

Maori

also known as “Te Maori”

Data source: eHRAF

Secondary source

Entered by Emily Pitek, Human Relations Area Files

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** Secondary Source entry, prepared from a literature review by a Ph.D. RA*

Entry tags: Religion, Oceanic Religions, Polynesia

The Maori are indigenous inhabitants of New Zealand, and trace their origin to three waves of settlers from Polynesian islands in 950, 1150, and 1350 (Latham, 2009). The first recorded European contact with the Maori occurred with Captain James Cook's arrival in 1769, and in the centuries that followed came whalers, traders, missionaries, and the British government (Hawthorn, 1944:7-11). This entry focuses around the time of 1820, before intense European influence. At this time, contact included that with whalers, explorers, and traders. The first missionaries arrived in New Zealand in 1814, but a change in indigenous religious beliefs was gradual and not salient until several decades later. The Maori did not have a distinct religious sphere; religious beliefs and practices were interwoven with secular life and thus the religious group is coterminous with society itself. The key forces in Maori religion are tapu (the prohibitions or laws emanating from the gods), makutu (magic), and mana (spiritual and intellectual power). Present in the supernatural realm are a supreme god, departmental deities/tutelary beings, tribal gods, family gods, and familiar spirits. Religious practitioners include chiefs, priests, and shamans.



Date Range: 1800 CE - 1830 CE

Region: Region of New Zealand

Region tags: Oceania, New Zealand

New Zealand ca. 1820

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

— Source 1: Divale, W. 2004. Codebook of Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. World Cultures: The Journal of Cross-Cultural and Comparative Research.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

— Source 1 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=oz04-004>

— Source 1 Description: Firth, R. (1959). Economics Of The New Zealand Maori. Wellington, Nz.: R. E. Owen, Govt.Printer.

— Source 2 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=oz04-000>

— Source 2 Description: Latham, C. (2009). Culture Summary: Maori. New Haven, Conn.: Human Relations

Area Files.

– Source 3 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=oz04-006>

– Source 3 Description: Hawthorn, H. B. (1944). Maori: A Study In Acculturation. Memoirs. [Menasha, Wis.]: American Anthropological Association.

– Source 1 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=oz04-001>

– Source 1 Description: Best, E. (1924). Maori: Volume 1. Memoirs Of The Polynesian Society. Wellington, N.Z.: Printed by H.H. Tombs, limited.

– Source 2 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=oz04-002>

– Source 2 Description: Best, E. (1924). Maori: Volume 2. Memoirs Of The Polynesian Society. Wellington, N.Z.: Printed by H.H. Tombs, limited.

– Source 3 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=oz04-003>

– Source 3 Description: Buck, P. H. (1952). Coming Of The Maori. Wellington: Maori Purposes Fund Board; [distributed by] Whitcombe and Tombs.

Notes: Best 1924 Volume 1 is referred to as Best, 1924a throughout this entry; Best 1924 Volume 2 is referred to as Best, 1924b

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: "European society presented a complex front to the Maori in the first century of contact [18th-19th century]. There were the whalers and the traders, mixed in nationality and habits, intentions and effects; the missionaries, usually genuine but often shortsighted; the representatives of the British government, called in to protect Maori from European and European from Maori, and pleasing neither; the settlers, liberal in the ideas of the nineteenth century but with an insistent land-hunger. During this first century of contact the Maori came into close and prolonged contact with all of these groups, each with its own interests and purposes, many of them antagonistic to his own, and a few which combined with his own desires and qualities to enable his cultural re-adjustment" (Hawthorn, 1944:11).

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– Yes

Notes: "The infringement of the laws of tapu [sacred/spiritual powers/taboo] was a frequent cause of quarrels between early settlers and the natives, and the massacre of the French commander Marion du Fresne and a party of his men at the Bay of Islands was due to such a mischance" (Best, 1924a:253).

– Yes

Notes: "Inter-tribal enmity sometimes led to terrible acts of savagery" (Best, 1924b:55).

↳ Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 1650 (Frequency of External Warfare, Resolved Rating) indicates that "external warfare seems to occur almost constantly and at any time of the year". Additionally, SCCS Variable 1654 (Pacification) indicates that the society is "not pacified for all or part of the twenty-five-year time period" (Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

— No

Notes: The Maori religious group is coterminous with the society itself. As such, there is not a concept for assigning affiliation besides being born into a particular tribe.

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

— No

Notes: The Maori religious group is coterminous with the society itself. As such, there is not a concept of proselytizing or recruiting.

Does the religion have official political support

Answer 'yes' also in cases where the religious and political spheres are not distinguished from one another, but the religious group's activities are tied up with, and supported by, the functioning of the society at large.

