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**THE STRUGGLE FOR SUCCESS:**

**A Socio-Cultural Perspective on  
the French Marist Priests  
and their Māori Mission  
(1838-1867)**

A thesis

submitted in fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

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**Doctor of Philosophy in French**

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by

**SANDY HARMAN**

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Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

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## **ABSTRACT**

# **THE STRUGGLE FOR SUCCESS: A Socio-Cultural Perspective on the French Marist Priests and their Māori Mission (1838-1867)**

Sandy Harman

The nineteenth-century Roman Catholic missionary endeavour in New Zealand had its origins in a society of priests from Lyon, known as the Marists. The Marists' mission has been deemed a failure due to its ongoing financial problems, its reputation for having abandoned Māori adherents, and its less visible impact compared to the Anglican Mission. This thesis examines the challenges facing the pioneer Marist priests in New Zealand and asks the question: was the Mission indeed a failure? The answer lies in the correspondence of the French Marists themselves, a largely untapped historical source which contains a different view of early New Zealand contact and religious history from that of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) evangelists.

'The Struggle for Success' consists of three parts examining the Mission before, during and after the pioneer phase. The first describes the Marists' early influences and religious formation in France, which serve to elucidate the missionaries' *raison d'être* and provide an historical context for the Mission. It is also an important attempt at a prosopography of men whose early lives were barely documented, and whose connection with contemporaneous and historical France, and the Lyon area in particular, would greatly affect the missions in Oceania.

The subsequent comparative mission history in Part Two highlights the difficulties and conflicts that affected the progress of the Marist Māori Mission in New Zealand compared with other Christian missions in Oceania, notably the CMS in New Zealand and the early Marists in Wallis, Futuna, Tonga and New Caledonia. It describes the factors leading to the alleged failure of the Marist Māori Mission and demonstrates that hardships and struggle were the common lot of pioneer missionaries in Oceania. But the Marists on the Māori Mission had the added obstacles of being Frenchmen in a British colony, ascetics surrounded by and dependent on commerce, and dutiful religious under the authority of overburdened bishops. Irish immigration into New Zealand distorted the original aims of the French Marist missionaries, and Māori politico-religious initiatives to combat the devastating impacts of British colonialism essentially quashed Marist hopes that Māori would become a decidedly Catholic people.

Having considered the obstacles to success, the thesis discusses in Part Three how the pioneer Marists understood success and conversion. In retrospect, it is clear that the missionaries underestimated the tenacity of early Māori catechists, but the CMS in New Zealand and Marists throughout Oceania were equally insensible in this respect. Finally the thesis offers an assessment of the mission's overall success taking into account the revival of the Marist Māori Mission in the late 1870s and its continuation into the twentieth century. The social, cultural and political complexities of missionary endeavour demand a less rigid evaluation of missions than has been previously offered; and success and failure are problematic terms for the pioneer Marist Māori Mission because evangelisation was and is a work in progress.

## RÉSUMÉ

Les origines de la mission catholique romaine en Nouvelle-Zélande au XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle se retrouvent dans une société de prêtres de Lyon, à savoir les Maristes. On jugea que leur mission ne fut qu'un échec, car ils furent en proie à des problèmes de fonds, on les accusa d'avoir abandonné leurs adeptes, on déclara qu'ils eurent moins de succès visible par rapport à la mission anglicane. Notre thèse examinera les défis que les premiers missionnaires maristes durent affronter en Nouvelle-Zélande et posera la question: la mission mariste fut-elle vraiment un échec? Les réponses se trouvent dans la correspondance des missionnaires, source historique à peine utilisée et qui contient une perspective sur l'histoire de contact culturel et de religion en Nouvelle-Zélande autre que celle des missionnaires de la Church Missionary Society (CMS).

Notre thèse est une étude en trois parties dont la première décrit les influences sur les Maristes en France ainsi que leur formation religieuse ; celles-ci illumineront pour nous la raison d'être de ces missionnaires et nous donneront le contexte historique de la mission mariste. Il s'agit aussi d'une prosopographie sur ces hommes dont les premières années de leurs vies sont à peine documentées ; de plus, il est important de considérer le lien entre les missionnaires maristes et la France, et plus spécifiquement la région lyonnaise, car ce lien eut un impact important sur les missions d'Océanie.

Ensuite nous examinerons l'histoire missionnaire en soulignant les difficultés et les conflits qui touchèrent les progrès de la mission mariste en Nouvelle-Zélande, en les comparant avec d'autres missions chrétiennes en Océanie, surtout celles de la CMS en Nouvelle-Zélande ainsi que celles des premiers Maristes à Wallis, Futuna, Tonga et en Nouvelle-Calédonie. Cette histoire comparée cherche à comprendre les facteurs qui conduisirent à l'échec présumé de la mission māorie. De plus, elle démontre que les épreuves et la lutte font partie de la portion des pionniers missionnaires en général. Mais les Maristes dans les missions māories se trouvèrent confrontés à d'autres obstacles, en tant que Français dans une colonie britannique ; en tant

qu'ascètes dépendants du commerce ; en tant que religieux obéissants sous l'autorité d'évêques accablés et tout-puissants. L'immigration des Irlandais en Nouvelle-Zélande déforma les buts originels de ces missionnaires français ; puis des initiatives politico-religieuses māories, dont le but commun était de lutter contre les effets ravageurs du colonialisme britannique, anéantirent les espoirs des Maristes que les Māoris allaient se faire définitivement catholiques.

Nous expliquerons dans la troisième partie comment ces missionnaires maristes comprenaient le succès et la conversion au christianisme. Il est évident aujourd'hui que les missionnaires sous-estimèrent la détermination des premiers catéchistes māoris, mais on trouve le même manque de perception chez la CMS en Nouvelle-Zélande ainsi que chez les Maristes partout en Océanie à cette époque. Nous évaluerons ensuite le succès à long terme des missions maristes, en tenant compte de leur renaissance dans les années 1870 et de leur continuation au XXème siècle. L'effort missionnaire se caractérise par des complexités sociales, culturelles et politiques, il faut donc une évaluation moins rigide que celles qui existent ; le succès et les échecs sont tous les deux des termes problématiques pour décrire la mission pionnière des Maristes, car évangéliser est un travail progressif.

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## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACDA	Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives (Auckland)
AML	Archives Municipales de Lyon (Lyon)
APM	Archivio Padri Maristi (Rome)
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library (Wellington)
CMS	Church Missionary Society
LMS	London Missionary Society
MAW	Marist Archives Wellington (Wellington)
NZJH	<i>New Zealand Journal of History</i>
Rev.	Reverend
SM	Society of Mary
WMS	Wesleyan Methodist Society



# INTRODUCTION

An interdisciplinary study whose core is in French Studies, the following thesis aims to fulfil a variety of objectives, hence it requires an introduction composed of several sections. The considerable overlap between sections reveals the broad academic relevance of research on the French Marist missionaries, but it is important to consider these sections independently to recognise the contribution to each discipline made by the thesis. Given its historical focus, it is essential first of all to consider its place within New Zealand historiography, which can itself be divided into categories relevant to New Zealand's general history, religious history and mission history. While the French Marist Mission is clearly an historical topic, this is primarily a thesis in French studies and as such it emphasises the cultural significance of the Marist missionaries and their experience as Frenchmen in an increasingly British-dominated setting. The numerous translations from French into English interspersed throughout the thesis further highlight the importance of the study as a contribution to French Studies in the Anglophone countries of the Pacific. Such a diverse study also calls for diverse research and translation methodologies, which will be explained in detail alongside the research hypothesis.

## *0.1 Historiography*

With the exception of the Church Missionary Society's (CMS) efforts in the early nineteenth century, evangelical missions have been largely neglected in New Zealand historiography. Books and articles by Revs. Octavius Hadfield and Richard Taylor, and the journals of Henry Williams and Bishop George Selwyn, can now be accessed

electronically, such is their importance to New Zealand's nineteenth-century religious history. The few nineteenth-century publications on the Catholic Church in New Zealand include the histories produced by pioneer bishop Jean-Baptiste-François Pompallier<sup>1</sup> and by Irish cardinal Patrick Moran,<sup>2</sup> Father Chouvet's account of his adventures as a missionary,<sup>3</sup> and Antoine Monfat's study of the Marist Māori Mission based on descriptive letters written by the early missionaries.<sup>4</sup> In fact, very little has been published about Catholic missionaries and even about New Zealand's Catholic history in general, compared with the abundance of literature describing the Anglican Church and its missionaries in early New Zealand. The first reason for this is the vow of humility taken by the Marist missionaries, who were supposed to imitate the Virgin Mary by living *ignoti et quasi occulti* – usually translated as 'hidden to the extent of being unknown'. While self-written histories of the Anglican mission and missionary journals were published in the nineteenth century and are now widely available to New Zealand readers and historians, this is not the case with the early Catholic history of New Zealand. Certain French Marists, such as Father Jean-Marie Vibaud, acted as historians for the early New Zealand mission, but the detailed history of the French Catholic mission is in fact documented in the numerous letters sent from the missionaries to their superior-general Father Colin. These letters contain controversy and anti-Protestant propaganda, just as the journals and letters written by the CMS missionaries contained controversy and anti-Catholic propaganda; in 1934 Vibaud,<sup>5</sup> one of the last French Marist missionaries in New Zealand, wrote to a Marist archivist in Rome to encourage open access to documents relevant to the pioneer Catholic mission, despite the contentious and antagonistic view they might offer of the CMS and (Wesleyan Methodist Society) WMS missions. Vibaud wrote: "Modern New Zealand historians, like Haropp [sic], Mulgan, Lindsay Buick, though staunch

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<sup>1</sup> J.-B.-F. Pompallier, *Early History of the Catholic Church in Oceania*, trans. by Arthur Herman (Auckland: 1888).

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Francis Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia: from authentic sources ...* (Sydney: Oceanic Publishing, 1895).

<sup>3</sup> J. A. M. Chouvet, *Un Tour du monde : voyage à la Nouvelle-Zélande et retour en France par l'île Sainte-Hélène* (Avignon: F. Seguin Aîné, 1855).

<sup>4</sup> Antoine Monfat, *Les Origines de la Foi Catholique Dans la Nouvelle-Zélande : Les Maoris : Étude historique, avec vues, portraits et carte* (Lyon: Librairie Générale Catholique et Classique, 1896).

<sup>5</sup> For studies on Jean-Marie Vibaud, see the following works: Paul Bergin, 'Hoani Papita to Paora: The Marist Missions of Hiruharama and Otaki, 1883-1914' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Auckland, 1986); Sandy Harman, 'Le père Vibaud et la mentalité religieuse des Maori' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Waikato, 2006).

Protestants, have undertaken, from circumstantial evidence, to vindicate the early Catholic missionaries. But I have it from their own mouth that they would welcome the publication of historical documents known to be in our Marist Archives. The New Zealand reading public is sufficiently broadminded to relish even severe criticism of early Protestant missionary behaviour.”<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately for the New Zealand reading public, these letters have not yet been translated into English and have only very recently been transcribed and edited by a Franco-American Marist Father, Charles Girard.<sup>7</sup> Only in the late twentieth century was the chapter on New Zealand in Father Chouvet’s publication translated from French into English.<sup>8</sup> The fact that the early Marists wrote predominantly in French is therefore another reason for the limited historical scholarship on the French Catholic missionaries in New Zealand.

An obvious explanation for the dominance of CMS missionaries in New Zealand histories is that the Anglicans were the first Christian denomination to establish a mission in New Zealand, and were thus a powerful example of not only early cultural encounter but a prolonged intercultural relationship thoroughly documented in CMS letters and reports. Caught between two cultures, these men fascinated historians such as Judith Binney, who published a biography of the wayward Thomas Kendall<sup>9</sup> that exposed the inner conflicts of a European missionary living among Māori. The missionaries’ writings were deliberately or sometimes inadvertently ethnographic, providing useful accounts of the physiognomy, customs, beliefs and practices of Māori. While the Eurocentric view of the missionaries is betrayed through their writings, which often reveal a paternalistic, patronising attitude toward Māori and consider them as examples of the ‘noble savage’, or more frequently the ‘ignoble savage’, the anthropological value of their observations is undeniable. The French Marists journeyed, ate and slept alongside their Māori guides and catechists, choosing

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<sup>6</sup> Marist Archives Wellington, Letter from Jean-Marie Vibaud to L.L. Dubois (Assistant for the Missions in Rome), 18 August 1934, HD3.

<sup>7</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes pendant le généralat de Jean-Claude Colin: édition critique*, ed. by Charles Girard (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2009-2010, 10 vols.).

<sup>8</sup> J. A. M. Chouvet, *A Marist Missionary in New Zealand 1843-46*, trans. by Patrick Barry, ed. by Jinty Rorke (Whakatane: Whakatane & District Historical Society, 1985).

<sup>9</sup> Judith Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: A Life of Thomas Kendall* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2005)



an apostolic approach different from that of the CMS and which facilitated a close relationship between evangeliser and neophyte.

In a 1969 issue of the *New Zealand Journal of History*, historian Jane Thomson stated that “the anonymity of the [Marist] missionaries cannot account for the historians’ silence: they are unknown because unsuccessful and unimportant.”<sup>10</sup> One of the objectives of this thesis is to directly challenge Thomson’s assertions by exploring the notions of missionary success and failure, while also revealing the importance of the French Marist missionaries in New Zealand religious history by bringing to light their experiences in the pioneer mission period (1838-1867). The anonymity of the Marists can again be connected to the inaccessibility of Catholic missionary accounts, since New Zealanders were ignorant to the French *Annales* published in Lyon and the works of Chouvet and Monfat. The linguistic barrier extends to Māori-language sources, which have also been largely ignored in studies of New Zealand’s Christian history. But another major reason for the oversight of Catholic missionaries in New Zealand historiography is the fact that several CMS missionaries played an instrumental role in turning New Zealand into a British colony, and are therefore intrinsic to its colonial and national history. Arguably the most celebrated and condemned missionary in nineteenth-century New Zealand history is the CMS missionary Henry Williams, whose contribution to the Treaty of Waitangi aroused the interest of historians such as Claudia Orange. Apart from a brief mention of Bishop Pompallier, the French Catholic missionaries are virtually absent from studies on this period, even though one of the principal reasons used to persuade Māori chiefs to sign the Treaty was the threat of French annexation.<sup>11</sup> Clearly New Zealand’s religious history has become inseparable from its Protestant and British colonial histories, and consequently minority groups have been passed over or mentioned only in as much as

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<sup>10</sup> Jane Thomson, ‘Some Reasons for the Failure of the Roman Catholic Mission to the Maoris, 1838-1860’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 3. 2 (1969), p. 166.

<sup>11</sup> In February 1840 Henry Williams described the British Treaty to chiefs gathered at Waitangi as “a fortress for them against any foreign power which might desire to take possession of their country as the French has taken possession of Otiaiti,” quoted in Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), pp. 45-46. Williams was incorrect in assuming that Tahiti had already been annexed by France. Tahiti remained an independent state until official annexation in 1880, but did operate under a French protectorate from as early as 1842. Partly as a result of Williams’ discourse, Māori chiefs such as Hone Heke were more inclined to accept British governorship at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi: “Heke reasoned that without a governor the Maori people might be subjected to the influence of the French and other unscrupulous Pakeha,” quoted in Orange, p. 49.

the politico-religious threat they posed. Thomson's view of the Marists as "unimportant" compared with the CMS missionaries may be partly based on the CMS missionaries' political connection to colonial New Zealand; this thesis will show that the Marist missionaries also played a part in the political events from the Treaty of Waitangi to the New Zealand Wars, and that the French Marists were not only caught between two cultures but faced with a multiplicity of conflicts that tie them to the encounter and colonial history, as well as the religious history, of early New Zealand.

If the evangelising endeavours of the Salvation Army, Baptist Church and other minority churches are barely known, Catholicism as one of the three earliest and largest churches in New Zealand must surely require a recorded history that reflects its importance in the nineteenth century and today. Michael King sought to redress this with *God's Farthest Outpost: A History of Catholics in New Zealand*,<sup>12</sup> which especially told the story of the Catholic settler and Pākehā church. Thorough diocesan histories by E. R. Simmons,<sup>13</sup> Dominic O'Sullivan, Cynthia Piper<sup>14</sup> and Michael O'Meeghan<sup>15</sup> ensure that the Marists and their Māori missions have been acknowledged for their contributions to parishes and Catholic communities throughout New Zealand. Michael O'Meeghan's chapter on the French Marist Māori Mission in John Dunmore's *The French and the Māori*<sup>16</sup> is perhaps the only comprehensive description of the experiences and the impact of the Marist Fathers in New Zealand, from the pioneers through to the men who revived the Māori Mission from the 1870s onwards. Recent works such as Jessie Munro's exemplary biography of the exceptional Marist missionary Suzanne Aubert have helped to create an interest in the Marists and the extraordinary situation in which they found themselves as French missionaries in a British colony. Yet the French Marists, who established the Catholic Church in New Zealand and ministered to Māori and European alike well

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<sup>12</sup> Michael King, *God's Farthest Outpost: A History of Catholics in New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1997).

<sup>13</sup> E. R. Simmons, *In cruce salus: a history of the Diocese of Auckland 1848-1980* (Auckland: Catholic Publications Centre, 1982).

<sup>14</sup> *Turanga ngatahi = Standing together: the Catholic Diocese of Hamilton, 1840-2005*, ed. by Dominic O'Sullivan and Cynthia Piper (Wellington: Dunmore Press for the Catholic Diocese of Hamilton, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> Michael O'Meeghan, *Held Firm in Faith: A History of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch 1840-1987* ([n.p]: Catholic Diocese of Christchurch, 1988); Michael O'Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope: The Story of the Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington 1850-2000* (Palmerston North, Dunmore Press Ltd., 2003).

<sup>16</sup> *The French and the Maori*, ed. by John Dunmore (Waikanae: Heritage Press, 1992).

into the twentieth century, remain largely in obscurity while the founders of the Anglican church continue to be a familiar feature of New Zealand's religious and general histories.

While Protestant missionaries have clearly dominated New Zealand religious histories, missionaries as a collective body have been largely excluded from social, cultural, political and national histories or have been caricaturised as narrow-minded, Bible-bashing destroyers of culture. John Stenhouse suggests in his article entitled 'God's Own Silence' that the importance and value of religion in the lives of Māori and European settlers have been understated in New Zealand's written histories. Despite Prime Minister Richard Seddon referring to New Zealand in the late nineteenth century as 'God's Own Country', New Zealand has been portrayed as a chiefly secular nation and, according to Stenhouse, "historians have too often offered generalizations about New Zealand Christianity based on inadequate arguments and insufficient evidence. More accurate, precise and better-substantiated stories must be told."<sup>17</sup>

Stenhouse's statement is especially pertinent with regard to the accuracy of Catholic stories, since primary sources have not been sufficiently included in the scholarly research of Catholicism in New Zealand. This is because early Marist letters were written in French, stored in the Marist Archives in Rome and filed under the relevant author. Indeed the Catholic mission has been misrepresented in more general histories because of the inaccessibility to these letters and a continual reliance on a handful of works on the Marists, namely Lillian Keys' biographies of Bishop Pompallier and Bishop Viard, and Mary Catherine Goulter's *Sons of France*. The many references in the thesis to secondary works produced in the 1960s and 1970s demonstrate that there has been very little recent, up-to-date scholarship on the Marists in New Zealand. The late Father Mulcahy, a Marist archivist in Wellington, came across a number of repeated errors which had their origin in existing secondary sources. One example is the recurring reference to the *Eleanor* as the ill-fated ship that was to transport Father Borjon and Brother Déodat from Auckland to Port Nicholson in 1842, when in fact it

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<sup>17</sup> John Stenhouse, 'God's Own Silence: Secular Nationalism, Christianity and the Writing of New Zealand History' *NZJH*, 38.1 (2004), p. 63.

was the *Speculator*; a ship called the *Eleanor* reached Port Nicholson in 1841 and was destroyed by fire that same year, but had no connection whatsoever to the Marist missionaries in New Zealand. (Mulcahy was also convinced that Goulter had mistakenly referred to Father Servant as ‘Louis’, but according to the original letters, Servant was known to sign his name as Catherin Servant, Louis Catherin Servant, sometimes simply Servant, or any combination of his initials.) E.R. Simmons’ *A Brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand* is praiseworthy for its inclusion of previously classified material from the Auckland Diocesan Archives, but makes little reference to the hundreds of missionary letters sent from New Zealand to France in the nineteenth century which contain detailed first-hand accounts of the earliest undertakings of the Catholic Church in New Zealand.<sup>18</sup> Recently, historian Paul Moon somehow discerned from Keys’ *Life and Times of Bishop Pompallier* that the Catholic mission was on an equal footing with the CMS mission in New Zealand in the 1840s, asserting that “overall, these two mission movements were well supported with funds from their governing organisations in Paris and London.”<sup>19</sup> The Catholic mission was, on the contrary, in debt almost from its inception in 1838 and its only source of income throughout the century was delayed and variable funding from a charity in Lyon. An important objective of the thesis is to complement major works such as E.R. Simmon’s *A Brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand* with the story of the Marists according to the considerable documentation they have left behind.

Existing historical works on New Zealand Catholicism have been written largely by Catholics, just as Anglicans tend to be the authors of histories of the Church of England. This is understandable, but such religious histories have the potential to contain denominational bias and propaganda, which detracts from their scholarly findings. Biographies and biographical articles of the better-known missionaries can at times border on hagiography, as is the case with *Sons of France* and nostalgic articles in *The New Zealand Tablet* and *The Marist Messenger*. Furthermore the focus of scholarship on early Catholic history in New Zealand has often been on Bishop

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<sup>18</sup> E. R Simmons, *A Brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand* (Auckland: Catholic Publications Centre, 1978).

<sup>19</sup> Paul Moon, *The Newest Country in the World: A History of New Zealand in the Decade of the Treaty* (North Shore, N.Z.: Penguin, 2007), p. 110.

Pompallier, who was not actually a professed Marist, and the attention paid to him has not only overshadowed the men in his charge, it has created a one-sided version of events. The end result is a misrepresentation of the Catholic mission and its missionaries, which has endured especially in northern New Zealand where Pompallier is a revered historical figure. The Society of Mary, in the nineteenth century and today, holds a very different view of Pompallier, one that corresponds to the way in which he was portrayed by most of the early Marist missionaries in their letters to the Superior-General. Although no researcher or historian could claim to be completely objective, I seek to review the mission from outside the church tradition by reconstructing its early history from a socio-cultural perspective and by considering the experiences of Pompallier and all of the French Marist priests in New Zealand until 1867 in the wider context of evangelical missions in nineteenth-century Oceania.

New Zealand mission history is another area where the Marists have been underrepresented. Only part of the Marist story appears in Jane Thomson's 1966 thesis<sup>20</sup> and 1969 journal article on the failure of the Catholic mission,<sup>21</sup> probably because Thomson did not have access to the missionaries' original letters and based her ideas on material from the Auckland Diocesan Archives and on edited letters which appeared in the *Annales des Missions d'Océanie*.<sup>22</sup> Peter McKeefry's *Fishers of Men*<sup>23</sup> was also dependent on these *Annales* as a primary source of information on Marist history, and although E. R. Simmons' brief history does not contain references it is likely that he, too, sourced his quotes from the *Annales*. The principal dilemma in using the *Annales des Missions d'Océanie* is that they only contain edited or specially selected letters, while the most honest, confessional letters or sections of letters were meant only for Father Colin to read and were therefore withheld from publication and stored in the Marist archives. The *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*,<sup>24</sup> another

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<sup>20</sup> Jane Thomson, 'The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870' (unpublished master's thesis, Victoria University, 1966).

<sup>21</sup> Thomson, 'Some Reasons for the Failure of the Roman Catholic Mission to the Māoris'.

<sup>22</sup> Société de Marie, *Annales des Missions d'Océanie : correspondance des premiers missionnaires*, tome 1 (Lyon: [n.pub.], 1895).

<sup>23</sup> Peter McKeefry, *Fishers of Men* ([n.p.]: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1938).

<sup>24</sup> Œuvre Pontificale Missionnaire de la Propagation de la Foi, *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi : recueil périodique des lettres des évêques et des missionnaires des missions des deux mondes, et de tous*

publication containing excerpts of Marist letters, is even less reliable since the Marists themselves complained that letters they had sent back to France were sometimes significantly modified before appearing in them. Thomson refers often to Pompallier's *Early History of the Catholic Church in Oceania*, which is also somewhat unreliable and one-sided because it is the bishop's version of events only, and throughout this study it will become apparent that the views of Marist missionaries often conflicted with those of Pompallier.

Philip Turner's 'Politics of Neutrality: the Catholic mission and the Māori 1838-1870' offers a response to some of Thomson's assertions and contains translated excerpts of missionary letters, including Father Servant's version of Treaty proceedings. While Turner's thesis has a political focus, my thesis questions the mission's apparent failure from a socio-cultural perspective. It also explores the notion of success and failure according to the missionaries' aims and to modern understandings of what a successful mission entails, based on more accurate information and taking into consideration other missions and their progress during the same period.

The Marist missions are covered in some detail in Wiltgen's extensive work *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania 1825-1850* and in the writings of Marist historian Jean Coste.<sup>25</sup> The Tongan and New Caledonian Marist missions have been the subjects of French scholarship,<sup>26</sup> but the prominent French work on the New Zealand Marist mission, Antoine Monfat's *Les origines de la foi catholique dans la Nouvelle-Zélande : Les Māoris : étude historique*, is outdated and hagiographical. Hugh Laracy has produced the definitive English-language work on the Marist

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*les documents relatifs aux missions et à l'Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi*, tomes 7-87 (Lyon/Paris: M.-P. Rusand/Librairie ecclésiastique de Poussielgue-Rusand, 1834-1915).

<sup>25</sup> J. Coste, *Cours d'Histoire de la Société de Marie: Pères Maristes 1786-1854* (Rome: [n.pub.], 1965).

<sup>26</sup> Caroline Duriez-Toutain, *Présence et perceptions maristes à Tonga, 1840-1900* (Talence: Cret, 1996); Georges Delbos, *L'Église catholique à Wallis et Futuna (1837-2004)* (Suva: CEPAC, 2004); Georges Delbos, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie : Un siècle et demi d'histoire* (Paris: Desclée, 1993); Jacques Izoulet, *Ouvéa. Histoire d'une mission catholique dans le Pacifique sud au XIXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005); Claire Laux, *Les Théocraties missionnaires en Polynésie (Tahiti, Hawaii, Cook, Tonga, Gambier, Wallis et Futuna) au XIXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000). For more details on the French Marist experience in Australia, see John Hosie, *Challenge. The Marists in Colonial Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

mission in Melanesia,<sup>27</sup> and has thus left the way open for such a study on the Marists in New Zealand. While its principal focus is the Marist missionaries in New Zealand, this thesis also offers an important contribution to nineteenth-century mission literature in the Pacific, including personal testimonies of Marists based in Tonga, Wallis, Futuna, New Caledonia and Fiji.

The views and experiences of French scientific explorers are revealed in works such as the translations by Olive Wright, and in John Dunmore's extensive contributions, as historian and editor, to scholarship on the French presence in the Pacific; in a similar vein, the Marists' perspectives on New Zealand and the politico-cultural changes and exchanges are revealed in the history of the French Māori Mission contained in this study. Given the French origins of the Marists on the Māori Mission and the correspondence between Lyon and the various mission stations in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, this thesis may be considered as a relevant contribution to France-New Zealand studies. Dunmore's *The French and the Maori*, containing essays by Christiane Mortelier,<sup>28</sup> Michael O'Meeghan<sup>29</sup> and Peter Tremewan<sup>30</sup>, alongside Tremewan's independent works *French Akaroa* and *Selling Otago*<sup>31</sup> stand out as examples of what would otherwise be a very limited scholarship on French relationships with New Zealand and its inhabitants. It is striking that the story and testimonies of the French Marist missionaries, who personify such a relevant and significant relationship between France and early New Zealand, had never been considered in *The New Zealand Journal of French Studies* until the very recent publication of Peter Tremewan's article on Father Antoine Garin.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Hugh Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976).

<sup>28</sup> Christiane Mortelier, 'French Doctors on Whaleships' in *The French and the Maori*, pp. 69-79; Christiane Mortelier, 'The Maori in French Fiction in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries' in *The French and the Maori*, pp. 164-182.

<sup>29</sup> Michael O'Meeghan, 'The French Marist Mission' in *The French and the Maori*, pp. 38-68.

<sup>30</sup> Peter Tremewan, 'French Tupuna: French-Maori Families' in *The French and the Maori*, pp. 122-131; Peter Tremewan, 'French Land Purchases' in *The French and the Maori*, pp. 107-121.

<sup>31</sup> Peter Tremewan, *French Akaroa: an attempt to colonise southern New Zealand* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury Press, 1990); Peter Tremewan, *Selling Otago: a French buyer, 1840; Maori sellers, 1844* (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1994).

<sup>32</sup> Peter Tremewan, 'Antoine Marie Garin: Map, Diary, Letter to his Parents, 1840-41' in *New Zealand Journal of French Studies*, 30.2, (2009), pp. 7-40.

A great deal of information and insights in this thesis were obtained from the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes pendant le généralat de Jean-Claude Colin: édition critique*, recently edited and compiled by contemporary Marist Father Charles Girard,<sup>33</sup> but this ten-volume work is only available in the original French and is therefore inaccessible to the vast majority of New Zealanders. Hélène Serabian has transcribed, and provided an excellent critical commentary on, the journal of an early Marist missionary;<sup>34</sup> however her work is written entirely in French. My thesis makes a timely and important contribution to New Zealand historiography by not only drawing from the missionary letters from 1836-1854 as a primary source, but also including a significant number of translated excerpts so that this material may be made available to a wider audience. These translations from French to English will enable fresh reflections on early Marist experience, since they have remained a largely untapped source of information. Another important work involving the French Marists and material from the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie* is Giselle Larcombe's recently completed thesis on a pioneer Marist Father in New Zealand: 'Antoine Marie Garin: A Biographical Study of the Intercultural Dynamic in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand'.<sup>35</sup>

Mary Catherine Goulter's *Sons of France*<sup>36</sup> is a rare example of a work based on the missionaries' letters and including translated excerpts of letters from five of the early missionaries and short biographies of seven Marist missionaries. While McKeeffry's *Fishers of Men* contains translated excerpts of letters written by Pompallier and seven of the pioneer Marist missionaries on the Māori Mission (sampled from the *Annales des Missions d'Océanie*, as has been mentioned above), these excerpts stand alone, with no historical introduction or background to contextualise either the letters or their numerous and very diverse authors. In contrast Goulter claimed to have used original French letters accessed through the Marist archives, rather than edited

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<sup>33</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes pendant le généralat de Jean-Claude Colin: édition critique*.

<sup>34</sup> Hélène Serabian, 'Le Journal du Père Antoine Garin 1844-1846. Une édition critique présentée avec commentaire, transcription et annotations' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, 2005).

<sup>35</sup> Giselle Larcombe, 'Antoine Marie Garin: A Biographical Study of the Intercultural Dynamic in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, 2009).

<sup>36</sup> Mary Catherine Goulter, *Sons of France. A Forgotten Influence on New Zealand History* (Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1957).



excerpts from the *Annales*, but she did not have access to all the Marist correspondence retrieved by Girard, such as the six letters written by Father Jean-Antoine Séon that appear in the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie*; in addition, her work is limited to the seven Marist individuals whom she viewed in an especially heroic light.

The researcher is always cautious when using letters as a reliable source about the past. There are many factors to consider: the author's objectives and any ulterior motives, the intended reader and his or her expectations, the author's bias about certain events or individuals discussed in the letter, deliberate omissions, and the socio-political and socio-cultural circumstances in which the letter was written. Missionary correspondence is especially vulnerable to criticism because of the religious propaganda and exaggerated successes it so often contains; in order to secure funding, letters were used to capture the public's attention and to prove that the foreign missions were making progress among cultures that were interesting, interested, and responsive. Missionaries were usually careful not to cause distress to their families when recounting their experiences abroad, offering instead some reassurance that they were safe and in good health. In stark contrast, the confidential correspondence between the Marist Fathers and their superior-general was often brutally honest and revealed the harsh realities of life on the Māori mission as well as the missionaries' personal sufferings. Hence the historical value of the Marist writings in *Lettres reçues d'Océanie* and subsequently the translated excerpts which form the foundation of this thesis.

## ***0.2 Research methodology***

This study is essentially a re-assessment of the French Marist Mission using over six hundred primary source documents, many of which have not been previously considered in their entirety by historians. It is based on the collection and analysis of archival letters and reports, Marist records, the published works of New Zealand historians, and recollections in written and, to a lesser extent, in oral form. Using largely qualitative data, the thesis analyses in detail both primary and secondary sources by considering each text according to themes relevant to the hardships and

conflicts of missionary experience and relevant to the success, failure and progress of the Māori Mission.

The aims of the thesis include offering an understanding of the Marists' background and their experience on the Māori Mission, in light of the progress and hardships of contemporary and later missions. These comparisons are made in order to contextualise and balance research findings by juxtaposing the Marist Māori experience with that of missionaries in a related situation, such as fellow Marists elsewhere in Oceania, or missionaries of rival denominations. Comparative research for this thesis has relied largely on secondary works concerning the CMS, WMS and London Missionary Society (LMS) missionary work in the Pacific, with a far greater emphasis on the efforts of the CMS in New Zealand. As the first and largest missionary society in New Zealand in the nineteenth century, the CMS provides a different perspective on Māori mission work and enables a comparison between the progress, growth, and setbacks of the Anglican Church in New Zealand and the Catholic Church.

Being a socio-cultural history of the French Marist Fathers in early New Zealand, the thesis will not examine the French Marist mission from a theological or religious perspective; although religion, spirituality and churches were central to the Marist experience, this study emphasises the early Marists in New Zealand as Frenchmen, members of an institution, and pioneer adventurers. It would be easy to dismiss them as typical nineteenth-century Christian missionaries, struggling to establish a mission among indigenous peoples in Oceania, but as French Catholics in a British Protestant colony, and as destitute men reliant on charity alongside salaried Protestant missionaries, they were in a difficult cultural and social situation. One of the secondary objectives of this study is to reinstate the French Marists as important contributors to New Zealand's religious history by discussing the largely social issues that prevented them from being recognised as such in the past. The method of writing 'history from below' is described by Tony Ballantyne and Brian Molloughney as a popular means of revisiting and giving value to marginalised groups in New Zealand

history, such as women;<sup>37</sup> the French Marists, being both marginalised and a minority group, are therefore suitable subjects for such a social history.

While the socio-cultural history of the mission is the crux of this thesis, the formation of the missionaries is considered in the first part of the thesis to shed light on the religious order, the nation and the historical period to which these missionaries belonged. Prosopographic studies are useful to the historian in conjunction with comparative studies, because they achieve a balance of perspective. While comparisons often focus on the differences between people or organisations, the value of considering the similarities *within* an institutional or categorical framework is the insight they offer in terms of individual motivation, intent, character and disposition. If the prosopographic study does not account for nuances or contradictions among the individuals considered, it can give us a helpful understanding of the general background of the group by highlighting data that is common to the majority within the said group. Collective biographies and multiple-career-line analyses, though similar in concept, do not necessarily suggest the same methodology as a prosopography, which requires the construction of a detailed database of individual experiences, from which commonalities can be discerned and analysed at a later stage. Lawrence Stone explains:

This is a key tool for exploring any aspect of social history and involves an investigation of the common background characteristics of a sample group of actors in history by means of a collective study of a set of uniform variables about their lives – variables such as birth and death, marriage and family, social origins and inherited economic and status position, place of residence, education, amount and source of personal wealth and income, occupation, religion, experience of office, and so on.<sup>38</sup>

A prosopographic study has been attempted in Part One of this thesis, but could not be fully realised because of a lack of information on the early Marists. The difficulty with creating a database for the Marist Fathers is the lack of recorded information pre-dating their entry into the Society of Mary. In addition, their celibacy meant that

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<sup>37</sup> *Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand's Pasts*, ed. by Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006), pp. 9-10.

<sup>38</sup> Lawrence Stone, *The Past and the Present* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1981), p 27.

they did not have direct descendants who could be easily traced and contacted for research purposes. While there is insufficient data about their early lives, there is no shortage of material on priests, missionary orders and seminaries in early nineteenth-century Lyon, which allows an understanding of the factors that influenced the pioneer Marists. From research carried out primarily in France, this thesis presents a number of factors that propelled over fifty Frenchmen to become priests, Marists, and missionaries to the Māori. Coupled with the content of their letters written from New Zealand to France, the research findings enable us to reconstruct a general description of their lives from childhood to approximately age 50. An investigation, even a limited or generalised one, of the early Marists' backgrounds is necessary to this thesis for two reasons: the Marists appear to be a homogeneous group and this cannot be accounted for merely by their attachment to the same religious order; similar to Diane Langmore's prosopographical work on Papua missionaries,<sup>39</sup> this thesis will argue that the origins and early influences of missionaries directly and indirectly impacted their approach to evangelisation in Oceania.

### ***0.3 Hypothesis and format***

In the 1840s and 1850s low points in the early mission were made public knowledge by bankers and unfriendly Protestants, and this encouraged the public's assumption that the Catholic missionaries had failed or were about to fail. A thesis written in 1966 reflects the prevalent belief that the early Marist mission was a failure.<sup>40</sup> If this belief is an accurate one, how should success and failure be measured? Is it fair to compare the Anglican mission with the Catholic one? By considering the extent to which the Marist situation was a complicated one, and noting the considerable sacrifices and achievements of certain French Marists despite the odds, notions of success and failure will be challenged and the Marist experience will be explored according to the conflicts and struggles with which they were faced.

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<sup>39</sup> Diane Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua, 1874-1914* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).

<sup>40</sup> Thomson, 'The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870'.

The central hypothesis being put forward in this thesis is that the French Marist missionaries made an important and valuable contribution to New Zealand religious history, and that their Māori mission was not merely a failed attempt to collect converts for the Roman Catholic Church. The mission and its circumstances were complex and based on conflicting ideas, and the concept of a successful mission was not necessarily the same from one missionary to another. Missionaries of all denominations and backgrounds faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles in their quest to christianise the non-European world, but arguably the French Marists in New Zealand were in a particularly inauspicious political, economic and social position, so that 'success' was hardly a practicable goal. Despite being marginalised in a British colony and coming to terms with the possibility that their mission would never succeed, a number of early Marists continued their work among Māori until the late 1850s and 1860s, with the hope that any small successes would at the very least keep the Catholic faith alive if Māori were ever ready to minister their own church. If the Catholic mission failed because its missionaries abandoned Māori mission stations during the New Zealand wars and subsequent land confiscations, it is fair to say that the CMS and WMS missions failed also. None of these societies had enough European missionaries in the Māori mission field from 1850-1880 to warrant the status of an active and steadfast missionary church. However, none of these societies ever intended *European* missionaries to carry the church into the twentieth century; they envisaged instead that this would be done by their indigenous converts.

To understand whether the Marists succeeded or failed, and to what extent they made progress in their mission to Māori, we must first identify the goals and aims which the French Marist missionaries hoped to achieve in New Zealand. The first section of the thesis discusses the mindset, motivations and evangelical influences of the Marists in France. Evangelism was the principal driving force for missionary activity, but this does not mean that evangelising groups and individuals from different nations or church societies had the same objectives in mind. Is it reasonable to believe that CMS and WMS missionaries, who were offered salaries, could purchase land for their families and could potentially rise in social status, chose the difficult missionary life in New Zealand solely because it offered the chance to evangelise Māori? It is perhaps difficult for sceptics to accept this, given the extensive land purchases made

by members of the CMS and their relatively comfortable lifestyles from the 1830s onwards. Is it reasonable to believe then that the Marist missionary was perhaps only motivated by evangelistic zeal and that he saw himself as solely an

Apostle, traveler for Christ, Christ's witness, prince of souls, saver of souls, winner of souls, hunter of souls – such were the terms used to describe the nineteenth-century missionary. These appellations revealed the simplicity of the missionary's central aim in life: to teach and convert as many people as possible to Catholicism. From conversion, all else followed.”<sup>41</sup>

If the sceptic would perhaps minimise or underrate the impact of evangelism and highlight temporal influences and material gains as a strong factor for missionary fervour, this thesis will show that the French Marist Fathers do not correspond to such an argument. Certainly the early Marists in New Zealand appeared to be very different from a number of Catholic missionaries in other parts of the world, who “dominated their neophytes under what can be best described as a regime of terror, resorting to intimidation, violence, and even slavery to defend their local power.”<sup>42</sup> If the Marists' goal was simply to evangelise Māori and build the foundations for a Māori Catholic Church, did they then succeed in doing this?

A key argument in this thesis is that the early Marists were faced with difficulties that obstructed the mission and made it almost impossible for the mission to be viewed as a success, even in the eyes of the persevering Marists themselves. The second part of this thesis will elucidate the nature and extent of these difficulties, beginning with a chapter on establishing a foothold in early New Zealand. This chapter and the subsequent one explore the rivalry between the CMS and the Marists as both missionary societies endeavoured to grow and dominate first in the north of New Zealand and later throughout the entire country. The second chapter also investigates the Marist role in New Zealand politics and the significance of their French origins in a British colonial setting. In Chapter Three, the Marists' financial troubles, particularly the economic crisis of 1842, are addressed and explained with reference

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<sup>41</sup> J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 44.

<sup>42</sup> Daughton, p. 12.

to the Society of Mary, charitable organisations and the vicar apostolic's administrative decisions.

In Part Three of this thesis, the term 'conversion' is brought into question and examined according to both spiritual and temporal circumstances at different periods and in different locations within New Zealand. The second chapter considers the all-important role of the indigenous catechist and the evangelising technique known today as 'enculturation', highlighting the importance of culture and cultural adaptation in creating a successful mission. Chapter Three explores the two phases of Marist missionary work that followed the pioneer Māori Mission, and retrospectively considers the role played by the pioneer missionaries in the overall success of Marist missions in New Zealand.

#### ***0.4 Translation methodology***

To highlight the connection between the French Marist Mission and the introduction of Catholic religious texts to Māori, Eugene Nida's theory of translation has been applied in the translation of the Marists' letters from French into English for the purpose of this thesis. Nida is well-acquainted with translation involving these two particular languages, but more importantly he is conscious of the role that culture plays in the translation of religious<sup>43</sup> and general texts. He therefore encourages an interdisciplinary approach, inclusive of linguistic, semiotic and philological perspectives on the practice of translation.<sup>44</sup> While there are numerous theories of translation, many of which have been developed in recent decades, these tend to consider Translation Studies as a discipline and are therefore not entirely suitable for the translations in this thesis, which are not independent translations but appear instead within an historical commentary; in fact, no existing methodology of translation aptly catered for the nature and aims of the translations within this thesis. Lawrence Venuti points out that in the 1960s-70s translation theory focused largely

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<sup>43</sup> Eugene Nida, *Fascinated by Languages* (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> Eugene Nida, *Contexts in Translating* (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002), pp. 109-114.

on ‘equivalence’,<sup>45</sup> a concept that Nida envisaged as having two very separate forms: Dynamic Equivalence and Formal Correspondence,<sup>46</sup> but the most useful methodology of translation, at least for this study, is arguably a combination of the two.

Nida’s emphasis within this theory is on the receptor language, usually referred to as the target language by other theorists, and in Nida’s opinion texts should be rendered into a comfortable ‘natural equivalent’ in the receptor language.<sup>47</sup> Formal Correspondence is largely Direct Translation, and can produce heavy, verbose sentences that may be incomprehensible to the modern reader. Conversely, Dynamic Equivalence allows for a flexible interpretation of the text, and can produce an anachronistic, oversimplified or overly modified translation. Thus to create ‘natural equivalence’, the two forms in a complementary partnership achieve a sensible translation that is still historically sound and culturally approximate. It was not necessary to apply the method of Dynamic Equivalence strictly to the translation of the letters for one reason: the French and English languages from the nineteenth century, as used by early missionaries in New Zealand, have not undergone remarkable changes and are therefore completely recognisable to French or English speakers today, thus it is not necessary to modernise the translations of these letters for comprehension purposes. The effect is that reading English translations of the early Marists’ letters does not differ greatly from reading the journals and letters of nineteenth-century English missionaries in New Zealand. This is justified in that the translations feature within a comprehensive historical commentary, as opposed to standing alone, so that terms which need further explanation can be treated within the commentary rather than disrupting the translations themselves. Clarification on any religious, cultural or social term that might not be understood by the average modern-day New Zealander is thus accessible within the same document without affecting the ‘fidelity’ of the translation.

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<sup>45</sup> *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 147.

<sup>46</sup> Eugene Nida and Charles Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), p. 22.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p. 13.



Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet note that there are essentially seven techniques involved in translation (borrowing, calque, literal translations, transpositions, modulation, equivalence<sup>48</sup> and adaptation) and that these techniques fall into two categories: Direct Translation and Oblique Translation.<sup>49</sup> Since it was important for the missionaries to learn English, and because they became increasingly comfortable with the language, they sprinkled their letters with English words and English-inspired syntax, especially from 1840 onwards; this made the transition from French to English more straightforward for me in my role as translator, and enabled the use of the simple method of Direct Translation for some parts of the Marists' letters. Nevertheless English and French, although they have overlapping lexicons, have fairly different grammars and syntax, obliging the use of Oblique Translation.

## ***0.5 Justifications***

Letters and reports written to family, friends and superiors suggest that life was an everyday struggle for the French Marist Fathers, and that this was a multi-faceted struggle, pervading the public and private spheres and extending to financial, social, cultural, religious, spiritual and psychological matters. Conflict defined the Marists' engagement in New Zealand. An individual experienced an internal battle to reconcile ostensibly incompatible beliefs and loyalties. This conflict sometimes gave rise to disharmony and confrontation, but could also lead to compromise and resolution, so that the struggle for success on the mission represented a test of one's strength, character, knowledge and endurance. The term 'struggle' has been chosen because it describes the feelings of Marist missionaries as set down in letters and reports, and will be used to highlight human experience and the issues and obstacles that must be considered to determine the success or failure of the Marist Mission.

The Marists' mission is usually referred to as the Roman Catholic Mission because of its connection with the Pope and Sacra Propaganda Fide and the Marists' role as

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<sup>48</sup> Note that this use of 'equivalence' as a specific technique differs from the more general use of 'equivalence' as a methodology of translation.

<sup>49</sup> Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, 'A Methodology for Translation' in *The Translation Studies Reader*, p. 129.

representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in New Zealand, in contrast with the other two Christian denominations present in the nineteenth century. Within this thesis the Catholic mission is generally described according to the relevant missionary society, in consistency with the CMS and WMS missions; the Roman Catholic Mission is therefore referred to as the French Marist Māori Mission. The period under study, 1838 to 1867, has been selected to illustrate the arduous beginnings of the mission as testified by the Fathers in their letters to France. The year 1838 marks the arrival in New Zealand of Bishop Pompallier and the first two Marist missionaries. From 1867 Father Pezant, who had hitherto ministered to both Māori and Pākehā in the Taranaki and Whanganui regions, was no longer an active missionary among Māori. In 1867 Father Lampila abandoned the last surviving Māori Mission station to work as a parish priest in Wanganui. It is important to note that many of the difficulties faced by the first Marist missionaries in New Zealand were shared by the French Marists who revived the mission in the 1870s and 1880s. In fact the French character of the Catholic mission to Māori endured until the early twentieth century, when social, political and demographic changes led to Irish dominance in the Catholic Church at all levels of the hierarchy. 1937 saw the emergence of a new Māori mission, characterised by mostly New Zealand-born clergy, a revised policy, and annual conferences for the discussion of social and ecclesiastical issues.<sup>50</sup> The thesis will focus on the pioneer mission because it can offer fresh perspectives on the period 1838 to 1867. To show the evolving nature of the French Catholic presence in New Zealand and the result of the French Marists' withdrawal from Māori mission work, the revival mission era and modern Māori mission will be considered in Part Three of the thesis.

By the late 1930s, the last French Marist missionaries to Māori had passed away, transferred to parish work, or returned to France. Our understanding of their lives is therefore limited to the documents they left behind, the books that have been written about them, and the memory of them which may survive in the oral tradition of Māori today. It is never possible for a historian to tell the whole story, and this thesis, which draws primarily on French reports and letters, regrettably offers little discussion of

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<sup>50</sup> G. Arbuckle, *The Maori and the Church: A Survey of the Marist Maori Mission in the Archdiocese of Wellington* (Greenmeadows: [n.pub.], 1969), p. 212.

contemporary Māori views and experiences. The stories of the early CMS missionaries and the Irish Catholic Church in New Zealand have been told, the story of the early French Marists is being told in more detail now that their letters have been made more accessible, but what of Māori catechists, priests and communities connected with the Marists? It must be stressed that the views and testimonies of Catholic Māori would be of inestimable value to research on the Marists; gaining access to this resource however would require the researcher to be an insider, or at the very least to be fluent in te reo māori and have the trust of the many relevant Māori Catholic communities. The task is too great to be achieved within this thesis and within the time constraints of a doctoral study. Furthermore this researcher feels that the story is perhaps better left to Māori historians or Māori-speaking historians to be told in their own way and in their own time.

In addition, it must be noted that this study is limited to the French Marist *Fathers*, with a particular focus on the pioneering missionaries; the Society of Mary also consists of Brothers, Sisters and Laity, all of whom were equally important to the progress of missionary work in New Zealand. The Brothers, who worked alongside the pioneering Fathers and thus played a key role in founding and sustaining the early missions, will be considered in terms of their partnership with the Marist Fathers and the advantages and disadvantages such a partnership presented.<sup>51</sup> While this thesis, as a socio-cultural history based on the French Marist Fathers' accounts, does not comprise the views and experiences of Māori or non-sacerdotal missionaries, it lays the foundations for further studies on the early Marists and their perspectives and experiences as missionaries in nineteenth-century New Zealand.

The references in this thesis to Charles Girard's *Lettres reçues d'Océanie* correspond to the final pre-publication version, which is almost identical to the 2009 published version but was accessible to the researcher in early 2007. Throughout the thesis, the modernised spelling of Māori words and place names has been used except in quotations and translated excerpts of the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie*.

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<sup>51</sup> For a detailed history of the Brothers, refer to Edward Clisby's *Marist Brothers and Māori 1838-1988* (Auckland: Marist Publications, 2002).

## **PART ONE**

### **ORIGINS AND FOUNDATIONS**

Some 500 French Marist priests left France in the nineteenth century with Oceania as their destination; over 50 of these men worked either part-time or full-time on the Māori Mission. There must have been similarities in the backgrounds and characteristics of the Marist missionaries which explain their decisions to become priests, Marists and eventually missionaries, for the basic information that appears on church and society records indicate that the pioneer Marists were a distinctly homogeneous group. Eight of the sixteen Marist Fathers who worked in New Zealand between 1838 and 1854 were Frenchmen born in the Lyon and Belley dioceses, most were former staff or students of the college or seminary in Belley, and all except Father Petit were in their late 20s or early 30s when they departed for Oceania. Perhaps the most striking similarity was the fact that all of these men left for the missions almost immediately after they were professed to the Society of Mary. There is little specific information about their backgrounds, and any detailed descriptions are usually based on the lives of one or two missionaries in particular and are therefore not representative of the group. Being celibate priests they had no children to whom they could pass down their stories, making the task of researching their early lives a very challenging and potentially futile one. There is, however, abundant information on life in early nineteenth-century France, on the Society of Mary in Lyon and on Catholic education and sacerdotal formation; by considering the setting in which the Marists first became Marists, it is possible to draw conclusions about their early lives and the French character that defined the Marist Māori mission from the outset.

When the first Marists left for Oceania in 1836, France was still experiencing the aftermath of the famous revolution of 1789; devout Catholics felt the need to combat growing secularisation in France, and organised local missions to re-establish the Catholic faith among the irreligious or indifferent. Why, then, did the Marists choose to undertake foreign mission work, which was dangerous, lonely and full of hardships? It might seem obvious that the reason for the devotion to the missions in Oceania was rooted in the evangelising and civilising fervour of Europeans in the nineteenth century, and it has been asserted that the “French missionaries’ services to France were incidental: they were but a means to and a by-product of their only real objective, which was the salvation of souls.”<sup>52</sup> Daughton suggests however that France “had a history of using Christian missions to further national interests”;<sup>53</sup> perhaps the only conclusion that can be comfortably drawn is that there was a distinct relationship between missionaries and empire-building, but that this was, as Porter confirms, a complex relationship.<sup>54</sup> In most cases missionaries tended to serve as a prelude or an accompaniment to imperialism, yet this was not necessarily their intention, and if we consider certain examples from the Pacific the matter certainly proves to be far more complex than a simple partnership between missionary and his or her nation. If missionaries paved the way for British and French colonisation specifically of the Pacific region, it was not generally their original intent to do so; Anna Johnston explains:

It is, of course, almost impossible to generalise about missionaries across the wide range of colonial environments, but it is possible to argue that, despite the missionary societies’ sometimes good intentions, the process of evangelisation inevitably assisted the subjugation and subjection of indigenous peoples and the consolidation of white institutions of colonial control.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Thomson, *The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>53</sup> Daughton, p. 13.

<sup>54</sup> See Andrew Porter, *Religion versus empire? British Protestant missionaries and overseas expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

<sup>55</sup> Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 19.

The Pacific was not therefore an exception to the rule; however the circumstances connecting exploration, colonisation and evangelisation of the Pacific, and especially of New Zealand, were somewhat unusual. Both the British and French missionaries in early New Zealand came independently of their governments. The British missionaries supported the Treaty of Waitangi because they preferred a British colonial government over lawlessness or French annexation, the threat of which did not occur until the late 1830s, and when the British dishonoured the Treaty several leading missionaries protested the effects of British imperialism on Māori. In New Caledonia, a French Marist bishop took no interest in a colonial cooperative with French commanders, even though this would likely have facilitated the establishment of his mission.

At the same time, a number of Marist priests must have felt a loyalty and love for France, despite becoming British subjects in New Zealand, but appeared to have little interest in French imperialism. Mary Goulter claims that Father Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean “never surrendered his national and civic patriotism, and cherished it through all the vicissitudes of his missionary life.”<sup>56</sup> But if a combination of religious zeal and nationalism were the motivating factors for missionaries, how were these instilled in young Frenchmen and why would these men serve France by moving as far away as possible from their nation and their families? Did they see themselves as representatives of a nation or only as servants of a higher power? To understand the mindset and possible motivations of the French missionaries in New Zealand, we must look to France first of all, and consider the role that French history and contemporary French culture played in their formation.

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<sup>56</sup> Goulter, p. 14.

## Chapter 1: French Catholicism and Foreign Missions

### 1.1 *Early French Catholic missionaries in Asia and the Americas*

In the tradition of Jesus Christ's apostles, the Roman Catholic Church sent men and women out as missionaries to ensure that the message of the Gospel was spread throughout the known world. The Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith) was founded in the seventeenth century, and its role in the Roman Catholic Church was exactly what its title would suggest. It was Propaganda Fide that created and defined the role of vicar apostolic to direct missionaries in the field. Initially Propaganda Fide had also planned to provide funding, but this was not viable given their limited resources and the enormous, persistent needs of foreign missions everywhere. Consequently, many missionaries found themselves in a state of abject poverty.<sup>1</sup>

The French Marists were well versed in the history of the Catholic missions, not simply because Church history was an important part of their seminary training but because all devout Catholic children in France grew up with knowledge of Saint François Xavier (Francisco Javier) the missionary martyr. In 1841, Pompallier wrote of the futility of his letters to the French charitable organisation The Propagation of the Faith; although the New Zealand mission would eventually offer an abundance of interesting material for readers of the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, during its early years Pompallier suggested that there would be greater stories to tell in other parts of the world, where missions had been established for two or three centuries.

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<sup>1</sup> Archives Municipales de Lyon, 'Les Dossiers de l'Action Missionnaire : Manuel de missiologie', Fascicule V, Document 83, pp. 344-345.

The *Annales* themselves echoed an older Catholic missionary publication: the French Jesuits' *Relations*<sup>2</sup> which dated from the seventeenth century and recounted stories of tortured, martyred French missionaries in New France where missionary presence had deliberately coincided with French colonial interest. Pompallier believed that his pioneer mission to Oceania suffered greatly at having to contend with the powerful nineteenth-century evangelical impulse of British men and women:

An older mission may satisfy the Propagation of the Faith's desire for news better than ours; everything has been done in those missions where at least the main establishments are standing; but in ours everything has yet to be created, everything has to be done and to be done in haste, to keep up the competition with the enemy: heresy.<sup>3</sup>

Since the seventeenth century Paris had housed a Seminary for Foreign Missions and French Catholic priests had been active in parts of Asia and the Americas, but the first Catholic foreign missions date back to the sixteenth century and reflect the colonial aspirations of the Spanish empire. The Company of Jesus, familiarly known as the Jesuits, was the most dynamic mission order sent out by the Catholic Church to evangelise non-European peoples. Founded in the sixteenth century by a Castilian ex-soldier, Ignacio de Loyola, the Jesuit order required vows of obedience to the Superior and ultimately to the Pope. A Spanish missionary, Francisco Javier, led the way for foreign missionary work in Asia in the 1540s, undertaking apostolic work in India, Indonesia and Japan. According to sixteenth-century Portuguese Jesuit missionary Father Manuel da Nóbrega, the Jesuit "attributes a primary role throughout the apostolic process to the abilities of the missionary, the grace of conversion being a gift from God proportionate to the perfection of the task accomplished by the converter."<sup>4</sup> Javier earned the reputation of being a successful

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<sup>2</sup> 'The Jesuit relations and allied documents: travels and explorations of the Jesuit missionaries in New France, 1610-1791', ed. by Reuben Gold Thwaites [microfiche, University of Waikato Central Library].

<sup>3</sup> « Une mission ancienne peut mieux satisfaire aux désirs de la propagation de la foi pour les nouvelles que la nôtre; tout est fait dans celles-là où du moins les principaux établissements sont sur pieds; mais dans la nôtre tout est à créer, tout est à faire, et tout est à faire avec hâte, pour soutenir la concurrence de l'ennemi, l'hérésie », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 110, 10 September 1841, Tauranga, Pompallier to Colin, p. 8 [note that page numbers correspond to the original letters, not to the pages in Girard's edition].

<sup>4</sup> « (...) attribue aux compétences du missionnaire un rôle primordial dans tout le processus apostolique, la grâce de la conversion étant un don de Dieu à la mesure de la perfection de la tâche accomplie par le convertisseur », Andrea Daher, *Les singularités de la France Equinoxale: Histoire de la mission des pères capucins au Brésil (1612-1615)*, (Paris, Honoré Champion, 2002), p. 206.



missionary and was canonised in 1622 to become the patron saint of missionaries, yet Javier railed against Buddhist and Hindu practices as he tried to make headway in Asia, attracting modern criticism of his approach to evangelisation; like Pompallier and the Marist missionaries in New Zealand, many of Javier's successors in Asia displayed a far more tolerant attitude to existing cultural practices, demonstrating an early form of the enculturating evangelism practised by the Catholic Church today. Matteo Ricci and Adam Schall in China and Robert de Nobili in India were all seventeenth-century Jesuit missionaries with an open and accepting attitude to the cultural practices and beliefs of their potential converts.<sup>5</sup> Schall's skill in astronomy proved useful in winning acceptance into the Emperor's ranks, but persuading the Chinese to accept Christianity was a far greater challenge; Jonathan Spence explains that because the Jesuit missionary "did as little as possible to upset the members of the Confucian elite or to disturb their existing beliefs [...] Schall and his fellow Jesuits were able to gain the confidence of influential Chinese, and had made several thousand converts in China by 1640."<sup>6</sup> Twenty years later, his achievements were reversed when a rival Chinese astronomer, supported by other anti-Christian Chinese, falsely accused him of treason; Schall's status and freedom, along with the visible progress of Christianity he had made in Peking, were swiftly removed.<sup>7</sup>

The early Jesuit missionaries in China found that they were up against numerous obstacles; Christianity had to compete with not one but three long-standing religions: Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism, and missionaries were also faced with countless dialects and languages as they travelled throughout China, which restricted their effectiveness as evangelists. But the greatest threat to their endeavours was persecution by Chinese officials, especially after the 'fall' of Adam Schall when Jesuits in Peking were exiled to Canton for seven years.<sup>8</sup> In the seventeenth century a large number of Christian missionaries were tortured and executed to curb their influence over the Chinese people. To the devoted Jesuit missionary, martyrdom was a reward for one's sacrifice and sufferings, and in Asia an untimely death was a real

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<sup>5</sup> Cor Rademaker, *The Catholic Mission in the Cook Islands 1894-1994* (Bavel, Netherlands: Fathers of the Sacred Hearts, 1994), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Spence, *To Change China* (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), p. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Spence, pp. 21-22.

<sup>8</sup> Brockey, Liam Matthew, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China 1579-1724* (London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 125-126.

possibility for European missionaries. In spite of Francisco Javier's progress in the period 1549 to 1551, Japan was the scene a century later of violent persecutions which saw the deaths of 2000 Christians and the exile or incarceration of many others.<sup>9</sup> The Catholic missions to China and Japan could not be considered an overall success because of the persecutory periods that continually impeded their progress.

From the late seventeenth century, French missionaries of various Catholic orders nevertheless poured into southern China. It was apparently not the potential conflict with Chinese, Japanese or Indian persecutors that frightened them, but rather the growing influence of Protestantism and the threat of invasion or conquest by non-Christians: "The century in which the Company of Jesus was born is one of great conflicts, great cultural and political transformations, and wars between kings and emperors, between Christians, and against Muslims and Lutherans."<sup>10</sup> Was it this political and religious turmoil in Europe that motivated them to promote Christianity and thus promote France as a civilising power outside of Europe? When five French Jesuits, inspired by Javier's work, arrived in China in the 1680s, they created yet another obstacle for the Jesuit missionaries already stationed there; difficulties and tension arose from their conflicting nationalities and the French opted to establish a separate mission. The largely Portuguese clergy in place were suspicious of French interests in southern China, and this reaction was essentially provoked by French Jesuit non-compliance; Brockey explains that the French Jesuits "saw themselves as an independent French effort in the service of the crown."<sup>11</sup>

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Jesuits were confronted by an internal conflict within the Roman Catholic Church; a division was sharply drawn between the Jesuits and the Jansenists over their conflicting views regarding predestiny and divine intervention. Jesuits were also seen to have the monopoly on education as directors of colleges and seminaries, and were thus accused of influencing and even

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<sup>9</sup> *La Société de Marie, ses missions : Japon, Maroc, Hawaï* (Nivelles: Society of Mary, 1923), p. 33.

<sup>10</sup> « Le siècle de la naissance de la compagnie de Jésus est celui des grands conflits, des grandes mutations culturelles et politiques, des guerres entre rois et empereurs, entre chrétiens, contre les musulmans et les luthériens », Hervé Yannou, *Jésuites et compagnie* (Paris: Lethielleux, 2008), pp. 23-24.

<sup>11</sup> Brockey, pp. 158-159.

trying to control the nobility through education.<sup>12</sup> When the Pope consequently banned the Jesuit order in 1773, “(...) the effect was radical: the mission was decapitated.”<sup>13</sup> The order was not reinstated until 1814, and while their absence was strongly felt in the fields of mission work and education, it opened the way for other Catholic missionary congregations to form and develop, and it was in this context that the Marists were called upon to staff a new mission in Oceania.

## ***1.2 Post-revolutionary France***

The nineteenth century followed a massive upheaval in the political and social structure of France. The impact of the French Revolution was felt world-wide, but at home, where leaders of all social classes were battling their way into government, it generated over a century of unstable rule and periods of religious persecution. Tombs noted that: “Since 1789 there have been three monarchies, two empires, five republics, and fifteen constitutions. Every head of state from 1814 to 1873 spent part of his life in exile.”<sup>14</sup> Many Roman Catholic priests, like the nobility, had until the 1790s enjoyed an elevated status under the Ancien Régime, the French system of government in place from the fourteenth century until the Revolution. It was not uncommon for bishops and nobles to be one and the same, with some church figures like Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin further benefiting from appointments as advisors to the King. Even general clergy were granted substantial political influence through the feudal-based social divisions into First, Second and Third Estates. But from 1789 this socio-political system was completely overturned by the Revolutionary government and a Civil Constitution was established the following year to subvert and subjugate the French clerical hierarchy as well as confiscating church property. Priests who refused to swear an oath in support and acceptance of the Constitution were labelled refractory priests or non-jurors, and were forced into exile or hiding. Many of those who agreed to the oath did so reluctantly; Tackett points out that the numerous clergy from humble, rural backgrounds would have felt

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<sup>12</sup> Yannou, pp. 41-42.

<sup>13</sup> « (...) l'effet est radical: la mission est décapitée », Yannick Essertel, *L'aventure missionnaire lyonnaise* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2001), p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Tombs, *France 1814-1914* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc, 1996), p. 3.

obliged to maintain their vocation given the financial sacrifice made by their families to enable their formation in the first place,<sup>15</sup> and this may explain the high level of oath-taking clergy in the region surrounding Lyon.

From October 1793 the Revolutionary Government, operating under ‘La Terreur’, a ‘Reign of Terror’ instigated by the Jacobin leader Maximilien Robespierre, effected new secular laws for clergy to be killed on sight, forbade open worship and promoted the destruction of religious structures; consequently half of the 223 priests and nuns in Lyon alone abandoned their orders<sup>16</sup> and some 200 seminaries throughout France were deserted or destroyed, along with the orders and societies who had directed them.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile Lyon, a bastion of Catholicism and a hotbed of social and political revolution at the same time, fell to the Revolutionary army during its campaign of destruction and conquest towards the end of 1793, in an effort to quash anti-Revolutionary insurrections.<sup>18</sup> The diocese of Belley, which would be instrumental to the formation of the early Marist missionaries, was left in the same derelict state as numerous other dioceses in France following the Reign of Terror, and the city of Lyon and surrounding rural areas were in desperate need of physical and social rebuilding, as well as spiritual rebuilding according to the views of refractory and budding French priests.

During and after the Revolution France remained a ‘Catholic country’, inasmuch as Catholicism was the religion of the majority of French citizens, and this would be the case well into the twentieth century. The 1801 Concordat, an agreement between Napoleon Bonaparte and the papacy in Rome, “restored freedom of worship and financial support to the Church, but at the price of making the clergy practically civil servants”<sup>19</sup> since the ruling government could now dictate religious decisions and appointments in France. Under the First Empire, seminaries were gradually rebuilt and over 2000 grants were made available to seminary students; this increased to

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<sup>15</sup> Timothy Tackett, *Religion, Revolution, and Regional Culture in Eighteenth-Century France: The Ecclesiastical Oath of 1791* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 87.

<sup>16</sup> Louis Trénard, ‘Livre III: L’Epoque Moderne, Chapitre IX’ in *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours* (Lyon: Editions Lyonnaises d’Art et d’Histoire, 2007), p. 629.

<sup>17</sup> Marcel Launay, *Le Bon Prêtre : Le clergé rural au XIXe siècle* (France: Aubier, 1986), p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> David Andress, *French Society in Revolution 1789-1799* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 134.

<sup>19</sup> Tombs, p. 16.

3000 grants under the Bourbon Restoration.<sup>20</sup> Religious orders were also eventually restored, but French Catholic clergy, in particular the Jesuits whose Roman headquarters rendered them even more suspicious in republican eyes, were exiled on more than one occasion. Ardent supporters of the French Republic viewed Catholic clergy as oppressors and a potential threat to the Republic itself. Thus republicanism became synonymous with opposition to the Roman Catholic clergy, which would be termed ‘anti-clericalism’ later in the century. Anticlericalism reached a pinnacle in 1871, during the Paris Commune, when over a hundred priests and nuns were charged with treason and 23 were executed. This reign of republicanism led to a final rupture between Church and State in 1905. Frenchmen training to become priests in the latter part of the nineteenth century were therefore driven abroad to complete their seminarian studies. The French Marist Claude Cognet, who would dedicate over 25 years to the Māori missions in the Wellington diocese, completed his clerical training in Switzerland and Spain.<sup>21</sup>

### ***1.3 Lyon and Nantes***

The early French Marists had a common origin: the city and diocese of Lyon. Over the course of the nineteenth century, 72 Marist Fathers hailing from Lyon chose to join the foreign missions,<sup>22</sup> but more importantly for this thesis, many of the pioneer Marist missionaries came from Lyon and Belley. Until 1822, Belley was part of the Lyon archdiocese, and even when it was turned into a separate diocese Belley continued to be very closely linked to Lyon and its influence. As a result of the Concordat of 1801, Lyon became geographically the largest Catholic diocese in France,<sup>23</sup> and in the nineteenth century the city developed into a principal missionary centre for a number of reasons, both spiritual and temporal. Since this thesis will discuss the Marist Fathers operating the Māori Mission between 1838 and 1867,<sup>24</sup> it is

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<sup>20</sup> Launay, pp. 33-34.

<sup>21</sup> Goulter, p. 194.

<sup>22</sup> Essertel, p. 90.

<sup>23</sup> Coste, *Cours d’Histoire de la Société de Marie: Pères Maristes 1786-1854*, p. 32.

<sup>24</sup> For profiles on the Marist missionaries in New Zealand during this period, see Appendix B.

important to discuss the people, places and events that would have motivated these men to join the Society of Mary and the foreign missions.

If Lyon missionaries were not the majority within their religious houses, which consisted of a number of Parisians, Bretons and men and women from various parts of the country, Lyon's newly ordained priests more consistently opted for foreign mission work in the first half of the nineteenth century. While Brittany was arguably the staunchest Catholic region in France, it was not a strong missionary region until the late nineteenth century, and this is reflected in the changing origins of the French Marist missionaries on the Māori Mission; by the 1860s they no longer came predominantly from the Lyon diocese but from the dioceses of Nantes, former capital of the province of Brittany, and St. Brieuc. From the 1870s into the early twentieth century, Brittany became a leading source of missionaries: "An old land of rural Christendom, Brittany so constituted a vast clerical reservoir, providing a considerable number of volunteers for the external missions and possessing a rate of sacerdotal ordinations well above the national average."<sup>25</sup> Being ordained as a priest and joining the missions did not necessarily correspond; in the Breton town of Saint-Brieuc, for example, the annual rate of ordinations ranged from 200 to 400 over the course of the nineteenth century, but the annual rate of departures for the mission did not reach 100 until 1890.<sup>26</sup>

Nantes was a source of missionary activity largely because of its history of strong Catholic resistance, since during periods of radical republicanism the Catholic faith was preserved chiefly in western France (and also parts of the Midi).<sup>27</sup> In 1793 under 'La Terreur', a counter-revolutionary uprising in a town in the Vendée, a western region of France directly south of Nantes, saw the murders and imprisonment of Republican soldiers and guards by Catholic peasants. The revolt in the Vendée against the Republican regime turned into "a drawn-out guerrilla war from 1794-

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<sup>25</sup> « Vieille terre de chrétienté rurale, la Bretagne constitue alors un vaste réservoir clérical fournissant un nombre considérable de volontaires pour les missions extérieures et possédant un taux d'ordinations sacerdotales largement supérieur à la moyenne nationale », David Bensoussan, *Combats pour une Bretagne catholique et rurale : Les droites bretonnes dans l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris: Fayard, 2006), p. 201.

<sup>26</sup> Essertel, p. 377.

<sup>27</sup> Tombs, p. 67.

1800, commonly known as *chouannerie*;<sup>28</sup> the Chouans, as the insurgents were nicknamed, were allegedly spurred on by nobles and clergymen and supported the restoration of the French monarchy. In defending both God and King, the Vendée insurgency led to over 200,000 deaths.<sup>29</sup>

Not unlike Lyon, Nantes also happened to be an important port and, as a developing industrial city, boasted the sixth largest population in France throughout the nineteenth century. Of the pioneer Marist missionaries in New Zealand, two hailed from the diocese of Nantes: Father Reignier, born in the town of Chateaubriant just 60 kilometres north of Nantes, and Father Bernard from Chantenay in the city of Nantes itself. Father Reignier, who stayed on during the years in which the Marist Māori Mission was revived, was joined by seven fellow missionaries from the diocese of Nantes: Fathers Lepetit, Soulas, Leprêtre, Melu, Broussard, Maillard and Vibaud.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> J. Woell, *Small-Town Martyrs and Murderers: Religious Revolution and Counterrevolution in Western France 1774-1914* (Marquette University Press, 2006), p. 17.



<sup>29</sup> Tombs, p. 253.

<sup>30</sup> For profiles of the Marist missionaries involved in reviving the Māori Mission from the 1879 onwards, see Appendix D.



**Figure 1: Dioceses of Origin<sup>1</sup>**

**KEY**

-  Diocese of origin: pioneer Marist Fathers
-  Diocese of origin: revivalist Marist Fathers
- 1** Archdiocese of Lyon
- 2** Diocese of Belley
- 3** Diocese of Nantes
- 4** Diocese of Saint-Brieuc
- 5** Diocese of Coutances

<sup>1</sup> Map has been adapted from ‘Outline Map of French Departments’,  
 <<http://www.hist-geo.co.uk/france/outline/france-departments-1.php>>.



## ***1.4 Lyon's Catholic heritage***

The Marists divided France into two provinces: Paris and Lyon. The Paris Marist Province drew most of its missionaries from the aforementioned western dioceses of Nantes and St. Brieuc, while the Lyon Marist Province attracted missionaries from Lyon, Belley and small surrounding villages. Like Brittany, Lyon was renowned as a Catholic stronghold; paradoxically it was also a hotbed of persecution and rebellion, and housed rival orders such as the Freemasons. Historians claim that Lyon's powerful Christian heritage dates back to its early standing as the Gallo-Roman capital city known as Lugdunum. Sent by Saint Polycarp, who was a disciple of Saint John the Evangelist in Asia Minor, Saint Pothinus arrived in Lugdunum in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD; according to Lyon's inhabitants, Saint Pothinus was the first Christian apostle to reach Gaul. He was inaugurated as the first bishop of Lugdunum, but was incarcerated during the persecution of 177 AD under Marcus Aurelius.<sup>1</sup> Saint Pothinus' successor Saint Irenaeus, who had evaded the pogrom in 177 AD, theologised on the importance of apostolic teaching and was commemorated in the title of Lyon's seminary, 'Le Grand-Séminaire de Saint-Irénée' (the Major Seminary of Saint Irenaeus), founded in 1659. Saint Pothinus was also credited with bringing the first Marian altar to Gaul, in the form of an image of the Virgin Mary which he placed in a chapel in the Lyon parish of Saint-Nizier.<sup>2</sup>

Once the economic and political capital of Gaul, largely because it was situated on the banks of the Rhône and in close proximity to the Saône River and to several major provinces,<sup>3</sup> the city of Lyon continued to play an important connecting role between France and Rome as a sojourn for popes heading to Paris. In the middle ages, Lyon's bishops had possessed a judicial authority that extended to outer regions, highlighting Lyon as a logical choice for an archdiocese. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Pope Innocent IV

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<sup>1</sup> André Pelletier, 'Livre I : L'Antiquité' in *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours*, pp. 11, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Bard, 'L'Église paroissiale de Saint-Nizier', in *Revue du Lyonnais 1836*, Vol. 2 (Lyon: L'imprimerie de L. Boitel, 1836), p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> Pelletier, p. 71.

called the famous first Council of Lyon to protect Christian Europe from Mongolian invaders, continue to oppose Muslim claims to the Holy Land, and to unite all nations through the promulgation of the Christian religion.<sup>4</sup>

In the latter part of the sixteenth century, Christian vigour was redirected to the politico-religious infighting, described as the French Wars of Religion, which had emerged in France largely as a result of the growing influence of French Protestantism. The Huguenots (French Calvinists) developed into an organised force in alliance with the House of Bourbon, which posed a threat to the decidedly Catholic House of Guise; though neither House occupied the French throne at that point in time, the Bourbons were eager to curb the influence of their political opponents. While political motives underpinned the wars, religious tension largely powered them, as is demonstrated by historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie: “The clientage for extreme Catholicism was immense; it was based on a silent majority in the countryside and in a large number of towns. This silent majority, cut to the quick by the scandal presented by the very existence of a rival form of worship, asked no more than to be aroused.”<sup>5</sup> In Lyon from 1561 to 1562 the local Protestant minority was able to gain control and banned the Catholic faith, but this was a mild example of persecution compared with the far more violent encounters which followed in cities such as Rouen, Dreux and Orléans, where massacres and assassinations occurred on both sides. In August 1572, Huguenots in Paris were slaughtered in their thousands over a period of several days, an event which was labelled the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre; the violence and atrocities extended to at least thirteen cities across France, including Lyon.

### ***1.5 The Pope and the Virgin Mary***

From the sixteenth century, the Catholic church in France was concerned with internal conflict; the French divided into ‘Gallicans’, who believed that the king in

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<sup>4</sup> Jacques Roland, *Des Nations à évangéliser : Genèse de la mission catholique pour l’Extrême-Orient* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2003), pp. 181-183.

<sup>5</sup> Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Royal French State 1460-1610*, trans. by Juliet Vale (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), p. 177.

France should have supreme authority over French clergy, and ‘Ultramontanists’, who recognised the Pope as the highest ecclesiastical power. The principal congregations in Lyon dedicated to the Virgin Mary preferred the latter, thus revealing a loyalty to the papacy that probably stemmed from the city’s enduring relationship with Rome. The popes of the nineteenth century played an instrumental role in turning Lyon into a missionary hub through their promulgation of the Virgin Mary as a heavenly saint and protector, rather than simply Jesus’ mother; a principal example of this was Pope Pius IX’s proclamation in 1854 of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, exempting Mary from original sin. In a way this was a watershed in the portrayal of women by the Roman Catholic Church, since women were usually associated with Eve and original sin.

The Catholic religion became increasingly ‘feminised’ during the nineteenth century, so that churchgoers were now usually women and children, and a compassionate, maternal Christianity began to eclipse the paternal figure of a forbidding, vengeful God. Christ and Mary were both at the core of this development, but Mary was unquestionably of particular appeal to the people of Lyon. According to the Roman Catholic Church, Mary was not only the mother of Jesus Christ; she was also the mother of God and therefore intrinsic to the concept of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) for there could be neither father nor son without the maternal role of Mary. Interestingly, Lyon’s inhabitants in Gallo-Roman times, despite the multitude of Roman and oriental cults that dominated, had displayed a special reverence for ‘Matrae’, Celtic mother-goddesses.<sup>6</sup>

While urban centres in France were troubled with foundlings and young mothers in need of financial and emotional support, the Church hoped to protect pre-marital chastity and secure the loyalty of young girls in the heart of the French countryside by promoting an association known as the *Children of Mary*. Young girls hailed Mary as a model of purity and virginity.<sup>7</sup> Yet Mary had been more than just a symbol of chastity and maternal, heavenly love since the seventeenth century; when Lyon was

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<sup>6</sup> Pelletier, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Jean-Claude Farcy, *La jeunesse rurale dans la France du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Christian, 2004), pp. 177-178.

threatened with disease or war, Mary became a saviour in her own right and religious fervour centred around her as one of the healing and protecting saints. Marian fervour in Lyon as early as 1638 saw:

(...) the rectors of the Hospital La Charité ask the Virgin of Fourvière, and no longer the Virgin of Puy or of Notre-Dame de Lorette, to put an end to the scurvy that was killing their orphans. The consulate<sup>8</sup> did the same when the plague reappeared in 1643, and the disappearance of the scourge established the fame and power of Our Lady of Fourvière.<sup>9</sup>

Pilgrimages to Fourvière saw countless paintings and religious items offered to the Virgin Mary in gratitude for her healing powers. Two of these paintings, now housed in the Fourvière museum beside the chapel, depict Marists in Oceania who prayed to the Virgin Mary for deliverance from death; Bishop Douarre, in charge of the New Caledonian mission, survived a violent storm at sea in 1846, while the following year Bishop Collomb and his missionaries escaped unharmed from an attack led by the Kanak, the indigenous inhabitants of New Caledonia.<sup>10</sup> These reflect the enduring relationship between the Marist missionaries in Oceania and the city of Lyon, which continued to support the missions financially through their charitable donations and spiritually through their prayers. Having adopted the motto 'Lyon à Marie' (meaning 'Lyon belongs to Mary'), the city claimed that Mary's divine intervention spared them from cholera in the 1830s, encouraging local women to pray to Mary for aid when the Prussians were expected to invade in 1870. In 1852 Lyon began a tradition of lighting up the city every 8<sup>th</sup> of December in honour of Mary's role as the city's protector. It was therefore not only the Marists who had a special devotion to Mary and believed in her protective power but an entire French city, and this devotion was concentrated at Fourvière which represented the beginnings of Christianity in France.

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<sup>8</sup> The consulate of Lyon was the municipal ruling body from the thirteenth century until 1790 when the first mayor came to power.

<sup>9</sup> « (...) les recteurs de la Charité demandent à la Vierge de Fourvière et non plus à la Vierge du Puy ou à Notre-Dame de Lorette, de faire cesser le scorbut qui décime leurs orphelins. Le consulat fait de même lors de la reprise de la peste en 1643 et la disparition du fléau établit la notoriété et la puissance de Notre-Dame de Fourvière », Louis Trénard, Françoise Bayard and Olivier Zeller, 'Livre III : L'Époque Moderne, Chapitre VI' in *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours*, p. 522.

<sup>10</sup> Simone Blazy and Claude Prudhomme, *De Fourvière au bout du monde : le rayonnement du catholicisme* (Lyon: Musée Gadagne, 1996), pp. 10, 13, 40.

By the end of the nineteenth century every diocese in France had its own cult devoted to the Virgin Mary. While the most significant Marian shrines were housed unsurprisingly in Italy, France boasted the greatest number of Marian apparitions, the most famous of which were the 18 visions witnessed by young Bernadette Soubirous in 1858, transforming the city of Lourdes into a prominent place of pilgrimage. In Le Puy, Mary appeared to a young seminarian, Jean-Claude Corveille; his vision was teamed with the Marian-inspired ideas of Jean-Claude Colin to form the foundations of the Society of Mary in Lyon.

The Virgin Mary as a source of missionary inspiration derived from the Roman Catholic belief that she had played a significant role in the beginnings of apostolic work. Mary and her cause were indomitable in the eyes of missionary congregations such as the Marists, the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, and the Marianists. The latter saw her as “(...) a war leader who, having recruited them into the ranks of the apostolic army, calls them forth, prepares them for combat, casts them into the melee, supports them, raises them up, and leads them towards victory.”<sup>11</sup> If the Marists viewed Mary in a gentler light, they nevertheless saw themselves as her soldiers and believed that Mary would secure funding for the evangelical ‘battle’; such a belief seemed justified in Lyon by the presence of significant charitable works, some created especially to provide for the foreign missions.

## **1.6 *Charity in Lyon***

Many charitable works in Lyon were created in response to social ills, which were in turn a consequence of industrial expansion in the city. Compared with Britain, industrialisation and urbanisation came slowly to France, except in the case of Lyon, which became an economic capital of France as a result of its thriving silk industry and was the third largest city in France throughout the nineteenth century. Silk had been important to Lyon’s economy since the sixteenth century, but by the nineteenth

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<sup>11</sup> « (...) un chef de guerre qui, après les avoir enrôlés dans les rangs de l’armée apostolique les provoque, les forme aux combats, les jette dans la mêlée, les soutient, les relève, les conduit à la victoire », *La Société de Marie, ses missions : Japon, Maroc, Hawaï*, p. 6.

century it had become France's principal export and provided employment for countless French men and women, as well as thousands of Italian immigrants.<sup>12</sup> However, the industry largely benefited the bourgeoisie and relied on the exploitation of the lower working classes, particularly the 50,000 women and children working in textile factories; "the world of textiles was therefore highly diversified and unequal with regard to functions and income".<sup>13</sup> In the 1830s silk workers began to protest for better working conditions, and further strikes were organised in the 1850s and 1860s.

Catholic congregations and Civil Hospices laboured to combat increasing social problems among the poor and lower working-classes. The capital of France had over five times the population of Lyon, resulting from an influx of migrants and the rural-urban shift, and was faced with an extremely high rate of poverty and social ills. There was, however, no shortage of community aid, and compared with most other European cities, Paris boasted:

(...) the most complete range of social aid coming from private societies. In Paris, in the decade 1840-1850 alone, a capital sum of almost 500,000 Francs per year was accrued from the donations and bequests made by individuals while alive or from their will and testament [...] The beneficiaries were numerous: parishes, schools, certain public or private institutions, the poor from one district or another, or even societies for charity or goodwill.<sup>14</sup>

Paris was not the only city to rapidly expand its social initiatives in light of this crisis; Lyon had possessed social works such as the Hôtel-Dieu for the ill and the Aumône générale (General Charity) since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but the phenomenal number of benevolent works that were founded in the nineteenth century indicated a deep concern throughout the city for the spiritual and temporal wellbeing of the less fortunate. Lyon historian Dumons claims: "Beggars, vagabonds or silk

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<sup>12</sup> Tombs, pp. 270, 361.

<sup>13</sup> « (...) le monde du textile était donc très diversifié et très inégale quant aux fonctions et aux revenus », Pierre Cayez, 'Livre IV : L'Époque Contemporaine, Chapitre II' in *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours*, p. 700.

<sup>14</sup> « (...) la panoplie la plus complète de secours provenant de sociétés privées. Dans la seule décennie 1840-1850 à Paris, un capital de presque 500 000 francs par année est constitué par les dons et legs effectués par des individus de leur vivant ou par testament [...] Les bénéficiaires sont multiples : paroisses, écoles, certaines institutions publiques ou privées, les pauvres de tel ou tel arrondissements ou encore des sociétés de charité ou de bienfaisance », Barrie M. Ratcliffe and Christine Piette, *Vivre la ville : Les classes populaires (1ère moitié du XIXe siècle)* (Paris: La Boutique de l'Histoire éditions, 2007), p. 190.

weavers deprived of work, young mothers in distress or abandoned orphans, the incurably ill or abandoned elderly: every face of urban poverty thus found an institution or received some relief.”<sup>15</sup> Religious orders were only one of many groups offering social and financial aid; businessmen, factory workers, and servants in Lyon played an active role in the fundraising effort by donating regularly to associations and congregations. An important non-cleric was Frédéric Ozanam, who created a benevolent lay association in Lyon: the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Ozanam, a student and later a professor at the Sorbonne University, promulgated Catholic charity while also fostering socialist and liberalist values.<sup>16</sup>

Sacra Propaganda Fide’s resources were constantly stretched, so that newly formed missions were forced to fend for themselves; missionary societies therefore united with charitable associations to help fund their endeavours. In the 1820s Pauline Jaricot, a working-class Frenchwoman, and Benoît Coste, of the bourgeoisie, formed the Association of ‘La Propagation de la Foi’ (The Propagation of the Faith) to raise funds for the evangelism of indigenous peoples all over the world.<sup>17</sup> This initiative was completely independent of Sacra Propaganda Fide, but its success prompted the Church to seek ownership of the Association, which it finally achieved in 1922. The Propagation of the Faith was a unique and remarkable union of working-class, bourgeois and clerical individuals in Lyon, and most importantly it was the first association to provide effective universal aid for the foreign missions.<sup>18</sup> Marist Father Petit-Jean later wrote: “(...) I believe that it was owing to its thousands of martyrs and its ancient faith that Lyon had the honour of having been the birthplace of the Propagation.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> « Mendiants, vagabonds ou canuts privés d’ouvrage, jeunes mères en détresse ou orphelins abandonnés, malades incurables ou vieillards isolés, chaque visage de la misère urbaine trouve alors une institution où recevoir quelque consolation », Bruno Dumons, ‘Lyon Charitable et Prévoyant’ in *Lyon, l’humaniste : Depuis toujours, ville de foi et de révoltes*, ed. by Claude Royon (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 2004), p. 157.

<sup>16</sup> René Rémond, ‘Frédéric Ozanam en son temps’ in *Frédéric Ozanam (1813-1853 : un universitaire chrétien face à la modernité*, ed. by Bernard Barbiche and Christine Franconnet (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2006), pp. 12-13.

<sup>17</sup> John Hosie, *The French Mission*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Rome: Marist Archives, [n.d.]), p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> Christian Ponson, ‘Livre IV : L’Époque Contemporaine, Chapitre IV’ in *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours*, p. 745.

<sup>19</sup> « (...) je pensais que c’étoit à ses milliers de martyrs et à sa foi antique que Lyon étoit redevable de l’honneur d’avoir été le berceau de la Propagation », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 176, 8 July 1842, Sydney, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 7.

Religious fervour and a spirit of charity among the various social classes, alongside the four hundred or so religious societies and congregations, suggested that Catholicism at the end of the nineteenth century was “stronger than it had been a hundred years earlier,”<sup>20</sup> at least in the city of Lyon. The instrumental figures of Pauline Jaricot, Frédéric Ozanam, Jean-Claude Colin and Marcellin Champagnat, among others, feature as sculpted reliefs on the exterior of Fourvière basilica in commemoration of their various charitable and missionary initiatives;<sup>21</sup> but if Lyon immediately recognised their efforts, New Zealand and some of the Pacific Islands did not, notably those which were not annexed by France in the nineteenth century. The profound relationship between Lyon and the Catholic evangelisation of Oceania has only been discussed in detail by Ralph Wiltgen and brought to the fore by Lyon historian Yannick Essertel and by Suzanne Aubert’s biographer Jessie Munro.

### ***1.7 Missionaries from Lyon***

In the nineteenth century Lyon maintained a reputation as a hub of missionaries and charitable works. In 1842 Father Petit-Jean in the New Zealand mission wrote of the city’s renown, which Catholic settlers and missionaries carried all the way to the Pacific; for him,

Lyon is extremely dear and precious to all Catholics and in particular to the Catholic immortals of Ireland and Abbot Brady, priest of the Sydney mission, today some forty years old, told me that from the age of 8 he had heard boasting of Lyon as being a city noteworthy for its faith.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> « (...) plus fort qu’il ne l’était cent ans auparavant », Yves Lequin, ‘Déclassement culturel et succès économiques’ in *Lyon, l’humaniste: Depuis toujours, ville de foi et de révoltes*, p. 132.

<sup>21</sup> Élisabeth Hardouin-Fugier, *Fourvière : Une basilique à découvrir* (Chatillon-sur-Chalaronne: La Taillanderie, 2006), pp. 60-61.

<sup>22</sup> « Il faut noter ici que ce nom de Lyon est extrêmement cher et précieux à tous les catholiques et en particulier aux immortels catholiques d’Irlande et m(onsieu)r l’abbé Brady, prêtre de la mission de Sydney, aujourd’hui âgé d’une quarantaine d’années, me disoit que dès l’âge de 8 ans il avoit entendu vanter Lyon comme étant une ville remarquable par sa foi », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 184, 28 & 31 July 1842, Sydney, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 5.



Pauline Jaricot's source of funding contributed to missionary fervour by making missionary work financially viable outside of France. "From 1815 to 1962, almost 2000 missionaries originating from the Lyon diocese left France to work on all the continents; 32% were in Asia, 30% in Africa, 20% in North America, and 10% in Oceania."<sup>23</sup> Of the missionary societies based in Lyon, two were particularly dominant: the Society of African Missions of Lyon, and the Society of Mary. Melchior de Marion-Brésillac founded the Society of African Missions in the 1850s. Having resigned from the unsuccessful Indian mission, where traditional rites and the caste system defeated Christian missionary effort, Marion-Brésillac requested an African vicariate. He arrived in Lyon in search of funding and recruits, and in 1859 left France for the Vicariate Apostolic of Sierra-Leone with a 5000-franc advance from the Propagation of the Faith. Marion-Brésillac and his pioneering missionaries fell victim to yellow fever just a few months after their arrival, but the society and association congregations continued to support the mission effort in Africa.<sup>24</sup> There was an array of other missionary societies and congregations, some based in Lyon and some elsewhere in France but attracting a large number of Lyon's religious. An impressive number of men and women from the Lyon diocese contributed to the overseas missionary effort in the nineteenth century.<sup>25</sup>

Pope Gregory XVI renewed Roman Catholic missionary zeal in general by creating missionary delegations in Asia Minor, Egypt and the Middle East in the 1830s<sup>26</sup> and new mission territories in Oceania. The Oceania territory was entrusted to two French religious orders, the Picpus Fathers and the Marists. Over the nineteen years that Father Jean-Claude Colin acted as the Society of Mary's director, more than 250 Frenchmen professed themselves as Marist priests,<sup>27</sup> and hundreds more joined the

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<sup>23</sup> « De 1815 à 1962, près de 2000 missionnaires originaires du diocèse de Lyon ont quitté la France pour oeuvrer sur tous les continents, dont 32% en Asie, 30% en Afrique, 20% en Amérique du Nord, 10% en Océanie », Essertel, p. 119.

<sup>24</sup> L. Le Gallen, *Vie de Mgr de Marion-Brésillac, Evêque de Pruse, Fondateur de la Société des Missions Africaines de Lyon s'après ses mémoires* (Lyon: Typographie et Lithographie Ve M. Pacquet, 1910), pp. 422, 480, 589.

<sup>25</sup> See table in Appendix E.

<sup>26</sup> Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, 'Les Chrétiens d'Orient au XIXe siècle : un renouveau lourd de menaces' in *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours: Tome XI: Libéralisme, Industrialisation, Expansion Européenne (1830-1914)*, ed. by J.-M. Mayeur and L. Pietri, (France: Desclée, 1995), p. 816.

<sup>27</sup> Coste, *Cours d'Histoire de la Société de Marie: Pères Maristes 1786-1854*, p. 193.

Society of Mary as Marist Brothers, Sisters or laity. The Propagation of the Faith was the society's only major source of funding for the various missions in Oceania.

Female congregations, whose achievements were not always sufficiently acknowledged at the time, were complementary to the sacerdotal orders to which they were attached. "Far more numerous than men in missionary posts at the end of the nineteenth century, they helped to make French missions the most active and numerous in the Catholic world, largely through their clinics and schools, and their religious and social action surrounding women."<sup>28</sup> Both the Society of African Missions of Lyon and the Society of Mary established some of their mission works with the collaboration of female congregations, including the female Franciscans and Our Lady of the Missions. While this thesis highlights the experiences of the Marist Fathers, it is important to acknowledge that missionary sisters were absent in the first twelve years of the pioneer Māori Mission. Three of the better-known female missionaries who later co-operated with the Marists in Oceania were (Marie) Françoise Perroton, Euphrasie Barbier and Suzanne Aubert.

Françoise Perroton's family was acquainted with the Jaricot family, but while the latter grew wealthy the Perrotons continued to struggle to make ends meet. When in her twenties, Françoise began contributing to the overseas missions through the Propagation of the Faith;<sup>29</sup> however it was not until she reached her fifties that she decided to leave France to undertake missionary work. With no money for her passage, Perroton convinced a trading captain, Auguste Marceau, to transport her to the island of Wallis, also known as Uvea. On her arrival, she received a cold welcome from Bishop Bataillon but was immediately cared for and declared sacred by the Wallisian sovereign.<sup>30</sup> Perroton battled with elephantiasis as she laboured among the women of Wallis and, several years later, the women on the nearby island of Futuna; she was eventually joined in 1858 by three French sisters of the Third Order of Mary,

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<sup>28</sup> « Beaucoup plus nombreuses que les hommes dans les postes missionnaires à la fin du XIXe siècle, elles contribuent largement par leurs ouvriers et leurs écoles, leur action sociale et religieuse auprès des femmes, à faire des missions françaises les plus actives et les plus nombreuses dans le monde catholique », Blazy and Prudhomme, pp. 16-17.

<sup>29</sup> Marie Cécile de Mijolla, *Une Lyonnaise: Marie Françoise Perroton (1796-1873) Missionnaire en Océanie* (Rome: 1997), p. 30.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 48-50, 68, 70.

and was admitted into this Marist congregation to become Sister Marie du Mont Carmel.<sup>31</sup> It was unusual for a woman, especially at Perroton's age and independent of a congregation or society, to become a foreign missionary; her "extraordinary departure had made a stir, not only in Lyon where she was from, but also in Le Havre and in Normandy."<sup>32</sup> Perroton certainly would have made an impression on the young Frenchwoman Euphrasie Barbier who later left her town of Caen to pursue missionary training and eventually establish a Marist novitiate in Lyon. In the 1860s Barbier, having taken on the name Mother Mary-of-the-Heart-of-Jesus, prepared a number of young women who had joined 'Our Lady of the Missions' for the Christchurch, Napier and Nelson missions in New Zealand.<sup>33</sup>

Jessie Munro, in her biography of Suzanne Aubert, describes the powerful mission atmosphere in Lyon, particularly in the parish of Saint-Nizier,<sup>34</sup> which was in the nineteenth century "one of the most opulent, most populous and most pious of parishes in the city of Lyon."<sup>35</sup> It was this very atmosphere that impelled the young Frenchwoman to embark on the missions in Oceania without her family's consent. Aubert, a determined lay missionary who would later create her own congregation called 'The Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion', made a significant contribution to social work in late nineteenth century New Zealand. Aubert was responsible for founding and running hospitals and orphanages for the underprivileged, as well as producing a Māori grammar and dictionary and marketing Māori medicines. More significantly, she was the driving force behind the revival of the Māori Mission and its success.

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid*, pp. 88-90.

<sup>32</sup> A. Coulomb, *Vie de la Très Révérende Mère Marie du Cœur-de-Jésus née Euphrasie Barbier* (Paris: Librairie Vic et Amat, 1902), p. 30.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*, pp. 109-111, 214, 360.

<sup>34</sup> Jessie Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1997), pp. 21-32.

<sup>35</sup> « (...) l'une des paroisses les plus opulentes, les plus populeuses et les plus riches en piété de la ville de Lyon », Bard, p. 270.

## 1.8 *Lyon: Missionaries and imperialism*

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, missionaries are often considered the precursors to imperialism. With regard to French missionaries, this became much more obvious in the late nineteenth century from Napoléon III's empire-building to colonial endeavours under the Third Republic. Lyon remained an important source of missionaries but the missions in Oceania became less of a focus even for the Marists as opportunities opened up elsewhere, particularly in the old mission fields of China, Japan and Africa. The early nineteenth century was also a time of persecution against Christians in China, and European priests were banned from the country until 1842, when the aggressive colonisation of the East by European powers forced China to open up its empire and to westernise, thus provoking mass conversions to Christianity.<sup>36</sup> China and India suffered economically as a result of European industrialisation in the early nineteenth century and subsequent production by Europeans of important Asian exports such as tea, silk and textiles,<sup>37</sup> which had of course been facilitated by missionary exploration and reports. But by the 1850s, the silk industry had already begun to decline in Lyon as European countries realised that silk made in Asia could be purchased for less; the industry further suffered from an outbreak of pebrine disease which devastated French silkworm crops.<sup>38</sup> This was an advantage for missionaries in Lyon who viewed Asia as a desirable apostolate; "the notables in the Chamber of Commerce did not hesitate to solicit the missionaries from Lyon to undertake cocoon trials (1855-1856), investigate dyes used for silk by the Chinese, and gather information on the Japanese market."<sup>39</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, the missions in Asia had reached a high point, but their success from a spiritual perspective was highly questionable since Catholic missions in the

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<sup>36</sup> Yannou, p. 232.

<sup>37</sup> Benôit Pellistrandi, *Les Relations Internationales de 1800 à 1871* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2000), p. 137.

<sup>38</sup> Cayez, in *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours*, p. 677.

<sup>39</sup> « (...) les notables de la chambre de Commerce [...] n'ont pas hésité à solliciter les missionnaires lyonnais pour procéder à des essais de cocon (1855-1856), enquêter sur les teintures utilisées par les Chinois pour la soie, recueillir des informations sur le marché japonais », Claude Prudhomme, 'L'ouverture sur le monde' in *Lyon, l'humaniste : Depuis toujours, ville de foi et de révoltes*, ed. by Claude Royon (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 2004), p. 163.

East were seen to be “a reflection of Western colonial and mercantile expansion”; missionaries in Asia, despite being vilified and persecuted under the Third Republic in France, continued to receive subsidies from the French Republican government.<sup>40</sup>

Foreign missionary work was especially appealing after 1880, when religious orders were exiled from France; surprisingly missionaries and Republican officers or officials managed to work alongside each other outside of France for the greater good of their nation, and it was through this partnership that French colonial ventures were able to progress. But if missionary and Republican worked together, they did not necessarily work together in harmony, and to make the missionaries’ situation worse it was not uncommon for local Chinese and Japanese governments to hamper Catholic missions even after more than two centuries of European Christian missionary effort. In the 1880s Father Chaminade’s Society of Mary, the Marianists, began missionary work in Tokyo and later Nagasaki. “The beginnings were arduous, for everything seemed to conspire against them: their inexperience of the country, the blatant animosity of anticlerical Europeans, the deaf hostility of the authorities which clearly had not involved themselves for freedom’s sake, as their recent constitution proclaimed.”<sup>41</sup> As Daughton explains, the contrasting worlds of the French cleric and the French colonial officer were bound to cause tension or hostility:

French missionaries and merchants were not from common socioeconomic backgrounds, nor did they share common politics or sensibilities. Missionaries came from humble rural upbringings; colonial entrepreneurs tended to be middle-class and liberal, and often active in masonic lodges and republican politics, where anticlericalism thrived.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> « (...) reflet de l’expansion coloniale et mercantile de l’Occident », Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, pp. 816-817.

<sup>41</sup> « Les débuts furent pénibles, car tout semblait conjurer contre eux : leur inexpérience du pays, l’animosité non-déguisée d’européens antireligieux, l’hostilité sourde du pouvoir qui n’avait pas pris parti nettement pour la liberté, que pourtant proclamait sa constitution récente », *La Société de Marie, ses missions : Japon, Maroc, Hawaï*, pp. 34-36.

<sup>42</sup> Daughton, p. 52.

## Chapter 2: Religious Formation, the Society of Mary and the Mission to Oceania

### 2.1 *Rural milieu*

In the 1790s, French clergy were executed, exiled or at the very least persecuted and forced into hiding. This meant that at the turn of the nineteenth century there was a dramatic shortage of Catholic priests in parishes throughout France, resulting in the dereliction of remaining seminaries. After Napoleon's rise to power and the implementation of the Concordat, a new clergy surfaced; while bishops hailed from families wealthy enough to assist them in some of their land-buying and church-building schemes, ordinary priests bore little resemblance to the affluent landowning clergy that had existed before the Revolution:

In the 18th century, in most dioceses, well-to-do merchants and the educated bourgeoisie from the Nobility of the Gown gave the Church the majority of its priests. In the following century, the situation was reversed; the clergy was now recruited from modest and especially rural milieus.<sup>1</sup>

Although official records do not contain a great deal about missionaries' early lives, the parents of Marist priests were often listed as having been 'cultivateurs' (farmers) or artisans. This was not uncommon at the time since at least 30% of priests ordained in France between 1835 and 1840 were sons of 'cultivateurs'.<sup>2</sup> Father Pezant's birth certificate, dated 17 May 1811, could not be signed by the relatives who acted as

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<sup>1</sup> « Au XVIIIe siècle, dans la plupart des diocèses, les marchands aisés et la bourgeoisie instruite des milieux de robe donne à l'Église la majorité des ses prêtres. Au siècle suivant la situation s'inverse, le clergé se recrute maintenant dans les milieux modestes surtout dans les milieux ruraux », Launay, p. 31.  
<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p. 73.

witnesses at his birth because, according to the registrar, they came from farming backgrounds and were therefore illiterate.<sup>3</sup> Pompallier and Viard came from a wealthier social milieu, hence their suitability for the role of bishop, and a known exception to the ‘cultivateur’ trend among the pioneer Marists was Antoine Garin, whose father was a notary. The majority of the French population were peasants at this time, and the farming community generally consisted of humble people accustomed to sacrifice, subservience, and, to some extent, poverty; but priests from these backgrounds may have seen corresponding values in the vows of humility, poverty and obedience practised by the Marists.

The Marist Brothers, though not ordained priests, also came from rural backgrounds and were given the more practical tasks on the mission, such as building, cooking and printing. Fathers and Brothers were often dispatched to the missions together, in a complementary partnership that would facilitate the construction and establishment of schools and churches overseas. Of the first ten Brothers to arrive in New Zealand, “all save one were from the little rural hamlets or villages in the south-east of France centred on Lyon which provided so many vocations, priests as well as brothers, for the young Society of Mary.”<sup>4</sup>

It may be problematic to use the term ‘rural’ when referring to nineteenth century France, since the country remained largely rural even after industrialisation, and Lyon itself contained a number of semi-rural zones and had an important agricultural output. The term ‘cultivateur’ is also unclear as it comprises several socio-economic levels including land proprietors and simple farmers. Nevertheless, the fact that the early Marist Fathers were raised in this milieu suggests that they were accustomed to a modest income and physical labour. These backgrounds were not enough, however, to fully prepare the French Marists for daily life and travel in New Zealand. Jessie Munro writes “A good many of France’s clergy, in the years that formed Suzanne, were no longer the well-off, well-born people who once had entered the old monasteries and convents. They now tended to come from middle-class and poorer origins. The way they could define and practise asceticism was to push their already

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<sup>3</sup> MAW, Copy of Jean Pezant’s birth certificate, ACC 208/17.

<sup>4</sup> Clisby, *Marist Brothers and Maori, 1838-1988*, p. 7.

familiar economy of lifestyle right out to the limits of pared-down hardship.<sup>5</sup> Despite the many health problems incurred by the Marist missionaries in Oceania, often a result of frequent travelling and a poor diet, many lived surprisingly long lives; except in Melanesia where fatal diseases were endemic, most of the Marist missionaries reached their sixties or seventies and retired from the mission by taking on parish work either in Oceania or back in France.

Rural areas were generally bastions for Christianity when compared with urban areas, which were more obviously affected by the influence of modernisation, industrialisation and subsequent secularisation in the nineteenth century. While the Catholic Church was visible and influential in Lyon and other towns and cities, it was omnipresent in the villages surrounding Lyon and throughout the French countryside:

The bells regulated the daily life of the countryside. One knelt down in the fields when the Angelus sounded. The Church presided over events which were essential to one's existence: birth, marriage, and death. It largely regulated the life of the village community. Religion provided charms and incantations; it organised protective ceremonies to benefit the crops and herds. God was thanked at every meal. He shared in one's hopes and concerns every evening. The labourer made the sign of the cross on himself when tracing the first furrow and casting the first handful of seeds; he would not have cut a slice of bread without tracing a cross on it with the point of the knife.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.2 *Maternal influence*

Devout French families provided their children with a Catholic upbringing, which involved daily prayers, catechism and church-going on Sundays. Some parents demonstrated their piety and commitment to the Church by encouraging one or more

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<sup>5</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> « Les cloches rythmaient la vie quotidienne des campagnes. On s'agenouillait dans les champs quand sonnait l'Angélus. L'Église présidait aux événements essentiels de l'existence : naissance, mariage, mort. Elle régissait en grande partie la vie de la communauté villageoise. La religion fournissait des charmes et des incantations ; elle organisait des cérémonies protectrices pour favoriser les cultures et les troupeaux. On remerciait Dieu à chaque repas. On lui faisait part chaque soir de ses soucis et de ses espérances. Le laboureur se signait en traçant le premier sillon, et quand il jetait la première poignée de grains ; il n'aurait pas coupé une tranche de pain sans y avoir tracé une croix de la pointe du couteau », Michel Vanderpooten, *Les Campagnes Françaises au XIXe siècle : Économie, Société, Politique*, (Nantes: Éditions du Temps, 2005), p. 287.



of their sons to join the priesthood; often a child's mother was the influential figure in this decision, undoubtedly because she hoped to "see her son become a notable, educated and having a seemingly easier material life."<sup>7</sup> Jean-Claude Colin, recognised as the true founding father of the Society of Mary, lost both of his parents before he had reached the age of five. His mother Marie, "seriously ill and sensing she would not recover, [...] impressed on her children that the only mother they had now was their heavenly mother, Mary, the mother of God."<sup>8</sup>

In the 1878 obituary of Father Antoine Séon, who served on Māori missions and in Pākehā parishes throughout New Zealand, there is a glimpse into the impact of the post-Revolution persecution of clergy on sympathetic Catholics: "His mother, whose death was caused principally through hardships received during the troubled times of the first French revolution, in sheltering a Priest from the assaults of a fierce populace, had earnestly wished that the son born to her during those trials should be a Priest."<sup>9</sup> It seems reasonable to conclude that the strong maternal influence that governed devout French Catholic families therefore helped inspire a priestly vocation and at the same time encouraged a closeness to Mary, the Mother of God, which the Society of Mary could then continue to nurture.

