

in relation to the world: a stronger individual identity, which also alters how one thinks about, describes and lives life.⁵⁵ The papers had a national circulation, though some had a regional base and primarily local readers. Māori contributed to the papers as individuals and sometimes as a tribal group, but they did not limit their comment to tribal matters even if their life emphasised them. Print (among other European innovations) also increased the possibility of earning a status that went beyond what was traditionally due by virtue of lineage or (less frequently) extraordinary achievement. In addition, the newspapers opened up and served new and larger communities: Māori with Pākehā as one people nationally or, at least philosophically, in international association with other peoples. Some Māori used the papers to argue a political and cultural autonomy against colonisation, others to support it. However, I suspect the press had a wider impact as a tool of communication, not one that replaced the *marae* and kin group, but one that irretrievably expanded the horizons of individual thought and self-awareness.

A reading of the mix of oral and literate conventions in Māori writing for newspapers is rich with suggestion for a history of Māori literacy and mentality. It supports some of the current views about the development of literacy⁵⁶ and it reveals new material and insights. But it also serves us more personally. Energetic, considered and pragmatic in this use of print, Māori ensured retention of some of their oral poetry and cultural philosophy in the silent, paper bird, leaving us a fascinating record, covering almost 100 years, of how they responded to and developed their use of literacy and, equally significantly, of the complexity and beauty of their poetic depiction of life.

REFERENCES

- 1 My article is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented at the SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing) international conference in Mainz in 2000. It is one publication from a 3-year research project at the Department of Māori Studies of the University of Auckland, funded by the Marsden Fund (Royal Society of New Zealand), in association with the Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, and the History of Print Culture in New Zealand (Humanities Society of New Zealand). I would like to acknowledge researchers on our project: Jenifer Curnow, Tane Mokena, Dinah Paul, Hazel Petrie, Yvonne Sutherland and Lyn Waymouth who, in creating English abstracts of the newspapers and through discussion, have contributed towards my article. All translations are mine, unless otherwise stated.
- 2 *Te Wananga*, 4 March 1876, p.125, the letter advises a death in his family.
- 3 The newspapers can be read in the microfiche collection *Niupepa 1842-1933: Maori newspapers* (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1996) and (with the abstracts) on the University of Waikato's Computer Science Department's Internet site <<http://www.nzdl.org>>.
- 4 As discussed by, e.g., Walter Ong, *Orality and literacy* (London: Methuen, 1982) and Norman Simms, *Points of contact: A study of the interplay and intersection of traditional and non-traditional literatures, cultures and mentalities* (Pace University Press, New York, 1991).
- 5 Some saw the potential for the papers to preserve the oral tradition but this did not happen to any extent. I am grateful to Steven Chrisp for this information with regard to the Wairarapa papers, *Te puke ki Hikurangi* and *Te Mareikura*.