

The Treaty of Waitangi, from Darkness to Light:
Historical and Anthropological Analysis of The Waikato-Tainui Tribe

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Abstract

The dissertation examines the impacts of the Treaty of Waitangi over the Waikato-Tainui tribe in New Zealand through a historical and anthropologic study from the first rebellion in 1840 to the current claims and settlements directed by the tribal trust board. I clarify how the Waikato-Tainui tribe recovered their lands and rights after losing them because of the Treaty. In addition to analysing the role played by the Waikato-Tainui tribe during the King Movement and the New Zealand Wars, the dissertation examines the creation of the Waikato-Tainui Trust Board and their new tribal identity. I use two major research strategies: (1) qualitative analysis of historical works and (2) cultural relativist analysis of Waikato-Tainui Trust Board activities. Data have been collected from the pre-eminent and salient works of Michael King and James Belich, not to mention through five years of participant observation on the field. The dissertation asserts the arguments that (1) the Treaty of Waitangi led the Waikato-Tainui tribe to a catastrophic situation, and (2) the Treaty of Waitangi enabled the Waikato-Tainui tribe achieve political and social unity. Firstly, they started wars against Europeans and other Maori tribes, and then they lost their lands and their tribal bonds. Secondly, by attempting to resolve their internecine differences, the Waikato-Tainui tribe compelled the New Zealand Government to recognize the Treaty as a Constitution and to settle Maori claims. The Treaty finally served Waikato-Tainui tribe.

Keywords: Treaty of Waitangi, Waikato-Tainui, trust board, claims, settlements