



The New Zealand Wars: 1845

Background Guide



EagleMUNC

Model United Nations
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Introduction

Letter from the Chair:

Tēnā Koutou Delegates,

I would like to extend my warmest of welcomes to all you high school students who have chosen to participate in EagleMUNC VIII. My name is Jonathan (Jon) Baccay, and I am excited to be your chair for The New Zealand Wars committee. I am a senior in the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, I am part of the pre-law program and a history major with a finance minor. I grew up in Bedford, New York and I **very strongly** believe that New York pizza is the best type of pizza out there. This conference marks my third and final year as part of EagleMUNC and I couldn't be happier to be spending it as the chair for this committee.

My hope for this committee is that we will be able to engage in meaningful discussion on the history of the exploitation of the Māori people by the New Zealand Company, and the British Empire. The topics to be discussed will require you all to work together to ensure the survival of the Māori people in the face of the British onslaught. Will you work with the British and try to establish the Māori as serious participants in local politics, or will you try and maintain your independence and keep the Māori as a self-governing entity? Who among you is the best person to lead the Māori people during the tumultuous period? How will you deal with the rise of religious extremism among the Māori people? All of these topics, I hope, will create a lively debate amongst yourselves and allow the very best ideas to guide the committee.

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Balancing collective interests and personal ambitions will be a complex task, and we at EagleMUNC ask that you all remain professional and civil during your time in committee and throughout the conference in general. Whether you are a first time or long time Model United Nations participant, we at EagleMUNC hope that you will take every opportunity given to you to contribute and meet your own expectations of the conference. What we have planned is sure to entertain, immerse, and educate you throughout the weekend on everything Model United Nations and we hope you enjoy the event. I look forward to meeting you all, and am happy to answer any questions you may have!

Come excited and prepared to kick some British butts!

Regards,

Jonathan S. Baccay

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Historical Background

The Māori Wars were a series of conflicts set in the middle of the 19th century, and fought between the native Māori tribes of New Zealand, and the British Empire. Relations between the Māori and the British were initially friendly. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 under the belief that both sides were guaranteed mutual benefits resulting from the document.¹ However, differences in translation became a source of conflict between the British and Māori.

The British believed that by signing the document, the Māori agreed to cede sovereignty to the British Crown, agreed that the Crown alone could buy and sell land, and finally that the Māori were guaranteed the same rights and privileges as British citizens. In the Māori language, the word “sovereignty” was translated as “kawanatanga” which interpreted as “governance.”² Thus, the Māori believed that their tribal chieftains still maintained the full extent of their rule and that they would be governing themselves. That is not to say that the Māori believed that they were wholly independent from the British. The Māori believed that the clauses within the treaty implied that the Crown had the first option to buy land from the Māori, but the Māori could then sell to anyone. In addition, while the British agreed that the Māori retained “undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties,” the Māori translation was “tino rangatiratanga o o ratou wenua o ratou kainga me o ratou taonga katoa” which

¹ 'The Treaty in brief', <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/treaty/the-treaty-in-brief>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), (Accessed 10 July 2019), 1.

² 'Māori text', <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/treaty/read-the-treaty/māori-text>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), (Accessed 7 July 2019), 1.

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implied full authority over all their treasures.³ Treasures included not just material possessions, but immaterial things such as culture and language.⁴ Finally, the Māori belief regarding land ownership and use were significantly different from that of the Europeans. They believed that selling land meant that the buyer would be entitled to usage for the land for a specific purpose for a limited time, no more.⁵ The different understandings of the treaty created the environment in which conflict would become inevitable.

Tensions between the Māori and the British came to a head in 1845, but the problems leading up to open conflict began in 1842, with the execution of Maketū, the son of a local iwi leader.⁶ Although a majority of the Māori people believed that Maketū should be tried and convicted for the murder of an English man and his family, there was contention over the legal process through which it was carried out, especially in terms of how Maketū was executed. The Māori saw the public execution of Maketū as a public embarrassment for him, and since the British had failed to secure the execution of a European man accused of a similar crime, the Māori saw this as a sign of inequity between them and the British.⁷

For one iwi chieftain, Hone Heke, the execution symbolized the surrendering of chieftain authority to the Crown.⁸ The perceived disrespect was exacerbated by the

³ 'The Treaty in brief', 1.

