Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century: A microhistorical study of the document of speeches from John Ballance’s tour of seven Maori districts, 1885

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Abstract

This thesis explores the nature of ambivalence in Maori political thought as expressed during John Ballance’s tour of seven Maori districts in 1885. A microhistorical study of Maori speeches recorded during the tour, undertaken by Ballance as minister of Native Affairs, reveals three overlapping points regarding Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century. Firstly, despite a lack of power in processes of government and the effects of numerous land laws, Maori remained optimistic at the possibility of gaining equality, an optimism generated by the very act of Ballance’s visit to Maori communities. Secondly, optimism was grounded in a pragmatic approach to state power, one that acknowledged the realities of the colonial government’s position in the New Zealand political system. Thirdly, a strongly held desire for equality, in combination with a pragmatic approach to state power, explains why Maori continued to seek solutions through the colonial government in the late nineteenth century. These three implicit positions can be seen in the greetings, criticisms and requests made by Maori leaders during the twelve hui that constituted Ballance’s tour. In combination, these points suggest an ambivalence in the conceptual bases of Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century. This argument challenges existing interpretations of late nineteenth century Maori political activity, particularly the idea that Maori increasingly sought ‘autonomy’ in their own sphere. By adopting the approach of the microhistorian, this thesis opens a brief and unique window onto a period between the New Zealand wars and the resurgent protest movements of the 1890s, one that historians have yet to capture.
We have a lot of things to bear in mind. We must bear in mind your policy, and compare the policy of future Ministers with it. You must consider, now that you have come to see us, that we bear in mind the policy of previous Ministers... I have nothing new to say. I say the same now as I said to Sir Donald McLean in his time. Do you search for some new word to tell us or some new policy[?]

- Rewi Maniapoto, 1885
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Michael Allen, University of Canterbury, June 2004
Figure 1 - Map of hui locations, 1885
JOHN BALLANCE’S TOUR OF MAORI DISTRICTS, 1885

1. Ranana hui: 7-8 January 1885
2. Hiruharama hui: 9 January 1885
3. Pipiriki hui: 9 January 1885
4. Kihikihi (1) hui: 3 February 1885
5. Kihikihi (2) hui: 4-5 February 1885
6. Whatiwhatihoe hui: 6 February 1885
7. Parawai hui: 11-12 February 1885
8. Ohinemutu hui: 16 February 1885
9. Mokoia hui: 18 February 1885
10. Whakarewarewa hui: 19 February 1885
11. Whareroa hui: 21 February 1885
12. Whakato hui: 24-25 February 1885

Figure 2 – Timeline of events
Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century was predicated upon two co-existing, yet contrasting, political currents. The first current was a clearly articulated position in opposition to specific policies of the colonial government, particularly the aspects of the governing process that were perceived to have resulted in the swift and widespread alienation of land following the New Zealand wars. The second current, one that is more intangible and difficult to define, resulted from a combination of factors which, together, tempered political opposition to the colonial government in this period. Firstly, Maori leaders approached state power in a spirit of pragmatism. Pragmatism was based on an understanding that, as the ultimate power in New Zealand, the colonial government demanded practical engagement and negotiation in the interests of future prosperity. In many cases, pragmatism was not a position adopted merely out of necessity; continuing relations with the government were based on an enduring institutional trust. The second factor evolved out of a continued belief in citizenship and the rule of law, and the theoretical benefits of central government. That two contrasting currents existed at this time suggests that the effects of colonial governance created new challenges for traditional Maori society, challenges that did not always suggest clear courses of action. When, in 1885, John Ballance, the minister of Native Affairs, toured a seven Maori districts, ambivalence was a dominant characteristic of the political thought of those Maori leaders who continued to negotiate a place within the emerging colony. While historians have defined and explained the first, more palpable, political current in Maori society, the factors that combined to temper protest have yet to be systematically studied.

The aim of this thesis is to examine the above propositions through the discipline of microhistory. Microhistorians believe that a topic can be most effectively studied if an aspect of that topic is analysed on the small scale, whether through an event, person, or group of people. Microhistorians argue that the obscured cultural and social aspects of a society can be uncovered through a fine-grained textual analysis of a historical document, by observing subtle patterns of thought that may be
missed in a broader study. Therefore, while the micro may not be strictly representative of the macro, it may – in unexpected ways – reveal more fundamental aspects of the topic previously undiscovered and clarify any conceptual problems evident in the historiography. This approach means not only that historians can ascertain the extent to which ideas, beliefs and values were commonly held in a society or in a community, it also provides an apt mechanism to study how these aspects of culture operate on an individual level. By centring Maori political thought, and by studying this through a single source, this thesis aims to make some suggestions on the nature of Maori politics at the end of the nineteenth century.

The document of speeches from John Ballance’s tour of the central North Island is a distinctive example of a historical record of Maori political thought, one that warrants the sole focus of a microhistorical study. In the early weeks of 1885, John Ballance, the minister of Native Affairs, undertook a tour of seven Maori districts – Whanganui, the Rohe Potae (King Country), Waikato, Hauraki, Tauranga, Rotorua and the East Coast – to promote two main planks of the new Stout-Vogel administration: pushing through the Main Trunk railway and his proposed legislation for the administration of Maori land (what became the Native Land Administration Act 1886). During the tour, Maori from different tribal groups hosted Ballance at twelve hui: Ranana, Hiruharama, Pipiriki, Kihikihi (1), Kihikihi (2),¹ Whatiwhatihoe, Parawai, Ohinemutu, Mokoia, Whakarewarewa, Whareroa and Whakato. The most remarkable aspect of Ballance’s tour from an historian’s perspective is the documentary record that the tour generated. Throughout the twelve hui, the under-secretary of Native Affairs, T.W. Lewis, assiduously took notes of the discussions and debates that occurred between Maori speakers and the Native Minister. The notes were later typed and printed in the annual government publication, the Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHRs).² The purpose of Lewis’ notes was to keep a record of Ballance’s speeches for political purposes and an inventory of suggestions and requests made by Maori for the Native Affairs Department. The document is one of the most comprehensive accounts of Maori political views of its

¹ A distinction will be made throughout this thesis between the two hui held in the town of Kihikihi with the numbers (1) and (2). The first refers to the hui between Ballance and Te Kooti. The second refers to Ballance’s hui with the three iwi of the Rohe Potae: Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa and upper Whanganui.
² 'Notes of Native Meetings', Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHR), 1885, G-1, pp.1-78. For the sake of brevity, this document will be referred to in footnotes as Document of Speeches henceforth.
time. Because its purpose was to keep an exact record of what was said, the document lacks most of the obvious biases of contemporary Pakeha commentaries on Maori. Including Ballance’s speeches, the document runs to approximately one hundred thousand words.

Not only is the document lengthy, it is also representative of a broad cross-section of Maori political society. Ballance – as a representative of the government – did not meet only with Maori tribal groups supportive of the government. Although a number of tribal groups had fought on the side of the government during the New Zealand wars – notably some of the Whanganui iwi, Te Arawa and Ngati Porou – many others who hosted Ballance during his tour had fought against the government, including Ngati Maniapoto, Ngai Te Rangi and the group led by the Ringatu prophet, Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki. At Whatiwhatihoe, Ballance met King Tawhiao and representatives of the Kingitanga; at two of the hui on the Whanganui river, Ballance met Maori who had fought both for and against the government in the wars. Terms such as ‘loyalist’ and ‘rebel’ became complicated in the post-war period, and in many ways are not useful labels in the context of late nineteenth century Maori society. Of more importance – both to the historical event that was Ballance’s tour and to the accuracy of the resulting document – Maori at all of the meetings criticised both past governments and Ballance’s policies. The record of these criticisms – evidence that the document has not been edited – suggests further that there was a common perspective of the colonial experience that went beyond regional and tribal differences.

A study of Maori political thought from such a record is primarily the study of male political leadership; only four of those recorded as speaking at the hui were women. The document is important because it contains speeches of some of the most prominent Maori leaders of the period, including Keepa Te Rangihiaiwai (Major Kemp), Te Kooti, Wahanui Huatare, Rewi Maniapoto, King Tawhiao Te Wherowhero, Wiremu Te Wheoro, Paora Tuhaere, Hoani Nahe, Wi Keepa Te Rangipuawhe and Wi Pere. All of the one hundred and twenty-six Maori whose speeches were recorded over the twelve hui were leaders in some sense. Within this sample, there is much to suggest fluidity in the political leadership of Maori society. While most were leaders in the traditional sense (rangatira), others were charismatic leaders or purely political leaders; some were both. At most of the hui, Maori groups within each district organised, prior to Ballance’s visit, a list of subjects for discussion
and debate. Within the speeches themselves, Maori traversed a broad range of political issues that preoccupied them. Consequently, an in-depth study of the implicit and explicit ideas contained in the document is rewarding, helping to explain the subtleties of Maori political thought, and revealing a more complex understanding of Maori political motivations.

While microhistory offers a rewarding approach to the study of Maori political thought, the major problem in applying a microhistorical approach to the 1885 document is that, as far as we know, there is no Maori version of the document to compare against the text in English. It appears as though the original Maori was not recorded, only the English translation; this was unlike a number of similar contemporary documents which provided both the Maori text and a translation. However, both Lewis and Ballance’s translator, G.T. Wilkinson, were experienced and competent in the Maori language; Lewis in particular had over twenty years’ experience of negotiating with Maori and was a skilled translator for the Native Department. In addition, through a comparison with similar documents that do provide the original Maori, a certain amount of confidence can be placed in the fact that the document is largely reliable in its rendition of Maori ideas into English.

I will argue in this thesis that the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour offers explicit and implicit evidence of ambivalence in Maori political thought, which has crucial implications for the broader period of the late nineteenth century. On first reading the document, I was struck by what appeared to be a profound conflict in the conceptual bases of Maori political thought. This conflict could be seen in both the speeches of greeting and in the political interchanges between individual speakers and the Native Minister, at hui throughout the tour. Maori criticised past governments and talked of the ‘troubles’ that lay upon them, yet requested the new Native Minister, John Ballance, to come and offer ‘relief’. On returning to the document, my impression of this conflict strengthened. Yet, I had not seen this explained in other historical studies on the period. Before discussing existing historical interpretations, it is necessary to briefly define what is meant by ‘political ambivalence’, to outline how it was expressed during Ballance’s tour and to describe the broader issues this thesis aims to explore.

In the opening paragraph of this introduction, I suggested that ambivalence manifested itself as two contrasting currents in Maori political thought. The term ‘current’ is used for a reason. The particular problem is that, while Maori opposition
to aspects of government policy was clearly and consistently articulated during the post war period – protest particularly focused on the regime of land laws that was established in the 1860s and 1870s – the factors that tempered opposition were not. Therefore, a term is required which captures both the nuances contained in political ideas and the degree of consciousness that characterises both. Terms such as ‘positions’ or ‘issues’ do not adequately capture the implicit positions Maori adopted in approaching state power. During Ballance’s tour, no two clear opposing political philosophies were posited, around which different factions could congregate; the problems created by colonial governance were those shared by all of Maori society. In addition, ambivalence cannot be seen in the Maori response to specific political issues, such as the rating of land or specific land legislation. When Maori leaders reacted to government policies, it was almost invariably to voice their opposition. Therefore, a study of specific issues usually only reveals the strong forces opposing the colonial government.

The reasons why Maori protest only went so far following the New Zealand wars were implicit, engrained in the political culture and ideology of the period. I use the term ‘current’ in an attempt to capture the explicit and the implicit, the conscious and the unconscious. While some currents, such as a stance in opposition to the government, were clearly articulated at the time, others were weak or undefined, not fully apparent to contemporary actors. Consequently, the significance of these embedded ideas only becomes clear upon a close study of particular concepts that emerge from the speeches, the context in which they were used and the meaning the actor was attempting to convey in using them. The danger of this approach is to project an interpretation onto the past that did not exist by reading too much into a particular document. Therefore, in exploring the above propositions in the following pages, I intend to tread carefully, in an attempt to stay as true as possible to the contents of the document of speeches.

The following chapters will explore the intellectual bases of political ambivalence that can be seen in the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour. Historically, different Maori communities sought the Native Minister’s presence for various reasons. Following the New Zealand wars, which entrenched political power in the hands of the colonial government, Maori leaders were increasingly powerless to set the agenda of political negotiations, or where such negotiations would be held. This conflicted with Maori political culture, which continued to be based in the oral
mode of political interchange. Therefore, Maori sought the presence of Crown ministers within their communities to engage in face-to-face negotiation. Maori were concerned with state power, both in terms of their lack of influence and the effects of inequitable governance. Ballance’s tour was significant to some Maori communities because it was the first time for many years that they had received a minister of Native Affairs in their settlements; for others it was the very first visit they had received a Native Minister.

In negotiating with Ballance, Maori leaders clearly articulated their criticisms of the government, particularly in respect of the effects of the Native Land Court. However, speakers also revealed what was an enduring and sustained belief in the theoretical benefits of central government; many entreated Ballance to fulfil promises of equality with Pakeha under the rule of law. Consequently, Maori across the tour clearly articulated their criticisms whilst maintaining optimistic that good governance would be provided. The serious tone of the speeches suggests that each community viewed Ballance’s visit as being of immense historical importance. A belief in the theoretical benefits of centralised government was expressed both abstractly, through ideas of what good governance entailed, and more explicitly as speakers explained in what ways they believed the government should protect Maori under the law. This belief was also articulated through numerous requests for assistance by individuals, in areas as diverse as public works or mediation in disputes with Pakeha settlers. Such a pragmatic approach to state power can be seen again and again in the document, both in community proposals and in individual requests. However, such beliefs require explaining. It is the purpose of this thesis to attempt to do so.

Maori at hui throughout the tour placed considerable emphasis on either forming or further empowering committees as a political response to the effects of the Native Land Court. In particular, Maori proposed expanding the powers of the newly established bodies, the Native District Committees, as a counter weight to the overwhelming power of the Native Land Court in determining legal title. One of the issues that is explored in this thesis is to what extent the committee concept represented a desire for ‘self-government’. By placing these initiatives within a historical context, several interesting conclusions can be formed on the nature of Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century. In particular, the framework of the committees can be usefully contrasted with the type of ‘self-government’ advocated by the Kingitanga during the hui at Whatiwhatihoe. By making such a
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contrast, I will suggest that although Maori challenged the government's right to determine issues relating to land, they implicitly accepted the role of government itself. This, in turn, reveals a crucial question concerning Maori political ambivalence. Why, given large-scale alienation of land and inequitable governance that seemed the product of the colonial government, did Maori not seek other political alternatives?

Some answers to this question can be sought in the conceptions Maori held of their own political landscape. The speeches contained in the document suggest that Maori leaders primarily responded to the alienation of land by attempting to reaffirm traditional tribal control over land. In the proposals outlined to Ballance, Maori wanted to see the Native District Committees given further powers to prevent the factionalisation that was the result of Native Land Court processes and properly establish block committees to exercise collective control over the management of land. One question arises from this: to what extent was the desire for committees a new conceptualisation of tribal governance? Some of the opinions expressed during Ballance's tour, particularly those of Whanganui leader, Keepa Te Rangihiwini, suggest that these new forms of tribal governance competed against an older generation of traditional leadership. This thesis will consider to what extent this conflict in Maori political thought contributed to political ambivalence. In addition, the conceptions of the Maori political landscape evident in the document form an interesting point of comparison to political developments later in the century, particularly the Kotahitanga movement of the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Although the document contains speeches by both Maori leaders and the Native Minister, the content of the text has determined that the focus of this thesis be on Maori political thought. The numerous speeches made by Maori alone raise significant questions concerning the existing historiography of late nineteenth century Maori culture, society and politics. Of the 230 acts of speech that were recorded in the document from the 126 Maori speakers, few offer ready-made interpretations; in combination, the document presents an intimidating set of Maori ideas, thoughts, attitudes and beliefs. Ballance's speeches are interesting in themselves and crucial in understanding how ministers of Native Affairs approached the practice of the portfolio in the late nineteenth century. However, a close analysis of Ballance's perspective requires its own study. Although there is room for a bicultural history of these types of encounters, the Maori speeches present enough of an interpretive challenge to justify the overwhelming focus of this thesis. Only when historians have
examined Maori political thought in more detail can a bicultural history be contemplated. Therefore, in the present study, Ballance is seen mainly as a mirror reflecting Maori approaches to state power in the late nineteenth century.

Finally, the question may be asked why a microhistory is more valid in exploring the phenomenon of political ambivalence than a more comprehensive narrative. Studying a document that is broadly representative mitigates many of the problems of selecting appropriate case studies faced by most historians; in many ways, the text self-selects the areas for study both in terms of topic and in geography. Consequently, the decision is taken out of the hands of the historian. In addition, it was only in the process of studying the document of speeches that the particular themes that form the basis of this thesis became apparent. Therefore, while microhistory is in some senses ideological, a focus on a single document reveals aspects of the past that may be obscured when conflating information from a broad range of documents. The utility of this approach is particularly evident in a discussion of existing historical interpretations of late nineteenth century Maori political thought.

I – Historical interpretations of Maori political initiatives in the late nineteenth century

Few historians have considered a microhistory as a way of exploring Maori political thought. While a number of historians have looked at Ballance’s tour and the document of speeches in particular, their studies have usually considered one aspect of the tour. Most studies that discuss the contents of the document do so as part of a broader narrative, primarily from the perspective of Ballance’s intentions in carrying

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out the tour to advance certain policies. These studies take a more traditional historical approach to the use of sources, using a range of documents and conflating information to a particular subject area or narrative focus. While these historians have studied the contents of the document, there have been no studies which have focused on it as the object of analysis. Consequently, very little is known about the specifics of the episode, such as why Ballance set out on such a comprehensive tour of Maori communities, or what the contents of the document contain. More importantly, because this document has not been the focus of close study, historians appear to have missed what is a crucial aspect of Maori political thought.

Most historical writing on Maori politics and society in this period emphasises autonomy. A number of contemporary historians – that is, historians writing since the 1970s – have argued that the nature and intention of Maori political actions and initiatives in the late nineteenth century have revolved around the search for autonomy, either separate from or within the state. These historians – for example, Alan Ward, Claudia Orange and Vincent O’Malley – argue that Maori political initiatives, particularly in the late nineteenth century, were primarily pursuing the right to self-government. Historians have observed this trend in a variety of political movements in Maori society following the New Zealand wars – movements such as the Repudiation movement, Ngapuhi’s Treaty of Waitangi movement, various Maori parliaments and the Kotahitanga movement. They have also observed a trend in general criticism aimed at the government of New Zealand, in particular the activities of the Native Land Court established under Native Land legislation. In addition, these historians argue, either implicitly or explicitly, that following the wars protest took on clear and coherent forms, culminating in the Kotahitanga movement in the late 1880s and 1890s. For the purposes of simplification, this argument will be referred to as the ‘autonomy thesis’.

The autonomy thesis is a substantial advance upon previous fatalistic accounts. This was the myth that, as Alan Ward writes, ‘after the wars most of the tribes, demoralised by defeat and confiscation, lapsed into a ‘dark age’, a period of apathy’. In addition to deconstructing the fatalistic interpretation, historians writing

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from a revisionist perspective have contributed vastly to the understanding of Maori political initiatives. However, there is a possibility that revisionist historians have overestimated the strength of Maori opposition to the government and placed too much emphasis on the idea of autonomy. There are several specific problems with this thesis. Firstly, as a concept, autonomy implies that Maori primarily wanted independence from the government following the wars. By arguing that Maori had a coherent and unified response to colonisation, historians miss the type of ambivalence that characterised Maori political thought in this period. Secondly, while historians have made it clear that following the New Zealand wars Maori reacted strongly to the continual alienation of land, few have analysed exactly how Maori leaders conceptualised their relationship with the government. In emphasising autonomy historians have conflated different kinds of ‘self-government’ to an overwhelming desire to exercise power independently of the colonial government. Finally, because the autonomy thesis has developed out of critiques of government policy, there is a tendency to interpret Maori political thought through the lens of this policy, rather than on its own terms.

The first, and possibly still the most compelling articulation of the autonomy thesis, and late nineteenth century Maori political thought in general, is Alan Ward’s seminal study of government policy, A Show of Justice: Racial Amalgamation in the Nineteenth Century, first published in 1974 and reprinted in 1995. Ward laid the groundwork for dismissing altogether the fatalistic interpretation of nineteenth century Maori history. His strength lies in his narrative structure: in following developments through the nineteenth century, aspects of continuity and change take on a coherent form. Ward’s idea that Maori achieved success and a measure of equality ‘as much in spite of, as because of, Pakeha assistance’ remains the best evaluation of race relations in the formation of modern New Zealand. In addition, Ward laid down many of the main lines of research that have led to an increased

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5 Williams says that a ‘mood of reaction’ dominated following the wars, adding that ‘Rangatira who were foes during the wars of the 1860s now became allies in a number of intertribal efforts to stem the loss of rangatiratanga and lands and many of these efforts coalesced into the Kotahitanga movement of the 1890s.’ Ward says that one of the notable features of protests is how many former supporters of the Crown were by the 1880s thoroughly fed up by the loss of land and rangatiratanga. Ward also says an obvious product of the alienations and the manner of them was the growth of Maori protest, such as Kotahitanga. Cox says that ‘it was the Pakeha attitude to acquiring land… [that] most disaffected Maori – a disaffection which provided a powerful catalyst for unity at a pan-tribal level…’ D. Williams, p.12, 95; Ward, National Overview, p.243, 248; Cox, p.33

6 Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.311-312
understanding of Maori society in the late nineteenth century. In doing so, he created a picture of Maori political thought and activity that laid the ground work for the autonomy thesis.

Prefiguring historians like Vincent O’Malley, Ward argues that protest centred around the desire by Maori to ‘deal with the land’ as they wished, meaning the removal of paternalistic controls. More generally, where there is ambivalence, Ward sees consistent behaviour: Ngati Maniapoto unambiguously engage with the Pakeha order while former government supporter Wi Te Wheoro separates away, moving towards Tawhiao and the Kingitanga; Rewi Maniapoto’s decision to pull out of Ngati Maniapoto’s Native Land Court hearings in 1884 is interpreted as due to his ‘volatile’ nature; the tendency for ‘loyal’ tribes and ‘loyalist’ leaders to cooperate with ex-‘rebels’ is seen as a manifestation of the ‘mounting movement in Maori society to establish institutions of local self-government.’ In particular, Ward sees a seamless increase in anti-government sentiment from Whanganui leader Keepa Te Rangihiwini: despite being a ‘former loyalist’, Ward argues, the alienated Te Rangihiwini moved from opposing government surveys in the Whanganui region to being heavily involved in the Kotahitanga movement. However, Ballance’s tour occurred between Te Rangihiwini’s local opposition and Kotahitanga. During the hui at Ranana, Te Rangihiwini made several speeches expressing his loyalty to the government: a position in complete contrast to the picture described by Ward. A comprehensive interpretation of Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century needs to explain such discrepancies, to try to complete what is currently a partial picture of the past.

James Belich’s argument in the concluding chapters of *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, first published in 1986, is

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7 Ward, *National Overview*, p.252
8 Ward, *A Show of Justice*, p.274
9 Ward, *A Show of Justice*, p.288
11 Ward, *A Show of Justice*, p.291. Ward restated this position in 1997. ‘[A] notable feature of [Maori protest] is how former supporters of the Crown, like Major Te Wheoro or Major Kemp, Paul Tuhae or the Hawke’s Bay chiefs, were by the 1880s thoroughly fed up with the loss of land and rangatiratanga and had begun to develop organised protests. The Repudiation Movement based in the Hawke’s Bay in the 1870s was one, Paul Tuhae’s “Parliaments” in Auckland from 1879 another and the Treaty of Waitangi meetings among Nga Puhi a third. In 1880 Kemp actually took up arms over a land dispute in the Murimuto country and set up a ‘land trust’... These movements converged in the Kotahitanga which mobilised huge numbers of Maori by the 1890s, seeking a repeal of the land laws and the return to Maori hands of both the determination of title and management of the land.’ Ward, *National Overview*, pp.242-3
probably the baldest statement of the autonomy thesis, though it is positioned slightly outside the concepts developed by its core practitioners. Belich argues that ‘two zones’ of power developed at the conclusion of the wars: a Pakeha zone which was governed by the colonial government and an autonomous Maori zone made up of essentially self-governing individual tribes. In this line of argument, not only did Maori seek autonomy; they already held it. As evidence, he cites the example of the Kingitanga: ‘an independent Maori state inside New Zealand nearly two-thirds the size of Belgium’. Although this interpretation holds true within the terms set – the relationship between central government and certain communities was ambiguous – it does not engage with the range of views Maori held towards the government. In general, the argument simplifies the complexity of Maori political positions, especially in light of the fact that some leaders’ positions did not always follow consistent paths. Following Ward, Belich is surprised by the actions of Keepa Te Rangihiwinui. In most cases in dealing with such a complex period, placing Maori and the state into binary oppositions is misleading.

Other accounts are more closely focussed on specific areas of Maori political activity and are consequently more nuanced. One such work is Vincent O’Malley’s study of Maori committees, Agents of Autonomy: Maori Committees in the Nineteenth Century, published in 1997. O’Malley’s study is relevant both in terms of its interpretation – the phrase ‘agents of autonomy’ – and its analysis of different committee initiatives in the period. As a new political development in the late nineteenth century, the movement among Maori to form committees – which will be discussed in detail in later chapters – is interpreted by O’Malley as part of a specific desire by Maori for autonomy, or self-government, terms that he uses interchangeably. O’Malley defines autonomy as the power for Maori to ‘deal with their own affairs’. The unexplained assumption here is that Maori wanted the power to determine titles to land and to manage land in general. Indeed, O’Malley convincingly describes the protest that increased towards the end of the century as a reaction against the Pakeha attitude to acquiring land and the rights assumed by the

13 Belich, p.306
14 Belich, describing the effects of being a loyalist after the wars, is surprised that Keepa, in blocking the Whanganui tiver, could act against the government having fought for them several years previously. Belich, p.308
15 O’Malley, p.163
government in acquiring it. However, he does not draw out the full significance of what Maori protest was not, especially in their advocacy for committees. In other contexts throughout the book, O'Malley describes autonomy as the power to ‘administer their lands and local affairs’, the ‘control over their own lands and other affairs’, and ‘Maori self-management of their lands and other affairs.’ The full significance of what these ‘other affairs’ might be is never fully fleshed out. As O'Malley’s account suggests, protest became increasingly associated with land: an attempt to reclaim the rights lost through the establishment of the Native Land Court. However, arguments in favour of autonomy over ‘other affairs’ became less vocal: Maori primarily were not looking beyond land rights to the broader issue of self-governance that had characterised previous political movements. O'Malley’s discussion of Ballance’s tour – probably the most detailed examination of the contents of the document of speeches – applies this approach. Maori, throughout Ballance’s tour, he argues, expressed a singular desire for autonomy, one that Ballance strove to suppress. This explanation, however, fails to see the differences among various arguments for autonomy: O'Malley interprets the stand for self-government made by the Kingitanga as similar to rights which many speakers advocated in the system of committees.

In *The Treaty of Waitangi*, published first in 1987, Claudia Orange argues that Maori political society post-war was oriented around securing rights guaranteed in the Treaty. Orange – whose chapter on the 1880s is entitled ‘A Struggle For Autonomy’ – argues that this impulse was one which encompassed all of Maori society. The primary problem with Orange’s argument is that it is predominantly Kingitanga-and Nga Puhi-centred: she focuses on the two groups that led protests against the government based on Treaty principles. Consequently, Orange ascribes an importance to the Treaty that is not as all-encompassing as she suggests. In the discussion of Ballance’s tour Orange overemphasises the role of the Treaty as a political force.

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16 O'Malley, pp.154, 171, 176
17 O'Malley, pp.174-179
18 O'Malley, p.176
19 For example, Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, p.185
20 Orange argues that ‘the Maori people’ turned their attentions to England in the 1880s, seeking their autonomy through which they hoped to determine their future. In addition, by the mid-1880s, most tribes wanted to forge a unity of purpose in the treaty. Despite what Orange claims to be an overwhelming tendency, other areas were ‘not so revolutionary’ in their proposals to the government. Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, pp.204, 219, 191
The meetings provided Maori with ample opportunity to air their grievances which varied little from one area to another. There was a hard core of Maori discontent which took its stand on treaty rights. There was great sympathy for the King’s appeal, even if some had reservations because of tribal rivalries, fears of the King’s ambitions, or caution about the New Zealand government’s reaction.  

This last sentence is based on little evidence. Few Maori leaders expressed support for Tawhiao in 1885; the occasions when he is mentioned in other meetings are not expressions of support. In addition, while grievances did vary little from one area to another, the only leadership to take a stand based on Treaty rights was that of the Kingitanga. The difficult issue to reconcile, however, is that within a few years, a number of Maori leaders had moved further towards Tawhiao’s ideas on the Treaty. The implication is that the majority opinion expressed in 1885, which Orange ignores, goes some way to explaining the timing of the origins of the Kotahitanga movement.

Another key work is Angela Ballara’s, *Iwi: The Dynamics of Maori Tribal Organisation from c.1769 to c.1945*, published in 1998. Ballara’s explanation for the formation of the ‘modern tribe’, or the iwi, is slightly outside the autonomy thesis but develops some of its key themes. She argues that the received view of Maori political society operating around a hierarchy of tribal units – from whanau to hapu to iwi – is misleading and contrary to historical evidence. According to Ballara, hapu were not neat sub-sections of iwi. Instead, hapu and iwi operated in different contexts with different purposes. In addition, Ballara argues that hapu throughout most of the nineteenth century were the most important political (or tribal) units in Maori society, and that iwi were a more recent development as a supra-tribal reaction to colonisation, particularly land alienation: ‘The many problems for Maori deriving from colonisation, including lack of control over land alienation motivated them to find communal solutions. Many of these Maori solutions contributed to the corporatisation of the modern tribe.’

Ballara implies that the development of the modern tribe was the most important development in Maori political society in the late nineteenth century, especially because hapu continued to divide Maori communities despite the ideal of tribal unity. This interpretation of political developments within Maori society informs Ballara’s reading of Ballance’s meeting with Maori in the Rotorua region in 1885. Ballara argues that Ngati Whakaue and Tuhourangi – two iwi that made up the Arawa federation who met Ballance in separate hui – presented a duplicitious front,

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21 Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, p.214
22 Ballara, *Iwi*, p.283
meeting separately but arguing that Te Arawa were a united people. 'Both Maori and Pakeha authority figures slipped back and forth in their rhetoric between terms expressing the (official) ideal, one Arawa nation, and actual local divisions.' Ballara does not ask what lay behind Te Arawa's ideal of unity.

Alternatively, in Kotahitanga: The Search for Maori Political Unity, published in 1993, Lindsay Cox argues that politics formed on two levels: the national level where Maori sought to counter the effects of colonisation as a people and the tribal level where individual iwi attempted to reassert diminished authority. Unlike Ballara, Cox sees differences on the hapu level as inherent and not of particular significance in comparison to the larger political developments that occurred. Rather the basis for unity came in pan-tribal movements which sought to mobilise Maori collectively against the Crown. Cox argues that Maori primarily wanted autonomy; yet, most structures implemented by the Crown were designed purely 'to give a veneer of autonomy.' Cox argues that Maori tribal constructs were systematically ignored by the government in favour of legislated bodies.

Lyndsay Head's interpretation of conceptions of citizenship is a significant revision of the autonomy thesis and Treaty-based history. Looking at the period before and during the New Zealand wars, Head argues that Maori political identity revolved around a belief in the rule of law as laid down in the bible. Law was the institutional model of modernity, one that was initially tied to God not government: 'Maori could, therefore, be faithful to modernity and independent of Pakeha at the same time.' This was the political model for the King movement. For those who chose to remain loyal to the Crown, however, a large amount of trust was required. Trust could be found in the model of law itself: law extended the bonds of family to a political community that was nominally not tied to blood. For those who did enter into such an arrangement – leaders such as Renata Kawepo of Ngati Kahungunu – citizenship and law became an aspect of culture beyond choice. When the government went to war over the Waitara purchase in 1860, breaking the accepted bonds of trust,

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23 Ballara, Iwi, p.305
24 Cox, p.75
26 Head, p.114
Renata evaluated the government’s decision as the abandonment of law. However, because a commitment to the rule of law was no longer a matter of choice but an a priori aspect of identity, political options were seriously diminished. Head argues that Renata’s concerns can be projected on to broader Maori society: that belief in the rule of law was an overwhelming preoccupation in Maori society around the time of the wars, representing a Maori desire for modernity. As Head observes, ‘The time when identity did not wholly rest on ethnicity lasted less than thirty years, but it suggested interesting political possibilities.’

Some interesting propositions can be considered if Head’s thesis is brought forward to the latter years of the nineteenth century. If belief in the rule of law created ambivalence in Maori political thought, how did this develop as the century progressed and the position of Maori society became increasingly marginalised? If the government broke institutionalised trust in going to war at Waitara, in what ways did the relationship between Maori and the government subsequently develop? The speeches given by Maori during Ballance’s tour give a myriad of clues on an evolving political society that was simultaneously conscious of its position yet in intellectual conflict over its future direction.

Other recent reinterpretations of the autonomy thesis have focused primarily on Maori agency, usually in terms of selling land and the government’s ability to provide adequate protection for Maori within the terms of nineteenth century politics. This debate is limited, however, to the actual results of land loss: an externalist view of history that has to reconcile cause with effect. A more effective interpretation will take an internalist approach, studying Maori political thought on its own terms rather than the tangible results of history. Taking this approach releases history from the constrictive effects of land loss to take a broader view of late nineteenth century politics. This is not to deny the externalist position; on the

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27 Head, p.98
29 Miles Fairburn gives the following definitions for externalist and internalist accounts. Externalist accounts are ‘accounts of a situation which are written from the viewpoint of an outside observer and may draw attention to the things which were not apparent to the insiders.’ In contrast, internalist accounts are ‘accounts of a situation from the viewpoint of those who were part of it.’ Miles Fairburn, Social History: Problems, Strategies and Methods, (Basingstoke: Macmillan; New York: St. Martins Press, 1999), p.310
Introduction

contrary, an internalist analysis may in fact clarify many of the connections between cause and effect. However, by removing the narrative requirement to prove, many of the a priori assumptions of history are cleared away.

The intent of this thesis is to explore the argument, and to tentatively suggest, that the conceptual bases of Maori political thought were significantly more conflicted than has been suggested in historical writing on Maori politics in the late nineteenth century. A sustained analysis of the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour suggests that a drive for ‘autonomy’ does not substantially capture the complexity of Maori political thought in this period. While Maori sought to regain the power over their land assumed by the government in the guise of the Native Land Court, this preoccupation does not sufficiently justify ‘autonomy’ as the all-encompassing concept suggested in existing interpretations. However, arriving at a more nuanced explanation takes us only a small step away from the autonomy thesis. Arguing that the problems created by colonial governance did not present clear and apparent alternatives – that Maori sought a pragmatic solution to the problem of state power – is not a significant leap from the current consensus. In the end, a microhistory can only be a series of initial suggestions towards the future direction of historical scholarship in this area.

II – Chapter outline

The chapters that follow are based on the consideration that a microhistory is the study of a document in an attempt to explain the underlying cultural and political assumptions of a period wider than the document itself. Therefore, the structure of the thesis has been largely determined according to the above propositions, rather than basing analysis according to the chronology of the tour or thematic approaches.

Chapter 1 will look at the genre of microhistory, its characteristics, how it has been practised and its strengths and weaknesses. Because a microhistorical study is not the norm for a study of politics in Maori society, the relevance of this approach requires specific justification. Through this examination, a methodological framework will be set in place within which to study the document of speeches. Working within
this framework, the interpretations generated by a close study can be used to address the type of ambivalence that dominated Maori political thought in this period.

Chapter 2 will give a contextual background to Ballance’s tour, explaining how such a tour could come about and giving a narrative of the tour as it unfolded. In particular, the chapter will trace the New Zealand political situation from the end of the New Zealand wars in order to explain the circumstances under which particular Maori communities were able to entertain such a tour. In taking this approach, extra focus will be placed on leaders who were significant in Maori political society at the time, in particular, those who played an important role in the discussions with Ballance during his tour.

Chapter 3 will look at the various hui in more detail, through the fragmentary evidence provided in the document of speeches and surrounding historical documentation. The chapter will examine the organisation of the hui, the preconditions for speaking rights at such events (who precisely made up the one hundred and twenty-six speakers who were recorded in the document), the ceremonial structure of the encounters and the types of interaction that took place both among Maori and between Maori leaders and Ballance. Such an analysis suggests that the purpose of the hui was only partially ceremonial: mostly, the encounters with Ballance were seen as a fulfilment of the Maori desire to negotiate with the government via the medium of oral exchange, as a way of conveying their issues and grievances to Ballance, in order to arrive at real solutions.

Chapters 4 and 5 look at the particular ideas Maori raised in their speeches and how this reflects a coherent, though by no means straightforward, set of political beliefs. Chapter 4 examines the different ways that Maori conceived of their relationship with the government and the Maori position within the colonial system, through the greetings, proposals, suggestions, criticisms and requests made during the tour. The chapter outlines the historical perspective from which the majority of those recorded spoke – the tradition of negotiation between Maori and government ministers – and how this tradition informed the general problems created by colonial governance.

Chapter 5 will look at the different ways that Maori talked about the political structure of their society. The idea of Maori committees will be discussed, particularly what role Maori leaders hoped the committees would play in the tribal administration of land. The concept behind the committees can be usefully contrasted with enduring
conceptions of traditional leadership. The dichotomy between the old and the new was at the heart of the fissures in the Maori political landscape in the late nineteenth century: where Maori society required, and searched for, a coordinated response to the worst excesses of colonial governance, some of those who represented the traditional order of chiefly authority acted against those who increasingly sought a more combined response. It is only when these conflicting conceptions are placed together that the ambivalence of Maori political thought can be fully understood.
Chapter One

Microhistory and Methodology

Microhistory offers an innovative approach to the study of Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century, one which has the potential to explain several of the discrepancies in existing historical interpretations. By studying an area of the past on a reduced scale, whether through an event, person or group of people, microhistorians argue that previously undiscovered facets of history can be revealed and illuminated. Using this approach, microhistorians believe they can avoid concept-presentism (anachronism) by studying people’s ideas, values and beliefs on their own terms. There are several key aspects of an approach that can generally be described as microhistorical: the reduced scale of focus, a finely grained analysis of a historical text, and an interpretation of that text to reveal a person’s or a group’s perspective of the world. This approach is particularly useful when considering the opacity of Maori political thought and the difficulty Maori material presents for interpretation. In particular, by reducing the scale of focus in the late nineteenth century to one event and one text, microhistory offers a mechanism to solve some of the conceptual problems left unanswered by the autonomy thesis.

However, microhistory is a relatively new and undefined development in the discipline of history. Those historians who are associated with microhistory encompass a diverse range of approaches and topics. Consequently, the practitioners of microhistory display the inherent limitations of an undefined approach. While microhistorians have been successful in contributing fresh interpretations to their respective historical areas, they have been vague in explicating a specific approach, by incorporating the various influences of other academic disciplines into a historicist approach. This chapter will begin by discussing the general principles of microhistory. This will be followed by a critical evaluation of various microhistorical works with the purpose of demonstrating how a more closely integrated theory of these approaches would be beneficial to the practice of microhistory. In particular, what is required is an acknowledgement that two different strands of microhistory have
emerged – one cultural, one social – and to develop these approaches with the hope of obtaining more accurate historical interpretations. Finally, this chapter will explain how the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour in 1885 can be examined and interpreted through the lens of a microhistorian, particularly through the more closely defined approach of cultural microhistory, in preparation for a sustained study of the document in subsequent chapters.

I – The characteristics of the microhistorical approach

Because the genre of microhistory is relatively undefined as a genre encompassing a broad range of approaches, identifying the core characteristics of microhistory is a difficult task. Not only is there a lack of consensus as to who is and who is not a microhistorian, different writers offer different interpretations of what the characteristics of microhistory entail. As Jill Lepore has written, because there are few practitioners of microhistory, definition can only be made by example.\(^1\) Therefore, a certain amount of interpolation is required. However, before a discussion of specific examples, and as a basic guide, four basic elements have been deduced which characterise the microhistorical approach.

The first and most important factor of the microhistorical approach is the reduced scale of inquiry.\(^2\) Instead of studying a topic on the macro level, looking at a broad period or a general set of evidence, the unit of analysis is the micro: small, particular to one event over a short period of time and focused on a limited set of historical sources. Microhistorians believe that by reducing the scale of observation, historians in general are placed at a greater advantage in teasing out the subtleties of the past, subtleties that macro-studies tend to gloss over. As Giovanni Levi explains, ‘the unifying principle of all microhistorical research is that it will reveal factors previously unobserved.’\(^3\) The practitioners of this approach have shown that the micro-level of analysis can take on a variety of forms, whether as a study of an event, or a small group of people within a larger group (such as a family or a community).

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\(^3\) Levi, p.97
Secondly, microhistorians are interested in some form of finely grained analysis. This is what differentiates a microhistory from a case study. As Miles Fairburn has written, 'historians often refer to 'microhistory' as an all-purpose designation for any kind of study on a minute scale -- say, a village or a family or a fragment of some event. But this designation should not be confused with the sub-discipline of microhistory.' Reducing the scale of observation alone would be an inadequate justification for the kind of broader conclusions microhistorians draw from their studies. Instead, a micro-study compensates in the amount of detail that can be conveyed. In this sense, many writers have compared microhistory to the job of the detective, observing 'trifles' for their significance and linking these to broader patterns.

This type of close analysis has taken on a variety of forms. However, as will be discussed below, a number of microhistorical works have demonstrated the utility of studying a text, but more importantly for historians, the study of such particular events requires a familiarity with the text which (on many occasions) is the sole remaining record of the event. Therefore, a textual analysis involves a form of hermeneutic reading -- that is, reading cultural meanings from words -- popularised by Clifford Geertz's phrase "thick description". In Geertz's paradigm, because historical and ethnographic texts are "thick" with cultural information -- particularly information on a minute level -- detailed description is required to piece together the informal logic of a society. The main assumption of 'textual' microhistory, as Carlo Ginzburg argues -- hinting at the aim of microhistory as cultural interpretation -- is that 'a close reading of a relatively small number of texts, related to a possibly circumscribed belief, can be more rewarding than the massive accumulation of repetitive evidence.'

Apart from the deductive method, the analogy some have made between the microhistorian and the detective is somewhat misleading. An example of this argument is Jill Lepore's proposition that microhistorians address themselves to solving small mysteries and that microhistorians become characters, detectives in their own story. However, solving historical problems has been an element in only a

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4 Fairburn, Social History, p.205
7 Ginzburg cited in Muir, viii
handful of microhistorical works (notably those of Natalie Zemon Davis), and is not essential to the process of the general approach. As Lepore argues herself, ‘The life story, like the mystery, is merely the means to an end – and that end is always explaining the culture.’ Instead, in the only similarity to the task of the detective, microhistorians have offered an alternative method for the evaluation of historical evidence as a systematic way to sort out fragmentary clues.

This broader purpose behind the examination of a micro-study leads to the third aspect of microhistory. That is, the microhistorical approach integrates the close study of an event and a finely-grained textual analysis through an interpretation of ideas, values and beliefs of the person or group being studied. The purpose of this is to access the “native’s point of view”, or the focus on the world as perceived by the subject. In this sense, as Fairburn explains, ‘[T]he paradox of such concepts is that although they are quite unfamiliar to us, their users took them for granted’. Therefore, the purpose of this approach is to arrive at the most accurate assessment of a person’s or group’s understanding of the world, or an aspect of it, in the period of study. This aspect of the microhistorical approach has been strongly influenced by ethnography, social anthropology and other developments in the social sciences over the last thirty or so years. For a number of microhistorians, the attempt to extrapolate broader themes from a micro-study was a conscious development upon the idea mentalités, or mental structures, developed by historians associated with the Annales ‘school’ of history. Annales historians such as Braudel, Febvre and, in particular, Le Roy Ladurie had attempted to elaborate broad, deep cultural structures: the unconscious assumptions held by people in a particular society that limited their perception of the world. Microhistorians similarly seek to penetrate and explain the deep layers of cultural phenomena: not simply the explicit artefacts of culture, but the thoughts, values, beliefs and ideas that, combined, give a society its culture. The concept of culture that informs this aspect of the microhistorical approach will be the focus of further discussion below.

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8 Lepore, p.133
9 Muir, viii. Muir associates this ‘evidential paradigm’ with the theory of abduction developed by American philosopher Charles Peirce.
10 Again, this term was popularised by Geertz. Clifford Geertz, “From the Native’s Point of View”: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding”, in Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology, (New York: Basic Books, 1983)
11 Fairburn, Social History, p.206.
12 This was similar in concept to Geertz’s intention behind “thick description” and cultural analysis in general to establish the ‘informal logic of actual life’. See Geertz, ‘Thick Description’, p.17
A fourth aspect of microhistory, but one that is more suggestive of topic than approach, is the interest in under-represented and disenfranchised groups who have not been accorded an equal status in the historiography of a particular historical area. Historically speaking, this concern with re-enfranchising previously disenfranchised groups is commonly known as "history from below". Peasants, for example, have been a popular group of study by microhistorians because of their subordinate position in past societies and their subsequent lack of representation. Although "history from below" is not necessary to a microhistorical study, the nature of subaltern groups does lend itself to the microhistorical approach. What makes writing "history from below" a difficult task, one which requires a different approach, is that many groups of people were essentially voiceless in their own time – consequently they have left few traces in the historical record. Therefore, those microhistorians who have taken up the cause to reconstruct the thoughts, beliefs, values and ideas of a "voiceless" group have tended to focus on extraordinary events or individuals. This is because it is only due to extraordinary personal acts that a rich set of evidence exists.\textsuperscript{13} The main shared assumption among microhistorians is that the history of subaltern groups can be reconstructed through a fine-grained analysis of the remaining snippets of information.

II - Microhistory in practice

As Lepore suggests, because there are only relatively few practitioners of microhistory, a definition of the approach can only be made by example. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to illustrate how microhistory has been practised. Identifying a core group of practitioners is a difficult task because there are very few historians who actively identify themselves as microhistorians. In the handful of historiographical surveys that have attempted to place some boundaries on microhistory, different historians and historical works are cited in association with the approach.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13} Sigurdur Gylfi Magnusson, "The Singularization of History: Social History and Microhistory Within the Postmodern State of Knowledge", \textit{Journal of Social History}, Spring 2003, p.710; Lepore, p.133
\textsuperscript{14} Fairburn, for example, argues that microhistory developed primarily in three centres – Melbourne (under Greg Denning and Rhys Isaac), the United States (under Robert Darnton and Natalie Zemon Davis) and in Italy (through the journal \textit{Quaderni Historici}, led by Carlo Ginzburg and Giovanni Levi)
Microhistory developed in the 1980s as a sub discipline of cultural history, through historians such as Robert Darnton, Natalie Zemon Davis, and Carlo Ginzburg. In the 1990s, the focus of microhistory shifted to a more sociological approach, following the lead of historians such as Rhys Isaac. One commentator now considers historians in this latter category to be more accurately representative of microhistory; works in the former simply 'show affinities with' microhistory.\footnote{Magnusson identifies two distinct strands of microhistory, social and cultural, differing substantially from Fairburn. Fairburn, Social History, p. 205; Magnusson, p.712} Despite a change, the general difference between what could be termed 'cultural' and 'social' microhistory has largely passed without comment. For example, James Fernandez and Miles Fairburn have separately described both Robert Darnton and Rhys Isaac as representing the ethnographic tradition of microhistorical recording, reconstructing history from the subjects’ perspective.\footnote{Fairburn, Social History, pp.206-7; James Fernandez, 'Historians Tell Tales: Of Cartesian Cats and Gallic Cockfights', Journal of Modern History, 1988, vol.60, p.115.} Although this is true, Darnton and Isaac represent two subtly different approaches to a topic from a micro perspective.

The initial type of microhistory, led by Darnton, developed out of a concern in the historical profession regarding an over-commitment to the quantification of culture and an under-evaluation of the symbolic element in social intercourse.\footnote{Roger Chartier, 'Texts, Symbols and Frenchness', Journal of Modern History, 1985, vol.57, p.688; Fairburn, p.206; Muir, vii; Magnusson discusses the dominance of the Annales school in social history in the late 1980s with an emphasis on the study of the largest possible aggregates, with the priority to measurement in the analysis of social phenomenon. Magnusson, p.705} The objective was to rehabilitate the perceived world as the primary object of study. In addition, microhistorians attacked large-scale quantitative studies on the grounds that they distorted reality on the individual level. In this sense, microhistorians were also interested in moving the study of peoples beyond material influences, such as economic forces, to the study of representations of such influences. Following on from Clifford Geertz’s notion of “thick description”, these works had a single text as the primary focus of their study: a historical application of Geertz’s principle. Microhistorians like Darnton argued that significant details could be seen in written expression, not simply anthropological observation. The aim was that in reducing the framework of study and studying a text in close detail, historians could more fully penetrate the cultural meanings of a particular society.
The characteristics of these works can be viewed in the work of Robert Darnton, Natalie Zemon Davis and Carlo Ginzburg.\textsuperscript{18} In *The Great Cat Massacre*, Darnton argues that by 'getting the joke' of a story of the massacre of cats we may understand a basic ingredient of the culture of eighteenth century French apprentices.\textsuperscript{19} Following anthropologists, Darnton argues that the best point to access an alien culture was where that culture seemed most opaque.\textsuperscript{20} Darnton implicitly argues that although past societies do not always immediately make 'sense', they can be understood if they are studied for their logic. Darnton found this opaque event in the story of the cat massacre, retold in an 'autobiography' of one of those complicit in the event twenty years afterwards.

A second historian who developed the initial type of microhistory and with whom microhistory is often associated, Natalie Zemon Davis, developed two quite different techniques in two historical works. In *The Return of Martin Guerre*,\textsuperscript{21} Davis uses a retrospective work written by a judge who presided over the trial of a French man, a peasant, charged with impersonating another, to evaluate the position of women and individual identity in sixteenth century France. Davis reads into the text the judge's unwitting intentions and, consequently, is able to speculate upon the impersonator's guilt, and crucially, the implication of the real man's wife in the deception. By pulling together what the judge wrote with what the judge refused to see, Davis convincingly argues that peasant women held a greater agency in sixteenth century France than is usually assumed and, more fundamentally, that identity was fluid in nature during this period – all of which would have been invisible following the approach of a conventional historian.\textsuperscript{22} Davis contributed to the general notion of


\textsuperscript{20} Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, p.78


\textsuperscript{22} Some debate arose over whether Davis went too far in her reading of the manuscript by the trial judge, Jean de Coras. See Robert Finlay, 'The Refashioning of Martin Guerre (AHR Forum: The Return of Martin Guerre)', *American Historical Review*, 1988, vol.93, pp.553-71. However, Davis's response convincingly covers all of the main points, reaffirming that while her argument was speculative, speculation was well founded. Natalie Zemon Davis, "On the Lame" (AHR Forum: The Return of Martin Guerre), *American Historical Review*, 1988, vol.93, pp.572-603.
microhistory further in *Fiction in the Archives.* In this book, Davis examines a set of letters of remission, narratives related by homicide offenders to royal notaries in order to obtain a royal pardon. Davis is concerned with the literary function of these letters: "fiction" refers to "the extent to which their authors shape the events of a crime into a story." By studying these letters, one of the best sources of relatively uninterrupted narrative from the 'lower order' in sixteenth century France, Davis is able to 'detect the range of narrative techniques and motifs found in different provinces' and find 'links between violence, storytelling, and pardon seeking.' The general approach to this source – more a case of reading cultural meanings from the text rather than solving a mystery – is markedly different from that in *The Return of Martin Guerre.* However, the key element of both these books is that the judge's text and the set of court records gave the opportunity for a close study of peasant culture that may not have otherwise been possible.

The final work in this initial development of microhistory was Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms.* In it, Ginzburg examines a set of court records of the trial for heresy of an Italian miller in the sixteenth century – who was unique for his interesting ideas as well as his ability to read – and compares the miller's testimony to all the books he conceivably could have read at the time. Ginzburg concluded that there was a unique oral tradition that survived in the miller's ideas that did not exist in any of the contemporary books.

As a body, these works were microhistorical in their reduced scale of study. That is, instead of studying the 'national' culture of France or Italy, or instead of studying peasants in general during a particular period, they reduced the focus to a single person or an event. In addition, they all had a single text as the focus of study, or in Ginzburg's case, a single text in a context of contemporary books. Finally, they all studied this text for the ideas of key protagonists, the deeper meaning behind these ideas, and by implication the cultural bases of meaning and the distinctive attributes of particular cultures. These key characteristics suggest the commonality of a developing historical genre. However, Darnton was the only one of the three to substantially engage with the symbolic structures underpinning his study, and the idea

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24 Davis, *Fiction in the Archives,* p.2

25 Davis, *Fiction in the Archives,* p.2, viii

of ‘culture’ as an analytical category. Although the tone of the three historians is relatively similar – that is, an intuitive approach and a method by which a limited set of historical texts were studied – their coherence was limited to some very broad and intuitive analytical categories.

The other type of microhistory was developed during the 1990s by a number of historians, working mainly in the field of American social history, who undertook finely grained studies of small communities to establish some general patterns of social interaction within them. As opposed to the cultural approach, the idea was that by reducing the scale of observation historians were more likely to reveal the complicated functions of individual relationships – these relationships being the fundamental basis of social history.\(^27\) Foremost amongst these microhistorians was Rhys Isaac. Isaac stands out in particular because of the methodological discussion in the final chapter of his 1982 study of a Virginian community, The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790.\(^28\) In it, Isaac presents a series of ‘linked studies of changing expressions of meaning of life, traced through half a century of religious and political revolution in Virginia.’\(^29\) Two differences stand out in Isaac’s study. Firstly, in reducing the scale of analysis, Isaac aims to demonstrate the subtleties of social structure rather than focusing more strictly on the meanings that society produced. Isaac’s focus is what he calls the ‘social-cultural context’ of religious and political thought and feeling in the second half of the eighteenth century: ‘Social life, in its routines as well as its conclusive processes of change, is viewed as a complex set of performances. Not only words but also settings, costumes, and gestures all carry their messages in the incessant exchanges of interaction.’\(^30\) Secondly, Isaac does not foreground a single text as the object of study: the community itself is the basis of analysis.

IV – Microhistory and associated theoretical problems

Perhaps the most important aspect of microhistory, and the aspect which has led to most criticisms of the approach, is the idea that studying people’s beliefs on the small

\(^27\) Magnusson, p.709
\(^29\) Isaac, p.5
\(^30\) Isaac, pp.5-6
scale will necessarily reveal aspects of an all-encompassing worldview shared by the broader society. Behind this unifying principle is a concept of culture: that is, culture can be thought of as the practices that produce meaning – thoughts, ideas, values and beliefs – and as distinct sets of shared meanings. However, within this concept of culture, microhistorians also hold a loosely defined concept that these thoughts, ideas, values and beliefs in some manner interact with social structure: that the social and the cultural are separate categories but that they are mutually dependent. These two loosely defined and articulated concepts – a concept of culture and a concept of the cultural and social interacting – have, combined, created confusion among microhistorians, resulting in what is effectively a segregated sub-genre of the historical profession.

Some of these problems can be partially solved through a closer definition of the terms ‘society’ and ‘culture’ and their use in history. Therefore, the question may be asked, what exactly is meant by the ‘social’ and the ‘cultural’? The two are often used synonymously, particularly in reference to the construction of identity (that is, ‘social constructions’ and ‘cultural constructions’). ‘Culture’, in particular, has undergone a multitude of changes as a concept.\(^{31}\) However, for the purpose of this discussion, several key abbreviations can be made.

The difference between society and culture usually depends on both the object of study and the approach in studying it. On the most basic level, ‘society’ is the aggregate of people and the relationships between people. The social is inherently more concrete than the cultural because it deals in absolutes: numbers of people, competing groups (social histories tend to use quantitative data as evidence) and different factions. In addition, social scientists believe there is a process of socialisation that exists outside the meanings which people attribute to things. Studies of social structure often centre on the different levels of power among groups of people, in terms of class, race and gender, and the different ways power is enacted between these groups. Social historians look for processes external to the meanings, views or interpretations a group within a society holds at any one point in time: the assumption is that there is a ‘reality’ external to and beyond people’s conscious

awareness. In this definition, the ‘social’ is seen to be an aspect of reality that exists outside the ideas, values and beliefs that people hold.