Many families in France were closely associated with at least one clergy member,<sup>10</sup> and some boasted generations of priests within their lineage. Daughters were also likely to join congregations as a result of a strong church tradition in the family; Father Bernard professed himself a Marist in 1842, while his elder sister had founded her own congregation, the Franciscan Sisters of Saint-Philbert-de-Grand-Lieu,<sup>11</sup> the preceding year. Yet if parents were highly supportive of their children's decision to become priests or nuns, those who opted for a missionary vocation outside of France often did so discreetly because of the disappointment and distress it would cause their families. Father Catherin Servant justified his decision to become a missionary priest

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<sup>7</sup> « (...) voir son fils devenir un notable, instruit, ayant une vie matérielle apparemment plus facile », Launay, p. 77.

<sup>8</sup> Donal Kerr, *Jean-Claude Colin, Marist: A founder in an era of revolution and restoration: the early years 1790-1836* (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2000), p. 31.

<sup>9</sup> 'Death of Father Seon', *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 2 August 1878, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Trénard, Bayard and Zeller, p. 531.

<sup>11</sup> *Marist Messenger*, Monday 2 June 1947, p. 19.

in a letter to his parents in 1840: “(...) my absence would be more useful to you than my presence because God does not neglect to bless the families who sacrifice their children for his glory and the salvation of souls.”<sup>12</sup> Father Reignier joined the New Zealand mission against his father’s wishes, and was subsequently cut off from his family, much to his mother’s distress.<sup>13</sup> If the loss of their mothers, or an intensely close relationship with their mothers, was the driving force behind the Marist missionaries’ decision to become priests and Marists in the first place, a different influence was responsible for enticing them to join the foreign missions.

### 2.3 *Early education*

Until the 1870s educational institutions in Lyon were dominated by religious orders and societies. In 1802 the Municipal Council of Lyon entrusted two congregations, the Brothers of Christian Schools and the Sisters of Saint-Charles, with primary school education in Lyon,<sup>14</sup> and the bourgeoisie attended schools run by the Jesuits.<sup>15</sup> Outstanding students who did not have the financial means to pursue a college education were sometimes redirected towards a religious vocation,<sup>16</sup> and their fees were taken care of by noble families or waived by an influential parish priest. An elite education was available for students such as Philippe Viard, coming from particularly well-to-do “good Catholic families”.<sup>17</sup>

If a young man’s parents were not the driving force behind his aspirations towards joining the priesthood, the local parish priest was likely to have had some involvement. If he “noticed the attentiveness and good behaviour of his young

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<sup>12</sup> « (...) mon absence vous seroit plus utile que mon présence parce que Dieu ne manque pas de bénir les familles qui sacrifient leurs enfants pour sa gloire et le salut des âmes », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 67, 4 August 1840, Hokianga, Catherin Servant to his parents, pp. 1-2.

<sup>13</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 56.

<sup>14</sup> Ponson, p. 741.

<sup>15</sup> Cayez, p. 699.

<sup>16</sup> Launay, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> Keys, Lillian G., *Philip Viard, Bishop of Wellington* (Christchurch: The Pegasus Press, 1968), p. 22.

parishioner at catechism, and discerned his aptitude for study,”<sup>18</sup> the parish priest would encourage the individual, with his family’s permission, to consider attending the major seminary. Father Riberolles, who was also the parish priest of Father Pezant’s hometown Chanonat, was supposedly responsible for Pezant’s decision to enter the seminary and eventually become a priest. One account claims that Riberolles visited Pezant’s house and “(...) declared to his parents that the good Lord wanted their child and that they ought to give the child to Him unselfishly. The parents, fervent Christians, readily fulfilled the will of God which their pastor had just revealed to them, and happily entrusted their young child to this virtuous priest for instruction.”<sup>19</sup> Many young men who went on to become priests, whether swayed by parent or priest, apparently demonstrated an interest in the priesthood at a very early age. Mary Goulter believed it was a spiritual predisposition that directed Marist Fathers such as Claude Cognet, whose “(...) early years followed the familiar pattern: a priestly and religious vocation which seems to have been born with him.”<sup>20</sup>

#### ***2.4 From seminarian to parish priest***

In the nineteenth century, the first official step towards priesthood was entry into a minor seminary, where students underwent five years of general and religious education. Six minor seminaries were established by Cardinal Fesch, the archbishop of Lyon: L’Argentière, Alix, Meximieux, Saint-Jodard, Roche and Verrières.<sup>21</sup>

If deemed suitable and ready for further seminary study, five years might be spent in a major seminary, where a student’s commitment to ordination became more concrete. Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean’s “childhood and youth followed the usual pattern:

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<sup>18</sup> « Tantôt c’est le curé de la paroisse qui a remarqué au catéchisme l’attention et la bonne tenue de son jeune paroissien, distingué ses dispositions pour l’étude (...) », J. Brugerette, *Le Prêtre Français et la Société Contemporaine Vol. II : Vers la Séparation (1871-1908)* (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1935), p. 46.

<sup>19</sup> « (...) déclara à ses parents que le bon Dieu voulait leur enfant et qu’ils devaient le lui donner généreusement. Les parents, fervents chrétiens, accédèrent avec empressement à la volonté de Dieu que leur pasteur venait ainsi de leur manifester et confièrent avec bonheur, à ce prêtre vertueux, leur jeune enfant à instruire », Archivio Padri Maristi, ‘Semaine Religieuse de Clermont des 25 juin et 2 juillet 1881’, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Goulter, p. 194.

<sup>21</sup> Essertel, p. 96.

the ecclesiastical seminary... ordination... and parish work”.<sup>22</sup> However, Father Petit-Jean left his parish work in 1839 to join the third party of Marist missionaries heading for Oceania. Father Pezant did the same, after a chance meeting with the founder of the Society of Mary while travelling between parishes in France.<sup>23</sup>

Although the Roman Catholic Church had primacy over French clergy, it did not force individual clergymen into joining overseas missions; to become missionaries, French priests or seminarians had to put in a request with no guarantee of acceptance into their chosen mission. Some priests were not permitted by their bishop to leave the diocese, while others were unfit in health or temperament. The majority of French priests did not elect to join the foreign missions, preferring instead to commit themselves to parish work, although this had its disadvantages; a clear hierarchy was in place, with bishops occupying the highest rank and enjoying absolute authority over other clergy, while ‘desservants’ (incumbents) received a low salary and could be moved from parish to parish if their bishop so desired.<sup>24</sup> In 1877 Monsignor Guilbert, the Bishop of Gap (in the High-Alps region of France), revealed that some parish priests had incurred debt from the moment they were appointed because they had no personal resources or finances to offer their parishes. It was not uncommon for many parishes to ask for subsidies from municipal councils to make ends meet. Government salaries, which had been established at the beginning of the century, were no longer enough to cover necessary costs and, according to Guilbert:

[t]he revenues of the French clergy derived from all casual sources put together are of no importance save in a few parishes situated in the wealthy quarters of populous cities; and in these exceptional parishes the value of the fees and offerings is more than balanced by the large demands upon an incumbent’s charity.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Goulter, p. 15.

<sup>23</sup> APM, *Semaine Religieuse de Clermont* des 25 juin et 2 juillet 1881, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Launay, p. 83.

<sup>25</sup> ‘French Church Livings: Clergymen who Exist on Small Salaries – Ecclesiastical Fees and Perquisites – Young Men without Pecuniary Resources’, *The New York Times*, Wednesday 3 July 1877, p. 2 < [query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=>](http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=>) [accessed 7 December 2008].

The well-to-do parishioners of Saint-Nizier in Lyon, an example of “these exceptional parishes”, were able to provide a ‘Providence for underprivileged young boys’, which subsisted on donations and subscriptions.<sup>26</sup>

The reality of life as a French parish priest was perhaps not as pleasant as the optimistic description given by Mary Catherine Goulter, who asserts that the early Marist priests “had abandoned the prospect of comfortable, creditable, clerical careers in their native country. They might have had some country parish, and lived and died there, in honour and happiness”;<sup>27</sup> nevertheless between Napoleon’s rise to power in 1801 and the beginnings of the Third Republic in 1870 parish work in France was a safer and more promising career option than that of foreign Catholic missionary. There is an undeniable disparity between the lifestyle of a missionary priest and that of a parish priest for European settlers; while there may be criticism of evangelisation and its methods and outcomes, there is no doubt that the Marist missionary to Māori endured physical and spiritual challenges in his or her evangelical tasks that resulted in exhaustion, failing health, extreme isolation and poverty, and disheartenment. In the nineteenth century the parish priest in both France and colonial New Zealand, though faced with challenges of his own, was not forced to travel extensively, beg frequently, or struggle relentlessly to make himself accepted and understood by a non-European culture.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, there was a general change in the way that parish priests began to carry out their duties in France. Perhaps as a result of rising secularisation, priests were encouraged, especially by their bishops, to take a more apostolic approach and bring Catholicism to the people. Perhaps they were also influenced by missionary literature but were not willing to distance themselves from their families or from France. In any case, these parish priests, Launay reveals, broke away from their sedentary lifestyles to counter the stereotype of the *bon prêtre* or ‘good priest’, a role that lacked adventure and excitement:

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<sup>26</sup> AML, ‘Providence des Jeunes Garçons de la Paroisse de Saint-Nizier: Fonctionnement 1854-1862’, 744WP074.

<sup>27</sup> Goulter, p. 103.

(...) many would become pastors who no longer wanted to sit back in the peaceful life of their parish, who were no longer content with being 'good priests' without a missionary spirit, waiting for a possible promotion- the ultimate achievement in an unremarkable career.<sup>28</sup>

## 2.5 *The Major Seminary and Belley College*

There was no longer a shortage of priests by the time Rome had established the Marists as an official order; in fact, religious zeal was so prevalent in Lyon that there may have been a superfluity of priests in the 1830s. Why, then, did young Frenchmen join the Marist missions in the nineteenth century? An important reason was their belief that suffering on earth led to an eternity in paradise. Letters sent to loved ones back in France confirmed that the missionaries had not been driven abroad because of a rift or a quarrel; in a sense, they had abandoned their families in order to save them. The utopia that Heaven represented to the devout Catholic was one that they hoped to share with the people they cared for most. The isolation and deprivations which the missionary lifestyle entailed were thus worth enduring if it meant salvation for oneself and one's family. Father Comte assured his parents that they need not worry about their son; he had chosen to become a missionary in New Zealand with the reassurance of what lay ahead in the afterlife:

(...) my dear parents, how wrong you would be to aggrieve yourselves because of me. What would I lack in this land I am in? Is God not everywhere? Is he not aware of our needs? ... When I left France, I left with the conviction that sorrows, tribulations, privations, poverty, and sufferings would be my lot. I rejoice in this thought, in saying to myself: the path that you will travel is the surest one to reach Heaven.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> « (...) nombreux vont être les pasteurs qui ne voudront plus s'endormir dans la vie paisible de leur cure, qui ne se contenteront plus d'être de « bons prêtres » sans esprit missionnaire, en attendant un éventuelle promotion, ultime couronnement d'une carrière sans histoire », Launay, pp. 169-170.

<sup>29</sup> « Mais, mes chers parents, que vous auriez bien tort de vous mettre en peine de moi. Que me manquerait-il dans cette terre où je suis? Dieu n'est-il pas partout? Ne connaît-il pas nos besoins? ... Lorsque je quittai la France, je partis bien convaincu que les peines, les tribulations, les privations, les misères, les souffrances seraient mon partage. Je me réjouissais dans cette pensée, me disant en moi-même: la voie que tu vas parcourir est la plus sûre pour arriver au ciel », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 54, 12 April 1840, Hokianga, Comte to parents, p. 1.

Father Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean had a particularly close relationship with his brother in-law, Auguste Paillasson, to whom he wrote at least three long letters between 1840 and 1850. He also sent a gift to Paillasson in 1845, to acknowledge his donations to the mission, and often mentioned him in his letters to the Marist Fathers in Lyon. Aware that as a missionary he could meet an untimely death or simply never have the opportunity to return to France, Father Petit-Jean was comforted to know that Paillasson was in a position to care for his family on earth, but his greatest consolation was the belief that he would see his family again in Heaven:

Dear God, save my parents, save all those whom I love with the same love that I have loved your mother and your disciple John. On this earth, I have been separated from them, I have lost them out of love for you; deign some day to give them back to me in Heaven, where I will never lose them again.<sup>30</sup>

To counterbalance the wonders of Heaven, the Catholic concept of Hell was equally impressive with its fiery abyss and torturous demons. Eternal damnation was believed to be the fate of all those who had not been enlightened by the True Church. In a retrospective letter, Marist Father Philippe Viard recalled his sympathy for:

(...) the thousands of savages who were lost and plunged into hell for lack of priests to instruct them, while priests were so numerous in the diocese where I was; this reflection made a deep impression on my soul, so that I thought only of flying to the help of these poor savages who stretched their arms out to me.<sup>31</sup>

Such a depiction of non-Christians, and equally of non-Europeans, might now be seen as patronising and even insulting, especially in the use of the term ‘poor savages’ which was so commonly a feature of missionaries’ writings. Yet the intentions behind it were innocently paternalistic and even humanitarian, and were shared by thousands of Frenchmen in the nineteenth century. Lillian Keys’ biography of Viard, who came from the Saint-Nizier parish in Lyon, testifies that “...each year fifty to sixty new

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<sup>30</sup> « Mon Dieu, sauvez mes chers parents, sauvez tous ceux que j’aime du même amour que vous avez aimé votre [mère] et votre disciple Jean. Sur cette terre, je m’en suis séparé, je les ai perdus pour l’amour de vous; daignez un jour me les rendre dans le ciel, là où je ne les perdrai plus », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 53, 18 March 1840, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Paillasson (brother-in-law), p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> Keys, *Philip Viard*, p. 24.

priests were ordained in Lyons. It was natural for the minds of many of these young ordinands to turn to the missions;”<sup>32</sup> it must be considered that the minds of these young men were unquestionably influenced by their teachers and mentors, who believed that missionary work was a necessary and philanthropic act of Christianity.

From a broad perspective, the re-establishment of Catholic orders by the Pope created missionary fervour in itself; Sacra Propaganda Fide, an entity within the Roman Catholic Church responsible for Catholic missionary work throughout the world, had been established in the early seventeenth century and dissolved in 1808. Its re-establishment in 1814 was followed closely by that of the Jesuits, Lazarists and other orders or societies including the Missions Etrangères de Paris.<sup>33</sup> More importantly, schools and seminaries were often run by these religious societies, who also prided themselves on having a strong history of mission work; their students were thus influenced by a strict Catholic education and exposure to missionary activity. In the seventeenth century the Lazarists (also known as Vincentians) had established missions in Africa and other countries in Europe, the Jesuits were making headway in China, the Americas and the Far East, and Sulpician missionaries had constructed a seminary in New France (Canada). Before the French Revolution, nobles often received their sacerdotal education in Sulpician seminaries and went on to become members of the high clergy. Although most of France’s major seminaries were taken over by diocesan clergy following the Revolution, once Napoleon restored their legal status the Lazarists, Jesuits and Sulpicians were able to take up seminary work again.

Before their society had been restored, a group of Sulpicians in Lyon covertly began to operate the Major Seminary of Saint Irénée (Irenaeus), where the founding fathers of the Society of Mary came together in 1816. Significantly the Sulpician curriculum emphasised a very strong devotion to Mary and a Christocentric Catholicism: students were expected to imitate Jesus and Mary in their everyday actions in order to serve and praise God. This clearly inspired the future Marists, who integrated much of the Sulpician founder’s teachings into the spiritual guidelines of the Marist order,

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<sup>32</sup> *ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>33</sup> Pierre Guillaume, *Le monde colonial : XIXe – XXe siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1999), p. 63.



including humility to the point of being unseen in the world, unconditional obedience and self-sacrifice for the service of others.

Seminarians sometimes found solidarity in a few of their classmates, as was the case with the founding fathers of the Society of Mary. Some of the men who left in 1836 on the pioneer mission for Oceania were also connected through the seminary, but as colleagues at the Minor Seminary of Belley and Belley College rather than as classmates. With Jean-Claude Colin as the seminary's superior, and his brother Pierre as the headmaster, Fathers Chanel and Bret both took up teaching positions there in the early 1830s. Chanel, nominated by his Bishop to teach in Belley, had hoped to join the mission in America but was offered Oceania instead.<sup>34</sup> The Minor Seminary in Belley might have continued to be a useful source of recruits for the missions in Oceania, but Father Colin resigned as the seminary's superior to concentrate on his duties as superior-general of the Society of Mary; nevertheless it was common practice for students, upon completing their novitiate, to teach at a seminary for at least one year, and the Minor Seminary of Belley was a popular choice for the Fathers. Before they departed for the missions, Fathers Chanel, Baty, Comte, Borjon and Séon were all teachers or prefects at the Minor Seminary of Belley. It is also no coincidence that Marist Fathers Borjon, Garin and Séon were all educated at the Brou Major Seminary, considering the Brou seminary also catered for students from the diocese adjacent to Brou: that of Belley.

Furthermore the pioneer Marist missionaries tended to depart for the missions immediately after their profession as Marists, and had usually been ordained for several years and worked as parish priests or teachers. In contrast, many of the French Marists who joined the revival Māori Mission from the 1880s to the early 1900s had been Marists for several years and either waited until their ordination to depart for the missions or completed their studies in New Zealand at the Marist Seminary in Meeanee.<sup>35</sup> Given that a number of the pioneer Marists worked with Father Colin, it

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<sup>34</sup> Claude Rozier, *Écrits du Père Pierre Chanel, missionnaire mariste à Futuna 1803-1841* (Paris: Musée de l'Homme, 1960), pp. 24, 31.

<sup>35</sup> See appendices B and D.

is likely that their decision to join the Society and the Oceania mission was influenced by their loyalty to Colin and the first group of Marists.

Although joining the missions was a decision to be made by the individual, there was no shortage of influential figures who encouraged young seminarians towards a missionary career. Father Reignier, who became a Marist in 1841, was directed towards the Society and missionary work by his bishop in Nantes and by Monsieur Boiteux, the superior at his major seminary in Nantes and, not incidentally, a friend of Father Colin.<sup>36</sup> There was also an expectation for seminarian students whose friends and colleagues had opted for missionary work to take up the same challenge. Father Chanel writes, in regard to Jean-Baptiste Martin who became vicar of St-Didier-sur-Chalaronne in the Rhône-Alps region:

I do not know how I could forgive my dear Mr. Martin for having gone, upon leaving the seminary, to be an assistant priest in a parish of the diocese, instead of bravely offering himself to our Reverend Father superior-general in order to strengthen with his person and his zeal the precious reinforcements which have just reached us.<sup>37</sup>

## 2.6 *Literature and martyrs*

The Sulpicians ensured that seminarians received a rigorist orthodox education which included studying classical authors and works written by the founders of the Society of Sulpice and the seventeenth century French School of Spirituality. The humble backgrounds of many priests sometimes explained the difficulties they faced with learning Latin and achieving in their academic studies. Seminarians were nonetheless encouraged to study the Humanities, church dogma and of course the Scriptures.<sup>38</sup> Trinity College, established by the Jesuits in Lyon in the sixteenth century, “had given rise very early on to interest in Lyon for the missions, especially through its

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<sup>36</sup> APM, ‘Notice Nécrologique sur le P. Reignier’, pp. 328-329.

<sup>37</sup> « Je ne sais comment je pourrai pardonner à mon cher Mr Martin d’être allé, au sortir du séminaire, *vicarioter* ainsi dans une paroisse du diocèse au lieu de s’offrir courageusement à notre Révérend Père supérieur général, pour grossir dans sa personne et de son zèle le précieux renfort qui vient de nous arriver », Rozier, pp. 260-261.

<sup>38</sup> Brugerette, *Le Prêtre Français et La Société Contemporaine, Vol. I : La Restauration Catholique (1815-1871)* (Paris: P.Lethielleux, 1933), p. 89.

publications.”<sup>39</sup> The Jesuits wrote profusely about the order’s philosophies, which included missionary work in foreign countries, and with the view that “writing was a form of apostolate” they hoped to evangelise and potentially recruit young Frenchmen.<sup>40</sup> Their influence on the Marists is evident in the requests for Jesuit literature made by the Marist missionaries to their superior-general; Father Jean-Simon Bernard, for example, ordered a French-language copy of a work by Jesuit missionary Aloys Bellecius<sup>41</sup> – most likely Bellecius’ *Les exercices spirituels de Saint Ignace, disposés pour une retraite de huit jours*, a manual first published in France in 1837 and containing spiritual exercises which were developed by the founder of the Jesuits, Ignacio de Loyola. These exercises were a regular feature of the spiritual retreats held by the Marist missionaries in Oceania. Simmons notes that Pompallier compared himself to Francisco Javier, the Jesuit missionary mentioned in the opening chapter of this thesis; when the bishop left France in 1836 “one of the books Pompallier had with him was the 1828 edition of Francis Xavier’s letters, published in his own town of Lyons under the auspices of Archbishop Gaston de Pins. The grand vision never quite left him and he often seemed to see himself in the role of a Xavier of the Pacific.”<sup>42</sup>

Perhaps the most influential publication of all for the young men who would go on to become Marist missionaries, was the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi (Annals of the Propagation of the Faith)*: “Read in groups of associates who received them automatically, used by parish priests in sermons, made available to students in religious colleges, the *Annales* circulated from hand to hand and met with an astounding success.”<sup>43</sup> The popular publication recounted missionary adventures all over the world and provided ethnographical information about distant cultures. Aside from exotic or spectacular tales of encounter and peril, letters published by the *Annales* often contained pleas for young men and women to heed the evangelical call.

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<sup>39</sup> « (...) avait fait naître très tôt, à Lyon l’intérêt pour les missions, surtout à travers l’édition », Blazy and Prudhomme, p. 7.

<sup>40</sup> « (...) l’écrit était une forme d’apostolat », Trénard, Bayard and Zeller, p. 523.

<sup>41</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 983, 22 January 1851, Akaroa, Bernard to Poupinel, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> E. R. Simmons, *Pompallier: Prince of Bishops* (Auckland: Catholic Publications Centre, 1984), p. 30.

<sup>43</sup> « Lues dans les groupes d’associés qui les reçoivent automatiquement, utilisées par les curés dans les sermons, mises à dispositions des élèves dans les collèges religieux, les *Annales* circulent de main en main et connaissent un étonnant succès », Prudhomme, p. 160.

The *Annales* also told of daring French missionaries who became martyrs, such as Jean-Louis Bonnard who barely spent three years in Tongking (now part of Vietnam) before he was captured by a mandarin (a public official under the Chinese Empire) and executed.<sup>44</sup> Father Petit-Jean mentioned the persecutions in Tongking in a letter to his brother-in-law in 1841;<sup>45</sup> Girard makes reference to an article entitled ‘Recent Persecution in Tong-King’ from the *Annales* in May the previous year, which Petit-Jean had apparently read along with letters from a French bishop in Africa published in the *Annales* in late 1839. Petit-Jean left for New Zealand in June 1839, and like his fellow missionaries there he initially had access to the *Annales* by way of translated excerpts taken from Sydney newspapers and published in the Bay of Islands.<sup>46</sup>

Nineteenth-century British missionary literature, epitomized in the African adventures of David Livingstone of the London Missionary Society (LMS), was also highly influential on the British Protestant public. Lydia Wevers notes that the romantic writing style of William Colenso, who was a botanist, printer and Anglican missionary in New Zealand from the 1830s, reflected the stories of adventure and exploration from Colenso’s British childhood.<sup>47</sup> Anna Johnston points out the impact on British fiction that missionary endeavour had achieved: “Fictional texts, from novels to children’s literature, included missionary characters and situations, particularly in the genre of adventure novels which took great interest in exotic corners of the empire.”<sup>48</sup> If this fiction portrayed a daring missionary hero, defending and assisting British imperialism, the French equivalent differed only slightly. The French missionary was a humble hero with an especially romantic flavour, somewhat inspired by the kindly figure of Father Aubry from the late eighteenth-century novella *Atala* set in North America. *Atala* featured in French author Chateaubriand’s 1802 publication *Génie du christianisme*, a work which defended Christian values and the Catholic Church against growing secularisation in the decades following the French

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<sup>44</sup> *Tong-King et martyr ou vie du vénérable Jean-Louis Bonnard: missionnaire au Tong-King décapité pour la foi le 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1852* (Lyon: Briday, 1876), p. 347.

<sup>45</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 87, 7 March 1841, Petit-Jean to Paillason, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Pompallier to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Lydia Wevers, *Country of Writing: Travel Writing and New Zealand 1800-1900* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002), p. 38.

<sup>48</sup> Johnston, p. 19.

Revolution. Some of the French Marists themselves, including Father Petit-Jean, wrote with a particularly romantic style and must have found parallels with the scenery and setting of *Atala* while journeying through the dense forest in early New Zealand.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps most romantic of all was the discussion surrounding martyrdom; in the eyes of a devout Catholic priest, martyrdom was the ultimate service to God and was something to be glorified and celebrated, and this was reinforced through tales of martyrdom in the *Annales*. In 1841, three years after his arrival in Futuna, Marist Father Pierre Chanel became the first Christian martyr of Oceania; Chanel's death was ordered by the King of Futuna, who disapproved of his son's conversion to Christianity. The Marist letters of 1842 are riddled with commentaries on the martyrdom of Father Chanel, but most notable is Father Épalle's opening remark in a letter to the Marist superior-general: "A martyr in the Society of Mary; what a joyous occasion! But what misfortune that it is not I!"<sup>50</sup> Three years later, Épalle was killed on the pioneer Marist mission to Melanesia.

## 2.7 *The foundation of the Marists*

The Marists are well known in New Zealand Catholic communities because of their prominence in the fields of education and rugby. Colleges established by the Marists in the latter half of the nineteenth century still cater to local religious and learning needs, but the nature in which they operate today differs immensely from the traditional French system. In addition, these colleges were merely an offshoot of the Marists' original projects in early New Zealand, which were specifically to convert and baptise indigenous inhabitants in western Oceania through the instruction and establishment of the Catholic faith. The story of the Marist missionaries thus begins not in New Zealand but in early nineteenth-century France, where Catholic priests were recovering from the anti-clerical violence of the French Revolution and ensuing Republic.

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<sup>49</sup> William Jennings, 'Le romantisme et les Maristes', University of Waikato French Department Seminars, 3 July 2009.

<sup>50</sup> « Un martyr dans la Société de Marie, quel sujet de joie! Mais ce n'est pas moi, quel malheur! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 127, 19 January 1842, Bay of Islands, Épalle to Colin, p. 1.

The spiritual origins of the Marist order can be traced back to a young Frenchman named Jean-Claude Courveille. As a child, Courveille had partially lost his sight as a result of smallpox; at the age of 22, while on a pilgrimage to the cathedral in Le Puy, he was suddenly cured and attributed this miracle to the Virgin Mary. Three years later, standing before Mary's statue in Le Puy, Courveille had a revelation, claiming that Mary spoke to his heart and instructed him to create a religious society whose affiliates would be called Marists.<sup>51</sup> Courveille began sharing his vision of a Society for Mary with fellow theology students at the Lyon seminary; in July 1816, twelve young men pledged their allegiance to Courveille in a religious ceremony which, according to Marist historian J.M. Coste, should be considered as the founding of the Society.<sup>52</sup> Despite Jean-Claude Courveille's role in the conception of the Society of Mary, his classmate Jean-Claude Colin is consistently credited as its founder. There are two apparent reasons for the phasing out of Courveille as head of the proposed order: as the Society grew in popularity, members looked to Colin and another classmate, Marcellin Champagnat, for leadership and guidance, which supposedly made Courveille jealous and bitter. Meanwhile, Courveille was involved in a monetary scandal which left him unworthy perhaps of the honourable title of Founder.<sup>53</sup> This reflects the disharmonious beginnings of the Society but also highlights Colin as a natural leader and a figure connected with honesty and integrity, hence the deep loyalty and honesty displayed in the letters of Marist missionaries when writing to Colin two decades later. Meanwhile the Society continued to develop under Colin and Champagnat into different branches, with Colin heading the Marist Fathers and Sisters while Champagnat created the education-focused Little Brothers of Mary.

At around the time that Colin and his confreres were creating their Society of Mary in Lyon, Father Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade was developing a Society of Mary in Bordeaux whose followers would become known as Marianists. Chaminade was undoubtedly influenced by his three years' exile in Zaragoza, home of the cathedral

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<sup>51</sup> Coste, *Cours d'Histoire de la Société de Marie: Pères Maristes 1786-1854*, p. 20.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, pp. 58-60.

Nuestra Señora del Pilar (Our Lady of the Pillar) where the first apparition of Mary supposedly took place. Forming his Society of Mary in honour of the Blessed Virgin, 'Le Bon Père' (The Good Father) Chaminade dedicated himself to apostolic work and was beatified in the twentieth century. The Marianists' early missions were established in France, Spain, Germany and Italy, but by the late nineteenth century they had already expanded their work to America, Canada and Hawaii.<sup>54</sup> There are countless similarities between the two Societies of Mary, the principal one being a special devotion and attitude to the Virgin Mary:

Mary is the mother of Jesus. What comes to us from Jesus and through Jesus therefore comes to us from Mary as well. The Sacrifice with all its effects, the Eucharist with all its graces, the various sacraments, the doctrine, the Church with its gifts, its estates, its virtues, its works, its sufferings, its merits; the entire city of God which is built in all eras to be dedicated eternally; everything results from Mary, everything relies on Mary, Mother of God and creator of Christ.<sup>55</sup>

The significance of Mary in nineteenth-century France is manifest in the countless chapels, churches and congregations dedicated to Marian humility and piety. Her particular traits and actions inspired charity as well as religious zeal, and stirred young French men and women into a revival of missionary work in France. In the Roman Catholic view, Mary was the 'source of the apostolate', 'Mistress and Queen of the Apostles' and 'Educator of the apostles in the earliest days of the Church',<sup>56</sup> making her a champion of Catholic missionaries. Colin's Marist order, though not originally intended as a society for foreign missions, was designed as an apostolic community who lived according to the spirit of Mary and responded to the needs of the Catholic Church in France.

## 2.8 *The Mission*

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<sup>54</sup> *La Société de Marie, ses missions : Japon, Maroc, Hawaï*, p. 20.

<sup>55</sup> « Marie est la mère de Jésus. Ce qui nous vient de Jésus et par Jésus nous vient donc aussi de Marie. Le sacrifice avec tous ses effets, l'Eucharistie avec toutes ses grâces, les divers sacrements, la doctrine, l'Église avec ses dons, ses états, ses vertus, ses travaux, ses souffrances, ses mérites ; toute la cité de Dieu qui se construit dans les temps pour être dédiée dans l'éternité tout découle de Marie, tout s'appuie sur Marie, Mère de Dieu et auteur du Christ », *ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> « la source de l'apostolat... la Maîtresse et la Reine des Apôtres... Educatrice des apôtres aux premiers jours de l'Église », *ibid*, pp. 3, 5.

Father Colin lobbied for almost two decades to have the Society of Mary officially recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, and was finally rewarded for his efforts in 1836. Kevin Roach highlights approval of the Marist order as the foremost reason for Colin's enthusiastic acceptance of foreign mission work, and also reveals that Sacra Propaganda Fide was behind Pope Gregory XVI's acceptance of the Marist order; Cardinal Castracane, who had been involved in the case since the end of 1833, informed Colin that "the Sacred Congregation was especially led to approve your Society in order to stimulate you to undertake the difficult task of the Mission."<sup>57</sup> Subsequently, by the 1840s, the Marists became a dominant missionary society in Lyon.

The 'Mission' was the evangelising mission in the Vicariate Apostolic of Western Oceania, which included New Zealand, the Solomon Islands and numerous islands in between. In 1829 Frenchman Henri de Solages was given charge of evangelisation in the South Seas, but de Solages died before he could take up the position. The Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Marie, more commonly known as the Picpus Fathers, were a French missionary congregation who commenced their missionary effort in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) only to be exiled in 1831 by the Queen Regent, Ka'ahumanu. In 1831 the Picpus Fathers requested to evangelise the eastern islands in the Pacific, which included Tahiti and the Marquesas; the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide granted their request by entrusting them with the Vicariate Apostolic of Eastern Oceania. In December 1835 the Church established the western vicariate in Oceania, which it planned to staff with members of the Society of Mary.<sup>58</sup> The remaining task was to elect a suitable leader for the Marist Mission, but correspondence had already taken place between Father Colin and a priest from Lyon, Father Jean-Baptiste-François Pompallier, who had been recommended as vicar apostolic by the vicar-general of Lyon. Pompallier was not a professed Marist, he had however worked closely with the Marists, hence Colin's willingness to support Pompallier's nomination. Two months after the Society of Mary officially became a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church, Pompallier was promoted to bishop

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<sup>57</sup> Letter from Castracane to Colin, 12 March 1836. Quoted in Kevin Roach, 'Jean-Claude Colin and the Foundation of the New Zealand Catholic Mission' *NZJH*, 3.1 (1969), p. 75.

<sup>58</sup> Coste, *Cours d'Histoire de la Société de Marie: Pères Maristes 1786-1854*, pp. 13, 101-102.



and given the title Vicar Apostolic of Western Oceania; missionary work thus began in 1836, when a band of missionaries left France for the islands in western Oceania, with a non-Marist at the reins.

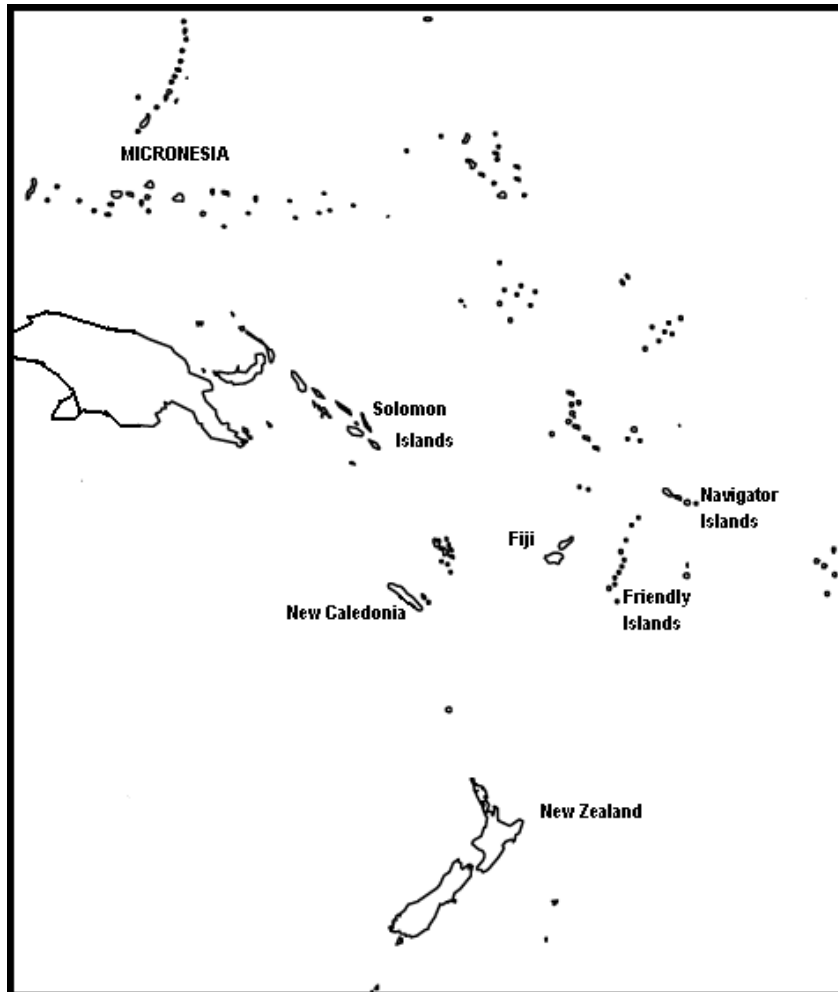


Figure 2: Vicariate Apostolic of Western Oceania 1836-1842<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Map has been adapted from 'Oceania (Outline Map)'  
<<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/oceania/auooutl.htm>>.

## 2.9 *The CMS and LMS in Oceania*

Each European Christian mission group in the Pacific set out to fulfil what was essentially the same mission: to bring Christianity to indigenous peoples. This common mission can be broken down into a number of smaller missions or goals, which varied in importance for each missionary society: to introduce European ‘civilisation’ and eradicate unchristian indigenous customs and practices; to implement European education and labour systems; to rescue indigenous souls from paganism and rival Christian denominations; and, for some missionaries, to coalesce with their national government representatives in order to pave the way for colonisation of the Pacific. The evangelical impulse of the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society in the Pacific stemmed from the broader evangelical movement in England, which was itself a humanitarian response to the country’s social troubles of the late eighteenth century and, more importantly, to the atrocities of slavery which Britain had brought upon African Americans working in its numerous colonies around the world.<sup>1</sup>

The Society for Missions to Africa and the East was formed in 1799 and became known as the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1812. The CMS was very different in nature to the Society of Mary, since it was a voluntary society with no actual status in the Anglican Church, although it was linked with a group of highly influential evangelicals in English society.<sup>2</sup> British Protestant societies in general were largely formed by groups of devout men and women, rather than by clergy or by the Church itself, and these societies could often look to specialist societies, such as the Bible Society, to provide resources for the missions. Through local sermons and rallies, English Protestants were stirred into action and both the wealthy and the poor contributed to the CMS cause. These sermons, in addition to the stories of international Protestant endeavour in the *Missionary Register*, inspired a number of British men from various backgrounds to join the society in the capacity of lay

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<sup>1</sup> Guillaume, *Le monde colonial: XIXe - XXe siècle*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Allan K. Davidson and Peter Lineham, eds., *Transplanted Christianity: documents illustrating aspects of New Zealand church history*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Palmerston North, N.Z.: The Dunmore Press, 1989), p. 21.

missionary. The earliest CMS missionaries were often men from modest backgrounds with practical skills, eager to improve their standing in society and make their fortune abroad. Although these men may have been fundamentally motivated by the call to serve God, the salaried position of foreign missionary was unquestionably attractive; it offered possibility and security at the same time.

While the CMS was clearly an Anglican society, the London Missionary Society or LMS accepted Protestants of any denomination, although it did have a strong Anglican element. Active in the Pacific from as early as 1797, the LMS became successful in winning converts in Tahiti and the Cooks Islands from the 1820s through the effective leadership of missionary John Williams. Following Williams' death in 1839, LMS missionaries and indigenous converts from Tahiti, the Cook Islands and Samoa continued to propagate Christianity in Polynesia and Melanesia. There was never an attempt by LMS missionaries to found stations in New Zealand, perhaps because the CMS had already established an Anglican presence there in the early nineteenth century. The CMS entered the Pacific as a result of the perseverance of Samuel Marsden, an Anglican minister in New South Wales, who saw a golden opportunity for church expansion. Marsden continually persuaded the CMS to undertake a mission in New Zealand, where a Māori chief had offered land and protection.<sup>3</sup> Finally in December 1814 the first CMS station in New Zealand was established at Rangihoua and three pioneer lay missionaries began laying the foundations for "civilisation" in the hopes that it would facilitate the Christianisation of Māori.

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<sup>3</sup> Morrell, p. 4.

**PART TWO**

**OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS: A COMPARATIVE  
HISTORY OF THE FRENCH MARIST MĀORI MISSION  
AND OTHER PIONEER MISSIONS IN OCEANIA**

In the period between 1836 and 1930, the French Marist Mission in New Zealand went through two distinct phases. The first phase involved a trickle of missionaries into the country until 1842, followed by a period of decline beginning in the 1850s and reaching a nadir in the 1860s when the New Zealand Wars and resulting anti-European movements ostensibly unravelled any success the Catholic mission had made among Māori. The second phase brought revivalists to the shores of New Zealand; these missionaries aimed to re-establish the Māori mission particularly in the Hawke's Bay, Whanganui and Taranaki regions. Under the first Superior-General of the Society of Mary, Father Jean-Claude Colin, fifteen Marist Fathers pioneered the mission in New Zealand, visiting iwi and hapū from Hokianga and Whangaroa in the far North to Otakau (Otago) in the lower South Island, and founding mission stations often in proximity to Anglican and Wesleyan establishments. The original mission was purely aimed at Māori, since the French Marists were sent to expand the Catholic Church by bringing ideas of sin and salvation to the indigenous peoples of Oceania, but by 1840 there were already cries for resident Catholic priests in New Zealand ports where Europeans had settled. Between 1838 and 1842 Colin sent seventeen ordained Marist priests to New Zealand (three of whom were immediately transferred to the mission of Tonga) and fourteen Marist Brothers to join Bishop Pompallier, Father Servant and Brother Michel on the Māori Mission, but sent no reinforcements for the remaining twelve years of his generalate. Drawing on the

experiences of the early French Marists, the reasons for the decline and apparent abandonment of the mission are revealed by the missionaries themselves in their letters to Father Colin and to family members in France.

Numerous excerpts from these letters appear throughout the second part of this thesis. The reason for their inclusion has been outlined in the general introduction, but it is important to add that if the veracity of missionary letters, known to exaggerate or deliberately skew events where religious issues are concerned, is usually problematic, this is not the case with much of the Marist correspondence addressed to Father Colin. While some of the Marists' letters were obviously written with the knowledge that portions of them would be selected and edited for publication, with the view of promoting the mission to obtain donations and support in France, the Marist Fathers and Brothers were nevertheless able to write in strict confidence to their Superior, revealing their inner fears and desires, as well as their shortcomings or wrongdoings. Bishop Pompallier and the Marist missionaries were careful to differentiate between publishable material and distinctly private material within their letters, as is demonstrated by the following excerpt from Pompallier's letter to the Propagation of the Faith:

To the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith, I send news which speaks of the success of our works and everything that may incite the charity of the faithful and apostolic zeal in the clergy. To you and to the central council of the association, I reveal the difficulties and give you a taste of the bitterness of my chalice, in order to include you in my tribulations [...] and show you what I require here in order to remove the obstacles against good and ensure our chances of complete success.<sup>1</sup>

From the passage above, it is also clear that Pompallier viewed success as an achievable outcome of the missionary effort in Oceania. But it is equally clear that this success was partly dependent on the assistance of others to fund, staff and

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<sup>1</sup> « Aux annales de la propagation de la foi, j'envoie des nouvelles qui parlent des succès de nos travaux et tout ce qui peut exciter la charité des fidèles et le zèle apostolique dans le clergé. A vous et au conseil central de l'association, je fais voir les difficultés et fait [sic] connaître un peu l'amertume de mon calice, pour vous associer à mes tribulations [...] et vous montrer ce qu'il me faudroit ici pour lever les obstacles au bien et assurer nos chances de plein succès », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 279, 3 November 1843, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 3.

support the missions, and could only be attained once the missionaries had overcome certain obstacles. The nature of these obstacles will be explored in detail in this comparative mission history, which considers the Marist Māori Mission alongside several pioneer missions to Oceania. The CMS mission and missionaries have been the subject of numerous studies, and in studying the French Marist Mission it is natural to draw comparisons between the two and to understand the implications that each had for the other. At the same time the Marist missions in the Pacific Islands enable a very different kind of comparison; the Marist experience in Wallis, Futuna, Tonga and New Caledonia is especially useful in highlighting the similarities and differences faced by Catholic missionaries in the 1840s in the Pacific Islands, where there were varying degrees of contact with Europeans, compared with in New Zealand. A number of questions guide this comparative history: Was the character of the pioneer mission similar to that of the well-known CMS mission in New Zealand? Can the early Marists' marginalisation in New Zealand historiography be explained by comparing their progress and achievements with that of the CMS and other missions in the Pacific during the same period? Or is it possible to demonstrate that the early Marist experience is relevant and significant, and that its 'failure' is intertwined with the changing political, social and cultural situations in New Zealand? The following history of the early Marist mission will help to validate Porter's statement that: "The search for converts as well as its success or failure always reflected local social and political conditions."<sup>2</sup>

If we consider the local social and political conditions affecting the pioneer Marist Māori Mission, it is obvious that these conditions as an ensemble are rather unique in Oceania in the period 1838-1850; British colonial efforts and progress made by pioneer Protestant missions presented the early Marists with an increasingly anglicised New Zealand where British infrastructure and systems were swiftly implemented. In spite of their marginalised position, the French missionaries succeeded in helping to form Catholic Māori communities, and found their services in high demand as European settlers and soldiers, particularly those of Irish origins, flooded into the country as part of colonising company and government immigration

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 164.

schemes. Over fifty French Marists are recorded as having worked either part-time or full-time on the Māori Mission in New Zealand in the nineteenth century, but many of these were simultaneously or subsequently responsible for nearby Pākehā parishioners, whose needs seemed to take priority over Māori in the changing administrative structure of the Catholic Church in New Zealand. The nature of cultural contact and experience was characterised by their position as Frenchmen, which worked to their disadvantage as much as to their advantage among Māori and proved to be problematic in their work among Irish Catholic settlers.

From the outset the Marists' evangelising mission seems to have entailed a continuous struggle to make ends meet, to maintain their dignity despite their poverty and to overcome their social and cultural marginalisation in a budding British colony. It is this very struggle that will be highlighted, in the context of pioneer missions to Oceania, so as to provide an understanding of the difficulties faced by early missionaries and the extent to which the Marists in New Zealand were prevented or prevented themselves from achieving the success that Bishop Pompallier had envisaged. With so many temporal obstacles before them, it is not surprising that a number of French Marists withdrew or retired from the Māori mission, preferring to take up parish positions in Pākehā settlements or even back in France. But it is somewhat surprising that they established a Māori Mission at all, given the numerous factors that hindered them from even gaining a foothold in New Zealand, the greatest of which was arguably the presence of CMS missionaries in the far North. The Rev. Samuel Marsden of the CMS arrived at the end of 1814, accompanied by three lay missionaries, to found an Anglican mission in the Bay of Islands, and by 1838 the Anglican Church had established a strong foothold in the North Island. But their mission stations only extended as far south as the Bay of Plenty and Poverty Bay, which signalled to the French Marists that their Mission had a fighting chance against the spread of 'heresy' in the Pacific.

## Chapter 1: Establishing a Foothold

### 1.1 *Missionaries in New Zealand, 1814-1838*

New Zealand was a land of possibility and opportunity when the first missionaries arrived in December 1814. There were no rival missionaries to contend with and no colonial government in place to curtail individual enterprise. Samuel Marsden's evangelising initiative took the form of a 'civilising mission' whereby three lay missionaries would introduce European systems and values, such as education and trades. Marsden had advised the Church Missionary Society that "nothing, in my opinion, can pave the way for the introduction of the Gospel, but civilization; and that can only be accomplished amongst the heathen by the arts; I would recommend that Three Mechanics be appointed to make the first attempt."<sup>1</sup> Hence the three earliest missionaries, Thomas Kendall, William Hall and John King, made very little impact on the religious life of Māori in the Bay of Islands, bringing instead the influences of education and industry. In fact the first twelve CMS missionaries in New Zealand followed this trend and were therefore well-equipped to build stations which could guarantee future self-sufficiency for the mission, as well as providing for the day-to-day needs of Europeans living on the stations. "The range of their former occupations covers everything from teacher to coach painter. In between are sandwiched a joiner, a blacksmith, a nurseryman, two small farmers, a shoe maker, a shopkeeper in a small way, captain of a small boat and a fist full of carpenters."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Transplanted Christianity*, p. 26 [sourced from Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, London 1806-1809, pp. 961-963].

<sup>2</sup> Robert Glen, 'Those Odious Evangelicals: The origins and background of CMS missionaries in New Zealand' in *Mission and Moko: The Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814-1882*, ed. by Robert Glen (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship of New Zealand, 1992), p. 33.



Establishing a foothold in New Zealand was not the dangerous task it could have been if missionaries had attempted it in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, given the violent encounters between Māori and European explorers including Abel Tasman and Frenchman Marion du Fresne. There was no need for British trading vessels to protect the CMS missionaries because their leader, Marsden, had come at the invitation of a Māori chief who agreed to extend his personal protection to the pioneers. No threats or treaties were required, in contrast to the situation in China in 1842 when British traders forced open various ports including Nanking and Hong Kong, followed in 1844 by a Sino-French treaty for the same purpose, thus enabling “free operation of the missionaries”<sup>3</sup>; Kororāreka and other ports were already accommodating European and American traders well before the arrival of the CMS missionaries. Although the three pioneers Kendall, Hall and King were under the protection of Ngāpuhi leader Ruatara, they were heavily dependent on Māori for food, shelter and guides and were bound to the mission station at Rangihoua through the friendship forged between Marsden and Ruatara. When Ruatara died in 1815, his uncle Hongi Hika took over his role as protector of the missionaries and helped them to establish a second mission station at Kerikeri in 1819. Another way to view this was that without Ruatara and his protection, the station at Rangihoua was no longer viable and it was necessary for the missionaries to find another Māori leader on whom they could depend.

The first decade of the CMS mission necessarily involved financial hardships, especially since the Church Missionary Society in England was a young society still working to obtain adequate funding for its mission in India, and the missionaries were expected to create their own means of sustaining their mission to Māori. Kendall, Hall and King resented Marsden for his lack of effective leadership, but were able to escape their deprived lifestyle by secretly participating in the arms trade.<sup>4</sup> Once the Kerikeri mission station was up and running, CMS missionary families could expect a simple house and garden on top of their salaries, and were even purchasing land for

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt*, pp. 48-52.

their sons to take ownership of in the future.<sup>5</sup> The Anglican missionaries would later be accused of land-grabbing, especially since they were among the most frequent land buyers before New Zealand became a colony and British settlers flooded in.<sup>6</sup> By 1826, the mission had its own schooner and could therefore expand into the southern part of the North Island, yet they chose not to do so until the 1840s. The Waimate station began to yield crops in the 1830s but according to Morrell, “the work was laborious, labour was hard to get, the crops were uneconomic and self-sufficiency was not achieved.”<sup>7</sup> Not all missionaries were cut out for physical labour, as William Yate demonstrated at the Waimate mission station with his frequent refusals to assist with manual tasks.<sup>8</sup>

While the first CMS missionaries were invited to establish a mission in Rangihoua, the first Wesleyan missionaries were extremely vulnerable to Māori when they attempted a mission station near the Whangaroa harbour in 1823. ‘Wesley Dale’, as they named it, was sacked and burned to the ground in 1827 by a Ngāti Uru raiding party connected with Hongi Hika, prompting the Wesleyan missionaries Nathaniel Turner and John Hobbs to seek refuge in the Hokianga instead. Patuone, a prominent Ngāpuhi chief, offered his protection so that the Wesleyans could establish a mission in Mangungu in 1828. That same year, Hongi Hika died and the CMS missionaries were left vulnerable to attacks and raids, having enjoyed over a decade of Hongi’s protection.

By the time the Catholic missionaries reached New Zealand in 1838, the Anglicans had created five major mission stations in the far north (Rangihoua, Kerikeri, Paihia, Waimate, and Kaitaia) while the Wesleyans had established themselves in the Hokianga (Mangungu and Pakanae) and Kaipara. CMS attempts to penetrate Puriri (Thames River), Mangapouri, and Rotorua in the early 1830s had had little impact because of intertribal conflicts.<sup>9</sup> Although their dominant presence in the north

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<sup>5</sup> Nola Easdale, *Missionary and Maori: Kerikeri, 1819-1860* (Lincoln, N.Z.: Te Waihora Press, 1991), pp. 28, 79-80.

<sup>6</sup> Dom Felice Vaggioli, *History of New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, trans. by John Crockett (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000), p. 48.

<sup>7</sup> Morrell, p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Morrell, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Morrell, pp. 12-13.

disheartened the Marists, the Protestant missionaries had barely expanded outside of Tai Tokerau, leaving a large part of the country still to be visited and evangelised. Michael O’Meeghan proposes that if Pompallier had established his mission base at Port Nicholson, where only a handful of Europeans had settled prior to the Wakefield<sup>10</sup> initiative, he might have had greater success among Māori.<sup>11</sup>

## ***1.2 Dependence and trade***

Pompallier selected the Hokianga for his first station<sup>12</sup> largely because a Catholic Irishman, Thomas Poynton, had extended his hospitality to any representatives of the Catholic Church willing to establish themselves in the area. It was Poynton who helped the pioneering Marists acquire Māori language skills, language being one of the initial setbacks which all missionaries would have to overcome if they were to earn the respect of Māori and establish a mission among them. There were a small number of French and Italian Catholics in New Zealand at this time, some of whom played a role in helping to set up the Catholic Māori missions. An Italian, Dominique Ferraris, provided some land for the early Whangaroa mission, and Frenchman Emile Borel assisted with labouring tasks and Māori translations on Matamata and Rangiaowhia missions in the Waikato.<sup>13</sup>

Hokianga was also one of the ports from which ships departed regularly for Sydney, thus ensuring that the Marists would not be cut off from the rest of the world. Immediately Pompallier and his party of Marists met with resistance from Wesleyan missionary Nathaniel Turner and his Māori adherents. Without the protection of local chiefs, the early Catholic missionaries were at the mercy of Protestant missionaries and Māori who had possibly been goaded by them. Preceded by Anglican missionaries by more than twenty years, the French Catholic party appeared to be at a

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<sup>10</sup> Edward Gibbon Wakefield established the New Zealand Company in 1839 and sent his brother William Wakefield to purchase land from Māori that same year. By 1842 four major European settlements had developed as a result of Wakefield’s scheme: Port Nicholson (Wellington), Petre (Wanganui), Nelson and New Plymouth.

<sup>11</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> For descriptions of the Marist mission stations, see Appendix C.

<sup>13</sup> Tremewan, ‘French Tupuna: French-Maori Families’, p. 120.

glaring disadvantage and Pompallier was essentially powerless; yet the CMS missionary presence was still largely limited to northern parts of New Zealand.

Dependence on Māori characterised all of the early missions in New Zealand, and contemporary Marist Michael O’Meeghan argues that the “The missionaries – as the settlers – were very dependent upon the Maori... The Missionaries received what status they had from those (chiefs) who chose to adopt them. Needless to say this fact does not feature prominently in the dominant Catholic interpretation.”<sup>14</sup> In fact, economic dependence on Māori was an enduring characteristic of the Catholic mission, whereas the CMS and WMS were running several self-sufficient mission stations by the 1840s. Indeed reliance, not only on Māori but on anyone who could offer charity to the Catholic mission, exemplified the powerlessness of the Marist missionaries in New Zealand, and the Marist Māori mission would function this way even towards the end of the nineteenth century. Pompallier owed a great deal of his early ‘success’ in establishing mission stations to helpful and charitable ship captains, settlers and chiefs, some of whom were Protestants.

It is disappointing for the historian that the Marists often did not provide the names of their Māori companions and guides in the letters they sent back to France. Perhaps the missionaries felt that their readers would not be interested in the names of individuals whom they would never meet or see. It is unlikely that the French Marists omitted their names and referred to most of them simply as ‘a native’ or ‘one of our natives’ because Māori individuals were not valued by the Marist missionaries; the few named catechists and Catholic chiefs (albeit Catholic names given to them at baptism) are described with the greatest respect and gratitude. The early Marists were aware that their dependence on Māori guides was the only means by which the Fathers could make any progress, for without them the missionaries would have been completely unable to locate the scattered iwi and hapū in their mission districts. The Marists could also be transferred to a different station according to the changing needs of the overall mission, forcing them to abandon tribes they had come to know and establish themselves all over again in a new environment where they would require an alliance

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<sup>14</sup> Kerin Schmidt, ‘Mission to the Maori 1838-1870’ in *The Society of Mary in New Zealand, 1838, 1889-1989*, ed. by Peter Ewart (Wellington: Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Mary, 1989), p. 6.

with local Māori to assume their itinerant way of life once more. Such reliance on certain Māori was necessarily a drawback for the expansion of the mission, as Father Catherin Servant quickly learned in the Hokianga. The Father regrets that “Our Hokianga tribes may have suffered for lack of visits; however, those who are doing well came once in a while to guide me to their home, but the natives generally do not want to guide me free of charge to a tribe other than their own.”<sup>15</sup>

The early missionaries’ need for Māori guides entailed more than simply navigation; it was crucial for their survival in a brutal environment where the terrain was rugged and varied. The Frenchmen were assigned vast mission territories, containing many widely spread Māori communities that they were expected to visit regularly on foot or by waka. Fathers Jean Lampila and Maxime Petit, who replaced Father Servant in Hokianga in 1842, found their Māori companions indispensable:

(...) here it is a swamp to get through, there a river to cross, one sometimes so deep that we cannot cross it without a canoe, so that more than once we are unable to see such and such a tribe through lack of this resource. On our journey to Ahipara (some thirty leagues from the station), we did not experience these inconveniences: the Zealanders’ esteem for Monsignor and also a certain number of natives who accompanied us served us marvellously in overcoming all of these obstacles.<sup>16</sup>

The Fathers assigned to the stations in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty in the 1840s were faced with the same obstacle as the earliest Marists: there was no option but to befriend local Māori and walk the hundreds of square kilometres that made up the Fathers’ mission districts. Father Séon, stationed at Matamata, pointed out the varied topographies of the early mission districts in a letter to the Marist Superior in 1843:

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<sup>15</sup> « Nos tribus d’Hokianga ont pu souffrir à défaut de visites; cependant celles qui vont bien sont venues de temps en temps me conduire chez elles, mais les naturels généralement ne veulent pas me conduire gratuitement dans une tribu différente de la leur », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 121, 20 December 1841, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> « (...) là c’est un marais à franchir, ici une rivière à passer quelquefois si profonde qu’on ne peut la passer sans pirogue, de sorte qu’il doit arriver plus d’une fois qu’on ne puisse voir telle ou telle tribu, faute de ce moyen. Dans notre voyage de A[h]ipara (à une trentaine de lieues de l’établissement), nous n’avons pas éprouvé ces inconvénients: la considération dont jouit Monseig(neu)r auprès des Zélandais et puis un certain nombre de naturels qui nous accompagnaient nous ont merveilleusement servis pour surmonter tous ces obstacles », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 237, 12 February 1843, Bay of Islands, Lampila to Colin, p. 3.

The journeys are long: I would count almost forty leagues from one end of my station to the very last tribes, and others even further away beg me to go amongst them. I could not accurately tell you the number of sheep in my flock, a thousand or five-hundred. On these rounds we do one or two days of walking without coming across a single dwelling.

The natives themselves are divided into a small number of families and are at one or half a day's [journey] from each other, separated by paths cut off by swamps, rivers, forests and mountains; this is my lot. Father Pezant has the sea which thwarts him; the Rotorua station has lakes; and that of Opotiki, where Fathers Comte and Reignier are, has rivers which they must cross fifteen to twenty times.<sup>17</sup>

In New Zealand an odd sight, but not uncommon in the early mission years, was that of Māori carrying not only missionaries' gear but the European missionaries themselves, whom they held on their shoulders as they crossed rivers, streams and swamps. Local waterways were particularly dangerous for the foreign missionary because he had neither the physical strength nor the experience to cross safely and relied entirely on the Māori guide to make a safe crossing. In the following anecdote Father Servant and Bishop Pompallier attempted to traverse a swamp in the Hokianga:

I recall that one day, Monsignor having wanted to visit some tribes, we became stuck in a swamp because the natives who were guiding us were not very good guides; one of them, who was carrying me on his shoulders, sank into the swamp, taking his load with him. He called out to his companion for help, but his companion likewise sank into it. At last, after a great deal of effort, we escaped from the danger...<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> « Les voyages sont longs: je compte près de quarante lieux d'un bout de ma station jusqu'aux dernières tribus; et d'autres encore plus loin [me] prient d'aller au milieu d'elles. Je ne vous dirais pas au juste le nombre des ouailles, mille ou quinze cents. Dans ces courses on fait un et deux jours de marche sans rencontrer une seule habitation.

Les naturels sont eux-mêmes divisés en familles peu nombreuses et éloignées les unes des autres d'un jour, d'un demi jour, par des chemins coupés de marais, de rivières, de forêts, de montagnes; voilà ma part. Le p(ère) Pesant a la mer qui le contrarie; la station de Rotorua, des lacs; et celle d'Opotiki, où sont les pères Comte et Regniers, des rivières qu'il faut passer de quinze à vingt fois », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 253, 28 April 1843, Matamata, Séon to Colin, pp. 2-3.

<sup>18</sup> « Je me rappelle qu'un jour m(onseigneur) ayant voulu visiter quelques tribus nous fûmes engagés dans un marais parce que les naturels qui nous conduisoient n'étoient pas de bons guides; celui d'entr'eux qui me portoit sur ses épaules enfonça et avec lui son fardeau. Il appela à son secours son compagnon qui s'enfonça pareillement, enfin après beaucoup d'efforts nous échappâmes au danger », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 31, 16 September 1838, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 4.

Over the next decade, the practice of relying on Māori guides and helpers continued in this way. It is not surprising that while European settlements and towns flourished in New Zealand the Marist missionaries were still relying heavily on Māori to carry out regular visits of their mission districts, given the lack of infrastructure that prevailed in the young colony; this was not remedied until the main railway trunk had been built in the North Island, and even after its construction remote coastal or riverside settlements, as well as inland communities in the South Island, were barely accessible. Father Moreau in 1850 wrote to his cousin in France that Māori:

(...) lend themselves to all that one wishes of them, and willingly become your domestics for all of the services you desire. If there is a river, a stream, or difficult terrain to cross, he [the Maori] willingly lends you his shoulder and presents himself with the utmost grace in helping you across to the other side. If there is a load or a parcel to carry, for a modest price he will gladly take it and carry it wherever you like.<sup>19</sup>

In accordance with the Eurocentric view held by most, if not all, European missionaries in the early nineteenth century, the guides were also expected to act as servant and perhaps also packhorse, as can be discerned by Moreau's comments above. Could the early Marists have achieved their ends without the assistance of these guides who usually remained anonymous in missionary accounts? Missionaries of all denominations and in all locations relied on friendly indigenous guides and would certainly have been at a loss without them, whether travelling through the dense forests and across the lakes and rivers of New Zealand or across the reefs of the various Pacific Islands. Father Favier's Futunian guides carried his ceremonial and personal items for him so that he could journey more easily around the island. In 1845, Father Favier wrote:

The tracks are dreadful in Futuna; when we want to do a circuit of the island, we are obliged to travel almost continually either over jagged rocks, reefs, peaks, or in the seawater. Sometimes we pass over rocks where waves break and surge upwards to a height of 25 to 30 feet, so that,

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<sup>19</sup> « (...) se prêtent à tout ce qu'on veut, et se font volontiers vos domestiques pour tous les services que vous désirez. [...] Y a-t-il une rivière, un ruisseau, un mauvais pas à traverser, il vous prête volontiers ses épaules et s'offre de la meilleure grâce à vous passer de l'autre côté. Y a-t-il un fardeau, un paquet à porter, pour un prix modique, il se fera un plaisir de le prendre et de le porter où vous voudrez », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 947, 10 October 1850, Tauranga, Moreau to his cousin, pp. 1-2.

like it or not, the spray will end up on your back [...] In our travels we always bring with us two or three natives who are devoted to our service.<sup>20</sup>

In contrast to both Moreau's and Favier's testimonies, Father Bernard found that after a decade of European settlement, and a sudden influx of Europeans into the Canterbury region, Māori were now far more reluctant to assist the missionaries unless considerable remuneration was involved, and seemed remarkably indifferent to Catholicism compared with the Māori response to evangelisation in the North Island in the 1830s and 1840s. Situated in Banks Peninsula in 1851, Bernard informed Colin that he and Father Séon had "nobody to accompany us from place to place and carry our blanket and few provisions. The natives come only at an extraordinary cost, and even then they do not come when we want them to."<sup>21</sup>

Despite the many dangers and difficulties they faced, the early Marists were determined to carry out their mission work and travelled so frequently that they were essentially nomadic. This was in contrast to the early CMS missions in the Bay of Islands and Kerikeri, where the mission stations resembled a community centre including a house and school. Whereas many of the early CMS missionaries were lay missionaries and therefore had limited church authority, the Marist Fathers were more than simply evangelisers; as priests they had a multitude of duties which included administering to the sick and baptising or giving extreme unction to the dying, hence their visits to Māori villages often had a sense of urgency. An early Marist historian, Antoine Monfat, wrote this of the Marist pioneers "(...) more than once, so as not to let a sick person die without the last rites, for this sole purpose, they will undertake ten- to fifteen-hour journeys across the obstacles of the land and the perils of the

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<sup>20</sup> « Les chemins sont affreux à Futuna; lorsque nous voulons faire le tour de l'île, nous sommes obligés de voyager presque continuellement soit sur des rochers à pointes aiguës, soit sur des récifs, soit sur des hauteurs, soit dans l'eau de mer. Quelquefois nous passons sur des rochers sur lesquels les flots de la mer viennent se briser et jaillir jusqu'à la hauteur de 25 à 30 pieds, alors bon gré mal gré il faut les recevoir sur le dos [...] Dans nos voyages nous emmenons toujours avec nous deux ou trois naturels qui se sont consacrées à notre service », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 394, 27 August 1845, Futuna, Favier to Bourdier, pp. 14-15.

<sup>21</sup> « (...) personne pour nous accompagner de place en place et porter notre couverture et un peu de vivres. Les naturels ne viennent qu'à [sic] un prix extraordinaire, et encore ne viennent pas quand nous voulons », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 983, 22 January 1851, Akaroa, Bernard to Poupinel, p. 3.



waters.”<sup>22</sup> Māori were by no means inhospitable to visiting missionaries, but food and shelter often came at a material price that the charity-based Marists simply could not pay. The poverty of the Marists combined with the tough conditions of travelling in early New Zealand meant that the missionaries would arrive at their destinations “drenched all over with sweat and rain or splashes from the waters, often dying of hunger, always exhausted with fatigue.”<sup>23</sup> If Monfat’s portrayal of the Marist Fathers in New Zealand is romantic or hagiographic, the missionaries left their own testimonies of the constant trekking that enabled them to propagate the Catholic religion among different iwi and hapū. Furthermore, Father Bernard notes that Māori themselves, whose livelihood was largely dependent on agriculture and trade, did not have a sedentary lifestyle, which made missionaries’ visits even more challenging. Writing from Tauranga in 1844, Bernard explains:

(...) I do not see how, without a great miracle of grace, New Zealand could become truly Catholic. If these peoples do not come together into a social unit, and if they remain forever nomadic, I believe that humanly speaking we could never convert them. Today they are here, tomorrow they will be 5 or 6 leagues from here. They spend 7 to 8 months in their pa; then they disperse into the forest 5 or 6 leagues away to spend the winter, dig up potatoes and plant others.<sup>24</sup>

What dictated the mission’s dependence specifically on Māori was the Catholic Church view that the service provided by missionary or parish priest should be reciprocated by his ‘flock’. In other words, the Marists expected to be fed, sheltered and supported by Māori in exchange for evangelising and ‘enlightening’ them. The LMS had a similar attitude in the early period of their missions to the Pacific. According to Johnston: “The society expected that their missionaries should rely on

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<sup>22</sup> “(...) plus d’une fois, pour ne pas laisser mourir un malade sans les derniers secours, pour ce seul motif, ils entreprendront des courses de dix à quinze heures à travers les obstacles de la terre et les périls des eaux », Monfat, p. 11.

<sup>23</sup> « (...) tout mouillés de sueur et de pluie ou du rejaillissement des eaux, souvent mourant de faim, toujours épuisés de fatigue », *ibid*, p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> « Mais je ne vois pas sans un grand miracle de la grâce comment la Nouvelle Zélande pourra devenir vraiment catholique. Si ces peuples ne se réunisse pas en corps de société, et s’ils demeurent toujours vagabonds, je crois qu’humainement parlant nous ne pourrons jamais les convertir. Aujourd’hui ils sont ici, demain ils seront à 5 ou 6 lieues d’ici. Ils passent 7 à 8 mois dans leur pa; puis ils se dispersent dans les bois à 5 ou 6 lieues pour passer l’hiver, y arracher des pommes de terre et en planter d’autres », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 330, June & 11 August 1844, Tauranga, Bernard to Colin, p. 3.

the generosity of their local indigenous ‘congregations’ or on their own labours for supplies of food, clothing, and shelter, an optimistic theory which assumed that Polynesians were interested in maintaining a foreign presence in their communities.”<sup>25</sup> The LMS missionaries in Tonga and Tahiti, for example, found that evangelisation in the Pacific could only go hand in hand with trade and commerce; Polynesians were only interested in obtaining material goods from the missionaries and absorbed little of their religious teachings in the early years of each mission.

Marist Father Chevron and Brother Atale reached Tonga in mid-1842, at a time when the New Zealand mission was at a low point economically. The two missionaries were not in a dissimilar situation to that of the first Marists in New Zealand: Wesleyan missionaries had already gained a foothold in a key part of the country and established themselves at least two decades earlier, so that the Marists were immediately at a disadvantage. In addition, the local inhabitants were in no position to support the Catholic mission or its missionaries. Caroline Duriez-Toutain also highlights the dual importance of the Wesleyans’ capacity to provide medicines to the Tongan people, which “contributed largely to their success and limited, some years later, a mass conversion to Catholicism.”<sup>26</sup> Medicines were especially useful in the Pacific Islands where fevers and disease were more common than in New Zealand. Nevertheless Father Petit highlighted doctors as an asset to the CMS mission in New Zealand: “They have a doctor here who treats the natives; this has forced Monsignor to have his own for those who have turned toward the Catholic faith, for it would have been too dangerous to force them to resort to the Protestants’ doctor.”<sup>27</sup> Petit is referring to a doctor for the CMS missionaries, and the ‘danger’ lay not in any physical risk but in the mana which the Marists stood to lose, and which the CMS missionaries subsequently stood to gain, if Māori were referred to the CMS for medical care.

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<sup>25</sup> Johnston, p. 121.

<sup>26</sup> « (...) contribua largement à leur succes et limita, quelques années plus tard, un mouvement massif de conversions au catholicisme », Duriez-Toutain, p. 16.

<sup>27</sup> « Ils ont ici un médecin qui donnent ses soins à leurs naturels; ce qui a obligé m(onsei)g(neu)r d’avoir le sien pour ceux qui ont tourné à la foi catholique car il eut été trop dangereux de les obliger à avoir recours à celui des missionnaires », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 3.

It was a hunger for these items that sometimes drove Māori, and Pacific Islanders, to help themselves to Europeans' possessions. The French Marists in New Zealand were not only dependent but open to aggressions by Māori who were interested in their decorative Catholic ceremonial items or who were militant supporters of the CMS or Wesleyan Methodist missions. In the first year of the Marist Mission, before the bishop had earned the widespread esteem of northern Māori, the vulnerability of the Catholic mission undermined its effectiveness and led Māori to believe that Pompallier was a man they could dominate. Catherin Servant explains that:

Persecution against us was rampant from the beginning. A band of savages on 22nd January came to present themselves before the Bishop's house, with the intention, according to interpreters who were aural witnesses of this, of stealing items of worship and of getting rid of His Lordship and me.<sup>28</sup>

According to Servant, these Māori had a change of heart upon meeting the bishop in person, and subsequently struck up a friendship with him. But if Pompallier quickly captured the attention of Māori in the north with his elegance and stature, and with the gifts he offered to chiefs, Māori expectations to trade with or gain items from Pompallier's missionaries were just as quickly disappointed. As Father Borjon discovered in Maketū in 1841 when his mission house was ransacked, apparently at the order of chief Tangaroa, the priests were in a very different situation to their bishop. Unlike Pompallier, they had not acquired a great deal of mana and, at the complete mercy of Māori, they were only as valuable as the material items they could provide.<sup>29</sup> They were in a similar situation to the pioneer CMS missionaries, who had played a significant role in introducing Māori to muskets and who were responsible for creating the image of the missionary 'supplier' in New Zealand, an image which Pompallier greatly enhanced to the detriment of his missionaries. Father Séon in Matamata was dismayed that Māori had come to expect material goods from the missionaries and resorted to theft if their curiosity or cupidity could not be appeased:

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<sup>28</sup> « (...) La persécution a sévi dès le commencement contre nous. Une troupe de sauvages le 22 janvier vint se présenter devant la maison épiscopale, avec le projet, suivant le rapport d'interprètes qui en furent témoins auriculaires, avec le projet d'enlever les objets de culte et de disposer de Sa Grandeur à volonté, de Sa Grandeur et de moi », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 27, 22 May 1838, Servant to Tholière, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Philip Turner, 'The Politics of Neutrality: the Catholic Mission and the Maoris 1838-1870' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Auckland, 1986), pp.161-162, 172.

Libertinism is very great in certain pa, and theft widespread; there are few journeys where one does not lose something in this way especially in regard to tobacco. Whether outside or in my place of residence I have been robbed ten times at least. I should add however that my journal was recognised as a stolen object in the hands of a Maori, who was whipped by his chiefs, one of whom journeyed 18 leagues to return it to me.<sup>30</sup>

What the Marists sometimes tended to forget was that Māori-European relations were founded on trade. While the desire for material items was undeniably strong among Māori, there were necessarily numerous greed-driven European individuals fueling this desire and coming away with a better deal than Māori. If the Marist missionaries were harangued by Māori for clothing, books and other goods, it was largely because that was the norm; given the missionaries' considerable dependence on Māori, it seems only fair that Māori initially expected some kind of reciprocity, Christian salvation notwithstanding. Paul Moon confirms that:

(...) trade was the most important driving force affecting relationships between Maori and European, and with astute business sense the relationship could be managed very profitably. Europeans were far from being in mortal danger when entering Maori communities; they were more likely to be prized as bringers of wealth.<sup>31</sup>

What Māori desired most from Pompallier was an item that presumably could not be taken by force: a Catholic priest of their own. Frustrated with Pompallier's incapacity to provide northern iwi with the permanent missionary presence they had long been promised, a group of Ngāti Whare or Ngāti Manawa Māori travelled to the bishop's residence in Kororāreka. The bishop had no choice but to give the visiting party exactly what they had come for. Father Servant recounts that there were:

(...) about twenty natives from the Whirinaki tribe who, on behalf of the whole tribe, left for the Bay of Islands with the intention of asking Monsignor our bishop for a priest to instruct them,

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<sup>30</sup> « Le libertinage est très-grand dans certains pa; le vol bien répandu; il est peu de voyage où l'on ne perde quelque chose de cette manière surtout en fait de tabac. Soit dehors soit au lieu de ma résidence, j'ai été volé dix fois au moins. Je dois ajouter cependant que mon diurnal, ayant été reconnu comme objet volé entre les mains d'un Maori, ses chefs le fustigèrent et l'un d'eux fit 18 lieux pour me le rapporter », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 253, 28 April 1843, Matamata, Séon to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> Moon, p. 90.

and who returned with dear Father Comte, triumphant to have succeeded in obtaining a priest which they had long since desired.<sup>32</sup>

Similarly in 1841 Ngāi Te Rangi chief Tomika Te Mutu, an important patron of the Catholic mission in Tauranga, pressured Pompallier into providing a Marist priest for the Waikato region. Pompallier, realising that the Tauranga mission would be in jeopardy if he did not fulfil Tomika Te Mutu's request, immediately appointed Father Séon to Matamata.<sup>33</sup> According to Arvidson, this was "a somewhat ineffective placement given the strength of Anglicanism in that district."<sup>34</sup> Clearly Māori dictated the direction of the early mission, inviting or forcing Pompallier to establish stations among particular iwi and hapū.

### ***1.3 Reception of missionaries***

Since first impressions were important in gaining entry to the islands, it seemed to bode well for the earliest European missionaries in the Pacific that they were mistaken for gods or powerful wizards and were thus a useful ally to the local chief or sovereign. Anne Salmond relates that Māori were awestruck when Samuel Marsden mounted his horse near Rangihoua, since this was the first time Māori had observed a man riding an animal.<sup>35</sup> In 1845, a year and a half after the Marists' arrival in New Caledonia, Father Rougeyron noted that the Kanak were still largely unaware of European science and progress: "Since their island has hardly ever been visited by Europeans, they still possess a great image of the white man. They ascribe us power over the wind and rain. The sky, according to them, is the land that we inhabit and they came to this conclusion because they saw our ships on the horizon touching the

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<sup>32</sup> « (...) une vingtaine de naturels de la tribu de Wirinaki qui, au nom de toute la tribu, étoient partis pour la Baie des îles dans le dessein de demander à m(onsei)g(neu)r notre évêque un prêtre pour les instruire et qui revenoient avec le cher p(ère) Comte tout triomphants d'avoir réussi à obtenir un prêtre qu'ils désiroient depuis longtemps », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 52, 5 March 1840, Servant to Colin, Bay of Islands, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Cynthia Piper, 'Missionary and Maori' in *Turanga Ngatahi*, p. 16.

<sup>34</sup> K. O. Arvidson, 'Evangelisation, Sectarianism and Ecumenism', in *Turanga Ngatahi*, p. 78.

<sup>35</sup> Anne Salmond, *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges Between Maori and Europeans 1773-1815* (Auckland: Viking/Penguin, 1997), pp. 460-461.

sky.”<sup>36</sup> Father Douarre added that in New Caledonia “the mission offers great hopes. We have neither whites nor Protestants, and a population that heeds us.”<sup>37</sup>

The method of distributing gifts, as used by Pompallier, was by no means common practice throughout the Pacific; in fact the methods used to win the interest and loyalty of potential converts varied from island to island, and in some cases acceptance among them was achieved less by design and more by fortuity interconnected with a typical missionary action such as charity, caring for the sick and wounded. In Wallis Father Bataillon tended to a young member of the royal family who had fallen ill; the youth’s recovery was attributed to the French missionary’s ability as a healer and he subsequently won the trust and respect of Wallisians and the tolerance of their king.

In 1842 Marist Fathers Grange and Chevron were faced with the total antithesis of the ‘white wizard’ image when they established their mission in Tonga. It would have shocked nineteenth-century Europe to learn that Tongans, whom they viewed as an inferior, uncivilised race, believed that “white people belong to a degenerate race, and anyone who is not Tongan is a vile, miserable person, a nobody.”<sup>38</sup> Grange himself writes:

In the same way that, in former times, anyone who was neither Greek nor Roman was considered barbarous, he who is not from the sacred island (this is what Tonga tabou signifies) is ignorant and has the status of a slave according to the notions of our islanders. If the King of France were to come here, he would no doubt be offered great signs of respect, though of a lesser degree than those offered to the King [of Tonga] and to the principal chiefs. Nevertheless

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<sup>36</sup> « Comme leur île n’avait presque pas été visitée par les Européens, ils ont encore une grande idée du blanc. Ils nous attribuent la puissance sur la pluie et le vent. Le ciel, selon eux, est la terre que nous habitons, et ils l’ont conclu parcequ’ils voyaient nos navires à l’horison toucher le ciel », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 407, 1 October 1845, New Caledonia, Rougeyron to Colin, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> « (...) la mission offre de grandes espérances. Nous n’avons ni blancs ni protestans, une population qui n[ous] écoute », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 408, 3 October 1845, New Caledonia, Douarre to Father de Meydat, p. 5.

<sup>38</sup> « Pour eux, les blancs appartiennent à une race dégénérée, et tout ce qui n’est pas Tongien est personne de rien, vile, misérable », Jean Hervier, *Les missions maristes en Océanie* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1902), pp. 44-45.

the lowest slave in Tonga would consider himself to be of nobler origin than he [the king of France].<sup>39</sup>

Two years later Fathers Roulleaux-Dubignon and Bréhéret and Brother Annet Pérol arrived in Lakeba as pioneer Marists for the Fiji mission. With no support or resources from their bishop, they were forced to fend for themselves and were, like the Marists in Tonga, largely met with indifference on the part of the indigenous inhabitants of Fiji. Bishop Bataillon was aware of the difficulties confronting these missionaries, but either could not or would not offer them assistance and wrote to Colin, probably to exonerate himself: “Only in Fiji have our *poor* fathers truly suffered, but because of an unforeseen circumstance: the natives have been forbidden to give or sell anything to our missionaries.”<sup>40</sup> The source of this prohibition was probably the anti-Catholic influence of the Wesleyan missionaries who had already been active in Fiji since 1835.

By the 1840s European presence was strong in the Pacific and many indigenous cultures had absorbed a great deal of European items, skills and concepts. If the Tongans viewed the missionaries as inferior, they nevertheless expected to benefit from the technological advances that the western world had made. Again, trading proved to be the key to a relationship between the missionary and the indigenous people he hoped to convert, but the Marists had nothing to trade and realised that the greater the contact with the European world, the higher the expectations would be. Father Chevron described the difficulty he faced in meeting material demands in Tonga:

Our position is very different here compared with in Futuna; to [the inhabitants of] the latter, everything made them happy because everything was new to them. Here we find ourselves

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<sup>39</sup> « De même qu'autrefois qui n'était pas grec ou romain étoit considéré comme barbare, ainsi d'après les idées de nos insulaires, celui qui n'est pas de l'île sacrée (c'est ce que signifie Tonga tabou) , est ignorant et esclave. Si le roi de France venait ici, on lui donnerait sans doute de grandes marques de respect, moins toutefois qu'au roi et aux principaux chefs. Néanmoins le dernier esclave de Tonga se croirait d'origine plus noble que lui », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 264, 1 July 1843, Tongatapu, Grange to Nicoud, p. 3.

<sup>40</sup> « Il n'y a qu'à Fidji où nos *pauvres* p(ères) ont réellement souffert, mais à cause d'une circonstance imprévue: on avoit défendu de donner ou de vendre rien à nos missionnaires », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 577, 10 December 1846, aboard the *Arche d'Alliance*, Bataillon to Colin, p. 4.

among natives who are accustomed to European products. Ships visited them often. For a long time now they have been familiar with solid, well-crafted tools from England, introduced to them by the Protestant missionaries. They sell them lustrous printed calicoes, and now they are perhaps harder to please with all these things than people in France.<sup>41</sup>

In New Zealand the CMS missionary William Richard Wade believed that the Bay of Islands in general was too corrupt to make headway with Māori mission work. Kororāreka, which had been frequented by whalers and other traders since the beginning of the century, was a centre for drunkenness and lawlessness, earning the famous label ‘the Hell-hole of the Pacific’.<sup>42</sup> Stationed at Waimate in 1834, Wade established the Te Papa mission in Tauranga the following year and later commented that: “my residence at Tauranga has given me an insight into the character and habits of the Natives, which ten years residence in the neighbourhood of the Bay of Islands would not afford.”<sup>43</sup> Having established missions at Papakawau and Totara in the Hokianga, Bishop Pompallier decided to uproot the procure house and headquarters of his mission in 1839 to Kororāreka in the Bay of Islands, another port which had frequent contact with ships from Sydney. The move might be considered, in hindsight, as unwise because of the high cost of living and adverse influence of lawless European settlement.

There was an advantage in being stationed in the Bay of Islands at this time; the demand for missionaries in New Zealand came from not only northern Māori but also from Māori visiting the Bay of Islands or returning to their homes after being held captive by Hongi Hika. These Māori extended invitations to come and preach to iwi and hapū all over the country, and the missionaries eagerly accepted. In this respect,

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<sup>41</sup> « Notre position est bien différente ici de ce qu'elle étoit à Foutouna; à ces derniers tout faisoit plaisir parce que tout étoit nouveau; ici nous nous trouvons avec des naturels habitués aux ouvrages européens. Ils ont eu souvent la visite de navires. Depuis long temps les missionnaires protestants les ont habitués aux outils solides et bien travaillés d'Angleterre. On leur vend des indiennes brillantes, et maintenant ils sont en tout cela plus difficile peut être qu'on ne l'est en France », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 307, after 17 January 1844, Tonga, Chevron to family, pp. 1-2.

<sup>42</sup> The source of the name ‘Hell-hole of the Pacific’ is attributed to visitors of Kororāreka before British annexation occurred; it also reflects the CMS missionaries’ view of the settlement. Charles Darwin described the Europeans in Kororāreka as ‘the very refuse of society’. See Richard Wolfe, *Hell-Hole of the Pacific* (Auckland: Penguin, 2005), p. 54.

<sup>43</sup> Alexander Turnbull Library, Letter from William Richard Wade, 4 August 1836, Waimate, MS-Papers-6570, p. 1.



Māori, rather than the qualities of the missionary himself, were responsible for the spread of Christianity. The Wesleyan Māori mission founded in Te Aro in 1839, before the settlement of Port Nicholson, was the result of an invitation from Minarapa Rangihatuake of Ngā Mahanga. Minarapa had been a prisoner of Ngāpuhi and became a lay preacher for the Wesleyan church.<sup>44</sup> As the demands for missionaries from all three denominations began to grow, the CMS, Wesleyan and Marist missions expanded accordingly.

It is worth noting that, while each mission station offered its own problems and disadvantages, Fathers Baty and Servant felt in 1840 that they had been appointed to a particularly difficult part of the country. Hokianga had been exposed to Europeans, Protestant missionaries and industrialisation before the rest of the North Island, apart from the Bay of Islands. Baty believed that the more recently arrived Marist contingents would have a better chance of success than the missionaries at the northern stations, where Pompallier had first established the Catholic mission:

(...) the new generation will perhaps be less difficult to rescue than the generation which has been so strongly imbued since childhood with all the errors, which has grown up in evil and which is enslaved under the devil's empire. But what can I say, I do not know what will become of the new generation with the multiplicity of Europeans, of ships, of trade, all things which do not have holy results. Note well that I speak to you of Hokianga; it seems that elsewhere the natives have better dispositions and far fewer relations with Europeans, with the exception of a few ports.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> John H. Roberts, *The Wesleyan Maori Mission in Te Upoko o te Ika 1839-1885* (Christchurch: Methodist Publishing, 1922), pp. 11, 14.

<sup>45</sup> « (...) la génération nouvelle sera peut-être moins difficile à ramener que celle qui a été si fortement imbue dès son enfance de toutes les erreurs, qui a vieilli dans le crime et qui est asservie sous l'empire du démon. Mais que dis-je, la génération nouvelle, je ne sais pas ce qu'elle deviendra avec la multiplicité des Européens, des navires, du commerce, toutes choses qui n'ont pas des résultats de sainteté. Notez bien que je vous parle d'Hokianga, il paraît qu'ailleurs les naturels ont des dispositions meilleures et beaucoup moins de rapports avec les Européens, si l'on en excepte quelques ports assez peu nombreux », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 66, 4 August 1840, Hokianga, Baty to Girard, p. 2.

## 1.4 Language

Māori mission work had been carried out by Pompallier and Father Servant since their arrival at the beginning of 1838. Pompallier had hoped that the second contingent of missionaries would not only replace him in the field, but also take control of daily tasks and transactions in the increasingly British town of Kororāreka, thus enabling him to visit other parts of his vicariate. Pompallier was clearly dissatisfied with Colin's failure to have the Marists gain knowledge of the English language before leaving France:

I cannot wait for one of the two fathers or even both of them to be able to speak the language of the land in order to relieve me; for a year and a half now I have been obliged to cope with everything on my own, even at the school for natives, whose language is not known by my English schoolmaster. In addition, since neither one of my two missionaries here at the Bay of Islands knows any English I must be dragged in to deal with outsiders regarding the slightest of details in the house. How unfortunate it is, my reverend Father, that not one of them who has come here knows how to speak the English language! It is a useful language for all my missionaries in this area, and necessary for some of them, above all those who I could prepare for an institution. I have been aware of this since my stay in Le Havre before leaving France and I wrote to you about it. Henceforth I beseech you to make those whom you see as capable of directing a mission and an institution learn this language, so that they are at least able to make themselves understood at the moment of their departure; during the voyage they can finish acquiring it; otherwise it is an overwhelming task on the mission field to have to learn two languages at the same time.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> « Il me tarde bien que l'un des deux père et même tous les deux puissent parler la langue du pays pour me soulager, car voilà un [an et] demi que je suis obligé tout seul de [faire] face à tout, même à l'école des naturels dont la langue n'est pas connue de mon maître d'école anglais. En outre, comme aucun de mes deux missionnaires ici à la Baie des îles ne sait l'anglais, il faut que je me mêle des moindres détails de la maison avec l'extérieur. Qu'il est fâcheux, mon r(évérénd) père, qu'aucun de ceux qui sont venus n'ait pas sçu la [langue] anglaise! C'est une langue utile à tous mes missionnaires en ces parages et nécessaire à quelques uns, surtout à ceux que je pourrais préparer à quelque établissement. J'avais compris dès mon séjour au Havre avant de quitter la France et je vous en écrivis: dorénavant je vous prie bien de faire apprendre cette langue à ceux que vous voyez être capable de bien diriger une mission et un établissement, qu'ils soient à même au moins de se faire comprendre au moment de leur départ, dans la traversée ils peuvent finir de l'acquérir; autrement c'est un ouvrage accablant sur les lieux de la mission d'être obligé d'apprendre deux langues tout à la fois », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 8.

The bishop even sent a small book in 1839 to the Marist priests of the novitiate in Lyon to help them with the learning of languages for the purposes of missionary work in New Zealand.<sup>47</sup> The earliest Marists could not have anticipated the extent to which the Bay of Islands had become dominated by English speakers, thus Pompallier stressed the need for priests to have some knowledge of the English language for the following reasons:

1) because of the Europeans flooding into our islands and speaking only English, it is absolutely necessary to carry out ministry in English for those who are Catholic; 2) many falsities have been delivered against the Catholic Church, and nothing is more common during the visits that we receive, and those that we are obliged to pay out of politeness, than to see ourselves led into a conversation on religious matters, as would be expected; but all this takes place in English, and often the most harmful impressions would be made in their minds if nobody from the mission dispelled, with sound reasons given in English, the falsities and sophisms of heresy; 3) the director of a mission house is naturally its procurator; he must have relations with Europeans for small purchases, minor affairs concerning some work to be done for the erection or maintenance of the establishment, and also, for the provisions necessary to their subsistence; in all these cases English is indispensable.<sup>48</sup>

More important than English was the Māori language, which the CMS missionary Thomas Kendall was the first to document with his 1815 publication *A korao no New Zealand*.<sup>49</sup> Māori were eager to see chapels erected and a priest in residence, and their impatience was shared by the Marists who were continually aware that they were competing against the better-resourced Protestant missionaries in New Zealand. But Pompallier and the earliest missionaries found it difficult to satisfy Māori enthusiasm because they were at the very first phase of establishing their mission whereas the

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<sup>47</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 35, 20 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to novitiate priests, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> « 1<sup>o</sup> parce [que] les Européens affluant dans nos îles et ne parlant que l'anglais, il faut nécessairement exercer le ministère en anglais à l'égard de ceux qui sont catholiques; 2<sup>o</sup> bien des faussetés se débitent contre l'église catholique, et rien n'est plus fréquent dans les visites qu'on reçoit et qu'on est obligé de rendre par civilité, de se voir conduit en conversation sur des matières religieuses et de fait, mais tout cela se passe en anglais, et souvent les plus funestes impressions se faisoient sur les esprits si personne de la mission ne dissipoit, par de solides raisons données en anglais, les faussetés et les sophismes de l'hérésie; 3<sup>o</sup> le directeur d'une maison de mission en est naturellement le premier économiste, il faut qu'il ait des rapports avec les Européens pour de petits achats, de petites affaires concernant quelque ouvrage à faire pour l'érection ou la conservation de l'établissement, et puis, pour les provisions nécessaires à la subsistance; en tous ces cas l'anglais est indispensable », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 34, 18 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas Kendall, *A korao no New Zealand; or, the New Zealander's first book; being an attempt to compose some lessons for the instruction of the natives* (Sydney: [n.pub], 1815).

CMS had laid the groundwork and were now ready to expand. Father Servant wrote of the disappointment and pressure that characterised the first year of the Marist Mission and that perhaps explains Pompallier's subsequent willingness to throw caution to the wind and send missionaries out into the field as soon as they arrived in New Zealand.

Before we even knew the language of the land, the people of the island were complaining that Catholic ministers were taking too long to visit them and instruct them. But Monsignor had it explained to them that it was necessary to make visits rare in order to learn their language instead... Some tribes have even anticipated the wishes of His Lordship by offering to build a chapel on their territory. Similar requests have been made by numerous natives for religious instruction, which we were unable to give them, not yet knowing their language!<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, with the CMS well-established in the north, Māori language was essential if the Marists were to counter the anti-Catholic teachings of the Anglican Church that had already enjoyed wide publicity through printed pamphlets and general preaching. Father Philippe Viard discovered early on, in an encounter with the Māori Protestant 'Matthew', that the inability to converse in Māori left him ill-equipped to defend himself in sectarian debate<sup>51</sup> and therefore ineffective as a missionary. Without the fluency to preach in Māori, the Marists would not only lose impatient Māori followers but would lose them to the 'heretic' CMS mission which, in the mind of the Catholic missionary, was equivalent to damning their souls to Hell. Acquiring the indigenous language was therefore a matter of urgency.

If the pioneers of the CMS in New Zealand documented Māori vocabulary and grammar for the first time, the Marists in New Zealand did not draw from this existing material, choosing instead to study the language for themselves, which further delayed their progress in evangelising Māori. In New Caledonia, the Marists

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<sup>50</sup> « Avant même que nous sussions la langue du pays, les insulaires se plaignoient de ce que les ministres catholiques tarδοient trop à les visiter et à les instruire. Mais m(onsei)g(neu)r leur avoit fait dire que c'étoit pour leur intérêt, qu'il étoit nécessaire de rendre rares les visites pour apprendre plutôt leur langue... Quelques tribus ont même prévenu les désirs de Sa Grandeur en s'offrant de construire une chapelle sur leur territoire. Que d'instances même de nombreux naturels ont fait pour avoir des instructions que nous étions dans l'impossibilité de leur donner, ne sachant pas encore leur langue! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 31, 16 September 1838, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Keys, *Philip Viard*, p. 27.

were the first Europeans to establish a mission station, but unlike Māori the Kanak had not been introduced to literacy and literature, thus the task of creating a dictionary and grammar was an even greater challenge for the missionaries there. Eighteen months were needed before the missionaries could preach to the Kanak.<sup>52</sup> Another difficulty lay in the multiplicity of languages spoken on the mainland alone, and this inability to communicate their religious ideas to the New Caledonians hindered the mission; Father Viard proved a useful interpreter in New Caledonia, though he could not speak the local language, because he was able to communicate with the Wallisians who had emigrated there, and these Wallisians then transmitted his ideas to the Kanak. Mastering the local languages was crucial to the mission's progress, and the Marists struggled with it until mid-1845 when "(...) everything changes. Douarre and Rougeyron [...] visit, teach, encourage prayers and singing, prepare foundations for the future and begin to build places of worship."<sup>53</sup> There were dialectal differences in Māori, particularly between the North and South Islands, but these were minor so that communication was far less of a problem than for the Marists in New Caledonia. Why then did it take some of the New Zealand missionaries over a year to achieve relative fluency in Māori?

Some priests were more adept or diligent when it came to learning the Māori language. Since Father Servant had been in the Hokianga since 1838, Pompallier sent some of the newly-arrived priests to learn the Māori language there, and a mere four months after his arrival in New Zealand Father Baty had already grasped enough of the Māori language to preach and instruct the Māori in Hokianga.<sup>54</sup> However not all missionaries were able linguists; Father Tripe, who did not belong to the Society of Mary but volunteered for the mission, was forced to replace Father Pezant in Akaroa and minister to the French colonists there, because Pompallier found Tripe to be inept at learning languages.<sup>55</sup> In the rest of Pompallier's vicariate, languages were no less challenging for some of the early Marists posted there. Fortunately for Father Chanel,

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<sup>52</sup> Delbos, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 43.

<sup>53</sup> « (...) tout change. Douarre et Rougeyron [...] visitent, ils enseignent, ils font prier et chanter, ils préparent les fondations futures et ils commencent à construire des lieux de culte », *ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>54</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 39, 15 October 1839, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 78, 23 November 1840, Akaroa, Tripe to Colin, p. 1.

who was based in Futuna from 1837, the neighbouring island of Wallis proved a helpful forum for the acquisition of language; Chanel discovered that the inhabitants of Wallis and those of Futuna possessed a similar language, and while there had been little growth in the second year of his mission, this was resolved after Chanel spent one month with Father Bataillon and Brother Joseph-Xavier in Wallis: “This time was precious to me in terms of enriching myself through the progress that Fr. Bataillon had already made in the language.”<sup>56</sup> But Father Chevron in Tonga had no support in learning the Tongan language, which both he and Father Grange found extremely difficult to speak; Chevron, a humble man by nature, claimed in 1844 that after two years in Wallis and Futuna and another two years in Tonga, he was still a very long way from mastering any languages of the Pacific:

I have been in these islands for a little over four years and I am only just beginning to make myself reasonably well understood; I am not hopeful that one day I will know the language well. The phrasing is entirely different to that in Europe. The pronunciation which seems easy at first is difficult in reality because of short and long vowels which give completely different meanings to the same word, and the truly challenging glottal stops, and also the suspensions in the middle of words (an unknown feature in European languages) which also change the meaning of them.<sup>57</sup>

If Bishop Pompallier deserves credit for having understood the importance of learning the Māori language and emphasising its value to the Marist Fathers in his charge, he nevertheless lacked the initiative to create an efficient system for the teaching of the Māori language to new missionaries until 1840, and this appears to be the primary reason for the delay in acquiring the Māori language. Father Petit, who arrived in New Zealand in the same missionary contingent as Baty, complained of having made disappointing progress with language acquisition. The ‘instructions’ mentioned by Father Petit in the following passage are undoubtedly the early version

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<sup>56</sup> « Ce temps me fut précieux pour m’enrichir des progrès que le P. Bataillon avait déjà fait dans la langue », Rozier, p. 222.

<sup>57</sup> «Voilà 4 ans tout à l’heure que je suis dans ces îles et je commence à peine à me faire comprendre passablement; pour savoir bien la langue un jour, je ne l’espère pas. Les tournures sont entièrement différentes de celles d’Europe. La prononciation qui paroît d’abord facile est réellement difficile à cause des brèves et longues qui donnent à un même mot des significations complètement différentes, puis les haspirations vraiment peinibles, puis des suspensions au milieu des mots (chose inconnue dans les langues d’Europe) qui en changent aussi le sens », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 312, 2 February-24 July 1844, Tonga, Chevron to Colin, p. 2.

of Bishop Pompallier's 1841 *Instructions pour les Travaux de la Mission*, a manuscript of instructions for mission work, which he insisted that all of his missionaries read in preparation for Catholic missionary work in an environment dominated by Protestants.<sup>58</sup> It would have been frustrating for the newly arrived Marists, having spent long months at sea feeling anxious and uncertain about their new lives as Pacific missionaries, to be held up at Kororāreka where interaction with Māori was sometimes supplanted by contact with Europeans and where temporal activities tended to take precedence over spiritual ones:

I was hoping to know the language of New Zealand in a few weeks, but almost 7 months have passed since we arrived and I do not know it yet in such a way as to be able to speak it in public with some assurance. Until now, I have limited myself to reading the instructions compiled by His Lordship. Since our arrival, I believe I have not devoted altogether a half day each week to the study of the language; thus I owe a great deal of what I do know to practice, which takes up the time that I would like to devote to theory. I hope that I will have more time for studying at Kaipara, where Monsignor is thinking of sending me in the next few days for a month or 6 weeks.<sup>59</sup>

Pompallier himself, who was preaching in Māori six months after his arrival in the Hokianga, had a questionable level of Māori according to the Marist missionaries. When the Marists began printing Māori publications in 1842, some of the early Marist Fathers were not very supportive of Pompallier being the one to produce them, especially since the Fathers conversed in Māori more frequently than did the bishop. After reading the two catechism booklets printed in late 1842, both entitled *Ako Marama o te Hahi Katorika Romana ko te Pou me te Unga o te Pono*, Father Pezant “complains that the book printed by Monsignor does little good, and one of the

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<sup>58</sup> MAW, J.-B.-F. Pompallier, ‘Instructions aux travaux de la mission’, 1841.

<sup>59</sup> « (...) j’espérois savoir la langue de la N(ouve)lle-Zélande en peu de semaines, et voilà bientôt 7 mois que nous sommes arrivés et je ne la sais pas encore de manière à pouvoir parler en public avec un peu d’assurance. Jusqu’à présent je me suis borné à des lectures des instructions composées par Sa Grandeur. Depuis que nous sommes arrivés, je crois n’avoir pas consacré l’un dans l’autre une demie journée chaque semaine à l’étude de la langue; aussi je dois en grande partie ce que j’en sais à la pratique qui m’ôte le tems que je désirerois consacrer à la théorie. J’espère que j’aurai plus de tems pour l’étude à Kaipara où m(onsei)g(neu)r pense m’envoyer sous peu de jours pour un mois ou 6 semaines », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 48, 8 January 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 2.

reasons that he gives for this is that it is in very bad Maori.”<sup>60</sup> Father Comte also criticised the booklets, pointing out that Fathers Baty and Pezant were better-suited to the task of producing a Māori-language catechism. Comte found that Pompallier spoke and wrote Māori in a very unauthentic way: “These are New Zealand words arranged in the form of European phrases. And this is why the natives have defined the style as New Zealand *oui-oui* language, in other words: French.”<sup>61</sup> Father Baty had in fact collaborated with Pompallier on the 1842 catechisms, but with Pompallier’s tendency to dictate, it is likely that some of Baty’s suggestions would have fallen on deaf ears, if indeed he voiced them at all. In the 1850s a number of the Marist missionaries were no longer missionaries at all, occupying posts as resident priests to European parishes instead. Having spent eight years learning and communicating largely in Māori, Father Moreau spent his first year in Nelson studying English.<sup>62</sup>

### ***1.5 Literacy and literature: the CMS***

In the 1830s and 1840s there was a high demand for the distribution of religious booklets in Māori communities, but this could not be met without adequate funding. Literacy was certainly a drawcard for Māori but it was only one motivating factor for Māori interest in Christianity. Nevertheless Catholic missionaries could not compete with this visible triumph that their rivals appeared to have in terms of converting Māori to the Christian faith. Before a printing press could reach the CMS missionaries in New Zealand, printing was carried out in Britain and Australia. With the arrival of Rev. William Colenso and a printing press in 1834, the CMS mission printery began to make progress, so that 5000 copies of the influential Māori-language version of the New Testament had already been printed and distributed by

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<sup>60</sup> « Le pè[re] Pezant se plaint de ce que le livre imprimé par M[(onsei)g(neu)r] fait peu de bien, et une des raisons qu’il en d[onne], c’est qu’il est en trop mauvais maori », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 260, 8 June 1843, Auckland, Petit-Jean to Epalle, p. 7.

<sup>61</sup> « Ce sont des mots nouveau-zélandais arrangés sous la forme de tournures européennes. Aussi les na[t]urels ont-ils défini le style: langage nouveau-zélandais *oui-oui*, c’est-à-dire français », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 366, 5 June 1845, Wellington, Comte to Colin, p. 11.

<sup>62</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1126, 3 March 1852, Nelson, Moreau to Colin, p. 1.



the end of 1837.<sup>63</sup> Colenso was the pivotal figure in terms of missionary printing, and even printed important secular documents including the Treaty of Waitangi. Undoubtedly Colenso made a substantial contribution to the popularity of the CMS mission through his publications at Paihia; the Anglican's printing press meant that Protestant ideas could be disseminated easily and eagerly throughout the country, often by Māori visitors to the Bay of Islands. The Wesleyans quickly followed suit, establishing a press at Mangungu in 1836 which was operated by William Woon,<sup>64</sup> thus the Marists were met with considerable non-Catholic and anti-Catholic propaganda before they had had a chance to retaliate. When Colenso authored pamphlets printed in 1840 denouncing the 'Errors of the Roman Church',<sup>65</sup> no counter-offensive could be launched by the Marists until two years later. In 1839 Pompallier had complained to Father Colin that:

Almost all of the Protestant missionary establishments have a printing press, which allows them to print in a way that truly deludes readers; and their works, which circulate by the thousands in New Zealand, have had until now only my voice and my quill to oppose them, yet there are many tribes who hear or read the error without having heard or read the antidote.<sup>66</sup>

For the CMS missionaries, especially from the 1838 onwards, printing was a useful means of discrediting the Catholic Church and its teachings, but literature and literacy had been a key element of the CMS mission to Māori even when its policy comprised 'civilisation through industry', hence Kendall's appointment as the mission's schoolteacher and the development of schools for Māori at the Kerikeri and Paihia stations in the 1820s. In the following decade Henry Williams encouraged a change of approach, placing the emphasis on itinerant preaching and distributing translations of the Bible.<sup>67</sup> The introduction of printed scriptures, prayers and hymns was not a

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<sup>63</sup> Morrell, p. 15; A.G. Bagnall and G. C. Peterson, *William Colenso, his Life and Journeys* (Wellington: [n.pub], 1948), p. 49.

<sup>64</sup> *Transplanted Christianity*, p. 39.

<sup>65</sup> See William Colenso, *Ko te tuarua o nga pukapuka waki: hei wakakite atu i nga henga o te Hahi o Roma* (Hobart: [n.pub.] 1840).

<sup>66</sup> « Presque tous les établissements des missionnaires protestants ont une presse avec laquelle ils impriment d'une manière vraiment à flater les lecteurs, et leurs ouvrages qui circulent par milliers dans la Nouvelle Zélande n'ont eu jusques ici que ma voix et ma plume d'opposition, mais que de tribus qui entendent ou lisent l'erreur sans avoir entendu ou lu l'antidote », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 34, 18 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>67</sup> *Transplanted Christianity*, p. 38.

unique evangelising strategy; the nineteenth-century LMS missionaries in India used it to enable and facilitate conversion<sup>68</sup> and indeed Protestant missionary churches in general often found that education and literacy were a useful and even necessary accompaniment to evangelisation. But, according to Robert Glen, the CMS had an especially profound commitment to promoting and providing Māori-language literature in New Zealand, and this is perhaps partly explained by the equally profound commitment that Māori showed to gaining literacy and their enthusiasm for obtaining direct access to the Bible.

This policy of the priority of the Bible in Maori covered the whole span of CMS missionary involvement in New Zealand from 1816 to 1893. To further the practical needs of printing and distribution of the Bible the CMS took on printing presses at Paihia and such salty characters as William Colenso to man them. To fulfil this commitment the CMS Committee broke its normal rule of sending its more able academics to India and despatched Robert Maunsell to New Zealand to grapple with the Maori Bible. To introduce the new Maori Christian to Scripture the CMS mission put effort into its schools to achieve literacy skills. The mission was even prepared to delay baptism until the candidate was instructed and literate.<sup>69</sup>

The CMS were assisted in their endeavours by the British and Foreign Bible Society, which distributed bibles as well as subsidising and later covering the costs of printing bibles in New Zealand. Wesleyan Methodist missionaries also benefited from their association with the Bible Society; stationed in Waikouaiti in the South Island, James Watkin was overwhelmed at the arrival of bibles for his mission: “The arrival of books has infused a little life into my soul, and affords no small pleasure to my people... Cases of clothing, useful and necessary, have reached me, but this, this good thing, the better, the *best* thing that any ship has yet, or can possibly bring them – The Word of Life.”<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Johnston, p. 66.

<sup>69</sup> Glen, p. 20.

<sup>70</sup> T. A. Pybus, *Maori and Missionary* (Christchurch: Cadsonbury Publications, 2002), p. 24.

