

Parramatta Dec^r 22^d 1823

Ch. 2 July 3/24

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Rec^d L dear Sir

Agreeable to your request I have made every enquiry respecting the Cannibalism of the New Zealanders & beg to return the following answers to the Queries proposed by your Committee?

Question (1) "What acts of the New Zealanders eating human Flesh, have fallen under your own actual observation?"

Answer Some of the Missionaries never saw them eat human flesh.

Mr Kendall never did. & I could not learn that any of the Missionaries at Ranghreeho ever did.

At Kiddee Kiddee on Shunghees return from war some Slaves were killed and eat. The Missionaries saw some human flesh dressed for eating.

Question (2) "On what occasions were those perpetrated?"

Answer As a sacrifice, or satisfaction for the death of a Relative or Friend, The dead Body is considered holy food, or holy sacrifice; & The Persons who eat it are holy after a Battle

the hearts of the Chiefs are cut off
and laid by themselves, and when
this is done, the Brains, and the whole
of the inside of the Skull are taken
out, & prayers are offered up to their
God & the funeral ode is sung the
very same ode they believe which
the first man ^{ever} sung over
the dead Body of his Son. When
the sacrifices are offered up at
too great a distance for their Friends
to partake of them, the Priests
take some small splinters of
wood & pass them thro' the flesh
of the sacrifices & when they return
home bring them with them
when they are put amongst the
food, when dressed & afterwards
swallowed thro' the Mouth of the
Priest in the presence of the Chiefs
who went to war & prayers are
offered up at the time and then
the splinters of wood are taken
to their family Sepulchre and
deposited there. When the Chief
has eaten the Sacrifice at a distance
and returns home with the pieces
of wood, he is considered unholly,
having touched a dead Body, but
when the Priest has received the
pieces of wood from him & he has
been sprinkled by the Priest

between the Thouldews with the latter, he is cleared from all his pol-
-lutions & admitted into the Society
of his Friends again — It may
here be remarked, that every man
who goes to war & kills and eats
another, is considered as having
done the act of a God. When the
Chiefs return from Battle and
have any particular cause for
rejoicing or mourning they will
kill a Slave or Slaves and eat
them

Question (3) "By what circumstances were
such acts accomplished?"

Answer I have heard of Slaves being
killed in cool blood as well as in
moments of revengeful anger, &
one young woman was killed and
eat in cool blood when I was then
at this time near my lodgings.

Question (4) "Is the Cannibalism of the
New Zealanders confined to their
prisoners of war?"

Answer It is, excepting the offering up
& eating those who are killed in
Battle

Question (5) "Is the killing and eating
Prisoners of war limited to any
specific period after they are
taken?"

Answer Prisoners of war are seldom

killed but are kept as Slaves; but they are liable to be killed by their Masters at all times - with respect to the women and Children they generally save what they can of them.

Question (6) "Is it a custom among the New Zealanders to kill & eat those who are convicted of Theft?"

Ans. Thefts are of different kinds - common and sacred. Sacred thefts are often punished with death. I saw one young woman who was killed for sacred theft such as breaking into the sweet Potatoe Houses when tabooed or into the superstructure of the dead to carry away the bones, or into any sacred ground, especially if the offender be a slave. If any of their own Friends are guilty of theft, they are liable to be punished some other way. The New Zealanders do not think that theft is a crime of that magnitude generally, as to merit death.

Question (7) "Is there any particular class of Persons to whom the liability to be killed & eaten is confined?"

Ans. There is no class of Persons that are liable to be killed and eaten in cool blood, there is always a reason assigned for such an act which generally originates in

in superstition & very distinct
from Cannibalism, tho' the whole
system of their religious ceremonies
is interwoven with the eating of
human Flesh.

Question (8) "Are there any Restrictions
with respect to Age in persons
who are killed & eaten by the
New Zealanders?"

Answer Persons of all ages are liable to
be killed in battle, those who are,
or have been the greatest Warriors
are the most esteemed, I have
not heard of any old persons, or
very young Children ^{having} been killed
as sacrifices, but those who are
grown up

Question (9) Will you state such well
authenticated facts relative to the
practice of Cannibalism by the
New Zealanders as have been com-
municated to you by others, distin-
guishing those from such as you
are acquainted with from your
own Knowledge?

Answer I have had many Conversations
with the Chiefs at the Bay of
Islands, the River Thames &c.
respecting Cannibalism. It is ad-
mitted by all as ^a Fact, & practised
by all as a religious ceremony in
their wars. Every Chief when he

falls in Battle expects to be eaten,
as it is their universal custom, but
the New Zealanders have not been
known to kill and eat one another
privately, without there had been
some previous injury, meriting that
Punishment, according to their Laws.
Question (10) "What account do the Natives
give of the origin, object & advantages
of eating the flesh of their fellow
Creatures?"

Answer It appears to have originated from
a belief that Mowheeboo, the first
cause of all sacrificed his Son and eat
him. Their object is to satisfy their super-
stitious minds, to appease the Deity
& the ^{manes} names of their departed Friends.
It cannot however be doubted but
that they gratify their appetites & revenge
-ful feelings, at the same time the
custom does not originate in this
gratification, but in superstition.

I am

Dear & Res^d. Sir

Yours faithfully

signed Sam^l. Marsden

Res^d. J. Pratt

L. L. L.

Dec. 1823

Rev. J. Wardens' Answer
to Queries respecting the
Communion of the New
Zealanders.