⁴ 'Māori text', 2.

⁵ Taonui, Rāwiri. 'Muriwhenua tribes - European contact', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/muriwhenua-tribes/page-4> (accessed 6 August 2019)

⁶ 'The first execution', <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/the-death-penalty/the-first-execution>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), (Accessed 10 July 2019), 1.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 'Origins of the Northern War', <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/northern-war/origins>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), (Accessed 29 June 2019), 2.

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replacement of the United Tribes Flag with the Union Jack at Kororāreka. The flagstaff had been gifted to the British by Heke, believing that it would be used to fly the United Tribes Flag, and its removal was seen as a denial of Māori equality.⁹

In 1845, Hone Heke proceeded to hack down the flagstaff, and his actions caused the British to prepare for war.¹⁰ Heke, along with other chiefs, launched an attack on Kororāreka, where Heke once again chopped down the flagstaff, which had been recently reinforced with steel and was protected by Māori troops allied with the British.¹¹ In response, the British launched a military campaign against Heke and his allies, concluding with the battle of Ruapekapeka¹². This final battle ended the Northern War as Heke was forced to make peace with Tāmati Wāka Nene, another iwi chief who sided with the British.¹³

This peace was temporary as hostilities resumed in 1846 when Ngāti Toa chief Te Rangihaeata backed local Māori opposed to European settlement in the Hutt Valley. A group of settlers from the New Zealand Company claimed to have ownership over land in the Hutt Valley and attempted to survey it. The uncle of Te Rangihaeata, a renowned war leader named Te Rauparaha, requested an investigation of the supposed land sale by British officials and destroyed surveying equipment.¹⁴ In response, warrants were issued against the two chiefs and armed civilians came to arrest the two. Te Rangihaeata

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ 'Northern War', <https://teara.govt.nz/en/new-zealand-wars/page-2>, (Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand), (Accessed 29 June 2019), 2

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ "The Wairau Incident", URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/wairau-incident>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), (Accessed 30 June 2019), updated 21-Dec-2016

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and his group resisted arrest, which resulted in a fight that ended with his and Te Rauparaha's wives dead.¹⁵ In response, Te Rangihēata demanded *utu*, defined as a maintenance of balance and harmony, resulting in the massacre of 22 prisoners.¹⁶ Following this, the two chiefs were exonerated in order to ease tensions between the settlers and the increasingly discontent Māori, the governor sparking outcry from the settler community by suggesting that the settlers provoked the Ngāti Toa.¹⁷

When Te Rangihēata began supporting the renewed skirmishes in March of 1846, Governor George Grey declared martial law over Wellington and ordered the construction of military posts and troop barracks along the Wellington - Poriura road.¹⁸ In July of that year, Governor Grey responded to rumors of an approaching war party by arresting Te Rauparaha. Upon hearing of his uncle's capture by the British, Te Rangihēata attempted to mount a rescue attempt but his party of 50 men were easily driven off by the British.¹⁹ As the British moved against the combatants, the Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Tama, and Ngāti Rangatahi retreated to Poroutawhao, ending the conflict.²⁰

The issue of land disputes came up again in 1860, igniting the North Taranaki Wars. Over the past 20 years since the end of the Wellington Wars, the European population in New Zealand eclipsed that of the Māori in size. With the influx of new settlers, the Māori were

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ "Māori values and practices", URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/frontier-of-chaos/māori-values>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), (Accessed 30 June 2029), updated 20-Dec-2012

¹⁷ "The Wairau Incident", URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/wairau-incident>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 21-Dec-2016

¹⁸ Keenan, Danny. 'New Zealand wars - Wellington and Whanganui wars, 1846–1848', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/new-zealand-wars/page-3> (accessed 21 August 2019)

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

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once again faced with massive losses of land, and by the time of the outbreak of war, almost the entirety of the South Island was in British hands.²¹

The Northern Island Māori organized resistance against further sales of their land.²² However, some Māori continued to sell land to the British, and in 1859, a young chieftain named Te Tiera agreed to the sale of 600 acres of Māori land, over the objections of the more senior chieftain Te Rangitake.²³ When the British attempted to survey their acquired land, they were interrupted by supporters of Te Rangitake who, after the British surveyors left, ordered the construction of fortifications on a ridge overlooking the British position.²⁴

