

第34回国際生理科学連合 (IUPS) 世界大会 2001年8月26 ~ 31日, NEW ZEALAND 開催にあたり, IUPS Secretaryで日本生理学会の名誉会員である Denis Noble教授から日本の会員の皆様へご案内が寄せられましたのでここにご紹介致します。



CONTENTS

Introduction

The *Māori*

The Language

The Culture and the Treaty

The Marae

The *Māori Pōwhiri*

References

Welcome (*te pōwhiri*), The *Marae* of New Zealand

Denis Noble,
Secretary-General, IUPS

Introduction

Physiologists worldwide will soon be turning their attention to Christchurch, New Zealand and the 2001 Congress. To go or not to go? For some, I suspect many, the decision will turn not only on the science and the Congress itself (described elsewhere in this Newsletter), but also on the excitement of visiting New Zealand. Doubtless, many will also make it a family holiday.

I first travelled to New Zealand as a Visiting Professor at Auckland 10 years ago, so I can't yet be regarded as a cultural expert. But I did immediately become an enthusiast for this extraordinary and beautiful country. If you have never been, you will find many things to surprise and intrigue you.

First, the wildlife is an island biological treasure. There are many unusual species of animals (some sadly now lost) and plant life, including magnificent trees unique to New Zealand. You will notice the sniffer dogs at the airport trained to detect any vegetation being brought in. I once came with a mag-



nificent bunch of roses for a friend, only to see the whole lot taken to be destroyed! I couldn't even keep a single red rose petal for my friend. Preserving what is unique about New Zealand wildlife is now a priority.

Second, the countryside is spectacular. You will be bombarded with tourist information on this, so I will let it pass—only to say that even what would appear to be the wildest exaggerations of the tourist agencies are actually true.

The Māori.

No, my real reason for devoting this article to New Zealand is to highlight what for me is the most intriguing cultural treasure of all: the *Māori*.

These Polynesian travellers arrived by boat around 1000 years ago, so for around 8 centuries they had New Zealand all to themselves. It is haunting to go to the rugged north eastern coasts where they must first have arrived. I once tried to follow a New Zealand colleague around one of the rocky outcrops as the waves lashed into us. I finally arrived safely back on the beach a literally bloody mess: he emerged without a single scratch!

After the tiny Pacific Islands of Polynesia, the *Māori* must have regarded New Zealand as a fabu-

lous, apparently boundless paradise, with food in abundance. Most probably, there were several waves of arrivals. Although a millennium has passed, much of this historical event survives in the stories and oral tradition of the *Māori*. Until the language adopted roman script, it was not written down, so the oral tradition of recording history was very strong.

The language

The language itself is a major cultural treasure. Polynesian languages in fact provide one of the best natural experiments in language development for we can trace the changes as people progressively spread from the East Asian mainland through the chains of islands, then across the far-flung Pacific sea gaps, until finally reaching at one extreme Easter Island and at the other extreme New Zealand. By correlating the vocabulary with the times of arrival we can estimate how long it takes for vocabulary to diverge. It takes around 2000 years for over 90% of the vocabulary to change, by which time, following all the usual criteria, a new language has emerged.

Yet, some features clearly did not change. To anyone familiar with Japanese or Korean, there are extraordinary parallels. All vowels are voiced separately, with a characteristic rhythm. Grammar is located in special particles. Nouns are simultaneously singular and plural. Strictly, one should not say the *Māoris*. They are the *Māori*. Incidentally, we are the *Pākeha*. So are all New Zealanders of Western origin. *Pākeha*, not *Pākehas*.

“New Zealand” is of course the *Pākeha* word for the country. The *Māori* call it *Aotearoa*. Its meaning is “long white cloud” and from what I have said about vowels you will already have a fair idea how to pronounce it: there are six syllables here, *A-o-te-*



a-ro-a, just as there would be if this was a Japanese or Korean word. Strictly speaking this is the *Māori* name for the North Island. Not surprisingly for people of Polynesian descent, a separate island requires a different name. The South Island (which is where the Congress will be held) is *Te Wai Pounamu* which means the “the greenstone water (island)”.

