5, p.73.
10 Ibid, January 10, 1847, vol.4, p.159.
12 Ibid, July 30, 1849.
13 Ibid, August 17, 1836, p.131.
group. Wilson had visited a fellow clergyman on board the convict ship Circassian, who was being transported to Australia for book stealing. He was middle-aged and “apparently of a humble and quiet demeanour, but in conversation I found him to be cold and nearly insensible to his present degradation and misery”, this comment made in reference to the man’s lack of acknowledgement of his sin. The soldiers on board ship were told of God’s love being displayed in “a crucified Saviour” and of their “utter depravity and unworthiness” as sinners. A conversation with an old European man near Sydney brought forth the comment that this man had “forgotten his God”, had lamentable ignorance, and a “benighted mind”. He too was told he needed a change of heart, just as Wilson was to repeat to Maori a few months later.

These men of the CMS mission clearly believed in the solidarity of humanity in depravity, and this despite the fact that many Europeans were raised within ‘civilized’ environs. There were around 30 Europeans living around Coromandel Harbour during 1837, “the great majority of whom are living without God and without hope in the world and whose example must prove a sad stumbling-block as it regards the labours of our brethren amongst the natives”. Alfred Brown feared that a European living with Christian Maori at Otumoetai pa would end up being “a great obstacle to their progress heavenward”. He was aware that many traders who moved along the coast “spread a moral pestilence around them wherever they settle. This man, although but just arrived, has commenced a grossly immoral course, and I urged the natives to send him away.” Indeed, a few years later, John Morgan lamented: “in how many ways do our own countrymen oppose the progress of civilization and Christianity”.

Thomas Chapman declared British sailors in the mid-1830s to be emissaries of the Devil to Maori around Kororareka, because their actions were responsible for much of the “evil” and temptation which lured Maori in the area “into the snare laid for them by their great enemy”. Chapman had been working in hope of “subduing the rude barbarity of the savage mind”, a “rudeness” which he believed had now “greatly subsided”, except that “the vices of the white man” were growing steadily around them, with a strength that could wreak havoc in Maori communities. These comments were made in relation to the shipping, as well as the sale of “ardent spirits” to Maori: by 1834

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17 Alfred Brown, November 20, 1837, p.126.
19 John Morgan, August 31, 1846, p.234.
there were five establishments at Kororareka dedicated to the sale of alcohol, and though not intended to cater for Maori, “when the crews of five or six or more ships land for the sole purpose of letting lose to every evil desire – coupling this with the known character of the British sailor, and the grossness which proverbially belongs to them … the scenes of depravity there are very great”. The character of Europeans in New Zealand toward the end of the 1830s was altogether rather poor in Chapman’s opinion, with few “honourable exceptions.” There were runaway convicts in their hundreds according to his estimate, along with “many others equally worthless … their influence and example is precisely what you must suppose – as base as can be”.

Other opinions from people outside the mission concluded that Maori during the early 1830s, even if unconverted, held missionaries in high esteem, while Maori deemed other Europeans untrustworthy. William Puckey thought that most Maori people knew the missionaries had come “on a far different errand to them than the European settlers and flax dealers, and often remark the difference which appears in the conduct of the Missionaries, to that of the other Europeans who are I am sorry to say very often very appropriately called Devils by the natives”. According to Puckey, the CMS missionaries at Kaitaia had to “fight against the devil in many shapes”. This was firstly with their own countrymen, Englishmen “whose conduct is far below the brute beasts”, another indication of European capacity for barbarism.

European ‘barbarism’ was portrayed by the missionaries as one of the reasons for Maori depopulation. European interaction with Maori around Kaikohe in the Bay of Islands, first in relation to the shipping, and then the coming of colonization, Richard Davis characterised as displaying “the raging power of sin”, which was bad in England, but “worse in her colonies”. Colonization in this sense was a bad thing for Maori. There was a “stream of immorality”, begun through the interactions of Maori and Europeans around the shipping, which had become enlarged through colonization “and possesses a strong and overwhelming current” which Davis thought could one day destroy the indigenous population. He pondered how it was that “all savage tribes fall and become annihilated before civilisation?” but ended up restating the question: “How is it that all savage and barbarous tribes fall and become annihilated before demoralization …

20 Thomas Chapman, February 24, 1834, pp.79, 81.
21 Ibid, August 6, 1838, p.177.
before the deadly immorality introduced amongst them by those who are called civilized beings? This is the TRUE way of stating the question, and it conveys its own answer”, i.e. Europeans were not the civilized beings they made themselves out to be. The “demoralization” and diminution of Maori in New Zealand was, Davis argued, primarily a consequence of European sin, and he asked, “if the aborigines decreased so fast when the stream of immorality was comparatively small, what may we not now expect when it is so much enlarged?” He feared that a couple of decades would see Maori almost wiped out. Therefore, it was only the Gospel which could protect and preserve Maori communities.25 Despite the highly paternalistic nature of these comments, as Davis expects Maori will be annihilated without missionary intervention, these statements also imply an inversion of the normal savage/civilized discourse.

