

what you do then? You punch back, ay? Same for words. Only words hurt much deeper. Punch only hurts for a second. Words hurt for years and years. Till you die sometimes."

"Back in those old days, you say a karakia wrong, you commit hara and you die. True! Power of the word, you see. You see a charm wrong and you die, sick or something happens to you. Tohunga got to come in have a look. And, if he can't help, ah well, ka mate."

"Silly pakehas. Knowing nothing 'bout words. Need the books to remember. And actions stronger than words they reckon. Tito! Words got the power. So, e moko. Kia tupato. Kia

tupato. Careful, ay boy. Power of the word. Strong stuff."

The scene flashed past, a lifetime's teachings in a second.

"Nothing to say...I hit that pakeha...and I'd do it again," Tuki mumbled, meant for himself but heard by all.

"Not where you're likely to go. Society has got to be protected from thugs like you. The streets aren't safe with rogues like you attacking innocent people. I want a probation report, but I warn you I intend sending you to jail," the judge cut in. "And a word of advice, Mr Ropata, sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt

me. Remember that. You had better learn a bit of respect for other people."

"I ain't eating at the same place as no black bastard", the youth said, words slurred, liquor breath condensating in clouds in the cold air.

"Bloody horis, should'a stayed in the bush, the lotaya. Ya ain't wanted here. This white man's country, so, get lost." His red eyes, misted, glazed, spat hate.

"And take that black sprog with you..." he said, tongue curling curses, fire licks, at the young girl, hand clasped in her father's.

And Tuki's fist struck home.

## Women and the Structures of the Church — The Position of Maori Women

*I want to begin with some historical references to the position of women in the Church, because naturally enough, it is this inheritance that has dictated the framework within which Maori women have received, celebrated, endured and are now in many instances beginning to challenge, male interpretation of the Good News.*

The creation story, shared by Christians, Moslems and Jews, is a cornerstone of the historical bias against women. According to this Hebrew folktale, Eve tempted Adam with the forbidden fruit and thus triggered humankind's expulsion from Paradise. The identification of woman with evil, temptation and sin thus became a primary ingredient in Christian tradition.

While man was linked with spiritual, the reasonable and the godly, woman was associated with flesh, matter and the world. Good and evil were given their clear sexual counterparts. According to this view women actually caused evil to come into the world. As a result they must atone for their collective guilt and redeem themselves.

How is this to happen? Patriarchal religion says women are redeemed by willingly accepting their gender roles. They should bear children, keep their sexuality under control and be prepared to subordinate themselves to the wishes of men.

When we look at the relationship between Jesus and women, male church leaders will remind us that [male] Priests are following the example of Jesus, as justification for a virtually all male Priesthood. The sayings of men like Paul, concerning women being silent are usually added for good measure and the history of the Churches are added as further corroboration of the thesis that the Priesthood should be confined to males. While the facts of the case seem to be true, there are many loopholes in this

line of argument.

First of all it is not clear that Jesus actually established the Priesthood. The Priesthood as it is currently known, probably began later in the life of the Church. (This statement is open to challenge having been made on the basis of somewhat limited research). If it is argued that Jesus gave the power over the Eucharist to his apostles and that they are the predecessors of the Bishops, then should not the Bishops be the ones who should always preside over the Eucharist? Why can Bishops confer this power to other males who are Priests and not to any woman? Is the male traitor better than the faithful women who stood by Jesus at the foot of the Cross? Is it not to them, that Jesus first revealed himself after his resurrection? One could further argue that since the Apostles were Jews, all Bishops should be Jews and circumcised. Couldn't we also argue that the chief of the Bishops should be married as Peter was... Just where do we draw the line in following the example of Jesus? Could it not be possible that the line was drawn on a sex basis due to the tradition of male domination rather than due to any divine inspiration.

The Vatican has already declared that men should be Priests in order to be like Jesus — this presupposes that Jesus was an ordained Priest of the Christian Church, but of course, Jesus was not an ordained Minister he was a rabbi — a lay teacher among the Jews. Nor it seems, did Jesus actually begin the Christian ordained Priesthood. In so far

as he is called the unique High Priest of the New Testament, there are to be no Priests like Him — He teaches that we can go direct to the Father without any intercessors — therefore, it does not seem to be a valid conclusion from the maleness of Jesus or Nazareth, to argue that women cannot be Priests. If this were a valid argument, once again, can we not ask whether all Priests should not be Jews, circumcised, poor, vagrant...like Jesus...and that only males should ever be at the Table, as at the Last Supper?

Not only is this case rather poor, it is adding insult to injury to women. It is bad enough women are thus treated in the Church but when the sex characteristics of Jesus are adduced in favour of a male Priesthood, one can see to what extent male domination will go to suit its own purposes.

How far are these actions or a continuation of these actions justifiable?

Contemporary emancipation of women has fortunately brought many searching questions to the fore. It is noteworthy that the movement for the emancipation of women has emerged and developed without much direct support from the Churches. They have tended to be the last refuge of male dominance. They have given male chauvinism not only a practical expression, but also a theological and even quasi-divine legitimation.

The Anglican Church has to a certain extent attempted to accommodate the feminine appeal for change. The irony of course, is not now being so easily lost on women...women, who have traditionally been the most faithful supporters of the Church. Without women many Churches would not even have a congregation. Children are brought to Church by their mothers...young women often persuade