## 1.6 Literacy and literature: the Marists

The earliest Catholic publications in New Zealand were ordered from France, but this protracted system left the Marist mission at a further disadvantage in light of Protestant advancements. Pompallier begged for three printing presses, which he believed to be crucial to the success of the mission, to cater for the North Island, South Island and Pacific Islands. Protestant success owing to the mass production of printed material was naturally a source of jealousy and humiliation for the Marists. Pompallier's *Ko nga tahi Pono Nui o te Hahi Katorika Romana* paled in comparison, and Pompallier himself admitted to being in awe of the fine publications produced by his rivals: "It is a delight to see the beauty of their printing, of their pamphlets by the thousands; they leave nothing to be desired in their production. Here I am embarrassed to distribute my little catechism of only 8 pages".<sup>71</sup> Unexpectedly this same catechism proved to be the tool of conversion for an entire hapū in Rotorua one year before Pompallier had even made his first visit there. According to the bishop, the hapū:

(...) had never seen nor received anything from the Catholic Church, only this small pamphlet which I had in April 1840 given to a chief from the area, to whom I handed several of them to distribute to his acquaintances and allies. I instructed him as much as one can in a single day. He gave all the knowledge on religion he had received to those of his parents and friends who were in the vicinity of his own tribe, and distributed my pamphlets.<sup>72</sup>

Books of any kind were highly sought after by Māori in the 1830s and 1840s. The capacity to provide their potential or recent converts with translations into Māori of hymns, prayers and passages from the Bible was often a prerequisite for missionaries

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<sup>71</sup> « C'est un plaisir de voir la beauté de leurs impressions, de leurs brochures par millier; elles ne laissent rien à désirer pour la confection. Je rougis ici de distribuer mes petits catéchismes de 8 feuilles seulement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>72</sup> « (...) n'avoient jamais rien vu ni reçu de l'Église catholique, que cette petite brochure que j'avois en avril 1840 donnée à un chef des environs, auquel j'en remis plusieurs pour la distribuer à ses connoissances et alliés. Je l'instruisis autant qu'on peut le faire en un jour. Il donna tout ce qu'il avoit reçu de connoissance sur la religion à ceux de ses parents et amis qui étoient dans les environs de sa propre tribu, et distribua de mes brochures », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 220, 8 November 1842, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

if they were to elicit the help of local Māori. With nothing to trade and a strong dependency on Māori resources, the Marists hoping to establish new mission stations were desperate for catechisms and prayer-books to meet Māori demands; even in the Bay of Islands where Protestant mission printing had catered to Māori since 1834, the thirst for literature had not yet been quenched and Father Garin wrote that: “(...) the natives *torment* us, *hassle* us, *persecute* us for books.”<sup>73</sup> Books not only enabled Māori to achieve literacy, but were also a tangible representation of the spiritual ideas of Christianity. The importance of having religious books became clear to Father Séon when he was asked by a Matamata chief to surrender a French copy of the New Testament, given to him by a priest in France:

Before we had printed books in Maori, a chief forced me to leave this book with him so that he could drive away the Protestant ministers who came to canvass him. Here, this is my prayer, he would say to them, showing them the back of his book adorned with a cross. It was this chief who led me on my first visit among the tribes so that I would know which tribes followed the Catholic prayer and comprised my mission station.<sup>74</sup>

Pompallier finally received his long-awaited printing press at the end of 1841, along with lay Marist Jean François Yvert who was skilled in the craft of printing. However, in the competition for ‘winning’ converts, the Marist missionaries were well behind the CMS and this was no secret to Māori. The Gaveaux printing press sent from France produced a prolific amount of literature, but this did not occur until it had been properly assembled and housed, which was not only an expensive undertaking but a time-consuming one as well. The printery in Kororāreka was remarkable for its uniquely French architecture and its durability, considering the inaptness of New Zealand’s soil for pisé-style buildings. According to Father Garin, its lengthy construction stalled the progress of the mission and encouraged mockery

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<sup>73</sup> (...) les naturels nous *tourmentent*, nous *harcèlent*, nous *persécutent* pour avoir des livres », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 178, 22 & 26 July 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, pp 1-2.

<sup>74</sup> « Avant que nous eussions des livres maori imprimés, un chef m’a forcé à lui laisser ce livre pour chasser les ministres protestants qui venaient le solliciter. Tiens, voilà ma prière, leur disait-il en leur montrant le dos de son livre orné d’une croix. C’est ce chef qui m’a conduit dans ma première course au milieu des tribus afin de me faire connaître celles qui faisaient la prière catholique et formaient ma station », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 303, January 1844, Matamata, Séon to Laignet, p. 1.

of the Marists among Māori who were already impatiently waiting for Pompallier to fulfil his promise of more Catholic priests:

“(…) *taihoa*, *taihoa* (soon, soon), people of *taihoa*!” they say to us. We have a press and no room in which to set it up, no means to build one, no wood, no money to obtain any; what are we to do? Remain like this until we receive some money? But without money we could build using pisé, yet what a great deal of labour and time! We can, however, provide these. Oh well, pisé it is! Brothers, Fathers, all set themselves in motion, but how difficult it is to form walls from the earth.<sup>75</sup>

It was not until 1842 that the Catholic mission would produce its first printed booklets in Māori using the press acquired in Paris by Yvert. Having completed a course in printing, Yvert was an indispensable addition to the Marists in Kororāreka; his efforts along with those of the Marist brothers he trained were responsible for the profusion of Catholic booklets following the construction of the printery. In 1845 the dispute between Hone Heke and the British colonial government in New Zealand<sup>76</sup> resulted in a year-long hiatus for the mission printery in Kororāreka, but this did not deter the Marists who managed to print more than 30,000 documents in the period 1842 to 1850. Father Baty, the Māori scholar of the Marist mission, published 6000 copies of the catechism and prayer-book *Ko te Ako Me Karakia o te Hahi Katorika Romana* in the period 1846-1847 alone.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless several Marist missionaries complained of the shortage of literature for Māori, and were concerned that this would result in their defection to the Protestant missions. It might seem surprising that the Marists' extensive output of prayer-books and catechisms was not enough to cater to Māori demands, but the CMS had already printed over 70,000 documents before 1840,

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<sup>75</sup> (...) *tahioa* [sic] *tahioa* (bientôt bientôt), peuple de *tahioa*! nous disent-ils. Nous avons une presse et pas une chambre pour l'établir, pas de moyens d'en faire une, pas de bois, pas d'argent pour en avoir; que faire? Rester là jusqu'à ce qu'on ait reçu de l'argent! Mais on pourrait sans argent bâtir en pizet, mais que de peine et de temps! Cependant nous pouvons fournir cela. Eh! bien, soit en pizet. Frères, pères, tous se mettent en mouvement, mais que de peine pour faire sortir ces murs hors de terre », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 128, 19 January 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>76</sup> In 1844-1845 Hone Heke, a Ngāpuhi chief, cut down the flagpole at Kororāreka four times to signal Māori dissatisfaction with the colonial government and its disregard for the Treaty of Waitangi. Heke's act of defiance was viewed as a rebellion and the government issued soldiers to defend the flagpole. As the conflict escalated, Heke's ally Kawiti moved in to destroy the European township at Kororāreka, proving Māori strength and resilience against colonisation.

<sup>77</sup> MAW, Base file, Baty.

giving them an overwhelming advantage. Father Comte explained to his Superior-General:

I saw the Fathers in the northern stations at the beginning of 1844, and I have just seen in Tauranga all of those from the central stations. Father Baty told me that he thought we had ten to twelve thousand Catholics, but I must apologise to Father Baty for he is very much mistaken. The number of Catholics barely reaches beyond six thousand, according to the Fathers' calculations added together. I will explain to you elsewhere the nature of these six thousand Catholics. If my calculations are fairly accurate, as I am convinced they are, we must minimise these great successes that we are reputed to have achieved. To what therefore, you would ask me, must we attribute the poor returns of your ministry? We must not attribute it to either the small number of priests or to the failing of their work and the dispositions of the natives, but rather to the lack of *books* and books *such* as are needed for the New Zealanders.<sup>78</sup>

Was a lack of books truly the reason why the Marists felt the sting of failure from the earliest phase of their mission? Perhaps it contributed to the negative reputation that the Marists had developed because of their poverty and Pompallier's incapacity to keep his promises, but literacy was one of many European practices that interested Māori and drew them to mission stations. Nevertheless there is no doubt that printing presses were a powerful tool for the propagation of the Gospel, whether according to the Anglican, Wesleyan or Roman Catholic Church, and the dissemination of printed religious literature enabled tangible progress in winning indigenous adherents and paving the way for an indigenous clergy. In Wallis, the Marist printing press was finally built in 1844, and its impact was immediately felt the following year, not only in Wallis but throughout central Oceania; Father Roudaire, who was appointed as head of the printery in 1843, wrote to Father Colin that:

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<sup>78</sup> « J'ai vu les pères des stations du nord au commencement de 1844, et je viens de voir à Tauranga tous ceux des stations du milieu. Père Baty m'a dit qu'il croyait que nous avions de dix à douze mille catholiques, mais je demande bien pardon au père Baty. Il se trompe considérablement. Le nombre des catholiques ne peut pas être guère porté au delà de six milles, d'après les calcules réunis des pères. Je vous dirai dans un autre endroit ce que c'est que ces six milles catholiques. Si mon calcule est assez exact, comme j'en ai la conviction, il faut bien rabattre de ces grands succès que nous sommes réputés avoir obtenus. A quoi donc, me direz-vous, faut-il attribuer cette maigreur de vottre ministère? Il ne faut l'attribuer ni au petit nombre de prêtres ni au défaut de leurs travaux et les dispositions de la part des naturels, mais au manque de *livres* et de livres *tels* qu'il les faudrait aux Nouveaux-Zélandais », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 366, 5 June 1845, Wellington, Comte to Colin, p. 7.

Already the word has spread in the neighbouring islands that the religion of Wallis also produces books. Some copies that were sent to Tonga have created a sort of enthusiasm in our Catholics and have been a terrible blow for heresy... What will the effect be when in a few days' time we send them 2000 copies of the alphabet in their language! ... But to return to matters relevant to me, the printery has enabled the current foundation of a college for Wallis and neighbouring archipelagos.<sup>79</sup>

Gaining a foothold was clearly more of a challenge for the pioneer Marists in New Zealand, Tonga and Fiji simply because, like the Picpus Fathers, the Marists reached their mission destinations several years or even decades after LMS, CMS or Wesleyan missionaries had already established an influence there. Overcoming the influence of 'heresy' became a major priority for the Catholic missions in the Pacific, even after they had gained a foothold, and even in Wallis since this island became the headquarters of the Marists' Pacific Island missions in 1842. But it is important to note once again that the Protestant missions had only gained a foothold on their respective islands; there remained numerous communities on each island which had resisted the Protestant missionary influence, and this made it possible for the Marists to view success in the Pacific as a continuing possibility.

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<sup>79</sup> « Déjà le bruit s'est répandu dans les îles voisines que la religion de Wallis fait aussi des livres. Quelques exemplaires qu'on a envoyés à Tonga ont produit une sorte d'enthousiasme sur nos catholiques et ait été un coup de terreur pour l'hérésie. ... Que sera-ce, lorsque dans quelques jours nous allons leur envoyer 2,000 exemplaires de l'alphabet en leur langue! ... Mais pour revenir à ce qui me regarde, l'imprimerie a rendu possible la fondation actuelle d'un collège pour Wallis et les archipels voisins », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 383, 1 July 1845, Wallis, Roudaire to Colin, p. 2.

## Chapter 2: Protestants, Politics and Nations

### 2.1 *Catholic versus Protestant*

If Catholic missionaries had been faced with just Protestant settlers, their early experiences in New Zealand might have been less difficult in terms of the spiritual and emotional struggle. Religious intolerance and persecution were a reality of nineteenth-century Europe, particularly in the two nations from which so many Protestants and Catholics hailed: Britain and France. Hostility regularly arose between the English CMS and the French Marist missionaries and involved the spreading of rumours, the publication of propaganda-filled pamphlets and public debates that denounced popes, kings, reformers and nations alike. The reason Protestant and Catholic missionaries struggled to co-exist was that “each denied the other’s claim to be minister of the true God, and thus each represented to the other the most serious threat possible”.<sup>1</sup> Add to this the centuries of war between the French and the English, and it becomes difficult to separate nationalism from sectarianism as motivating factors for conflict. But it is clear that neither mission wanted its rival nation or denomination to be triumphant in its ambitions, whether those were to christianise or colonise the Pacific. Within two years of their arrival in New Zealand the pioneer Marists on the Māori Mission found themselves in a unique situation; New Zealand had been annexed by the British Crown, forcing the French Marists to attempt a mission in a British colonial context. The Marist experience in the Pacific Island missions will be considered in detail so as to understand the extent to which

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<sup>1</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 12.



the presence of Anglican and Wesleyan missionaries made it more difficult for the Catholic missionaries to achieve conversions and make tangible progress.

Bishop Pompallier's manuscript of instructions for mission work, written in 1841, offers less advice on how to be a missionary than how to defend oneself against a Protestant's verbal attacks. Mervyn Duffy explains that Pompallier and the Marists were conscious of the numbers of Protestant missionaries already established in the Pacific, but viewed them as "an 'obstacle' to the proposed Marist endeavor, expected to be actively engaged in turning the minds of the peoples of Oceania against the Catholic French."<sup>2</sup> If Protestant missionaries were an obstacle, they could therefore be overcome. Nevertheless Pompallier encouraged his missionaries to exercise neutrality in public places where there were no conversions to be made; Catholic missionaries could not afford a reputation of being troublemakers. As Pompallier was well aware, the Marists would have to work especially hard to be tolerated by the numerous Protestant traders and settlers already in New Zealand or heading to the new colony, so he gave the following instruction to Father Colin to ensure that the missionaries made a good impression:

Advise the missionaries and catechists, boarding the ships destined for the mission, not to raise controversial religious matters at the passengers' tables, not to foster or fuel these sorts of conversations which usually excite the pride of the company without a single advantageous result for the faith. It is not the place to speak of holy things, it is a place of honesty, civility and good education; observing the rules creates far more beneficial impressions than discussion.<sup>3</sup>

New Zealand settlers usually displayed a general open-mindedness concerning the differing Christian sects, with the exception of Catholicism. Inevitably, there were incidents where Catholic and Protestant settlers clashed, although these were not

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<sup>2</sup> Mervyn Duffy, 'The Work of Mary versus the Works of the Devil: The Ecclesiology of the Early Marist Missionaries' in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania: Marist Missionary Perspectives*, ed. by Alois Greiler (South Australia: ATF Press, 2009), p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> « Recommandez aux missionnaires et catéchistes, s'embarquant à bord des navires pour la mission, de ne pas élever des controverses en matière religieuse à la table des passagers, de ne pas entretenir ou nourrir ces sortes de conversations qu'échauffent ordinairement l'orgueil de la compagnie sans aucun résultat avantageux pour la foi. Ce n'est pas le lieu de parler des choses saintes, c'est la place de l'honnêteté, de la civilité et de la bonne éducation; en observer les règles, c'est faire beaucoup plus de salutaires impressions que de discuter », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 69, 6 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Pierre Colin, p. 1.

commonplace in nineteenth-century New Zealand and were more reflective of the political situation in Europe than religious rivalry within the colony. In the early twentieth century, for instance, the question of Home Rule for Ireland led to significant conflict in Auckland and Timaru, although relations in central North Island regions remained relatively amiable.<sup>4</sup> At the end of First World War, New Zealand Catholics were persecuted for a short time by an organisation set up by an anti-Catholic extremist and known as the PPA (Protestant Political Association), however its conduct was “not acceptable to the majority of the population. Much of the anti-Catholic hatred of that period, the worst in New Zealand’s history, was due more to individual obsessions rather than to real sectarian conflict.”<sup>5</sup>

Peter Lineham points out that “the co-operative principle was all-important in New Zealand society [...] There was a strong social pressure against any religion which condemned others, and for this reason there was intense dislike of the Roman Catholic Church.”<sup>6</sup> In line with this ‘co-operative principle’, settlers belonging to different Protestant denominations had fairly peaceful interactions, with some communities even sharing churches; for example, a community chapel built in Karori in 1844 was used for both Wesleyan and Presbyterian services.<sup>7</sup> Some Catholics even partook in this ecumenism. There were also some Protestant settlers who demonstrated an attitude towards Catholics that surpassed religious tolerance; in 1839, Father Baty describes a Protestant captain’s hospitality in his letter to a parish priest in Ain, France. The captain, a friend of Pompallier’s, and his wife welcomed the Marists into their home at the Bay of Islands: “This house has become our pied-a-terre, we are at home here. We have truly found a father and mother in those who have received us, even though they are Protestants.”<sup>8</sup> Surprisingly Protestant

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<sup>4</sup> Arvidson, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Lineham, *New Zealanders and the Methodist Evangel* (New Zealand: Wesley Historical Society, 1984), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> *Methodism in Wellington 1839-1989: A Chronological Outline of the Growth and Development of the Methodist Church in the Wellington District*, ed. by A. L. Olsson, (Wellington: Wellington District Synod of the Methodist Church of New Zealand, 1989), p. 102.

<sup>8</sup> « Cette maison est devenue notre pied à terre, nous y sommes comme chez nous. Nous avons vraiment trouvé un père et une mère dans ceux qui nous reçoivent, quoiqu’ils soient protestants », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 32, 18 June 1839, Bay of Islands, Baty to Nyd, p. 1.

individuals even donated land to the Catholic clergy on occasion, as in 1841 when Father Petit-Jean attempted to fundraise for a church in Mangonui:

The place that I frequent the most after Wangaroa is Mongonui, and our projects for religion are more advanced there than in Wangaroa, at least among the Europeans. Full of trust in God who commands hearts, and with the conviction of authority that the legitimacy of our ministry gives us, I presented to the residents of this bay, the majority of whom are Protestant, a subscription list for a Catholic church to be built on the bay. I went from house to house and up to now, almost in a single day, I have gathered 53 pounds sterling and there are 15 to 20 subscribers on my list. *This* is a people whose generosity I exalt. I must admit, my dear brother, the Englishman in similar undertakings is very honourable. I must add for the glory of God [and] his legitimate ministries that the Protestant ministers have attempted the same visit, but without any success.<sup>9</sup>

Some New Zealand settlers therefore exercised religious tolerance throughout the nineteenth century; and blatant rivalry between denominations was largely limited to the pens and mouths of fervent Christian missionaries. The French were the latecomers and the minority in New Zealand, leaving them exposed to attacks by the now well-established Protestant missionaries, who were initially a united front of Anglicans and Wesleyans. ‘Mihinare’ (or ‘mihanere’), the Māori transliteration of ‘missionary’, was popularly used to denote Protestant missionaries, while ‘Epikopo’ was used by Māori to refer to the Catholic missionaries. Māori viewed the denominations in New Zealand as two distinct bodies, one being English and one being French; as a result the terms French and Catholic became more or less synonymous as Father Baty explains in a letter from 1840: “Here is how the New Zealanders classify Catholicism and Protestantism: Are you Epikopo (bishop) or *oui*

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<sup>9</sup> « Le lieu que je fréquente le plus habituellement après Wangaroa c’est Mongonui, et nos affaires pour la religion y sont plus avancées qu’à Wangaroa, au moins parmi les Européens. Plein de confiance en Dieu qui dispose des cœurs, et avec la conviction de l’autorité que nous donne la légitimité de notre ministère, j’ai présenté aux habitants de cette baie dont le grand nombre est protestant une liste de souscription pour une église catholique à bâtir sur la baie. J’aie [*sic*] parcouru les maisons et jusqu’à présent, presque en un seul jour j’ai ramassé 53 po(unds) (£ sterl(ing)) et il y [*a*] 15 à 20 souscripteurs sur ma liste. Voilà un peuple dont j’exalte la générosité. Il faut l’avouer, mon cher frère, l’Anglais dans des entreprises semblables est très-honorable. Il faut bien ajouter pour la gloire de Dieu de ses ministres légitimes que les ministres protestants ont tenté la même visite, mais toutà- fait sans succès », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 87, 7 March 1841, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Paillasson, p. 8.

*oui?* (French). Are you *manga watia* (broken branch) or *Pakeha maori* (English)? According to them the Irish and English Catholics are *oui oui*.<sup>10</sup>

More than two decades after the arrival of the first CMS missionaries, the Marists arrived in Hokianga and, seen to be encroaching upon Protestant territory in the north, were depicted by rival missionaries as political agents sent to take over New Zealand and enslave Māori; to reinforce this, the Protestant missionaries evoked the memory of the Frenchman Marion du Fresne, who was believed to have been killed for breaking tapu and whose men consequently killed all the inhabitants of a Māori village to avenge his death.<sup>11</sup> Pompallier complained of the negative reputation that had preceded his arrival, censuring the Protestant Europeans in New Zealand for having described him as the Antichrist<sup>12</sup> and his missionaries as the murderous descendants of Marion. The Marists faced the seemingly impossible task of earning the respect and acceptance of northern Māori, many of whom had already formed mutually useful relationships with the CMS missionaries. It appeared that Pompallier's mission base had been ill-chosen, and had he accepted this view his missionaries would have had a very different experience perhaps in Ponape (Pohnpei in Micronesia) where he had originally planned to set up the mission headquarters. But Pompallier was determined to make headway among Māori, despite discouraging and disadvantageous beginnings and the progress of the CMS and the WMS:

Upon my arrival in New Zealand, I discovered hundreds of heterodox ministers on every point of the island that I tried to access; we did not know how to say anything at the beginning, whereas they have long since acquired the language of the New Zealanders; they had excellent printing presses, at least two here in the North Island; I found myself surrounded at a short distance by 5 or 6 establishments of their numerous stations; their books, their pamphlets circulate everywhere; [...] even the English Catholics advise me to leave and abandon this mission to the English Catholic bishop in Sydney.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> « Voici comment les Nouveaux Zélandais désignent le catholicisme et le protestantisme: Es-tu epikopo? (évêque) ou *oui oui?* (Français). Es-tu *manga watia?* (branche cassée) ou *Pakeha maori* (Anglais). Selon eux les Irlandais et Anglais catholiques sont des *oui oui* », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 77, 10 November 1840, Bay of Islands, Baty & Epalle to Chanut, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Turner, pp. 74-75.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Maunsell, *Ko Te Anati-Karaiti* ([n.p]: [n.pub], 1838).

<sup>13</sup> « (...) j'ai trouvé, à mon arrivée à la Nouvelle Zélande, des centaines de ministres hétérodoxes sur tous les points de l'île que j'entamois; nous ne savions rien dire au commencement, eux possédoient

The competitive nature of Māori society made it difficult in some ways for the French Catholics to contend with the Protestant missionaries. The CMS had several chapels in New Zealand, which led Māori to question why the Catholics did not yet have one. Raupō chapels were then erected in several Māori communities, but this only led Māori to ask why the CMS had wooden churches and chapels and the Catholic did not. As the Marists began to win Māori adherents, Protestant hapū then questioned why Catholic hapū did not have the buildings, books and items for trade that the CMS and WMS could offer their Māori followers. Denominational rivalry was therefore exacerbated by the contest for mana between Māori:

We are in a sort of competition with the heretics who have at their disposal every means to succeed. A very considerable amount of funds has been allocated to them, good printing presses, chapels and houses that appeal to the natives, who hardly judge things other than by appearance.<sup>14</sup>

Being the first missionary church to arrive, the Anglicans also had the upper hand in New Zealand in claiming the first Māori converts, baptisms and marriages. Yet the belated arrival of the Catholics meant that the pathway for Christian missionaries had been largely cleared as a result of early initiatives taken by the CMS in New Zealand. “In the late 1830s the Gospel spread rapidly throughout the country. Māori literacy became very common, comparative peace reigned, and the old practice of cannibalism virtually disappeared,”<sup>15</sup> in short, the missionary and the Bible were apparently viewed with respect by northern Māori, and this meant that the Marists could plunge into their evangelical work among catechumens who were already open

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depuis longtemps la langue des Nouveaux Zélandois; ils avoient d'excellentes presses, au moins deux en cette même île du Nord; je me trouvois entouré, à peu de distance, de 5 ou 6 établissements de leurs nombreuses stations; leurs livres, leurs brochures circuloient de toutes parts; [...] Les catholiques anglois eux-mêmes me conseilloient de partir et de laisser cette mission à l'évêque anglois catholique à Sydney », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> « Nous sommes dans une espèce de concurrence avec les hérétiques qui ont à leur disposition tous les moyens humains pour réussir. Des fonds très considérables qui leur alloués, de bonnes presses, des chapelles et des maisons qui en inspirent aux naturels, qui ne jugent guères des choses que par l'extérieur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Neil Benfell, 'The Shape of the New Society: Selwyn, CMS and the New Zealand Company in fierce debate', in *Mission and Moko*, p. 76.

to European and Christian ideas. This was true even in some parts on New Zealand south of the Bay of Islands, where Māori themselves had spread the word of the Gospel.

Despite their frequent enmity, Marists and Protestant missionaries alike would earn the reputation of peacemaker through their key role as mediators during times of intertribal conflict, thrusting them into a favourable light for some time. In cases where Māori hapū or iwi in the same mission area had a rivalry or dispute that the missionaries were unable to conciliate, missionaries were forced to administer to each iwi or hapū individually, rather than saving time, resources and energy by preaching to a large, unified group. When visiting the people of Whirinaki in 1840, Father Servant found that there some had a keen interest in Catholicism but “(...) there reigned between the three main villages a spirit of division and antipathy which prevented them from coming together for religious instruction; I was obliged to have consideration for their petulance and go from one village to the next.”<sup>16</sup>

Quarrels between iwi and ensuing acts of vengeance were an element of Māori life before and after European contact, but missionary involvement sometimes assuaged both parties and prevented outright war. When Tauranga and Waikato iwi were at war with each other in 1841, Philippe Viard, the only Catholic priest in the district, managed to negotiate peace between the tribes.<sup>17</sup> The Rev. Henry Williams of the CMS was especially prominent as a peacemaker, having journeyed as far as Maketū, Waikato and Tauranga for the specific purpose of intervening in iwi and hapū disagreements rumoured to be taking place there.<sup>18</sup>

When hapū near Mangonui were at war in 1843, Bishop Pompallier sent Fathers Baty and Bernard to assist Father Rozet, who was stationed at Whangaroa and therefore had charge of many Māori involved in the conflict. While Pompallier’s principal

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<sup>16</sup> « (...) il régnoit entre les trois villages principaux un esprit de division et d’antipathie qui les empêchoit de se réunir ensemble pour les instructions; j’étois obligé d’avoir égard à leur susceptibilité et d’aller tour-à-tour dans les trois villages », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 52, 5 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>17</sup> Keys, *Philip Viard*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>18</sup> *The Early Journals of Henry Williams: 1826-40*, ed. Lawrence M. Rogers, (Christchurch: Pegasus Press, 1961).

motivation was undoubtedly the aim of securing peace between Māori, which ensured the safety of his flock, his men and himself at the same time, the bishop also saw the advantages for evangelisation of exercising a policy of neutrality among Māori:

The charity, prudence and zeal that they showed on this occasion, by providing medical care to the wounded, dressing their wounds as best they could, visiting both enemy camps in a spirit of neutrality and devotion, and endeavouring to persuade them to make peace, all of these practices, I tell you, have made very favourable impressions of the Catholic religion on the minds of all peoples, especially the Protestant natives.<sup>19</sup>

Marist missionaries were therefore enjoying some success in winning the interest and allegiance of Māori in the early 1840s. And if the CMS and WMS were largely active in the North, the proximity of their established missions still did not greatly hinder the progress of Catholic missions because the Marist Fathers, whose collective data is far more reliable than that of Pompallier, were able to report a solid rate of conversions from 1838 to 1840 in Kororāreka and Whangaroa.<sup>20</sup> Why then did the Marist mission allegedly decline in the 1840s? Was it the Marists' inferiority compared with the progress and expansion of the CMS mission? Father Baty wrote of the basic advantages which the Protestants had over the Catholic missionaries, but with a clear sense of hope that the Frenchmen had not arrived too late to make an impact on Māori. His denigration of Protestant missionaries aside, Baty is somewhat justified in saying that the Protestants had been preoccupied with creating homes and farms for the benefit of their families, although this enabled them to become self-sufficient and provide for visiting Māori. Baty writes with regard to the Anglicans and Wesleyans:

(...) they have seniority in the country, they have printing presses, know the language well and distribute many books, and the natives are great lovers of reading. But they have against them sterility, no graces for teaching the Gospel; also despite the number of years that they have been

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<sup>19</sup> « La charité et la prudence et le zèle qu'ils ont montrés en cette occasion, en donnant des remèdes aux blessés, en les pensant [*sic*] de leur mieux, en visitant dans un esprit de neutralité et de dévouement les deux camps des ennemis, en s'efforçant de leur faire faire la paix, tous ces procédés, dis-je, ont fait sur l'esprit de tous les peuples et surtout des naturels protestants des impressions très favorables à la religion catholique », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 259, 30 May 1843, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Epalle, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 4.

here they have spent more time rearing horses, cattle, and sheep, and amassing wealth, than winning over the New Zealanders.<sup>21</sup>

If the French were latecomers to Hokianga and the Bay of Islands, they were by no means latecomers to the rest of New Zealand. The arrival of French Catholic missionaries explains the impetus that saw the CMS and WMS expand as far as Whanganui and Port Nicholson by 1839. The CMS now boasted eleven mission stations, but it was not so much the number of Protestant stations that discouraged the Marists but rather the influence that Protestant missionaries were able to exert over Māori throughout the North Island. This influence, the Marists rightly feared, would allow the CMS in particular to denounce the Pope, the Catholic religion, the French nation and representatives of the above in New Zealand. Yet Michael O’Meeghan points out that the CMS missionary William Colenso, believing himself to be a pioneer in Hawke’s Bay and Poverty Bay, found that Marist Fathers Baty and Lampila had already visited several parts of these regions between 1841 and 1845.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless during and following the Marist mission’s financial crisis in 1842, Father Forest was forced to admit that the Catholics were still very far behind the Protestant missionaries in terms of their capacity to satisfy Māori demands and maintain their interest in Catholicism:

Inland, a multitude of Methodist Protestant ministers paralyse every success made by our poor missionaries. These ministers are very wealthy; they take into their service a great number of those Maori whom they clothe well and feed. They give or more frequently sell books to others, give remedies to the sick, whereas the poverty of our mission does not permit us to do anything.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> « (...) ils ont l’ancienneté dans le pays, ils ont des presses, savent bien la langue et distribuent beaucoup de livres et les naturels sont de grands amateurs de lecture. Mais ils ont contre eux la stérilité, la privation des grâces pour enseigner l’évangile; aussi, malgré le nombre d’années qu’ils sont ici, ils ont plus élevé de chevaux, de boeufs, de moutons, plus amassé d’argent qu’ils n’ont gagné de Nouveaux Zélandais », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 77, 10 November 1840, Bay of Islands, Baty & Epalle to Chanut, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 37.

<sup>23</sup> « Dans l’intérieur des terres, une foule de ministres protestans méthodistes paralysent tous les succ[ès de] nos pauvres missionnaires. Ces ministres sont très riches; ils prennent à leur [service] un grand nombre de ces Maori qu’ils habillent bien et nourrissent. Ils donnent ou vendent le plus souvent des livres aux autres, donnent des remèdes aux malades, tandis que la pauvreté de notre mission ne nous permet de rien faire », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 205, 7 October 1842, Auckland, Forest to Colin, p. 3.



Lacking in so much from the very beginning, the Marists were forced to take whatever opportunities for progress presented themselves in order to achieve their principal aim of evangelisation. In 1838 Marist Father Catherin Servant complained that the prophet Papahurihia, also known as Te Atua Wera, paid no attention to Catholic teachings and had made no attempts to adopt a Catholic way of life. The Māori prophet had declared himself staunchly Catholic, which meant that his followers would adopt the Catholic faith along with him:

(...) the great Papa[huri]hia appears with a large pig, which he offers as a gift to His Lordship, declaring to him that the heretics were not telling the truth, that he acknowledges himself that the bishop alone tells the truth and that consequently he and his numerous tribes will only speak to him alone. He finishes by declaring, as he touches the bishop's hand, that he has much affection for him; he [Papahurihia] has already declared to some heretics who bother him relentlessly that they themselves were not true ministers since they did not come from the Pope, and that he has taken a side. He wanted to go to the bishop.<sup>24</sup>

Far from denouncing Te Atua Wera, the Catholic mission valued him for his anti-Protestant campaigns and influence on fellow Māori to join the Catholic Church. In fact it was Te Atua Wera who had manipulated Bishop Pompallier and his Marist Fathers, using the Catholic mission as a means to regain spiritual control by diminishing the mana of Protestant missionaries.<sup>25</sup> The competitive nature of Māori society therefore made it *easier* in some ways for the Marists to contend with the CMS and WMS missionaries. Some Māori would have seen conversion to the Catholic faith as a means also to opposing their traditional enemies who had since joined the Anglican or Wesleyan Churches. Could the apparent success of the Catholic mission have been nothing more than superficial if conversions were based on attempts by Māori to reject the influence that the CMS had gained over Māori in the Bay of Islands, or to further interhapū rivalries? Or were these early conversions

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<sup>24</sup> « (...) le grand Papahia paroît avec un grand porc qu'il offre pour présent à Sa Grandeur, en lui déclarant que les hérétiques ne disoient pas la vérité, qu'il reconnoissoit luimême que l'évêque seul la disoit et qu'en conséquence lui et ses nombreuses tribus ne s'adresseroient qu'à lui seul et il finit par déclarer qu'il avoit pour lui un grand coeur en lui touchant la main; il a déjà déclaré à quelques hérétiques qui ne cessent de l'obséder qu'eux-mêmes n'étoient pas les vrais ministres puisqu'ils ne venoient pas du pape, et qu'ainsi son parti étoit pris. Il vouloit aller à l'évêque », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 31, 16 September 1838, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Turner, pp. 66-69.

genuine? It is likely that Māori had a mixture of motives for converting to Catholicism, but the fact that Māori converted with some ease from one Christian denomination to another indicates that the success of the Anglican and Wesleyan missionaries was no more concrete than that of the Marists. In the late 1850s especially, French Catholics-cum-British subjects re-baptised a large number of CMS converts, provoking Anglican Rev. Richard Taylor to assert that declining interest in Protestantism was a result of the “papists”’ disloyalty to the British Crown.<sup>26</sup> Father Pezant himself acknowledged having re-baptised Māori who had already been baptised into the CMS station under John Morgan; Howe confirms that in Rangiaowhia in the late 1840s “many of the Maoris baptised as Catholic had already been baptised as Protestants or were later to be baptised as Protestants.”<sup>27</sup>

To support this idea, there are examples of conversions or at the very least a great interest in Christianity which depended solely on the showmanship of the missionaries present. It was not unusual for Protestant and Catholic missionaries to challenge each other with the aim of humiliating their opponent, especially since said opponent was likely to come from a different country as well as a different church: “The doctrinal divide was not merely some minor issue to occupy idle minds – it was a gaping chasm, wedged apart by religious obduracy on both sides, and buttressed by nationalism. What really puzzled so many onlookers, however – both Māori and European – was the relish that missionaries of all persuasions sometimes seemed to experience when arguing with their opponents.”<sup>28</sup> Father Jean Lampila’s “challenges to an ordeal by fire are the clearest proof that the importance of these encounters lay less in the content of the discussion, than in the personal victory of one missionary over another, whether by trickery, oratorical skill, or sheer force of personality.”<sup>29</sup> A victory therefore secured not only the chance to gloat but more importantly the admiration and adherence of Māori spectators.

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<sup>26</sup> Schmidt, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> K.R. Howe, ‘Missionaries, Maoris and “civilization” in the upper-Waikato, 1833-1863: a study in culture contact, with special reference to the attitudes and activities of the Reverend John Morgan of Otawhāo’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of Auckland, 1970), p. 156.

<sup>28</sup> Moon, p. 102.

<sup>29</sup> Turner, p. 154.

In October 1841 a debate took place in Te Auroa Point, on Māhia Peninsula, between Father Baty and Rev. William Williams of the CMS; for several hours they defended their views and beliefs in front of a Māori audience. According to Baty, Williams had 300 Protestant Māori whereas Baty had only 30 Catholics with him.<sup>30</sup> Protestant evangelisation had commenced on the Māhia Peninsula as early as 1838, thus Baty was at a clear disadvantage as he had only recently arrived there on Pompallier's mission schooner. Baty had greater success near Waikaremoana at the end of 1841. CMS missionary William Colenso was incensed to find that Baty had reached parts of the East Coast before him and, anticipating a sectarian debate, wrote: "So I expect to have a controversy. May the Lord prepare me!"<sup>31</sup> The debate between Colenso and Baty took place on Christmas Eve, with Baty claiming to have had the upper hand.

The pioneer Marist Fathers Chanel and Bataillon were the first priests to establish evangelising missions in Wallis and Futuna. The New Caledonian mission, though launched several years later, was also fortunate in that Protestant missionaries had not yet penetrated the island group. But many other Marists, like those on the Māori Mission, found that wherever they went CMS, LMS or Wesleyan missionaries had already gained a foothold. Father Calinon, a Marist missionary in central Oceania, explained to Father Colin that:

(...) the difficulties of the pagan Wallis mission cannot be compared with those of the missions where one must battle paganism and Protestantism at the same time. I give you Wallis as proof of this. If, converted like it is today and having a bishop and resources, Wallis cannot cope with a handful of heretics who emerged after its conversion and without a Protestant minister, what would become of it if they were only beginning to implant Catholicism there? This is the case where we are in Tonga, in Fiji and where the subjects of all future missions will be located.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 114, 25, 27 & 30 October 1841, Te Auroa (Mahia Peninsula), Baty to Girard, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> Bagnall, pp. 115-116.

<sup>32</sup> « (...) on ne peut pas comparer les difficultés de la mission de Wallis payenne avec celle des missions où il faut lutter à la fois contre le paganisme et le protestantisme. J'en donne pour preuve Wallis elle même. Si convertie comme elle l'est aujourd'hui, ayant un évêque et des ressources, elle ne peut se débrouiller avec une poignée d'hérétiques survenus après sa conversion et sans ministre protestant, que seroit-ce s'il falloit commencer d'y planter le catholicisme? C'est cependant le cas où nous sommes à Tonga, à Fidji et où se trouveront les sujets de toutes les missions à créer dans la suite », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 406, October, 24 & 27 November & 2 December 1845, Tonga, Calinon to Colin, p. 14.

Marist missionaries Father Chevron and Brother Atale, for example, arrived at Tongatapu in 1842, twenty years after a Wesleyan mission station had been established there; they claimed that half the island had already converted to Wesleyan Methodism. Although the Marists created their Catholic community in a different district, conflict with the Wesleyans was inevitable and, more importantly, it embroiled the entire island of Tongatapu. The Marists, who had expected to introduce Christianity to a completely ignorant island population, found instead that they had to “(...) temper their ambition to enlist names of numerous new converts in baptism registers and had to concern themselves with the manner in which to proceed in order to reach the souls of these refractors of Christianity.”<sup>33</sup> It was thus a case of ‘winning’ adherents, which sometimes meant converting them to Catholicism even after they had already been converted to Anglicanism or Wesleyan Methodism. In the Pacific Rev. John Williams of the LMS had made an arrangement with Wesleyan missionaries to divide islands into respective spheres of influence; for example Samoa was allocated to the LMS while Fiji was accepted as a Wesleyan mission territory.<sup>34</sup> Such an arrangement had also been made between the CMS and WMS in New Zealand, but Rev. William White of the WMS disregarded the agreement when he established a station at Kāwhia. With the arrival of the Marists in 1838, the Protestant-Catholic situation became a particularly confusing one for Māori in New Zealand, who were dealing with not two but three Christian denominations vying to win their interest and loyalty. It was not merely a case of Catholic versus Protestant; James Watkin of the WMS recorded that in 1843 Octavius Hadfield’s Anglican converts, including Te Rauparaha’s son Tāmihana, clashed with the Wesleyan converts in the South Island. Watkin wrote: “God forbid that the civil feuds of the Maoris should be succeeded by religious ones. My soul sickens at the thought of religious dissension among the natives. I would have them Christians, not sectaries.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> « (...) modérer leur ambition d’inscrire sur les registres de baptême le nom de nombreux nouveaux convertis, et eurent à se soucier de la manière dont il fallait procéder afin de toucher l’âme de ces réfractaires au christianisme », Duriez-Toutain, p. 63.

<sup>34</sup> John Garrett, *To live among the stars: Christian Origins in Oceania* (Geneva: WCC Publications 1982), p. 79.

<sup>35</sup> Pybus, p. 53.

The missionaries in New Zealand were further locked in battle because each church was unashamedly active in marring the reputation of its rivals, not only in verbal debates, teachings and pamphlets but also via the European political arena of the colonial newspaper. In the mid-1840s Fathers Forest and Petit-Jean entered into a religious debate with the Methodist missionary Thomas Buddle by means of local newspapers. Father Forest's response to Buddle's comments against the Catholic Church, which had appeared in the weekly *New Zealander* in 1846, was accepted for publication in a later issue of the same paper.<sup>36</sup> The Marists also approached the *Auckland Press* in order to respond to Buddle's comments.<sup>37</sup>

How did the Marists respond, faced with anti-Catholic rumours and a growing Protestant influence in the Pacific? The Marist missionaries did not hesitate to denounce the Anglican and Wesleyan churches, in the hope that it would help to offset Protestant missionaries' defamation of the Catholic Church and the Pope, but they found that the Protestant-Catholic debate was an irresolvable one. Fortunately for the Marists, there were elements of these Protestant churches, particularly the Wesleyan Methodist Church, that did not appeal to Māori and Pacific Islanders alike. The principal drawback for potential converts to Wesleyan Methodism was the missionaries' strict regulations regarding indigenous cultural practices. In Tonga, for example, the Wesleyans placed a ban in the 1830s on traditional song and dance, based on the view that these were as unchristian as acts that violated the Ten Commandments. But another point that sometimes acted in favour of the Marists was the rivalry that existed between chiefs and tribes or communities. The Tongan chiefs Aleamotu'a and Taufa'ahau, who were allied with the Wesleyan missionaries, found that their traditional enemies now opposed them by forming an allegiance with the Marist missionaries. In New Zealand some iwi and hapū were looking for an authority that would rival the CMS missionaries, and some chiefs stood to gain mana from having 'their own Pākehās'. The very presence of the Catholic missionaries was enough to draw an interest. According to Turner, "The Catholic faith achieved its

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<sup>36</sup> 'Original Correspondence', *New Zealander*, 3 October 1846, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Docs 558 & 559, November 1846, Petit-Jean to the Editor of the *Auckland Press*.

initial currency not through the content of its message but through its symbolic power as an alternative to Protestant orthodoxy.<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand political interplay in the Pacific could be equally disadvantageous to the Marist cause, and in Tonga the Marist Fathers Chevron and Grange realised by 1844 that the alliance between the Wesleyans and Taufa'ahau represented a significant obstacle to the success of their mission. While the Marists had the support of chiefs in Pea and other small Tongan communities, Taufa'ahau had extended his power from Ha'apai and Vava'u to the island of Tongatapu and was instrumental to the success of the Wesleyan mission in the 1840s:

He is the pillar of Protestantism here; he was the one who planted it with his spear, watered it, unfortunately not with his own sweat, and he was the one who maintained it and maintains it still through the terror of his name. I do not think that there has been a man in Europe who has made a nation tremble such as this man has made this archipelago tremble. He has nothing to do with this island, but when called to the aid of the Wesleyan mission, he declared himself its protector.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, persecution of the Marists and their converts prevented them from expanding the mission into other parts of Tongatapu. Nuku'alofa in the north acted as a strong base for the Wesleyans while the Marists branched out from Pea and created a Catholic community in the western village of Kolonga, but in 1845 a neighbouring chief, his sister and her husband, who was a Wesleyan catechist, ordered the Catholic converts to stop construction of a church in Kolonga and banished Father Chevron back to Pea. Chevron approached the chief, who told him “that his will was still the same, but that he would commit no violence towards me because he was aware, he said, from the reports of the English missionaries and other travellers, of France's bad

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<sup>38</sup> Turner, p. 48.

<sup>39</sup> « C'est le pilier du protestantisme ici; c'est lui qui l'a planté avec sa lance, l'a arrosé, malheureusement pas de ses sueurs; c'est lui qui l'a maintenu et la maintient encore par la terreur de son nom. Je ne crois pas qu'il y ait eu en Europe d'homme qui ait fait trembler un peuple comme cet homme fait trembler cet archipel. Il n'a rien à faire dans cette île, mais appelé au secours de la mission wesseleyenne, il s'en est déclaré le protecteur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 306, 17 January, 24 February, 4 & 10 March, 12 & 24 July 1844, Tonga, Chevron to his family, p. 5.

intentions for Tonga.”<sup>40</sup> The early 1840s had seen the preliminary annexation of Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands by a French admiral, hence the Tongan chief’s apprehension towards Chevron and his mission. But it was not until 1855 that a French naval unit arrived in Tonga, though not to annex it but to enforce a ‘friendship treaty’ whereby the Marist missionaries would be guaranteed freedom from Protestant persecution.

## **2.2 French naval vessels**

Early missionaries in Oceania needed protection and status to establish themselves among local inhabitants, but in Tahiti and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) French missionaries were met with a political impasse. In both instances, Protestant missionaries had developed a political rapport with the local sovereign and were therefore in a position to oust unwanted missionary opposition. The Tongan monarchy was not clear-cut in that several chiefs held the title of Tu’i, but already in 1826 the chief Tuafa’ahau had established supremacy; he eventually claimed overall sovereignty as King George Tupou I in 1845, a mere three years after the Marists had established their pioneer mission in Tongatapu. This was markedly different to the situation in New Zealand, where there was no Māori sovereign until the emergence of the Kīngitanga and the first coronation in 1858, twenty years after the Marists arrived in the Hokianga.

When the Picpus Fathers reached Tahiti in 1836 they appeared destitute alongside the better-funded British missionaries and the Tahitian Queen saw that there was much more to gain from an alliance with the LMS missionary George Pritchard, who also the appointed British Consul in Tahiti. Pritchard influenced Queen Pomare IV to expel the Catholic missionaries, a far more aggressive measure than the Protestant practice of denouncing Catholic missionaries through rumours and slander. John Dunmore explains that “Protestants, whatever their denomination, resented the

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<sup>40</sup> « (...) que sa volonté étoit toujours la même, mais qu’ils [sic] ne me feroit aucune violence, connaissant, dit-il, et par les rapport des missionnaire anglais et d’autres voyageurs, les mauvaises intentions de la France sur Tonga », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 372, 17 June 1845, Chevron to Colin, p. 4.

competition of the newcomers, warned their followers against them and used their influence to keep them out. Their antipathy towards the ‘Papists’ soon became linked with opposition to the French presence and, being predominantly of British stock, they worked to ensure that the territories in which they worked came under Britain’s influence.”<sup>41</sup> Certainly the Marists complained of the negative reputation that always seemed to precede them, such as the image of Pompallier as the Antichrist in New Zealand. The Wesleyans in Tonga hoped to thwart the Marists’ attempts to establish themselves there by circulating the story that Catholic missionaries “(...) herald a truly terrible religion which imposes murder and adultery; if you convert, the missionary will kill your small children and cut them into pieces to be roasted.”<sup>42</sup>

John Dunmore asserts that “religious implantations were seldom successful until colonisation had occurred, or at the very least until they were helped by the political influence of the mother country or, in the islands, by the appearance of naval units”.<sup>43</sup> Although French corvettes did little to protect or assist the Marist Fathers on the Māori mission, Bishop Pompallier made use of a French vessel early on to impress Māori and assert French power in New Zealand. When ships called into Kororāreka, he did not hesitate to socialise with their captains and knew that Māori would be in awe of a man who was welcomed with numerous salutes by representatives of his nation’s government. Indeed the Picpus Fathers, assigned by the Roman Catholic Church to Eastern Oceania, made significant progress only when Queen Pomare IV of Tahiti was forced by French warships to grant freedom of religious worship and the right for French citizens to live there.<sup>44</sup>

The island of Wallis was an example of relatively successful conversion without naval interference, but the appearance of French vessels undoubtedly helped to consolidate the progress that Father Bataillon and his missionaries had made since November 1837. The French missionaries, and Pompallier in particular, spoke of a

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<sup>41</sup> John Dunmore, *Visions & Realities: France in the Pacific 1695-1995* (Waikanae: Heritage Press, 1997), p. 131.

<sup>42</sup> « (...) annonce une religion bien mauvaise qui ordonne le meurtre, et l’adultère; si vous vous convertissez le missionnaire tuera vos petits enfants et les coupera en morceaux pour les faire rôtir », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 153, 9 May – 11 July 1842, Wallis, Chevron to family, p. 13.

<sup>43</sup> Dunmore, *Visions & Realities*, p. 152.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*, pp. 136-138.



great nation, both rich and powerful, which had sent them to Oceania to gallantly rescue the souls of suffering pagans, thus creating an image of grandeur that did not correspond to the shabbily-clad Marists who struggled more often than not simply to make ends meet. Visits from naval vessels were therefore important in confirming the missionaries' claim that they had the support of France and its government:

The French admiral commanding the stations of the South Seas and residing in the Marquesas Islands, which France recently seized as its possession last May, learned by way of rumours from some time ago that we were fearful in our mission. He immediately dispatched the *Embuscade* to us, a corvette of 34 guns and 230 men to come to our aid [...] The captain of the corvette is Mr. Mallet. He is a man who seems to take a strong interest in our missions. He offered us all of his services and placed himself entirely at our disposal.<sup>45</sup>

French missionaries in the Pacific could expect support and protection during the reign of King Louis-Philippe (r. 1830-1848) and Emperor Napoleon III (r. 1852-1870), largely because those governments hoped to expand French control in Oceania. In New Caledonia French sovereignty was imposed by a French commander in 1853, without the intervention of Bishop Douarre and his accompanying missionaries. Georges Delbos writes: "Douarre, who always consented to reciprocal services of benefit to the people they both governed, would always refuse to mix nationalism and religion."<sup>46</sup> If politics were of no interest to Bishop Douarre himself, the presence of French vessels nevertheless offered him and his companions much-needed succour on more than one occasion. The *Rhin*, captained by Auguste Bérard, visited the first instalment of missionaries in Balade in 1845 and inspired Father Rougeyron to write:

I am not afraid to say that Mr. Bérard had the care and tenderness of a mother and showed that he possessed a rare devotion to the welfare of the mission. In this way our fortune truly changed,

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<sup>45</sup> « L'amiral français com[mand]ant les stations des mers du sud et résidant aux îles Marqu[ise]s, dont la France vient de prendre possession au mois de mai passé, ayant appris par des bruits de vieille [*sic*] date que nous étions inquiétés dans notre mission, nous a expédié de suite l'*Embuscade*, corvette de 34 canons et de 230 hommes pour nous secourir [...] Le commandant de la corvette est m(onsieu)r Mallet. C'est un homme qui semble s'intéresser beaucoup à nos missions. Il nous a offert tous les services et s'est mis entièrement à notre disposition », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 214, 4 November 1842, Wallis, Bataillon to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> « Douarre, qui sera toujours consentant pour des services réciproques au bénéfiques de leurs communs administrés, se refusera toujours de mélanger nationalisme et religion », Delbos, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 40.

and Mr. Bérard left us, upon his departure, with an abundance of provisions to last a year. Blessed be the ship of the motherland! <sup>47</sup>

In support of Dunmore's assertion, if Douarre had had the constant presence of French ships and warships, perhaps he would not have been forced to abandon the vicariate of New Caledonia following the events of May-August 1847 (during which Douarre himself was absent). Douarre was involved in the establishment of the Société de l'Océanie, an initiative involving the Marist Superior-General and French captains who agreed to transport and support Marist missionaries in the Pacific. In May the chief of Hienghène informed Captain Raballand, a member of the Société de l'Océanie, of his plot to attack and kill the French missionaries as soon as Raballand's ship, the *Anonyme*, departed for Sydney; fortunately the *Speck* arrived in Balade soon after, carrying Bishop Collomb and a large supply of provisions for the mission, but again the missionaries were alerted to an impending attack following the departure of the *Speck*. In July Kanak chiefs laid siege to one of the Marist stations and the missionaries fled to Pouébo, leaving behind Brother Blaise Marmoiton, who had received a debilitating head wound from one of the Kanak assailants. Marmoiton was killed and his body, not unlike the Marist chapel nearby, was stripped and ravaged. On 13 August, after almost a month of living in constant fear and exile at the Pouébo station, the thirteen remaining New Caledonian missionaries were rescued by Captain Du Bouzet and brought aboard *La Brillante*.<sup>48</sup>

### **2.3 The colonising attempt at Akaroa**

The main period of French post-Revolutionary colonial expansion began in 1880 and was brought to an end by the First World War. Despite considerable conflict between Republicans and clergymen in France, the colonial official and the missionary were

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<sup>47</sup> « Je ne crains pas de le dire, m(onsieu)r Bérard a eu pour nous les soins et la tendresse d'une mère, et il s'est montré d'un rare dévouement pour le bien de la mission. Voilà notre sort vraiment changé, et m(onsieu)r Bérard en nous quittant nous laissa en abondance des vivres pour un an. Béni soit le navire de la patrie! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 407, 1 October 1845, New Caledonia, Rougeyron to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 651, c. 13 August 1847, New Caledonia, 'Procès-verbal des événements qui ont eu lieu dans la mission catholique de la Nouvelle Calédonie' (Official report of events that took place on the Catholic mission of New Caledonia), Collomb, Rougeyron and Verguet, p. 1.

forced to co-operate in order to achieve the French ‘civilising mission’.<sup>49</sup> Would the French Marists have enjoyed greater success in New Zealand if there had been a stronger French political presence in the Pacific? Or would French officers and officials have had a negative impact on the Māori Mission, especially in the 1840s considering so many British Protestants had settled in New Zealand? The progress of a Christian church was aided by its country’s colonising endeavours in certain ways, such as gaining entry and security through military backing or having the financial advantage of an influx of settlers-cum-parishioners. By 1884 government stipends were available to French missionaries in Tahiti. However coexisting government agents, settlers and clergymen were not always of the same mind and this sometimes hampered the mission; after New Caledonia was annexed in 1853 by Rear-Admiral Febvrier-Despointes, the missionaries found that:

The simultaneously evangelising and civilising action of the Mission was deliberately hampered, for an entire decade, by the ideological hostility of the new governor, the anticlericalism imported from metropolitan France, the bad example set by whites, and finally the sad spectacle of the transportation of convicts and the deportation of political exiles.<sup>50</sup>

In any case, the early Marists found themselves in unusual political circumstances in New Zealand, given the suspicion and uncertainty of European colonial intentions that accompanied exploration and trading in the Pacific; in the first half of the nineteenth century, Anna Johnston states, “islands in the Pacific operated under quasi-colonial status. (...) Missionaries generally behaved as if colonial status was imminent or even already in place.”<sup>51</sup> Certainly the preliminary annexation of the Marquesas and Society Islands in 1842 and 1843 reflected a small attempt by a French captain to counterbalance British expansion in New Zealand and Australia. Father Colin, the Marist Superior-General, supported the French naval presence in the Pacific because it ensured the protection of his missionaries, but as Kevin Roach points out, “Colin understood that a too open protection of the mission by the French

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<sup>49</sup> Daughton, p. 6.

<sup>50</sup> « L’action, à la fois évangélisatrice et civilisatrice de la Mission, fut délibérément entravée, pendant toute une décennie qui parut longue, par l’hostilité idéologique du nouveau gouverneur, par l’anticléricalisme importé de métropole, par le mauvais exemple des blancs, par le triste spectacle enfin de la transportation des bagnards et de la déportation des exilés politique », Delbos, *L’Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 96.

<sup>51</sup> Johnston, pp. 115-116.

government could be dangerous to the progress of religion on account of the suspicions of the English missionaries.”<sup>52</sup>

The Marists benefited from the arrival in April 1838 of a French navy vessel in the Bay of Islands, whose captain Jean-Baptiste Cécille saluted Pompallier with nine guns as he came aboard to “impress both natives and whites with the importance of the bishop and of the nation to which he belonged.”<sup>53</sup> Pompallier knew he could rely on Cécille’s cooperation if the mission or missionaries needed protection. But the French Marists in New Zealand were never ousted as the Picpus Fathers were, and did not face the threat of being attacked in the same way as the French Marists in Futuna, New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands would be; while Admiral Abel Aubert Du Petit-Thouars saw an opportunity for political conquest in the exile of the Picpus missionaries in Tahiti, the circumstances in New Zealand did not call for a similar action. The Marists on the Māori Mission were marginalised but certainly not persecuted (even if they used this word to describe Protestant missionary conduct towards them) nor was Captain Cécille as audacious as Du Petit-Thouars had been. In addition the Marists were bound to a policy of political neutrality, evangelisation being the sole purpose for their presence in New Zealand. Even when Du Petit-Thouars visited the Bay of Islands in late 1838, he showed no interest in claiming sovereignty on behalf of France; he simply invited Ngāpuhi chiefs Rewa and Pomare on board and offered them gifts.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless British Protestant fears of a French takeover were not unjustified; this was demonstrated by the arrival of French settlers in Akaroa, a small port in the South Island of New Zealand, just months after Hobson’s annexation of the whole country in 1840.

The French character of the early mission in New Zealand was particularly troublesome because of the threat posed by France as a rival coloniser, a threat that seemed to be confirmed by the arrival of French vessels in 1838; although the vessels were in place to protect French missionaries already established in the Pacific, their presence was interpreted as a means to execute the French monarchy’s plans for

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<sup>52</sup> Roach, p. 82.

<sup>53</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 18.

<sup>54</sup> Turner, pp. 77-78.

colonial expansion. In 1840 Akaroa became the first French colonial settlement in the Pacific, as a result of government interest and individual enterprise; Peter Tremewan's work *French Akaroa* offers a detailed account of the motives and ambitions of the individuals involved in the Akaroa scheme and its connection with Father Colin, who was privy to French colonising plans concerning the Pacific.<sup>55</sup> Tremewan explains: "The Government wished to back French missionary activity, especially in Oceania, where it wished to create settlements on the principal islands, because if they became Catholic, they will become French."<sup>56</sup>

Pompallier probably expected that the Marist Fathers he sent to Akaroa in 1840 would have the aid and support of not only the settlers but the French captain who led the colonial expedition, Charles François Lavaud. Instead Fathers Pezant and Tripe were disappointed to find that Māori in the Banks Peninsula area were few in number, the French settlers there took little interest in them, and Lavaud was largely indifferent towards the missionaries and their plight. Lavaud's attitude might be explained by the fact that he was a freemason,<sup>57</sup> but Pezant noted that he had been very accommodating until the failure of the colonising venture; while Akaroa may have been secured, there was no opportunity for expansion because of the annexation of the South Island by the British:

The commander of the *Aube* has behaved rather poorly towards us since our arrival here; he did not even want to lift a finger to prepare a small oratory for us where we could hold mass and give some instruction to the settlers; as a result of this the spirituality of these poor people greatly suffers [...] Certainly, if the government knew all of this, the commander would be strongly reprimanded: for I can say and I should say that the government showed itself to be cordial and favourable to us in Paris, that it showed itself to be great, that it acted for our benefit with an eagerness, a generosity and above all a perfect politeness, which truly touched Monsieur Tripe and me. We also know that in the instructions given by the government to its representative were the most insistent recommendations to treat us with respect, to assist us, to protect us and to favour us. But since this man has begun to neglect or rather to fail in the business of colonisation for which he was sent, he has very much changed.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> See also Turner, p. 19.

<sup>56</sup> Tremewan, *French Akaroa*, p. 53.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*, p. 247.

<sup>58</sup> « M(onsieur) le commandant de l'*Aube* s'est conduit assez petitement à notre égard depuis notre arrivée ici; il n'a pas même voulu faire un pas pour nous faire préparer un petit oratoire où nous

## 2.4 *The Treaty of Waitangi*

Perhaps unfairly, Pompallier's contribution to the Treaty of Waitangi was viewed as highly political by Anglican missionaries, who were bewildered by Governor Hobson's sanctioning of Pompallier's suggestion for religious tolerance. At the signing in Waitangi, Pompallier appeared to neither support nor deplore the Treaty, even agreeing to become a British subject in the new colony. Yet "many observers were struck by the fact that the most violent opposition to the Treaty came from Catholic chiefs, and drew the conclusion that they had been influenced by the French missionaries."<sup>59</sup> Rewa and Te Kemara were two such Catholic chiefs and, in light of the influx of British Protestants that the Treaty would facilitate, both chiefs probably were advised by the bishop or his missionaries to reject British sovereignty. Tupaea of Ngāi Te Rangi was another of Pompallier's Catholic adherents, but Turner asserts that "Chiefs like Tupaea did not oppose the treaty because they were Catholics; rather they turned to the Catholics because they opposed the treaty."<sup>60</sup> In any case, in front of the government and in his letters to France Pompallier maintained a deliberately neutral stance with regard to the Treaty:

A great event took place last January: an English warship arrived at the Bay of Islands; it brought a lieutenant governor, vassal of the great English governor of Sydney; he is called Captain Hobson. He is sent by the queen of England to protect the British subjects who are already very numerous in New Zealand; one does not come across a tribe of natives without one or two or three Europeans from Ireland or Scotland or England; moreover in the principal bays their numbers already form the population of small towns. The governor, or rather lieutenant governor, visited the principal tribes himself or through his agents to request that the natives

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puissions donner la messe et quelques instructions aux colons; en sorte que le spirituel de ces pauvres gens en souffre beaucoup [...] Certainement, si le gouvernement savait tout cela, le commandant serait fortement blâmé: car je puis dire, je dois dire même que le gouvernement s'est montré cordialement bon pour nous à Paris, qu'il s'est montré grand, qu'il a agi pour nous avec un empressement, une générosité et surtout une politesse parfaite, qui nous ont vraiment touchés, m(onsieu)r Tripe et moi. Nous savons aussi que les instructions données par le gouvernement à son représentant lui font des recommandations les plus pressantes de nous traiter avec égards, de nous aider, de nous protéger de nous favoriser. Mais depuis que cet homme s'est mis à négliger, ou plutôt à perdre l'affaire de la colonisation, pour laquelle il était envoyé, il a changé beaucoup », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 74, 17 September 1840, Akaroa, Pezant to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> Thomson, 'The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870', p. 21.

<sup>60</sup> Turner, p. 102.

sign a treaty proposed to them in the name of the queen of England; by way of the treaty they will be conquered as subjects and protected as such – which is nothing more than a blatant annexation of New Zealand by England. The natives have been divided in their feelings on this matter; some have signed the treaty, others have refused, but few have truly understood what they were doing by signing; they were won over by presents and by their own ignorance. Our position has been most critical in this country for some weeks. The natives came to ask me what they ought to do: to sign or not to sign; here I enlightened some chiefs on what it would mean for them and then left them to decide, keeping myself neutral and detached from politics, and telling them that I was here in this country with my fellow men to work for the salvation of those who would not sign and of those who would. When they received offers to purchase their lands and they consulted me as to whether or not they should sell, I told them that this was a matter of their own will. Now they interrogate me as to whether it is good to cede or not to cede their independence; they are the masters of it, so it is again a matter of their own will. Besides which I was assured that the request for signatures was no more than a pretext; the decision to take possession had already been made.<sup>61</sup>

Father Servant, who was also present at the signing of the Treaty, wrote a similar account to the Marist Superior-General, although his version contains several references to the antipathy of Māori towards Protestant missionaries. He neglects to mention that, while there were indeed statements denouncing the Protestants and European settlers, there were also some Māori who were prepared to sign the treaty

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<sup>61</sup> « Un grand événement a eu lieu en janvier dernier: un bâtiment de guerre anglais est venu à la Baie des îles; il a apporté un lieutenant gouverneur, vassal du grand gouverneur anglais de Sydney; il s'appelle le cap(itain)e Hobson. Il est envoyé par la reine d'Angleterre pour protéger les sujets britanniques qui sont déjà fort nombreux en la Nouvelle Zélande; on ne rencontre pas une tribu de naturels où il n'y ait un, ou deux ou trois Européens d'Irlande, ou d'Écosse ou d'Angleterre; puis dans les baies principales, leurs nombres forment déjà la population de petites villes. Le gouverneur, ou plutôt lieutenant gouverneur a parcouru ou fait parcourir les principales tribus par lui-même ou par ses agents pour demander aux naturels de signer un traité qu'il leur a proposé au nom de la reine d'Angleterre, et par lequel ils lui seroient soumis comme sujets et protégés de même: ce qui n'est rien autre qu'une entreprise évidente de prise de possession de la Nouvelle Zélande par l'Angleterre. Les naturels ont été divisés de sentiments sur ce point; les uns ont signé le traité, les autres ont refusé, mais peu ont bien compris ce qu'ils ont fait en signant; ils ont été gagnés par des présents et par leur ignorance. Notre position a été fort critique en ce pays durant quelques semaines. Les naturels venoient me demander ce qu'ils devoient faire, ou signer ou ne pas signer; ici j'éclairais les chefs sur ce dont il s'agissoit pour eux et les abandonnois ensuite à eux-mêmes, me tenant dans la neutralité hors de la politique, leur disant que j'étois ici en ce pays avec les miens pour travailler au salut et de ceux qui ne signeroient pas et de ceux qui signeroient. Quand on leur proposoit de leur acheter des terres et qu'ils me consultoient s'ils devoit vendre ou non, je leur disois que cela étoit une affaire de leur volonté. Maintenant ils m'interrogent s'il est bien de céder ou de ne pas céder leur indépendance, ils en sont les maîtres, c'est encore ici une affaire de leur volonté. D'ailleurs, j'étois bien assuré que la demande des signatures n'étoit qu'un prétexte, la prise de possession étoit résolue », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 5-6.

because it would thwart any French plans for annexation. Servant explained to Father Colin:

The governor proposed that the native chiefs recognise his authority, making it understood that this would be for civil order and for their own good while pointing out to them that they will remain chiefs in their tribes and in control of their possessions. On that, one by one numerous chiefs took their turn to speak and demonstrate all their Maori eloquence: the great majority of orators do not want the governor to extend his authority over the natives, but exclusively over the Europeans; others do not even want the governor to remain in New Zealand. Among the latter, attention was drawn to an elder who, very wrathful, repeated a number of times: “No, no, no governors. Be gone, governor, be gone, return to your country. We do not want a foreign authority here; we are afraid of it.” Another (a heretic chief) said that foreigners had come to take their lands, to lower their status by reducing them to servants, to rob and deceive them; that the Maoris had been given bibles but that they would readily give them back, since everything else had been taken from them. A great number complained of the vast properties which had been acquired by the heretic ministers.

Finally, at the end of the meeting, conciliatory chiefs were introduced who spoke a great deal in favour of having the governor’s authority recognised. Soon it was time to sign a document through which the chiefs promised to recognise English authority. I was told that, in a meeting that had taken place in Hokianga, a chief had said to the governor: “the queen of England wants to reign over New Zealand, but if a chief from here goes to England, could he have the right to become king?”

We are leaving politics, to which we are absolutely foreign, well alone. Let us concern ourselves with the kingdom of Jesus Christ; the welfare of souls, this should be the sole purpose of our vows. May we have the ability to work at effectively bringing about the natives’ salvation, and may the arrival of foreigners be not detrimental to it!<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> « Le gouverneur propose aux chefs naturels de reconnoître son autorité, en leur faisant entendre que ce seroit pour le bon ordre et leur propre bien en leur faisant remarquer aussi qu’ils resteroient chefs dans leurs tribus et maîtres de leurs possessions. Là dessus de nombreux chefs prennent la parole tour-à-tour et déploient toute leur éloquence maorient: le plus grand nombre des orateurs ne veulent pas que le gouverneur étende son autorité sur les naturels, mais sur les Européens exclusivement; d’autres ne veulent pas même que le gouverneur restât à la Nouvelle-Zélande. Parmi ces derniers se fait remarquer un vieillard qui, tout courroucé, répéta un grand nombre de fois: Non, non, point de gouverneur. Va-t-en, gouverneur, va-t-en, retourne dans ton pays. Nous ne voulons point d’une autorité étrangère; nous en avons peur. Un autre (c’était un chef hérétique) disoit que les étrangers étoient venus pour s’emparer de leurs terres, pour ravalier leurs noms en les réduisant en servitude, pour les voler et les tromper, qu’on leur avoit donné une bible, mais qu’ils la rendroient volontiers, puisqu’on leur enlevait tout le reste. Un grand nombre se plaignit des terres immenses dont les ministres hérétiques avoient fait l’acquisition. Enfin, à la fin de la séance se présentèrent des chefs conciliateurs qui parlèrent beaucoup pour faire reconnoître l’autorité du gouverneur. Bientôt on parvint à faire signer un écrit par lequel les chefs s’engageoient à reconnoître l’autorité anglaise. On m’a rapporté que, dans la réunion qui avoit eu lieu à Hokianga, un chef avoit dit au gouverneur: la reine d’Angleterre veut régner à la Nouvelle-Zélande, mais si un chef d’ici va en Angleterre, pourra-t-il avoir le droit de devenir roi?



Though only Pompallier and Servant were present at the Treaty-signing, all of the Marist Fathers mentioned the political takeover in their letters to France, some of them offering a less diplomatic version of events than Servant's especially when writing to family and friends. Father Petit-Jean, writing to his brother-in-law, connects the Treaty back to his spiritual rivals, the Anglican missionaries:

(...) at the Bay of Islands and elsewhere they are generally missionaries, simply called English missionaries. Without a doubt, they were sent well in advance for two ends: to win this people over to the Englishmen's religion, then to submit them later on to their authority-in a nutshell, to make them as English as possible. Lo and behold, this nation's government has decidedly taken possession of the country in the name of Queen Victoria, and it seems that New Zealand will soon be functioning entirely as an English colony. Praise be to God, the priest makes no distinction between nations, his wish is to save everyone.<sup>63</sup>

The Protestant missionaries who attended the official Treaty signing included Revs. Samuel Ironside and John Warren of the WMS and Revs. Henry Williams, Richard Taylor, William Colenso, Charles Baker, John King, James Kemp and George Clarke of the CMS. The Anglican missionary Henry Williams may not have set out to turn New Zealand into an English possession, but he incontestably played a key role in its colonisation by translating the Treaty imprecisely into Māori and swaying chiefs in favour of the English. In Williams' defence, Lawrence Rogers asserts that the clergyman found himself inextricably caught up in the politics of the Treaty of Waitangi and "although he had wished to devote himself entirely to missionary work, his knowledge and prestige were indispensable to Hobson and Fitzroy, and involved

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Nous laissons la politique à laquelle nous sommes tout-à-fait étrangers. Occupons-nous du royaume de J(ésus) C(hrist); le bien des âmes, ce doit être là tout l'objet de nos vœux. Puisse-nous travailler à opérer efficacement le salut des naturels et puisse l'affluence des étrangers ne lui être pas nuisible! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 52, 5 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, pp. 10-11.

<sup>63</sup> « (...) à la Baie des îles et ailleurs, ce sont généralement des missionnaires dits simplement missionnaires anglais. Sans doute, ils avoient été envoyés long-temps d'avance pour deux fins, gagner ce peuple à la croyance des Anglais, puis le soumettre plus tard à leur autorité, en un mot, le faire anglais autant que possible. Voilà que le gouvernement de cette nation a décidément pris possession du pays au nom de la reine Victoria et dans peu à ce qui paroît la Nouvelle-Zél(ande) sera complètement sur le pied de colonie anglaise. Dieu soit béni, le prêtre ne fait distinction d'aucune nation, il désire sauver tout le monde », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 53, 18 March 1840, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Paillason (brother-in-law), p. 4.

him in problems he would gladly have avoided.”<sup>64</sup> He certainly was an obvious choice for translator of the treaty into Māori, although historian Claudia Orange points out that his brother, William Williams, and other CMS missionaries including Rev. Robert Maunsell, who had both a superior command of the Māori language and experience in English to Māori translation, would probably have been given the task had they been available at the time.<sup>65</sup> According to Paul Moon, the all-important Treaty was no less than a hastily assembled document put together by a man, Captain Hobson, who had no experience in treaty-writing, and who had been given a few sample treaties from Africa and vague instructions on what the New Zealand treaty ought to contain.<sup>66</sup>

Initially, the French Marists were unsure of what the Treaty might mean for them and for the future of their apostolic work in New Zealand. Considering the rivalry in Europe between the French and English nations, between Catholic and Protestant churches, and between two colonising and trading powers, British annexation of New Zealand in 1840 could have led to the ousting of the French Marists in New Zealand. Father Garin was relieved that this did not turn out to be the case:

One cannot truly comprehend how difficult it is to be able to ally a Catholic *French clergy* protected by the *French government* with an *English Protestant nation* in an *English colony*. It is a fact that Monsignor has [won] the affection of the English and we consider it a marvel that we are able to remain here still, given the disasters that surround us.<sup>67</sup>

While it did not mark the end of their mission, the annexation and settlement of New Zealand by the British did adversely affect the French Marists in terms of their marginalisation. Indeed to be Catholic was already reprehensible in the eyes of the Protestant majority, but to be French as well as Catholic aroused heavy suspicion within the colonial government. Surprisingly, the French missionaries enjoyed a

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<sup>64</sup> *The Early Journals of Henry Williams: 1826-40*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>65</sup> Orange, p. 39.

<sup>66</sup> Moon, p. 18.

<sup>67</sup> « On ne peut pas assez comprendre quelle difficulté il y a à savoir allier *un clergé français catholique protégé du gouvernement français* avec *une nation protestante anglaise* dans *une colonie anglaise*. C’est un fait que m(onsei)g(neu)r a l’affection des Anglais et nous regardons comme un prodige que nous puissions rester encore ici, vu les sinistres qui nous environnent », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 209, 29 October & 4 November 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 6.

relatively positive rapport with Governor Hobson. In a letter following the Treaty, Father Servant explains:

The governor and the English authorities, guided perhaps by their political views, show esteem for Monsignor and tell us that they view the Catholic mission well and even make it understood that they will protect and favour it; they make us feel how much the bishop's and missionaries' influence on the natives can be useful to them, but we work outside of politics, as our duty demands.<sup>68</sup>

Rather than fearing that the official establishment of British sovereignty in New Zealand would curb the progress of the French mission, Pompallier's response to the Treaty was also oddly optimistic; he believed that it would do more damage to his enemies, the Protestant missionaries. With respect to Rev. Henry Williams, Pompallier may have been right. Williams was later reprimanded by Governor Grey for his considerable land purchases from Māori and was consequently dismissed from the CMS. The implementation of a British authority in New Zealand also interfered with trading ventures set up by European settlers and checked the freedom and lawlessness that had dominated Kororāreka and other ports:

(...) everywhere they now say: the Protestant missionaries truly needed to deafen us with their continuous repetitions that the bishop [Pompallier] would take over our country. For it is they! It is their queen who does this in place of him. Let us continue to pray with fervour to the Lord, and to His august mother, in order that His holy reign may take root and grow stronger in these great islands of New Zealand. This annexation offers something else to our advantage: the Europeans here who previously found themselves in a sort of anarchy, are no longer in this state, and the mission functions with a greater sense of protection than before.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> « Le gouverneur et les autorités anglaises, guidés peut-être par leurs vues politiques, manifestent des égards pour m(onsei)g(neu)r et nous disent qu'ils voient bien la mission catholique et font même entendre qu'ils la protégeront et la favoriseront, ils nous font sentir combien l'influence qu'ont l'évêque et les missionnaires sur les naturels peut leur être utile, mais nous travaillons en dehors de la politique, comme notre devoir le demande », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> « (...) ils disent partout maintenant: les missionnaires anglois avoient bien besoin de nous casser les oreilles de leurs répétitions continuelles que l'évêque s'emparerait de notre pays. Ce sont eux! C'est leur reine qui le fait à sa place. Prions toujours le Seigneur avec ferveur, ainsi que son auguste mère, afin que son saint règne s'établisse et s'affermisse en ces grandes îles de la Nouvelle Zélande. Cette prise de possession a encore cela d'avantageux pour nous, que les Européens ici qui se trouvoient auparavant dans une sorte d'anarchie, n'y sont plus maintenant, et la mission marche avec plus de protection qu'auparavant », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 6.

Bishop Pompallier nevertheless enforced a policy of neutrality during and following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Dominic O’Sullivan notes that Pompallier’s policy of neutrality directly contrasts with the approach taken by Archbishop Polding in Sydney, although it can also be argued that Australian Aborigines were in a very different situation compared with Māori; Polding “developed a reputation for speaking out strongly against the white exploitation of Aborigines.”<sup>70</sup> But Pompallier was well aware that co-operation with British officials and acceptance from the Catholic settler communities would be required now that New Zealand had become a British colony, and was careful to ensure that nationalism did not interfere with his religious duties:

(...) in all political conflicts, of speculation and of commerce, all missionaries must prove themselves to be what they should always be: Catholic men, embracing all peoples of the land in their charity, and weighing all nations on an equal scale, with no regard to their flags or customs: the cross is our only flag and the Lord’s blood the only weight on our scales for souls. Prudent, truly judicious men with a truly Catholic heart are needed to work successfully on our missions in Oceania. A profound disinterest is also needed.<sup>71</sup>

## 2.5 *Racial tension and war*

Considering the French Marists were steeped in a denominational battle with English Protestants over Māori adherence, political disinterest was not an attitude that could easily be maintained and any opportunity to denounce the rival denomination was readily seized. In the following passage from a letter to the Marist Superior-General, Father Petit-Jean describes the Robertson murders of 1841, a crime for which Maketu Wharetotara, the son of a Ngāpuhi chief, was hanged the following year. Although Petit-Jean’s claim elsewhere in the letter that Maketu was a loyal Protestant does not

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<sup>70</sup> Piper, ‘Missionary and Maori’, p. 16.

<sup>71</sup> « (...) dans tous les conflits politiques, de spéculation et de commerce, il faut que tous les missionnaires se montrent bien ce qu’ils doivent toujours être, des hommes catholiques, embrassant dans leur charité tous les peuples de la terre, et pesant dans une même balance toutes les nations, sans faire attention à leurs drapeaux, à leurs coutumes: la croix est notre unique drapeau, et le sang de notre Sauveur l’unique poids de notre balance pour les âmes. Il faut des hommes prudents, bien judicieux et d’un cœur bien catholique pour travailler avec succès dans nos missions de l’Océanie. Il faut aussi un grand désintéressement », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 7.

correspond with other historical accounts, Maketu did ask to be baptised on the day of his execution. Petit-Jean faithfully portrays most of the events and was also acquainted with the victims, having visited Elizabeth Roberton three weeks before the murders:

I still have to recount a tragic event which has just happened in one of the islands in our bay (Bay of Islands). On Saturday 20 November 5 people were killed and the only house standing there was burnt down. The culprit was apprehended. Here are some details: an elderly servant of this house had his head split open with the blow of an axe while he was sleeping outside. A widow and a small child with another little girl whom she was caring for received fatal blows and the bodies were, so to speak, roasted in the flames. Another of the widow's boys, aged about 6 or 7, had been captured while he was fleeing and despite his cries and his tears he was thrown from a great height onto a rock down below; then the sea swallowed him up so that his body could not be retrieved. This catastrophe plunged the whites into shock and dismay. People are struck with horror and compassion for this ill-fated widow. We deeply share the public's grief, especially since this woman's husband, named Roberton, had shown a particular kindness towards the Catholic mission.<sup>72</sup>

Maketu's execution in March 1842 was the first example of capital punishment in New Zealand and could have led to major conflict between Māori and Europeans. According to the CMS missionary William Colenso, there was a genuine fear on the part of settlers that Māori would avenge Maketu's execution: "A plan was talked of as being concocting to make a simultaneous rise and murder every white! Several hundred natives all armed have assembled in this station; as yet, however, no violence has been offered; and I would hope that peace may be preserved."<sup>73</sup> Father Petit-Jean also mentioned the paranoia of the European settlers, but predictably denounces the

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<sup>72</sup> « J'ai encore à vous raconter un événement tragique qui vient de se passer dans une des îles de notre baie (Baie des îles). Le samedi 20 nov(embre), on y a tué 5 personnes ; la seule maison qui y étoit a été incendiée. Le coupable est saisi. Voici quelques détails. Un vieux domestique de cette maison a eu la tête fendue à coup de hache pendant qu'il dormoit dehors. Une veuve et une petite enfant avec un autre petite fille qu'elle soignoit a reçu le coup de la mort dans la maison, et leurs corps ont été pour ainsi dire rôtis par les flammes. Un autre garçon de cette même veuve, âgé de 6 ou 7 ans environ, a été saisi pendant qu'il s'enfuyoit et malgré ses cris et ses larmes, il a été précipité sur un rocher à une grande profondeur; puis la mer l'a englouti sans qu'on ait pu retrouver son corps. Cette catastrophe a plongé les blancs dans la stupeur et la consternation. On est saisi d'horreur et de compassion pour cette veuve infortunée. Nous partageons vivement le deuil public, d'autant que le mari de cette femme, nommé Roberton, avoit montré une bienveillance particulière pour la mission catholique. C'est vers les 3 heures du soir que tous ces crimes ont été exécutés et l'incendie a suivi le meurtre immédiatement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 118, 11 December 1841, Kororareka, Petit-Jean to Colin, pp. 13-14.

<sup>73</sup> William Colenso quoted in Moon, p. 80.

Protestant missionaries in his rendering of events: “Now the whites are frightened. The Maori are in a sort of anarchy, which causes some concern. The Protestant missionaries want to deceive us by having us believe that the natives are upset because of some of the governor’s orders in relation to properties and forests.”<sup>74</sup> However, one of Maketu’s victims was the granddaughter of Ngāpuhi chief Rewa, which perhaps explains why Māori were willing to surrender Maketu to the British judicial system.

While the Marists secretly blamed the CMS for Maketu’s actions, in 1845 the CMS deprecated the Marists and Pompallier as conspirators against the British Crown. Charged with inciting Hone Heke and other Māori ‘insurgents’, the Frenchmen could have had the book thrown at them given the heavy-handed patriotism that might exist in a British colonial government, but the Marists found unlikely support and acquittals in the person of Governor Grey.<sup>75</sup> Evidence of Pompallier’s innocence can be found in the letters he wrote pleading to Heke to make peace with the government, but while he had encouraged Heke’s defiance he was not beyond “capitalising on the very causes of his weakness: his foreign nationality and his religion.”<sup>76</sup> One might conclude that the Bishop can hardly be considered ‘neutral’ in all political matters if he utilised his position as a Frenchman, which detached him from the Treaty, in an effort to win the loyalty and adherence of one the CMS’ foremost Māori converts. Pompallier wrote to Heke:

If I were an English Stranger living with the New Zealanders, and if I had ever solicited you to yield the sovereignty of your Nation to Englishmen, thy heart would do well to mistrust my present letter, which I am now writing for thy welfare. Quite the opposite, I am of a different nation; I have never said to you, give up your sovereignty to strangers, be they English, French, or Americans, or any other nation that exists. Because I am not sent hither by any king of this world to rule the affairs of this perishable earth; on the contrary, I have been sent by the Prince

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<sup>74</sup> « Maintenant les blancs sont effrayés. Les Maori sont dans une espèce de dérangement qui donne quelque inquiétude; les missionnaires protestants veulent donner le change en faisant croire que les naturels sont indisposés par quelques ordonnances du gouverneur relativement aux propriétés et aux bois », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 118, 11 December 1841, Kororareka, Petit-Jean to Colin, pp. 15-16 (margin).

<sup>75</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, pp. 38-39.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

of Bishops of the Church, which is the living tree, to work exclusively in the ministry of salvation!<sup>77</sup>

Although the CMS missionaries in New Zealand had opposed British sovereignty until 1839, Pompallier and the French Marists were quick to point out that the CMS had been involved in extensive land purchases well before Governor Hobson's arrival,<sup>78</sup> had traded muskets, and had encouraged Māori to sign the Treaty of Waitangi for their own protection. Belich points out that Heke's actions had the view to "regulate, not reject, European contact and settlement,"<sup>79</sup> but there were undoubtedly Māori affected by the new tax schemes and colonial laws who had a more extreme stance on British presence and control in New Zealand. Father Jean-Simon Bernard, writing from his station at Tauranga, had claimed that Māori did not recognise their French 'neutrality' and at times treated them with the same contempt as all other Europeans: "In short, to them we are merely *Pakeha*, foreigners, some of those men who exploit them and ruin them through their cupidity and their dreadful morals."<sup>80</sup> But a number of the eager converts to the Roman Catholic Church in the decade following the Treaty-signing were former adherents of the Protestant missionary churches, probably disillusioned with all things British. In the mid-1840s, after a period of disheartenment and crisis, the morale of the Marists was lifted when northern Māori began to question the integrity of the CMS mission. Father Séon seemed hopeful that the Catholic Church would gain converts now that British sovereignty and influence were under scrutiny following Hone Heke's first attack on the flagstaff in Kororāreka in July 1844:

His Excellency the Governor, informed of what had happened, made great threats and announced that in a few weeks' time troops would come here to extract a blinding vengeance for such an insult. To prevent this disaster the Anglican Bishop summoned a good number of Maori chiefs to Te Waimate, his place of residence and just one league's distance from Kaikohe,

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<sup>77</sup> J.-B.-F. Pompallier, *A Few Letters written by the RT. REV. John Baptist Francis Pompallier, Catholic Bishop of Auckland, to the New Zealanders, in the time of Native Disturbances, in order to convey to them some counsels taken from the luminous wisdom and charity of the Mother Church* (Auckland: Kunst, 1863) p. 4.

<sup>78</sup> Chouvet, pp. 54-55.

<sup>79</sup> James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1988), p. 34.

<sup>80</sup> « En un mot, nous sommes pour eux que des *Pakeha*, des étrangers, de ces hommes qui les exploitent et les ruinent par leur cupidité et leurs affreuses mœurs », quoted in Monfat, p. 47.

the home of Hone Heke. Never had an assembly of New Zealanders spoken more in favour of the Catholic Church than they did then. They went over all that had been said regarding the Catholic bishop and made it clear how much all of it was false and how much he [the Catholic bishop] prevailed over the Englishmen's bishop: "You others," said Hone Heke to the ministers and the bishop present, "during the day you take care of your wives. Do not say that I am a liar, for upon your arrival here you had but one child, now you have two of them and soon you will have as many as William (who has eleven)." Another chief, Waikato, compared the Maori members of the two churches: "From us," he said, "springs all of the evil, theft, quarrels and libertinism. In the epikopos' mission, it is not so."<sup>81</sup>

Whether or not the Marists privately supported or denounced the imposition of British authority in New Zealand through the implementation of the Treaty, Pompallier's hope that it would result in the downfall of the Protestant missions, and the subsequent success of the Catholic mission, was not realised. There was certainly a decline in Māori interest in Protestantism in the 1840s and 1850s, but this was the case for Christianity itself. Following the signing of the Treaty, one of the greatest problems faced by the Anglican and Wesleyan Māori missions was the tension and mutual suspicion that had developed between settlers and Māori. On one hand, Māori were becoming increasingly aware of the loss of their lands and the extent to which the British colonial government was dishonouring the Treaty; they were also suffering from the negative impacts of colonisation, which included addictions to tobacco and alcohol as well as death and disease. On the other hand, settlers were frustrated to find that they had travelled over ten thousand miles only to be deprived of land because Māori were beginning to refuse and protest the sale of their land. The CMS missionaries sometimes found themselves in the middle of these tensions, being both allies to the government and to many Māori. In 1845, Revs. Samuel Ironside and

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<sup>81</sup> « M(onsieur) le gouverneur, informé de ce qui s'était passé, fit de grandes menaces, annonça que dans quelques semaines on verrait arriver des troupes et qu'on tirerait une vengeance éclatante d'une pareille insult[e]. Pour prévenir ces malheurs l'évêque anglican convoque à Te Waimate, lieu de sa résidence et éloigné d'une lieu seulement de Kaikohe, demeure de Hone Heke, un bon nombre de chefs maori. Jamais aucune assemblée de Nouveau Zélandais n'avait parlé plus en faveur de l'église catholique qu'on ne le fit alors. On repassa tout ce qu'on avait dit de l'évêque catholique et on fit voir combien tout était faux, combien celui-ci l'emportait sur l'évêque des Anglais: Vous autres, disait Hone Heke, aux ministres et à l'évêque présent, pendant le jour vous vous occupez de vos femmes. Ne dis point que je suis un menteur; car, en arrivant ici tu n'avais qu'un enfant, maintenant tu en as deux et bientôt tu en auras autant que William (celui-ci en a onze). Un autre chef, Waikato, compare les maori des deux églises: c'est de nous, disait-il, que sort tout le mal, le vol, les querelles, le libertinage. Chez les epikopo, il n'en est pas ainsi », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 350, 23 & 28 October & 5 December 1844, Kororareka, Séon to Colin, pp. 5-6.



James Watkin of the WMS attempted a hui at Porirua to strengthen their ties with local Māori and perform baptisms. “However for the settlers in Wellington this gathering was seen to have a sinister political aspect. They saw it as a plot against the settlement.”<sup>82</sup>

Did New Zealand’s political situation in the 1840s and 1850s cause the Marist mission to fail, or at least decline? There is no doubt that the political complexities resulting from the presence of British missionaries, traders and colonisers in the Pacific forced a re-shaping of the original Marist Mission’s aims, while also pitting CMS missionary against Marist missionary in an effort to win converts or denounce a rival church. But the Marists stubbornly persevered with full knowledge that they were in a British colonial setting and one that could result in war with Māori at any time. If the politics of nations curbed progress on the Catholic mission, it did not do so until the 1860s with the outbreak of the New Zealand Wars and the growth of the Kīngitanga and associated religious movements and religions, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six of this thesis. But one factor that undoubtedly contributed to the early decline of the mission was the Marists’ often precarious financial situation. If the Marists were frustrated by the progress already made by the CMS in the north, they were nevertheless confident initially that the Catholic mission had the potential to match this progress. The only major obstacles to early progress were a shortage of staff and, above all, a shortage of funding.

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<sup>82</sup> Roberts, p. 23.

## **Chapter 3: Funding and Expenditure**

The Marist Māori Mission was in a state of poverty from the outset. In its earliest years, the CMS mission also struggled with funding; in the late 1830s salaries became more decent and the CMS missionaries were able to achieve financial security in the form of profits from farms and mills. The Catholic mission, however, continually struggled financially and experienced extreme moments of destitution, particularly in 1842. What was the nature of these financial issues and were they shared by the Marist missionaries elsewhere in the Pacific? The following chapter considers the circumstances that led to and prolonged economic hardship in the pioneer missions in Oceania, beginning with the CMS in New Zealand and the Marists in the Pacific Islands, then focusing on the financial problems facing the Marist Māori Mission. Funding was arguably the greatest obstacle to the pioneer mission in the 1840s, and one that earned the mission a reputation of decline and failure.

### ***3.1 Funding and supplying the missions***

The common social origins of the Marist missionaries, not only in New Zealand but those based throughout Oceania, were disadvantageous to the temporal aspect of the mission; apart from the occasional family inheritance, the Marists had no personal wealth and, having abandoned all worldly possessions, were without any resources other than those provided by the Society itself. Traditionally, Catholic missionaries might have received funding from Rome and from their relative kings and queens, but by the nineteenth century Sacra Propaganda Fide had few resources to offer and European governments were absorbed in other ventures. The task of funding foreign missions was essentially left to humanitarian organisations, which drew their funding

from public and private donations. The only source of funding available to the Society of Mary was charity, chiefly from a lay association of French workers who donated to Catholic missions all over the world. In a letter he wrote before even setting foot in New Zealand, Bishop Pompallier confessed:

All my funds are now exhausted; I am even in debt by several hundred francs. More than a year spent at sea and at different ports with my whole company of missionaries and catechists, that is to say 8000 leagues crossed for the sacred cause of Jesus Christ and souls, plus the initial expenses that 3 newly established missions require, have absorbed everything I had. In at least 2 or 3 years I can see that we will be obliged to cater for all of our needs ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

While the Marists were laying foundations for mission work in the Hokianga and Bay of Islands, the CMS and WMS missionaries were gradually making their way south into the Waikato and Bay of Plenty to set up new stations among Māori. The funding situation for both Protestant mission societies at the time was very different to that of the Marists, since the CMS and WMS had overseas committees or boards which provided salaries to each missionary. The Wesleyan missionaries in New Zealand received £10000 for their Māori mission in the 1820s, and this figure was doubled in the 1830s. Regular funding continued until 1865, when the Wesleyan Mission headquarters in Sydney, not unlike the CMS headquarters some decades later, withdrew its financial support in the belief that the Wesleyan Church in New Zealand should be able to fend for itself. This action may have reflected the fact that the WMS headquarters did not understand the difficult economic situation with which Māori were faced as a result of the dubious sales and unwarranted confiscation of their land.<sup>2</sup>

CMS finances were low at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but 'Associations', which collected funds locally, appeared and began to supply the majority of funds for the CMS missions. The development of these 'Associations'

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<sup>1</sup> « (...) tous mes fonds sont maintenant épuisés; je suis même endetté d'une douzaine de cents francs. Plus d'un an passé sur les mers et dans différents ports avec toute ma compagnie de missionnaires et de catéchistes, c'est-à-dire huit mille lieues faites pour la sainte cause de J(ésus) C(hrist) et des âmes; plus les premiers frais qu'exigent trois missions commencées ont absorbé tout ce que j'avois. Durant deux ou trois ans au moins je vois que nous serons obligés de pourvoir à nos dépends à tous nos besoins », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 24, 14 May 1838, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Roberts, pp. 29, 31.

allowed the CMS to establish and fund foreign missions, including the New Zealand mission. But by the 1830s the CMS funds were being consumed by the mission in India, and even the Māori Mission was starting to absorb more than £15000 annually. Nevertheless the 1840s saw a rise in contributions<sup>3</sup> and the CMS missionaries in New Zealand were well-supported until the twentieth century, when the Society decided to withdraw its funding with the view that Māori had assimilated or would assimilate into colonial New Zealand and therefore the colonial church.

From his arrival until 1852, Selwyn received an annual sum of £1200, half of which came from the CMS and the other half from the colonial government. With the whole of New Zealand to cover, and both Māori and European interests to consider, this funding was hardly sufficient. But compared with Pompallier's income and the comparative size of his vicariate, Selwyn's income enabled growth and visual progress for the Anglican Church. Bishop Selwyn was dependent on the financial backing of the Church Society for New Zealand, which was a body of men linked with the New Zealand Company and therefore invested in the colonisation and settlement of New Zealand. Further funding came from the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, although this was specifically for settler churches and resources, and the society was again connected with the New Zealand Company. Selwyn, not unlike Pompallier, made the mistake of assuming that promised funding would definitely come through. When the New Zealand Company began to dissolve in the mid-1840s Selwyn was forced to beg for charity and give up on ventures he already begun, including a college in Porirua.<sup>4</sup> Despite this, his progress in building churches, schools and a relationship with Māori in the early 1840s was enough to discourage the Marists in no small way.

By September 1838, nine months after his arrival in New Zealand, Pompallier was desperate for money and manpower. Requests for both of these would feature in almost every letter he would send back to Marist headquarters, until his break with the Society in 1850. Pompallier was forced to rely on the Propagation of the Faith

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<sup>3</sup> Eugene Stock, *History of the Church missionary Society, Vol. 1* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899) pp. 481, 485.

<sup>4</sup> Benfell, 'The Shape of the New Society: Selwyn, CMS and the New Zealand Company in fierce debate' in *Mission and Moko*, pp. 85-88.

and charitable individuals in France and New Zealand for the financial and material needs of the mission, and never seemed to consider any other means of fundraising. Whereas the Marist missionaries saw the importance of having mills and gardens for each station, Pompallier viewed charitable funding as something to which he was entitled. In his mind, the onus of providing for the missions in Oceania was not on the bishop; it was on the Association of the Propagation of the Faith and individual donors in France:

Since I have been on the mission I do nothing but ask, and I am very far from stopping despite the considerable weight of gratitude that I feel for the association of the Propagation of the Faith and so many charitable souls who have helped me or my colleagues personally. I owe the successes that God has deigned to grant us, along with my own, to the kind deeds and ardent prayers. Continuance! Continuance! ... Until the end of my days, I will be a supplicant because there are no spiritually impoverished as needy as the flock and the shepherd of this mission.<sup>5</sup>

Poverty was not just a circumstance for the Marists; it was a rule. By voluntarily joining the Society of Mary, these men had committed themselves to a life of poverty, chastity, humility, and obedience. This was typical of Catholic orders, but posed a colossal problem for the Marists because they needed money and resources to carry out the tasks they had been set. Moreover, the Marist way of life had been intended for priests living together in a religious community, not lone, roving missionaries. Spreading the word of God required extensive travel, food, clothing, shelter and resources. The bishop had the monopoly over the mission's funds and resources, which meant that the Fathers and Brothers were essentially at his mercy.

The seven missionaries stationed on Wallis, Futuna and Tonga saw very little of the funding Pompallier received from the Propagation of the Faith for his vicariate, and this was because Pompallier concentrated his efforts and resources on charming Māori chiefs and, to a lesser extent, European guests and officials in New Zealand.

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<sup>5</sup> « Depuis que je suis en mission je ne fais que demander, et je suis bien loin de cesser malgré le gros poids de reconnaissance que je sens pour l'association de la propagation de la foi et tant d'âmes charitables qui m'ont aidé en ma personne ou en celles de mes collaborateurs. C'est à leurs bienfaits et à leurs ferventes prières que je dois avec les miens les succès que Dieu a daigné nous accorder. La continuité, la continuité! ... Jusques à la fin de mes jours, je serai un demandeur parce qu'il n'y a pas de pauvres spirituels aussi nécessaires que le troupeau et le pasteur de cette mission », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 5.

The Marists in New Zealand were aware that the needs of their mission impinged on the growth of other Marist missions in Oceania and Father Forest wrote to Colin in 1844: “The only regret we have is having consumed so much money and so much energy for such limited results.”<sup>6</sup> While a constant shortage of money was the principal obstacle to progress in New Zealand, money itself was not a necessary or coveted possession in the Pacific islands at this time. Poverty on the Māori Mission was linked with New Zealand’s transformation into a British colony and resulted from enormous debt, high interest rates, and irregular funding with which to purchase materials, whereas poverty on the islands under Pompallier’s jurisdiction usually indicated a lack of food and articles such as basic clothing and tools to barter. Father Chevron explains that the Tongan mission was in dire need of resources:

I have heard it said here that one asks France for money; I am not familiar with the New Zealand mission, but for the mission here it can be said that this seems to be of no use; the main thing [we need] are loads of tools, spades in particular, good axes, saws, iron planers, scissors and other similar objects; next, a *pharmacy* – I wish I could write this word in very bold letters; without remedies comparable with those of the Protestants, no mission.<sup>7</sup>

In 1845 a ‘pharmacy’ or medicine cabinet arrived in Wallis, but the demands for material items were incessant and could never be met in their entirety by the modest collections of a charity. In 1844 Father Mathieu and Father Bataillon, who was now a bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania (Wallis, Futuna, Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia), sent an exhaustive list of ceremonial objects to be procured for the mission; some of these probably would have been donated to the mission by individuals in Lyon but Colin would not have had the means to supply the rest, especially given the long list of more urgent requests including clothing, remedies and tools.

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<sup>6</sup> « Le seul regret que nous avons, c’est de consumer [sic] tant d’argent, tant de peines pour si peu de résultats », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 325, 18 April 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> « J’entens ici dire qu’on demande en France de l’argent; je ne connois pas la mission de la Nouvelle Zélande, mais pour la mission d’ici, on peut dire, cet [sic] ici meuble inutile; beaucoup d’outils, voilà le principal, bêches surtout, bonnes haches, scies, fers à rabots, cizeaux et autres objets semblables; puis une *pharmacie* - je voudrais pouvoir écrire ce mot bien gros; sans remèdes auprès des protestants, pas de mission », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 285, 24 November 1843, Tonga, Chevron to Colin, p. 2.

Objects for the churches: copes, monstrances, censers, incense, portable holy water fonts, lamps to burn before the Blessed Sacrament, lanterns with lamps for illuminating the church and altar, paintings depicting the Mysteries of religion. (The paintings are more valuable than statues. It would be good however to have large crucifixes for the ceremonies of Holy Week. They need to be well-crafted.) You could obtain beautiful [depictions of] the Stations of the Cross in large colour prints, varnished and mounted on canvas, for a low price in Paris at the home of Félix Jamin [...] We would need many of them.

-Some decorations, ornaments and Serrures de Tabernacle,<sup>8</sup> and carton-pierre<sup>9</sup> ornaments along with everything needed to gild them if possible.

-Painting supplies & brushes & oil to paint the altars and tabernacles.

-Red fabrics to make curtains and decorate the dais and chapels for Holy Thursday. Processional crosses, banners, altar boys albs.

-Pieces of cloth to use as tablecloths, altar linens, corporals, purificators, etc.

-The peoples here are extremely responsive to the splendour of ceremonies & like all infant races they begin by judging religion according to its external displays of worship. One must capture their attention before being able to win their hearts.<sup>10</sup>

When Father Colin prompted the separation of central Oceania from Pompallier's influence in 1842, one of his motives was his hope that Father Bataillon would better cater to the temporal needs of his Marist missionaries as a result of this administrative change. Father Servant was aware that, while European traders were to be found everywhere, the extent of European settlement was far greater in New Zealand and Australia than in other parts of the Pacific. He had discerned in 1840 the need for a separate vicar apostolic to take charge of Wallis and Futuna and ensure that the missionaries stationed there were receiving adequate supplies and support:

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<sup>8</sup> Highly decorative locks bearing engravings of Christian iconography.

<sup>9</sup> Papier-mâché that imitates the appearance of stone.

<sup>10</sup> « Objets pour les églises — Chappes, ostensoirs, encensoirs, encens, bénitiers portatifs, lampes pour brûler devant le s(ain)t sacrement, lanternes avec lampes pour illuminer l'église & l'autel, tableaux représentant les mystères de la religion. (Les tableaux valent mieux que les statues. Il seroit bon pourtant d'avoir de grands crucifix pour les cérémonies de la semaine sainte. Il faudroit qu'ils fussent bien faits.) Vous pourrez vous procurer à Paris chez Félix Jamin [...] de beaux chemins de croix, grandes estampes coloriées vernies & colées sur toile à bon compte. Il en faudroit beaucoup. Quelques garnitures, ornements & serrures de tabernacle, des ornements en carton pierre avec ce qui seroit nécessaire pour les dorer si c'étoit possible. — Provision de peinture & pinceaux & huile pour peindre les autels, les tabernacles. — Des étoffes rouges pour faire des rideaux, dais & chapelles de jeudi saint. Croix de procession, bannières, aubes d'enfants de choeur. — Pièces de toile pour nappes, linges d'autel, corporaux, purificatoires, &c. — Les peuples sont extrêmement sensibles à la pompe des cérémonies & ils commencent comme tous les peuples encore enfants à juger de la religion par l'extérieur du culte. Il est nécessaire de frapper leurs yeux avant de pouvoir gagner leur coeur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 347, 20 & 29 August 1844, Wallis, Mathieu to Poupinel, p. 7.

I do not see how there could be a proportionate distribution of goods for the mission since even in New Zealand the Bay of Islands establishment absorbs the majority of funds. It seems therefore expedient and desirable to have a new vicariate apostolic for the tropical islands. In the tropical islands, the good that is to be done is more concrete than in New Zealand; the foreigners who flock here greatly perturb the natives through their demoralising influence.<sup>11</sup>

Father Bataillon, along with Brother Joseph-Xavier, had had to struggle to survive in the pioneering years of the mission in Wallis because of Pompallier's negligence; one historian, clearly in a hagiographic tone, wrote of Bataillon: "Alone, isolated, lost, facing a population of 2500 cannibals, he had his hours of crisis and distress, his days of exhaustion and hunger. Tracked at times like a wild beast, reduced to feeding himself with scraps thrown to the pigs, never did he falter."<sup>12</sup> This was not too far from the truth, and similar stories emerged in the letters of the pioneer Marists in Tonga. After arriving in Tongatapu in 1842, Fathers Grange and Chevron were surprised to learn that Tongans from all levels of the Tongan social hierarchy generally assigned Europeans to the lowest social stratum. Befriending local inhabitants thus did not necessarily elicit a willingness to share food and resources since the Marist missionary was not greatly respected or coveted in Tonga, given that he was neither a symbol of prestige and wealth nor a means to gaining knowledge or material items for trade. Additionally, as Chevron mentioned in a letter to his family, "(...) here as in former times the poor are the first to receive the Gospel",<sup>13</sup> so that even the Tongans who were somewhat compassionate or loyal to the Marist missionaries were not necessarily in a position to feed and care for them.

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<sup>11</sup> « (...) je ne vois pas comment pourra exister une distribution proportionnelle des biens de la mission puisque même à la Nouvelle-Zélande l'établissement de la Baie des îles absorbe la plupart des fonds. Il paroît donc expédient et il est à désirer qu'il y ait un nouveau vicariat apostolique pour les îles du tropique. Dans les îles du tropique, il y a un bien plus solide à faire qu'à la Nouvelle-Zélande, les étrangers qui affluent ici dérangent beaucoup les naturels par leur démoralisation », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, pp. 6-7.

<sup>12</sup> « seul, isolé, perdu, en face d'une population de 2500 cannibales, il eut ses heures de crise et de détresse, ses journées d'épuisement et de faim. Traqué parfois comme une bête fauve, réduit à se nourrir des débris que l'on jetait aux porcs, jamais il n'eut de défaillance », Hervier, pp. 9-10.

<sup>13</sup> « (...) ici comme autrefois les premiers qui reçoivent l'évangile sont les pauvres », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 306, 17 January, 24 February, 4 & 10 March, 12 & 24 July 1844, Chevron to family, p. 7.



With the conferral of administrative control over Tonga to Father Bataillon in 1842, the missionaries and their superior-general clung to the expectation that Marist welfare in the Pacific would be given greater attention, but Fathers Grange and Chevron in Tongatapu continued to be neglected. In contrast Wallis appeared to prosper from the resources pumped into its economy, and in 1844 Father Grange deplored the policies of his new Vicar Apostolic, who was portrayed by Grange and other Marist missionaries as no better or fairer an administrator than Pompallier had been:

If the people of Europe would reflect on the fact that the Propagation of the Faith provides 4-5 thousand Francs each year to each one of the priests in our mission, I believe they would be outraged to learn that these priests suffer because this entire sum seems to be consumed by a single priest, especially if they were to learn that here no purchases are made for churches and almost none for ceremonies, for these objects are supplied in addition to standard allocations. The charitable people of France would see that the intention of the Society is for the priests to have the means to survive. I am most certain that only our mission is administered in this manner, where one man keeps what is given to all.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile in less than a year on the Māori Mission Bishop Pompallier, having attracted adherents and converts with material gifts, found himself without anything useful or tangible to offer and his influence therefore waned. Pompallier's lack of prudence in offering gifts of blankets, Catholic ornaments and clothing to chiefs had played a significant role in leading him to his initial success, and simultaneously to his financial predicament, and his attitude in the letter below is clearly that of a man desperate to save face. The bishop made plain his frustrations and the urgency of his situation to the Marist Superior-General, but was careful to place the blame on a lack of prompt and regular financial assistance – arguably an unreasonable expectation considering the pioneering nature of the mission and the limited development of

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<sup>14</sup> « (...) si le peuple d'Europe feroit [sic] réflexion que la Propagation de la foi fournit chaque année 4 à 5 mille francs à chaque prêtre de notre mission, je crois qu'il seroit scandalisé d'apprendre que ces prêtres souffrent parce que toute cette somme seroit absorbé par un seul, surtout s'il apprenoit qu'ici on ne dépense rien, ni pour les église et à peu près rien pour le culte, ces objets étant fournis en sus des allocations ordinaires. Elles verroient, les personnes charitables de France, que l'intention de la Société est que les missionnaires aient de quoi vivre. Je suis bien certain qu'il n'y a que notre mission qui soit administrée de cette manière où un seul garde tout ce qui est donné pour tous », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 320, 20 February – 25 July 1844, Tonga, Grange to Colin, p. 10.

communication networks between France and early New Zealand. While the CMS and WMS had been gaining momentum and funding over the past three decades, the non-salaried missionaries of the Society of Mary were essentially trying to catch up to their Protestant counterparts:

How arduous my position has become in a bountiful harvest. If you do not hasten to send me subjects and allocations from the Propagation of the Faith, the consequences will be dreadful and immediate for the mission that presently offers the happiest results. Almost two years have passed since I left Le Havre, and still no sign of life, no aid. The items that I possess in this mission cannot be suitably sold; this would make a bad impression, which the heretics would take advantage of, and then these items will not be sold for the price that I had paid for their transportation alone. Finally, this would make us seem like shopkeepers, which is of no value to bishops, nor to the priests in the missions. I have no chapel; the wood has been given for its construction but the labour is on my account; it is very expensive in this country and I do not have the money. I am even in debt, and do not dare to incur more of it. Besides, it is impossible to incur debt since everyone here is poor and nobody can lend to me. My position towards the foreigners and the natives is becoming humiliating for the episcopate. It is damaging to the respect that had given me a favourable influence on the greatest tribal chiefs. I fear with good reason that this respect is lost, to the detriment of souls, for the extremely difficult living conditions on our side, the absence of a chapel for them, and nobody being able to pay for the labour which can only be offered by foreign carpenters, all these difficulties being insurmountable without any funds, inspire reluctance in tribal chiefs and hesitation in many people to follow their shepherd.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> « Que ma position devient pénible dans une moisson abondante. Si vous ne vous hâtez de m'envoyer des sujets et les allocations de la propagation de la foi, de fort mauvaises conséquences ne tarderoient pas de survenir à la mission qui offre les plus heureuses données en ce moment. Voilà bientôt deux ans que j'ai quitté le Havre, et toujours aucun signe de vie, aucun secours. Les choses que j'ai dans la mission ne peuvent se vendre convenablement, cela feroit un mauvais effet dont les hérétiques tireroient parti et puis ces choses ne se vendroient pas au prix qu'elles m'ont coûté pour le transport seulement. Enfin cela nous donneroit un air de commerçants, ce qui ne vaut absolument rien aux évêques, ni aux prêtres dans les missions. Il me manque une chapelle, le bois est donné pour la construire; mais la main d'œuvre est à mon compte; elle est fort chère en ce pays et je n'ai pas le sol. Je me suis même endeté et je n'ose m'endeter davantage. D'ailleurs il m'est impossible de m'endeter, car tout est pauvre ici et personne ne peut me prêter. Ma position devient humiliante pour l'épiscopat vis-à-vis des étrangers et des naturels. C'est nuisible à une considération que m'avoit donné une heureuse influence sur les plus grands chefs des tribus. Je crains avec fondement qu'elle ne se perde au détriment des âmes; car une extrême difficulté de vivre de notre-côté, et point de chapelle pour eux et personne ne pouvant payer la main-d'œuvre qui ne peut être donnée que par des charpentiers étrangers au pays, toutes ces difficultés insurmontables sans fonds inspirent de la répugnance aux chefs des tribus et de l'hésitation à plusieurs pour suivre leur pasteur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 30, 14 September 1838, Hokianga, Pompallier (and Servant) to Colin, pp. 1-2.