There were few European settlers whose Christian faith measured up in Richard Taylor’s estimate to “the consistency and morality of the natives” after their conversion. The simple fact was that many Europeans who came to New Zealand were irreligious: “they partake indeed of the civilization of their country but having no faith they are like a vessel without a helm”. This is another clear indication that Christianity was considered to be the only legitimate foundation of civilization. Some Maori people, on the other hand, did have faith, but having not far “emerged from a savage state” European colonists often regarded them as inferior to themselves. But under Taylor’s assessment, Maori faith and conduct placed them in superiority over many Europeans.26 Benjamin Ashwell in his journal of a visit to Port Nicholson described the immoral living of Europeans in the vicinity. However, by the “blessing of God” a Maori teacher known as Richard Davis, who had studied with his namesake at Waimate and acquired some English, had wielded considerable influence upon others in the area and had helped to prevent any significant proportion of Maori from “following the pernicious examples around them”. This man worked as a carpenter, and owned some property, and out of his own pocket was financing and building a Maori Christian chapel nearby. He had also “in some measure acquired the manners and dress of a European … the house and family of this young man are a credit to him being quite in the European style”. Davis visited nearby Maori villages and pas, and was active in helping to prevent conflict between Maori and Europeans in the vicinity. Ashwell called him a “truly

Christian native” and a missionary in his own right to Maori at Pt. Nicholson, “long before any European visited them”.  

Some of the English soldiers Taylor knew he labelled as “most depraved” because they regularly committed theft, and appeared “dead to all sense of shame”. Europeans were born and raised in “the midst of Christian light”, but Taylor believed they were merely civilized heathens who bore the name ‘Christian’ because of their upbringing. This is a clear repudiation of the traditional European idea of Christendom, or that being European also automatically meant being Christian. Moreover, in one instance Taylor drew a distinction between the European and Maori celebrations of Christmas for the year 1848. Whilst the Europeans in the vicinity attended the horse races, Taylor remarked that so few Maori seemed interested in attending because believing Maori who lived in the area considered the whole event “an open profanation of this season of our Saviour’s birth, and thus were not drawn away by this European novelty.” Taylor contrasted the varying way the season was celebrated: “perhaps near 700 Europeans were assembled at these races on one side of the river, and many of them passing their time in drinking, swearing and gaming. Exactly opposite nearly 4000 of the lately barbarous natives had congregated from all parts some near 150 miles off to celebrate a Saviour’s birth.” Taylor assumed that these Christian converts were no longer ‘barbarous.’ So while ‘heathen’ Maori were “pressing into the church” it seemed as though the “children of the Kingdom are sitting by, worse than indifferent to the heavenly boon.” Though the sons of Christendom pretended to celebrate the coming of Christ “with eating and drinking and carnal merriment … they leave all spiritual thoughts to those who are too generally regarded as scarce ranking in the scale of rational beings.”

Part of the reason that John Morgan wanted to see a general advance in civilization during the 1850s was so that those who had been “sunk in the lowest depths of barbarism and cannibalism” could rise from these depths through the preaching of the gospel and the power of “the God of all grace, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy”, to establish a “sanctified civilization, that they may survive the evil effects of European Colonization, and become a people fearing God and working righteousness”. These phrases encompass much of what constituted the CMS missionary notion of

27 Benjamin Ashwell, Journals April 20, 1841.
civilization. British colonization did not just mean the possible physical annihilation of Maori, but could also represent a source of their spiritual ruin, and Morgan warned of learning the “vices” of the “lowest” of the Europeans. 31 Civilization was partly to equip Maori to stave off the physical and moral onslaught of unprincipled Europeans: Englishmen could indeed be savages, particularly in relation to “poor Heathens whom they imagine they have in their Power”. 32

In reflecting on the number of Maori visiting Auckland and its associated “vices” and “temptations” in 1842, Thomas Chapman thought that many who had visited Auckland had been preserved by God “from falling into the snare of the devil”. 33 But, more than a decade later in 1855, as fewer people were attending Sunday school in Chapman’s district, he regretted how little he and his fellow missionaries had been able to calculate “the evils of civilization and commerce” and the introduction of European settlers which they now had to deal with: “I speak not of the few (good) but of the many (evil) – really the wickedness of very many of the “civilized” is excessive – dragging with them as they do the unstable natives into their ruinous practices.” Chapman put the word ‘civilized’ in inverted commas, again demonstrating that the Europeans he referred to were perhaps so in name only. He had hoped that government support and intervention would prevent Maori from succumbing to a similar fate of other indigenous peoples in British colonies, but perhaps now saw that this “wiser and better government” did not exist in New Zealand. 34 In theory he still hoped that agricultural activity, along with “a few more towns, and rural European districts, would greatly benefit the natives if such laws could be enacted, and such persons inhabitants of the towns and villages, as would generally set the natives a good example”. Yet such a situation was considered to be comparatively rare by the missionaries. Chapman thought Auckland was better than many colonial towns, but there still remained a “fearful character among its inhabitants, as may be expected; and few among the natives visiting it, who do not receive damage in some shape or other”. 35

Of course, godly Europeans could be of great benefit in the cause of the gospel, providing an example of upright living. Marianne Williams’ commended the Kemps, who were mission workers, in this regard, for being: “truly Christian and self-denying

33 Thomas Chapman, September 30, 1842, p.213.
spirits and cultured minds. I did indeed bless God that such a couple remained in New Zealand, to declare the Saviour’s name, and exemplify his power in a consistent life”.  

William Williams believed the presence of the few respectable, upright and industrious Englishmen in the colony provided Maori with “the example of steady industry, such as the English labourer is accustomed to from his childhood - always at work because he is used to it”. Settlers also brought with them a strong market for Maori produce, which complemented that which was produced by the settlers. “It has followed, as a consequence, that the possession of money has enabled the New Zealander to follow the example of civilized man with regard to dress, so that to a great extent the Maori clothing has been entirely superseded.”