On March 7, 1860, the British opened fire at the constructed fortifications using cannons and rockets.²⁵ However, the next day at dawn, the British stormed the position and found it abandoned by the Māori.²⁶ A major defeat by the Māori occurred at Puketakauere, where the Māori waited until the British had stormed trenches surrounding Puketakauere and then fired upon them from concealed positions.²⁷ The British were forced to retreat having lost 30 men with 34 more wounded during the fighting.²⁸

²¹ Keenan, Danny 'New Zealand wars - North Taranaki war, 1860–1861', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/new-zealand-wars/page-4> (accessed 21 August 2019)

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

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Major General Thomas Pratt took over command of the war effort and forced the Māori back to a position overlooking the Waitara river.²⁹ The Māori made incredible effort to prevent British advancement beyond the Waitara river, and settled on defending Te Ārei which was supported by the nearby Pukerangiora hill.³⁰ With winter approaching and both sides unable to make territorial gains, a truce was organized by Wiremu Tamihana, thereby preventing the war from extending to Waikato, the home of the Māori King.³¹ In 1862, the British began construction of the Great South Road and was soon used to transport men and military supplies to the Waikato. Finally, in 1863, Governor George Grey ordered all Māori living in Waikato to swear allegiance to the Queen and warned that all those who resisted would forfeit ownership of their lands.³²

Cultural History of the Māori

In the 14th century, New Zealand was first settled by Polynesians originating from the mythical island of Hawaiki, now identified as either Tahiti or Raiatea. This fatherland was culturally and spiritually significant to the Māori, appearing throughout the native literature and genealogies, while also being the home of their deities.³³ The name Māori referred to “ordinary” or “normal,” which reflected that they were normal human beings in comparison to their deities and nature spirits (called wairua). After

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Keenan, Danny. 'New Zealand wars - Waikato war: beginnings', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/new-zealand-wars/page-5> (accessed 21 August 2019)

³² Ibid

³³ Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 'Hawaiki', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/hawaiki>

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European colonization, Māori became used more in a pan-tribal context in opposition to the Pākehā, which referred primarily to English-speaking Europeans.³⁴

The Māori divided themselves into tribal groupings known as iwi, which were divided into sub-tribes or clans known as hapū, and then into extended familial groups known as whānau. The hapū was the most important political unit and competed with other hapū over territory. The viability of a hapū depended on its ability to defend its land claims.³⁵ Hapū were led by Rangatira, hereditary chieftains. Rangatira were often also head of a whānau. Ariki were high-born of significant tapu (sacredness) or mana (authority) who also served in significant leadership positions. Finally, Tohunga were experts at some skill or art that led to being respected and provided authority. A person could be any combination of these things.³⁶ Iwi formed based on their descent from the original wakas, or canoes, that the first Māori arrived on.³⁷ They brought with them the Polynesian dog, known as Kurī, which helped hunt the native birds of New Zealand as well as serving as a food source. Kurī were favored pets of Māori chiefs. The islands were filled with numerous bird species, many of which were hunted to extinction by the Māori and the Kurī.³⁸

In the 15th century, a series of natural disasters contributed to the development of the Classical period. Māori culture developed a fierce warrior culture, characterised by

³⁴ "Pākehā," Te Aka - Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index, <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?keywords=pakeha>

³⁵ Taonui, Rāwiri 'Tribal organisation - How iwi and hapū emerged', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/tribal-organisation/page-2>

³⁶ Taonui, Rāwiri 'Tribal organisation - Social rank', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/tribal-organisation/page-5> (accessed 6 August 2019)

³⁷ Taonui, Rāwiri 'Tribal organisation - How iwi and hapū emerged'

³⁸ Keane, Basil. 'Kurī – Polynesian dogs', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/kuri-polynesian-dogs>

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pounamu (greenstone) weapons, elaborate carved canoes for both transport and war, and whareniui (meeting houses) centered within a sacred space that were stylized with images of the iwi's ancestors.³⁹ They also built large hillforts, known as pā. These were heavily fortified villages, akin to a European keep or fort that had its own water systems and substantial housing and food storage. Over 5000 were known to have been built, with many redesigned and repurposed to better counter the firepower of the British during the Māori Wars.^{40,41}