Alternatively, ‘culture’ is inherently more abstract than ‘society’ and infinitely more difficult to define. The core concept of culture has gone through about five changes of meaning over the past two hundred years or so.\(^{32}\) However, it is the most recent two definitions that have particular application to contemporary debates.\(^{33}\) In the first, culture is defined as the set of ideas, beliefs and values that defines a group of people: for example, French culture, American culture or, within New Zealand society, Pakeha culture and Maori culture. In this definition, where the world is made up of numerous cultures, ‘culture’ can be used in the plural. A ‘culture’, in this sense, refers to distinctive ways of life, shared values and meanings common to a particular group. In contrast, in the second definition, culture is seen as a system both in the way that people relate to ideas, beliefs and values (the symbolic) and the way these codes interrelate (the semiotic). Here, ‘culture’ refers to the practices that produce meanings. Microhistorians incorporate versions of both definitions as part of their approach. Both definitions are necessary to any cultural study because of the tendency for people to organise and identify with particular groups – articulating themselves consciously as culturally distinct, which can be observed from external study – and for the processes that bring about a plurality of cultures, allowing beliefs, values and ideas to be shared among various people.

The problem with these definitions, and any definition of culture and society, is that the cultural and the social are mutually dependent, influencing each other to drive change. Ideas, values, beliefs and symbols need people and actions to bring them into the world and give them meaning. Culture is brought into the physical world by “social acts”: acts, in other words, ‘whose subjective action is oriented toward the action of others.’\(^{34}\) Social acts can be symbolic if they carry a direct

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\(^{33}\) In the first and earliest meaning of the concept, “culture” was used to ‘refer to the tending of crops (cultivation) or looking after animals.’ The second meaning developed in the sixteenth century and was used to refer to the “cultivation” of more abstract things, like the human mind. The third definition of “culture” stems from the Enlightenment and the idea of the ‘unilinear, historical self-development of humanity’. In this concept, “culture” was used to refer to the products of that enlightened society, such as art and literature. Bocock, pp.150-1

association of meaning. People bring their own interpretations to social interaction that influences power relations between people. However, the concept of culture is that it is an independent and autonomous system in and of itself, simultaneously separate and intertwined with the social structure.

The major theoretical debates of the twentieth century have been concerned with clarifying the overlap between society and culture, establishing what aspect of the cultural system is autonomous.\textsuperscript{35} The problem centres on finding the exact relationship between the two: ‘The meaning of an ideology or belief system cannot be read from social behaviour; it must be studied as a pattern in and of itself. Approaches to culture differ from one another in describing precisely what such autonomy implies.’\textsuperscript{36} This statement asks a common question: to what extent does the act of socialisation influence or determine the practices, ideas, values and beliefs of an individual? This has been the perennial concern of cultural theorists since the Marxist theory of base and superstructure. E.P. Thompson initiated a fresh debate in the 1960s with the publication of \textit{The Making of the English Working Class}.\textsuperscript{37} In it, Thompson argues that the social and cultural are mutually dependent, the social placing constraints on the extent to which culture is autonomous. However, he also emphasises the role of the individual in constituting his or her environment through belief or action. Thompson argues that social processes set the limits of cultural change; it is the creation of group self-consciousness that predetermines social change itself. Arising separately, although from a similar concern, poststructuralists argue that the determinism of previous theories could be in part solved by seeing cultural meanings and social power in competing ‘discourses’ (collective ideas, beliefs and values) that both constitute social power and simultaneously create it. Following Antonio Gramsci, poststructuralists argue that people’s beliefs are predicated upon the unconscious acceptance of the dominant discourse. Through all of these developments, however, there remains a widely accepted tenet (though contested through poststructuralism and postmodernism) that the social and the cultural, while essentially intertwined, can be separated out for the sake of study.

\textsuperscript{35} The main developments in these debates have come from functionalism, structuralism, Marxism and poststructuralism, taking in disciplines such as anthropology, history, political science, sociology, philosophy, linguistics and literary analysis. See Jeffrey C. Alexander, \textit{Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates}, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.1-27
\textsuperscript{36} Alexander, p.25
\textsuperscript{37} E. P. Thompson, \textit{The Making of the English Working Class}, (London: Gollancz, 1963)
What differentiates social history from cultural history, in practice as well as in theory, is the emphasis placed on either phenomenon: 'social' or 'cultural'. Social history is the study of the particular set of interactions between people, how power is manifested between people, the influence of economic conditions or institutions. To reiterate, social historians look for processes external to the meanings, those all-encompassing factors that exist above that lifespan of human beings and that drive change. Cultural history is the study of the internalised ideas, beliefs and values that actors bring to the meaningful order. Both, of course, overlap: the exercise of power requires people to have a concept of authority and disenfranchisement; although a social explanation would emphasise the manifestation of power in conditions other than that observed by individuals (broad patterns obvious only retrospectively). Conversely, ideas, values and beliefs require people to act them out in social systems, creating social groups where beliefs are shared, and conflict where beliefs differ. Therefore, while there is some scope for overlap, the complexity of either sphere, the social and the cultural, in essence requires an ultimate focus, either on social history or on cultural history.

The position of microhistory within this historical development, and within the spheres of social and cultural history, is complicated because of the concept of culture employed by microhistorians. In their concept of culture and their mode of study, microhistorians have been strongly influenced by Clifford Geertz. As mentioned above, Geertz popularized the phrase ‘thick description’ as a method for cultural analysis, although one not strictly defined.\(^\text{38}\) Geertz describes culture as a semiotic system of interrelated symbols:

The concept of culture I espouse… is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.\(^\text{39}\)

Here, Geertz places the significance of ethnographic study in the process of interpretation, de-emphasising the idea that a process can be found in the structure of culture itself. However, Geertz does have a strong idea of what culture is: roughly,
that because all peoples cognitively have the same capacity for thought, culture manifests itself in the same process across different societies. Therefore, although culture does not manifest itself as the same, different societies can be studied in the same manner. Geertz, however, placed his definition of culture strictly within an externalist setting. He strongly disagreed with Goodenough’s statement, that ‘culture [is located] in the minds and hearts of men’, or the idea that culture is somehow disembodied from social practice.\textsuperscript{40} As he explained, ‘culture is public because meaning is.’\textsuperscript{41} In saying this, Geertz was placing emphasis on social action as the window to cultural meanings. To establish an accurate interpretation of opaque actions, Geertz advocated strict contextualization: a kind of Skinnerian intentionality applied to gestures and actions. Geertz’s focus, however, was strictly upon meaning: the cultural, not the social structural.

The only microhistorian to engage substantively with Geertz – despite his almost ritual invocation by historians\textsuperscript{42} – is Robert Darnton. Darnton’s misapplication of Geertz’s insights, however, in combination with a lack of elaboration by other microhistorians, has in part contributed to the general confusion over what constitutes microhistory. Although much of the criticism aimed at Darnton has been aimed at his symbolic analysis,\textsuperscript{43} the more fundamental problem with his approach is the expansion beyond a Geertzian analysis into social structure. Darnton’s analysis of the cat massacre story revolves around the symbolic relationship between words and meanings. For example, he asserts that cats bore enormous symbolic weight in the folklore of France.\textsuperscript{44} In other words, Darnton assumes that in reading the text he can distinguish between a symbol which held a considerable amount of importance and others which did not, a distinction between ‘loaded and empty signifiers’.\textsuperscript{45} In Darnton’s lexeme, “symbol” is a broad term connected with any act that conveys a meaning, whether by sound, image or gesture.\textsuperscript{46} Some symbols may be directly representational, for example, blackness stands for death, but others ‘will drift free

\textsuperscript{40} Cited in Geertz, ‘Thick Description’, p.11
\textsuperscript{41} Geertz, ‘Thick Description’, p.12
\textsuperscript{42} Richard Baenacki, ‘Method and Metaphor after the New Cultural History’, in Bonnell and Hunt (eds.), Beyond the Cultural Turn, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p.64, and Ronald C. Walters, pp.537-556, have both discussed the tenuous link between anthropology and its application to history in specific reference to historians who draw upon Geertz.
\textsuperscript{43} See Chartier, “Texts, Symbols and Frenchness”
\textsuperscript{44} Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre, p.93
from their sensory moorings'. According to Darnton, we think of the world in the same way as we talk (or write) about it: by establishing metaphorical relations.\textsuperscript{47} Therefore, Darnton argues that symbolic associations can be established historically by establishing the logic of ideas from a historical text. By moving back and forth between a text (in Darnton's case, a narrative) and the surrounding historical documentation, an historian should be able to delineate the 'social' dimension of meaning.\textsuperscript{48} Here, Darnton introduces the idea of culture posited by Geertz – culture as public meaning – and the notion that the social and the cultural are somehow mutually dependent. However, towards the end of Darnton's discussion, he speculates on the nature of social structure in eighteenth century French society. Darnton deduces from the 'social' dimension of meaning evidence for 'social structure', in particular, the notion that the story of the cat massacre reveals something fundamental about class in the period. In doing so, Darnton extends beyond the evidence for which his text allows and into a type of social analysis that requires fundamentally different evidence. Consequently, Darnton moves beyond the type of cultural analysis as outlined by Geertz.

Isaac ventures further into the realm of social history than Darnton, using an ethnographic approach to explain the social processes, structures and relationships of a Virginian community. In Isaac's case, the interpretation of social action is for the purpose of explaining social structure. While Isaac employs a semiotic concept of culture similar to that of Geertz – 'culture may be thought of as a related set of languages... consisting of more than just words, it also comprises gesture, demeanour, dress, architecture, and all the codes by which those who share in the culture convey meanings and significance to each other'\textsuperscript{49} – his concern is primarily with the action and how that reveals social structure. In particular, his focus is on how power is manifested on different levels of society: 'One who stands in the relationship of significant other to considerable numbers of persons is thereby endowed with social power and enters into transactions upon markedly advantageous terms.'\textsuperscript{50} The purpose of Isaac's examination of the symbolic practices of civic ritual in Virginian political and religious life is to explain how power was expressed between people in social interaction.

\textsuperscript{47} Darnton, 'The Symbolic Element in History', p.222
\textsuperscript{48} Darnton, 'The Symbolic Element in History', p.228
\textsuperscript{49} Isaac, pp.324-5
\textsuperscript{50} Isaac, p.338. Italics author's own.
The primary difference between Darnton and Isaac has to do with the ends to their means. The ultimate aim of their respective studies determines the tone of each: Darnton primarily focuses on the cultural (the meanings themselves) and Isaac the social (how societies are structured on the small scale). Although Darnton makes assertions about the social structure of French society, his primary focus is on what the massacre of cats meant to the peasants. Consequently, the tone of the respective studies differs significantly.

A recent article has introduced the idea that two separate ‘methods’ of microhistory: one which analyses cultural meanings (ideas, beliefs and values) and another which studies social phenomena on the small scale.\(^{51}\) The article’s author, Sigurdur Magnusson, cites a debate between two microhistorians – Gianna Pomata and Giovanni Levi – on the future direction of the approach. Both approach small-scale topics with the intention of making connections with larger units. However, they differ on their understanding of microhistory as a domain of cultural history (Pomata) or social history (Levi).\(^ {52}\) In the debate, Levi attacks the approach of cultural historians, advocating turning microhistory into a social science. Pomata in contrast, argues that social historians like Levi do not take into account those historians who work with meanings. Social microhistorians, in Pomata’s opinion, seem uncomfortable around meanings and have to turn them into something harder, like ‘practices.’\(^ {53}\) Pomata was alluding to the notion that meanings and practices are different analytical concepts, and inherently depend on different kinds of evidence. In addition, this debate gives added weight to the argument that there are two domains of microhistory.

However, because microhistorians have assumed that the social and the cultural can be separated for the sake of study, all of them share more similarities than differences when compared to postmodernist historians who argue that discourses constitute social structure. In this formulation, social structure is seen as in no way separate from the discourses that represent the world; if there is a degree of

\(^{51}\) Magnusson, p.712

\(^{52}\) Magnusson comments that, ‘At the risk of oversimplification, Levi and his followers might be said to adhere to a rather traditional form of social history, with strong leanings towards the social sciences; the other group, including Pomata, might be said to represent the new “cultural history”.’ Magnusson, p.712

\(^{53}\) Magnusson, pp.712-714
separation, the relationship is itself discursive. The idea that meaning is power and exists external to social influence is an inherent contradiction; power cannot exist if there are no people to bring it into existence. Microhistorians differ substantially. As Edward Muir has written, ‘[n]o matter how critical the microhistorians become about the authority of evidence..., no matter how aware they are of the ways in which texts influence their own meanings, they assume that there is a reality external to those historical texts, a reality that can be known.’ In their similarities, Darnton and Isaac reflect Geertz, whose work embodies a pragmatic but by no means perfect formulation of the relationship between society and culture. The key for microhistorians is one of source and focus. As with all historians, source should dictate the approach. In the absence of evidence that demonstrates social conditioning, the microhistorian should concentrate on understanding and explaining the actors’ ideas, values and beliefs, the cultural manifestations of a group of people, in an approach akin to an intellectual historian understanding and explaining a text, without succumbing to the temptation of “turning beliefs into something more solid, like practices.” The implication is not that social influences do not exist – unlike poststructuralists who assume discourse and power to be synonymous – but that for the sake of simplicity, understanding the multifarious complexity of the perceived world is enough scope for a study.

The future for microhistory then, is to acknowledge that there are two strands of microhistory and to develop the strengths of each without significantly complicating the aims of the genre, recognising the social and the cultural as distinct analytic categories. Firstly, a social approach should be developed with the focus of explaining social phenomena. Fairburn has outlined what is an apt approach for social microhistory. He argues that microhistory and social history in general should follow Isaac’s approach, focusing on explaining behavioural norms. Actors’ intentions need

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54 A strict postmodernist position can be seen in the work of Patrick Joyce. For example, Joyce says: ‘Knowledge in the new dispensation is seen to reveal the operations of power, and not itself to confer power through access to objective truth.’ Later in the same essay Joyce gives a different explanation: ‘The project of modernity disguises the fact that “individual” and “society” are not real, “objective” entities, but historical and normative creations, designed to handle the exigencies of political power and political order.’ However, Joyce also gives a more moderate position: ‘At one level we may of course posit a dualism between the “real,” or the “social,” and representations of it. The “real” can be said to exist independently of our representations of it, and to affect these representations. But this effect is always discursive, and it must be insisted that history is never present to us in anything but a discursive form’. Patrick Joyce, 'The End of Social History?', in Keith Jenkins (ed.), The Postmodern History Reader, (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp.344, 352; Patrick Joyce, 'History and Postmodernism', in Jenkins (ed.), The Postmodern History Reader, p.247

55 Muir, xiii-xiv
to be explained 'by putting them in the context of cultural rules, the rules inherent in the cultural norms prescribed for the institutional role the actor was playing, and in the cultural code of common sense maxims.'\textsuperscript{56} Fairburn's is a reasonable and flexible response to the problems of social analysis. He does not abandon the idea that culture plays a strong role in social practice: the approach places social practices within the context of cultural 'norms.' However, the approach is primarily focused on explaining how social practices operate on the micro level, not explaining cultural phenomena specifically. Instead, aspects of the cultural are assumed prior to study.

The key aspect to a cultural microhistory approach is to understand that, while not disembodied from social practice, cultural meanings require a concentrated focus. The cultural approach faces the same problem as any cultural analysis: culture, as the intangible web of meanings of a society, recedes infinitely the more it is studied. Geertz identified this problem in his essay on "thick description": 'Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is.'\textsuperscript{57} Geertz's compromise is to live with the knowledge that study will never penetrate or capture a cultural phenomenon to the fullest extent. This is the nature of scholarship. However, for the microhistorian, this is where a study of a single text is critical: the text, in most cases, will set the limits for study. Not only does the text limit the area of study, the text will signal the limit of required contextualisation.

Moreover, the cultural approach should focus on explicating the concept of culture employed by most historians in terms of the text as the focus of study. This means a cultural approach should not simply be limited to symbolic analysis. While all language is symbolic, analysis of symbols in cultural history is restricted to symbols where the speaker creates an image in order to evoke another meaning. Symbolic analysis is only one method in penetrating the different layers of cultural meaning. Microhistory is the process of revealing these different layers: how ideas, beliefs and values are manifested at different periods and how people define themselves in cultural terms. This should not be limited to symbolic analysis. The coherence of a subject (world-view, web-of-meaning) can be assumed if there is a logical relation between ideas and if a similar set of ideas can be demonstrated to be held amongst a group of people. The discussion of ideas is broader than symbolism,
and takes away much of the infinite regression involved in symbolic study. In addition, it is more likely to result in a more accurate cultural analysis. The main purpose of cultural microhistory – understanding people’s ideas, beliefs and values in their own terms – requires an approach on the micro level because discovering logic requires a close study, an observation of detail.

In all cases, the source should determine the approach taken. If there is more evidence of social processes within a text, a social microhistory approach should be adopted. Alternatively, if a text contains primarily cultural information, this would suggest a cultural microhistory. This supports the precedent set by the early practitioners of microhistory, that a beneficial study requires a single text placed in primary focus. In each case, however, there needs to be flexibility: cultural microhistorians should be prepared to investigate the social influences in creating meaning just as social microhistorians should be prepared to probe the interconnectedness of such meaning. Yet the case of Darnton serves as a warning. The cultural cannot simply be assumed to reveal the social; ultimately, the two spheres are different and require different types of evidence.

V - Application of the microhistorical approach to political thought in late nineteenth century Maori society

Microhistory offers an effective mechanism for solving some of the problems of interpreting Maori evidence outlined in the introduction. Reducing the scale of space and time by placing a single historical text at the centre of study – placing individual people’s ideas in a framework and comparing them against each other – illuminates some of the subtleties in Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century. This next section investigates how the microhistorical method outlined above can be applied to the particular example of the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour in 1885.

Microhistory in New Zealand is a more recent development than it is overseas and is limited to only a handful of works. Fairburn, discussed above, has undertaken a form of social-microhistory in the study of a colonial diarist. In another example,

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Bronwyn Dalley studied the ‘narratives and explanations’ put forward by the public following a woman’s mysterious death in 1928, employing the tools of narrative study developed by Robert Darnton and Natalie Zemon Davis.\(^{59}\) Recently, Peter Gibbons has advocated that New Zealand historians in general should follow the lead developed by these two historians.\(^{60}\)

In the area of Maori history, however, there have been no studies that have followed the broad microhistorical approach. Claudia Orange, in an article on the Kohimarama conference in 1860, has been closest to undertaking a microhistory in the area of Maori history.\(^ {61}\) In the article, Orange attempts to explain the ideas put forward by Maori leaders regarding the Treaty of Waitangi and the broader political situation. Orange argues that the zeitgeist from 1840 and beyond can be accessed through the study of a single historical document: specifically the document of speeches from the Kohimarama conference.\(^ {62}\) By placing a single document at the centre of study, Orange argues, historians would be in a better position to make judgements on the period. Yet, as Orange observes, few historians had attempted to understand the political landscape as Maori conceived it.\(^ {63}\) Orange argues that a common Maori perspective can be traced by closely studying the speeches given by the various chiefs at the conference. ‘The Maori viewpoint’, according to Orange, can be studied through what Maori said.

The uniqueness of Orange’s approach resides in the fact that the source material was limited to a single text: the entire topic was framed by this one set of speeches from the conference. In addition, the approach of the article assumes that a close study of the text would reflect new light on the events that surrounded the conference. However, the expressed intentions do not reflect the conclusions reached in the summarising statement. In the course of the article, the analysis of the ‘Maori viewpoint’ changes to an analysis of government retribution and manipulation. For example, Orange argues that ‘one way of charting a course through this territory is to


\(^{62}\) The Kohimarama conference was a meeting of Maori chiefs called by Governor T. Gore Browne to discuss the political situation in the wake of the outbreak of the Taranaki war with the intention of firming up the support for the government.

\(^{63}\) Orange, ‘The Covenant of Kohimarama’, p. 61
look at the crises that have occurred in Maori affairs. At such times there was a tendency for government to make use of the treaty in order to support and justify its policies. This is what occurred at the Kohimarama conference in 1860. Orange does not explain how looking at the internal political processes of the colonial government sheds light on Maori political thought.

There are a handful of other works that have been based on single sources. Ann Parsonson studied a single block of minutes from Native Land Court hearings in order to understand the way Maori shaped their cases in the court. Alex Frame looked at a diary of a tour undertaken by Governor George Grey to uncover the relationship between Grey and his travelling companion, Te Heuheu Iwikau. Helen Hogan similarly studied two separate documents: a travel diary kept by Renata Kawepo in the 1840s and a diary written by one of two Maori who travelled to Austria in the 1850s. However, these studies have generally worked from methodologies that differ from the microhistorical framework and do not strive to emulate Orange’s aim of capturing the zeitgeist in the study of a single document.

As with Orange’s approach, this thesis looks primarily at the political aspect of a document of speeches: the content of the debates contained within the document is, after all, almost wholly political. Yet this is not a way of creating a new kind of microhistory: political thought is an expression of culture, in that it is part of the processes that produce ideas, values and beliefs. However, political thought may not be consciously articulated as part of a particular culture, for actors may in fact believe politics exists outside the realm of culture. Indeed, it is the conflict between the articulated and the unarticulated, the conscious and the unconscious that makes political thought such an interesting place to enter a particular culture. While political thought is not an expression of ‘everyday life’ as conceived by some microhistorians, the type of information contained in the document of speeches limits the study to this sphere of society. In addition, the problems raised by existing interpretations, outlined

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64 Orange, ‘The Covenant of Kohimarama’, p. 61
in the introduction, are expressly linked to the study of political thought, not the study of ‘everyday life.’

In light of the above discussion, the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour strongly suggests that a cultural microhistory approach be taken. The document offers more evidence of ideas, values and beliefs — cultural information — than it does about the manifestation of power between Maori and Ballance, between Maori and other Maori at a particular hui, or the effect of economic conditions. Although Maori discuss the effects of land alienation, this is evidence of a belief, not of the effects themselves. Although the effects can be proven, this would require external evidence. As the discussion below will demonstrate, the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour does not contain enough evidence to establish ‘cultural norms’ and the conditions under which Maori reacted to these norms, or to come to a definitive evaluation of the social structure of Maori society. In other words, the document constitutes evidence for ideas — not actions or social structure: changing the focus would require changing the source. Finally, by taking away the imperative to prove that the Crown was adversely affecting Maori society, and focusing on the semiotic makeup of ideas, a cultural microhistory removes some of the problems that restrict historians of late nineteenth century Maori political thought to a narrow focus.

The methodology used in studying the document of speeches has been to examine each of the speeches closely, identify both specific and general themes, and conflate these themes to reveal several overriding concerns. From this process, a framework of Maori political thought in 1885 has been inferred. Although this may seem like the methodology of any historian studying a text or a set of texts, historians of Maori political thought have tended to argue by example, drawing on selected passages from contemporary sources to illustrate their argument. Few historians who have used this method have discussed how these examples are indicative of a general trend. 69 Failing to discuss criteria by which material is selected has a two-fold effect.

69 The examples of the interpretations made from the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour, outlined in the introduction, are indicative of this trend. A fuller example is required, however. In Inwi: the Dynamics of Maori Tribal Organisation from c.1769 to c.1945, Angela Ballara at one point draws on eight examples which are intended to illustrate the continuity of hapu identity through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Of the eight examples, only three were from Maori sources (the other five were commentaries by Pakeha); the full significance of the differing origins of the sources is not explained. Nor does she explain how the evidence in each quote relates to the others or provide a summary of the subtleties which each passage brings to the topic. Ballara simply notes that while the ceremonies described in the quotes have elements of the ‘non-traditional’, such as Christian festivals,
Firstly, by not incorporating or at least explaining away contrary or complicating evidence, the problem of interpreting Maori evidence is minimised, giving the impression that interpreting Maori political thought is a simple, uncomplicated exercise. Secondly, this approach leads to a skewed picture of the past, overly simplifying political intentions by not including the full gamut of opinions. In taking a restrictive approach, many historians have either ignored or missed the ambivalence that dominates late nineteenth century Maori political thought.

To counter this problem, then, a number of methods have been employed. Firstly, each speech has been studied chronologically for themes, ideas, imagery and symbolism. 70 After several readings, recurrent themes began to emerge. Consequently, upon returning to each speech, the predominant ideas and the underlying assumptions that Maori brought to their speeches could be drawn out. To illustrate how this has been done on the individual level, I will discuss a portion of the final speech made by Rewi Maniapoto – a principal leader of Ngati Maniapoto – at the second hui at Kihikihi:

When Mr. Bryce 71 was here it was arranged to give up the railway-line, and I wrote a letter to Mr. Bryce and asked him to hurry on with the formation of the line, in order that it might be completed within five years, 72 that I might ride on it before I die. I thought that was all settled and that there would be nothing to talk about with regard to that; but I find they are talking about it again. That is all I have got to say about the railway-line; I consider it was settled long ago. Now, it will be well for you to leave the balance of this month for us to consider the matter. It has been previously understood from all parts of the boundary that the thing was settled; now we have objections coming from some parts, and it would be well if we got the balance of this month to settle it, in order that we might discuss these matters that we take great interest in. It is not that we have any doubts in our minds regarding you in the matter but it is amongst ourselves that we

70 The initial steps of this task involved entering key words into a database, building up comparative examples and common trends. This database formed the basis of the outline of chapters.
71 'Mr. Bryce' is John Bryce, Minister of Native Affairs before John Ballance who was crucial to the negotiation of the Main Trunk railway, to which Maniapoto was referring here. In 1883 Maniapoto and Ngati Maniapoto leader Wahanui Huatare had agreed to a survey party to investigate an inland route for the railway. By 1885, the negotiations were reaching their peak. See Chapter 2.
72 Maniapoto had told John Rochfort, a surveyor exploring a direct central route to Te Awamutu, in 1883 to 'Tell Mr Bryce to hasten on the railway. I am an old man now and I should like to ride in the railway before I die.' Presumably Maniapoto also sent a letter indicating this same thought. Richard Seymour Fletcher, Single Track: The Construction of the North Island Main Trunk Railway, (Auckland: Collins, 1978), p.117
want to settle these matters. Some people of these four tribes\textsuperscript{73} who own the land within the boundary are causing trouble. Wahanui has estranged himself by going to the Parliament, to Wellington.\textsuperscript{74} Tawhiao was estranged by going to England.\textsuperscript{75} This is one matter that is causing me some consideration. Tawhiao was away in England, and Wahanui has been absent at Wellington.\textsuperscript{76}

The first point to be identified is the specific political issue which the speaker is addressing: namely, the negotiations for the Main Trunk railway which the government wanted to push through the central North Island. Understanding the context of these negotiations, and Rewi Maniapoto’s position within this, reveals several layers of meaning.\textsuperscript{77} Placing this speech in the context of the hui as a whole, it is clear that Maniapoto agrees with most speakers that the issue should be left to the four iwi (see footnote) for discussion before settlement, but that personally he regarded the matter as settled. Taking a wider perspective still, this speech and others given by Maniapoto during the hui are structured within a historical framework.\textsuperscript{78} History informed his discussion of the government, and the idea that the tribes should be given time to come to a decision. History was also the prime factor in commenting upon the actions of Tawhiao, the Maori King, and Wahanui, leader of Ngati Maniapoto: ‘consideration’ was made in the light of past practices of leadership. The implication from Maniapoto’s speech is that, in being absent, Wahanui and Tawhiao could not provide adequate leadership for their people: consequently, indecision arose regarding whether or not the railway should go ahead. Not only does this reveal something of Maniapoto’s conception of proper leadership – that is, absence does not make for good leadership – it is also reveals something of Maniapoto’s relationship with Tawhiao and Wahanui. Maniapoto’s denunciation of the two illustrates both the

\textsuperscript{73} This was a reference to Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and upper Whanganui – the four iwi who were in consultation with the government over the Main Trunk railway.
\textsuperscript{74} In 1884, Wahanui Huatere – the other principal of Ngati Maniapoto – was granted an audience with the general assembly, in the hope of advancing negotiations over the Main Trunk railway. Wahanui gave a speech on the issues confronted by Ngati Maniapoto. \textit{NZPD}, 1884, vol.50, pp.427, 555-6
\textsuperscript{75} The same year that Wahanui was granted an audience with parliament, Tawhiao, the second Maori King, travelled to England to present a petition to the British parliament, arguing for the New Zealand government’s authority over Maori to be repealed. \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.24
\textsuperscript{77} Maniapoto’s letter to Bryce, and the aphorism regarding the construction of the railway within his lifetime, was an important development in the negotiations for the railway. The aphorism in particular has become well known.
\textsuperscript{78} Maniapoto’s interpretation of history can primarily be seen in his first speech at the hui, where he placed Ballance within the tradition of previous ministers, contemplated the nature of the Pakeha political system and came to a few concluding comments upon the future governance of Maori society. This speech will be discussed more fully in Chapter 4. These ideas are implicit in this later speech. \textit{Document of Speeches}, pp.11-12
problems of interpretation facing historians and the political ambivalence that bound people like Maniapoto into a particular mode of thinking. Maniapoto was essentially agreeing with Wahanui’s support of the railway, and the points he made in parliament, and later went on to be present at Tawhiao’s meeting with Ballance: the problem of ‘estrangement’ that he identified was really a matter of finding a proper role for Maori governance within an increasingly constraining state. The key point in outlining the approach taken to the document of speeches is that recurrent contradictions that may prove difficult for interpretation – such as Maniapoto’s criticism of Tawhiao and Wahanui – have not been ignored or simply assumed to reflect the speaker’s ‘volatile’ nature. In approaching these speeches, the assumption that everything said made sense to the speaker has been employed. Consequently, contradictions have been explored in search of logical progression in meaning, though not in a way that projects meaning upon intentions that are obviously unclear.

The second part of this approach has been to place recurrent themes into a broader framework. The process by which this conflation has occurred has largely been intuitive, although within the criteria of incorporating contradictory evidence. Indeed, most of the problems of interpretation presented by the document of speeches have been included within the overall framework in some form. When an example is used to illustrate a point, it has been chosen as an indicative example from a broad range of examples; the intention has been to summarise the general feeling on a particular matter to penetrate to the underlying thrust of Maori political thought. Not only does this process illustrate regional differences where they occur, it emphasises the very commonality of thought amongst Maori in the late nineteenth century. The aim of this approach, combined, is to apply the principle of “thick description” outlined by Geertz: by putting these descriptions into a framework that elucidates the semiotic nature of political thought, both explicit and implicit, conscious and unconscious.

A key requirement of applying cultural microhistory to this particular document is explaining the environment in which the speeches were delivered: in other words, acknowledging that – as a written transcription of a series of speeches delivered during public hui – the document of speeches is not solely the product of an individual’s thoughts expressed in writing. Consequently, an account is required of the social conditions in which the hui were conducted. However, as with Darnton, explaining social conditions need not lead to a sustained study of social structure.
What is required is to establish the social perimeters of Maori thought, and the ways in which the speeches can be interpreted. Because the recorder transcribed only the content of the speeches and very little peripheral information, these speeches lend themselves more to a study of ideas than to a study of social action; as discussed above, if the text indicated different levels of power held by different people through showing how and why a person was able to speak, the focus of the study might differ. Such a focus has usually been the case when microhistorians have used court records as their primary source. However, because these speeches were given before of a particular audience, including a Pakeha minister of the Crown, it needs to be established in what ways the audience’s presence affected the content of the speeches. For example, speakers may have selected their information or may have modelled their speeches to please certain sectors of those present at the hui. This kind of consideration is important in establishing what weight the speakers placed on the ideas they conveyed in their speeches.

IV - Problems of microhistorical approach applied to the document of speeches

There are three major problems associated with this approach when applied to the particular example of the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour. Firstly, the document was transcribed by a Pakeha civil servant, raising possible problems of observer bias. Secondly, the document was recorded in English only, without a Maori original or translation. The third problem is the issue of generalisation: to what extent can broad themes be inferred from a single document? To return to the first point, a possible problem exists in the fact that the document of speeches did not originate from those who are the subjects of study. Although Maori themselves did not directly generate the document, employing their own scribe to record the hui, it can be classified as a Maori primary source. A close study of the text reveals that any ideology the note-taker may have held does not significantly impinge upon the text: despite the mediation of a Pakeha scribe, Maori political ideas appear relatively unmediated.

79 See Le Roy Ladurie for a classic example.
Fairburn argues that historical records generated by 'dominant' groups can be studied for accurate information regarding 'subordinate' groups, discounting postmodernist claims that 'every historical document written by the dominant elements, irrespective of the conscious intentions of the author, imposes a tendentious meaning on 'reality'."\textsuperscript{80} By outlining what the observer's bias may have been, then tracing the information in the text that goes against that bias, the historian can establish what we can reasonably assume to be accurate. Cornelius Jaenen – looking at the Canadian setting and arguing that obviously biased documents can be used as historical records of indigenous ideas – mirrors Fairburn's argument:

It is true that the early observers of native reactions to contact with Frenchmen had commercial, religious, and military interests in the Amerindians.... Nevertheless, in their records, which were sometimes quite comprehensive, they unwittingly related incidents and conversations which enabled the historian to reconstruct Amerindian reactions motivated by beliefs and objectives which the chroniclers frequently ignored.\textsuperscript{81}

Fairburn also considers texts where the dominant elements simply comment upon subordinate groups:

The material comes in all manner of genres such as comments by employers about individual servants, impressionistic accounts by travellers about the inhabitants of a particular place, reports by parliamentary committees of enquiry, pamphlets on social problems, published official statistics... parish records, the files of official institutions such as the courts and almshouses, to mention but a few. The observations contained in these sources can be classified into the purely qualitative or literary ('impressionistic'), the overtly statistical, and the potentially quantifiable.\textsuperscript{82}

Numerous sets of evidence exist of Pakeha recorded material about Maori similar to those cited above. The amount of 'filtering' required to distil accurate information is greater in these types of evidence. For example, Resident Magistrates' Reports are extremely useful for information on political events and hui, yet the amount of interpretation the magistrates themselves place on these events limits the extent to which the reports can be used. In contrast, a large majority of transcriptions from hui in the nineteenth century can be more accurately classed as Maori primary material.

\textsuperscript{80} Fairburn, Social History, p.179
\textsuperscript{82} Fairburn, Social History, p.178
because they reflect Maori views in a similar way as Maori letters or petitions, than a Resident Magistrate’s reports.

The document of speeches from 1885, in particular, is a more accurate piece of Maori evidence, essentially free of the bias that marks ‘dominant’ observations of the ‘subordinate’. There were two purposes behind having a short-hand note taker accompany Ballance on the tour. Firstly, recording Ballance’s speeches had a political purpose. By having an exact record of the words used by the Native Minister, politicians – especially Ballance – were able to refer to his discussion of the proposed legislation regarding the administration of Maori land during the tour, what became the Native Land Administration Act, in parliament.83 As this was an important event in New Zealand political history, Ballance wanted to be able to point to what he had done and what he had said, not only with Pakeha but with Maori as well. Secondly, the document had a bureaucratic purpose. By recording the speeches of Maori, the Department of Native Affairs was able to create an inventory of requests and suggestions by Maori.84

At the second Kihikihi hui, Ballance described the mechanics of recording the speeches and his view of the purpose of the record: ‘With regard to what I have said to-day, it is being taken down here word by word in shorthand, and will be published.’85 The short hand note taker was T.W. Lewis. As under-secretary of the Native Department (and soon to be employed as head of the land purchase department), Lewis’ status reflects the importance attached to the job. Because Lewis was a ‘short-hand’ note taker, and because the document does not appear in short-hand form, a fuller account of the speeches was probably written from these notes after returning to Wellington. It is not clear whether Lewis was interpreting directly from his own ear, or whether he was taking notes from the interpreter, G.T. Wilkinson. However, Lewis was a very capable linguist of the Maori language who

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83 Ballance referred to the tour in the debate on the bill in June 1885. John Ormond quoted from Ballance’s speech at Kihikihi directly. _NZPD_, 1885, vol.52, pp.390-1, 398
84 The existence of a ‘Travelling Letter Book’ in the archives of the Department of Maori Affairs is evidence of the bureaucratic importance behind recording Maori speeches during the tour. The letter book exists separately from the document of speeches but contains almost the same information. The book contains numerous dispatches, each of which is a request made at one of the hui. These dispatches were entered individually into the Inwards Letter Book of the Native Affairs Department, indicating the bureaucratic purpose of the record. MA 30/3, February 1885, Travelling letter book, trip to the King Country
had the ability to cope with a great deal of Maori material in his daily functions as under-secretary of the Native Affairs Department.  

There is very little evidence to suggest that Lewis brought any personal prejudices to the way he recorded the speeches. He was not present as anthropologist, and his role as note taker was an explicit part of the bureaucratic functioning of the Department of Native Affairs. Indeed, Lewis’s record, which included very little information external to the speeches themselves, compares favourably to other accounts of hui from the nineteenth century recorded by Pakeha. For example, the record of the 1882 Kingitanga hui at Whatiwhatihoe, taken by R.S. Bush, while comparatively overflowing with visual detail of the way speeches were delivered, is heavy in interpretation. In addition, unlike some government owned Maori newspapers, Lewis’s record was not altered to accommodate space or readership. Therefore, because the speeches did not go through the process of mediation that Fairburn and Jaenen describe, a process of ‘filtering’ is not required.

In addition, the document appears to be a relatively full account of the hui. The only hui where the speeches were not completely recorded was at Parawai. The text records that on the first day, local Maori welcomed Ballance by ‘singing a waiata, and with the usual speeches.’ The other place in the text where this occurs at the beginning of the record for the Hiruharama hui, where the speeches are recorded following ‘the usual welcome.’ These two examples appear to be the only occasions when an abbreviation of any significance took place. Although some of the speeches were recorded in the third person, key ideas and imagery were retained in the record. The document of speeches from Ballance’s tour does not include much information external to the speeches, and is consequently not as complete a record as could be desired. Where there are notes on actions – a gesture, an aside, a note on a person’s identity – they relate specifically to the content of the speech. Such information fills out our knowledge of the conduct of the hui, how the social environment influences the conduct of the speakers.

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86 See Chapter 2 for further biographical notes on Lewis and Wilkinson.
87 Tawhiao’s meeting at Whatiwhatihoe in May, 1882, AJHR, 1882, G-4A
88 For example, Te Waka Maori did not publish the full account of a hui in 1876: the reason given was that the speeches would not be of interest to the majority of European readers. Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani, 1876, vol.12, p.113
89 Document of Speeches, p.30
90 Document of Speeches, p.9
91 The basis of this comparison is an examination of a handful of records from Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani, 1876, vol.12, and a broad survey of accounts in the AJHRs 1870-1900.
The second problem in using this document as the basis for an in-depth study is the lack of an original Maori text, or a Maori re-translation from the English notes. Although Maori is effectively absent from the text – apart from one occasion when Taonui Hikaka is recorded saying "'Ehoa, tena koe; Ehoa, tena koe'" [Friend, greetings; Friend, greetings] and a handful of italicised terms – the number of Maori idioms and images suggests that the translation is reliable. For example, familial imagery of unity appears throughout the text, a common form of Maori expression in the nineteenth century influenced partly by missionary teaching but also emergent from the kin-based nature of Maori society. Examples in the document reflect all varieties of familial imagery. Translators generally rendered such imagery into stock phrases which, when recorded in the English language, differed from normal English idioms.

A comparison between accounts of different hui in the late nineteenth century suggests that not only were speeches generally consistently translated, but that Maori were consistent in their use of imagery. For example, the form of welcome used by Ngati Whakaue at the Ohinemutu hui is similar in form and expression with a welcome given by Hone Mohi Tawhai to the Governor’s party in 1876. Whititera Te Waiatua, on behalf of Ngati Whakaue, addressed Ballance in these words:

'This is a welcome to the Native Minister from the Ngatiwhakaue Tribe. Friend, Mr. Ballance, salutations. Welcome To Rotorua; welcome to the land which has been left to us by our ancestors.'

In contrast, Hone Mohi Tawhai’s greeting to the Governor was:

'Welcome, Governor! Welcome, Sir Donald McLean! Welcome, Hori Tupae! This place was the dwelling of our ancestors. (Haere mai te Kawana! Haere mai Ta Tanara Makarini! Haere mai Hori Tupae! Ko te wahi tenei i noho ai o tatou tupuna.)'

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92 Ballance indicated that his speeches would be translated into Maori during the tour and would be circulated amongst Maori communities, after a request from Wi Pewhairangi at the Whakato hui. However, if such a translation was made (which often was not the case), a copy has not been obtained. Document of Speeches, p.73
93 Document of Speeches, p.16
94 Head, pp.110-112
95 Tamehana Te Ngarara’s welcome to Ballance reflects the mission influenced language: ‘Welcome my friend! Welcome! The father of the Native people. You are like a saviour of the Maori people... You have come to show affection to your Maori children.’ Hopa Te Ranginini, alternatively, referred to Ballance as his younger brother: ‘Welcome to you, my younger brother.’ Document of Speeches, pp.51, 12
96 Document of Speeches, p.41
97 ‘The Governor’s Visit to the North’, Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani, 1876, vol.12, p.134
This aspect of formal speech (whaikorero) will be explored further in Chapter 3. For now, it is enough to see that in each example the orators who welcomed the visiting party did so within a set structure, the latter example corresponding to its Maori translation. It can also be observed that the speaker’s intention in referring to ‘our ancestors’ is different in each speech: the former is a statement of rights to land, the latter – spoken by Tawhai at Waitangi – referred to the signing of the Treaty. The context of the first quote shows that ‘o matou tupuna’ (‘our ancestors’ exclusive) would have been used, explicitly identifying the ‘ancestors’ as belonging to the tangata whenua. In the second quote, the reference to ‘our ancestors’ is explained with the knowledge that Tawhai, in talking to the Governor at Waitangi, was referring to their respective ancestors, Ngapuhi and Governor Hobson, and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. This interpretation is confirmed in consultation with the Maori text, ‘o tatou tupuna’ (‘our ancestors’ inclusive). While such nuances cannot be definitively confirmed without an original Maori text, these examples demonstrate that they can be reasonably ascertained in the English translation: it is primarily the context that imbues each sentence, each idea, with meaning.

Occasionally the speeches have not been translated into idiomatic English. For example, one speaker is recorded discussing unity as ‘the making of one’: an odd and jarring phrase when compared to the rest of the speech. It can be assumed that the word in Maori was ‘whakakotahitanga’ – more accurately translated as the act of unifying in purpose – as opposed to ‘kotahitanga’, because ‘unity’ is a term recorded in speeches throughout the document. Although this is a problem for a historian, similar examples are relatively rare in the document. In addition, the idea implied in ‘the making of one’ is clear enough – especially in the context of the speech as a whole – to enable us to speculate safely as to the possible Maori term used and the meaning intended by the speaker.

In a broader setting, the perception of translated texts as legitimate historical sources appears to be shifting away from a postmodern sensibility towards the notion that culturally specific ideas can be accurately translated across languages. A recent study by Douglas Howland cites two historians of translation, who argue that, ‘we understand concepts best through acts of comparison – not the comparison of

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98 Te Rangihiroa, Document of Speeches, p.11
originals and translations, but the comparison of sets of concepts as they are used." Howland adds that the key scholarly intervention is to understand how ideas – and the words that contain them – have been used.\footnote{Howland, p.58}

Howland’s point can be reiterated in the New Zealand setting. Robert Mahuta’s thesis on Maori oratory, *Whaikoorero: A Study of Formal Maori Speech*, provides the sketch of a methodology for interpreting Maori thought through translation. Mahuta quotes a speech by Matene Te Whiwhi from 1856, translated from Maori into English. From the English, Mahuta explains the imagery that the speaker invokes. In one instance, Mahuta addresses the issue directly in discussing a letter written by King Mahuta to Sir James Carroll: ‘The letter, translated by James Cowan, seems to have lost little, if any, of the spirit of the original and is an excellent sample of Maori eloquence and attitudes towards death.’\footnote{Robert Mahuta, *Whaikoorero: A Study of Formal Maori Speech*, (University of Waikato: M.A., 1974), p.32} The key aspect in Mahuta’s framework is a knowledge of context and the intent that the speaker is attempting to convey. Mahuta elaborates, saying that even though ‘much of the thinking expressed in whaikoorero is symbolic and allusive, and sometimes when the beliefs or attitudes embodied in the speeches are translated into English, they may seem irrational, self-contradictory, or nonsensical’, there is always an essential theme to formal speeches that can be understood through comparison and explanation.\footnote{Mahuta, p.127} In addition, while Mahuta sets out a methodology for understanding formal speech, most of the speeches recorded in the document under consideration are informal discussions relating to specific political issues. The informal speeches are not as elliptical or allusive as formal speech: therefore, there are few occasions in the document that appear ‘irrational, self-contradictory, or nonsensical’. Finally, because Mahuta – and many other New Zealand historians – have discussed Maori speeches and letters in English, this suggests that most ideas can be conveyed adequately across the two languages.

In light of these considerations, it is reasonably safe to assume that the transcription of the hui closely reflects the ideas as they were expressed in Maori. Although if there were a Maori text there would be greater confidence that the English translation captured all of the nuances of the original, this does not mean that English language documents should be excluded from academic study. Indeed, to reiterate,
that there is a historical document of this magnitude at all is remarkable. The examples given above also suggest that there is a consistency between documents written in Maori by Maori and records of hui transcribed by bilingual government officials like Lewis. In other words, a certain amount of confidence can be assumed that documents such as that from Ballance's tour are relatively reliable, even without an original Maori language text. On this basis, it may be argued that the use of this document as the central source of a microhistorical study of Maori political thought is justifiable. Moreover, the way the text was recorded means that it can be classified as a Maori primary source as opposed to a report that was mediated by a Pakeha commentator.

This discussion leads on to the third and final problem in applying a microhistorical approach to this particular text: to what extent can generalisations be made from the document of speeches and in what ways? One problem arising from the microhistorical approach is to what extent an analysis of the particular requires an understanding of the general. A difficulty lies in establishing what ideas were general across Maori communities, and what ideas were specific to a region or a community. Where microhistory has expanded upon a more traditional approach is the extent to which statements can be made on fragmentary evidence. But as is the case across all aspects of the discipline of history, historians are limited to the extent an interpretation can be explored by the documentary evidence.

The particular advantage of the document of speeches from Ballance's tour is that it includes a wide variety of Maori political groupings, which together constitute a broad sample of Maori society in the late nineteenth century. A close study of such a document requires the historian to incorporate and explain groups which may otherwise be omitted in a conventional study: the text itself selects the areas and individuals that form the basis of study. However, Ballance's tour took place at a particular point in the late nineteenth century when Maori were attempting to develop a political role within the state. Ignoring the historical context in which Ballance's tour took place has the potential to over-inflate the importance of the tour. In order to demonstrate that the document of speeches is a reliable reflection of broader Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century, the pattern of such thought needs to be substantially signposted.

A recent discussion by Sigurdur Magnusson has explored the link between the micro and the macro, concluding with the idea that the source, not the "metanarrative"
(what he refers to as the 'big structures, large processes and huge comparisons' of history and historical writing), should determine the framework of study. Magnusson argues that microhistorians should contribute what he calls 'singularisations': singular studies particular to that study’s interests. In this method, the source should determine the framework by avoiding the a priori assumptions of broader arguments. Magnusson’s case is compelling, though slightly overstated. First, he gives contradictory statements about the inclusion of metanarratives. Second, he gives few clues on how historians should differentiate a ‘metanarrative’ from legitimate historical scholarship relevant to the particular study. The key point is that, while in a microhistory the source should determine the focus, context is crucial.

Microhistorians should first and foremost be aligned with their area of concern and aim to illuminate their particular field of inquiry. It is correct that there can be no microhistorical metanarrative, except in a methodological sense. Such a metanarrative would almost inevitably be disparate beyond utility. Instead, microhistorians should aim to illuminate some aspect of the field they are working in. It is naïve to believe that microhistorians could separate themselves entirely from the existing historical literature; indeed, the aim of microhistory is to contribute something back to that literature. While the focus of each individual study should be ‘in the terms and according to the subject matter itself’, often the significance of the subject matter can be identified in consultation with current interpretations – in this case the ‘autonomy thesis’ – and by placing the particular event within the context of its past.

In the following chapter the focus therefore shifts to the historical context in which Ballance’s tour arose, drawing upon continuities that are evident in secondary sources and in other primary documents. Without this historical context, there would be no insights to be found in a text. One example, one event, would be disembodied in

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103 Magnusson states this position explicitly: ‘The idea is that the focus will always be fixed on the matter in hand and on that alone.’ Magnusson, p.720
104 Indeed, Magnusson’s framework mirrors that outlined above: ‘The singularization of history in this sense provides the researcher with a means of bringing out the oppositions that exist between the different “discourses” of individual groups, and this is a precondition to our being able to approach ideas and points of view that in the general run do not come to the fore. In addition, this ideology brings into prominence the contradictions and inconsistencies in the mind of each and every individual and heightens the oppositions that move within each living person. To allow the contradictions and paradoxes freedom of expression, the emphasis must always be kept on squarely the subject matter itself and on nothing else.’ Magnusson, p.721
105 In one instance he argues that ‘the linkage between units of research and metanarratives are not only undesirable but downright dangerous, since the latter tend to monopolize the scholar’s attention; on another he provides criteria under which they can be connected: ‘Metanarratives [should] be examined in the terms of and according to the conditions of the subject matter itself rather than from some preconceived perspective.’ Magnusson, p.720
historical time. Not only are historians less likely to make unsubstantiated claims if they can demonstrate the place of their particular topic in a broader context, but their analysis needs to be geared towards answering the questions which the historiography of late nineteenth century Maori society has not yet answered.
CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND NARRATIVE OF THE TOUR

The conditions that made a tour such as Ballance’s possible in Maori society and Pakeha politics can be found in several specific issues current to 1885 and in a broader political context that developed in the wake of the New Zealand wars. The immediate origins of the tour were dual. From Ballance’s perspective, negotiations over the North Island Main Trunk railway needed to be advanced with Maori in the King Country. On a broader level, Ballance wanted to push his proposed legislation on the administration of Maori land – what later became the Native Land Administration Act 1886. By using these issues as the basis of a tour, Ballance followed a precedent set by former politicians such as Grey and McLean, to conduct negotiations with Maori in their communities. Maori leaders, for their part, wanted to engage with the government face-to-face, a political practice that had been increasingly denied to them following the New Zealand wars. The particular interest that motivated their desire for a hui with Ballance in 1885 was the increasing alienation of land and a growing interest in new political initiatives, such as the Native District Committees which had been provided for in recent legislation. Consequently, there was a strong desire among Maori leaders to obtain a visit by a government minister, particularly the minister of Native Affairs. In short, Ballance wanted to visit Maori communities; they wanted to have him.

This chapter will outline the historical context out of which Ballance’s tour came about, following the tour as it unfolded in 1885 to investigate the particular context of each area. Because the issues defining the tour have roots in past events, it is necessary to go outside the document that is the focus of this thesis: in particular, secondary sources and other primary documents. By providing this background, including profiles of Maori leaders who played a major role during the meetings, this
chapter sets up a broad picture from which to begin a fine-grained analysis of the speeches in following chapters.

I - The dual origins of the tour

Ballance’s tour took in what could be roughly called seven districts across the central North Island. In order of the tour, these were Whanganui, the Rohe Potae, the Kingitanga, Hauraki, Rotorua, Tauranga and the East Coast. This is probably the simplest abbreviation for a series of hui that varied significantly in their social and political staging.

The twelve hui at which Ballance met with Maori can be attributed to one of these seven districts: several of the hui were held within one district. These were the three hui on the Whanganui River – Ranana, Pipiriki and Hiruharama – and the three hui at Rotorua – Ohinemutu, Mokoia and Whakarewarewa. However, because each hui differed markedly in organisation and constitution, further explanation is required. Most of these district areas are roughly synonymous with a tribal grouping, usually iwi, or a cluster of tribes. The hui also differed in their constitution: some were hosted by a single iwi; while a number of iwi combined at others. Ohinemutu (Ngati Whakaue), Whakarewarewa (Tuhourangi) and Tauranga (Ngai Te Rangi)\(^1\) are examples of the former. The Rohe Potae (Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa and upper Whanganui iwi), Hauraki (Ngati Maru, Ngati Paoa, Ngati Whanaunga and Ngati Tamatera) and the East Coast (Ngati Porou, Te Aitanga a Mahaki, Rongowhakaata and Ngati Kahungunu) are examples of the latter.

There were two other hui which were quite different from the rest. The first exception was the hui at Whatiwhatihoe: the residence of King Tawhiao. This hui was not so much based on tribal interests as on the interests of the Kingitanga. However, because the Kingitanga had its own power base in Maori society in the region, the Whatiwhatihoe hui has been classified as a separate ‘district’. The second exception was the meeting between Te Kooti and Ballance at Kihikihi. Living in exile on land granted by the government, Te Kooti and probably the majority of his followers were from Rongowhakaata and other East Coast iwi. However, unlike Tawhiao, Te Kooti

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\(^1\) Speakers at this hui only referred to Ngai Te Rangi. Ngati Ranginui and Ngati Pukeko were not mentioned. This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 5.
did not have a significant standing in the region: his authority lay in his status as a prophet, and his followers were primarily in the Bay of Plenty and the Urewera. Consequently, Te Kooti’s meeting with Ballance has not been designated as a separate ‘district.’ These issues will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter.

The only direct evidence that the tour was in part the result of Maori initiatives is the record of invitations from two of the districts. The first invitation – which was received by the Native Department in early November 1884 – requested Ballance to ‘attend a meeting of the Tribes at Ranana’. Whanganui leader Keepa Te Rangihiwinui, who issued the invitation, asked for the hui to be held on 25 December 1884. The Native Department, it seems, agreed to the meeting but asked for a delay of two weeks. Te Rangihiwinui responded, saying that he had postponed the meeting to 9 January 1885. The second invitation came from the East Coast. The Native Department received a cable from Hirini Te Kani and others in late December 1884, inviting the Native Minister to attend a meeting at Whakato on 24 July 1885. Neither invitation gives any reasons as to the purpose of the proposed meeting. Nor is there any indication why the meeting was to be held on such a specific date. However, while the direct evidence is slight, a discussion of the political context in which the tour occurred helps to explain the intent behind the invitations.

II – The context of Ballance’s tour: Maori perspectives

The general context in which Maori sought Ballance’s visit to their communities can be seen in the various processes of peace-making following the New Zealand wars, processes that emphasised unity and face-to-face negotiation. One of the most important reasons for obtaining a visit from the Native Minister was the desire to literally see and directly negotiate with the politician responsible. For example, the type of political negotiation Maori in the King Country sought in negotiations over

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\text{A number of reports from the mid 1880s onwards describe the widespread following of Te Kooti’s prayer in these areas. See for example, ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1889, G-3, no.5, pp.5-9}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{3}}\text{Keepa Te Rangihiwinui to Ballance, 8 November 1884, no.84/3594, MA: Letter Book – Inwards Register}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{4}}\text{Keepa Te Rangihiwinui to Ballance, 13 December 1884, no.84/3651, MA: Letter Book – Inwards Register}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{5}}\text{Hirini Te Kani and others to Ballance, 26 December 1884, no.84/3777, MA: Letter Book – Inwards Register}\]
the Main Trunk railway or to debate alternatives to the Native Land Court can be traced to this post-war context. Yet, in this same process of peace-making can be seen the political ambivalence that came to dominate Maori political thinking post-war; a type of ambivalence in which Maori were at once critical of the government and yet sought the presence of government ministers.

The New Zealand wars created a variety of new factions in Maori society: communities in Waikato split over the decision to go to war from the early 1860s; the East Coast descended into near civil war where divisions occasionally went down to the family level; adherents to the Pai Marire faith nearly separated to become an autonomous tribal grouping.\(^6\) However, following the wars, Maori expended much political will attempting to overcome the effects of fighting and forge new political bonds. Although the government was a ministerial presence in these negotiations, the process of establishing these new political bonds occurred separately from the process of negotiations with the government. This suggests that Maori saw a political imperative in putting aside differences and overriding the effects of the previous fighting. In Maori society, the process of making peace required groups to meet each other face-to-face (kanohi ki kanohi). Peace could not be simply stated; it had to be tangibly made. By the act of ‘coming in’, one community visiting the settlements of another community, previous hostilities could be acknowledged and, in principle, put aside.\(^7\)

A brief reading of reports from hui among Maori suggests that most of the major events in Maori society during the late 1860s and early 1870s were events of peace making. In 1872, a hui was held at Mataaahu between those who had fought for the government, led by Ropata Wahawaha, and those who had fought against.\(^8\) The same year a series of meetings was held at settlements along the Whanganui river, the culmination of which was a hui at Putiki. ‘The object of the meeting’, according to a

\(^6\) See Ward, \textit{A Show of Justice}, pp.168-169

\(^7\) In her latest study, Angela Ballara describes the multi-faceted processes of peace-making in Maori society in the early nineteenth century. As she explains, ‘There were many aspects to peace-making and many degrees of finality achieved, but some formal, public arrangement of peace was an essential element to ending the conflict.’ Ballara’s study, unfortunately, does not extend to cover the processes of peace-making following the New Zealand wars. This area will require further study. Angela Ballara, \textit{Taua: ‘Musket Wars’, ‘Land Wars’ or Tikanga? Warfare in Maori Society in the Early Nineteenth Century}, (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2003), p.153

\(^8\) ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1872, F-3, no.8, p.11
report, ‘was the confirmation of peace and unity.’ By 1872 King Tawhiao began ‘mixing freely and friendly with kupa.’ In 1875, Tawhiao travelled to Motakotako (Raglan) to re-establish relationships with Ngati Hikairo. At this meeting, Maori were recorded talking about ‘whakakotahitanga’, the act of forging unity. This was unity to fix bonds injured by war: as one speaker said, ‘We are Waikato; where is there another?’