Civilization and its downside

Conversely, much associated with civilization according to the CMS missionaries had a downside. There were many complaints from missionary mouths and pens throughout the 1840s and 1850s to the effect that ‘civilization’ was drawing Maori away from “seeking the one thing needful”, that is, salvation in Christ. By the middle of 1840, William Puckey felt sure that the state of things in New Zealand, “both spiritual and temporal”, was now much improved from what it had been previously. He had already begun to see the benefits which the presence of British government had brought, in the “suppression of vice amongst the European population, which was continually a great barrier to our operations, their example and conversation being quite in opposition to all our proceeding”. Unfortunately, the arrival of so many Europeans had also constituted “a great trial of the faith of some of our baptized natives”. The market price for food and goods had risen to the extent that “it has been a source of great temptation to many to grow cold and seek after temporal good instead of that which is eternal”. But Puckey was preaching regularly in the Kaitaia district on the subject of greed, and in response “many of them have seen their error and have confessed that they have acted contrary to the word of God which they have heard from the mouths of us their teachers, and have also seen with their own eyes”.

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36 Marianne Williams, *Williams Family Letters*, Thursday, for August 2, 1823, p.46.
38 William Puckey, June 12, 1840, pp.57-58.
Alfred Brown was only partly pleased with the advancing civilization which he saw. A group of Maori from Tauranga who had been living in Auckland for two and a half years had developed “a certain air of civilization, and they were most respectably clothed, but they had forgotten many vital truths with which in past years they were quite familiar”. The language here infers that lacking “vital truths” meant lacking ‘true’ civilization; they had its appearance, but not its substance. He believed that the “trappings of civilization”, particularly commerce, and the benefits derived from it occupied too much of his parishioners’ time, “to the neglect of their families and the neglect too, I fear, of the means of grace”. However, he was pleased with stockyards for their cattle, and with an agreement made with a millwright to erect a watermill, so corn could be grown with less labour than it took to grown the traditional kumera.

Auckland was a popular destination for Maori looking for work, with abundant employment available on road works; unfortunately, itinerant workers often returned home “with abundance of clothing and money, but with an increased indifference to spiritual things”. Keeping of horses, and raising sheep, and especially the growing of wheat sprang up in many residences of his district, proving “Civilization is certainly making progress amongst the natives”, however, he rather thought that rather than civilization “acting as a handmaid to Christianity, it seems only to remove them farther from the simplicity of the Gospel which they displayed when in a more barbarous state”. This was labelled a ‘spurious’ form of civilization by the missionaries.

In the latter half of the 1840s Brown found it increasingly difficult to “reprove a native for any sin … without his being able to point to the Europeans at Auckland as affording an example of the same kind, whether it be card playing, drunkenness, desecration of the Sabbath, or any other of the “Works of darkness””. This situation led him to comment that the “transitional state of the natives from comparative barbarism to miscalled civilization” was a danger to their spiritual life, demonstrating they “were too young in Grace for the full tide of colonization to rush in upon them, and raises the question whether their civilized barbarism was not preferable to their present barbarized civilization”. There is an implicit inference here that true civilization implied having a healthy spiritual life, and barbarism the neglect of the worship of God. A civilized

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39 Alfred Brown, January 10, 1840.
40 Ibid, August 12, 1846.
41 Ibid, June 17, 1847.
42 Ibid, November 30, 1847.
43 William Williams, Christianity, p.348.
44 Alfred Brown, April 3, 1848.
barbarism implied a worship of God without a developed social condition, while the opposite phrase, a barbarised civilization, indicated a rise in social development, but neglect of faith. Ashwell was also sorry that “the constant intercourse of the natives … with Auckland is productive of carelessness and lukewarmness in their religious duties”. Ashwell wanted to see his charges progressing in both civilization and Christianity, and an absence of the latter led him to decry the evidence that “covetousness now seems the absorbing principle of many”. Similar comments come from John Wilson. It seemed to him that the “religious feeling” among the people of his district during 1846 had remained “nearly stationary”, and though civilization was proceeding well, Wilson regretted “that the good seed of the kingdom in too many instances has been sown among briers and thorns, and brought no fruit unto perfection” (this is a reference to Jesus’ parable of the sower in Matthew 13). Many around Opotiki appeared to be only concerned with gaining property and working their cultivations, with the resulting harvests being sent to Auckland, but Wilson feared that “their returns are far from compensating for the moral degradation which this kind of intercourse naturally conveys”. Maori appeared caught in a paradoxical conundrum: they were surrounded by many difficulties, with their position:

in the scale of humanity so low – inveterate prejudices continually forced upon his attention … what will be their station generally ten years hence? Elements are so warring around them. A White man has arrived and settled among them in yonder Pa. This is good. He brings blankets for their pigs and garments for flax. Yes, this is good. It is – but this is to see only one side of the picture. He brings sin in some of its worst features. He breaks the Sabbath – he curses – he becomes drunken and induces others living with him (natives) to join him in his intemperate habits. His house is perhaps the resort of evil companions – disease is introduced – a stone is thrown into the pond, and no wonder if its circling waves roll on to its very edge … I mean not to say, there are none dwelling among the New Zealander who strive to do them good – there are and we are very thankful when we meet with such. These I fear are few.