— Yes

Notes: The Maori religious and political spheres are not entirely distinguished from one another. Rather, the religious group's activities are tied up with, and supported by, the functioning of the society at large. See questions below for more details.

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

— I don't know

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

— I don't know

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

— Yes

Notes: "...the ariki [superior chief] had to perform certain priestly functions which could not be conducted by the professional priests" (Buck, 1952:346).

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

— Yes

Notes: Among the Maori there was, "the absence of civil law. This corrective power, as we know it, was lacking in the Maori social system, and yet social life was well ordered and the people lived in amity as a rule. Certain scenes of turbulence witnessed occasionally were often really part of the forces that replaced civil law. The forces that controlled the social system were the

institution of tapu, public opinion, the influence of respected chiefs, and, to some extent, the custom of muru" (Best, 1924a:356).

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of a conception of apostasy.

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

— I don't know

Notes: "When Captain Cook visited New Zealand in 1769 the indigenous population was probably between 200,000 and 250,000. The population declined after contact with Europeans, but it began to recover at the beginning of the twentieth century" (Latham, 2009). "...a census was taken in 1857-58 (56,049)..." (Firth, 1959). There is not a specific population figure provided for the time that this entry focuses on. Based upon the above information, we know that the population must be somewhat higher than 60,000.

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

— Estimated population, percentage of sample region: 100

Notes: The Maori religious and political spheres are not entirely distinguished from one another. Rather, the religious group's activities are tied up with, and supported by, the functioning of the society at large. Therefore, all members of the Maori society are adherents of the religious group.

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

— Yes

Notes: "...tohunga ahurewa or tohunga tuahu (a high-class priest), tohunga kehua (a shaman), tohunga makutu (a wizard)..." (Best, 1924a:243).



Is there a hierarchy among these leaders:

Hierarchy need not be formally institutionalized if it is widely recognized and accepted.

— Yes

Notes: "When we come to examine the Maori priesthood of former times, we find that, as in the case of their gods, they can be divided into classes or ranks. A system of classification is the easiest mode of describing the tohunga maori, as they were termed" (Best, 1924a:243).



Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:

— Yes

Notes: "The superior orders of priests were believed to possess amazing powers, as is shown in

other parts of this chronicle. They were supposed to possess power over the elements, and also strange powers of mind over matter" (Best, 1924a:246).

↳ Powers are inherited:

— Yes

Notes: "First-born chiefs inherited certain religious powers (mana atua) by reason of primogeniture. In youth, they were admitted to the schools of learning together with theological students and thus acquired a good deal of religious theory and practice. However, they rarely practised professionally as priests, but there were some rites which could be performed only by them because of their birth. Such was the opening of the sacred oven of the first-born during the ceremony following exhumation" (Buck, 1952:475).

Specific to this answer:

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists

↳ Powers are culturally transmitted from another human (e.g. teacher):

— Yes

Notes: "When a priest had taught some young man his own stores of knowledge, he would, when near his end, tell his pupil to ngau (bite), or whakaha, some part of his body just as the breath of life was passing from him. It was believed that this act had the effect of transmitting the mana (powers, prestige, psychic power, etc.), and knowledge of the dying man to the pupil" (Best, 1924a:245).

↳ Are religious leaders chosen:

— No

Notes: "The office of tohunga was not strictly hereditary in New Zealand, though, as in other expert professions, a son usually followed in his father's steps. The priests of the departmental and tribal gods were educated men who occupied a responsible position in public life and were often of high birth. Priests of the family gods were usually self-taught and self-created. Those who practised black magic were detested and condemned by public opinion, but they were also feared because of their credited power to slay those who displeased them. As in other walks of life, the social position could be improved by brains and personality" (Buck, 1952:476).

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

— I don't know

Notes: At the time this entry focuses on, the Maori did not have a written language. While written scriptures are clearly not present, it is unclear if oral traditions would be considered to be scriptures. Oral history was extremely important to the Maori, and was based largely upon religious stories. "The

tapu School of Learning, under different names, was held to be a highly important institution, and it assuredly occupied a high status in both islands. A study of this school and its activities impresses one with the conviction that the [Page 65] Maori held what we may call learning in high estimation, and ever looked upon high-class teachers and repositories of such learning as important members of the community. Inasmuch as all esoteric knowledge was closely connected with the gods, it follows as a natural sequence that occult knowledge and its human mediums were endowed with the condition of tapu. In no sphere of Maori activities was that restrictive institution more in evidence than in the higher form of the School of Learning. The more intensely tapu matter was that pertaining to the Supreme Being, and the higher versions of cosmogonic myths, the origin of man, and the superior phases of religion" (Best, 1924a:64).