What made the Marists' financial situation precarious was therefore the inconsistency and delayed receipt of the Propagation of the Faith's annual allocations. Pompallier's biographer Lillian Keys points out that: "it was the custom of the Council of the Work for the Propagation of the Faith from the very first not to send further funds to the Bishop until they had received his account of the manner in which the money he had already received had been expended. The privation which such a system entailed was the cause of his legitimate complaints."<sup>16</sup> Keys' statement conflicts with the findings of Kevin Roach, who asserts that the Propagation of the Faith did not ask for detailed lists of expenditures and, from May 1838 onwards, would annually draw up estimates of allocations for each mission and send the first half of the allocation to Father Colin in about October and the second half in about March the following year. Upon receiving these funds, Colin then had to purchase items for the mission as per Pompallier's requests, pay for the passage and clothing of departing missionaries, and have these missionaries pass on the remaining amount to Pompallier.<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Pompallier, as the mission administrator, would have found it problematic to establish an annual budget since he was uncertain of the funds he would receive each year and when these could be accessed. The association had collected a sum of 78,000 francs (£3120) for 1839, but only 25,000 arrived that year; another 32,000 arrived in mid-1840 and only 7000 reached Pompallier in mid-1841. Pompallier did not learn about the 190,000 francs (which included emergency funding) allocated to the mission for 1842 until two years later when he read about it in letters sent from France.<sup>18</sup> While Pompallier was absent from the mission from 1846 to 1850, Father Viard was equally troubled by the delayed receipt of funding from the Propagation of the Faith, and informed the Marist procurator in Lyon in 1849 that he was patiently awaiting a total of £1,634 (40,850 francs) from the 1845 and 1846 allocations.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Lillian G. Keys, *The Life and Times of Bishop Pompallier* (Christchurch: The Pegasus Press, 1957), p. 110.

<sup>17</sup> Roach, pp. 77-78.

<sup>18</sup> Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, pp. 288, 314.

<sup>19</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 828, 29 July 1849, Kororareka, Viard to Poupinel, p. 1.

### 3.2 1842: *The mission in crisis*

If there was an early point where it seemed even to the missionaries themselves that their Māori mission was a failure, it was undoubtedly the year 1842 when the poverty of the missionaries and the repercussions of Pompallier's unfulfilled promises led to Māori lack of interest in Catholicism. Father Forest had been sent to New Zealand in the capacity of official visitor to the missions, a role which allowed Colin to send a trusted Marist to investigate the Marist Fathers' complaints of Pompallier's handling of the Māori Mission.

Forest's report to Colin in June 1842 was perhaps the most pessimistic letter from Oceania in terms of the future of the Māori Mission. Prior to 1842, Pompallier in particular had gone to great pains to portray a promising, fruitful mission, even in the face of CMS opposition and British colonisation of New Zealand. It was no coincidence that Colin refrained from sending Marist missionaries to New Zealand after August 1842, given Forest's review of a mission in its fifth year that had made such limited progress. According to Forest's interviews with the Marist Fathers, Māori were not the hopeful, eager catechumens and neophytes that French benefactors expected to read about in the *Annales*. From as early as 1840 the novelty of Christianity had already begun to wear off, especially in the north, and Māori were not so much uninterested in Christianity as they were interested in other innovations such as flour mills in the Waikato area;<sup>20</sup> if there were still a number of hapū who showed enthusiasm for the CMS mission, it was at least partly because the desire for literacy and bibles had endured from the 1830s into the 1840s. Unaware of these trends, the Marists claimed that Māori:

(...) have a sort of aversion for the Bishop and his religion. They say that they have been duped, and the majority has either fallen into a sort of indifference or has gone over to the Protestant side. Basically the summary of all this great fuss and commotion corresponds literally to the saying: *a mountain has laboured long to give birth to a mouse*. Everything has been reduced to three or four stations or establishments which have only a very small number of Catholic natives who give but very little consolation. Everything I tell you here, I am

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<sup>20</sup> K. R. Howe, 'The Maori Response to Christianity in the Thames-Waikato Area, 1833-1840' *NZJH*, 7.1 (1973), p. 45.

taking from the very mouths of all the confreres I was able to interview. All of them, apart from Father Epalle, have this view of the mission.<sup>21</sup>

The year 1842 was especially trying for the Marist missionaries in New Zealand due to a number of events and circumstances, beginning with the failure of the London bank Wright & Co. in 1841. Overall the loss was a relatively minor one, but because of the urgent need to clear and curtail debts Pompallier's reaction was that of a man under immense pressure. After desperately and continuously pleading for more missionaries, and being overjoyed at the arrival of previous contingents, Pompallier is far from excited at the arrival of the fifth contingent of Marists to reach New Zealand, and considers them as simply a financial 'burden'. Pompallier's administration volume explains the details in a tone clearly dominated by disappointment:

(...) about 33,300 francs reserved for the mission and deposited in London at this bank by Father Séon were engulfed in this bankruptcy. Father Séon brought, out of the loan he had been obliged to draw in London, after the loss of funds that he had deposited in the Wright Bank, he brought only 6950 francs along with the new burden of twelve subjects to place and maintain in the mission. The sum of 6950 francs did not even suffice to cover the debts that the mission had contracted.<sup>22</sup>

At the end of 1841, news of Father Chanel's murder in Futuna reached the New Zealand Marists. The missionaries had mixed emotions; they were saddened and shocked by the violent death of their confrere, but necessarily comforted that Chanel would ascend to Heaven and be rewarded for his many sacrifices. Pompallier left immediately for Wallis and Futuna to call on the remaining missionaries there, whom

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<sup>21</sup> « (...) ont un espèce de dégoût pour l'évêque et sa religion. Ils disent qu'ils ont été trompés et la majeure partie est ou tombée dans une espèce d'indifférence ou s'est rendue du côté des protestans. Enfin le résumé de tout ce grand train et grand fracas est à la lettre la vérité de ce que l'on dit: *qu'une montagne a été long temps en travail pour enfanter une souris*. Tout se réduit à trois ou quatre stations ou établissements qui n'offrent qu'un bien petit nombre de naturels catholiques qui ne donnent que très peu de consolation. Tout ce que je vous dit là, je le tiens de la propre bouche de tous les confrères que j'ai pu interrogé. Tous, à part le père Épale, ont cette idée de la mission », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 174, 2 June 1842, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> « (...) environ 33.300# consacrés à la mission et déposés à Londres en cette banque par le P. Séon furent engloutis dans cette faillite. Le P. Séon n'apportait sur l'emprunt qu'il avait été obligé de faire à Londres, après la perte des fonds qu'il avait déposé dans la Banque Wright, il n'apportait que 6.950# avec la nouvelle charge de douze sujets placer et à soutenir dans la mission. La somme de 6.950# ne suffisoit pas même pour couvrir les dettes qu'avait contractées la mission », ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 296.

he had not visited for over four years, and to investigate the first Catholic martyrdom in Oceania. The bishop was absent for nine months, during which the financial situation for the Marists in New Zealand went from bad to worse. Father Forest was deeply concerned for the welfare of the Marist missionaries in the absence of the bishop, particularly as there was no shortage of rumours regarding the state of the mission and Pompallier himself; Forest, who arrived during Pompallier's absence, relayed one of these to the Marist superior in mid-1842: "For a long time now he has been in the tropical islands, from where he does not dare, I think, to return, for fear that his ship will be taken from him and that he will even be arrested for lack of payment."<sup>23</sup>

Between 1838 and 1842, the Propagation of the Faith had collected almost 550,000 francs (£22,000) for the Vicariate of Western Oceania. Over half of these funds would have reached Pompallier before his departure for Futuna, and since every single pound sterling he had received had been spent, largely on travel and 'upkeep', Pompallier had resorted to drawing various loans. In early 1842, according to novice and assistant Louis Perret, the mission had accumulated a total debt of around £4000, and this was a result of loans which had been secured at an annual interest rate of at least 10%.<sup>24</sup> Pompallier might have seemed fair in his distribution of mission funds,<sup>25</sup> had it not been for the substantial amount of debt he neglected to take into account when allocating funds to each station. If Pompallier was hopeful that the timely arrival of funds would relieve him of these debts, he perhaps possessed a naivety that, by 1842 at least, many of his missionaries did not. The Marists in Wallis and Futuna, no doubt expecting Pompallier's visit to bring resources and items to trade, wrote to Father Colin of the desperate situation of their missions and their concern that Pompallier had abandoned them since the Mission's inception and looked likely to abandon them again. After Pompallier's stay in Wallis, Father Bataillon was moved

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<sup>23</sup> « Maintenant depuis longtemps il est dans les isles des tropiques d'où il n'ose, je crois, pas revenir, crainte qu'on ne lui enlève son navire et qu'on ne l'arrête lui même, faute de paiement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 174, 2 June, 1842, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 163, 20 May 1842, Kororareka, Perret to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> 'Distribution des fonds reçus de la propagation de la foi en chaque station pour 1844' (Distribution of Funds received from the Propagation of the Faith in each station for the year 1844), ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 325. See translation in Appendix F.

to comment that emergency funding would be needed to secure the future of his station and the overall Marist Mission:

Monsignor finds himself in the greatest embarrassment. All of the surrounding islands offer ripe harvests and he has nobody to send there. He also has no pecuniary resources. Soon he will no longer be able to visit us. Without a miracle, the mission cannot sustain itself if the Propagation of the Faith cannot give us more aid.<sup>26</sup>

With Bishop Pompallier absent and no idea of when he would return, the Marists in New Zealand took the initiative to battle urgent debts and find enough money to support the mission until the Bishop's return. Father Petit-Jean travelled to Sydney in search of a loan, and obtained £400 (10,000 Francs) to cover some of the mission's debts and purchase some much-needed resources, including flour and cattle. Meanwhile Pompallier's provicar Father Épalle headed to France to discuss the mission's many problems with Colin. His journey required bills of exchange to the value of 25,000 Francs, which Épalle knew to be a heavy tax on mission funds. Before he had reached France he sent word to Colin that any plans for a Marist dispatch should be halted because more staff would only mean a greater burden on the mission's finances;<sup>27</sup> indeed it did seem unwise to send more men to Oceania when the missionaries already there were destitute and starving.

In 1842, the Marists perceived a new challenge to their mission when an Anglican Bishop arrived in Auckland halfway through the year; Bishop George Selwyn represented an Anglican equivalent to Pompallier in terms of status but also had the personal wealth and a substantial salary to implement his plans for Protestant progress among Māori. He impressed Māori and settlers alike with his extensive travelling, especially on foot, and his fluency in the Māori language, which he had acquired even before stepping foot in New Zealand. Father Garin noted that: "The new Protestant bishop comes with a great deal of money; he announces that he is going to open

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<sup>26</sup> « M(onsei)g(neu)r se trouve dans les plus grands embarras. Toutes les îles environnantes offrent des moissons mûres et il n'a personne p(ou)r y envoyer. Il n'a aussi point de ressources pécunières. Il ne pourra bientôt plus nous visiter. Sans prodige la mission ne peut se soutenir si la Propagation de la foi ne peut nous secourir davantage », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 143, 2 & 25 May 1842, Wallis, Bataillon to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 182, 23 July 1842, Valparaiso, Epalle to Colin, p. 1.

schools for the natives, and I am forever asking myself how it can be that we still have natives who maintain the Catholic faith.”<sup>28</sup> By 1844, the Marists were complaining that Selwyn and his sizeable army of Protestant missionaries were the principal obstacle standing in the way of progress for the Catholic mission. The Anglican bishop’s impact was profound and far-reaching, and the French Marists were not unjustified in their belief that greater funding and governmental support were instrumental to Selwyn’s tangible success:

He has brought with him enormous sums of money which give him the capacity to erect everywhere churches, schools for natives and for Europeans, boarding schools for the European youth, and even a seminary to train his priests. He himself is an explorer who fears, they say, neither hardships nor fatigue [...] The Governor and the entire English government is in favour of this bishop and privilege him greatly. When the Protestants make a subscription for either a chapel or something else, the Protestant bishop is authorised by the government to cover this subscription with an equal sum that he has the right to draw from the government. This has already happened several times. He has a large clergy; it is at least three, perhaps even four times larger than ours.<sup>29</sup>

The financial reputation of the Catholic mission in 1842 was embarrassing for the missionaries, and this further thwarted any progress with Māori. Demands for resident priests in European settlements were unrelenting, and the decision was made during Pompallier’s absence, a decision that may have been made by Fathers Épalle, Garin and Forest before Épalle’s departure for Europe, to transfer Father Borjon from Maketū to the settlement of Port Nicholson. The Marists were not aware at this stage that an Irish Catholic priest, Father Jeremiah O’Reily, was about to assume the position of resident priest there. Father Garin, the designated Provincial, expressed his

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<sup>28</sup> « Le nouvel évêque protestant vient avec beaucoup d’argent; il annonce qu’il va ouvrir des écoles pour les naturels, et je suis toujours à me demander comment il se peut faire que nous ayons encore des naturels qui se conservent dans la foi », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 178, 22 & 26 July 1842, Kororaraka, Garin to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> « Il a apporté avec lui des sommes immenses qui le mettent à même d’élever partout des églises, des écoles, pour les naturels, pour les Européens, des pensionnats pour la jeunesse européenne, même un séminaire pour former ses prêtres. Il est lui même un intrépide qui ne craint, dit-on, ni peines ni fatigues [...] Le gouverneur et tout le gouvernement anglais est pour cet évêque et le favorise beaucoup. Lorsque les protestans font une suscription soit pour une chapelle ou autre chose, l’évêque protestant est autorisé par son gouvernement à couvrir cette suscription par une somme égale qu’il a droit de prendre sur le gouvernement. Ceci a déjà eu lieu plusieurs fois. Son clergé est très nombreux; il est bien trois, peut être bien quatre fois plus nombreux que nous », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 325, 18 April 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, pp. 3-4.



frustrations to his Superior-General that: “Fathers Borjon and Rozet are ordered to go to Port Nicholson as swiftly as possible to form a station with *nothing*.”<sup>30</sup> Providing a further blow to the mission, Father Borjon and his companion Brother Déodat left Auckland on 1 August 1842 never to reach their destination of Port Nicholson. The ship was declared missing, and its passengers presumed drowned. Father Rozet did not arrive on time to board the same ship, and escaped the same tragic end.

Initially bankers and settlers did not believe that the Catholic mission was in a state of poverty. Turner points out Pompallier’s generosity and expenditures in the first three years of the mission, and argues that “Contrary to Jane Thomson’s picture of a mission always handicapped by poverty, such profuse expenditure quickly gained the mission a reputation for wealth.” Simmons adds that despite the apparent poverty of the mission, many stations continued to employ European and Māori servants throughout the 1840s.<sup>31</sup> The mission’s initial image of affluence made it difficult for Father Petit-Jean and his fellow missionaries to obtain funds through begging in early 1842.<sup>32</sup> But by the time Pompallier returned to the Bay of Islands in August 1842, to his surprise the poverty of the mission was so well-publicised that sympathetic bank directors were waiting for him there. Fortunately for the Bishop, these men were willing to relieve him, temporarily, of the financial onus that had all but devastated the mission’s standing in New Zealand.

They offered me their help to extinguish my debts and the interests on interests that were accruing, and this by means of drafts that I would make them in Lyon, that is to say out of the allocations for this mission that are owing or will be owing [...] I did not hesitate to accept their offer, and I extinguished all of the debts by obtaining about five thousand francs more to continue administering the vicariate apostolic for a while, until we receive some new aid from benefactory associations.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> « Les p(ères) Borjon et Rozet ont ordre de se rendre le plus promptement possible à Port Nickolson pour y former un établissement avec *rien* », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 178, 22 & 26 July 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, pp 1-2.

<sup>31</sup> Simmons, *Pompallier: Prince of Bishops*, p. 81.

<sup>32</sup> Turner, p. 28.

<sup>33</sup> « Ils m’offrirent leurs secours pour éteindre mes dettes et les intérêts des intérêts qui couroient, et cela par le moyen de traites que je leur ferois sur Lyon, c(’est) à d(ire) sur les allocations échues ou à échoir pour cette mission [...] Je n’hésitois pas d’accepter leur offre, et j’éteignis toutes les dettes en me procurant en plus environ cinq mille francs pour continuer à administrer le vicariat apostolique pendant quelque temps, jusqu’à ce que nous reçussions quelques secours nouveaux des associations

Pompallier's administration volume confirms that the debts had been cleared upon the bishop's return from Wallis and Futuna,<sup>34</sup> but this information did not reach Lyon until the following year, after the Propagation of the Faith had already sent a sum of 80,000 Francs to New Zealand for the sole purpose of rescuing the mission from its debts. Pompallier was initially displeased with the measures taken by the Propagation, which might seem strange considering Pompallier had pleaded for more funding in almost every letter he had sent to them and to Father Colin. His reaction is perhaps explained by the fact that his pride was at stake, since he had already erased the mission's debts only to be rebuked much later for his mishandling of funds. In any case, Pompallier was still in need of money for the progress of the mission, and this emergency sum was a much-needed replenishment of funds for the mission stations; unfortunately these did not reach New Zealand until late 1843 and could not be accessed from the Port Nicholson bank until early 1844.<sup>35</sup>

In light of the creation of the new vicariate of Central Oceania in 1843, the Marists in New Zealand were concerned that their already insufficient funding from the Propagation of the Faith would diminish. Yet these 'newer' missions were equally strained for finances or items to barter. In 1845 a procure house was established in Sydney to cater to the missions in Wallis, Futuna, Tonga, and New Caledonia. Bishops Bataillon and Douarre as well as the procure house in Sydney were facing problems similar to those that Pompallier faced, including the inconsistency of funds from the Propagation of the Faith. Father Dubreul, one of two Marist procurators in Sydney, explained to Father Colin that a year and a half after the establishment of the procure house there was still no indication of how much funding had been allocated to the missions in Central Oceania<sup>36</sup> and debts were therefore accumulating, especially in New Caledonia. Father Reignier, based in Rotorua at the time, was concerned that energy was being focused on the Pacific Island missions, although he

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bienfaitrices », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 217, 6 November 1842, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Propagation of the Faith, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup> ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 308.

<sup>35</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 314, 3 February 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin (on Pompallier's behalf), p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 515, 5 June 1846, Sydney, Dubreul to Colin, p. 2.

would not have known at the time of writing that it was Father Colin, his correspondent, who had made this decision. Reignier expressed his unease to Colin in 1844, a year after the final Marist contingent under Colin was dispatched to the Māori Mission:

My dear Reverend Father, two new bishops are now in the Tropics; the desires, hearts and purses of priests and the faithful in Europe are reserved for the Tropics. They know that New Zealand is an English colony interwoven throughout by an army of Protestant ministers; already in some ways it is no longer considered a new mission and I fear that, because of this, New Zealand will be far less privileged.<sup>37</sup>

### **3.3 Government funding**

The Marist Mission was established independently of the French government and never expected extensive support from any entities except the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide and the Association de la Propagation de la Foi. If the French government had financially supported the Marists in New Zealand, the missionaries may have found it considerably easier to establish and expand their mission. They would also have had more status in the eyes of Māori and in the eyes of European settlers, businessmen and officials, instead of earning ridicule, particularly in 1842 because of their poverty compared with the Protestant missionaries in New Zealand. By no means would the Marists' task of transmitting Christianity to Māori have been eased by French political backing, but it was not so much spiritual progress that disheartened the Marist missionaries in the early years; the temporal situation of the Māori mission was what the Marist Fathers more consistently lamented in their letters back to Father Colin. Kevin Roach describes the very limited financial assistance offered to the missionaries in New Zealand, at a time when currency had been introduced and prices were rising rapidly:

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<sup>37</sup> « Mon très-révérend père, deux nouveaux évêques sont maintenant dans les tropiques, les désirs, coeurs, les bourses des prêtres et fidèles d'Europe sont pour les tropiques; on sait que la Nouvelle-Zélande est colonie anglaise enlacée toute entière par une légion de ministres protestants; déjà en quelque sorte elle n'est plus considérée comme une mission nouvelle; je crains d'après cela que la Nouvelle-Zélande soit bien moins favorisée », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 316, 12 February 1844, Bay of Islands, Reignier to Colin, pp. 2-3.

In the period 1838-48, French government help in terms of material aid in New Zealand amounted to a single grant of money by the Ministry of Justice and Worship, meagre rations accorded two priests and a brother for a time at Akaroa, the repairing of Pompallier's ship by Lavaud's men at Akaroa, for which the mission paid, the supplying of six sailors by the Ministry of Marine for the crew of Pompallier's ship, their upkeep to be the mission's responsibility, and the free transport of missionaries on State ships on two occasions.<sup>38</sup>

Direct financial assistance from the French government was therefore minimal; in any case, since post-Revolutionary France did not actively engage in colonial expansion on the same scale as Great Britain until the 1880s, the early Marist missionaries could not and did not rely on the French government for funding. Pompallier did however expect the French community at Akaroa to support the priests he had sent them, but Father Pezant complained that they were left to fend for themselves:

Monsignor, counting on resources that we did not find, gave us almost none to live on. Only few potatoes are found here and they are sold at a very high price because the ships purchase them as soon as they become available; pigs are free but run wild in the woods and Mr. Comte with Brother Florentin undertook an excursion in vain to go and take some. Mr. Comte was reduced to borrowing money, with which he obtained some potatoes, though at great expense.<sup>39</sup>

Pompallier and the Marists also expected, from 1840 onwards, some financial aid from New Zealand's colonial government. In the early years of New Zealand's colonial history, Governor Hobson had guaranteed that missionaries would be eligible for government salaries and stipends; however, this did not extend to the French Marists because they were of foreign (not British) birth.<sup>40</sup> A disappointed Father Petit-Jean quickly discovered that the colonial government was unwilling, and to some extent unable, to assist the Catholic mission. He became involved in conflict in 1843 when trying to procure government funding, as Father Forest illustrates in the following excerpt from a letter to Father Colin:

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<sup>38</sup> Roach, pp. 76-77.

<sup>39</sup> « Monseigneur, comptant sur des ressources que nous n'avons pas trouvées, ne nous a donné presqu'aucune pour vivre. On ne trouve que peu de pommes de terre et encore se vendent-elles à un prix très-haut, parce que les navires se les arrachent; les ports [sic] sont libres, mais errants dans les bois, et m(onsieu)r Comte avec le f(rère) Florentin a fait en vain une excursion pour en prendre. M(onsieu)r Comte a été réduit à emprunter de l'argent, avec lequel il a eu des pommes de terre, quoique bien chèrement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 74, 17 September 1840, Akaroa, Pezant to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>40</sup> Turner, p. 111.

In the regulations of the English colony in New Zealand, it is stated: *that the governor according to the opinion of his council will be able to give a certain sum to ministers of each religion, when religions have the number of people required by the regulations, when these religions have a chapel.* Father Petit-Jean, believing himself to have met all of these conditions, wanted to claim the favours of the law for himself and for his chapel and for his school, but he was met with the response that at present, poverty being extreme in the colony, it was judged inopportune to make this application. So the Father became angry and wrote anonymously to the Sydney newspapers of the government's injustice towards him. The government responded, and now my poor Father Petit-Jean is a target.<sup>41</sup>

Certainly the colony was in financial disarray through much of the 1840s. Governor Fitzroy could not raise enough money to fund the colony through taxation and, as historian Paul Moon put it, he was subsequently “left to run the country on the crumbs fed to him by the British Government [...] By August 1844 New Zealand was stumbling into an economic chasm of unprecedented proportions, with solutions thin on the ground.”<sup>42</sup> Sir George Grey took over as Governor in 1845, and from 1847 Grey provided several hundred pounds sterling annually to the Catholic mission for educational purposes under the Education Ordinance. The CMS, which had a greater number of missionaries in the field, received almost twice this amount.

Although government officials and some individuals were wealthy, the settlers who came to New Zealand generally were not; in fact many emigrants had come to the colony in search of a better life, or indeed to make their fortune, because of the pitiable living and working conditions for the lower classes in Britain. Father Comte, when visiting Auckland on his way to Bay of Islands, commented on the generosity

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<sup>41</sup> « Dans les règlements de la colonie anglaise dans la Nouvelle Zélande, il est dit: *que le gouverneur d'après l'avis de son conseil pourra donner une certaine somme aux ministres de chaque religion, lorsque les religions auront le nombre de personnes voulues par les règlements, lorsque ces religions auront une chapelle.* Le père Petit Jean, croyant avoir toutes ces conditions, a voulu réclamer pour lui et pour sa chapelle et pour son école les faveurs de la loi, mais on lui a répondu que dans ce moment la misère étant extrême dans la colonie, on ne jugeoit à propos de faire cette application. Alors le père s'est fâché et, sans se signer, il a fait écrire aux journeaux de Sidney l'injustice du gouvernement à son égard. Le gouvernement a fait répondre et mon pauvre père Petit Jean est maintenant en butte... », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 247, 26 March 1843, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 9.

<sup>42</sup> Moon, p. 86.

of the Catholic settlers there; he hoped that European parishioners would be in a position to rescue the missionaries from their poverty. Comte wrote back to France:

How great the faith of the Irish is! How well they receive their priests! How they love them! The population of Auckland at present is two thousand souls, of which three hundred are Catholic. While the Catholics are generally poor, they have nevertheless made a subscription which has risen to more than 200 pounds sterling for the chapel. We will begin [work on] it as soon as the missionary has arrived.<sup>43</sup>

The missionary assigned to Auckland in 1842 was Father Petit-Jean, who immediately realised that his new post was, in fact, no less precarious than his previous one in Whangaroa. The Catholics of Auckland could offer him little more than a weekly collective sum of 17 shillings, and the settlement which had become his parish was already riddled with debt.<sup>44</sup>

The little financial relief available in New Zealand for the Marists drove their superiors to find their own means of subsistence, which predictably led them away from Māori mission work. After facing various hardships as a missionary to Māori, Father Jean Pezant was assigned the position of resident priest in the township of Wanganui. Unaccustomed to remuneration from France or the Church, it was perhaps ironic that he would receive funds from the British army for his role as chaplain to Irish Catholic soldiers.<sup>45</sup> One by one, Marists originally assigned to the Māori missions were given parish work instead. European Catholics, many of whom were not wealthy, nevertheless made funding available to the Fathers for the benefit of their parish.

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<sup>43</sup> « Que la foi des Irlandais est grande! Comme ils reçoivent bien les prêtres! Comme ils les aiment! La population d'Auckland est en ce moment de deux mille âmes dont trois cent sont catholiques. Quoique les catholiques soient généralement pauvres, ils ont pourtant fait une souscription qui se monte à plus de 200 livres sterlings pour la chapelle. On la commencera dès que le missionnaire sera arrivé », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 155, 14 May 1842, Bay of Islands, Comte to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 269, 3 September 1843, Auckland, Petit-Jean to Forest, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> Schmidt, p. 7.

### 3.4 *Pompallier's administration*

In the eyes of the Marist Fathers and Brothers, culpability for the slow progress of the Māori Mission, the lack of Catholic establishments for Māori and Irish alike, and the destitution of the missionaries, fell solely on one figure of authority: Bishop Pompallier. Virtually omnipotent as the vicar apostolic and mission administrator, he held the monopoly over the distribution of funding and resources. Assuming the right to screen the missionaries' letters before they were sent to Europe, Pompallier was irritated that the Marists made their requests for books, clothing, ceremonial items and other needs to the Marist Superior. He wrote to Father Colin in 1840 that all provisions should be delivered directly to the procure house in the Bay of Islands "(...) for the unity of pastoral administration of this mission, unity being the heart of success. Here I give myself the right to distribute, according to the needs of each mission, what the charity of the faithful sends us."<sup>46</sup>

From the moment he arrived in New Zealand Bishop Pompallier offered gifts of clothing and ceremonial items to Hokianga Māori. This was to be a characteristic of the bishop's early visits to iwi and hapū throughout New Zealand, which encouraged the image of a Catholic mission that was materialistically wealthy led by a man of noble rank. When funds began to dry up, it also became impossible for the Marist priests and brothers to ration food while still providing Māori visitors with passable meals.

From time to time the natives bring us some baskets of potatoes but these are presents for which we must pay a higher price than at the market. Adding to this expense are the visits we receive from the natives who come from far away, and often in large numbers, and do us the honour of staying for several days.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> « (...) pour l'unité d'administration pastorale de cette mission, l'unité étant l'âme du succès. Ici je me réserve de faire distribuer, selon les besoins de chaque mission, ce que la charité des fidèles nous envoie », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> « Les naturels nous apportent bien de tems à autres quelques paniers de pommes de terre mais ce sont des présents qu'il faut payer plus cher qu'au marchand. Ce qui augmente cette dépense ce sont les visites que nous recevons des naturels qui viennent de loin et souvent en g(ran)de compagnie et nous font l'honneur de rester chez nous plusieurs jours », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 2.

Pompallier's generosity towards Māori chiefs made the Marists' already meagre existence even more difficult, as Māori came to expect gifts from the Catholic missionaries or were only interested in dealing with the bishop. Pompallier's approach to gaining the loyalty of Māori chiefs was therefore met with disapproval on the part of the Marist missionaries, who were disappointed and distrustful of Pompallier as mission administrator. Clearly these sentiments would be shared by Māori when they discovered that Pompallier's fabricated image of affluence did not correspond to the reality of life on the mission, but Pompallier was willing to take this risk or most likely did not see it as a risk at all, such was his faith in Providence and France's capacity to provide. Furthermore, his strategy, though seen as outright bribery by the CMS missionaries in New Zealand, was effective in that it captured the interest of many Māori who might otherwise have taken up with the Protestant missionaries.

Historians agree that Pompallier was a poor administrator and lacked foresight, and that these were weaknesses which played a major role in the financial disarray in which the mission continually found itself. Pompallier's earliest expenditures in the Bay of Islands exacerbated the growing conflict between the bishop and his priests, none of whom were especially commerce-savvy but all of whom believed that a skilled procurator was an essential addition to the mission staff. Father Servant further reproached Pompallier for allowing himself to be duped on more than one occasion; an example of this was his purchase of a rowing boat and an organ for the equivalent of 1000 Francs each, when both of these items could have been acquired for a lesser price. An embarrassed Servant complains to Colin:

It is painful for us to hear from foreigners that Monsignor allows himself to be swindled and that he and business affairs do not go well together. It would suit the interests of the mission if the mission's procurator alone had this task to fulfil and if Monsignor remained hidden behind the curtain.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> « (...) il est pénible pour nous d'entendre dire aux étrangers que m(onsei)g(neu)r se laisse tromper et qu'il ne s'entend pas aux affaires de commerce. Il conviendrait aussi pour les intérêts de la mission que le procureur de la mission ait lui seul la tâche à remplir et que m(onsei)g(neu)r restât caché derrière le rideau », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 2.



According to Father Forest, it was not only Pompallier but all the Marists who were seen as unfit for commercial transactions; Forest reported to Colin in 1842: “All the Catholics and Protestants say that the French priests are good priests but that they are veritable *children, children* when it comes to temporal affairs.”<sup>49</sup> The word *children* appears once in English in Forest’s original letter to echo the comments made to him by the English-speaking settlers.

Since money was of no value to Māori prior to 1840 the early CMS missionaries had traded material items including muskets and blankets to obtain food from local Māori. The WMS pioneer Samuel Leigh funded his mission in Whangaroa in a similar manner, requesting in the 1820s that England send items he could barter in New Zealand. Once New Zealand became a British colony, food and services became expensive with pioneer traders and settlers trying to eke out a living and many materials having to be shipped from overseas. In early 1842, according to novice and assistant Louis Perret, the mission had accumulated a total debt of between 100,000 to 150,000 Francs, and this was a result of loans which had been secured at an interest rate of at least 10%.<sup>50</sup> These debts were in his view the sole reason why the mission had not yet been able to make much tangible progress. Father Petit-Jean lamented that: “On the entire surface of New Zealand, we do not have a single chapel made of wood nor any other solid material, except at Kororareka.”<sup>51</sup> While there were many raupō Catholic chapels, these were not seen to be as prestigious as the impressive churches that the Protestants had already erected, and Catholic Māori were eager to match their rivals in appearance. There were also no cemeteries for Catholics, which especially upset Irish settlers. Subscriptions for churches and cemeteries were instead employed to clear urgent debts, causing further concern among settlers; and Catholics in Sydney began to ask questions after their contribution to a ‘proper’ church in Kororāreka did not have swift results.

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<sup>49</sup> « Tous catholiques et protestans disent: que les prêtres français sont bons prêtres mais qu’ils sont de vrais *children, enfans* pour les affaires temporels », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 174, 2 June 1842, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 163, 20 May 1842, Kororareka, Perret to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> « Sur toute la surface de la Nouvelle-Zélande nous n’avons pas une seule chapelle en bois, ni autre matière solide, excepté à Kororareka », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 159, 18 May 1842, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 4.

There were unavoidable expenditures involved in establishing and maintaining foreign missions, particularly transport costs. Of the 60,000 Francs (£2558) allocated by the Propagation of the Faith for the second year of the mission, 30,000 was used to transport the second party of Marist missionaries and some necessary items to New Zealand.<sup>52</sup> Colin was in charge of making purchases in France on behalf of the mission, and handed the remaining 30,000 to the departing missionaries who could then ensure that this money safely reached Pompallier in New Zealand. The other half of the 1839 allocation was therefore entrusted to Pompallier, who spent two-thirds of this amount on two substantial purchases: for approximately 10,000 Francs Pompallier bought a mission house to welcome and brief newly arrived Marists, and some land in the Bay of Islands where he planned to build schools, a church and a cemetery; less useful was his contribution of 10,000 Francs towards the joint purchase of a mission sailing ship, which he viewed as essential at the time but would later surrender to the other buyer involved, Bishop Rouchouze of the Picpus Catholic mission. The cost of travelling was indeed a great burden on the mission, with Pompallier spending 1250 francs per month for Father Viard's, Brother Michel's and his own passage around New Zealand in 1840<sup>53</sup> for the evangelisation of Māori as far south as the Bay of Plenty. In his letter to Father Colin on 7 December 1839, Pompallier deals with only one topic: the value and urgency of a ship especially for mission purposes, yet his idealistic tone undermines his argument:

We can easily carry out our duties not only within the places under my jurisdiction, but we could even go to Europe and come back without difficulty. What a saving for the mission! What a facility for all communication links! It is a slightly costly enterprise to begin with, but very economical at the same time, since the money to buy the ship is enough for the transport of six missionaries and their possessions from Europe to our waters. But with a ship appertaining to the mission the first voyage will be a little more expensive, but it will also belong entirely to the mission.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> « (...) on peut faire facilement non seulement les courses dans l'intérieur des lieux de ma juridiction, mais on pourroit même aller en Europe et revenir sans difficulté. Quelle économie pour la mission! Quelle facilité pour tous les rapports de communications! C'est une entreprise un peu coûteuse en commençant, mais bien économique en même temps. Car l'argent pour acheter le navire à peine suffit-il

He estimated that the ship would cost up to 24,000 Francs, and suggested a French whaling captain who had spent some time in the Bay of Islands as a suitable captain for the vessel. The ship would also require the protection of the Naval Ministry in France,<sup>55</sup> undoubtedly because of the overwhelming British presence in foreign waters. The Marist Fathers did not support Pompallier's decision in 1840 to purchase a mission schooner for £1400 (35,000 F), and frequently complained of the ongoing costs it created; vessels were usually of a commercial nature, which helped to subsidise their voyages, but Pompallier's mission schooner offered no revenue to cover the costs of its crew and maintenance. Father Épalle warned the Marist Superior-General:

A ship is an abyss that cries out incessantly for money. Therefore do not be surprised by the drafts that have been withdrawn in your name for four or more likely five bills of exchange, amounting to 2152 pounds sterling, 6 shillings and 7 pence (53808 Francs, 20 centimes).<sup>56</sup>

The mission schooner served to transport Pompallier from the Bay of Islands to Akaroa, and as far as Wallis and Futuna after Chanel's death. The Marists in Wallis and Futuna did not have their own schooner until 1845, and this schooner required at least 8,000 F a year for its upkeep<sup>57</sup> and was later traded in for another vessel which needed costly repairs. Furthermore, travelling through New Zealand was trying but not impossible without a schooner; Pompallier's belief in the need for a mission ship was argued against in 1845 by Father Comte who had made the round trip from Wellington to Tauranga on foot in just three months:

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pour le transport de six missionnaires avec leurs effets d'Europe en nos parages. Mais avec un navire appartenant à la mission le premier voyage sera un peu plus cher, mais aussi le navire sera à elle », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 44, 7 December 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 44, 7 December 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>56</sup> « Un navire est un gouffre qui crie sans cesse à l'argent. Ainsi ne soyez pas surpris des traites qui ont été tiré sur vous par quatre ou plus probablement cinq lettres de change faisant une somme de 2152 livres sterling, 6 shillings, 7 pence (53808 f(rancs), 20 c(entimes)) », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 127, 19 January 1842, Bay of Islands, Épalle to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 390, 30 July 1845, Wallis, Mathieu to Poupinel, p. 1.

If Monsignor has insisted until now and continues to insist on having a ship belonging to the mission, it is because he always imagined that New Zealand was impracticable and could hardly be visited other than by means of a ship. But even though the country is spiked with curious mountains, cordoned off by extensive ridges, covered with forests, furrowed by numerous rivers, and beset with lakes and swamps, there are nevertheless communication linkages in all directions and for all locations used by the natives.<sup>58</sup>

In 1842 external pressure finally forced the bishop to sell his beloved *Sancta Maria*. He was not only dismayed by the personal loss of his schooner, but saw its absence as a major loss to the Māori Mission because he viewed the schooner as an important symbol of Catholicism. Yet most of the Marist missionaries in New Zealand were forced to find other vessels to travel between mission stations because Pompallier monopolised use of the schooner. It was therefore not so much the ‘mission schooner’ as it was a visible symbol of Pompallier’s prestige and a means of being on a par with the CMS:

Heresy has, just in New Zealand, more than 25 mission stations and I have only eight of them; but my mission’s schooner was a travelling station which produced the light of the Faith everywhere, it was more than a warship fighting against error. Alas! Its beautiful Catholic flag no longer flies in these waters and the sight of it no longer brings joy to the hearts of our numerous catechumens and neophytes!<sup>59</sup>

The schooner certainly cost the mission more than it contributed to it, but the greatest strain on the mission’s funds was the Marist establishments in the Bay of Islands. Pompallier’s residence symbolised Catholic might and prestige even more than his schooner had, but it did so at a price. Kororāreka was, particularly from 1845 onwards, the ‘black hole’ of the Marist Māori Mission.

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<sup>58</sup> « Si m(onsei)g(neu)r a tant tenu jusqu’ici et tient toujours à avoir un navire appartenant à la mission, c’est qu’il s’est toujours figuré que la Nouvelle Zélande était impraticable et ne pouvait guère se visiter autrement que par le moyen d’un navire. Mais quoique le pays soit hérissé de montagnes bizarres, barré par des crêtes prolongées, couvert de bois, sillonné par de nombreuses rivières, semé de lacs et de bourbiers, il existe cependant des communications en tous sens, pour tous les points, pratiquées par les naturels », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 366, 5 June 1845, Wellington, Comte to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> « L’hérésie a, rien qu’à la Nouvelle-Zélande, plus de 25 stations de mission et je n’y en ai que huit; mais le navire de ma mission étoit une station ambulante qui produisoit partout la lumière de la foi, c’étoit plus qu’une frégate contre l’erreur. Hélas! son beau drapeau catholique ne flotte plus en ces mers et sa vue ne porte plus la joie dans le coeur de nos nombreux catéchumènes et néophytes! », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 217, 6 November 1842, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Propagation of the Faith, p. 7.

### 3.5 *Purchases and upkeep in the Bay of Islands*

In 1840 Kororāreka, a principal trading port situated directly beside the colonial capital, was a particularly expensive place to maintain a mission station. Two weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, Father Petit complained to the recently appointed Marist Procurator, Poupinel, of the exorbitant prices he was having to pay for necessary mission items such as the ‘soutane’ worn by the priests.<sup>60</sup> Soutanes were black cassocks that buttoned from top to bottom and were thus very basic garments, yet the cost for tailoring just one cassock was 62 Francs, which was more than the price of 200 pounds of pork.<sup>61</sup> At least 1000 Francs was needed to erect a chapel,<sup>62</sup> in addition to the daily rate of up to 18 Francs for carpenters and other tradesmen.<sup>63</sup> Petit explains that in New Zealand: “you need a lot of money for just a few things. You can do as much and even more with 5 Francs in France than with one pound sterling here (25 Francs).”<sup>64</sup>

While a minimum of 30,000 francs was required for the establishment of each mission station,<sup>65</sup> the ongoing expenses were not as simple to calculate. Considering that the missions were growing at varying rates and had varying needs, and that these needs were ever-changing, Pompallier faced a difficult task in allocating funds fairly and effectively. The Marists were unhappy with the distributions; Pompallier had moved his residence and the procure house from Hokianga to the Bay of Islands because Kororāreka offered easier access to supplies, but the Bay of Islands seemed

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<sup>60</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 49, 21 February 1840, Kororareka, Petit to Poupinel, p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 87, 7 March 1841, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Paillason, p. 6.

<sup>62</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 78, 23 November 1840, Akaroa, Tripe to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> « (...) il faut beaucoup d’argent pour avoir peu de chose. On fait autant et surtout d’avantage en France avec 5 francs qu’ici avec une livre sterling (25 f(rancs)) », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 49, 21 February 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Poupinel, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 312.

to engulf more funds than other stations. Apparently Pompallier's decision to relocate to Kororāreka was "seen as part of a plan by the See of Rome to undermine the Protestants' efforts"<sup>66</sup> but with the political changes of the 1840s there seemed to be less and less justification for the move from the Hokianga. Kororāreka was the most expensive place in New Zealand in the early 1840s, and the capital of New Zealand was transferred from Okiato<sup>67</sup> to Auckland as early as 1841, which adversely impacted on the growth of Russell. Furthermore there were few European Catholics in Kororāreka, and Māori, who were supposed to be the centre of the Marist mission, lived several miles from the Bay of Islands settlement. The bishop nevertheless attempted to expand the station in the early 1840s and Louis Perret pointed out to Father Colin in a letter to France in 1842 that Pompallier's unwise expenditures now included, along with the schooner, "(...) a property purchased in Kororareka for fifteen thousand Francs, that is to say for much too high a price, [...] a property that we could do without at a pinch since we already own two buildings in this town."<sup>68</sup>

Louis Perret and the Marist Fathers recommended to Colin that a separate administrator be appointed to the mission, to ensure the fair and prudent distribution of funding. This would obviously undermine Pompallier, but neither Pompallier nor the Fathers and Brothers on the Māori mission had the experience or skills to effectively manage the mission's accounts and expenditures. Perret insisted that: "this person must be well chosen; he would contribute powerfully to the good, to the improvement, of the mission. I am most convinced that the success of the mission will depend largely on this selection".<sup>69</sup> Despite the establishment of the Sydney procure house in 1845, Pompallier continued to control funds allocated to the Marist mission in New Zealand until 1850, when the Marists were removed from his jurisdiction. Father Grange, having spent several months in the Bay of Islands before

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<sup>66</sup> Wolfe, p. 92.

<sup>67</sup> While Kororāreka and Russell are sometimes used as interchangeable terms, the colonial capital and European settlement known as Russell was officially located at Okiato, a few miles from Kororāreka.

<sup>68</sup> « (...) c'est une propriété achetée à Kororareka quinze milles francs, c'est à-dire beaucoup trop chère, [...] propriété dont on pouvait se passer à la rigueur puisque déjà on est propriétaire de deux immeubles dans cette ville », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 163, 20 May 1842, Kororareka, Perret to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>69</sup> « Il faudrait que cette personne fût bien choisie; elle contribuerait puissamment au bien, à l'amélioration de la mission. Je suis bien convaincu que de ce choix dépendra en grande partie la réussite de la mission », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 163, 20 May 1842, Kororareka, Perret to Colin, p. 2.

being transferred to Tonga, discerned the discrepancy between the financial situations of the Kororāreka station and the other mission stations in Pompallier's vicariate. Kororāreka was not merely a station, it was a procure house and a facility for welcoming and briefing newly-arrived missionaries and it was used by Pompallier to receive European and Māori guests, especially those of prestige. In 1844 Grange expressed his frustration at the expensive upkeep of the Kororāreka station in light of the comparative poverty of his station in Tonga; though he is careful not to mention Pompallier directly, it is obvious that the bishop is the only person in a position to make the decisions in Kororāreka described here by Grange:

Money ... nothing but money! (...) 130,000 francs allocated to the New Zealand mission alone arrived, free of charge, with the missionaries by government ship, and what will be done with it? Will this entire sum of money be employed in a single establishment which has less than 30 Christians? So that this entire amount is consumed, will money continue to be borrowed at 22½ % interest to purchase lands that offer nothing in return?! Will necessities still be purchased at 6 times the price they could be obtained? 1 franc per pound of bread, 20 francs for a worthless pair of sandals, 72 francs to make a soutane... Will foreigners continue to be fed?<sup>70</sup>

From the examination of Pompallier's administration volume, it is clear that the Bay of Islands station was particularly draining on the mission's funds; almost one-quarter of the Propagation of the Faith's allocation for 1844 was needed for the upkeep of the eight Marists and four tradesmen there, with only one of the Marists directly administering to Māori<sup>71</sup> and several of the Brothers engaged in cooking and cleaning. In the same year, the Bay of Islands station spent £121 on staffing and provisions, and in Auckland (the capital of New Zealand from 1841 to 1865) £84 was spent on staffing and the repayment of debts. In Tauranga and Ōpōtiki, annual expenditure only came to £10 and this was largely for the purchase of land and

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<sup>70</sup> « De l'argent ... rien que de l'argent! (...) 130,000 francs aloués à la seule mission de la N(ouve)lle Zélande et, arrivés avec les missionnaires franc de port par un navire de l'état, qu'en fera-t-on? Emploiera-t-on toujours toute cette somme dans un seul établissement qui n'a pas 30 chrétiens? Pour la consommer cette somme, empruntera-t-on toujours de l'argent à 22½ p(our) % pour acheter des terres qui ne rendent rien! Achetera-t-on toujours ce qui leur est nécessaire à un prix 6 fois audessus du prix auquel ils pourroient l'avoir. 1 franc la livre de pain, 20 f(rancs) une mauvaise paire de soullier, 72 francs la façon d'une soutanne.... Nourira-t-on toujours les étrangers? », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 320, 20 February – 25 July 1844, Tonga, Grange to Colin, p. 14.

<sup>71</sup> ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 325.

contributions to chapel subscriptions for the Māori Mission.<sup>72</sup> Pompallier claimed to have placed many of the Marist Fathers on one-man stations so that he could expand the mission as quickly as possible and check Protestant missionary influence in his vicariate, yet for a decade he poured a significant amount of Māori mission funds into a station that, apart from its printery, contributed very little to the Māori mission itself. If it had originally been chosen for its convenience as a port, this was no longer a valid reason in the mid-1840s since there were several ports regularly visited by European and Australian ships, including Port Nicholson.

Taking into account Pompallier's predilection for grandiosity, it is likely that the Kororāreka station was preserved to show that the Marist mission could stand alongside the CMS mission in a British colony and so that Pompallier could receive high-ranking guests at his residence there. If the Marist Fathers continually cried poverty and deprivation even after the crisis of 1842, the Catholic station at Kororāreka seemed to contradict this with Pompallier's generosity, which extended less to Māori and more to settlers as the decade progressed. Father Forest notified the Superior-General of the lack of financial foresight that came to characterise Pompallier's administrative decisions:

All of the money sent from Valparaiso by Father Epalle is gone; the majority of the money from Monsignor's schooner is gone, and only 500 pounds sterling remain from the money you sent us. From 100,000 francs, after paying all of our debts, perhaps 1500 pounds sterling remain, and what has been done with it? I hardly know a thing about it. A clock has been purchased for the town of Kororareka and is said to come to 80 pounds sterling, of which 24 will be paid by subscription; the rest will be charged to the mission. And what service will this clock provide for both the town and for religion? I haven't the faintest idea. We are rarely consulted and even more rarely listened to.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, pp. 457, 477, 499, 539.

<sup>73</sup> « Tout l'argent du père Épalle, envoyé de Valparaiso, est parti; la plus grande partie de l'argent de la goélette de monseigneur est partie, et il en reste encore 500 livres sterlings de l'argent que vous nous avez envoyé. Des 100,000 francs il restera, payé tout ce qui est dû, peut être 1500 livres sterlings, et qu'a-t-on fait? Je n'en sais presque rien. On a acheté pour la ville de Kororareka une horloge qui, dit-on, reviendra bien à 80 livres sterlings, dont 24 environ seront payées par souscription; le reste sera au compte de la mission. Et quel service rendra cette horloge et à la ville et à la religion, je n'en sais rien. Nous sommes rarement consultés et plus rarement écoutés encore », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 325, 18 April 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 2.



If the enormous expense of living and buying goods in Kororāreka was not enough to persuade Pompallier to rethink the location of his headquarters, its gradual desertion by Europeans and Māori alike should have led his efforts elsewhere, particularly southward where there were plenty of iwi and hapū who had not yet seen a European priest. In 1844, according to Father Forest:

The Bay of Islands is practically deserted. Everyone is moving to Auckland or Sydney. I think that within a few months there will be nothing left here but the mission house and few taverns, 3 or 4 for the American whaling ships which always come here to see their consul, who resides here in the Bay of Islands. We no longer see any French ships. They all go to Akaroa or to the Marquesas or to Tahiti.<sup>74</sup>

The following year, Hone Heke razed the township at Kororāreka to the ground, sparing only the Catholic and Anglican buildings; even if the Marist printery and the chapel were unchanged by the affair, it incited further abandonment of Kororāreka and brought Irish soldiers to the Auckland region, whose demand for a chaplain then absorbed the Marists' energies and drew Fathers Garin and Séon away from Māori Mission work. Father Baty described the scene at Kororāreka immediately after Heke's attack in 1845:

Upon my return from a voyage to the south I found this town destroyed and reduced almost entirely to a pile of ashes. Already the grass is growing over these ruins and in the evenings, instead of the rowdy celebrations and glee that were heard in prosperous times, the only thing that can be heard is the howling of dogs abandoned by their owners and which come back at night to visit their former homes and hide during the day in the bushes. What fallen hopes! What miserable families who, unable to seek their fortune elsewhere, are to endure poverty in Auckland! (...) The great chapel had just been completed and now we do not know if we will ever have need of it; this place, once so frequented by the natives – a good number of whom would attend Sunday services and 60 of whom received communion at all the celebrations – will

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<sup>74</sup> « La Baie des îles est à peu près abandonnée. Tout le monde s'en va ou à Auckland ou à Sydney. Je crois que dans quelques mois il n'y aura plus ici que la maison de la mission et quelques auberges, 3 ou 4 pour les navires baleiniers américains qui se rendent toujours ici auprès de leur consul qui réside ici à la Baie des îles. Nous ne voyons plus des navires français. Ils vont tous ou à Akaroa ou aux Marquises ou à Thaïti », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 313, 3 February 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 1.

probably not be frequented for a long time. Monsignor Pompallier has just left for Whangaroa so as not to be confined here by the whites to whom this bay belongs.<sup>75</sup>

Although the church and Pompallier's residence were spared, Turner points out that the mission at Kororāreka went into decline immediately following the northern war of 1845, especially since catechist chiefs Rewa and Moka had 'left the faith'.<sup>76</sup> Pompallier's residence and procure house remained at Kororāreka until 1850, which puzzled and exasperated some of the Marist Fathers. When the Marists relocated to the diocese of Wellington, the town of Wellington took the place of Kororāreka as the financial 'black hole' of the Marist Mission. Although Catholic settlers there were especially generous, funds from the Propagation of the Faith were nevertheless required to meet the costs of building and upkeep. But Pompallier's administration had lasting effects on the Marist missions in the Pacific; funds that could have been used to build mills, schools and large-scale gardens were largely absorbed by a schooner and a procure house, both of which played only a very minimal role in evangelising Māori. Bishop Bataillon followed Pompallier's example, labouring to develop Wallis while the other Marists in his vicariate went hungry and struggled to gain any mana in the eyes of local chiefs and sovereigns. If success was bringing Catholicism to the indigenous inhabitants of Oceania, the missionaries who were succeeding in the 1840s, under Pompallier's administration, were the Marist Fathers travelling from village to village and making gradual progress at converting Pacific Islanders and Māori to Catholicism.

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<sup>75</sup> « (...) à mon retour d'un voyage du sud je trouvai cette ville détruite et réduite presque en totalité en un monceau de cendres. Déjà l'herbe pousse sur ces ruines et les soirs, au lieu des réjouissances et des plaisirs bruyants qu'on entendait au temps de la prospérité, on entend autre chose que le hurelement des chiens abandonnés par leurs maîtres et qui la nuit reviennent visiter leurs anciennes demeures et se cachent le jour dans les broussailles. Que d'espérances déçues! Que de familles misérables qui, ne pouvant aller chercher fortune ailleurs, sont à endurer la misère à Auckland! [...] La grande chapelle venait d'être achevée et maintenant on ne sait pas si jamais on en aura besoin; cette place, autrefois si fréquentée par les naturels dont un bon nombre venaient les dimanches aux offices et dont environ 60 communiaient à toutes les fêtes ne sera pas probablement fréquentée de longtemps. M(onsei)g(neu)r Pompallier vient de quitter pour se rendre à Wangaroa afin de n'être pas fermé ici par les blancs auquel cette baie est assujétie », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 365, 27 & 29 April 1845, Kororareka, Baty to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>76</sup> Turner, p. 137.

### 3.6 *Subsistence and economic ventures*

The formation of a self-sustaining mission, in which the missionaries could feed themselves and their adherents, fund their own projects and train catechists, was never considered essential in the original Marist plans for Oceania. In fact the Catholic Church held the view that indigenous converts would provide temporal support as soon as Catholicism had been planted there. The common origin of Lyon probably also influenced Pompallier's and Colin's view that charity would provide for the missions; nowhere else in France was there a charitable association comparable to the Propagation of the Faith.<sup>77</sup> According to Turner, Fathers Colin and Épalle later devised a farming system for the missions, but Pompallier was unwilling to implement it.<sup>78</sup>

As Thomson points out, the Marists' financial situation was markedly different from that of the CMS in New Zealand, which looked to its Parent Committee for financial support<sup>79</sup> and, though dependent on Māori in the first fifteen years of its mission, was hardly in a state of poverty. The first groups of Marist missionaries were predictably reliant on Māori for food, shelter, guides and protection, but this reliance continued as the Marists expanded southward to establish new stations in the 1840s and even the 1850s. The Marist missionaries quickly discovered that they could not expect to gain mana while they remained economically dependent on Māori; some stations produced garden crops but they were still far from being self-sufficient. In 1844 only the Māori Mission stations at Whangaroa and Hokianga had both a garden and some cattle.<sup>80</sup> The pioneer Marists in the Pacific Islands appeared to take more initiative, but their efforts consistently resulted in failure.

On the island of Futuna, Father Chanel made a small but unsuccessful attempt at subsistence in the late 1830s. According to Chanel, commerce with European and American sailors was a major problem on the island of Futuna and hindered his

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<sup>77</sup> Blazy and Prudhomme, p. 19.

<sup>78</sup> Turner, p. 168.

<sup>79</sup> Thomson, 'The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870', p. 123.

<sup>80</sup> 'Distribution des fonds reçus de la propagation de la foi en chaque station pour 1844' (Distribution of Funds received from the Propagation of the Faith in each station for the year 1844), ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 325. See translation in Appendix F.

efforts to become self-sufficient; the Futunans were selling important food staples, including the pigs and goats Chanel had hoped to breed, in exchange for disproportionate goods, moving Chanel to comment: “Only tragedy follows the passage of ships, especially for the animals I long to have on this island.”<sup>81</sup> On the neighbouring island of Wallis it became apparent to Father Bataillon that the Wallisians were not in a position to support the mission. In 1844 Bataillon, recently made Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, informed Father Colin of the need for economic support of indigenous converts, rather than being dependent on their flock as the Catholic Church would encourage:

I speak to you from experience: one of the greatest obstacles to our missions is the destitution of missionaries, and I am convinced that out of all the human methods the one that can contribute the most to the progress of the mission is being able to meet the temporal needs of these peoples, who are so poor and yet so rapacious. It is also being able to alleviate them of their illnesses.<sup>82</sup>

In the period 1837 to 1843 there had been little initiative from the Marist missionaries with regard to findings means of subsistence. In contrast, the first Marist missionaries in New Caledonia concentrated almost solely on achieving economic independence from the moment they arrived, even if their agricultural ventures were not always successful. Travelling aboard the *Bucéphale*, Bishop Douarre, Fathers Rougeyron and Viard, and Brothers Jean and Blaise arrived in Balade, New Caledonia, in December 1843 as veritable pioneers; according to Georges Delbos:

(...) for nearly eighteen months, the missionaries’ preoccupations would be almost entirely centred on their material subsistence and a means of ensuring this in the future. They were not peasants and mountain dwellers for nothing [...] It was a matter of firstly securing a practical dwelling, necessary furnishings, and food-producing resources which would generate crops in

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<sup>81</sup> « Que de malheurs suivent le passage des navires, surtout pour les animaux que je désirerais dans cette île », Rozier, p. 212.

<sup>82</sup> « Je vous parle ici par expérience, un des plus grands obstacles à nos missions, c’est le dénûment de nos missionnaires, et je suis convaincu que parmi tous les moyens humains celui qui peut le plus contribuer au progrès de la mission c’est d’être à mieux de pouvoir subvenir aux besoins temporels de ces peuples si pauvres et cependant si avides. C’est aussi de pouvoir les soulager dans leurs maladies », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 346, 20 August 1844, Wallis, Bataillon to Colin, p. 3.

the garden and fields, as well as breeding the pigs, ewes and poultry unloaded by the *Bucéphale*.<sup>83</sup>

Thus the foundation of the mission in Balade required a great deal of labour and concern for the temporal; evangelising, the primary purpose of missionary presence, was relegated until the temporal situation had been resolved. Bishop Douarre's highly practical approach to establishing the New Caledonian mission was probably encouraged by his visit to the missionaries in Tongatapu, whose struggle to obtain food had partly impeded their spiritual success among the Tongans. Bishop Douarre, who reached Tongatapu at the end of 1843, informed Father Colin that the missionaries' food source largely consisted of discarded fruit and scraps, which was not enough to satisfy their hunger or sustain their health.<sup>84</sup> According to Father Chevron they mostly survived on yams and especially kava; the latter proved to be the vital sustenance that enabled Chevron to complete his apostolic duties, which included walking 'several leagues', perhaps some twenty kilometres, each day.<sup>85</sup> Bishop Douarre, eager to avoid the economic problems in Tonga, explained to the Marist superior-general:

You will find that I am very concerned with material things. What do you expect! I am a bishop and am therefore obliged to attend to these things somewhat: the cabbages are coming along very well, as are the onions and celery - the whole lot from cuttings - and the fig trees are a perfect success, hence it would be easy to improve the situation of our men.<sup>86</sup>

When the crops in New Caledonia began to yield, they gave the Marists a sense of self-sufficiency, but their supplies were rapidly exhausted and the missionaries soon

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<sup>83</sup> « (...) pendant près de dix-huit mois, les préoccupations des missionnaires seront presque uniquement centrées sur leur subsistance matérielle et les moyens de l'assurer dans l'avenir. Ils ne sont pas pour rien paysans et montagnards [...] Il s'agit tout d'abord de s'assurer d'un logement fonctionnel, du mobilier indispensable et des ressources vivrières qui fourniront la culture du jardin et des champs, ainsi que l'élevage des porcs, des brebis et de la volaille débarqués du *Bucéphale* », Delbos, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 42.

<sup>84</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 304, 10 January 1844, New Caledonia, Douarre to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>85</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 261, 24-25 June 1843, Tonga, Chevron to his family, p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> « Vous me trouverez bien matériel. Que voulez-vous! Je suis évêque et par conséquent obligé de m'occuper un peu de ces choses: les choux viennent très bien, les oignons, le céleri, et le tout par bouture, les figuiers réussissent parfaitement en sorte qu'il serait facile d'améliorer la position de nos messieurs », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 304, 10 January 1844, New Caledonia, Douarre to Colin, p. 5.

found themselves starving and desperate.<sup>87</sup> The Picpus Fathers in Eastern Oceania had also planted crops in the first year of the mission but these were destroyed by rats and the missionaries starved until their bishop, Étienne Rouchouze, arrived with cats and traps in 1839.<sup>88</sup> In 1844 the Picpus Fathers again found themselves in strife while waiting for resources from their bishop, who had returned to France three years earlier. According to Father Forest in New Zealand: “Mr. Caret, Prefect Apostolic of the Gambier-Tahiti missions, wrote to Monsignor Pompallier that they are all in state of terrible affliction and severe poverty; terrible affliction because Monsignor Rouchouze has still not arrived from France.”<sup>89</sup> It was later discovered that Bishop Rouchouze and another twenty-three missionaries aboard the *Marie-Joseph* drowned at sea in early 1843.

Meanwhile the financial crisis experienced by the Marist missionaries in New Zealand in 1842 finally prompted them to reconsider their situation as itinerant priests subject to French charity, Pompallier’s will and the generosity of local Māori. Marist devotion required a vow of poverty to discourage materialism and imitate the spirit of Jesus Christ; this essentially ruled out commercial ventures as a means to fund the mission and helped prevent missionaries from becoming preoccupied with the temporal world. Unfortunately for the Marists, they had little choice but to concern themselves with the temporal, since their very survival and any chance of evangelical success necessitated urgent funds and resources. The Marists could barely make ends meet, especially in 1842, and it was clear that the Māori mission would risk financial ruin unless the priests and Brothers took the initiative to create self-sufficient missionaries. Agriculture was the obvious option in the 1840s, since the CMS had already proved its usefulness at Waimate and had since attracted the interest of Waikato Māori in particular. Pompallier evidently saw the importance of Māori self-sufficiency in order to enable the mission’s survival; in his 1841 manuscript ‘Instructions pour les Travaux de la Mission’, Pompallier confirmed that Māori

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<sup>87</sup> Delbos, *L’Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, pp. 46, 48, 49.

<sup>88</sup> Honoré Laval, *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de Mangareva : ère chrétienne 1834-1871*, ed. by C.W. Newbury and P. O’Reilly (Paris: Publications de la Société des Océanistes, 1968), pp. 30-31.

<sup>89</sup> « Monsieur Carret, préfet apostolique des missions des Gambier-Taïti, écrit à monseigneur Pompallier qu’ils sont tous dans une bien grande affliction et dans une grande misère. Dans une grande affliction: Monseigneur Rouchouze n’est point encore arrivée de France », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 325, 18 April 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 1.

“know enough about agriculture to grow sufficient food and a quantity of other provisions. [...] Encourage them to work well so as to be able to sell their products profitably, buy clothes, and tools, and give up selling their lands.”<sup>90</sup> Father Petit in Hokianga expressed a hope that the Catholic mission would be able to offer succour to Māori in need through the establishment of flour mills in each mission station, however Pompallier did not have enough funding to obtain a mill for even one of the stations, so that the Fathers were left to plead with charitable friends and colleagues in France to raise enough funds for such an expensive item as a mill. The Anglican missionary John Morgan had already introduced successful flour mills at Rangiaowhia and Otawhao, but at a cost of over £300. In 1844 Father Tripe reported that Petit and Hokianga Māori had collected a large amount of wheat but could do nothing with it as they were still waiting for a mill to be sent from France.<sup>91</sup>

Father Comte in Ōtaki, Father Lampila on the Whanganui River and French diocesan priest Joseph Garavel in Rangiaowhia clearly worked towards economic success to rival nearby CMS stations, and these had multiple benefits, providing employment for local Māori and a much-needed source of food for the missionary priest as well as the community.<sup>92</sup> From 1844, Comte introduced market gardens, rope-making and water mills to Ngāti Kapu and other iwi in the Ōtaki area, and even purchased a schooner to facilitate trade and commerce for their benefit. But Father Petit’s motivation for creating mills was influenced by more urgent circumstances; by the mid-1840s many northern iwi were suffering economically as a result of European contact and looked to missionaries for immediate and long-term relief, and the Marists did their best to respond. According to Father Petit, an addiction to tobacco was the principal reason for Māori suffering in a physical, economic and spiritual sense:

Our main goal was to obtain a means of subsistence for us if our state of hardship were to continue and, supposing it came to an end, to put ourselves in a position to alleviate our poor neophytes; they are in great destitution due to the necessities they have created for themselves by adopting the habits of Europeans, primarily the usage of the tobacco pipe which is a source of many evils for the body and the soul. This *hunger for tobacco*, as they call it, is an overly

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<sup>90</sup> Translation appears in McKeefry’s *Fishers of Men*, p. 18.

<sup>91</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 333, July 1844, Observations of Jean-André Tripe on the New Zealand mission, p. 4.

<sup>92</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 114.

pressing one for them. They all smoke, from the age of 3 or 4 years and above, women and men alike. The vast majority of provisions that they sell to whites is sold in order to fuel the tobacco pipe.<sup>93</sup>

Flour mills, orchards and other commercial agricultural ventures proved to be more than merely an aid to subsistence for both CMS and Marist missionaries. Agriculture had largely replaced literacy, particularly in the Waikato, as the European innovation that drew Māori to the missions. Howe points out that Māori interest in agriculture was a major reason why mission schools were not as effective in the 1840s.<sup>94</sup> The early CMS missionaries had attempted to introduce industry but were thwarted in their evangelical progress by a lack of effective teaching, whereas in the 1840s industry would, ironically, work to benefit evangelical missions more than education or religious literature were able.

Faced with unanticipated hardship in New Zealand in the early 1840s, the Marists displayed persistence and a certain amount of deftness towards the end of the decade in imitating the methods that were proving fruitful for the CMS missionaries. While Father Baty and several Marist Brothers used the printing press in Kororāreka to win Māori adherence through literature and literacy, Fathers Comte and Lampila focused their energies into economically viable mission stations to facilitate commercial-minded Māori. This was a remarkable recovery from the destitute state of the Marists in New Zealand in 1842.

The pioneer Marists in Wallis and Futuna had also experienced hunger under Pompallier, but from 1842 the Wallis mission benefited from Father Bataillon's appointment as Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania. In Tonga and Fiji the Marists established and maintained their stations despite having no items to trade or give

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<sup>93</sup> « Notre but principal étoit de nous procurer de quoi subsister si notre état de pénurie continuoit et, supposé qu'il cessât, de nous mettre à même de pouvoir soulager nos pauvres néophites qui sont dans une grande misère par suite des nécessités qu'ils se sont faites en prenant les habitudes des Européens et principalement l'usage de la pipe qui est une source de bien des maux pour le corps et l'âme. Cette *faim de tabac*, comme ils l'appellent, est excessivement impérieuse chez eux. Ils fument tous, depuis l'âge de 3 ou 4 ans et en dessus, les femmes comme les hommes. La très grande partie des provisions qu'ils vendent aux blancs, c'est pour alimenter la pipe », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 310, 20 January 1844, Hokianga, Petit to Colin, pp. 2-3.

<sup>94</sup> Howe, 'Missionaries, Maoris and "civilization" in the upper-Waikato, 1833-1863', pp. 137, 163.



away. And in New Caledonia, where the vicar apostolic had tried to be prudent, failed crops made it more difficult to evangelise effectively. If the missionaries did not eat, they could not travel, and if they did not travel, how could they expect to propagate Christianity? Yet the missionaries throughout the Pacific persevered with their evangelising task despite their hunger and their incapacity to build churches, schools and other works associated with the establishment of Christianity. If problems with funding and Pompallier's imprudent expenditures caused a temporary decline in Māori interest in the Catholic mission and damaged its reputation, the crisis in 1842 clearly did not signal or result in the failure of the mission or its missionaries. Economic hardship did, however, contribute to a growing sense of disillusionment among the Marist Fathers. This disillusionment, coupled with their discontent at being isolated on their stations, caused the Marists to view their mission as a failure.

## **Chapter 4: Isolation and Disillusionment with the Mission**

Life on the early Marist mission in New Zealand demanded a certain type of missionary: robust health, physical endurance for frequent long-distance travel on foot, skill in learning languages, patience and courage in the face of danger. It was perhaps this last quality that helped paint a romantic, heroic picture of foreign mission work and recruit young Frenchmen. But were these dangers real? The early Marists on the Māori mission did not face the threat of cannibalistic savages as had been mythologised in Europe, but they did risk instant death or injury by falling from cliffs, drowning, or being caught in the midst of intertribal warfare. They also risked a ruined physical health by the age of forty because of their constant journeying and poor diet, which usually consisted of a small amount of salted pork and potatoes. But of all the hardships they encountered, loneliness and isolation seemed to weigh heaviest on the Marists who, unlike CMS and LMS missionaries, had neither wives nor children to accompany and assist them in their missionary endeavours. This loneliness and isolation impacted on the effectiveness of the overall mission in various ways, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter.

Missionary appointments were treated very differently in the CMS and WMS compared with the Society of Mary. While the two Protestant missionary churches usually appointed men to New Zealand with the understanding that this would be their permanent mission territory, the French Marists were sometimes needed for the Marist effort elsewhere in the Pacific and were transferred accordingly; transfers to other mission stations in New Zealand were also much more frequent for the Marists and caused discontent among Māori, whose needs were neglected as a result of such transfers. Why would Marist leaders knowingly jeopardise established mission

stations by transferring staff elsewhere? The simple reason was the shortage of missionaries for the territory in Oceania to which the Society of Mary had been assigned. But other factors also came into play, including Pompallier's hasty expansion and the Marists' subsequent disillusionment with Pompallier and his administration, and with their roles as destitute itinerant missionaries.

#### **4.1 *Shortage of missionaries***

The need for more missionaries to the Māori was unrelenting, yet the men themselves always numbered very few. As Thomson rightly points out, the average length of service for the French Marists was much shorter compared with that of the CMS missionaries in New Zealand and resulted in “a loss of that personal influence which counted a great deal in winning the allegiance of the Maoris.”<sup>1</sup> This said, some of the early CMS missionaries had a remarkably short career and were dismissed from the Society; the long-serving CMS missionaries tended to be those who arrived in the 1830s and 1840s, and one might add that much of this ‘service’ was disrupted by the New Zealand Wars.

Of the eight Marists in the founding party, one priest did not survive the crossing, two priests and two brothers were stationed in Wallis and Futuna, while only Pompallier, Servant and Brother Michel carried on to New Zealand. Already in 1838, the first year of the mission, Catherin Servant was pleading for more colleagues, distraught to find himself the sole Marist Father in the whole country and unable to advance the mission without strength in numbers:

The harvest appears all white and ready to be reaped... How the heart suffers at the thought that the workers are so few... Oh if only I were able to inspire those who are called to the missions by Divine Providence, to happily decide in favour of their calling, to not fear the hardships and difficulties which, considered from afar, may exist in the imagination rather than in reality... Oh! Let us ask the Lord for workers.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thomson, ‘Some Reasons for the Failure of the Roman Catholic Mission to the Maoris, 1838-1860’, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup>« La moisson paroît toute blanche et prête à être recueillie... Combien le coeur souffre à la pensée que les ouvriers sont en si petit nombre... O s'il m'était permis d'inspirer à ceux que la divine providence

Writing to the Marist Superior-General in the same year, Pompallier attributes his inability to make progress within his vicariate to the shortage of funding and lack of men to staff the missions. He also divulges to Colin his frustration at being ridiculed by the Protestant missionaries as a result of Marist privation. The urgency of Pompallier's requests in 1838 is obvious, and the possibility of failure is recognised by the bishop himself in the following extract, yet his continued spending would indicate that he genuinely believed in Colin's capacity to recruit more missionaries and collect more funds from the Association of the Propagation of the Faith within a short period of time.

The difficulties are very great here. I find myself in a state of poverty that severely injures the mission in the natives' opinion. I am in debt by about 15 hundred Francs, and if the enemies of our religion who are so spirited against me want to take advantage of this situation by humiliating and vexing me, they certainly have the chance. If you delay, too, in sending me subjects, the mission that offers the happiest gifts could fall into a very distressing state and, perhaps, a state of ruin. How I need the funds that the Propagation of the Faith may have for me. At the moment two things prevent me from going to Wallis and Futuna: a lack of missionaries and of funds.<sup>3</sup>

The Marists back in France must have appeared to lead a sheltered, privileged life in comparison to their counterparts in Oceania, who were regularly faced with rugged terrain, destitution, hostile Māori, and Protestant tirades. Most French seminarians in the nineteenth century were content with the prospect of becoming a parish priest. Their families took pride in such a vocation, even though it did not offer the same benefits as had been available to clergy before the Revolution. Mothers and local

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appelle dans ces missions à se décider avec joie en faveur de leur vocation à ne pas redouter des peines et des difficultés qui considérées de loin peuvent exister plutôt dans l'imagination que dans la réalité... Oh! demandons des ouvriers au Seigneur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 27, 22 May 1838, Hokianga, Servant to du Treuil, pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> « Les difficultés sont bien grandes ici. Je me trouve dans un état de pauvreté qui nuit singulièrement à la mission dans l'opinion des naturels. Je suis endetté d'environ 15 cents francs, et si les ennemis de la religion qui sont si animés contre moi veulent profiter de cette occasion pour m'humilier et me vexer, ils en ont bien l'occasion. Si on tarde aussi à m'envoyer des sujets, la mission qui offre les plus heureuses données pourra tomber en un état très affligeant et peut-être de ruine. Que j'ai besoin des fonds que la Propagation de la foi peut m'avoir fait. Deux choses en ce moment m'empêchent d'aller à Wallis et à Fortuna: le manque de sujet et de fonds », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 29, 4 September 1838, Hokianga, Pompallier to Colin, p. 7.

priests helped to steer promising young boys towards the major seminary to complete their studies, but parents were reluctant to lose their sons and daughters, and superiors were sometimes reluctant to lose their newly ordained clergy to the foreign missions. The sense of unfairness rings through when Pompallier writes to Father Colin:

What a comfort in my labours! What an indescribable joy to bless once more and embrace the children of Mary, new soldiers under her battle flag, new missionaries and catechists, new apostles for my dear souls who overburden me and will continue to overburden me even from the day when I will have a hundred subjects... I only have six priests in my entire mission! And there are more than thirty thousand of them in France, my Catholic motherland! Perhaps even the dioceses of Lyon and Belley alone have more than fifteen hundred between them? Oh Lord! How disproportionate are the resources and how superior are the needs on my side. 12 to 15 million souls in the thousands of islands that my mission comprises, and only six priests with me!<sup>4</sup>

Several missionaries felt it necessary to appeal directly to seminarians and priests in France to encourage recruitment for the mission in Oceania. Father Garin suggested to the minor seminary students in Meximieux, where he had been a teacher, that missionary work was more rewarding and in some ways less challenging than rural parish work, and claimed: “I have not seen in France happier or more contented men than our missionaries here.”<sup>5</sup> From his station in Futuna, Father Favier translated and forwarded a letter apparently written by several Futunan catechists and catechumens, with the knowledge that parts of this letters would be published in the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* for the French public to read; the letter mentions a need and desire for European priests and indirectly urges Father Colin to uphold his role as

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<sup>4</sup> « Quelle consolation dans mes travaux! Quelle joie ineffable de bénir de nouveau et d’embrasser des enfants de Marie, de nouveaux combattants sous ses étendards, de nouveaux missionnaires et catéchistes, de nouveaux apôtres pour mes chères âmes qui me surchargeoient et qui me surchargent [*sic*] encore lors même que j’aurais cent sujets dès ce jour! ... je n’ai que six prêtres dans toute ma mission! Et il y en a plus de trente mille en France, ma patrie catholique! Peut-être même que les seuls diocèses de Lyon et de Belley en ont entr’eux deux plus de quinze cents? Oh! Dieu quelle disproportion de moyens et quelle supériorité de besoins de mon côté! 12 ou 15 millions d’âmes dans des milliers d’îles que comprend ma mission, et six prêtres seulement avec moi ! », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> « Je n’ai pas vu en France des hommes plus gais, plus contents que ne le sont ici nos missionnaires », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 99, 12 June & 17 July 1841, New Zealand, Garin to students at Meximieux seminary, p. 14.

provider of missionaries for Oceania: “ (...) he [Colin] remains in Europe so that he may send us his priests. Tell him that we love him, and that we love those whom he sends to us.”<sup>6</sup> Bishop Pompallier was especially active in pleading for more recruits, appealing to the Marist Fathers in France to join the mission using romantic images of battle and glory to stir them to action. In a direct letter to the Marist novitiate in 1839, he writes:

Oh Mary who art more powerful than armies, make your power burst forth, use the strength in your arm against the infernal powers in this mission! ... Everything serves our interests here: the difficulties, the contradictions, the scandals of Europeans, the perils, the privations, the calumnies; all of the blows that Hell has dealt us until now have come back onto them, in such a way that the successes of my labours are due in part to the wrath of the enemies of God and of his Holy Church! You have many comforts in your retreats, my dear friends, but many others are reserved for you in the Lord's battles and especially in the missions for infidels! No, there is no happiness as great on earth as that of leaving behind everything for Jesus Christ and following him into the crosses, the tribulations, and the perils of all kinds for the cause of his holy name!<sup>7</sup>

The Society of Mary simply could not meet Pompallier's demand for priests at the time; the Marists were a young order, having only been approved by the papacy in 1836, and did not have a large number of adherents until later in Colin's generalate. Pompallier must have found this hard to accept given that missionary fervour in Lyon was considerable; it pervaded every social class and every institution, and inspired a myriad of societies, works and congregations. Stirring letters circulated throughout

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<sup>6</sup> « (...) il reste en Europe pour nous envoyer ses prêtres. Dites-lui que nous l'aimons, et que nous aimons bien ceux qu'il nous envoie », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 387, 27 August 1845, Futuna, Futunan Christians to their Catholic brothers in Europe, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> « O Marie qui êtes plus puissante que les armées, faites éclater votre pouvoir, déployez la force de votre bras contre les puissances infernales en cette mission! ... Tout nous sert ici, les difficultés, les contradictions, les scandales d'Européens, les périls, les privations, les calomnies, tous les coups jusques ici que l'enfer nous a portés, lui sont retombés dessus; en telle sorte que les succès de mes travaux en partie sont dûs à la fureur des ennemis de Dieu et de sa sainte église! Vous avez bien des consolations dans la retraite, mes chers amis, mais bien d'autres vous sont réservées dans les combats du Seigneur et surtout dans les missions chez les infidèles! Non, il n'est point de bonheur si grand sur la terre que celui de tout quitter pour J(ésus) C(hrist) et de le suivre dans les croix, dans les tribulations, dans les périls de tout genre pour la cause de son saint nom! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 35, 20 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to novitiate priests, pp. 2-3.

Lyon, the glory of martyrdom and the courageous example set by others were some of many factors which had influenced Pompallier and the first group of Marist missionaries to depart in the first place. Pompallier also believed strongly in Providence, and expanded the Māori Mission south of Hokianga and the Bay of Islands in the hope that Providence would provide for the Mission and its men. By 1840 his demands still could not be met, even though the society had grown substantially in numbers and in popularity back in France. He asked Colin for “priests in great number and brothers in even greater number, and sisters soon also. I require 50 priests for New Zealand; 20 for the archipelago of Fiji and the Friendly Islands, 20 more for the neighbouring archipelagoes.”<sup>8</sup> If New Zealand had been Pompallier’s priority, it was certainly not the priority of the Society itself; Colin initially gave equal consideration to the needs of all the Marist missions in Oceania. Father Colin felt personally responsible for the Marists stationed at Wallis, Futuna, and Tonga, who had suffered as a result of New Zealand having absorbed all of the mission funds from 1838 until 1843. Of the fifteen Marist Fathers who worked on the early Māori Mission, two were transferred to Pacific Island stations, one was transferred to the Sydney procure house and one, Father Épalle, was promoted to bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Melanesia.

Furthermore the large number of islands that comprised these vicariates forced Colin to send departing recruits to ‘new’ missions in Oceania rather than replacing and reinforcing existing missionaries in New Zealand. But the new Marist missions faced exactly the same problem: a major shortage of missionaries which in turn hindered expansion and progress. Predictably the bishops in charge of these missions sent requests that echoed exactly the desperate requests of Pompallier; Bishop Douarre for example pleaded his case to Father Colin in 1845, two years into the New Caledonian mission, with a similar optimism that Pompallier had displayed in the letter quoted above, two years into the New Zealand mission. Douarre informed his superior-general:

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<sup>8</sup> « (...) des prêtres en grand nombre et des frères encore plus nombreux, bientôt aussi des soeurs. Il me faudroit 50 prêtres pour la Nouvelle Zélande; 20 pour les archipels Fidji, des Amis, 20 encore pour les archipels voisins », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 58, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 4.

(...) we require many workers, sixteen or twenty priests and forty brothers at least; with such reinforcements everything would function all at once and we would occupy every part of the island, and in a few years we would have more than fifty thousand Christians in New Caledonia.<sup>9</sup>

The call for Marist priests was certainly urgent in New Zealand, but not all Marist Fathers were already ordained when they signed up for missionary duty back in France. The shortage of Fathers for the mission in the early 1840s compelled Bishop Pompallier to hasten the ordination process so that he could fulfil his promise to send missionary priests out into his vast vicariate. François-Joseph Roulleaux-Dubignon arrived in New Zealand in December 1840, was ordained into the priesthood the following year, and left for the Wallis mission in April 1842. Father Garin, while stationed as the mission's provincial in the Bay of Islands, was witness to Roulleaux-Dubignon's unusually swift ascent through the major orders: "Mr. Roulleaux, who had just been made subdeacon last Sunday, has been made deacon. Soon he will be raised to the priesthood, such is Monsignor's need for Priests."<sup>10</sup> In the early 1860s in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, sacerdotal training and ordination were also done in haste to cater to the demands of Māori missions.<sup>11</sup>

Priests and Brothers alike were expected to cope with a heavy workload as a result of the lack of mission staff. This was especially demoralising for the earlier missionaries because they had expected, and were continually promised, reinforcements within several months to share the workload. There seems to be a consistency in the humble socio-economic backgrounds of the French Marist Fathers, which perhaps made them more compatible with mission work in the arduous conditions of early New Zealand.

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<sup>9</sup> « (...) il nous faudrait beaucoup d'ouvriers, seize ou vingt prêtres, quarante frères au moins; avec un pareil renfort tout marcherait à la fois, nous occuperions tous les points et dans quelques années nous aurions à la Nouvelle Calédonie plus de cinquante mille chrétiens », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 358, 1845, Douarre's report on the mission, Douarre to Colin, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> « Monsieur Roullaux qui venait d'être fait sous-diacre le dimanche précédent a été fait diacre. Bientôt il sera élevé au sacerdoce, tant m(onsei)g(neu)r a besoin de prêtres », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 99, 12 June and 17 July 1841, Garin to students in Meximieux, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 76.



All Marist Fathers, at least until 1842, were required to travel constantly to Māori villages and settlements, learn to speak and preach in Māori and English, as well as perform the usual sacerdotal functions such as baptisms, marriages, funerals, and mass. Many Fathers fundraised for and then constructed their own chapels and churches with the help of local Māori. Certain Fathers with a gift for learning languages were engaged to translate hymns, catechisms and prayer-books into Māori. In addition the Marists in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands were often preoccupied with tending to the sick, wounded and dying, duties that could have been shared with female religious, a common arrangement for Catholic missions elsewhere. But Catholic Sisters were not brought to New Zealand until 1850, and even then they were largely constrained to instructing young European girls. On behalf of Pompallier, Father Forest advised the Marist Superior-General in 1844: “Do not send female religious here. The moment has not yet come when they are able to do good without facing great and enormous difficulties, whether on the part of our adversaries, the Protestant missionaries, or on the part of an English government that is quick to take offence.”<sup>12</sup> Bishops Pompallier and Bataillon were of the view that Sisters would only exacerbate the rivalry with Protestant missionaries in the Pacific; Marie Cécile de Mijolla suggests that this was largely because of the fact that Fathers and Sisters on the mission together would provide Protestant missionaries with additional ammunition: “Would it not simply provoke slander, for everyone knows how difficult it is for Protestants to believe in the celibacy of the Catholic clergy?”<sup>13</sup> In retrospect the Marist Fathers perhaps also underestimated the resilience of religious French women, given the remarkable missionary careers of Suzanne Aubert and Marie-Françoise Perroton.

The Fathers’ workload increased as fellow missionaries requested to leave the mission, fell ill from disease or injury, or unexpectedly died. Brother Joseph-Xavier (Jean-Marie) Luzy, an active pioneer missionary in Wallis, developed elephantiasis

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<sup>12</sup> « Ne point envoyer ici de religieuses. Le moment n’est pas encore venu où elles puissent faire le bien sans de grandes et très grandes difficultés, soit de la part de nos adversaires, les missionnaires, soit de la part d’un gouvernement anglais qui est ombrageux », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes: anthologie de la correspondance reçue par Jean-Claude Colin, fondateur de la Société pendant son généralat*, Doc 314, 3 February 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin (on Pompallier’s behalf), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Marie Cécile de Mijolla, *Origins in Oceania: missionary sisters of the Society of Mary, 1845-1931* (Rome: [n.pub.], 1984), p. 35.

and was gradually less able to assist Father Bataillon with the upkeep of the mission and visits to different parts of the island; a handful of Marist recruits finally arrived in 1843, facilitating expansion of the mission into other Pacific Islands. In New Zealand Father Servant complained of a respiratory illness and was transferred to the warmer climate of Futuna in 1842; Father Petit succeeded him at the mission station in Hokianga. But after Father Borjon's transfer from Rotorua to Port Nicholson, there were simply not enough missionaries in New Zealand to replace him and Father Pezant was left in charge of Rotorua as well as his own station at Tauranga for the following three years. Pezant, alone and exhausted, wrote to his superior-general:

In sole charge of the two districts of Rotorua and Tauranga, all I could aim to do, while waiting for reinforcements, was to prevent them becoming Protestants, to catechise them 'on the run', as they themselves would say, and to provide baptism for the ill and for the healthy who desired it.<sup>14</sup>

The Fathers' letters in 1844 contained many of the same complaints and issues as those sent in 1838: shortage of funds, distance from fellow Marist Fathers, and varying degrees of neglect by the bishop and the Marist headquarters. The missionaries were starving, isolated and unable to progress without resources or finances; would more missionaries have helped ease the workload and loneliness of the Fathers currently staffing the mission, or would they have simply added to the Marists' financial burden? Pompallier berated Colin and the Propagation of the Faith for their unwillingness to cater to his demands. His letters from 1838 to 1842 are repetitive, always asking for more priests and Brothers, or for less opinionated priests and better-skilled Brothers. En route to France in 1842, Épalle wrote to Colin: "Any plans to send more missionaries must be halted at once. Money and not subjects. It is a matter of repairing the past."<sup>15</sup> This begs the question of whether Pompallier expanded too quickly, and was therefore imprudent in sending missionaries to

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<sup>14</sup> « Chargé seul des deux districts de Rotorua et de Tauranga, tout ce que je pouvais viser à obtenir était de les empêcher de devenir protestants, en attendant du renfort, et de les catéchiser en courant, comme ils le disaient eux mêmes, de baptiser les malades et les bienportants qui voulaient l'être », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 954, 29 October 1850, New Plymouth, Pezant to Riberolles, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> « Si un envoi étoit pris, arrêtez le bien vite. De l'argent et non des sujets. Il s'agit de réparer le passé », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 182, 23 July 1842, Valparaiso, Epalle to Colin, p. 1.

establish mission stations rather than focusing on building up just a few stations. Father Petit-Jean wrote that same year: “We have exhausted our resources before the fight, like a shining army which has no strength, like soldiers who brandish their weapons and fire all their shots before the battle.”<sup>16</sup> Pompallier’s base at Kororāreka might also be seen as a strategic misstep; while it was a useful port, Kororāreka was overly expensive and the procure house there occupied at least seven missionaries who could have been evangelising elsewhere. The shortage of priests for the Auckland and Northland Māori missions from 1850 was largely a result of the mass exodus of Marists from the Auckland diocese in answer to the Pompallier-Colin discord and of the countless complaints made by the missionaries about their bishop, which will be addressed in detail in Chapter Five of this thesis.

## ***4.2 Expansion in the 1840s***

The effective expansion of missions was largely dependent on the amount of funding and number of missionary volunteers available in the ‘home’ nation. But Porter reveals that financial support for missionary societies from the British public did not necessarily decrease during difficult economic periods in Britain, therefore “it is possible to look to the emergence in many minds of perceived opportunities for missionary work and a heightened sense of religious obligation.”<sup>17</sup> These ‘opportunities’ were undoubtedly connected with British colonial expansion, possibilities for which created confidence in British missionary societies and their religious supporters. Hence the steady or even increasing income for the CMS missions from the 1820s to the 1850s. French colonial expansion occurred in the latter part of the nineteenth century, coinciding with a recovery in the French economy, which had been devastated by the French Revolution and, to a greater extent, the Napoleonic Wars. It was not incidental that France also experienced from

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<sup>16</sup> « Nous avons épuisé nos ressources avant de combattre, comme une armée brillante qui n’a point de solidité, comme des soldats qui menacent et lancent tous leurs traits avant le combat », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 192, late August 1842, Sydney, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 153.

the 1880s a missionary exodus that far surpassed the evangelical impetus in the decades of the early Marist Mission.

Expansion for the pioneer Marists on the Māori Mission occurred in the 1840s, subsequent to British annexation of New Zealand, and was therefore immaterial to French colonial interests. In the first three years of the mission, Pompallier displayed confidence in the growth and potential success of the Mission by visiting various iwi who lived near ports, including the Kai Tahu in the South Island. On his way to Otakau (Otago), Pompallier left Father Baty to investigate the Māhia Peninsula, on the East Coast of the North Island, as a possible mission station. The subsequent shortage of missionaries meant that areas visited by the Catholic missionaries, including Otakau and the Māhia Peninsula, often could not be made into permanent mission districts, to the disappointment of Māori and Marists alike. Is Jane Thomson justified in her claim that “Pompallier’s dreams appear to have involved his missionaries in a useless dissipation of effort”?<sup>18</sup> Certainly Pompallier controlled the direction of the New Zealand mission and was not, as we have seen with his handling of mission finances, inclined to forethought or prudence in his actions. But Pompallier was adamant that his role was to curb Protestant influence by sending missionaries out into the field as quickly as possible, but his men felt that he did this with little concern for their spiritual and emotional wellbeing. Rapid expansion in the 1840s was necessary because it was a question of getting there before the Protestants, and breaking the French trend of coming second to Britain in exploration, colonisation and evangelisation of the Pacific. In Pompallier’s defence, the central North Island had barely been penetrated by the CMS and therefore offered a rich field of opportunity for the French Marist missionaries. The visit that Baty made to Māhia Peninsula in 1841 would have helped to consolidate the faith in Māori communities who had already received literature on the Catholic Church but had not yet seen a Christian missionary. Rev. William Williams of the CMS came across pockets of Catholic Māori on his travels through Poverty Bay in 1840, the year before Baty had even arrived there.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 162.

<sup>19</sup> *The Turanga Journals 1840-1850: Letters and Journals of William and Jane Williams, Missionaries to Poverty Bay*, ed. by Frances Porter (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1974), p. 137.

Missionary expansion was necessarily a risky and uncertain process, and the CMS was not beyond relocating one of their men if a station did not attract many Māori converts or if a missionary was seen to be needed elsewhere. James Hamlin, for example, explored the Waikato and Manukau Heads, moving from Mangapouri to Moeatoa to Orua Bay in the space of a few years. He was then removed to the East Coast where Bishop Selwyn believed he would have greater success.<sup>20</sup> Similar transfers were made in the Marist missions throughout Oceania, although less frequently in the Pacific Islands compared with New Zealand; changing stations was not a simple matter because of the diversity of languages within the Pacific, and there was a clear expectation among most Marists that a missionary should be completely dedicated to the mission to which he was assigned. A dilemma occurred after Bishop Épalle's death, since his missionaries had committed to the Melanesian mission only to be relocated elsewhere until a new bishop arrived to replace him. Father Jean-Georges Collomb was officially appointed in 1847 to lead the mission to Melanesia and Micronesia, accompanied by two other missionaries; while in New Caledonia Collomb recruited Father Montrouzier, a member of Épalle's original mission party. In a letter to Bishop Douarre, Father Rougeyron, who had spent some three years on the New Caledonian mission, expressed his disappointment that Montrouzier did not refuse Bishop's Collomb's offer. Rougeyron declared that Montrouzier:

(...) forgot in a few moments that New Caledonia had offered him hospitality for almost a year, and that the mission had generously given him treatments for the recovery of his health. I find this conduct appalling. Now that he knows the language, which I had taught him with difficulty, and now that he could render great services to New Caledonia, he abandons us and leaves us in hardship.<sup>21</sup>

For Bishop Pompallier in New Zealand missionary transfers were simply a case of placing staff where they were most needed to further the Māori mission or to satisfy

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<sup>20</sup> H. J. Ryburn, *Te Hemara: James Hamlin 1803-1865: Friend of the Maoris* (Dunedin: [n.pub.], 1979), p. 85.

<sup>21</sup> « (...) a oublié dans quelques instants que la N(ouve)lle Calédonie lui avait donné l'hospitalité durant près d'un an; que la mission lui avait prodigué ses soins pour le rétablissement de sa santé. Cette conduite me révolte. Maintenant qu'il savait la langue que je lui avait apprise avec peine, maintenant qu'il pouvait rendre de grands services à la N(ouve)lle Calédonie, il nous quitte et nous laisse dans le malheur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 594, 22 January 1847, New Caledonia, Rougeyron to Douarre, p. 2.

demands for resident priests in principal European settlements. When Father Baty returned from Māhia Peninsula to assemble and edit a Māori catechism and prayer-book in Kororāreka, this was not an unwise action considering the importance of literature in gaining acceptance into Māori hapū, especially in the 1830s and early 1840s. The Marists were aware that they were well behind the CMS in terms of output of Christian books, and were actively seeking to redress this. William Williams claimed that in Wherowhero, Poverty Bay, he “was requested to go and see the popish party, who have all declared their intention to join us if I would supply them with books.”<sup>22</sup>

While it is understandable that the mission’s poverty had prevented it from producing books to satisfy Māori curiosity and demand, it is unusual that after five years on the mission Pompallier had not created an effective ‘induction’ text for newly-arrived recruits. His *Instructions* of 1841 prepared the Marists for debates with CMS and WMS missionaries, but did little to school them in Māori language or culture. Father Bernard complained in 1843 of being stuck in Kororāreka with no handwritten notes, dictionaries or grammar books, which could perhaps have been provided by the more experienced Fathers; in fact all he had was a Protestant Māori bible. Nor did Pompallier send the missionaries directly to mission stations to acquire the Māori language through frequent contact with Māori and assist the Fathers already stationed there. Pompallier claimed to be in a better financial situation in 1843 in comparison to the previous year, in which enormous debts had threatened to dissolve the mission, but his inability to send Fathers Bernard, Chouvet and Moreau into the field indicates otherwise:

For a long time now I have wanted to be with the natives in order to instruct them in religion while instructing myself in their language. But I think God wishes to thwart my desires. For six months all three of us were left to ourselves in a dreadful room. There we were both teacher and student in English and Maori. Not a single teacher to guide us. I had as my only book a new testament in Maori. I also had to make my own dictionary. The result was that we learned in 4

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<sup>22</sup> *The Turanga Journals 1840-1850*, p. 137.

months what we could have learned in one. Subsequently there was neither a ship nor money to send us to mission stations.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the Marist efforts in the central North Island to combat or forestall CMS missionaries, there was no doubt that the CMS dominated New Zealand by the end of the 1840s. The CMS expansion from 1839 was, according to Porter, part of a broader movement which had its origins in CMS policy back in Britain. The CMS missionaries in New Zealand had already gained momentum in the 1830s with their output of religious literature, and benefited from:

(...) the domestic status, respectability and degree of independence the missionary movement had acquired by the early 1840s. Together with new openings and more ample resources than it had previously known, these circumstances were responsible for the optimism and self-confidence marking the missionary endeavour.<sup>24</sup>

If the CMS became optimistic and confident as it expanded throughout New Zealand in the decade following the Treaty-signing, the Marists in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands generally had a very different outlook on the Catholic Mission. The Marists on the Tongan mission were unable to expand out of Tongatapu until as late as 1858, partly because of a lack of resources and missionaries, and partly as a result of the unquestionable strength of the rival Wesleyan mission there. Even the Marist progress on Tongatapu was unimpressive, being limited to the small communities at Pea and Kologa for at least a decade. Adding to their troubles in the 1840s was a dispute over the administration of the mission in Tonga, which was redirected along with Wallis, Futuna and other islands to the Vicariate of Central Oceania, formed in 1842. Following Pompallier's announcement in 1846 that Rome had allowed Tonga to be returned to his jurisdiction, Father Petit-Jean and others wrote to Father Colin in protest. In 1847 the situation was reassessed by the Church in Rome and Tonga was

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<sup>23</sup> « Il y a long-temps que je désire être avec les naturels pour pouvoir les instruire de la religion en m'instruisant moi-même de leur langue. Mais je crois que Dieu se plaît à contrarier mes désirs. Nous avons été six mois tous les trois abandonnés à nous-mêmes dans une mauvaise chambre. Là nous étions maîtres et écoliers sur l'anglais et le maori. Pas un seul maître pour nous guider. J'avais pour tout livre un nouveau testament maori. Il m'a fallu aussi faire mon dictionnaire. De sorte que nous aurions pu apprendre dans un mois ce que nous apprenions en 4. Ensuite on n'avait ni navire, ni argent pour nous envoyer dans des stations », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 272, 5 October 1843, Kororareka, Bernard to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 162.

sensibly reunited with its neighbouring islands under the management of Bishop Bataillon, and New Zealand consequently became Pompallier's only administrative concern. The Marists in central Oceania would probably argue that Pompallier had only ever been concerned with the mission in New Zealand. The Marists in New Zealand would probably argue that while Pompallier concerned himself with the mission he displayed little concern for its missionaries. Petit-Jean had endured the hardships of 1842 and was no supporter of Pompallier as an administrator and leader, hence his adverse reaction to the news and accompanying sympathy to his confreres Fathers Chevron and Grange in Tonga. After describing the wilting state of the Māori Mission, Petit-Jean declares that "the reuniting of the two missions of Tonga and New Zealand is a catastrophe. Why complicate things? Why envelop Tonga in the same ruin?"<sup>25</sup>

In the late 1840s the Māori Mission was certainly not flourishing in numbers or in 'zeal', and it was apparent that Pompallier had indeed expanded too quickly in an effort to divert Māori from the influence of Protestant missionaries, whom Father Viard describes as 'wolves' in the excerpt below. With Pompallier in Europe, Viard was left in charge of the Māori Mission and discovered that he was forced to beg and plead for more missionaries and more funding as Pompallier had done repeatedly since 1838, only now it was a matter of supporting what Pompallier had created rather than developing or expanding the mission. Viard confided to the Marist superior-general:

Continually waiting to receive new reinforcements at any moment, we leave our poor missionaries all by themselves, some even without a brother; this breaks my heart. I would have liked to destroy some stations, but it is a painful task to reverse what one has begun; I am still afraid of delivering the poor sheep into the wolf's mouth.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> « (...) la réunion des deux missions Tonga et la N(ouv)elle Zélande sont une calami[t]é. Pourquoi compliquer les choses, pourquoi envelopper Tonga dans la même ruine? », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 503, 12 May 1846, New Zealand, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> « Attendant toujours à chaque moment de recevoir de nouveaux renforts, nous laissons de pauvres missionnaires tout seuls et même quelques uns sans frères; cela me déchire le coeur; j'aurai désiré détruire quelques stations, mais c'est pénible renverser ce qui est commencé; je crains encore de livrer à la gueule du loup de pauvres brebis », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 525, 20 July 1846, Bay of Islands, Viard to Colin, p. 1.



Expansion of the Marist missions under Bishops Bataillon and Douarre also served to hamper the Māori Mission. In the mid-1840s missionaries, funds and attention were directed to New Caledonia, Tonga and the apparently thriving missions of Wallis and Futuna. Thomson notes that in New Zealand, “the French missionaries were beginning to feel that the outside world considered their cause a lost one. Catholics in Europe, Reignier wrote, were chiefly interested in the Tropics now.”<sup>27</sup> Furthermore Father Colin had decided not to dispatch any more missionaries to the Māori mission because of his differences with Pompallier. In August 1842 the last band of Marist missionaries to be sent to New Zealand under Colin’s orders sailed for Auckland. No more would be sent until 1858.

### ***4.3 Isolation and loneliness***

It is difficult to determine whether the Marists’ pessimism in the 1840s was a genuine reflection of their mission’s progress or whether it was strongly influenced by their destitution and loneliness. Expanding the mission had generated lifestyles that were isolated in both a physical and emotional sense, and this led the Marist missionaries to question their very presence in Oceania. Isolation, accompanied by a sense of abandonment, characterised the first four years of the Wallis and Futuna missions. Initially Pompallier’s focus was on New Zealand not so much because it was the chosen base for the Oceania mission, but because Wallis, Futuna and the other islands in the vicariate were inaccessible until more funds could be obtained for Pompallier’s passage. Not unmoved by the precarious situation in which he had left some of his missionaries, Pompallier deplored his helplessness. He was aware that an Episcopal visit would bring much-needed comfort and support to Bataillon and Chanel in Wallis and Futuna. Two years after his departure from France, Pompallier was almost ready to complain to the Pope about the Society of Mary’s alleged neglect of their duty to supply missionaries for Pompallier’s vicariate:

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<sup>27</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 31 ; see also *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 316, 12 February 1844, Bay of Islands, Reignier to Colin, pp. 2-3.

If several months elapse and I have still received neither funds nor subjects, I will need, to the great detriment of the New Zealand mission, to leave on the first frigate that enters these waters, in order to go and speak to the Holy See about the complete abandonment in which I have been left. It is especially at the outset of these missions that the connections and aid should be more frequent. I deplore, before the Lord, the things that stand in their way and cause my three established missions to suffer. How greatly am I afflicted to be unable to come to the aid of the fathers and brothers in Wallis and Futuna, who are in need as much I am. I rely on your goodness and your zeal to come to the aid of your infant members, sacrificed for the glory of Jesus and Mary, and for the salvation of souls!<sup>28</sup>

Pompallier was disheartened at more than simply a shortage of resources; the lack or delay of correspondence from Marist headquarters, as well as contributing to a feeling of abandonment, sometimes caused Pompallier a great deal of offence. The Bishop felt that his authority was undermined on occasion by Father Colin, whose orders to departing missionaries were communicated to Pompallier only after they had been carried out, due to the slow and unreliable nature of correspondence in the nineteenth century. Pompallier was unhappy when the second band of missionaries did not come directly to the Bay of Islands, pausing instead at Tahiti to meet with the Catholic Picpus missionaries and then at Wallis and Futuna; Fathers Bataillon and Chanel had felt especially abandoned until May 1839 when Fathers Petit, Baty, and Épalle called there as Colin had requested them to do. Upon their arrival in New Zealand a month later, the three new recruits were immediately reproached by their bishop. Pompallier writes to Colin in remonstrance:

The most recent subjects to arrive lingered a good while during their voyage by going to visit the missions in Wallis and Futuna before coming to me. Passing through Cape Horn, and stopping in the neighbouring mission and in the missions under my jurisdiction, takes too long.

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<sup>28</sup> « Si plusieurs mois s'écouloient encore sans recevoir ni fonds, ni sujets, je serai dans la nécessité, au grand détriment de la mission de la Nouvelle Zélande, de partir par la première frégate qui viendra en ces parages pour aller parler au s(ain)t siège sur l'abandon complet où je suis laissé. C'est surtout dans le commencement des missions que les rapports et les secours doivent être plus fréquents. Je déplore, devant le Seigneur, les causes qui y mettent obstacle et qui font souffrir mes trois missions commencées. Combien je suis affligé de ne pouvoir secourir les pères et frères de Wallis et de Fortuna qui sont dans le besoin autant que je puis l'être. Je compte sur sur votre bonté et sur votre zèle pour secourir vos enfants membres sacrifiés à la gloire de Jésus et de Marie et au salut des âmes », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 30, 14 September 1838, Hokianga, Pompallier (and Servant) to Colin, pp. 2-3.