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48 Thomas Chapman, May 25, 1845, pp.262-263.
The “trappings” of civilization could also be a distraction from the primary focus of missionary efforts. The fact that the term “trappings” is used means that material paraphernalia itself did not constitute civilization; rather, these were things that a civilized society produced or used. One of Alfred Brown’s teachers, Samuel, was recorded by Brown lamenting: “when the natives are in health ... their whole thoughts are occupied about the riches of the world. They want horses and ships and mills. When a man is lying as I am now, he feels that horses and ships and mills are of no value, - that nothing can really satisfy him but a crown of glory”. Material ‘blessings’ did matter, as chapter seven argued, but were nothing without the sanctifying and empowering principle of faith, and were supposed to be used to this end.

Furthermore, it appeared that material “trappings” could easily smother religious fervour. Industriousness and peace, moral and civilized characteristics, had marked John Wilson’s district during 1848, but the “spirit of enquiry once so general, and apparently so sincere, has abated”. Many now seemed more interested in working for “the meat that perisheth”, precluding the “higher and nobler exertions for that which endureth unto everlasting life”; material blessings he traced as one of the chief sources of spiritual indifference, as they required much effort to acquire. Jane Williams deduced towards the end of 1853 that the people around Turanga had “sunk into a very torpid state as regards spiritual things”, and were instead “all alive when buying and selling are the subjects brought before them”. Most had stopped attending Bible class, and though the she and William had addressed the issue things were not in the happy state which they had been previously. But besides this, Wilson did acknowledge that interaction with “European character and laws” during visits to Auckland could be of sizeable benefit in other respects. He just thought it a deep pity that “civilization and the public house should ever remove them from their present simplicity of life”. He believed that with better housing, with “the rubbish of old times” being removed, and “cottages and gardens duly arranged, little more is desirable for them. These and the Gospel would, with God’s blessing, make them a singularly happy people”. The missionaries lauded ‘simple’ civilization, not ever increasing material development.

But the “trappings” of civilization were not necessarily negative. William Colenso published a report in the Church Missionary Record of December 1849 which

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50 John Wilson, Letters, Annual Report, 1848.
52 Thomas Chapman, November 19, 1854.
was highly critical of the works on public roads in Wellington, which employed hundreds of Maori, because they were supposed to be a “great means of abominable evils. There many have made shipwreck of their faith”. But it shocked Octavius Hadfield that Colenso should write in this vein about Hadfield’s district, of which Colenso apparently knew little. Hadfield provided “the most decided and unqualified denial to the assertions contained in the extract”. This was both in relation to the “general tendency of the public works, which I consider to have been highly beneficial”, as well as the effect on those members of Hadfield’s district involved in the work, “not one of whom made shipwreck of his faith on those works”. Hadfield had corresponded with all of the local teachers, who had constantly referred to him in relation to the situation and all seemed well.\(^{53}\)

Whilst the “trappings” of civilization could be a danger, enticing Maori away from faith, the Maori situation amongst civilized people demanded that many learn to handle the temptations posed. The Maori community, and particularly the church, now required these “trappings” to be able to supply their own needs. Hadfield could not understand how this would happen apart from “considerable advance and improvement in civilization.” He therefore now held that after instruction in the gospel, “the object of the Missionary ought to be civilization and improvement of the natives in every way”, and the CMS needed to promote this as far as possible: “No time should be lost in leading the natives to depend for their improvement in every respect of their own energies and resources.” Colonization had meant there were now other issues to consider.\(^{54}\)

Therefore, by the late nineteenth century, when Wohlers wrote his account of his missionary experience on Ruapuke, he could speak of a younger generation with an “inheritance” among a Christian community, i.e. they had grown up in a Christian environment, “even though their faith seemed to be less a matter of heart as it had been for their parents. Their conduct was that of Christian believers, even though their zeal appeared to be of a lesser heat.” Unlike Maori in the North Island, some of whom had followed the syncretic religious movements and “prophets” who arose in opposition to English authority, Wohlers stated that Ruapuke Maori were loyal to the English government, and faithful, “simple Christians”. Any “prophet” who wanted to find a hearing amongst them needed to at least preach what Wohlers called “biblical Christianity”, which he thought the syncretic movements opposed, and therefore their

\(^{53}\) Octavius Hadfield, *Journals*, Report for year ending December 31, 1851, pp.92, 93.

\(^{54}\) *Ibid*, March 8, 1847, p.55.
ideas were rejected by the people of Ruapuke. The “healers” who came to the island could not easily persuade the people of their power because of their improved health and manner of life that had resulted from his presence among them.

Ruapuke Maori were still Maori, but Christian Maori, not European. Despite the many aspects of European culture that had been introduced on the island, and sizeable Christian conversion, Wohlers still viewed the people as Maori, as did the people themselves. But Wohlers could still warn of the dangers of appearances, or an “external” form of conversion, which “results in formal and powerless frame of mind”. The other thing Wohlers was cautious of was the syncretistic religious movements from the north, which he feared might encourage old roots of ‘superstition’ that perhaps remained. But he was confident “there are no heathens proper now in my whole missionary district in the south of New Zealand. The whole native population, as well at Ruapuke as in the scattered villages, may be looked upon as a Christian community.”

Wohlers affirmed that Maori from Ruapuke were now able to be ranked as civilized people. There was a huge difference between what the people had been, and what they now were, the difference between “heathendom and Christianity”. While living in “heathendom” it had been common practise to place sick people in isolation, “that they might not interfere with the comfort of the living”. But since conversion to Christianity and the nurturing of Christian custom, “they can die in the blessed faith of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that, under the care and in the presence of their dear ones in their own dwellings. Verily Christianity makes men into men, fashioned after the likeness of God.” It was Wohlers opinion that, “with the help of God, the raw, stinking heathen have become changed into civilized Christians, who in no respect are inferior to ordinary Christians in old Christendom”.

