

THE SPECIFICS OF THE MĀORI CULTURE IN THE POLYNESIAN REGION

Māori are the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand. This tribe is known for its militancy, ritual dances Haka, elaborate wood carvings, tattoos ta-moko and legends. This tribe is attracting a lot of global attention. The history of the relationship between Māori and colonists reveals an amazing relationship between the characters of cultures, and Māori is a perfect example of how their culture has always saved itself, how they not only survived, but also got along with the settlers, and also how they enriched world culture with their traditions.

One of the biggest Māori problems is the plight of Māori and Pacific citizens. Many people have been forced into homelessness because their income or benefits don't cover their rent. New Zealanders, which is predominantly much more financially stable, is taken as the mainstream when actually it's very different from many other parts of the population.

As a whole, while ethnic inequalities are decreasing in the 21st century, on average Māori and Pacific people still have lower incomes, worse housing, poorer health than non-Māori and higher death rates. They are less likely to work in professional occupations or have higher educational qualification. The health system fails to deliver appropriate levels of care for Māori for decades.

Despite the existing problems of Māori, New Zealand is trying to support their native inhabitants and listen to them through the Māori political party in Parliament. This is expressed in renaming of English names to Māori. Recently it was decided to rename 7 new railway stations and the other day the news was announced that the first police station with all external signage in Māori language opens. The national Māori language, Te Reo is recognized as the second official language of New Zealand and is taught in schools. The Oxford English dictionary includes Māori words in its latest edition. A designer Jean-Paul Gaultier uses elements of the Māori style in his collections. Jewelry with Māori symbols and “Ta-moko” tattoos have become popular. Disney created a cartoon “Moana” where it has added the Polynesian girl to its pantheon of princesses.

Māori culture is absolutely unique. Nowhere else in the world will you meet such an interesting tribe as the Māori. Their traditions and customs are still an important part of the New Zealand identity today. Using indigenous knowledge, as New Zealand is trying to do use Māori knowledge, can improve the way federal

governments manage ecosystems and natural resources. What modern civilization should learn from Māori is the love of their native land, interconnectedness and a sense of community, the internal and cultural strength.