Reports in the AJHRs suggest that such hui continued into the 1880s. In 1883, Tawhiao toured the North Island, visiting several centres with the intention of making peace. At Maketu, the first meeting, held between Ngati Pikiao and Waikato, was reported to be one of ‘peacemaking’. In early 1885, Titokowaru began a walking tour (hikoi), going from village to village in Taranaki. A Native Officer, W. Rennell, accurately summarised what had been occurring for a number of years:

One of the reasons given for these visitings, as I heard from a very intelligent Native chief, is to finally put an end to all bad feelings which may have arisen among the Natives during the former wars, they saying that peace has been firmly established between Europeans and Natives, but it cannot be equally binding amongst Natives themselves until these meetings have taken place, where old enemies meet together in a friendly manner, face to face, and old resentments are banished.

Peace-making probably had the effect of emphasising an accepted tenet of Maori society: that war was not an acceptable means of conducting society. Furthermore, establishing peace on a face-to-face basis was a way of reinforcing the interconnectedness of Maori society. Even though establishing peace was not the equivalent of unity, by creating an environment in which a troubled past had at least been acknowledged, it set the foundations for any future unified movement.

One example, however, demonstrates the difficulty of establishing peace within Maori society, and the intangible presence of the government within such discussions. In 1875, the Ngati Maniapoto leader Rewi Maniapoto travelled to the

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9 'Reports from officers in Native Districts', AJHR, 1872, F-3A, no.1, p.1; See also Orange, The Treaty of Waitangi, p.190
10 McCann, p.71
11 This was Renata Wharepuni. Tawhiao, who followed, spoke similarly: ‘where should Waikato go but to Waikato?’ ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1875, G-1, no.1, pp.1-3
12 ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1883, G-1, no.6
14 'Reports from officers in Native Districts', AJHR, 1885, G-2, no.15, p.20
Bay of Plenty to negotiate peace on behalf of Ngati Maniapoto with Maori of the region. At Maketu, Ngati Pikiao chief Te Pokiha Taranui – who had fought with the government – spoke to this purpose: ‘I shall now go with my tribe to Waikato, seeing that we have made peace.’ Reconciliation, then, was made in the act of meeting. This part of the process is relatively transparent. However, Maniapoto’s reply to Te Pokiha highlights the problem of explaining Maori intentions: ‘Do not go now, there is a day not far distant when all the people will see Waikato.’\(^{15}\) Why did Maniapoto and Te Pokiha debate the significance of Waikato? What was its importance in establishing peace? A speculative answer would be that Maori continued to see that in Waikato lay the central reason behind the wars. Therefore, going to Waikato was the culmination of reconciling past differences. However, Maniapoto’s response suggests that he believed peace had to be achieved elsewhere first.

Claudia Orange – who describes peace-making among Maori as part of the increasing movement in the 1870s to form runanga as bodies of tribal governance – argues that there were two purposes behind these meetings: to reaffirm tribal associations after the turmoil of the 1860s and to establish hapu and tribal relationships with the government.\(^ {16}\) Indeed, both aspects can be seen in accounts of hui from the 1870s. However, as the above example suggests, it is in establishing what exactly Maori meant by their relationship with the government that the situation becomes difficult to interpret. Despite the fact that the government had been the primary aggressors and that in many areas land confiscation had embittered Maori, tribal leaders saw the need for establishing peace with the government. Such peace was required for the future prosperity of Maori society. In the late 1860s, the same Kingitanga meetings that established the aukati, the boundary of the Rohe Potae, also called on Pai Marire believers throughout the island to cease fighting.\(^ {17}\) A further example can be seen in the account from a hui held at Maungatautari in 1873.\(^ {18}\) Although this was a pan-tribal hui, the discussions centred around the Kingitanga and the need for a resolution with the government. Speakers from Te Arawa said that Tawhiao and the government should come to a proper understanding. Tawhiao’s advisor, Te Ngakau, countered, saying Te Arawa had caused the trouble by ‘opening

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\(^{15}\) ‘The Hon. Native Minister’s Meeting with Tawhiao; and Rewi Maniapoto’s visit to Bay of Plenty’, AJHR, 1875, G4, no.22, pp.13-16

\(^{16}\) Orange, The Treaty of Waitangi, p.190

\(^{17}\) Ward, A Show of Justice, p.201

\(^{18}\) ‘Further reports from officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1873, G-1, no.5 and 6, pp.5-11
the twelve gates on the East Coast'. 19 Rewi Maniapoto, Tawhiao's ally during the wars, replied to Te Ngakau by saying any fault was squarely with him and Ngati Maniapoto: 'If an evil has been committed, I am the person who caused it. I brought the war into Waikato, and I alone am to blame for that'. Wahanui, the emerging leader of Ngati Maniapoto, struck a different key. How could Tawhiao and the government work closely together, Wahanui said, if both had been shedders of blood? There needed to be a third party, but who was to make peace between them? Wahanui was again reflecting the belief that a process of peace-making was needed and that any resolution of tensions among Maori necessarily involved peace with the government. Although there were a number of different opinions at the hui, there appears to be a collective acknowledgment that a settlement was necessary if Maori were to survive politically into the future. The government had to be negotiated with, not ignored. The ultimate implication was that without a sufficient resolution with the government, there could not be effective peace between Maori.

The negotiation of peace undertaken between Maori in a number of areas and the government in the immediate years following the wars accentuates the complexity of this picture. While the government’s intention in this process is relatively transparent – to further establish the instruments of local and central government, to begin the process of Native Land Court hearings and to push through a variety of public works – the intentions of Maori are not. All those who had fought against the government began the process of negotiation to varying degrees following the wars, although in the case of the Kingitanga the negotiations took a number of years. As Ward explains, 'adamant non-cooperation' was difficult for those in the Kingitanga to sustain against the 'attractions of engagement with the Pakeha economic order.' 20 For others, 'the cessation of fighting was accompanied by an upsurge of determination to come to grips with the now apparently unshakable Pakeha world and to succeed in it.' 21 Most, like Ngati Maniapoto – who did not want to live in isolation but wanted to protect their remaining land – acted out of a kind of pragmatism, responding to the reality of a situation where they did not have the power to set the terms of negotiation. Yet Maori intentions behind attempts at peace-making with the government were not only the result of powerlessness. There is a suggestion that the place of the

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19 This was a reference to Te Arawa’s role during the New Zealand wars, possibly in allusion to the twelve gates of heaven in Revelations (Revelations 21:12).
20 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.235
21 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.264
government in Maori society evoked a fundamental ambivalence. Maori at once desired the theoretical benefits of central governance, yet were critical of the actual results that such governance created.

However, an overwhelmingly negative impression of the colonial government developed subsequent to the wars which encompassed most of Maori society. This negative impression formed primarily as a result of the increasing alienation of land. Maori increasingly believed that being a Maori citizen meant being a second-class citizen: a situation created and reinforced by successive governments. The ultimate expression of this was through the processes of the Native Land Court, established in 1865, which denied Maori any formal role in determining title. By 1868, as Ward argues, "the main lines of governmental policy and the framework of institutions which were to dominate Maori administration and affect race relations for the next hundred years had been laid down by settler politicians." At the same time, the government rejected any system whereby Maori would have a significant role in government. The establishment of only four seats in parliament in 1867, below the theoretical level per population of around twenty, gave Maori men a stake in parliamentary democracy, but brought home the essential powerlessness of Maori society within the colonial framework. Protest movements, such as the Repudiation movement (a Ngati Kahungunu-based movement committed to rejecting fraudulent land sales made in the Hawke's Bay region), had intermittent success. In 1879 the Ngati Whatua leader Paora Tuhaere convened the first of several Maori parliaments at Orakei, which sought greater Maori control over land. Attempts by Maori to engage with the government on an equal level, however, were consistently scuttled by the government.

One such example was the desire to establish a system of Maori committees across numerous tribal districts to act as a tribunal on issues relating to land, particularly to determine title and adjudicate upon disputes. The negative influence of the Native Land Court on Maori society, and the lack of a formal role in the process, meant that the idea of committees took hold. This movement was one firmly based in

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22 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.217
23 Ward lists the denial of Wiremu Tamihana’s request for recognition of the Kingitanga, the defeat of Fitzgerald’s Native Provinces Bill of 1865, the disestablishment of the Runanga system, and the rejection of any Maori tribunal system to determine land titles. Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.217-8
24 Cox, p.61
25 Orange, The Treaty of Waitangi, pp.190-1; Cox, pp.63-65
26 Orange, The Treaty of Waitangi, pp.191-196; O'Malley, pp.133-4; Ward, A Show of Justice, p.272
Maori society. Through the 1870s, tribal runanga, without the official status in law that Maori wanted, broke up and reformed in an attempt to stem the tide of alienation and the influence of the Native Land Court. The idea for a system of ‘councils’, wherein local councils under a Maori president could pass and enforce various by-laws and could investigate and determine disputed land boundaries, had been put forward by Donald McLean in his Native Council’s Bill 1872. However, the bill was withdrawn under strenuous opposition from Pakeha members of parliament, saying that the legislation gave Maori too much authority. A series of bills introduced by Maori members of parliament in the early 1880s culminated in Henare Tomoana’s Native Committees Empowering Bill 1882, which passed its first two readings in the House of Representatives. However, Native Minister John Bryce’s opposition to the legislation left it in limbo. Needing to offer an alternative, Bryce proposed his own version in 1883. The Native Committees Act 1883, gave Maori few powers, removing from Tomoana’s bill the section which meant the Native Land Court would be judicially bound to follow the decisions of Maori committees. In addition, when Bryce brought the system into practice, he instituted twelve broad districts, outside geographic practicalities and the existing state of Maori tribal governance. Therefore, although some Maori groups established committees with enthusiasm, such enthusiasm was mixed with criticisms over what was an obviously ineffectual system.

The events of the 1860s and 1870s culminated in a situation where Maori could not effectively engage with the state. However, most remained hopeful and greeted opportunities to meet with relevant politicians with enthusiasm. For example, the desire to see and negotiate with a minister of the government was a specific reason for Maori leaders in the King Country and the Whanganui district to seek Ballance’s presence to discuss the Main Trunk railway. Ngati Maniapoto’s boundary, the Rohe Potae, formed in opposition to the wars and large scale confiscations, had prevented the construction of a railway through the centre of the North Island. Consequently, initial efforts on the part of the government to survey prospective routes were met

28 The bill provided for councils to be elected in districts where Maori were the main residents. Any applications to the Native Land Court would have to go past the council, whose decisions the court was bound to follow. The Resident Magistrate would act as a conduit to the council, passing by-laws on local issues such as drunkenness and sanitation. Ward, *A Show of Justice*, pp.247-8; O’Malley, p.53
29 O’Malley, pp.137-55
30 O’Malley, pp.165-8
with opposition. In 1883, along with the opening of Ngati Maniapoto lands to the Native Land Court, Ngati Maniapoto leaders tentatively agreed to the construction of an interior route. However, initial construction occurred without a final agreement between the government and the four iwi whose land the railway would cover, Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and Whanganui. Taonui Hikaka, the Ngati Maniapoto leader, wrote to the government just a few months prior to the tour, conveying his feelings of dismay that no government official had come to discuss an issue as important as the Main Trunk railway with his people:

Friend we are at a loss to know what wrong we and our people have done that you should have ignored us when you commenced Government Works in our localities, that is that you should have commenced the construction of the railway before coming to see us, the owners of the land, and discussing the matter fully with us in accordance with the promise made by Mr. Bryce to Wahanui at Whatiwhaioho when he asked Wahanui to allow the preliminary survey of the line to be made.\(^{31}\)

The belief was that by directly negotiating with the government in the person of a minister, the issue could be dealt with most effectively. This same belief motivated Whanganui leader Keepa Te Rangihiwini, in 1883, to issue a request for a meeting between then Native Minister John Bryce and the people of Whanganui, to discuss the issue of the railway.\(^{32}\) Te Rangihiwini’s disagreement with Bryce over a government survey in the Murimotu region meant that this meeting did not come about. However, when Ballance came to power, there was renewed hope among Whanganui Maori leaders that effective, face-to-face negotiations with the new minister may come about. When Maori issued their invitations to Ballance – and perhaps there were no more than two – it was enough to lay the foundations of a tour. The more underlying point of these two examples can be projected onto the broader population of Maori leaders: Maori, in general, sought the presence of the Native Minister to carry out face-to-face negotiations. Yet, as was indicative of the political situation, the decision as to whether such a tour would go ahead lay emphatically in the hands of Ballance and the desire of the new government to conduct politics with Maori on the local level.

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\(^{31}\) Taonui Hikaka to Ballance, 3 December 1884, no.84/3668, MA 13/43a King Country

\(^{32}\) J.W. Buller to Native Department, 15 September 1883, no.83/2921, MA 13/43a King Country
IV – Ballance’s reasons for the tour

A search through contemporary newspapers, parliamentary debates and government archives reveals that Ballance made no definitive statement before, during or after the tour, explaining why he was visiting Maori communities in the central North Island. However, two major issues – the need to negotiate an agreement with King Country iwi regarding the Main Trunk railway and Ballance’s desire to promote his proposed legislation on the administration of Maori land (what became the Native Land Administration Act 1886) – explain why one of the government’s most senior politicians embarked on a semi-national tour when he did. In addition, in touring Maori communities, Ballance was following a precedent set by earlier politicians who had visited and negotiated with Maori.

John Ballance came into the position of minister of Native Affairs with the election of the Stout-Vogel government in 1884. Colonial politics in the 1880s was preoccupied with alleviating the problems of what came to be known as the ‘long depression.’ The policies which defined the Vogel era of the 1870s – large scale immigration and public works – were pushed to the background as public discourse became fixated on the country’s economic and social ills.33 The general turbulence of New Zealand in the 1880s was reflected in the number of governments that formed then fell by the wayside.34 In late 1884, the Stout-Vogel ministry – the ideological predecessors to the Liberals –formed following a general election. The new minister of Native Affairs, replacing John Bryce, was John Ballance.

Ballance was born in Ireland in 1839 to a Protestant tenant farmer and a Quaker mother.35 After being employed in a variety of professions across Britain, Ballance emigrated to New Zealand with his first wife in 1866, settling in Wanganui. He soon established himself as a journalist, founding the Evening Herald (which became the Wanganui Herald) in 1867. His bellicose editorials earned Ballance a wide reputation, which easily transferred to political popularity from the late 1870s

34 Dalziel says that the only reason the Stout-Vogel administration was not ‘turned out’ after Vogel’s economic strategy ‘all but destructed’ in 1885 was because of the ‘public’s fear of political chaos.’ p.261
on. As member for Wanganui, Ballance was an outspoken advocate for the closer settlement of land. In and out of Parliament over the next few years, Ballance was eventually returned to the Wanganui seat in 1884. He held the portfolios of lands and immigration, native affairs and defence. Ballance’s attitude towards Maori was ambiguously humanitarian, motivated mostly by his generally liberal outlook. However, as his biographer has written, Ballance’s sympathy for Maori grew as he came into contact with them. His initial philosophy developed in his early years in Wanganui where he wrote focused critiques of the colonial forces during Titokowaru’s war in 1868. Although Ballance never gained fluency in Maori he made efforts to achieve some proficiency. Ballance’s general attitude towards Maori, then, can go some way to explaining why in 1885 he contemplated such a comprehensive tour.

In touring Maori communities to conduct political negotiations, Ballance was acting in accordance with a precedent set by previous politicians. The nature of public politics in New Zealand – and in settler societies in general – at the end of the nineteenth century emphasised ceremony as a central element in the exercise of power by those in government over its people. One of the ways this occurred was in the form of tours. Most visible among Ballance’s predecessors in this respect was Sir George Grey and Donald McLean. Both repeatedly toured Maori districts in order to secure political support for their initiatives, and in McLean’s case, the procurement of Maori land. The tours often took on the appearance of ceremony: processions, hui and formal meetings characterised the encounters between Maori leadership and the two politicians.

There was a noticeable difference between tours undertaken by public dignitaries and royal figures and politicians. Among the former, Governor Bowen and the Duke of Edinburgh toured Maori districts. The most prominent among the latter

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36 McIvor, The Rainmaker, p.138
37 This is the argument put forward by Mark Francis in Governors and Settlers: Images of Authority in the British Colonies, 1820-60, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992)
38 Keith Sinclair says that Grey ‘often travelled with a retinue of chiefs.’ Sinclair, ‘Grey, George, 1812 – 1898’, Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, updated 16 December 2003. For example, Grey undertook a journey with the paramount Ngati Tuwharetoa leader, Te Heuheu Iwikau in 1846. This event has recently been covered in Alex Frame’s Grey and Iwikau. In 1866, Grey toured the North Island seeking ‘the submission of hapu whose Pai Marire enthusiasm had subsided.’ Ward, A Show of Justice, p.200
was Donald McLean. For Pakeha politicians such as McLean, it was a necessity in the immediate post-war environment to maintain political links with Maori communities. McLean had acquired a good knowledge of the Maori language and a ‘standing among Maori for his knowledge of their language and his respect for rank and protocol. He was also industrious and accessible, putting aside social engagements if Maori callers wanted his attention.’ Upon assuming the portfolio of Native Affairs in 1868, McLean began his practice of touring Maori communities for political ends. In 1869 he met Manuhiri (Tawhiao’s advisor), Rewi, Wahanui and Parihaka prophet Te Whiti-o-Rongomai to negotiate a peace settlement. Ward writes that ‘McLean wooed the rebel chiefs by a variety of tactics. He took care to write personally to numbers of important men, announcing his coming to office at [sic] Native Minister, and toured disaffected areas, meeting rebel chiefs, assuring them that they would be allowed to dwell in peace as long as they did not molest settlers’. In his negotiations with Maori, McLean was both sympathetic and devious: ‘In the course of his diplomacy McLean made a great many promises of redress, usually verbal, which were never followed up and remained to plague his successors after his death.’ Ballance was one of those who were the recipients of McLean’s legacy, working within the process of face-to-face negotiation and attempting to fulfil the promises of redress while acting as an agent for the Crown. Maori who were aware of the duplicitous nature of McLean, still regarded the process by which he conducted his politics as of foremost importance when considering his life. Consequently, when McLean died in 1877, reports were sent in of Maori lamenting his death.

By the 1880s, however, the necessity for politicians to maintain links with Maori communities had lessened considerably. John Bryce, Ballance’s immediate predecessor, was instrumental in shaping the political relationship between Maori and the government that existed in the mid 1880s. Bryce’s determination to change the administration of Maori affairs, by reducing expenditure and retrenching a number of its functions, angered Maori political leaders. Bryce was instrumental in the

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41 McCann, p.65; Ward, A Show of Justice, p.229
42 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.229
43 For example, see ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1877, G-1, no.15
44 For the change in administration see Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.281-284. For the Maori reaction see Ward, A Show of Justice, p.293 and Orange, The Treaty of Waitangi, pp.219-220. Orange explains...
surveying and subsequent eviction of the Parihaka community, including its two prophets, Te Whiti and Tohu.45 This was opposed vigorously by the Maori members of parliament at the time and was used subsequently as an example of governmental nroprieties. Bryce consistently scuttled the proposals of the Maori MHRs, such as omoana’s Native Committees Empowering Bill 1882. For his refusal to tour and meet and talk with Maori leaders Bryce was considered cold and indifferent.46 When Bryce focused his energy, in Taranaki and the King Country, his sole purpose was to negotiate the opening of the King Country.47 As a result, Bryce was widely disliked in Maori society.

Although Ballance brought a new tone to that of Bryce, many of the issues that motivated Bryce’s politics remained pertinent to the Stout-Vogel administration. Ballance’s tour had two main purposes from the government’s perspective, both of which required a degree of negotiation with some Maori communities: negotiating the opening of the North Island Main Trunk railway and promoting Ballance’s proposed agitation on the administration of Maori land. Negotiating the opening of the railway had been a longstanding issue for several governments. Indeed, as the only major public work yet to be completed, the Main Trunk railway was probably the only surviving aspect of Vogelism.48 That New Zealand’s two major North Island entries (which up until 1885 economically depended upon the shipping route along the West Coast) were not connected by a railway system was an embarrassment for successive governments. However, following land confiscations and the creation of Ngati Maniapoto’s aukati (boundary), building such a railway had not been possible.

From the early 1880s, when Ngati Maniapoto commenced its process of ‘opening’, negotiations for a route began. In 1883 Ngati Maniapoto leaders agreed to allow a survey route to enter the King Country.49 By early 1885, the majority of the negotiations had been completed and a large part of the planning had begun. However, Ballance needed to secure a definitive agreement with the four iwi whose

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46 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.293
47 McCann, pp.125-142
48 Dalziel, p.260
49 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.287
land the railway would travel through – Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and Upper Whanganui.

The second issue, one that required Ballance going beyond the King Country, was Ballance’s proposed legislation regarding the administration of Maori land – what was initially called the Native Land Disposition Bill and later the Native Land Administration Bill. The Native Land Disposition Bill, the first reading of which was on June 16 1885, was drafted as the new government’s response to the increasing protest among Maori over the operation of the Native Land Court. The bill had two main aspects. Firstly, it proposed to re-establish the Crown’s pre-emptive right to purchase Maori land as a way of protecting Maori interests by preventing direct private purchases. As Ward explains, ‘Ballance hoped to inaugurate a system whereby the Crown sold or leased land as agent for the Maori.’\(^{50}\) Secondly, to prevent further unwanted alienation, the bill proposed to give Maori owners of blocks of land the right to elect ‘block committees’ that would represent the collective interest.\(^{51}\) The idea behind the block committees was based on the principle that the system operational under the 1873 Native Land Act, which fragmented title and allowed dealing with individual owners, prevented Maori from protecting their interests collectively. Instead, the bill picked up on an idea put forward by lawyer W.L. Rees and East Coast MHR, Wi Pere, that the principle of tribal title should be preserved by incorporating the owners of a block as one legal entity. The owners would then elect a ‘block committee’ with powers to decide on the terms of a sale or lease and, under Ballance’s Act, place their land with a District Commissioner (a Government official) for auction. The idea behind these committees differed significantly from the district committees established under the 1883 Act: the block committees were elected solely by the owners to determine the course of a block after the Native Land Court had ruled upon ownership. While Ballance’s policy on Maori land was part of the administration’s broad strategy for economic recovery – land settlement, in particular, ‘was promoted as a panacea for economic and urban troubles’\(^{52}\) – Ballance did not see that land settlement needed to act against the interests of Maori. But, he knew that in order to make the committees work, and in order to justify the system in Pakeha society, he needed to convince Maori that it could work.

\(^{50}\) Ward, A Show of Justice, p.296  
\(^{51}\) Ward, A Show of Justice, p.296  
\(^{52}\) Dalziel, p.267
Ballance spoke to the significance of the tour in regard to the legislation in parliament subsequently:

During the recess I took the opportunity of visiting most of the Native people in this Island. I explained to them the principles of the measure which we intended to introduce, and I may say, with regard to the success of our proposals, that there was a general feeling expressed by their leaders and chiefs that such proposals as I then placed before them would be to their interests and meet their wishes.\(^{53}\)

Despite Ballance's exaggeration regarding the number of Maori leaders he reached during the tour, this suggests the political significance of the proposed legislation to the tour. Therefore, in combination with the negotiations over the Main Trunk railway and the two invitations, Ballance had a specific agenda to tour a number of Maori communities in the North Island.

V - Organisation of the tour

Although the tour had a rough shape before Ballance left for the Whanganui, many of the details were not finalised until Ballance was already on the road. Ballance was committed to visiting Whanganui iwi and East Coast iwi on account of their invitations, and the Rohe Potae on account of the Main Trunk railway. In organising the tour, Ballance had an already existing and legally acknowledged institution – the Native District Committees. Although there is no record of the practical organisation between the Native Affairs Department and these committees, the hui where the committees played a central role, usually through the chairman of the committee, partly explains Ballance's itinerary. Representatives from four committees met with Ballance during the tour: Ranana (Wanganui District Committee), Kihihi (2) (Kawhia District Committee), Parawai (Hauraki District Committee) and Ohinemutu (Rotorua District Committee). In addition, a member of the Rotorua District Committee played an important role during the Whareroa hui. Therefore, while each district had its own issues, the district committees provided a recognised forum in which to meet Maori. The place of these committees within the hui will be discussed in later chapters. In all these cases, it is possible that an invitation was issued to Ballance, but they have not survived in the historical record.

\(^{53}\) NZPD, 1885, vol.52, pp.390-1
As for the districts that were excluded from Ballance's itinerary, the pressures of a parliamentary timetable and the length of the tour as it stood suggests some answers. Ballance had initially planned to visit Northland, but time curtailed his itinerary. Because he was detained on several occasions, notably in the Waikato and at Rotorua, he was even unable to visit some places – such as Maketu – that were relatively close to the route of his tour. In addition, he intended to travel to Taranaki in May to meet with Te Whiti.\textsuperscript{54} Although the Wairarapa had its own District Committee, representatives from Ngati Kahungunu were present at the Whakato hui. As for the South Island and Ngai Tahu, there is no indication Ballance considered travelling south as part of his tour. Given the length of the tour was already five weeks, the limitations of transport in the late nineteenth century and the requirements of parliamentary life, it was not practical for a government minister to include the South Island as part of a single extended tour.\textsuperscript{55}

Ballance had a travelling party of up to five people throughout the tour, but three made up the core group. W.G. Butler – Ballance's private secretary – and G.T. Wilkinson – the Resident Magistrate for the Waikato district – are mentioned regularly in newspaper accounts of the tour. It is likely that they were both present during its entirety. Wilkinson probably acted as Ballance's interpreter for the whole of the tour, although during the Whanganui leg he also acted as the correspondent for the \textit{New Zealand Herald}.\textsuperscript{56} As the Resident Magistrate for the Waikato District, Wilkinson had a dual role of organising much of the King Country and Waikato portions of the tour from Alexandra. Wilkinson had extensive contact with Maori over a number of years. This included providing translations to letters for the Native Department and acting as a translator for visiting government officials.

The mainstay of Ballance's tour was Thomas W. Lewis. Lewis, the Under-Secretary of the Native Department, travelled with Ballance in the capacity of shorthand note-taker.\textsuperscript{57} Lewis was with Ballance on every leg of the tour, recording both the hui, which were later printed in the \textit{AJHR}s, and interviews with assorted individuals, several of which were recorded in the Travelling Letter Book. Lewis also took the opportunity of forwarding to the Native Department extracts from

\textsuperscript{54} There appears to be no record of this meeting taking place.
\textsuperscript{55} Vogel, on the other hand, spent some of this time in the South Island.
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Whanganui Chronicle}, 7 January 1885, p.2
\textsuperscript{57} For this, Lewis received a travelling allowance of 15 shillings a day. Ballance to Native Department, 12 January 1885, no.85/123, MA: Letter Book – Inwards Register
Historical context and narrative of the tour

newspapers giving reports of meetings. Lewis, who had entered government service in 1863, attained the position of Under-Secretary of the Native Department in 1879. By 1885 he had over twenty years’ experience of engaging with Maori and of the Maori language. As he explained several years later, his day-to-day roles involved going through any complaints received by the department regarding the Native Land Court and reporting on all petitions submitted by Maori to parliament. Not only did Lewis have extensive experience, he was aware that Maori ‘bitterly and frequently’ complained of false evidence given by licensed interpreters. Although Lewis always acted in the government’s interest, in terms of his role as short-hand note taker on the tour he regarded his role as neutralist.

VI - Narrative of the tour

Ballance’s tour began in early January with hui at three villages situated along the Whanganui River: Ranana, Hiruharama (Jerusalem) and Pipiriki. On the morning of Tuesday 6 January, Ballance left Wanganui town by canoe heading up river to the village of Ranana. With him were Butler, Lewis, Lewis’ son, A.I. Willis, and the ‘Herald Representative’, Wilkinson. The canoe was towed up river by the steamer Waitara as far as the Kaiwhaike Quarries, and from then was powered by oar and paddle.

The various communities along the Whanganui river had been strongly affected by the New Zealand wars. As discussed above, the purpose of Mete Kingi’s unity hui in the early 1870s was to establish a basis upon which Maori in the area could put the past behind them. For much of the nineteenth century Maori along the Whanganui river had been split: tribally, between hapu and iwi, and geographically, between the upper and lower river communities. The most prominent leader during this period – among lower Whanganui people at least – was Keepa Te Rangihiwini

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59 ‘Minutes from the Commission on Native Land Laws’, AJHR, 1891, G-1, p.145
60 Little has been written about Lewis in histories so far. David Williams argues that Lewis was in a distinct position to comment on Crown policies, yet this is not evidence of his ability with the Maori language, although he does note Lewis’ credentials serving under McLean. Ward, in contrast, dismisses Lewis for no apparent reason. ‘Lewis was destined to serve no less than six Native Ministers and was a competent and loyal staff officer to each, but nothing more.’ Ward provides no evidence for this opinion. D. Williams, p.99; Ward, A Show of Justice, p.281
61 Wanganui Chronicle, 7 January 1885, p.2
(also known as Major Kemp), who, by 1885, was at least 60 years of age. Te Rangihiwiwinui had earned his reputation in both Pakeha and Maori society as a result of his decisive leadership of a Maori contingent of the government forces during the New Zealand wars, for which he was promoted to Major – a title which he continued to use – and later earned the Victoria Cross. Despite the label of loyalist, which Te Rangihiwiwinui was eager to foster, his identity was defined by his ability to act independently from other people, both Maori and Pakeha. He vociferously opposed King Tawhiao and anyone who may have imposed upon his own authority along the banks of the Whanganui. Similarly, Te Rangihiwiwinui opposed local Pakeha who, in 1880, tried to send a steam boat up the river. In opposition, he blocked the river. However, this was not a way of resistance against colonisation: it was more a way of expressing and asserting his independence. In a way, tradition had expanded to incorporate the new world of colonial politics. Te Rangihiwiwinui sensed the reality of the government’s power, as an entity which had to be negotiated with, not ignored. This was the model out of which he acted when opposing Bryce over the railway in 1883, and subsequently requesting a minister to visit his community.

On Wednesday 7 January, Ballance and company arrived at Ranana for the principal meeting with Whanganui Maori. The main portion of the hui was held on the following day, finishing – after an adjournment for dinner – on Thursday evening. On Friday, Ballance and his entourage proceeded up river from Ranana to Hiruharama for a hui with Maori there. The party then travelled further up river to Pipiriki for another brief hui. Having gone as far as Pipiriki, a distance of 78 miles, the party returned to Wanganui town on Saturday evening. Ballance returned to Wellington overland on the evening of Tuesday 13 January to attend to parliamentary duties.

The two hui at Kihikihi – one with the iwi in and around the Rohe Potae and another with Te Kooti – took place almost a month after the hui at Ranana. There are a number of reasons why there was such a delay. Because parliamentary commitments kept Ballance in Wellington following the Whanganui leg, and because

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62 Dreaver says that Keepe was probably born in the first half of the 1820s. Anthony Dreaver, ‘Te Rangihiwiwinui, Te Keepe, ? – 1898’, Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, updated 16 December 2003
63 Wanganui Chronicle, 7 January 1885, p.2
64 ‘Mr Ballance and the Wanganui Natives’, New Zealand Herald, 10 January 1885, p.5; Document of Speeches, pp. 1-9. See Chapter 3 for a fuller description of this hui.
65 Document of Speeches, pp.9-10
66 New Zealand Herald, 14 January 1885, p.5
there was no railway connecting the interior to the two main North Island centres, the
easiest access to the Waikato was by boat to Auckland and travelling south from
there. In addition, the arrangements for the tour changed several times from the initial
plan. However, it appears as though quite early on Ballance had decided upon a tour
that encompassed many of the districts of the central North Island. The end point was
to be the meeting at Whakato, the date of which had been brought forward from July
to 24 February 1885.67

In the portion of the tour that took in the King Country, Ballance was expected
to be the guest of Ngati Maniapoto’s principal leader, Wahanui Huatara. By mid
January 1885, Wahanui had begun to make arrangements for Ballance’s visit,
purchasing some twenty four sheep which were kept in readiness for the occasion.68
Wahanui, unlike Rewi Maniapoto and Wetere Te Rerenga, gained prominence
amongst Ngati Maniapoto subsequent to the New Zealand wars.69 His increasing
importance in the iwi’s affairs saw him play a central role in negotiating a settlement
with the government and opening Ngati Maniapoto’s tribal area – the Rohe Potae – to
the Native Land Court. While in many senses he represents the point of divergence
between Ngati Maniapoto and the Kingitanga following the wars,70 Wahanui’s
position is by no means clear. Wahanui, for example, spoke for Tawhiao several times
in the 1880s, including, in 1882, during Tawhiao’s formal act of peace-making at
Alexandra.71 In addition, he had grave concerns about the effect that opening Ngati
Maniapoto’s land to the Native Land Court would have upon his people, suspicious as
he was of the precedent set by the court in other areas.72 However, as with Keepa,
there is a sense that Wahanui believed that the government should be negotiated with,
not ignored. Perhaps symbolically, at the same time that Tawhiao was in England,
Wahanui made an important visit to parliament, in which he addressed both houses
outlining the problems of colonial governance and particular land legislation.73

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67 New Zealand Herald, 2 February 1885, p.6
68 ‘The Natives and Mr. Ballance’s visit’, New Zealand Herald, 21 January 1885, p.5
December 2003, URL: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/. Te Rerenga, on the other hand, ‘came to a position of
prominence in his tribe following Waitara’s death in 1862.’ Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, ‘Te
URL: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/
70 ‘State of Natives Upper Waikato, Raglan and Kawhia’, AJHR, 1874, G-2B
71 Henare
72 Ward says Wahanui feared ‘secretive dealing for individual interests’. Ward, National Overview,
p.247
73 NZPD, 1884, vol.50, pp.427, 555-6
Negotiating a route for the Main Trunk railway was one of Wahanui’s central concerns. On this issue, Ngati Maniapoto had some real negotiating power with the government. The government in particular used the new institution of the Kawhia District Committee, chaired by the young Ngati Maniapoto leader, John Ormsby, to facilitate negotiations. However, given the regional concerns that any proposed route aroused, Wahanui realised the need for pan-tribal deliberations concerning the railway. In addition, it was inherently understood that Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and the upper Whanganui iwi, as well as Ngati Maniapoto, would all be present at the hui with Ballance. On Tuesday, 20 January 1885, in expectation of the hui, a preliminary meeting was held at Aotearoa to discuss matters relating to the railway and roads prior to Ballance’s arrival. Wahanui and Ngati Raukawa representatives were present at the hui. The general conclusion was that they would offer no obstruction to the railways and roads and they would not consider selling lands until a title had been ascertained in the Native Land Court.

It was eventually decided that the hui should be held at Kihikihi, a small settlement on the edge of the Rohe Potae. The main reason, as speculated by a local newspaper, was that Kihikihi would be a more convenient location for Ballance to meet with the ageing Ngati Maniapoto leader, Rewi Maniapoto. Maniapoto, who was known by the name Manga in 1885, is another figure who presents problems of interpretation. In more ways than is the case with Wahanui, Maniapoto’s relationship with Tawhiao was wildly contradictory and infinitely impenetrable. Yet he also presents probably the most opposite example of the type of political ambivalence that emerged among Maori leaders in this period. There is a significant body of evidence to suggest that Maniapoto believed he, and Ngati Maniapoto by implication, had some culpability in beginning the Waikato wars, claiming on at least one occasion ‘mine is

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74 O’Malley, pp.187-9. Ormsby was the son of a Pakeha settler and a Ngati Maniapoto woman. Born in 1854, Ormsby rose to prominence in Ngati Maniapoto affairs as a protégé of Wahanui Huatera. Ormsby was the first chairman of the Kawhia District Committee: ‘Although Ormsby was young, and junior in Maori terms, the authority of leading chiefs supported his chairmanship. They in turn were keen to make use of his considerable skills in speaking and dealing successfully with European officialdom.’ M. J. Ormsby, ‘Ormsby, John, 1854 – 1927’, Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, updated 16 December 2003, URL: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/

75 Representatives of all four iwi had signed the ‘Rohe Potae’ petition to the government in June 1883, acting as a precedent for this unified negotiation. O’Malley, p.148

76 ‘Meeting of Waikato Natives’, New Zealand Herald, 21 January 1885, p.5

77 It was initially suggested that Ballance would meet Rewi at Alexandra and then travel on to Otorohanga to meet the sum of those who had gathered.
the sin.\textsuperscript{78} In 1869, Maniapoto said that he had played a strong part in events which led to Waikato living in exile, adding that he wanted to play a strong part in finishing it.\textsuperscript{79} This was a reference to the confiscations Waikato had suffered following the wars and the light treatment Ngati Maniapoto received in comparison. Subsequently, he embarked on a series of peace-hui, visiting Maketu, Whanganui and Waikato.\textsuperscript{80} At the latter meeting in 1872, Maniapoto, with other Ngati Maniapoto, told the Waikato kupapa that he and his kin had brought trouble upon Waikato: acknowledging responsibility was the purpose of the meeting.\textsuperscript{81} In the same year, he told Native Minister Donald McLean that old evils needed to be buried for the good of the future.\textsuperscript{82} During this immediate post war period, Maniapoto was internalising past events, acknowledging the part he and Ngati Maniapoto had to play in the events of the early 1860s, and attempting to find a role that fitted the new political world which Maori now inhabited.

On numerous occasions during the 1870s and 1880s, reports emerge of Maniapoto and Tawhiao working together.\textsuperscript{83} Then, without explanation, reports appear of another split between the two leaders.\textsuperscript{84} Although ‘splits’ can often be exaggerated in historical accounts, these accounts reflect Maniapoto’s political aims of making peace with the Kingitanga, the government and himself. At a meeting with Grey at Waitara, a symbolic reminder of the government’s culpability in beginning the Taranaki war, Maniapoto planted a ‘tree of peace.’ Although he had ostensibly separated from Tawhiao, the purpose was to make peace between the government and the Kingitanga. Maniapoto told Grey that he must go and meet the Kingitanga four times in order for the tree to flourish.\textsuperscript{85} At the annual Kingitanga hui in 1882, he again spoke to his ambivalence. Replying to an orator, he said, ‘You say you are floating in the sea with a sword hanging over your head. I say you have two swords over your

\textsuperscript{78} ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1873, G-1, no.3; ‘The Hon. Native Minister’s Meeting with Tawhiao; and Rewi Maniapoto’s visit to Bay of Plenty’, \textit{AJHR}, 1875, G4, no.22, pp.13-16; ‘Further reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1873, G-1, no.5&6, pp.5-11
\textsuperscript{79} McCann, p.62
\textsuperscript{80} ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1872, F-3, no.11, pp.14-15; ‘Further reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1872, F-3A, no.12, pp.15-16
\textsuperscript{81} ‘Further reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1872, F-3A, no.12, pp.15-16
\textsuperscript{82} ‘Further reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1872, F-3A, no.15, pp.17-18
\textsuperscript{83} See, for example, ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1871, F-6, no.30, pp.17-18
\textsuperscript{84} ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, \textit{AJHR}, 1874, G-2, no.9, p.9; ‘State of Natives Upper Waikato, Raglan and Kawhia’, \textit{AJHR}, 1874, G-2B, no.4, p.3
\textsuperscript{85} McCann, p.98
head: mine as well as the pakeha’s [sic]. Maniapoto also discussed rehabilitating the Kingitanga. He drew a circle on the ground, indicating his outside boundary, and said that when it was defined there would be a house for Tawhiao to live in forever. He said that Waikato suffered calamity, but the people did not bring it upon themselves, the calamity was Maori electing a king. Maniapoto added that the boundary line of his was an old thing: he had tried to define it four times now. In a letter following the hui, he asked Grey to support Tawhiao’s ideas, ‘by this means our tree of good will grow – that is, the tree we planted at Waitara.’ However, this middle path that he was attempting to negotiate was never clear. In late 1884 Maniapoto pulled out of Ngati Maniapoto’s Native Land Court hearings, telling the Resident Magistrate that he should be called ‘kopikopiko noa’ – meaning, in ‘every direction’ or ‘directionless’. From someone who had historically acted with utter deliberateness, this was an extraordinary confession.

Maniapoto was conflicted over the direction taken by Ngati Maniapoto, his past loyalties to the Kingitanga and the idea that peace had to be established with the government. Faced with two positions, he had to make a choice; the wrong choice would have negative and possibly disastrous results for his people. On one side, he faced a political society attempting to negotiate from a position of powerlessness, with a governing power that had a history of acting to the detriment of Maori society. On the other side, he faced the prospect of separation not simply from the government, but from the majority of most of Maori society, including Ngati Maniapoto. This position was motivated by the fact that ‘calamity’ had resulted from adopting a King and opposing government power. For those like Maniapoto who had authority, it was a terrible situation to be in. The result was that he lost some influence amongst his own iwi, trapped between Wahanui’s détente and Tawhiao’s search for a viable role for the Kingitanga.

On Monday, 2 February 1885, with preparations near complete for a meeting with Ngati Maniapoto, Ballance, Lewis and Butler departed Auckland by train, en route to the Waikato. In the evening, the party arrived in Alexandra (modern day Pirongia). After their arrival Ballance was met by Wahanui. Wahanui placed

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86 ‘Tawhiao’s meeting at Whatiwhatihoe in May, 1882’, AJHR, 1882, G-4A, p.7
87 Tawhiao’s meeting at Whatiwhatihoe in May, 1882’, AJHR, 1882, G-4A, p.10
89 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.287
90 New Zealand Herald, 3 February 1885, p.5
Ballance’s arrival in the context of face-to-face political negotiation, saying that ‘he [Wahanui] was happy to meet him [Ballance] among his own people.’\textsuperscript{91} The following day Ballance left Alexandra, arriving at Kihikihi at half-past one. A large number of Maori had gathered, but apparently, ‘all concerned were not present. Taonui,\textsuperscript{92} with his followers, had not arrived, having only left Kopua that morning, and being a heavy man Taonui and his follower rode at a walking pace.’ As a result, it was decided that the main meeting would be held over to wait for Taonui, a beneficial arrangement given that those who had already gathered wanted to discuss the issues amongst themselves before meeting the Native Minister.\textsuperscript{93}

While Ballance’s primary attention was focused on the forthcoming hui, it had also been arranged that he would meet with the Ringatu prophet, Te Kooti Te Turuki, who at this stage lived in exile in the King Country. Te Kooti had previously lived in Te Kuiti from 1873 to 1883, after accepting Tawhiao’s terms of ‘pacification’ in September 1873, following his escape into the King Country from pursuing colonial forces.\textsuperscript{94} After being effectively pardoned under the Amnesty Act 1883, Te Kooti remained in the area, relocating to a piece of land granted to him and his people by the government. Just prior to the meeting in 1885, Te Kooti had intended to travel to the East Coast, but had been dissuaded from going by Ballance who had received several messages from settlers and some Maori opposing the proposed visit.\textsuperscript{95} Although it was initially understood that Te Kooti would attend the main hui at Kihikihi,\textsuperscript{96} a separate meeting transpired on the evening of Tuesday, 3 February 1885. According to the \textit{New Zealand Herald}, as Ballance drove down the street, Te Kooti, with about sixty followers came into view, ‘got up’ a haka to welcome him.\textsuperscript{97} Following this, Ballance, Te Kooti and his people convened at the Kihikihi Public Hall.

On Wednesday afternoon, the remaining Maori who had travelled from around the district – mainly Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa and upper Whanganui – assembled in the Kihikihi Public Hall. The meeting reconvened the following

\textsuperscript{91} ‘The Native Minister in the Waikato: He declines Tawhiao’s invitation’, \textit{Te Aroha News}, 7 February 1885, p.6
\textsuperscript{92} Taonui Hikaka, who had written the letter, cited above, asking why the iwi in the Rohe Potae had not been properly consulted regarding the railway, was a prominent Ngati Maniapoto leader in this period. \textsuperscript{93} \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 4 February 1885, p.5
\textsuperscript{95} See correspondence between Te Kooti and Ballance in MA, 23/8c part two, Te Kooti papers, 1884-86
\textsuperscript{96} ‘The Native Minister’s Visit’, \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 2 February 1885, p.6
\textsuperscript{97} \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 4 February 1885, p.6
morning to continue negotiations regarding the railway, pushing back Ballance’s meeting with Tawhiao at Whatiwhatihoe to the afternoon.\textsuperscript{98} After the assembly had broken up, Ballance returned to Alexandra. On arrival at Alexandra the meeting at Whatiwhatihoe which had been scheduled for three o’clock was again postponed, this time to the next day.\textsuperscript{99}

Ballance then turned his attention to the next destination of the tour: Whatiwhatihoe, the residence of King Tawhiao. Tawhiao was crowned the second Maori King in 1860 after the death of his father, Potatau Te Wherowhero. Although defeat at the hands of British forces and occupation of their lands had pushed the people of Waikato into Ngati Maniapoto territory, Tawhiao continued to hold to the concept of the Kingitanga, strengthening it spiritually with the establishment of the Tarioa (morning star) faith in 1875. From Tawhiao’s perspective, peace with the government could only be nominal if the confiscations of Waikato land remained effective. Unlike some other Maori groups which could negotiate from a position of relative strength, the Kingitanga had no stake in seeing the colonial administration succeed. Consequently, opposition became entrenched. The negotiation that did occur was more about the establishment of peace, such as the symbolic laying down of guns in 1882, rather than creating a practical settlement. As power steadily moved towards central government, Tawhiao moved away from the idea that the colonial government could be negotiated with. His list of grievances, including the confiscation of Waikato lands, was based around the ill treatment Maori had received from the Crown since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Consequently, the Treaty and the Constitution Act 1852 became central to Tawhiao’s politics. In 1884, he travelled to England with a petition asking the British Government to confirm the Treaty of Waitangi and to consider a proposal to establish a separate Maori parliamentary system under Section 71 of the 1852 Constitution Act.\textsuperscript{100} The visit resulted in little of actual consequence; however, Tawhiao and the Kingitanga continued to seek an effective role in national politics.

Tawhiao was faced with a dilemma, though of a different kind to other Maori leaders. He rejected the government’s authority over the Kingitanga but realised that isolation would result in increasing irrelevance. Consequently, a contradiction arose:

\textsuperscript{98} 'The Native Minister in the Waikato', \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 5 February 1885, p.5
\textsuperscript{100} Cox, p.57
while Tawhiao wanted a separate self-governing Maori district under his authority, proposals were made to the government to give the Kingitanga power some consultative power with the government. One such example was the negotiations for the Main Trunk railway. Tawhiao hoped not to be excluded from the negotiations, arguing that any decision made by Ngati Maniapoto required his consent. This, and the suggestions laid before the British government, formed the central points upon which Tawhiao issued an invitation to Ballance. In addition, the *New Zealand Herald* reported that the intention behind the invitation was to bring to the Native Minister’s attention several dubious grants which were before the Supreme Court.\footnote{‘Arrival of the Hon. J. Ballance’, *New Zealand Herald*, 29 January 1885, p.5. However, perhaps because the case was subjudice, this issue was not raised at the Whatiwhaihoo hui.}

Organising the meeting with the Kingitanga involved a considerable amount of negotiation, reflective of Tawhiao’s desire to negotiate with the government on the same level as Ngati Maniapoto. Ballance’s initial plan to meet both groups at Otorohanga was opposed by Tawhiao.\footnote{In the document of speeches, Ballance is recorded as saying that he had intended to meet Tawhiao at Whanganui, but that Tawhiao ‘went away too soon’ for a meeting. However, there is no suggestion that this was part of the plans in other documentation, *Document of Speeches*, p.25} Due to time constraints, Ballance proposed Alexandra as a compromise. However, the *Te Aroha News* argued that Tawhiao would not ‘come in, as, from all appearances, he has forbidden even his own people from coming to Alexandra during the Minister’s stay.’\footnote{‘The Native Minister in the Waikato: He declines Tawhiao’s invitation’, *Te Aroha News*, 7 February 1885, p.6} As the *New Zealand Herald* explained, Tawhiao would only accept a meeting at his own settlement.\footnote{‘The Native Minister in the Waikato’, *New Zealand Herald*, 4 February 1885, p.5} Ultimately, Tawhiao gained the meeting that he desired. Butler, Ballance’s private secretary, arranged for Ballance to travel to Whatiwhaihoo on Thursday, 5 February 1885.\footnote{*New Zealand Herald*, 4 February 1885, p.5} Because the Kihikihi meeting extended into Thursday morning, this became Friday.

Ballance was not the only dignitary expected to make an appearance at Whatiwhaihoo. Equally anticipated was the return of Wiremu Te Wheoro from England. Te Wheoro, who was related to Tawhiao, chose to side with the government during the wars,\footnote{Te Wheoro had been supportive of the existing system for some time before the wars, speaking in favour of the ‘Pakeha governor’ at a great meeting at Paetai in 1857 where the proposal to install Potatau Te Wherowhero was discussed. Ward says that to young men, like Takerei Te Rau of Ngati Mahuta, Tioriori of Ngati Haua and Te Wheoro, ‘the King movement appeared retrogressive.’ Gary Scott, ‘Te Wheoro, Wiremu Te Morehu Maipapa, ? -1895’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 16 December 2003, URL: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/; Ward, *A Show of Justice*, p.106} a position he acknowledged permanently separated him from his
relations who joined the Kingitanga. Following the wars, Te Wheoro became disillusioned with some aspects of the colonial political process, resigning his position as Assessor of the Native Land Court in 1872 in a protest over its actions. This action led to his winning the Western Maori seat in parliament and, despite the wars, led to his becoming a close advisor to Tawhiao, highlighted by Te Wheoro’s inclusion in the party that travelled to England in 1884.

Historians have interpreted the relationship between Tawhiao and Te Wheoro in a number of ways. Ward argues that the close relationship and Te Wheoro’s ‘separatist activity’ was the culmination of increasing disillusionment over the government’s handling of Maori affairs. Sinclair, alternatively, argues that the opposite was true: the close relationship symbolises Tawhiao’s increasing openness. Both accounts emphasise the closeness that characterised their relationship. However, both Tawhiao and Te Wheoro acknowledged the central divide that separated them: the positions each had taken during the wars. In 1886, Tawhiao wrote to Ballance saying that he was connected to Te Wheoro ‘as a relative, and that is all – but his thoughts and doings are still with you and for you his word; therefore let not his doings and actions be put on to me, No! for they are his own.’ Te Wheoro also acknowledged the difficulty of his situation. At a Kingitanga hui in 1881, he said that he was a Queenite – an entrenched position as a result of the wars – but that he now took up the ‘paddle’ of the Kingitanga. However, Te Wheoro explained that twisting politics in relation to Pakeha off at the root was not the answer. In accompanying Tawhiao to Britain, and promoting the petition, Te Wheoro was pushing for a political solution for Maori based on rights accorded under the Treaty of Waitangi. While the force of history remained between the two, the Treaty provided a point of political unification that was not defined by war. Following Tawhiao’s return to New Zealand, Te Wheoro had remained in England to promote the petition further. But by early 1885, he was expected home.

Travelling to the Waikato in the same coach as Ballance, Te Wheoro returned to Whatiwhatihoe on Tuesday, 3 February 1885. A number of people had gathered

107 ‘Letter from Major Te Wheoro, M.H.R., to the speaker forwarding proposals from Tawhiao’, AJHR, 1882, G-4
108 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.274
110 Tawhiao to Ballance, 7 September 1886, MA 23/4a: Tawhiao’s Papers
111 ‘Reports from officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1881, G-8, no.6
informally to welcome him home. Te Wheoro urged those at the meeting not to raise their grievances at the meeting with Ballance, which was still expected to occur in the afternoon, but to wait for the result of the petition to the Queen. According to the *New Zealand Herald*, ‘Wait! wait! wait! were the words which he [Te Wheoro] again and again reiterated.’ On Thursday, those who had assembled held an informal meeting to discuss the issues that were likely to be brought up the following day:

Te Wheoro again urged them not to seek redress at the hands of the Colonial Government. The home Government he said would do this, and if after six months’ grace the Colonial Government refused to do its duty in the matter, Mr. Gorst would be sent out as a Royal Commissioner, and the whole management of native affairs would be placed in his hands.

‘Mr. Gorst’ was John Gorst, the former Resident Magistrate in the Upper Waikato who, in 1863 was evicted from the area by Ngati Maniapoto for his attempts to subvert the Kingitanga. However, Gorst, who had aided the presentation of an earlier petition to the British parliament, remained a contact in Britain. The hope was that Gorst would come to New Zealand on behalf of the British government to hear Maori concerns.

Ballance arrived at Whatiwhatihoe about ten o’clock on Friday 6 February. He was welcomed by Ngati Whataua leader Paora Tuhaere – the organiser of the Orakei parliament of the late 1870s and early 1880s – and by Te Wheoro. About ten minutes later Tawhiao came out to greet Ballance. The Whatiwhatihoe hui soon began. After the hui, Ballance left for Alexandra, departing immediately for Auckland, stopping off on the way at several settlements to meet local Pakeha groups. He was back in Auckland on Monday. At this stage it was decided that because of the pressures of time – the delays in the Waikato and the need to be at Whakato on February 24 – the northern leg of the tour would be omitted from the itinerary. Instead, Ballance headed east.

On Wednesday 11 February, Ballance left Auckland for Thames on the *S.S. Hinemoa*. Arriving in the afternoon, several Pakeha deputations waited upon him into

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112 ‘The Return of Te Wheoro’, *New Zealand Herald*, 6 February 1885, p.5
113 ‘The Arrangements for the Trunk Railway’, *New Zealand Herald*, 6 February 1885, p.5
114 Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, p.164
115 ‘Meeting between Mr. Ballance and Tawhiao’, *New Zealand Herald*, 7 February 1885, p.5
116 According to the *New Zealand Herald*, Ballance intended to travel to Northland after returning to Wellington. Whether he did so is unclear; such a visit is not recorded in the *Document of Speeches* or the travelling letter book. ‘Movements of Ministers – Mr. Ballance’, *New Zealand Herald*, 10 February 1885, p.5
the evening. At some stage during the day, Ballance travelled out to Parawai – a village just outside Thames where the first mission station had been – where he was greeted with a waiata followed by several speeches. The greeting included several hymns sung by local Maori. The next day, Ballance returned to Parawai. Ballance first had an interview with the members of the Native Committee, which included Hoani Nahe (the Chairman of the Committee) and Tamati Paipa. Nahe, who had been member of parliament for Western Maori in the late 1870s, was a prominent leader of Ngati Maru and other iwi in the Hauraki district. Hauraki had been the first district to nominate and elect a committee, the first sitting of which was held in May 1884. Following the meeting with the committee, a more general hui was held. The hui included iwi from across the Hauraki district: Ngati Maru, Ngati Paoa, Ngati Whanaunganga and Ngati Tamatera. Among those present was Tukukino, a Kingitanga supporter who had threatened force to block a road in the 1870s. In the evening, Ballance dined at the home of prominent Ngati Maru leader Wirope Hotereini Taipari. Later Ballance received several Pakeha deputations, before departing Thames on the Hinemoa.