Without any help from God himself the mission here might have perished as a result of the delay of missionaries.<sup>29</sup>

This incident is an early glimpse of the desperate state of the pioneer mission. As a result of Pompallier's frustration at the delayed arrival of reinforcements, the second band of missionaries was met with severity and reproachment, which they interpreted as an introduction to the authoritarian attitude with which Pompallier treated all of his 'subjects'. If in the previous year Pompallier had shown sympathy for the isolated missionaries in Wallis and Futuna, he appeared to have little concern for them in comparison to the needs of the New Zealand mission and perhaps his own desire for complete control over the movements of the missionaries under his jurisdiction. Yet despite his initial reaction to the arrival of Fathers Petit, Baty and Épalle, Pompallier clearly felt comforted at receiving the much-needed confirmation that his pleas had been heard on the other side of the world. It was discovered that letters sent from France via Valparaíso in Chile had arrived extremely late or in the wrong order.<sup>30</sup> With missionaries and letters reaching New Zealand more regularly from 1839 to 1841, Pompallier's trust in Colin was somewhat restored:

(...) nearly eighteen months among the savages without funds, without aid, without reinforcements, and without a single letter from Europe, and in the middle of everything that heresy, hatred, jealousy and lies brought together can give rise to persecutions and perils. How greatly am I eased to learn by way of your latest letters, my reverend father, that the Society will henceforth be more prompt in confronting perils to come to the aid of its own!<sup>31</sup>

This enthusiasm was short-lived; the financial hardships of 1842 as discussed in the previous chapter generated distrust between Pompallier and Father Colin. Pompallier

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<sup>29</sup> « Les derniers sujets qui sont venus ont bien demeuré dans leur voyage en allant visiter les missions de Wallis et de Fortuna avant de venir à moi. Passer par le cap Horn, s'arrêter dans la mission voisine et chez les missions de ma juridiction, c'est trop long. Sans un secours de Dieu tout particulier la mission ici eût dû périr par le retard des missionnaires », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 34, 18 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>31</sup> « (...) près de dix huit mois parmi les sauvages sans fonds, sans secours, sans renfort et sans aucune lettre d'Europe, et au milieu de tout ce que l'hérésie, la haine, la jalousie et le mensonge unis ensemble peuvent susciter de tracasseries et de périls. Combien je suis aise d'apprendre par vos dernières lettres, mon révérend père, que la Société d'orénavant sera plus prompte à affronter les périls pour venir au secours des siens! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 37, 28 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 4.

did not acknowledge his own role in the economic crisis, but the Marist missionaries, witnesses to Pompallier's expenditures, collectively pointed the finger at their bishop. From Pompallier's perspective, his requests were necessary and reasonable, and therefore Father Colin and the Propagation of the Faith were to blame for their failure to meet the demands of the Māori Mission. As has been demonstrated, Pompallier's requests could not be met by the Society of Mary; he was however justified in criticising the state of uncertainty in which he found himself, even if Colin and the Propagation of the Faith were not guilty of placing him there; the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide was ultimately responsible for the Vicar Apostolic and the Vicariate Apostolic of Oceania. Pompallier nevertheless admonished the organisations in France for his frustrations:

One of the greatest ordeals of this mission is the lengthiness, the irregularity and the uncertainty of communication. To be unaware here of the reality of resources, in subjects and in funds, being prepared for us in France, and to be unaware of the expectations and possibilities we may have with regard to these two important things, is to paralyse our actions here, more or less.<sup>32</sup>

Pompallier's frustrations were shared by the Marist missionaries in Oceania, to whom regular correspondence was just as crucial to lessen their solitude and to revive their fervour. Whether it was a letter from a family member, friend, colleague, mentor or superior, there was no denying the immediate comfort brought by communication with the outside world. In 1844, Father Reignier complained that while he was expected to send letters to France describing his progress and experience as a missionary in New Zealand, there had been "for two years and several months, complete silence from Europe, no letters at all."<sup>33</sup> To the missionaries' distress, letters were sometimes lost or their delivery delayed; news of marriages, births or deaths of loved ones in France could take over a year to reach them. But if the pioneering missionaries expected to receive letters somewhat regularly, many found it

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<sup>32</sup> « Une des plus grandes épreuves de cette mission, c'est la longueur, l'irrégularité et l'incertitude des communications. Ignorer ici la réalité des ressources en sujets et en fonds qu'on nous prépare en France, ignorer les espérances et les possibilités qu'on peut avoir sur ces deux points si importants, c'est nous paralyser plus ou moins ici dans l'action », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 279, 3 November 1843, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> « Pendant deux ans et quelques mois, silence complet de la part de l'Europe, point de lettres », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 302, January 1844, Rotorua, Reignier to Poupinel, p. 1.

almost impossible to carry out the task of writing even occasional letters to Father Colin in Lyon regarding the progress of the mission. It was expected that the missionaries would also write about Māori people, their customs and their responses to Christianity for the benefit of the mission; the Marists hoped that people would be moved to either contribute to the Propagation of the Faith or to become missionaries themselves. Pompallier, who wrote frequently to Colin until 1843, explains to Father Colin in one of his letters from 1839: “If I write sometimes, too often it is only late at night, because during the day I must busy myself with many other urgent labours and satisfy the people of the island who never leave you in peace or to rest.”<sup>34</sup> The situation was far more extreme for the itinerant Marists in New Zealand who, alone and overwhelmed with tasks, spent most of their days travelling on foot visiting iwi and hapū and many of their nights sleeping in the open air with their Māori guides. There was little time for letter-writing in the pioneer years of the mission, and the letters that have survived often begin or conclude by mentioning the hastiness in which they were written because the ship that would transport the letters was about to sail.

In addition to the Marists’ desire for contact with France, there was a need for timely contact with superiors since the Fathers could not act without the permission and guidance of their bishop. The first Marist missionaries could not have anticipated the extent to which they would feel deserted by their bishop, who was ultimately in charge of the distribution of missionaries within his vicariate. As has been mentioned, Pompallier virtually abandoned his missionaries when installing them on their respective island or station. Father Baty, whom Pompallier left at Māhia Peninsula on his way to Akaroa, found himself deserted there until he took the initiative to make his way to the Bay of Islands in mid-1842. Although Pompallier had a valid reason for leaving, Baty was nevertheless left to fend for himself.

On 30 September 1841, Monsignor Pompallier had me disembark at Mahia Peninsula, where I was supposed to remain for about three weeks, and from where the mission schooner was

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<sup>34</sup> « Si j’écris quelquefois, ce n’est trop que dans la nuit avancée, parce que durant le jour il faut vaquer à bien d’autres travaux pressants et satisfaire des insulaires qui ne vous laissent ni paix, ni repos », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 4.

supposed to transfer me to Auckland; but at that moment, Monsignor having learned of the martyrdom of Father Chanel, he made the journey to the Tropics and I remained at my post alone, amid the natives, the shortage of brothers and the lack of funds not permitting a companion to be left with me.<sup>35</sup>

While Bishop Viard was more considerate than Pompallier had been of his missionaries' well-being, Father Séon had reason to believe that Viard had forgotten him after Séon was evicted from Akaroa in 1851 and forced to beg for his survival in the nearby town of Lyttelton. He awaited Bishop Viard's instructions, since Viard had charge of the Wellington diocese which included the entire South Island at the time; "Then lonely, discouraged and feeling he had been abandoned by his bishop, he secured a berth to Wellington on a promise that his fare would be paid on arrival. It transpired that Viard's letter to him had been lost in transit."<sup>36</sup>

Why were the missionaries consistently alone, given that Father Colin had insisted on assigning at least two Fathers to each station to maintain Marist spirituality in the mission field? The fundamental reason was Pompallier's desire to curb CMS and WMS influence by sending forth Catholic representatives as quickly as possible. Father Garin initially defended Pompallier's stationing of the missionaries. Considering the situation in 1841, he was reassured that, while a few Fathers were alone on their stations, the majority at least were paired up. Those who were alone were only a few days' journey from the nearest Father, for example Father Petit in Kaipara and Father Servant in Hokianga. Garin reasoned to the Superior-General that: "If Monsignor has been obliged to place some Fathers isolated in this way, it is not, as you fear, the desire to undertake a great deal at once, or to exert an impatient zeal, but it is *necessity*; it is the chance to lose everything or gain almost everything."<sup>37</sup> This is

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<sup>35</sup> « Le 30 7bre 1841, m(onsei)g(neu)r Pompallier me débarqua à la presqu'île de Mahia où je devais demeurer environ trois semaines, d'où le navire de la mission devait me reporter à Auckland; mais sur ces entrefaites, m(onsei)g(neu)r ayant appris le martyre du p(ère) Chanel, il fit le voyage des tropiques et je demeurai à mon poste seul, au milieu des naturels, la pénurie des frères et le manque de fonds n'ayant pas permis de me laisser un compagnon », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 232, 18 January 1843, Bay of Islands, Baty to Maitrepierrre, p. 2

<sup>36</sup> O'Meehan, *Held Firm in Faith*, p. 42.

<sup>37</sup> « Si monseigneur a été obligé de mettre ainsi quelques pères isolés, ce n'est pas, comme vous le craignez, le désir d'entreprendre beaucoup à la fois, ou d'exercer un zèle impatient, mais c'est la *nécessité*; c'est la chance de tout perdre ou de gagner presque tout », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 111, 22 September 1841, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 4.

yet another example of Pompallier's faith in Providence, or risk-taking, as it might be viewed more sceptically.

By placing his missionaries on their own in isolated stations, Pompallier definitively jeopardised his relationship with the Marists and their Superior-General which, in turn, created disharmony on the Māori Mission. Had Pompallier respected the Marist rule of pairing Fathers on mission stations the Marists might have been more effective and content in their missionary work. Indeed the Marist Fathers in New Zealand had been led to believe that they would have companions, whether fellow priests or catechising brothers, to assist them in their mission duties and in their everyday lives. In 1850 when Bishop Viard proposed removing Brother Basile from the Rotorua station, Father Reignier voiced his disapproval at having to carry out temporal and priestly duties alone, saying: "I begged His Lordship in the name of the rule and even expressed to him that I cannot consent to remaining here alone."<sup>38</sup> The following year, having been transferred to the Wellington diocese and appointed to Ahuriri in the Hawke's Bay, Reignier was grateful to have Father Lampila as his designated confrere, but was moved to say "(...) now I know that, despite his apparent desire to come to their aid, there are some places that Monsignor Viard abandons because he upholds the rule of being in pairs and subjects are lacking."<sup>39</sup> In short, the role of Vicar Apostolic was a problematic one for both Pompallier and Viard; Pompallier chose to ignore Marist solidarity in favour of reaching Māori more quickly, though not necessarily more efficiently or more effectively, whereas Viard chose to honour Marist solidarity but at the risk of leaving numerous parts of his diocese with neither priest nor missionary.

There were several interconnected reasons for the importance of having more than one missionary at a station. Firstly, the workload of a missionary was more than one individual could manage, hence a preference for CMS missionaries to have wives

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<sup>38</sup> « Je conjure Sa Grandeur au nom de la règle et lui exprime même que je ne puis consentir à rester seul », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 876, 15 February 1850, Rotorua, Reignier to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> « (...) maintenant je sais qu'il y a quelques lieux que M(onsei)gneur Viard abandonne, malgré le désir qu'il paraît avoir de venir à leur secours parce que l'on tient à la règle qui prescrit d'être deux et les sujets manquent », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1037, 27 July 1851, Wellington, Reignier to Lagniet, p. 2.

who could assist them as well as providing companionship and comfort. For the Marist Fathers, this was the role of a Brother or fellow Father. Secondly, the Society of Mary was intended to promote community of religious and lay persons, not a solitary lifestyle. For Bishop Douarre, who led the Marist Mission to New Caledonia in 1843, it was imperative that his missionaries remain together until the first station was properly established. But he had envisaged that his Marist community in New Caledonia would include Father Gilbert Roudaire, who was instead required, under the orders of Bishop Bataillon, to man the printing press in Wallis and subsequently to lead a new mission to Samoa. Douarre complained of this to Father Colin in Lyon, saying: “(...) my reverend Father, if one wanted to break my heart one has only to separate me from this worthy and excellent friend, to whom I owe my entry into the Society and the missions.”<sup>40</sup> But in general the Marists in Oceania had not developed close friendships with each other while in France; indeed some were perfect strangers. Nevertheless a feeling of solidarity was clearly uplifting for a wandering missionary, especially in a foreign country where hardships were so numerous. Father Comte, having spent five months in New Zealand, recognised the value of being able to share the company of his fellow Marists in Hokianga after long, arduous journeys on the Māori mission:

We finally reached the fathers of the Society of Mary near 7 o'clock in the evening. Oh how sweet it is to belong to a society. I was received not as a stranger, nor as a friend, but as a brother, as a son of the house. The thought alone that I belong to the Society of Mary brings me all my joy and all my happiness.<sup>41</sup>

Many of the Marist Fathers preferred to be close to a fellow Father since they did not view the Brothers as their peers or equals. Father Séon, alone in Matamata in 1843, believed that his loneliness could not be eased by the presence of a Brother, although he did need one to assist him with his mission. He yearned for the company instead of

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<sup>40</sup> « (...) mon révérend père, si on veut briser un coeur on a qu'à me séparer de ce digne et excellent ami à qui je dois mon entrée dans la Société et dans les missions », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 513, 27 May 1846, New Caledonia, Douarre to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> « Nous arrivâmes enfin auprès des pères de la Société de Marie vers les 7 heures du soir. O qu'il est doux d'appartenir à une société. Je ne fus pas reçu comme un étranger, ni comme un ami, mais comme un frère, comme un fils de la maison. La pensée seule que j'appartiens à la Société de Marie fait toute ma joie et tout mon bonheur », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 54, 12 April 1840, Hokianga, Comte to parents, p. 3.



a Father, a fellow Marist priest, “(...) a companion to encourage one another, consult together, confess one another without being obliged to regularly undertake a day and a half’s walk through the swamp and the forest to find my closest neighbour, Father Pezant.”<sup>42</sup> For the pioneer Marists in the Pacific Islands a separate station meant a separate island altogether; Fathers Bataillon and Chanel barely saw one another despite being just two hundred kilometres apart. Even after Bataillon took charge of the islands, communication continued to be sporadic, leading Father Mathieu to complain to his brother in France:

Two years is a very long time, my dear brother, to remain unable to correspond with others. Distance is not the only cause; above all it is the remoteness of this small land I inhabit, where so few ships arrive [...] For a year we have received nothing from either New Caledonia, Fiji or even Futuna which is a mere thirty leagues from here. We are utterly isolated.<sup>43</sup>

#### **4.4 *Spiritual hardships***

Of the many experiences that disillusioned the early Marists, loneliness was one of the greatest, and was a consequence of Bishop Pompallier’s disregard for the Marist rule that Fathers and Brothers should never be completely isolated. But Colin’s requirement of having more than one Marist on a mission station was based on more than companionship and solidarity; it was vital for the Marists to have spiritual guidance since they had only been with the Society for a short time and were still learning how to live according to its values and regulations. Essentially, the Fathers and Brothers needed someone to ‘keep them in check’. Father Garin, the first Marist provincial in New Zealand, was concerned of the consequences otherwise:

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<sup>42</sup> « (...) un compagnon avec le quel on s’encourage, on se consulte, on se confesse sans être obligé de faire ordinairement un jour et demi de marche à travers les marais et les bois pour aller trouver mon plus proche voisin, le p(ère) Pesant », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 253, 28 April 1843, Matamata, Séon to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> « C’est bien long, mon cher frère, de rester deux ans sans pouvoir correspondre. La distance n’en est pas la seule cause, c’est surtout l’isolement de cette petite terre que j’habite et où si peu de navires arrivent [...] Depuis un an nous n’avons rien reçu ni de la Nouvelle Calédonie, ni des Fidji, ni même de Futuna qui n’est qu’à trente lieues d’ici. Nous sommes tout-à-fait isolés », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 373, 20 June 1845, Wallis, Mathieu to his brother, pp. 1-2, 15.

Oh! Yes, I find that there are indeed dangers in leaving a father alone; he has only himself to spur him on, there are no witnesses to his conduct, he does not receive lessons which might push him forward, he would have need of being encouraged, being corrected, being warned, and nothing can replace that but a virtue put to the test.<sup>44</sup>

Garin's fears were in a sense realised in 1843 when Father Petit-Jean caused a stir with his written criticism of the British government and its lack of concern for Catholics in New Zealand. Petit-Jean, completely alone in Auckland after Brother Colomb's inappropriate behaviour resulted in his removal to Tauranga, was considered hasty and imprudent in his actions. Father Forest was moved to write, in regard to the Marist rule of pairing up for mission stations: "Ah, how wise this point is! All of these troubles would probably not have come about if there had been two of them."<sup>45</sup>

There was little to no preparation, and certainly no practical training, provided for the early Marist missionaries. The Society of Foreign Missions had a seminary in Paris where missionaries could learn languages and receive specific instruction, but the Society of Mary was young and untrained for its charge of western Oceania. However, the Marists were firm in their faith in God, Mary, and divine Providence, which they believed would somehow ensure the mission's growth and success once enough blood, sweat and tears had paved the way for Christianity in New Zealand. But the early missionaries were also ill-prepared for the *Marist* lifestyle without the presence of their Superior-General or an obvious Marist community. In addition, they had taken the vows of humility, obedience and chastity only a few years before their departure for Oceania. Father Pompallier, though not a professed Marist himself, complained to Father Colin: "Alas! All of the subjects generally do not have enough knowledge or experience regarding the religious condition. The pioneers who came with me in the first dispatch had not done a novitiate, and then most of those who

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<sup>44</sup> « Oh! oui, je trouve qu'il y a bien des dangers de laisser un père seul, il n'a que lui-même pour se stimuler, il n'a point de témoins de sa conduite, il ne reçoit pas des exemples qui puissent le pousser, il aurait besoin d'être encouragé, d'être repris, d'être prévenu et rien ne peut remplacer cela qu'une vertu à l'épreuve », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 149, 7 May 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> « Ha, qu'il est sage, ce point! Toutes ces misères n'auroient probablement pas eu lieu si ils eussent été deux », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 247, 26 March 1843, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 9.

came afterwards have not completed one either.”<sup>46</sup> While Pompallier had frequented the Marist founders and was therefore well-acquainted with the order, he was probably referring specifically to the vow of obedience, which certain Marist Fathers in New Zealand had some difficulty in executing wholeheartedly when it came to observing Pompallier’s authority. But the missionaries, at least superficially, fulfilled their vow because to become a Marist was to serve God, the Roman Catholic Church, and one’s family, which was exactly what these men, from the parental home to the seminary, had been taught to do. Father Comte confessed in 1844:

The greatest of my consolations is the Fathers: their mutual charity, the uniformity of their views regarding the Catholic Mission in New Zealand, the edifying conduct exemplified by each one, the zealous spirit which animates them all, and the obedience which they display in all circumstances, even in circumstances that most contradict their mutual sentiment. If the Bishop desires it, they desire it; if the Bishop does not desire it, they do not desire it. I am the only one who does not practise this blind obedience demonstrated by all of my confreres. Pride gets involved, nature rebels and the man [inside] is revealed.<sup>47</sup>

Father Garin, who was appointed as the mission’s first provincial and spiritual guide, had the difficult task of ensuring that the Marist Fathers and Brothers were adhering to the Society’s regulations; religious orders expected their members to pray, study, and deliberate on a daily basis, which proved to be too much for the Marist missionary’s already exhausting schedule. Garin expressed to Father Colin how inadequately Marist spirituality was observed in New Zealand, particularly by the Fathers:

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<sup>46</sup> « Mais hélas! tous les sujets généralement n’ont pas assez de connoissance et d’expérience en fait d’état religieux. Les anciens qui sont venus avec moi au premier envoi, n’avoient pas fait de noviciat, et puis ceux qui sont venus après ne l’avoient pas achevé pour la plupart », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 9.

<sup>47</sup> « La plus grande de mes consolations ce sont les pères, c’est leur charité mutuelle, c’est l’uniformité de leurs vues touchant la mission catholique de la Nouvelle Zélande, c’est la conduite édifiante dont chacun donne l’exemple, c’est l’esprit de zèle qui les anime tous, c’est l’obéissance qu’ils font paraître dans toutes les circonstances, même les plus contraires au sentiment commun de tous. L’évêque le veut, ils le veulent; l’évêque ne le veut pas, ils ne le veulent pas. Je suis le seul qui ne pratique pas cette obéissance aveugle dont tous mes confrères me donnent l’exemple. L’orgueille se mêle, la nature se révolte et l’homme se fait voir », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 352, 29 November 1844 Port Nicholson, Comte to Colin, p. 4.

They must first of all be protected against this idea they have formed, if not in theory than at least in practice, that under the pretext of being a missionary one is free from the exercises of religious life, that is to say the regulations. I have further noticed this in the last few days: I ask the rector of a mission station: how are the regulations observed? *Very well*, he replies; *only for the exercises done together was it impossible; we each did everything there was to do individually*. This already is not very religious, all the more so because the only reason for this conduct was the incompatibility of personalities; I find this to be a little extreme. However I continue with my questions: Have you done the annual retreat? *No*, he tells me, *I have not done any at all since I left France*. How long ago was that? *Almost three years now*. And: do you have a conference on the regulations, or a lecture? *No*. And the ecclesiastical conference? *Not exactly; I read my theology from time to time*. And confession? *We do not do it at all*. And so on and so forth on different points. [...] When I see these Fathers coming to the house, I notice that the rules of an order are foreign to them. This, however, may have a rather reasonable cause: their being accustomed to travelling among the tribes.<sup>48</sup>

With the burden of his role as provincial, Father Garin worked at improving the observance of Marist regulations. He assembled the Marists at the Bay of Islands to offer them a much-needed ‘retreat’, which was essentially a chance for the Marists to meditate on their faith and revive their spiritual zeal. In November 1841 Garin arranged a week-long programme of religious exercises, reviews, and discussions for the four Fathers, five Brothers and two novices present.<sup>49</sup> Father Petit-Jean wrote to Colin the following month: “Oh my reverend Father, the poor apostolic missionary is conscious that he truly has need of retreats to rekindle the fire of virtues, which is

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<sup>48</sup> « Il faudrait d’abord les prémunir contre cette idée que l’on se fait sinon en théorie du moins en pratique, que sous prétexte qu’on est missionnaire on est affranchi des exercices de la vie religieuse, c’est) à d(ire) d’un règlement. J’ai encore reconnu cela les jours derniers: je demande à un recteur d’établissement comment s’observait le règlement? *Très-bien*, me répond-il, *seulement pour les exercices à faire en commun, c’était impossible; nous faisons chacun en notre particulier tout ce qu’il y avait à faire*. Voilà déjà qui n’est pas très-religieux, d’autant plus que le seul motif de cette conduite c’était l’incompatibilité des caractères; je trouve que c’est un peu fort. Cependant je poursuis mes questions: Avez-vous fait la retraite annuelle? *Non*, me dit-il, *je n’en ai point fait depuis que j’ai quitté la France*. Combien y a-t-il de temps? *Voilà bientôt trois ans*. Et: faites-vous une conférence sur la règle ou une lecture? *Non*. — Et la conférence ecclésiastique? — *Pas précisément; je lis de temps en temps ma théologie*. Et la coulpe? *Nous n’en faisons point*. Et ainsi de suite sur différents points. [...] Lorsque je vois ces pères venir à la maison, je reconnois bien qu’ils sont étrangers à l’assujettissement d’une règle. Cela cependant [*sic*] peut avoir une cause assez raisonnable, c’est l’habitude de voyager dans les tribus », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 149, 7 May 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>49</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 122, December 1841, Kororareka, Garin to Colin.

always going to go out.”<sup>50</sup> If the spiritual sufferings of the Fathers and Brothers were somewhat eased by the nomination of Father Garin as provincial and spiritual leader, Garin himself felt powerless and inadequate in his position and pleaded to Colin for Father Forest to replace him. Garin wrote to Colin in August 1842:

(...) yesterday I received news from nearly all the Fathers, those at Tauranga, Maketu, Matamata, Opotiki, Auckland and Hokianga. I tell you that after spending two hours in reading the story of all the sufferings, corporal and spiritual, which burden our poor Fathers, I was unable to restrain my tears.<sup>51</sup>

In 1843 Father Forest assumed the position of Marist Provincial. This was a fitting appointment, given that Forest had been travelling to the various mission stations to assess the condition of the Brothers and Fathers in New Zealand. In January 1843, Forest provided Father Petit-Jean and Brother Colomb in Auckland with a short retreat, before travelling to Tauranga where he held a week-long retreat for Fathers Séon and Pezant and Brother Euloge. He then continued to Ōpōtiki to visit Fathers Comte and Reignier and Brother Justin, with whom he discussed the state of the Māori mission and the Marists’ spiritual observance. Forest was back in the Bay of Islands by mid-February for a retreat with Father Garin and Bishop Pompallier, organised for the benefit of Fathers Baty and Tripe, the Brothers and novices in the procure house, and the new arrivals who made up the seventh group of Marists to arrive in Oceania. In Hokianga, Forest later had the chance to participate in one of his planned retreats, along with Fathers Garin, Lampila and Petit, and Brothers Luc Macé and Claude-Marie.<sup>52</sup> The latter brother was particularly pleased with the new provincial, who was more forthright in the role than Garin had been and who, being

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<sup>50</sup> « O mon rév(érend) père, le pauvre missionnaire apostolique éprouve qu’il a bien besoin de retraite pour ranimer le feu des vertus qui va toujours s’éteignant », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 118, 11 December 1841, Kororareka, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> « (...) hier j’ai reçu des nouvelles de presque tous les pères, de ceux de Tauranga, de Maketu, de Matamata, d’Opotiki, d’Auckland, et d’Hokianga. Je vous dirai qu’après avoir resté deux heures à lire l’histoire de toutes les souffrances corporelles et spirituelles qui pèsent sur nos pauvres pères, je n’ai pu retenir ma sensibilité, ni le cours de mes larmes », English translation in Goulter, p. 75. Original French in *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 186, 9 August 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 247, 26 March 1843, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin.

Colin's trusted Visitor to the Missions, had the authority to make changes and set up new initiatives. Claude-Marie wrote to Father Colin:

May you forever receive God's grace, most Reverend Father Superior, for having sent us the good Father Forest to remedy our troubles. Formerly we were harassed, or at least some of us were, and we were overwhelmed with manual tasks; now the reverend father has set everything in order and wants us to keep busy but not to work ourselves to death, so that everyone is happy.<sup>53</sup>

#### ***4.5 Disillusionment under Pompallier***

Marist letters from the very first years of the mission in New Zealand expose the disillusionment felt by the Fathers and Brothers as they struggled to come to terms with the reality of missionary life in the Pacific. Over the following decade, a severe lack of resources and funds was a principal reason for their frustration, particularly in the early 1840s. The missionaries had not expected that the remarkable spirit of charity in Lyon would be insufficient to cover the costs of their most basic needs, and in fact had not considered that the daily running of the mission would be such a priority and such a setback for their spiritual goals. Romantic notions of missionary work, propagated throughout France by churches and missionary literature, were largely responsible for the blind optimism that characterised the pioneer Marist missionaries in New Zealand, but Pompallier's accounts of a flourishing Māori mission corroborated the belief in Europe that Christianity would be embraced in the Pacific. According to Jessie Munro, Pompallier's exaggerated description of the Māori Mission persisted into 1860, when the Bishop recruited French missionaries, including Suzanne Aubert, for the Auckland Diocese:

Suzanne for one did not realise that they were coming mainly to teach French and embroidery, along with faith to merchant daughters of Auckland. She saw a future of proud indigenous

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<sup>53</sup> « Grâce vous soit à jamais rendue, très-révérend père supérieur, de nous avoir envoyé le bon père Forest pour remédier à nos maux. Autrefois, nous étions molestés ou du moins quelques-uns, nous étions accablés d'ouvrages manuel, et maintenant le rév(érend) p(ère) a mis ordre à tout et il veut que l'on s'occupe mais non que l'on se tue, de sorte que tous sont contents », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 357, 25 December 1844, Hokianga, Brother Claude-Marie (Jean-Baptiste Bertrand) to Colin, p. 2.

mission. As Bishop Pompallier in Europe wove his idealistic, exhilarating tales of southern shores and apostolic fervour from the pulpit and the dinner table, his recruits did not foresee how disillusioned they could become in a war-anxious, impoverished settler diocese.<sup>54</sup>

To be an itinerant missionary, in the footsteps of the apostles and Jesus Christ himself, had seemed appealing to a fervent Catholic who needed only God's love to survive and find fulfilment in this world. Their lives as missionaries were completely unpredictable, since they could be moved from one mission to another at any moment and with no option but to accept the new post; Goulter claimed that this was precisely the fate the Marists had chosen, the burden of men "who are content to sow where another must reap, and reap where another has sown, who are sent here and there at the command of superiors."<sup>55</sup> Father Petit-Jean, writing to his brother-in-law in 1840 from Whangaroa, explains:

Such is, my dear brother and friend, the situation of the religious on this earth. To be everywhere without being anywhere, to never attach oneself to anyone or to any place, or to at least be prepared to abandon everything at the first sign of your superiors' will. You must forever be ready to leave for another place, where the Lord will have prepared other friends, other brothers. This is certainly contrary to nature, but if the flesh is chagrined, the spirit rejoices, the heart expands and becomes yet more apostolic thanks to it.<sup>56</sup>

But the Marist interpretation of a missionary's lifestyle was not well received by Māori, who preferred a resident priest to a visiting apostle. The scattered nature of Māori settlement was a major obstacle for the early French missionaries, who were few in number and had little else but their own two feet to carry out the extensive journeys to evangelise Māori; from the very beginning, Pompallier and his missionaries were accused of neglecting northern iwi and hapū who were eager to learn more about Catholicism, and had to admit their impotence as a handful of missionaries with an unfeasibly large territory to cover. Father Servant summarised

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<sup>54</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 9.

<sup>55</sup> Goulter, p. 12.

<sup>56</sup> « Telle est, mon cher frère et ami, la condition du religieux sur la terre. Etre partout comme n'y étant, ne s'attacher jamais à rien ni aux personnes, aux lieux, ou du moins être dans la disposition de tout quitter, au premier signe de la volonté des supérieurs. Il faut sans cesse être prêt à partir pour un autre lieu, où le Seigneur aura préparé d'autres amis, d'autres frères. Cela contrarie la nature certainement, mais si la chair est contristée, l'esprit s'en réjouit, le coeur s'agrandit et n'en devient que plus apostolique. » Doc 53, 18 March 1840, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Paillason (brother-in-law), p. 1.

the situation to his superior-general: “Alas! The remoteness and the number of tribes are the reason why we can only seldom visit the same tribe, hence the religious instruction of the natives is delayed.”<sup>57</sup>

The insufficiency of clergy for the various Māori communities visited by Pompallier in the infant years of the mission, and the pressure on Pompallier to establish missions throughout the country and the wider vicariate, resulted in sporadic contact between priests and converts. This was true of even the areas surrounding the established mission bases since the priests were expected to cover the entire region. Māori were impatient to learn more about Catholicism and to understand priestly life, but their enthusiasm could not be rewarded, since no Marist could stay with a hapū for longer than a few days before having to move on to the next group of converts or potential converts. With such an extensive mission district, the early missionary was therefore never truly a resident priest, and was at best a frequent visitor to a particular hapū. This arrangement did not correspond with Māori wishes, and became especially problematic after Pompallier’s visits, since the bishop was a symbol of prestige and power whom Māori wished to retain in their iwi for their own material and spiritual benefit. Father Baty wrote of the impact of Pompallier’s absence from the Hokianga after he had moved his residence and the procure house to the Bay of Islands:

During the fifteen months I have been in the Hokianga, baptisms have been performed on 93 people, about three quarters of the adults; 5 or 6 people refused baptism at the moment of their deaths. At present the mission here seems to be taking a more satisfying course; the departure of Monsignor has been somewhat grievous to this station, for despite everything that may be said, the natives are unable to understand why one would have reasons to leave them once one has established oneself among them.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> « Mais, hélas! l'éloignement et le nombre des tribus sont cause que nous ne pouvons visiter que rarement une même tribu, d'où il arriva que l'instruction des naturels est retardée », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 52, 5 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup> « Pendant quinze mois que je suis demeuré à Hokianga, il s'y est baptisé 93 personnes, les trois quarts d'adultes environ, 5 ou 6 personnes ont refusé le baptême au moment de la mort; dans ce moment la mission de cet endroit semble prendre une marche plus satisfaisante; le départ de m(onsei)g(neu)r a été un peu funeste à cette station, car, malgré tout ce qu'on peut dire, les naturels ne peuvent pas comprendre qu'on puisse avoir des raisons de les quitter une fois qu'on s'est établi au milieu d'eux », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 77, 10 November 1840, Bay of Islands, Baty & Epalle to Chanut, p. 4.



The situation was equally dispiriting for the Marist missionaries themselves; the problem for the Marists lay in the simple fact that the reality of such a lifestyle was far more difficult to endure than what they had envisaged before reaching Oceania. Some Marists found it challenging not to form emotional attachments to people and places, particularly when missionaries had laboured on certain stations for several years, only to have their progress continued by another missionary while they started all over again on new and sometimes hostile stations.

Meanwhile the missionary reinforcements who arrived between 1841 and 1843 expected to develop the Māori mission on the assumption that Catholicism had been established in various parts of the upper North Island; in 1844 when Father Bernard was placed on the Tauranga mission station, which Fathers Viard and Pezant had formerly occupied, he expected to find a zealous Māori Catholic community but was met instead with indifference. He reported to Marist headquarters that Māori had lapsed in their Catholic prayers and attendance at the chapel. Bernard was one of the more vocal Marist missionaries when it came to lodging complaints, but his disappointment with the lack of progress on the Māori Mission was by no means unjustified given Pompallier's glorification of the mission relayed through the *Annales* of the Propagation of the Faith:

Monsignor left me there alone with Brother Luc who was only assigned to me so that he could construct a wooden house. Until now we have been living in a house made of grass and reeds, ravaged by rats and mice and very cramped inside. I was expecting that I would have only to harvest the fruits of a land already cultivated for more than 4 years. I was sadly mistaken here just as [I had been] elsewhere. Alas! How erroneous we were in leaving France with the belief that we were going to New Zealand to simply reap the harvest!<sup>59</sup>

Pompallier was largely responsible for the disillusionment of the Marists who arrived from 1841 onwards. For Father Colin, the early reports from Pompallier served as

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<sup>59</sup> « Monseigneur m'y a laissé seul avec le frère Luc qu'on m'a donné seulement pour construire une maison en planche. Jusqu'à ce moment nous habitons une maison d'herbe et de roseaux que les rats et les souris dévastent et dans laquelle tout est l'un sur l'autre. Je m'attendais à n'avoir qu'à recueillir les fruits d'une terre déjà cultivée depuis plus de 4 ans. Je me suis malheureusement trompé ici comme ailleurs. Hélas! que nous étions dans l'erreur en partant de France, quand nous pensions que nous allions à la Nouvelle Zélande pour moissonner seulement! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 330, June & 11 August 1844, Tauranga, Bernard to Colin, p. 1.

encouragement to dispatch several more groups of Marist missionaries to New Zealand; these reports were found to be hyperbole as soon as the Marist reinforcements reached the Bay of Islands, eroding the trust and positive relations that had hitherto existed between the two leaders. Simmons describes Pompallier thus: “He was essentially a romantic whose vision of himself and his mission outstripped the mundane realities of the present.”<sup>60</sup> A member of the Marist contingent that reached New Zealand in 1843, Father Bernard expressed to the Marist superior-general his great disappointment at the state of the Māori mission, which bore little resemblance to the way it had been portrayed to the young seminarians in Nantes:

I can say that when I was in France I had only a false idea of this country. One only shows the shiny side of the medal, and one is very careful not to let the other side be seen. This is what is disconcerting for the Fathers but especially for the Brothers. I must confess to you that I was amazed to see all of these sad and sombre faces. I believed, like the others, that I would find the whole of New Zealand converted to the true religion, and a land covered with inhabitants. And all I found were a few baptised neophytes.<sup>61</sup>

It must have been an unhappy surprise for the Marists to learn that not only did Catholicism have a meagre following in comparison with the Anglican faith, but the two Protestant denominations in New Zealand had already established some fifteen stations in the North Island at the time of the Treaty-signing. It is not difficult to imagine the disheartenment felt by the destitute Marist missionaries upon seeing that their Anglican rivals were self-sufficient, well-fed and living in comfort, while they, expected to travel constantly between Māori villages, depended largely on the hospitality of friendly Māori for shelter and food. The fourth CMS station was located at Waimate and was the site of New Zealand’s first flourmill and a large farm; George Clarke was one of the CMS missionaries stationed there until 1840, when he

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<sup>60</sup> Simmons, E.R. *A brief history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*, p. 12.

<sup>61</sup> « Je puis dire que lorsque j’étais en France, je n’avais qu’une idée fausse de ce pays. On ne fait voir que le beau côté de la médaille, et on se donne bien de garde de laisser voir l’eautre. C’est ce qui déconcerte bien des p(ères) mais des f(rères) surtout. Je vous avoue que j’ai été frappé de tous ces visages sombres et tri[stes]. Je croyais comme les autres trouver toute la Nouvelle-Zélande convertie à [la vraie] religion; et une terre couverte d’habitants. Et je n’ai trouvé que quelqu[es] néophytes baptisés », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 272, 5 October 1843, Kororareka, Bernard to Colin, p. 3.

was appointed by the Colonial Office to protect Māori rights and welfare. With an openly envious tone, Father Comte describes the setting at Waimate:

Near 6 o'clock in the evening we arrived at Waimate. It is a magnificent place; several Protestant missionaries have established themselves there. They have pretty gardens, pens full of cattle and sheep, and vast, well-cultivated fields. I spent the night amid a Catholic tribe, right next to the Protestant missionaries' houses.<sup>62</sup>

Father Forest, sent to New Zealand in the official capacity of 'Visitor to the Mission', had the task of investigating the numerous complaints which Colin had received from his men since the mission's inception. Together with Fathers Garin, Épalle, Petit and Petit-Jean, Father Forest assembled a letter for Colin in 1842 explaining the many problems plaguing the mission, with much of the blame on the actions of their bishop.<sup>63</sup> The following year, Forest revealed to Father Colin the extent to which Pompallier's assertion of the mission's success contradicted the Fathers' view that the mission was in a dire state:

(...) on one hand, Monsignor pompously praises the mission and shows us everything in a beautiful light; on the other hand, several of his missionaries paint horrible pictures of it. Again, these last few days, Father Pezant wrote me that he cannot achieve anything in his mission, that he has had no success at all; he attributes this barrenness to the lack of human means suitable for achieving the good that one could hope for; he says that in this mission nothing has been done well, nothing carefully produced, with regard to either prayers, books or doctrine, that in every respect we are most inferior to the Protestants, and that these very Protestant ministers mock us, publishing in the newspapers that the Catholic bishop and his priests have a curious manner of acquiring proselytes by means of smocks and blankets. He adds that we would do better to leave this country and take the torch of the Faith elsewhere, since there is nothing to be gained here.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> « Vers les 6 heures du soir nous arrivâmes à *Wai maté*. C'est un endroit magnifique; plusieurs missionnaires protestants sont fixés là. Ils ont de beaux jardins, des parcs remplis de boeufs et de moutons, de vastes champs bien cultivés. Je passai la nuit dans une tribu catholique, tout près des maisons des missionnaires protestants », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 54, 12 April 1840, Hokianga, Comte to parents, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 167, 22 May 1842, Bay of Islands, missionaries to Colin.

<sup>64</sup> « (...) d'un côté, monseigneur me fait un éloge pompeux de sa mission et nous montre tout en beau; d'un autre côté, plusieurs de ses missionnaires m'en font des peintures horribles. Ces jours derniers encore, le père Pezant m'écrivait qu'il ne peut rien gagner dans son mission, qu'il n'a aucun succès et il attribue cette stérilité au défaut de moyens humains propres à opérer le bien que l'on pourroit espérer; il dit que dans cette mission l'on a rien de bien fait, rien de soigné, ni en fait de prières, ni en fait de livres, de doctrine, que sous tous les rapports nous sommes très inférieurs aux protestants, que ces mêmes

After almost ten years of perseverance on the mission in New Zealand, Father Bernard finally decided in 1852 that it was indeed time for a new attempt, and requested a transfer out of New Zealand. He was appointed to the newly established mission in Samoa but was immediately disappointed to find many of the same obstacles he had encountered on the Māori mission. No matter where he was stationed, Bernard frequently complained of the difficulties of missionary work and was probably not an easy man to please. His unrealistic expectations of swift progress on the missions fostered these comments with regard to his brief stay in Samoa, before requesting another transfer:

I saw with pleasure that communities were much more numerous and closer together here than in New Zealand, and therefore easier to evangelise. Other than that, it was the same ignorance, the same corruption and the same indolence for their own salvation.<sup>65</sup>

Bernard was not the only Marist to yearn for a station that offered less of a challenge than the constant struggle on the Māori mission. As early as 1842 Father Petit-Jean was writing to Father Colin about the potential opportunities in New Holland (Australia) but not among the Aboriginal peoples; a cause for Marist disillusionment with indigenous missions was the tempting call for Catholic priests in European settlements, including Sydney where Catholic works appeared to be flourishing under Archbishop Polding. Although Polding had his own challenges, the Marists saw that apostolic and social work among Europeans generated a more visible and swift progress, as well as some nostalgia for the Catholic Europe they had known. Father Baty noted that in Sydney:

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ministres protestans se moquent de nous, publiant dans les journeaux que l'évêque catholique et ses prêtres ont une manière curieuse de se faire des prosélytes par le moyen des blouses et des couvertures. Il ajoute que nous ferions bien mieux de quitter ces pays et de porter ailleurs le flambeau de la foi, qu'il n'y a rien à gagner ici », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 254, 12 May 1843, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> « J'ai vu avec plaisir les populations beaucoup plus nombreuses et plus rapprochées ici qu'à la N(ouv)elle Zélande; par conséquent plus faciles à évangéliser. Du reste c'est la même ignorance, la même corruption, la même indolence pour leur propre salut », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1306, 15 November 1853, Upolu (Samoa), Bernard to Colin, p. 1.

The orphanage is on a good footing; these poor children have gained much in losing their parents! They read, write, sew, and sing very well, and are pious. The 8 bells, the largest of which exceeds 3000 pounds, remind me of the town of Lyon. I have not witnessed such external pomp for religion since 1838.<sup>66</sup>

The colony of New Zealand grew rapidly in the 1840s; according to Simmons, the European population went from 2000 to 20,000 in just one decade.<sup>67</sup> Once Auckland and Port Nicholson had become important stations for the Marists, there was no curbing the demands from European, especially Irish, settlers for a Catholic resident priest. With the Māori Mission no longer the sole focus of the Marists, the opportunity to expand into Australia presented itself, since Irish Catholic settlers in Sydney were just as in need of priests as were the settlers in New Zealand. Father Petit-Jean, having visited Sydney in 1842, realised the potential success the Marists might have in turning their attentions across the sea:

Sydney, trading centre for all islands in Oceania, a fine place for a procure house – in Sydney, which contains liberal, wealthy, albeit Protestant, families, we would have almost all of the youth in one college; Sydney, a fine place for a college – a large number of young people whom we would prepare for the religious condition – many children of wealthy parents who are rejected from the sanctuary because they have the misfortune of being born of *convict* ancestors, would be received by us and we would make missionaries for the islands out of them.<sup>68</sup>

Conversely some French missionaries were rejected by the Irish settlers who had pushed so hard to have them as resident priests. The Irish understandably wanted fellow Irishmen to minister to their spiritual needs, but were also dissatisfied with the Marists' level of English, not to mention their heavy French accents. In 1844, Pompallier was already arranging the recruitment of Irish priests for the mission.

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<sup>66</sup> « L'établissement des orphelins est sur un bon pied, ces pauvres enfans ont bien gagné à perdre leurs parens! Ils lisent, écrivent, brodent, chantent très-bien, ils sont pieux. Les 8 cloches dont la plus grosse passe 3000 m'ont rappelé la ville de Lyon. Depuis 1838 je n'avais pas été témoin de tant de pompe extérieure pour la religion », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 311, 28 January 1844, Sydney, Baty to Colin, p. 8.

<sup>67</sup> Simmons, *Pompallier: Prince of Bishops*, p. 97.

<sup>68</sup> « Sydney, centre de commerce pour toutes les îles de l'Océanie, bon pour une maison de procure — Sydney, renfermant des familles riches, libérales, quoique protestantes, nous aurions dans un collège presque toute la jeunesse; Sydney, bon pour un collège — grand nombre de jeunes gens qu'on disposeroit à l'état ecclésiastique — beaucoup d'enfans de parens riches qu'on repousse du sanctuaire parce qu'ils ont eu le malheur de naître d'ancêtres *convicts*, seroient reçus par nous et nous en ferions des missionnaires pour les îles », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 191, 21 & 30 August 1842, Sydney, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 5.

Pompallier requested that Father Épalle, who had returned to Europe in 1842, employ funds from the Propagation of the Faith to secure eight to ten students from an Irish seminary near Dublin, presumably St Patrick's College at Maynooth, and to pay for their passage to New Zealand so that they could undertake missionary work in Pompallier's vicariate.<sup>69</sup> Father Épalle had at this stage been appointed as Vicar Apostolic of Melanesia and Micronesia, and was thus released from Pompallier's jurisdiction; there was no question that Épalle's loyalty lay with the Society of Mary, and as Pompallier continued to actively seek out Irish priests for his mission Épalle unfairly charged him with "taking every measure to prepare his plans to foil the Society."<sup>70</sup> Pompallier was simply filling a need, and if Father Colin refused to entrust him with new contingents of Marist missionaries from 1843 onwards, he had no choice but to procure them from elsewhere; although, according to Colin in 1843, it was Pompallier who refused to accept more Marist missionaries to staff his vicariate.<sup>71</sup> Adding insult to injury, Pompallier learned that Father Colin was able to spare six Marists for the establishment of a Marist mission in Ireland. Clearly Colin, too, realised the need for English-speaking missionaries in Oceania, and the Irish mission was itself the first phase in forming Irish Marists for this very purpose.

#### ***4.6 Disillusionment under Viard***

The conflict between Father Colin and Bishop Pompallier led to a rupture between the two men, with Colin insisting that the Marists could not be left in Pompallier's charge. The Roman Catholic Church attempted to resolve the situation by establishing the diocese of Wellington and assumed, as did Father Colin and some of the Marist missionaries, that the Marists' situation would improve in the new diocese under Viard's leadership. Initially the move to Wellington proved more beneficial to the Marists and their morale than they had expected; their writings reflect a newfound motivation and hope for the Mission to Māori, following a long period of stagnation

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<sup>69</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 327, 3 May 1844, Nelson, Pompallier to Epalle, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> « (...) négligeoit rien pour préparer dans sa pensée un échec à la Société », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 395, 27 August 1845, Sydney, Epalle to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>71</sup> Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians*, p. 14.

in the Auckland diocese under Pompallier. Wealthy Catholic parishioners, both Irish and English, donated generously to Bishop Viard's diocesan fund. Father Petit-Jean claimed that as a result of these donations, "our holy buildings are erected with a swiftness that is surprising to everyone,"<sup>72</sup> so that the visual might of the Catholic Church could finally contend with that of the Anglican one.

Within a year of commencing missionary work in the new diocese, the Marists realised that under Bishop Viard their financial circumstances had not improved. There were some cases where the Government or the New Zealand Company offered assistance to the Marists who were assigned to settler parishes, but the Fathers assigned to the Māori Mission were again expected to establish stations with no resources. They had to rely on the generosity of Māori, European settlers, and devout French Catholics, as had been the trend since the outset of the mission to New Zealand. Father Lampila, clearly frustrated and dismayed by this, wrote to the Superior-General in 1851 from Hawke's Bay:

When we arrived in Heretaunga, a district in Monsignor Viard's diocese, we hastened to purchase a property in fulfilment of our bishop's intentions, but the response to my letter, not from Monsignor to whom it was addressed but from Father Petit-Jean, was that I must acquire this property for nothing; as if His Lordship knew of cases where Protestants give to Catholics free of charge.<sup>73</sup>

Viard, who had experienced firsthand the difficulties associated with founding new stations for the Catholic mission, found himself in the same dilemma as Pompallier; with limited funding and constant demands for priests and churches from a substantial settler community, Viard was hard-pressed to provide any form of support to his pioneer missionaries. Moreover his stretched resources were supposed to cater to an area that extended well beyond Wellington; the diocese assigned to him included the

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<sup>72</sup> « (...) nos édifices sacrés s'élèvent avec une rapidité qui étonne tout le monde », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 917, 15 August 1850, New Zealand, Petit-Jean to his brother-in-law Paillasson, pp. 1-2.

<sup>73</sup> « Lorsque nous fûmes arrivés à Heretaunga, endroit du diocèse de monseig(neu)r Viard, nous nous hâtâmes d'acheter un terrain en remplissant les intentions de notre évêque, mais on répondit à ma lettre, non pas monseig(neu)r à qui elle était adressée, mais le père Petit-Jean, qu'il fallait obtenir ce terrain pour rien: comme si Sa Grandeur connaissait des cas où les protestans donnent gratis aux catholiques », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 992, 1 March 1851, Hawke's Bay, Lampila to Colin, p. 6.

southern half of the North Island and, unrealistically, the entire South Island. Furthermore many of the Marist Fathers struggled to accept that they had spent around a decade labouring among hapū from the far north down to the Bay of Plenty, only to have to begin the evangelising process all over again in unfamiliar territory with unfamiliar hapū. Of the fourteen Marist priests stationed in New Zealand at the beginning of 1850, nine of them were still working on the Māori Mission while the remainder ministered to European parishes. The shift to the Wellington diocese therefore meant surrendering eight major mission stations, leaving only Comte's post at Ōtaki intact, to the non-Marist clergy recruited by Pompallier during his visit to Europe. The Brothers were equally disillusioned with the changes; Brother Élie-Régis who had worked on the missions in Whangaroa and Whakatāne, now found himself at Ōtaki and wrote to the Marist Superior-General in 1851: "There is one thing I desire: that I do not have to continue changing location, for I have planted the grape vines already three or four times now, and never get to enjoy it."<sup>74</sup>

#### ***4.7 Resigning from the Māori Mission***

As a rule the CMS missionaries were instructed to establish somewhat permanent mission stations, where Māori could gather for the purpose of prayers, catechism and religious services. The CMS missionaries who arrived in New Zealand in the 1820s and 1830s commonly served the same mission district for over 30 years,<sup>75</sup> whereas the Marist missionary's record contains a long list of stations and parishes in various parts of the country. Certainly the CMS missionaries were equally exhausted from early years of rugged missionary excursions, but their finances enabled a diet and lifestyle that far surpassed that of the Marists. Although several CMS missionaries were dismissed for inappropriate conduct, most served twice or three times as long as the early Marist missionaries in New Zealand. Very few CMS missionaries resigned from the Anglican Māori mission, whereas a number of Catholic missionaries

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<sup>74</sup> « Il y a une chose que je désirerois, c'est qu'on ne me changea pas toujours de place car voilà déjà trois ou quatre fois que je plante de la vigne et je n'en joui jamais », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1113, 11 January 1852, Ōtaki, Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Marin) to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Allan K. Davidson, *Christianity in Aotearoa: A History of Church and Society in New Zealand* (Wellington: NZ Education for Ministry Board, 1991), p. 11.



requested transfers or were appointed to other parts of Oceania, essentially abandoning the Marist Māori mission while maintaining their loyalty to the Society of Mary and the overall mission to Oceania. The circumstances surrounding their resignations highlight the conflicting nature of the Marist missionary in colonial New Zealand. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and the transformation of New Zealand into a British colony, some French Marists found it difficult to tolerate their dual marginalisation. As they became more and more disillusioned with their apostolic work among Māori and Pākehā, the solution seemed to be a transfer to other parts of Oceania under Marist jurisdiction, where they envisaged a less challenging mission physically, economically and in politico-religious terms. Turner summarises the Marists' motives for leaving New Zealand: "They complained of the materialism of the natives, the arduous journeying and poverty, but most also mentioned distrust of the British administration, the intense competition from Protestant missionaries, and their dislike of having to work for Irish and English Catholic settlers."<sup>76</sup> Father Servant, ill, partially deaf and unable cope with the frequent and distant travelling required on the Māori Mission, asked for a transfer to the island of Futuna in 1841 and was granted a transfer the following year:

According to my perspective, the work on this mission of Hokianga will take a long time because the natives here are too scattered and there are many difficulties to overcome. This particular mission is very different in my view from the tropical missions where there is only paganism to combat, and where almost all of them are practically won over when one gains their trust.<sup>77</sup>

Father Servant assumed that missionary work on Futuna would entail a much easier workload, and in most respects he was proved right. In 1842, after almost four years in the Hokianga, Servant was sent to Futuna, where Father Pierre Chanel had been murdered the year before. Almost all of the island's inhabitants had converted to Catholicism, including Chanel's assassin. The reason for this mass conversion lay

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<sup>76</sup> Turner, p. 110.

<sup>77</sup> « (...) suivant ma manière de voir, l'ouvrage en cette mission d'Hokianga sera long parce qu'ici les naturels sont trop dispersés et qu'il y a beaucoup de difficultés à vaincre. Cette mission-ci est bien différente suivant moi de celles des tropiques où il n'y a presque que l'infidélité à combattre, et où la masse est presque gagnée quand on a gagné la confiance », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 97, 31 May 1841, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, pp. 1-2.

more in the inauspicious deaths of the king who had ordered Chanel's murder and one of his associates, than in the effectiveness of any missionaries. Father Bernard also asked to leave the mission in the hope that he might carry out missionary work in a place that had not yet been dominated by Protestant missionaries.<sup>78</sup> He left Father Pezant alone on the Whanganui mission and headed to Sydney towards the end of 1852, from where he was sent to Samoa under Bishop Bataillon. Unhappy in an undeveloped mission, given that Samoa was in its pioneering stage, Bernard asked to be transferred to Wallis instead.

The 1850s saw the departure of several pioneer missionaries of the Māori Mission, including Bernard, for what was fundamentally the same reason: Māori mission work had left them physically and emotionally worn out, and pessimistic that success would be achievable during their missionary careers. Father Baty was ill with consumption and died in 1851, aged 39, but had already left the Māori mission in 1850 to take charge of the procure house in Sydney. That same year Baty had written to Colin regarding the predicament of being simultaneously a Marist and a missionary, revealing a hint of regret that his devotion to the Society had led him away from developing himself as a Marist priest in a stable, nurturing community:

The problem is that on the missions, such as I knew them, one cannot improve; one does not become more apt at filling the needs of the Society. I do not need to dwell on this. Those who left for the mission many long years ago are hardly informed about the Society's practices.<sup>79</sup>

In 1852 Father Petit, over 50 years of age, returned to France. Though his reasons are not discussed in detail in any available records, it is likely that after ten years on the Māori Mission, most of which were spent in the Hokianga, he was not prepared to continue missionary work in a new setting or to build the foundations of a mission for the second time. His age and health were undoubtedly a factor, given that he died just six years after his return to France. In 1854 Brother Luc Macé, who had been on the

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<sup>78</sup> O'Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 45.

<sup>79</sup> « (...) c'est que dans les missions, telles que je les connais, on ne se perfectionne guères; on ne se rend pas aptes à bien remplir les emplies de la Société. Je n'ai pas besoin de m'appesantir là dessus. Ceux qui sont partis depuis longues années ne sont guères au fait des pratiques de la Société », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 944, 6 October 1850, Sydney, Baty to Colin, pp. 1-2.

Māori Mission since 1842, left for Australia as a result of his disappointment with the progress of the mission. Rumours circulated that Fathers Lampila and Pezant were also considering resignation from the mission. Pezant was unhappy with Viard's leadership in Wellington and would apparently have preferred working under Bishop Douarre, or even returning to Pompallier's diocese.<sup>80</sup> Father Pezant pointed out to a colleague in France, who was considering joining the Marist Mission, that disappointment, disillusionment and frustration was part of the missionary's lot in New Zealand:

But do not come with the false ideas that we brought with us from France. We believed that the infidels would desire to have us among them, that they would be burning with ardour to embrace the faith, that they would spoil and indulge their missionaries with benefaction, respect and kind gestures. [...] You will be tempted to feel discouraged, to leave for Europe, to go to other islands; but be patient. [...] Only gradually can we penetrate their world and win them over.<sup>81</sup>

It is clear that the Marist missionaries had certain expectations before they left France. They anticipated that the mission in Oceania would involve a spiritual battle to win adherents, and they were prepared, as pioneers, to suffer hardship and privation in establishing a foothold in the various islands. But there are several things that the Marist Fathers did not anticipate, such as an ongoing struggle to obtain food and resources; no fellow priest to act as a companion and confessor on remote stations; three or four transfers within the first fourteen years of their careers; and difficulty developing a Marist spirituality while also carrying out missionary work. Disillusionment grew among the Marists in New Zealand as the Pacific Island missions began to develop and absorb the attention of the Society of Mary in Lyon. But most surprising was that the Marists on the Māori Mission and the first Marists in central Oceania quickly discovered the incompatibility between the Marist way of life

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<sup>80</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1184, 22 September 1852, River Hutt, Rozet to Poupinel, p. 2 ; Doc 1207, 21 December 1852, Whanganui, Pezant to Grange, p. 5.

<sup>81</sup> « Mais ne venez pas avec les idées fausses que nous avons apportées de France. Nous croyions que les infidèles nous désiraient, qu'ils brûlaient d'ardeur – d'embrasser la foi, qu'ils choiraient et gâteraient leur missionnaires de bontés, de respects et d'attentions. [...] Vous serez tenté de découragement, de partir pour l'Europe, d'aller dans d'autres îles; mais prenez patience. [...] Ce n'est que peu à peu qu'on s'insinue chez eux, qu'on les gagne », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1207, 21 December 1852, Whanganui, Pezant to Grange, pp. 3-4.

and the requirements and expectations of vicars apostolic. Internal conflicts arose concerning Marist vows of obedience and poverty, the omnipotence of vicars apostolic, and the general hardships of life on the Māori Mission. To some extent these internal conflicts were echoed in Bishop Bataillon's vicariate, but the Māori Mission experienced a significant upheaval as a result of an irresolvable conflict.

## Chapter 5: Internal Conflict

Working within a missionary society had its advantages and its difficulties. The CMS and WMS were formed at the turn of the nineteenth century. The Society of Mary, conceived in 1816 and given papal approval in 1836, was therefore the youngest of the three biggest missionary societies in New Zealand and, as has been mentioned earlier, was not originally formed with a missionary function in mind. Many of the issues causing conflict within the CMS were not unlike those experienced by the Marists, but the action taken to resolve them differed entirely. The following chapter explores the internal conflicts which adversely affected the CMS and Marist missions, and highlights the problematic nature of church hierarchies.

Interdenominational rivalry may have frustrated missionaries, but conflict and incompatibility within their own Church was arguably more damaging to their missions. The interaction between the CMS and Bishop Selwyn can be considered as somewhat similar to that which existed between the Marists and Bishop Pompallier, but the latter were clearly more intensely opposed, and their conflict arguably had a more profound effect on the morale of the missionaries involved. Pompallier's desire to expand rapidly and Father Colin's concern for his disillusioned missionaries led to, as Jessie Munro describes it, "the first major nineteenth-century mission dispute."<sup>1</sup> Thomson places the failure of the Catholic mission around the time that the Marists left the Auckland diocese. While she is justified in saying that the early 1850s were an unfortunate period to abandon the Māori stations in the North since Māori interest

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<sup>1</sup> Jessie Munro, 'Colin and Pompallier and the Founding of the Catholic Church in New Zealand' in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania: Marist Missionary Perspectives*, ed. by Alois Greiler (South Australia: ATF Press, 2009), p. 84.

in Christianity was already beginning to decline,<sup>2</sup> the Marists could not have remained under Pompallier's jurisdiction without betraying their Society. And while the Marist missionaries may have left the northern missions, they did not entirely abandon them because it was understood that Pompallier would find replacement missionaries from Europe. By examining the circumstances surrounding the removal of the Marists from Pompallier's jurisdiction, it will be made clear that the Marists in Oceania had differing perceptions of their missionary roles. For some, the Society of Mary was of more importance than the mission to Oceania. For others, leaving behind their stations and the indigenous converts they had made was unbearable.

### *5.1 Discord within the CMS*

While there were numerous factors that worked for and against both Anglican and Catholic missionaries, the vow of celibacy taken by Catholic clergy was of particular interest to indigenous peoples in Oceania. It presented an obvious contrast with the common practice of Protestant missionaries working alongside their wives and children on mission stations. Not having family responsibilities meant that the early Marists were perhaps more able to travel extensively and expand their Māori mission,<sup>3</sup> although Māori found it difficult to comprehend the seemingly sexually-deprived lifestyle to which the Marists had resigned themselves. As they did not have wives to accompany them and assist them on the mission, the pioneer Marist Fathers were assigned Brothers who were lay missionaries equally devoted to the spirit of Mary. Present-day Marist Philip Turner asserts that "In a very real sense the Catholics had given up everything for the mission, and they were, as a result, more dependent on maintaining good relations with the Maori than the Protestants, who had wives, families, servants and often farms to provide economic and emotional support."<sup>4</sup>

The CMS missionaries enjoyed a number of advantages as part of a family unit, which undeniably outweighed the disadvantage of limited travelling. A missionary

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<sup>2</sup> Thomson, 'Some Reasons for the Failure of the Roman Catholic Mission to the Maoris, 1838-1860', p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> Piper, 'Missionary and Maori', p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Turner, p. 171.

wife also significantly enhanced her husband's salary; a married minister in New Zealand in the 1830s received an annual sum of £100.<sup>5</sup> As well as offering companionship, Anglican ministers' wives were of great value to the CMS missions because they were able to take charge of various missionary responsibilities when their husbands were absent; the Williams brothers each had "an admirable helpmate in his wife" and perhaps could not have succeeded in running their stations without them.<sup>6</sup> While servants tended to general household duties, both wives and children of the CMS missionaries furthered the progress of the Anglican Church through their roles as teachers and catechists on the mission station. In addition to the help and skill they provided, missionary wives also enabled their husbands to travel, as Rev. Benjamin Ashwell explains in his journal *Recollections of a Waikato missionary*:

(...) although the missionaries were necessarily out in their districts a great part of the year, the quiet yet earnest perseverance of our wives and assistants ensured the progress and efficiency of our institutions. In one year alone I spent 120 nights in my tent, travelling to various villages, holding meetings for reading the Scriptures, examining candidates for baptism, settling disputes, organising schools, attending to sick, and in other missionary duties.<sup>7</sup>

While the CMS mission station might appear to be a harmonious unit, with husband, wife and children working together as missionaries to Māori, the wider picture was not as seamless. Firstly, not all CMS missionaries were married. Secondly, while most married CMS missionaries worked congruously with their families, their relations with fellow CMS missionaries were sometimes strained. Rev. William Wade joined the New Zealand CMS mission in 1834 along with William Colenso, who would become known for his skill and output as the mission's printer. Lydia Wevers notes that Wade and Colenso "were from a dissenting background and neither was ordained, which made their integration into the High Church Anglican community at Paihia difficult."<sup>8</sup> Four years before he left the CMS for the Baptist Missionary Society, Wade claimed that:

Our chief hindrances to the work of personal religion arise

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<sup>5</sup> Morrell, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Morrell, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> B. Y. Ashwell, *Recollections of a Waikato Missionary* (Auckland: Atkin, 1867), p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Wevers, p. 98.

From the nature of our work,  
From the state of the natives, and  
From ourselves.<sup>9</sup>

Discord within the CMS was present from the outset of its mission in New Zealand. Despite being united in nationality and status, since they were all British lay missionaries, the earliest CMS missionaries in Rangihoua had little in common; in fact the only thing that truly connected them was their evangelical enthusiasm. Samuel Marsden described the conflict between Kendall and Hall as a result of both missionaries' participation in the arms trade, through which they had acquired food and other necessities but, more importantly, a sense of power and accompanying arrogance. Marsden informed the Secretary of the CMS:

I hear bartering with the natives and Shipping for Muskets and Powder excited their Avarice, and Avarice excited Jealousy, and both together destroyed all Christian Love, and carried them so far out of their duty that they could not even meet at last to read the Service of the Church on the sabbath day together.<sup>10</sup>

Judith Binney asserts that, because of their involvement in an illegal and immoral trade, "Kendall and the others were, in part, responsible for their own ineffectualness as missionaries."<sup>11</sup> They were certainly guilty in some people's eyes of setting an unchristian example for both Māori and Europeans in the Bay of Islands, despite this being an area renowned for the corrupting influence of lawless European and American traders. In 1819 the arrival of John Butler, the first ordained missionary on the CMS Māori mission, had intensified Kendall's feelings of bitterness; the two men immediately clashed and Butler, as the appointed superintendent of the mission at Kerikeri, only exacerbated the internal conflicts that had afflicted the Rangihoua station.<sup>12</sup> Kendall's reputation deteriorated when in 1820 he undermined CMS authorities by travelling to England with the intention of becoming an ordained

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<sup>9</sup> ATL, Letter from William Richard Wade, 4 August 1836, Waimate [MS-Papers-6570], p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Transplanted Christianity, p. 31 [taken from Samuel Marsden to the Secretary of the CMS, Bay of Islands April 1820, Hocken Library Dunedin MS57].

<sup>11</sup> Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt*, p. 89.

<sup>12</sup> Stuart Lange, 'The Church Missionary Society in New Zealand: An overview' in *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the Work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814-1882*, ed. Robert Glen, (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship, 1992), pp. 10-11.



minister, though he was viewed by the CMS as unfit for ordination.<sup>13</sup> While there were other motives behind the voyage, seeking ordination was an important one in relation to Kendall's rivalry with Butler, and Kendall was indeed permitted entry into the priesthood which gave him a sense of empowerment on the mission. But by 1822 he had been dismissed from the CMS, a decision prompted by several incidents of misconduct, which included having committed adultery with Tungaroa, a young Māori woman who was both Kendall's student and domestic and the daughter of a tohunga at Rangihoua. This particular scandal resulted in a loss of respect for Kendall as a preacher of the Anglican Church and diminished attendance at his services.<sup>14</sup> According to Binney, Kendall was distraught by his conflicting role as an early missionary who had been sent to destroy the customs and beliefs of Māori while at the same time befriending them and gaining knowledge of their world. Binney posits the question: "How does a man escape from his isolation when all meaningful contacts produce a sense of conflict?"<sup>15</sup>

The man who had initiated the CMS mission in New Zealand, Samuel Marsden, had not offered the pioneer missionaries much guidance or leadership, other than encouraging them to implant agriculture and European values among Māori. Marsden was based in Australia, leaving the running of the early mission to Kendall and eventually Butler. It was also Marsden who pushed for Kendall and Butler to be removed from the mission, and Marsden again who at last selected a suitable leader for the CMS mission in New Zealand in the person of Henry Williams. When Williams arrived on the scene, the mission was still dependent on Māori patronage and the aforementioned scandals and dismissals had compromised the integrity of the CMS. Further examples of misconduct followed, at first with Rev. William Yate, who was dismissed in 1836 after enquiries into alleged acts of sexual molestation, despite continual protests of his innocence.<sup>16</sup> But Henry Williams was himself dismissed by the CMS in 1849, though for a very different kind of scandal and one that is the subject of unresolved debate. Essentially Williams, like the majority of CMS

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<sup>13</sup> Morrell, pp. 4-5.

<sup>14</sup> Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt*, pp. 100-101, 108.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*, p. 86.

<sup>16</sup> Judith Binney, 'Whatever Happened to Poor Mr Yate? An Exercise in Voyeurism', *NZJH*, 38. 2 (2004), p. 157.

missionaries, purchased considerable amounts of land from northern Māori, largely for farming purposes; in the missionaries' defence they did indeed have many children and farming appeared to be one of few opportunities for these children to eke out a living in early New Zealand. Williams felt justified in purchasing land in order to provide for his children's future; in his defence the New Zealand missionaries did not receive the same benefits as ministers in nearby Australia:

The C.M.S was unable to make provision for adult members of the missionaries' families, but, in order to avert absolute want, contributed a sum of £10 a year with food for each child until the age of fifteen years... This was in great contrast to the liberality shown in New South Wales, where the Colonial Chaplains received a free grant of 2,560 acres for each son and 1,280 acres for each daughter.<sup>17</sup>

But Governor Grey saw such land purchases as taking advantage of Māori, and pushed for Williams' dismissal; certainly Grey could argue that Williams' claim was the largest of all the missionaries and far exceeded the normal maximum of 2,560 acres. Williams' granted claim in 1844 was some 9,000 acres, out of a total claimed of 11,000.<sup>18</sup> Clearly the CMS came to accept Williams' argument, and to appreciate his contributions to the progress of the CMS mission, since they reversed the dismissal in 1854. Meanwhile William Colenso, not a popular figure among his fellow CMS missionaries because of his opposition to extensive land purchases, was dismissed from the CMS in 1852 when it was discovered that his Māori domestic, Ripeka, was carrying his child.<sup>19</sup> The circumstances leading to the scandal and subsequent fall from grace echoed Kendall's story in that both men were disenchanted with the European world and sought refuge in the Māori one.

If internal conflict within the CMS disrupted the mission, so too did clashes with the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries. The two Protestant mission societies began on friendly terms until the CMS began to resent Wesleyans' dependence on them, which

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<sup>17</sup> *The Early Journals of Henry Williams: 1826-40*, Appendix III, pp. 484-486.

<sup>18</sup> Morrell, p. 37.

<sup>19</sup> G. A. Phillipson, 'Missionary Printer: William Colenso at Paihia, 1834-52' in *Building God's Own Country: historical essays on religions in New Zealand* ed. by John Stenhouse and Jane Thomson (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004), pp. 137-138. See also A. G. Bagnall and G. C. Peterson, *William Colenso, his Life and Journeys* (Wellington: [n.pub], 1948).

then caused WMS superintendent William White to take offence. White consequently decided to claim the entire west coast of the North Island as Wesleyan mission territory and set about establishing a mission in Kāwhia. This did not correspond with the agreement the two societies had come to earlier, assigning to the Wesleyans the upper West Coast of the North Island but assuming that the Waikato region, in addition to the upper east coast, would belong to the CMS.<sup>20</sup> Henry Williams wrote in regard to William White:

(...) it appears our missions can never run together, some serious measures must be adopted, or we shall sustain much damage. The conduct of this man has frequently called forth the notice of the natives as being inconsistent, but to the Europeans it has been unbearable. With much assurance he sends us notice of his having formed stations in various parts of Waikato, tho he followed in the steps of Messrs. Brown and Hamlin. His conduct is sadly grievous and is likely to be productive of serious mischief to these poor people; they cannot but see and know our weakness. I feel persuaded that nothing but the removal of their mission from the land can remedy the evil. The world is large, we surely need not thus clash.<sup>21</sup>

William White was yet another difficult missionary character in early New Zealand, and his personality not only enraged the CMS but also his fellow Wesleyan missionaries, the latter to such an extent that he was the apparent cause of Hobbs' request to be transferred to Tonga and James Stack's resignation from the mission.<sup>22</sup> White was dismissed in 1836 for misconduct, which included having participated in commercial ventures, more specifically selling kauri timber, on the Hokianga mission.

A new conflict arose in 1842 with the arrival of Bishop Selwyn, who was put in charge of the Anglican Māori missions and Anglican settlers. Perhaps the first and foremost cause for the disharmony between Selwyn and the CMS was the fact that Bishop Selwyn, like Pompallier, did not hail from the same background as his missionaries and was not a member of the missionary societies he was supposed to lead, therefore bishop and missionary often had very different views and priorities concerning missionary work. In the same way that the Marists had complained of

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<sup>20</sup> Morrell, p. 16.

<sup>21</sup> *The Early Journals of Henry Williams: 1826-40*, p. 380.

<sup>22</sup> Morrell, p. 17.

Pompallier's autocratic behaviour, the CMS and WMS both accused Selwyn of authoritarianism and regularly disagreed with his actions and policies, which reflected his 'high-church' formation:

That the Society met half of his salary and let Selwyn make use of its property at Waimate, speaks of its initial charity. This turned sour under his emerging Tractarian sympathies, curdled in resentment at his high handedness over the sensitive issues of land held by CMS missionaries, and went rancid under his stubborn insistence to refuse ordination to any (CMS lay missionary or Maori catechist) who could not handle classical languages.<sup>23</sup>

With regard to the CMS Māori mission, Selwyn's strictness stunted possibilities for an indigenous church and brought into question the role of the Anglican Church in New Zealand, which had been entirely focused on the conversion of Māori. Selwyn's ideas of an integrated church clashed with the CMS focus, and the CMS parent committee was forced to remind the bishop that the CMS mission was to Māori, thus "their men were not at liberty to minister to the Europeans without the Committee's consent."<sup>24</sup>

Both Selwyn and Pompallier were, nevertheless, praised as much as they were criticised, and in Selwyn's case his strengths were acknowledged by a missionary of the Wesleyan Church with whom he had irreconcilable differences; Selwyn and the WMS were at loggerheads because of Selwyn's view that the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries were unworthy of ordination, which he based on the grounds that the Wesleyan church had broken away from the Church of England.<sup>25</sup> In 1844 Watkin received Bishop Selwyn at Waikouaiti in the South Island and wrote:

He is, I expect, the most primitive Bishop of the Church of England at the present time. He is in labours more abundant, in journeyings often. He is an excellent traveller, can bear privation, and endure exertions which would finish some of us who are below him in station... He laments disunion, so do I, wishes for unity, so do I, but I see not how the unity he desires is to be brought about.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Glen, pp. 26-27.

<sup>24</sup> Morrell, p. 28.

<sup>25</sup> Warren E. Limbrick, *Bishop Selwyn in New Zealand, 1841-68* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1983), pp. 138-139.

<sup>26</sup> Pybus, p. 57.

Within the CMS there were issues of superiority such as existed between Catholic priests and lay missionaries, but there were also examples to the contrary; in fact Henry Williams and his brother, William Williams, sought equality for all CMS preachers so that catechists would be entitled to the same salary as ordained ministers.<sup>27</sup> Only Selwyn seemed to consider CMS and Wesleyan lay missionaries as inferior, and the Bishop further offended the Wesleyan missionaries by declaring their baptisms invalid because the procedure had been performed by laymen.

## ***5.2 Discord between Marist Fathers and Brothers***

In the Catholic Māori mission, the Catholic bishop and the majority of Marist priests considered lay missionaries essential but inferior nonetheless. If the Marist Fathers are obscure figures in New Zealand history, the Brothers have received even less recognition for their roles as early missionaries and catechists. Edward Clisby is perhaps the only scholar to have contributed a comprehensive history of the Brothers from their beginnings on the Māori Mission to their involvement in New Zealand education.<sup>28</sup> Initially Marist Brothers were unaware of the extent to which a social division would come into play, and left France with enthusiasm for the missionary life that lay ahead of them. In his early correspondence with Father Colin, Bishop Pompallier stressed the importance and value of having Marist Brothers on the mission, and the role they could play in furthering its progress among Māori. The arrival of Brother Atale (Jean-Baptiste Grimaud) in December 1839, along with Fathers Viard, Petit-Jean, Comte and Chevron, would have been a joyous occasion were it not for Pompallier's expectations that Brothers would be sent in a more balanced ratio to priests.

I was distressed, my reverend father, that there was only one brother. Send me therefore at least three brothers for each priest and have each one of them be reasonably familiar with a profession for the schooling of my dear savages and to provide them with industry. The brothers can learn languages quickly now that we have a grammar and dictionary of the New

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<sup>27</sup> Morrell, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Clisby, *Marist Brothers and Maori, 1838-1988*.

Zealand language, and their school ministry, by sending them off in pairs, will be incredibly useful: it is like two priests here. How cross I am to have to finish here; the ship is setting sail, the winds have unfortunately improved. Priests, priests, my reverend father; brothers, and even more brothers. Without them heresy will and has already caused great troubles throughout my whole mission.<sup>29</sup>

Yet Pompallier's intention to utilise the Brothers as catechists was barely realised. Marcellin Champagnat, one of the twelve founding Marists in Lyon, had established the Marist Brothers in 1817 and saw the Brothers as a necessary branch of the Society of Mary which would bring general and spiritual education to underprivileged children in France and, one day, throughout the world. The 'Petits Frères de Marie' or 'Little Brothers of Mary', as they were originally called, would eventually develop into the largest Marist branch and Champagnat would be canonised to sainthood over a century and a half after his death. Bishop Pompallier viewed the Marist Fathers and Brothers as very different entities within his vicariate, and considered that their roles, although complementary in theory, were just as different. There were also two kinds of Brothers: Champagnat's Little Brothers of Mary, who were also known as the teaching brothers from 1839 onwards, and the Marist coadjutor Brothers, who undertook manual work. The Fathers and Bishops in Oceania made little or no distinction between the two before 1839, and even in France the division was ambiguous. All missionary Brothers were at the bottom of a clear-cut hierarchy, and were expected to serve the Bishop and the priests and perform tasks similar to those of domestic servants and artisans. This was a far cry from fulfilling the aims that Champagnat had had in mind when creating the Marist offshoot, but according to Edward Clisby even the Marist Superior-General was convinced that the Champagnat's Brothers ought to assist the Fathers in this way; Colin's "statement that one of the main purposes of both the brothers' and the sisters' congregations was to

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<sup>29</sup> « (...) j'ai été affligé, mon révérend père, de ce qu'il n'y avoit qu'un frère. Envoyez-moi donc au moins trois frères pour un prêtre et que chacun d'eux sache un état passablement pour faire l'école et donner l'industrie à mes chers sauvages. Les frères peuvent apprendre les langues vite maintenant que nous avons grammaire et dictionnaire de nouveau zélandais et leur ministère d'école, en les envoyant deux à deux, sera d'une utilité inconcevable: c'est comme deux prêtres ici. Que je suis donc fâché d'être obligé de terminer, le navire met à la voile; le vent malheureusement devient bon. Des prêtres, des prêtres, mon révérend père, des frères, des frères encore plus nombreux. Sans cela l'hérésie fera et fait déjà des maux bien grands par toute ma mission », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 47, 8 January 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

serve the needs of the fathers so that the latter could more freely give themselves to the salvation of souls, indicates clearly the gap between the two.”<sup>30</sup>

Such conflict between the leaders of the Society of Mary predictably filtered down to the leaders of the Marist missions in Oceania, apparently with the exception of Bishop Douarre in New Caledonia. In 1844 two Brothers, Jean Taragnat and Blaise Marmoiton, were assigned to Douarre’s mission, which was initially under the supervision and administration of Bishop Bataillon, the vicar apostolic for Central Oceania. In the extract below Douarre mentions Brother Atale (Jean-Baptiste Grimaud), who was briefly stationed at Wallis and Futuna; Atale’s main station was at Tongatapu with Father Chevron, whom he consistently viewed as kind, virtuous and hard-working. Douarre would have encountered the two missionaries during his visit to Tongatapu in late November 1843, when Brother Atale must have recounted his experience working under Bataillon. In this letter Douarre echoes Pompallier’s requests for more Brothers, but with a very different outlook on their status as men and as missionaries:

We require many of them. They would be in some way more useful than the missionaries themselves, but we also require that you take care to privately instruct each missionary and to the superiors above all to treat them like fellow missionaries and not like domestics, or even worse, without going into detail. Monsignor Bataillon is not irreproachable in this regard, because he is probably unaware that in our mission they are one with fathers and are treated equally. Good brother Atale could no longer bear it in Wallis, where he was often mistreated and never heard a word of encouragement or kindness.<sup>31</sup>

Certain Brothers were indeed discouraged at being heavily reprimanded by the Father to whom they had been assigned. If Pompallier reminded Father Colin at one point

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<sup>30</sup> Edward Clisby, ‘The Contribution of the Marist Teaching Brothers and the Marist Coadjutors Brothers to the Foundation of the Catholic Church in Western Oceania’ in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania*, p. 109.

<sup>31</sup> « Il en faudrait beaucoup. Ils seraient en quelque sorte plus utiles que les missionnaires mêmes, mais il faudrait aussi que vous eussiez soin d’enjoindre à chaque missionnaire en particulier et aux supérieurs surtout de les traiter comme d’autres eux mêmes et non comme des domestiques, plus mal encore pour ne rien dire de plus. Monseigneur Bataillon n’est pas irréprochable sous ce rapport parce qu’il ignore probablement que dans notre mission ils ne font qu’un avec les pères et qu’ils sont également soignés. Le bon frère Atale ne pouvait plus y tenir à Wallis, rudoyé souvent, sans entendre un mot d’encouragement ou de bienveillance », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 304, 10 January 1844, New Caledonia, Douarre to Colin, p. 3.

that it was important for the Fathers to treat the Brothers well, it was only in the interest of numbers for the mission and to avoid situations like the one that arose in 1840 between Brother Amon and Fathers Pezant and Tripe:

Brother Amon, named Duperron, an active young man, possessing much skill in his profession as a baker, disembarked here at the Bay of Islands with nothing but great resentment towards the two priests, especially Father Pezant, with whom he came from France on the corvette *L'Aube*. The first thing that he asked me for on arrival was some clothes from his chest to find employment in the new colony of this country. I was much aggrieved by this.<sup>32</sup>

Matching a Father with a Brother posed great problems because of the pompous attitude that some Fathers had assumed; the Fathers were paternalistic, and firmly believed that their treatment of the Brothers was justified, but this attitude also reflected the church hierarchy of the Ancien Régime in which Catholic clergy were superior to laymen and enjoyed the same privileges as members of the French aristocracy. Even those Marist Fathers who were never criticised by their respective Brothers held this view; the difference was that their paternal and corrective role was carried out with gentleness so as to avoid open conflict and to protect the mission's reputation. Father Servant explained:

In this country it is impossible for missionaries to have stations without any brothers, and it is the same for the other islands. But it is fair that they be treated like brothers, that the chastisements they are given be nothing but spiritual charity for the good of their souls, and that as a result they are wise and prudent punishments, I mean in proportion to the nature and number of mistakes, and done between us and not in the presence of foreigners and natives. Fits of anger and extreme humiliation, in addition to being far from enlightening and charitable, only serve to close and discourage the heart.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> « (...) frère Hamon, nommé Dupéron, jeune homme actif, ayant beaucoup de moyens dans sa profession de boulanger, n'a débarqué ici à la Baie des îles, qu'avec un coeur tout gros contre les deux prêtres, et surtout contre le p(ère) Pezant, avec lesquels il étoit venu de France sur la corvette l'Aube. La première chose qu'il m'a demandée en arrivant a été quelques habits de son mobilier, pour chercher une place dans la nouvelle colonie de ce pays. Cela m'a affligé beaucoup », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> « Dans ce pays il est impossible que des missionnaires puissent avoir des établissements sans frères, et il en est de même pour les autres îles. Mais il est juste qu'ils soient traités en frères, que les corrections qui leur sont faites ne soient qu'une aumône spirituelle pour le bien de leurs âmes, et que par conséquent elles soient sages et prudentes, je veux dire, proportionnées à la nature et au nombre des fautes, et faites entre nous et non en présence des étrangers et des naturels. Les emportements et les humiliations extraordinaires, outre qu'ils ne sont rien moins qu'édifiants et charitables, ne servent qu'à



On the Hokianga mission, Brother Claude-Marie assisted Fathers Servant, Baty and Petit respectively, and accused the latter of being particularly callous with him. Brother Claude-Marie found it impossible to progress in the English language in the short time he had left to study in the evenings, and claimed that he was forced to give up altogether “(...) when Father Petit, having caught sight of this, forbade me to work at it anymore, my sole tasks being cooking and gardening”.<sup>34</sup> While the Brother appeared to have amicable relations with Fathers Servant and Baty, Claude-Marie did prove problematic for the mission; his unseemly conduct around children caused him to be removed to the Bay of Islands mission as the new cook.

Claude-Marie was not the only Brother to be removed from a mission station; in 1843 Father Petit-Jean requested that Pompallier withdraw Brother Colomb (Pierre Poncet) from Auckland as a consequence of the Brother’s inappropriate behaviour around young girls;<sup>35</sup> within a few months of Colomb’s transfer Father Petit-Jean let Father Colin know that he preferred to be alone rather than to have a Brother who might taint the missionaries’ reputation: “As soon as he left, I felt myself relieved of a very heavy burden.”<sup>36</sup> Following continued accusations of immoral behaviour, which Pompallier deemed significantly detrimental to the mission’s reputation, Brother Colomb was sent back to France in 1844.

In 1840 Pompallier had dismissed Brother Michel (Antoine Colombon) from the mission altogether on accusations of theft and inappropriate conduct. Épalle later revealed that Brother Michel had taken items from the mission only to help out a woman and her children who were in need, but Épalle suspected that the Brother’s

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resserrer le coeur et à décourager », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> « (...) lorsque le p(ère) Petit s’en étant aperçu me défendit de ne plus y travailler, que mon unique ouvrage devait être la cuisine et la culture », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 234, 22 January – 2 February 1843, Hokianga, Brother Claude-Marie (Jean-Claude Bertrand) to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 268, 12 July 1843, Auckland, Petit-Jean to Forest, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> « Aussitôt qu’il est parti, je me suis senti délivré d’un fardeau bien lourd », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 269, 3 September 1843, Auckland, Petit-Jean to Forest, pp. 1-2.

motivation was perhaps emotional rather than charitable.<sup>37</sup> Father Bernard in 1843 came across Colombon, no longer a Brother, living with Father Rozet; both Rozet and Bernard were sympathetic to Colombon, and Bernard was even eager to take him in as a helper on his next mission station.<sup>38</sup> Colombon remained in Whangaroa with Rozet and re-entered the Society of Mary as Brother Michel probably at the end of 1843.

### 5.3 *Catechist or labourer*

If the Marist Fathers were viewed by Māori as inferior to Pompallier, so the Marist Brothers were viewed as inferior to the Fathers and to Pompallier; the Brothers were servants and Pompallier their chief in the Catholic socio-political hierarchy. Bishop Pompallier nevertheless expected Brothers, and Fathers for that matter, to have both religious and sociable ‘civility’ “[a]nd yet the majority of Brothers who are sent here to us are most flawed in all of these respects; they are weak also in the knowledge and practice of various crafts they know how to do. Their work is most inferior to that of the English in these lands.”<sup>39</sup> According to Pompallier in 1840, Brothers Marie-Nizier (Marie-Nizier Delorme) and Marie-Augustin (Joseph Drevet) were the only two Brothers with skill and civility, but both were destined for the missions in Wallis and Futuna. The Brothers were to suffer humiliation especially in public places because of this social division, which was perhaps most visible at mealtimes; Father Garin explained that: “The Brothers dine separately because of the sensitivity of the English, who do not know or at least are not supposed to know that they are Brothers, and see them as domestics.”<sup>40</sup> Pompallier enforced such a division not only in his

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<sup>37</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 9-10 ; Doc 72, 31 August 1840, Kororareka, Epalle to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 272, 5 October 1843, Kororareka, Bernard to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> « Or la plupart des frères qui nous sont envoyés ici sont bien défectueux sous tous ces rapports; ils sont foibles aussi dans la connoissance et la pratique des divers arts qu’ils savent faire. Leurs travaux sont bien inférieurs à ceux des Anglais en ces pays », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> « Les frères mangent séparément à cause de la délicatesse des Anglais qui ne savent pas ou du moins ne sont pas censés savoir qu’ils sont frères, et qu’on regarde comme domestiques », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 111, 22 September 1841, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 5.

mission stations but aboard the ships that transported the missionaries to Oceania, fearing that the reputation of the mission might be compromised by the Brothers:

An error to avoid in the near future aboard the government vessels, is that which has just been committed, through inexperience; our catechist Brothers were seated with the priests at the officers' table, which consists of young people who are quite educated and often belong to the most distinguished families in France; their education is advanced. Our brothers, although most exalted through religious condition in the eyes of God, are not of a similar rank and education in civilian life: they can sometimes incite criticism from young people already rather inclined towards it in all religious matters. It is far better for our brothers not to sit at the table with the priests and officers.<sup>41</sup>

In complete contrast, Bishop Douarre was described as having taken an openly egalitarian stance, which was undoubtedly a major reason for the positive rapport between the bishop and his missionaries. Father Rougeyron wrote to a staff member at the major seminary in Clermont of Douarre's willingness to perform menial tasks for the sake of establishing and maintaining his mission:

If one fine morning you found yourself transported to New Caledonia, you would see him digging, ploughing, or carrying the mortar, or axe in hand, chopping wood. I sometimes cannot hold back my tears at seeing a bishop mixed up with brothers and savages, and labouring at such gruelling work.<sup>42</sup>

The frequent criticism of the Marist Brothers by Pompallier and the Fathers stemmed from their belief that the Brothers were lay workers who should possess useful practical skills. These skills were highly important not only for the construction of

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<sup>41</sup> « Une faute à éviter prochainement sur les bâtiments de l'état, c'est celle qui vient d'être commise, faute d'expérience; on avoit placé nos frères catéchistes avec les prêtres à la table de l'état major qui est composé de jeunes gens assez instruits et souvent appartenant aux familles les plus distinguées de France; leur éducation est relevée. Nos frères, quoique par l'état religieux fort élevés aux yeux de Dieu, ne sont pas dans le civil d'un rang et d'une éducation semblables: ils peuvent quelquefois même exciter à la critique des jeunes gens déjà assez porté d'eux-mêmes à cela pour tout ce qui est religieux: il vaut beaucoup mieux que nos frères ne soient pas à table avec les prêtres et l'état major », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 69, 6 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Pierre Colin, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> « Si par un beau matin vous vous trouviez transporté à la Nouvelle Calédonie, vous le verriez bêchant, piochant ou portant le mortier ou, une hache à la main, coupant du bois. Je ne puis quelquefois retenir mes larmes en voyant un évêque confondu avec les frères et les sauvages, travailler à des travaux si pénibles », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 454, 2 January 1846, New Caledonia, Rougeyron to Gamon, p. 3.

mission projects but as a tool to appease, interest and ultimately aid the conversion of Māori and the island nations: “The kings and chiefs are delighted at having in their tribes or in their islands a European who is a skilled craftsman and who can fashion something for them, if only a chest to hold a shirt that they are to receive.”<sup>43</sup> However, the Little Brothers of Mary had been led to believe that they would be sent into the field as catechists and teachers. Impatient to be among the Māori, they were often caught up with the mission printery and numerous chores, leaving them little time to learn the language, let alone catechise in it.

Since not all of the early Marist Brothers were literate, their experience in Oceania is perhaps not as well-known or as accessible as that of the Marist Fathers and Catholic bishops. Some of the Brothers based in New Zealand initially communicated to Colin through the pen of Father Garin, the first Marist provincial. Brothers Élie-Régis, Claude-Marie, Luc Macé and a few others wrote to Father Colin directly of their trials and triumphs, and all of these letters indicate the general discontent that the Brothers felt at being mistreated, disciplined and assigned to household duties. The latter caused great humiliation and discontent, as well as undermining the very purpose for which the Brothers had embraced the mission to Oceania. Brother Claude-Marie in Hokianga was distressed by the low status that Māori had attributed to the Marist Brothers based on their functions on the mission:

(...) one day an Englishman asked one of our natives from the Bay of Islands what the word ‘brother’ signified in French; he replied that it signified ‘domestic’. Another time a Father said to me: Brothers who desire to join the mission must look at themselves as austere managed domestics. This is very true; there were times when I had not a moment even on Sundays to go to confession and attended only one mass for want of time.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> « Les rois et les chefs sont enchanté d’avoir dans leurs tribus, dans leurs îles, un Européen qui s’entendent [*sic*] dans les arts et qui leur fasse quelque chose, ne seroit -ce qu’un coffre pour contenir une chemise qu’il aura reçu », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 72, 31 August 1840, Kororareka, Epalle to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> « (...) un jour un Anglais demandais à un des nôtres de la Baie des îles ce que signifiait le mot frère en français; il lui répondit qu’il voulait dire domestique. Une autre fois un père me dit: il faudrait que les frères qui désire venir en mission se regardasse lorsqu’ils seront ici comme des domestique durement menés. Cela est très vrai, il m’est arrivé de n’avoir pas un moment même le dimanche pour me confesser et n’assister qu’à une messe, faute de temps », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 183, 26 July 1842, Hokianga, Brother Claude-Marie (Jean-Claude Bertrand) to Brother François (Gabriel Rivat), p. 4.

Meanwhile in Whangaroa in the early 1840s, Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Marin) seemed to be the exemplary model of a Marist Brother, but his workload left him utterly exhausted. This was all the more true at the end of the decade when he was enlisted to labour over the construction of a large stone building, intended for a Catholic college in Auckland, despite complaints to Father Forest of a painful leg injury: “I do not believe that anyone has ever been forced at the Hermitage to work when they were ill or disabled, nor has anyone been refused medicine or relief; otherwise it would be more like slavery than a religion.”<sup>45</sup> He was accustomed to hard work, and had proven himself during Father Petit-Jean’s absence in 1841, when Brother Élie-Régis was virtually left alone on the mission until Father Rozet’s arrival in 1843. Father Petit-Jean did not fail to acknowledge this: “As early as the year 1841 we had a small harvest of wheat and potatoes. This second year, 1842, we have at present in the granary 8 to 9 bushels of wheat, some sixty baskets of potatoes, about 25 to 30 baskets of corn, gourds and some vegetables; the whole lot is the fruit of our Brother Élie’s labours.”<sup>46</sup> But unlike the Brothers based in the Bay of Islands, Brother Élie-Régis was an active missionary in the field rather than simply a labourer, and his duties as a catechist, though overwhelming at times, were a rewarding part of his daily existence on the Whangaroa and Whakatāne missions. He wrote to Father Colin from Whangaroa in 1842:

I have many occupations, for I am obliged to be catechist, carpenter, joiner, farmer, tailor, clothes-washer sometimes, and cook sometimes too; in addition to that, the care of a poultry-yard, poultry and other animals we have. There are truly unusual graces for missionaries here, for amid all of this there would be the work for three people and it has to be done by one alone [...] Among all these duties, it is the role of catechist which comes first, that is to say that if I learn of an ill person in a tribe, I drop everything to go and see him, instruct him and baptise him if he is in danger of dying. I say prayers with the nearest natives, morning and evening, but

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<sup>45</sup> « (...) je ne crois pas qu’on aient jamais contraint personne à l’Hermitage de travailler lorsqu’on étoit malade ou infirme, ni refusé les remèdes ou soulagements, autrement seroit plutôt un esclavage qu’une religion », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1113, 11 January 1852, Otaki, Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Marin) to Colin, pp. 2-3.

<sup>46</sup> « (...) dès l’année 1841 on eut une petite récolte de blé et de pommes de terre. La seconde année, 1842, on a actuellement au grenier 8 à 9 boisseaux de blé, une soixantaine de paniers de pommes de terre, environ 25 ou 30 paniers de maïs, des courges et quelques légumes; le tout, fruit de la sueur de notre frère Élie », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 192, late August 1842, Sydney, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 3.

when I am able to go among the more distant tribes, I feel much consolation because I then have the occasion to teach them of the truths of our holy religion.<sup>47</sup>

Following a transfer to the Bay of Plenty, Brother Élie-Régis continued his manifold duties, which included building a pisé presbytery for Father Lampila, a wooden presbytery for Father Chouvet and a wooden chapel in Whakatāne, and tending to the garden in Whakatāne. Most importantly, he was able to act as a catechist on a daily basis, especially during Father Lampila's frequent absences.<sup>48</sup> Urged on by a Māori catechist with the baptismal name François, the Brother even engaged in religious debates with CMS missionary John Alexander Wilson,<sup>49</sup> who established a station in Ōpōtiki in the early 1840s. These debates took place in the common medium of the Māori language and reflect the very different nature of the 'teaching' brothers and the 'coadjutor' brothers; Élie-Régis in particular demonstrated academic and linguistic aptitudes and a biblical knowledge equal to those of the Marist Fathers. This was also true of Brothers Marie-Nizier and Joseph-Xavier in Wallis and Futuna, who tended to sign their letters off with their names followed by 'cate', an abbreviation for 'catechist'.

While the often solitary Marist Fathers continuously pleaded in vain for more Fathers and Brothers to be sent over from France to join the Catholic missions, perhaps they should also have been pleading for missionary sisters to act as catechists for Māori. In 1842 Louis Perret had written to Father Colin in favour of Catholic sisters, suggesting that they "would do enormous good, whether among European or native children, whether among the poor and the ill. Only the female religious can come to the aid of

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<sup>47</sup> « J'ai beaucoup d'occupation, car je suis obligé d'être catéchiste, charpentier, menuisier, cultivateur, tailleur, lavandier quelque-fois, cuisinier aussi quelquefois; outre cela le soin d'une basse-cour, volaille et autre animaux que nous avons. Il y a vraiment des grâces particulière pour les missionnaires, car au milieu de tout cela il y aurait bien de l'ouvrage pour trois personnes et il faut que sa [*sic*] se fasse par un seul [...] Parmi toutes ces fonctions c'est celle de catéchiste qui passe la première, c'est à dire que si j'apprend qu'il y a un malade dans une tribu, j'abandonne tout pour aller le voir, l'instruire et le baptiser [*sic*] s'il est en danger de mort. Je fais la prière aux naturels les plus près, matin et soir, mais quand je puis aller dans les tribus les plus éloignés, j'éprouve beaucoup de consolation parce que j'ai alors l'occasion de les instruire des vérités de notre sainte religion », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 148, 7 May 1842, Whangaroa, Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Martin) to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>48</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 520, 30 June 1846, Whakatane, Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Marin) to the Brothers at the Hermitage, pp. 5, 7.

<sup>49</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 520, 30 June 1846, Whakatane, Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Marin) to the Brothers at the Hermitage, pp. 12-28.

every human woe.”<sup>50</sup> Yet it was not until 1850 that sisters were brought into the equation and established their education, nursing and catechetical works; Father Forest had advised against recruiting female missionaries in the 1840s, claiming that British dominance in New Zealand and the resulting marginalisation of the Marists would hinder any achievements they might have made anyway.<sup>51</sup> Some Fathers, despite their extreme veneration of the Virgin Mary, perhaps also undermined the value of female missionaries; it was not uncommon at that time for men to view women as delicate and unfit for the arduous undertakings of missionary work, hence Father Bataillon’s indignant reception of Marie Françoise Perroton in Wallis. But Perroton and fellow Frenchwoman Suzanne Aubert, who were both particularly headstrong, represented the changing nature of women’s roles in nineteenth-century European society. Interestingly, Bishop Pompallier maintained a relatively happy rapport with Aubert and many of the missionary Sisters in his diocese, even if his relationships with the Marist Fathers and several Brothers were riddled with conflicts and complaints. Since the Sisters did not challenge Pompallier’s authority, he perhaps did not feel threatened by them and could therefore afford to be less austere towards them.

#### ***5.4 The Catholic Bishop versus the Marists***

In the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, Pompallier was the Pope’s representative, and therefore the highest Catholic authority in New Zealand, an authority which the Marist missionaries had no option but to respect and obey. The commitment they made to the Church and to the Society of Mary was one of unconditional obedience, which left them largely powerless in the running of the Māori mission. Thomson concludes:

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<sup>50</sup> « (...) feraient un bien immense soit auprès des enfants des Européens, soit auprès des enfants des naturels, soit aussi auprès des pauvres, et des malades. La religieuse seule peut venir au secours de toutes les misères humaines », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 163, 20 May 1842, Kororareka, Perret to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 314, 3 February 1844, Bay of Islands, Forest to Épalle, p. 1.

Thus, whereas the C.M.S. missionary possessed a considerable degree of independence, having his own home and lands, receiving a salary, and writing long, indignant letters to the Parent Committee if he felt his rights had been infringed, the Catholic missionary, reared in a totally different tradition, was allowed no possessions, and little will of his own.<sup>52</sup>

From the hundreds of letters sent from the Marists in New Zealand to Father Colin in France, it is clear that the Marists did not suffer in silence; they were subjects, but subjects with opinions nonetheless.

On the stations, the pairing-up of two Fathers or a Father and a Brother was no easy task since different personalities, experiences and opinions easily resulted in clashes or uneasiness. In the smaller missions of Wallis and Futuna, to which only a handful of missionaries were assigned, there was no escaping such clashes; the incompatibility of Fathers Servant and Roulleaux in Futuna resulted in a division of the island, until Roulleaux was re-assigned to the Fiji mission.<sup>53</sup> More frequently the Marist Fathers found solidarity in each other, probably because they shared a common regional origin, education and family influence, all of which were more or less intertwined since Lyon fostered Catholic instruction and devotion to Mary. Instead they concentrated their frustrations on Bishops Pompallier and Bataillon. Discord between Bataillon and the Marist Provincial for Oceania, Calinon, stemmed from conflicting instructions: Calinon was encouraged to establish a procure house whereas Bataillon had been led to believe that the Vicar Apostolic ought to have the monopoly over funding and resources. Calinon complained to Marist headquarters: “Already apprehension is rising at seeing the establishment here of what we call the New Zealand system, a system whereby relief supplies are centralised around the bishop and subjects who work in the distant missions are left in destitution.”<sup>54</sup>

In 1848 the Auckland and Wellington dioceses were created, yet the Pacific Islands, where the Marists were established as early as 1837, were not classified as dioceses

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<sup>52</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 92.

<sup>53</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 332, 16 June & 10 August 1844, Futuna, Roulleaux to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Déjà s’élèvent des appréhensions de voir s’établir ici ce qu’on appelle le système de la Nouvelle Zélande, système de centraliser les secours autour de l’évêque et de laisser dans le dénuement les sujets qui travaillent dans les missions éloignées », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 344, 27 July 1844, Tonga, Calinon to Maître pierre, p. 1.



until the 1960s. The reason for New Zealand's unique treatment here stemmed from a very different political drama with no international or interdenominational overtones; it was a conflict between Vicar Apostolic Bishop Pompallier and the Marist Superior-General Father Colin. But the circumstances behind this conflict are themselves a complex story of miscommunication, mishandling of funds and disillusionment. The French Marist Fathers were prepared to face the dangers and the privations of missionary life, some were also determined to contend with the influence of Protestant missionaries, but the most difficult challenge for many was obeying the bishop and vicar apostolic in New Zealand, Monsignor Pompallier.

The tension between Pompallier and the Marists is a difficult and delicate story to portray, since Pompallier is today revered as an outstanding pioneer missionary by Māori and Pākehā Catholics particularly in the Auckland diocese, while Marist communities in the Wellington diocese and in France tend to sympathise with Father Colin and the Marist missionaries and view Pompallier unfavourably. The early Marist missionaries saw the bishop's authoritative behaviour as a means to obtain greater mana, so that his mana as a European among Māori would eventually be paramount;<sup>55</sup> perhaps Pompallier was deliberately acting like a rangatira, but his missionaries wanted a leader who would take a Marist approach to mission work. It is also likely that the bishop struggled to reconcile his great zeal and optimism with his temperamental nature, his frustrations and his desire for absolute authority.

Since it was the bishop's role to allocate resources to the indigenous missions, some missionaries inevitably found themselves in disagreement with not only Pompallier, but even Viard, Redwood and the Irish bishops who would dominate the Catholic Church in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Pompallier had been, despite his shortcomings, dedicated to the success of the early Māori Mission and responsible for attracting Māori interest in Catholicism. Father Petit-Jean praised him for his many abilities and roles in the mission, especially when there were just seven Fathers and six Brothers in the whole country and the demand for missionaries was extremely high:

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<sup>55</sup> Turner, p. 40.

We are overburdened with occupations. That which is purely material often takes up a great deal of time. You ought to see in particular our bishop, with so few priests for such a vast vicariate, fulfil all the functions of a bishop, a parish priest and sometimes a schoolmaster, businessman and interpreter. He has compelled the respect of even the English through his kindness and manners. When one considers the advancements of the Catholic faith in New Zealand, one must acknowledge his great skill.<sup>56</sup>

Scholars have commented on Pompallier's success as a nineteenth-century missionary, with regard more to his "enlightened approach to evangelisation"<sup>57</sup> than to his actual impact on Māori spirituality. Ken Arvidson for example credits Pompallier with showing "prudence in relating the teachings of the Church to his contemporary context" when advising the Marist priests on how to set about being a successful missionary to Māori.<sup>58</sup> In short, Pompallier believed in a gradual conversion that encouraged the preservation of Māori customs and beliefs that did not conflict too strongly with the values of the Catholic Church. The official *Instructions* he wrote in 1841 can be divided into two sections, one dealing with an enculturating technique of evangelisation, the other with the defence of the Catholic Church against Protestantism and its representatives.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the most meaningful testimony to Pompallier's early achievements on the mission comes from the highly esteemed missionary Mother Suzanne Aubert, who knew Pompallier well when she was Sister Mary-Joseph in the Auckland diocese. Her efforts to revive the Māori mission in the latter part of the nineteenth century were exceptional, and derived partly from the influence of Pompallier, so that "(t)hroughout her life Suzanne gave credit to Pompallier for the vision which she had the capacity to realise and to share with others."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> « On est surchargé d'occupations. Ce qui est purement matériel prend souvent beaucoup de temps. Il faudrait voir en particulier notre évêque avec si peu de prêtres pour un vicariat si vaste remplir à la fois toutes les fonctions d'évêque, de curé et quelquefois même de maître d'école, d'homme d'affaires et d'interprète. Il a forcé l'estime même des Anglais par ses complaisances et ses manières. Quand on considère les progrès de la foi catholique dans la Nouvelle-Zélande, on lui accorde de suite une grande habileté », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 53, 18 March 1840, Whangaroa, Petit-Jean to Paillasson (brother-in-law), p. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Piper, 'Missionary and Maori', p. 36.

<sup>58</sup> Arvidson, p. 81.

<sup>59</sup> Pompallier, 'Instructions aux travaux de la mission', 1841.

<sup>60</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 62.

The overall impression of Bishop Pompallier, as discerned from his early letters to Father Colin, is of a man given tremendous responsibility, but without the means to effect any change. He reproached the Society of Mary and the Propagation of the Faith for this, since they were expected to provide funding and new recruits for his vicariate, and pleaded his own cause with little sympathy for the circumstances in which the Marists and charitable institutions in France found themselves in the early nineteenth century. The Society of Mary was young and inexperienced, and had only a small number of followers; hence four of the first band of missionaries to Oceania (Fathers Servant, Bataillon, Chanel and Bret) and three other early missionaries to New Zealand (Fathers Baty, Séon, Forest) were also among the first twenty Marist members. But the Society could not send every single member into the mission field when France had its own demands for priests, and in any case the missionary vocation did not appeal to every man who took an interest in becoming a Marist, just as every man who became a Marist was not necessarily a suitable candidate for missionary work. The Propagation of the Faith had formed just a decade before the Pope approved the Marists as an official order, and was therefore a young organisation too; in addition there was no obligation to sustain a particular mission, because the organisation was global and divided its collected funds between numerous missions at various stages of their apostolic work. While the bishop would have been well aware of this, he sympathised only with the situation in New Zealand, which was admittedly a pitiable one in terms of poverty, loneliness and helplessness during the first four years of the mission:

(...) imagine a vicar apostolic who sees himself obliged to distribute his small company to several places to confront the enemy that attacks from all sides; who is counting on reinforcements at the end of 7 to 8 months; whose entire funds are exhausted by the costs of sea voyages; who sees heresy gaining ground everywhere and banishing the rightful ministry from these places; who finds himself nonetheless overburdened by the numerous tribes who are turning to the Catholic faith; who sees them hounded by a thousand falsities, humiliated by his poverty, his isolation and his incapacity to instruct them all at the same time in accordance with their wishes; who receives not a single piece of news, from neither his colleagues in need and in peril, nor his correspondents in Europe; who hears each week the incessant complaints of the

natives who murmur, who complain that his promises of reinforcements have not been fulfilled.<sup>61</sup>

In Pompallier's eyes, the great battle between Catholicism and Protestantism could only be won with numbers, but priests and brothers were slow to arrive and Pompallier was left feeling frustrated at the Marist Superior-General. Despite Pompallier's continual pleas to Father Colin for more Marist missionaries, the Society could not, and in some respects would not, fulfil his demands, but the bishop simply saw this as unnecessary apprehension on Colin's part:

Alas! How I tremble before the Lord to see that in Europe one *hesitates* too much; through too much prudence one fails to take up opportunities which may not present themselves again; heresy knows all too well how to take advantage of these, to the detriment of our holy mother, the Roman Catholic Church!<sup>62</sup>

Pompallier's concern that the expansion of Protestantism in New Zealand would signal the end of the Catholic mission was the driving force behind his pathetic letters in which he desperately tried to obtain more men for his vicariate. Robert Maunsell, and undoubtedly his fellow CMS missionaries, had portrayed Pompallier as the Antichrist,<sup>63</sup> a title which not only humiliated the bishop but led him to fear that such a reputation among Māori would obstruct him in his missionary efforts. While this did not seem to be the case, Father Petit-Jean reveals in a letter from 1841 that the slander lingered among iwi and hapū who had not yet come into contact with the Marist missionaries: "In one tribe, Monsignor was required to append his signature to

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<sup>61</sup> « (...) figurez-vous un vicaire apostolique qui se voit obligé de diviser sa petite troupe sur plusieurs points pour faire face à l'ennemi qui assaillit de toutes parts et qui compte sur du renfort au bout de 7 à huit mois; dont tous les fonds se trouvent épuisés par des frais de voyages sur les mers, qui voit de tous côtés l'hérésie gagner du terrain et en proscrire le ministère légitime; qui se trouve néanmoins surchargé par de nombreuses tribus qui tournent à la foi catholique, qui les voit harcelées de mille faussetés, humiliées de sa pauvreté, de son isolement et de son incapacité à les instruire toutes à la fois selon leurs désirs; qui ne reçoit aucune nouvelle ni de ses collaborateurs dans le besoin et le péril, ni de ses correspondants d'Europe; qui ne cesse chaque semaine d'entendre les plaintes des naturels qui murmurent, qui se plaignent de ce que ses promesses de renfort ne s'accomplissent point », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 37, 28 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 2-3.