European character and behaviour in missionary eyes was not necessarily representative of civilized character. Being a European did not, from the missionaries’ theological viewpoint, make a person civilized, though Europeans enjoyed the benefits and heritage of civilized community. At the same time as Maori were rising in the scale of civilization through the influence of the Christian gospel, missionaries portrayed their so-called civilized fellow countrymen as living in degradation and misery, effectively sliding down the scale of civilization, especially in cases where Europeans were

depicted as taking up Maori living habits. The moral and religious bases of missionary notions of civilization are especially evident when taking into account missionary reports of European de-civilization. It was not the lack of political, legal or technological structures that evoked missionary comment, but a moral and religious void into which Europeans, who had reportedly rejected their Christian heritage and privileges, were seen to have fallen. The fact that missionaries portrayed Maori as more civilized and prosperous than their European counterparts indicates that they could see a substantial improvement in the lives of some Maori people. This opinion was based on theological reasoning, not Enlightenment-based notions of civilization. However, the waning of religious interest in exchange for the trappings of civilization was seen as a spurious form of civilized lifestyle. It did not constitute the kind of civilization which the missionaries were promoting. It formed what Alfred Brown labelled a “barbarous civilization.” Not all Maori participated in the new ways introduced, and not all were deemed to be ‘improving’; some wanted nothing or little of what the missionaries offered. But the difference which the missionaries perceived among some groups of people from what they had previously known of them is no light thing; it indicates that the missionaries believed Maori people were prospering through their influence.
Conclusion: The CMS Missionary Perspective of Maori Culture.

Throughout this thesis I have attempted to demonstrate that the overarching paradigm through which the Church Missionary Society missionaries in New Zealand viewed the world, and particularly the Maori people amongst whom they laboured, was primarily a religious one, and missionary comments and criticisms based on an evangelical theological rationale. As a result of this theological ‘lens’, missionaries were quite critical of Maori beliefs and practices, and deliberately aimed at not only securing the eternal destinies of converts, but a religiously inspired transformation of Maori culture, and worked to bring to an end certain reputedly negative cultural elements. Yet the Church Missionary Society’s missionaries in New Zealand during the period 1830-1860 primarily deemed Maori to be ‘savage’ or ‘barbarous’ not because of primitivism, but because of perceived moral and social degradation associated with their spiritual state in missionary eyes. Primitivism stemmed from this degradation. Yet the CMS missionaries hoped this would only be a temporary situation. They hoped that through faith in the gospel of Christ Maori people would be ‘redeemed’, released from their ‘bondage’ to sin, Satan and the wrath of God, and brought to fullness of life and ‘humanity’ through union with Christ. This was, in missionary thinking, the basis of the moral and social elevation of Maori. From this point Maori could advance in civilization to become a people “fearing God and working righteousness”, and this was indeed what the majority of missionaries believed was happening in the years between 1830 and 1860. By 1860 many of the missionaries looked upon numbers of Maori people as being more ‘civilized’ than their ‘ungodly’ European neighbours. The missionaries obviously believed that the Christian gospel had had a positive impact on Maori communities.

Although other elements stemming from their own British background and culture also informed missionary viewpoints, it must be stressed that these had a secondary place amidst such a comprehensive worldview as the evangelical theological paradigm patently was. British cultural perspectives were in many ways subject to evangelical scrutiny and rationalisation. The presence and pervasiveness of the missionaries’ evangelical theology in consequence dismisses the argument that CMS missionaries separated their understanding of the world into sacred and secular categories. Ultimately this was not so, despite the fact that certain missionaries referred to some of their activities as ‘secular’. Even so-called secular activities were conducted
under the rule of a sovereign God. That this was actually the case has been expounded through considering the nature and meaning of the term ‘civilization’ in CMS missionary thinking.

We began by examining the kind of Christianity that CMS missionaries were working so hard to see established among Maori communities across the North Island of New Zealand. The missionaries’ primary interest was the creation of true, believing, ‘inward faith’ in Maori people: missionaries carefully watched and examined interested persons and those who professed faith to determine whether or not they actually ‘believed’ the doctrines they espoused. It was important that true ‘faith’ be established in Maori hearts, as the hoped for outward transformation of Maori culture and communities was premised upon an inward ‘conversion’.

The basis and order of cultural transformation in the missionary worldview stemmed from their understanding of the relationship between religion and culture. The nature of religious systems, and especially the presence of what were called ‘idolatrous’ or ‘superstitious’ beliefs, were thought to determine the nature of culture, and as all belief systems that were not based on the worship of the Christian God were believed to be a suppression of the true order that God had established within the creation, the only result could be a ‘depraved’ or ‘debased’ form of human living. Where conversion and Christian faith was established, human beings were released from their ‘bondage’ to Satan, held responsible for deceiving people into following false ‘gods’ and ‘idols’, and a renewed nature given to believers, from which automatically flowed a transformation of culture. When it came to the transformation of Maori culture there were two major underlying cultural factors that were challenged by the missionaries and their faith: *tapu* and *utu*. Both ideas, and all cultural practices associated with them, had, at missionary insistence, to be abandoned after conversion, or else find a changed form of expression that fitted well with the evangelical Christian outlook. Both ideas were certainly re-fitted and re-interpreted in the light of Christian revelation, so that the terms and some associated meaning remained, but their use was transformed.