Ballance’s next set of hui was in and around the new Rotorua township, with Maori from the various Te Arawa iwi. It is not exactly clear why Ballance met with Te Arawa in three hui when the pressures of time meant other areas had to be removed from the itinerary. Most likely a request was made and given that each of the locations was within a short travelling distance, Ballance agreed. Indeed, his willingness to meet Rotorua Maori in separate hui contradicts Angela Ballara’s suggestion that Ballance wanted to deal with Te Arawa in one regional institution. Maori in the Rotorua region had a unique set of circumstances which gained Ballance’s attentions and prompted his visit there. The Rotorua township, which had begun promisingly only a few years before, had by this stage become a near disaster, with a number of settlers lapsing in their payments to local Maori. The Thermal

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117 ‘Mr. Ballance at the Thames’, New Zealand Herald, 12 February 1885, p.5
118 ‘Mr. Ballance at the Thames’, New Zealand Herald, 13 February 1885, p.5; Document of Speeches, p.30
119 Nahe is recorded as the Chairman of the Committee in the document of speeches, however Te Raika Whakarongotai is given as the Chairman in other accounts. It is likely that Nahe was acting Chairman. ‘List of Native Committee Districts and Chairmans’, 15 April 1885, MA 23/13a: Native Committees
120 O’Malley, p.173
121 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.278
122 ‘Mr. Ballance at the Thames’, New Zealand Herald, 13 February 1885, p.5; New Zealand Herald, 14 February 1885, p.4; Document of Speeches, pp.30-41
123 Ballara, ōti, p.315. This will be discussed more fully in Chapter 3.
Springs Act 1881 had established a system between the government and Ngati Whakaue whereby a township would be established in Rotorua and the land alienated on long lease at public auction.\textsuperscript{124} Although the system was initially successful within a year the lessees began to default on payment of rents. As Ward describes:

The whole Rotorua scheme began to founder in acrimony. What should have been a thoroughly beneficial system broke down, not only because lessees found they could not pay inflated rentals in the intensifying economic depression, but also because they had a great repugnance to being tenants of Maori landlords at all....\textsuperscript{125}

These lapsed payments emerged as the central issue as news of Ballance’s impending visit filtered through the region in late January. In addition, the proposed railway connecting Cambridge and Rotorua was causing some anxiety amongst Maori who could not afford to gift land to the government without compensation. Ngati Whakaue, having already gifted land to the government for such a purpose, were especially anxious that they would not have to do so again. On Saturday 31 January, a preliminary meeting of Pakeha residents and Ngati Whakaue was held in Rotorua’s Palace Hotel to discuss various subjects in anticipation of the Native Minister’s visit.\textsuperscript{126}

From Thames, Ballance travelled to Tauranga. On Sunday 15 February, he made his way to Rotorua by carriage, arriving in the evening. The \textit{New Zealand Herald} described the scene the following morning as Ballance began the first of the three hui with Ngati Whakaue at Ohinemutu:

[Ballance] was early astir this morning, making himself acquainted with the sulphur town affairs. After breakfast he visited [the] Whakarewarewa geysers. Returning at twelve o’clock, shouts of welcome drew him to Tama Te Kopua [sic], where he addressed a large assemblage of natives stating that in all his travels he had not met such a hearty reception.\textsuperscript{127}

After a brief discussion, an adjournment was taken for an hour. On resuming, the principal speaker was Retireti Tapihana. Tapihana – the son of Pakeha trader Phillip Tapsell and a high born Ngati Whakaue woman – had a history of involvement with the government. Acting as a Maori policeman and fighting in the Native Contingent during the New Zealand wars, Tapihana continued to be employed by the Native

\textsuperscript{124} Ward, \textit{A Show of Justice}, p.288
\textsuperscript{125} Ward, \textit{A Show of Justice}, pp.289
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 2 February 1885, p.6
\textsuperscript{127} \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 17 February 1885, p.4
Department into the 1880s. However, Tapihana was also heavily involved in the administration of the affairs of Ngati Whakaue, acting as one of the principal signatories for the establishment of the Rotorua township and negotiating the railway to Rotorua in the 1880s. As part of this latter duty, Tapihana acted as the primary speaker for Ngati Whakaue during the hui at Ohinemutu. However, as Tapihana discussed at length during the hui, the process of putting Ngati Whakaue's land through the Native Land Court combined with the increasingly acrimonious circumstances surrounding leasing in the Rotorua township meant that despite their past relationship with the government, Ngati Whakaue did not view the current circumstances favourably.

On Wednesday 18 February, Ballance crossed over to the island of Mokoia, where gifts of a 'valuable mat and mere' were presented to him. Wi Keepa Ngawhau welcomed the Native Minister on behalf of his people, singing a song, the thrust of which was, 'It is time for peacemaking.' Mokoia Island had been the site of the famous battle with Nga Puhi in the 1830s. Like other Te Arawa, the people of Mokoia had fought on the side of the government during the wars, a relationship to which they repeatedly referred. However, the effects of the Native Land Court had pitted those on Mokoia against Ngati Whakaue, an issue that formed the basis of the meeting with Ballance when he arrived on the island. After the meeting, Ballance returned to Rotorua township.

The following morning, Ballance drove out to Whakarewarewa to meet with Tuhourangi. The leader of Tuhourangi – and the chairman of the Rotorua District Committee – was Wi Keepa Te Rangipuaewhe. Like Tapihana and most of Te Arawa, Rangipuaewhe had supported the government during the wars. He was also the guardian of O-tu-kapua-rangi and Te Tarata – the pink and white terraces at Rotomahana. The tourist trade that was brought in by the terraces, however, which featured prominently in the discussions with Ballance, came to an end less than a year after Ballance's tour. The eruption of Mount Tarawera in June 1886 destroyed the Tuhourangi settlement at Wairoa, killing over half of its 250 residents. Ngati

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129 Bay of Plenty Times, 21 February 1885, p.2; Document of Speeches, pp.46-50
130 Other accounts record Keepa's name as Te Keepa Te Rangi-puaewhe, although the above version is that given in the document of speeches.
Ngati Rangiwehi and Ngati Rangitihia, who also had interests in the
terraces, on some occasions disputing Tuhourangi’s right, also had representatives at
the hui with Ballance.

By the evening of Friday 20 February, Ballance had arrived back in Tauranga.
The news of Ballance’s movements in the Rotorua district had spread rapidly,
attracting several prominent figures to travel to Tauranga. Among these was Te
Pokiha Taranui of Maketu, who arrived in Tauranga for an interview with Ballance.\(^{133}\)
Pokiha received most of Ballance’s attention in a lengthy interview, leaving the
numerous Pakeha deputations until a very late hour.\(^{134}\)

On Saturday morning, about 10 o’clock, Ballance and his party took the ferry
across Tauranga harbour to the Whareroa marae, where the hui was held. Whareroa
was a settlement developed by the Ngai Te Rangi leader Hori Ngatai following the
wars.\(^{135}\) Ngatai had supported the Kingitanga during 1863 and 1864. He continued to
oppose government forces when fighting spread to Tauranga, including the battles at
Gate Pa and Te Ranga. Shortly after, Ngatai surrendered, saying that Ngai Te Rangi
would never return to warfare: ‘Let there be peace in the land.’\(^ {136}\) Although Ngatai
had become a successful farmer by 1885, he also had several disputes with the
Tauranga County Council regarding the rating of land. Because of his prominence,
Ngatai dominated the exchange with Ballance when he arrived.

The other person to play a major role in the hui was Te Mete Raukawa.
According to his biography, Raukawa – a Ngati Ranginui leader – was a spokesman
for all Maori in the Tauranga district, Ngai Te Rangi and Ngati Ranginui.\(^ {137}\) Raukawa
was also a member of the Rotorua District Committee, the only representative of
Tauranga Maori on the committee, and consequently played an important role in
trying to obtain a separate committee for their district. Part of this role included
meeting with Ballance at the Whareroa hui. The hui lasted for a number of hours;
Ballance and his party did not return to Tauranga until the late afternoon. At eleven

\(^{132}\) Ballara’s point regarding the difference between Tuhourangi and Ngati Wahiao, the residents of
Whakarewarewa, will be discussed in the next chapter. Ballara, *Iwi*, pp.228-9
\(^{133}\) ‘The Native Minister’, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 21 February 1885, p.2
\(^{134}\) *Bay of Plenty Times*, 24 February 1885, p.2
\(^{135}\) Oliver, ‘Ngati, Hori, ? – 1912’
\(^{136}\) Oliver, ‘Ngati, Hori, ? – 1912’
\(^{137}\) Alister Matheson, ‘Raukawa, Te Mete 1836/1837, ? – 1926’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*,
updated 16 December 2003, URL: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/. No mention is made in this biography of
Ngati Pukenga or other iwi in the district.
pm on Saturday night Ballance, his wife, Lewis and Lewis' son departed on the
Hinemoa for the East Cape and Gisborne.\textsuperscript{138}

The culmination of Ballance's tour was the meeting that had been organised
first, based on the invitation sent by Hirini Te Kani. Te Kani, who was born in the
1820s and who was of Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, a section of Ngati Porou and
Rongowhakaata, became a prominent leader in the Turanga area in the 1850s.\textsuperscript{139}
During the 1860s he became the leader of pro-government Māori in the region, but
tried to bring about reconciliation and maintain peace between government forces and
Pai Marire adherents who were in opposition. Te Kani was also heavily involved with
the Anglican church, acting as one of three lay representatives at the first two synods
of the diocese of Waiapu.

Another of the representatives who played a major role in the meeting with
Ballance was prominent East Coast leader Wi Pere. Pere was a generation younger
than Te Kani, living well into the second decade of the twentieth century, and was of
Te Aitanga-a-Mahaki and Rongowhakaata descent. In a similar way to Te Kani he
played an ambivalent role when the wars reached the East Coast, especially in his
relationship with Te Kooti. However, Pere was ultimately on the side of politics
through the established system, even if he was often opposed to certain institutions of
government. In 1884, Pere was elected to parliament as member for the Eastern Māori
seat: of four people who had been members of parliament who met Ballance during
his tour, Pere was the only one who still held a seat. The widespread support that saw
Pere elected reflected the increasing influence Māori members of parliament had in
the Māori political landscape at the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{140} Around this time,
Pere, in partnership with lawyer W.L. Rees, developed a scheme whereby multiple
owners would be legally recognised, their interests represented by an elected
committee for each block.\textsuperscript{141} This idea was taken up in Ballance's bill and formed a
considerable portion of the focus when Ballance arrived in the East Coast.

The hui, held at the Whakato marae, first assembled on Sunday 24 February.
People had come in from the whole East Coast district, from Ngati Porou further

\textsuperscript{138} Bay of Plenty Times, 24 February 1885, p.2. 'The Native Minister', New Zealand Herald, 24
February 1885, p.5. Document of Speeches, pp.58-66
\textsuperscript{139} Above information comes from Steven Oliver, 'Te Kani, Hirini, ? – 1896', Dictionary of New
\textsuperscript{140} Above information comes from Alan Ward, 'Pere, Wiremu, 1837 – 1915', Dictionary of New
\textsuperscript{141} Ward, A Show of Justice, p.296
north to Ngati Kahungunu in the south. An important issue on the East Coast, as in most areas, was the Native Land Court. In particular, the court then sitting at Waiomatatini, which would not adjourn for Ballance’s visit, had prevented a number of Maori from attending the hui.\textsuperscript{142} However, the hui began on Sunday. After several speeches of welcome, Wi Pere announced, ‘This is a day of pleasure, a day of amusement. My young people will indulge in amusement before you. The tribes will not speak on important subjects to-day. To-morrow the words will be spoken.’ The hui reconvened the next day, when a wide ranging discussion ensued.

VII - Summary

When the \textit{Hinemoa} left Gisborne at midnight on Thursday, 26 February 1885, Ballance’s month-long tour had come to an end.\textsuperscript{143} Throughout the tour, Maori communities that had emerged from the New Zealand wars with a variety of experiences were able to the engage with the Native Minister as they wished, on a face-to-face basis. In meeting with Ballance, Maori were simultaneously reclaiming some of their lost power yet acknowledging the power that the position of the government held. The tour was a continuation of an evolving history whereby Maori were ambivalent about their relationship with the New Zealand government. This ambivalence – reflected in criticism of the government’s performance, yet simultaneously seeking to operate within the existing system – was evident in the subjects that Maori brought before Ballance and in the way they conducted their negotiations with him. It is to this latter point, the structure and conduct of the twelve hui, to which the analysis now turns.

\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Document of Speeches}, pp.66-78

\textsuperscript{143} ‘Banquet to the Native Minister’, \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 28 February 1885, p.5
Chapter Three

Sites of negotiation: Politics and interaction within the twelve hui of Ballance’s tour

This chapter examines the setting of the twelve hui during Ballance’s tour. The focus shifts from a narrative of the tour and its historical context to a closer examination of the types of interaction within the hui and the extent to which they were typical of encounters between Maori and Crown representatives in the late nineteenth century. The purpose for doing this, in accordance with the microhistorical methodology outlined in Chapter 1, is to establish the social perimeters of thought; in other words, to establish the processes external to the speeches. The conduct of the hui – the ways that Maori received Ballance, how the speeches were delivered, the physical environment in which they were held – all suggests that although the meetings took on the form of ceremony, their purpose was not wholly ceremonial. Acting in accordance with their belief that the oral medium of negotiation was the most effective form of establishing good governance, Maori set about creating an environment where Ballance would be most receptive to their ideas. As discussed in Chapter 2, Maori historically sought the presence of Pakeha ministers both as a symbol of equal power and as a site for practical negotiation. Yet, not only do these hui demonstrate the inherent problems of interpreting Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century, the very act of creating a receptive environment for the Native Minister in order to praise, criticise and negotiate with him, demonstrates the ambivalence that characterises political thought in this period.

This chapter will begin by examining the political organisation required by Maori for their meetings with Ballance. The analysis then looks at the one hundred and twenty six Maori speakers recorded in the document of speeches and attempts to understand whom they represented. Following this, the types of ritual and ceremony
used to welcome Ballance will be examined. Finally, the interaction between Maori leaders and Ballance during the twelve hui will be analysed. Two problems emerge from this type of study. Firstly, very little has been written on hui in the late nineteenth century, particularly between Maori and Crown representatives. Secondly, there is a lack of information describing the encounters between Maori and Ballance. Both problems present difficulties for establishing what practices and forms of ceremony Maori used during the twelve hui. However, by incorporating existing academic works on hui and other primary documents with the fragments of information that do exist, the social context of the encounters can be tentatively deduced. Establishing this structure will lay the foundations for an analysis of the content of the speeches – and Maori political thought in general – in Chapters 4 and 5.

I – The conduct of the hui as evident in the text

The general process by which the twelve meetings were conducted suggests that Maori envisaged Ballance’s visit as a site, an opportunity, for practical negotiation. Negotiation was based in the oral mode of interaction: therefore, Maori created an environment where they could practically engage with the Native Minister. The structure of the hui revolved around political debate, discussing issues and arguing points. Aspects of ceremony were geared towards this practical negotiation. Therefore, while ceremony was evident at some of the hui, it was not required to define the encounter, which explains the occasions when the negotiation itself formed the entirety of the encounter.

Although each hui was different, the first hui of the tour at Ranana is relatively typical of the way Maori managed the engagement with Ballance. A narrative of this hui opens a window upon the broader process that characterised the interaction at hui across the tour. While the document of speeches begins with the introductory address given by Whanganui leader Keepa Te Rangihiwini, an article from *New Zealand Herald* described the scene as Ballance arrived:

> On arriving at Ranana the entire population turned out to do him honour, and three volleys were fired by Kemp’s men. Hakas and other demonstrations of welcome were also given. A triumphal arch had been erected, and the guest was
escorted to the arch. Major Kemp, on behalf of the native committee and people, presented an address of welcome to him.¹

Reading from a written document, Keepa formally described the relationship between Whanganui Maori and the government, referring to the ‘submission’ made by the chiefs at Waitangi in 1840. Ballance then replied to this welcome, expressing his gratitude for the warm reception he had been given. The meeting then adjourned until the next day. According to the Herald, approximately 5000 people had turned out to welcome Ballance: an extraordinary number given the population in the entire Whanganui region was considerably less than this.² Proceedings reconvened inside Ranana’s whare-runanga. Keepa again spoke first, referring to the reasons why he had sent an invitation to Ballance to attend a meeting; they numbered eight in all. Paori Kuramate, the chairman of the recently elected Wanganui District Committee, then read the eight subjects for discussion.³ Ballance responded to each issue in turn, including a discussion on law based on a comment made by Keepa,⁴ and embarked on a lengthy description of his proposed legislation for the administration of Maori land. Keepa then responded, emphasising his political independence in relation to other Maori leaders and arguing that the Wanganui District Committee should act under the direction of the government when it came to the management of land. A debate then ensued, on these topics. Some of those who spoke had travelled from other parts of the Whanganui river: Hakaria had come from Koriniti, Rini from Hiruharama.⁵ Kuramate defended an accusation of bribery made by Keepa against the committees.

At this stage, Hoi, the only woman recorded at this hui, got up to express support for a point made by Hakaria. Keepa then spoke for the final time. He summarised his support for development by producing a surveyor’s theodolite and case of drawing instruments: symbolically expressing his support for surveys undertaken by the

¹ 'Mr Ballance and the Wanganui Natives', New Zealand Herald, 10 January 1885, p.5
² The Whanganui population will be discussed below.
³ Briefly, these were placing restrictions on Wanganui’s exterior boundary; confining the Wanganui District Committee to the Wanganui District only; that a steamer would be allowed on the Wanganui River; the committee would deal with surveys of land; the committee would deal with sales of land; the committee would deal with leases; the committee would deal with the question of where the railway was to go; the committee would question surveys within the tribe’s boundaries. The political significance of these issues will be discussed in Chapter 4. Document of Speeches, p.2
⁴ Keepa said that ‘I have always taught the people of Wanganui to aim at the ends sought by rich Europeans, but now I have changed my opinions, and I think it is best that the people should only act in accordance with law.’ Ballance responded by making lengthy reference to Te Whiti and Tawhiao, especially Tawhiao’s recent visit to England. Document of Speeches, pp.1, 5-6
⁵ Rini had welcomed Ballance, discussing aspects of the law; Whakaheirangi welcomed Ballance and discussed the exterior boundary; Te Pehi welcomed Ballance and requested time for him to consult with his people regarding a road, lest obstruction occur. Document of Speeches, pp.6-7
government in association with the committees. Winiata, from Manganui-a-te-ao, then expressed his agreement with Te Peehi regarding the road and his wish for a delay so that he could consult with his people, upon which the meeting broke for dinner. Upon resuming, Aperaniko Taiawhao briefly described the position he had taken during the New Zealand wars, before Keepa concluded by saying that all the subjects for discussion had been settled. Ballance recapitulated several issues, including saying that Keepa 'hardly understood' his reference to local committees under his proposed legislation on the administration of Maori land. After a few supplementary questions, the meeting concluded.

This brief description of one of the twelve hui gives an insight into aspects of ceremony, leadership and interaction that typified the encounters during Ballance’s tour. The greater part of each hui involved a wide ranging discussion and interaction between Maori and Ballance based on the list of subjects that the hosts had agreed upon prior to Ballance’s arrival. Within this general structure, however, there was extraordinary variety in types of speech, order of speech, aspects of ceremony and the physical environment in which the meetings were held. Variety is evidence of the spontaneity of Maori political conduct in the late nineteenth century: variety also makes generalisations fraught with difficulties. Therefore, it is necessary to go into the structure of the hui in detail. Before this can be done, however, some explanation is required as to how Maori organised the hui and a further explanation as to who delivered speeches.

II - Organisation of the hui

Each of the twelve hui involved different acts of organisation in order to make the meeting with Ballance effective. Organisation occurred on a political level and on a practical level. Politically, Maori needed to create a forum that represented different tribal interests when Ballance’s itinerary dictated only one hui per region; practically, each of the hui required considerable preparation because of the large number who attended. Only glimpses of the behind-the-scenes organisation that was involved in getting these meetings off the ground emerge from the document of speeches and surrounding documentation. What is revealed is the spontaneity of Maori political
society, further reinforcing the point that in their nature, hui of this kind were essentially flexible forums for political negotiation.

Deciding who was to host Ballance and consequently who assumed authority was very important. It appears as though the rights to host the hui were determined either by the initial invitation – in the case of Ranana and Whakato – or by Ballance’s itinerary – in the case of the two Kihikihi meetings. However, because the tour was comparatively short, yet considered of such importance by Maori it was inevitable that most of the meetings would be supra-tribal ones. Therefore, a degree of negotiation was required amongst Maori prior to Ballance’s visit.

Essentially, all of the hui required political cohesion, with people coming together to present their perspectives to Ballance. However, there were different degrees of political cohesion: Ballance met on some occasions with one iwi, on others with several iwi combined. Current debate over the tribal structure of Maori society usually centres around iwi, translated usually as the ‘tribe’, and hapu, mostly translated as the ‘sub-tribe.’ In her book Iwi: The Dynamics of Maori Tribal Organisation from c.1769 to c.1945, Angela Ballara argues that Maori society in the nineteenth century was primarily organised around the hapu. She argues that the image of a stratified, hierarchical tribal structure ‘derives from a long history of superficial observation of Maori by Pakeha.’ In addition, iwi, as a political structure, was a more recent development, primarily as a reaction against colonisation: ‘The many problems for Maori deriving from colonisation, including lack of control over land alienation, motivated them to find communal solutions. Many of these Maori solutions contributed to the corporatisation of the modern tribe.’ The implication that can be drawn from Ballara’s argument is that Pakeha, especially the government, forced Maori to act through iwi structures. The overall picture gained from the practice of hui during Ballance’s tour suggests a slightly more complicated situation. While, in some cases, Maori organised on the supra-iwi level as a reaction against governmental pressures, it was not unusual for people from different iwi to come together in one hui. Within the hui itself, the vast majority of Maori spoke to iwi identity, rather than hapu identity. Those who did refer to hapu were mostly leaders

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7 Ballara, iwi, p.19
8 Ballara, iwi, p.283
9 For an exceptional case, see discussion below regarding the hapu of Tuhourangi.
who raised local issues, specific to a particular hapu, or as part of general debate regarding the need for collective title.\textsuperscript{10} Perhaps of greater significance, Ballance was recorded referring to hapu on more occasions than Maori.

Some of the hui were pan-tribal forums where representatives from different iwi could present their views to Ballance; in others Maori presented themselves as more of a combined front. At Kihikihi (2), Ngati Maniapoto assumed the main speaking rights, as primary hosts, yet other iwi maintained a distinct presence. In this case, the pressure the government was bringing to bear on the four iwi whose land was to be affected by the Main Trunk Railway – Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and upper Whanganui – resulted in a joint response in the meeting with Ballance. Prior to the meeting, several hui were held to decide what this collective response would entail.\textsuperscript{11} Consequently, during the hui, while representatives of two of the other iwi spoke (Ngati Tuwharetoa was absent), authority was given to Wahabui to represent their collective voice. Therefore, different iwi coordinated a response among themselves on a major issue that affected them all.

Pan-tribal cohesion was less politically motivated at other hui, though often no less visible. The Parawai hui required the different iwi of the Hauraki area to present their issues at the same hui. Consequently, three speakers from different iwi in the district – Haora Tareranui, Hapi Rewi and Tukukino – were given the primary position of speaking prior to Ballance’s first response. This was undertaken with Ballance in mind: Ballance was directed by Tareranui to answer Tukukino’s questions before he answered Tareranui’s. Although this speaking order would have been organised prior to the hui, there are no suggestions as to how much consultation was required to satisfy the different tribal interests. On one hand, given the importance that Maori attached to meeting Ballance, negotiations for speaking rights may have lasted some time. On the other hand, pan-tribal hui were normal political fora in the late nineteenth century. Consequently, such organisation may have been spontaneous, taking place just prior to the hui.

If the political organisation of the hui was spontaneous then this would be reflected in standard practices of greeting among respective Maori leaders. An example of such spontaneity occurred at the Whakato hui. After two speakers had

\textsuperscript{10} See Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{11} This hui occurred on Tuesday 20 January at Aotearoa, where Ngati Maniapoto and Ngati Raukawa discussed the issues relating to the Main Trunk railway. ‘Meeting of Waikato Natives’, \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 21 January 1885, p.5
offered welcomes to Ballance, Arapeta Potae rose to welcome ‘those of the Ngatiporou who were present.’ Potae then ‘sang a song of welcome.’ Like any other hui, those who were hosts, or tangata whenua, assumed the position of hosts: welcoming all those who were from other areas. Visitors offered their own welcomes and identified themselves according to their iwi, in this case Ngati Porou and Ngati Kahungunu. At other hui, people simply identified themselves as belonging to a particular area or tribal grouping. At the Pipiriki hui, for example, Te Kaoriroti Kamuera explained how he was from another area: ‘This is my settlement. I do not live at Ranana, although I come from there.’ The main point that emerges from a study of the document of speeches is that it was the norm of Maori politics to join together at hui.

The examples of the three Rotorua hui suggest that groups could claim simultaneous identities without conflict. Ballara, in explaining the development of the Te Arawa federation from the late nineteenth century on, discusses the two hui with Ballance at Ohinemutu and Whakarewarewa. Ballara argues that at these two hui, Ngati Whakaue and Tuhourangi, who also presented themselves as Te Arawa, ‘were developing separate institutions to attempt to govern their people and provide solutions for their problems.’ Ballara’s argument has some merit: Ngati Whakaue and Tuhourangi did manage to obtain separate meetings with Ballance and a request had been made for separate committees for each of the four main iwi of the Te Arawa tribe. Ballara’s evidence is Tuhourangi’s request for a separate committee at the Whakarewarewa hui. This example, however, is slightly misleading. The request was specifically made for a committee to ‘act under the direction of the District Native Committee’. In addition, Tuhourangi made requests for extra powers to be given to the Rotorua District Committee. While Ngati Whakaue and Tuhourangi were different iwi, this is not evidence that the two were antagonistically opposed. Speakers at Ohinemutu, Mokoia and Whakarewarewa welcomed Ballance first to Te Arawa, then to specific tribal groupings within this. Overall, however, this example reflects the fact that Maori preferred to meet and discuss with Ballance at the level of the

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12 Document of Speeches, p.66
13 Document of Speeches, p.9
14 Ballara, iwi, p.306
15 In October 1883, according to O’Malley, Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikaheke of Ngati Rangiwehehi wrote to Native Minister John Bryce informing him that as there were four main divisions of Te Arawa, there should also be four committees for them. O’Malley, pp.165-6
16 Document of Speeches, pp.51, 54-55
smallest tribal unit possible, in order to present issues specific to that community. Therefore, because Ngati Whakaue and Tuhourangi met separately with Ballance, this was not to diminish Te Arawa identity.

A further point should be added regarding the Whakarewarewa hui, which was an exception to the rule that Maori primarily organised around iwi. Although Tuhourangi was the main unit represented, written documents were presented on behalf of different hapu of Tuhourangi: Ngati Wahiao by Wiremu Pauro, Ngati Whaoa by Wiari Ngatai and on behalf of the ‘other hapus of Tuhourangi’, by Maika Te Aporo. Ballara sees evidence of continuity in the identification with Ngati Wahiao as a hapu in particular.\(^{17}\) However, in political terms, there is little significance in this difference evident in the Whakarewarewa hui; on the contrary, that Wiremu Pauro delivered the subjects for both Tuhourangi and Ngati Wahiao suggests that there was anything but a split. The subjects read by Pauro simply demonstrates that Tuhourangi and Ngati Wahiao, as different entities, faced different issues.\(^{18}\)

The final aspect of the organisation of the hui – the staging and practical organisation – is even more difficult to establish. As with any large congregation of people, the hosting of hui in the late nineteenth century, particularly those that were seen with such historical significance, required a huge amount of food and good will.\(^{19}\) The only record of the number of people attending the hui comes through the New Zealand Herald’s observation that 5000 people turned out to bid Ballance welcome at the Ranana hui. As mentioned above, this is an extraordinary number given the population of the Whanganui district numbered somewhere between 2000 and 4000.\(^{20}\) Even if the actual number was considerably less than 5000, it is evidence

\(^{17}\) Ballara, *Iwi*, pp.228–230

\(^{18}\) Perhaps a more significant difference could be taken from the disagreement between Tuhourangi and Ngati Rangitihi. See below footnote.

\(^{19}\) Very little has been written about the organisation of hui in the late nineteenth century. A comparison can be made, however, with Salmond’s discussion of hui in the 1960s and 1970s. Salmond explains that at a typical hui, about 300–500 people are fed and accommodated for a period of up to three days, although some can reach up to 5000 people. Salmond, pp.91, 53

\(^{20}\) Census figures can be used only as a rough guide to population in this period. According to reports, in 1874 the population of lower and upper Whanganui combined was 3015. By 1878 this figure had risen to 4161 out of a total Maori population of 42819. Somewhat confusingly, the figure for the Whanganui population dropped to 1968 in the next census in 1881, with the overall population increasing slightly. The next census in 1886 records a similar figure of 1133, with the overall population dropping slightly. These final two figures may be aberrations, a result of redrawn boundaries for the districts. The population for the Whanganui in this region, then, can only be tentatively guessed at, probably falling somewhere between the 2000 and 4000 mark. ‘Approximate Census of the Maori Population’, *AJHR*, 1874, G-7; ‘Census of the Maori population, 1878’, *AJHR*, 1878, G-2; ‘Census of the Maori Population’, *AJHR*, 1881, G-3; ‘Census of the Maori Population’, *AJHR*, 1886, G-12
in support of the significance with which Maori viewed Ballance’s visit.\textsuperscript{21} A large number of people probably turned out for most of the other hui, except perhaps for those at Kihikihi which was not a Maori settlement, where probably only the leaders of the respective iwi made the trip.\textsuperscript{22} The sites of the other hui – Ranana, Pipiriki, Hiruharama, Whatiwhatihoe, Parawai, Ohinemutu, Mokoia, Whakarewarewa, Whareroa and Whakato – were all Maori settlements.\textsuperscript{23} It appears as though Ballance stayed in a hotel when he was near a Pakeha settlement: although on the Whanganui river he would have been housed within the village.\textsuperscript{24} Provisions for feeding large numbers of visitors was required for these hui, such as Wahanui’s purchase of twenty-four sheep two weeks prior to the hui.\textsuperscript{25} While the hui were primarily designed for business, the occasion was also a cause for celebration; historically, few communities had received a visit from a minister of Native Affairs. However, of the hundreds of people who gathered to welcome and hear Ballance during the tour, only a few dozen had the opportunity or the rights to speak on behalf of their communities during a hui.

\section*{III – Identity of speakers and the basis of leadership}

In all, the speeches of 126 Maori are recorded in the document, with a total of 230 acts of speech.\textsuperscript{26} While some spoke briefly compared to others, the speeches are all

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\textsuperscript{21} Reports from other hui in the period record large turnouts. For example, at a hui between Ngati Tuharetoa, upper Whanganui and portions of Ngati Maniapoto and Ngati Raukawa at Poutu, near Taupo, in late 1885, 1000 people were recorded being present for the hui. In 1876, when the Governor visitedWaitangi, a reported 400 to 500 had turned out. Approximately 600 people gathered for a pan-tribal hui at Paeroa, also in 1876. ‘Native Meeting, Poutu, Taupo’, \textit{AJHR}, 1886, G-3, p.1; ‘The Governor’s Visit to the North’, \textit{Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani}, 1876, vol.12, p.132; ‘The Paeroa Meeting’, \textit{Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani}, 1876, vol.12, p.111
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\textsuperscript{22} Salmond’s explanation is probably applicable to most of the hui during Ballance’s tour: “The general principle that governs attendance at a hui is “the more the better”, because a large number of visitors is a compliment to the sponsors, and a recognition of their mana.” Salmond, p.98
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\textsuperscript{23} Some settlements, however, were closer to Pakeha towns than others. Ohinemutu and Whakarewarewa, in particular were close to the new Rotorua township. Similarly, Parawai was just outside the Thames township. Whareroa, established in the 1870s, was across the harbour from the town of Tauranga.
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\textsuperscript{24} For example, at Rotorua Ballance stayed at Lake House, at Tauranga he stayed at the Menzies Hotel. ‘The Native Minister at Rotorua’, \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 21 February 1885, p.5; \textit{Bay of Plenty Times}, 21 February 1885, p.2
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\textsuperscript{25} ‘The Natives and Mr. Ballance’s visit’, \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 21 January 1885, p.5
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\textsuperscript{26} The definition of an ‘act of speech’ includes all occasions in the document where a speaker is indicated by their name. This includes the conversational exchanges that occasionally occurred between Maori leaders and Ballance. An extreme example of this was when Paora Tuaheere replied to a question with a simple ‘Yes’. However, the vast majority of speeches are of a substantial length, lasting
relatively the same length. The politics of speaking rights at hui is a complex topic, almost impenetrable for studies of nineteenth century hui. However, a number of points can be deduced from the document of speeches.

Leadership in the late nineteenth century was largely continuous with earlier periods. Most scholarly writing on leadership in nineteenth century Maori society emphasises two core characteristics.\textsuperscript{27} Firstly, broad kin groups (hapu) formed around the leadership of an individual who gained authority through genealogical links to eponymous ancestors. However, genealogy was not the sole basis for leadership. Individuals had to fulfil genealogical potential through demonstrations of efficient leadership: ‘The mana of a chief was integrated with the strength of the tribe. It was not a mysterious, indefinable quality flowing from supernatural sources; it was basically the result of successive and successful human achievements.’\textsuperscript{28} Leaders of hapu were rangatira – usually the translation of ‘chief’ in letters and transcripts of hui from the late nineteenth century. The relationship between rangatira and the next level of political leadership, usually termed as ariki, or leaders of iwi, is less clear.\textsuperscript{29} ‘Ariki’ usually refers to the uncontested principal chief of an iwi. However, apart from a few examples, particularly the Te Heuheu lineage of Ngati Tuwharetoa, principal chieftainship was rarely uncontested. Such an example would be the relationship between Wahanui Huatare and Rewi Maniapoto: although the former took on a greater prominence among Ngati Maniapoto towards the end of the century, it would be difficult to assert that Wahanui’s authority was greater than that of Rewi.

Speaking rights at hui, whether tribal hui or those held with Crown representatives generally followed predetermined lines of leadership and followed the various tribal differences outlined above. This was the case during the meetings with

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\textsuperscript{27} See, for example, Waitangi Tribunal, Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Orakei Claim (Wai – 9), (Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 1987), p.185, Firth, p.107 and Ward, A Show of Justice, p.5


\textsuperscript{29} Ballara argues that the framework put forward by Howe, regarding the correspondence between ariki, rangatira and kaumatua as leaders of iwi, hapu and whanau respectively, is as fraught as the relationship between the tribal structures themselves. Using the terms without specific evidence is dangerous, as Winiata explains in respect of the modern era: ‘The old-time rangatira has been absorbed into the ariki position and the kaumatua has been elevated and universalized.’ Ballara, Iwi, pp.19, 204-206; Maharaia Winiata, The Changing Role of the Leader in Maori Society: A Study in Social Change and Race Relations, (Auckland: Blackwood and Janet Paul, 1967), p.102
the Native Minister.\textsuperscript{30} The vast majority of those who dominated the proceedings of the hui – either by welcoming Ballance first or leading subsequent debates – were leaders of iwi. At Rananana, Keepa Te Rangihiwini, of Whanganui, dominated interchanges with Ballance and other Maori, speaking four times; Wahanui (Ngati Maniapoto, six times) and Rewi (Ngati Maniapoto, five times) at Kihikihi (2); Tawhiao (Waikato, nine) and Te Wheoro (Waikato, six) at Whatiwhatihoe; Retireti Tapihana (Ngati Whakaue, three) at Ohinemutu; Wi Keepa Te Rangipuaawhe (Tuhourangi, six) at Whakarewarewa; Hori Ngatai (Ngai Te Rangi, seven) at Whareroa; and Wi Pere\textsuperscript{31} (Te Aitanga-a-Mahaki and Rongowhakaata, eight) at Whakato. The obvious exception is the Parawai hui, where no one person dominated the discussions. The beginning of the korero was shared between Tamati Paipa, Hapi Rewi and Haora Tareranui, after which everyone only spoke once.

The presence of Te Kooti – who was at the centre of his community’s meeting with Ballance at Kihikihi – amongst the preponderance of traditional political leaders is evidence that leadership in Maori society had widened from the traditional model. Te Kooti was not a rangatira; his leadership was based on his charisma, his personal qualities and his spiritual teachings.\textsuperscript{32} As Binney explains, he spoke as a spiritual leader, not as a politician of the time.\textsuperscript{33} This presents an interesting problem. Although Te Kooti was not a political leader, he was involved in politics to some extent: spiritual leaders were inevitably politicians of sorts. What does Te Kooti’s role signify for political leadership as a whole?

Rosenfeld argues that during this period mana was passing from ‘hereditary’ chiefs to tohunga (religious experts).\textsuperscript{34} This is a very difficult thesis to establish. Firstly, tohunga were not a separate ‘grade’ of society, instead they formed more of a profession of experts in a variety of fields.\textsuperscript{35} Certainly, as Elsmore argues, a new type

\textsuperscript{30} In most cases, leaders in Maori society were those who negotiated and interacted with Pakeha. Ballance was treated no differently in this regard; those who held authority in Maori society (known from the historiography but evident in the document of speeches) were those who dominated proceedings with Ballance.

\textsuperscript{31} In some ways Wi Pere’s case was an exception. The relationship between him and Hirini Te Kani will be discussed below.

\textsuperscript{32} Winia, p.75


\textsuperscript{34} Jean E. Rosenfeld, \textit{The Island Broken in Two Halves: Land and Renewal Movements Among the Maori of New Zealand}, (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), p.146

\textsuperscript{35} Buck, p.338
of leader arose from around 1860 on;\textsuperscript{36} however, it is very questionable whether one can assume from the evidence available that mana was ‘passing’ from one ‘grade’ of society to another. Secondly, chiefs – by their status – had a crucial role in spiritual matters, particularly the managing of tapu, although it is difficult to establish what exactly these religious roles entailed in the late nineteenth century. Tawhiao’s role as religious and political leader, through Tariao and the Kingitanga respectively, speaks to the persistence of mana in both spheres, although Tawhiao, as Maori King, occupied an exceptional position. A more apposite example is the transformation of the Ngati Pikiao religious movement led by Himiona Te Orinui after their chief, Te Pokiha Taranui, joined: the movement came to be known as Pokiha’s Karakia or Fox’s Church.\textsuperscript{37} In addition, as Winiata explains, the rise of the charismatic leaders was not a complete break from the past: charismatic leaders emphasised the ritual aspects of traditional leadership.\textsuperscript{38} In summary, the genesis and historical experience of those who dominated proceedings with Ballance suggests chieftainship emerging from traditional tribal society remained strong. Evidence for this can be seen in the nine leaders cited above, all of whom emerged from traditional society. The practice of leadership during Ballance’s tour, then, suggests that Rosenfeld’s argument – that mana was passing from the chiefs – is largely inaccurate.

Lesley Andrews makes a more compelling argument regarding the bases of leadership in late nineteenth century Maori society. She says that leadership roles in the late nineteenth century multiplied and expanded reflecting the complexity of the political environment in this period.\textsuperscript{39} One person could fulfil a variety of roles, secular, religious, or political roles, most of which required engaging with the Pakeha order. Leaders emerged who could specifically provide orientation to political issues. People such as Tapihana and Pere, the sons of Pakeha merchants and high-born Maori mothers,\textsuperscript{40} could become prominent in traditional society as well as representing their

\textsuperscript{38} Winiata, p.67
\textsuperscript{39} Andrews explains that ‘we do not know enough about the backgrounds of leaders at the local level to understand the changing patterns of power and authority. However, national leaders drew on both old and new criteria in validating their roles.’ Constance Lesley Andrews, ‘Aspects of Development, 1870-1890’, in I.H. Kawharu (ed.), \textit{Conflict and Compromise: Essays on the Maori Since Colonisation}, (Wellington: Reed, 1975), p.91
\textsuperscript{40} Young, ‘Tapsell, Ngatai Tohi Te Uurangi, 1844 - 1928; Tapsell, Retireti, 1836 – 1913’; Ward, ‘Pere, Wiremu, 1837 – 1915’
people in the wider world. Pere’s standing as primary speaker at the Whakato hui eclipsed that of Hirini Te Kani, who spoke only to welcome Ballance, despite being the principal leader present and having been foremost in establishing the hui. Pere, the only sitting member of parliament who Ballance encountered throughout the tour, embodied the meritocratic basis upon which leaders in traditional society could succeed. His position of authority reflected his high-born status and the increasing importance Maori parliamentary leaders had gained in district wide affairs.\(^41\) By 1885, the different ways in which political authority could be exercised had expanded to include a variety of roles.

As an indication of the expanding roles of leadership, alongside a traditional leader, the proceedings of each meeting were usually conducted with another leader, more politically oriented and usually of lesser status. This person either had a prominent role in the new political initiatives, the Native District Committees, or held a similar position of responsibility within the political makeup of the district. Usually, these leaders read the list of subjects that formed the central part of the discussions. Although these people held an important role in the operation of the hui, they were not as forthright as the principal leaders discussed above. At three of the hui a representative of the Native District Committee, often the chairman, introduced the subjects for discussion and was subsequently heavily involved in the exchanges with Ballance: Paori Kuramate (chairman of the Wanganui District Committee) at Ranana, John Ormsby (chairman of the Kawhia District Committee) at Kihikihi (2) and Whittitera Te Waiatua (representing the chairman of the Rotorua District Committee)\(^42\) at Ohinemutu. Ormsby, in particular, was central to discussions in a hui that included representatives from iwi other than his own. In addition, Te Mete Raukawa – a member of the Rotorua District Committee – played an almost identical role as a foil to Hori Ngatai at Whareroa, perhaps as a demonstration of Ngai Te Rangi’s desire to have their own committee.\(^43\) At Parawai, Ballance had a meeting with the Hauraki

\(^41\) Ward argues that Pere lost the trust of some of the people in the district following a failed land scheme. Although Pere lost to James Carroll in 1887, he returned to parliament in 1894 and remained for many years until he was defeated by a young Apirana Ngata in 1905, suggesting that a large base of the Maori population on the East Coast continued to support him. Ward, *A Show of Justice*, p.297

\(^42\) The chairman, Wi Keepa Te Rangipuawhe was a principal leader of Tuhourangi, and absented himself from the Ohinemutu hui to prepare for the hui at Whakarewarewa. Consequently, Rangipuawhe acted as leader of Tuhourangi, rather than as chairman of the Rotorua District Committee.

\(^43\) See Chapter 5.
District Committee prior to the general hui, although no representatives appeared on behalf of the committee in the main hui itself.

The Native District Committees, where they were successful, were broadly representative of the makeup of tribal governance in Maori society. After the passing of the Native Committees 1883 Act, the then Native Minister John Bryce decided that only a few districts would be established, initially six or seven, where Maori would nominate and elect a committee of twelve members.\textsuperscript{44} Ultimately, however, only twelve districts were proclaimed under the Act.\textsuperscript{45} Despite initial enthusiasm from Maori, the size of the districts, often requiring traditional enemies to sit on the same committee, meant that nominations and elections were generally a slow process. When elections did occur, the Resident Magistrates observed that interest focused primarily in areas where elections were held: a natural reaction to the administrative boundaries Bryce had enforced.\textsuperscript{46} However, despite tribal differences, Maori within a number of districts attempted to make the committees accordingly representative. For example, a hui was held among the iwi of Hauraki to determine the constitution of the committee. Subsequently, a letter was sent informing the government of how many representatives each iwi would elect for the committee.\textsuperscript{47} In 1885, where a committee did play a major role in the proceedings, there was a correlation between the tribal makeup of the committee and the hosts of the hui itself. The Kawhia District Committee, chaired by John Ormsby, was primarily made up of Ngati Maniapoto\textsuperscript{48}; the Rotorua District Committee that encompassed a huge district, stretching from Tauranga to Taupo, met with Ballance at Ohinemutu and nowhere else, except at the Whareroa hui, where Te Mete Raukawa requested a separate committee for Ngai Te Rangi; the Wanganui District Committee, which stretched down to Otaki, was dominated by Whanganui members; the Hauraki District Committee met with Ballance at Parawai. While Maori were frustrated with the powers and jurisdiction of the committees, when they met Ballance, the committee was intimately part of the

\textsuperscript{44} The purpose of the committees and their political significance will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.
\textsuperscript{45} These districts were Bay of Islands, Kaipara, Waikato, Thames, Kawhia, Rotorua, Opotiki, East Cape, Hawke’s Bay, Wanganui, Taranaki and Wairarapa, plus a committee for the South Island, the Kaiapoi Committee. O’Malley, p.167; ‘List of Native Committee Districts and Chairmans’, 15 April 1885, MA 23/13a: Native Committees
\textsuperscript{46} O’Malley, pp.168-170
\textsuperscript{47} The twelve members were allocated thus: Ngati Tamatera – 2 (representatives), Ngati Hako - 1, Ngati Koi – 1, Ngati Paoa – 3, Ngati Whanaunga – 2, Ngati Maru – 3. Taipari to Wilkinson, 6 December 1883, MA 23/13a: Native Committees.
\textsuperscript{48} O’Malley, p.189
organisational front-line of that hui. In addition, the leadership occasionally, though not always, reflected existing tribal leadership. Hone Mohi Tawhai was elected chairman for the Bay of Islands, Wi Keepa Rangipuawhe for Rotorua and Henare Matua for Hawkes Bay.\(^{49}\) In short, the Native District Committees developed out of existing forms of governance within Maori society.

A further point can be made regarding the place of the committees within the hui. The committees – as legally established bodies – were seen as the appropriate institutions to negotiate with Ballance, precisely because they were bodies legislated for by the state. While Maori saw numerous problems with the structure of the committees, the fact that they were established in law gave them some legitimacy and provided Maori with a point of leverage with the government.\(^{50}\) However, at hui in areas where there was no committee, Maori generally conducted the hui in a similar manner, with one individual taking a lead role and another introducing policy matters for discussion. Wi Pewhairangi introduced the subjects of discussion at the Whakato hui after Wi Pere’s general introduction. Ratema Te Awekotuku and Wiremu Pauro served a similar function at the Mokoia and Whakarewarewa hui respectively. Even Te Wheororo outlined a few general issues after Tawhiao’s initial speech. Although it is difficult to understand exactly what position each of these people held in the leadership of their respective iwi, most of them probably rose to prominence because of their acumen in public debate and their knowledge of specific political issues such as land acts. Those who were members of the committees were probably nominated because of these abilities in the first instance.

Beyond the initial formal introduction of proceedings, speaking rights were relatively undefined, with people spontaneously bringing their issues in front of the Native Minister. Without a detailed study of each community, it is difficult to ascertain the identities of the large majority who spoke only once (eighty one persons), where they came from and which iwi they belonged to. Most were probably the leaders of hapu. At Parawai, for example, a number of people requested help from Ballance on the basis that they represented their ‘people’.\(^{51}\) These individuals tended to speak as leaders of smaller groups of people, seeking action on local issues.

\(^{49}\) ‘List of Native Committee Districts and Chairmans’, 15 April 1885, MA 23/13a: Native Committees
\(^{50}\) This point will be discussed further in Chapter 4.
\(^{51}\) See the speeches of Pepene, Tamati Paetaki, Kapihana te Tuhi, Tamati Waka, Wiremu Turipona, Te Meremana, Hakipene Hura, Matiu Pono, Epeniha, Mango, Ngapari, “A native”, Hohepo Mataiataua, Te
While the hui seem an overwhelmingly male dominated environment, women were also involved in speaking to Ballance during his tour. Specifically, four women were recorded: one at Ranana (Hoi), two at Parawai (Ripeka Turepona and Arani Watene) and one at Tauranga (Marata). As a whole, the document supports Judith Binney’s argument that in the nineteenth century women could hold positions of leadership but that men tended to hold formal leadership. The exception that perhaps proves this rule is Ripeka Turepona at the Parawai hui. Turepona’s speech suggests that she represented her hapu, negotiating with Ballance over a block of land and reading out a letter that she had previously sent to the government on the issue. While men predominantly held formal leadership, Maori political society was flexible enough for women to act on behalf of their people without any great significance being attributed to the practice. None of the four women were opposed in their right to speak; no one – apart from Lewis who identified each as a woman beside their names in the text – saw it as out of the ordinary.

IV - Aspects of ceremony within the hui

Having looked at the organisational structure and the political makeup of the hui, this chapter now turns to the ceremonial structure Maori used in greeting Ballance, an example of which can be seen in the Ranana hui. “Ceremonial structure” is a loose term used to encompass the different rites, practices and performances used by welcoming the Native Minister. Often these rites, practices and performances go deeper than ‘ceremony’ – which is a display of celebration based on tradition – and into ‘ritual’ – which is essentially religious or solemn ceremony. Because ritual is a deeper form of ceremony, for the purposes of this discussion, it can be assumed part of the overall “ceremonial structure” of the hui. It is difficult, of course, to build a coherent picture of this structure from the fragmentary evidence that exists on Ballance’s tour. The lack of research on hui in the late nineteenth century, particularly between Maori and Pakeha, also makes speculation a perilous exercise. However,

some explanation is required in order to understand what kind of environment Maori created and what kind of message they hoped to convey to Ballance.

There are several reasons why this particular set of hui are difficult to interpret. Firstly, very little has been written on how the “rituals of encounter” – the term used by Anne Salmond to describe the ‘calling, chanting, wailing and oratory’ that characterises the formal welcome at a hui⁵³ – otherwise known as the kawa of the hui, were applied in meetings with Pakeha in the nineteenth century. Early accounts of hui suggest that Maori interacted with Pakeha according to ritual and customary procedures: in such instances, Maori engaged with Pakeha in accordance with the normal political conduct of Maori society. According to Salmond, in her seminal study *Hui: A Study of Maori Ceremonial Gatherings*, the main purpose and structure of hui has remained the same from early contact until contemporary times, although the effects of contact and change in general have altered the meaning behind some rituals. Salmond argues that accounts from hui early in the nineteenth century suggest Maori generally conducted such gatherings within a set structure. This could be seen in the order of speakers, the type of speech used, the place of meeting and the subjects traversed.⁵⁴ However, she also notes that as the century progressed, the ritual function of the hui to establish peace between two groups lessened, corresponding with the diminishing threat of war.⁵⁵ Consequently, as peace came to be assumed, ritual challenges, such as the wero, became more symbolic.⁵⁶ Change mostly served to formalise what had formerly been a loose structure characterised by regional variations.⁵⁷ The purpose of the call of welcome to remove the tapu of the visitors

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⁵³ Salmond, p.115
⁵⁴ Salmond summarises the pattern of these early hui as a gathering where a number of people talk in turn, using proverbs and genealogy, the best speaker gaining extra mana. These gatherings were held in the marae or ‘wherever two groups happened to meet.’ Salmond describes the initial encounter between hosts and visitors as ‘ceremonious and formal’; the reason being that ‘in those uneasy days it was difficult to tell friends from enemies.’ Ceremonial challenges established peaceful intentions, then the visitors were welcomed in and speeches begun. This, according to Salmond, was the general structure by which hui operated in the early nineteenth century. Salmond later summarises the order of the ‘rituals of encounter’ in contemporary hui: Waarea (protective incantation), wero (challenge), karanga (call of welcome), powhiri (action chant of welcome), tangi, whaikorero and hongi. Salmond, pp.14-15, 118
⁵⁵ Salmond, p.17
⁵⁶ There are instances of the wero holding more than symbolic meaning at the time of Ballance’s tour. For example, see the account of a hui held at Parawai in 1876. ‘The Maori Meeting at Parawai’, *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, 1876, vol.12, pp.124-5.
⁵⁷ This is not to say that tribal variations were extinguished. Numerous regional and tribal variations continued into the twentieth century, such as the order of speech (paeka and utuutu) and conventions as to the right of women to speak on the marae. However, in the case of haka, as Gardiner explains,
(manuhiriria) remained a central component in hui between Maori, and with it whai korero (formal speech) and other elements of the kawa.  

However, it is far from certain what intent lay behind ceremonial practices in hui with Pakeha, especially in the late nineteenth century. While in some senses Maori continued to act in accordance with the norms of political conduct – unconsciously acting within the protocol in which they had been educated – ceremony became more symbolic and responsive to the significance of the forum. It may be argued that this change can be linked to the political disenfranchisement discussed in Chapter 2. As power became increasingly entrenched in central government in the late nineteenth century, so that Maori were unable to control the site of negotiation, Maori saw a greater political significance in where and how political negotiation took place. Therefore, as politics between Maori leadership and the government became more complicated, a more formalised structure of political interaction followed. Firstly, Maori saw an implicit difference between hui solely for other Maori and those held for Pakeha dignitaries. Where Maori did meet with Pakeha dignitaries, they differentiated between political figures who were largely ceremonial and those with whom they could discuss business. Often this was the difference between a Governor, or a visiting British royal, and a minister of the Crown, such as the minister of Native Affairs. Where Maori lacked the power to control the setting of political negotiation, they may have attempted to reclaim some of that lost power by defining the encounter


59 If the hui was supposed to be an all Maori affair, Pakeha were often not allowed to speak. For example, at the pan-tribal hui at Maungatautari in 1873, Clark was not allowed to speak. At the annual Kingitanga hui in 1882, McDonald interrupted the course of discussion, asking the previous speaker to clarify a point. A Ngati Raukawa chief asked McDonald not to interfere, saying the purpose of the day's proceedings was for visiting Maori to reply to the proposals set down by the Kingitanga the previous day. Therefore, although Pakeha were often present at these occasions, they did not have speaking rights. 'Further reports from officers in Native Districts', AJHR, 1873, G-1, no.5&6, pp.5-11; 'Tawhiao's meeting at Whatiwhitihohe in May, 1882', AJHR, 1882, G-4A

60 For example, during Governor Onslow's visit to the Waikato in April 1890, at a meeting with Ngati Maniapoto, the collected leaders presented an address to the Governor, expressing their gratitude for his visit. After the meeting with the Governor had adjourned, those who had assembled met with the Native Minister where, according to a report, 'a number of matters connected with their welfare were discussed.' A very similar process occurred when the Governor and McLean visited Ngapuhi at Waitangi in 1876. In the minds of Maori, then, ceremony and politics could be separated out from each other. 'Reports from officers in Native Districts', AJHR, 1890, G-2, no.4; 'The Governor's Visit to the North', Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani, 1876, vol.12, p.132
in terms of cultural difference. Different layers of significance emerged as politics itself became more complex.

When Maori leadership met with Pakeha political figures a number of factors came into focus: a constant and dynamic tradition and a rapidly changing present. Maori began to define politics in cultural terms in a conscious presentation of cultural difference. In environments where Maori engaged with Pakeha, this served to reinforce the distinctive aspects of Maori culture. However, by doing so, Maori were also separating culture from political practice, abstracting from what was originally reflexive conduct into a core set of principles. Yet at the same time, Maori also instinctively referred back to a tradition of their own. For example, Maori in the late nineteenth century primarily saw the oral medium of exchange and negotiation as important to bringing about effective and good governance; they did not rely on an oral culture simply because it was a part of their past that differentiated Maori and Pakeha societies. Although this aspect of the past needs considerably more research, examples from the late nineteenth century suggest both the abstracted and the reflexive were in use. This was a reflection of the continuing significance of tradition in Maori society and of an attempt to grapple with the new world that had come about as a result of colonisation. Ballance’s tour occurred in the middle of a period when all these factors were coming together to change Maori political society. It is for this reason that the ceremonial structure that characterised the twelve hui is so difficult to explain.

The significance of Ballance’s tour is that because most of the hui were held in Maori communities, unlike the majority of political negotiations between the government and Maori leaders in the late nineteenth century, Maori were able to construct the environment for negotiation as they wished. Consequently, what evidence there is suggests that Maori predominantly used ceremony unconsciously in accordance with the norms of political conduct, but with an undercurrent of cultural

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61 One such example occurred during the Cambridge session of the hearings of the Commission on Native Land Laws in 1891. Pepene Eketone, who greeted the Commissioners first, stated that the commission was, ‘strange to us, chiefs of Ngatiraukawa, Ngatimanianipoto, Ngatituwheatou; and it is in accordance with Maori custom that the chiefs greet the Commissioners first. It will not be a long proceeding; it will just be of a formal character.’ There is an act of presentation in this statement: a reclamation of power in a situation where the commissioners held the position as arbitrators. By explaining the process by which his group was going to proceed, Pepene was reclaiming the power that was inherently denied in coming before the commission. This example is demonstrative of the attempt by Maori to find the most effective way of negotiating with ministers with government institutions. ‘Commission ‘Native Land Laws’: Minutes from’, AJHR, 1891, G-1, p.2
consciousness. Mostly, Maori structured the hui in order to negotiate most efficaciously with the Native Minister. Although the evidence is fragmentary, on occasions during the tour where Ballance travelled to Maori communities, he was welcomed according to the “rituals of encounter”, or the ‘kawa’ of the hui.

The ‘shouts of welcome’ mentioned in the New Zealand Herald as part of the Ohinemutu hui, inviting Ballance onto the marae, almost definitely referred to karanga.62 ‘Other demonstrations of welcome’ recorded in the Herald for the Ranana hui may have referred to karanga, or other aspects of the powhiri. However, the lack of information prevents a definitive explanation. Yet, that the external ceremony was largely not recorded suggests Lewis had seen the ceremony before. This in turn suggests ceremony was not used as a cultural marker of difference, but simply reflected the political conduct normal to Maori society.

The performance of haka presents a different case. As cited above, Ballance was welcomed at Ranana with haka. However, without further explanation, little can be deduced from this example. In traditional terms, haka served a specific social purpose, symbolically demonstrating strength through performance. Haka were not simply ‘dances of war’: demonstrating strength could substitute for war or even help in facilitating peace. Furthermore, the purposes of haka expanded post-contact; when interacting with Pakeha leaders, haka contained specific political messages.63 Such would have been the case with the haka performed by Te Kooti and his followers on the main street of Kihikihi. Te Kooti spent much time composing his own haka: the message contained in the haka made to welcome Ballance would have been specific to the occasion, a way of prefacing the negotiation that was about to commence inside the Kihikihi Public Hall. However, haka were also performed as entertainment, usually for visiting Pakeha dignitaries or as part of the expanding tourist trade run by Maori. An example of this occurred at the Whakato hui; Wi Pere, after welcoming Ballance, said that ‘The only proceedings to-day are welcoming you. This is a day of pleasure, a day of amusement. My young people will indulge in amusement before you.’64

While performances such as haka and waiata would have occurred at most of the hui, on some occasions, such as the meeting with Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati

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62 New Zealand Herald, 17 February 1885, p.5
63 Gardiner, p.28
64 Document of Speeches, p.66
Raukawa and upper Whanganui at Kihikihi Public Hall, there is no evidence of ceremony external to the meeting itself. As will be discussed below, the only apparent use of “ceremony” was the use of formal speech, or whaikorero, in greeting Ballance. Speakers at this hui were keen to stress the significance of the meeting as an orally based medium of political interaction. On most occasions, the fact that Ballance was in such an obviously Maori environment meant that they did not have to present themselves in a way that clearly articulated the cultural differences between Maori and Pakeha, as a way of reclaiming some of the power lost to them in the course of the nineteenth century. Where Ballance and his entourage were in the minority they could not set the tone of the meeting simply by their presence.