³⁹Keane, Basil. 'Pounamu – jade or greenstone - Symbols of chieftainship', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/pounamu-jade-or-greenstone/page-5> (accessed 6 August 2019)

⁴⁰ Cowan, James, "Chapter 9: The Capture of Rua-Pekapeka", *The New Zealand Wars: A History of the Maori Campaigns and the Pioneering Period: Volume I (1845–64)*, <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cow01NewZ-c9.html>

⁴¹ 'First Taranaki War erupts at Waitara', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/taranaki-war-erupts-after-shots-exchanged-at-waitara>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 17-Mar-2017

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Topic 1: The Māori King Movement (Kīngitanga)

In the years following the Treaty of Waitangi, the amount of Pākehā grew to a point where they eventually outnumbered the Māori. This boom in the settler population was accompanied by more aggressive pursuance of land. While the Māori had no concept of buying or selling land prior to the arrival of the British, the Treaty allowed for purchases between the Crown and the Māori. A mistranslation allowed the British individuals and companies to take advantage of this provision and began pursuing land deals with individual Māori chiefs, who were not necessarily representative of the larger population.⁴² Many Maori attempted to resist land sales and tried to persuade other chieftains to also not give up their land. Some, like the legendary Ngāti Toa leader, Te Rauparaha, agitated for resistance against the British.⁴³ The Ngāti Toa iwi was located primarily in the southern part of the North Island. During the Wairau Affray, Māori who refused to leave their land killed 22 British settlers. In the aftermath, Te Rauparaha's wife was killed and he was arrested for providing support for Māori rebels.⁴⁴

In 1854, the Māori attempted to organize and stem the sale of land to the British. Representatives of various iwi met in Taranaki and Waikato to agree upon certain tracts of land that were forbidden from being sold to the British. This did little to stop disputes however, and the continuing fights between iwi caused the British to station troops in New Plymouth to protect the settlers. Seeing the concentration of power occurring

⁴² Orange, Claudia. 'Treaty of Waitangi', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/treaty-of-waitangi>

⁴³ Mitchel, Hilary I and Mitchell, John. 'Te Tau Ihu tribes - Land loss', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/te-tau-ihu-tribes/page-4>

⁴⁴ "The Wairau Incident", URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/wairau-incident>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 21-Dec-2016

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between the European settlers, and wishing to resolve inter-tribal differences, chieftains from various iwi began to push for a unification of the Māori under a King, led by the son of Te Rauparaha and Christian convert, Tāmihama Te Rauparaha.⁴⁵ He had met with Queen Victoria and concluded that a Māori sovereign would be seen as having greater authority to negotiate treaties with rather than the many, disparate tribal leaders. By presenting a united front, this would prevent unnecessary bloodshed.⁴⁶ The problem was, however, that the Māori had never had a centralized government and choosing who would become their first king was a hotly contested issue. Many chiefs who were offered the position refused as they were tribal leaders, not suited for the burden of a kingship.⁴⁷ Considering how the past conflicts with the British have been fought by individual tribes, without more broadspread support from the Māori people as a whole, it would now seem imperative that the Māori select a king to lead them through another war with the British. Who will accept the great burden of leading the Māori to defend their lands, people, and culture?

Topic 2: The British Are Coming!

Seeking retribution for the casualties of the North Taranaki War, the British are intent on invading the Waikato region, home of the Māori King. Despite the truce made

⁴⁵ Papa, Rahui and Meredith, Paul. 'Kīngitanga – the Māori King movement - Origins of the Kīngitanga', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/kingitanga-the-maori-king-movement/page-1>

⁴⁶ Oliver, Steven . 'Te Rauparaha, Tamihana', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1990. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1775/te-rauparaha-tamihana>

⁴⁷ Papa and Meredith, 'Kīngitanga'

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between the British and the Māori, the replacement of Governor Thomas Gore Browne with George Grey has reignited British ambitions for new lands in the region. On January 1, 1862, Governor Grey ordered the construction of a new road leading south, with the clear intention of facilitating easy movement of troops and supplies. On July 9, 1863, Governor Grey ordered all Māori living in the Auckland region to swear allegiance to the Crown or be evicted to Waikato. Two days later, Governor Grey issued a proclamation that all those "in arms" were subject to confiscation of their land. The assembled Māori of the committee must now prepare for the imminent threat of invasion, or face complete and utter annihilation.