Evangelical Christian theology also transformed the meaning of another, this time European, term: ‘civilization’. While the evangelical missionaries of the CMS maintained certain common elements present in general, Enlightenment-based European notions of civilization, they also emphasised, in a way that more general approaches did not, a moral, and therefore also religious, basis and meaning of the term. This was why civilization and Christianity were so closely linked by evangelicals throughout the
nineteenth century. Christianity was believed to be the only basis on which ‘true’
civilization could be founded, as faith in Christ was the only way that a truly ‘moral’
foundation for human life could be established. Only in being united to Christ could real
‘temporal happiness’, the attendant ‘blessings’ that were to follow in the train of
Christian faith, be found. Evangelicals aimed at the moral, and therefore social,
renovation of the world, through the life which flowed through a believers’ faith-union
with Christ.

The missionary notion of civilization was quite different from that of other
Europeans, whose primary interest was in material, technological, social and political
development which could occur through adoption of European structures and practices.
In their view, civilization was achievable outside of the confines of Christian faith, and
could be measured in a material manner: political power and stability, and progress in
the provision and purchase of articles for usefulness or gratification. Though missionary
thinking on the subject did include material, technological and political development,
these were believed to be the “attendant blessings” which flowed out of Christian
conversion, a change in the moral foundation of society, and the inculcation of scriptural
principals in community life. In addition, these material “blessings” did not need to be
highly sophisticated; just enough to support the “simple civilization” which belonged to
a God-fearing people. In fact, missionaries spurned material wealth and development
where it was not accompanied by faith and righteous living, deeming it covetous; such a
situation was labelled a ‘spurious’ form of civilization.

The Church Missionary Society missionaries were happy for Maori people to
maintain a “simple” form of civilization: to be at peace, to provide for family and
community, to be happily employed and productive, to be disciplined and structured in
life and society, to have the means and tools for functionality in life generally, and the
role and need of Christian faith specifically in this regard, which education aided, for a
safe, fruitful, happy and well-provided-for domestic environment, goes a long way to
defining much of what the missionaries envisioned when they spoke of civilization, and
helps us to see why Stuart Piggin calls it ‘humanization’ rather than Europeanization.
All of these elements of civilization were imbued with religious significance by the
missionaries: sin was often perceived to be the reason for conflict; war was barbarous
because of its social outcomes; Satan was believed to be at work in Maori forms of
warfare. Peace, on the other hand, was an effect of the reception of the Christian gospel,
which stemmed from peace with God. Industry, agriculture and domestic living were all
thought to have their civilized basis in Christian faith, and their goal was godly living, further civilization. The basis of good law and government, and an individual’s relationship to them, also had their genesis in Christian faith, and again, their outcome was civilized, godly societies. Further, civilization and godly living were established and augmented by a Biblically based education that aimed as much at the moral renovation and Christian maturity of its students as the acquisition of knowledge. The social elements just described are trans-national in their significance and presence, and are not confined to European social life. There were certainly aspects of stadial civilization theory caught up in these ideas, particularly with the place of established abodes and commerce in missionary notions of civilization, but these were perceived as accompanying social ‘blessings’ stemming from faith, or things which augmented Christian living. The far stronger emphasis in missionary notions of civilization was its moral significance, which in the case of evangelicals is as much to say its religious dynamic, for the foundation of moral life was faith in Christ and obedience to His laws. These ideas set the CMS missionaries apart from the general European colonist in this period, and in some instances actually put them in opposition to one another.

The coalescing of Christianity and civilization is more a difficult concept to grasp for historians who insist on seeing everything through the “lens of secularization theory”, than for a nineteenth century CMS missionary who understood all things taking place within God’s creation as happening under His providential hand. There was, to an evangelical missionary, nothing, no one, and nowhere outside of God’s reign, though Satan, and human sin, sought to challenge this. For the missionaries, Christian faith had application and relevance in all areas of human life, and therefore culture and civilization, if properly understood through the eyes of ‘faith’, were just as much under God’s jurisdiction. The link between Christianity and civilization in missionary thinking, and their seeming interchangeable nature at certain points, can only be understood when the reality that the ‘sacred’ and ‘profane’ were not separate in missionary thinking is fully understood.

The outcome of missionary efforts in New Zealand, missionary comment advocates, was the formation of a new, or different, Maori culture. For CMS personnel there was no longer only traditional Maori culture, or European ways, but a new ‘middle way’ and a ‘new’ Maori people who took their place within a ‘third race’, a people made up “of every tribe and people and language and tongue under heaven”, as John Morgan explained. This cultural change only took place on the heels of faith, meaning
that the missionaries did indeed see many Maori people as being genuine converts and believers in Christ. The missionaries saw these new Christian Maori as being distinctly different from their ‘heathen’ counterparts. The missionaries perceived that the new religion had positive implications for all aspects of Maori life, forming a new culture which was a mixture of traditional Maori, European, and predominantly Christian structures. This was neither a traditional Maori, nor European culture, but a Christian Maori culture, Maori people giving expression to Christian thought and values in a Maori way; a Maori Christian civilization; or a Christian Maori civilization.