The settings of the various hui suggest that Maori primarily sought face-to-face negotiation within their own communities. As with contemporary hui, most of the hui were characterised by the more formal welcome being held outside with the informal discussions continuing inside the whare-runanga (council-house). A number of the whare-runanga that housed the discussions during Ballance’s tour had been built in the 1870s. This was the case with Keepa Te Rangihiwinui’s council house at Ranana. The whare-runanga used for the Ohinemutu hui, Tama Te Kapua, had been built in the early 1870s to house Ngati Whakaue’s new political initiative, the Komiti Nui. Hori Ngatai’s settlement at Whareroa had also been established in the 1870s.65 According to Salmond, whare-runanga ‘had become to symbolise Maori resistance to European encroachment’ – a suggestion that Maori consciously separated from Pakeha.66 However, although Maori would have seen a political significance in the fact that negotiations were held in whare-runanga, the idea that these were symbols of ‘Maori resistance to European encroachment’ is contradicted by the fact of Ballance’s tour itself. Different Maori communities across the central North Island sought the presence of a Native Minister to find some common ground, to negotiate with the government on a relative level of equality.

Although the primary aim was for face-to-face negotiation within Maori communities, the occurrence of hall hui suggests that political considerations were flexible enough to make concessions to Ballance’s itinerary and to conduct

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65 Meeting houses had a spiritual significance as well as a political significance. As Salmond explains, the meeting house represents a specific ancestor or event of a past, most often a remote but famous male ancestor. For example, this was the case for the Tama Te Kapua whare-runanga: Tama Te Kapua was the captain of the Arawa waka. Salmond, p.39
66 Salmond, p.81
negotiations elsewhere. The two meetings held at Kihikihi, in the Kihikihi Public Hall, are clear exceptions to the general rule that hui were held in Maori communities and in whare-runanga. When Ballance met with Te Kooti and his people, and with the larger pan-tribal gathering, both the formal speeches and the discussion occurred inside the hall. Mostly, it seems the place where the meeting was held did not affect the conduct of the meetings. Again, speakers at these larger, pan-tribal hui placed more significance on the oral mode of communication, than in the actual setting of the meeting itself. Maori leaders saw the actual process of negotiation as the most important aspect of the encounters: more important than ceremonial structure and more important than external factors such as the place of meeting.

A further complicating factor in explaining the ceremonial conduct of the hui are the uses of practices that had clearly emanated from Pakeha political society. Some of the staging of the hui – such as erecting ceremonial archways, the firing of guns and the reading of prepared addresses – originated as part of ceremony in Western societies. However, during the nineteenth century Maori had taken up some of these practices as part of the ceremonial structure of hui. When Maori incorporated aspects of Pakeha political ceremony during hui, especially those with Pakeha dignitaries, it was more a sign of political acceptance, not dissimilar to traditional Maori practices, than a marker of cultural affiliation with Pakeha.

A prime example of ceremony that originated in Western societies that occurred during Ballance’s tour was the erection of ceremonial archways. At the two hui where they were constructed, Ranana and Whakarewarewa, both at opposite sides of the island, the purpose behind the ceremonial archways was to foster an image of loyalism by creating an ambience of grandeur. Unfortunately, the accounts of neither hui give a physical description of the archways, apart from the fact that at Whakarewarewa, ‘decorated archways [had been] placed on both sides of the bridge.’\(^67\) However, the archways probably resembled those constructed for visiting Pakeha dignitaries, such as the Duke of Edinburgh’s visit in 1860.\(^68\) Maori who had been present at ceremonial welcomes knew that archways could be used to acknowledge a visitor’s importance in Pakeha society. At Whakarewarewa, archways were the physical centrepiece of the ceremonial welcome: Ballance was escorted to

\(^{67}\) ‘The Native Minister’, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 February 1885, p.5

\(^{68}\) In a further example, when the Governor arrived at Russell in 1876, the wharf had been ‘decorated’ as a form of welcome, including a triumphal arch. Maori were present at this occasion but were not the hosts. ‘His Excellency in the North’, *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, 1876, vol.12, p.123
the decorated bridge and 'passed through amidst a perfect ovation.' In terms of the conduct of the hui the archways had several purposes. Firstly, Maori at the two hui were showing the Native Minister the significance they attached to him and his visit. Secondly, by erecting ceremonial archways they were, in a way, making Ballance feel at home in what would have been an alien environment to him. However, because the archways were limited to the image of loyalism that these two communities were attempting to convey, this aspect of the ceremonial structure cannot be generalised to the other hui. The most likely explanation for the imitation of Pakeha practices such as erecting ceremonial archways is that Maori were attempting to create the most agreeable environment for practical political negotiation. As with the use of more traditional Maori ceremony, this was both a self-conscious decision and a reflection of the evolving state of politics. This is a contradictory interpretation; however, it is one that emanates from the fact that archways were not necessarily seen by Maori as culturally specific to Pakeha society.

A similar point could be made regarding the firing of guns. When Ballance was welcomed at Ranana with a discharge of guns,69 it was not simply a symbol of loyalism but also an image of power, one that had been adopted by Maori in circumstances separate from Pakeha. Ballara comments that the firing of guns at ceremonies such as hahunga in the early nineteenth century were accretions to the existing order because, in the case of hahunga, 'the firing of guns was merely a substitute for other noises Maori had made for the same purpose'.70 This explanation can be projected forward to the late nineteenth century and to the different circumstances of engaging with a Pakeha politician: noise could be used to create an ambience of occasion. In addition, while Maori used guns to acknowledge Pakeha politicians such as Ballance,71 accounts of hui from the late nineteenth century reveal that it had become a common practice in encounters between Maori. For example, the erection of the first pole establishing the boundaries of the Horowhenua block, where Keepa Te Rangihiwinui was appointed ‘kaitiaki’ (guardian), was celebrated ‘with a great ceremony of flags, gunfire and feasting.’72 Therefore, while it is clear that Maori were in some way defining the encounters culturally, it is difficult to say exactly what

69 'Mr Ballance and the Wanganui Natives', *New Zealand Herald*, 10 January 1885, p.5
70 Ballara, *Taua*, p.413
71 At the reception for the Governor at Waitangi in 1876, Ngapuhi 'fired a volley while the boat approached.' 'His Excellency in the North', *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, 1876, vol.12, p.123
72 Dreaver
this meant, particularly when many aspects of Pakeha political conduct were used in hui solely between Maori.

The same argument can be projected onto those aspects of political conduct that had originated in Pakeha society, but were not intended to promote an image of loyalty. The occasions where a speech by Ballance was greeted with ‘applause’ during the tour, and other similar responses associated with Pakeha political conduct, suggests that Maori were attempting to meet Ballance on equal terms.\(^\text{73}\) Perhaps as a continuation from the nineteenth century, Salmond argues that Maori used applause in receiving ‘non-traditional’ performances. Discussing the difference in which waiata and action songs are received, Salmond says,

It is interesting that while people greet a waiata with murmurs of approval in Maori ("Tena koutou!", "greetings"; Kia Ora!" or its English equivalent, "Hear! Hear!"), they greet action songs with applause. Applause is only given on the marae for non-traditional performances, say a young Maori or a European giving a whaikorero (speech) and it is unconsciously used as a European form of approbation appropriate to European-influenced activities.\(^\text{74}\) Applying this insight to the 1885 hui, Maori saw applause as a way of greeting a ‘non-traditional’ performance: namely, Ballance’s speech. However, like the use of gunfire, applause was a way of creating ambience through noise. Therefore, applause was a form of political approbation as well as an unconscious cultural marker.

Unlike aspects of ceremony that were external to the actual negotiations involved in the meetings, the use of written documents by Maori across the tour is a different case in point.\(^\text{75}\) At many of the hui, there was a tendency for Maori, when presenting ‘formal’ matters, to read from a prepared document. Documents were either prepared as part of a greeting,\(^\text{76}\) or as a record of a list of subjects.\(^\text{77}\) Examples of both can be seen in the account of the Ranana hui given above. Written formal greetings and prepared discussion documents were presented either on behalf of the Native District Committee or on behalf of the various tribal groups who were represented at the hui. While on some occasions the list of subjects would have been

\(^{73}\) Maori at the Kihikihi (2) hui responded to one of Ballance’s speeches with applause. At Whatiwhaithoe, Te Wheoro agreed with a point made by Ballance by saying ‘hear, hear’. Document of Speeches, p.29

\(^{74}\) Salmond, p.112

\(^{75}\) Using written documents within hui is not ‘ceremonial’ as such, but for the purposes of this discussion – Maori uses of political conduct that had originated in Pakeha society – the use of written documents forms an interesting counter point and is crucial to the overall structure of meetings.

\(^{76}\) Document of Speeches, pp.1, 41, 43, 55, 56

\(^{77}\) Document of Speeches, pp.2, 15-16, 41-42, 47-48, 51, 59-60, 67
formulated through extensive discussions – probably the subjects presented by John Ormsby were decided at the various meetings prior to Ballance’s arrival – some would have been decided by the committee or the host community. In addition, letters and documents were read during the hui by Maori, although usually more informally than the greetings or the list of subjects. Speakers often read out portions of a letter they had previously sent to the government.  

They often also referred back to conversations with previous politicians, referring to the existence of a written record of the discussion. In these cases, Maori used literacy as an information technology: a tool to extend communication into new realms and strengthen relations between people. This was also part of the negotiating process with Ballance. On these occasions, speakers referred to written documents as part of the everyday purposes of literacy that had become common practice in Maori society.

Although the reading of speeches and addresses is a political practice strongly associated with Pakeha society, Maori incorporated the practice into hui in the late nineteenth century. A number of examples exist where Maori leaders welcome Pakeha dignitaries by reading aloud a written address. Maori also prepared documents in political discussions between themselves. The written word had real force in Maori society at this time, providing a greater ease in gaining agreement amongst many people. Once an issue was decided upon, it would be harder to disagree if it had been committed to paper. Those who requested a Maori translation of Ballance’s speech did so both to study its contents and so they could hold future governments to account in case there was any dispute later as to what had been agreed. John Ormsby spoke to the latter point in concluding his speech the Kihikihi (2) hui: ‘I will now conclude what I have to say, and ask you that those reasons you have brought forward may be written down and signed, so that we can keep it and

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78 For example, Ripeka Turipona read a letter at the Parawai hui on behalf of herself and her hapu regarding several applications she had made to the government. At Whakato, Wi Pere read a letter regarding a dispute over a block of land which had been signed by the interested parties in the block. *Document of Speeches*, pp.41, 68, 58

79 During the Governor’s visit to Waitangi in 1876 ‘several Native addresses were read welcoming His Excellency to the place where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed’. ‘His Excellency in the North’, *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, 1876, vol.12, p.123

80 For example, following the conclusion of discussions at a hui held at Pouetu in late 1885, a document was circulated embodying the resolutions of the hui, which was signed by chiefs as representatives of their hapu. A written document was read aloud to begin a pan-tribal hui at Paeroa in March 1876: ‘The originators of the meeting, Ngatiwhaoa and Ngatihau, opened the proceedings by reading a paper to the assembled tribes, numbering in all about 600 persons.’ ‘Native Meeting, Pouetu, Taupo’, *AJHR*, 1885, G-3, p.1; ‘The Paeroa Meeting’, *Te Waka Maori o Niu Tirani*, 1876, vol.12, p.111

81 Wi Pewhairangi asked Ballance if ‘the speech which you have just been good enough to make to us may be translated into Maori, seeing that notes have been taken of it.’ *Document of Speeches*, p.73
show it to future Governments.\(^{82}\) At Parawai, Haora Tararanui spoke to the issue more directly, telling Ballance that, ‘Whatever matters you agree to we want in writing.’\(^{83}\)

However, as the centre piece of most of the hui, the verbal presentation of a written list of subjects was as much an act of presentation as something practical. By having the most important subjects prepared, Maori were signalling to Ballance their intentions to take the discussions seriously. By highlighting the list of subjects, often by having the Native District Committee’s representative read the document, Maori were drawing attention to the fact that the purpose of the occasion was to address the serious problems that they faced. Although Maori leaders read from a prepared document, they were also drawing attention to the fact that they were meeting with the Native Minister face-to-face: an extension of the oral basis of political interchange. That literacy held a considerable force in Maori society, particularly in political conduct, should not eclipse the important role of the hui in the oral mode of negotiation.

In summary, from fragmentary evidence it is difficult to determine exactly what aspects of ceremony were used in the course of Ballance’s tour, let alone what interpretation should be drawn from their use. In particular, it is by no means certain whether each part of the ceremonial structure was deliberately designed to create a calculated effect or whether Maori simply acted in accordance with their own political norms. More research is required to understand this aspect of Maori politics in the late nineteenth century. The main point that can be surmised from existing evidence and interpretations is that Maori wanted Ballance’s presence in their midst to undertake practical negotiations. These meetings were for business: that most communities had prepared a list of subjects for discussion prior to Ballance’s arrival confirms this.

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\(^{82}\) Document of Speeches, p.19

\(^{83}\) Document of Speeches, p.32. The importance of written documents to Maori, especially attaining copies of specific legislation, can be seen in a speech made by Rini at the Ranana hui. Rini made a comparison between a blind man and a man who can see to underline the point that Maori required copies of legislation in order to fully understand their contents: 'There are two people living here, one blind and the other can see; a letter arrives for the blind man and also for the one that can see. The blind man could not read his, but handed it to the man who could see to read it to him. The man who could see added to the letter, and the blind man, believing the letter, agreed to the contents of it. The blind man represents the Maoris, the man who saw was the European, the letter written to them represents the law. I ask you to have the laws put into Maori so that the Maoris can understand them. I have heard that the books of the old laws have been lost.' The meaning of this last sentence is by no means clear; Rini may have been referring to a version of the Old Testament. Document of Speeches, p.7
Figure 3 - The exterior of Keepa Te Rangihiwiniwha’s whare-runanga at Ranana: All of the following photos were taken by Alfred Burton during his tour of Maori districts, just a few months after Ballance’s. Burton Brothers Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Figure 4 - A wider shot of Ranana. Burton Brothers Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
Figure 5 – Hiruharama: Looking down the Whanganui river, across Hiruharama. Burton Brothers Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Figure 6 – Whatiwhatihoe: The ‘King’s Palace’ – possibly the site of the Whatiwhatihoe hui. Burton Brothers Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
Figure 7 – Ohinemutu: Looking across Lake Rotorua to Ohinemutu from the 'sunken pa'. Burton Brothers Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Figure 8 – Mokoia Island: This is possibly the site of the Mokoia hui, held on 18 February 1885. Burton Brothers Collection, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
Figure 9 – Whakarewarewa: The site of the Whakarewarewa hui. This is probably the bridge which was decorated with ceremonial arches and which Ballance passed through with a 'perfect ovation'. In the middle distance a large gathering of people can be seen. *Burton Brothers Collection*, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Figure 10 – Whakato: According to Te Papa records, this is the Whakato marae. *Burton Brothers Collection*, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
v - The structure of formal speech

One aspect of the ceremonial conduct of hui that can be witnessed in some detail in the document of speeches itself is the formal speeches of welcome made by Maori leaders to Ballance. As a whole, these speeches demonstrate how the negotiation itself was the most important part of the interaction: consequently, Maori structured their speeches accordingly. At most of the hui, Maori delivered a set of formal speeches (whaikorero) before embarking on a wide ranging informal discussion with the Native Minister, based on the subjects each group had prepared. Robert Mahuta’s 1974 thesis, Whaikoorero: A Study of Formal Maori Speech, is of particular use as a point of comparison with the speeches in the 1885 document. The order of speech, the structure of speech, the tendency for the chief to either speak first or last, the tendency for one speaker to elaborate upon points raised by previous speakers – all aspects of whaikorero described by Mahuta – are all apparent in the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour.1

The aspect of formal speech that appears to be unique for this period, but which is a variation on the structure of whaikorero described by Mahuta, is the tendency for Maori to place the Native Minister within a tradition of other ministers of the Crown. At different hui during the tour, Maori discussed Ballance’s position as minister of Native Affairs as part of a genealogy, linking successive politicians and governments together, seeing a process in past events. While these speeches do not include a beginning (tau) and a conclusion (whakamutunga) in the sense described by Mahuta, they embody the characteristics of the body of the speech (kaupapa).2 Mahuta says that the body of the speech is divided into three parts: greetings to the dead (mihi mate), greetings to the living (mihi ora) and the purpose of the speech (take).3 Maori often began their speeches of welcome to Ballance by referring to previous Pakeha politicians, particularly Donald McLean. McLean, who died in 1877, was seen as an ancestor of Ballance, both in terms of his political position (McLean was also Native Minister) and in terms of his politics (speakers referred to McLean’s practice of visiting Maori communities, negotiating with them face-to-face).4

1 Mahuta, pp.14-46
2 Mahuta, p.27
3 Mahuta, p.31
4 This will be discussed further in Chapter 4.
Greetings were then offered to Ballance, welcoming him within the tradition of McLean. With this tradition as a basis, speakers then moved to the purpose, or take, of their speech.  

Although the type of genealogy that related to Pakeha political leaders differed from strictly Maori genealogies recited at hui in the absence of such politicians, the two types of genealogy ultimately had the same intention. At the annual Kingitanga hui in 1882 at Whatiwhatihoe, a number of the speakers extensively referenced tradition, with much time spent establishing the descent of each person through whakapapa and finding common bonds through tribal links to geographical features. Pakukowhatu referred to the mountains of each area, saying, ‘Let the bonds of your ancestors be cemented’; similarly, Te Wheoro said, ‘The words of our ancestors and pledges given are still fresh in our minds.’ One speaker said that ‘the birds of Tane and Te Hokioi are calling us to come hither;’ Hoani of Muaupoko entreated the assembled leaders to bind as one, referring to the birds of each tribe. By emphasising common roots, Maori at this hui were attempting to build unity between themselves in order to re-establish the core principles of the Kingitanga. Although this was different from the 1885 hui, in that the speakers explicitly talked to other tribal leaders rather than to a Pakeha politician, the purpose was essentially the same. In 1885, the purpose was to establish a rapport with Ballance and to explain to him why his visit was important. Although acknowledging a visitor’s importance was part of the conventions of formal speech, in order to give the visitor a metaphorical place to stand, each speech served the purpose of foreshadowing the issues about to be discussed. Therefore, although Ballance was welcomed ceremonially, ceremony was not the purpose of the visit.

A study of the document of speeches suggests that while the devices of formal speech were in common practice, they were not necessary to the specific interaction with Ballance. The text occasionally records Maori performing ‘songs’ as part of their speech. Mahuta quotes Richard Taylor – who described how an orator would generally wait until everything was still in the village and then, marching onto the marae, he would sing an old ‘song’ related to the subject he wished to speak on –

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5 Examples can be seen particularly at the Whareroa hui and the Whakato hui, Document of Speeches, pp.58-59, 66
6 ‘Tawhiao’s Meeting at Whatiwhatihoe in May, 1882’, AJHR, 1882, G-4A
7 See the speeches of Hapimana Tinipaora, Hori Ngatai and Wiremu Parera Document of Speeches, pp.66, 58
saying that these ‘songs’ were probably what is known in contemporary terms as the tau (beginning). While this is difficult to establish as a general rule for the speeches made during Ballance’s tour – the place of some ‘songs’ at the end of some speeches suggests they were a whakamutunga (conclusion) – the example of Wi Keepa Ngawhau’s ‘song’ at Mokoia demonstrates how such devices were employed to reinforce a particular point about to be made. Ngawhau – who spoke at the very beginning of the Mokoia hui – began his speech by saying: ‘I want to make known to you the thoughts of my people. [A song, “It is time for peacemaking.”] This is an incantation to meet us as one people.’ Ngawhau then went on to outline his people’s relationship with the government and with other Maori. This example suggests that when Maori performed a ‘song’, it was with the intention to make a particular point more forcefully. However, the comparative lack of this aspect of formal speech in the document of speeches suggests, at least in the context of engaging with a Pakeha politician, that the structure of formal speech was not necessary to the interaction as a whole.

Some of the speeches also incorporated ‘proverbs’ (whakatauki). For example, Aporo Te Tarututu at the Kihikihi (2) hui said that, ‘We have an old proverb that says, “When one person of rank passes away another one is there to take his place.”’ Tarututu recited this saying as a way of placing Ballance within a tradition of Native Ministers. Like the ‘songs’, proverbs were used to underline a point or idea through metaphor. However, while some speeches contain examples of the structure of formal speech outlined by Mahuta, most spoke directly to the points without a structure.

One final aspect of whaikorero described by Mahuta that is evident in the formal speeches made by Maori in 1885 is the tendency for speakers to repeat and expand upon points previously made. Mahuta explains the differing chronological stages of this process:

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8 Mahuta, p.30
9 Another example occurs at the end of Tamamnui Tera’s speech at Whakato. At the end of his speech he said ‘I want you to listen to my song. [Tamanui then sang a song, “Where were you in the time of trouble?”] I allude to the Koreke, which live in the mountains. That is all I have to say.’ In the case of the other three examples, only the word ‘song’ is recorded. See the speeches of Hapimana Timipaora, Hori Ngatai and Wiremu Perera. Document of Speeches, pp.46, 68, 66, 58
10 Document of Speeches, p.12
11 Other examples include Te Rangitakea’s pepeha at the Kihikihi (2) hui: ‘Another of my words to you is – let Ngatoroihangi’s fire still burn on and run through the country’. Also Hori Ngatai, during the hui at Whareroa, explained the small number of people in attendance with a proverb: ‘There is an ancestral boast of ours that, although but one man of Ngaiterangi is seen, he is capable of doing great work.’ Document of Speeches, pp.21, 58
The first speaker is known as the kai-waahi koorero or the opening speaker, and he sets the theme of the speeches for the group. The following speakers are known as ngaa kai-wetewete koorero or ‘the discussors of the talk’ and generally they repeat the theme set previously. The final speaker is known as the kai-whakamutunga and he is responsible for ‘tying together the loose ends’ of the previous speeches. That is to say, if a particular take or topic was under discussion, his task is to clarify his group’s position and attitude towards that take. Whoever ends the whaikoorero will indicate verbally or non-verbally that such is the case and this cue is accepted by the reciprocal group.\(^{12}\)

At Whareroa successive speakers elaborated upon an initial point put forward by Hori Ngatai, that ministers of the government had neglected Ngai Te Rangi and that Maori and Pakeha did not enjoy equal rights. The final speaker tied up the ‘loose ends’. This process was mirrored at Kihikihi (2). Rewi Maniapoto, who spoke last, summarised the ideas made by previous speakers.

However, like other aspects of ceremony that occurred during the tour, a structured, formal speech was not necessary to the forum itself. Not all of the hui began with a group of individuals making formal speeches. The hui at Ohinemutu did not include formal speeches that could be classified as whaikoorero. As discussed above, the more common practice was for an individual to read an address of welcome from a prepared document. For example, Whititera Te Waiauta began the Ohinemutu hui by reading a prepared introductory address, including the subjects for discussion, as did Keepa Te Rangihiwini at Ranana. The preponderance of written addresses and lists of subjects over seemingly normal practices, like whaikoorero, emphasises the fact that Maori intended the meetings to be a forum for practical engagement. While formal speeches were often made to facilitate the discussion, and enhance the points being made, they were not necessary to the interaction itself.

VI - Interaction between Maori leaders and with the Native Minister

The above discussion underlines the very simple point that Maori organised their meetings with the Native Minister in a way that would make negotiation as effective as possible. As described above, this was achieved firstly by meeting face-to-face, where a wide range of Maori leaders could partake in the discussions. The success of

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\(^{12}\) Mahuta, pp.17-18
these negotiations depended on the ability of Maori to set the subjects for discussion and for Ballance to engage with these points. In this sense, the form of negotiation was as important as the subjects debated.

The account of the Ranana hui is typical of the type of interaction that occurred between Maori and Ballance: first a list of subjects was introduced, setting the agenda, upon which Ballance responded and a discussion ensued. In this sense, Maori clearly directed Ballance towards the issues they wanted to discuss. In addition, Ballance was occasionally directed when and to whom he could speak. An example of this occurred at the Parawai hui, where Hapi Rewi – one of the three initial speakers – asked Ballance to structure his response in a particular order, beginning with the points made by Tukukino and finally reaching those made by Rewi himself.\(^\text{13}\) Similarly, speakers at the Ohinemutu hui told Ballance, after the introductory addresses had been given, how they wished the remaining portions of the meeting to be structured. Whititera Te Waiatua and Retireti Tapihana told Ballance exactly who was being represented and what was going to be discussed. Ballance agreed to the arrangements that had been made. This quick interchange established the conduct of politics at the hui.\(^\text{14}\)

Ballance occasionally entered into conversational exchanges with an individual, usually with the principal leader at the hui. Such an example can be seen at the beginning of the Whatiwhatihoe hui, when Ballance and Tawhiao greeted each other, discussing the latter’s recent visit to England:

Tawhiao said: Greeting to you. Greeting to everybody.
Mr. Ballance said: I am very glad to see you, Tawhiao.
Tawhiao: I say the same.
Mr. Ballance: ... I had intended to meet you at Whanganui, when you paid your visit there, but you went away too soon for me... I hope you enjoyed your visit to England. I am very glad to hear from Major Te Wheoro that the people were very kind to you.
Tawhiao: They were very kind indeed. It was not that they treated us well for one day only, but for continuous weeks.
Mr. Ballance: So I have heard. It has given great satisfaction to the people of this colony. The Europeans, the people of England, are always hospitable to great chiefs when they leave this colony to pay a visit to the Mother-country. It is a strange country to you but not to many of us.

\(^{13}\) *Document of Speeches*, p.32
\(^{14}\) *Document of Speeches*, p.43
Tawhiao: They are very good people indeed. I have nothing good to say in favour of the soil, but the people are very good. They did not have anything bad to say to us.

Mr. Ballance: The climate is not equal to that of New Zealand. You would not have such good health there as you have here. I suppose you have no wish to go back again.

Tawhiao: No; there is only one person of great importance that should go backwards and forwards, and that is the electric telegraph.¹⁵

This example illustrates the way that humour and good natured banter were worked in to what was an essentially serious political discussion. Tawhiao’s point regarding the electric telegraph was a light hearted response to Ballance’s earnest protestations on Britain’s climate. Ballance, however, also used humour. At the second Kihikihi hui he made a pun about the worth of berries and eels, a play on words from a foregoing speech which drew laughter from the audience.¹⁶ However, while the meetings were good natured encounters, this did not detract from the political purpose of the hui. On the contrary, humour could be an important element in negotiation, by establishing a rapport and a common purpose.

An important element in understanding the interaction between Ballance and Maori was the criticisms made of the government and of Ballance. Debates were always thorough and often argumentative. Although the text does not record the disposition of the speakers, points at issue between the parties were often thoroughly argued. At Kihikihi (2), for example, John Ormsby and Ballance went back and forward over the issues raised in the list of subjects six times.¹⁷ Only on a handful of occasions did Maori accept an argument from Ballance without debating the point first. An example of this occurred at the Whareroa hui, where a proposal was made for a member of Ngai Te Rangi to be appointed to the Legislative Council. Ballance, evidently seeking to defuse a politically difficult request, explained to those assembled that the Legislative Council was no longer of any political importance. Ngai Te Rangi accepted this without opposition.¹⁸ However, this interchange must be put in perspective: on other issues, such as the government’s rating regime and

¹⁵ Document of Speeches, p.25
¹⁶ Document of Speeches, p.24
¹⁷ Document of Speeches, pp.13-24
¹⁸ Ballance gave the following explanation: ‘The Governments are made and unmade in the other House. That is where the power is, and that is where you should seek to have power, and never mind what the Upper House does.’ Here, the document of speeches says, ‘The Natives agreed to what had been said by the Native Minister.’ Document of Speeches, pp.59, 63
whether Ngai Te Rangi were adequately represented in the Native District Committees system, Ngai Te Rangi representatives Hori Ngatai and Te Mete Raukawa had thorough debates with the Native Minister.\(^{19}\)

Maori leaders across the tour saw considerable benefit arising from their discussions with Ballance, particularly on problems that they believed had been partially or wholly solved. For example, when the Kihikihi (2) hui reconvened for a second day of discussions to debate the issue of the Main Trunk railway, a number of speakers applauded the advances that had been made in the hui to that stage. John Ormsby did so in alliterative language, comparing the agreement reached on the ratings of land to the removal of a scorpion’s sting.\(^{20}\)

The meeting yesterday was highly pleased with the replies that the Native Minister made to the subjects which had been laid before him. The sting of the scorpion has been broken off: the road we look upon as the scorpion, and the rates as the sting from it. Yesterday that sting was destroyed; now we have changed that insect, the scorpion, into one that we can utilize.\(^{21}\)

This passage reveals something of how Maori leaders in general envisaged their interaction with Ballance. The meetings were not simply a place to air grievances: they were a forum to solve pressing concerns, such as the effects of rates.\(^{22}\) Because politics in Maori society continued to be based in the oral medium of exchange, issues could be most effectively solved through face-to-face negotiation.

One final point to be made on the types of interaction that took place during the twelve hui relates to the way different Maori groups interacted with each other. Despite the political cooperation that occurred between Maori of different iwi and hapu in meeting with Ballance, the agenda of each hui was set by the hosts of the hui. The effects of this can be seen at the Kihikihi (2) hui. Kingi Hori, who was a representative of one of the other three iwi who were in negotiations with Ngati Maniapoto, made reference to restrictions placed on him as an outsider: ‘I have lots of things to talk to you about, but Ngatimaniapoto yesterday ruled some of them out of

\(^{19}\) Document of Speeches, pp.59-64

\(^{20}\) In using the image of a scorpion, Ormsby may have been incorporating the language used by Wahanui, who talked about the ‘sting’ in a particular piece of legislation during his speech delivered at the bar of the House on 1 November 1884: ‘When I saw this Bill I found that it had great sharp teeth from the head to the mouth, and there was a sting also in its tail.’ NZPD, 1884, vol.50, p.555

\(^{21}\) Keepa said something similar at the Ranana hui: ‘All the matters of importance have been brought before you and satisfactorily settled this morning.’ Document of Speeches, pp.22, 7

\(^{22}\) This issue will be discussed in Chapter 4.
order.

However, while host communities set the agenda for debate, the hui were ultimately a public forum for Maori to raise their issues with Ballance. Consequently, Maori publicly disagreed with each other when they did not see eye to eye. As the example of the Ranana hui shows above, Hakaria disagreed with Keepa’s stance over the railway. At Kihikihi (2), Hopa Te Rangianini and Rewi Maniapoto disagreed with the majority opinion regarding the railway and James Thomson denounced the role of the chief. When Kereopa stood up to request assistance in repairing some hot springs at the Mokoia hui, Wi Keepa Ngawhau responded, saying he did not think that Ballance should have been asked to help them. Similarly, when Karora of Ngati Rangitahi requested the creation of a township and Ballance asked whether any people would live there, Wi Keepa Rangipuaawhe interjected, saying, ‘Not a cabbage could grow there.’ Such disagreements, however, reflected the nature of public debate within hui and demonstrate the fluidity of Maori political society in the late nineteenth century.

VII - Summary

Probably the only general conclusion that can be reached from such a complex set of encounters is that Maori organised the hui so that they could present their issues in the most orderly and practical way possible. Maori organised their encounters with Ballance to emphasise a key tenet of their political culture: the oral mode of communication and interaction. While the hui were not defined in cultural difference – each of the meetings was organised with practical negotiation as the primary objective – the basis of a politics where culture and practice were separate can be seen. However, much more research is required into the nature of hui in the latter part

23 Document of Speeches, p.23
24 Document of Speeches, p.23
25 Document of Speeches, p.50
26 Document of Speeches, p.57. This difference was perhaps indicative of the tribal difference between Tuhourangi and Ngati Rangitahi. According to Stafford, ‘The Tuhourangi people had split into two sections known as Tuhourangi proper and Ngati Rangitahi. Both were of course of Tuhourangi stock, but each occupied separate areas and operated as separate entities.’ However, as seen in the discussion of Te Arawa tribal differences above, too much should not be read into evidence of splits. Don Stafford, Te Arawa: A History of the Arawa People, (Auckland: Reed, 1967), p.164
of the nineteenth century before the substance behind continuity and change can be fully understood. More important in terms of drawing broad conclusions from the speeches, the document is evidence of aspects of political thought that were consensual – lists of subjects that had been agreed to by the host community or through prior discussion among a group of communities – yet, as we have seen, Maori were free to voice their dissent as well. Not only is this evidence of the subtlety of the exchanges, it also suggests that a broad range of ideas are contained within the document. From this basis, then, the focus now shifts to the content of the speeches and the ideas Maori articulated in the political environment of the hui.
Chapter Four

History, land and colonial governance: Conceptualising Maori relationships with the State in 1885

This chapter explores the political ambivalence that dominated Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century, as it was expressed during Ballance's tour in 1885. Because the idea of 'political ambivalence' is a new interpretation of Maori political thought, one that differs from the autonomy thesis, some initial exposition is required. 'Ambivalence' is used as an extension of the dictionary definition: the simultaneous existence of two opposing or contradictory ideas. In the speeches made by Maori leaders during the tour, ambivalence can be seen in the form of one clearly articulated political stance - criticism of the government - posited against two implicit positions. The first, suggested in the contextual discussion in Chapter 2, was a position that was grounded in pragmatism. Maori approached state power in the knowledge that the central government held definitive power within New Zealand. The second position, which is more intangible and abstract than the first, but nevertheless can be deduced from a study of the document of speeches, emanated from a belief in citizenship and the rule of law, and an appreciation of the benefits of having a centralised authority to act on behalf of Maori interests. Because both positions were merely implicit, however, the subtle aspects of the two currents only become apparent through a close examination and discussion of the document. Therefore, the structure of this chapter has been generated from a close reading of the document of the speeches, in order to examine these intangible positions in the clearest way possible.

This chapter begins by examining the speeches of greeting Maori leaders made during Ballance's tour. These speeches contain the most obvious examples of political ambivalence within the document of speeches. The analysis then moves to outlining the main points of opposition Maori leaders raised in their discussions with
the Native Minister. Opposition to the government crystallised around two main issues. Firstly, and primarily, leaders opposed the colonial land administration, particularly the operations of the Native Land Court. Secondly, they opposed measures that had been instituted by the government wherein Maori as a people were not treated equally with Pakeha. Because these issues dominated discussions with Ballance, this section is necessarily lengthy. The analysis then shifts to looking at the different political responses to these issues posited by Maori during the tour. To a large number of Maori leaders in 1885, creating a system of state sanctioned committees was a particularly powerful idea. Many speakers focused in particular on gaining extended powers for the Native District Committees. The discussion then considers to what extent the core concept behind the committees differed from arguments for a more substantive independent authority, put forward by the Kingitanga at Whatiwhatihoe. This section will conclude by exploring in what ways these political responses grew out of ambivalence and to what extent they can be explained by the concept of autonomy.

Because this chapter signals the beginning of a sustained discussion of the political ideas evident in the document, it is pertinent at this stage to signal that an analysis of a single document from a microhistorical perspective is a difficult exercise. As described in Chapter 1, there few precedents for such a study in the area of Maori history. Moreover, the circumscribed scope of this single set of speeches makes generalisations methodologically dangerous. The conclusions that follow are therefore necessarily suggestive. Nevertheless, the theory that Maori political thought was dominated by two opposing currents has been formulated upon a close reading of ideas expressed by Maori leaders during Ballance’s tour, as opposed to a hypothesis posited prior to study. In addition, in concentrating on Maori conceptions of their position within the colonial political system, this chapter leaves many of the issues that have significance for the Maori political landscape for Chapter 5.
I – ‘Troubles’ and ‘relief’: evidence of political ambivalence in Maori speeches of greeting

The speeches of greeting made by Maori leaders during Ballance’s tour contain the most obvious evidence of political ambivalence in the document of speeches. The act of welcoming Ballance itself reflected a kind of pragmatism in dealing with state power. Without the power of government, Maori had few options but to deal with the situation that presented itself, and to do so with utmost conviction. Therefore, when the opportunity of a meeting with a Native Minister presented itself, Maori leaders welcomed it with open arms. However, because Maori never clearly articulated why or in what ways pragmatism influenced their political action, this position remained implicit. A more clearly stated position was criticism of the government, particularly over the perceived inequalities in treatment of Maori society. When Maori considered how they would welcome the Native Minister, the product of these two elements of Maori political thought was the simultaneous expression of criticism and praise.

Reading the greetings and introductory speeches from hui throughout the tour, it becomes immediately apparent that political ambivalence was not a localised concern. At all the hui where formal speeches were recorded,¹ Maori spoke to the same core set of ideas regarding the ill effects of colonial governance and their political place within the colonial system. While no one speaker articulated the situation as a fully formulated political position, applying the concepts of cultural microhistory reveals an interlinking, if not interlocking, set of ideas. Consequently, the discussion below is an investigation of the overall framework rather than an examination of regional and tribal differences, in order to accurately explain what was a shared understanding of the colonial experience.

Ballance’s visit was important to Maori because of the enduring significance that the oral medium of negotiation had in their political culture. As previously discussed, a key aspect of continuity in Maori society following the New Zealand wars was a belief in the importance of face-to-face negotiation. Through the 1870s and 1880s, Maori made concerted efforts to negotiate with government ministers on a personal basis, where possible within their own communities. In the context of

¹ That is, Ranana, Pipiriki, Hiruharama, Kihikihi (1), Kihikihi (2), Ohinemutu, Mokoia, Whakarewarewa, Whareroa and Whakato.
Ballance’s visit, this was expressed literally: there were many phrases such as ‘come to see the people’, ‘Come, that you may see the Native people’, ‘welcome, so that we can see each other’, ‘welcome to see the people’. \(^2\) Face-to-face negotiation was also political: many speakers told Ballance that this was their first visit by a Native Minister. For other communities, a Native Minister had not visited for many years. For example, at Ranana, Keepa Te Rangihiwini told Ballance that he was the first minister who had accepted an invitation to meet the people of the Whanganui river.\(^3\)

At Kihikihi (2), Wahanui finished his greeting to Ballance by saying ‘Greetings to you, who are now seen by us for the first time.’\(^4\) In his welcome to Ballance at Kihikihi (2), Te Hoti Tamehana combined the literal and the political: ‘Although a great deal may be said, we are all assembled here for the purpose really of seeing you’.\(^5\) Speakers at the Whareroa hui implored Ballance to extend his stay beyond a fleeting visit to demonstrate his good will towards the people. Hohepa Hikutaia welcomed Ballance in this fashion: ‘My first request to you is that you will not return to-day, but that you will stay with us a long time.’\(^6\) Hikutaia told Ballance that if he stayed only ‘a few minutes’ he would be demonstrating that his love for Ngai Te Rangi would not be strong. Te Puru Temea explained why: ‘Other Ministers have passed through Tauranga without turning on one side to meet us.’\(^7\) At Whakato, Wi Pere explained the purpose of the invitation issued by the people for Ballance to visit them: ‘This word of invitation went out from their mouths, calling you to come to see them, as you have never seen them before.’\(^8\)

Maori leaders emphasised the fact that both Ballance’s tour and the position which he held fell within a historical tradition of ministers’ conduct on a face-to-face level. As discussed in Chapter 3, Maori greeted Ballance as carrying a tradition of relations between Maori leaders and ministers of the Crown. Within this framework, Sir George Grey and Donald McLean were held in high esteem by particular communities, who remembered the manner in which they conducted their politics.\(^9\)

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2 Document of Speeches, pp.46, 12, 68
3 Document of Speeches, p.1
4 See also Hirini Te Kani, Document of Speeches, pp.12, 66
5 Document of Speeches, p.12
6 Document of Speeches, p.58
7 Document of Speeches, p.58
8 Document of Speeches, p.66
9 Speakers at Whareroa referred to Grey and McLean. McLean was evoked at the Whakato hui. Tamati Te Rangituawaru entreated Ballance to ‘come to us in the same spirit.’ Repeatedly, Maori greeted Ballance by referring to the troubles which they faced. Document of Speeches, pp.58, 66
Wi Pere’s statement at the Whakato hui encapsulates this view: ‘The last Native Minister, they say, was Sir Donald McLean; you are the next one to come and visit them. You are called the Native Minister – that is, the minister for the Native people. It is very good that you have come to see us.’ At Mokoia, Paratemia welcomed Ballance in the name of Sir George Grey: ‘Come to the place that Sir George Grey used to visit and bring his words to us. Sir George Grey was the first white chief to come and see us. You are the second.’ Conversely, John Bryce was remembered as the ‘hard man’, cold and indifferent. At the Whareroa hui, Tareha compared McLean with Bryce:

> Come and treat us the way we were treated by Sir Donald McLean; he brought us love and treated us properly. Let your protection of the Maori people be like his was. I do not think that Mr. Bryce should have been called a Native Minister; he was only a Minister for the Europeans – he did nothing for the Natives. If you treat us like Sir Donald McLean treated us, then you will indeed be a father to us.

Within these statements, one can observe the idea that the oral mode of negotiation was the proper way of conducting politics. Maori believed that they needed to have personal interaction with the Native Minister – their representative in government – in order for the official title to have any meaning.

Speakers made a subtle, but important, distinction between the specific people that filled the role of Native Minister and the office of Native Minister itself. Maori did not simply greet Ballance, the man; they greeted the position of Native Minister. This was also both literal and political. For example: ‘You are known as the Native Minister, therefore I welcome you as such’; or ‘You are called the Minister for the Native race; that is right. I therefore greet you.’ One of the speakers at the Whakato hui, Hapimana Tinapaora, probably had this concept in mind when he said, ‘Come, my friend, perhaps you will be a Native Minister in reality, and not in name only.’ Politicians who filled the role of the Native Minister had to act as Native Minister, by visiting Maori communities and earning the right to that role. Some speakers made broader statements on the tradition itself and Ballance’s place within it. At the Ranana hui Rini made an observation on the nature of the existing political system: ‘There

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10 Document of Speeches, p.66
11 Document of Speeches, p.46
12 See Keepa Te Rangihiwinui, Hori Ngatai and Te Kiri Karamu. Document of Speeches, pp.1, 58, 46
13 Document of Speeches, p.58
14 Hopa Te Rangianini, and Te Rangituatea. Document of Speeches, pp.12, 21
15 Document of Speeches, p.66
have been many Governments, but none have come here before you; some are dead, and some have fallen. You (the Government) are their successors.¹⁶ Aporo Te Taratutu applied a proverb to the phenomenon high ministerial turnover at Kihikihi (2): ‘We have an old proverb that says, “When one person of rank passes away another one is there to take his place.”’¹⁷ Pineha, on the second day of the Kihikihi (2) hui, described how Ballance had solved some of the problems created by past ministries: ‘These matters that we went into yesterday are all invalids of previous Governments. Now, during your day these matters have been made clear, or resuscitated.’¹⁸ Retireti Tapihana spoke of the need for face-to-face negotiation with a Native Minister:

With regard to your expression that the time at your disposal is very short, it is the wish of this people that every man, great or small, may have an opportunity of expressing his views to you, because it is many years since the Arawa Tribe have had an opportunity of laying their matters before a Minister.¹⁹

Keepa Te Rangihiwini spoke directly to the lack of interaction between Maori and Native Ministers:

Now that the late Government have gone out of office, a new Government has entered with the new year, and with a new policy. There has always been a Minister called a Native Minister, but the practice hitherto has been for him to confine his attention to the towns, and if the Natives wished to see him they had to go to him; and he was always too much engaged to give his attention to the Maoris, so we invited you to come here to see us. I think that, now there is a new Minister who has taken office with the new year, he should go round amongst the Maoris and explain his views and his policy to them. I do not blame any particular Minister; perhaps the Maoris have been somewhat to blame themselves hitherto.²⁰

Te Rangihiwini differentiated between particular ministers and the position itself: one he believed had ‘always existed.’ He was expressing his frustration in the lack of continuity in ministries and policies: each new year there was a ‘new policy.’ In doing so, Te Rangihiwini spoke of the difficulties that this lack of continuity posed for establishing meaningful relationships between the government and Maori communities. His solution, like so many others, was for face-to-face negotiation.

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¹⁶ Comment text’s original. Document of Speeches, p.9
¹⁷ Document of Speeches, p.12
¹⁸ Document of Speeches, p.22
¹⁹ Document of Speeches, p.44
²⁰ Document of Speeches, pp.1-2
By referring to the historical invisibility of Native Ministers, speakers were also suggesting that they believed the role of the Native Minister was to represent Maori interests in government. The basis upon which Maori welcomed Ballance was that he was their minister: therefore, as one of the examples given in the previous paragraph suggests, it was ‘right’ to welcome him. At two different hui, Ballance was described as the ‘person who takes care of land and people’ and ‘the saviour of the people and the land.’ 21 In addition, Te Rangihiwai described Ballance as ‘Minister for both Maori and Europeans.’ 22 A widely held view was that the position of Native Minister was primarily not designed to facilitate relations Maori communities and the state, but to represent Maori issues in the government.

Within these statements, welcoming Ballance to discuss important issues, a penetrating point can be drawn on Maori understandings of state power in the post-war period. In differentiating between Ballance, the person, and the position he filled, Maori leaders were speaking to the real and tangible power that the Native Minister held. It was a position that had its own tradition. Two key aspects of political ambivalence can be witnessed in this position. Firstly, by welcoming Ballance as the Native Minister, Maori were acknowledging the reality of the contemporary political situation. The Native Minister, as a permanent position, was the representative of the colonial government. Implicitly, this was an acknowledgement that the colonial government was also entrenched. Therefore, in welcoming Ballance as Native Minister they were pragmatically acknowledging political realities. Secondly, Maori leaders were expressing their appreciation of the theoretical benefits of centralised government. In welcoming Ballance as their representative in government, Maori described their expectations. The litmus test was McLean; although Bryce had not met these expectations, Maori did not seek political alternatives outside the government, they merely wanted Ballance to live up to McLean’s standard.

Political ambivalence can be most readily seen in two contrasting, but not quite contradictory, notions contained within Maori speeches of greeting to the Native Minister in 1885. Firstly, speakers forcefully articulated the idea that, as a people, they were suffering under the colonial regime. Secondly, these same speakers also expressed a hope – or perhaps an expectation – that Ballance and, implicitly, the government, would be able to provide solutions and fulfil the promises of good

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21 This was Rangitauea at Pipiriki and Te Kooti at Kihikihi (1). Document of Speeches, pp.9, 11
22 Document of Speeches, p.1
governance. At hui throughout the tour Maori articulated these dual concerns in two opposing words, translated respectively as ‘troubles’ and ‘relief’. Speakers constantly referred to their ‘troubles’: the policies created by previous ministries that had collectively worked to marginalise and pauperise Maori society. Yet speakers also expressed their gratitude to the Native Minister, for coming to their communities, in a hope that he would offer ‘relief’. Four examples from four different hui illustrate this point:

‘Our joy is very great at your coming here to see us, so that you may be able to listen to our grievances and troubles, and to afford us relief.’

‘The Native people were very glad that you have come to see us. Come to bring us relief from the troubles which afflict us.’

‘Our joy at your coming to see us is very great, because we know that you are coming to hear the subjects that we will bring before you. Now for the first time prosperity will come upon us through the action of your Government, and perhaps your Government will be able to take away the troubles which rest upon us.’

‘Come and examine into the troubles of the people. Come the Native Minister. Come, my father; come, my friend, that I may show you the troubles under which I labour. Come to bring us help.’

The binary opposition between ‘troubles’ and ‘relief’ was expressed in other ways. Notably, orators used images of darkness to convey the essence of their current situation, and light for the future they hoped the Native Minister would provide:

Come to dispel the gloom and darkness, and bring us the light. There were many good actions performed in the past, but we have not benefited by them to the fullest extent. You are a new Minister; you will be able to lead us in the right path. We hope it will be for you to bring us a good policy and to direct us properly.

Although past governments had performed ‘good actions’, their particular community had not received the full benefits of good governance. In other contexts, Ballance, the ‘saviour’, was compared with the ‘evil’ of the past.

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23 Whititera Te Waiauta, Document of Speeches, p.41
24 Te Kiri Karamu, Document of Speeches, p.46
25 Tuhourangi, Document of Speeches, p.50
26 Hapimana Tinipara. Other examples from the Whakato hui include Tamati Te Rangituaawaru Maraki Te Koari, Tamanui Tera and Ruka Te Aratapu. Document of Speeches, pp.66, 68, 70.
27 Himiona Te Kura, Document of Speeches, p.51
28 This was Tamehana Te Ngarara at Whakarewarewa: ‘Welcome my friend! Welcome! The father of the Native people. You are like a saviour of the Maori people. It is for you to come to preserve them, and take away all that is evil. You have come to show affection to your Maori children.’ Rangihiewa, at the same hui, also said, 'Bring us good tidings. Bring us the light of day.' Document of Speeches, p.51
allegorically placed Ballance within a ministerial tradition, comparing darkness with light:

You have come in the clouds of your ancestors, which have descended upon you this day. Your predecessors came to us in the darkness of night, in the days that have gone by. You have come in peace, your garments shining as the snow on the mountain – a symbol that the white hawk of the sky and the beast of the earth will dwell together in harmony.\(^{29}\)

Implicitly, Maori acknowledged that colonial governance had created their dilemmas. Hope, however, was based on a belief in Ballance, the individual; his beneficial policies and his intention to meet and negotiate with Maori in their communities.

By observing that Maori were in a state crisis, yet remaining optimistic, speakers were expanding the tradition of contact between Maori and Native Ministers to the political present. Speakers alluded to the fact that they had heard of Ballance’s ‘good policy.’ At Ohinemutu, for example, Whititera Te Waiatua explained how Ngati Whakaue had heard of Ballance’s work at previous hui during the tour: ‘Although you have been absent in body, we have heard of the good measures that you brought before Parliament. It is on this account that our joy is very great, for we have heard of the policy expressed by your Government at meetings at Waikato and Wanganui.’\(^{30}\) This position, widely taken up by Maori leaders during Ballance’s tour, was one based on pragmatism and trust. In stating that successive ministries had created their ‘troubles’, speakers knew the situation could repeat itself. Meeting Ballance in good faith required trust in both the man and the system. In McLean there was a precedent; they believed the system could work. By deferring to Ballance for help, Maori were also implicitly acknowledging the power of the government. As can be seen in one of the examples above, the idea of negotiating with Ballance was so that Maori could ‘show’ him their troubles. In summary, then, these examples suggest something of the pragmatism inherent in the way Maori leaders approached state power. While this was a position based on the practical realities of dealing with a firmly entrenched central power, it was also one predicated on the belief that the Native Minister was their representative in government. Although Maori leaders were making an observation on their exclusion from the processes of government, they

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\(^{29}\) *Document of Speeches*, p.1. This appears to be a reference to Genesis, especially 2:18-20, in which ‘the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof’ (King James Version).

\(^{30}\) *Document of Speeches*, p.41
were also expressing a degree of confidence in the processes of central government, a form of social trust that was primarily founded on past relationships.

A number of speeches suggest that a wide range of Maori communities founded their relationship with the government on the position each had adopted during the New Zealand wars. Keepa Te Rangihiwinui’s introductory address, cited above, raises the issue of loyalism, and whether a concept of loyalty influenced the way Maori envisaged a relationship with the state. An accepted tenet among contemporary historians is that Maori sided with the government during the wars for their own reasons, mostly as a way of advancing a tribal agenda, perpetuating existing tribal differences. 31 While this argument is well-founded in its assessment of relationships within Maori society, reducing Maori intentions solely to tribal imperatives ignores any political reasons they may have had for siding with the state, both during and after the wars.

For a number of Maori leaders who met with Ballance in 1885, specifically Whanganui and Te Arawa, loyalism implied a historical relationship. This was an image fostered both in ceremony – as described in Chapter 3 – and in words. Te Rangihiwinui’s opening address, discussed above, was not simply an allusion to past ministers, but to the relationship between those Whanganui Maori whom he represented and the government. Te Rangihiwinui referred, according to the translator, to the ‘submission’ that had been made by the chiefs in signing the Treaty of Waitangi, a submission by which he said they were still bound. 32 Similarly, the address of welcome from Ngati Whakaue said, ‘Welcome to the Arawa Tribe, who have always been loyal and upheld the Queen’s laws from the time of the fighting down to the present.’ 33 While loyalism was usually to the Queen, the colonial government was occasionally included in this, with Ballance referred to as the

32 Document of Speeches, p.1. Other individuals during the Ranana and Hiruharama hui referred to their relationship with the government, both during and after the wars.
33 Document of Speeches, p.41. A similar comment was made in the opening address on behalf of Tuhourangi: ‘This tribe has remained under the Queen’s laws from the first. My hands have never been stained with blood. None of the Tuhourangi have taken up arms against the Europeans; on the contrary, the Tuhourangi have always performed the military services required of them by the Government, and upheld the laws.’ Wi Keepa Ngawhau expressed a similar sentiment at Mokoia: ‘Welcome to Rotorua! Come to see the people who are loyal to the Queen. Come to see the people who took part in upholding the Government of this Island against the King.’ Document of Speeches, pp.51, 46
Queen’s representative. By referring to the past, the current relationship was given added meaning. However, loyalism did not preclude criticism of the government: in most cases where a relationship of loyalty was invoked, criticism became sharpened. Keepa said that he hoped Ballance would consider all the grievances that the people had suffered during Bryce’s administration. Maori in the Rotorua district, following pressure placed on them to sell their lands, continually asked why their loyalty had not been rewarded with a similar act of faith on the part of the government. Speakers at Ohinemutu, Mokoia and Whakarewarewa repeated these concerns to Ballance. Loyalty was about reciprocity: a number of Maori leaders did not believe their trust had been repaid.

Alternatively, several of those communities that had taken the opposing side during the wars based their relationship with the government on a commitment to peace. Ngai Te Rangi founded their good will on the peace that was made with the government in 1866. Wiremu Parera described his iwi’s position at the Whareroa hui: ‘In the days of Sir George Grey peace was made with this tribe, and it has never been broken since. That peace still remains in force, and it has spread over all the land.’ Parera then described how the government’s ‘love’ towards Maori ceased with the death of McLean. Te Puru Temea picked up on this theme: ‘Welcome to Ngaiterangi, for since the peace was made Ngaiterangi have been living in peace and goodwill towards the Europeans. Since that peace was made Ngaiterangi have never done anything wrong to the Europeans.’ Similar points of view were expressed during the hui at Pipiriki. Karaetainai welcomed Ballance by referring to his past: ‘Salutations to you, my friend. I am a bad man; I am called a wild man. I have fought against you; I was your enemy. After the days of Te Kooti, I stand in your presence to-day, having given up fighting and my adherence to Te Kooti. For the future I will be loyal to the

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34 For example, Keepa’s address said, ‘We welcome you also, Mr. Ballance, as one of the Ministers administering the Government of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, under whose shelter we live.’ At Mokoia, Wi Keepa Ngawhau welcomed Ballance by saying, ‘Come to see the people who are loyal to the Queen. Come to see the people who took part in upholding the Government of this Island against the King.’ Hopa Te Rangianini presented a more moderate position: ‘I have no other person to go to except the Queen in England, who is represented by yourself, as you sit there. You are the person who points out the Queen’s policy.’ Document of Speeches, pp.1, 46, 12

35 Document of Speeches, p.6

36 O’Malley cites two examples. Firstly, Wi Maihi Te Rangiakaheke asked parliament in 1874 why the government was committing an ‘act of treachery’ against the people of Te Arawa who had been loyal to the Crown. Secondly, Paora te Amohau said that ‘he had been loyal to the Government, but the Government had not been considerate to them in regard to land transactions.’ O’Malley, pp.87, 107-8.

37 Document of Speeches, p.58
Queen.” Later, Te Kaiorototo Kamuera referred to having been ‘induced’ by Keepa Te Rangihiwini to leave the Hauhau; because of this, he wanted a flag as a token from the Queen and protection from the government.