The exact time and place of where the British invasion will begin is unknown to the assembled Māori, but the last place where the British had attempted to invade was at Te Arei. There is already strong defenses in place there, left over from the Northern Taranaki War, but the British came awfully close to overcoming it before being forced to quarter for winter.

In the past, the Māori have constructed large defensive fortresses, called pa, that were proven capable of withstanding a British attack until reinforcements could arrive or where the Māori could organize a successful retreat. With each iwi holding limited resources to construct these pa, the committee must decide where a likely British attack will happen and plan accordingly. If this defensive line fails, the British will be able to invade the Waikato region and hurt any further resistance to British land seizures.

An alternative to any resistance would be to try and negotiate with the British over the terms of future land sales. The Treaty of Waitangi is the source of the problems

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between the Māori and the British and perhaps a reexamination of the terms of the agreement could help solve the long term problems between the two groups. Yet the British are currently unlikely to come to the negotiation table if they feel that they have a realistic chance of conquering the Māori and seizing the land.

The onus is now on the assembled group to figure out how to deal with the British. Peace and coexistence is the best result that the Māori can hope for, but will either side be able to look past historic grievances and settle for peace? Will peace with the British satisfy the wish of the Māori people as a whole, or will this simply be a repeat of the past and only result in a temporary lull in the fighting? The survival of the Māori people now hangs in the balance, and it is up to you to find the solution.

Topic 3: The Pai Marie and Ringatu Movements

The last of the wars was fought between 1864 and 1872. After being imprisoned as a youth for supporting the King Movement, Te Ua Haumene converted to Christianity and upon release, blended Christian tenets with traditional Māori beliefs. Called Pai Marie (good and peaceful), this new religion denounced the culture of the pakeha (Europeans/non-Māori) and wished to purge all elements of the pakeha from their ancestral lands, ultimately ushering in a period of peace and prosperity. However, many of the movement's followers became zealous in their beliefs, agitating for violence against the British colonial government. The Taranaki region was the first one to see the impact of this new syncretic religion, and when British forces were attacked at Te Ahu Ahu, many were savagely killed and the severed head of their leader, Captain Thomas

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Lloyd, was taken and paraded around the North Island to aid in recruitment.⁴⁸

Calling upon the spirit of God in the wind, Te Hau, they shouted "Pai Marie! Hau, hau!" in battle, believing it would protect them from the bullets of the British. For this, they earned the moniker the Hauhau. These fanatics drove the British to seize more land in a desperate attempt at pacification, but this simply resulted in many Māori taking up arms. Meanwhile, the guerilla leader Te Kooti produced another Christian-inspired faith, Ringatu. The Ringatu warriors joined the fight in 1868, similarly pledging to remove the pakeha from the ancestral lands of the Māori.

These wars were fought primarily between the British government and dissident Māori who had taken up arms either in the name of faith or in dissidence for land seizures. Due to the costliness of the previous wars, tribal leaders could not afford to officially take part in such resistance movements. Instead, many tribal chieftain supporters of the King movement debated whether or not they should help round up Hauhau and Ringatu fighters to avoid British retaliation. Some leaders did however fight against the radicals, and at Moutoa Island, a contingent of Māori warriors fought followers of a prophet named Matene, who were attempting to seize control of the nearby Whanganui town. Radical religious movements are a cause for concern among the British, and could lead to them targeting the Māori people as a whole. However, infighting among the Māori would only serve to weaken their already fragile state, something the British could again

⁴⁸ Keenan, Danny. 'New Zealand wars - Pai Mārire, South Taranaki and Whanganui, 1864–1866', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/new-zealand-wars/page-8> (accessed 22 August 2019)

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take advantage of. The committee must decide what support, if any, they will give Hauhau and Ringatu resistance movements.



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Questions to Consider

The Māori King Movement (Kīngitanga)

- Should the King be one of the past leaders of the war effort against the British, or should it be someone new?
- How can the committee balance the sovereignty of the individual chieftains over their *iwi*, and the sovereignty of the King over the Māori people?
- Who is in the best position to preserve the land and culture of the Māori people against the British?

The British Are Coming!

