

A Field Trip to Rotorua

Narrator: Erik is from Norway, but this year he is on a student exchange to Papatoetoe High School in New Zealand. He has already been there a couple of weeks and made many new friends. Today his history class is on a field trip to the city of Rotorua to learn more about the Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand. He is currently seated on the bus with his new friend Victoria.

Victoria: Are you excited? Ready to see more of this country called Aotearoa?

Erik: Aotearoa?

Victoria (*laughs*): The land of the long white cloud. It's what the Maoris call New Zealand.

Erik: Right, I believe I'm in for a lesson in Maori culture?

Victoria: Sure. Do you know anything about Rotorua and the indigenous people in New Zealand at all?

Erik: Not much, but I believe it's the same old story?

Victoria: What do you mean— the same old story?

Erik: Well, how the Europeans came and killed the natives, stole their land, forced them to adjust to western culture, refused them to speak their native language or practice their religion and cultural traditions. Leaving them to alcohol, unemployment and degeneration. End of story.

Victoria: Wow, must say you are quite prejudiced. Actually, this is not the case with the Maori. Well, not quite anyway. Although you find examples of alcoholism and other social issues, most of the Maori people are part of our multicultural society. Quite a few Maori students are at our school, as you already know, and we can all, for instance, sign up for classes in the Maori language - Te Reo Maori. The Maori language is actually one of the official languages in New Zealand. See the road signs? They are all in English **and** Maori.

Erik: Really? That reminds me of the indigenous people in Norway, their language is also acknowledged today, though it hasn't always been like that.

Victoria: Indigenous people in Norway? Other than you? (*laughs*)

*Erik: Well, the Sami people originally lived in northern Norway, and in that area, you can see signs, for instance, in both the Norwegian **and** Sami languages, just like here.*

Victoria: Interesting. Perhaps we can find more similarities between our indigenous people.

Erik: Well, ours is a sad story, really. I saw this film called The Kautokeino Rebellion telling the true story of how a group of Sami rebelled against the local representatives of the Norwegian state in the 19th century. The Sami are a peaceful people, but this tells a very different story – I

still remember the beheading in the opening scene. If you want to see it, it's available online for free.

Victoria: I would like that. I think we can learn much about history and different cultures by watching movies, like the famous film called *The Whale Rider* about a group of Maori in contemporary New Zealand. It explains the legend of how Maori came to New Zealand in the first place and gives a good insight into Maori culture and identity. Probably you will see some of this when we come to Rotorua. I bet we'll see a Haka performance at least. Have you heard about the Haka?

Erik: Sure, everybody has seen the All Blacks perform the war dance before their rugby games. They are trying to scare their opponents, rolling their tongues and eyeballs. Not as peaceful as our Sami.

Victoria: You seem to know quite a bit about the Maori. Familiar with the Ta Moko and the Hongi too?

Erik: Hongi?

Victoria: Haven't you seen how we sometimes greet each other – rubbing noses?

Erik: Ah, so that's a Hongi.

Victoria: And Ta Moko is the decorations you see on men's faces, like tattoos.

Erik: Oh, I'm really looking forward to seeing all of this today!

Victoria: And speaking of seeing....here we are. Haere mai – welcome to Rotorua!

Explanations:

Indigenous people = urfolk

Contemporary = samtidig