A number of Maori leaders argued that reciprocity of trust could be achieved if Ballance and the government instituted a period of tangible, meaningful equality between Maori and Pakeha. This was not an argument based on the Treaty of Waitangi; on the contrary, the Treaty was very rarely mentioned. Rather, this was an argument based on law. A notion of citizenship was implicit within this; however, few actually talked about their rights in terms of citizenship. Perhaps explaining why the Treaty of Waitangi, particularly Article 3, was not invoked as a document that secured Maori citizens’ rights, speakers were more concerned with a notion of equality. They repeatedly told Ballance how they were not being treated equally under the law. This was a common theme among Maori leaders in the late nineteenth century. There was an increasing frustration at the inherent inequality of governance provided by the state, despite theoretical equality held under the law and the language of ‘one law for all’ promoted in settler newspapers and by the government.39

The desire to see good law applied equally was where two aspects of Maori political thought – belief in the rule of law and criticism of government actions – converged. For many the rule of law – te ture – went beyond ethnic boundaries. Maori inherently did not associate ‘the law’, as a concept, with particular statutes initiated by the government. The conviction in the worth of a system of justice was stronger than the failure of particular policies. Instead, the failure was seen to be the result of specific governments, represented by ‘hard men’ like Bryce and the form of parliamentary democracy that saw governments go in and out of power. For example, the Rotorua District Committee requested a change in the law relating to the government’s approach to Maori land issues:

For many years past the Government have been devising laws affecting the Native lands; but those laws still press heavily upon the Native: therefore it is our desire that some new policy should be enunciated with regard to these matters, therefore we propose that a law should be made jointly affecting the native lands.40

38 Document of Speeches, p.9
39 Ward gives the example of Te Wheoro who petitioned Governor Bowen about his frustration at not being able to live on terms of equality under the law with Pakeha, “because these things have not yet been carried out.” Ward, A Show of Justice, p.221
40 Document of Speeches, p.41
Here, the notion of bad ‘laws’ affecting Maori land was contrasted with the desire for a ‘new policy’ – the concept of law itself. Variations on this view were repeated at other hui. 41 However, while Maori readily distinguished between the concept of law and particular pieces of legislation, continuing to hold hopes of ‘jointly’ made legislation, it was increasingly difficult by 1885 to see beyond the colonial government to any other form of authority in the New Zealand political system from which the rule of law could operate.

Arguments in favour of equality under the law were posited in terms of a contrast between past inequalities and future hopes. A number of speakers expressed their wish for Maori and Pakeha to be united under the same ‘policy’, not driven apart in acrimony. John Ormsby clearly articulated this concern at the Kihikihi (2) hui. Maori and Pakeha, he said, had been ‘estranged’ from each other. He argued that although one law for both Maori and Pakeha had been the ideology in Pakeha public discourse, this was certainly not the reality: ‘It is said that there should be only one law for the Maoris and the Europeans. I would ask you, has there only been one law during the past for the Maoris and the Europeans? I say to you that there has not been only one law.’ 42 However, Ormsby hoped that their problems would be solved within the processes of the law. ‘This is the day that we wait to hear your statement to us regarding that matter, in order that we may do what you wish us to do in accordance with the law.’ In other words, because the administration of Maori affairs had been handled so badly, it was difficult to separate the government from the negative outcomes of its actions. A significant portion of the Maori population did not want to abandon a system of law; what they sought was the application of the law with consistency. Ormsby envisaged the meeting with the Native Minister as an opportunity for ‘the commencement of an era in which we would start a new policy in connection with these matters’. 43 Thus, he was articulating a widely held belief that Ballance’s tour was a pivotal moment which had the potential see true equality meted out to Pakeha and Maori alike.

41 At the Kihikihi hui, John Ormsby referred to a petition he had sent to Parliament, saying, ‘We thought at the time that we sent our petition that we would explain to the Government what we wanted - that some Acts would be passed that would be beneficial to the Native race.’ At Whakato, Wi Pere requested that the Government should amend the laws of the Native Land Court. Document of Speeches, pp.14, 67
42 Document of Speeches, p.15
43 Document of Speeches, p.14
The notion that Maori had been denied their rights as equal citizens was most strongly and coherently expressed at the Whareroa hui. Successive speakers from Ngai Te Rangi saw Ballance within a historical tradition that had not delivered them equality, particularly in the time of Bryce; Ballance was there to bring the ideology of equality into practice. Hori Ngatai began this line of argument:

The days of love between the Europeans and Maoris ceased when Sir Donald McLean died, down to the time when Mr. Bryce became Native Minister; and since then I do not know that any love has been shown to the Maori people, or that they are living in a state of prosperity. I do not believe in the statement which is so often made, that the Maoris and the Europeans are living together as one people. I do not believe there is any truth in it; but, now that you have come to see us, it may be that that saying will come true, and that you will show us the love that Sir Donald McLean used to show us.44

A hope for economic equality, discussed through a political tradition, was repeated and expanded by the next four speakers. Ngatai and others interrogated the language of ‘one people’ used by the government in the nineteenth century, to argue that Maori were not receiving the perceived rights to which they continually referred. As another speaker said, ‘Let there be one law for both races, and show us the same love that is extended to the Europeans.’45 Arguments for unity were based in trust, a kind of political affection or love.46 Wiremu Parera expanded upon Ngatai’s idea that Maori and Pakeha were not living as ‘one people’:

The love to the Natives ceased when Sir Donald McLean died, but now the Ngaiterangi think that perhaps you may renew it. This is not a new saying: that the Maoris and Europeans should be as one people; that is an old word. I have always held to that word, and treasured it up in my heart. But I am not sure that such is the case. I think that we are not yet living together as one people, for when the Europeans are in the house we stand outside the door, and, instead of being invited to enter, we are told to go away.

The house was a recurrent image of unity between Maori and Pakeha in the nineteenth century. Originally the house was used to illustrate the unifying bonds of Christianity. The idea later evolved in proposals by the Kingitanga; the house was used as an image for a bi-racial state. Here the concept was expanded, and the metaphor reversed, in order to illustrate the way that Pakeha had shut Maori out of the type of

44 Document of Speeches, p.58
45 Tareha, Document of Speeches, p.58
46 ‘Political aroha’ is a term coined by Lyndsay Head to denote the trust Maori placed in the government in the early colonial period. A similar concept is loosely applied here. Head, p.116
citizenship to which they were entitled and to explain to Pakeha that their claims of equality were based on false pretences.

Similarly, the idea was posited that Maori showed ‘greater affection to the European’ than the other way around. In other words, the basis of the government’s right to rule was the trust placed in it by the Maori people. It followed that Maori should be treated with respect and be given the governance they deserved: ‘Do not treat us as we have been treated by other Ministers.’[^47] In these speeches, Ngai Te Rangi were collectively attempting to remind the Native Minister of the moral imperative in founding the colony, placing the onus on him to bring about a state of equality. Ultimately, in the summary opinion given by Te Ranahia Kahukoti, confidence was expressed in Ballance’s ability to fulfil his promises: ‘[Y]our fame and your good name has come to us: we have heard that you treat the Maoris kindly; the fame of your kindness and your love has preceded you.’ Despite the problems which had arisen between Maori and Pakeha, speakers at the Whareroa hui ultimately expressed hope in Ballance’s abilities to offer relief.

Only two people recorded throughout the tour expressed any form of doubt or cynicism towards the widely accepted idea that Ballance would provide some solutions or that the position of Native Minister itself had some legitimacy. The first was Te Hoti Tamehana at Kihikihi (2). Like other speakers, Tamehana placed Ballance within a ministerial tradition; however, he ostensibly rejected Ballance’s authority: ‘I do not welcome you as the Native Minister, or anything else in connection with the Natives. I merely welcome you as you have come here to see us’. He continued, ‘It is well for you to come and see us, but you cannot unloose the trouble that is fast on my back.’[^48] The second was Rutene at the Whakato hui. He blamed Ballance – as the embodiment of the government – for the invisibility of past Native Minister’s, accusing him of consuming the land: ‘Salutations to you the devourer of the land.’ Rutene concluded by saying that Ballance would be ineffectual in halting land alienation. ‘Will you be strong enough to save us? I am afraid not.’[^49]

For these two speakers, political belief conflicted with cultural practice. The conduct of hui necessitated the Native Minister being welcomed. The outcome was that both

[^47]: Te Puru Tamea, *Document of Speeches*, p.58
[^48]: *Document of Speeches*, p.12
[^49]: *Document of Speeches*, p.66
speakers did welcome Ballance, but not in a manner that expressed any confidence or support in the government or its policies.

While most speakers preferred to express optimism, a few hinted at the overwhelming, systemic problems faced by Maori society in the colonial state. One such example was Kingi Hori’s greeting to Ballance at the second Kihikihi hui. Hori referred to the trust Maori within the Rohe Potae had placed in the government. He warned Ballance that, in order to maintain trust, his administration of Maori affairs must be transparent:

My word to you is, be very clear in managing matters that pertain to the Natives, that is, those Natives within this provincial district that I have mentioned - the four tribes. They are making friends with you; therefore I say to you that your management should be proper. You must consider that this is a trial effort of theirs to deal with the things according to European custom.50

In other words, because Maori were meeting the government in good faith – ‘making friends with you’ – the government should in turn meet Maori with clear intentions. Hori argued that the government should not simply assume authority: the right to govern was based on the existence of goodwill. However, the warning was one as much to Maori as it was to Ballance. In meeting with the Native Minister, Maori were pragmatically engaging with state power. However, Hori was hinting at the fact that in placing their trust in the government, Maori were committing themselves to a system that had hurt them before. Herein lay the problem faced by Maori. For trust to work, it had to be reciprocated.

Possibly the most interesting and broadly intuitive speech on the nature of government and the future of Maori society within the colony was that made by Rewi Maniapoto. Rewi made extensive reference to Ballance’s position within a long tradition of ministers and governments:

There are two kinds of minister that have been here. The first kind of minister preached to us about God. Time went on and we were told that there was another sort of Minister - that is, this kind of Minister (a Minister of the Crown). My first acquaintance with the last kind of Minister was in Sir Donald McLean’s time. We considered the policy of that Minister; he passed away, and another Minister came to the front having a different policy. We have a lot of things to bear in mind. We must bear in mind your policy, and compare the policy of future Ministers with it. You must consider, now that you have come to see us, that we bear in mind the policy of previous Ministers. Welcome. Welcome to consider all these different

50 Document of Speeches, p.23
policies that have been laid before us, to consider all the matters that refer to the Maoris and to the Europeans that are in the presence of the Minister. It is well that you should come here and look into these matters. They are matters of great importance from a Maori point of view. It is well that you should consider carefully this word, that there should only be one policy for the Europeans and the Natives. You, the present Native Minister, carefully consider this word, that there should be only one policy for the Europeans and the Natives. I am very glad to see you within this house, and of your appointment to the position of Native Minister to conduct matters for the Native people. Give us some new policy that will be clear to the Native mind. I have nothing new to say. I say the same now as I said to Sir Donald McLean in his time. Do you search for some new word to tell us or some new policy[?] From the commencement of these matters we only looked to the Almighty – that was taught us by the ministers. Now, this is a Minister who conducts matters according to law; the other was one who conducted matters according to religion. Do you search for some new policy[?] 51

Here, Maniapoto was making a comparison between the different meanings and functions attributed to the title ‘minister’ in order to explore the nature of power in a secularised political system. He found fault in a system of parliamentary democracy that saw governments rise and fall and numerous policies come in and out of existence. The implication of Maniapoto’s argument was that incoming governments could renege on past agreements. Maori saw the insecurity inherent in this system as a fault; one that consistently led to governance without direction. In observing this, Maniapoto was comparing the political culture of Maori society with a more secularised system; between a political system in which leadership was spiritually sanctioned and deeply personal and one in which authority resided in abstracted, impersonalised institutions. A secular system was one in which authority was vested in the position, not the person. Herein lay a crucial aspect of political ambivalence. Although Maori acknowledged the reality of the position of Native Minister, and the theoretical representation of Maori interests in government, those who sought to find a reason in the process that led to the marginalisation of Maori as a people could not look past the design of a system that could not secure Maori interests. Authority was not vested in the individual; it belonged to the position. Consequently, when one minister passed away, such as McLean, a different minister and invariably a different government, would appear with a different agenda. This process destroyed

51 Question marks have been added here to indicate what obviously appear to be questions. Document of Speeches, pp.12-13
institutional trust in the process of centralised governance. Therefore, Maniapoto had ‘a lot of things to bear in mind’: not only the present, but the past and the future as well. From this position, trust in the government was more than a leap of faith.

It is hard not to over-generalise from what was an extraordinary coherence of opinion across all of the hui, with the possible exception of the Whatiwhatihoe hui. Even at the Whareroa hui, hosted by Ngai Te Rangi, who had fought against the government twenty years earlier, Maori were still expressing their hope in the government’s ability to succeed. The simultaneous expression of criticism and hope by Maori speakers at these hui counters the prevailing impression given in historical accounts of late nineteenth century Maori political thought that Maori were consistently and overwhelmingly critical of the government. Moreover, the occasions where orators hint at more systemic problems, especially in some of their statements on the nature of governance in the colonial system, gives added credence to the notion of political ambivalence. On these occasions, the ideas that tempered protest appear as not so much a series of implicit positions as an overriding, near fully elaborated political concept of the position of Maori people within the colony. Such examples demonstrate the real, tangible pull of forces within the conceptual bases of Maori political thought. While most preferred to maintain a position of optimism there is evidence, most clearly articulated in the speech made by Rewi Maniapoto, of a collective hesitancy, a slight wariness, in the overall approach to state power. Pragmatism informed explicit politics of the majority; a handful of thinkers looked at the big picture and were not so convinced.

II – Maori approaches to state power: criticisms and requests relating to land and citizens’ rights

While the speeches of greeting focused on more abstract notions of the relationship between Maori communities and the government, the majority of the discussions that occurred during the tour focused on tangible political issues. These issues were the main focus of the list of subjects Maori prepared prior to the Native Minister’s visit, and consequently came to dominate the debates with Ballance. Therefore, it is important in analysing the document to pay close and lengthy attention to the way
Maori articulated their concerns. The purpose of this section is to outline some of the issues put forward by leaders and to explain their perceptions of each of them. These issues can be conflated to two main categories. Firstly, across the twelve hui, speakers expressed opposition to the colonial land administration, particularly the operation of the Native Land Court. Secondly, they protested over their perceived lack of equality on specific issues such as the distribution of liquor and access to ammunition and guns. However, while most iwi leaders and committee representatives presented their issues in the form of criticisms, speakers who raised individual or local issues did so usually in the form of a request. While a number of these issues were specific to a district or a tribal group, many were raised at hui across Ballance’s tour. An analysis of these issues and the results Maori hoped to achieve from negotiation further reveal the ambivalence which characterised Maori political thought in this period.

Most of the concerns Maori leaders raised during the tour related to land. In his first speech of welcome at the second Kihikihi hui, Wahanui Huatare spoke directly to this purpose: ‘This is the time for the welcome to the Native Minister, who has arrived amongst us, and to talk to him about matters concerning our lands.’

At most of the twelve hui, the first issue in a community’s list of subjects related to the colonial land administration. Whiti te Waiatua began with such a point when reading Ngati Whakaue’s list of subjects: ‘For many years past the Government have been devising laws affecting the Native lands; but those laws still press heavily upon the Natives: therefore it is our desire that some new policy should be enunciated with regard to these matters.’

The concerns expressed during Ballance’s tour were a continuation of protests following the New Zealand wars. In the late nineteenth century, most protest was based on the increasing alienation of land and the government’s role in facilitating this process. Few accepted the powers that the government assumed in the administration of their land. As an indication of the determination with which Maori leaders opposed some of the government’s measures between 1870 and 1900, thirty petitions per year on average were presented to parliament contesting land laws, the Native Land Court’s decisions and dubious alienations.

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52 Document of Speeches, p.12
53 Document of Speeches, p.41
54 Ward, National Overview, p.242; D. Williams, p.95
One of the most important and recurrent objections Maori raised in their discussions with Ballance concerned the operation of the Native Land Court. Established primarily under the Native Land Act 1865, the court had three main purposes: ascertaining the 'owners' of customary Maori land, the extinction of customary rights which would be replaced by legal titles derived from the Crown, and regulation of the succession to land not converted to Crown title but not alienated. From its inception, however, Maori opposed their lack of input in determining title and the divisive practices that often accompanied hearings. Although Maori were not opposed to the idea of determining legal title to their land – most desired some form of title as a security measure against alienation – the results suggested to them that the court was not designed to provide such security. The most worrying outcome that Maori anticipated was widespread land alienation. After the Native Lands Act 1873 – which marked the start of a period when most land passed through the court – Maori began to see that alienation inevitably followed court hearings. As with the theory of a system of courts, Maori did not oppose alienation per se: they opposed a system that meant alienation was beyond the control of the collective owners. The implication that Maori drew from this process was that the government was not acting in their interests as citizens, having designed a system whereby Maori property rights were not protected.

During Ballance's tour, Native District Committee members and iwi representatives described the Native Land Court as the centrepiece of a system designed to alienate Maori land. John Ormsby presented what was probably a common perception of the court at the Kihikihi (2) hui:

*We have never seen any good come out of the work of the Native Land Court. Where now are the numerous blocks of land which have been passed through*

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55 The principles behind the Court had been laid down in the Native Lands Act 1862, but the Court was effectively brought into practice under the Native Lands Act 1865. Ward, *National Overview*, p.215
56 D. Williams, p.142
57 Williams writes that from 1868 onwards the Maori members of parliament consistently criticised Crown policy on the Native Land Court and brought forward their own bills to give Maori greater autonomy. D. Williams, p.95
58 Hayes, p.16; D. Williams, pp.74-5
59 Williams observes that 'nearly eighty percent of investigated land was not immediately alienated when the ten-owners rule was in existence, whereas when that rule was replaced with the more extreme version of individualisation introduced by the Native Land Act 1873 the rate of alienation increased dramatically.' The percentage of land alienated subsequent to title determination by 1885 had increased to 59 percent. D. Williams, p.167
the Native Land Court? They are not in the possession of the Maoris, but they are in the possession of Europeans...\textsuperscript{60}

Ormsby saw a process in this system: following a sitting of the court, alienation would follow. The government had not merely designed this process, it also benefited from alienation: ‘I have found out that a Court is merely a machine by which the lands are transferred by the Native owners to either the companies or the Government.’ This created an environment where Maori were ‘very fearful’ about the fate of their land.

Speakers also opposed the divisive nature of the process, whereby any claimant could bring a case before the court, resulting in protracted hearings and bitter disputes. Wi Pere raised this issue at the Whakato hui, observing how the practice of calling individual witnesses was hurting community relationships.\textsuperscript{61} Ormsby, again, forcefully articulated the key concerns: ‘In accordance with the present procedure of the Native Land Court, anybody can go in and lay a claim to a block of land whether he has a right to it or not; and, should he be strong, and press his fictitious claim, the Court will give judgment in his favour.’\textsuperscript{62} Speakers at Whakarewarewa\textsuperscript{63} and Whakato criticised the practice of the court of sitting in geographically inaccessible places. Wi Pere also described how a number of people had been prevented from attending the Whakato hui because a particular court would not adjourn, suggesting to him the almost inherent inflexibility of the court in general.\textsuperscript{64}

A more specific example of this position can be seen in the speech Himipuru made at the Parawai hui. Himipuru, in making an inquiry to Ballance as to what moneys he was owed from the Te Aroha Block, referred to the practice of the Native Land Court and the impression Maori gained from its practice:

Previous to the investigation of this block by the Court it was arranged that he was to have this money, but before he got paid the money the land passed the Court, and he was absent, having received no notice that the land was to be put through the Court. When the land went through the Court, all his claims on it went with the land, extending up to a portion of the block called Manawaru, which was given by the Government to some other Natives than the owner. The way that land was put through the Court had the appearance of robbing the Natives.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{60} Document of Speeches, p.14
\textsuperscript{61} Document of Speeches, p.74
\textsuperscript{62} Document of Speeches, p.14
\textsuperscript{63} Document of Speeches, p.53
\textsuperscript{64} Document of Speeches, p.67
\textsuperscript{65} Document of Speeches, p.39. This speech was recorded in the third person.
Most complaints made to Ballance regarding the alienation of land or problems over a particular block only hinted at the role of the court. However, the number of times the Native Land Court was raised during the tour – which total in the dozens – suggests how large the issue loomed in Maori political thought.

A number of communities opposed the high cost of putting land through the Native Land Court. This was a common objection to the court in this period.\(^{66}\) On many occasions, money advances for court fees (and costs for survey) put Maori into debt. Therefore, Maori faced constant pressure to sell, in the form of indebtedness.\(^{67}\) Wi Pere, again, raised this point at the Whakato hui. He said that they did not oppose the court ‘for the sake of obstruction’, but wanted to see laws enforced which would end the destructive effect of Maori borrowing money from Pakeha to pay for court fees.\(^{68}\) Pere insisted that the law had to be enforced, otherwise those who faced defaulting would be tempted to borrow.\(^{69}\)

Another recurrent concern was the high costs of surveying, another aspect of Native Land Court processes. One of the requirements of the court was that all applications needed an accompanying survey. The high cost of surveys – which was continually opposed by Maori through the latter part of the century\(^{70}\) – was an issue raised at four of the hui: Ohinemutu, Whakarewarewa, Mokoia and Tauranga. Like the charges for the court itself, Maori objected to exorbitant prices charged by most surveyors. For example, Retireti Tapihana explained how surveys – and the money needed for a survey – often caused disputes among Maori. Tapihana said that he would not elaborate, because these were ‘matters that are well known to the Government.’\(^{71}\) One speaker went against the received picture of Maori opposing surveys, however, by taking the opportunity of Ballance’s presence to request a

\(^{66}\) Costs were £1 for investigation or counter-claim and £1 to the investigation for every day occupied after the first. D. Williams, p.189

\(^{67}\) Ward, *National Overview*, p.241. Indebtedness is a recurrent cause outlined in many Tribunal reports as to the alienation of land. Ward argues that while Maori found it difficult to obtain credit to develop land, Pakeha lent money to Maori for court expenses, often enforcing defaults when Maori could not pay. Hayes disputes this interpretation, saying that this practice was limited to a few isolated cases. He argues for 'a more nuanced approach to the role of debt in the alienation of Maori land', that debt was often incurred in anticipation of alienation. Whether or not Hayes is correct, it is clear that Maori reacted strongly against debt, many associating it with government actions in general. Hayes, p.119

\(^{68}\) Document of Speeches, pp.75, 67

\(^{69}\) Document of Speeches, p.67

\(^{70}\) D. Williams, pp.192-3.

\(^{71}\) Document of Speeches, p.44. At Whakarewarewa, the representatives for Tuhourangi also requested that the charges made by surveyors be reduced. At the Mokoia hui Ratema Te Awekotuktu went even further by requesting that the island of Mokoia would not be surveyed, and that leases would not be permitted for portions of the land of the island. Document of Speeches, pp.51, 47
survey.\textsuperscript{72} Perhaps a more revealing position was expressed in the document read by Whiti te Te Waiatua on behalf of Ngati Whakaue. Whiti te requested that survey charges should be reduced, and that the government should pay for surveys outright so that Maori could repay their debt once they had derived revenue from the lands.\textsuperscript{73} Although historians have criticised payments made by the government in advance of Native Land Court hearings, it is clear that Maori sought credit.\textsuperscript{74} By arguing that the cost of surveys be minimised, Whiti te was accepting – albeit reluctantly – the argument that Maori needed to pay for surveys. But in arguing that the costs should be reduced Whiti te was putting the view that the government should take on some of the burden and reduced the impact on Maori.

From studying the manner in which community leaders raised their issues before the Native Minister in 1885, it appears as though the practices of the Native Land Court and the concomitant results fed into the overall Maori perceptions of the way they were treated by the government. Consequently, speakers broached other subjects that related to land in the same critical tone, speaking of these not so much as discrete matters, but as part of a system which they increasingly believed had been designed specifically to impoverish them. The rating of lands was one such concern that was raised at a number of hui. The system of rates by 1885 was complex.\textsuperscript{75} Maori land that had not been purchased or investigated was generally exempt from rates. However, lands that had gone through the court were rated in a seemingly arbitrary manner, from which Maori received little or no benefit.\textsuperscript{76} Consequently, Maori viewed rating as one of a number of government measures which resulted only in increasing poverty.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{72} See Tareha, at the Tauranga hui, who asked that his land at Te Aute might be surveyed. Document of Speeches, p.64
\textsuperscript{73} Document of Speeches, p.42
\textsuperscript{74} See D. Williams, pp.146-149
\textsuperscript{75} The rating regime for Maori land began with the Highways Board Empowering Act 1871. The Rating Act 1876 and the Crown and Native Rating Act 1882 expanded categories of rateable Maori land: the latter including Maori land occupied by Pakeha, Maori land held under Crown Grant, Maori land within five miles of a public road and Maori land within a Borough. Marinus La Rooij, 'That most difficult and thorny question': The Rating of Maori Land in Tauranga County, Wai 215 #P14, (Report commissioned by the Waitangi Tribunal), 2002, pp.16-19
\textsuperscript{76} Maori land was often valued too high or too low. In addition, although Maori paid custom duties, and often participated in the construction of roads, most rates were inevitably spent on European communities. Ward, National Overview, pp.440-441
\textsuperscript{77} In 1871, Maori members of parliament said that Maori were too poor to pay rates and should instead be allowed to give land or work on their construction. A number of the speakers at Paora Tuhaere’s parliament in 1879 vehemently opposed the ratings system. Ward, National Overview, pp.441-2; La Rooij, p.17
Maori objected to the ratings regime during the hui at Kihikihi (2), Whakato, Parawai, Mokoia and Whareroa.\textsuperscript{78} Of all the hui, Ngai Te Rangi articulated the concern regarding rates most forcefully. Te Mete Raukawa began the list of ‘the subjects which affect Ngaiterangi very deeply’\textsuperscript{79} with this issue:

In the opinion of the Ngaiterangi people the Rating Act is a very unjust Act, because the Natives, being an impoverished people, are not able to pay either the rates on the land or the property-tax. We ask that these laws may be repealed so far as they affect Native lands. If the Government will not repeal these Acts, then we will continue to think that they are not desirous of affording us any relief.\textsuperscript{80}

Ngatai used the same language in referring to rates as Maori across Ballance’s tour used in their speeches of greeting. However, he turned the image of ‘relief’ on its head, warning Ballance that his current popularity would slump if the Rating Act was not repealed. Hori Ngatai elaborated upon this from his own personal experience: he had been given a Crown Grant, and the County Council had demanded rates from him but from none of the adjacent owners. Ngatai made clear his feelings upon this:

I have been made an example of and harshly treated. It is my wish, and the wish of the whole of the Ngaiterangi, that this rating should be done away with. If I am to be treated in this way in future, I ask that I may be killed outright, and not killed by degrees; for I may as well say at once that I have no money to go on continually paying these charges.

Ballance disputed Ngatai’s interpretation, saying that he owned his block outright, whereas those around him held a collective title. He also said that if Maori wished to be treated alike, under the same law, then they would have to pay rates for the maintenance public works.\textsuperscript{81} This was the type of argument that Ngatai had objected to in his opening speech: ‘I do not believe in the statement which is so often made, that the Maoris and the Europeans are living together as one people.’\textsuperscript{82} In replying to Ballance, Ngatai did not repeat this belief. Instead, he spoke of the principles of equality, saying that he ‘quite agreed with the principle of paying rates.’ What he objected to the exorbitant cost: ‘All the Government works that I embarked in result in my having to pay something heavy... I cannot understand how this occurs.’ Ngatai

\textsuperscript{78} Document of Speeches, pp.14, 67, 37, 47, 39, 59, 60-61, 63
\textsuperscript{79} Document of Speeches, p.59
\textsuperscript{80} Document of Speeches, p.60
\textsuperscript{81} Ballance made a similar response when replying to Tamati Paetai’s request for rates over a specific block be waived. Document of Speeches, p.37
\textsuperscript{82} Document of Speeches, p.58
also disputed Ballance’s interpretation of the collective title held by his neighbours.\textsuperscript{83} This exchange demonstrates the bind that many Maori were in regarding the paying of rates. Ngatai wanted to act as a citizen, and receive the concomitant benefits such as improvements in public works. However, he saw that the costs of citizenship were not warranted if such improvements were not of real benefit to Maori, serving only to further pauperise an already poor community. Ngatai expressed a generally held view that the high cost of rates, Native Land Court fees and surveys, combined with insufficient access to credit to fund development, meant that Maori were rarely able to enjoy the equal benefits of citizenship.

Indeed, at Kihikihi (2), John Ormsby observed a causal connection implicit in the various cogs of the colonial land administration machine, particularly the evident links between rates, the Native Land Court and the alienation of land. Having outlined the specific problems of the court, Ormsby discussed rates:

It has been stated that, as soon as ever a road is formed, then a Road Board is also formed – that is, the Rating Act is enforced. The Act gives the Government power to proclaim within the Rating Act any land, although it may not have passed through the Native Land Court; and out lands, although we might not have used them for twenty years, still the rates would go on accumulating, and, whenever we use them, the accumulation of rates would be demanded from us.\textsuperscript{84}

Ormsby continued with a counterfactual:

Possibly you will reply, and say, “That is your fault, because you do not put your lands quickly through the Court.” Then I shall say, “Through which Court are we to pass them?” Because, as I have shown, we are fearful of the action for the Native Land Court, because of the evil acts by which the Native Land Court is worked.

It was not simply one measure alone but the combination of government pressures that placed Maori in a perilous position. However, Ormsby, like other speakers who brought these issues before Ballance, remained essentially pragmatic, hoping to negotiate a solution with the Native Minister. As described in Chapter 3, by the end of the Kihikihi (2) hui, Ormsby believed much had been achieved in the course of the discussions, comparing the understanding that had been reached with Ballance with the amputation of a scorpion’s sting. Ormsby not only saw a causal process in the operations of the colonial government, he believed that some of the key instruments in this process could be eliminated in the course of one meeting with a minister of the

\textsuperscript{83} Document of Speeches, pp.61, 63
\textsuperscript{84} Document of Speeches, p.14
Crown. This demonstrates much of the practical approach to state power that was typical of speakers across the tour.

Such pragmatism extended to other problems that Maori leaders believed were the result of unequal governance. When speakers expressed opposition to roads or other public works, it was usually on account of rates.\textsuperscript{85} For example, at Parawai W.H. Taipari complained to Ballance that his people were to be rated forty to fifty miles from the nearest road.\textsuperscript{86} At the Kihikihi (2) hui, Ballance commented on the fact that Maori usually protested over rates in order to promote the building of a road. Ormsby agreed with Ballance: ‘Mr. Ballance was perfectly right when he said the objection was to the rates, not to the roads.’\textsuperscript{87} Indeed, a number of speakers asked Ballance for a road to be built in a particular area. At Ranana, Keepa Te Rangihiwini was particularly vociferous in seeking a road from Ranana to Murimotu.\textsuperscript{88} Hoani Nahe spoke on behalf of a group of owners who had not received the road for which they had given up some land.\textsuperscript{89} Where Maori communities did oppose roads, however, was when they feared discrimination in the local council’s choice of route. Haora Tareranui described one such instance at Parawai:

There is a Native settlement of twenty acres in that locality; there is also some European land in that locality. Within the twenty acres of the Maori block is a sacred place; there were some bodies buried there a long time ago, and it is still used as a burial-ground; a portion of it is precipitous. The Council have determined to run a road right through the Native cultivations. The Maoris say, “No; it should not be so, because you take land from us that is available for cultivation.” The Council say, “We want to do it in order to make the road straight.”\textsuperscript{90}

From Tareranui’s perspective, the actions of the council were pointless and petty. By taking the issue up with the Native Minister, the representative of Maori interests in the government, he was hoping that the central authority might override the local and to protect their interests.

The issue of the Main Trunk railway – as a major public work – had a different significance altogether for Maori from the Whanganui region through to

\textsuperscript{85} Ward says for the broader period that Maori were not opposed to roads as such; they were concerned about the effects ratings would have on their ability to finance their land. Ward, \textit{National Overview}, p.442
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.39
\textsuperscript{87} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.19
\textsuperscript{88} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.8
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.37
\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.33
Waikato. Because the railway was such a major work and because of the political and economic importance of connecting the two halves of the North Island together, the railway took on symbolic importance in the opening of the King Country. As discussed in Chapter 2, by the time of Ballance’s tour the King Country negotiations were effectively reaching their final stages. During the meeting, however, a number of speakers expressed their desire to hold over the final arrangements until the four iwi with interests in the decision – Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and upper Whanganui iwi – could meet and discuss the issue. The primary problem was that representatives from Ngati Tuwharetoa were not present at the meeting with Ballance. One concern, as Te Hauraki articulated, was that pushing through the railway too quickly, without solving problems related to land first, would inevitably lead to difficulties: ‘Leave the road (railway) for the present. It will go through in the course of years. Leave it for some years hence till you have settled all matters concerning land for the Natives to reside on; then the railway can be made.’

While most sought a shorter delay than Te Hauraki so that the various iwi could reach a common understanding, Hopa Te Rangianini and Rewi Maniapoto said that such consultation was of no consequence. They argued that the decision agreeing to the railway had already been reached. Rewi referred to his commonly quoted letter to Bryce, in which he asked for the line to be formed with speed so that he might ride on it before he died. ‘I thought that was all settled, and that there would be nothing to talk about with regard to that; but I find they are talking about it again.’ In the end, the discussion did not last long. The flurry of correspondence that followed the hui merely confirmed that the railway would go through. Ballance agreed to the three week delay so that the four iwi could discuss the issue. A hui was convened on February 24, at which consent was given for the railway to go ahead, with certain provisions. An agreement had been reached. The first sod of the railway line was turned in April 1885.

91 Wahanui spoke for most at the hui in saying that there needed to be a definitive agreement between the four iwi: ‘I have not been able to see all the people; only the ones that I have seen are in the house at the present time – that is, Ngatimaniapoto and Ngatiraukawa. There are some from Whanganui here present. Those who are not present are Ngatatiharetoa [sic]. I do not wish you to consider that what I am now saying is in the light of keeping back the railway-line, but what I am anxious for is that I should be able to see those people who are absent, after I have seen you, after this meeting.’ Document of Speeches, p.22
92 Document of Speeches, p.16
93 Document of Speeches, p.24
94 See correspondence from G.T. Wilkinson to the Native Department, MA 13/43a: King Country
Underlying most of the issues regarding land that were raised by community representatives was the notion that Maori were not receiving full equality under the law. This was particularly the case in the matter of property rights. Leaders understood that their rights extended to all land within their territory. However, Maori faced a problem when they sought legal title to the foreshore, since the Crown also assumed rights under the common law. At the Whareroa hui, Hori Ngatai referred to the rights that he and his iwi held over the Tauranga harbour:

I will look upon the land below high-water mark as being part of my own garden. From time immemorial I have had this land, and had authority over all the food in the sea... My mana over these places has never been taken away. I have always held authority over these fishing-places and preserved them; and no tribe is allowed to come here and fish without my consent being given. But now, in consequence of the word of the Europeans that all the land below high-water mark belongs to the Queen, people have trampled upon our ancient Maori customs and are constantly coming here whenever they like to fish. I ask that our Maori custom shall not be set aside in this manner, and that our authority over these fishing-grounds may be upheld.\(^\text{95}\)

Ngatai thus argued that although Maori property rights were supposed to be protected under the law; that same law was now acting to strip Maori of their rights. Although the Native Land Court initially heard and, in some cases, awarded title to the foreshore, by 1885 the Crown had essentially denied Maori the right to seek investigation of their claims to these areas.\(^\text{96}\)

Issues relating to land were raised before the Native Minister at hui after hui during the 1885 tour. Each time a speaker got up during a hui to discuss land, it was to discuss a problem. Usually this was not to cast judgement upon systems of government, but to come to an agreement with the Native Minister on the particular problem at hand. Those iwi and community representatives who did discuss the system, however, found fault in the regime of land laws that had been established following the New Zealand wars. When Maori greeted the Native Minister, asking

\(^{95}\) Document of Speeches, p.61  
\(^{96}\) A handful of titles were issued in the 1860s and 1870s. However, the practice became less common after Chief Judge Fenton’s decision in 1870 against Maori freehold titles to the foreshore, to prevent Maori going to the Native Land Court to secure title. The Harbours Act 1878 enshrined this position in law, providing that no part of the foreshore was to be granted or given away other than with the authority of a special Act of Parliament. By the twentieth century the Crown began assuming that the Crown had owned the foreshores since 1840 according to common law. Ward, National Overview, pp.338-340
him to relieve their ‘troubles’, they were predominantly referring to the collective burden that weighed upon their land.

The second main set of issues Maori leaders raised at hui throughout the tour related to their rights as citizens, on how government policies and administration inhibited Maori from obtaining full equality with their Pakeha equivalents under the law. While their ‘troubles’ mostly did relate to land, in some instances the issues that were brought forward related to broader issues of inequality. Two slightly obscure examples demonstrate the widely held expectation that Maori had of their rights as citizens: the request to relax restrictions on the purchase of arms and ammunition, and Te Kooti’s right to travel freely.

One issue that was raised at a number of the hui was the tight restrictions on the purchase of arms and ammunition. The regulations still surrounding the acquisition of arms in 1885 appear to be a direct legacy of the wars of the 1860s and 1870s. Especially on the East Coast, where settlers feared the resurgence of fighting, the government tightly controlled access to weapons.\(^97\) An individual, whether Pakeha or Maori, had to apply to the Resident Magistrate for a permit to purchase arms and ammunition. The Magistrate then used his discretion to decide who was ‘respectable’, and therefore who received a permit. In theory this was an equitable system; in practice, as speakers put it to Ballance, restrictions were much tighter for Maori. At Mokoia, Whakarewarewa, Tauranga and Whakato, speakers objected to these restrictions, and requested that they be lifted so they could resume effective hunting of birds.

Wi Pauro, representing the Ngati Wahiao hapu of Tuhourangi at the Whakarewarewa hui, is one such example. Pauro, reading from a prepared document, argued that Ngati Wahiao should be able to purchase arms and ammunition at a reasonable price, ‘such as those at which they are supplied to the Europeans.’\(^98\) Ngai Te Rangi had a similar request. As Te Mete Raukawa argued:

> The restrictions regulating the supply are very strict, and Ngaiterangi are not able to obtain arms and ammunition. We do not wish that this privilege of obtaining

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\(^97\) The restrictions on the purchase of arms and ammunition began with the Arms Ordinance, enacted by Grey in 1845 in the interest of suppressing rebellion. The Suppression of Rebellion Act of 1863 entrenched this position, and the power of Resident Magistrates to issue licenses. Ward, \textit{A Show of Justice}, p.87

\(^98\) An almost identical request was raised by Ratema Te Awekotuku at the Mokoia hui. \textit{Document of Speeches}, pp.51, 48
licenses may be restricted to the chiefs only; we wish that any person may be allowed to get them if he wishes.\textsuperscript{99}

Raukawa suspected that lingering suspicions from the wars motivated the tight restrictions:

The fighting that took place between the Europeans and the Ngaiterangi arose from a very great cause, which could not be controlled; but even that fighting was carried on in a straightforward and manly spirit. During that fighting Ngaiterangi firmly held to that peace and when the fighting was over and peace was made Ngaiterangi firmly held to that peace and did not break it.

Raukawa believed that Ngai Te Rangi had earned the right to be trusted because of their conduct during and after the wars: the ‘straightforward and manly spirit’ of the fighting and the peace negotiated subsequently. Finally, at Whakato, Wi Pere asked on behalf of ‘the people present here’ for Ballance to give them some ammunition so that they could properly feed their distinguished visitors:

Some of the people advised me not to make this request, lest it should be said that we want this ammunition to shoot one another. I wish to explain to you that, in years when birds are plentiful, a chief should have as many as twenty licenses granted to him... The reason preserved birds were so scarce at this meeting is that the Maoris had no ammunition. When Maoris go to shoot they shoot them for others - for great meetings, &c. – so that they may be able to entertain chiefs who come to see them.\textsuperscript{100}

Although Pere and Raukawa thought differently on who should be given licenses, the consensus was that Maori should have access to guns and ammunition, without referring to the Resident Magistrate for approval. Although Ballance countered this argument by saying that Pakeha also had to apply to the Magistrate for ammunition, Maori believed that in practice the restrictions were tighter for them, a further manifestation of inequality between Maori and Pakeha.

Hoani Nahe gave a very different perspective on the issue at the Parawai hui. He said that the Hauraki District Committee had heard that some individuals of Te Arawa had received licenses to purchase guns and ammunition, and ‘they had heard that the reason the Arawas were so anxious to get guns was to avenge the murder of Kereopa, who was murdered by Natives some time ago.’\textsuperscript{101} This suggests that Pakeha

\textsuperscript{99} Document of Speeches, p.60
\textsuperscript{100} Document of Speeches, p.77
\textsuperscript{101} There appears to be some confusion as to who this ‘Kereopa’ exactly is. From his speech, it is apparent that Nahe was not referring to Kereopa Te Rau, the Ngati Rangiwiwehi Pai Marire emissary, who was executed by the government in 1872; primarily for the fact that Nahe said that Te Arawa were aiming to ‘avenge the murder of Kereopa’ and that Nahe himself was Ngati Maru. However, in his response, Ballance talked about Kereopa Te Rau: ‘The Arawas know that Kereopa was justly punished
were not alone in creating the hysteria about possession of guns. Whether Nahe was
correct in his assessment of Te Arawa intentions, articulating these concerns to
Ballance could only add to the fears held by the settler population in general.

A second discussion which illuminates the type of expectations Maori had of
their rights as citizens took place between Ballance, Te Kooti and a number of his
followers at the first Kihikihi hui. Te Kooti’s advisor, Te Rangihiroa discussed Te
Kooti’s proposed visit to the East Coast in late 1884; an event Ballance had referred
to in his opening speech. Te Rangihiroa reacted against Ballance’s statement that ‘the
Government and the institutions of the colony allow the fullest latitude to all the
people of the colony’, including the preservation of Maori institutions and religion,
saying that the government had not demonstrated this by offering to protect his party
in going to the East Coast. Te Rangihiroa said he travelled in accordance with the
Amnesty Act, but found that ‘some of the people of the place had built a pa to fight
me – to oppose me – but I paid no attention to that pa, because I knew I was going in
accordance with the law, and the law is supposed to be as a parent over all people.’

He then explained his intention to go in January 1886: ‘I shall go in accordance with
the law. The only canoe that I shall make use of to convey me to Wairoa will be the
law. The paddlers of that canoe are affection, the making of one, and religion.’ Te
Rangihiroa, then, was drawing a clear association between the government’s
obligations to supply protection from those who went outside the law and his rights
own rights as a citizen; protection included the right to travel freely. Ballance
responded, saying that the government had not prohibited the party from going, but
merely advised them not to go.

Te Kooti continued the discussion, outlining his reasons why the law should
protect him. He began by placing the current situation within the context of his past
and the power the government had come to assume in the course of the previous
decades:

The reason of my expression of good feeling to you is that I am a person who has
been brought out of trouble. The Queen is the ruler over all the Islands, the

according to law for the great crime he had committed, taking the life of the Rev. Mr. Volckner [sic];
and I believe that the Arawas themselves as a body are perfectly satisfied with the course that the law
took in that case...’ Possibly there was some misunderstanding between Nahe and the Native Minister
on this occasion. Document of Speeches, p.31

Document of Speeches, p.10

The ‘place’ was Wairoa, Hawke’s Bay.

Document of Speeches, p.11

See methodological discussion in Chapter 1 for a discussion on this peculiar translation.
Governor is the ruler over this Island. Mr Bryce took my hat off my head. Mr Bryce and Mr Wilkinson were delighted at what had been done in order that I might not return to my old ways.¹⁰⁶

Te Kooti was conscious of the reputation he had gained among Pakeha and among some iwi. Consequently he was aware of Ballance’s motivation; primarily, that Te Kooti’s very presence on the East Coast would incite hostility among certain sections of the public. Despite the obligations the government had to enforce the law, according to Ballance, it made practical sense not to go. Te Kooti continued:

This is you during the present time telling me to remain. I agree to it. I told you that I was going to Te Wairoa. Your advice to me to remain was good. You have been privileged by the Almighty that your action be good to the children, and also to the land. They [Te Kooti’s followers] are still asking me to go over there (to the East Coast) during the next year. The road by which I am supposed to go is the road that has been laid down by Mr. Bryce, and your word to me, and affection, and the making of one, and Christianity. This is an expression of good will towards you. Go away but do not forget me.

Te Kooti’s position as a prophet was by no means typical. However, in expressing his belief in the law, he was articulating a concept of good governance similar to those expressed in the greetings. Te Kooti, like Kingi Hori at the other Kihikihi hui, based his hope for equality in trust. Where Hori told Ballance that he should be treated well because they were ‘making friends’ with the Native Minister, Te Kooti based his trust in the idea of unity, primarily through the unifying bonds of Christianity. In return for trust, Te Kooti promised his ‘good will.’

These two examples suggest the type of rights Maori expected as citizens of the colony. It also goes some way to explaining the type of role they expected centralised government to fulfil in the administration of Maori affairs. Maori wanted the same rights as Pakeha citizens in the matter of purchasing arms and ammunition. They did not believe that restrictions should be based on racial prejudice. Equally, however, these examples suggest something of the expectations Maori had of the Native Minister. As their representative in government, Maori believed that in bringing these issues before Ballance, he would be able to institute change in their favour.

Most of the examples cited above are from speeches made by iwi, community and committee leaders. Little so far has been made of the individuals who represented

¹⁰⁶ Document of Speeches, p.12
small specific groups, usually hapu or even smaller family groups. At almost every hui throughout the tour, these individual speakers made requests of the Native Minister for support or assistance in a variety of areas. These were requests for help on specific, local issues, rather than the broader, tribally based, political concerns formulated prior to the hui and presented in a list of subjects. Individual Maori had the opportunity to raise local issues in eight of the hui; eight examples from these hui typify the general pattern. At Ranana, Rini spoke of a promise made by Sir Donald McLean a number of years previously for a place to be built in the Wanganui township for Maori to reside when they went to the town.\textsuperscript{107} Two speakers requested a flag from Ballance at Pipiriki.\textsuperscript{108} At the first meeting at Kihikihi, successive speakers, all of whom were Te Kooti’s followers, rose to request some dry land instead of the swamp that had been given to them by the government at Orakau.\textsuperscript{109} At Kihikihi (2), Hopa Te Rangianini asked for a viaduct to be built to divert the railway over his swamp, where he collected eels in the summer.\textsuperscript{110} The account of the Parawai hui contains the most examples of this type of request, many of which related to the non-payment of money for land given for gold exploration, incorrect payments and disputes with Pakeha neighbours. In a typical example, Hohepo Mataitua asked for a government medical officer to be appointed at Coromandel, suggesting the re-appointment of a Dr. Hovell, and requesting that those Pakeha who got oysters on the beach frontages of their lands should pay a license-fee to local Maori.\textsuperscript{111} Petera Pokeno at Mokoia requested some blasting powder to help his community split posts for a fence.\textsuperscript{112} At Whakarewarewa, Tamati Paora requested some land where they might keep their buggies, two flags for the community and a salary for himself. Te Puru, towards the end of the Whareroa hui, spoke about a Pakeha who, having bought a piece of land, had begun to fence in land that was not his.\textsuperscript{113}

These examples suggest the type of relationship that Maori saw in welcoming the Native Minister into their communities. Maori approached state power pragmatically. Power was with the government; therefore, Maori dealt with that

\textsuperscript{107} Document of Speeches, p.9  
\textsuperscript{108} Document of Speeches, pp.9-10  
\textsuperscript{109} Document of Speeches, pp.10-11. In 1884, Te Kooti and his followers were granted a portion of land near Orakau.  
\textsuperscript{110} Document of Speeches, p.23  
\textsuperscript{111} Document of Speeches, p.38. The specifics of both requests are not known.  
\textsuperscript{112} Document of Speeches, p.50  
\textsuperscript{113} Document of Speeches, p.64
reality. Secondly, Maori saw a clear role for central government and the position of the Native Minister. From their perspective, the benefits were numerous. These ranged from the ability of the government to provide assistance for public works to the government’s role as mediator in disputes between Maori and their Pakeha neighbours. In summary, the practical approach that can be seen in community-based proposals for reform can also be seen in requests made by individuals.

From the foregoing discussion of the issues raised by community leaders and individuals at hui during Ballance’s tour, a number of conclusions can be reached on some of the main aspects of Maori political thought in this period. Firstly, Maori believed they were not receiving the full benefits of equal citizenship that they had expected. Secondly, Maori believed there was a causal process implicit in the operations of the colonial government, a system which they perceived was designed primarily to impoverish them. Most saw the actions of the Native Land Court as the prime contributor to this system. The effects of the court, in turn, had flow on effects to the Maori perception of other topics, such as ratings, property rights and other citizen’s rights. The depth of feeling among Maori communities in regard to this system can be seen in the list of subjects that had been drawn up prior to the hui; lists that contained most of these points. However, the very act of negotiation that Maori leaders undertook with the Native Minister on these issues, demonstrates the pragmatism that underlay their general approach to state power in this period. It is mainly in the political response to these problems that Maori proposed during the tour that political ambivalence becomes apparent. Some interesting points can be made when comparing the problems outlined by Maori during the tour to specific political responses suggested.

III – Maori political initiatives and proposals for reform

Throughout the tour, Maori speakers proposed alternative political solutions to the problems created by colonial governance. These proposals had been considered and decided upon prior to the hui and consequently made up a significant portion of the list of subjects presented by each community to the Native Minister. A close reading of these proposals, and the discussions that ensued during the hui, further
demonstrates the type of pragmatism employed by Maori in approaching state power in the late nineteenth century. Speakers at most of the hui placed considerable emphasis on committees – specifically the Native District Committees established under the 1883 Act. By extending the committees’ powers, they argued, many of the problems that had been created by colonial land administration would be alleviated. The following discussion will outline how, in requesting power from the government, Maori were specifically requesting the power to determine titles to land and to prevent further alienation, a power they did not enjoy under the system of the Native Land Court. Those who talked of committees as the power of ‘self-government’ were stringently opposed to the government’s land regime. Implicitly, the framework of the committees legitimated the colonial government’s authority, inherently guaranteeing the existing political order as it had developed since the New Zealand wars. Finally, this section will outline how the majority view – politics through committees – differed substantially from the position adopted by the Kingitanga, which proposed a more comprehensive form of self-government, independent of the New Zealand government. This interpretation challenges the current historical consensus, that Maori sought committees as effective mechanisms of ‘self-government’ or autonomy.

A study of the document of speeches suggests that empowering Maori committees was a potent idea in Maori political thought in 1885. Before asking why this was the case, some amount of exposition is required regarding the specific proposals made by Maori during Ballance’s tour.

Two types of committee were at issue in 1885. Firstly, as described in previous chapters, there was an existing system of Native District Committees established under John Bryce’s Native Committees Act 1883. The Act established a system whereby committees could be elected from among the adult male population of specifically designated districts. Ultimately, twelve districts were proclaimed under the Act. The committees, under this system, had two main functions. Firstly, they were designed to arbitrate upon disputes between two parties where the cause of the dispute had arisen within the district and the matter did not exceed twenty pounds. The second main function of the committees was to make inquiries, where the committee saw fit, where it was desired to ascertain names of owners of any block passing through the Native Land Court, to ascertain the successors of any deceased

114 Native Committees Act 1883, New Zealand Statutes
owner or where disputes had arisen in the location of a boundary, and to report to the court on these matters. Each committee was to have twelve members, nominated, then elected, under the authority of the Resident Magistrate. By 1885, a number of districts had elected committees. Representatives from district committees played a prominent role in discussions at three of the hui: Ranana, Kihikihi (2) and Ohinemutu. In addition, Ballance met with the Hauraki District Committee prior to the Parawai hui. Speakers at all of these hui put forward proposals regarding the expansion of their own committee’s powers. The powers and jurisdiction of the district committees were also discussed at Whareroa, Mokoia, Whakarewarewa and Whakato. These proposals, as will be discussed below, took on a variety of forms.

The other type of committee under discussion during the tour was Ballance’s ‘block committees’, provided for under his proposed legislation on the administration of Maori land.\(^{115}\) In contrast to the District Committees, Ballance outlined a system whereby committees would be elected among the owners of particular blocks of land. In the Native Minister’s words, ‘All dealings with the land shall be managed through that Committee.’\(^{116}\) Because he advocated his proposal repeatedly during the tour, these block committees came to be an important part of the debates at most of the hui, including Whatiwhatihoe. The only hui where committees were not discussed at all were Pipiriki, Hiruharama and Kihikihi (1).\(^{117}\)

The key to understanding why the idea of committees was so strong at this time lies in unravelling what specific powers Maori leaders sought, and the context in which such requests were made. A widely held opinion expressed during the tour was that the Native District Committees as they had been constituted under the 1883 Act did not have enough powers. Committee representatives at Ranana, Kihikihi (2), Parawai and Ohinemutu, and community representatives at Mokoia and Whakarewarewa promoted this idea. For example, in reference to Ngati Maniapoto’s 1883 petition, John Ormsby – the Chairman of the Kawhia District Committee –

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\(^{115}\) As explained in Chapter 2, the legislation was still in its infancy in early 1885. The first reading of the Native Land Disposition Bill, as it was then known, occurred in June 1885. The bill was renamed in 1886 as the Native Land Administration Bill. It passed into law that same year. Ward, National Overview, p.244

\(^{116}\) Document of Speeches, p.3

\(^{117}\) Committee business was thoroughly dealt with at the Ranana hui, suggesting why this matter was not brought up at the two much smaller hui on the Whanganui river. As a small community living in exile, the reasons why the committees did not figure as an issue with Te Kooti and his people are self evident.
argued that real power needed to be vested in the committees for them to act effectively:

There were two things granted to us out of the petition: One was to keep in future the companies from dealing with our lands; the other was to give the Native Committees power. But, with regard to the forming of the Native Committees, that was not carried to such an extent as we wished. It was only a shadow when we came to take hold of it to work it – it was not substantial.\textsuperscript{118}

For those who supported the system of the committees, Ormsby’s opinion was typical.

The powers that Ormsby and most others sought related to the work of the Native Land Court. Bryce’s Act had removed some important provisions from Henare Tomoana’s Native Committees Empowering Bill 1882, particularly the power for the court to be judicially bound by a committee’s decision.\textsuperscript{119} Under the 1883 Act, committees had an advisory role only; in Tomoana’s bill, the court had to take ‘judicial notice’ of a committee’s decision.\textsuperscript{120} Ormsby went beyond the provisions of both pieces of legislation. The District Committees, he argued, should be ‘placed in the position of the Native Land Court.’\textsuperscript{121} Ormsby advocated for the district committees to be given powers to investigate and determine title: to ‘conduct all matters relating to sales or leases, as the case may be, and that the Government and private Europeans have nothing at all to do with it. Let them – the Committees or Boards – be independent of the Government or companies.’\textsuperscript{122}

A number of other proposals by committee representatives advocated similar powers for the District Committees. At Ranana, Paori Kuramate, the chairman of the Wanganui District Committee, advocated a change: ‘I think it would be best for the Committee to deal with the questions of title to land or any disputes that may take place between the people.’\textsuperscript{123} All of the eight subjects on the list read by Kuramate related in some way to giving the committee extra authority. Most of the requests centred on issues of land: requesting extra powers for the committee to investigate title and to control surveys, sales, leases and land held under Maori title where the

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Document of Speeches}, pp.14-15
\textsuperscript{119} Ward, \textit{National Overview}, p. 468; O’Malley, p.181
\textsuperscript{120} Native Committees Empowering Bill 1882, \textit{Bills Thrown Out}
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.15
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.16
\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.6
Main Trunk railway was proposed to travel. A supplementary request was made to give the committee the management of a prospective steamship.

Retireti Tapihana, at the Ohinemutu hui, supported extending the capabilities of the Rotorua District Committee, specifically in regard to the management of land: ‘The members of the District Committee have been elected according to law by the people, and their powers are what you have stated to-day; but they are quite aware that they have not sufficiently large powers to deal with all the subjects they wish.’ He went on to argue for the authority to determine titles and arbitrate disputes, and for the committees to control surveys. Proposals were also made during the Mokoia and Whakarewarewa hui to increase the powers of the Rotorua District Committee, specifically so that it could determine titles to particular blocks of land.

Not all proposals entailed a wholesale rejection of the Native Land Court. Hoani Nahe, for example, suggested that if the powers of the committees were extended, the job of the court would be made considerably easier:

If the preliminary investigation of land were gone into by the Native Committee, it would be much easier for the Native Land Court, and thereby the Maoris would be relieved of the expenses they were now put to in attending Court and paying Court fees, &c.

It appears as though Nahe sought the implementation of the aspects of Tomoana’s bill that required the court to take judicial notice of a committee’s decision. Most speakers, however, were damning of the court and its procedures, and wanted the right to determine titles separately of the court. Several argued that the Native Land Court should not go ahead without Maori sanction. If it was to go ahead, the court should be judicially bound to follow the committee’s decisions. It was argued that the problems that arose from the court would cease if the powers of the committees were extended. Hoani Nahe, despite conciliatory gestures, asked that the court ‘to be held at the Thames’ should only be for land ‘about which there is no dispute.’