- Given the past failures of the Māori to effectively combat the British in direct confrontations, should the Māori continue to focus on building *pā* or shift towards a new strategy?
- The British have been seen moving towards Waikato region, yet it is unknown where they will strike first. Given the sparse information and limited resources, where should the Māori choose to construct *pā* and delegate their fighters?
- What is the endgame? Will the Māori choose to fight until the British are forced from the island entirely, or can a treaty be created to guarantee continual peace moving forward?

The Pai Marie and Ringatu Movements

- How can the committee assure the British that the rise of these religious extremist movements do not require British intervention and can be dealt with internally?

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- Should the committee use these religious extremists to indirectly attack British hegemony in the region?
- Should the committee support these religious extremists and use them to reignite the struggle against the British?
- Can these extremist movements be made compatible with the Māori culture as a whole?

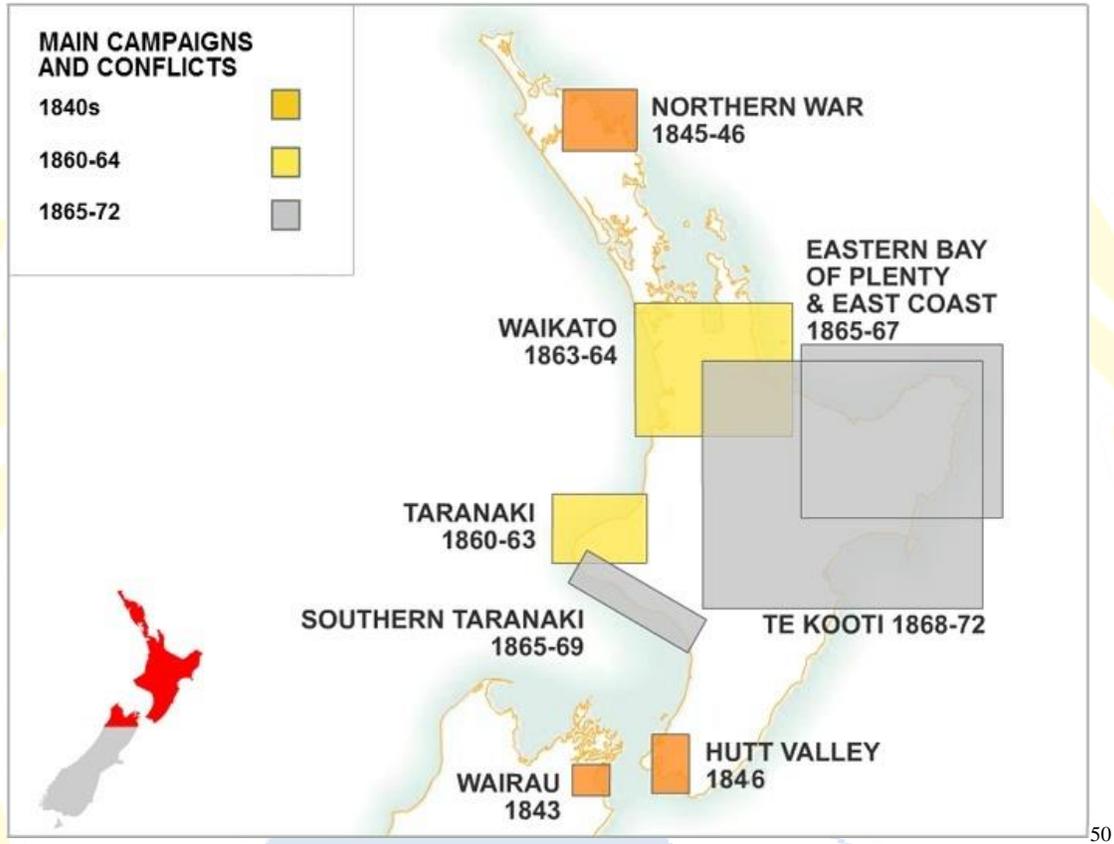
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Maps of Importance



49 Westmarevashti, 'Maori Place Names- Ingoa Wahi o Aotearoa', Treaty of Waitangi Learning Resources, <https://waitangitreaty.wordpress.com/2014/02/19/maori-place-names/>

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50 'New Zealand Wars map', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/nz-wars-overview-map>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 18-Aug-2017

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