Missionaries testified to this fact in various ways. They spoke of converted chiefs who continued to wield considerable influence, although Maori Christian teachers, who may not traditionally have had authority in their communities, now also took on this role. Christian hui and korero were encouraged. Maori developed a Christian politics of their own; the records of various korero in missionary journals, taken by missionaries not just to record what was taking place, but to highlight the political positions and speeches of professed Christians at the meetings, particularly in relation to British government, underline the existence of a Maori Christian politics. There was great encouragement of agricultural pursuits, a central part of traditional Maori life, with European agricultural knowledge aiding these efforts. Utu was pursued in a different manner, and the word given new meaning in relation to Christ’s atonement. The idea of tapu was re-interpreted within the new Christian framework. There were new laws and a new morality, although even these areas retained some of the old, for example giving ‘payment’ for wrongs committed. The new laws, though Christian in basis, were administered by Maori in their own way. Dunking people in a river for committing adultery, or banishing offenders to the woods, was not a European punishment. Karakia remained an important part of Christian Maori culture; it has been noted that traditional karakia which were uttered before certain traditional practices like fishing remained, but what was uttered, and who they were uttered to, was different. Maori language was retained, something so fundamental to cultural continuity and vibrancy, but a new Christian vocabulary had been added to it. Missionary emphasis on reading, writing and speaking Maori was a vital part of the retention and continuance of Maori language and culture. But the missionaries did often have to battle with their own culturally defined view of how Biblical ‘righteousness’ was expressed. Te Mamaku’s challenge to Richard Taylor over eating ‘stinking corn’, with an argument based on Biblical passages and theological reasoning, highlighted in chapter eight, is clear.
evidence that Maori did not let missionary ideas of righteousness go unchallenged. It also indicates that Maori people could and did have mastery of their own beliefs, and knowledge of the Bible which shaped the way they thought and acted, and how they argued with their missionary ‘teachers’.

According to the missionaries, much was still essentially Maori in nature. Missionary encouragement of the formation of new Christian pas provides a perfect example: no longer did Christian Maori fit in with traditional Maori ways, but they were also not European; they were Maori Christians. They operated and presided over these Christian communities as they deemed fit, with the support, criticisms and encouragement of the missionaries in their district. Some Christian Maori decided to side with Europeans in land disputes and wars, yet Christianity also provided a rationale for resistance to British authority, as it did for Wiremu Tamihana. This ‘new’ Maori culture displayed the peculiar nature of civilization in CMS missionary thinking, and it would not be going too far to suggest that at the end of the period under study the missionaries looked upon numbers of Maori communities as being at least well advanced in the transition state through which they were progressing to their civilized goal, if not actually ‘civilized’.

The missionaries did not want Maori to take on European culture for its own sake, particularly because they perceived within it much that was immoral in nature. Their primary aim in New Zealand was the conversion of Maori to a life of Christian faith. Historians’ insistence that missionary notions of civilization may be understood primarily as Westernization or Europeanization has been shown to be misguided by the evidence provided throughout this study. The moral and religious connotations which abound in missionary notions of civilization are far more trans-national in their significance. In their more religious interpretation of the matter, the missionaries did not believe that civilization was tied to Europe. The assumption of European cultural superiority through civilization was undercut, in missionary eyes, where Europeans refused to believe the Christian gospel. Europe did not hold a monopoly on Christian faith, despite the concept of “Christendom” in its attempts at self-definition and understanding. In addition, we must not forget the insistence of Andrew Walls that evangelicalism was a movement of protest against the idea of Christendom and a supposed belonging through national nominal confession of faith, a society that professed itself to be Christian, but had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, at least by fervent evangelicals.
Missionaries were not the ‘limited’ people that it has been implied they were. While there were boundaries on what they considered stemmed from faith and what did not, their theology and their worldview were broad enough to grapple with the issues which faith and Christian life in a Maori context involved. This included learning to understand Christian ideas in a Maori way, and how Christian principles could be firmly established within Maori cultural forms. The establishment of Maori Christian communities in all areas of the North Island during the period under study is clear evidence of the positive, effectual nature of the work of both Maori teachers, and their European missionary counterparts. Though criticism of missionary perspectives is common amongst historians of the British colonial era and students of indigenous history, many remain sadly ignorant of the theological and religious nature of what the missionaries sought to convey.

This thesis has shown that the primary interest of CMS missionaries in New Zealand during the nineteenth century was the establishment of a Christian community of faith among Maori peoples, and conformity in life and practice to the values which were purported to follow a profession of faith in Christ. It may also be asserted, without damaging the foregoing argument, that where the missionaries did advocate aspects of European culture in their work, and their converts to take up some of these cultural expressions, but they were not trying to make “brown-skinned Europeans” out of their converts. Rather, the inseparable nature of the expression of Christian faith within aspects of European culture is hereby exhibited, along with the need for converted Maori to unwrap the Christian package from its received cultural wrappings.
Appendix 1: Glossary of Maori terms

Ariki       paramount chief
Atua        spiritual being
Hui         meeting, assembly, congregation
Karakia     worship, incantation, prayer
Korero      discussion, conversation, speech.
Makutu      bewitch
Mana        power, influence, authority, prestige, spiritual force in a person, place or thing, intrinsically related to tapu with each affecting the other, stems from the power of the atua
Maori       indigenous inhabitant
Noa         not sacred, common, free of tapu
Pa          Fortified village
Pakeha      European
Rangatira   chief
Reinga      Maori place of departing spirits
Ritenga     custom, practice, habit
Rongopai    Gospel
Taipo       Unwanted spiritual being, not human in origin, which haunts the living
Tangi       Weeping, mourning ceremony
Taniwha     water spirit, chief, someone awesome, guardian of an area or territory.
Tapu        sacred, consecrated, restricted, forbidden, under the protection of an atua
Taua        war party
Tohi        dedication ceremony involving water
Tohunga     skilful person, often in spiritual matters an agent of the atua
Utu         payment, vengeance
Waiata      song or chant
Wairua      soul or spirit of a person which exists after death
Whakahere   offering, sacrifice
Whakapono   faith, belief
Whanau      extended family
Whiro, Wiro atua of darkness, death and evil
Appendix 2: Names and Locations of Major Missionaries Referred to in this Study