When proposals were put forward regarding the District Committees, Ballance usually responded by outlining his plan for a system of block committees. Leaders such as John Ormsby, Hoani Nahe and Wi Pere expressed support for Ballance’s proposal to establish a system of block committees. A number of Maori proposals

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124 Document of Speeches, p.2; O’Malley, p.175
125 Document of Speeches, p.43
126 Document of Speeches, p.31
127 Speakers at Kihikihi (2) and Parawai raised the example of the former.
128 Document of Speeches, p.37
suggest that news of Ballance’s proposed legislation had filtered through Maori districts prior to the Native Minister’s tour; possibly as a result of Wi Pere’s failed Native Lands Act Amendment Bill 1884, which put forward a system similar to that promoted by Ballance. Ormsby’s proposal for a system of district committees included block committees: he suggested that the district committee would award title to hapu, each of whom would elect a committee to oversee the administration of the block. Pere himself, as one of the architects of the scheme, promoted block committees during the Whakato hui. For most Maori leaders who were supportive of the concept of committees, however, they were still coming to terms with the provisions of the Native District Committees, and were consequently too preoccupied to seriously consider a new system. In addition, the primary idea behind gaining further powers for the district committees was to give Maori committees a greater role in determining titles to land; without these powers, proposals to give communities owners the authority to manage subsequent to the determination of title were essentially meaningless.

To understand why the committees were such a powerful idea in Maori political thought one has to understand just how powerful the Native Land Court had become in the political imagination. John Ormsby implicitly revealed this when he provided reasons for expanding the powers of the District Committees. The Native Land Court had become such a powerful psychological factor in conceptions of Maori-state relations that in historical discussions, Ormsby observed the establishment of the court as a turning point. For example, he made an important comparison between the practices of land alienation before and after the Native Land Court, using the success he attributed to pre-Land Court practices as a justification for giving extra powers to the committees:

We should remember that this deciding about the titles for land is a matter that requires a great deal of attention from all of us. It should be borne in mind that the Native Land Court has been in existence for over twenty years or more, and no other system has been established. The reason I speak in favour of the Native

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129 Wi Pewhairangi implicitly referred to Pere’s bill in reading the prepared list of subjects at the Whakato hui. The first subject was a request for ‘[t]he election of Committees to administer various blocks of land – that is, Committees for the various hapu of the East Coast Natives. This matter has been brought under the notice of Parliament.’ There is no evidence that Ballance had circulated advanced copies of his legislation among the various districts; contrary evidence comes from a number of requests made of the Native Minister to provide copies to Maori communities. Native Lands Act Amendment Bill 1884, Bills Thrown Out, Document of Speeches, p.67

130 O’Malley, p.175
Committees is that I refer to actions that took place before ever the Native Land Court was in existence. In those days land was sold, and there was an end of it; there was no trouble afterwards in connection with it. There might have been a solitary case of trouble; that was all. After that the Court was established, on the supposition that it would do away with all troubles and evils, but it was found that it was the introducer of all troubles and evils; and numerous are the blocks of land that have suffered through the action of the Native Land Court, and so have the people.\textsuperscript{131}

Ormsby’s historical explanation reflects just how dominant the Native Land Court had become in Maori political thought by the 1880s, and the importance land alienation had assumed within this framework. Prior to the existence of the court, Ormsby argued, disputes and fraudulent deals were few. The time period he gave is interesting: although the court had been in operation in Ngati Maniapoto lands for only a few years, he based his view on the court’s operations over twenty years, in communities other than those within the Rohe Potae. In the observation of the court’s activities, Ormsby found a justification for the committees: to take the place of the court.

It was because the Native Land Court had become such a powerful symbol of state injustice in Maori political thought that when speakers argued for extending the powers of the committees, they referred to powers of ‘self-government’. On the few occasions that community and committee representatives spoke of ‘self-government’, or the ability to ‘govern themselves’, this was in specific reference to the management of land and the power to determine land titles. Those at the Ohinemutu hui explicitly linked the idea of self-government with the management of land. In Whititera Te Waiatua’s opening address on behalf of the Rotorua District Committee, he stated:

We have heard that the policy of your Government has been indorsed and approved by a great many of the Native people of this Island; particularly with regard to the giving an opportunity of self-government to the Natives. Although only a small amount of self-government has been given to us – to the Natives – we were very glad to get it. No doubt the Government are right in thinking that a child should walk before it starts to run; but in our opinion we are capable of conducting matters of great importance connected with the tribes – that is, with regard to the administration of the land, and various matters connected with the tribes.\textsuperscript{132}

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Document of Speeches}, pp.18-19
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.43
Firstly, Te Waïtauaha does not specifically refer to ‘self-government’ as involving anything other than the ‘administration of land’. While the reference to the ‘various matters connected with the tribes’ may have been an allusion to broader powers that went beyond land, the absence of any further elaboration is telling. There is an implicit assumption in this passage regarding the nature of the committees, and the position they held within the existing colonial polity.

Retireti Tapihana continued this theme by giving an historical explanation of why Maori should have self-government, one that was specifically focused on land. Tapihana began by speaking on the first subject under discussion, that Maori should be given ‘extended powers for governing themselves’:

You [Ballance], in speaking on this subject, referred more particularly to the District Native Committees and to the Committees for managing blocks of land. The members of the District Committee have been elected according to law by the people, and their powers are what you have stated to-day; but they are quite aware that they have not sufficiently large powers to deal with all the subjects they wish. With regard to your statement that the owners of land would be authorized to elect Committees to administer the different blocks of land. That although the Committees may be appointed or elected to deal with the various blocks, still they will not be in a position to deal with Native matters generally. At the time when troubles first commenced - that is to say, when the fighting commenced on this Island - former Governments gave large powers to the chiefs, and they were able to carry out the government of the country satisfactorily. The late Sir Donald McLean and the various Civil Commissioners were the friends who worked with those Native chiefs. The arbitration about land disputes, and about boundaries, and about quarrels, were settled satisfactorily. Subsequent Governments took back the authority from those people, and retained it in the hands of the Europeans. Trouble then commenced, which has gone on increasing up to the time of Mr. Bryce’s Government. It is the wish of the owners that the land should be made a source of profit. As they have not [sic] power to administer it, nothing can be done with it for their benefit; and if the Government will give extended self-government to the Natives, I think that great good will result to the Natives, to the Europeans, and to the colony generally.133

The distinction Tapihana makes between the power to ‘deal with the various blocks’ and the power to ‘deal with Native matters generally’ is crucial to revealing what Maori widely understood ‘self-government’ through both district and block

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133 Document of Speeches, pp.43-44
committees to be. Tapihana argued that the power to ‘deal with the various blocks’ was more restrictive than the powers that had been given under the official Runanga system, or ‘new institutions’, established by Sir George Grey on his return to New Zealand in 1861. Tapihana was speaking from personal experience; he had been a member of the Runanga that sat at Maketu.\textsuperscript{134} Yet he did not speak of this system as providing broader power of self-government. In Grey’s system, Runanga had authority to make by-laws in association with a Civil Commissioner, on matters such as cattle, trespass, drunkenness and the ‘suppression of nuisances’.\textsuperscript{135} Rather, Tapihana thought of this as a moment in the past when Maori were able to adequately manage and govern their land, through the power to arbitrate land disputes, settle boundaries and other ‘quarrels.’ The problem he perceived was that this ‘authority’ had been taken away from them by subsequent governments, and that it was ‘retained in the hands of Europeans’; that is, through the Native Land Court. Tapihana also discussed ‘self-government’ as the ability to develop the land, to be able to make it ‘a source of profit.’

Tapihana thus made an important distinction between what was the proper role for both the district and block committees and, implicitly, what was not. While the core concept behind these initiatives was for Maori to be able to more effectively manage land, to have a greater role in determining titles and to avoid further alienation, governance, or kawanatanga, was still firmly, though implicitly, vested in the Crown. Tapihana was not refuting the legitimacy of the government’s position as the sole centralised authority within the New Zealand political system. It was only on matters of land administration that he challenged the government’s role. For example, he said that the responsibility for determining land titles should not rest in the court’s hands: ‘Any troubles that have arisen in the past, or that may arise in the future, rest with the Government; but when the Government give the land back absolutely to us to deal with, then we will know that the responsibility rests on ourselves alone.’\textsuperscript{136} Even given this concept of self-government, Tapihana acknowledged earlier comment by Ballance on the cooperation between Maori communities and the government: ‘In fact, you have struck the key-note yourself when you said that the management of the

\textsuperscript{134} Stafford, p.359
\textsuperscript{135} Ward, \textit{A Show of Justice}, pp.125, 130; Stafford, p.358. The Civil Commissioner for Bay of Plenty and Rotorua was T.H. Smith.
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.44
land should be joint - that is, that there should be joint management by the two races.\textsuperscript{137}

In this notion of self-government as the authority to manage land, an important change from the past can be observed. Whereas prior to the New Zealand wars Maori were contesting power, in the scheme of the committees land was the primary issue. Ward describes how runanga in the 1850s and 1860s were concerned with criminal and civil cases, but little or no progress was made in terms of deciding land title and other issues relating to land management.\textsuperscript{138} However, primarily because of the effects of the Native Land Court, by the 1870s there were increasing demands to give runanga official status and authority to determine land boundaries and control alienation.\textsuperscript{139} At the Orakei parliament in 1879, for example, one of the major decisions agreed to was that the power of the land court needed to be curtailed in favour of Maori committees.\textsuperscript{140} And the shift continued. The swift and widespread alienation of land in the 1870s and 1880s meant that land, as the basis of economic and spiritual well being of Maori communities, became the increasing and almost sole focus of Maori political initiatives.

Aspects of a politics that went beyond land were still evident in Maori political thought, although these were being increasingly marginalised in the framework of the committees. A few of the proposals made to Ballance incorporated the control of affairs other than land. For example, the Wanganui District Committee asked for the power to manage the steamship for the Whanganui river. The Hauraki Native Committee, bringing in an element of citizen’s rights, wanted to have the authority to issue licenses for guns and ammunition. However, the idea that committees should have the authority to deal with theft and crime was not primarily deliberated upon.\textsuperscript{141} John Ormsby’s examination of what was the proper role for the committees reflects the diminishing applicability of other areas of the governing process to such institutions. Most of his energies were spent advocating increased powers for the committees to decide titles to land and to have greater control over the alienation process. Ormsby’s discussion concerning the proper role of the committees,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{137} Document of Speeches, p.42
\item \textsuperscript{138} See Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.139, 147
\item \textsuperscript{139} Ward, A Show of Justice, p.247
\item \textsuperscript{140} Ward, A Show of Justice, p.272
\item \textsuperscript{141} One of the provisions of Tomoana’s draft bill was that the committees have some responsibility to adjudicate over theft and crime. O’Malley, p.151
\end{itemize}
specifically whether they should have the authority to deal with crime, puts the importance of land in the political framework of the committees into relief:

There are two sources of trouble: one comes from the land, in connection with the boundaries and the ownership to land; another source is robbery and assault and other petty crimes. I am divided in opinion about this matter. I think, perhaps, it would be wrong for the Committee to have power to deal with cases that only represent in value one or two or three pounds. It might be well to leave the power of the Committee to the larger subjects, such as dealing with land. With regard to dealing with crimes, I would have nothing to do with that. Have a Court independent of the Committee for that.\(^{142}\)

Ormsby went on to explain that because the committee covered too large a district it should not have responsibility for crime: instead, a Maori Magistrate separate from the committee should deal with crime. The significance of land within Maori political thought was reflected in the nature of political proposals: the need to recover authority over land eclipsed the desire for authority in other spheres. However, there was a broader shift occurring. Ormsby, like Tapihana, harked back to the pre-Land Court period as one when Maori autonomy was secured. From this point of view, the government’s position as the sole, centralised authority was also secured. Consequently, in the knowledge that the rule of law required a strong central government, arguments in favour of Maori control over citizen’s rights were not whole-hearted and diminished in the face of increasing anger over the issue of land.

The request by Tuhourangi for legal recognition for their ‘Tuhourangi Committee’ at the Whakarewarewa hui presents a complicating example. As iwi representatives explained to Ballance, the committee had been elected by the 600 owners of the Rotomahana-Parekarangi Block. Tuhourangi sought legal recognition for the committee. Wiremu Pauro explained that the committee would act under the direction of the District Committee; Mita Taupopoki added a request that Ballance grant the assistance of the Government Agent.\(^{143}\) Although the jurisdiction sought for the committee was similar to that proposed by Ballance, Tuhourangi also wanted legal recognition to preserve the Pink and White Terraces, preventing tourists from writing their names on them. Hori Taiawhio also explained that the committee had heard ‘a great many land disputes and other disputes’, but that the decisions had no legal

\(^{142}\) Document of Speeches, p.19

\(^{143}\) Document of Speeches, p.51
standing. While Tuhourangi wanted powers broader than those Ballance was proposing, their request was not significantly different from what most Maori understood the purpose of the committees to be. Indeed, Taiawhio’s explanation regarding the purpose of the committee, to hear land disputes, along with the constitution of the committee, suggests continuity with other proposals.

Establishing a system of committees was a way of working within the existing political framework of the colony. That Maori wanted a system of committees established in law was the pinnacle of a historical development. During the 1870s, numerous requests were made by Maori leaders to have runanga and committees recognised in legislation, giving them official status and power. As Orange observes, the difficulty of dealing with central government provided the stimulus for establishing a system of runanga or committees. Ngati Whakaue, for example, were continually frustrated in the 1870s when decisions regarding land issues made by their committee, Te Komiti Nui, were not recognised by the Native Land Court. By establishing the committees in law, Maori believed they would have a legitimate body for negotiations with the government over matters of land. Indeed, during the hui the committees were used as negotiating bodies with Ballance. For example, at Kihikihi (2) Ballance and Ormsby reached a decision over rates.

A close study of the document of speeches suggests that the type of self-government advocated by King Tawhiao and other speakers at the Whatiwhatihoe hui differed substantially from that sought by the majority of those who met with Ballance during his tour in 1885. Tawhiao’s political outlook was the culmination of a specific historical experience: leader of a political confederation that had been at the centre of government hostility through the 1870s and 1880s, he had attempted to chart a course whereby that confederation remained relevant and autonomous. Essentially, Tawhiao wanted to establish a separate Maori province in the Waikato under his authority. The 1884 petition to the Queen concentrated on the idea that the Kingitanga acknowledged the authority of the Queen in New Zealand, but not that of the colonial government. The petition outlined a plan to establish in New Zealand a separate Maori parliamentary system with a Queen appointee acting as a liaison with the

144 Document of Speeches, p.55  
145 Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.247, 290; Orange, The Treaty of Watangi, p. 192. The exact place of the committees in the Maori political landscape will be discussed in the next chapter. 
146 Orange, The Treaty of Waitangi, p.190  
147 D. Williams, p.159
colonial parliament.\textsuperscript{148} At the Whatiwhatihoe hui, he argued in favour of ‘self-government’ along the lines of the 1884 petition:

Why is self-government for the Maori race being withheld? Why is it not given to the Maori chiefs to manage things for their own good? Let them have it. Give the chiefs and the tribes a separate Government for themselves. Let them manage their own affairs. Give that to us to-day while the sun is shining.\textsuperscript{149}

When Ballance explained his plan to expand the powers of committees, in his words, ‘...extending self-government to the Native race under the Parliament and Government and institutions of the colony’, Tawhiao responded with an unambiguous statement of his political position: ‘We want it independently of the Government.’\textsuperscript{150}

Te Wheoro explained Tawhiao’s position to the Native Minister by saying that even though they acknowledged the Queen as sovereign over the island, they did not recognise the Government’s authority over them. He argued that although the Treaty of Waitangi had secured power in the Island for the Government, the power was for both the Government and Maori to share. ‘It was understood that the Maoris would be allowed to govern themselves in the same way that the Europeans are allowed to govern themselves.’\textsuperscript{151} Te Wheoro then asked that self-government be given to Maori, saying,

What harm is there in it? Has it ever been tried yet, to see whether evil will come of it or not? This has been the cause of all the trouble during past years; that the Maoris have not been allowed to try and govern themselves. That is the way that all the people here look at it.

He summarised his position by describing the tradition of relations between Maori and the government:

All the troubles that have occurred amongst us have been during the time that Governments have been in existence. Now we think it is time to make a trial as to whether it would not be well to let the Maoris manage their own affairs for a time, and see what the result would be.\textsuperscript{152}

The difference between Te Wheoro’s position and that of other speakers at other hui is considerable. Most would have agreed with the type of bewilderment expressed by Te Wheoro: they could not understand why the government never reciprocated the trust that Maori placed in it. Because the Native Land Court was having such a swift

\textsuperscript{148} Cox, pp.57-58
\textsuperscript{149} Document of Speeches, p.26
\textsuperscript{150} Document of Speeches, p.27
\textsuperscript{151} Document of Speeches, p.29
\textsuperscript{152} Document of Speeches, p.27
and debilitating effect, however, the majority saw regaining authority to determine land titles as the first and most important issue. Full authority, in the sense advocated by Te Wheoro was mostly not within the realms of the general political imagination at a time when the New Zealand government and the settler population were so firmly entrenched.

In this context, the Treaty of Waitangi – upon which Tawhiao based most of his arguments – was a peripheral concern to most speakers who were recorded in 1885. The Treaty was discussed on very few occasions during Ballance’s tour. One of the few to mention the document was Keepa Te Rangihiiwinui in the prepared address on behalf of the Whanganui people. In it, Keepa cited the signing of the Treaty as the moment when the chiefs of New Zealand ‘submitted’ to the Queen. Most speakers, however, did not explicitly base their relationship with the Queen, colonial government or Native Minister in terms of the Treaty. This was in keeping with the general feeling around this time. When Ballance met with the assembled ‘Council of Chiefs’ in early 1886, again the Treaty was a peripheral concern. Only Hirini Taiwhanga of Nga Puhi discussed the Treaty as an agreement that needed to be honoured. Most of those who were present spent their time discussing the Native District Committees and Ballance’s Native Lands Administration Bill: debate centred around these initiatives and ways in which the block committees could be made effective when brought into practice.

Although Tawhiao was firmly opposed to the role assumed by the colonial government in the management of Maori affairs, he confronted the same reality as the rest of Maori society: the government held the decisive power within New Zealand. This was something felt keenly by the Kingitanga in reality. John Bryce’s occupation of the Kawhia harbour in 1883 demonstrated to them that the government, ultimately, could act as it wished. Political reality was reflected in the act of negotiation: Tawhiao could not afford to ignore Ballance and deal solely with the British Crown in the hope that the authority of the colonial power would be revoked. Despite telling Ballance that he wanted power independently of the New Zealand government, Tawhiao also said that he wanted to be brought into the government’s confidence: ‘I wish that all

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153 ‘Native Meetings at Hastings’, AJHR, 1886, G-2. This meeting was organised by Wi Pere to discuss Ballance’s legislation, which at the time was called the Maori Lands Disposition Bill. Pere’s proposal for such a meeting is examined Chapter 5.
154 Taiwhanga – who claimed to represent Waikato as well as Nga Puhi – presented a Bill to Ballance, and said that it was their wish that ‘the law should be made to carry out the spirit and the letter of the Treaty of Waitangi.’ ‘Native Meetings at Hastings’, AJHR, 1886, G-2, p.6
laws should be carefully laid down, so that I can look at them and then tell you which I prefer." Furthermore, Tawhiao told Ballance that he wanted to be 'consulted about railways and roads'; despite any decision by Ngati Maniapoto, the railway had his consent. The idea of establishing a separate Maori parliament primarily as a consultative body was a position subtly contradicting the idea of independent government, one that was created by the opposing forces of ideology and political reality. Tawhiao, with some subtlety, argued for power independent of the government and, simultaneously, for a consultative body in association with the government. Both, however, were outside the realm of consideration for Ballance and the Stout-Vogel administration.

The above discussion of Maori committees, based primarily on a reading of the document of speeches, suggests a revision of current interpretations of the place of committees in Maori political thought. In *Agents of Autonomy*, Vincent O'Malley argues that Maori throughout Ballance's tour, in advocating expanded powers for the committees, sought 'effective instruments of self-government.' In other contexts, he describes 'self-government', or autonomy, as the power to 'administer their lands and local affairs', the 'control over their own lands and other affairs', and 'Maori self-management of their lands and other affairs.' The vagueness of this definition, particularly the mysterious 'other affairs', disguises what was an important development within Maori political thought. Maori leaders were concerned with power, yet they primarily sought power to manage their land and to determine titles. Consequently, political initiatives were limited to securing control of their land.

In addition, both O'Malley and Claudia Orange argue that the type of 'self-government' advocated by Maori during Ballance's tour in the form of committees was similar to that advocated by the Kingitanga. O'Malley summarises a select

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155 Document of Speeches, p.25
156 Document of Speeches, p.26. A further development in this story can be seen in the Kingitanga's decision to establish a 'King Committee' in late 1885, prompted, O'Malley argues, 'possibly by concern that the government had chosen to conduct its negotiations for the opening of the district to the Native Land Court and railway construction through the official Committees.' Unlike the official committees, this body was nominated rather than elected, but aimed to fulfil similar functions of title determination and land management. Other King committees were established in Kawhia, Aotea, Thames, Ohinemuri, Piako and other areas where Tawhiao held influence. Despite their basis in opposition, the King committees soon sought official recognition of their work. The government, preferring to maintain relations with Ngati Maniapoto, declined recognition. While much could be made of the Kingitanga's embrace of committees, this still does not change the main basis of Tawhiao's politics during this period and is evidence in favour of the argument that the Kingitanga was forced to adopt two positions because of the government's power. O'Malley, pp.187-189
157 O'Malley, p.186.
158 O'Malley, pp.154, 171, 176
portion of the dialogues that occurred during the tour. Upon reaching the Whatiwhatihoe hui, he says that 'the issue of Maori self-management of their lands and other affairs was again debated' – an explicit comparison with the arguments made at other hui.\textsuperscript{159} Orange, in contrast, argues that there was a 'hard core of Maori discontent which took its stand on treaty rights', and a 'great sympathy' across the tour for the King's appeal.\textsuperscript{160} However, as suggested above, there was little talk of the Treaty by Maori in most districts. Few outside the Kingitanga considered the more fundamental issue of authority, or contemplated an initiative that seriously challenged the government's position within the colony. The majority of speeches that discussed the committees, both in concept and in practice, only questioned the authority of the government as it was perceived to be embodied in the Native Land Court. The pragmatism with which the majority of Maori leaders approached state power in 1885 meant that the authority of the government was not directly questioned; indeed, for those who thought that real, tangible and meaningful benefits be derived from a centralised, racially neutral power, the government's position was largely secured.

\textbf{IV - Summary}

In the course of this chapter, the idea has been posited that underlying the Maori speeches made to the Native Minister in 1885, there were two subtly opposing currents, both of which manifested themselves in different ways. Opposition to the colonial regime was clearly articulated in the speeches of greeting, the myriad of 'troubles' that afflicted Maori society, and directly applied in the main portion of the dialogue that occurred during the twelve hui. The idea was repeatedly raised that Maori were not being treated equally under the law; speakers perceived that it was a real intention on the part of the government to bring about inequality, despite the ideology of 'one law for all.' The factors that tempered opposition, however, were not nearly as clearly stated. Within their speeches of greeting, orators maintained a position of hope, suggesting that opposition was not firmly entrenched in the Maori political imagination. Instead, throughout the tour, speakers revealed that they

\textsuperscript{159} O'Malley, p.176
\textsuperscript{160} Orange, \textit{The Treaty of Waitangi}, p.214
understood what type of benefits could be obtained from centralised governance. Despite the reality of living as a minority without the power of self-government, Maori responded to their position pragmatically.

The increasing importance of committees in the 1870s and into the 1880s was part of this overall practicality. In arguing for extended powers, Maori were articulating a fully developed political framework; one that acknowledged the benefits of centralised government, but would remedy the worst excesses of the colonial land administration. As an idea, the committees movement demonstrates the constraining force land was having on Maori political thought. As more and more land was alienated, as the politics of land became more complex and fraught, the politics of ‘autonomy’ increasingly became vested in land. This was one of the major implications that colonial governance had for Maori political thought; a process that occurred slowly and subtly, but with huge ramifications for the New Zealand political landscape as a whole.

This chapter has been concerned with explicating Maori attitudes towards the government and state power as seen in the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour in 1885. While a microhistorical focus on this document reveals some of the underlying assumptions of Maori political thought in this regard, a further consideration should be taken into account. Colonial governance had specific and problematic effects on the enduring political landscape of Maori society. How Maori leaders hoped to react to these effects had flow-on implications for the way they approached state power. Maori political thinkers reflexively looked to their own society when contemplating the future; existing and evolving states of internal politics held the basis of comparison with political participation in the colonial regime. Consequently, the focus of this thesis now shifts to an analysis of the Maori beliefs, attitudes and ideas regarding their own political landscape which can be witnessed in the document of speeches.
Chapter Five

Conceptualising the Political Landscape in Late Nineteenth Century Maori Society

Throughout Ballance’s tour, people spoke of their hopes, aspirations and beliefs for the future direction of Maori society. A study of these ideas suggests a subtle though very real divergence in opinion over which course would be adopted. These differences in opinion suggest further explanations for the overall ambivalence that dominated Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century. When Maori leaders considered their relationship with the government, they did so through the prism of their own political society. In this regard, the first and most palpable thought that preoccupied the majority of Maori leaders was to find some way of preventing community factionalisation that had increased in the previous two decades with the advent of the Native Land Court, and to reassert some of their traditional authority that had dissipated in the same period. During Ballance’s tour, this desire was articulated as a system of formalised committees. By expanding the powers of the Native District Committees, Maori leaders hoped to prevent community factionalisation. They sought a firmer basis in law for these committees in order to induce people into arbitration and to prevent inter- and intra-tribal disagreements that occurred during Land Court hearings. By properly establishing ‘block committees’, Maori hoped to halt unwanted land alienation. The idea of tribal authority that lay behind both types of committees was of a formalised system, one in which the power bestowed on the individual by recent land legislation was constrained in favour of the collective good.

Although the concept of committees was a powerful one among certain sectors of the Maori population, the document of speeches reveals hints of a boiling undercurrent of dissent among some of the more traditionally orientated leaders and
among ordinary people. Those who continued to embody the precepts of this older form of leadership, which emphasised rights of independent authority, subtly opposed a formalised system of leadership encapsulated in the committee model. Through a close study of the document of speeches the implicit assumptions of a form of leadership can be at least partly explained. Perhaps more importantly, the document also reveals some of the thoughts of ordinary people who were opposed to the constraints that the system of committees might place upon them. Perhaps as a consequence of these conflicting currents, any notions of the political unification of the Maori people were mitigated by the even stronger notions of formalised tribal authority, traditional leadership and the aspirations of ordinary people. Thus, the strong currents of tradition and the opportunities that colonial governance presented to some people offer suggestions as to why Maori protest and resistance against the government did not take on clear and continuous forms in the post war period. In addition, these fissures point to the future direction of politics in Maori society after 1885.

This chapter examines Maori conceptions of their own political landscape as articulated to Ballance during his tour in 1885. Because the document of speeches only reveals so much about the internal workings of Maori political society in this period, explaining the conceptual bases of this aspect of political thought is an inherently difficult and speculative exercise. However, the speeches point to the implicit assumptions that Maori brought to the political world; assumptions that can be explored through a close reading and analysis. Aiding this process is the fact that Maori tribal leaders often talked past Ballance to one another at the hui, revealing an aspect of internal politics that would be otherwise absent.

The chapter begins by examining what type of political society Maori imagined within the framework of the Native District Committees and Ballance’s ‘block committees’. The main aim of this section is to further explain why committees were such a powerful idea at this time, in part attempting to go beyond the specifics of the committees themselves to penetrate the core concept that lay behind the schemes. The formalised notions of authority implicit in the proposals brought before the Native Minister in 1885 are then contrasted with the enduring conceptions of leadership that are evident in the document of speeches, with a particular focus on the political philosophy of Whanganui leader Keepa Te Rangihiwinui. Thirdly, this chapter explores ideas of political unity, in order to consider what credence such ideas
were given in comparison to others at this time. Finally, this chapter looks beyond Ballance’s tour to see if there are any connections between the ambivalence that was expressed by Maori during their speeches and later political developments, especially the Kotahitanga movement that arose in the late 1880s.

1 – Maori committees: rehabilitating tribal authority

Throughout the tour, numerous Maori leaders put forward one main concept that had implications for their own political landscape: that Maori communities needed a forum to protect the collective good in matters of land. In this regard, the notion of Maori committees took on great significance. During his tour, the Native Minister received two main proposals for reforming the Native District Committees that would aid the administration of Maori society by community and tribal leaders. Firstly, a number of suggestions were made proposing to extend and strengthen the powers of the Native District Committees. Proposals concentrated on making the committees effective bodies of arbitration, giving them the power to summon disputants before them and to make judicially binding decisions upon titles to land. By doing this, Maori leaders sought to prevent the type of factionalisation that was the result of the Native Land Court. Secondly, Maori leaders wanted the district committees to reflect the existing tribal landscape, and lobbied Ballance to change the jurisdiction of the committees accordingly. A number of community leaders also expressed support for the notion of ‘block committees’, primarily as a way of controlling the alienation process. In keeping with what they understood the role of the committees to be within the colonial political framework, proposals for reform were particularly aimed at strengthening the aspects of tribal authority that had been injured by the colonial land administration. Indeed most of the problems faced by Maori communities, especially the ability for individuals to act in defiance of the collective, had been created by the regime of land laws that emerged following the New Zealand wars. This aspect of Maori political thought can be viewed as the apogee of a particular historical development, one that emerged within Maori society initially as a reaction to the effects of centralised government but focused increasingly on countering the effects of the Native Land Court. It can also be seen as a development towards a more
formalised and abstracted notion of authority, one that legally constrained the power of the individual from acting to the detriment of the collective group.

As discussed in Chapter 3, despite frustrations surrounding the implementation of the Native Committees Act 1883, Maori leaders agreed with the theoretical intentions of the initiative. Following the passing of the Act, those who had administrative control of the committees attempted to make them more effective by extending and strengthening their powers. In contrast, Maori from outlying areas lobbied for committees under their own jurisdiction. Administrative frustrations did not deter some groups: in the case of Hauraki Maori, attempts were made independently of the government to have the committees representative of the various iwi in the district. Those who made up the twelve members of each committee were either traditional leaders (chiefs or rangatira) – Wi Keepa Te Rangiuawhe, for example, was the chairman of the Rotorua committee as well as the principal chief of Tuhourangi – or a new type of leader who combined traditional credentials with abilities to interact with the colonial political order. However, there were exceptions to the overlapping of the committees with the traditional order. These will be explored below.

All through Ballance’s tour, those who supported the idea of the district committees argued that it was essential for such initiatives to be given proper legal authority in order for them to act effectively. John Ormsby, the young Ngati Maniapoto leader and chairman of the Kawhia District Committee, argued that some measure of compulsion was required to make people submit to the committees’ jurisdiction. He requested that it should be compulsory for individuals to be brought into the process of the committees. Ormsby raised this issue as the third and fourth subjects for discussion at the second Kihikihi hui:

(3.) We ask for extra powers to be given to the Native Committees; and (4.) That it shall not be left for a person to consent or not to take his matter before the Committee, but that it shall be compulsory for him to do so.¹

Ormsby asked Ballance to change the law relating to the committees to enable them to ‘force disputants to bring their cases before the Committee’.² These passages reveal what functions leaders such as Ormsby hoped the committees would perform. In both Tomoana’s bill and Bryce’s Act, district committees had power to arbitrate on

¹ Document of Speeches, pp.15-16
² Document of Speeches, p.15
disputes on matters where the cost did not exceed £20, but only if both disputants
gave their written consent for the committee to mediate. In between the formulation of
these pieces of legislation, the passing of the 1883 Act and Ballance’s tour, a notion
had arisen, or at least had gained further strength, that the committees required the
power of the law to act effectively. Implicitly, Ormsby revealed that the standing of
the committee in the local political scene was not sufficient to enable it to enforce
decisions; it required the assistance of the law. In this argument, the committee
needed to be given power so that it could prevent individuals from acting contrary to
the interests of the community. Ormsby hoped to create a body that could act in the
interests of the broader tribe.

Ormsby’s next proposal for reform contained a similar notion of the functions
he expected the district committees to perform. Immediately after requesting further
powers to ‘force disputants to bring their cases before the Committee’, Ormsby added
the following comment: ‘that the Committee should be placed in the position of the
Native Land Court.’ Although arbitration was not specifically for matters regarding
land, Ormsby’s close association of this aspect of the committee’s jurisdiction with
the ability to determine titles to land is indicative of his general concept of the role
that Maori committees would fulfil. That Maori sought power for the committees to
investigate titles, and to hear disputes over land, suggests the general direction in
which they hoped the initiatives would take.

Retireti Tapihana put forward a similar argument for extending the powers of
the district committees at the Ohinemutu hui. He said that if the committees had
authority over surveys, individuals would not be able to act to the detriment of the
community:

3 Document of Speeches, p.15
44 Indeed, exactly what the District Committees were to arbitrate upon is by no means clear. The 1883
Act vaguely stated that ‘the Committee may sit as a Court of arbitration and make awards in any case
of dispute between Natives usually resident in the district, where the cause of dispute has arisen within
the district and the matter does not exceed twenty pounds in value.’ Toamoana’s Bill, in contrast,
indicated a more specific purpose. Section 9 of the Bill indicates two areas where committees could
have jurisdiction over a dispute ‘between Native persons’: firstly, in regard to debt not exceeding
twenty pounds; secondly, where a plaintiff seeks to enforce a claim upon some ‘specific moveable
property not exceeding fifty pounds.’ Section 10 proposed a jurisdiction for the committees to try cases
of common assault or of petty larceny committee by one Maori on the person or goods of another.
Section 11 proposed giving the committees the power to make laws regarding intemperance. While
these aspects of the Bill are slightly complicating factors to the present argument, the absence of these
proposals in Ormsby’s argument and the manner in which the proposal for arbitration was linked with
the request for the committees to assume the role of the Native Land Court suggests a direction which
Ormsby hoped the initiative would take. Native Committees Act 1883, New Zealand Statutes; Native
Committees Empowering Bill 1882, Bills Thrown Out
We ask that the direction of the surveys should be given into the hands of the District Committees. We make that request on account of the troubles that are caused by surveys. If the direction of the surveys is left in the hands of the Native Committee everything will be clear, there will be no quarrelling, and it will not then be in the power of any one individual to go and carry on a survey and make trouble.\textsuperscript{5}

Tapihana believed that to make the committees effective, they needed the power of the law. Like Ormsby, he implicitly revealed that the standing of the members of the committee was not sufficient to prevent individuals from acting without concern for the interests of the collective group. The purpose of the District Committees, in this sense, was to take away from the individual the power recently legislated by the state and to vest it, instead, in the committee on behalf of the broader community. With power in the hands of the committee, according to Tapihana’s line of argument, community factionalisation – or ‘quarrelling’ – would cease.

The second main proposal for reforming the District Committees, on top of strengthening and extending their powers, centred on making them more closely reflect the existing tribal landscape. One of the most prominent criticisms of the Native District Committees, like Grey’s official Runanga before them, was that they did not adequately take account of existing tribal structures.\textsuperscript{6} The twelve districts that were established under the 1883 Act covered huge districts, often requiring traditional enemies to sit on the same committee. In practice, the iwi within whose district the administrative centre was located dominated the membership and operation of the committee. Outlying tribes tended to ignore the committees altogether.

These theoretical deficiencies, to which Maori pointed at the time when the bill was passed, had become apparent in practice by the time of Ballance’s tour. Where Ballance met with an existing committee, its members often asked for more defined districts. The Wanganui and Hauraki committees both requested a redefinition of their jurisdiction along tribal lines. Hoani Nahe, at the meeting between the Native Minister and the Hauraki District Committee, asked Ballance ‘whether it would be advisable for the Hauraki Committee to deal with matters in the Waikato and vice versa.’\textsuperscript{7} One of the requests presented by Paori Kuramate was for the ‘Native

\textsuperscript{5} Document of Speeches, p.44
\textsuperscript{6} Ward, National Overview, p.468. Cox argues that Grey’s system was oriented toward ‘efficient Pakeha administration and tended to ignore tribal territories.’ Cox, Kotahitanga, p.86
\textsuperscript{7} Document of Speeches, p.31
Committee to be confined to the Wanganui District only. The argument was that the committees could be effective only if they did not have to contend with the difficulties of an incompatible membership. Those leaders who supported the scheme hoped that they would be in a better position to enforce decisions on disputed issues, such as surveying and titles, on a tribal level.

Another form this request took during Ballance’s tour was for iwi who were not adequately represented on a District Committee to argue for a separate committee. The most successful iwi in this regard was Ngai Te Rangi, who presented their case for a committee separate from the Rotorua District Committee at the Whareroa hui. Hori Ngatai explained Ngai Te Rangi’s position:

I am very strenuous that the Tauranga people should have a separate Committee for themselves; although you may think it is a small district, it is not so. This district is so large that it includes the Arawa country, and the Arawa think that they are to have the direction of affairs.

Raukawa – a member of the Rotorua District Committee – elaborated upon Ngatai’s explanation:

The Arawa, being a distinct tribe, wish to obtain that Committee for themselves only; they look upon me as an outsider, but I being selected by the NgaiTeRangi became a member. It is my wish to give up my appointment on that Committee, and that we should have a Committee for our own district; but, if you do not see your way to it, I shall have to continue to be a member of the Rotorua Committee.

Ballance asked whether Te Arawa members of the Rotorua committee would agree to a division of the district. Ngatai responded, ‘I do not think that it matters much what they think, because it would not do them an injustice in dividing the district.’

Raukawa agreed with Ngatai’s interpretation:

It may be that the Arawa will not consent to the district being broken, because they want to obtain a control over the whole district. It should be considered that the Arawa and NgaiTeRangi are two distinct tribes, with conflicting interests. As the election took place at Ohinemutu, the Ngatiwhakaue were able to obtain a majority. We do not have a sufficient voice in the matter. I do not think that the Arawa should be consulted.

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8 *Document of Speeches*, p.2
9 Ballance agreed with Maori at the time, explaining to the Wanganui Committee, for example, that ‘nothing has appeared to my mind more absurd than the fact that some of the members of this Committee are living at Otaki.’ O’Malley says that it appears as though Ballance’s promise to amend the boundaries of this district did not happen. *Document of Speeches*, p.2; O’Malley, p.174
10 *Document of Speeches*, p.62. All following quotes in this paragraph are from this page.
As with the Wanganui and Hauraki committees, speakers from Ngai Te Rangi believed it was impractical and unfair for one tribal group to have a numerical advantage over another. Raukawa and Ngatai sought a system of committees that was fairly reflective of the existing political landscape, where major ‘distinct’ tribes were recognised as such and given a committee accordingly. At the time of Ballance’s tour, Ngai Te Rangi signalled their intention to work with other groups in the area. Raukawa said that the people of Te Aroha and Whakatane ‘would like to join us.’ However, when the Ngai Te Rangi committee was established, there was no mention of the other iwi in the area – Ngati Pukenga and Ngati Ranginui – only the ‘fifty-four hapu of Ngai Te Rangi.’

Ballance’s proposed reforms, through block committees, also held sway in the thoughts of some leaders, primarily because of their potential to bolster the authority of the will of the collective. As discussed in Chapter 4, it appears as though some Maori groups had picked up on the idea of committees for the management of particular blocks prior to Ballance’s tour. Ormsby, for example, as well as advocating the extension of the District Committees’ powers, had incorporated a similar proposal in his list of subjects, arguing for lands to be adjudicated in favour of hapu and for a committee to be appointed to each hapu. This was in keeping with his general vision for Maori committees. Establishing committees at the hapu level would prevent individuals from going outside the collective good, selling their interest in land. If the group decided to sell land, it would be done so through a democratically elected committee, with the agreement of a majority of owners.

Wi Pere, one of the original architects of the block committees’ idea, gave his position on the matter at the Whakato hui. Having outlined a number of problems with the colonial land administration, Pere spoke in favour of this initiative:

My wish is the same as yours, that is, that proper Committees may have the administration of the land, so that the whole of the dealings may be clear and above board, for the reason that the land now remaining in the possession of the Natives is very small indeed.

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11 ‘Hori Ngatai and others to Ballance’, 23 February 1885, MA 23/13b Native Committees. Following its establishment, the Ngai Te Rangi committee, as it was known, appears to have run into some problems in obtaining consent from the people of Motiti Island to act on their behalf. See, for example, ‘Petition of Hemiona Te Orinini’, 25 June 1886 and ‘Hori Ngatai and Akuhata Tupaea to Ballance’, 25 August 1885, MA 23/13b Native Committees.
12 Document of Speeches, p.16
13 Document of Speeches, p.75
Maori communities were faced with the prospect of a diminishing amount of land; leaders such as Pere saw a solution in committees. Within the framework of the block committees, Pere hoped to prevent individuals who wished to sell their interest in a block held collectively from acting in contrary to the interests of the collective. In saying this, Pere discussed the role of the Native Land Act 1873 in bringing about a situation where individuals were empowered, with the potential of their interests being bought up by outside parties: ‘Under the Act of 1873 every owner had his name inserted in a memorial of ownership, and each man, woman, or child had a voice in the matter. The great evil arising from that law is this: that Europeans were enabled to come and buy Natives’ shares.’\textsuperscript{14} In contrast with the past, when Maori communities reached decisions by consensus, the 1873 Act meant that group consensus was increasingly difficult to come by. Instead, Pere promoted a body that had authority to act on behalf of the community, but only with the agreement of a majority of owners: ‘Local Committees shall have no power to deal with the land unless in accordance with the wishes of the owners.’\textsuperscript{15} In the idea of block committees, community leaders wanted to create a system whereby hapu leadership was legally empowered, effectively establishing a tribally based veto on the alienation of land.\textsuperscript{16}

Pere’s discussion regarding the constitution of block committees is evidence of a broader democratic concept that was also raised by other leaders advancing district committees. Hoani Nahe suggested an addendum to the Native Committees Act, that ‘whenever a person falls out of the Committee, there should be the power to elect another in his place.’\textsuperscript{17} In other words, to give the committees the opportunity to have meaningful and lasting power, they must not become stagnant through resignations or altercations with other members. Ormsby’s concept of the democratic basis of committees was similar. In replying to Ballance’s indication to give the District Committee extra powers, Ormsby advocated a fresh election to gain a new mandate:

I was very pleased indeed to hear what Mr. Ballance said about increasing the powers of the Committee; and if those extra powers are given to the Committee,
then I would suggest that the present Committee be broken up and a new one elected, and then each one would strive to elect his representative. On the election of the new Committee it would most likely be found that each hapu and tribe had its representative.\textsuperscript{18}

Ormsby and Nahe were advancing the idea of a form of tribal authority based in representative democracy, whereby elected individuals represented people’s interests. The election process was one aspect of the formal nature of committees, based on a community response to land legislation that had allowed individuals to act in defiance of the community. In doing so, some Maori leaders were seeking to recreate a type of authority that was increasingly, as a result of legislation, part of a by-gone era. A process of elections introduced a new paradigm: the individual voter or land-owner, the representative and the committee itself. While the first two were long-standing aspects of traditional consensus-making in Maori society, the concept of ‘the committee’, separate from real people, was essentially new.

In the way that these Maori leaders described both the democratic orientation of the district and block committees and the functions they hoped for these initiatives, an important point can be deduced on the nature of tribal authority they hoped to bring into action. Mostly as a consequence of certain land legislation instituted by the government, Maori communities required legally binding bodies that acted on behalf collective interest. In both forms of committee, the power of the individual was to be restrained, mostly in terms of land alienation and other aspects of land management. In the Native District Committees, the architects of this idea sought power for pre-existing tribal structures, usually at the iwi level; in the block committees, authority was sought for a community of owners. However, because these bodies were essentially democratic in their constitution, those who were promoting committees were implicitly thinking of this authority as inhering in a body that was constituted in a title; where people could be voted in and out of office, but where the institution itself remained the sole constant. Although a community could vote for traditional leaders, which is what happened on most occasions, those who promoted the committee concept were imagining a power that existed above not only ordinary people, but traditional leaders themselves. This was the inevitable result of implementing a democratic system and formalising pre-existing relationships of tribal governance. In this paradigm, the tribe was thought of as an entity in itself rather than

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.18
as the sum of individuals. Rather than leadership being based in a personalised idiom, the committee was a body that represented an abstracted notion of tribal authority. The distinction between the type of tribal authority imagined in the committee concept and one that had existed previously is subtle; however, it is a distinction that contains important implications for how Maori conceived of their political landscape in 1885. Therefore, in order to bring out the historical significance in the thinking behind the committees, some contextualisation is required.

The proposals that community representatives, such as Ormsby, Tapihana, Nahe and Pere put to Ballance, can be seen as the continuation of a process that began in the 1850s, when tribal authority became increasingly formalised in comparison to the past. What had become a widespread desire amongst Maori leaders for committees by the 1880s, mostly to adjudicate upon land issues, was the culmination of a growing movement for greater tribal control over land. The committees movement emerged out of the large tribal and inter-tribal policy meetings that expanded and developed throughout the nineteenth century, largely to counter the effects of new and competing powers. In the 1850s, Maori developed formalised councils, or runanga, based on traditional runanga, where interested parties discussed a problem or dispute. According to Alan Ward, these new runanga ‘tended to assume a more formal structure and sometimes a more defined membership’; previously, councils existed as the sum of the leaders who filled them, rather than organisations that existed outside the realm of particular leaders.\(^{19}\)

The initial development of tribal runanga occurred at roughly the same time as the first attempts by colonial authorities to establish a system of kawanatanga through a series of Resident Magistrates. The initial success of this latter system was due, in part, to the extent to which each magistrate was incorporated into the existing structure of Maori society.\(^{20}\) Maori leaders looked upon the magistrates as a component of existing tribal governance, not as a competing body in the exercise of authority. Governor George Grey’s attempts at establishing official Runanga in the early 1860s – the ‘New Institutions’ – were curtailed during the downsizing of the Native Department under the Stafford government, despite some promising indications in some districts that Runanga were being used as a vehicle for co-

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\(^{19}\) Ward, *A Show of Justice*, p.97

\(^{20}\) Ward, *A Show of Justice*, pp.79-80
operation between magistrates and Maori leaders. While Maori leaders continued to meet in unofficial runanga to enforce authority on tribal levels, some disputants of lower rank continued to resort to the Resident Magistrate’s courts and to the magistrates themselves as mediators. A subtle but hugely significant shift had occurred: the system of magistrates now constituted a power in itself; a power that ordinary people recognised could adjudicate on disputes, by-passing traditional leadership. However, traditional leadership tended to support magistrates instead of undermining them: runanga formed as alternative tribunals rather than as bodies in opposition to the magistrates.

Through a series of incremental shifts – the establishment of the various bodies of government, local and central – tribal governance through chiefly authority lost an essential basis of power. The introduction of the Native Land Court continued this process, as some have argued, ‘destroying’ the ability for traditional leaders to make lasting decisions about ownership of land within the tribe. As Ward explains, runanga met on an increasingly broad tribal level throughout the 1870s and 1880s:

Maori leaders, anxious to forestall the sort of adjudication likely to be given by the Land Court, increasingly met in conference with the leaders of the neighbouring tribes and hapu, and frequently came to clear agreement upon boundaries which they wanted only to be formally ratified by the external authority.

Thus, a further shift had occurred. With the establishment of the Native Land Court, Maori leaders sought official status and power from the government for their councils and committees to enforce their own decisions.

Although colonial governance had created the problems associated with enforcing authority within Maori society, the government was accepted, often implicitly, as a legitimate central authority. After the failure of McLean’s Native Councils Bill in 1872, runanga were without legal standing and tended to break up

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21 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.196
22 Ward discusses the example of Woon’s Wanganui jurisdiction. O’Malley also comments upon this case, saying that a ‘defacto rivalry’ existed between Woon’s court and the runanga established by Whanganui iwi. A dual system of law operated, Woon having to rely on Maori custom to make his court relevant and ‘the runanga finding its own authority undermined by those who saw more advantage in pressing their claims under Pakeha tikanga.’ Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.205, 240-243; O’Malley, p.79
23 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.247
24 See Hayes’ discussion of the different arguments regarding the destructive effects of the Native Land Court on tribal authority, a concept he primarily attributes to David Williams. Hayes, pp.1, 12-15
25 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.182
and reform.\textsuperscript{26} Although Maori wanted to regulate community issues and control petty crime, as described in Chapter 4, the focus of runanga increasingly centred on the authority to determine land titles and to control alienation.\textsuperscript{27} It was at this stage that ‘committees’, as a more formalised version of runanga, took on increasing importance. Ward says that the idea behind Maori using the traditional term ‘runanga’ as opposed to the more missionary influenced ‘komiti’ in the 1850s was ‘a trend indicative of the Maori leaders’ reassertion of their own culture and their independence of the Pakeha.’\textsuperscript{28} Although the reverse may not be exactly the case for the 1880s, there is something to the argument that Maori adopted the term ‘committees’, or ‘komiti’, rather than ‘runanga’, to reflect the more formalised, defined nature of tribal authority, and to underline the idea that the scheme should be given the backing of the law.

Several important points can be drawn out of these experiments with committees, particularly as a development in Maori political thought. The core concept behind these initiatives represents an experiment with a more formalised expression of tribal authority, based on democratic elections, protective of the will of the collective and supported by the force of the law. Those who promoted the idea of district and block committees sought some form of compulsion to counter the effect of the land legislation which empowered individuals who acted in defiance of the collective good, to bring them under the authority of an elected body, and to support traditional leadership. In addition, the concept of tribal authority was bolstered by an attempt to firm up pre-existing tribal structures. In doing so, those who advocated the idea were subtly proposing that authority be vested in a formalised political body, one that was, in theory, abstract in comparison with the deeply personalised system of leadership that characterised Maori society. While a number of leaders saw the committees as their panacea, some of the older generation were hesitant, unconvinced of the benefits of the scheme or the implications it would have for their own authority.

\textsuperscript{26} Ward, A Show of Justice, pp.271-272; O’Malley, p.63
\textsuperscript{27} Ward, A Show of Justice, p.247
\textsuperscript{28} Ward, A Show of Justice, p.97
II – The concept and practice of traditional leadership

While, in 1885, some leaders were contemplating a change in the political order of Maori society, particularly through initiatives such as the Native District Committees, the ideas inherent in traditional leadership remained a strong element of Maori political thought and practice. Whereas some of the younger leaders were attempting to bring to fruition political initiatives that were defined by a more formalised leadership, the enduring order of traditional leadership was characterised by leaders – rangatira – whose politics revolved around their ability to provide leadership for their people. In the traditional model, leadership was deeply personal; spiritually sanctioned, based on the inherited mana of high born descent and the mana gained from fulfilling leadership potential. The committees introduced a more impersonalised system where the formalised body was a greater power than that of the leader himself. The tension between traditional leadership and new political developments, such as the committees, can be seen in the speeches made by Whanganui leader Keepa Te Rangihiwini at the Ranana hui.

Te Rangihiwini explicitly based his political identity in two factors: his ability to provide leadership for his people and his independence from outside political influences. On the first count, he implicitly argued that he was reflexive to his people’s needs in providing leadership. ‘His people’, Te Rangihiwini explained, had asked him to send an invitation to Ballance. However, he also spoke of his role as guide and leader, explaining to Ballance how he believed his people should live: ‘I have always taught the people of Wanganui to aim at the ends sought by rich Europeans, but now I have changed my opinion, and I think it is best that the people should only act in accordance with the law.’29 This comparison between two different ways of living, one according to the customs of rich settlers, the other according to the law, is an interesting one, though it is difficult to evaluate its significance from the particular context of his speech. However, one can clearly see one aspect of the concept of leadership Te Rangihiwini held for himself: his ability to provide leadership for his people.

The other point upon which Te Rangihiwini explicitly based his political identity was his independence from other Maori leaders. He distanced himself from

29 Keepa repeated this in a later speech, saying, ‘I have always endeavoured to keep my people and my lands within the law.’ Document of Speeches, pp.1, 6
Te Whiti, saying that there was no ‘fear’ that he would ever join with him, as well as from Ngapuhi’s 1882 deputation to England. Te Rangihiwinui had a particular antipathy towards the Kingitanga:

I never allow myself to be influenced by any other Maoris. Every one joined the King; I held myself aloof from him. Whenever they have come to me I have received them with suspicion; I never say to them that they are doing wrong; I just keep my thoughts to myself. If the King were to come to speak to me I should simply look at him; I reserve what I have to say for my people only, and for the Government.\(^\text{30}\)

A number of points can be surmised from this passage. Firstly, Te Rangihiwinui’s identity as a leader of the lower Whanganui people was predicated on his independence from other national Maori leaders. Independence of decision-making was one aspect of Te Rangihiwinui’s obligations to his community; in turn he reserved what he had ‘to say’ for his people, in order to fulfil leadership obligations. In this sense, a tribally based political independence was an expression of the personalised idiom of traditional leadership. Secondly, tribally based political independence was a way of buttressing his relationship with the government. Te Rangihiwinui’s loyalty was based on a historical relationship, the fact that he had fought on the side of the government during the New Zealand wars, and the knowledge that the government was, in a sense, a distant mana from his own on the Whanganui river. Therefore, the ‘submission’ made by ‘the chiefs’ in the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, to which he referred in his introductory address, did not contradict the idea of personal, localised authority.

The thrust of Te Rangihiwinui’s speeches was towards his vision of development and prosperity for his people. This model of development was not defined by the cultural differences between Maori and Pakeha; instead it was based on his ability to provide leadership, a tribally based political independence and his own personal mana. Te Rangihiwinui argued that prosperity for his people would come through attracting a large population to the Whanganui district. In this framework, he promoted individual land holdings to prevent land monopolies and to encourage a population to settle:

I think that all the lands should be subdivided, and the title of each person ascertained; not that I wish to prevent sales or leases of land, but I think that if it is

\(^{30}\) Document of Speeches, p.6
intended to sell the land it should be cut into small blocks and sold to private individuals, because it is population that will bring prosperity to this Island.\textsuperscript{31}

In saying this, Te Rangihihinui was not explicitly motivated by concepts of custom or tradition to find the most viable and prosperous path for his people. He promoted individual title because he believed it would work. The idea of enticing a settled population as opposed to pastoralism was probably one Te Rangihihinui had picked up from the colonial discourse of ending land monopolies, which became the Liberal policy of "bursting up" the great estates. However, he had arrived at this position independently; he was not simply mimicking Ballance's own policies in order to please the Native Minister. The above passage occurs in one of Te Rangihihinui's initial speeches, before Ballance had any real opportunity to advance his own policies. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that Te Rangihihinui's vision of development was one that he had considered seriously over the preceding period.

To begin his final speech, Te Rangihihinui produced a surveyor's theodolite and case of drawing instruments, a symbolic demonstration of his support for development: "This (the theodolite) was bought [sic] as a sign that I have kept within the law, and I am in favour of settlement, to show that I want the land to be covered with people – not with cattle or sheep."\textsuperscript{32} He also supported the proposal of a steamer on the Whanganui river: 'I will give every assistance to the steamer, and if there is any obstruction I shall do my best to overcome it, and I have no reason to believe that I shall not be successful.'

This position on development and surveying that Te Rangihihinui expressed during the Ranana hui appears incongruous to his opposition to land sales and surveying just a few years before. To reiterate points made in Chapter 2, he had, in the early 1880s established a land trust of one and a half million acres and, on one occasion, blocked the Whanganui river in opposition to an unwanted survey of the Murimotu block. His speeches in 1885 are evidence of either a radical shift in position in the space of just a few years, a contradictory, exceptional lapse of judgement, or an attempt to woo the new Native Minister. Given the manner in which he talked about development, none of these answers appear particularly convincing. Perhaps a more penetrating answer resides in the continuities in Te Rangihihinui's own personal philosophy. The land trust having broken down in 1883 under enduring tribal

\textsuperscript{31} Document of Speeches, p.1
\textsuperscript{32} Document of Speeches, p.7. The comment in brackets is from the original text.
differences, Te Rangihiwini searched for another model that would best benefit his people.

Te Rangihiwini may have been charting a path based on development as a way of reasserting his own personal authority as a leader of the lower Whanganui people. Evidence of this can be seen in the record of the Ranana hui. Having expressed his support for development, he reinforced his political independence: 'I have nothing to do with Te Whiti. I turn to Europeans; this (touching the theodolite) is my European.'

Like the theodolite itself, this was an affiliation with Pakeha in symbolism only; Te Rangihiwini was in fact differentiating himself from those like Te Whiti, the Kingitanga and Nga Puhi who were attempting to establish common political ground upon which Maori could oppose the colonial system. By distancing himself from these people, Te Rangihiwini was orientating himself within an older model of chieftainship. Throughout the rest of his speeches, he repeatedly spoke of his own personalised authority as teacher and leader of the people; the obligations he had to his community.

Te Rangihiwini’s discussion of Ballance’s proposed block committees can be placed in this context. While expressing limited support for the committees, he noticeably separated himself from their actions. In doing so, he also alluded to the place of the District Committee within the Whanganui river tribal polity:

I think that the Committee should be the child of the Government, and the Government should be in place of a parent. They could have full management of all sales and leases. It has always been said that the Governor was the protector of the colony and the protector of the people. I do not think that it would be good to leave the management of the lands with the Committees alone. I do not think that they would be able to carry it out properly, but I think that they should be assisted by the Government and the law, in case they allow lands to be alienated altogether. If the Government and the Committee carry on the management together, whenever the Committee desired to sell the land the Government could carry out the details, but I do not think it would be advisable to leave the management with the Maoris only. I am afraid if it is left to a Board of Maoris that they might be influenced by payments of money – they might be bribed, in fact – and by that means large speculators would get hold of the land, and they would reap the benefit of its being cut up again and sold in small blocks.