<sup>62</sup> « Hélas! Combien je gémis devant le Seigneur de voir qu'en Europe on *hésite* trop; par trop de prudence on manque du *à propos* qui ne se représenteront pas quelquefois et dont l'hérésie sait bien profiter au détriment de notre sainte mère, l'église catholique romaine! », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 110, 10 September 1841, Tauranga, Pompallier to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> See Maunsell, Robert, *Ko Te Anati-Karaiti* (1838).

a document passed around between the natives; they asked him to sign it ‘Antichrist’ because this tribe still knew him only by this name.’<sup>64</sup>

If the Anglican and Wesleyan missionaries tried to sabotage his reputation, Bishop Pompallier was still able to command the immediate respect of Māori and many Europeans from the moment he arrived in Hokianga. Father Viard, who would accompany Pompallier on his expeditions in the first half of 1840, was in awe of the bishop’s influence over Māori and depicts him as a hero in the following passage from a letter written one month after Viard arrived in the Bay of Islands:

The entire pacification of a tribe who, already in arms, was about to sanction injustice by way of violence, pacification obtained solely by the influence of the personality and virtue of our holy bishop. Here is another trait to add to those that do so much honour to our holy religion. Four natives had destroyed a Frenchman’s house and, adding insult to injury, had tied his hands behind his back. All our compatriots who reside in this island felt personally outraged and made it known to the chief that, if the stolen objects were not returned, they would take them back themselves by force. The chief understood the fairness of their complaint and promised that he would do the right thing. But these good intentions did not hold against the pernicious counsels of some rather ill-intentioned people. The second response informed the French that, far from satisfying their demand, the tribe was driving them from its land, and had weapons to oppose their threats. Monsignor, anticipating how extreme the situation would become, resolved to prevent this tragedy. He set off with a representative of the person wronged and a Bay of Islands chief, along with two captains whose ships were anchored in the harbour. On approaching the tribe, they caught sight of a mob armed with axes and rifles. Bishop Pompallier’s companions advised him to ward off so imminent a danger with some kind of peace signal. ‘Have no fear,’ he said to them; ‘all I must do is show myself and let my pastoral cross be seen.’ Indeed as soon as they were near the shore the natives let out cries of joy and prepared to give him a suitable welcome. He had barely touched the ground when all these savages, numbering three hundred, flocked around him. They soon acknowledged their mistake. The chief of the tribe, after a moment of silence and reflection, declared on behalf of all those that not only would the stolen objects be returned, but that a tidy piece of land would be offered to the foreigner as compensation for the insult that he had received. Now, he added, we seek his friendship. At

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<sup>64</sup> « Dans une tribu monseigneur requis d’apposer sa signature à un écrit passé entre des naturels, on demandoit de lui qu’il se signât antéchrist, parce que cette tribu ne le connoissoit encore que sous ce nom », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 87, 7 March 1841, Whangaroa, Petitjean to Paillason, p. 2.

these words, there was absolute joy all around. The natives threw down their weapons, crying aloud ‘Epikopo is with us; he will bring us all happiness’.<sup>65</sup>

### 5.5 *The two sides of Bishop Pompallier*

The elevated status of the Bishop within the Catholic mission was made clear by the grandiosity of his early exchanges with Māori. A tall and articulate Frenchman, Pompallier impressed Māori with his affluence and generosity, offering them ceremonial objects as well as the usual trading items, or promising to send them at a later date if he did not have them in his possession. While this affluence was a complete façade, not in terms of Pompallier’s private wealth but with regard to the church mission he represented, it was an important and effective means to obtaining acceptance among Māori. In 1842, when the mission reached a financial nadir and its poverty became visible, Father Forest revealed the lasting impact that Pompallier’s majestic appearance and material approach to evangelisation had had among Māori outside of the Bay of Islands; he informed Father Colin in Lyon that the bishop had “(...) acquired the reputation of a rich and opulent man, to the point that in several

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<sup>65</sup> « L’entière pacification d’une tribu qui, déjà sous les armes, s’apprêtait à appuyer l’injustice par la violence, pacification obtenue par le seul ascendant du caractère et de la vertu de notre saint évêque. Voilà un trait de plus à ajouter à ceux qui font tant d’honneur à notre sainte religion. Quatre insulaires avaient dévasté la maison d’un Français et, ajoutant les voies de fait à la spoliation, lui avaient attaché les mains derrière le dos. Tous nos compatriotes qui résident dans l’île se regardèrent comme personnellement outragés et firent signifier au chef que, si les objets volés n’étaient pas rendus, ils iraient eux même les enlever de force. Celui ci comprit la justice de leur réclamation et promit qu’il y ferait droit. Mais ces bonnes dispositions ne tinrent pas contre les conseils pernicieux de quelques personnes assez malintentionnés. Seconde réponse apprit aux Français que loin de satisfaire à leur demande, la tribu les repoussait de son territoire, et qu’elle avait des armes à opposer à leurs menaces. Monseigneur prévoyant à quelles extrémités on allait en venir, résolut de prévenir ce malheur. Il s’embarqua avec deux capitaines dont les navires étaient en rade, un chargé d’affaire de la personne lésée et un chef de la Baie des îles. En approchant de la tribu, ils aperçurent une multitude armée de haches et de fusils. Les compagnons de m(onsei)g(neu)r Pompallier lui conseillèrent de conjurer par quelque signe de paix un danger si imminent. Ne craignez rien, leur dit-il; il suffirait de me montrer et de laisser paraître ma croix pastorale. En effet, dès qu’il fut près du rivage, les naturels poussèrent des cris de joie et se disposèrent à lui faire une réception convenable. A peine eût-il mis pieds à terre que tous ces sauvages, au nombre de trois cents, se pressèrent autour de lui. Ils eurent bientôt reconnu leur faute. Le chef de la tribu, après un moment de silence et de réflexion, déclara au nom de tous que non-seulement les objets volés seraient rendus, mais qu’une jolie terre serait encore offerte à l’étranger comme réparation de l’insulte qu’il avait reçue. Maintenant, ajoutait-il, nous ambitionnons son amitié. A ces mots, l’allégresse fut complète et universelle. Les naturels jetaient leurs armes en s’écriant: Epicopo est avec nous; il nous rend tous heureux », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 45, January 1840, Bay of Islands, Viard to Noailly, pp. 1-2.

places it is still believed that he is a relative of Louis-Philippe, the reputation of an extremely good man who refuses nothing.<sup>66</sup>

As expected, many Māori in the upper North Island eagerly anticipated the fulfilment of Pompallier's promises only to find their patience tested to the limit, which meant that the rapid progress made by Pompallier could just as rapidly have been undone; Māori were left feeling cheated and distrustful of the Catholics, so much so that in some cases they defected to the seemingly wealthy Protestant mission instead.<sup>67</sup> On some occasions, aggrieved Māori would take the initiative to procure themselves a missionary; in the following extract Father Garin recounts a visit to Kororāreka by the Ngāpuhi chief Rewa. According to Garin, Rewa said to Pompallier:

(...) you had promised me an Ariki. Where is he now? You are a liar. I had reared pigs. I had built a house for him, and now it is falling into ruin and still you do not send one to me. I pass for an impostor among my tribes, my heart is filled with anguish and affliction, and I am in darkness. Where is your Epikopo, my subjects say to me mockingly. Where is your ariki. This chief, speaking to Monsignor on that evening, considered all of us and made his selection then and there; a moment later he left Monsignor and as he was going he came up to me and took my hand, saying to Father Epalle: This is the one I need.<sup>68</sup>

While Garin could not take up the position at the time, and remained instead at the Bay of Islands to act as the Marist provincial in New Zealand, he did become a missionary to northern Māori when appointed to the Kaipara mission station in 1843.

Although Pompallier was the one who had made the promises, Māori often badgered and begrudged the Marist Fathers over their grievances since the Fathers were viewed

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<sup>66</sup> « Monseigneur s'étant acquis la réputation d'un homme riche et opulent au point que dans plusieurs endroits encore on croit qu'il est parent de Louis Philipe, la réputation d'un homme extrêmement bon qui ne refuse rien », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 174, 2 June 1842, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup> Piper, 'Missionary and Maori', p. 17.

<sup>68</sup> « (...) tu m'avais promis un Ariki. Où est-il maintenant? Tu es un faux. J'avais élevé des porcs. J'avais bâti une maison pour lui et voilà qu'elle tombe en ruine et tu ne m'en envois pas. Je passe pour un imposteur au milieu de mes tribus, mon coeur est rempli de douleur et d'affliction, je suis dans les ténèbres. Où est ton epicopo, me disent mes sujets en se moquant de moi. Où est ton ariki. Ce chef, ce soir en parlant à monseigneur, nous considérait tous, et là il faisait son choix; un moment après il a quitté m(onsei)g(neu)r et en s'en allant il est venu me prendre la main en disant au p(ère) Épal: Voilà celui qu'il me faut », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 99, 12 June and 17 July 1841, Garin to students in Meximieux, p. 16.

as the bishop's representatives in his absence and were far more accessible than the bishop himself. If the Fathers were seen as agents of Pompallier, they certainly did not enjoy the same status as he did among Māori. Modestly dressed in cassocks and denied access to mission items which could have served as gifts to Māori, the Fathers very perceptibly paled in comparison to their extravagant bishop and could not therefore have had the same effect as pioneer evangelisers in such a materially-driven setting. In 1840 Father Servant protested at the loss or lack of mana that resulted from Pompallier's dominance, and from his excessive gift-giving to win over Northland Māori:

(...) it is through presents that we gain their friendship and their trust, but it seems that the bishop alone should not be the only one doing favours, and a simple priest, though not of high rank, should not have only refusals to make and be called hard-hearted in the natives' language; the bishop who begins a mission must also take the care to make his priests respected, to make sure that they have all their influence over the chiefs and the other natives, for priests who are not very well respected in the eyes of the natives will have difficulty succeeding. Thus when Monsignor left the establishment in Hokianga to come to the Bay of Islands, Father Baty and I had a thousand troubles with the natives who incessantly made threats to abandon everything; the greatest chiefs have retained little esteem for us.<sup>69</sup>

To Pompallier's credit, the Marists in his charge could see that the bishop's principal motive was a genuine desire to fulfil the original mission of saving Māori souls through Catholic evangelisation. Unfortunately Pompallier's preoccupation with satisfying Māori demands meant the neglect of the priests and Brothers in his vicariate:

Monsignor thinks only of his natives, sees only his natives, speaks only of his natives, and acts only for his natives. These natives constantly come and go from the house. We must continually give them pork and potatoes and flour and clothing; in short, nothing is refused them. On the

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<sup>69</sup> « (...) c'est par des présents qu'on gagne leur amitié et leur confiance, mais il semble qu'il ne faudroit pas que l'évêque seul fit des faveurs, et qu'un simple prêtre, bien qu'il ne soit pas élevé en dignité, n'ait presque que de refus à faire, et soit appelé un coeur dur dans le langage des naturels; il faudroit aussi que l'évêque qui commence une mission prît le soin de faire considérer ses prêtres en sorte qu'ils aient toute leur influence sur les chefs et les autres naturels, car des prêtres qui ne sont pas très considérés aux yeux des naturels auront peine à réussir. Aussi lorsque m(onsei)g(neu)r a eu quitté l'établissement d'Hokianga pour venir à la Baie des îles, le p(ère) Baty et moi nous avons eu mille peines avec les naturels qui ne cessoient de faire des menaces de tout abandonner; les plus grands chefs ont conservé peu d'estime pour nous », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 3.



other hand, our poor Fathers have very often been lacking in basic necessities; they have not always had what we offer here, in abundance, to the natives. They cannot give away anything in their mission stations, for they have nothing. The Maoris then tell them that they [the Fathers] are not good like the bishop, that they do not want to give anything to them [the Maori], whereas the bishop gives them many things.<sup>70</sup>

Undoubtedly Pompallier had upset Māori by making promises for priests, churches and material items he could not deliver because of a lack of funds, but Pompallier's argument was that of an optimist; he genuinely believed that as he made progress in New Zealand devout Catholics in France would be moved to invest their money in the Māori mission or abandon their mother country to serve as missionaries in his vicariate. This explains his inability to carry out promises and plans regarding the missions and is ultimately the reason why the Marist missionaries began to lose respect for their bishop. According to Father Comte:

Monsignor is two different men, a dreamer and a practical man. Often one contradicts the other. You see that there is nothing firm, nothing in detail, nothing thought through, no firm plan... Thus one project fails as he puts forward the next. The result is that after some time you lose [...] all the trust that you should have had in him and that he inspired in you in the first place.<sup>71</sup>

From the detailed examples provided by Father Servant in 1840, it is obvious that Pompallier did indeed have contradictory elements to his personality. Most of the early missionaries had at least one incident they could recall where the Bishop flew into a rage over what they viewed as a very minor issue. The dignified, well-liked bishop for whom Māori and English had developed great admiration did not bear any

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<sup>70</sup> « Monseigneur ne pense qu'à ses naturels, il ne voit que ses naturels, il ne parle que de ses naturels, il n'agit que pour ses naturels. Ces naturels vont et viennent continuellement dans la maison. Il faut leur donner continuellement et porc et pommes de terre et farine et sucre et habit, en un mot, rien ne leur est refusé. Tandis que nos pauvres pères ont manqué bien souvent du nécessaire, ils n'avoient pas toujours ce que l'on donne ici en abondance aux naturels. Ils ne peuvent rien donner dans leurs missions; ils n'ont rien. Les Maoris leur disent ensuite qu'ils ne sont pas bons comme l'évêque; qu'ils ne veulent rien leur donner, tandis que l'évêque leur donne beaucoup de choses », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 247, 26 March 1843, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 10.

<sup>71</sup> « Mon(sei)g(neu)r porte deux hommes différents en lui, un homme de spéculation et un homme de pratique. Souvent l'un contredit l'autre. On voit qu'il n'a rien d'arrêté, rien d'approfondi, rien d'examiné d'avance, point de plan arrêté... Aussi les projets se succèdent et se renversent presque en même temps. Ce qui fait qu'après quelque temps on perd... toute la confiance qu'on devrait avoir en lui, et qu'il vous avait d'abord inspirée », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 136, 5-6 March 1842, Akaroa, Comte to Colin, p. 5.

resemblance to the callous despot depicted in the following extracts from Servant's letter:

Monsignor's company has often been a source of grief and bitterness for me; I do not know what monstrous faults there are in me to be so severely persecuted. Besides, if these bitter corrections were intended to make me better, I hardly realised it, but I believe that they were of a nature so as to offend, to leave one heartbroken... — In New Zealand, I do not know how many times I have heard the most humiliating words in his cries of indignation; my punishments have sometimes been the same as Brother Michel's; all kinds of threats roared over my head; warnings that aimed at bringing out my guiltiness were sometimes given in the brother's presence...— Here in the Bay of Islands Father Petit, having asked a native chief to return objects that had been lent to him, was deeply humiliated by Monsignor in the presence of this very chief.<sup>72</sup>

When Servant wrote to Pompallier himself about these injustices, and threatened to leave the mission if he did not receive an answer, Pompallier's response was this: "it is not fitting for a bishop to receive conditions from a priest,"<sup>73</sup> and Father Épalle was deployed to persuade Servant to remain in the Māori Mission. Interestingly there is a strong similarity between Pompallier's volatile behaviour towards the Fathers and that of certain Fathers towards the Brothers who had been assigned to assist them with their mission stations. The hierarchy within French society doubtless facilitated Pompallier's sense of superiority, given that he was from an aristocratic milieu, but both Brothers and Fathers generally shared a humble rural background; if some Fathers felt entitled to supremacy over the Brothers, they were perhaps influenced by the socio-political structure of the previous century, when the Church hierarchy was arguably more pronounced. Furthermore, Turner asserts that, "class distinctions brought from Europe were deliberately cultivated and perpetuated within the

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<sup>72</sup> « La compagnie de m(onsei)g(neu)r a été souvent pour moi une source de chagrin et d'amertume; je ne sais quels monstres de fautes il y avoit en moi pour être poursuivis à outrance, du reste, si ces corrections amères avoient eu pour but de me rendre meilleur, je ne m'en suis guère aperçu, mais je crois qu'elles étoient de nature à froisser, à navrer le cœur... — A la Nouvelle-Zélande, j'ai entendu, je ne sais combien de fois, les paroles les plus humiliantes dans les crises de l'indignation; les punitions m'étoient quelquefois communes avec le frère Michel; toutes sortes de menaces grondoient sur ma tête; des monitions tendant à faire ressortir ma culpabilité se faisoient quelquefois en présence du frère... — Ici à la Baie des îles le p(ère) Petit, pour avoir réclamé des objets prêtés à un chef de naturels, a été fortement humilié par m(onsei)g(neu)r en présence de ce même chef », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, pp. 3-4.

<sup>73</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 4.

hierarchy of the church, in the interests of exalting the priests and the bishop of the church by the acquisition of mana in both European and Maori terms.”<sup>74</sup>

Through Pompallier’s mismanagement of funds and tendency to leave priests isolated or in serious states of poverty for months at a time, the bishop angered not only his entire Marist entourage but Father Colin himself. Colin’s only knowledge of the early mission was through the eyes of his Marists in New Zealand, Wallis and Futuna. Although the Marist Fathers recognised that their bishop bore the full weight of the experimental Catholic mission on his shoulders and was expected to administer to the vast territory labelled ‘Western Oceania’, their personal sufferings forced them to act; within two years of the mission’s commencement, several Marist priests were taking advantage of Pompallier’s frequent absences to send the Marist Superior-General their accounts of the bishop’s incompetence. From late 1841 to mid-1842, while Bishop Pompallier was away for nine months in the Pacific Islands, the Marist Fathers were especially disheartened with their situation in New Zealand and disillusioned with their bishop, and consequently wrote of their privations, complaints, feelings and suggestions to Father Colin. As Father Épalle put it in his letter of complaint: “The Catholic missionaries of New Zealand are hungry, because the mission is reduced to a state of extreme poverty, and the public in this growing town, informed by eyewitnesses, repeat: the bishop’s priests have nothing to eat”.<sup>75</sup> This of course weighed heavily on Colin, who had sent these men into the field in the first place. He had not recommended Pompallier as the vicar apostolic, but had certainly shown approval for the appointment and had trusted that Pompallier’s time as a chaplain to the Marist Brothers in France made him a suitable custodian of the Marist missionaries he would send to Oceania. At first Pompallier’s attitude confirmed this; he wrote warmly to Colin and encouraged the preservation of Marist spirituality in New Zealand. But, as has been demonstrated, it was not long before the missionaries in Oceania were complaining that their vicar apostolic was imprudent, temperamental, and inept at administration.

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<sup>74</sup> Turner, p. 35.

<sup>75</sup> « (...) les missionnaires catholiques de la Nouvelle-Zélande ont faim, parce que la mission est réduite à la dernière misère, et le public de cette ville naissante instruit par des témoins oculaires répète: les prêtres de l’évêque n’ont pas à manger », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 127, 19 January 1842, Bay of Islands, Épalle to Colin, p. 3.

Pompallier dominated the mission in many ways; he chose locations for mission stations, appointed missionaries, and controlled and distributed mission funds and resources. These were his roles as Vicar Apostolic, an appointment that had been made by the Sacra Propaganda Fide in Rome, but as a Bishop he expected to have authority over his missionaries to the same degree as was enjoyed by the French episcopate over diocesan priests. The conflicting nature of the affiliation between the Society of Mary and Pompallier became more and more problematic as Pompallier saw the Fathers and Brothers looking to Colin for leadership, when the bishop's power was supposed to be absolute. Pompallier saw the same difficulty with the Jesuits and the nearby Picpus Fathers, who had been entrusted with the eastern part of the Pacific.

(...) for the foreign missions, I prefer the rule of the order of Saint Francis of Assisi to that of the cherished Company of Jesus. Saint Francis of Assisi desires that the order's subjects who devote themselves to the foreign missions are so free to follow their love of God that even the superior-general cannot hold them back, and in apostolic works religious are almost entirely in the hands of the episcopate [...] I do not see here that God blesses the works of certain missionaries who have ideas contrary to these ones and who have brought with them the regulations of the neighbouring congregation of this mission.<sup>76</sup>

The discord between bishop and Marist escalated as Pompallier became aware of the way he was being portrayed in letters sent directly from the missionaries to their superior-general. Subsequently, Pompallier's alleged autocracy extended to the screening of letters sent by the Marists, so that even Fathers Bataillon and Chanel in Wallis and Futuna were expected to send their letters to New Zealand to be later forwarded to France.<sup>77</sup> Certainly Pompallier would have seen this as a necessary

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<sup>76</sup> « (...) je préfère pour les missions étrangères la règle de l'ordre de s(ain)t François d'Assise à celle de la chère compagnie de Jésus. S(ain)t François d'Assise veut que les sujets de l'ordre qui désirent se consacrer aux missions étrangères soient tellement libres de suivre leur attrait de Dieu que le supérieur général même ne peut les empêcher, et dans les travaux apostoliques les religieux sont presque entièrement entre les mains de l'épiscopat [...] Je ne vois pas ici que Dieu bénisse beaucoup les travaux de quelques uns qui ont des idées contraires à ceci et qui ont apporté avec eux des règlements de la congrégation voisine de cette mission », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 10.

<sup>77</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 5.

precaution, given that the general public had access to missionary letters through Catholic publications, as Pompallier learned in 1840:

For my part, I read with my own eyes in newspapers over here, at the Bay of Islands, two long letters that I wrote to you myself a year ago, the faithful English translation of which I now happen to possess in my room; they feature in Sydney's Catholic newspaper: the *Australasian Chronicle*. It is therefore most important to be prudent in divulging letters through the Annals.<sup>78</sup>

As Pompallier correctly assumed, his men were becoming increasingly disobedient. In a letter to Father Colin in 1836, before he had any idea of the enormous task that lay ahead, Pompallier had suggested that:

(...) if these missions succeed, it is largely because the regulars live well within the spirit of their institute; for when they are neglectful under this relationship, they soon cease to be obedient to the vicar apostolic in everything that concerns him, and in that way they compromise the success of an entire mission.<sup>79</sup>

It would seem that, on the contrary, Pompallier was the one accused of neglecting the 'spirit' of the Society of Mary, and this resulted in the Marist priests no longer wanting to obey their bishop and vicar apostolic. During Pompallier's absence in early 1840 Fathers Servant, Petit and Épalle felt pressed to correspond directly with Father Colin in Lyon regarding their dissatisfaction with Pompallier's running of the mission. Pompallier had never professed himself as a Marist, perhaps because his role as a bishop would contradict the humble vows required by the order, but had certainly formed a positive rapport with the society's founders in Lyon. He was thus highly offended when the Fathers left him feeling excluded and unappreciated:

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<sup>78</sup> « Pour mon compte j'ai lu de mes propres yeux dans des journaux, ici, à la Baie des îles, deux longues lettres que je vous avois écrites moi-même un an auparavant, et dont je me trouve d'avoir actuellement dans ma chambre, la traduction fidèle en anglais; on les voit dans le journal catholique de Sydney: *Australasian Chronicle*. Il est donc bien important d'être prudent pour la divulgation des lettres par les Annales », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 4-5.

<sup>79</sup> « (...) si ces missions réussissent, c'est en grande partie parce que les réguliers vivent bien dans l'esprit de leur institut; car quand ils se négligent sous ce rapport, ils cessent bientôt d'être obéissants au vicair apostolique en ce qui le concerne, et ils compromettent par là le succès de toute une mission », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 4, 5 novembre 1836, Paris, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

(...) words were said to me which made me understand that I was regarded as a member outside of the congregation. I have been sensitive to that only before the Lord, for I pretended not to pay attention to what was being said to me; I have been a little surprised nonetheless since this was news that I had never met with before in the congregation. I did not know how to defend myself over this; I deeply feel that my love for Our Lord and His divine mother is seen as merely imaginary, that I am not only unworthy of the cross, of the heavy burden of the episcopate, but of the sacerdoce and of religion itself.<sup>80</sup>

It would be wrong to assume that bishops heading the Oceania missions were always at odds with their clergy, or that conflict arose simply because bishops had higher status than their clergy and abused this position of power, since there are testimonies of bishops who were deeply loved and respected by their missionaries; the most noteworthy was Bishop Douarre in New Caledonia. Fourteen of Douarre's missionaries signed the following letter, after the mission to New Caledonia was deemed a failure by Father Colin:

No one wishes to come under Monsignor Bataillon's jurisdiction. What we have seen and heard, whether at the Navigator Islands [Samoa] or at Wallis, has been more than sufficient to prompt the refusal that we have all made to Monsignor, who begged us to take the side which His Lordship believed as complying with your intentions [...] We left with Monsignor of Amata [Bishop Douarre]. We came here to work with him; accustomed to the esteem and affection of this good father whom you gave to us, it is our duty to remain loyal to him; if Rome sends him elsewhere, we will happily follow him there, and if you are reluctant to accept another vicariate on behalf of the Society, we would accompany him still back to France.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> « (...) on m'a dit des expressions qui me faisoient comprendre que j'étois regardé comme un membre hors de la congrégation. J'ai été sensible à cela devant le Seigneur seulement, car j'ai dissimulé de faire attention à ce qu'on me disoit; j'ai été un peu surpris toutefois que ce fut des nouveaux que je n'avois pas connus autrefois dans la congrégation. Je ne saurois me défendre là dessus, je sens intimement que mon amour pour Notre Seigneur et sa divine mère n'est peut - être qu'imagination, et que je suis non seulement indigne de la croix, de la lourde croix de l'épiscopat, mais du sacerdoce et de la religion elle-même », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 59, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup> « Personne ne veut aller sous la dépendance de m(onsei)g(neu)r Bataillon. Ce que nous avons vu et entendu soit aux Navigateurs, soit à Wallis, a été plus que suffisant pour motiver le refus que nous avons tous fait à m(onsei)g(neu)r, qui nous priait de prendre ce parti que Sa Grandeur croyoit conforme à vos intentions. [...] Nous sommes partis avec m(onsei)g(neu)r d'Amata. Nous sommes venus pour travailler avec lui; habitués à l'estime et à l'affection de ce bon père que vous nous avez donné, nous nous devons de lui rester fidèles; si Rome l'envoie ailleurs, nous l'y suivrons avec bonheur, et s'il vous répugnoit d'accepter p(ou)r la Société un autre vicariat, nous l'accompagnerions encore en France », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 863, 6-10 January 1850, Isle of Pines, Fathers and Brothers of the New Caledonian mission, to Colin, pp. 1-2.

But even Pompallier was held in high esteem by certain missionary staff, including the sisters of Auckland and the McDonald brothers who joined his diocese in the 1850s. Furthermore Pompallier's strengths did not go unrecognised by the Marist Fathers even in their letters of complaint; Father Petit writes: "I have not spoken to you about the *good* things. It is not that there isn't much to say about his great zeal for the salvation of souls, the tenacity he has for his work, and his unwavering patience towards the natives, which has often been the subject of my admiration."<sup>82</sup> In 1840 Father Pezant, having spent less than a year on the mission, was quick to praise Pompallier's effectiveness and blame the slow progress of the mission on external factors.

Monsignor, because of his great goodness, is universally loved and esteemed by the natives as by the whites; there are already a certain number of baptised Zealanders or Maoris; a far greater number would be disposed to 'turning' to the Catholic faith if one were able to visit them and instruct them diligently. But the small number of priests, the nomadic lifestyle of these natives, their contact with Europeans, their dispersion over a vast territory, calumnies, the influence of and even more so the gifts offered by Protestants, were and still are great obstacles to the propagation of the true faith.<sup>83</sup>

## 5.6 *Provincials and procurators*

Father Garin, as the mission's first provincial, took it upon himself to defend Pompallier to Colin, with the conviction that the missionaries in 1841 and 1842 were basing much of their ill-feeling on unreliable information. It was the provincial's task to ensure that the missionaries were complying with Marist spirituality and the regulations of the order. The emotional, spiritual and physical well-being of the

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<sup>82</sup> « Je ne vous ai pas parlé en *bien*. Ce n'est pas qu'il n'y en ait pas beaucoup à dire sur son grand zèle pour le salut des âmes, son opiniâtreté au travail, sa patience inaltérable à l'égard des naturels, ce qui a été souvent le sujet de mon admiration... », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 56, 27 April 1840, Kororareka, Petit to Colin, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> « Monseigneur, à cause de sa grande bonté, est universellement aimé et estimé des naturels comme des blancs; il y a déjà un certain nombre de Zélandais ou Maoris baptisés; un bien plus grand nombre seraient disposés à tourner à la foi catholique, si on pouvait les voir et les instruire assidûment. Mais le petit nombre de prêtres, la vie voyageuse de ces sauvages, la fréquentation des Européens, la dispersion sur un vaste territoire, les calomnies, l'influence et plus encore les dons des protestants ont opposé et opposent encore de grands obstacles à la propagation de la vraie foi », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 73, 4 September 1840, Akaroa, Pezant to Colin, p. 2.

missionaries in the field was directly affected by Pompallier's decisions as vicar apostolic, so that their complaints could only incite Garin's compassion; in 1843 Garin would have the chance himself to experience life on a Māori mission as he was appointed by Pompallier to the Mangakahia mission in Tai Tokerau. This said, Garin was arguably in a better position to understand Pompallier's motives and hear his justifications regarding expenditure, and it is surprising that he would be moved to stand up for the man who featured as the villain in numerous letters sent by the missionaries to Garin at Kororāreka.

Many inaccurate things have been said against Monsignor. I see now for myself that several Fathers have been truly wrong with regard to Monsignor. I see the liberty and haste with which they permit themselves to speak about all of Monsignor's actions and methods, a haste which results in one often being mistaken; I myself, being located in the house of administration, could not pass judgement on certain things which happened right beside me and yet I see others who, from some corner of New Zealand, speak as though they know everything.<sup>84</sup>

In any case, it was clear to Pompallier, Colin and the Marist missionaries in New Zealand that a third party was needed to assist with administration tasks on the mission. In 1839 Pompallier requested that a procurator be assigned to the mission to improve the organisation of missionaries and mission items before their transportation to Oceania; this would relieve the bishop of an administrative onus, since he would no longer have to account for missing items, such as the absence of the letter 'o' in the printing press characters that accompanied Fathers Baty, Épalle and Petit on their journey from France to the Bay of Islands.<sup>85</sup> It was inconveniences such as having to print catechisms with a makeshift letter 'o' that wasted valuable time and frustrated the missionaries. Father Petit was also eager to have a procurator for the mission, but his reasons were very different; Petit hoped that the appointment of a procurator

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<sup>84</sup> « On a dit contre m(onsei)g(neu)r beaucoup de choses inexactes; je vois maintenant par moi-même que plusieurs des pères ont eu des torts réels à l'égard de m(onsei)g(neu)r. Je vois la liberté et la précipitation avec laquelle on se permet de parler de toutes les actions et des démarches de m(onsei)g(neu)r, précipitation qui est cause qu'on se trompe souvent; moi-même qui me trouve dans la maison de l'administration, je n'ai pas pu porter un jugement sur certaines choses qui se passaient tout près de moi et j'en vois d'autres qui d'un coin de la Nouvelle Zélande parlent comme s'ils savaient tout », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 202, 3 October 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 8.



would remove Pompallier's authority to screen missionary letters and distribute funds unevenly:

It would be to engage the Propagation of the Faith to allocate funds to the Society of Mary and not to the vicars apostolic and to send to either Sydney or elsewhere a procurator who would only come under you and would distribute funds and objects according to your intentions and the needs of the various missions. Other than economising funds, this would be a way to conserve the unity within the various missions which would be as many branches receiving the sap from the same trunk. It also seems to me that it would be desirable that this procurator was at the same time superior of the members of the Society of Mary and that all had the facility to write to him freely as to yourself without being obliged to hand over their letters to the investigations of vicars apostolic. To me, Sydney seems obviously the best place for his residence. Each day ships from all parts of the world arrive there.<sup>86</sup>

Until 1842, all resources for the mission to Oceania were sent to Pompallier's residence, which functioned more or less as a procure house. Father Poupinel in Lyon had been appointed procurator to the Oceania missions in 1840, a role which involved obtaining and accounting for the various items required for each mission or requested by the vicar apostolic. In 1845 a procure house was established in Sydney as a measure to better cater to the temporal needs of the stations in Oceania. The Central Oceanian missions suffered under Bishop Bataillon's leadership because he, like Pompallier, monopolised funding and resources which were intended for the benefit of all stations in his vicariate. Bataillon poured funds into the Wallis station, which he had developed since 1837, and this led the Marists in his vicariate to accuse him of favouritism and of spending mission funds on his personal ambitions. His unjustness surprised his fellow missionaries, given that Bataillon himself had suffered as a result of Pompallier's disproportionate distribution of resources in the first five years of the mission in Oceania. In 1843 Father Philippe Calinon was sent to Central Oceania by

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<sup>86</sup> « Ce seroit d'engager *la propagation de la foi* à allouer les fonds à la Société de Marie et non aux vicaires apostoliques et d'envoyer ou à Sydney ou ailleurs un procureur qui ne relèvroit que de vous et distribueroit les fonds et les objets selon vos intentions et les besoins des diverses missions. Outre l'économie des fonds, ce seroit un moyen de conserver l'unité dans les diverses missions qui seroient autant de branches recevant la sève du même tronc. Il me semble aussi qu'il seroit à désirer que ce procureur fut en même temps supérieur des sujets de la Société et que tous eussent la facilité de lui écrire librement comme à vous même sans être obligé de livrer leurs lettres aux investigations des v(icaire)s ap(ostoliques). Sydney me paroît évidemment le meilleur point pour sa résidence. Il y arrive chaque jour des navires de toutes les parties du monde », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 56, 27 April 1840, Kororaraka, Petit to Colin, pp. 1-2.

Father Colin; he was to undertake missionary work in Tonga, but also to assume the role of Marist Provincial and ensure the wellbeing of the Marist missionaries in Bataillon's vicariate. Calinon's description of Bataillon and his administration caused reluctance in the Superior-General to send Marists into Central Oceania:

He who possesses something can house himself and live according to his expenses, as do the Protestant ministers and some entrepreneurs who come to exploit trading in these islands. Monsignor Bataillon had deemed it appropriate to adopt a mixed system, which consists of offering gifts to some chiefs to obtain promises of kindness and aid, and leaving the survival and the lodging of the missionaries in their hands [...] Such is therefore the position in which we now find ourselves in his vicariate apostolic; a position in which he found himself in his mission at Wallis until his consecration as bishop [...] But in the other islands where His Lordship gives almost nothing in comparison to Wallis, especially those where it is a matter of creating or sustaining missions in the middle of idolatry and Protestantism, this system places us in a state of suffering and subservience.<sup>87</sup>

With the procure house in Sydney established, the suggestions of Fathers Petit and Petit-Jean appeared to be fulfilled. But within the year Fathers Dubreul and Rocher, who had been selected by Colin to staff the mission procure house, were writing to Colin of the difficulties they were facing, and the Fathers in New Zealand were continuing to criticise Pompallier, whose authority remained absolute in his vicariate. Pompallier's and Bataillon's neglect of the missionaries in their care incited some of these missionaries to request aid in Sydney, hence the substantial debt already incurred by the procure house. In September 1845 Father Épalle joined Dubreul and Rocher in a conference with Bishop Pompallier, with the aim of resolving the temporal problems within the New Zealand mission, but the discussions proved fruitless; Pompallier insisted on controlling all resources in his vicariate, and refused

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<sup>87</sup> « Celui qui possède quelques chose peut se loger et vivre à ses dépens, comme font les ministres protestans et quelques industriels qui viennent exploiter le commerce de ses îles. M(onsei)g(neu)r Bataillon a jugé à propos d'adopter un système mixte, consistant à faire des cadeaux à quelques chefs pour en obtenir des promesses de bienveillance et de secours et d'abandonner les missionnaires à leur discrétion pour leur vivre et leur logement [...] Telle est donc la position où nous nous trouvons actuellement dans son vicariat apostolique, position où il s'est trouvé lui-même dans sa mission de Wallis jusqu'à sa consécration épiscopale [...] Mais dans les autres îles où Sa Grandeur ne donne presque rien en comparaison de Wallis, surtout dans celles où il s'agit de créer ou de soutenir des missions au milieu de l'idolâtrie et du protestantisme, ce système nous met dans un état de souffrances et d'asservissement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 406, October, 24 & 27 November, 2 December 1845, Tonga, Calinon to Colin, p. 5.

the procurators' suggestion that a provincial be appointed to mediate between the bishop and the procure house in Sydney.<sup>88</sup>

## 5.7 *The 'Resolution'*

Pompallier did not understand why the Marists persisted in interfering in temporal affairs when he, as Vicar Apostolic, was the sole administrator to the mission. Pompallier saw Colin as the spiritual leader of the Marists and nothing more, which he made very clear in a letter he wrote to the Superior-General in 1841. Pompallier suspected that Colin had opposed his appointment as vicar apostolic from the outset; he accused Colin of interfering in matters that did not concern him and essentially blamed him for the internal conflict within the New Zealand mission:

You have been, without realising it no doubt, one of the principal reasons for the lack of a friendly union between my inferiors and myself, and for the lack of trust in me on their part, although the majority, I think, have come back from the attitude that they did not develop here but brought with them from the novitiate itself. It would have been far better from the moment of my departure from France to tell me that your resolve was thenceforth to exclude from the congregation those whom the Holy See raises to the episcopate, rather than tell me that I am a distinguished member and give me your entrustment through a relationship with the order, in order to place me by way of this relationship in a position where even the most able spiritual leader could never govern.<sup>89</sup>

Colin, being both founder and the elected Superior-General, naturally saw himself as guardian of the Marists' spiritual and temporal well-being. Seeing from the Marists'

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<sup>88</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 416, 16 October 1845, Sydney, Epalle, Dubreul & Rocher to Colin ; Doc 417, 16 October 1845, Sydney, Report on conference with Pompallier.

<sup>89</sup> « Vous avez été, sans bien le sentir sans doute, une des principales causes du manque d'union cordiale entre mes inférieurs et moi, du manque de confiance de leur part à mon égard, quoique la plupart, je crois, sont revenus de l'esprit, je ne dis pas, qu'ils avoient par ici, mais bien qu'ils avoient apportés du noviciat même. Il eût bien mieux valu dès mon départ de France me dire que votre résolution étoit bien dès lors de mettre en dehors de la congrégation ceux que le s(ain)t siège élèvent à l'épiscopat, que de me dire que j'en suis un membre distingué et de me donner votre délégation sous le rapport de la règle, pour me mettre sous ce rapport dans une position où le plus habile maître spirituel ne pourra jamais gouverner », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 116, 15 November 1841, Akaroa, Pompallier to Colin, p. 4.

letters that there was no change in Pompallier's attitudes, Colin felt compelled to take action, but from the other side of the world, he was essentially powerless. The bishop believed he was answerable only to the Roman Catholic Church and the Lord, since these were the powers who had given him the position of vicar apostolic in the first place. This led Father Forest to suggest to Colin that: "Only Rome will be able, I hope, to remedy this – the Society is regarded as worthless on all temporal matters."<sup>90</sup> Colin therefore brought the matter before the pope and requested that the Superior-General of the Marists be given authority over all Marist missionaries. His decision to abandon the Māori Mission by refusing to send missionaries to Pompallier after 1842 seems a harsh measure considering that several Marists were still in New Zealand waiting for support and relief. Marist Archivist Father Carlo-Maria Schianchi explains Colin's actions as a result of the Marist faith in Providence;<sup>91</sup> Colin believed that if the Roman Catholic Church did not consider him as the leader of the Marists and were willing to leave Pompallier in charge of the Marists, this was Providence telling Colin to remove himself from the situation.

To resolve the conflict between Pompallier and the Marist Fathers, the Church split New Zealand into two dioceses in 1848;<sup>92</sup> Pompallier took charge of the Auckland diocese while the Marist Fathers followed the newly appointed bishop Philippe Viard to the Diocese of Wellington in 1850 and 1851. Of the fourteen Marist Fathers in New Zealand at this time, seven were still full-time missionaries to Māori from the Bay of Plenty northwards, while Father Comte had already established a mission station as far south as Ōtaki. By 1850, the situation had changed dramatically; the Marists had essentially abandoned the upper North Island Māori missions and headed south to join Bishop Viard, the recently-appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Wellington diocese. Not all missionaries left willingly; the decision to leave behind a decade of emotional and financial investment into the spiritual instruction and conversion of the northern tribes was simply not theirs to make. Their lives as missionaries were

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<sup>90</sup> « Il n'y aura que Rome qui pourra, j'espère, porter remède[de] à cela — la Société est regardée comme nulle sur ce qui concerne le temporel », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 281, 4 November 1843, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>91</sup> Carlo-Maria Schianchi, 'Colin and the Congregation of Propaganda Fide in Rome', in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania*, p. 39.

<sup>92</sup> For an outline of the administrative structure of the Catholic Church in New Zealand, see Appendix G.

dictated by their Society and by the Roman Catholic Church, and if the move to Wellington was the solution to the conflict between Pompallier and the Marists, the rule of obedience compelled the Marist Fathers to accept such a solution. The uncertainty of such a lifestyle is evident in this excerpt from Father Reignier's letter to Colin dated February 1850; Reignier was not aware that the Marist mission to Melanesia would be discontinued after Bishop Collomb's death, and was unaware of where his loyalty to Bishop Viard would lead him:

It seems distressing, humanly speaking (God has his views), that we have not been consulted about the erection of the new vicariate apostolic; that Monsignor Pompallier is therefore left in sole possession of New Zealand, as he desires it; and that we are to be transported elsewhere, even to the Solomon Islands, if Monsignor Viard should replace Monsignor Colomb. At least the population there is large, and it is out of English colonial territory.<sup>93</sup>

Father Reignier was never transferred out of New Zealand and was in fact the only Marist Father from the pioneering phase to continue on through the revival phase of the Māori Mission, which was instigated by the French missionary Suzanne Aubert in the late 1870s. Marist Fathers like Reignier could have chosen to resign from the Society or return to France if their disillusionment with the mission proved unbearable, as Father Chouvet had done after just three years on the Māori Mission; but the majority of Fathers displayed an intense loyalty to Father Colin and to the values of the Society of Mary, and this, more than their attachment to the indigenous peoples of Oceania, incited them to remain on the missions during turbulent periods such as the Marist exodus to Wellington. Even Father Rozet, who had not yet taken the Marist vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, was a staunch supporter of the Society and preferred to join the band of Marists heading to the diocese of Wellington in 1850 and 1851. He informed the Marist headquarters in Lyon:

I refused to attach myself to the diocese of Auckland. I will remain here with Monsignor Pompallier for as long as I am indispensable to him, then I will join Monsignor Viard. For more

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<sup>93</sup> « Il paraît fâcheux humainement parlant (Dieu a ses vues), que nous n'ayons pas été consultés sur l'érection de nouveau vicariat apostolique? Qu'on laisse donc m(onsei)gneur Pompallier lui-seul en possession de la Nouvelle-Zélande, puisqu'il la désire, et qu'on nous transporte ailleurs, même aux îles Salomon, si m(onsei)gneur Viard devait remplacer m(onsei)gneur Colomb. Au moins là il y a du monde et c'est hors de colonie anglaise », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 876, 15 February 1850, Rotorua, Reignier to Colin, p. 2.

than nine years I have worked with the dear Society of Mary. What I have seen in my dear confreres during these nine years has only served to increase my esteem for them and to strengthen my bond with them. [...] Continue therefore to consider me a novice and treat me as such, for once the Society is set up here and as soon as it has received rules and constitutions, I will take my vows. When you speak of your fathers in the missions, you can thus consider me to be one of them.<sup>94</sup>

Nevertheless the transition from Auckland to Wellington was not an easy one for the Marists, and it was even more intensely felt by Māori on the Marist stations who did not expect to be abandoned by their missionary or by the Catholic Church. Father Bernard described the scene of mourning when the hapū nearest his Tauranga station learned of his departure in 1850; Bernard claimed that they had appeared nonchalant about his presence and about the Catholic religion in general, and was therefore surprised at their overt sadness and at the fact that members of the hapū even petitioned Pompallier in an attempt to retain their Marist priest:

I then bade them farewell in a few words. All I could do was weep with them. Then they accompanied me tearfully to the riverbank; and the boat filled up with men and women who wished to accompany me still to the ship. The whole tribe was silent and in tears.<sup>95</sup>

Pompallier himself did not visit the Māori missions of the Auckland diocese during the 1850s, largely because he was preoccupied with the Catholic settler community and perhaps tired of travelling. Jessie Munro points out that from the 1850s Pompallier “is recorded only twice as travelling out of Auckland to see his often-mentioned ‘flock’, his *hipi*, in their own homes. He wrote and spoke of his Maori

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<sup>94</sup> « J’ai refusé de m’attacher au diocèse d’Auckland. Je demeurerai avec monseigneur Pompallier tant que je lui serai indispensable, puis j’irai rejoindre m(onsei)g(neu)r Viard. Voilà neuf ans et plus que je travaille avec la chère Société de Marie. Ce que j’ai vu dans mes chers confrères pendant ces neuf ans n’a servi qu’à augmenter mon estime et mon attachement pour eux. [...] Regardez-moi donc toujours comme novice et traitez-moi comme tel car de suite que la Société sera constitué ici et aussitôt qu’on aura reçu les règles et les constitutions, je ferai mes vœux. Lorsque vous parlez de vos pères dans les missions, vous pouvez donc me regarder comme l’un d’eux », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 890, May 1850, Auckland, Rozet to Lagniet, pp. 1-2.

<sup>95</sup> « Je leur fis ensuite mes adieux en peu de mots. Je ne pouvais plus que pleurer avec eux. Ensuite on m’accompagne en pleurant sur le rivage; et le canot se remplit d’hommes et de femmes qui voulaient m’accompagner encore jusqu’au navire. Toute la tribu était dans le silence et dans les larmes », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 984, c. 22 January 1851, Akaroa, Bernard to his sister, p. 4.

mission but was no longer really in touch.”<sup>96</sup> Meanwhile Pompallier had recruited the Irish Sisters of Mercy to care for and educate young Māori girls, and their work was expanded by the French sisters including Suzanne Aubert from 1860 onwards; these French sisters formed their own congregation, The Sisters of the Holy Family, and worked in harmony with Pompallier for some time. From 1850 the Marist Fathers and Brothers dutifully began missionary work on the Whanganui River, and in Wairoa and Hawke’s Bay, continuing with only the Waikato and Bay of Plenty missions until Pompallier’s diocesan priests could replace them. In the Auckland diocese from 1850, there were five non-Marist Catholic priests taking over Māori mission work but Father Bernard explained that with the rapid changeover, the new missionaries from France (six of whom were hurriedly ordained one month after their arrival in Auckland) were sent into the mission field with very little knowledge of the Māori language and practically no contact with the pioneer Marist missionaries.<sup>97</sup> The twelve years of knowledge and experience in the North could not be transferred from the Marists to their replacements.

Viard remained on friendly terms with Pompallier, having acted as his co-adjutor until his promotion to bishop. He was careful not to incur numerous large debts as Pompallier had done, but faced many of the same constraints and frustrations in the 1850s and 1860s as Pompallier had encountered in the early phase of the mission. But he was a cautious and passive bishop, in complete contrast to Pompallier’s impulsive and improvident nature, and this was perhaps one of the reasons why he was promoted to Vicar Apostolic of the Wellington diocese. Yet Viard’s passive approach came to be criticised by the Marist missionaries in his diocese, especially when in 1852 rumours circulated regarding the Society of Mary’s intention to abandon the Māori mission entirely. Like a number of his fellow Marist missionaries, Father Petit-Jean was disappointed in his bishop’s inactivity, claiming that Viard continually awaited orders from Europe before making any important decisions. He clearly feared that Viard would allow the Society to withdraw from the Māori mission, and

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<sup>96</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 18.

<sup>97</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 984, c. 22 January 1851, Akaroa, Bernard to his sister, p. 2; see also Arvidson, p. 82.

attributes some blame to him for the Wellington mission's failure to develop an indigenous church:

If it is God's will that I die, my great regret will be not being able to cast my eyes upon someone we have formed to continue the Society of Mary; in a word, to die without a successor. The vocations would not be completely lacking. A small hope still remains in the depth of my heart. How painful it therefore is to think that Monsignor, through his curiously restrained manner of acting, has broken almost every one of my poor heartstrings. It is indeed in his nature to do so.<sup>98</sup>

Internal conflict clearly hindered the mission since the Marists were forced to establish themselves, their stations and their works for a second time, rather than making progress with their existing stations. Yet Ōtaki and the stations on the Whanganui River, which became the strength of the mission from the 1880s onwards, benefited from the transfer to the Wellington diocese. The northern missions were in decline even before the Marists left the Auckland diocese, and continued to decline under the newly arrived diocesan priests in the 1850s.<sup>99</sup> It was perhaps a timely decision to relocate the Marist Māori Mission to the lower half of the North Island. Conflict with Pompallier had undoubtedly affected the state of the Marist Mission and the morale of its missionaries; but despite the many complaints against Pompallier, the Marists did not find Viard's approach to the Māori Mission any more effective. In fact Viard appeared to take an overly cautious approach so as not to displease Father Colin, but faced an inner conflict instead between ministering to European settlers and fulfilling his duty to the original Māori Mission. This conflict will be explored in more detail in the following chapter.

If the letters of the Marist Fathers and Brothers give the impression of a failing mission plagued with disappointment and disagreement, the reality was not quite as sensational. It is important to remember that while there were many reasons for

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<sup>98</sup> « Si Dieu veut que j'y meure, mon grand regret sera de ne pouvoir jeter les yeux sur personne que nous ayions formé pour continuer la Société de Marie, en un mot de mourir sans postérité. Les vocations ne manqueraient pas absolument. Il reste encore un petit espoir au fond de mon coeur. Qu'il est donc douloureux de penser que monseigneur par sa manière singulièrement restreinte d'agir ait brisé presque tous les liens du pauvre coeur. C'est en effet de son caractère », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1186, 2 October 1852, Wellington, Petit-Jean to Poupinel, p. 3.

<sup>99</sup> Thomson "Some Reasons for the Failure of the Roman Catholic Mission to the Maoris, 1838-1860", p. 174.



complaint, the Marists nevertheless obeyed the instructions from their bishops and did not openly challenge them. The letters to Colin and to family members and colleagues voiced the discontent of the missionaries, but did not affect the continuance of their duties. Pezant, regardless of his desire to leave the Wellington diocese and his placement as chaplain to British soldiers in New Plymouth, remained active on the Māori Mission in the Wellington diocese until 1867. Lampila considered a transfer to Sydney in 1852 but ended up as the sole full-time missionary to Māori in the 1860s. He converted prominent Māori on the Whanganui River, whose descendants continued the Catholic tradition into the twentieth century.<sup>100</sup> But from the 1850s the needs of the Māori Mission were being overlooked in favour of the settler church, and in the period 1867 to 1879 not one Marist was officially committed to the Māori Mission. Some continued to minister to Māori, but their main activity was among Pākehā, causing Catholic Māori to feel abandoned.

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<sup>100</sup> Bergin, p. 47.

## Chapter 6: Diversions from the Māori Mission

Although a handful of Europeans continued to take an interest in the spiritual and temporal well-being of Māori during the New Zealand wars of the 1860s, Christian Māori were essentially abandoned by the missionaries who had fought so hard to establish a strong and enduring relationship between their Church and the Māori people. If the Marist missionaries failed to follow through with their individual Māori missions during the New Zealand wars, they did not place the blame on themselves or their Society. Instead the Marists claimed that the failure of the overall mission was due to complex circumstances, arising from interwoven events dating as far back as the Treaty-signing. The missionaries pointed to obstacles discussed in the previous chapters of this section, from British Protestant dominance in New Zealand to conflicts and factions within the Catholic Mission. Moreover Europeans commonly held the belief until the beginning of the twentieth century that the Māori population was not only declining but would actually die out. Turner reveals that Bishop Viard, when approached to print Māori catechisms, refused on the grounds that the Māori population was in decline, and continued to print Irish catechisms instead.<sup>1</sup>

Were the Marist missionaries, who had shown no fear of death at sea or of cannibalism, and who had stood in the middle of battlefields to enforce peace between warring iwi and hapū, guilty therefore of abandoning Māori in their very hour of need? Were the Marists guilty of choosing the easier path of Pākehā parish work, rather than facing the difficulties and dangers of war-torn New Zealand in the 1850s and 1860s? This is certainly the impression with which we are left, yet the Marists themselves offer some explanation for their actions which compel a

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<sup>1</sup> Turner, p. 190.

reconsideration of the abandonment of the Marist Māori mission. In fact the abandonment itself was a gradual one that began in the late 1840s, when the realisation set in that some of the obstacles facing the mission simply could not be overcome, at least at that point in time. From the 1850s Māori political, religious and politico-religious initiatives rivalled the Catholic religion in a way that the Anglican and Wesleyan churches could never have done. Relocating to Wellington may have been detrimental to the Marist Mission, but for many of its missionaries it was these Māori initiatives that seemed to mark the mission's failure. Arguably the abandonment of the mission proved to be more of a hiatus, given the French missionary impetus of the 1880s which will be discussed in Part Three of this thesis. The following chapter describes the many factors contributing to the Bishops' and the Marists' decision to withdraw from the pioneer Māori Mission, with emphasis on the influx of settlers and the political climate of the 1860s.

## **6.1 *The settler/soldier church***

One of the first major digressions from the New Zealand Marists' *raison d'être* was the transfer of Father Petit-Jean to Auckland in 1841 to cater to its Irish Catholic community. This was undoubtedly Pompallier's decision, one that was to be echoed several times throughout the next seven years. The Māori mission, which should have been the one and only focus of the Marist missionaries according to the agreement between Father Colin and the Roman Catholic Church, gradually lost some of its key missionaries; Garin was posted to the Fencibles at Howick, Séon to the Fencibles in Onehunga, and Baty, though still looking after Tangiteroria, was stationed at Kororāreka where few Māori remained. Admittedly, Pompallier was under pressure as the only Catholic bishop in New Zealand during this period to cater to the needs of European Catholics residing there. Yet his dealings with Archbishop Polding in Sydney confirm his disregard for the Marist purpose in New Zealand; according to Father Dubreul the Marist procurator in Sydney, Pompallier made plans in 1845 to exchange Father Petit-Jean for an English diocesan priest, but this was never realised. Dubreul warned Father Colin that such an exchange:

(...) will have a very bad impression on our Fathers in New Zealand, I believe. For I presume that Father Petit-Jean, being Marist, was called to the mission in Western Oceania; belonging to a society to which the holy see has entrusted these missions, a society which the holy see has, so to speak, left free to select its own bishops, Father Petit-Jean, I would say, will find it heartbreaking to come to Sydney, to live with Benedictines (for this was the hypothesis) and to abandon a mission where he is so needed and where it is said he does a great deal of good.<sup>2</sup>

Pompallier was not, however, responsible for the appointment of two Marist Fathers and a Brother to Port Nicholson; Father Forest, who arrived in New Zealand via Port Nicholson in April 1842, would most probably have made this decision together with Fathers Garin and Épalle during Pompallier's absence in Wallis and Futuna. Having discovered that land and funds were available for a resident Catholic priest, the Marists took advantage of the situation and arranged for Father Borjon and Brother Déodat's passage from Auckland to Port Nicholson on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1842. Father Rozet should have accompanied them but arrived late in Auckland; it was later discovered that Borjon and Déodat had drowned aboard the *Speculator*. Rozet never took up his appointment in Port Nicholson, especially since a Catholic priest from Ireland, Father O'Reily, had already taken up residence there, but Father Comte was sent to assist O'Reily some years later specifically with Māori Catholics in the Wellington area.

Diversions from the Māori Mission intensified under Viard, because of the wars and politico-religious movements mentioned earlier but also because of expectations on Viard to cater to the Catholic settler population. For the most part these expectations came from the settlers themselves, but even Father Colin had instructed Akaroa to be restored as a Marist station following the Marist exodus into the Wellington diocese in 1850. In fact Colin ordered two priests to be stationed there, Fathers Bernard and Séon, even though there were fewer than fifty French settlers in Banks Peninsula, and

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<sup>2</sup> « Cela fera une bien mauvaise impression parmi nos p(ères) de la Nouvelle Zélande à ce que je crois. Car je présume que le p(ère) Petit Jean étant mariste appelé à la mission de l'Océanie occidentale, appartenant à une société à la quelle ces missions ont été confié par le s(ain)t siège et qui la laisse pour ainsi dire libre de choisir elle même ses évêques, le p(ère) Petit Jean, dis-je, aura de la peine à venir à Sydney, vivre avec les bénédictins (car c'était l'hypothèse) et abandonner une mission où il en si nécessaire et où il fait beaucoup de bien à ce que l'on dit », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 363, 20 April 1845, Sydney, Dubreul to Colin, p. 4.

these settlers were overtly not interested in attending mass and other services. In 1851 Bernard wrote to Colin, with a hint of sarcasm:

You are astonished, my reverend Father, that I have not yet spoken about the natives to take them into account as our parishioners. This is because they are so few in number in this peninsula and on such a path to extinction that I do not believe I should include them. Out of perhaps 150 or 200 natives in the entire peninsula, we have some sixty bad Catholics. They are scattered in every corner of these awful mountains surrounding us. We cannot make them come to services. We cannot instruct them in their homes, given that there are only 2 or 3 of them in each place, and furthermore they are continually on the move. Besides, they have such little interest in religion that one cannot admit them by force to abstract ideas which they do not desire or do not care to know about. Two months ago I spent two days walking to visit some twenty of them, who call themselves Catholic, in three different places. And in these remote places not one was capable of catechising the others, nor even reciting prayers, which they did not know by heart. This is the flourishing state and a sample of the southern New Zealand mission. We are therefore no longer missionaries but simple religious, absorbing enormous sums of money without a single result.<sup>3</sup>

Why, as early as 1851, was the Māori Mission no longer the priority for Viard and Pompallier? Certainly Bishop Selwyn of the Anglican Church had begun his career in New Zealand by making an immediate impression on Māori and Europeans with his intensive travelling and school-building, only to become increasingly preoccupied with Europeans. The Marists had been sent to Oceania solely for the evangelisation of indigenous peoples, yet in 1851 Father Petit-Jean in Wellington, Fathers Séon and Bernard in Akaroa, and Fathers Garin and Moreau in Nelson were all ministering full-time to European Catholic settlers. This left only Fathers Reignier, Pezant and

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<sup>3</sup> « Vous êtes étonné, mon révérend père, que je ne vous ai pas encore parlé des naturels pour les faire entrer en ligne de compte de nos paroissiens. C'est qu'ils sont si peu nombreux dans cette péninsule et dans une telle voie d'extinction que je crois ne devoir plus les compter. Sur 150 ou 200 naturels peut-être qu'il y a dans toute la péninsule, nous en avons une soixantaine de mauvais catholiques. Ils sont disséminés dans tous les coins de ces affreuses montagnes qui nous entourent. Nous ne pouvons pas les faire venir aux offices. Nous ne pouvons les instruire chez eux – vu qu'ils ne sont que 2 ou 3 à chaque place, et encore toujours en mouvement. D'ailleurs il ont si peu de goût pour la religion qu'on ne peut pas leur faire entrer par force des connaissances abstraites qu'ils ne veulent pas ou ne se soucient pas de savoir. Il y a deux mois j'ai été à deux jours de marche pour pouvoir en voir une vingtaine qui se disent catholiques en trois places différentes. Et dans tous ces lieux éloignés pas un n'est capable de faire le catéchisme aux autres, ni même la prière qu'ils ne savent pas par coeur. Voilà l'état florissant et un échantillon de la mission du Sud de la Nouvelle- Zélande. Nous ne sommes donc plus missionnaires, mais simples religieux, absorbant sans aucun résultat des sommes immenses », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 983, 22 January 1851, Akaroa, Bernard to Poupinel, pp. 2-3.

Lampila to launch the missions in the Hawke's Bay and Whanganui region, with Father Comte still working with Māori on the Ōtaki mission until his departure in 1854. Father Lampila reinforced Bernard's description of the waning Catholic Mission in New Zealand:

If you now desire, my very reverend Superior, to know the state of our mission, I will tell you before the good Lord that we are almost entirely losing sight of the aim for which we came here; that is to say, the indigenous mission, which is fading from our hearts in the presence of Europeans who absorb both its members and its funds.<sup>4</sup>

How could the Marist missionaries neglect the Māori Mission? The disillusionment that accompanied the abandonment of the Auckland diocese does not account for their abandonment of the original mission; instead we must consider the reasons for their defection to European parishes. It is important also to note that while some missionaries made the transition to parish priest willingly, others were withdrawn from the Māori Mission by Viard and not permitted to return to it. Furthermore, the Propagation of the Faith continued to send annual allocations of approximately 40,000 francs<sup>5</sup> throughout the nineteenth century to the diocese of Wellington specifically for the Māori Mission. Viard, in his role as Vicar Apostolic of the Wellington Diocese was ultimately responsible for appointing the Marists to their stations, but according to Michael O'Meehan, Viard's neglect of the Māori mission was necessary in order to fulfil his role as the only Catholic bishop in the region:

(...) critics seemed to expect the impossible from him, for he was harassed by continuing financial limitations and too few priests. He was forced by circumstances to subordinate his first duty and love (the Maori Mission) to cope with an unprecedented growth in the European population.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> « Si maintenant vous désirez, mon très révé(re)nd supérieur, connaître l'état de notre mission, je vous dirai, devant le bon Dieu, que nous perdons presque entièrement de vue le but pour lequel nous vînmes ici, c'est-à-dire la mission des indigènes, laquelle va toujours s'effaçant de notre coeur, en présence des Européens qui absorbent et ses membres et ses fonds », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 992, 1 March 1851, Hawke's Bay, Lampila to Colin, pp. 7-8

<sup>5</sup> From the accounts of the Association published annually in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, in Turner, Appendix A, pp. 282-285.

<sup>6</sup> O'Meehan, *Held Firm in Faith*, p. 88.

Many of the Marist missionaries were equally drawn to European parishes, at least in the more established settlements such as Wellington, where wealthy Catholic settlers were able to provide for the Church and its endeavours. One such settler was the son of Lord Petre, a prominent director of the colonising New Zealand Company, and the man after whom the Wanganui settlement was originally named. The Petre family contributed to the construction of the Catholic church in Thorndon (now rebuilt as the Sacred Heart Cathedral) and had also brought Father O'Reily to New Zealand in 1843 as chaplain and resident priest of the young settlement at Port Nicholson. When the Marists reached Wellington in 1850, some found that their years of labour and hardship to produce little or no concrete progress among Māori were a distant memory compared with the comparative comfort and ease that seemed to characterise colonial towns in New Zealand. Accustomed to sleeping in the open or in rotting huts, trekking regularly through rugged terrain, and grappling with poverty and a constant lack of resources, Father Moreau understandably viewed Wellington through rose-coloured spectacles:

What is inestimable for the Catholic mission, and hardly believable, is that these 4 acres form only a portion, enclosed by a single fence. Two public roads run alongside us, not one path cuts into our property, and in this way we feel as though we are at home; and all of our buildings, such as the school, are clustered around us etc. When the government arrived here and learned that we possessed land, it was astonished; the entire town was surprised and could not explain why such a precious piece of land had been unoccupied for so long. But it is not simply about land.

Let us come to what has been created in terms of buildings. The sisters' building is completed and enclosed; they have two rooms for the school, and they have their domestic chapel. The bishop's palace is completed, at least as much as is desired for the moment. It is rather large, clean and carpeted. The kitchen and dining hall are standing and are located beside the bishop's palace. On the same façade as the bishop's palace there is a main building with four cells; the building was formerly occupied by [the son of] Lord Petre.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> « Ce qui est inestimable pour la mission catholique et à peine croyable, c'est que ces 4 acres ne forment qu'un morceau, qu'une seule fence renferme; deux routes publiques nous longent; pas un chemin ne coupe notre propriété; desorte que nous sommes chez nous; et tous nos établissemens tels qu'école sont groupés autour de nous &c. Quand le gouvernement arriva ici et qu'il sut ce que nous avions de terrain, il était étonné; la ville tout entière s'étonna et ne savait comment s'expliquer qu'un terrain si précieux ne fut pas occupé depuis longtemps. Mais ce n'est pas tout que du terrain. Venons en à ce qui est fait en fait d'établissement. L'établissement des sœurs est fait et entouré; elles ont deux salles pour l'école, elles ont leur chapelle domestique. L'évêché est achevé du moins ce qu'on en veut faire pour le présent. C'est assez grand, propre, tapissé. La cuisine et le réfectoire se tiennent et sont

There is some evidence that the Marist missionaries were not prepared in the 1850s to abandon the Māori Mission in favour of parish work, but since they had taken the Marist vow of obedience they were unable to oppose Viard's decision to place them among European settlers. That Bernard wrote to Colin of his discontent at being unable to undertake missionary work in Akaroa reveals his desire to continue with an indigenous mission, which he went on to do in Wallis. Father Reignier in the Hawke's Bay struggled to minister to both Māori and Pākehā, unwilling to resign his original mission to Māori or to neglect the spiritual needs of Catholic settlers. Father Pezant, on his travels through the Taranaki and Whanganui region, continued his contact with Catholic Māori even though his main appointment was as a military chaplain to British soldiers. His baptism register contains over three hundred recorded baptisms of settlers and soldiers between 1852 and 1868 compared with just one hundred Māori during the same period, but most interesting is the origins of these Māori; the great majority were not from Whanganui but had travelled instead from Taupō in search of a Catholic priest to baptise them.<sup>8</sup> French Marist reinforcements arrived at last in 1859, under the second Marist Superior-General Julien Favre, but Viard placed only Father Pertuis at a Māori mission station; Father Trésallet was appointed chaplain to the soldiers stationed at New Plymouth during the Taranaki land war, and therefore never learned to speak Māori; and Father Chataigner became the first Catholic resident priest of Christchurch.

If in the 1860s Viard felt compelled to withdraw priests from the field for their own safety following the onset of the New Zealand Wars, he also had an ulterior motive: fulfilling his role as Bishop of Wellington. It is important to note that in the 1850s Bishops Pompallier and Viard were *Vicars Apostolic* of their respective dioceses, whereas in 1860 both were officially given the status of residential Bishops. Michael O'Meehan described this change as representative of "the growth in the Church and

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accollés à l'évêché. Sur le même front que l'évêché il y a un corps de bâtiment où il y a 4 cellules. C'est un bâtiment autrefois occupé par le lord Peter », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1034, 13 July 1851, Wellington, Moreau to Auckland Fathers, pp. 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> MAW, 'Wanganui Register: Baptisms, Confirmations & Burials of the Catholic Station of Petre', 208/17.



a step achieved in development from mission to local church.”<sup>9</sup> If this is the case, where did Māori fit into the New Zealand Catholic Church? One by one the Marists were assigned to communities often comprised of Irish soldiers and settlers, while Catholic Māori were left to cope with the far-reaching devastation of war. Bishop Selwyn of the Anglican Church was also pressured to turn missionaries into chaplains, but when he attempted to remove CMS minister Thomas Grace from the Māori Mission and place him among British troops, Grace refused to obey.<sup>10</sup>

The 1860s brought another reason to divert Bishop Viard’s funds away from the Catholic Māori Mission; goldfields discovered on the West Coast of the South Island attracted thousands of immigrants, many of whom were Catholic, and Viard was expected to supply priests for the gold mining communities since the diocese of Wellington comprised the entire South Island until 1869. Pioneer Marist missionary Father Moreau was dispatched to Otago in 1861, to be joined soon after by new arrival Father Aimé Martin. As discussed earlier, Father Lampila was the only full-time priest on the Marist Māori mission, and in 1867 he was transferred to the Wanganui township, leaving the Marist Māori Mission unmanned for over a decade. Similarly the CMS missionaries had abandoned their stations when the wars broke out, becoming chaplains instead, as their missions were closed or destroyed.

Other denominations, including the Scottish Presbyterians in Otago, the Baptist Church and the Church of the Latter Day Saints, had arrived in New Zealand in the late 1840s and 1850s to establish settler churches; it was not until the 1880s that they entertained the idea of evangelising Māori. But the Marists had come to New Zealand to lay the foundations for an indigenous church, and had instead contributed to the development of a European settler church. For Viard to essentially surrender the Māori mission in the 1860s would perhaps also indicate that he had little hope in the success of the mission, in light of the overwhelming British presence and the rise of Māori religious movements based on a mix of traditional and Christian beliefs, not to

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<sup>9</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 63.

<sup>10</sup> David Grace, *A Driven Man, Missionary Thomas Samuel Grace 1815-1879: His Life and Letters* (Wellington: Ngaio Press, 2004), p. 160.

mention the prevailing belief that the Māori people would not survive into the twentieth century.

As has been demonstrated, the missionaries had indeed introduced Māori in many parts of the North Island, and in small pockets of the South Island, to Catholicism; but the vast majority of Māori were living in Pompallier's diocese, which was now in the hands of non-Marist clergy. In future years, the Catholic Church would be frequently reproached for having left the Māori Mission in the central and lower North Island in a state of abandonment and neglect between the late 1850s and 1870s. As they reached their fifties, the missionaries expected to be replaced or at the very least assisted by Marist reinforcements. This did not occur in a timely fashion because of the distrust between the Society of Mary in France and the first Vicar Apostolic of Western Oceania, and the conflicts and confusion arising from this distrust.

## ***6.2 The withdrawal of the Society of Mary***

If Fathers Bernard and Petit left the Māori Mission as a result of their disillusionment with the direction and progress of the mission, Father Comte resigned for a very different reason. Comte had spent fifteen years working with Māori in various parts of New Zealand, but having established a mission and orchard at Ōtaki he found himself in a predicament; his commercial success at Ōtaki surpassed the original goal of subsistence, and this compromised the Marist vow of poverty he had taken back in 1839. Bishop Viard had apparently exempted Comte from his Marist vows at some point during the 1840s, and in 1853 Comte decided to withdraw from the Society of Mary. Father Petit-Jean communicated the reasons for Comte's resignation to the procurator in Lyon:

The reason that made him leave his Society, after having obtained dispensation from his vows, was the scruple in handling his petty finances – not that he wanted to become wealthy, for he left New Zealand a poor man; rather it was to put himself in a better position to give according to his heart and to his instinct – having established a mill, and having prepared others, he

necessarily handled a great deal of money; he was the Maoris' treasurer, father, magistrate and guide.<sup>11</sup>

In 1854 Comte returned to France; although he corresponded with the Catholic Māori community there for a number of years, Ōtaki was largely neglected until the revival of the Māori mission in the late 1870s. Significantly, not one of the Marists who left the mission in the 1850s was permanently replaced; this was because Bishop Viard was now seen as the bishop of Wellington and thus had a large number of European Catholics who looked to him for leadership and for priests to minister to their parishes. But Viard, always short of priests just as Pompallier had been, was now conscious that he could not rely on the Society of Mary for priests and missionaries; by 1854, the final year of Father Colin's generalate, the Society of Mary had turned away from New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

The move was not unknown to the Marist missionaries, who had been conferring on the subject since 1852,<sup>12</sup> and it is important to note that the Māori mission was not the only Marist endeavour to be allegedly abandoned. In New Caledonia the death of Marist brother Blaise Marmoiton, who was killed by pillaging Kanak in 1847, forced Bishop Douarre to abandon the recently-established mission at Pouébo; Douarre and his Marist company were rescued by Bishop Collomb, but Douarre was not prepared to abandon the New Caledonian mission yet. Now Vicar Apostolic of New Caledonia, Douarre engaged a handful of missionaries including Father Rougeyron to continue progress in the New Hebrides and Loyalty Islands, and establish a mission on the Isle of Pines until it were possible to re-enter the New Caledonian mainland.<sup>13</sup> Two more failed attempts at restarting the mission still did not deter the bishop, who rejected Father Colin's recommendation to abandon the New Caledonian mission for a mission in America or Samoa. In 1853, Douarre died from an epidemic; the same

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<sup>11</sup> « La raison qui lui fit quitter sa société après avoir obtenu dispense de ses vœux, étoit du scrupule dans le maniement de ses petites finances – non qu'il voulût s'enrichir, car il part pauvre de la N. Zélande – c'étoit plutôt afin d'être à même de mieux donner suivant son cœur et son instinct – ayant établi un moulin, en ayant préparé d'autres, il a nécessairement manié beaucoup d'argent ; il étoit le trésorier, le père, le magistrat, le guide des Maoris », MAW, Letter from Petit-Jean to Poupinel, 4 December 1854, 208/9, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1186, 2 October 1852, Wellington, Petit-Jean to Poupinel, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Delbos, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, pp. 73, 77-80.

year it was confirmed that three of his missionaries had disappeared without a trace from the island of Tikopia. The first Vicar Apostolic of Melanesia and Micronesia, Bishop Épalle, had been killed on Isabella Island in the Solomons at the end of 1845, and his successor Bishop Collomb also met an untimely death, in this case caused by a febrile illness. Consequently both Melanesia and Micronesia were abandoned, but Colin had ceased to send missionaries into these fields from 1848 as a result of a general sense of disillusionment, hardship and struggle relayed to him through missionary letters. Father Colin clearly felt the need to reconsider the agreement he had made with the Sacra Propaganda Fide in Rome back in 1836 to staff the Vicariate Apostolic of Western Oceania with Marist missionaries.

In the two years leading up to Father Colin's own resignation in 1854 as Superior-General of the Society of Mary, there was a great deal of uncertainty regarding the future of the Māori Mission. Despite the Society's withdrawal from Oceania there remained a considerable number of Marists in the field who were decidedly loyal to their respective missions or bishops. On one extreme was Father Montrouzier, a former member of the Marist mission to Melanesia and Micronesia, who wrote to Cardinal Fransoni in 1854 of his desire to remain in the missions, revealing that he had only joined the Marist order as a means to undertake missionary work:

The Society of Mary no longer wishes to oversee the missions in Oceania. It has abandoned New Zealand, Melanesia and Micronesia. It no longer sends subjects to central Oceania or to New Caledonia. Our continued relations with it are strained. We are isolated members, with almost no union with the body. We are abandoned, without rules and without a provincial. [...] I entered the Society of Mary *solely* to be sent on the missions. Since the Society is renouncing the missions, nothing binds me to it any more.<sup>14</sup>

On the other end of the spectrum was Father Rozet, who was able to fulfil his desire to officially join the Society in 1854, having returned to France as Viard's delegate

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<sup>14</sup> « La Société de Marie semble ne vouloir plus s'occuper des missions de l'Océanie. Elle a abandonné la Nouvelle Zélande, la Mélanésie et la Micronésie. Elle n'envoie plus de sujets dans l'Océanie centrale ni en Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les rapports que nous conservons encore avec elle sont pénibles. Nous sommes des membres isolés, sans presque aucune union avec le corps. Nous sommes abandonnés sans règles, sans provincial. [...] Je suis entré dans la Société de Marie *uniquement* pour être envoyé en mission. La Société renonçant aux missions, rien ne m'attache plus à elle », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1336, 21 April 1854, Balade (New Caledonia), Montrouzier to Cardinal Fransoni, p. 1.

for discussions in Rome and Lyon on the Marists and their New Zealand mission.<sup>15</sup> The 1850s were a period of confusion and uncertainty for the Marist missionaries in Oceania, as they awaited their orders from Rome, but the situation in New Zealand was especially tentative because of the racial tensions that were developing between Māori and Pākehā, which would culminate in a series of skirmishes and have devastating consequences on Māori and on the Christian missions. If Colin was no longer involved in the Māori Mission, Bishop Viard therefore carried this responsibility, but Viard too withdrew from the Māori Mission in the late 1850s and 1860s, apparently for the safety of the Marist missionaries. Was he justified in doing so? The Marist missionaries, conscious that European adventurers had met their deaths in the South Seas, risked their lives in order to bring Catholicism to Māori and curb the influence of ‘heresy’ in New Zealand; if martyrdom was a desirable fate for a missionary, why would the Marists suddenly hesitate to embrace this fate?

### **6.3 *The New Zealand Wars***

War had threatened the mission in its earliest years, from intertribal warfare to interdenominational conflicts, but the first real obstacle was the northern war led by Hone Heke in 1845, and initiated the previous year with the symbolic act of severing the British flagpole at Kororāreka. It was thought that the British response to Heke’s acts would include a persecuting attitude towards Pompallier, partly because he was a suspected insurgent and partly because he was a Frenchman in a colony that felt compelled to assert its British character. Although the threat passed and Pompallier was never exiled from the colony, the Roman Catholic Church had anticipated that the British annexation of New Zealand might signal the end of the Catholic mission; Bishop Épalle informed the Marist superior-general:

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<sup>15</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1204, 8 December 1852, Wellington, Viard to Colin, p. 1.

Propaganda Fide, writing to Monsignor to announce the erection of the two vicariates of Melanesia and Micronesia, added that His Lordship could take charge of either one of these two vicariates in the case of his expulsion from New Zealand.<sup>16</sup>

The real threat to the Catholic mission originated during and from the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s, when the British government attempted to quash Māori resistance to land sales and take Māori land by force, creating racial tensions that endure arguably to this day. Historian James Belich does not refer to the nineteenth-century wars between Māori and British imperial forces as ‘Land Wars’, explaining instead that there were a number of factors additional to land ownership which led to the outbreak of armed conflict, dating from the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

From 1840, large-scale European immigration made Maori military superiority less obvious, and the theoretical British assumption of sovereignty increased the expectation that they would rule in practice. There followed a series of British attempts to bring the reality into conformity with the expectation; to convert nominal sovereignty into substantive sovereignty.<sup>17</sup>

The Marists arrived in New Zealand only two years before this political drama was set into motion, and their missionary work was made more difficult as the drama reached its height in the 1850s and early 1860s. Relations between Europeans and Māori deteriorated rapidly with the onset of campaigns led by the British Army in the Taranaki and Waikato regions. According to Jane Thomson’s thesis on the Roman Catholic mission, “when Maori relations with the English settlers and their government became strained, the foreign birth of the Catholic missionaries and their detachment from political affairs and from the settlers earned them the good will of many Maoris.”<sup>18</sup> But in fact both Catholic and Protestant missionaries found themselves in danger because of their common European heritage, which made them potential allies of the Government in the eyes of Māori. Just months after his arrival in New Zealand, Father Servant had already discerned that the Māori were rancorous in nature compared with inhabitants of the Pacific Islands he had encountered; he

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<sup>16</sup> « La Propagande en écrivant à M(onsei)g(neu)r pour lui annoncer l’érection des deux vicariats de la Mélanésie et de la Micronésie ajoute que Sa Grandeur en cas d’expulsion de la N(ouvelle) Zélande pourroit prendre l’un ou l’autre de ces deux vicariats », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 422, 22 October 1845, Sydney, Epalle to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Belich, p. 304.

<sup>18</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 5.

describes Māori as “(...) terrible when it comes to vengeance and they never forget an affront; an affront, along with all its circumstances, is perpetuated from father to son, and misfortune will come to whomever was guilty of provoking it.”<sup>19</sup> This was a description of ‘utu’, the Māori practice of reciprocation in a positive or negative sense. The Marists feared that simply being European would secure them as targets of excited Māori seeking to protect their land by ousting all Pākehā. Many of the Marist Fathers endeavoured to remain neutral during the wars, not only because they were forbidden as Catholic priests to interfere with politics but also because it would be detrimental to their Māori mission and the trust between Māori and missionary that was necessary to maintain the mission.

The New Zealand Wars also impacted on the territories gifted to the Catholic Church by Māori. The Crown refused to recognise this land transfer as legitimate, simply because the donors were Māori and therefore had multiple ownership of the land title. Munro explains: “The need to comply with government requirements became apparent when church property was included in confiscated parcels of land during and following the land wars in the 1860s.”<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the war had discouraged Māori from attending schools in Auckland, including the Nazareth Institute and St Mary’s College (run by the Catholic Church) as well as the Three Kings’ Institution and St Stephen’s (run by the Wesleyan Methodists and Anglicans respectively).<sup>21</sup> In the 1860s Māori became increasingly distrustful of the government as a result of the New Zealand wars, and missionaries particularly in the Waikato and Taranaki were aware of their delicate situation as Europeans in New Zealand. When the government offered education grants to all three major Christian denominations, Father Joseph Garavel, a French diocesan priest under Pompallier’s jurisdiction, was forced to “tell the natives that his funds came from Bishop Pompallier and not from Government.”<sup>22</sup> With the Waikato war impending, the school at Rangiaowhia, which had operated

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<sup>19</sup> «(...) qu’ils sont terribles pour la vengeance et qu’ils n’oublient jamais une injure; une injure avec toutes ses circonstances se perpétue de père en fils et malheur à celui qui s’en est rendu coupable », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 31, 16 September 1838, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Piper, ‘Missionary and Maori’, p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 89.

<sup>22</sup> John Eldon Gorst, *The Maori King* (Auckland: Reed Books, 2001), p. 22.

unofficially as one of the earliest training establishments for Māori catechists in the region, was forced to close just one year after it had opened for formal schooling.<sup>23</sup>

For the CMS, it was a similar story of danger, abandonment and decline. The decline in its Māori Mission coincided with a period of “hiatus if not stagnation in important areas of missionary activity overseas,”<sup>24</sup> which included the CMS effort in India and the West Indies, both of which were also plagued by political troubles. According to Benfell, the CMS mission schools had seen a decline from 1853, and “by 1860, almost all the schools had closed and many missions were deserted. The tragedy for the young nation was that in 1860, when the mission influence had been calculatingly undermined, the only force which may have held the peace was gone.”<sup>25</sup> Could the CMS missionaries have held the peace when they themselves had spoken largely in favour of the Treaty and of a British government of New Zealand? It is unlikely that Māori, now disenchanted with some of the impacts of European contact, would have respected the moral authority of the missionary as they had done in the 1830s and early 1840s.

Several missionaries persevered on their missions during the Taranaki war, a series of battles instigated in 1860 by the controversial sale of the Pekapeka block of land in Waitara. CMS missionary Benjamin Ashwell wrote in his *Recollections of a Waikato Missionary* that “It was the curse of war – the Taranaki war – that damped our spirits and blasted our hopes”<sup>26</sup> Was the danger to European missionaries therefore a legitimate reason for abandoning the Māori Mission? Marist Father Rolland, stationed at New Plymouth, was able to continue his missionary rounds through Taranaki unharmed and unhindered. Ashwell himself, stationed in the Waikato, had only temporarily abandoned his station in Taupiri after warnings from his Māori ally, the Anglican convert Wiremu Tāmihana, that he would be in danger if he stayed on in the Waikato, but this was in anticipation of the Waikato war of 1863. John Eldon Gorst,

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<sup>23</sup> Dominic O’Sullivan, ‘Education’ in *Turanga ngatahi*, p. 95.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 189.

<sup>25</sup> Neil Benfell, ‘Martyr to the Cause? Henry Williams and his tribulations’ in *Mission and Moko*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>26</sup> Ashwell, p. 18.



Commissioner and Magistrate of the northern Waikato country in 1861, wrote of his journeys throughout the Waikato in the period leading up to the Waikato war:

I was not only never treated with rudeness, but was everywhere received with the utmost kindness and hospitality. I was never plundered of a single article of property, nor subjected to the least injustice; and finally, when they broke into insurrection, not only were all Europeans living amongst them spared, but not a cow, nor a horse, nor any kind of property, was taken from us.<sup>27</sup>

It was therefore not the Taranaki war but the Waikato war, or more accurately events connected with the Waikato war such as the Kīngitanga, that truly discouraged the missionaries from continuing with their Māori missions. In fact it was not until 1863 that Gorst and other Europeans were driven out of Te Awamutu, and though Rewi Maniapoto threatened to kill Gorst if he did not leave, Gorst was given plenty of time and warning to remove himself before any harm would come to him. Rewi Maniapoto's actions were independent of the Māori King, with whom Gorst had established a good relationship, but the King did not hesitate to support Maniapoto for the benefit of the Kīngitanga and its anti-government attitude.<sup>28</sup>

#### **6.4 *The Kīngitanga, Pai Mārire and Hauhau***

While the wars were the principal cause given for the abandonment of the Māori missions, there were other contributing factors such as the development of religions and religious or politico-religious movements based on both Christianity and traditional Māori beliefs, the most important movement being the Kīngitanga in the Waikato. When the Kīngitanga gained momentum in the late 1850s, the distinction between French and British took precedence over Catholic and Anglican or CMS and Marist, but in such a way that the Marist missionaries were inadvertently drawn into the political arena. In 1861 Catholic Māori in Ōtaki raised a French tricolor flag alongside the Kingite flag in an effort to associate themselves with the French King,

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<sup>27</sup> Gorst, p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> Gorst, p. 144.

whom they viewed as a powerful symbol of opposition to the British Queen.<sup>29</sup> A rūnanga for the Kīngitanga subsequently held in Taupō also encouraged an interest in the Roman Catholic Church because of its political neutrality compared with the Anglican missionary church. According to John Eldon Gorst, the members of the rūnanga “accordingly addressed letters to Waikato, recommending all persons to change from the Protestant to the Catholic religion. A rumour was circulated that King Matutaera had himself become a convert.”<sup>30</sup> In reality the Māori King had not joined the Catholic Church, and the Kīngitanga’s desire to show opposition to the Crown while also creating a means to Māori self-determination was strengthened through association with a different religion, Pai Mārire, which blended Christianity with traditional Māori spiritual beliefs. The Marist response was, predictably, outward neutrality to the Kīngitanga itself; but both the CMS and the Marist missionaries voiced their disillusionment at the incorporation of Christian and biblical elements into the Kīngitanga, and at the development of an aggressive offshoot of Pai Mārire: Hauhauism.

A number of prominent CMS missionaries were decidedly partial when war broke out in Taranaki in 1860. Octavius Hadfield, assigned to the CMS mission at Ōtaki, was one of the more outspoken missionaries, publishing comments and pamphlets regarding the government’s conduct during the New Zealand Wars. According to John Stenhouse, “Hadfield’s stinging condemnation of the Governor’s actions made him the most hated white man in the colony in the early 1860s.”<sup>31</sup> With reference to Wiremu Kīngi Te Rangitāke, a prominent Te Āti Awa chief who opposed the sale of the Waitara block in Taranaki,<sup>32</sup> Hadfield wrote:

I was quite certain that he was the last man in New Zealand to injure a settler either in his person or his property; or show any hostility to the Government. He however was alarmed: he stated his suspicions as to the Governor’s intentions towards himself. I did not write to the Governor, having nothing to say to him; but I wrote to W. King, endeavouring to allay his suspicions and restore his confidence in the Governor. I never for one moment suspected that

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<sup>29</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 69.

<sup>30</sup> Gorst, p. 124.

<sup>31</sup> John Stenhouse, ‘Churches, State & the New Zealand Wars: 1860-1872’, *Journal of Law and Religion*, 13.2, (1998), p. 491.

<sup>32</sup> Ann Parsonson, ‘Te Rangitake, Wiremu Kingi ? – 1882’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 <<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>>.

the Governor was going to violate the Treaty of Waitangi – set law at defiance – and illegally employ Her Majesty’s troops against unoffending men, merely for the purpose of gratifying his own feelings of pride.<sup>33</sup>

Surprisingly, Hadfield’s antipathy towards the British colonial government shifted to support when the Waikato War erupted in 1863. Several missionaries retracted their neutrality at this point, choosing to side with the government or give in to the overwhelming demand for parish priests. The missionaries were particularly vexed by the success of the Kīngitanga and the subsequent withdrawal of Māori from mission stations, and developed an antipathetic view of the Kingites; the obvious evidence that it was not war but the Kīngitanga and associated syncretic religions which encouraged CMS abandonment of their missions was the sudden and complete transformation in attitude of certain CMS missionaries when the Waikato War began. Belich explains:

Many who had fearlessly argued the justice of the Maori cause in the Taranaki War of 1860, and consequently looked more sympathetically on Maori military endeavours, felt that the Waikato War of 1863 was the ‘sharp lesson’ which, sadly, the Maoris both needed and deserved. This group included such notable ‘philo-Maoris’ as Bishops Selwyn and William Williams, R. Burrows, R. Maunsell, and B. Y. Ashwell.<sup>34</sup>

Bishop Pompallier also changed his stance, renouncing the famous policy of neutrality he had maintained since 1840; according to Dominic O’Sullivan, “far from remaining aloof, Pompallier took a decidedly pro government position on the Waikato war.”<sup>35</sup> In the same way that he had urged Hone Heke to make peace with the British Crown in 1845, he now urged Waikato Māori to surrender, but with the insinuation that the Kingites were responsible for creating the conflict.

Stenhouse asserts that “controversy over the appropriate relationship between church and state, religion and politics, rent the colony during these years.”<sup>36</sup> Missionaries were unsure of their role since they were theoretically protectors of Māori welfare but

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<sup>33</sup> Octavius Hadfield, *The Second Year of One of England’s Little Wars* (Dunedin: Hocken Library, University of Otago, 1967), p. 22.

<sup>34</sup> Belich, p. 328.

<sup>35</sup> O’Sullivan, *Faith, Politics and Reconciliation*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>36</sup> Stenhouse, ‘Churches, State & the New Zealand Wars: 1860-1872’, p. 489.

also loyal subjects of the British Crown; thus the Taranaki and Waikato wars fostered conflict within and between Christian denominations, and between clergymen and the settler government. If Catholic clergymen were forbidden by Rome to participate in political affairs, priests such as Father Joseph Garavel still felt justified in their attempts to defuse hostility between Taranaki Governor Browne and chiefs involved in launching the Kīngitanga: “the first recorded Catholic political engagement of substance was its pragmatic rather than morally motivated interest in the Waikato war.”<sup>37</sup> Garavel’s closeness with Māori involved in the Kīngitanga attracted accusations of treason from the government and from Anglican missionary Carl Volkner; Garavel was interrogated by Governor Grey himself but no charges were laid against him. In 1865, Garavel permanently left the New Zealand mission. That same year Carl Volkner, the resident CMS missionary at Ōpōtiki, was accused of betraying Māori in the area by delivering information to the government about any activities related to the Kīngitanga. He was killed by Hauhau adherent Kereopa and the Whakatōhea Māori, who had previously been part of Volkner’s Anglican flock. Volkner’s murder incited nearby Anglican missionaries Bishop William Williams and Rev. Clarke to abandon their East Coast Māori mission. Williams wrote in 1865:

after consultation with our Māori friends it was decided that we should leave Waerenga-a-hika for the present with the hope that through the Providence of God our misguided neighbours might after a time recover their reason, and so the way might be open for us to return and resume our work.<sup>38</sup>

Volkner was the first missionary priest to be killed in New Zealand, although the Marist brother Euloge Chabany had been killed the previous year when conflict between Catholic Māori and adherents of Pai Mārire on the Whanganui River reached a pinnacle at the Battle of Moutoa.<sup>39</sup> Father Jean Lampila was also involved in the conflict at Moutoa, despite having been instructed to remain aloof from politics; Lampila, a former soldier in France, viewed the Battle of Moutoa as a necessary

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<sup>37</sup> O’Sullivan, ‘Church, State and Politics’, p. 61.

<sup>38</sup> William Williams, *East Coast (N.Z.) Historical Records* (Christchurch: Kiwi Publishers, 1998), p. 39.

<sup>39</sup> See ‘Important Engagement Up the Wanganui Between the Government and Rebel Natives – Eighty Rebels Killed’, *New Zealand Spectator and Cook’s Strait Guardian*, Volume XIX, Issue 1961, 18 May 1864.

defence of the Catholic faith against the onslaught of Hauhauism.<sup>40</sup> In 1869 WMS missionary John Whiteley was killed while approaching a redoubt at Pukearuhe (White Cliffs) to minister to British soldiers there; despite receiving warnings from the Ngāti Maniapoto taua who had seized the redoubt, Whiteley refused to turn back and was shot.

Thomson describes the 1860s as “a period of reaction against missionaries and against Christianity”<sup>41</sup> but the biblical basis and the ritualistic nature of these Māori religious movements suggest that, in some cases at least, the European missionary was rejected and not Christianity itself. The presumption that the deaths of the aforementioned missionaries indicate a rejection of European missionaries and European Christianity does not stand up to further examination. Volkner had not only betrayed the trust of his Anglican Māori community at Ōpōtiki but had conspired against them to further the government’s cause. Whiteley ignored warnings to retreat from a hostile military situation, and could not have been considered a peacemaking missionary as in former times, since he had sided with Taranaki settlers over the question of land sales. Brother Euloge Chabany was not recognisably a missionary, and was likely viewed as simply a European rising up against the Hauhau force. There was however evidence of Māori creating their own responses to the Bible and to Christian ideas and values, of which Pai Mārire is but one example of countless movements or religions all over New Zealand. Thomson is probably quoting the missionaries when she refers to these movements as “semi-heathen heresies” but what the missionaries did not understand was that such responses to evangelisation were common and necessary in the process of enculturation. The most extreme example of these movements was Hauhauism, which had its origin in the Pai Mārire faith created by Te Ua Haumēne in Taranaki. A strong distinction must be made between Te Ua Haumēne’s intended form of peaceful worship and the Hauhau movement that drew its inspiration from Pai Mārire teachings. Māori especially in Taranaki and Waikato embraced the peaceful message of Pai Mārire, but in some parts of the country it took on a much more violent form and represented aggressive opposition to all things European. Ironically, Te Ua Haumēne had converted to Wesleyan Methodism in

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<sup>40</sup> Schmidt, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 181.

1840s and acted as a ‘monitor’ on behalf of European missionaries before developing Pai Mārire in 1862.<sup>42</sup>

Many of these ‘responses’ were not limited to the war period; in the 1870s European missionaries found that the Pai Mārire influence, particularly the extreme Hauhau derivative, continued to drive them out of the Māori mission field. Rev. Ashwell was able to continue with the Kaitotehe station in the 1870s only because of the Māori deacon Heta Tarawhiti’s continual efforts to preserve the Anglican faith there.<sup>43</sup> But there appeared to be no strongholds of Catholicism (a presumption that would be disproved with the revival of the Mission in the late 1870s) and in 1867 Father Lampila, the last pioneer Marist priest still labouring full-time on the Māori Mission, abandoned the Whanganui River mission and took up parish work instead, dismayed at the numerous Māori in his mission district who had converted to Hauhauism and Pai Mārire. According to Marist historian and missionary Father Vibaud, the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s drew in a number of Catholic iwi and hapū in the Whanganui area, who subsequently “abandoned their district and went to quash the revolts at Taupō and Tauranga, which was the death of the mission at Whanganui and which brought about Lampila’s departure.”<sup>44</sup> Vibaud also added that “in Wanganui, Moutoa, and Houtahe, he [Lampila] lost the best and the most influential of his catechists, a scourge from which his mission will never recover.”<sup>45</sup> The catechist mentioned here was Kereti Hiwitaki of Kauaeroa; a newspaper article from May 1864 described the battle in detail and stated that: “Kereti is very highly spoken of as an intelligent man. He was the principal native catechist M. Lampiller [sic] has assisting him.”<sup>46</sup>

It is likely that the Marist missionaries were ready to surrender the Māori Mission largely because they felt overwhelmed by the obstacles they had faced since their arrival in New Zealand. Having established themselves in the northern part of the

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<sup>42</sup> Davidson, *Christianity in Aotearoa*, p. 44.

<sup>43</sup> Bryan Gilling, ‘Caught between the Mere and the Musket: B. Y. Ashwell and the Waikato War’ in *Mission and Moko*, pp. 187-188.

<sup>44</sup> J.-M. Vibaud, ‘Esquisse Historique de la Mission Maorie dans la Diocèse de Wellington’, HD6.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> ‘Important Engagement Up the Wanganui Between the Government and Rebel Natives – Eighty Rebels Killed’, *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian*, Volume XIX, Issue 1961, 18 May 1864, p. 2.

North Island, they were forced to start again in a new diocese and under a new bishop. CMS missionaries were influential throughout the country, and succeeded in creating self-supporting missions in the Waikato, at Ōtaki and on the Whanganui River. And now the Marists were expected to overcome the anti-European Hauhau influence and the destructive nature of war, which saw their stations and catechists suffer irreparably. If the Marists had felt disillusioned in the early years of the mission, they were now prepared to accept that the mission, at least while the political climate in New Zealand remained tense, was not going to succeed in the way that the missionaries had hoped. Neither was the mission a failure. As with all pioneer missions, it was an attempt to propagate Catholicism among indigenous peoples, and the Marists had accomplished the initial stage of their evangelising task.

The missionaries' 'hopes' for the mission were not the same as their 'objectives'. In the next section of the thesis, the objectives of the mission will be examined in more detail, with a view to understanding the Marists' ideas on success and progress. One objective that was certainly not achieved by the pioneer missionaries was the development of an indigenous clergy, in particular a clergy with a Marist spirituality. But the lack of clerical status did not diminish the importance of indigenous catechists, who were arguably the key to the mission's success. Furthermore, progress was to be made in stages, and it was not until the third stage that Māori priests and, finally, a Māori bishop would emerge.

In the third chapter of the next section, these stages of progress will be examined to demonstrate their connection with the pioneer mission and their comparative progress. The pioneer mission, the revived mission in the late nineteenth century, and the modern mission from the 1930s onwards worked together to achieve the aims set out by Colin and the Roman Catholic Church in 1836. If the Marists had not faced the numerous obstacles that had hindered their progress in New Zealand, these aims would probably have been fulfilled much earlier. But the struggle for success was ongoing, and if destructive events such as the wars of the 1860s diverted the missionaries from their original mission, there were many more diversions to come.

## **PART THREE**

### **ASSESSMENT: PROGRESS AND SUCCESS**

If we consider the Roman Catholic Church as responsible for the Catholic missions in Oceania, having engaged the Society of Mary and the Picpus Fathers to initiate them, then the Roman Catholic Church should be equally responsible for its overall success or failure. The French Marists were newcomers to missionary work whereas the Roman Catholic Church had invested in foreign mission work for over two centuries. Perhaps most significant is the role played by the Roman Catholic Church in the Pompallier-Colin affair, discussed in Part Two of this thesis; Propaganda Fide took little responsibility for their appointed Vicar Apostolic's alleged neglect of the Marist missionaries and failed to provide a resolution other than dividing New Zealand in half and moving all Marists into the southern diocese. From the outset, the roles of Pompallier and Colin were not made sufficiently clear, hence the conflict that arose over authority and hierarchy. Furthermore Vicars Apostolic were given unquestioned control over the staff and the resources in their vicariate, leaving them free to abuse this power and jeopardise the mission and its missionaries. Pompallier cannot be wholly blamed for his part in the mission's failures or low points, since he was essentially an 'employee' of the Roman Catholic Church. Thus the title of Jane Thomson's thesis on the failure of the 'Roman Catholic Mission' is not unjustified. The Roman Catholic Mission and the French Marist Mission, though seemingly one and the same, could be viewed as very different. The Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide simply commanded the evangelisation of indigenous peoples and the establishment of the Catholic Church in the Pacific, a command that was duly carried out by the Marists and Picpus Fathers; certain Marists, including Father Montrouzier in Melanesia, shared this objective and joined the Society of Mary in



order to fulfil it. But the majority of pioneer Marist missionaries in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands were undoubtedly committed first and foremost to the Society of Mary, and their objective was to do what was necessary to further Marist values.

If we view the Society of Mary as responsible for the mission in New Zealand, we must consider that the Marists in France had little control over the mission, especially since Pompallier denied them any authority over temporal affairs and, as demonstrated in Part Two of this thesis, it was precisely temporal affairs that caused the greatest obstacles for the missionaries in Oceania. The Marists in New Zealand also had little control because they were formed to be subjects who obey and serve the Church, and until 1850 their activities were largely determined by Pompallier as the Church's main representative. From 1850 Viard took charge of the Marist Māori Mission. Since he was a Marist priest and therefore saw the benefit of consulting with Father Colin, Viard's leadership effectively determined the direction of the mission in the Wellington diocese. To describe the mission led by Pompallier and carried out by the Marists as the 'Roman Catholic Mission' is to highlight the loyalty of the Marists to the Roman Catholic Church and to highlight their differentiation from the Anglican Mission and Wesleyan Methodist Mission. But to refer to the Marists' mission as the French Marist Mission emphasises their formation and their spiritual approach, and arguably offers a more accurate reflection of the driving force of their mission.

The thesis has thus far considered the socio-cultural and economic circumstances of the pioneer French Marists in New Zealand in comparison with those of the CMS missionaries and other Marists in Oceania. From the history outlined in Part Two, several conclusions are clear: that the French Marist Māori Mission posed a threat to the CMS mission in the period 1838-1840 and must therefore have been seen as potentially successful; that thousands of Māori expressed interest in or converted to Catholicism and requested a resident Catholic priest for their iwi or hapū; that Māori in the upper North Island were perturbed by the removal of the Marists to the diocese of Wellington in 1850-1851; that a Catholic Māori mission was maintained on the Whanganui River until the mid-1860s; and that even when the Marists had assumed the status of Pākehā parish priests or chaplains, they continued to baptise Catholic Māori whom they came across in their travels or who sought them out specifically to

receive the sacrament. With numerous Māori adherents throughout the century, can even the 'Roman Catholic Mission' truly be described as a failure?

Yet how can we define 'success' with regard to the mission? And in the same vein, how can we define 'conversion', which traditionally was a marker of the success of a mission? Can quantitative data such as conversion records truly indicate the successful transmission of an introduced religion? The theme of this thesis is the struggle for success, and the following chapters will consider what success, conversion and progress signified for the missionaries and for the overall mission as it is viewed today, and whether it is justifiable to class the pioneer mission as a failure, as Thomson and others have done. This section of the study will also discuss the role and effectiveness of Māori catechists in evangelising and promoting Christianity in Māori communities throughout the nineteenth century. Again the French Marist experience in New Zealand will be juxtaposed against the progress made by other missions, particularly the CMS Māori Mission and the Marist missions in the Pacific Islands. Finally, the French Marist Māori Mission, which consisted of two distinct phases, will be examined in its entirety so as to respond to the question of its overall success. From the assessment of the various factors and perspectives of success with regard to the Marists, it will become clear that Thomson's view of the failure of the Catholic Mission is not a well-considered one; and that the French Marist priests made significant progress over the course of the nineteenth century but were aware that success entailed an ongoing struggle.

Many of the pioneer Marist missionaries were dedicated to the missions because they were dedicated to the ideals of the Society of Mary and because they were loyal supporters of the founding Fathers, particularly Father Colin. Brother Marie-Nizier, when asked to describe the life of his fellow missionary on Futuna, Father Chanel, recalled a conversation the pair had had regarding Chanel's decision to accept the mission to Oceania, rather than to the Americas where he had initially asked to be sent. According to Marie-Nizier, a friend of Chanel's had tried to dissuade him from doing so:

*You want, he said to him, to enter a society which is only just beginning, and which may not get formal approval. If it does not succeed, shame will be your portion [...] – This is more or less what I remember of the father’s response to his bemoaning friend: The success of the Society does not depend on us. If nobody enters it, it will never be formally approved. What does it matter if it does not succeed? It is as good for shame to be my portion as for it to be that of someone else. After all, you do not know those who govern this Society.*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> « *Tu veux, lui disait-il, entrer dans une société qui ne fait que commencer, dont l’établissement est incertain; si elle vient à ne point réussir, tu auras la honte pour partage; [...]*– Voici à peu près ce que je me rappelle de la réponse du père au faiseur de lamentations: *Le succès de la Société ne dépend point de nous. Si personne n’y entre, elle ne s’établira jamais. Qu’importe, si elle ne réussit point? La honte est aussi bonne pour être mon partage que celui d’un autre. Après tout, vous ne connaissez point ceux qui gouvernent cette Société* », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 814, 13 June 1849, Futuna, Marie-Nizier (Delorme) to Colin, pp. 5-6.

## Chapter 1: Conversion / Progress

It is somewhat problematic to discuss the success or failure of a mission as having resulted from events and personal qualities, because the missionaries viewed success and failure from a distinctly spiritual perspective; events and personal qualities could therefore only be considered as stepping-stones in the path to eventual success. Failure was always a possibility for the pioneer missionaries, but success was equally possible, and if their faith in God and Mary was what inspired the Marists to join the foreign missions, it was this faith that encouraged them to persevere in their evangelising mission and it was these higher powers who, in their eyes, would ultimately determine its failure or success. According to Father Colin, the only influence that people who were not actually in Oceania could wield over the mission's success was through charity and prayer, a belief that was transferred accordingly to the adherents of his order. Father Chevron in Tonga wrote to his loved ones:

I have great confidence in the prayer group that you have formed for us, which, as you say, a good number of people have joined. It is to their prayers and to God's mercy that I attribute the success we achieve.<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to generalise about missionaries' success or failure in New Zealand, but this is misleading inasmuch as it does not take into account the legitimacy or depth of spiritual conversion achieved, nor does it consider the differing obstacles faced by each missionary. It has often been asserted that the Anglican mission was "the most

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<sup>1</sup> « J'ai grande confiance dans l'union de prières que vous nous avez formée dans laquelle, dites vous, bon nombre de personnes sont entrées. C'est à leur prières et à la miséricorde de Dieu que j'attribue le succès que nous obtenons », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 409, 3 & 11 October 1845, Tonga, Chevron to family and friends, p. 2.

thorough and the most successful” primarily because it had the largest and most widespread contingent of missionaries in nineteenth century New Zealand,<sup>2</sup> and because it was the first mission to be established there. Antoine Monfat justified his belief that the early Māori mission “had made real and notable progress” with the high number of conversions Pompallier claimed to have made, the number of chapels in the Rotorua mission territory, and the happier, more peaceful state of Māori compared with pre-European times.<sup>3</sup> However Māori rejection of some Christian missionaries and adaptation of biblical scripture to Māori spiritual traditions from as early on as the 1830s could be viewed as proof that this ‘success’ was merely superficial. If we look to baptism and conversion records, or numbers attending weekly mass, we can expect some inaccurate data, amended in some cases to fit the expectations of church superiors and patrons, and such records do not necessarily reflect religiosity. If we count the number of churches constructed in a village, or the number of visits made by priests or bishops, we still have no idea of the impact that Christianity has made on the spiritual life of its inhabitants.

The CMS arrived in New Zealand in December 1814 and were active in Tai Tokerau for over thirty years before the French Marists reached the Hokianga and challenged the Protestant missionary influence in the north. But how could three French missionaries, none of whom could speak any Māori, pose a threat to the long-established CMS mission? And why was the CMS influence largely restricted to the North when their missionaries could have expanded, unchecked by a rival denomination, into the rest of the North Islands and perhaps even the South Island? Firstly, historians agree that CMS did not begin to have a noticeable spiritual impact on Māori until the 1830s, and this progress is often partly attributed to Henry William’s leadership and emphasis on direct evangelisation instead of Marsden’s ‘civilising’ approach. Missionaries had also obtained their own means of transport in the mission schooner the *Herald* from 1826, and even more significant were the translations into Māori of parts of the Bible from 1827. But these causes for conversion credit the missionary and his methods, rather than considering that Māori consciously chose adherence to a missionary church.

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<sup>2</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Monfat, pp. 375-383.

With reference to the CMS conversions in the 1830s Harrison Wright did not view the missionary as the determining factor, and highlights instead the changing nature of Māori society and Māori demoralisation resulting from European contact. Owens argues this, claiming that “cultural disturbance as a result of European contact was often more of a hindrance than an aid to missionary activity (...) and that missionary activity was often more successful in areas where there had been little cultural disturbance”.<sup>4</sup> In agreement with Owens, certain iwi and hapū were more open to conversion than others and requested a resident missionary to live among them to gain mana, material items to trade, literacy and literature, or knowledge of Christianity, or perhaps all of the above. Wright minimises the role of the missionary, and Owens insists that Māori did not simply resort to Christianity because of disillusionment. Māori determined their acceptance of, conversion to, and rejection of Christianity based on the social, political and economic situation in which they found themselves in various periods of the nineteenth century. Lachy Paterson emphasises the active role that Māori played in embracing both Christianity and European culture, and asserts that syncretic movements such as Pai Mārire occurred “in response to war and land loss.”<sup>5</sup>

Conversion itself is a term that can only be applied with difficulty to describe Māori acceptance and adoption of Christianity, especially given that the act of converting was defined differently from one church to another and from one missionary to another. It is clear that Māori traditional beliefs and value systems could not be overturned in one or even three decades, and could only be made to fit with Christian beliefs and values by coming to a sort of compromise. Howe notes that in the 1830s “the Maoris did not reject one set of religious values and adopt another. By mutual instruction and endless group discussion they selected and manipulated the most exciting, useful or relevant Christian ideas and rituals.”<sup>6</sup> This is demonstrated in the

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<sup>4</sup> J. M. R. Owens, ‘Christianity and the Maoris to 1840’ *NZJH*, 2.1 (1968), pp. 19, 20, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Lachy Paterson, ‘Māori “Conversion” to the Rule of Law and Nineteenth-Century Imperial Loyalties’, *Journal of Religious History*, 32.2 (2008), pp. 219-222.