**Benjamin Ashwell:** Originally from Birmingham, Ashwell trained at the CMS training college in Islington, before going to Sierra Leone in 1833. He transferred to New Zealand in 1835, arrived as a catechist and was stationed at Paihia, Kororareka, Waikato Heads, Taupiri, Te Awamutu and Otawhao. Deaconed in 1853, Ashwell withdrew from missionary work for a time during the 1860s, before returning in 1868.

**Alfred Brown:** An Islington College student, Brown became a priest in 1828, arrived in New Zealand in 1829, and was stationed at Paihia, then Matamata, and later Tauranga. He was made an archdeacon there in 1843, and retired in 1883.

**Thomas Chapman:** Arrived in New Zealand as a lay member of the CMS, and was stationed at the mission store in Kerikeri. He became a teacher at Paihia, founded a station at Rotorua, and worked between Taupo, Opotiki and Te Ngae. Chapman was deaconed in 1844, and then priested in 1852, before teaching at St Stephen’s School for Native Girls from 1862.

**Richard Davis:** A farmer, Richard Davis arrived in New Zealand with his wife and children in 1824, settling at Paihia. He founded the CMS station at Waimate between 1830-1831 with William Yate and James Hamlin, and from 1831-1839 managed the CMS farm at Waimate North with George Clarke. Davis established a station at Kaikohe, and was ordained a deacon in 1843. He was ordained a priest in 1852.

**Octavius Hadfield:** Hadfield was born in the Isle of Wight, and spent part of his childhood in Europe, before attending Oxford University for a brief period. He was deaconed in Sydney, and in 1839 became the first priest ordained in New Zealand. He taught at the mission school at Waimate, and at the end of 1839 he began his work at Waikanae and Otaki.

**John Morgan:** Born in Ireland, Morgan arrived in New Zealand in 1833, and was one of the first missionaries to work in the Thames and Waikato districts. Morgan was deaconed in 1849, and made a priest in 1853. Stationed at Otawhao for most of his missionary activity, he resigned from the CMS in 1864, having acted as an informer for the Government against the King Movement.

**William Puckey:** Puckey arrived, aged 14, in New Zealand with his parents in 1819, as his parents assisted in one of Samuel Marsden’s missions. Puckey joined the CMS in 1821, and went with his father back to Sydney in 1826, before returning to New Zealand in 1827. He worked at Kerikeri, Paihia and Waimate, then helped found and remained at the station at Kaitaia.

**Richard Taylor:** From Yorkshire, Taylor graduated BA, and later took an MA, from Cambridge University, and was ordained a priest in 1829. He arrived in Sydney in 1836 and remained there for three years. In 1839 he arrived in New Zealand and taught at the mission school at Waimate North. In 1843 Taylor took up responsibility for the mission in the Wanganui area, and was an evangelist and peace-maker throughout his
large district. He returned to England for short periods in the 1850s and 1860s, but returned to Wanganui and later died there in 1873.

**Henry Williams:** Henry served in the Navy and was discharged as a lieutenant in 1815. Ordained a priest in 1822, with his wife Marianne he arrived in New Zealand in 1823. Williams settled at Paihia, and ministered in the district for most of their tenure. Henry was dismissed from the CMS for land purchases in 1849, but reinstated in 1854. During this period he continued to minister to Maori.

**William Williams:** Having earned a BA in classics from Oxford, William was ordained a priest in 1824, and entered the CMS training college at Islington in 1825. He arrived in New Zealand with wife Jane in 1826, taught at the English boys’ school at Paihia, and was the local doctor, and a primary mover in translating the scriptures into Maori. William moved to Waimate in 1835, and then went with Jane to Turanga in late 1839, where he remained until 1865.

**John Wilson:** A naval officer, Wilson was accepted by the CMS as a lay preacher in 1832. He arrived in New Zealand with his wife and family in 1833. Wilson went to Puriri in the Thames in late 1833, and in 1836 accompanied Brown to Tauranga, before heading to Opotiki. Wilson was ordained a deacon in 1852.

**Johann Wohlers:** From a village near Bremen in northern Germany, Wohlers arrived in Nelson, New Zealand in 1843. Wohlers began his work on Ruapuke Island in the Foveaux Straits in 1844. He lived there for the next 41 years, and died on Stewart Island in 1885.

**William Yate:** Yate attended the CMS training college at Islington in 1825, and was ordained a priest in 1826. Settled at Paihia in 1828, Yate worked in the Bay of Islands, Kerkeri and Waimate North until 1834, when he returned to England for a short period. He founded the mission station at Puriri in the Thames in 1833. Yate was dismissed from the CMS in 1837 for alleged sexual indiscretions.
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Abbreviations

AUL    Auckland University Library
APL    Auckland Public Library
AML    Auckland War Memorial Museum Library
NZETC  New Zealand Electronic Text Centre at Victoria University of Wellington.
NZJH   New Zealand Journal of History

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