33 Alan Ward, Whanganui ki Maniapoto, Preliminary Historical Report, Wai 48, 1992 pp.29-30; O’Malley, p.83
34 Document of Speeches, p.7
35 Document of Speeches, p.6
Te Rangihiwiniu’s worries about bribery were an expression of his ambivalence about Ballance’s proposals. By placing himself outside the committees, setting them alongside the government in the administration of land affairs, he was attempting to convey to those at the hui that his own authority was separate and perhaps superior to that of the committee. There is a subtle conflict within Te Rangihiwiniu’s speeches: although, in one sense, he supported the intentions behind the block committees36 his continuing chiefly identification with a deeply personalised form of leadership tempered his support for them in practice. In front of Ballance, ambivalence was expressed as criticism.

Although Te Rangihiwiniu was explicitly discussing Ballance’s proposals, Paori Kuramate, the chairman of the Wanganui District Committee, perceived a slight against his own authority. Kuramate rose to dispute Te Rangihiwiniu’s interpretation of the committees, both block and district:

I think it would be best for the Committee to deal with the questions of title to land or any disputes that may take place between the people. This is what I have always tried to impress on the people whenever any difficulties occur… The present Native Committee is a Committee for the whole people, and not to deal with private interests. It has been appointed under the Native Committees Act, and I am Chairman.37

Kuramate’s reaction goes some way to explaining the effect that Te Rangihiwiniu aimed to achieve in speaking against the concept of Maori committees during a hui with the Native Minister. Not only was Te Rangihiwiniu distancing himself from any future proposals, but he was placing himself outside and even above the jurisdiction of the already elected Wanganui District Committee. In a sense, this was antithetical to the intentions of the committees; committees were designed to buttress the authority of traditional leadership by providing leaders with a forum and a legally recognised body by which the interests of the collective could be protected. However, for leaders like Te Rangihiwiniu, leadership could be provided only by people such as himself continuing to act in accordance with the imperatives of chiefly authority.

In their approach to new political developments, an interesting comparison can be made between Keepa Te Rangihiwiniu and his Tuhourangi equivalent, Wi Keepa Te Rangipuawhe. Keepa Te Rangihiwiniu was unlike Te Rangipuawhe, the chairman

36 Te Rangihiwiniu spoke against the practice of private individuals obtaining surveys without the knowledge of the people. Document of Speeches, p.7
37 Document of Speeches, p.6
of the Rotorua District Committee; he believed that his personal authority could be maintained only if he was not part of a theoretically impersonal institution. Te Rangihiwini’s support for the committees was conditional, dependent on his independence from their operation.

An argument could be made that leaders such as Te Rangipuawhe saw that taking up the position of chairman of the committee could enhance his mana. Undoubtedly this was the case; however, the picture that emerges from the Whakarewarewa hui is slightly more complex. Te Rangipuawhe was part of the new politics of the committees. While he was primarily the principal leader of Tuhourangi, being the chairman of the pan-Arawa Rotorua District Committee was crucially important. Evidence of the importance with which Te Rangipuawhe viewed the position can be seen in the letters and petitions signed under his name on behalf of the committee.\footnote{See, for example, Wi Keepa Rangipuawhe to Ballance, 5 January 1885, MA, 23/13b: Native Committees} In meeting with Ballance at Ohinemutu, however, he ceded speaking rights as chairman of the committee to Whititera Te Waiatua, so that he could prepare Tuhourangi’s issues for the Whakarewarewa hui. Te Rangipuawhe saw no contradiction in giving up his role as chairman for one occasion: it was simply one aspect of the operation of tribal politics. When Whititera Te Waiatua read aloud the address of welcome from the Rotorua District Committee, he did so in the name of the chairman of the committee, an acknowledgment of Te Rangipuawhe’s authority within the committee. Te Rangipuawhe was a distant mana; present in name but absent in body. Being part of a committee was an aspect of the expanding role of chiefly leadership in the late nineteenth century. Te Rangipuawhe was part of this new order. Keepa Te Rangihiwini, on the other hand, continued to act within an older paradigm. He neither sought nor obtained a position on the committee.

What historical explanations can be found for Te Rangihiwini’s attitude, particularly his antipathy towards committees? Te Rangihiwini inherited a tradition of political independence from lower Whanganui leaders such as Mete Kingi and Wiremu Hipango. Kingi and Hipango, in the early colonial period, did not see central governance as inherently opposed to their own independent authority. Traditional leadership, as practised by these two leaders, was not so much an ‘order’ as it was the sum of individuals who exercised authority. In one sense, while traditional leadership was inherently conditional according to the people’s support, it was also characterised
by independence of action: the ability to make decisions on behalf of the people without the necessity of relying on outside political influences.

In terms of land, as Ballara explains, the mana of a chief was thought to ‘rest’ or ‘lie’ on or over his territory. Consequently, the chief had the authority to make decisions, even though this did not denote strict ‘ownership.’ In opposing the Waitara purchase, for example, Wiremu Kingi Te Rangitake acted out of this paradigm. Kingi argued that although he did not own the land, it was for him to give authority to the sale on behalf of the community. Ngati Kahungunu leaders, commenting on the situation in Waitara, said that their sales had mana because they were made with the authority of chiefs. In this framework, mana equated to the authority to act independently; this transposed onto the political world at large.

Concepts of authority inherent in this form of leadership influenced Maori approaches to state power in the early colonial period. Initially, central governance was not seen as inherently opposed to chiefly political independence. As discussed above, because the system of Resident Magistrates did not encroach upon traditional forms of leadership, and acted more in combination with tribal governance, it enjoyed initial success among some groups. When leaders did oppose the government, or a government representative, they did so on the grounds that their authority was being inhibited. Opposition was not primarily based in cultural differences – the differences between Maori and Pakeha – nor was it simple opposition to the operation of Kawanatanga. Rather, opposition occurred when their ability to act independently was impaired. Chiefs such as Mete Kingi and Wiremu Hipango assumed positions as Assessors in the Resident Magistrate system because it did not conflict with their existing authority. As Ward explains,

The role of the Assessors was of critical importance to the system. Their working with the Resident Magistrate helped identify him as part of the local community, particularly where he involved himself sympathetically with the people and treated his Assessors as responsible lieutenants. In such circumstances the taking of disputes before the court did not appear to the local Maori as an appeal outside their group; group cohesion, still important to all but a few thrusting and ambitious people, was not impaired.  

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39 Ballara, Iwi, p.204
40 Head, p.118. A similar concept can also be seen in Hori Ngatai’s statement of ‘ownership’ at the Whareora hut: his mana lay over the Tauranga harbour, it was his right to decide what to do with it. See Chapter 4 and the discussion below.
41 Ward, A Show of Justice, p.77
However, as central government gradually began to exercise substantive authority, as prophetic movements took on increasing importance and as ordinary people began to assume rights of equality through the influence of Christianity and successive land legislation, traditional society began to change. Group cohesion became increasingly difficult to retain: consequently, tribal runanga took on greater importance among some sections of Maori leadership. However, those who had established themselves in the old order continued to act with traditional forms of leadership in mind.

Keepa Te Rangihiwiniwui was one such leader whose political philosophy remained grounded in a past reality, outside the increasingly popular movement to have a system of committees established in law. During the Ranana hui, Te Rangihiwiniwui articulated his philosophy as three succinct but overlapping factors. Firstly, he articulated his leadership as based in support for and from his people and in an independence from other Maori leaders. Secondly, he proposed development for the Whanganui region as a way of increasing prosperity for his people. Thirdly, he criticised the proposed system of block committees, which had the effect of distancing him from the existing district committee.\footnote{While Keepa Te Rangihiwiniwui was the only leader who spoke against the committees during the tour, similar conceptions of traditional leadership can be glimpsed in other speeches contained in the 1885 document. At Ranana again, Aperaniko Taiwhao described the effects that the New Zealand wars had on his relationships with other Maori. ‘It was not the Government who had put a weapon in his [Taiwhao] hands to strike his relatives with; he [Taiwhao] did it himself to retain his independence.’ Taiwhao cast himself as neither loyalist nor rebel. Fighting was a choice made independently to retain independence. In a way, Taiwhao appears to think of himself as inhabiting a middle ground between the government’s intentions and his relations, whom he chose to fight. Document of Speeches, p.8}

A fundamental source of conflict between traditional leadership and the concept of functional tribally-based committees were the aspirations held by some ordinary people. The idea that all Maori should be equal under the law can be seen in the speech made by James Thomson at the Kihikihi (2) hui. The subsequent reaction by the assembled chiefs suggests something of the rights traditional leaders believed they still held. Thomson, who identified himself as an ‘inferior’ person, told Ballance that someone who held the title of Native Minister should meet the ‘inferior’ people as well as the chiefs.\footnote{Document of Speeches, p.21} He said that,

there were two classes of Maoris – the chiefs and the inferior people; and, possibly, when the Native Minister meets them, he would confine his attention to the chiefs and have nothing to say to the inferior people. He wished to advise the Minister not to confine himself, to the chiefs, for the inferior people had land
as well as the chiefs, and in future to be careful not to make laws for the benefit of the chiefs and not the inferior people. Thomson acknowledged the reality of the Maori social order: that authority lay in the hands of the few. However, he argued that the government did not have to reinforce that situation by passing laws that benefited chiefs only. Thomson, who based his discussion primarily in the matter of land alienation, went on to talk about a particular Act passed in the last session by the government, arguing that his rights as a citizen had been impaired: ‘The Act provides that, although I am the owner of land, I am not to sell it or lease it unless you tell me to.’ He believed that as a citizen, and as an individual, he had the right to manage his own affairs: ‘although we are of inferior position, we are the proper people to deal with our own lands.’ This position was the antithesis to the concept of committees. In a later speech, Thomson clarified his position, saying that the law in general should give equal rights to all Maori people, both chiefs and ‘inferior’ people. He argued that he had not said that the government had instituted a law ‘for the benefit of the chiefs, and another for the inferior people; but what I did say was, “Look out and do not do it in future.”’ According to Thomson, Ballance had come to the King Country for the purpose of seeing the chiefs only. ‘You did not come here for the purpose of seeing the inferior people; therefore I said to you, “If you come here again, come to see all of us.”’

The support that Ballance received from the assembled leaders in replying derisively to Thomson suggests that the majority of those at the hui were unified against Thomson’s ideas. The law that he claimed to be unfair was, according to Ballance, opposed by ‘one of the very chiefs of whom he [Thomson] seems to be jealous – namely, Wahanui.’ The text here records ‘applause’. This added information suggests that those at the hui strongly supported Ballance’s denouncement of Thomson’s aspirations. Although most Maori, both leaders and ordinary people, strongly believed in their rights of citizenship, there was rarely ever a

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44 This part of the speech was recorded in the third person, though it later reverted to the first. Document of Speeches, p.20.
45 Thomson was most likely referring to the Native Land Alienation Restriction Act 1884. David Williams explains the main provisions of the Act: ‘This Act enabled the Government to prohibit private land sellings with Maori in an area of some four million acres in the central North Island more or less along the route of the proposed main trunk railway line.’ D. Williams, p.221
46 Document of Speeches, p.21. This was a reference to Wahanui’s speech from the bar on 6 November 1884. Ballance was correct in saying that Wahanui did support the legislation, though he did have some reservations. He said that the ‘whole body’ of the bill was at first ‘covered with teeth, and it also had a tail with a sting in the end.’ However, he found that the government subsequently made improvements: ‘They drew the teeth of that Bill, with the exception of one, which now remains in it.’ Wahanui did not explain what this tooth was. NZPD, 1884, vol.50, p.427
suggestion to radically reform the internal political structure of Maori society. The applause that greeted Ballance’s reply, then, was from the majority who believed in the utility of leadership vested in certain individuals by the virtue of their descent and the chiefly impulse that endured amongst these leaders. In between the positions taken by Te Rangihiwini and Thomson was the idea of the committees.

III – Evidence of political unity in the document of speeches

A useful comparison can be made between the core concepts behind Maori committees and notions of chiefly authority, and the implicit notions of political unity Maori leaders occasionally revealed in their speeches. The theoretical basis for political unity can be seen in expressions of cultural consciousness and the application of culturally defined concepts to political action. That such notions of unity were expressed during the tour, albeit tentatively, suggests further evidence of the subtle pull of intellectual forces in the conceptualisation of the Maori political landscape. Three core concepts of Maori political unity can be seen in the document of speeches: unity of Maori as a people, unity of the chiefs through a national council and unity under pan-tribal movements such as the Kingitanga. However, the document also reveals that the tribal impulse through such institutions as the committees remained paramount at this time.

The first basis for political unity at a national level was the understanding that Maori, as a people, were being collectively affected by colonialism. A number of speakers during the hui articulated the idea that Maori society as a whole, not simply particular tribes, was feeling the full brunt of the colonial regime. Most were expressions of ethnic consciousness similar to that of Te Kiri Karamu at the Mokoia hui. Karamu spoke of the troubles that were afflicting all ‘the Maori people.’ While the cultural differences between Maori and Pakeha had always been apparent, it was only in what they saw as continuing unequal treatment by the government that Maori began to have an appreciation of what such difference could mean in practice. This appreciation, in turn, grew into a political sense of difference.

Some of those who spoke during Ballance’s tour founded their political proposals on the cultural differences between Maori and Pakeha. John Ormsby based
his proposal for local block committees in cultural politics. Ormsby’s argument illustrates a tendency for Maori leaders at this time to define politics in terms of cultural difference, identifying the distinct elements of the Maori present that had endured from the past. Discussing the practices of the Native Land Court, Ormsby argued that titles to land should be vested in the hapu, as a long existing cultural unit of Maori society. Hapu, as Ormsby argued, had the force of tradition; individual title, in contrast, did not:

What the Europeans desire is that the land should be granted individually, but I consider that it would not be proper to individualize the titles; that they should be given in favour of hapus; because from the time that our ancestors first settled on this land it was always divided amongst hapus; nothing was known about individualizing titles; then each hapu can appoint its own Committee, and then the Committee representing each hapu could manage or decide whether their land should be rented or sold.\(^7\)

Ormsby’s response to the Native Land Court was to argue in terms of cultural difference and to articulate a plan for the future that was based in tradition. He considered that because of past and enduring practices it was not proper for Maori titles to be individualised. The strongest moral justification Ormsby saw for granting Maori the right to hold land collectively resided in tradition: his was a political argument based on the importance of state recognition of Maori rights grounded in culture. This line of reasoning appears to have emerged as a result of an intellectual engagement with the colonial project. Where rights were denied to a people as a whole, those people looked to the past to find the unique cultural elements that explained difference. Ormsby went beyond most speakers, who pointed out that Maori were being collectively harmed, or those who implied simply that there were elemental differences between Maori and Pakeha: he instead applied these insights, the understanding of difference, to politics. Whereas tradition in Maori society had always been an unexplicated force for contemporary action, intellectual engagement with colonialism required articulating tradition as a set of concepts to apply to political action.

Similar examples of a politically motivated argument of cultural difference can be seen in the document of speeches. At the Whareroa hui, Hori Ngatai posited his argument for Ngai Te Rangi’s ownership of the foreshore of Tauranga harbour in

\(^7\) Document of Speeches, p.15
terms of mana and Maori custom. Ngatai began by outlining the places where, he said, he had always fished:

My mana over these places has never been taken away. I have always held authority over these fishing-places and preserved them; and no tribe is allowed to come here and fish without my consent being given. But now, in consequence of the word of the Europeans that all the land below high-water mark belongs to the Queen, people have trampled upon our ancient Maori customs and are constantly coming here whenever they like to fish. I ask that our Maori custom shall not be set aside in this manner, and that our authority over these fishing-grounds may be upheld.

Ngatai concluded his argument by reiterating the importance of Maori custom:

This Maori custom of ours is well established, and none of the inland tribes would dare to go and fish on those places without obtaining the consent of the owners. I am not making this complaint out of any selfish desire to keep all the fishing-grounds for myself; I am only striving to regain the authority which I inherited from my ancestors.\(^48\)

Mana was a concept of crucial to the exercise of property rights, one that other tribes inherently understood. This mana was also a personal quality; without Ngatai’s consent, other tribes would not be allowed to fish. In speaking in a chiefly idiom, Ngatai was similar to Keepa Te Rangihiwini. However, his inclusion of ‘Maori custom’ differentiates him significantly from Te Rangihiwini. From Ngatai’s perspective, the exercise of mana as an expression of property rights was one of a series of concepts that differentiated Maori society from Pakeha; hence his emphasis on the collective, Maori, aspect of property rights, as opposed to something distinctive to Ngai Te Rangi alone. These were customs that had the force of tradition; they were ‘ancient’ and obviously different when they were ‘set aside’ in such an arbitrary manner. Ngatai, then, was elaborating a crucial element of political thought during this period. Not only did he embody the practice of custom in his being – his chieftiness – he also applied his understanding of cultural difference to a political argument. Where tradition had always formed the basis of political thought, it was now being used as a force to define a politics on the basis of a common culture.

However, the political response that the majority of Maori leaders suggested, including Ormsby and Ngatai, came on the level of the tribe. At the Ohinemutu hui, Whitiitera Te Waiatua spoke of the predicament in which the Maori people as whole

\(^{48}\) Document of Speeches, p.61
found themselves, but commented positively on the self-government that had so far ‘been given to us – to the Natives’. Te Waiatua was speaking of the Native District Committees, but doing so in a manner that encapsulated Maori across the country.\textsuperscript{49} At the same time, however, Te Waiatua also associated ‘matters of importance’ with the political administration of ‘the tribes.’ In saying this, he was referring to the particular conduct of the Rotorua District Committee. While the issues affected Maori society as a whole, the desire for self-government occurred at the level of the ‘tribe.’ Ideas such as those put forward by Te Waiatua during Ballance’s tour suggest that a good number of Maori leaders did not believe, at least at this time, that politically they should organise on any greater level than the iwi. Indeed, in that the architects of the idea of committees envisaged a system that more accurately reflected the existing tribal landscape, Maori were actively manoeuvring against unification of the tribes, based on shared concepts of a common culture.

Unlike the first form of political unity, the idea of establishing a body that combined all the major Maori leaders was not merely implicit, but was in fact actively proposed by two leaders. Retireti Tapihana and Wi Pere both advocated the concept of a council of chiefs to advise the government on aspects of policy. Tapihana’s proposal was mostly concerned with creating a forum where Maori leaders could consult with the government on matters of policy, suggesting such a meeting as a way of increasing communication:

\begin{quote}
We ask that the Government will assist us to call a great meeting of all the chiefs, that they should assemble here and discuss various matters which will then be referred to the Government. We believe, if the Minister could meet the Native chiefs face to face and discuss various matters, that great benefits would result. The drawback at present is the jealousy existing between ourselves – the want of unanimity.\textsuperscript{50}
\end{quote}

Tapihana was emphasising the importance of the oral medium of negotiation in the Maori political imagination, which in his view had the greatest potential for bringing about good relations with the state. In Tapihana’s mind, however, creating a forum in which Maori could properly consult with the government would mostly benefit Maori leadership, creating unity where little existed.

\textsuperscript{49} Retireti Tapihana, who spoke immediately after Te Waiatua, mirrored this aspect of the national consciousness when requesting extra powers for the committees, saying that the government should ‘give the Maoris extended powers for governing themselves.’ \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.43

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Document of Speeches}, p.44
Pere’s proposal for a council of chiefs was almost identical to Tapihana’s. The only difference was that Pere sought a congregation of Maori leaders from around the country specifically to discuss Ballance’s proposed legislation on the administration of Maori land. During the Whakato hui, Pere brought this proposition before Ballance: ‘I ask you to bring before your colleagues this proposal, that chiefs from various districts may go to Wellington to advise the Government with regard to the proposed legislation.’\textsuperscript{51} It appears as though Pere was successful in his proposal. The following February a large number of Maori leaders from most iwi gathered in Hastings to debate the merits of the bill.\textsuperscript{52} Pere’s suggestion – borne out by the subsequent hui – was based on the intention of gaining some consensus among Maori leaders regarding the legislation, and then to debate any differences with Ballance.

The third type of political unity that can be seen in the document of speeches was that represented by the Kingitanga. As opposed to the majority recorded in the document of speeches, Tawhiao’s desire to establish a Maori parliament under his authority was a core plank of his policy articulated to Ballance. Tawhiao proposed creating a parliament – based on the Treaty of Waitangi and clause 71 of the Constitution Act – which would sit under his authority. This idea eventually took shape in the Kauhanganui parliament of the 1890s, a political initiative taken around the same time as the Paremata Maori. Tawhiao explained to Ballance during the hui at Whatiwhatihoe what the basis of his position in the Kingitanga’s parliamentary system was: ‘What I wish with regard to the Acts that affect ourselves is that it may be left with me to make them, because I am the representative of the people.’\textsuperscript{53} In one sense, Tawhiao was advocating political unification under his leadership – articulated in the idea for self-government for ‘the chiefs and the tribes’ – yet in another his authority was restricted to certain iwi. As he explained in respect of the issue of the railway, ‘I own this district. I am the head man here.’

Tawhiao’s proposals had limited appeal for Maori outside the Kingitanga due to a number of historical and contemporary factors. The first is summarised by O’Malley: ‘While Tawhiao’s proposal for the establishment of a Maori Council under his own personal supervision was acceptable to his supporters, it was less so to the

\textsuperscript{51} Document of Speeches, p.77
\textsuperscript{52} See ‘Native Meetings at Hasings’, AJHR, 1886, G-2
\textsuperscript{53} All the quotes in this paragraph are taken from Document of Speeches, p.26
tribes outside the King movement. For Te Arawa, and leaders such as Wi Keepa Ngawhau, opposition to the Kingitanga was based on a historical relationship with the government. At the Mokoia hui, Ngawhau welcomed Ballance, saying, ‘Come to see the people who took part in upholding the Government of this Island against the King.’ Lack of support for the idea of political unification in the form of the Kingitanga was long established. For most Maori, the original model for political unification had been the Kingitanga. Therefore, any notions of political unification, either under the guise of the Kingitanga or separate from it, were informed by the knowledge of the movement’s fate at the hands of the Crown, when Waikato was invaded in 1863.

Herein lay the dilemma faced by chiefs like Rewi Maniapoto, who in 1884 spoke of how he was ‘directionless’, and who in 1885 told Ballance that ‘we have a lot of things to bear in mind.’ Maniapoto considered the present position of the Kingitanga and Ngati Maniapoto, but also compared this with the nature of parliamentary democracy in the colonial political system. In discussing the disagreements that had arisen over the Main Trunk railway on the second day of the Kihikihi (2) hui, Maniapoto spoke within the chiefly idiom, passing comment on the leadership provided by Tawhiao and Wahanui:

Some people of these four tribes who own the land within the boundary are causing trouble. Wahanui has estranged himself by going to the Parliament, to Wellington. Tawhiao was estranged by going to England. This is one matter that is causing me some consideration. Tawhiao was away in England, and Wahanui has been absent at Wellington. Maniapoto was expressing his understanding of what good leadership entailed: presence as opposed to absence. From his perspective, proper leadership was not being provided by those who were absent promoting larger causes. The manner in which Maniapoto made this observation shares similarities with his speech on the first day of the hui, when he passed comment on the impersonal nature of parliamentary democracy in New Zealand and how this led to a marginalisation of Maori interests. Like the leadership provided by other Maori leaders, Rewi’s concern with the colonial political system was with absence: an absence of Native Ministers and a subsequent lack of accountability in policies. Both were causing him deep consideration. Both

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54 O’Malley, p.202
55 Document of Speeches, p.46
56 Document of Speeches, p.24
weighed against each other and left him ‘directionless’. For leaders like Maniapoto, it was difficult to see how unification, whether on the level of the tribe, the chiefs or movements such as the Kingitanga would introduce anything other than an impersonalised system, one that had subtle, but real, similarities with the existing colonial administration.

Rewi Maniapoto’s position is a unique example, borne of his intellectual engagement with the colonial project and with the state of the Maori political landscape. However, it was a position that was indicative in its hesitant opposition to concepts of political unification. In general, the notion that Maori people could politically unify in opposition to the colonial government lay dormant within Maori political thought in 1885. While all the elements were there, or taking shape, the fundamental idea around which political initiatives shaped was the rehabilitation of the existing tribal order.

IV – Beyond 1885, Towards Kotahitanga

Before concluding this thesis, some thoughts should be posited on whether the ideas contained in the document of speeches are representative of the broader pattern of late nineteenth century Maori political thought. In particular, the question may be asked to what extent the concepts of Maori-state relations and the contemporary shape of the Maori political landscape explain the rise of the Kotahitanga movement. This movement is seen by contemporary historians as the apogee of Maori discontent and disillusionment in state policies after the wars.\(^7\) In the late 1880s and early 1890s a movement gathered strength amongst various Maori leaders, including Keepa Te Rangihiwini, Hoani Nahe and Wi Pere, to form a Maori parliament. Some explanations can be found in the events that occurred in Ballance’s tour; continuities that suggest the ideas contained within the document of speeches are not inconsistent with the broader pattern.

One particular reason can be found in Ballance’s approach to Maori proposals both during and after the tour. In the wake of the tour, few of the major Maori proposals were enacted by Ballance and the Stout-Vogel ministry, particularly in

\(^7\) These interpretations are discussed in the historiographical section of the introduction.
respect of the district and block committees.\textsuperscript{58} Possibly the sole exception was the granting of a separate committee for Ngai Te Rangi. While Ballance expressed sympathy for several of the criticisms made by Maori – such as the exorbitant costs of the land court which meant that land was being ‘eaten up’ by lawyers and agents\textsuperscript{59} - he repeatedly adhered to arguments for ‘one law’ for both Maori and Pakeha. Therefore, although he willingly, and sincerely, promoted the expansion of the Native District Committees’ powers and the establishment of block committees to administer land, Ballance ultimately believed in firm and direct government control. For example, on one occasion he argued that the government had the right ‘for the good of both races’ to prevent land monopolisation by only allowing the sale of small blocks and that the government would place limitations upon the committees in this regard.\textsuperscript{60} This attitude extended to the Wi Pere-organised council of chiefs held at Hastings in February 1886. Here, Maori expended a considerable amount of political will to reach a combined proposal about the Native Land Administration Bill to put to Ballance, a proposal that ultimately was not reflected in the substance of the Native Minister’s Act.

Both the Native District Committees established in 1883 and the block committees outlined in Ballance’s Act failed comprehensively.\textsuperscript{61} The primary reason, in both cases, was Ballance’s unwillingness to incorporate the suggestions Maori had made during his tour.\textsuperscript{62} In the final draft of the Native Lands Administration Bill, Ballance ignored Pere’s criticisms of the aspect of the proposal that required committees to consult with District Commissioners on most aspects of management.\textsuperscript{63} However, possibly a more penetrating reason can be found in the aspirations of ordinary people, such as James Thomson. It appears as though Maori land owners were unwilling to give up their rights in determining their interests in land.\textsuperscript{64} When the Stout-Vogel government was defeated in the election 1887, Ballance’s Act was

\textsuperscript{58} O’Malley, pp.174, 179, 202
\textsuperscript{59} See Ballance’s meeting with the Hauraki District Committee, Document of Speeches, p.31
\textsuperscript{60} Document of Speeches, p.31
\textsuperscript{61} O’Malley surveys the historical consensus on the District Committees. The committees failed because of the lack of support from the government, an aspect preordained in the 1883 legislation. O’Malley, pp.163-4
\textsuperscript{62} O’Malley, pp.174, 202
\textsuperscript{63} Ward, National Overview, p.252; Ward, A Show of Justice, p.297. In addition, under the Act, the committees were not required to gain the consent of three-quarters of the owners before dealing with the land as was outlined in Pere’s bill. O’Malley, p.203
\textsuperscript{64} In one Resident Magistrate’s report, it was said that ordinary Maori looked upon placing authority for lands in the hands of block committees with ‘great suspicion’, possibly for the reasons outlined in the above footnote. ‘Reports from Officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1888, G-5, no.6, p.2
almost immediately repealed, restoring the free-trade in Maori land and ending the short lived experiment with block committees.\textsuperscript{65} The Native District Committees, without judicially binding authority in terms of arbitration, without the ability to determine titles to land and without the support of the principal chiefs, followed soon after, most having dispersed by 1888.\textsuperscript{66}

Because of these failures, Maori began to consider such options as Kotahitanga and a Maori parliament. Indeed, it was probably in looking back to the agreements reached at Hastings that the idea became a tangible one. In short, Ballance’s lack of consideration, as the culmination of two decades of inequitable governance, was the primary motivation for Kotahitanga. Developing out of the Repudiation movement of Ngati Kahungunu and the Treaty of Waitangi movement of Ngapuhi, but incorporating a broad base of Maori society, the Kotahitanga movement aimed to develop a Maori parliament separate from the General Assembly, though working within the colonial political system.\textsuperscript{67} In this movement, the Treaty became an increasingly important symbol around which protest was based.\textsuperscript{68} Why was this so? As the introductory speeches during Ballance’s tour suggest, Maori placed a high level of trust in central government. By 1885, Maori still had reasonable hopes that the government could deliver on the trust invested in them, despite a number of critical concerns. It was not until this trust dissolved – as the government continued on a paternalistic path, scuttling Maori proposal after proposal – that the Treaty did become an issue. Ballance’s decision not to incorporate proposals for enlarging the committees’ powers is a symbolic turning point in this sense. By looking back fifty years to a promise made, the Treaty became a rallying point around which Maori

\textsuperscript{65} Ward, A Show of Justice, p.297-298; Ward, National Overview, p.245; D. Williams, p.223; O’Malley, p.204

\textsuperscript{66} D. Williams, p.160; Ward, A Show of Justice, p.290. G.T. Wilkinson, in 1888, observed that the two committees elected in the Waikato district had ‘languished’. The committees failed, he argued, on account of four main reasons: firstly, the districts were too large, ‘some of the members having to travel over fifty miles to attend a meeting’; secondly, the committees were not ‘properly supported by the tino rangatiratanga, or principal chiefs’, the reason Wilkinson argued, was that the committees ‘appeared to usurp the power that principal chiefs think should rest only in them’; thirdly, the limited powers given to the committees meant that they could only act where both parties agreed to go into arbitration; fourthly, owners preferred to ‘look after his own rather than trust their affairs to the hands of a Committee’. Italics author’s own. ‘Reports From Officers in Native Districts’, AJHR, 1888, G-5, no 4, pp.4-5

\textsuperscript{67} Cox, pp.61-70

\textsuperscript{68} Prior to the first sitting of the Maori parliament a petition was circulated arguing that the Crown honour the Treaty. The first resolution of the first Maori parliament, held at the Treaty of Waitangi house in 1892, was for those present to sign their names under the mana of the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Waitangi and Section 71 of the 1852 Constitution Act, essentially an extension of Taiwhanga’s proposals to Ballance in 1886. Cox, pp.66-7
could unite. Only once it had become obvious that the promise would not be fulfilled, and more importantly, that a historical document had real relevance to the present, did the Treaty become a cogent political force, widely promoted by different Maori groups.

Orange argues that by the end of Ballance’s term, Maori had strengthened their resolve to act independently.\(^{69}\) This assessment accurately portrays the groundswell of Maori opinion that saw the Treaty of Waitangi gain ground as a potent political force within Maori political thought, leading to the Kotahitanga movement of the late 1880s and 1890s. However, Orange’s argument conflates the intentions of different Maori groups prior to Ballance’s term. It was precisely because Maori approached state power pragmatically in the period immediately following the New Zealand wars that Kotahitanga arose when it did, and not earlier. In addition, some points of continuity can be drawn from the proposals made in Ballance’s tour to the ultimate aims of the Kotahitanga movement. The movement sought to create a Maori parliament that worked in consultation with the government. This differed substantially from Tawhiao’s stated wish to have authority independent of the New Zealand government.\(^{70}\) The power sought by the Maori parliament was similar to that argued for in 1885: repudiating the authority of the Native Land Court and putting Maori committees in their place to deal with land issues.\(^{71}\)

In addition, the Kotahitanga movement was consistent with the concepts of the Maori political landscape that emerge from the document of speeches. Firstly, the basis of the movement was primarily a unification of the tribes. While concepts of cultural difference motivated some aspects of the desire to unify as Maori vis a vis the


\(^{70}\) However, Tawhiao did submit a bill to Ballance in 1886 which suggested the formation of a Legislative Council of Chiefs, mirroring Tawhiao’s more conciliatory views at the Whatiwhahoe hui. In the bill, a council was proposed under section 71 of the 1852 Constitution Act, financed from Maori taxation and the existing system of district committees. Ballance, however, refused to act on Tawhiao’s proposal. In response, Tawhiao established his Kauhanganui in 1891. Cox, pp.58-59

\(^{71}\) Resolution 3 of the laws framed at Putiki by Kotahitanga participants was for the committees appointed under the Native Committees Act 1883 to be empowered as the Native Land Court and to have the same jurisdiction as the court. The law then stated that the 1883 Act should be amended so that the committees ‘shall be released from the control of the Government’ and to have power to deal with cases according to ‘Native custom’. It appears as the the movement removed the particular wording regarding releasing the committees from government control in subsequent discussions. The third resolution of Te Kotahitanga o Te Tiriti of Waitangi, held on 14 April 1892, was for the ‘rejection of Maori Land Court and its laws by the movement. Give Maori Committees the power to deal with land issues.’ ‘Native Views on Native Land Legislation’, *AJHR*, 1888, G-7, p.1. Cox, p.67
state, this tribal impulse remained crucial within Kotahitanga. For example, one of the main proposals of the first Maori parliament, to give tribally-based committees proper legal authority to adjudicate on issues relating to land, mirrored almost exactly the proposals put before the Native Minister in 1885. This continuity, then, suggests the extent to which Maori leaders were willing to unify in a national movement, particularly among iwi who wanted to maintain their independence. Secondly, the concept of chiefly authority never fully dissipated, despite the participation of such leaders as Keepa Te Rangihiwinui. On the surface, Te Rangihiwinui’s involvement in the Kotahitanga movement appears a puzzle, especially given his speeches at the Ranana hui. The first answer probably lies in the fact that he did genuinely become disillusioned with the government’s policies. Perhaps the clinching factor, however, resides in the nature of his involvement. At almost every turn, Keepa attempted to assert his independence of action as head of the movement; as chairman of the first parliament and as principal signatory on petitions.72 Keepa was of a particular generation of leaders; while in some senses he adapted to the politics of the late nineteenth century, it was difficult to remove himself completely from a past reality.

V – Summary

Differing, conflicting and often co-existing conceptions of the Maori political landscape formed a crucial basis of political thought that, in combination with a pragmatic approach to the new world and a belief in the idea of citizenship, militated against the idea of large-scale protest in 1885. While, for many Maori, it had become clear that colonial governance was adversely affecting them as a people, the primary response to this was to reinforce and reinvigorate tribal governance. Within the concept of committees, some of the younger or more ambitious leaders hoped to institute a formalised, defined body which gave effect to tribal authority in the area where traditional authority had been most badly damaged, the ability to manage land. This concept of tribal authority, at least in discussions in 1885, was given prominence over any notions of political unification. A possible explanation may be found in the wish of the originators of the committee concept to be given the backing of the law. In

72 Cox, p.67
bringing their proposals before the Native Minister, those Maori leaders who were considering the effects of the Native Land Court and land legislation were contemplating both their relationship with the government and the problems that had emerged among Maori communities as a result.

At the same time, the enduring currents of traditional leadership in some ways acted against the rehabilitation of tribal authority in the form of committees. While some traditional leaders, such as Wi Keepa Te Rangipauawhe adapted to the new system, leaders such as Keepa Te Rangihitiwinui acted in accordance with an older order that defined politics in terms of a deeply personalised system of leadership. In either supporting or opposing the government, Te Rangihitiwinui acted to maintain his authority: this included keeping a critical distance from the affairs of the Wanganui District Committee. The committees raised the prospect of a more formalised, impersonalised and abstracted form of tribal governance: Keepa instead preferred to maintain his authority independent of the committee. In addition, the aspirations of ordinary people, it appears, also provided a challenge to the potential effectiveness of the committees. However, despite the undercurrents of discontent within the Maori political landscape, the document of speeches from Ballance's tour is primarily evidence of the strength of one idea: the conduct of land management through tribally-based committees.
Conclusion

Applying the insights of microhistory to a study of Maori political thought has enabled a close examination of a particular political phenomenon that a more conventional study may have overlooked. Microhistory has several specific advantages. First, in studying a particular historical document, the range of focus is limited to a particular set of events, people and ideas. Understanding the ideas that are contained in the document of speeches recorded during John Ballance’s tour of Maori districts in 1885 has required specific research into such varied phenomena as the political culture of late nineteenth century colonial politicians, ceremonial and ritual structures of nineteenth and twentieth century hui and the social basis of Maori leadership in the late nineteenth century. Undertaking a microhistory has required an exploration of all these elements and how they came to work together at one specific point in time. As a result of this process, it has become apparent what aspects of Maori culture, society and politics in the late nineteenth century are relatively well understood and what aspects require further research.

A second advantage of microhistory is that by choosing a historical document from a tour such as Ballance’s as the sole focus of study, the history and politics of a wide range of Maori communities and tribal groups have had to be incorporated into a single analysis. Consequently, specific tribal and regional variations in politics and history have become abundantly clear. Where possible these tribal differences have been highlighted. More importantly, however, letting the text pre-select the areas for study has provided a firm basis upon which a generalised Maori experience can be suggested.

The third advantage of microhistory is the requirement when approaching a particular historical document to set aside prior assumptions regarding any given aspect of a topic. This is not simply ideological, but a practical necessity given the task of explicating the contents of a single document on its own terms. The document of speeches from Ballance’s tour contains such a huge amount of detail that this process has often been difficult and unrewarding. Identifying just a few key themes in a morass of ideas, thoughts, suggestions, concerns, requests, proposals, criticisms and
jokes is by no means an easy task. For every one quote, passage or example, a dozen have been omitted. However, it is in synthesising material that the advantages of microhistory come to the fore. The precedent set by Darnton, Davis and Ginzburg demonstrate how specific aspects of past societies and cultures can be elucidated when a particular event is put into focus and a historical text from that event is studied with close attention to detail. It is in reconciling the different elements of a particular event and text, of explicit political ideas and of underlying assumptions that the nuances of the past come to the fore.

As explained in Chapter 1, the sub-discipline of microhistory requires further definition and a closer integration of the theoretical models that have influenced the approach. Perhaps more importantly, there needs to be an acknowledgement among microhistorians that two distinct strands of microhistory have emerged – one concerned with social processes, the other concerned with explaining the cultural meanings contained in a particular event and text. Although tentatively adopting the cultural model, this thesis has largely avoided some of the more fundamental methodological and theoretical implications that adopting such an approach raises. Offering more focused solutions to the social-cultural divide requires a sustained focus that is outside the scope of the present study.

However, there are a number of limitations of a microhistorical study that have become apparent in the course of writing this thesis. In focusing on one event and one text, microhistorians run the danger of over-emphasising the importance of their case. In order to mitigate this danger, microhistorians are required to go outside their text and study a broader context. While this is in some senses antithetical to the purposes of microhistory, microhistorians require a good knowledge of existing historical scholarship and debates, not only to be aware of the context of a particular event or issue, but also in order to contribute something back to the literature. Nevertheless, understanding to what extent a microhistorian should go outside the particular text in focus is a matter of judgement, one that is a possible pitfall to the prospective practitioner. These limitations, however, are outweighed by the advantages of the approach. In generating conclusions microhistorians can ask themselves whether their arguments are consistent with specific, limited material contained within their document and their microhistorical focus. While historians ask themselves similar questions of their evidence, they are not necessarily required to follow the same strict criteria to justify their conclusions. Microhistorians have to
make everything, or almost everything, within their document and their event 'fit'; to find some logical relationship between seemingly disparate ideas, beliefs, thoughts and actions.

A close reading of the document of speeches from John Ballance's tour of seven Maori districts in early 1885, according to the principles of microhistory, suggests that Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century was predicated upon two co-existing, yet contrasting political currents. On the one hand, Maori saw and understood the ways in which their well-being was damaged by colonial governance. This understanding was consistently and increasingly articulated in the form of protest and opposition to the colonial government following the New Zealand wars. On the other hand, Maori leaders approached state power in a spirit of pragmatism, acknowledging the reality of the colonial government's position in the New Zealand political system. In addition, a number of Maori continued to hold to a notion of equality, based in a belief in the rule of law. In combination, these implicit factors were expressed by a broad range of Maori communities as a desire to see and negotiate with a minister of the Crown.

In Chapter 2, the origins of Ballance's tour were described in this context. Following the New Zealand wars, Maori leaders consistently sought the presence of a Native Minister, partly to reclaim some of the power lost to them in the course of the nineteenth century and partly to operate out of an enduring aspect of Maori political culture, the oral mode of interaction. During pan-tribal hui in the late 1860s and 1870s, the government inhabited an ambiguous middle ground in the minds of those leaders who considered the past, present and future in their approach to politics. Most Maori leaders, it appears, were attempting to deal with the reality of the absolute dominance of Pakeha government after the wars: a widely held belief that the government, as the sole source of nationally-exercised power, must be negotiated with. This quandary over power could not be ignored; it was instead expressed as ambivalence. Chapter 2 pointed towards some of the historical origins of this phenomenon from a brief reading of hui transcripts in this period. Considerably more research is required in this area, however, before more definitive explanations can be reached.

Chapter 3 described how, during the twelve hui that constituted Ballance's tour, the site of the interaction was an unconscious projection of the state of Maori political thought. The meetings were a simultaneous confirmation of the Native
Minister’s position – his importance as the person to be negotiated with – and an attempted reclamation of the power Maori had lost to the colonial government in the course of the nineteenth century. Maori communities and leaders did this by creating an environment that emphasised the oral mode of interaction. The significance of Ballance’s tour was that for the first time in many years, Maori leaders were able to systematically control the site of negotiation, and consequently set the topics for discussion. Thus, at the majority of the hui, Maori communities, often through the Native District Committee, prepared a list of subjects that formed the substance of discussions with the Native Minister.

Despite an increasing trend in hui in this period for encounters between Maori leaders and Pakeha dignitaries and politicians to be defined in terms of cultural differences, Maori generally welcomed the Native Minister according to the norms of standard hui. For most, it was self-evident that the Native Minister and his party were in the minority in an obviously Maori environment. This was the case at Ranana where Ballance was greeted with haka, the firing of guns and a ceremonial arch. The former was a traditional challenge, the latter was an expression of loyalty through grandeur; both, however, were external to the actual process of negotiation that went on inside the whare-runanga. At the second Kihikihi hui, where Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Raukawa and upper Whanganui iwi met with the Native Minister in the Kihikihi Public Hall, the only aspects of ceremony were the formal speeches, whaikorero, that were made to welcome Ballance. This was not cultural politics, however. Formal speech was an unconscious marker of tradition; a way of placing Ballance’s tour within a historical context and emphasising the meeting as a site of face-to-face negotiation. While this thesis has posited a number of explanations as to the actual intent of Maori in constructing the environment of the twelve hui, these are mostly speculations based on fragmentary evidence. Much more research is required on the nature of hui in the nineteenth century before encounters such as those between Ballance and various Maori communities can be fully understood.

If the structure of the meetings was an unconscious reflection of the conflict in Maori political thought, Maori across the tour spoke directly to the problem in their speeches of greeting. Chapter 4 described how Maori spoke of the Native Minister’s visit in both literal and political terms. By placing Ballance within a tradition of other ministers who acted similarly – especially Sir Donald McLean and Sir George Grey – speakers were placing the onus on Ballance to act with due care. In welcoming him in
such a way, they were also reifying the position of the Native Minister separate from the person who occupied it. Acknowledging the Native Minister’s authority was both an unconscious confirmation of the power of the colonial system and a pragmatic approach to the dilemmas created by state power. For the majority of Maori, what emerged was a dual concern: a clear articulation of the ‘troubles’ that had been created by colonial governance and the desire for the government to offer ‘relief’. Most speakers based their political position on a historical relationship with the government and a belief in the rule of law. They defined their position according to that their communities had taken during the New Zealand wars: based either on loyalty (lower Whanganui, Te Arawa), the immediate conclusion of peace (Ngai Te Rangi) or subsequent negotiations of settlement (Ngati Maniapoto). Each of these positions had been a choice made, but it was one leaders believed had to be reciprocated. As speakers at the Whareroa hui said, it was believed that Maori showed greater affection for Pakeha than the other way around. This was an argument based in belief in the rule of law; having chosen peace, Maori were not receiving their full entitlements as equal citizens. For most the notion of citizenship was merely implicit; few actually used the term. More important was a concept of equality. Those who continued to place their trust in the government spoke of their bewilderment that such trust had not been repaid. However, it was because these communities had made a choice in favour of the colonial administration that hope, or perhaps expectation, remained that it would provide good governance.

For other leaders, like Rewi Maniapoto, however, Ballance’s visit caused a real problem. From Maniapoto’s perspective, bad governance was the outcome of the lack of personal responsibility in the Pakeha system – a lack of intimacy and humanity – that could be observed in the tendency for governments to rise and fall and policies to come and go. While for the majority of Maori leaders this democratic weakness emphasised the importance of Ballance’s visit as the last bastion of hope, a chance for face-to-face negotiation to solve the problems created by colonial governance which were so evident by the mid-1880s, leaders such as Rewi Maniapoto approached the encounter with hesitation, a slight but perceptible wariness. In Maniapoto’s case, knowledge and understanding only served to underline the existing problem: enter into the process of face-to-face negotiation or be damned to irrelevance.

The primary source of Maori opposition arose from the perception that colonial governance was bringing about the opposite of good and equal governance.
The purpose of the hui and the source of great discussion prior to them, was to negotiate a way out of the conditions created by a twenty year-long regime of unfair and unjust land laws. One constant of Maori political thought at this time that emerges from the document of speeches was an opposition to the practices of the Native Land Court. Maori opposed the wholesale right assumed by the government in establishing its own system for the determination of titles through the court. The process of the court was seen as divisive, ineffectual, expensive and designed primarily to alienate Maori land, rather than securing Maori property rights in law. Maori had an innate sense of the practical. In theory, the court – based in principles of impartiality – was one aspect of an ethnically-blind state; in practice it was a disenfranchising, pauperising institution, where Maori were objects but rarely subjects. This perception of the court’s effects fed into other issues: rates, for example, were seen as unfairly affecting Maori land while providing little benefit in return. One of the issues raised during the tour – rights to purchase arms and ammunition – confirmed this impression. When these issues were considered over a long period, each instance of inequitable governance appeared as further evidence that a system was at work. With the past firmly at the forefront, a leader such as Te Puru Temea could say with conviction – and much regret – that ‘we, the Maoris think that the Maoris show greater affection to the Europeans than the Europeans to the Maoris.’

While Maori leaders during Ballance’s tour expressed their opposition to inequitable treatment, the primary political response to colonial land administration put forward during the tour – a preoccupation with the committee concept – further suggests the extent of political ambivalence. Despite, and yet because of, the huge psychological and material effects of the Native Land Court, Maori leaders increasingly focused on reclaiming the power that had been lost to the court through state-sanctioned committees. The court created a narrowing political focus precisely because it affected land: the source of spiritual and economic well being for Maori communities. As land was rapidly alienated, as the effects of alienation became visible and as anxiety to retain remaining land grew, political initiatives such as that embodied in the committee concept focused on the Native Land Court. This narrowing focus can be seen in the proposals Maori leaders put to Ballance at hui across the tour: most centred on giving Native District Committees judicial powers in

1 Document of Speeches, p.58
relation to or equivalent to those of the court. In seeking the power of the law through the colonial government, however, these Maori leaders were effectively confirming its position as the legitimate source of centralised power in the New Zealand state. Herein lay the dilemma faced by the majority of Maori leaders in meeting with Ballance. While they realised that their situation had been for the most part created by the colonial government, the swift and widespread alienation of land demanded an immediate response. For those who were pragmatically minded, it not only made sense to go to the source of the problem, it was necessary to do so. Although these leaders maintained a position of hope that the government would give them management of their lands, there was an imperceptible feeling of scepticism that equality would not come to fruition.

Ambivalence had tangible effects. While many communities genuinely wanted committees to determine and control titles to land, those same communities requested help from the government on issues as varied as public works to the mediation of disputes with settler neighbours. Here, Maori saw a real and beneficial role for central government and the role of Native Minister itself. Such requests for assistance confirmed the government’s power, as was suggested in the literal and political welcome of the Native Minister in each community. Moreover, because some members of Maori communities saw such a role for central government, the committee concept implicitly had to adhere to this relationship.

The type of ‘self-government’ advocated by Tawhiao and by Kingitanga speakers at the Whatiwhatihoe hui differed significantly from ‘self-government’ envisaged in the framework of the committees. Tawhiao’s post-war politics evolved from the unique Waikato position of defeat without land; unlike Ngai Te Rangi, the Kingitanga did not have a relationship with the government based on peace. Unlike other Maori communities, the Kingitanga had no stake in seeing the colonial government succeed. However, Tawhiao’s politics were also moderated, albeit reluctantly, by the notion of pragmatic realism that informed other approaches to the government. After peace was formally negotiated in 1881, the Kingitanga searched for ways to increase the standing of Maori society within the colonial system. Reflecting this dual approach, Tawhiao told Ballance at Whatiwhatihoe that he wanted authority independent of the government and that he should be consulted over matters relating to Maori policy. However, for the majority of those who took a more
pragmatic approach in advocating for tribally-based committees, seeking powers ‘independent of government’ was not in the realm of possibility.

While Tawhiao’s policies were peripheral to the majority of Maori leaders in 1885, the Treaty of Waitangi became a tool of political unification in the years to come, particularly in the Kotahitanga movement of the late 1880s and 1890s. Both the 1885 hui and the 1886 ‘council of chiefs’ suggest that in this period the Treaty was peripheral in mainstream Maori political discourse; instead the committee concept held precedence. However, when it became apparent that Ballance would not listen to Maori proposals for improving both the Native District Committees and the block committees under the Native Land Administration Act, the expectation of good governance that moderated political opposition dissipated. Maori, instead, found a rallying point in the Treaty. Where the relationship with the government had once been an institutional trust, then a position of hope that the colonial administration would provide good governance, the only connection remaining by the end of the 1880s was a document signed fifty years before. Given that Crown promises had not been fulfilled, it was thought that the Treaty would provide proof of the importance of the moral imperative when the colony was created. The pervasive, underlying political ambivalence that can be seen in the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour in 1885 provides some explanation as to why the Kotahitanga movement arose in the late 1880s and not before. Yet, with all trust evaporated, the pragmatic approach to state power remained. In turn, this offers some explanation as to why Kotahitanga only went so far, and did not challenge the colonial government on the more fundamental issue of authority. Considered as part of a broader historical narrative, the timing of the Kotahitanga movement suggests Ballance’s tour was a watershed in the history of Maori political thought.

A close reading of the document of speeches suggests that the complex and often conflicting currents of the Maori political landscape also moderated protest against the colonial government in this period. The establishment of centralised, Pakeha-controlled government in New Zealand, then the institution of the Native Land Court and its practices, had the combined effect of destabilising and undermining traditional authority in Maori society. Maori political responses to this diminishing authority – initially through tribal runanga, which developed into the committees movement in the 1880s – emphasised the tribal bases of governance. In particular, as tribal authority became destabilised in its ability to determine the course
of land on behalf of the community, the focus of political initiatives such as the committees increasingly focused on land. During Ballance’s tour, Maori leaders promoted an increase in the powers of the Native District Committees to effect a tribally based system of governance that would, as in the pre-war period, constrain the individual from harming the interests of the collective. The same leaders also advocated block committees for similar reasons; so that communities might collectively control their lands. In their nature, the committees were also a continuation of earlier runanga, especially the move to a more formalised process of decision-making and to a more stabilised membership. By formalising tribal authority further in the framework of the committees, certain Maori leaders were perhaps unintentionally shifting power further towards a formalised and impersonalised body, and away from a type of a deeply personal type of leadership. As opposed to earlier periods when the strength of the community was symbiotic with the strength of the chief, the strength of the community was now based on the ability to hold land.

It appears as though this formalised notion of tribal authority conflicted with an earlier paradigm where customary leaders, rangatira, firmly based their identity in a personalised chiefly idiom. For many, the expression of this form of leadership was the ability to make decisions independently on behalf of the interests of the community. Initiatives such as the committees presented the possibility of a competing form of leadership. While some traditional leaders adapted to the new environment, others, such as Keepa Te Rangihiwini were unconvinced of the committee model. At the same time, the committees had to compete against the aspirations of ordinary people such as James Thomson, who relished the rights he gained under successive land legislation. Perhaps more importantly, however, the committees represented an impersonalised form of leadership, one that contrasted unfavourably with the form of parliamentary democracy that was embodied in the colonial state. For people such as Rewi Maniapoto, notions of political unity, often implicit within the committee scheme, also carried connotations of a more impersonalised leadership. Given the challenges posed by colonial governance in the years following the New Zealand wars and these contrasting notions over the future direction of Maori political activity, it was not surprising that Maniapoto paused in the middle of his introductory speech at the second Kihikihi hui, to say, ‘We have a lot of things to bear in mind.’
Conclusion

In summary, then, the document of speeches that survives from Ballance’s 1885 tour provides an interesting insight into what appears to be a deeply-felt ambivalence in the conceptual bases of Maori political thought in the late nineteenth century. This conclusion strongly suggests that historians should reconsider the notion of autonomy as an all-encompassing concept of late nineteenth century political thought and action. If historians are to capture the full and fluid complexity of Maori political thought in this period, in order to understand why protest peaked and troughed, they must attempt to incorporate the ideas that Maori leaders themselves raised regarding the nature of their relationship with the state. In terms of the present study, the idea that following the New Zealand wars Maori communities of all political persuasions became increasingly disillusioned with the colonial government and consequently sought separate institutions to ‘deal with their own affairs’ is subtly contradicted on almost every page of the 1885 document of speeches. One should pose the question why, after a prolonged period when Maori perceived the government to be acting unfair and unjust, did Maori continue to maintain hope, despite a full knowledge of these conditions? While this thesis has suggested, from a study of a single document, that several implicit factors tempered the extent of Maori opposition to the colonial government, it is possible that other documents reveal similar aspects of the same political phenomenon. Historians need to consider late nineteenth century Maori politics more closely before the concept of autonomy can be confirmed or rejected.

One possible solution is for more microhistorical studies of historical documents from the nineteenth century in general. Only in the process of applying the principles of cultural microhistory to this particular document has it become evident that there were two co-existing currents in the conceptual bases of Maori political thought in this period. A microhistory serves its ultimate purpose in suggesting future directions for study, in opening up an area of the past by posing a series of questions. This study has pointed out gaps in existing research; without further research into these areas, the most fundamental questions will remain unanswered. In particular, I have suggested that a series of implicit factors – based on pragmatism, trust and hope – tempered Maori opposition to the colonial government in the latter part of the nineteenth century. This is only a beginning. More microhistories and general historical studies are required to see whether the present study of the document of speeches from Ballance’s tour in 1885 holds up under scrutiny; whether political
ambivalence was as deeply ingrained in Maori political thought as a close reading of this document suggests.
**APPENDIX A**

**List of speakers at the twelve hui**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hui</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name (Given in the document/As cited in thesis)¹</th>
<th>No. of speeches</th>
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¹ It is quite likely that the spellings of some names may not have been correctly recorded in the document; where possible I have attempted to give the proper spelling.
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Whatiwhatihoe
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Thames Native Committee
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Whakarewarewa
Whakarewarewa
Whareroa

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12.2.1885 Hapi Rewi
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12.2.1885 Pepene
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12.2.1885 Epeniha
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12.2.1885 Ngapari
12.2.1885 "A native"
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12.2.1885 Te Raika
12.2.1885 Himipuru
12.2.1885 Parata Te Mohu
12.2.1885 W.H. Taipari
12.2.1885 Mrs Ripeka Turepona
12.2.1885 Pereki
12.2.1885 Arani Watene
16.2.1885 Whittiera Te Waiatua
16.2.1885 Retireti Tapihana
16.2.1885 Rotohiko Haupapa
18.2.1885 Wi Keepa Ngawhau
18.2.1885 Paratemea
18.2.1885 Te Kiri Karamu
18.2.1885 Auwhokoketo/Ratema Te Awekotuku
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18.2.1885 Petera Pokeno
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19.2.1885 Wiremu Pauro
19.2.1885 Wi Keepa Rangipuawhe/Wi Keepa Te Rangipuawhe
19.2.1885 Maika Paupopoki/Mita Taupopoki
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19.2.1885 Hori Taiawhio
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19.2.1885 Maika Te Aporo
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19.2.1885 Karora
19.2.1885 Pikea
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