<sup>6</sup> K.R. Howe, ‘The Maori Response to Christianity in the Thames-Waikato Area, 1833-1840’, p. 44.

hybrid movements discussed by Bronwyn Elsmore<sup>7</sup> and in the changing loyalties of Māori to the various missionary churches. Owens provides a useful response to the question of conversion:

there were no dramatic transitions – no given period when the Maoris moved from ‘dominance’ to ‘uncertainty’, no given period when there took place a ‘Maori conversion’ – and if, instead, the problem is seen in terms of constant social and cultural adjustment, accompanied by a diffusion of Christian concepts, sometimes spreading slowly, sometimes more rapidly (as in the early eighteen-thirties), and reaching different stages in different regions at any given moment, it does not make sense to ask why the Maori response was so long coming, or why it came when it did. The response began with Captain Cook, was still going on at the time of the Treaty of Waitangi, and did not stop then.<sup>8</sup>

To support Owen’s argument, we have only to consider the numbers of converted Māori in 1841, which could reflect the popularity of the Wesleyan and Roman Catholic churches or the leniency of these churches when accepting converts. Owens gives the following statistics for Māori converts: 584 for the CMS, 1565 for the WMS and 1000 for the Roman Catholic Church, making sure to distinguish between Māori attending Christian services and Māori enlisted as ‘communicants’, ‘members’ or ‘neophytes’ in the respective churches.<sup>9</sup> Marist Father Viard gives a total of over 4000 baptised Māori by 1846, a modest number compared to Pompallier’s earlier accounts of Māori conversions. The exaggeration of conversion records and differing definitions and expectations of conversion make it difficult to advance any assertions based on quantitative data from this early period. Consequently this chapter is a discussion of progress as well as conversion or sometimes instead of conversion, and argues that progress, which could only be made progressively, reflects the success or failure of the French Marists more accurately than early conversion and baptism records.

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<sup>7</sup> Bronwyn Elsmore, *Mana from Heaven: a century of Māori prophets in New Zealand* (Auckland: Reed, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> Owens, ‘Christianity and the Maoris to 1840’, p. 30.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 22.

## ***1.1 Temporal reasons for conversion***

From the outset, the CMS and WMS missionaries in New Zealand were faced with financial struggles, isolation and other difficulties that were the typical lot of pioneer missionaries. Robert Glen claimed that the CMS were gradually able to make progress in New Zealand because there were no major forces stopping them from doing so until the Roman Catholic Church and the development of ‘hybrid’ or ‘syncretic’ Māori religious movements curbed this progress.<sup>10</sup> Māori were the key players in the missions, and without their adherence the European missionaries had no place or purpose in New Zealand. But progress was slow in coming; it was not until the 1830s that historians see the CMS as having made substantial progress. Allan Davidson states: “It would be wrong to see the first fifteen years as all failure. The language was being learnt and mastered. Maori customs and beliefs were being observed and some significant points of contact were being established.”<sup>11</sup> If fifteen years were given to the Marists to progress in the Māori language, create a trusting relationship with Māori and build mission stations with very limited finances, would the French Catholic mission have been considered a success? It was certainly unfortunate that the Marist missionaries were removed from the northern to the southern half of the North Island in 1850, and then interrupted in their Māori mission work in the 1850s by the onset of the New Zealand Wars. However evidence of progress among Māori in 1846 indicated that the northern-most stations, where the Marists had first established themselves, were not as ‘successful’ as the missions in Waikato and the Bay of Plenty, where over two thousand Māori had been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>12</sup> Ngāpuhi and neighbouring iwi were realising the destructive impact of the Treaty and European settlement on their culture and livelihood, and either connected this with European missionaries or, as was exemplified by Hone Heke’s attack on Kororāreka, were simply disillusioned with the European influence they had once prized.

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<sup>10</sup> Glen, p. 37.

<sup>11</sup> Davidson, *Christianity in Aotearoa*, p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Simmons, *A Brief History of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*, p. 27.



What attracted Māori to conversion? Missionaries in the Pacific had a genuine belief in the need for spiritual enlightenment and the strong possibility of converting entire populations to Christianity. Why else would they dedicate, and in some cases sacrifice, their lives to such a difficult task? To borrow a passage from Andrew Porter's work on eighteenth-century British missionaries, there were essentially two approaches to missionary work:

The first tendency maintained that missions were best promoted by preaching, translation of the Bible and reliance on the working of the Holy Spirit to bring about individual conversions. The other, held most strongly by Scottish mission theorists, inclined to the view that conversion was to be looked for as the outcome of a gradual, developmental or 'civilising' process, fostered by missions and involving the cumulative workings of Divine Providence together with the operation of human reason and will.<sup>13</sup>

The CMS and WMS, from the 1830s, clearly followed in the tradition of the first approach, while the French Marists fit comfortably into the second. But the earliest leader of the CMS mission, Samuel Marsden, had also believed that civilisation and industry were the basis for successful conversions. The CMS in New Zealand had set up schools on their mission stations from the outset, hence Thomas Kendall's appointment to Rangihoua as schoolmaster, but the Catholic missionaries lacked the funding and manpower for permanent educational establishments. Informal, irregular schooling was not enough to consolidate the faith in their Māori adherents, and Jane Thomson notes that the Marists would have been more effective had they established schools early on,<sup>14</sup> instead of absorbing the *Petits Frères de Marie* in menial tasks. But Father Petit, in a letter from 1840, explains the importance of having Marist Brothers to introduce Māori to European labour, crafts and self-sufficiency:

Monsignor... recommended above all that I insist on the importance and necessity of having in the mission a good number of brothers proficient in either printing, carpentry, sewing etc. We cannot expect a full success until we have succeeded in inspiring a love for work in our natives,

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<sup>13</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Thomson, 'The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870', p. 111.

and we can hardly succeed in this without stimulating them with something they are not yet familiar with.<sup>15</sup>

Just as Marsden had promoted ‘civilising’ as a means to evangelising, the Marists also connected the two processes. Father Garin was confident that progress among Māori would not be difficult because of their great capacity to be ‘civilised’. Missionaries were often impressed at how strictly Māori kept the Sabbath, particularly compared with Christian settlers who were supposed to be setting an example for Māori. In an early letter, Garin wrote to French seminarian students at Meximieux, some of whom he hoped would consider joining the Marist Mission in the future, that Māori were comparable, and even exceeded French villagers and townspeople in their ‘civilised’ behaviour:

I see children here as developed as children from the city. They have an easy manner and speak very well and very quickly, understanding in one simple gesture; and I see that I was speaking the truth on the day before my departure from Meximieux when I told you that if these savages received instruction and clothing, like you, there would be no difference between you and them [...] I speak the truth in saying that in general this people is more open to instruction and civilisation than French peasants.<sup>16</sup>

Father Bataillon in Wallis came to understand that conversion, whether superficial or genuine, was only one step in a process that required industry and patience. While the CMS missionaries in New Zealand had executed Rev. Samuel Marsden’s belief that industry should precede, or rather lay the groundwork for, evangelisation, Father Bataillon approached his apostolic work conversely. After five years more or less focused on survival, instruction and conversion, Bataillon received a visit from

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<sup>15</sup> « Monseigneur ... m’a surtout recommandé d’insister sur l’importance et la nécessité d’avoir dans la mission un bon nombre de frères entendus soit dans l’imprimerie, la charpente et la couture etc. Nous ne pouvons espérer un plein succès qu’au moment où nous aurons réussi à inspirer à nos naturels l’amour du travail et l’on ne peut guères y réussir qu’en les stimulant par quelque chose qu’il ne connoissent pas encore », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 51, 3 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> « Je vois ici des enfans aussi développés que des enfans de la ville. Ils ont un air aisé et parlent très bien et vite, comprenant en un simple signal, et je vois que je vous disais bien la vérité la veille de mon départ de Meximieux, lorsque je vous disais que si ces sauvages avaient de l’instruction et des habits, comme vous, il n’y aurait point de différence entre vous et eux [...] je puis dire vrai en avançant en général que ce peuple est plus susceptible d’instruction et de civilisation que les gens de campagne de France », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 99, 12 June and 17 July 1841, Garin to students in Meximieux, p. 6.

Bishop Pompallier who encouraged him to impose the European world on the Wallisians, believing of course that this would be for their own good. Father Bataillon informed Father Colin in 1842:

We are now going to set our sights more specially on that which concerns the temporal wellbeing of our neophytes, teach them to grow cotton, to spin it, to weave, to build themselves healthier, more comfortable houses, to read and write etc., to rear cattle, to grow European plants, etc., etc. These are the intentions of Monsignor, who always embraces the dual benefit of religion and civilisation. It is the creation of a small new world.<sup>17</sup>

The ideal ‘small new world’ was arguably achieved by the Picpus Fathers in the Gambier Islands; the swift establishment of European infrastructure in Mangareva appears to explain the rapid conversion of the local inhabitants in the late 1830s. The Picpus Bishop Étienne Rouchouze reached the Gambiers at an opportune moment; in early 1835 the missionaries at Mangareva were preparing for the first adult baptisms and Rouchouze was able to perform these upon his arrival, which was deliberately accompanied by a degree of pomp. But Rouchouze the Vicar Apostolic of Eastern Oceania, was more than simply another Pompallier figure; he was a practical man with a great deal of foresight, having “brought with him all sorts of useful items such as a carpenter’s toolbox, a printing press and a complete forge... The harbours were improved and a network of roads was built as well as churches, schools and houses for the fathers.”<sup>18</sup> The Gambiers mission seemed to prove that European ‘civilisation’ could indeed lead to significant conversions.

Materialism pervaded the relationship between missionaries and indigenous peoples of the Pacific to such a degree that it must be considered as a key motivating factor for conversion to Christianity. If European missionaries in the nineteenth century had no doubt that they would eventually succeed in their overall mission, they were nevertheless aware that early conversions were not necessarily spiritual in nature.

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<sup>17</sup> « Nous allons plus particulièrement viser maintenant à ce qui concerne le bien être temporel de nos néophytes, leur apprendre à cultiver le coton, à le filer, à tisser, à se construire des maisons plus saines et plus commodes, à lire et à écrire, etc., à élever des bestiaux, à cultiver les plantes européennes, etc., etc. Ce sont là les intentions de m(onsei)g(neu)r qui embrassent toujours le double bienfait de la religion et de la civilisation. C’est un petit nouveau monde à créer », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 214, 4 November 1842, Wallis, Bataillon to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Rademaker, pp. 19-20.

Sometimes little distinction was made between religious or spiritual ‘zeal’ and a strong curiosity for something new and potentially useful, but the Marists generally did not seem to view Māori within the framework of theological determinism, “an unconscious assumption that through the innate and overwhelming superiority of the missionaries’ Christianity the Māori was simply compelled to convert.”<sup>19</sup> Certainly the methods used to obtain conversions were far from spiritual, and the Marist Fathers wrote very honestly to their Superior-General in regard to this.

According to Pompallier “Especially from the beginning of a mission, the importunities, the spirit of interest, the unreasonableness and the superstitions of the natives often test one’s patience.”<sup>20</sup> This ‘spirit of interest’ probably refers to the material and socio-political gain that had a key role in attracting Māori to Christianity, as well as being an unfitting trait for a Catholic. The early Marists believed that the obstacles they faced were surmountable, but not without the aid of more priests, more churches, and more bibles and prayer books. Even statues, paintings and ceremonial objects played a significant part in swaying Māori towards Catholicism in the early years of the mission, although one of the greatest draw-cards was arguably Pompallier’s purple robes:

Nowhere is it more important to have beautiful ornaments for worship than in the native land of these savages who hardly judge things other than by their appearance. They are deeply struck when they see Monsignor officiate pontifically. In their view, a well-decorated altar is a strong argument in favour of mass. Monsignor’s pontificals are known throughout almost all of New Zealand. They come from far away to see them.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Gary Clover, ‘Going Mihinare, Experimental Religion, and Maori embracing of Missionary Christianity- A Re-Assessment’, *Christian Brethren Research Fellowship (N.Z) Journal*, 121 (1990), p. 42.

<sup>20</sup> « Surtout dès le commencement d’une mission les importunités, l’esprit d’intérêt, le déraisonnement et les superstitions des naturels mettent souvent la patience à l’épreuve », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 39, 15 October 1839, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> « Nulle part il n’est plus important d’avoir de beaux ornements pour le culte que chez nos sauvages qui ne jugent guères des choses que par l’extérieur. Ils sont vivement frappés quand ils voient monseigneur officier pontificalement. Chez eux un autel bien orné est un grand argument en faveur de la messe. Le pontifical de m(onsei)g(neu)r est connu de presque toute la Nouvelle Zélande. On vient de loin pour le voir », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 49, 21 February 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Poupinel, p. 1.

Pompallier had started an improvident trend by offering gifts to chiefs in an effort to win their allegiance, since this gave Māori the impression that the Catholic mission was wealthy. He was convinced that clothing was an instrumental tool for conversion and said in justification that to offer it to Māori and Pacific Islanders was to teach them “Christian modesty”. Pompallier was clearly following the example of the Picpus Fathers in hopes of achieving the same ‘success’ and the same control over his indigenous flock: “I discovered that the Picpus missionaries in the Gambier Islands had excited the charity of the faithful in France, by means of their confreres in Paris, to such an extent that they were able to clothe all of their natives.”<sup>22</sup> The bishop was also participating in the Māori practice of ‘utu’ by exchanging gifts with chiefs who showed interest in the Catholic religion. There was no question that Māori responded favourably to gifts of European clothing; in early 1840, Father Petit revealed the power of a single cloak:

If you could find some people who would like to make some light coats for some great chiefs, they have a great love for these especially when there is a little red in the lining. Sometimes a gift made to a chief attracts his affection, then comes his conversion and, through his, that of his entire tribe.<sup>23</sup>

Three months after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, Pompallier claimed that over 25,000 Māori in Northland had ‘turned’ to Catholicism. He explains that:

(...) *to turn* is to know of the unity of God, the trinity of persons, the creation of the universe and of man, of his fall, of redemption, virginity, and the divine maternity of the very holy Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus-Christ our saviour; it is to have an idea of the chronological tree of the church, to recite morning and evening the *Pater noster* (*a to matou matua*), the *ave Maria* (*tena paiupa ki a koe e Maria*), the *credo* (*e wakapono ano ahau*); it is also to sing the hymns about God, his perfections and his kind deeds. *Tourner* is not therefore to have been baptised, but to prepare oneself for baptism or aspire to it. Finally, *tourner* is to know that one must love God

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<sup>22</sup> « J’ai appris que les missionnaires de Pic-pus à Gambier avoient tellement excité la charité des fidèles en France, par le moyen de leurs confrères à Paris, qu’ils avoient pu vêtir tous leurs naturels », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> « S’il se trouvoit quelques personnes qui voulussent bien faire quelques manteaux légers pour quelques g(ran)ds chefs, il en sont très amateurs surtout quand il se trouve un peu de rouge dans la doublure. Quelquefois un don fait à un chef attire son affection, vient ensuite sa conversion et par la sienne celle de toute sa tribus [*sic*] », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 49, 21 February 1840, Bay of Islands, Petit to Poupinel, p. 3.

above all and love one's neighbour as one loves oneself, to neither kill, nor steal, nor lie, nor be impure, and to observe the holy day of Sunday.<sup>24</sup>

It was precisely the conversion figures mentioned above, which were transmitted to the Propagation of the Faith and published in their *Annales*, that led to confusion and disillusionment in the mission and in Europe; the Marist contingent leaving France in 1842 expected to reach the Māori Mission described earlier by Pompallier as successful and promising. It is important to note that Pompallier used the term 'tourner' (to turn) rather than 'se convertir' (to convert) when describing his early successes, although this distinction was not necessarily made by readers of the *Annales*. To justify why baptism registers, after two and a half years' presence in the North, were far from impressive in comparison to his estimates of Māori 'converts', Pompallier expressed to Father Colin:

There are at present in New Zealand 25,000 or 30,000 catechumens and around 400 neophytes; baptism does not happen as quickly as conversion of the New Zealanders to the Faith, because tribes are too dispersed, there are not enough of us, and instruction can be given only too rarely to each community. The principal objective until now has been to safeguard them from the heresy that relentlessly works to lead them to their ruin.<sup>25</sup>

The priority for the early Marists was to deter Māori from embracing Protestantism, and if the genuineness of conversions had to be overlooked in the meantime, the Marists were willing to allow this. But they drew the line at Pompallier's considerable exaggerations and ensured that their Superior-General was aware of the very limited

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<sup>24</sup> « (...) *tourner*, c'est connaître l'unité de Dieu, la trinité des personnes, la création de l'univers, de l'homme, de sa chute, de la rédemption, de la virginité et de la maternité divine de la très sainte Vierge mère de Jésus-Christ sauveur, c'est avoir une idée de l'arbre chronologique de l'église, réciter soir et matin le *Pater noster* (*a to matou matua*), l'*ave Maria* (*tena paiupa ki a koe e Maria*), le *credo* (*e wakapono ano ahau*), puis c'est chanter le cantique sur Dieu, ses perfections et ses bienfaits. Mais *tourner* n'est pas pour cela avoir reçu le baptême, mais c'est s'y préparer ou y aspirer. Enfin tourner, c'est savoir qu'il faut aimer Dieu par dessus tout et le prochain comme soi-même, ne pas tuer, ni voler, ni mentir, ni être impur, et c'est observer le s(ain)t jour du dimanche », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 58, 14 May 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, pp. 2-3.

<sup>25</sup> « Il y a en ce moment à la Nouvelle Zélande 25,000 ou 30 milles catéchumènes et environ 400 néophytes; le baptême ne va pas si vite que la conversion à la foi des Nouveaux Zélandois, parce que les tribus sont trop dispersées, que nous ne sommes pas assez nombreux, et que l'instruction ne peut être donnée que trop rarement à chaque population. Le principal but jusques ici a été de les garantir de l'hérésie qui s'acharne à leur perte », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 64, 22 July 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 2.

spiritual progress the Marists had actually made. In April 1840, Father Servant wrote to Father Colin of this material-based trend for Māori conversion. Servant's views are far from naïve as he warns Colin that Pompallier has embellished the progress of the mission:

(...) it is after having consulted Fathers Baty, Petit and Epalle that I confide to your discretion the following details: you should not take literally the *mirabilia* [miracles] of conversion that previous letters may have announced to you; the natives are quite far away from a genuine conversion... How many of them want from what they call prayer only as much as it will gain them in clothes and other objects! How many of them have threatened to abandon prayer if we do not give them such and such a thing that they ask for! To this cupidity is added an evil ingratitude towards priests: some do not give us the food we paid them for in advance; others want to make us pay sometimes double for the miserable potatoes that we ate while staying in their tribes to instruct them; others sometimes demand that we give them double the price for the same object purchased; others want us to set the price in advance for the small boats to bring them spiritual services. If you are not careful you are duped by the lies and the cunning of the natives, who are adept at pushing themselves forward and to whom the ends justify the means. The great difficulty of communication with the tribes who are scattered far away is a great obstacle in the instruction of the natives and causes delay in their conversion.<sup>26</sup>

Literacy and literature, discussed earlier in the thesis, were also a significant reason for Māori interest in conversion and Christianity in general. The Protestant missionaries were “convinced that, to better convert, one must first educate, in the broader sense of the word, introduce literacy and instill concepts of agriculture. Teaching was the instrument of conversion, as it was in England where education was

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<sup>26</sup> « (...) c'est après avoir consulté les chers pères Baty, Petit et Épalle que je confie à votre prudence les détails qui suivent: Il convient de ne pas recevoir à la lettre les *mirabilia* de conversion qu'auroient pu vous annoncer les lettres précédentes; il y a loin des premières dispositions des naturels à une véritable conversion... Combien ne veulent de ce qu'ils appellent la prière qu'autant qu'elle leur gagnera des habits et autres objets! Combien nous ont fait de menaces d'abandonner la prière si on ne leur donne telle et telle chose qu'ils demandent! A cette cupidité se joint une noire ingratitude à l'égard des prêtres: les uns ne donnent pas le comestible qu'on leur a payé d'avance; les autres veulent faire payer quelquefois au double les malheureuses pommes de terre qu'on a mangé dans leurs tribus en y restant pour les instruire; d'autres demandent quelquefois qu'on leur donne un double prix pour le même objet acheté; d'autres veulent qu'on fixe d'avance le prix des embarcations pour aller leur rendre des services spirituels. Si on y prend garde, on est dupé par les mensonges et la fourberie des naturels qui sont habiles à se faire valoir et à qui tout moyen d'y parvenir est bon. La grande difficulté de communiquer avec les tribus qui sont dispersées au loin est un grand obstacle à l'instruction des naturels et occasionne de lenteur à leur changement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 55, 26 April 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 1.

dispensed on an exclusively religious basis.”<sup>27</sup> While religion and education were similarly connected in nineteenth-century France, the Catholic mission was not in the habit of encouraging non-clergy to read the Bible themselves, and its lack of resources prevented the printing of catechisms and prayer-books until late 1842. Some of the Marist Fathers felt that a lack of interest in the mission, and perhaps its subsequent failure, derived largely from their inability to provide bibles, prayer-books or books in general to Māori who hoped to gain literacy via the Christian missions. Father Comte suggested to Father Petit-Jean in 1845 that central North Island Māori were only yielding to Protestantism because of their enthusiasm for literacy and literature. Comte wrote, with a somewhat desperate tone:

My dear Father, perhaps I am mistaken, but it seems certain to me that we would need something from the Holy Scriptures. In reality, it is books that are needed to attract and retain Maori. If the rest of you at Monsignor’s side can see the necessity of it, how can you remain neutral? Our mission is dying.<sup>28</sup>

Somewhat of a veteran on the Māori Mission by 1852, Father Bernard requested to be transferred to the Marist missions in central Oceania and applied his experience to the mission in Samoa and Wallis. The Samoa mission was in its infancy, prompting Bernard to comment on the importance of literature and other factors conducive to a ‘successful’ mission: “My experience had taught me that without an establishment for the missionary at the heart of communities, without books, without continual instruction among these fickle peoples, one cannot hope for anything.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> « (...) ils choisirent l’endoctrinement par l’enseignement, convaincus qu’il fallait d’abord éduquer, au sens large, alphabétiser, inculquer des notions d’agriculture, pour mieux convertir. L’enseignement fut l’instrument de la conversion, comme il l’était en Angleterre où l’éducation était dispensée sur des bases exclusivement religieuses », Francine Tolron, *La Nouvelle-Zélande: du duel au duo? Essai d’histoire culturelle* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2000), p. 69.

<sup>28</sup> « Mon cher père, je puis me tromper, mais il me paraît certain que nous aurions besoin de quelque chose de l’écriture sainte. C’est réellement le livre qu’il faut pour attirer et tenir les Maoris. Si vous autres qui êtes à côté de mon(sei)g(neu)r en voyez la nécessité, comment se fait-il que vous restez neutres? Notre mission meurt », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 435, 18 November 1845, Wellington, Comte to Petit-Jean, p. 12.

<sup>29</sup> « Mon expérience m’avait appris que sans établissement pour le missionnaire au centre des populations, sans livres, sans instructions continues au milieu de ces peuples légers, on ne pouvait rien espérer », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1306, 15 November 1853, Upolu (Samoa), Bernard to Colin, p. 1.



If the inability to satisfy Māori ‘cupidity’ for goods and literature impacted negatively on the success of the Marist mission in New Zealand, it was only the ostensible success that was affected. Thomson states regarding the Marist Fathers: “it seems likely that the priests lost easily as much as they gained by the self-denial of their life and the unworldliness of their aims: the Maoris were after all interested in the temporal benefits which they had become used to regarding as essential concomitants of a missionary.”<sup>30</sup> But could the CMS missionaries claim success for their conversions and victory over the Catholic Church if the decisive factor in Māori eyes was which church could offer the most materially? Francine Tolron highlights the challenges faced by the early CMS missionaries in transferring the concepts of Christianity to Māori:

It appears that if the missionaries had few difficulties overall in making their presence and their temporal influence accepted, they met in contrast a blatant hostility, reluctance or indifference at best when trying to win their audience over to the word of Christ. Conversions were slow; they had to wait sixteen years after their establishment to register the first one, in 1830, which casts doubt on the nature of the interest they generated.<sup>31</sup>

According to Rogers, the delay in conversions “was due mainly to the insistence of Henry Williams on very long periods of probation before admission to the Church by public baptism was permitted.”<sup>32</sup> Certainly the CMS missionaries were not as quick to baptise their adherents and had been evangelising for far longer, at least in the North, yet this does not prove that their conversions were any more genuine. How then could missionaries produce sound conversions and at what point could Māori feel ready to genuinely convert to Christianity? Pompallier and the Marist missionaries understood to some extent that Māori could never relinquish all of their cultural practices and beliefs, whereas the CMS and WMS missionaries demanded that Māori do exactly this before they could receive the sacred rite of Christian baptism.

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<sup>30</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 110.

<sup>31</sup> « (...) il semble que si les missionnaires eurent dans l’ensemble peu de difficultés à faire accepter leur présence et leur influence temporelle, ils rencontrèrent en revanche une franche hostilité, au mieux de la réticence ou de l’indifférence, lorsqu’il entreprirent de rallier leur auditoire à la parole christique. Les conversions furent lentes, il fallut attendre seize ans après leur installation pour enregistrer la première, en 1830, ce qui laisse planer un doute sur la nature tardive de l’intérêt qu’il suscita », Tolron, p. 51.

<sup>32</sup> *The Early Journals of Henry Williams: 1826-40*, p. 21.

## *1.2 Politics and perseverance*

The authority of local chiefs was an important element of early nineteenth-century Polynesian society, and this was clearly understood by Pompallier, whose initial generosity towards rangatira in the North Island roused the interest of the hapū to which these rangatira belonged and led to numerous conversions. In Wallis, King Lavelua, perhaps threatened by a European's growing influence over his people, opposed the Marist mission there until he realised what other chiefs or royals might gain, materially and in terms of mana and status, if Father Bataillon were to establish a Catholic mission elsewhere. Hervier adds that the conversion of many Wallisians came about as a result of epidemics in the 1840s.<sup>33</sup> Indeed there were multiple motivating factors for conversion, but it is no coincidence that Bishop Pompallier's presence from late 1841 coincided with numerous baptisms in Wallis. Though belated, Pompallier's return to Wallis and Futuna revealed the importance of the bishop as a tool for conversion or more accurately as a means to confirm and secure conversions. Much like the naval vessels confirmed the missionaries' claims of support from the French government, Pompallier with his bright robes and large crucifix confirmed their claims of support from a French noble and representative of this great and glorious Roman Catholic Church the Wallisians had heard of for so long.

In 1844 Bishop Douarre, newly arrived in the Pacific, astutely pointed out to Father Colin that the presence of the bishop was needed to consolidate the progress begun by the Fathers, Brothers and catechists. Douarre was at this point under the jurisdiction of Bishop Bataillon, since Pompallier had been relieved of the Pacific Islands and was in charge of New Zealand only. As has been mentioned, further progress in Tonga was largely in the hands of the Tongan aristocracy; according to Bishop Douarre, however:

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<sup>33</sup> Hervier, pp. 11-13.

Bishop Bataillon could remedy this; but he did the same thing in Wallis, and how would he correct himself of such a pattern? It would be important, I think, to pull them [Chevron and Grange] from this quandary, and to do this it would be necessary for him [Monsignor] to come and spend some months in Tonga, all the more since the mission would gain a great deal from his presence, and this would even be a way of clearing paths, for Tonga is the Paris of Polynesia; with this archipelago converted, we could then attempt the others, even the New Hebrides, but once again the mission must be on a different footing and I doubt that other missionaries, after Mr. Chevron and Mr. Grange, could endure.<sup>34</sup>

Father Chevron had already voiced this dilemma to the Marist superior-general several months prior to Douarre's visit to Tonga, a dilemma which echoed the Marist situation in New Zealand. Pompallier's status as a bishop seemed to correspond to the status of Polynesian kings and chiefs, and therefore served to undermine the influence of the Fathers and Brothers, so that they were only effective as missionaries if the bishop confirmed their teachings and assertions with his own presence. In a similar vein, Father Chevron was not able to make headway with some of the Tongan people because they preferred to deal with the chief figure of the mission; this role originally belonged to Pompallier but was allocated to Bishop Bataillon when he was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania at the end of 1842:

One thing that harms the mission is the irregularity of visits. The Protestant missionaries are visited regularly; I do not know if it is every six months but what I absolutely know is that this visit is not delayed for more than a year. We are ruined by promises and the natives end up with a lack of trust in us. I think it will be good also if we were taken for something more than the bishop's *labourers*; I think that in the eyes of religion and the Church we are something more: we are his collaborators. There are resulting instances where the natives say: when the bishop comes, we will arrange it with him.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> « Monseigneur Bataillon pourrait y remédier; mais il a fait la même chose à Wallis, et comment se corrigerait-il d'une pareille habitude. Il serait important, ce me semble, de les tirer du bourbier et pour cela il faudrait qu'il vînt passer quelques mois à Tonga, d'autant plus que la mission gagnerait beaucoup à sa présence, et ce serait même un moyen de préparer les voies, car Tonga étant le Paris de la Polynésie, cet archipel converti on pourrait ensuite entreprendre les autres avec moins de peine vu qu'il s'y trouve beaucoup d'individus des différentes îles, des Nouvelles Hébrides même, mais encore une fois il faut que la mission soit sur un autre pied et je doute qu'après messieurs Chevron et Grange d'autres missionnaires puissent y tenir », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 304, 10 January 1844, New Caledonia, Douarre to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> « Une chose qui fait bien tort à la mission, c'est le peu de régularité dans les visites. Les missionnaires protestants sont visités régulièrement; je ne sais pas si c'est tous les six mois, mais ce que je sais positivement c'est que jamais cette visite ne tarde un an. On se ruine en promesses et les naturels finissent ainsi par manquer de confiance. Je crois qu'il seroit bien aussi qu'on nous prît pour quelque

Conversion was not merely a religious transformation, nor could it be achieved through trade or gifts alone. Spirituality was intricately laced into the political, social and familial framework of Polynesian peoples, thus the missionaries had limited control over progress and were instead dependent on the views and decisions of local chiefs, kings, queens and leaders. The pioneer Marist mission in Fiji found it difficult to simply establish a station in the mid-1840s; Fathers Mathieu, Bréhéret and Roulleaux approached one of the local kings, the Tui Heao, but he was unwilling to convert or provide support to the missionaries until the other two kings in Fiji had agreed to convert, for fear of creating conflict or damaging the good relations he had with both sovereigns.<sup>36</sup> After a year in Tongatapu, Fathers Chevron and Grange had made a small impact but with nothing material or politically advantageous to offer the island, they, not unlike the lower classes in Tonga, were at the mercy of the local chiefs. Chevron was disappointed that the Tongans:

(...) still hold to what they have been taught, few through conviction, some through pride and most through solidarity and fear of certain chiefs. I think that we have nearly two hundred catechumens, declared candidly and openly, and following prayers and instruction; and if we wanted to count as some do, we would gather almost two-thirds of the island to our side; all who speak of the Catholic religion say *our* religion. Only when they are asked why they do not declare themselves Catholics do they reply that they are awaiting the chiefs or some relatives, or that they are still too unlearned.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly the first four years of the Futuna mission were difficult for the Marist missionaries Father Chanel and Brother Marie-Nizier because of the overarching

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chose de plus que pour les *ouvriers* de l'évêque; je pense qu'aux yeux de la religion et de l'église nous sommes quelque chose de plus: nous sommes ses collaborateurs. Il arrive de là que les naturels disent: quand l'évêque viendra, nous nous arrangerons avec lui », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 262, 27 June 1843, Tonga, Chevron to Colin, pp. 2-3.

<sup>36</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 458, 6 January 1846, Wallis, Mathieu to his brother, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup> « Ils tiennent encore à leur enseignement, peu par conviction, quelques uns par amour propre et le grand nombre par esprit de parti et par crainte de quelques chefs. Je pense que nous avons bien près deux cents catéchumènes déclarés franchement et ouvertement, suivant les prières et les instructions; et si nous voulions compter comme comptent quelques uns, nous rangerions de notre côté près des deux tiers de l'île; tous en parlant de la religion catholique disent *notre* religion. Seulement quand on leur demande pourquoi ils ne se déclarent pas, ils répondent qu'ils attendent les chefs ou quelques parents, ou qu'ils sont encore trop ignorants », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 261, 24-25 June 1843, Tonga, Chevron to his family, p. 8.

influence of King Niuliki. According to Brother Marie-Nizier, the missionaries struggled to attract adherents and achieve conversions because Niuliki had threatened to persecute anyone who dared to show an interest in the Catholic Church:

There were only a small number of catechumens, for the continual persecutions and threats made against them to burn down and pillage their houses and plantations etc. doubtless prevented them from increasing in number as quickly as they would have. I really should tell you that the same threats had often been made to us, and that the secret principal motives for *every one* of these threats resided in the heart of the King.<sup>38</sup>

How then could progress be made, especially if the indigenous rulers in the Pacific had control over the spiritual direction of their people? And if the bishop's presence could convert an island, but his subsequent departure would undo all that had been achieved, how could the missionaries expect to be effective? Given the relationship between trade and conversions, and between political strategy and conversions, the missionaries evidently needed to be seen by the indigenous peoples of Oceania as some kind of an asset to them. But once they had penetrated this initial barrier, once they had 'won' the trust and interest of chief and hapū alike, there was still no guarantee that existing conversions were genuine or enduring. In the Pacific Islands, Pompallier's reports in the early 1840s suggested success and even thriving missions but these, as pointed out by Father Grange in Tonga, vastly overestimated the number of converts to Catholicism. Pompallier claimed he had 6000 indigenous converts in Tonga alone, but Grange challenged this and offered the following numbers in 1844: "Wallis 2300, Futuna 1050 (the father in Futuna gave me this very exact figure. All of them are baptised. Tonga, 130 baptised and 200 catechumens."<sup>39</sup> Yet baptism was simply the beginning, and without ongoing exposure to or participation in the Catholic Church and its teachings it was unreasonable to expect Māori or Pacific Islanders to maintain their interest in the religion. When Father Comte left Akaroa in

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<sup>38</sup> « Il n'y avait qu'un petit nombre de catéchumènes, car les persécutions et les menaces continuelles, qui étaient faites contre eux d'incendier, de piller leurs maisons et leurs plantations etc., les empêchaient sans doute de se multiplier aussi promptement qu'ils l'auraient fait. Je dois bien vous dire que les mêmes menaces nous avaient été faites bien souvent, et que *toutes* avaient leurs principales causes secrètes dans le coeur du roi », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 389, 29 July 1845, Futuna, Brother Marie-Nizier (Delorme) to Colin, p. 10.

<sup>39</sup> « Wallis 2300, Foutuna 1050, c'est le p(ère) de Foutouna qui donne ce chiffre très-exact. Tous sont baptisés. Tonga, 130 baptisés et 200 catéchumènes », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 320, 20 February – 25 July 1844, Tonga, Grange to Colin, p. 1.

1842, he was concerned that of the few Māori living in Banks Peninsula those whom he had baptised would probably ‘lapse’ after his departure. Tremewan explains: “Maori, as well as the French, often did not extend their interest in the Catholic Church beyond the sacrament of baptism. This was, of course, largely because there were no clergy living and working permanently in the area.”<sup>40</sup> Progress was therefore dependent on constancy, beginning with the long-term residency of a missionary priest who could visibly represent the Church and also establish stability and routine through services such as Sunday mass. Father Grange wrote candidly that reasons for conversion were as much temporal as spiritual, but he also stresses the pastoral role of the missionary:

I can say with all the honesty in my soul that I have never yet seen a person come to religion through purely supernatural motives. With that in mind, one should expect a rupture and an almost general desertion by those who embrace the religion if one is not always there to support them through some natural and supernatural means at the same time.<sup>41</sup>

Progress on the Marist missions in the Pacific, which were plagued with hardships as discussed earlier in this thesis, thus required more perseverance than perhaps any individual missionary could muster, hence the high level of transfers and the considerable number of resignations. Having visited Fathers Chevron and Grange in Tonga at the end of 1843, Bishop Douarre was moved to comment: “The Tonga-Tapu mission is very promising but it requires missionaries of an *almost supernatural* virtue and it will require many of them if measures are not taken to retain them.”<sup>42</sup> Given the Marist missionaries’ many complaints and criticisms about Pompallier’s methods and style of leadership, the following passage offers a possible defence for Pompallier; in this letter from 1840, Bishop Pompallier described the kinds of people

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<sup>40</sup> Tremewan, *French Akaroa*, p. 255.

<sup>41</sup> « Je puis avancer avec toute la sincérité de mon âme que je n’ai jamais vu encore une personne venir à la religion par des motifs purement surnaturels. D’après cela, on doit s’attendre à un craquement et à une désertion presque générale de ceux qui embrassent la religion, si on est pas toujours là pour les soutenir par quelques moyens naturels et surnaturels tout à la fois », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 320, 20 February – 25 July 1844, Tonga, Grange to Colin, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> « La mission de Tonga-Tabou promet beaucoup; mais il y faut des missionnaires d’une vertu *presque surnaturelle* et il y en faudra beaucoup si l’on ne prend des mesures pour les conserver », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 304, 10 January 1844, New Caledonia, Douarre to Colin, p. 1.

he viewed as unsuitable for missionary work in Oceania, such as melancholic, uneducated or antisocial types, claiming that they:

(...) would have only little success on the missions. Those who are too sensitive or have too ardent an imagination, those who are too quick to become upset, with thousands of reasons to be, amidst shortcomings and the vices of peoples, can sometimes see things all askew, or at least see the black side of things, when success is imminent with [a little] more patience and constancy.<sup>43</sup>

### **1.3 Models of success?**

From 1837, the Marists were thrust into the enormous mission territory of ‘Western Oceania’, comprising perhaps 350,000 square kilometres of land and including the majority of Polynesian, Micronesian and Melanesian islands. By 1842, the islands in ‘Central Oceania’ (Tonga, Samoa, Wallis, Futuna, Fiji, New Caledonia) had been erected as a separate vicariate. In 1844 the Roman Catholic Church established the ‘Vicariate Apostolic of Micronesia and Melanesia’, but Marist missionary activity there was effectively limited to the Solomon Islands and had petered out by the 1850s. While it is culturally problematic to divide Oceania into the artificial groupings ‘Polynesia’, ‘Micronesia’ and ‘Melanesia’, which do not accurately correspond with the ecclesiastical divisions created by the Roman Catholic Church, there are nevertheless commonalities within the Polynesian and Melanesian groupings, and disparate elements between them, with regard to the experience of European missionaries; it is therefore helpful to consider the Marists’ success in New Zealand, Wallis, Futuna, Tonga and Samoa (Polynesia) in comparison to their success in New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and Fiji (Melanesia).

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<sup>43</sup> « (...) n’auront que peu de succès dans les missions. Ceux qui sont trop sensibles, trop ardents d’imagination, trop prompts à s’indisposer au milieu des mille occasions de l’être, des défauts, des vices des peuples, peuvent voir quelquefois tout de travers les choses, ou du moins bien en noir, lorsque le succès seroit tout proche avec plus de patience et de constance », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 71, 30 August 1840, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 5.

Once missions had been firmly established, the Marists were convinced that swift progress would follow. Their justification for this belief was entwined with spiritual determinism: the Catholic faith was the true faith, therefore it would eventually prevail if this was the will of God. The missionaries were not so naïve as to think that there would be no obstacles in the path of Christianisation, but there was considerable disillusionment when their missions did not flourish as quickly as the Picpus mission in the Gambier Islands, which seemed to be the Catholic success story of the Pacific. The Picpus missionaries arrived in Gambier Islands in 1834, and had converted the whole island of Mangareva by the end of the following year.

Until this date, contact between Mangareva and the rest of the world had been neither frequent nor enduring. The archipelago had not experienced internal conquest by a rebel chief as in Tahiti; no European warship had ever come to exert external pressure on the population. The missionaries found themselves alone. Furthermore the arrival of Mgr Rouhouze in May 1835 had been a precious help to them and the spectacular ceremonies which took place on that occasion had greatly impressed the chiefs, desirous to participate in them.<sup>44</sup>

Rademaker describes the success of the Picpus Fathers in Mangareva as largely a result of political manipulation of the island, asserting that: “the missionaries kept all development under their own control and thus the Gambier Islands became the dream of a Catholic mission. A Christian form of theocracy gradually developed.”<sup>45</sup> If this tightly-managed theocracy was conducive to conversions in the early years of the mission, it was not long before those who left the island returned to their former practices; Marist Father Philippe Calinon reported that when the Picpus missionaries left the Gambiers to begin a mission in Tahiti they brought two of their most promising Mangarevian converts with them, but not long after their arrival these converts stole from the missionaries and fled. According to Calinon, who visited

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<sup>44</sup> « (...) jusqu'à cette date, les contacts de Mangareva avec le reste du monde n'avaient été ni fréquents ni durables. L'archipel n'avait pas connu de conquête intérieure par un chef rebelle comme à Tahiti ; aucun navire de guerre européen n'était jamais venu exercer une pression extérieure sur la population. Les missionnaires se trouvaient seuls. Encore que l'arrivée de Mgr Rouhouze en mai 1835 leur eût été d'un précieux secours et que les cérémonies spectaculaires qui se déroulèrent à cette occasion aient grandement impressionné les chefs, désireux d'y participer », Laval, p. CXXXIV.

<sup>45</sup> Rademaker, p. 20.



Tahiti in early 1844: “they outraged the Tahitian people, who nevertheless are not easily outraged, I assure you.”<sup>46</sup>

Wallis and Futuna, also largely unaffected by European expansion into the Pacific when the Marists arrived in 1837, became bastions of Catholicism within five years of their establishment, but not before the missionaries had created alliances with reigning sovereigns and chiefs. Melanesians, in contrast, kept far more aloof from the missionaries and were more actively resistant to European ideas and presence among them. Furthermore, the missionaries in San Cristobal were frequently unwell and left physically weak from bouts of tropical fevers.<sup>47</sup> The New Caledonian mission was a repeated failure; the Kanak welcomed the missionaries in peace, only to pillage their home and kill one of their missionaries. Even when the Marists used a different technique – that of ‘réduction’ as used successfully by the Jesuits in Paraguay – the result remained the same. ‘Réduction’ involved, as Georges Delbos put it, “assembling in a protected environment, sheltered from all foreign influence, a community of indigenous volunteers which would be firmly trained firstly in the Christian virtues, and which one would subsequently thrust into the middle of human dough, like a yeast which would cause it to rise.”<sup>48</sup> The Marists in New Zealand, discouraged by the comparative success of the CMS, felt that perhaps a ‘reduction’ for the Māori Mission might produce the same results as in Paraguay. According to Father Petit-Jean:

(...) a small village which is well-converted, well-ordered, well-subjected to ministers of religion, well-organised with its schools, or a village of 400 souls with the means to gradually develop, is of more value than the 7, 8 or 9 thousand Catholics that the mission might possess, taking this word in the broadest sense imaginable. Hence several Fathers and above all the reverend Father Rozet are pressing for us to form ‘reductions’, that is to say we purchase enough land somewhere to establish a village where we would begin to place a few available

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<sup>46</sup> « ils faisoient le scandale de la population tahitienne qui cependant n’est pas facile à scandaliser, je vous assure », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 406, October, 24 & 27 November & 2 December 1845, Tonga, Calinon to Colin, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 610, 8 March 1847, Sydney, Collomb to Colin, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> « regrouper dans un milieu protégé, à l’abri de toute influence étrangère, une communauté d’indigènes volontaires que l’on formerait solidement dans un premier temps aux vertus chrétiennes et que l’on jetterait ensuite en pleine pâte humaine comme un levain qui la ferait lever », Delbos, *L’Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 81.

families; we would do this with the good will to safeguard them from the contaminant of prevailing heresy, from the passions that, while not acute, are rather violent (without genuine faith, there is no chastity), and especially from the contaminant of inherent superstitions.<sup>49</sup>

Only in Futuna in 1850 did the Marist Fathers have a positive experience of ‘réduction’, but Futuna had already largely converted to Catholicism following the martyrdom of Father Chanel.<sup>50</sup>

In 1842 Wallis and Futuna were the most promising Marist missions in Oceania, whereas the Māori Mission appeared to have reached a low point in the same year. But how was it possible for Futuna to have matched the early success in Wallis, given that the previous year Father Chanel in Futuna had only 5 catechumens compared to Father Bataillon’s claim of having converted 2000 of the 2300 inhabitants on Wallis?<sup>51</sup> Again several factors contributed to the success of the Futunan Marist Mission, including Chanel’s assassination in 1841, the aforementioned auspicious death of King Niuliki, and Bishop Pompallier’s visit in 1842 to retrieve Chanel’s remains. Pompallier’s presence in Wallis and Futuna also helped to confirm the status of the Wallisian mission. King Lavelua had previously doubted Father Bataillon’s promise that a great French chief would visit the island in a large sea vessel, but changed his attitude when Pompallier arrived, and boarded the ship to meet with him. The inhabitants of Futuna were further impressed by the subsequent arrival of the French warship *l’Allier*; the ship’s captain Eugene du Bouzet was eager to avenge Father Chanel’s death but was apparently dissuaded from doing so by Bishop Pompallier, who requested him instead to assist with transporting Chanel’s remains

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<sup>49</sup> « (...) un petit village bien converti, bien réglé, bien soumis aux ministres de la religion, bien organisé avec ses écoles, ou un village de 400 âmes avec moyens de s’accroître peu à peu vaudroit mieux que les 7 - 8 - ou 9 mille catholiques que la mission peu posséder, en prenant ce mot dans le sens le plus large qu’on puisse imaginer. De là vient que plusieurs pères et surtout le rév(érend) p(ère) Roset pressent pour qu’on forme des réductions, c’est-à-dire qu’on achète en quelque endroit assez de terrain pour y asseoir un village où l’on commenceroit à placer quelques familles libres, de bonne volonté [p]our les garantir de la contagion de l’hérésie qui domine, des passions qui sans être vives sont assez brutales (sans la foi véritable, pas de chasteté), et surtout de la contagion des superstitions innées », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 503, 12 May 1846, New Zealand, Petit-Jean to Colin, pp. 3-4.

<sup>50</sup> Delbos, *L’Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 85.

<sup>51</sup> *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 98, 31 May 1841, Wallis, Bataillon to Colin, p. 2.

back to France.<sup>52</sup> Father Roulleaux asserted that the conversion of Futuna was more genuine than that of Wallis or any other domain ministered by the Marists, and based this on the fact that no gifts were offered to the local king or chiefs to coerce their loyalty and support.<sup>53</sup> But Roulleaux's colleague in Futuna, Father Servant, was less optimistic; Servant, who always informed his superior-general of dubious conversions such as that of Papahurihia on the Māori Mission, expressed his concern regarding Chanel's assassin, Musumusu:

Reverend Father Chanel's primary killer, who received baptism in Wallis while suffering from a serious illness, offers us no consolation. I even doubt the sincerity of his conversion and the conversions of a small few who share his feelings.<sup>54</sup>

The situation in Melanesia was markedly different. Of the six pioneer Marist missionaries (Fathers Chanel, Épalle, Paget and Jacquet, and Brothers Blaise and Hyacinthe) who were killed by local inhabitants of Oceania in the period 1841 to 1848, five of these occurred in the Melanesian islands. European contact was limited there, and these attacks on missionaries were prompted either by the missionary's own lack of caution or by the local inhabitants' desire to curb European presence and influence. Several Marist missionaries in Melanesia also died of febrile illnesses, making the Melanesian mission the most perilous. Bishop Épalle's pioneer mission to Melanesia and Micronesia never gained a foothold because Épalle, having been warned not to approach a particular village, underestimated the danger there and was killed just days after setting foot on the island of Santa Ysabel in 1845. Hugh Laracy asserts that the Solomon Islands could not be successfully evangelised at that time because:

As elsewhere in Melanesia and in contrast to Polynesia, the Solomon Islands offered no individuals to whom European governments could accredit consuls, no 'kings' who could

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<sup>52</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 133, 16 and 19 February 1842, Bay of Islands, Viard to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 342, 25 July 1844, Tonga, Roulleaux to Poupinel, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> « Le principal bourreau du (révérend) p(ère) Chanel, lequel a reçu le baptême à Wallis dans une grave maladie, ne nous donne pas de consolation. Je doute même de la sincérité de sa conversion et de celle d'un petit nombre qui partage ses sentiments », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 385, 6 July 1845, Futuna, Servant to Colin, p. 7.

gratify missionaries by precipitating mass conversions to Christianity and no patrons whose support guaranteed protection beyond the limits of their personal influence.<sup>55</sup>

If Melanesia was almost impossible to penetrate, and the associated Micronesian mission had not been attempted because of the failure in Melanesia, Polynesia was the Oceanian territory which offered the most potential for successful missions. Location was therefore an all-important factor in achieving acceptance and conversions for the Marists and other nineteenth-century missionaries in the Pacific. But New Zealand was strikingly different from the rest of Polynesia because of the significant number of British missionaries present from the 1830s and of the overwhelming number of British settlers from 1840. European exploration and colonisation of the Pacific was still in its early phases, thus in New Zealand for example accessible ports and coastal areas tended to have a strong European presence while some remote and rural areas remained largely untouched by European influences until major settlement, land sales and land confiscation occurred in the period 1840 to 1880. Bishop Pompallier chose to establish the early Catholic missions in northern New Zealand, in and around major ports and in close proximity to existing CMS and WMS stations. It is obvious from Part Two, Chapter Three of this thesis that from a long-term perspective the Catholic establishment in Kororāreka was more detrimental to the Māori Mission than beneficial; while it was useful for Pompallier himself to be located in the capital, whether that was Kororāreka or Auckland, perhaps the procure house should have remained in the Hokianga, which had a port, a considerable Māori population, and more opportunities for new missionaries to learn the Māori language.

In considering the notions of success and failure of the Māori Mission, it is necessary to compare the circumstances under which each denomination established its missions in New Zealand. The Church Missionary Society, as the instigators of missionary endeavour in New Zealand, faced the gruelling and dangerous task of laying the groundwork for Christianity; but throughout the mission era there was clearly a disparity in funding, manpower and status, at least in the colony, in favour of the Anglican missionaries. The Catholic missionaries always felt at a great economic

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<sup>55</sup> Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians*, p. 5.

and material disadvantage in comparison to both Anglican and Wesleyan ministers, and once New Zealand became a British colony there was a call for British priests to minister to Māori and European alike; the French missionary was an anomaly in the new colony, prompting comments such as this one from a Sydney clergyman: “you have everything you need to succeed but there is one important thing that disadvantages you, and that is being French.”<sup>56</sup>

How then could success or progress be achieved by the early Marists in New Zealand? The only means to answer this question is to consider the apparently ‘successful’ or ‘flourishing’ missions as recognised by the missionaries themselves: the stations at Ōtaki and on the Whanganui River. What these stations have in common is their economic viability, which became a priority for the Marists following the financial crisis of 1842, but they were also modelled on thriving CMS stations directed by Revs. Richard Taylor, Octavius Hadfield, and John Morgan. As Jenny Murray notes, Taylor and Hadfield:

(...) went to districts where a large number of people, though not everybody, was ready to welcome missionary teaching. Hadfield and Taylor had the immediate stimulation and encouragement of crowded schools and congregations numbering several hundred at services.<sup>57</sup>

But it was their ability to create a means of subsistence for these people that arguably secured their ‘success’. Hadfield of the CMS and Marist Father Comte were both stationed at Ōtaki, where Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa and Te Āti Awa prospered from the mid-1840s from various commercial enterprises introduced and fostered by these missionaries. It was a similar situation on the Whanganui River in the 1850s. Rev. Richard Taylor of the CMS, who established a flour mill in the area as early as 1845, was faced with both commercial and spiritual competition when Marist Father Lampila constructed a mill at Kauaeroa, several kilometres from Taylor’s base at Kawana.

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<sup>56</sup> « (...) vous auriez tout pour réussir mais il est une chose importante qui vous fait tord, c’est d’être Français », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 174, 2 June 1842, Bay of Islands, Forest to Colin, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Jenny Murray, ‘Moving South with the CMS: Some mid-nineteenth century missionaries’ in *Mission and Moko*, p. 111.

The Waikato was particularly lucrative in the 1850s with regard to Māori agricultural enterprise. Since the Marists were relocated to the Wellington diocese, Pompallier's diocesan missionaries replaced them in the Waikato, with Father Joseph Garavel assuming the post at Rangiaowhia. CMS missionary John Morgan was stationed at Otawhao (Te Awamutu), and rivalry between the two missionaries, who were based only a few kilometres apart, hastened the establishment of schools and churches on both stations. Howe points out that "the only real success Rev. Morgan's school had was in helping to give some Māoris a working knowledge of European agricultural techniques such as what crops to plant and how to fix broken ploughs."<sup>58</sup> Clearly these entrepreneurial missionaries had accepted that to attract and retain Māori, their missions would have to offer more than Christian guidance; many iwi and hapū south of Tai Tokerau were interested in participating in the European commercial world and, by creating a tight-knit industrious community with church and school included, the missionaries were able to satisfy Māori needs for subsistence and agricultural knowledge. Whether or not the Māori missions progressed in a spiritual sense is debateable, but there is no doubt that while these stations flourished economically Māori loyalty to Christianity and to their relevant missionary was strengthened significantly. Only in the 1860s, with the growing popularity of syncretic religious movements in line with efforts to regain mana whenua, was this loyalty to the Catholic, Anglican and Wesleyan Methodist Churches weakened or broken altogether.

#### ***1.4 Spiritual conversion***

A major difficulty for all the European missionaries in New Zealand was the continued belief in Māori spiritual concepts, particularly because of the way in which these were intertwined with what European viewed, and continue to view, as very distinct constructs such as politics and society. Perhaps the obstacle did not lie so much in the resilience of traditional Māori religion but rather in the approach taken by the missionaries, who viewed success and conversions through a Eurocentric lens,

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<sup>58</sup> Howe, 'Missionaries, Maoris and "civilization" in the upper-Waikato, 1833-1863', p. 142.

imposing European ‘civilisation’, education and labour systems on the peoples of Oceania in the hope that this would increase their capacity to become good Christians. Was success ending the moral ‘vices’ of supposedly non-civilised peoples? In this case, the French Marists in New Zealand arrived too late; the CMS had already taken credit for generally putting an end to cannibalism and ‘civilising’ Māori with European clothing and manners. In contrast, within a few years of commencing mission work, the French Marist missionaries in New Caledonia “had the satisfaction of noting [...] that thefts decreased, liars felt ashamed and cannibals concealed themselves; even if progress was slow, it was real. The missionaries were not preaching in vain.”<sup>59</sup>

When the Marists introduced their faith to northern Māori in 1838, they were the third Christian denomination to do so, which meant that Māori were faced with the confusing task of determining whether to accept one of these three conflicting foreign ideologies or whether to maintain their own traditional beliefs. Anne Salmond describes the spiritual confusion and discord that preceded Ruatara’s death in 1815, when only the CMS missionaries were present in New Zealand: “On one side of this ontological tug of war were the tohunga, or priests, who were concerned about Ruatara’s hau. On the other were Marsden and his missionaries, who were trying to save his soul, so that he could go to heaven.”<sup>60</sup> This ‘ontological tug of war’ turned into a denominational tug of war in the 1830s, making it even more difficult for Māori to spiritually connect to Christianity as it was being preached to them.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle against the early CMS missionaries was the all-important concept of tapu, which pervaded every sphere and facet of Māori life and was therefore a problematical practice to remove. Rev. William Yate described tapu in detail in his 1835 publication *An Account of New Zealand and of the Church Missionary Society’s Mission in the Northern Island*:

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<sup>59</sup> « (...) ont la satisfaction de constater, et ils le disent que les vols diminuent, que les menteurs rougissent et que les anthropophages se cachent, même si les progrès sont lents, ils sont réels. Les missionnaires ne moralisent pas en vain », Delbos, *L’Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 59.

<sup>60</sup> Salmond, pp. 508-509.

It enters into all their labours, pervades all their plans, influences many of their actions, and, in the absence of a better security, secures their persons and their property. Sometimes it is used for political, and at other times for religious, purposes: sometimes it is made the means of saving life, and at other times, it is the ostensible reason for taking life away.<sup>61</sup>

Yate claimed that tapu had largely disappeared in the north by 1830s as a result of missionaries and the Gospel having disproved Māori ‘superstitious’ beliefs, but tapu was still prevalent in the rest of the country, where missionaries had not established themselves. In the late 1830s Rev. Ashwell, who established a CMS station at the Waikato Heads, testified to the power and influence of tapu in the area:

The great hindrance at this time to the reception of the Gospel was the tapu of the great chiefs. Sometimes the chief was made sacred and could not be approached, or perhaps a road was made tapu and must be avoided. Then Wahi Tapu (sacred places) were very numerous.<sup>62</sup>

While there were numerous movements to revive Māori concepts and beliefs of the past, there was also an important widespread movement encouraging Māori to abandon these in favour of Christianity; the Wahi Tapu movement, which peaked in the 1850s, is explained by Elsmore as a response to the prevailing belief at the time that neglecting tapu “was the cause of diseases sweeping the country and drastically cutting the population. Since it appeared that a return to the old ways was unlikely, it became necessary to remove these old tapu sites so that they would not form a danger to the people.”<sup>63</sup> In the 1860s it was evident that tapu, like other traditional concepts, was very much alive throughout the country, and was probably never truly erased from the minds of Christian Māori. Ironically it was by way of a tapu placed upon Ashwell by Tarapīpipi (Wiremu Tāmihana), who was leading a taua through Taupiri in 1860 on his way into Taranaki, that the missionary and his family were protected from harm during the Taranaki wars.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> William Yate, *An Account of New Zealand and of the Church Missionary Society’s Mission in the Northern Island* (Wellington: Reed, 1971), pp. 84-85.

<sup>62</sup> Ashwell, p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, p. 110.

<sup>64</sup> Gorst, pp. 5-6.



Meanwhile, in the Pacific Islands, tapu was equally prevalent; one of the most important traditional beliefs seemed to be incurring the wrath of gods by breaching or disregarding tapu. Diseases and febrile illnesses were common and sometimes fatal, therefore spirituality was necessarily intertwined with healing and death. It was important for the missionaries to have some degree of medical knowledge, but even more necessary was the ability to prove the power of the Christian God and simultaneously disprove or at least show the weakness of Polynesian gods. Father Chevron in Tonga wrote to the Marist superior-general:

The natives here have many remedies brought over from the Fiji islands, the inhabitants of which are surprisingly skilful, for savages, at making these; they also have their deities' priests whose single occupation is to heal the sick through their prayers, which compels us to compete against them and to surpass them all. I believe that (except for a miracle) without medicine here one must either stay at home or leave altogether.<sup>65</sup>

Often referred to by missionaries as merely 'superstitious beliefs', the idea that an epidemic or natural disaster could be interpreted as a punishment from the supernatural world was a common one in Polynesia, and was sometimes responsible for the apparent capriciousness of indigenous adherence to existing and introduced religious beliefs. A primary example of this was the sudden conversion of most Futunans following King Niuliki's death from illness, which was viewed as a punishment for his having commanded the assassination of Marist Father Pierre Chanel. If indigenous Polynesians could turn away from traditional religious beliefs to Christianity, they could just as easily turn away from Christianity in favour of traditional beliefs. The LMS missionary John Williams, according to Rademaker, reached the Cook Islands at an opportune time, and was particularly successful as a result of having Maohi missionaries from Tahiti to evangelise the indigenous Cook Islanders; Rademaker confirms the multiplicity of reasons for the acceptance of Christianity in the Cook Islands, but asserts that:

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<sup>65</sup> «Les naturels ont ici beaucoup de remèdes apportés des îles de Fidji, qui sont en cela d'une habileté étonnante pour des sauvages, puis ils ont leur prêtres de dieux dont le métier unique est de guérir les malades par leurs prières, ce qui nous met dans la nécessité de faire concurrence et de les surpasser tous. Je crois qu'ici sans médecine (sauf un miracle) il faudroit ou rester chez soi ou s'embarquer », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 312, 2 February – 24 July 1844, Tonga, Chevron to Colin, p. 4.

the most important factor was the *mana* of the God of the Christians. This was demonstrated by the learning the foreigners had, their ships and material resources, not to mention that the old gods seemed powerless. It can truly be said that the history of the Cook Islands would have gone into a totally different direction if, after the first burning of idols, a hurricane or another catastrophe had hit the islands.<sup>66</sup>

Proof that a genuine and complete spiritual conversion was not something that could be swiftly achieved lies in the re-emergence of traditional Māori religion throughout the century. In the following passage Father Baty describes how a Catholic convert suddenly returned to traditional Māori beliefs after the Great March Comet of 1843, especially bright to observers in the Southern Hemisphere, passed through the sky. Baty was in Oruru (Doubtless Bay) at the time, having heard rumours of war brewing between hapū in the area; the missionary had viewed the comet himself but was alarmed to hear how it had been interpreted by others:

The most common feeling was that it was a sign of war. Later on I learned of other comments, for instance that it was Jesus Christ who was coming to visit the two churches to announce which was the right one. An old priestess who belonged to the group and who had 'turned' to the Catholic faith deemed it an opportune moment to feel inspired; her voice changed, she went into convulsive movements and harangued the others, she strongly insisted on the constancy needed for prayer and then, resembling a Pythoness, [...] she made several chiefs speak, chiefs who had been dead for a short or long time depending on the relevant war. She was strongly contradicted by several Catholics present, but she became only more excited and stopped only very late into the night; she was listened to with a sacred respect by those of the natives who still follow their ancient customs.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Rademaker, p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> « Le sentiment le plus général était qu'elle était le signe de la guerre. Plus tard j'ai appris d'autres commentaires, v(erbi) g(ratia) que c'était J(ésus) C(hrist) qui venait voir les deux églises pour dire quelle était la bonne. Une vieille prêtresse qui était de la troupe et qui avait tourné à la foi catholique jugea à propos de se sentir inspirée, sa voix changea, elle entra dans des mouvements convulsifs et haranga les autres, elle insista beaucoup sur la constance qu'il fallait avoir sur la prière et ensuite semblable à une Pythonisse [...] elle fit parler quelques chefs morts depuis plus ou moins long-temps relativement à la guerre. Elle fut fortement contredite par plusieurs des catholiques présents, mais elle n'en devint que plus animée et ne cessa que fort tard dans la nuit; elle était écoutée avec un religieux respect par ceux des naturels qui suivaient encore leurs anciens usages », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 311, 28 January 1844, Sydney, Baty to Colin, pp. 6-7.

As discussed in Part Two of this thesis, CMS and Marist missionaries challenged the Kīngitanga during the Waikato wars because of its connection with Pai Mārire and Hauhauism, a connection which drew away numerous Anglican and Catholic converts from their respective missions. Some missionaries viewed this as a return to paganism, failing to recognise the numerous Māori political and politico-religious movements throughout the century as vehicles of protest and self-determination. Many of these movements are described in Bronwyn Elsmore's *Mana from Heaven and Like Them That Dream*;<sup>68</sup> the recurring theme in these religions or movements is a likening between Māori and Jews, based on their interpretations of the Old Testament, but there are also prophecies and visions involving Jesus Christ, clearly based on the New Testament. What was unacceptable for the missionaries, including the Marists who were considered much more tolerant than the Anglicans and Wesleyans, was that these movements retained and promoted elements of traditional Māori religion which they had tried to stamp out since their arrival in New Zealand. With the emergence of such syncretic religions and Māori prophets, it became clear that Māori were inclined to accept Christianity only on terms that made sense to them and to their circumstances. In other words their spirituality was inseparable from their social, economic and political situation, and as this situation changed so therefore did certain ideas within their spirituality. That Pompallier, Viard and the Marist missionaries did not support Māori movements towards self-determination reflects the Catholic view that, "Compared with the inestimable gift of salvation which the mission offered, the survival or extinction of native independence was of little consequence."<sup>69</sup>

That all missionary churches in Oceania managed to find adherents among the indigenous populations, and that these churches endure today, proves that there were successful conversions to Christianity, but only if we consider conversion as an ongoing process rather than a single act such as receiving baptism. From the examples discussed so far, it is indisputable that conversion to Christianity was prompted by various factors from material gain to political gain to the belief that God, through the missionaries, could heal sickness and disease. Although tangible items

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<sup>68</sup> Elsmore, *Mana from Heaven*; Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream*.

<sup>69</sup> Turner, p. 91.

and a permanent Marist presence seemed to be the answer to achieving conversions, transforming Māori spirituality and shaping it to fit an age-old European model was a much more complex task. For this reason purely religious motives for conversion are usually dismissed by historians in favour of more practical reasons for conversion,<sup>70</sup> but there is evidence in New Zealand of a genuine absorption of Christian values and tenets even if these were skewed into syncretic religious and prophetic movements. While the description of a successful mission might have differed from missionary to missionary, Father Chevron in Tonga summarises the Marist belief that true success was essentially in the hands of a higher power: “Blessed be God, it is not success that is asked of us but labour; this belongs to us and the other depends on God.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> See Binney, Owens.

<sup>71</sup> « Dieu soit béni, on ne demande pas de nous le succès mais le travail, à nous appartient celui-ci, et de Dieu dépend celui là », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 312, 2 February – 24 July 1844, Tonga, Chevron to Colin, p. 7.

## Chapter 2: Catechists and Enculturation

Historian Jane Thomson makes the presupposition that in New Zealand “The Protestant missions, with the advantage of Māori ministers and preachers, never gave up the struggle, but Catholic missionary work was not resumed till the eighties.”<sup>1</sup> This statement is untrue for two reasons: the European CMS and Wesleyan missionaries abandoned their mission stations in the late 1850s and 1860s for the same reasons as the Marists did; as well as Protestant Māori ministers there were also Catholic Māori catechists who promoted Christianity throughout the country when the European missionaries withdrew. If Thomson valued Anglican Māori ministers for their contributions, surely Catholic Māori catechists who were active during the same period should be held in the same esteem? Whether Anglican or Catholic, numerous Māori were responsible for maintaining and encouraging Christianity among their relative iwi and hapū, and while the CMS might have shown more confidence in their adherents by ordaining them from as early as the 1850s there was no question in the minds of the Marists that Māori catechists were the key to a genuine and lasting conversion. Who were these important contributors to New Zealand’s Catholic history? To what extent were they necessary for the success of Christian missions and what did their roles entail? This chapter cannot provide an adequate description of the Marists’ chief catechists; a full investigation into their lives and experiences is required, and this would demand a doctoral research study of its own with a particular emphasis on Māori oral history. The aim of this chapter is to respond to Thomson’s statement and to offer insights into the beginnings of indigenous churches in the Pacific.

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<sup>1</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 223.

Māori catechists had many advantages over European missionaries because they were insiders to Māori culture and a channel between two very different worlds. Indigenous catechists and preachers could sometimes determine the ‘success’ of a mission station, regardless of the personality or skill of the missionary with whom they were associated, because their influence alone was enough to encourage acceptance and even conversion to Christianity within their own iwi or hapū. But catechists did not always remain with their people, choosing to follow the early European missionary on his travels or to propagate the Gospel independent of the missionary societies. The Marist missionaries quickly learned that Māori traditional religious beliefs and European Christianity would have to be intermixed to be comprehensible and relevant to their potential converts; this ‘enculturating’ approach had been a common method for Roman Catholic missionaries but notably unacceptable to Protestant missionaries including the CMS in New Zealand. Did enculturation offer greater hopes for success than the Protestant method of condemning Māori cultural practices and replacing them with Christian ones? This chapter explores the question by considering the effectiveness of the indigenous catechist and an enculturating Christianity.

## ***2.1 Early indigenous catechists***

From the very beginning the missionaries, CMS and Marists alike, relied heavily on Māori converts to lay the groundwork for their Māori missions. Father Servant had a valuable guide and catechist in a Hokianga chief known as Werahiko (having been christened ‘François’ by Bishop Pompallier) who accompanied, and occasionally had to carry, the French missionary on his journeys through the Hokianga in the early 1840s. Simmons describes Werahiko as a Whirinaki chief originally named Papahia.<sup>2</sup> When visiting Māori communities in the Hokianga, Father Servant explains: “Often I expanded on and had François expand on evidence in favour of the Catholic Church; I also explained the chronological tree to them. Feeling the great need to receive the benefit of instruction, these poor natives spoke to me incessantly of their desire to see

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<sup>2</sup> Simmons, *Pompallier: Prince of Bishops*, p. 36.

a priest live among them.”<sup>3</sup> The eager response was undoubtedly due in part to Werahiko’s convincing speeches, as he was able to find elements in Māori customs and traditional beliefs that could correspond to Christianity.

The role of the Māori catechist was a crucial one; Māori would only take interest or convert to Christianity on their own terms and, being an ambitious people who were quick to absorb new ideas and practices, there were numerous examples of Māori individuals taking initiative to pass on what they had learned. Moreover the method and language they used to transmit this knowledge was better-suited to their audience than the techniques used by an outsider to Māori culture. The earliest missionary efforts were concentrated in Tai Tokerau, where the CMS missionaries had begun cultivating an interest in Christianity among Ngāpuhi Māori almost two decades before the Catholic Church had even considered an evangelical mission to Oceania. When Pompallier and the Marist missionaries arrived in 1838, they were delighted to find that Christian influence had already spread south of the Bay of Islands, though ironically it was the interference of British Protestant missionaries that had led to Christianity being disseminated so widely and rapidly; the CMS missionaries had encouraged the release of Māori slaves captured by Hongi Hika during the Musket Wars of the 1820s, and when these slaves returned to their own iwi and hapū, they introduced the Christian ideas they had absorbed while in the Bay of Islands. Gary Clover emphasises the importance of Māori enthusiasm for Christianity and to teach Christianity to others, without which the CMS and Marist missionaries would not have met with such an encouraging response on their journeys throughout the country:

(...) almost whole Maori tribes turned to embrace Christianity through the evangelising influence of *Maori*, not European, evangelists as these teachers returned to their home tribes after missionary influence had them released from enslavement with the Ngapuhi and Waikato tribes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> « Souvent je développais et faisais développer par François des preuves en faveur de l’église catholique; je leur expliquois aussi l’arbre chronologique. Sentant le grand besoin de recevoir le bienfait de l’instruction, ces pauvres naturels ne cessoient de me parler du désir qu’ils avoient de voir un prêtre habiter au milieu d’eux », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 52, 5 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Clover, p. 42.

A number of Māori iwi and hapū south of the Bay of Islands created Catholic and Anglican Māori communities as a result of being introduced to Christianity. Their enthusiasm led to some fascinating developments in these communities, such as the construction of a Catholic chapel at a kāinga near Lake Waikaremoana before any priest or missionary had even visited the area. Marist Father Baty was surprised to come across this decidedly Catholic kāinga in December 1842 during his travels in and around Wairoa and Māhia Peninsula.<sup>5</sup>

Indigenous catechists were instrumental in converting Pacific communities, particularly if the leading catechists also happened to be prominent elders and chiefs. Porter notes that the LMS missionaries in the Pacific were restricted by their reliance on the political structures in place in each island, because a local chief, king or member of the elite could allow or disallow, encourage or discourage the conversion to Christianity of the lower classes.<sup>6</sup> In Tonga, an early ineffective LMS attempt at evangelisation was followed in the 1820s by the endeavours of the two Wesleyan missionaries Thomas and Turner, who were able to make an impact on Tongan thinking through Christian teachings. This progress was consolidated with the destruction of many temples and traditional items, which demonstrated the influence that the missionaries had developed over local Tongan chiefs, but this was only made possibly through an alliance with the Wesleyans' most significant adherent, the chief Taufa'ahau.

When he came to the Tongan throne in 1845, Taufa'ahau, thenceforth known as King George, challenged the chiefs in the Pea locality where traditional Tongan beliefs had prevailed and resisted the Wesleyan influence. Pea had been chosen as the Marist missionaries' primary station for this very reason; in the same way that some Māori hapū had manifested their opposition to the strong Anglican and Wesleyan presence in New Zealand by joining the Roman Catholic mission, Tongans in Pea embraced the French Marist mission largely as an act of defiance to Taufa'ahau. However the underlying reason for the acceptance of the Marists into the Pea Tongan community

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<sup>5</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 232, 18 January 1843, Bay of Islands, Baty to Maîtrepierre, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 164.



was the fact that they had arrived in the company of about thirty Tongans who had converted to Catholicism at Wallis. Without these instrumental catechists, the Marists might not have won the trust and protection of local chief Moeaki and the Pea community.

When the French Picpus Fathers Caret, Laval and Murphy entered the Gambier Islands in 1834, they encountered a Protestant missionary, George Nobbs, who left the island in 1835, though apparently not without spreading the usual rumours that the Catholic missionaries were murderous conquerors. Thus the Picpus Fathers were left to win over the Mangarevian aristocracy with no real interference from Protestant missionaries; there was nonetheless a wariness among various levels of the nobility, and the Fathers were not immediately welcomed into the island community. In fact it was probably the forming of a friendship with the uncle of the Mangarevian king which led to their acceptance and enabled their success with the rapid conversion of the Mangarevians.<sup>7</sup> Conversely in New Caledonia, the Marist missionaries owed their initial progress to a woman and child; especially valuable was Father Rougeyron's protégé, a boy "of eight to ten years of age who has a chiefly quality and to whom they will give the name Louis [...] He accompanies the missionaries in their apostolic rounds, facilitates their contact with the local population and assists them in preparing three other catechists."<sup>8</sup>

Arguably the most influential Māori Catholic in the Bay of Islands was a woman named Hoki, niece of Ngāpuhi chief Rewa. Hoki became one of the first Catholic converts on the Māori Mission and in 1840 was given the baptismal name 'Beata' by Pompallier, which was transliterated as 'Peata'. Her role in the Māori mission dated from the early contact with the pioneer Marists at Kororāreka to her collaboration with Suzanne Aubert in her attempt to revive the mission in the late 1870s, and significantly she was the very first Māori to take religious vows. Jessie Munro notes that her uncles Rewa, Te Wharerahi and Moka were pivotal to the establishment of the Catholic mission at Kororāreka and its expansion into other parts of the upper

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<sup>7</sup> Laval, pp. 74-75.

<sup>8</sup> « de huit à dix ans qui a qualité de chef et à qui ils donneront le nom de Louis [...] Il accompagne les missionnaires dans leurs tournées apostoliques, leur facilite les contacts avec la population [...] et les aide à préparer trois autres catéchistes », Delbos, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, p. 60.

North Island,<sup>9</sup> but that Peata alone held so much mana that she was able to protect the Catholic mission from a taua following the sack of Kororāreka in 1845.<sup>10</sup> Peata was acknowledged in the early twentieth century by Archbishop Redwood as the “brave chieftainess who saved the Catholic Mission at Russell” and was said to have “led a very holy life, and often spent nights in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.”<sup>11</sup> Marist Father Garin described her importance as a powerful model catechumen on the pioneer mission in the Bay of Islands:

In this bay I would count three chiefs who are well disposed to the priest, and many natives; they are always eager to pray, while the others are a little less fervent. We also have a chief's wife, a widow; her name is *Peata*. She is one of the most zealous one could see; she has a great deal of influence over chiefs, especially the two greatest, Rewa and Moka, in this part of the island. She has a virtuousness that is not very common among them.<sup>12</sup>

Māori residing in or visiting the Bay of Islands therefore ensured the early success of the Anglican and Catholic Churches by actively supporting or teaching Christianity, just as other indigenous peoples in the Pacific determined the acceptance of Christianity in the various island nations. But already in the 1820s the LMS had taken indigenous catechising to a new level; the closeness in language and customs of many Polynesian islands allowed for an interconnected approach to evangelisation and, beginning with Aitutaki in 1821, the Maohi catechists Papeiha and Vahapata from Tahiti were making progress in converting indigenous Cook Islanders to Christianity. Rademaker asserts that “It was indeed very important that the first bearers of the Good News were Polynesians. They understood the language, the culture, the society and religion of the Maoris and could build on the Maori tradition.”<sup>13</sup> Missionary John Williams realised that the key to successful Protestant missions in the Pacific was to

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<sup>9</sup> Munro, ‘Colin and Pompallier and the Founding of the Catholic Church in New Zealand’, p. 79.

<sup>10</sup> Munro, ‘Meri Hohepa: Mother Aubert and the Maori’, p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> MAW, Letter from Redwood to unknown recipient, 12<sup>th</sup> February 1926, Wellington, 208/8.

<sup>12</sup> « Je compte dans cette baie trois chefs d'un coeur tout-à-fait bon pour le prêtre; et beaucoup de naturels, ils sont toujours fervens à faire la prière; les autres sont un peu moins fervens. Nous avons aussi une femme de chef, veuve; elle se nomme *Peata*. C'est une des plus zélées qu'on puisse voir; elle a beaucoup d'influence auprès des chefs, même des deux plus grands, Rewa et Moka, dans cette partie de l'île. Elle a une vertu peu commune parmi eux », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 186, 9 August 1842, Kororareka, Garin to Colin, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Rademaker, p. 5.

utilise indigenous converts as catechists on other islands, thus he sent Tahitians to evangelise Cook Islanders, Cook Islanders to evangelise Samoans, and so on.<sup>14</sup>

In 1835 Wesleyan missionaries Cargill and Cross followed Williams' example and sent Fijian chief Josua Mateinaniu, whom they had converted in Tonga, to "mingle with the many Tongans who were spread through the islands [...] On the Sunday after his return Cargill's small chapel was overflowing with a congregation 'of 300 or 400 Tonguese from the Leeward Iss of Feejee'."<sup>15</sup> Desperate to evangelise the Pacific Islands before Protestants could gain too much ground, the Marists sent one of their key catechists, Moïse Matanavai, to begin apostolic work in Fiji. Matanavai had come into contact with the Marists in Wallis and was greatly valued by Father Chevron for his devotion and effectiveness as a catechist:

This young man, born in Tonga, was led, while still young, to the Fiji islands. In a voyage to Samoa or the Navigator Islands, the canoe he was in was thrust by the winds onto the reefs of Uvea [Wallis], where he was baptised and confirmed. He is a young man full of modesty and energy; he had been assigned to me to be my catechist par excellence, and I loved him dearly; a sacrifice had to be made for the glory of God. He is going to pave the way for the Gospel in the Fiji islands, while waiting for Monsignor to have priests to dispatch.<sup>16</sup>

However Father Roulleaux, who joined Matanavai in Fiji in 1844, offered an insight into the difficulties that this indigenous catechist faced as a result of his affiliation with and commitment to the Catholic mission; like the Marist missionaries themselves Matanavai was isolated, disillusioned at Pompallier's broken promises, and harassed by neighbouring Wesleyan missionaries:

We have with us a catechist whom Monsignor Pompallier left, two years ago, at Lakeba [...] with the promise to send him priests in six months' time. This poor neophyte has had to battle all this time against the inducements of heretics, against the scandalous behaviour of pagans, but

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<sup>14</sup> Lange, pp 62-68, 78-81.

<sup>15</sup> Garrett, p. 103.

<sup>16</sup> « Ce jeune homme, né à Tonga, fut conduit encore jeune dans les îles de Viti. Dans un voyage à Hamoa ou île des Navigateurs, la pirogue où il se trouvoit fut jetté par les vents sur les récifs d'Ouvéa, où il a été baptisé et confirmé. C'est un jeune homme plein de modestie, d'activité; il m'avoit été associé pour être mon catéchiste par excellence, je l'aimais beaucoup; il a fallu en faire le sacrifice pour la gloire de Dieu. Il va préparer les voies à l'évangile dans les îles de Viti en attendant que monseigneur ait des prêtres à envoyer », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 153, 9 May – 11 July 1842, Wallis, Chevron to family, p. 10.

he persevered; we even have on board a Fijian whom he baptised when in danger of dying, and who is very attached to the faith. In a letter this catechist wrote to the reverend fathers in Tonga, he said: If you do not visit me soon, I will wait another year; if after that you do not come, I will wait yet another year still; if finally you leave me here like this, I will wait for the rest of my life.<sup>17</sup>

The early Marists in the Pacific did not have the funding or resources to establish a catechist training institution from which Pacific Islanders could be sent to various islands to prepare their inhabitants for conversion. It was important first of all to have local catechists preaching to the local population, thus in Futuna Father Servant observed that “There are catechists in every village for men, women and children. These catechists, whom we have taken care to instruct ourselves in a very special manner, fulfil their function in the evenings every day.”<sup>18</sup> However to form catechists for expansion of the mission, as Rev. John Williams had done, was not such a simple task. In Tonga and New Caledonia it was clear that the Marists could not form catechists until they had become relatively self-sufficient because the catechists would need to be fed and supported by the mission. The only centre for aspiring indigenous missionaries was Wallis, where Bishop Bataillon had grand plans for a seminary and other works; gradually Wallisian converts became more involved in the missions in central Oceania and accompanied Marist missionaries to other islands, encouraging this remark from Father Mathieu to the Marist Superior-General:

Our young people ask only to leave with the new missionaries for infidel lands. This is an enormous resource for establishing new missions. These young people nourish the missionary at the same time as serving as catechists for him. I believe, my reverend Father, that it is time to consider the establishment of a college and a seminary. When the islands are converted, I fear

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<sup>17</sup> « Nous aurons avec nous un catéchiste que m(onsei)g(neu)r Pompallier avait laissé, il y a deux ans, à La Gemba, [Lakeba] [...] avec promesse de lui envoyer des prêtres dans six mois. Ce pauvre néophyte a eu à lutter pendant tout ce temps contre les sollicitations des hérétiques, contre les scandales des payens; il a persévéré; nous avons même à bord un Fidjien qu’il a baptisé en danger de mort, et qui est très-attaché à la foi. Dans une lettre que ce catéchiste écrivait aux r(évérands) pères de Toga, il disait: Si vous tardez à me visiter, je patienterai encore un an; si après cela vous ne venez pas, je patienterai une autre année encore; si enfin vous me laissez ainsi, je patienterai toute ma vie », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 332, 16 June & 10 August 1844, Futuna/Fiji, Roulleaux to Colin, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> « Il y a des catéchistes dans tous les villages pour les hommes, les femmes et les enfants. Ces catéchistes, que nous avons soin nous-même d’instruire d’une manière toute spéciale, remplissent leur fonction chaque jour pendant la veillée », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 385, 6 July 1845, Futuna, Servant to Colin, p. 2.

that the zeal of the French clergy will not suffice to maintain the good work there without the help of indigenous priests.<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2 *Towards an indigenous clergy*

Bishop Pompallier travelled constantly in the first decade of the mission in New Zealand, establishing a number of stations himself before sending Marist Fathers and Brothers to occupy them. In a letter dated August 1839, Pompallier suggested that a number of Māori would have the opportunity to begin training for the Catholic priesthood if he could only free himself from constant travelling to give them the religious formation required:

It is highly likely that in a certain number of years I could find among the young neophytes some subjects suitable for study and clerical virtues. Already several of them have begged me to take them away to be near to me and receive religious instruction, and they have expressed their resolution to observe a religious and perpetual celibacy; but I test them, or rather the thousands and thousands of mission duties do; my frequent absences from my place of residence, and then my poverty, have forced me to test their wishes and their steadfastness by leaving them in their tribes and in their forests, until God gives me the facility to receive them.<sup>20</sup>

French missionary Louis Rozet, who was not yet a Marist when he joined the mission in 1841, finally set up a school for Māori catechists in Whangaroa in the early 1840s, and in the early phase of the mission there was promise for an indigenous clergy to

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<sup>19</sup> Nos jeunes gens ne demandent qu'à partir avec les nouveaux missionnaire pour les pays infidèles. C'est une ressource immense pour établir de nouvelles missions. Ces jeunes gens nourrissent le missionnaire en même temps qu'ils lui servent de catéchistes. Je crois, mon révérend père, qu'il est temps de penser à l'établissement d'un collège & d'un séminaire. Quand les îles seront converties, je crains que le zèle du clergé français ne suffise pas pour y conserver le bien sans le secours de prêtres indigènes », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 335, 10 July 1844, Wallis, Mathieu to Colin, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> « Il est très-possible que dans un certain nombre d'années je puisse trouver parmi les jeunes néophytes des sujets propres à l'étude et aux vertus cléricales. Déjà plusieurs d'entre eux m'ont prié de les retirer auprès de moi pour les faire instruire, et ils m'ont manifesté leur résolution d'observer un célibat religieux et perpétuel; mais je les éprouve, ou plutôt les mille et mille travaux de la mission; mes absences fréquentes du lieu de ma résidence, et puis ma pauvreté m'ont forcé à éprouver leurs désirs et leur constance en les laissant dans leurs tribus et leurs forêts, jusques à ce que Dieu me donne la facilité de les recevoir », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 33, 14 August 1839, Bay of Islands, Pompallier to Colin, p. 3.

eventually take over the work of the missionaries. But more than a century would pass before New Zealand saw the ordination of its first Catholic Māori priest, Wiremu Te Awhitu from Taranaki. Over forty years later, the first Catholic Māori bishop, Max Takuira Mariu, was ordained as auxiliary bishop of the Hamilton Diocese. In contrast the Anglican college established by Bishop Selwyn produced its first Māori clergyman, Rota Waitoa, as early as 1854. In 1883 Te Rau Theological College opened in Gisborne, enabling the continuation of Māori clerical formation within the Anglican Church, and by 1928 the first Anglican Māori bishop emerged, Frederick Augustus Bennett.<sup>21</sup>

The early CMS mission, or at least the mission envisaged by the Parent Committee in London, was to evangelise Māori in such a way that would prepare them to produce their own clergy, who were expected to emerge within a few decades of Christian instruction. Henry Venn, secretary of the CMS is described by Porter as “instrumental in focusing much of the movement’s attention on how indigenous native churches might be developed.”<sup>22</sup> However the missionaries’ task was far more demanding and complex than the Parent Committee had perhaps anticipated, especially with the influx of European settlers from the 1840s onwards; Bishop Selwyn also delayed the process of ordination by insisting that Anglican ministers required a sound knowledge of Greek. The Anglican Church began ordaining Māori in the 1850s, and these indigenous ministers were the best and most trusted catechists identified by the CMS missionaries. As soon as he was made Bishop of Wellington, Octavius Hadfield ordained two of his long-serving Māori catechists, Riwai Wanui and Henare te Herekau, as Anglican deacons.<sup>23</sup> The role and importance of the CMS catechist, or kaiwhakaako, were described by Governor Grey on a visit, accompanied by Tūwharetoa chief Iwikau Te Heu Heu, through Matamata in 1849:

The kaiwhakaako, or Native Teacher, acts as a sort of coadjutor to the Missionary of the District, who appoints one for every village in his circuit. It is the duty of the native teacher in the absence of the Missionary to conduct the service every morning and evening, and three

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<sup>21</sup> Manu A. Bennett, ‘Bennett, Frederick Augustus 1871 – 1950’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 <<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>>.

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Porter, p. 167.

<sup>23</sup> Davidson, *Christianity in Aotearoa*, p. 44.

times on Sundays ; to attend to the reading and writing classes ; to see that all the candidates for baptism and communion learn their catechism and such other things as the Missionary prescribes for them.<sup>24</sup>

Why, if Bishop Pompallier had envisioned Māori ordinations in the late 1830s, did this vision take such a long time to realise within the Catholic Church compared with the Anglican Church? First of all, if stipulations for Catholic baptism appeared lax or premature to Protestant missionaries so the CMS policy for ordination of indigenous clergy must have seemed to the Catholic missionaries. Taking into considering the lengthy and specialised training received by Catholic priests, not to mention the ‘privileged’ position he held as an intermediary between God and people, ordination of Māori was not something that could be conferred by the French bishops without a profound investment into Māori clerical formation. Yet in the Pacific Islands, the Marists moved much more quickly towards creating indigenous churches, possibly as a result of Bishop Bataillon’s desire to create a seminary in Wallis in the mid-1840s. A Tongan named Soakimi Gata was ordained in Rome in 1866, and in 1886, two seminarians from Wallis and one from Futuna were ordained.

Pompallier himself never followed through with the concept of an indigenous clergy for a myriad of reasons, including a shortage of priests and teachers, a divergence of resources from the Māori Mission to European Catholic parishes in the Auckland diocese, a belief that Māori were only superficial converts and were therefore not ready to embark on sacerdotal training, and of course the outbreak of the New Zealand Wars. The CMS did not ordain a Māori Anglican until forty years after it established its Māori mission, and furthermore this was linked with an international CMS impulse in the 1840s and 1850s towards creating indigenous churches. Just twenty years after the French Marists established their Māori Mission, wars, anti-European movements and the development of syncretic religious movements discouraged the Catholic Church from its mission to Māori. These religious movements were seen by some missionaries as outright paganism when in fact these were Christian in essence and inspired by biblical scriptures. For the French Marists, the question was whether Māori could ever lead the church if they continued to

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<sup>24</sup> *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian*, 16 November 1850, p. 4; also in Moon, p. 122.

‘revert’ back to traditional practices, and these movements gave them a clear answer. Pierre Guillaume explains that such fusions of traditional religion and the religion of the evangeliser were a common outcome of evangelisation and indicative of the delicate role played by the indigenous catechist:

Kingpin of evangelisation, the catechist is the reflection of the missionary, but he lives in the indigenous population from which he issues; too close to the missionary, he risks giving caricatural, formalistic teachings; too integrated into his milieu, he can be the source of deviations which, at worst, give rise to dissident sects. An indispensable instrument of all evangelisation, the catechist is only with great difficulty a faithful agent for communicating the evangelical message. He is the messenger of cultural amalgamation, in a domain that hardly tolerates it.<sup>25</sup>

The missionaries did not always anticipate the way in which local inhabitants would interpret various aspects of Christianity. That indigenous catechists would take the initiative, especially when the missionaries were absent, was inevitable and usually beneficial to the mission. But when Paeamara, one of the Picpus Fathers’ principal catechists, understood himself to be equal in status to the French priests and even to their bishop, the Fathers became concerned. Father Laval explained, “we had given him permission to explain to the people all that he knew about the doctrine; but we had no idea that he would perform Mass.”<sup>26</sup>

It is interesting to note that all of the prophets and leaders of the syncretic religious movements created by Māori during the course of the nineteenth century were former converts and catechists of the Anglican, Wesleyan and Catholic Churches. Te Ua Haumēne, leader of the Pai Mārire religion, had attended the Wesleyan station in Kāwhia; Te Kooti, who initiated the Ringatū religion, had been educated at the CMS school at Whakato in Gisborne; and even the early prophet Papahurihia (Te Atua Wera), whose loyalty shifted between the CMS, the Marists and traditional Māori

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<sup>25</sup> « Cheville ouvrière de l’évangélisation, le catéchiste est le reflet du missionnaire, mais il vit dans la population indigène dont il est issu ; trop proche du missionnaire, il risque de donner un enseignement caricatural, formaliste ; trop intégré à son milieu, il peut être à l’origine de déviations qui, à la limite, donnent naissance à des sectes dissidentes. Instrument indispensable de toute évangélisation, le catéchiste n’est que fort difficilement un organe de transmission fidèle du message évangélique. Il est porteur de métissage culturel, dans un domaine qui ne le supporte guère », Guillaume, p. 69.

<sup>26</sup> Laval, p. 112.



beliefs, probably received instruction at John King's CMS mission school at Rangihoua.<sup>27</sup>

While these catechists sought a number of things including autonomy, recompense and hope through these movements, other catechists chose to remain loyal to missionary-taught Christianity during the period 1850 to 1880, a period of racial tension and war. The CMS missionaries were aided by their kaiwhakaako, whom they continued to recruit throughout the 1850s until the Taranaki and Waikato Wars led to the hiatus in Māori Mission work previously discussed in this thesis. Howe notes that Rev. John Morgan was astute in continuing the trend of appointing high-ranking Māori chiefs as kaiwhakaako; in fact all of Morgan's schoolteachers in the 1850s at Otawhao were chiefs or sons of chiefs, and thus had the potential to convert entire hapū at once.<sup>28</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century Māori catechists arguably played a principal role in making progress for the Christian missions, maintaining the faith in areas which were barely visited by European ministers. A document written by Archbishop Redwood in 1926 lists the exemplary Māori catechists and Catholic chiefs from the pioneer mission and from this period of increasing European inactivity on the Māori Mission. Among them are several Whanganui River Māori: Wherahiko and Poma from Kauaeroa, Wherahiko from Koriniti and Te Metera from Rānana, Te Menehira, and Mataroa who was the main catechist at Hiruhārama.<sup>29</sup> Another important catechist for the Marist Māori Mission was Hakaria Rangikura, who consistently rang the church bell in Ōtaki from 1850 to 1916, hence the bell was named 'Te Pere o Rangikura'.<sup>30</sup>

A common feature of the writings of missionaries reviving the Māori Mission in the 1880s was their surprise at coming across Māori communities where figures such as Hakaria Rangikura had kept the faith alive, essentially 'bridging the gap' between the pioneer Marist Mission and the revival Mission. In the Auckland diocese, Father John Becker, Superior of the Mill Hill Māori Mission, visited a Māori community in the

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<sup>27</sup> Elsmore, *Mana From Heaven*, pp. 23, 168, 200.

<sup>28</sup> Howe, 'Missionaries, Maoris and "civilization" in the upper-Waikato, 1833-1863', p. 150.

<sup>29</sup> MAW, Letter from Redwood to unknown recipient, 12 February 1926, Wellington, 208/8.

<sup>30</sup> Paddy Kinsella, Irene Mackle and Brendan Molloy, *Pukekaraka: Celebrating the History of St. Mary's Parish, Otaki, 1844-1994* (Otaki: St. Peter Chanel School, 1994), p. 3.

Waikato (possibly Te Awamutu given Becker's description that it was located ten hours' journey by horse from Ōhinemutu and bordered the King Country); Father Garavel, based in Rangiaowhia was probably the last Catholic priest to visit the area, but it was Pompallier who had survived in the memory of the hapū residing there. Becker wrote:

there appeared a rather old man, who took off his cap and rubbed noses with me. These were his words: 'Welcome, thou relic of Bishop Pompallier, welcome to Te Woutu [sic]. I, one of your sheep, [have] not seen a Priest for 20 years – Welcome! Welcome!' and then he made the sign of the Cross. This is only one of the many instances where one single man of the tribe has kept the Faith all through the horrors of war, when the feelings of the Māori ran very high against everything European.<sup>31</sup>

### ***2.3 Enculturation and the cultural impact of missionary 'progress'***

Having considered the crucial role played by indigenous catechists in the Christian evangelisation of the Pacific, it is fair to conclude that success in a practical sense was dependent on the labours and perseverance of these catechists, who would occasionally become ministers in the Anglican Church but would remain catechists in the Catholic Church. The European missionaries were responsible for introducing Christianity and forming catechists, so that if we are to evaluate their success in this role we must examine their method of evangelisation and how this was received by Māori. If missionaries were disillusioned by the lack of genuine Christian values in their converts, they were also unreasonable in expecting Māori to renounce ideas that had been integral to their belief system and social-cultural-political framework for centuries, in favour of the newly-introduced Christian religion, which was itself divided into various conflicting denominational faiths. But most of the Marist missionaries viewed certain aspects of Māori culture as worthy of being preserved and incorporated into Catholic practice. From a modern perspective, success in the Catholic Church might be viewed according to enculturation (also spelt 'inculturation'), which was the method of evangelisation and conversion favoured by

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<sup>31</sup> Letter from Becker to Rector of Mill Hill College, Ohinemutu, 13<sup>th</sup> June 1889, in W. Tuerlings, *Mill Hill and Maori Mission*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn ([n.p.]: [n.pub.], 2005), p. 110.

the late Pope John Paul II but used by the Jesuits in parts of China as early as the seventeenth century. Enculturation seeks to introduce Christianity to non-Christian peoples in a way that is compatible with the existing culture of those peoples.

Thomson suggests that, of the three missionary churches active in New Zealand in the nineteenth century, the CMS was the most successful because it had the greatest number of stations and missionaries. If success is also defined as having the highest number of Māori adherents, the Anglican Church would again come out victorious, in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But Thomson also describes the CMS missionaries as more “thorough” than the Marists and Wesleyan Methodists, an assertion that is difficult to prove. What is meant by “thorough”?<sup>32</sup> The CMS made sure to send its missionaries all over New Zealand, but thoroughness in evangelisation must surely also indicate a depth of commitment and an eventual fulfilment of missionary goals. Did the pioneer French Marists not show their thoroughness by living, eating and sleeping alongside Māori while CMS missionaries generally had a more comfortable, centralised way of life? The interaction between Marists such as Fathers Pezant and Lampila and their Māori adherents was arguably closer and more quotidian. The same can be said for the Marists in Tonga, particularly Father Chevron who adapted to the ways and customs in Tongatapu, including the regular consumption of kava. Chevron admitted: “it appears that every day I become more and more naturalised and identify myself with them.”<sup>33</sup>

Indeed certain CMS missionaries, such as Octavius Hadfield, showed profound affection and admiration for Māori and their values, although Hadfield’s opinion changed dramatically with the onset of the Waikato War. Nevertheless John Stenhouse asserts that “Historians have not been sensitive to the subtle but significant ways in which Maori ‘converted’ missionaries”,<sup>34</sup> and this is true of both Anglican and Catholic missionaries in New Zealand. For the Marists, these subtle but significant ways related to the enculturating Christianity that characterised their

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<sup>32</sup> Thomson, ‘The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870’, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> « (...) il semble que tous les jours je me naturalise de plus en plus et m’identifie avec eux », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 371, 14 June 1845, Tonga, Chevron to his family, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> John Stenhouse, ‘Churches, State & the New Zealand Wars: 1860-1872’, p. 493.

Māori Mission; although the Catholic Church was known as the more tolerant of the first three missionary churches in New Zealand, the French Marists' acceptance of and respect for certain traditional Māori concepts perhaps also revealed their appreciation of Māori culture.

The Marists did not need the scientific, mathematical or advanced medicinal skills that the Jesuit missionaries had displayed in order to impress the Chinese in the seventeenth century, a tactic that also proved useful for the Protestant LMS missionaries attempting Chinese missions in the nineteenth century; having said this, medical skills were certainly conducive to building good relationships with Māori, as Father Garin and Sister Suzanne Aubert discovered. While Māori may have responded to literacy, literature and trade in the 1830s and early 1840s, this was always accompanied with a genuine curiosity about Christian spiritual teachings; for this reason, the 'living tree' diagram and all other recitations of Catholic 'whakapapa' were an effective tool used by Pompallier and the Marist missionaries. The branches of the 'living tree' contained names of popes and bishops from the birth of the Catholic Church until the nineteenth century, forming a lineage from the apostles all the way to Bishop Pompallier; this was comparable to the way a Māori chief would whakapapa back to his illustrious ancestors. Protestant figures featured in the living tree included Calvin and Luther, who were depicted as the 'broken' branch of the Catholic Church falling into Hellfire. These ideas also formed the basis of the verbal debates held between certain CMS and Marist missionaries.

During the revival of the French Marist Mission, Jean-Marie Vibaud made a name for himself on the Whanganui River as a gifted orator with a remarkable memory, which enabled him to recite the whakapapa of the Catholic Church and thus impress local Māori. Vibaud even attended a wānanga on the Whanganui River, where he gained invaluable knowledge of Māori traditions and practices, and his writings before and after this wānanga reflect the extent to which he became 'converted' by Māori.<sup>35</sup> Even more tolerant than Bishop Pompallier, Vibaud "believed in reconciling Māori tradition with Christian faith. [...] Vibaud's writings reflect a desire to Christianise

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<sup>35</sup> See Sandy Harman's 'Le Père Vibaud et la Mentalité Religieuse des Maori', p. 69.

Māori, but at no time did he attempt to Europeanise them.”<sup>36</sup> Enculturation was an approach that had also been embraced by Vibaud’s predecessor, François Delachienne, who was kept from returning to the Māori Mission possibly because of his initiative to incorporate Māori practices such as hui and whanaungatanga into the Catholic Church of the early twentieth century. Contemporary Marist Father Philip Cody describes Delachienne as a ‘model for inculturation’.<sup>37</sup>

Nineteenth-century missionaries, particularly British Protestant ones, have been attacked for their role in the destruction of cultural practices and traditions throughout the world, but Neil Benfell defends the CMS missionaries in New Zealand by insisting that only the ‘degenerate’ practices were suppressed and that these were not seen by the missionaries in cultural terms.<sup>38</sup> Certainly missionaries such as the Wesleyan Methodist James Watkin were of the view that preservation of culture was not as important as salvation. Watkin served in Tonga before evangelising Māori at Waikouaiti in the South Island. His biographer describes the apparent ‘success’ that Watkin and his fellow missionaries achieved in Tonga. But success is clearly intertwined with the loss of cultural sites and structures that challenged Christianity:

the various missionaries had the joy of seeing the fruit of their labours. Idols and heathen temples were destroyed. Finau, the chief of Vavau, set fire to the temples and the gods were burned with them. At Lufuka, where Watkin lived, in six months the converts increased to more than a thousand.<sup>39</sup>

The Catholic missionaries in New Zealand did not aim to destroy Māori culture but were also preoccupied with the salvation of souls first and foremost. Pompallier and many of the Marists were fascinated by Māori customs and several Marists even structured their missionary work around core Māori practices such as hui. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries generally carried out their work using the Māori language as their primary medium of communication, as can be seen in the enormous

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<sup>36</sup> Sandy Harman, ‘The Religious Mentality of Father Vibaud’, *Te Kura Kete Aronui*, Vol. 3 (2007), p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> Cody, Philip, *Seeds of the Word, Ngā Kākano o te Kupu: The Meeting of Māori Spirituality* (Wellington: Steele Roberts, 2004), p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> Neil Benfell, ‘The Shape of the New Society’, p. 79.

<sup>39</sup> Pybus, p. 5.

amount of printed religious literature in Māori and the fluency in Māori of numerous missionaries. Although a contentious figure in New Zealand religious history, Bishop Pompallier was nonetheless remarkably perceptive in his approach to Māori language and culture. He assembled an instruction manual in which he describes the importance of being able to communicate in Māori and understanding the commonalities between elements of Christianity and elements of Māori culture.<sup>40</sup> Suzanne Aubert, arguably the most resourceful and determined Marist missionary in New Zealand, had an excellent knowledge of Māori language and grammar which she put to use in *Ko te Ako te Karakia o te Hahi Katorika Romana*, a Māori prayer book published in 1879. In 1885, Aubert produced the *New and complete manual of Maori conversation*, which would serve as the basis for Sir Apirana Ngata's *Complete manual of Maori grammar and conversation, with vocabulary* published in the twentieth century. Cynthia Piper claims that this was exactly what Māori Catholics expected, and that in later years they "argued that missionaries should have knowledge of Maori culture, customs and language."<sup>41</sup>

The progress that was made in the late 1830s and early 1840s often took the form of baptisms and demands for instruction and a priest for each iwi or hapū, or an eagerness for prayer as Father Comte describes: "The New Zealanders have a strong liking for prayer. They are not content with doing it in the evenings and mornings; one often hears them recite it during the day. One sees small children, three or four years old, who know their prayers extremely well."<sup>42</sup> Prayer was an element of Catholicism with an obvious counterpart in traditional Māori beliefs that could thus be easily adapted. Certain elements of Māori culture were, however, viewed as unchristian by the Protestant missionaries to such an extent that they were banned or at least frowned upon, and these included performing haka, consulting tohunga and observing tapu.

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<sup>40</sup> Pompallier, 'Instructions aux travaux de la mission', 1841.

<sup>41</sup> Piper, 'Te Koanga Tuarua: The Second Spring' in *Turanga Ngatahi*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>42</sup> « Les Nouveaux Zélandais ont beaucoup de goût pour la prière. Ils ne se contentent pas de la faire le soir et le matin; on les entend souvent la réciter durant la journée. On voit de petits enfants de trois ou quatre ans qui savent très bien leurs prières », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 54, 12 April 1840, Hokianga, Comte to parents, p. 4.

There is no doubt, however, that imposing Christianity on Pacific peoples had a number of negative effects, both cultural and social, and it is not wholly unjustified to assert that the missionary legacy was one of cultural loss and decline, whether intended or not. Daughton explains: “Missionaries’ mere presence in a community often led to devastating social unrest, as conversions could turn neighbors against one another and split villages and towns.”<sup>43</sup> Certainly the multi-denominational representation of Christianity had exactly this outcome in the nineteenth century, hence the constant complaints of persecution between Catholic, Wesleyan and Anglican communities throughout the Pacific. In New Zealand, factions in Māoridom were no longer limited to iwi or hapū loyalties; they now also included, or were disturbed by, allegiances to Christian denominations. In 1843 the Māori inhabitants of Moeraki in the South Island were observed by Governor Hobson’s former secretary, Edward Shortland, as being strongly divided between Wesleyan Methodism and Anglicanism, to the extent of creating discord and rifts within families.<sup>44</sup>

The Eurocentrism that dominated missionaries’ outlook on the missions meant that spiritual conversion took precedence over the preservation of indigenous culture. Clearly all Europeans would have felt justified in condemning practices such as intertribal warfare and cannibalism, and all Christian missionaries would have felt justified in condemning religious beliefs that were not compatible with Christianity; but interfering with Māori practices and spirituality arguably had a damaging effect on tikanga since everything in Māori culture was inextricably connected. Even the Picpus Fathers’ pioneer mission in the Gambiers, described as a Catholic model of success in the Pacific, was guilty of causing the downfall of the royal family in Mangareva, which was replaced by the Fathers’ system of theocratic rule, and contributed to a major population decline from the 1840s due to European-introduced epidemics.<sup>45</sup> The indigenous catechists discussed in this chapter could be considered as successful agents of their respective Church, although many of these catechists, under the influence of European missionaries, encouraged the rejection of Polynesian traditions and allowed elements of their local cultures to decline. Churches in the

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<sup>43</sup> Daughton, p. 12.

<sup>44</sup> Edward Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand; a Journal with Passing Notices of the Customs of the Aborigines* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1851), p. 136.

<sup>45</sup> Laval, pp. CXXXIX-CXL.

modern day tend to view success as the absorption of Christianity without unnecessary loss of indigenous customs that do not conflict with Christian tenets. Given the extraordinary loss of culture resulting from contact with Europeans, particularly early missionaries who encouraged the destruction of traditional structures and practices, it is difficult to describe any of the pioneer Christian missions in the Pacific as truly successful according to the modern view. Statistics such as conversion records point to the Roman Catholic Church as the least successful of the three main missionary churches in nineteenth-century New Zealand. But Pompallier and the Marists, who fostered a particularly tolerant form of evangelisation, were perhaps the most successful missionaries when viewed retrospectively.

It is important to consider the Marists from a retrospective viewpoint because of the process involved in the successful transmission of Christianity. The propagation of Christianity is the first step, and is followed by adoption of Christianity by indigenous leaders who then promote the religion among their people. As has been demonstrated there are numerous obstacles that may delay the process and test a missionary's loyalty to his or her mission and perseverance in assisting the growth and development of an indigenous church. The thesis has looked at the foundation of the Marist Māori Mission and has proven that the pioneer missionaries were faced with complex circumstances which made their task increasingly difficult. By considering the next phases of the Mission, it will become clear that the pioneer missionaries, through their efforts to sow the seeds of Catholicism in the period 1838 to 1867, helped ensure the success of the revival mission in the 1880s.