The culture and the Treaty

Māori culture has immense and obvious impact on the New Zealand of today. Outside towns with obvious Western names like Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch virtually all the place names are *Māori*. And even the big towns also have *Māori* names. Christchurch, where the Congress will be held, is *Ōtautahi*, while Auckland is *Tāmaki makau rau*-yes, also like Japanese, Maori has double-length vowels so this is strictly 9 syllables long! (*Ta-a-ma-ki ma-ka-u ra-u*)

Moreover, unlike the relationship between many indigenous peoples and their recent invaders, there is a formal legal basis to the relationship between the *Māori* and the *Pākehā*. This is the Treaty of *Waitangi*, entered into on behalf of Queen Victoria (and a reason why many *Māori* will probably resist New Zealand becoming a republic: the Queen can be viewed as the legal guardian of their rights in this treaty).

The Marae

And this treaty takes me to the central point of this article. Different cultures have different concepts of land and society, which can be a deep problem when it comes to interpreting legal documents. Land belongs to a tribe not to individuals. It is often said too that *Māori* face the future walking backwards with eyes on the past and their ancestors. The *Māori* concepts of land, ownership and the roles of society, the tribe, are therefore very differ-

ent from *Pākehā* concepts. This is best explained by saying something about the title of this article: the *Marae*.

Many will already know the *Marae* as the beautiful *Māori* meeting places. Constructed in wood, with colourful decoration, they are renowned worldwide as the symbol of *Māori* culture. But the concept of *Marae* does not have to have a physical existence in this form. Its cultural significance can be viewed as being the location of the rituals that must be followed when the members of one tribe meet with another. There are about 35 North island tribes and 5 South Island tribes, each with their own rituals. But they all have in common this concept that certain rituals must be observed when one visits the territory of another tribe. A *Marae* is wherever these rituals are observed.

In this sense, all of New Zealand is a *Marae*. It is the earth-mother, the basis of all *Marae*, for they are also the home of the ancestors. We will be the guests, or *manuhiri*. Strictly speaking, we cannot set foot in New Zealand without following the courtesies of arriving at a *Māori* *Marae*.

The *Māori* *Pōwhiri*

There will therefore be a *Māori pōwhiri* (welcome) at the opening of the Congress, and we intend to do the best we can to follow the traditions and reply to this welcome in a way that respects *Māori* culture.

I finish with a lovely speech addressed by Hiwi Tau-roa (see reference) to his home *Marae*

Te marae e takoto nei

The marae lying here

Tānā koe

I greet you

Papatuanuku te whāea

Papatuanuku the Earth Mother

Tānā koe

I greet you

I ahau e tu ake nei

While I stand here

Ka huri oku whakaaro

My thoughts turn

Ki a rātou, ōku tipuna

To them, my ancestors

I tu ake hoki i nga wā o mua

Those who also stood in years gone by.

When we are welcomed in *Āotautahi* we will be facing people for whom the respect for ancestors (including those heroic canoeists of 1000 years ago), and the expression of this respect in the rituals of the *Marae* are very deep. They will almost certainly use certain *Māori* words to welcome us, including *haere mai* (welcome), *manuhiri* (visitors) and *tūārangi* (from afar)

Haere mai e te manuhiri tūārangi

Welcome visitors from afar

We have yet to compose our reply, but its spirit will be a *mihi* (greeting) to the *Marae* and those present to welcome us:

Te whare e tu nei

The house standing here



Te marae e takoto nei

The marae lying here

Tēnā korua

Greetings to you both

Nga hau e whā

People of the four winds

Nga iwi e tau nei

People gathered here

Tēnā koutou katoa

Greetings to you all.

References:

Hiwi & Pat Tauroa (1986) *Te Marae: A guide to customs and protocol*. Auckland: Reed books.