## Chapter 3: The Revival of the Māori Mission and the Modern Māori Mission

The early Marist missionaries in New Zealand were pioneers of their order. Father Colin sent 117 missionaries to Oceania during his generalate, and the Superior-General who succeeded him in 1854 continued to send Marists into the mission field. The Marists today view the Māori Mission as part of the wider mission to Oceania, and with the benefit of hindsight the nineteenth century can be divided into three periods of Marist missionary effort: 1837 to 1842 was the pioneer period during which missionaries reached Oceania and the first stations were established; 1842 to 1862 was a period of hardship and a change of direction for the Marists; and the period 1862 to 1896 saw a new phase of Marist missionary work which built on the foundations laid by the pioneers.<sup>1</sup> The early Māori Mission can therefore be considered a ‘trial’ for the Marist missionaries, in both senses of the word; more importantly, the pioneer mission was, to borrow the language of the nineteenth-century missionary, an opportunity to sow the seeds of the Catholic religion, which later missionaries and catechists were expected to harvest. It was a parallel situation for the pioneer Marist missionaries to Melanesia, who launched their mission at San Cristobal in 1845. Hugh Laracy points out that:

The Marist assault on Melanesia had achieved none of its goals. Of the nineteen missionaries who entered the vicariate under Colin’s aegis four were killed, three died of illness, two were seriously wounded, four left the Society; and the Faith had not been planted there by 1855.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alois Greiler, ‘Studying Colin, the Marists, the Catholic Church and Western Oceania’ in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> Laracy, ‘Colin and Melanesia’ in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania*, p. 100.

However Laracy goes on to call the Melanesian mission a paradoxical success<sup>3</sup> because it represented a stepping-stone to other missionary and Marist ventures. Anna Johnston points out that the first LMS mission in Polynesia failed due to a lack of “informed planning”, but adds: “The second generation of LMS missionaries sent to Polynesia achieved considerably greater success. They built on the experiences of earlier evangelists, some of whom returned to the field and some of whom had managed to ride out the periods of unrest and remain in situ.”<sup>4</sup> Success for the Māori Mission was more apparent with its revival in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; missionary sisters were numerous and invaluable to the revival, Māori culture was embraced as part of Māori Catholic spirituality, and it was discovered that a handful of Māori catechists, as discussed in the previous chapter, had maintained Catholic communities and practices in the decades leading up to the revival. But like the LMS mission in the Pacific it was a matter of building on the experiences and achievements of pioneer missionaries; the following chapter offers an outline of Catholic and Marist activity in New Zealand in the latter half of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century, to demonstrate the way in which the modern Māori Mission expanded on the progress achieved by the pioneer French Marist Fathers.

### ***3.1 Parallel obstacles***

The revived Marist Māori Mission encountered many of the same financial and political difficulties as the pioneer mission, though with greater anti-European feeling resulting from the aftermath of the New Zealand wars. The late 1850s and 1860s saw the withdrawal of the Marists from their Māori mission stations, but in the Auckland Diocese Māori mission work continued in places such as Hokianga, Rotorua and Ōpōtiki, stations which the Marists had established but were forced to abandon to join Bishop Viard in the Wellington diocese. By 1856 CMS missionary Henry Williams in the Bay of Islands was convinced, with the removal of the Marists from the north and the shortage of replacements, that “the effect of Popery has become extinct amongst

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<sup>3</sup> Laracy, ‘Colin and Melanesia’ in *Catholic Beginnings in Oceania*, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> Johnston, p. 119.

the Aborigines around the Bay. One Popish priest has been prowling about for these two years past, to obtain a footing – but unable to do so.”<sup>5</sup>

But there were minor achievements made during this period which would contribute to the progress of Māori Catholicism; for example Pompallier continued to provide a Native Institute for Boys and one for Girls, as well as schools for Māori and European children throughout his diocese.<sup>6</sup> The colonial government offered financial assistance for educational establishments, and Pompallier received £500 annually in addition to diocesan funds and parliamentary grants, and was thus able to run St. Mary’s College on the North Shore.<sup>7</sup> However some of the new missionaries in the Auckland diocese were just as dissatisfied with Pompallier’s allocations as the Marists had been. When Pompallier left the Irish priest James McDonald in charge of the diocese from 1868 to 1869, it became clear to McDonald that the Bishop’s administrative role was not an easy one. McDonald wrote letters to debtors strongly urging them to repay their loans to the Bishop, and was accused by the French missionary Boibieux, who was especially aggrieved at being unable to make ends meet, of withholding funds from the clergy. Boibieux wrote a candid letter, co-signed by Father Grange (a diocesan priest, not the Marist Father Grange in Tonga), in 1869:

I have been worse this week in my health and I went to see a Doctor to pay whom I have been obliged to borrow money. And also Father Grange has received this day a letter of which you are undoubtedly aware by this time threatening him that if that paltry sum of £3-17-0 be not immediately paid, legal proceedings will at once be resorted to [...] You say that you have to struggle for bare life, but we shall not believe that with the Bishop’s share of the Cathedral, which share is pretty well-known; & of which he has not yet got a particle this last year, and also with the late collections made for us & thirdly with more than four thousand francs lately awarded to you by the Propagation of the Faith, which succour we know to have been asked under plea of *our* wants & consequently has been awarded on *our* behalf, it is, I say, very hard with all these things, to believe that you have to struggle so much to keep us in bare food.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ACDA, Miscellaneous Extracts 1850s, POM33-7.

<sup>6</sup> ACDA, Statistics of the Diocese of Auckland, New Zealand 1863, POM15-5/8, pp. 2-4.

<sup>7</sup> ACDA, Accounts for Educational Purposes (Auckland diocese, April 1850-Dec 1852), POM22-2, No. 284, pp. 356-359.

<sup>8</sup> ACDA, McDonald’s Letter and Cutting Book 1868-1869, POM23-4, pp. 171-172.

Shortly after receiving Boibieux's letter, and one from Father Petit-Jean asking for Boibieux to be transferred temporarily to the Wellington diocese, McDonald permitted Boibieux to leave the Auckland Diocese and help the Marists with the Irish Catholic communities in Otago.

The Marists in Wellington Diocese also continued to struggle, as they always had, to make ends meet. Even with funding from several wealthy Pākehā parishioners, the few priests still ministering to Māori were not well-supported; and the expectation on Māori to contribute to building costs was an unreasonable one, given that they were not in a socio-economic position to do so. But while reliance on donations from the community would always dictate the financial ambitions of the Marist Māori missions, the occasional family legacy, though hardly enough to cover mission costs, was put to good use; for example Father Pierre Leprêtre received an inheritance of £700, enabling him to contribute to the construction of a school and convent in Wairoa.<sup>9</sup> Bishop Viard's family legacy received in the 1860s helped to repay the £150 loan obtained for the establishment of the Christchurch Catholic parish.<sup>10</sup>

The early Marists were forced to travel frequently to administer to Māori communities, but such a task was daunting even for the missionaries who arrived well after town centres were established and the transport systems improved, since "the Maori population was well insulated from non-Maori throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. In 1900, 98 per cent of Maori lived in rural communities that were so scattered as to cause not only geographic separation of Maori from Pakeha, but also Maori from other Maori."<sup>11</sup> Geographic separation combined with iwi and hapū divisions contributed to Māori mission communities developing largely in isolation; consequently, each mission village had to be approached according to its specific needs and would sometimes yield very different results from its neighbours.

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<sup>9</sup> *Peter Lepretre S.M. Pa Tanatia, First Resident Priest of Wairoa December 1894: Centennial Tribute* ([n.p.]: [n.pub.], 1994), p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> O'Meehan, *Held Firm in Faith*, p. 60.

<sup>11</sup> Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004), p. 246.

It was not until after World War II that a significant number of Māori began shifting to urban centres, coinciding with marked growth in the general Māori population,<sup>12</sup> but by that stage the French character of the Marist missions had long since disappeared. In a letter to Father Holley written from Wanganui in 1917, Father Jean-Marie Vibaud proposed integration, whereby a Māori mission territory and Pākehā parish in the same geographical area would be fused into a single Catholic community; he claimed that having a mission for Māori was no less than racist.<sup>13</sup> Whether or not this view was justified is not relevant here, but Vibaud undoubtedly came to the conclusion, after over a decade in the field, that the Māori mission was economically impractical. Left without the finances or resources needed to carry out his tasks as a missionary to Māori on the Whanganui River, Vibaud pointed to the ‘topography’ of places to which he was assigned as a direct cause of his difficulties.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the late nineteenth century, the Marist missionaries would also have to contend with a range of religious bodies, all vying for adherents; these ranged from the long-standing Anglican and Wesleyan Methodist Churches to American Christian missions to syncretic Māori-Christian religions and movements which were constantly increasing in number. On the Whanganui River, for example, the Catholic mission was impelled to defend itself against the Anglican Church and Rev. Richard Taylor’s influence, the teachings of Te Whiti and Tohu of Parihaka, the Ringatū faith, and the arrival of the Salvation Army in the 1880s.<sup>15</sup> In the first half of the twentieth century, the Māori Christian movement that became the Rātana Church proved to be a resilient contender, claiming 3,000 more Māori adherents than the Roman Catholic Church in the first census to contain a section for Māori Religious Profession.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Arbuckle, p. 92.

<sup>13</sup> APM, Letter from Vibaud to Father Holley, Wanganui, 1917, Z 65 610.

<sup>14</sup> APM, Letter from Vibaud to Father Regis, Whanganui River, 1909, Z 65 610.

<sup>15</sup> Bergin, pp. 73-74.

<sup>16</sup> *Dominion of New Zealand Population Census, 1926, Vol. XIV: Maori and Half-Caste Population* (Wellington: Census and Statistics Department, 1929), p. 39.

### 3.2 *The Irish Catholic Church*

Perhaps the greatest new obstacle of the revival mission period was the division within the Catholic Church in New Zealand between French and Irish. Following Pompallier's retirement to France, a new bishop came to power in Auckland and the Catholic Church in New Zealand began to change in character: the priests and other religious were now Irish and the Church's priority was the Irish population. Just as 'French' and 'Catholic' had been transposable in the early years of the Marist mission, now 'Irish' and 'Catholic' could be used in the same manner.<sup>17</sup> The pervasive control of bishops had a powerful impact on the nature of the Māori Mission, with some bishops impeding its progress by deliberately focussing on the needs and wellbeing of European Catholics. "From the outset Bishop Thomas Croke was prejudiced against anyone who was not Irish, [and] anyone associated with the French Marists in New Zealand."<sup>18</sup> Croke greatly improved the financial state of the Auckland diocese but, with a different mission in mind and no Marist obligations, he tended to disregard Catholic Māori in favour of his fellow countrymen.

In the South Island, Patrick Moran had taken up the position of Bishop of the Dunedin Diocese and consequently the Marists who had worked on the southernmost missions returned to Wellington from the early 1870s. Moran's time was consumed with the welfare of Irish Catholics in the Dunedin Diocese. He established the *New Zealand Tablet* in 1873 as a voice for the Irish Catholics in New Zealand and a means for him to propagate his religious and political ideas. The *Tablet* and Moran took little interest in the spiritual or temporal welfare of the small number of Māori in the Dunedin Diocese.<sup>19</sup>

Back in Europe, the Society of Mary was evolving and had its own plans to establish a Marist novitiate and college in Ireland, for it was plain to Father Colin that Oceania was largely a British territory and French-speaking priests were of little use in places such as New Zealand. St. Mary's College in Dundalk, founded by Colin in 1861,

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<sup>17</sup> Arvidson, 'Evangelisation, Sectarianism and Ecumenism' in *Turanga Ngatahi*, p. 86.

<sup>18</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 107.

<sup>19</sup> B. D. McLeod, 'Good Reading Matter: the *New Zealand Tablet*, 1873-1895' in *Building God's Own Country*, p. 101.

began to produce English-speaking priests in the 1870s and by the end of the century Irish Marists had all but taken over the Catholic Church in Wellington and its institutions.

In Wellington in the 1870s, Suzanne Aubert continually appealed to Bishop Francis Redwood, a New Zealand-born Marist, for assistance with the revival of the Māori Mission. Redwood was sympathetic and even committed to the success of the indigenous mission, but was under pressure to meet government and settler demands, so much so that he used donations sent from France for the Māori mission to benefit Pākehā parishioners. As Viard's successor, Redwood was faced with a vast diocese. After Bishop Moran had taken charge of Dunedin, the Wellington Diocese continued to comprise the northern half of the South Island, so Redwood requested that Christchurch be made into a separate diocese. Redwood was made Archbishop of Wellington in 1887, which only served to incense Moran in Dunedin, who had expected to be made Archbishop and subsequently did not attend Redwood's inauguration.<sup>20</sup> In November that year, the *Tablet* published an article entitled 'Misleading', which contested a success story written about the Marists in the *Illustrated Catholic Missions*, a monthly missionary periodical connected with the Propagation of the Faith. Certainly the number of chapels, churches and parishes in New Zealand were indicative of Irish Catholic charity and enthusiasm, but the author of 'Misleading' firmly believed that Irish Catholic settlers had contributed more to Catholic progress in New Zealand than had the Society of Mary:

One not aware of the facts would certainly come to the conclusion that the position of the Catholic Church in these two dioceses [Christchurch and Wellington] was entirely due to the Marist missionaries and their Maori converts. We in New Zealand know that such is not the case; but people in England [...] will be surprised to hear that there are not one thousand Maori Catholics in these two dioceses, and only one Maori mission. They will also be astonished to learn that were it not for Irish Catholics and their children there would not be more than perhaps one Catholic parish or mission in all New Zealand.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, p. 103.

<sup>21</sup> 'Misleading', *New Zealand Tablet*, 18 November 1887, p. 17.

Irish Catholic settlers were certainly the priority for the Church in New Zealand at this time, and the French Marists' years of service to them did not seem as significant now that Irish priests were becoming more readily available. In 1865 an influx of settlers arrived in West Canterbury and Father Trésallet was sent to cater to the spiritual needs of the numerous Catholics who were mining the recently discovered goldfield; Hokitika and Greymouth became important Catholic parishes with churches being constructed and priests taking up residency from the mid-1860s onwards;<sup>22</sup> but these Catholic settlers were predominantly Irish and preferred one of their own to lead the local church, rather than a Frenchman with faltering English. O'Meeghan points out: "A sign of the changing times was that in 1865, when Father Chataigner had John Cullen build the third church [in Christchurch] with a per capita subsidy from the Provincial Government, he dedicated it to St. Patrick."<sup>23</sup>

### 3.3 *Progress*

Bishop Redwood, a Marist priest and Father Garin's former protégé in Nelson, succeeded Viard as Bishop of Wellington in 1874. Like Viard, Redwood was also torn between Irish settlers and Māori, and ultimately gave preference to the settler communities until missionary Suzanne Aubert compelled a revival of the Māori Mission. But to revive the mission, Redwood required staff who would be willing to travel frequently, learn the Māori language, and make do with few resources. Michael O'Meeghan points out:

The delay in tackling the Maori Mission left Redwood open to later criticism, but there was little else he could have done at the time. It would have been pointless pressing any of his available priests into an apostolate for which they had no empathy.<sup>24</sup>

Turner notes that individuals such as Sister Suzanne Aubert and Father Soulas "were regarded as aberrant and eccentric, if not slightly crazy, by their colleagues. [...] Being a Maori missionary in the 1870s was not a 'respectable' profession in New

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<sup>22</sup> O'Meeghan, *Held Firm in Faith*, p. 75.

<sup>23</sup> O'Meeghan, *Held Firm in Faith*, p. 47.

<sup>24</sup> O'Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 114.



Zealand society.”<sup>25</sup> Redwood was faced with lack of interest from Irish priests in the Wellington Diocese and from the French Marists who had reached New Zealand in the 1850s and 1860s, with the exception of Father Pertuis. As O’Meeghan put it, “The simple fact of the matter is that after Viard’s death there were just no priests temperamentally suited to the delicate task of gradually and painfully rebuilding Maori trust.”<sup>26</sup> The pioneer French Marists had not lost sight of their original mission, but no longer felt able to carry it out for reasons discussed in Part Two, Chapter Six of this thesis; they took up positions instead as resident priests of settled towns, which often involved visiting Māori villages within the district or region, but such a task required full-time travelling and resources which the Marists did not have. Parish work consumed most of their time and was perhaps better-suited to these ‘founding Fathers’ who were now in their fifties or sixties and many of whom were suffering from various health problems. The pioneer Marists were aged and in no state to travel, thus they remained in their respective parishes. But according to Paul Bergin, when Father Soulas asked Bishop Redwood to allocate some of the priests in the Wellington diocese to the Māori Mission, the bishop “insisted that he had only two priests in his diocese that he could even consider releasing for the Maori apostolate: Lampila, resident priest of Kaikoura, who, at seventy-six years of age, was still enthusiastic on a return to the area of his old mission; and Moreau, parish priest of Feilding, who, at seventy years of age, had just recovered from a painful accident.”<sup>27</sup> Redwood decided to send the latter to the Whanganui River mission in 1883, but Moreau died just seven months later. Finally Redwood realised that the only suitable missionaries for the task were young, fervent Marists from France.

Meanwhile the Auckland Diocese was also facing the problem of finding recruits for the Māori Mission. With the departure of the Franciscan missionaries in 1875,<sup>28</sup> only James McDonald was willing to undertake Māori Mission work in the far north, and diocesan priests were consumed with parish work. Bishop Luck, who took over the

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<sup>25</sup> Turner, p. 273.

<sup>26</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 288.

<sup>27</sup> Bergin, p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> Franciscan missionaries, especially the Superior Ottavio Barsanti, fell into conflict with Bishop Pompallier in the 1860s. They, like the Marists, complained of Pompallier’s administrative incompetence and difficult character. In the early 1870s the Franciscans claimed to have irreconcilable differences with Bishop Croke, causing them to leave the Mission in 1873. See Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 109; and Simmons, *Pompallier: Prince of Bishops*, p. 171.

Auckland bishopric in 1882, appealed to the headquarters of the Society of Mary in Lyon for missionaries to renew Māori Mission work, but a lack of resources meant that no missionaries could be sent at that time; it also seemed fruitless to send French missionaries to an English-speaking colony. Bishop Luck then engaged the ‘Mill Hill’ Fathers and Brothers to pick up where the Marists and diocesan priests had left off in Auckland and south of Auckland.<sup>29</sup> The missionaries of the St Joseph’s Foreign Missionary Society, more commonly known as the Mill Hill missionaries, make an interesting comparison to the Marist Fathers. They were members of an order that had been established as recently as 1866 at Mill Hill, near London, by Father Herbert Vaughan. The pioneer Mill Hill Fathers in New Zealand were predominantly Dutch and were thus foreigners in the British colony. While Bishop Luck was never depicted as the authoritarian type, he was nevertheless reproached for allowing Vaughan’s missionaries to endure the same adversities that the Marists had faced forty years earlier; once again the needs of a developing Society were being compromised, and in 1888 Vaughan, now a Bishop himself, wrote a letter to Luck expressing his concerns:

You must allow me to point out that Your Lordship seems inclined to treat us as though it were our business to supply you with priests without receiving our equivalent compensation for the expenses of their education [...] and to place our priests so completely under you as that they shall be dependent upon you as the ordinary diocesan clergy, while they are paid on a much lower scale, subjected to greater hardships...<sup>30</sup>

Although Vaughan threatened to withdraw his men at this early stage, the Mill Hill Fathers and Brothers persevered on their Māori Mission in the closing years of the nineteenth century and throughout twentieth century. Bishop Luck had also brought in the Marist Brothers in the early 1880s to assist with Catholic education in New Zealand, and this initiative led to arguably the most successful and well-known of the Marist projects in New Zealand: the Marist Brothers’ schools. The Mill Hill missionaries were equally invested in the education of Māori; when the Propagation of the Faith ceased to fund the Mill Hill Māori Mission in 1925, this did not prevent the Mill Hill Fathers from founding a catechist school in Northcote (which later

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<sup>29</sup> Piper, ‘Te Koanga Tuarua: The Second Spring’, pp. 48-49.

<sup>30</sup> Letter from Vaughan to Luck, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1888, quoted in Tuerlings, p. 41.

evolved into Hato Petera College) and the Fathers even established their own means to assist with financing the school and other related projects: the St Joseph's Maori Mission Guild.<sup>31</sup>

In the Wellington Diocese Redwood finally conceded to Aubert's constant campaigning and appointed fresh arrivals from France to the Māori Mission, beginning with Christophe Soulas who, together with Aubert, revived the mission at Pakipaki in the Hawke's Bay from 1879, where Father Reignier had manned the Māori Mission in the 1850s. French Marist priests were now obliged to train outside of France, due to the anticlericalism that prevailed during the Third Republican government, but this did not pose a major problem since the Society had already developed centres in Ireland, Belgium and Switzerland. French Marist missionaries were again sent in waves to New Zealand and other parts of Oceania, with the evangelising task that had been entrusted to the pioneer Marists some forty or fifty years earlier. Redwood considered the Māori Mission as a burden because of the sizeable funding and manpower it would require, and in 1885 he wrote candidly to Bishop Grimes, the recently appointed Bishop of the Christchurch Diocese: "you will have an easy diocese to administrate, and *no* Maori Mission to give you more anxiety than all the rest."<sup>32</sup>

Progress predictably did not come easy; in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Sister Suzanne Aubert was forced to fight against her thrice marginalised position in the Catholic Church and New Zealand society. French, Catholic, and female, Suzanne Aubert was faced with an increasingly Irish Catholic Church and a Protestant-dominated public and political sphere, both of which were directed and dominated by men. Determined to make a difference through charitable social work, which included caring for orphaned babies and administering to the sick in Wellington, Suzanne knew that "(t)he best way for her to channel her good will and acceptance for Catholicism was to be available, helpful, medically skilful, friendly and popular."<sup>33</sup> Father Soulas was the antithesis of Suzanne in terms of personality; he was

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<sup>31</sup> Tuerlings, pp. 52, 54.

<sup>32</sup> O'Meehan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 124.

considered difficult and aggravating, but was “dedicated to Māori mission and he fought, argued and quibbled in its defence for years.”<sup>34</sup>

In 1886 Soulas established himself at Hiruhārama (Jerusalem) on the Whanganui River, where he created a completely Māori station, as Father Lampila had done over thirty years earlier. The Church and the Society would have felt some concern at the fundraising and social welfare projects undertaken by Soulas, Aubert and her Sisters, which included “bush farming, orchard planting, trading with tourists, making and marketing medicines, and raising lots of children”;<sup>35</sup> but the attempt at reviving the Māori Mission at Hiruhārama, where Catholicism had survived thanks to local catechists, was proving successful. It was also a useful training site for missionary arrivals. One such arrival was Claude Cognet, who learned the Māori language while at Rānana with the help of local Māori Catholics, and who went on to work in Okato and Ōtaki and wrote *Ko Te Hitoria Poto o te Hahi Katorika*,<sup>36</sup> a short history of the Catholic Church in Māori, as well as a number of pamphlets and articles. New Zealand became a Marist Province in 1889, and the Marist missionaries were pleased to find that their Provincial, Father Jean Pestre, was also a supporter of the Māori Mission. Pestre wrote to Cognet, now the appointed Superior of the Māori Mission, in 1895:

The details you give me about your travels among the Maori are really full of interest and consolation. Go on cultivating this part of the Lord’s vineyard. With these new conversions, fill in the gap left by so many others, who through monstrous ingratitude, renounce the privilege of their holy vocation.<sup>37</sup>

The labours of the pioneer missionaries had resulted in enduring loyalty to the Catholic Church in areas that had been predominantly Māori missions as opposed to settler parishes. When Father Cognet was invited to an important hui on the Waitōtara River, he was surprised that Ngā Rauru chief Te Waero, a known supporter of the

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid*, p. 236.

<sup>35</sup> Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, p. 241.

<sup>36</sup> Claude Cognet, *Ko Te Hitoria Poto o te Hahi Katorika* (Lyon: Vitte, 1894).

<sup>37</sup> Letter from J. Pestre to C. Cognet, 10 June 1895, trans. by Brian Quin.

prophet Te Whiti,<sup>38</sup> “proclaimed his support for the Catholic Church, referring to the work of Pezant and Lampila among the tribes of his region.”<sup>39</sup>

However in the Hawke’s Bay the situation was less promising, apart from Meeanee where in 1890 the first Marist seminary in New Zealand was established on land acquired by Father Reignier in the 1850s. Fathers Delachienne and Leprêtre had taken over from Soulas at Pakipaki, and for four years Leprêtre covered an extensive mission district from Pakipaki to Wairoa to Upper Hutt. O’Meeghan describes the reason for the Marists’ departure from Pakipaki in the mid-1890s: “In a devious and dubious deal which was brokered by a Pakeha between two Māori groups, the ownership of a large block of land around Pakipaki changed hands. The local Māori were forced to move on, and the missionaries also were told to leave.”<sup>40</sup> Leprêtre was requested to stay in Wairoa as resident missionary to both Māori and Pākehā, a role which he performed for the next twenty-five years, until Father Lacroix was appointed to Wairoa as parish priest. Leprêtre then assumed the role of missionary to Māori once again, which O’Meeghan describes as some feat considering the priest’s condition:

So at 65, with his stamina lessening and eyesight beginning to fail, Leprêtre recommenced the longer journeys, including a monthly visit to Pakipaki which had been slowly growing again. The change in status spelled the end of his dream of a model parish with both races integrated.<sup>41</sup>

Father Delachienne’s commitment to the Ōtaki station, where Father Comte had been stationed until 1854, led to a flourishing Māori Catholic community from 1896 to 1916. Delachienne founded *Whare kura*,<sup>42</sup> a quarterly magazine in Māori for Māori, and “confronted with a large sprawling, fragmented Mission ran a series of annual ‘huis’ or meetings attended by Maoris from the various districts.”<sup>43</sup> But Delachienne’s emphasis on enculturation was not appreciated by the Church at that

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<sup>38</sup> Te Whiti-o-Rongomai, leader at Parihaka whose spiritual teachings fused Christian elements with Māori tradition. See Danny Keenan, ‘Te Whiti-o-Rongomai III, Erueti ? – 1907’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 <<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>>.

<sup>39</sup> Bergin, pp. 41-42.

<sup>40</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 290.

<sup>41</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 291.

<sup>42</sup> MAW, *Whare kura*, ‘Catholic Maori Newsletter and Magazines’, DNM 17.

<sup>43</sup> Arbuckle, p. 211.

time; this was perhaps one reason why he was sent back to France in 1916 and not allowed to return to the Māori Mission. Father Melu was also active in Ōtaki alongside Delachienne and, according to a contemporary Marist Father, Melu's approach and his advice to fellow Marists on the Māori Mission was simply to be a kind and caring missionary.<sup>44</sup> Eventually *Whare kura* was discontinued, after a new regulation was put in place requiring missionaries to pay their own way. According to O'Meeghan, the subsequent shortage of money for running the magazine, training catechists and funding other mission-related projects resulting in a loss of mana for the Marist missionaries in the eyes of Māori.<sup>45</sup> Once again money and manpower restricted the potential and progress of the Māori Mission. Bergin notes, "of ninety-six priests trained at the Marist seminaries at Meeanee and at Greenmeadows between 1890 and 1922, only two were appointed to the Maori mission."<sup>46</sup> One was a New Zealander, Father Augustine Venning, and the other was French Marist Father Vibaud. In 1909 Vibaud wrote:

Here, it is Father X who drives from one end of the diocese to the other in an automobile that his European parishioners have bought him; or else it is Father Y who is left to build and furnish a palace by way of a presbytery. There, it is Father Z who must turn up the ground to obtain a meagre means of sustenance. Elsewhere, it is the Protestant mission with its large schools where Maori youths train for the liberal professions. Nearby is the Catholic mission, run by a foreigner, a poor mission that has to be content with a primary school, the staff of which must work the land to get by. These contrasts are an enigma for the native, and the failed attempts at solutions break the heart of the Catholic missionary.

Be that as it may, victory belongs to constant devotion and an unflinching patience.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Anonymous interview with Marist Fathers in New Zealand, 2008.

<sup>45</sup> O'Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 291.

<sup>46</sup> Bergin, p. 134.

<sup>47</sup> « Un dernier mot sur les contrastes créés par notre civilisation. Luxe et misère se coudoient dans le monde religieux tout aussi bien que dans le monde social. Et l'indigène n'est pas sans faire de longs commentaires sur un état que son communisme national tempéré par l'institution du « tapu » avait rendu impossible dans le bon vieux temps. Ici, c'est le Père X qui se promène d'un bout à l'autre du diocèse dans un automobile que ses paroissiens Européens lui ont acheté ; ou bien c'est le Père Y qui s'est laissé bâtir et fournir un palais en guise de presbytère. Là c'est le Père Z qui doit bêcher la terre pour se procurer une maigre pitance. Ailleurs, c'est la mission Protestante avec ses grandes écoles d'où la jeunesse maorie sort préparée pour les professions libérales. Tout près c'est la mission catholique à la charge d'un étranger, mission pauvre qui doit se contenter d'une école primaire dont le personnel doit travailler la terre pour vivre. Ces contrastes sont une énigme pour l'indigène et les solutions attentées font mal au cœur du missionnaire catholique. Quoiqu'il en soit la victoire appartient au dévouement constant et à une patience à toute épreuve. », J.-M. Vibaud, 'La Mentalité religieuse des Maoris' 1909, translated in Sandy Harman's 'Le père Vibaud et la mentalité religieuse des Maori', p. 81.

### 3.4 *The Modern Māori Mission*

The Māori mission remained an individual entity and has endured until the present day, though it has undergone many changes as a result of modernity and social advances. The French nature of the mission was replaced with an Irish one, and later a distinctly New Zealand Catholic Church emerged. But even in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, French Marists staffed the Māori Mission, simply because New Zealand Marists or Catholic priests in general were not appointed to the Māori Mission; they had to volunteer for it, and there appeared to be little interest among Irish or New Zealand priests to work with Māori. O’Meeghan informs us that: “The first New Zealander to volunteer for Maori mission service, Augustine Venning, presented his request in writing seven times before superiors released him for this service in 1918; at the time his confreres regarded his choice as somewhat eccentric.”<sup>48</sup> Venning was followed by Fathers James Riordan, John Dynan, and James Durning, and it was these New Zealand Marists who revived the Mission for a third time. A new Māori Mission phase began in the 1930s, one that involved regular meetings and discussion and review of Māori Mission policy in 1937. Known as ‘missioners’ rather than missionaries, these men effectively took over the work of the last remaining French Marists, but were “deprived of having shared the French Marists’ experience in on-the-job training”<sup>49</sup> because the latter had not been immediately replaced following their departures or deaths. Yet once the missioners were in the field, they discovered that to the Catholic Māori communities they visited “we joined up with what their grandmother and grandfather knew, the Frenchmen...”<sup>50</sup> In 1946 Father Riordan held the first Hui Aranga, a revival of the annual hui in Ōtaki that had been conceived by Father Delachienne.<sup>51</sup> The twentieth century also saw the establishment of Hato Paora and Hato Petera Colleges, two important Marist-directed Catholic Māori schools, adding to the already existing

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<sup>48</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 289.

<sup>49</sup> O’Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 289.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Marist Fathers in New Zealand, 2008.

<sup>51</sup> Bergin, p. 134.

girls' college, St Joseph's, founded in 1867 by Father Reignier and the missionary sisters in Hawke's Bay.

Kevin Maher described the missionaries of the 1960s as “cheerful troubadours of Our Lady, taking life as it comes, enthusiastic, ubiquitous and optimists.”<sup>52</sup> But even the modern Māori Mission would undergo many of the same challenges that the pioneer French Marists had faced. Funding was stretched, especially as cars were needed to visit the missionaries' extensive districts, and the number of missionaries was not adequate to cater to the many Māori communities throughout the country. Significantly, one Father commented: “I can't see what else we could do, and it's not enough. Not enough 'cos I think results are out of our hands.”<sup>53</sup> He also added that success should be measured “in the good Catholics, and there are a surprising number of those.”<sup>54</sup>

As has been discussed earlier in this thesis, qualitative information is more useful and reliable in gaining an understanding of success and progress on the Māori Mission, whereas quantitative data such as conversion and baptism records are a problematic measure of religious success; yet the quantitative data in Māori censuses is markedly different because it reflects the religious bodies to which Māori affiliated themselves. The 1921 census states that the estimated population of Māori had not changed significantly between 1874 and 1921, averaging around 45,000.<sup>55</sup> The following census, taken in 1926, looks specifically at Māori religious adherence for the first time. Out of a total Māori population of 63,670, who had a plethora of Christian, Non-Christian and 'Other' beliefs to choose from (of which only some are shown below), 59,327 professed to adhere to a Christian religion. The dominance of Anglicanism is obvious:

Church of England	21,738
Ratana Church	11,567
Roman Catholic	8,558

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<sup>52</sup> Kevin Maher, *The Marist Priesthood* (Wellington: McKeefry, 1962), p. 14.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Marist Fathers in New Zealand, 2008.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Marist Fathers in New Zealand, 2008.

<sup>55</sup> *Dominion of New Zealand Population Census, 1921* (Wellington: Census and Statistics Department, 1922), Appendix A, p. 1.



Ringatu	3,837
Methodist	4,066 <sup>56</sup>

By 1945, the Māori population had grown to almost 100,000, and almost one-third professed to be Anglican, while 17,181 belonged to the Rātana Church and 15,190 to the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>57</sup> From the 1950s the number of Catholic Māori began to surpass the number of Rātana followers, and although the Anglican Church in the 1950s and 1960s could boast twice as many Māori adherents as the Catholic Church, the latter eventually managed to bridge the gap.<sup>58</sup> The 2001 and 2006 general censuses revealed that while over 550,000 New Zealanders were affiliated with the Anglican Church, the Catholic Church was not far behind with approximately 500,000 adherents;<sup>59</sup> the 2001 census statistics specifying Māori religious affiliation show that, out of a total Māori population of 526,281, there was not a great difference between the number of Catholic Māori and the number of Anglican Māori:

Anglican	74,961
Catholic	68,634
Methodist	16,272
Ratana	45,177
Ringatū	13,446 <sup>60</sup>

Thomson credits the revival of the Māori Mission for the strong number of twentieth-century Māori Catholics.<sup>61</sup> Yet without the pioneer missionaries, Māori probably would not have been as receptive of the Catholic Church in the 1870s. Missionaries involved in the revival certainly would not have come across Māori communities where the Catholic faith had been maintained during and after the New Zealand wars, in the hope that priests would visit them again. The 1971 Māori census shows that

<sup>56</sup> *Dominion of New Zealand Population Census, 1926, Vol. XIV*, p. 39.

<sup>57</sup> *New Zealand Population Census, 1945, Vol. III: Maori Census* (Wellington: Census and Statistics Department, 1950), p. 28.

<sup>58</sup> *New Zealand census of population and dwellings, 1966, Vol. 8: Maori population and dwellings, Table 11* (Wellington: New Zealand Department of Statistics, 1967).

<sup>59</sup> *2006 Census: QuickStats about Culture & Identity – Religious Affiliation* <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2006CensusHomePage/QuickStats/quickstats-about-a-subject/culture-and-identity/religious-affiliation.aspx>>.

<sup>60</sup> *2001 Census of population and dwellings: Māori Table 17a* <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2001-census-data/2001-census-maori-tables.aspx#regional>>.

<sup>61</sup> Thomson, 'The Roman Catholic Mission in New Zealand 1838-1870', p. 229.

Catholicism is particularly strong today in places such as Rotorua, Whakatāne, Tauranga and Hawke's Bay, but the Anglican Church consistently has a higher number of Māori adherents in all of these areas. The only two places that stand out as having a far greater number of Catholics are Whanganui and Hokianga.<sup>62</sup>

It is no coincidence that the two leading Christian missionary churches in early nineteenth-century New Zealand also have the highest number of Māori adherents today. This is evidence that the Marist Mission was not a complete failure, but confirms that the Anglican Church has been more successful in gaining Māori adherents, until recently. It is clear that Pompallier and the Marist missionaries' achieved their aim to curb the influence of Protestantism in New Zealand by successfully promoting the Catholic faith among Māori.

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<sup>62</sup> *New Zealand census of population and dwellings, 1971, Vol. 8: Maori population and dwellings, Table 14* (Wellington: New Zealand Department of Statistics, 1973), pp. 52-61.

## CONCLUSIONS

Did the French Marist missionaries struggle in vain to achieve a successful mission among nineteenth-century Māori? Having contextualised the pioneer mission and having examined what success entailed to the missionaries involved, it is clear that the concept of missionary success was a complex one subject to a number of influences and factors. It is not reasonable to conclude that the pioneer Marists failed because they had fewer establishments and fewer adherents than rival missionary societies. The thesis has offered three different arguments to support the assertion that the pioneer mission was not a failure, and the following section will reiterate and summarise these arguments.

### *Salvation and the Society*

The French Marist priests clearly had both a spiritual and temporal predisposition towards missionary work in Oceania, resulting almost entirely from their French Catholic background. The French Revolution fostered secularisation, and it was in response to this secularisation that a number of zealous men and women in France founded new religious orders and inspired greater missionary effort. As children born into Catholic families, especially those living in and around Lyon, the French Marists had been exposed to intensive church activity and had developed a strong affection for the Virgin Mary, which drew many of them to the Society of Mary. But other factors included close connections with Jean-Claude Colin and the seminaries in Lyon and Belley. As discussed in Part One, the pioneer Marists' involvement in the mission was the result of a series of interconnected circumstances relating to religious

training in Lyon and Belley and the emphasis on Mary and charitable works which prevailed in both dioceses.

While Paris held the Seminary for Foreign Missions which prepared young men for a variety of overseas missions, Lyon's Society of Mary was entrusted with the western parts of Oceania that had not yet been penetrated by Roman Catholic missionaries. By choosing to join the Society of Mary, French priests expressed a desire to evangelise distant nations inhabited by 'heathens', whose souls, in Christian eyes, were in urgent need of salvation. It cannot be ignored that clergymen in France were persecuted by Republican and imperial governments in the latter half of the nineteenth century, making overseas missions a far more attractive option than they might otherwise have been, particularly for the revivalist wave of Marist missionaries to New Zealand. But this was not the case for the pioneer Marists who joined the foreign missions in the 1830s and 1840s. Clearly some men viewed the Society of Mary as a means to becoming missionaries abroad, and others were eager to show their loyalty to the Society and its leaders by fulfilling the evangelising role which the Roman Catholic Church had entrusted to Colin. Both motives contained a strong spiritual element. While the missions were viewed as both frightening and perilous, they were also part of a deeply spiritual journey, and one that could lead to the ultimate reward for a devout Catholic priest: martyrdom. Kenelm Burridge, referring to missionaries in general, asserts that:

The 'success' or 'failure' of missionary endeavours can only be measured subjectively. For missionaries being a missionary is self-justifying, and their 'success' or 'failure' may not be measured in numbers or rates of conversions. [...] Rather is their work to be measured by the manner in which they attempt an imitation of Christ. Secular observers, on the other hand, tend to measure missionaries by precisely those criteria by which they do not measure themselves.<sup>1</sup>

In 1850 and 1851 the French Marists in New Zealand proved that they had joined the missions primarily to serve the Society of Mary. Every single missionary followed Bishop Viard to the Diocese of Wellington, consequently abandoning their northern

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<sup>1</sup> Kenelm Burridge, 'Aborigines and Christianity: An Overview' in *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions: ethnographic and historical studies*, ed. by Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose, (South Australia: Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1988), pp. 24-25.

stations to Pompallier's diocesan clergy. From the viewpoint of a devout Marist, success was performing a selfless service on behalf of the Society of Mary and on behalf of the Catholic Church. The salvation of souls was important, but the Marists believed strongly that Providence would dictate the success of the actual mission. Such a belief suggests that there could be no real failure; a non-prosperous mission was simply a harvest that was not yet ready to be reaped.

### ***The struggle for comparative success***

If the socio-cultural history of the Marist Māori Mission, in Part Two of this thesis, highlighted obstacles, conflicts and hardships, its seemingly pessimistic perspective of the mission does not imply that the pioneer mission was a failure. In fact such a perspective of the mission is necessary to counterbalance the hagiographic material produced by many Catholic authors in the past. Marist historian Michael O'Meeghan points to the church histories written by Bishop Grimes and Bishop Moran, who were inclined to focus only on positive events. O'Meeghan writes:

In our history we need to see mirror images of ourselves – misunderstandings, disappointments, discouragement even to the point of apathy, square pegs in round holes, clashes between strong minded people seeking the same good by differing means. Only then does it serve to encourage us to see beyond the problems which absorb us in our own day and stimulate hope.<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Pompallier described New Zealand as 'Le champ des combats du Seigneur'<sup>3</sup> (the Lord's battlefield). He and the Marists were aware that their mission was essentially a battle, or rather a series of battles. In their minds they had been sent to confront paganism and heathenism, but as French Catholics in a British Protestant colony they were also facing marginalisation in New Zealand to a much greater degree than they could have anticipated. Inwardly the Marist Fathers were also entangled in a series of conflicts. They were torn between destitution and materialism, between incompatible colleagues and superiors, and between loyalty to Māori

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<sup>2</sup> O'Meeghan, *Steadfast in Hope*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 83, 2 January 1841, Cook Strait, Pompallier to Solichon, p. 1.

adherents and conformity to the regulations of their order as well as those set down by the Catholic Church. Although some of these conflicts were shared by fellow Marists and by rival missionaries in Oceania, the French Marist Fathers in New Zealand had little chance of winning a battle in which they were expected to adhere to poverty and the constraints of hierarchy, while at the same time, and with almost nothing at their disposal, capturing the spiritual enthusiasm of Māori and prevailing over the more numerous, better-funded Protestant missions. If scholars have previously concentrated on problems of funding and rivalry with CMS and WMS missionaries, these were just two of many factors that contributed to the apparent failure of the mission. Both obstacles specifically led to disillusionment among the Marist missionaries; this disillusionment, in addition to a strained relationship with the Catholic authority in New Zealand, motivated several missionaries to resign from the Māori Mission.

The Roman Catholic Church endowed bishops with duties and functions beyond their capabilities, and gave them unqualified jurisdiction over the missionaries within their vicariate. Bishop Viard was responsible for withdrawing missionaries from the Māori Mission to have them minister to Irish settlers and soldiers. The Marists were not victims; they chose to be Catholics, Marists, priests and missionaries. However it was not until British and Church politics were played out in New Zealand that the French Marists would realise the extent to which these were conflicting obligations. To have been successful as a missionary to Māori in the period 1850 to 1870 would have meant disobeying one's bishop, or compromising one's vows as a Marist. Comte recognised the impossibility of trying to reconcile an economically successful mission with the deprived lifestyle expected of a Marist priest, hence his resignation from the Mission in 1854. In short, to succeed as a missionary, at least at that point in time, was to fail as a Marist.

Given the conflicts discussed above, the Marists' struggle to make progress on the mission was particularly difficult compared with other pioneer missionaries including the CMS and fellow Marists in the Pacific. One might conclude that the Marist missionaries were making considerable progress in the early years of the Māori Mission, since CMS and WMS missionaries were concerned at their 'popish'

influence and growing number of Māori adherents. It is therefore unreasonable to consider the Marist Māori Mission a failure simply because it did not continue to achieve the same statistical success as other pioneer missions.

If we return to the discussion on conversion and progress from Chapter One of the previous section, it is evident that genuine conversion to Christianity was not easily or rapidly achieved by any of the pioneer missions in Oceania. The most promising missions, such as the Marist mission in Wallis, relied on the patronage of a local chief or sovereign and on temporal factors such as trade to maintain their influence. ‘Successful’ Māori missions of the 1850s were in fact flourishing agricultural and commercial centres. If economic prosperity or political backing was a measure of success, none of these supposedly successful missions reflects the spiritual entrenchment of Christianity among Māori.

### ***Keeping the faith***

Taking into consideration the abandonment of Māori missions due to war, Pai Mārire, Hauhauism and other related factors, the Catholic Church essentially failed its Māori adherents in the 1860s. But the same can be said regarding the supposedly ‘successful’ Anglican Church. Marist and CMS missionaries had withdrawn from their Waikato, Taranaki, Bay of Plenty, and Whanganui stations by the end of the 1860s, leaving Māori to cope with the adverse effects of European colonial contact. Whereas the Marists withdrew largely because they were bound to the orders of Bishop Viard, the CMS missionaries had greater independence and left voluntarily, albeit with some degree of reluctance. The CMS ministers had stood between warring iwi and hapū to establish peace in the 1830s and 1840s, yet they distanced themselves from the wars of the 1860s. Did the murder of Rev. Carl Völkner instil fear in them? Or were the CMS missionaries equally disillusioned with the influence that Pai Mārire and Hauhauism wielded over former Christian adherents? Perhaps they were both fearful of Hauhau aggression and discouraged by the complex politico-religious circumstances of the 1860s. Regardless of their motives, both Marist and CMS

missionaries failed to maintain their Māori Missions during the most turbulent and destructive period of nineteenth-century New Zealand history. Fortunately for both missionary societies, their pioneer missions had successfully instilled Christian ideas and values in certain Māori individuals, who continued to maintain those beliefs and practices in their respective communities.

The endurance of Catholicism among Māori, from its French beginnings until the present day, might be viewed as a testimony of the pioneer Marist mission's lasting success. Yet this success can only be partially attributed to the missionaries. It was Māori catechists who transmitted and preserved the Catholic faith in New Zealand. No matter what evangelising techniques were used by missionaries, Māori adopted Christianity to suit their own needs and thus determined for themselves the success of the CMS and Marist missions in New Zealand. Both missionary societies were instructed to sow the seeds of Christianity and develop an indigenous Christian Church, with Māori members and a Māori hierarchy. Although the Catholic Church did not officially achieve this until the twentieth century, Māori took ownership of Catholicism even before Bishop Pompallier arrived in the Hokianga. Hence when the Marists travelled throughout the country, they came across villages where Māori catechists regularly said Catholic prayers despite having never encountered a Catholic priest. Perhaps the most significant catechists were those who maintained the faith between 1850 and 1880, when the pioneer Marist missionaries either left the mission or were assigned to parish work. In fact a number of Māori catechists or adherents ensured the success of the next phase of Marist missionary work by simply continuing with the Catholic practices that a missionary priest would usually perform.

In the period 1880-1920 several French Marist Fathers would achieve more obvious success with Māori. Missionaries such as Delachienne, Melu and Vibaud realised that successful mission work required not just an open-minded and enculturating approach but arguably a complete fusion of the Catholic world with that of the Māori, or even the absorption of the Catholicism into the existing Māori world. Yet, as discussed in Part Three, the pioneer Marists nevertheless laid important foundations for the Māori Mission, and their efforts were not forgotten by Māori particularly in the Whanganui and Taranaki regions. The success that could not be achieved during the politico-



religious complexities of the 1850s and 1860s was gradually realised during the revival of the Māori Mission in the 1880s. Again this success should be mostly credited to the positive Māori response to Christianity, although there is no doubt that certain iwi and hapū such as Ngā Rauru on the Waitōtara River were eager to embrace Catholicism in the 1880s and 1890s because of the earlier efforts of the pioneer Marist missionaries.

It is therefore clear that the pioneer Marist Māori Mission was not a failure. It succeeded in its objective to evangelise Māori and establish the Catholic Church in New Zealand. Despite the hardships endured by the pioneer Marists, several persevered on the Mission, with Fathers Reignier, Lampila and Pezant continuing to minister to Māori into the 1860s. Māori catechists, most of whom are not named in the Marist records, fostered Catholicism throughout the following decades until new young recruits entered the mission field from the 1880s. Yet the struggle for success was ongoing, and although the revival missionaries built on the work of the pioneer French Marists, there were numerous obstacles to overcome including the changing structure and character of the Catholic Church in New Zealand.

Today the Māori Mission faces social, cultural, economic and political challenges that are rooted in the conflicts and land loss of the nineteenth century. The Catholic Church must also compete with Ringatū, Rātana and Pai Mārire, as well as more recent religious entities such as Destiny Church. Modern census results and the popularity of events such as the annual Hui Aranga help prove that Māori Catholicism is still very strong. New Zealand Marists continue to build on French foundations and fulfil the objectives of the pioneer mission entrusted to Jean-Claude Colin, but the men are few and their task is complicated by the challenges mentioned above. Again the success of a missionary or missioner is in some senses subjective, but there is no doubt that the modern Māori missioners are resilient and patient, much like the Frenchmen whom they consider to be their tūpuna. To recall Father Petit-Jean's already quoted words of 1852: "If it is God's will that I die, my great regret will be not being able to cast my eyes upon someone we have formed to continue the

Society of Mary; in a word, to die without a successor.”<sup>4</sup> Petit-Jean could not have known that the Mission would survive into the twenty-first century, or that it would finally produce a Māori successor over fifty years after Petit-Jean’s death. Perhaps the most pertinent evidence of the interrelated success of the three phases of Marist missionary work is the ordination of Marist Father Wiremu Te Awhitu in 1944 and of Marist bishop Max Takuirā Mariu in 1988. Mariu was New Zealand’s fifth Marist bishop and first Māori Catholic bishop, and represents the culmination of 150 years of Catholic missionary work and active Māori participation in the Catholic Church and in the Society of Mary. Although Petit-Jean was not alive to see these ordinations take place, he and his fellow pioneer missionaries had undoubtedly paved the way for a Māori Marist clergy. Since the formation of an indigenous church was a principal reason for establishing the nineteenth-century Māori Mission, Father Te Awhitu and Bishop Mariu might be seen as a testimony to the gradual but enduring success of the French Marist Māori Mission.

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<sup>4</sup> « Si Dieu veut que j’y meure, mon grand regret sera de ne pouvoir jeter les yeux sur personne que nous ayions formé pour continuer la Société de Marie, en un mot de mourir sans postérité », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 1186, 2 October 1852, Wellington, Petit-Jean to Poupinel, p. 3.

### ***Future direction***

The *Lettres reçues d'Océanie* presents a new perspective on New Zealand encounter history. Religious and general histories pertaining to New Zealand have focused on the British CMS missionaries and their writings as representative of European views and experiences particularly in the period 1815 to 1863. The French Marist writings offer valuable points of comparison for at least half of the aforementioned period, and are perhaps even more interesting given that the French Marists were considered 'the other' by the British majority in colonial New Zealand. However, the primary source material must first be translated into English in order to make it more widely accessible. This thesis offers a number of translated excerpts, and an online translation project is already in progress under the direction of Marist Father Mervyn Duffy. Yet there is scope for many more translation projects, which could consider the Marist letters according to theme, chronology, location or author.

The possibilities for research are as broad as the topics and issues contained in the letters themselves. The Marist letters would make for interesting literary, historical and cultural analyses but are relevant to research in many disciplines. This thesis calls for anthropological and psychological enquiry into the lives and mentalities of French missionaries and Māori Catholics. There is also abundant material for compiling biographies of certain missionaries who have received little or no scholarly attention thus far. The rivalry and commonalities between missionaries such as Rev. John Morgan (CMS) and Father Jean Pezant, or Rev. Richard Taylor (CMS) and Father Jean Lampila, would be the subject of an interesting comparative study. With regard to French Studies, further research on the Marists is needed, given the profound connection between the French Marists and the Pacific, and given the accessibility Francophone scholars now have to primary source material on the Marist missions.

A researcher can never tell the whole story, which is why different perspectives are so important in achieving a balanced and accurate reconstruction of historical figures

and events. The dominance of Eurocentrism in New Zealand's written histories has yet to be checked, and I recognise my inability to provide a non-Eurocentric perspective in the thesis. It is my hope that Māori-speaking scholars might offer new and different perspectives on New Zealand's Catholic and mission histories, through historical written and oral research on Māori catechists and Māori Catholic communities.

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## GLOSSARY

### *Glossary of Catholic and Mission terms*<sup>1</sup>

archdiocese	the main diocese in a group of dioceses.
(lay) brother	a person who has taken the vows of a religious order but is not ordained and is employed in ancillary or manual work.
catechism	a popular summary or compendium of Catholic doctrine about faith and morals and designed for use in catechists.
catechist	someone who teaches Christian doctrine.
catechumen	a person who is preparing for Baptism.
coadjutor	an auxiliary bishop.
diocese	a community of the faithful in communion of faith and sacraments whose bishop has been ordained in apostolic succession. A diocese is usually a determined geographic area.
episcopal/ episcopate	pertaining to the office of bishop.
Holy See	the seat of the central administration of the worldwide Catholic Church.
Māori mission	station set up to convert local Māori to Catholicism; also the surrounding territory being visited from the station. Usually corresponds to particular iwi, hapū, suburbs, villages or towns.
Māori Mission	co-ordinated evangelising effort aimed at Māori. The Anglican Māori Mission was established in December 1814. The Marist Māori Mission was established in 1838.
Monsignor	title used for a Roman Catholic bishop.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions sourced from *New Advent: The Catholic Encyclopedia* <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/index.html>>; *Dictionary of Catholic Terms* <<http://www.thesacredheart.com/dictionary.htm>>; and *AskOxford.com: Oxford Dictionaries* <<http://www.askoxford.com/>>.

neophyte	a term used of those who, lately converted from heathenism, have by the sacrament of Baptism, been transplanted into the higher life of the Church.
Oceania	‘Oceania’, as used by Propaganda Fide of the Roman Catholic Church in the nineteenth century, consisted of Australia and the South Sea islands (also known as the South Pacific).
parish	a stable community of the faithful within a particular church or diocese, whose pastoral care is confided by the bishop to a priest as pastor. The establishment of Catholic parishes in New Zealand coincided with and was a result of the influx of European settlers.
pontificals	the vestments and other insignia of a bishop.
prelate	a bishop or other high ecclesiastical dignitary.
procurator	an administrator or finance agent; a person who manages the affairs of another by virtue of a charge received from him.
procure house	building in which mission provisions are housed before being distributed.
proselyte	a convert from one religion to another.
province	a group of dioceses under the charge of a provincial.
provincial	a religious superior who exercises authority over local superiors and who is answerable to the Superior-General of an order.
rector	a priest in charge of a church or a religious institution.
sister	a member of a religious order of women.
soutane	a cassock.
vicar apostolic	the head of a vicariate. As Vicar Apostolic, a bishop might facilitate his vicariate’s development into a diocese or series of dioceses.
vicariate apostolic	an unfamiliar territory with no church for a bishop to use as his seat of authority. The Vicariate Apostolic of Western Oceania comprised from 1838 to 1842 New Zealand, the Friendly Islands (Tonga), the Navigator Islands (Samoa), the Gilbert and Marshall Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the Caroline Islands.

## *Glossary of Māori terms<sup>2</sup>*

atua	ancestor with continuing influence, god, demon, supernatural being, deity, ghost, object of superstitious regard, strange being, god.
hapū	kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe - section of a large kinship group.
hau	wind, breeze, air, breath, gas, vital essence, vitality of human life.
hui	gathering, meeting, assembly, seminar, conference.
iwi	extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor.
kaiwhakaako	teacher, lecturer, coach, trainer, instructor.
kaumātua	adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman.
Kīngitanga	King Movement - a movement which developed in the 1850s, culminating in the anointing of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero as King. Established to stop the loss of land to the colonists, to maintain law and order, and to promote traditional values and culture.
mana	prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma - <i>mana</i> is a supernatural force in a person, place or object.
mana whenua	territorial rights, power from the land - power associated with possession and occupation of tribal land.
rangatira <sup>3</sup>	chief, chieftain, chieftainess.
tapu	restriction - a supernatural condition. A person, place or thing is dedicated to an <i>atua</i> and is thus removed from the sphere of the profane and put into the sphere of the sacred.
taua	war party, army.

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<sup>2</sup> Definitions sourced from *Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary* <<http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/>>.

<sup>3</sup> The English word ‘chief’ has been used more frequently in the thesis to denote rangatira and kaumātua because the Marist missionaries did not always distinguish between the two.



tikanga	correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention.
tūpuna/ tīpuna	ancestors, grandparents.
whakapapa	genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent (also to trace or recite one's lineage).
whanaungatanga	relationship, kinship, sense of family connection - a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging.

## **APPENDIX A: DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS FOR THE MARIST MĀORI MISSION (1836-1867)**

Departures and arrivals of Marist missionaries from France to New Zealand (1838-1854), sourced from *Pères Missionnaires et Frères de la S.M. en Océanie 1836-1939* (MAW) and Charles Girard's *Lettres reçues d'Océanie*.

**1<sup>st</sup> Departure** **24 December 1836**  
**Arrival** **10 January 1838, Hokianga**  
Mgr Jean-Baptiste-François Pompallier  
Father Louis Catherin Servant [*sent to Futuna in 1842*]  
Brother Michel (Antoine Colombon)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Departure** **22 September 1838**  
**Arrival** **14 June 1839, Kororāreka**  
Father Claude-André Baty  
Father Jean-Baptiste Épalle [*Bishop of Melanesia & Micronesia from 1844*]  
Father Louis-Maxime Petit  
Brother Marie-Augustin (Joseph Drevet) [*sent to Wallis in 1842*]  
Brother Florentin (Jean-Baptiste Françon)  
Brother Élie-Régis (Étienne Marin)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Departure** **June 1839**  
**Arrival** **9-10 December 1839, Kororāreka**  
Father Joseph-André Chevron [*sent to Wallis & Futuna in 1839, Tonga in 1842*]  
Father Jean-Baptiste Comte  
Father Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean  
Father Philippe Viard

Brother Atale (Jean-Baptiste Grimaud) [*sent to Wallis & Futuna 1839, Tonga in 1842*]

**4<sup>th</sup> Departure**

**February 1840**

**Arrival**

**11 July 1840, Kororāreka**

Father Jean Pezant

Father Jean-André Tripe [*non-Marist, returned to France in 1843*]

Brother Claude-Marie (Jean-Claude Bertrand)

Brother Amon (Claude Duperron)

**5<sup>th</sup> Departure**

**December 1840**

**Arrival**

**15 June 1841, Kororāreka**

Father Michel Borjon

Father Antoine Garin

Joseph-François Roulleaux-Dubignon [*sent to Futuna in 1842*]

Father Louis Rozet [*professed Marist in 1854*]

Father Jean-Antoine Séon

Brother Euloge (Antoine Chabany)

Brother Basile (Michel Monchanin)

Brother Pierre-Marie (Pierre Pérénon)

Brother Justin (Étienne Perret)

Brother Colomb (Pierre Poncet)

Brother Emery (Pierre Roudet)

**6<sup>th</sup> Departure**

**November 1841**

**Arrival**

**6-11 April 1842, Port Nicholson (Wellington)**

Father Jean Forest

Father Jérôme-Basile Grange [*sent to Tonga in 1842*]

Jean Lampila [*ordained in 1842*]

Father Euloge Reignier

Brother Luc (Luc Macé)

Brother Déodat (Jean Villemagne)

**7<sup>th</sup> Departure****August 1842****Arrival****7 February 1843, Auckland**Father Jean-Simon-Marie Bernard [*sent to Samoa 1852, Wallis in 1857*]

Father Joseph Auguste Marie Chouvet

Father Delphin-Victor Moreau

There were no further departures for the Māori Mission under Father Jean-Claude Colin. His successor, Father Julien Favre, sent several Marists to New Zealand between 1858 and the revival of the Māori Mission, but only two of these contributed significantly to the Māori Mission: Fathers Pertuis and Rolland.

**Later Departures****1858-64**

Father Eugène Pertuis

October 1858

Father Jacques-Maurice Trésallet

October 1858

Father Jean-Baptiste Chataigner

October 1859

Father Jean-Claude Chervier

October 1860

Father Aimé Philippe Martin

October 1860

Father Augustin Sauzeau

November 1861

Father Jean-Baptiste Rolland

November 1862

Father Louis Fauvel

October 1864

## **APPENDIX B: PROFILES OF FRENCH MARIST PRIESTS ON THE PIONEER MĀORI MISSION (1838-1867)**

Brief descriptions or profiles of the Marist priests in nineteenth-century New Zealand are included in most Church and Mission histories. Yet little is known about these men, partly because the Marist order was humble and somewhat obscure, and the immense figure of Jean-Baptiste-François Pompallier seemed to overshadow the Fathers who were assigned to his care and direction. However *Nga Tipuna*, compiled by Wellington Marist Archivist Brother Gerard Hogg, recognises the Marist priests who worked part-time or full-time on the Māori mission between 1838 and 1913. The following profiles draw upon this important assemblage, and from other unpublished works including Michael O’Meeghan’s ‘Chronological List of Marist Arrivals in New Zealand 1838-1843’. For a detailed history of the pioneer Marist Brothers in New Zealand, refer to Edward Clisby’s *Marist Brothers and Māori 1838-1988*.

### *Marist Fathers*

#### **BATY** Claude-André (Claude)

Born in 1811, Claude-André Baty was raised and educated in the diocese of Belley. He later taught at Belley College, which is probably how he became familiar with Jean-Claude Colin. Baty was ordained in 1835 and joined the Society of Mary the following year, as one its first twenty official members. When Baty left for New Zealand in September 1838, he was 27 years old. He arrived on the mission nine months later and learned Māori from Father Servant in the Hokianga. Baty was the first Catholic priest in the Hawke’s Bay but was needed in Kororāreka in 1842 to

revise the Marists' first printed catechism in Māori. For the next eight years Baty used Kororāreka as a base for his missionary activity. According to Father Tripe, a French missionary in New Zealand from 1840 to 1842, Baty would have made an excellent bishop were it not for his lack of politeness. Baty was also considered a very good linguist and the best Māori language scholar among the Marists.<sup>1</sup> He left the mission in 1850 and died the following year.

**BERNARD** Jean-Simon-Marie (John Simon)

Jean-Simon-Marie Bernard was born in 1807 in the diocese of Nantes. He professed himself as a Marist in 1842 and left for the missions that same year. Bernard spent the second half of the 1840s on the Māori mission in Tauranga. Following the Marist exodus to the Wellington diocese, he was stationed at Akaroa where he ministered to Europeans rather than Māori. In 1852, after assisting Father Pezant on the Whanganui River, Bernard requested a transfer to the Vicariate of Central Oceania. He subsequently worked on the missions in Wallis, Samoa and New Caledonia.

**BORJON** Michel (Michael)

Michel Borjon was born in 1811 in the Belley diocese. He attended the neighbouring major seminary of Brou and was ordained in 1837. Borjon then worked at the Minor Seminary of Belley and became a Marist in 1839. The following year he joined the fifth group of Marists to depart for the mission. For two years Borjon was stationed at Maketū. In 1842 he was recalled to Auckland and sent to Port Nicholson to be Wellington's first resident priest, unaware that an Irish priest, Father Jeremiah O'Reily, had already taken up residence there. Borjon, accompanied by Marist Brother Déodat, boarded the *Speculator* on 1 August 1842 but never reached Port Nicholson. They were presumed drowned.

**COMTE** Jean-Baptiste (John-Baptist)

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<sup>1</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 333, July 1844, Observations of Jean-André Tripe on the New Zealand mission, p. 6.

Jean-Baptiste Comte was born in 1812 in Le Puy diocese, which formerly shared its north-eastern border with the archdiocese of Lyon. Like Father Borjon, Comte was a teacher at the Minor Seminary of Belley and joined the Society of Mary in 1839. Comte left for New Zealand immediately after making his profession, and began on the Hokianga mission. He was appointed to Akaroa in 1840, but remained there for only two years because he was discouraged at the small number of Māori in the Banks Peninsula area. In 1844 Comte founded a mission at Ōtaki; this was the southernmost Catholic station before the Marists moved into the Wellington diocese in 1850. After a decade in Ōtaki, Comte returned to France apparently because he was unable to reconcile his religious vows of poverty and humility with the commercial success he achieved on the Ōtaki mission. He left the Society of Mary altogether in 1857.

**ÉPALLE** Jean-Baptiste (John-Baptist)

Born in 1808, Jean-Baptiste Épalle was born in the Lyon archdiocese. He attended the minor seminaries of Saint-Jodard and Alix and the major seminary in Lyon. Épalle became a Marist in 1838 and left for New Zealand in September that year. Based initially in Whangaroa, he was appointed as Pompallier's provicar but spent only three and a half years on the Māori Mission before returning to France to resolve problems with funding. While in Europe he was promoted to Vicar Apostolic of Melanesia and Micronesia. He returned to Oceania in 1845 to found a mission in the Solomon Islands but was killed by inhabitants of Santa Ysabel before he could gain a foothold there.

**FOREST** Jean (John)

Jean Forest was born in 1804 to a landowning farming family in Chuyer, near Lyon. He attended the Major Seminary of Saint-Irénée and entered the priesthood in 1830. He professed himself a Marist in 1836, along with Baty, Séon, and Servant. In 1841 he departed for Oceania as the Official Visitor to All Missions, a role entrusted to him by the Marist superior-general. Forest never learned to speak Māori but was an

important spiritual leader for the Marist missionaries in the early 1840s. From 1845 he was put in charge of European settlers in Auckland. Following the move to the Wellington diocese, Forest was appointed resident priest of Hutt Valley, and from 1862 he served as parish priest of Napier.

**GARIN** Antoine Marie (Anthony)

Antoine Garin was born in 1810 to a bourgeois family in the diocese of Belley. He attended the nearby seminary of Brou and was ordained in 1834. Garin worked as a parish priest and then as a teacher at the Minor Seminary of Meximieux. In 1840 he joined the Society of Mary and immediately left for the missions. From 1841 to 1843 Garin served as the Marist Provincial for the Māori Mission but was glad to pass the role on to Colin's emissary in New Zealand Father Jean Forest. Garin then undertook missionary work in Kaipara in Tai Tokerau until 1847/48, when Bishop Pompallier appointed him as chaplain to the Howick Fencibles. Following the transfer of Marists to the Wellington diocese in 1850, Garin began parish work in Nelson, where he made a significant contribution to local education and established the town's first orphanage.

**LAMPILA** Jean (John)      *Hone Rapira*

Jean Lampila was born in the diocese of Albi in 1808. An ex-soldier, Lampila became a Marist in 1841 and in November that year he joined the sixth group of Marists to depart for New Zealand. Lampila was ordained into the priesthood in New Zealand in 1842. He spent over twenty years working full-time on the Māori Mission, and was perhaps best known for challenging Protestant missionaries to fire-walking and for his time on the Whanganui River, where he was based from 1852 to 1867. Lampila built flour mills to rival Rev. Richard Taylor of the CMS, who had established a mission on the Whanganui River in 1843. In 1865 Lampila and Marist Brother Euloge Chabany apparently took part in the Battle of Moutoa, and Chabany was killed. Lampila left the River mission two years later and assumed parish work in the Wanganui township.



### **MOREAU** Delphin-Victor (Delphin)

Born in 1813, Delphin-Victor Moreau came from the Angers diocese, which is adjacent to the diocese of Nantes. He joined the Society of Mary and the missions in 1842, and was a member of the final group of missionaries to be sent directly to the Māori Mission under Jean-Claude Colin. During the pioneer years, Moreau worked on various stations from Hokianga to Ōpōtiki. Bishop Viard sent him to the South Island where he became a parish priest to the Catholic settlers in Dunedin, but Moreau was recalled from Dunedin in 1871 when Bishop Moran and his Irish priests took charge of the new diocese of Dunedin. In 1883, after just over a decade of largely parish work in the Ōtaki district, Moreau joined the effort to revive the Māori Mission but died after barely seven months on the Whanganui River mission.

### **PETIT** Louis-Maxime (Louis)

Louis-Maxime Petit was born in the Arras diocese in Northern France in 1797. In 1838 he professed himself as a Marist and, at forty years of age, was the oldest priest to leave for the pioneer Māori Mission. Petit was a missionary in Kaipara before replacing Servant in the Hokianga, where he set up New Zealand's earliest tidal mill at Purakau. In 1852, following the transfer of Marists to the Wellington diocese, Petit requested to return to France, where he died six years later.

### **PETIT-JEAN** Jean-Baptiste (John-Baptist)

Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean was born in the Lyon diocese in 1811. He was also educated in Lyon, first at the Minor Seminary of L'Argentière and then at the minor and major seminaries of Saint-Irénée. Ordained in 1836, Petit-Jean joined the Society of Mary and left for the missions three years later. Petit-Jean spent only three years on the Māori Mission, predominantly on the Whangaroa station, before being appointed as Auckland's first Catholic resident priest. During the financial crisis of 1842 he went to Sydney to beg for loans and financial aid. He remained in Auckland until 1850, when he followed Bishop Viard to Wellington and assumed parish work in the suburb

of Thorndon for the next twenty-six years. Petit-Jean was an intelligent and prolific writer and revealed a particularly sensitive, emotional nature.

**PEZANT** Jean (John)            *Pa Tewano*

Born in 1811 in the Clermont diocese, directly to the west of the archdiocese of Lyon, Jean Pezant attended a local seminary and the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris. He was ordained in 1835 and worked as an assistant priest in Clermont until 1839, when he joined the Society of Mary. The following year Pezant left with the fourth group of Marist missionaries and was appointed to Akaroa. In late 1840 he was transferred to the Tauranga mission and remained there until 1844. He then worked on the Waikato Māori Mission, based initially in Matamata and then in Rangiaowhia. From 1850 he was appointed to Taranaki and fulfilled the dual role of military chaplain and travelling missionary. He did the same in Whanganui in the 1860s and 1870s before taking up parish work in Blenheim and Picton in the South Island. Pezant's appointment to Blenheim was a deliberate rest from Māori Mission work, which became more difficult in his old age.

**REIGNIER** Euloge-Marie (Euloge)

Euloge Reignier was born in 1811 in the western French diocese of Nantes. He completed his seminary training in Nantes and was ordained in 1834. He became a Marist in 1841, after five years as a parish priest, and left immediately for the missions. Reignier began on the Māori Mission in Ōpōtiki, where he learned to speak Māori, but spent most of his early years in New Zealand as a missionary in Rotorua. He remained in Rotorua until 1851, when he was replaced by a diocesan priest and allowed to join his fellow Marists in the Wellington diocese. From 1852 to 1858 Reignier replaced Father Lampila at Pakowhai, which served as a base for Reignier's extensive travelling throughout the Hawke's Bay. After the land at Pakowhai came under dispute, Reignier established a mission at Meeanee, the future site of a Marist seminary. He ministered to Māori and Pākehā settlers alike in the Hawke's Bay and helped Suzanne Aubert with her Māori apostolate in the 1880s when the Māori

Mission was revived. Reignier also founded a Providence (boarding house) in 1867, Saint Joseph's Māori Girls College, which still exists today.

**SÉON** Jean Antoine-Joseph (Anthony)

Born in Lyon in 1807, Antoine Séon was educated at the nearby Minor Seminary of Meximieux and the Major Seminary of Brou. He entered the priesthood in 1831, and was one of the first twenty priests to profess themselves as Marists in 1836. Séon taught at the Minor Seminary of Belley under Jean-Claude Colin, and left for the Māori Mission in December 1840. He was stationed at Matamata until Pezant replaced him there in 1844. By 1847 Séon was working as a chaplain to the Onehunga Fencibles as well as ministering to Māori in Auckland and Hauraki. When Séon followed the Marists to the Wellington diocese in 1850, Bishop Viard sent him to minister to the settlers in Akaroa, but Séon was evicted the following year by the Canterbury Association, which claimed possession of the mission property. In the 1850s and 1860s Séon was alternated between travelling missionary and parish priest in the Wellington, Wairarapa, Canterbury and Otago regions.

**SERVANT** Louis Catherin (Catherin)

Born in 1807 or 1808, Catherin Servant hailed from the Lyon diocese and was ordained in 1832. He served as a chaplain at the Hermitage and in 1836 he, like Séon, Baty and Forest, joined the Society of Mary as one its first twenty members. Servant was the one of the first Marist priests to depart for Oceania. When he reached New Zealand in 1838, he was given charge of the mission in the Hokianga, where he compiled a manuscript on the customs and habits of Māori. He was the first Marist Father to learn the Māori language, and subsequently taught it to Baty and others. But in 1842 he requested a transfer to the Pacific Islands due to ill health but also his disillusionment with the growing British and Protestant influence in the Hokianga. From 1842 to 1855 Servant served as a missionary in Futuna as Father Chanel's replacement.

## **VIARD Philippe Joseph (Philip Joseph)**

Philippe Viard was born in Lyon in 1809, in the parish of Saint-Nizier. He was educated at the local seminaries of L'Argentière and Saint-Irénée and worked as a parish priest following his ordination in 1832. Viard entered the Society of Mary in 1839 and left for the Māori Mission in June that year. Aboard the *Sancta Maria* he accompanied Pompallier on a journey from the Bay of Islands to Akaroa in 1840-41, and founded the mission in Tauranga along the way. Viard also joined Pompallier on the trip to Futuna to recover Father Chanel's remains, and subsequently spent several years on the missions in Wallis, Futuna and New Caledonia. When Pompallier was in Europe from 1846 to 1850 Viard, as Pompallier's co-adjutor, visited the various established missions in New Zealand. In 1848 he was put in charge of the Marists in New Zealand and given sole charge of the diocese of Wellington, which initially included the entire South Island. Viard was given the official title of Bishop of the Wellington Diocese in 1860.

### ***Minor Figures***

#### **CHEVRON & GRANGE**

Fathers Joseph Chevron and Jérôme Grange spent only a brief time in New Zealand before being sent to other parts of Oceania. Chevron visited Futuna and from 1842 to 1884 headed the Tongan mission. Grange was also sent to Tonga and later New Caledonia, where he was wounded during the sacking of the mission station there in 1847; Grange returned to France the following year.

**CHATAIGNER, CHERVIER, FAUVEL, MARTIN, SAUZEAU &  
TRÉSALLET**

These Marist Fathers arrived on the Māori Mission between 1859 and 1865 but worked mostly with European settlers in the Wellington diocese. They had only sporadic contact with Māori and did not have the ability to communicate in the Māori language.

**PERTUIS Eugène (Eugene)**

Born in 1830 in the diocese of Puy, Eugène Pertuis attended the major seminaries of Puy and Belley. He was ordained in 1857 and entered the Society of Mary that same year. In October the following year he left for the Māori Mission. Initially Pertuis was sent to a Māori mission station but within a few years he, like other Marists who were sent to the Māori Mission between 1859 and 1879, was occupied with ministry to European settlers. However Pertuis expressed a desire to return to the Māori Mission, and was finally permitted to do so when the Mission was revived towards the end of the nineteenth century.

**ROLLAND Jean-Baptiste (John-Baptist)**

Jean Baptiste Rolland was born in 1834. He was raised and educated in the diocese of Verdun, and ordained into the priesthood in 1859. Two years later Rolland joined the Society of Mary and the following November he left for the Maori Mission. Assigned to the Taranaki, Rolland apparently ministered to Maori and settlers alike during the Taranaki war in the early 1860s.

## *Non-Marist Priests*

**POMPALLIER** Jean-Baptiste-François (John-Baptist-Francis) *Epikopo*

Born in 1801 and educated at the Major Seminary of Saint-Irénée, Pompallier was ordained into the priesthood in 1829. He became acquainted with the Marist Brothers through his position as chaplain at the Hermitage and La Favorite; he sometimes considered himself a member of the Society of Mary and sometimes did not, but never officially professed himself a Marist. In 1836 he was selected as Vicar Apostolic for the Marist missions and consecrated as a bishop, and in December he led the first group of Marist missionaries departing for Oceania. Pompallier entered the Hokianga harbour in 1838 and was for the next decade the only Roman Catholic bishop in New Zealand. From 1848 onwards he was the resident bishop in Auckland and, due to irreconcilable differences with the Marists and their superior-general, had to recruit diocesan priests for the Māori Mission in the Auckland diocese. Pompallier retired to France in 1868.

**CHOUVET** Joseph Auguste Marie

Auguste Chouvet was not a Marist when he departed for the missions in 1842, but had taken the Society's preliminary vows and was therefore planning to become a Marist Father at a later stage. According to a letter to Father Colin in 1847, Chouvet had only taken these Marist vows in order to join the foreign missions. Disillusioned with the New Zealand mission, but surprisingly not with Pompallier whom he described sincerely as a 'venerable prelate',<sup>2</sup> Chouvet returned to France in 1846.

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<sup>2</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 627, 14 May 1847, Bollene (France), Chouvet to Colin, pp. 1-2.

### **ROULLEAUX-DUBIGNON** François-Joseph

François-Joseph Roulleaux-Dubignon was not a Marist when he arrived in New Zealand at the end of 1840. In 1841 he became the first Catholic priest to be ordained in New Zealand; he made his Marist profession in early 1842, before accompanying Father Servant to Wallis and Futuna. He made slow progress on the Lakeba mission (east of Fiji) with fellow Marist Father Bréhéret from 1844, and returned to France in 1855 because of health problems.

### **ROZET** Louis

Louis Rozet's early life does not appear in Marist records, probably because he did not join the Society of Mary until after his return from the missions. He departed with the fifth group of Marist missionaries and founded the mission in Ōpōtiki in 1841. Rozet was supposed to join Father Borjon and Brother Déodat on the *Speculator* in August 1842, but arrived late in Auckland and missed the boat. He was then sent to Whangaroa where he began a school for Māori catechists, and when the school expanded he transferred it to Takapuna. In 1851 Rozet followed the Marists to Wellington and was selected by Bishop Viard in 1853 to represent the Māori Mission before the Roman Catholic Church in Rome. Rozet never returned to the Māori Mission but officially joined the Society of Mary in 1854.

### **TRIPE** Jean-André

A diocesan priest, Jean-André Tripe joined the fourth group of departing Marist missionaries and worked among settlers in Akaroa from 1840 to 1842. He felt unsuited to the missionary vocation<sup>3</sup> but was also discouraged by the lack of interest in Catholicism shown by the settlers in Akaroa and returned to France in 1843.

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<sup>3</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 79, 23 November 1840, Tripe to a relative, p. 1.

## **APPENDIX C: PROFILES OF MARIST MĀORI MISSIONS (1838-1867)**

Compiling a catalogue of the Māori missions generates two important questions, the first being: what exactly constitutes a ‘mission’? Early Marists passed through countless villages in the North Island introducing the Catholic faith to Māori. One could argue that wherever missionaries tried to evangelise Māori, a mission was founded. For the purposes of this thesis, a mission will be described as the ‘station’ to which one or more missionaries were assigned. These stations were usually bases from which the Marists would travel extensively.

The second question to consider is: how should missions be grouped? Geographical and political boundaries have changed throughout New Zealand’s history, making it problematic to categorise missions into districts, regions, provinces, or even dioceses. Missions will therefore be identified according to the names Marist missionaries tended to use when referring to them in letters. The data for these profiles was sourced from various mission and diocesan histories (O’Sullivan and Piper, eds., *Turanga Ngatahi*; O’Meeghan, *Held Firm in Faith*) as well as Marist records and letters featured in Girard’s *Lettres reçues d’Océanie*.

### **AKAROA (Banks Peninsula)**

In 1840 Fathers Pezant and Comte were appointed to Akaroa, where they established the Station of the Assumption. Pezant was sent especially to minister to French settlers in Akaroa, while Comte travelled around nearby bays to evangelise local Māori. Comte was disappointed to find that:



There are only some thirty natives here in Akaroa. In a nearby bay to the north of Akaroa there are supposedly 200 natives. That is the number of inhabitants in Banks Peninsula. They all practise Methodist prayers.<sup>4</sup>

Father Tripe, a non-Marist priest, replaced Pezant as resident priest of Akaroa at the end of 1840 but abandoned the station two years later and returned to France. Brother Florentin, who had assisted Tripe, was transferred to the Hokianga.

Following the Marist exodus to Wellington in 1850, Bishop Viard appointed Fathers Séon, Bernard and Brother Chabany to Akaroa and the Canterbury region. The three missionaries had barely stayed a year in Akaroa before they were expelled by the Canterbury Association, which claimed the church property for re-sale. Séon and Petit-Jean visited Akaroa occasionally from 1852 onwards, but it was no longer considered a Marist station.

## **AUCKLAND (Province)**

Father Petit-Jean had very limited contact with Māori after his transfer to Auckland. He wrote nostalgically of Whangaroa, and felt in his element whenever he had Māori visitors in Auckland.<sup>5</sup> Petit-Jean and his companion, Brother Colomb, occupied themselves with settlers and a school of eighty students. Colomb was transferred to Tauranga around 1843, and Petit-Jean worked as a lone Marist in Auckland until Father Forest arrived in 1845.

For three years Forest, with the help of Father Séon, ministered to Auckland settlers while Petit-Jean resumed Māori Mission work in the Bay of Islands. Forest and Petit-Jean shared the parish duties from 1848 to 1850, before following Bishop Viard to Wellington. From 1850, Māori in the Auckland area were left in the charge of diocesan priests but settlers continued to take precedence. Bishop Pompallier did,

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<sup>4</sup> « Il n'y a ici à Akaroa qu'une trentaine de naturels. Dans une baie voisine et au nord d'Akaroa il y a 200 naturels, dit-on. Voilà le nombre des habitans de la presqu'île de Banks. Ils font tous la prière des méthodistes », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 70, 20 August 1840, Akaroa, Comte to Colin, pp. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 252, 24 April 1843, Petit-Jean to Colin, p. 2.

however, view maintain a number of schools for young Catholic Māori, including St Mary's College for training catechists, which was relocated from the North Shore to Ponsonby in 1854.

### **BAY OF ISLANDS (Kororāreka, Te Rawhiti)**

By mid-1839 Kororāreka had become Pompallier's official place of residence, instead of Papakawau in the Hokianga. The Bay of Islands station was named St Pierre (Peter) & St Paul, and became the site of the Mission's procure house. Pompallier, Brother Michel and Brother Augustin welcomed new recruits for the missions in Western Oceania, who were sent to Pompallier before being appointed to their stations. Father Servant visited the Bay of Islands during these early years to make booklets for Māori.

The station at Kororāreka became less of a mission and more of an administrative centre as the 1840s progressed. It was staffed initially by Pompallier, Garin, Baty and Brothers Augustin, Basile, Colomb, Emery, Luc and Pierre-Marie. The Brothers shared the household duties and made use of their crafts as cobblers, tailors, and carpenters, except for Brother Pierre-Marie who was studying theology under the Fathers. The station lost three brothers when Augustin left for Wallis, Colomb transferred to Auckland, and Pierre-Marie returned to France. In 1843 Brother Claude-Marie joined the station and Father Forest replaced Garin as Marist Provincial.

From 1845 to 1848, Father Petit-Jean was a missionary in Te Rawhiti, 20-30 kilometres from Kororāreka, while Father Forest ministered to the settlers in Auckland. The European settlement at Kororāreka was destroyed in 1845 during the Northern War between Hone Heke, Kawiti and the British colonial government. Only the Catholic and Anglican churches and Pompallier's residence were left intact. Nevertheless the station went into decline and only Te Rawhiti continued to be visited by diocesan priests in the 1850s and 1860s.

## **HOKIANGA & TE RARAWA (Totara, Papakawau, Purakau, Whangape, Ahipara)**

In 1838 Bishop Pompallier, Father Servant and Brother Michel arrived at Totara Point. Irish Catholic settler Thomas Poynton gifted land to Bishop Pompallier at Papakawau, which served as the site for the bishop's residence. The mission was known as the Saint Joseph Station, and the missionaries used this station as a base from which they travelled throughout the Hokianga district. According to Father Servant, by 1840 there was a raupō chapel and two hundred Catholic-inclined Māori in Ahipara alone.<sup>6</sup> Fathers Comte and Baty arrived in the Hokianga around 1840 with Brother Florentin. Baty remained to learn Māori from Servant, while Comte left for Akaroa in August.

In 1839 Pompallier purchased land in Purakau and the mission was transferred to this new property. A vineyard was planted at Purakau and supplied the various stations with wine throughout the 1840s. After a trip to the Bay of Islands in 1840, Father Servant returned to Hokianga to find that his mission was:

(...) in a bad state. The scandals of whites, the doggedness of heretics, the relocation of the station, Monsignor's departure from Hokianga in previous years; all this had placed the natives in a state of aloofness and indifference, and they were almost no longer coming to the station.<sup>7</sup>

Father Petit replaced Servant as resident missionary of Hokianga in 1842. Servant, who had requested a transfer to Futuna, was happy to leave the station to Father Petit,<sup>8</sup> but Brother Claude-Marie would have preferred Servant and Baty to remain instead. In 1843 Brother Florentin took over from Claude-Marie, who was transferred

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<sup>6</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 52, 5 March 1840, Bay of Islands, Servant to Colin, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> « (...) en mauvais état; les scandales des blancs, l'acharnement des hérétiques, la transposition de l'établissement, le départ d'Hokianga que m(onsei)g(neu)r avoit fait les années précédentes, tout cela avoit mis les naturels dans un état de froideur et d'indifférence, ils ne venoient presque plus à l'établissement », *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 97, 31 May 1841, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 97, 31 May 1841, Hokianga, Servant to Colin, p. 1.

to the Bay of Islands, and Petit and Florentin were joined by new arrival Father Moreau. Father Lampila covered the lower end of the harbour until late 1844 when he was appointed to Whakatāne.

Another station was located in the far north, where Te Rarawa is the local iwi. Pompallier lists 'Terarawa' as a station in his Distribution of Funds for 1844<sup>9</sup> but the Marists do not mention it in their letters. It is possible that this station is either Ahipara or Whangape, which were both visited regularly by the resident missionaries in Hokianga, or it may be the station that Lampila occupied for a short time. After the Marists were replaced by diocesan priests in the upper North Island, Hokianga continued to be an important Catholic mission and received visits from Italian missionaries in the 1860s.

#### **KAIPARA** (Tangiteroria, Mangakahia)

Father Petit and Brother Michel visited Kaipara and Mangakahia in 1839 and established the station of Our Lady of the Rosary. In 1843 Father Garin was released from his position of Provincial at Kororāreka to undertake full-time missionary work in Kaipara. The station's name was changed to Hato Irene (St Irenaeus), or simply Hatoi. Towards the end of the 1840s, Garin left Kaipara to take on a chaplaincy in Auckland. After the Marists left Tai Tokerau altogether in 1850, Kaipara became part of Pompallier's North Shore mission.<sup>10</sup>

#### **MAKETŪ / ROTORUA** (Maketū, Rotorua, Taupō)

Father Borjon and Brother Justin established the station of St Joachim & St Anne at Maketū in 1841. Borjon also covered the Rotorua area. The Maketū station was sacked by local Māori later that year, and in mid-1842 Borjon wrote in dismay: "I find myself amid a tribe reputed for being one of the worst and most indifferent; until

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix F.

<sup>10</sup> See Serabian's and Larcombe's theses on Father Garin.

now the tribe still has not yet heard the voice of God.”<sup>11</sup> A few months later Borjon left Maketū for a new appointment as resident priest for the settlers of Port Nicholson, but was shipwrecked and died at sea. Borjon was replaced in Maketū by Father Comte for a short time, and Father Pezant visited Rotorua from his station in Tauranga. From 1844 Father Reignier and Brother Euloge served as missionaries for Rotorua and Taupō, using Ōhinemutu as their base. The Maketū mission was abandoned completely when the Wellington Diocese was established in 1848, and the Rotorua mission was neglected for several years after the departure of Reignier in 1851. By the 1860s Rotorua was again an important base for Catholic missionary work.

## **MATAMATA / RANGIAOWHIA**

Bishop Pompallier and Father Viard had visited the Waikato region in early 1840. Father Séon was appointed to Matamata in 1841 in response to a local chief’s demand for a resident missionary. In 1844 Father Pezant replaced Séon and subsequently moved the station from Matamata to Rangiaowhia, which he viewed as a more suitable base for Waikato mission. Pezant’s decision to transfer the station to Rangiaowhia had also been prompted by an invitation from Ngāti Hinetu, although Séon had visited Rangiaowhia regularly from his post at Matamata.

In the 1850s Rangiaowhia developed into a flourishing economic centre, largely because of CMS missionary John Morgan’s flour mills. Under Father Garavel, the Catholic mission at Rangiaowhia also prospered. Garavel’s station of the Holy Angels included a mill, a school and a wooden church. Rangiaowhia and its mission stations were destroyed by the Waikato wars of 1864 and the village was subsequently abandoned.

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<sup>11</sup> « Je me trouve placé au milieu de la tribu réputée pour une des plus mauvaises, des plus indifférentes; jusqu’à présent elle n’a pas encore écouté la voix de Dieu », *Lettres reçues d’Océanie par l’administration générale des pères maristes*, Doc 157, 15 May & 4 June 1842, Borjon to Claude Girard, p. 4.

## **ŌPŌTIKI**

While Bishop Pompallier and Father Viard were visiting the eastern coast of the North Island in early 1840, they evangelised various ports including Ōpōtiki. Father Rozet founded a station in Ōpōtiki the following year and named it the station of the Annunciation. By early 1843 Father Comte and Brother Justin were the resident missionaries, since Rozet had been transferred to Whangaroa, and at the end of 1843 non-Marist Father Chouvet had joined Brother Justin so that Comte could minister to Māori in āane. Father Moreau took over Ōpōtiki after Chouvet returned to France. Ōpōtiki endured as a major mission station after Moreau transferred to the Wellington diocese. In 1865 Ōpōtiki was the site of New Zealand's first missionary murder. Anglican missionary Carl Volkner was killed by followers of the Hauhau politico-religious movement.

## **ŌTAKI**

The station at Ōtaki was founded by Father Comte in 1844. It was the southernmost Marist station until the 1850s. Like John Morgan in Rangiaowhia, CMS missionary Octavius Hadfield encouraged mills and other agricultural ventures to create an economically viable mission. Comte followed his example, but found that commercial success and vows of poverty were not compatible. He returned to France in 1854 and was not replaced at Ōtaki. It was not until the mission was revived in the 1880s that Ōtaki Māori had frequent contact with Catholic clergy again.

## **PAKOWHAI / MEEANEE**

Father Lampila founded the mission at Pakowhai in 1851, and his arrival marked the early beginnings of the Hawke's Bay winery culture. In 1852 Father Reignier took charge of the mission but was later forced to transfer his station from Pakowhai to Meeanee. In the 1860s Reignier became increasingly preoccupied with ministering to Pākehā settlers but was an eager participant in the revival of the Hawke's Bay mission in the 1880s. The Marists selected Pakipaki as the new station for the revival

in 1879, but Pakowhai remained part of the mission district visited by Reignier and his successors.

## **TAURANGA**

The Tauranga bay area was one of several ports visited by Bishop Pompallier and Father Viard in 1840. Viard established the Aquinas mission station that year and remained until 1841. After Viard left, Father Pezant and Brother Euloge ministered to Māori in Tauranga. Brother Euloge was replaced by Brother Colomb in 1843, but Colomb requested to return to France the following year. Pezant was transferred to the Waikato in the mid-1840s, and was replaced at Tauranga by Father Bernard, who remained at the station until the Marist exodus of 1850. Tauranga was one of the Marist stations largely neglected by Auckland diocesan clergy during the period 1850 to 1880.

## **TE AUROA / TERA KAKO (Māhia Peninsula)**

Māori from Māhia Peninsula (also known as Te Māhia or Tera Kako peninsula) approached Bishop Pompallier in Kororāreka to request a resident missionary for their iwi. Father Baty visited the Peninsula in September 1841 and established the station of Saint Michel at Te Auroa Point. Baty's departure in 1842 and Pompallier's inability to provide a resident missionary for Māhia Peninsula resulted in the abandonment of the station.

## **WHAKATĀNE**

Father Comte visited Whakatāne frequently from his post at Ōpōtiki in 1843. The following year Father Lampila became Whakatāne's resident missionary. Within a few months the station of St Jean at Whakatāne had a raupō church, and by 1846 Brother Élie-Régis had constructed a small pisé house and a wooden chapel. Brother Élie-Régis was a particularly effective catechist during his time in Whakatāne. When he and Lampila left the mission in 1850, diocesan clergy continued to minister to Māori at Whakatāne.

## **WHANGANUI RIVER**

When the Marists arrived in the Wellington diocese in 1850, Father Lampila established a mission on the Whanganui River. Initially based at Kaiwhaiki, Lampila moved his base to Kauaeroa where he and local Māori established an important flour mill. For much of the 1860s Lampila's station was the Marists' only exclusively Māori station in the Wellington diocese. War on the River, particularly the Battle of Moutoa in 1864, resulted in the deaths of important catechists and the destruction of the mission establishments. Lampila left the station at Kauaeroa around 1867.

The nearby village of Hiruhārama had been a significant part of Lampila's mission, and was chosen as the preferred site for the revival of the Māori Mission in the 1880s.

## **WHANGAROA (Whangaroa, Mangonui)<sup>12</sup>**

The Epiphany Station was established at Waitaruke in Whangaroa in early 1840 by Fathers Épalle and Petit-Jean, along with Brother Élie. Father Petit-Jean left Whangaroa in 1841 and spent some time in the Bay of Islands before taking up his new appointment as resident priest of Auckland. Brother Élie was left behind to manage the Whangaroa mission until Father Rozet and Brother Michel joined him in 1843. Rozet remained at Whangaroa until the Marist departure from the north in 1850. Pompallier then integrated Whangaroa and Mangonui with the Bay of Islands Māori mission.

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<sup>12</sup> Whangaroa and Mangonui are sometimes grouped with the Bay of the Islands, but Pompallier and the Marist missionaries viewed Whangaroa harbour as a separate region altogether.



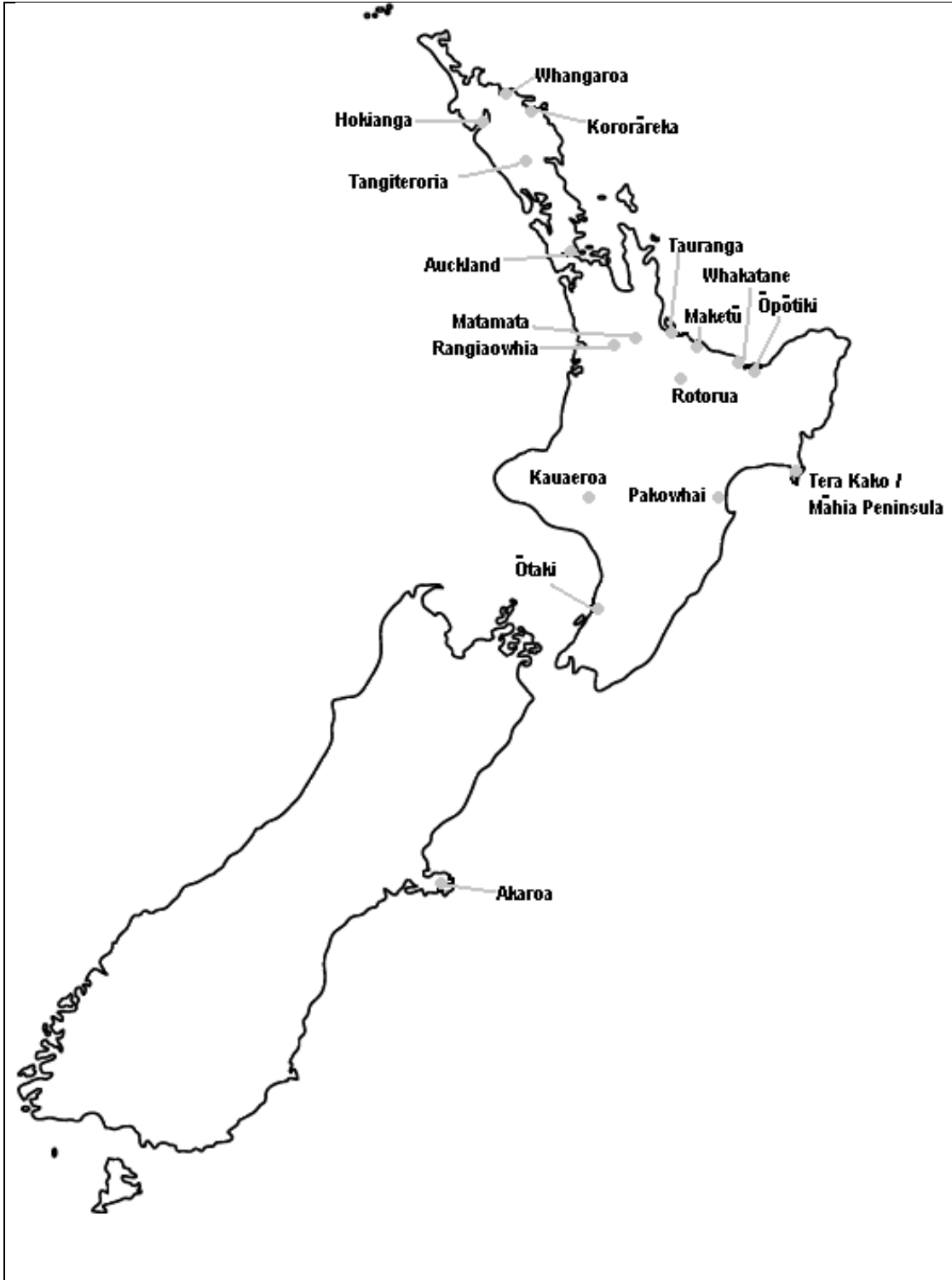


Figure 3: Marist Māori missions 1838-1867<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Map has been adapted from 'New Zealand Outline Map'  
 <<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/oceania/outline/nz.gif>>.

## **APPENDIX D: PROFILES OF FRENCH MARIST FATHERS (1879-1930s)**

### **BARRA** Jean (John)

From the Saint-Brieuc diocese, John Barra left for the New Zealand mission in 1903 and was ordained in New Zealand in 1905. He was missionary in Ōtaki and Okato before undertaking parish work including a chaplaincy in Timaru during World War I.

### **BRIAND** Jean-Baptiste (John-Baptist)

Jean-Baptiste Briand was born in diocese of Saint-Brieuc and completed the final years of his clerical training in Switzerland because of the political climate in France in the 1870s. Briand joined the Society of Mary in 1879 and left for the missions in 1887. He had some contact with Māori while residing in the Christchurch area. In 1895 Briand requested to return to France.

### **BROUSSARD** Pierre (Peter)

Born in the Nantes diocese, Pierre Broussard was ordained in 1889 and joined the missions later that year. He had already been a Marist for four years. In the 1890s Broussard worked in Ōtaki and among Māori in Rangitikei. He transferred to the New Caledonian mission in 1899.

### **COGNET** Claude     *Pa Koneta*

Originally from Lyon, Claude Cognet was educated by the Marist Brothers at Valbenoîte and the Seminary of Belley, before completing his seminary studies in exile, in Switzerland and Spain. Cognet joined the Society of Mary in 1880 and

departed for Oceania five years later. He was particularly active on the Whanganui River Maori mission in the 1880s and 1890s. Cognet learned Maori quickly at Rānana on the River, and wrote a history of the Catholic Church in Māori, as well as many pamphlets and articles. From 1908 he was based in Ōtaki, which had become a vibrant centre of Māori Catholic activity as a result of Father Delachienne's initiatives.

**DELACHIENNE** François (Francis)      *Pa Hohepa*

Born in the Saint-Brieuc diocese, François Delachienne began his seminary studies in France and completed them in Spain. He became a Marist in 1888 and waited to be ordained two years later to depart for the missions. Delachienne was initially appointed to Pakipaki and transferred to Ōtaki in 1896. Over the next two decades, Delachienne established a Māori-language Catholic magazine and organised annual hui at the Māori-style Ōtaki church of Pukekaraka. Church authorities, disapproving of the French missionary's approach to evangelisation, arranged for Delachienne's removal from the mission in 1916. Petitions were made for his return but Delachienne was not permitted to do so.

**GINISTY** Paul

Paul Ginisty was one of last French Marists to join the Māori Mission. Born in the diocese of Rodez, he became a Marist in 1909 and left for the missions in 1912, immediately after his ordination. Ginisty worked predominantly with Whanganui River Māori in the early twentieth century, before being re-assigned to parish work.

**LACROIX** Célestin

From the Saint-Brieuc diocese, Célestin Lacroix attended a Marist seminary near Toulon and was ordained in 1895. He left for the missions in October that year, and made his Marist profession in New Zealand in 1889. Lacroix served as a missionary at Okato in Taranaki and on the Whanganui River for several years, and as a military chaplain during World War I.

**LE BOUTEILLER** Henri (Henry)

Born in the Coutances diocese, Henri Le Bouteiller completed his clerical training at the Marist Seminary in Meeanee. He was ordained in 1907, three years after his arrival in New Zealand. Le Bouteiller was largely parish-based.

**LE MENANT DES CHESNAIS** Théophile

Born in 1836 in the diocese of Rennes, Théophile Le Menant des Chesnais was ordained in 1860 and joined the Society of Mary in 1866. He undertook missionary work in Sydney and the United States of America before joining the Oceania missions in 1876. Le Menant des Chesnais was primarily a parish priest in Christchurch.

**LEPETIT** Augustin

From the diocese of Nantes, Augustin Lepetit was ordained, professed Marist and joined the missions all in the same year: 1884. He served in Fiji for five years before working as a missionary in the South Island.

**LEPRÊTRE** Pierre (Peter)

Pierre Leprêtre was born in the diocese of Nantes. He attended the local major seminary but transferred to Spain to complete his studies. Having been a Marist for two years, Leprêtre was ordained in 1884 and joined the missions that December. Initially based at Hiruhārama on the Whanganui River, Leprêtre made his mark as missionary and parish priest of Wairoa for over thirty years. He died in Wairoa in 1933.

**LETERRIER** Jean (John)

Born in 1826, Jean Leterrier came from the diocese of Coutances. He became a priest and a Marist in the 1850s and worked on missions in Ireland and the United States. Leterrier was appointed as New Zealand's first Marist Provincial, and Head of the Māori Mission, from 1889 until his return to France in 1902.

**MAILLARD** Julien-François

From the diocese of Nantes, Julien-François Maillard was educated in Nantes and Barcelona, Spain. He joined the Society of Mary in 1888. Two years later he was ordained and decided to depart for the missions. Maillard worked especially on the Whanganui River Māori mission but also served in Okato, Ōtaki and Raetihi before returning to France in 1920.

**MELU** François Marie (Francis)     *Pa Werahiko*

François Melu was born and educated in the diocese of Nantes. He was ordained a priest in 1881. Melu became a Marist and left for the missions in 1883. He served in Whanganui before spending several decades on the Māori mission at Ōtaki, where he died in 1938.

**MÉNARD** Aloysius Joseph

Born in Normandy, Aloysius Ménard completed his clerical training at Greenmeadows, the Marist Seminary in Meeanee. He became a priest and a Marist in 1896 and worked on a number of stations and parishes from Mangaweka to Okato. In the 1930s he resigned from the mission and left for Sydney.

**SOULAS** Christophe (Christopher) *Pa Hoani Papita*

Christophe Soulas was the first Marist priest to revive the Māori Mission, prompted by fellow missionary Suzanne Aubert. Soulas hailed from the diocese of Nantes and joined the Marists and the mission in 1878. After an unsuccessful attempt at Pakipaki, Soulas transferred to the Whanganui River where he remained until 1902. He then continued missionary work in Okato, which became the headquarters of the Māori Mission. Soulas was known for having a difficult personality, but was determined to revive the mission in the Wellington diocese.

**VIBAUD** Jean-Marie (John) *Pa Wiripo*

Jean-Marie Vibaud was born in the diocese of Nantes. He joined the Society of Mary in 1902, left for Oceania in 1903 and was ordained after a year at Greenmeadows seminary in Meeanee. Vibaud served at Otaki and Hiruhārama on the Whanganui River. He later came into dispute with Father Maillard, the second Marist Provincial, over Vibaud's conflicting position as Wanganui parish curate and Māori missionary.

**YARDIN** François (Francis)

From the Troyes diocese, Father Yardin was an early Marist, professed in 1846, who had acted as procurator to the Oceania missions. He left for the missions at age 50 but undertook largely parish work and was appointed Director to the Marist lay Brothers at Meeanee.

## APPENDIX E: TABLE OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS HOUSES WHO HAD MISSIONARIES FROM LYON<sup>1</sup>

(1800-1900)

### MALE RELIGIOUS HOUSES (PRIESTS)

<u>Denominations</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Secular priests	258	27
Foreign Missions of Paris	230	24
Jesuits from the Lyon Province	129	14
<b>Society of Marist Fathers</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>8</b>
Congregation of the Mission (Lazarists)	62	7
Society of African Missions of Lyon	48	5
Society of African Missionaries (White Fathers)	38	4
Capuchins of the Lyon Province	27	3
Congregation of the Holy-Spirit	23	2
Oblates of Mary-Immaculate	20	2
Fathers of Saint-Sulpice	19	2
Dominicans of the Lyon Province	11	1
Redemptorists	10	1
<b>BROTHERS</b>		
<b>Marist Brothers of the schools</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>73</b>
Brothers of the Christian schools	75	22
Clerics Of Saint-Viateur	10	3
Brothers of Sacred-Heart	6	2

### FEMALE RELIGIOUS HOUSES

Denominations	Number	%
Saint-Joseph of Cluny	88	15
Missionary Sisters of Our-Lady-of-Apostles	78	13
Saint-Joseph of Lyon	77	13
Missionary Sisters of Our-Lady of Africa	61	10
<b>Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>9</b>
Little Sisters of the Poor	41	7
Our-Lady-of-the-Missions of Lyon	30	5
Missionary Franciscans of Mary	28	5
Sisters of Jesus-Mary	27	5

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<sup>1</sup> Essertel, p. 90.

Sisters of Saint-Paul of Chartres	20	4
Franciscans of the Propagation of the Faith	17	3
Franciscans of Saint-Mary-of-the-Angels	14	2
Sisters of the Christian-Doctrine of Nancy	13	2
Sisters of the Charity of the Word-Incarnate	10	2
Saint-Charles Sisters	10	2
Little Sisters of the Holy-Childhood	8	1
Sacred-Heart of Poitiers	8	1
Sacred-Hearts and Perpetual-Adoration	7	1



## APPENDIX F: DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS RECEIVED FROM THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH IN EACH STATION FOR THE YEAR 1844<sup>1</sup>

1: Bay of Islands, where there are 5 priests: 1) the vic(ar) ap(ostolic) included, 2) the pro-vicar, 3) the provincial, 4) the procurator, 5) a priest to serve the natives of this station; plus 3 printing brothers, 1 tailor and a cobbler for the whole mission, and 1 cook and gardener for the stations; which makes altogether 12 members. This house would also be [for] the new arrivals in the mission and all the members who come on retreat. In addition, one must observe that everything is more expensive here compared to elsewhere in the mission. However, the allocation is made in a similar manner to the others, in proportion to the twelve members who are here, that is to say at £40 per person, which makes an annual sum of	... £480
2: Hokianga, where there is 1 priest and 1 brother, and a garden and cattle	... £70
3: Terarawa, where there is 1 priest and 1 household servant, and a garden	... £70
4: Whangaroa, where there is 1 priest, 1 brother, a farm, cattle, and a poultry-yard	... £50
5: Auckland, where there is 1 priest, assisted by the faithful, but it is the capital; they require a boat and must maintain the school for Europeans	... £100
6: Matamata, where there is 1 priest and 1 household servant	... £70
7: Tauranga, where there is 1 priest and 1 brother	... £70
8: Rotorua, where there is 1 priest and 1 servant	... £70
9: Whakatane, 1 priest and 1 servant, a house there made of Raupo and a basic establishment to be erected	... £5
10: Opotiki, 1 priest and 1 brother	... £70
11: Kaipara, 1 priest and 1 servant	... £70
12: Port Nicholson, 1 priest and 1 servant, the assistance of the faithful there	... £70
13: reserve funds for the Procure to assist stations if need be	... £100
14: a boat and a chapel made by the brothers, except for the windows, and a house of residence at Whangaroa	... £60
15: a chapel for which a subscription was made among the Europeans and natives at Hokianga, and a house of residence	... £40
16: a wooden house of residence and a kitchen at Tauranga	... £70
17: a wooden house of residence at Opotiki	... £60
18: a boat for the Kaipara station	... £15
19: establishment for native catechists; 1) for the erection of the establishment's house 2) for the upkeep and living costs of 9 indigenous subjects, and also the 2 or 3 brothers who should be taken onto the Bay of Islands station to manage this important institution	... £200
20: for maritime voyages and other mission errands, not including those of the missionaries in their stations	... £300
total	... £2110

<sup>1</sup> ACDA, Administration volume of Bishop Pompallier, POM2, p. 325.

## **APPENDIX G: THE ADMINISTRATIVE CATHOLIC CHURCH STRUCTURE IN NEW ZEALAND**

- 1836** Vicariate Apostolic of Western Oceania established  
(from 1847 Bishop Pompallier had charge of New Zealand only)
- 1848** Auckland Diocese established; Wellington Diocese established
- 1869** Dunedin Diocese established (formerly part of the Wellington  
Diocese)
- 1887** Christchurch Diocese established (formerly part of Wellington  
Diocese); Wellington Diocese acknowledged as New Zealand's  
Archdiocese
- 1889** New Zealand established as a Marist Province consisting of  
Wellington and Christchurch dioceses
- 1980** Palmerston North Diocese established (formerly part of Wellington  
Diocese); Hamilton Diocese established (formerly part of Auckland  
Diocese)