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

— No

Notes: "Let it be clearly understood that the Maori never erected anything in the form of a temple. He made no attempt to add impressiveness to his ritual performances by means of any artificial erection, indeed he was strongly prejudiced against performing rites elsewhere than out in the open. So far as we are aware the tapu houses in which tribal lore was taught were the only buildings in which important rites were ever performed. The Maori preferred to carry out such functions in the open, not under a roof, and away from all artificial structures" (Best, 1924a:288).

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

— Yes

Notes: "Village pouahu. When the tuahu with an enclosed post was located in the village, it was usually situated near the main gateway. A wooden box, termed a waka (receptacle), for containing the symbol of the tribal god was kept in the enclosure. Sometimes a small carved house termed a kawiu was set on top of a high post and used as a container for the waka of the god. The priest could perform his ritual within the sacred enclosure. The shrine did not differ in name or function from the tuahu tapatai erected outside the village" (Buck, 1952:481).



Are sacred site oriented to environmental features:

"Environmental features" refers to features in the landscape, mountains, rivers, cardinal directions etc...

— No

— Yes

Notes: "Sanctified water (te wai tapu). In some rites, water was a necessary medium for sprinkling or immersion and some part of a stream or a pond was devoted to the purpose. When the priest entered the water and conducted the ritual, the water was rendered tapu, hence the term wai tapu became associated with the particular locality. Each village had its wai tapu established by usage, and though it may not have had the same degree of tapu as the tuahu shrine, it was avoided by the people. Children were dedicated to the gods by sprinkling, sick people were cleansed of their errors by ablution, and warriors going out to battle were put under the war tapu and freed from it on their return by immersion in the sanctified water" (Buck, 1952:481).

↳ Are sacred site oriented to environmental features:

"Environmental features" refers to features in the landscape, mountains, rivers, cardinal directions etc...

— Yes

— Yes

Notes: "The tuahu was, therefore, established usually in a secluded spot at some distance from the village and away from beaten tracks. The tuahu retained the character of simple shrines, and Best (15, p. 171) states that they took the form of a heap of rough unworked stone sometimes with one or more blocks of stone set upright in the earth. A tuahu on the shores of Lake Rotorua was distinguished by four upright stones spaced a little apart. Other shrines took the form of a post (pou) erected on tapu ground and were termed pou-ahu, which was a synonym for tuahu. Sometimes the post was surrounded by a fence; and the enclosure, which only the priest could enter, was then termed a tuahu tapatai. The crudest form of shrine consisted of some natural feature, such as an outcrop of rock, which became a tuahu merely because a priest used it as a place to commune with his god. On some tuahu, a small platform of sticks termed a tiepa was erected for the reception of offerings, or a larger elevated platform (whata) was constructed for a similar purpose" (Buck, 1952:480).

↳ Are sacred site oriented to environmental features:

"Environmental features" refers to features in the landscape, mountains, rivers, cardinal directions etc...

— No

— Yes

Notes: "Village latrines (turuma or paepae). Protective guardians imbued the latrines with the potential qualities of a sacred shrine which were utilized by the priest in the ngau paepae rite to protect warriors from any magic spells by enemy priests on the field of battle. The war party paraded and each warrior bit (ngau) the cross-bar of the latrines as the priest pronounced the protective formula over him" (Buck, 1952:481).

↳ Are sacred site oriented to environmental features:

"Environmental features" refers to features in the landscape, mountains, rivers, cardinal directions etc...

— No

Are pilgrimages present:

— No

Notes: No evidence for the presence of pilgrimages.

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body.

Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

— Yes

Notes: "All things of earth know death. All things possess a soul or life principle, hence all things must, sooner or later, perish. So says the Maori. All mankind must traverse the broad path of Tane, for death is universal" (Best, 1924b:30).

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

— Yes

Notes: "The wairua[soul] seems to bear two aspects; it is supposed to be an immortal quality that survives the body at death, and yet we are also told that certain magic arts were employed in order to destroy the wairua of enemies, and so cause the death of their physical bases. The wairua can leave the sheltering body during life; it does so when a person dreams of seeing distant places or people; it is the astral body and the immortal soul, certainly a spiritual life principle" (Best, 1924a:300).

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

— Yes

Notes: "The wairua[soul] is not located in any organ of the body..." (Best, 1924a:300).

Belief in afterlife:

— Yes

Notes: "The spirits of the dead forebears of the defunct one will come from spirit land to guide his soul back to that far-off region, and after that to the realm that soul selects for its final abode, after it has undergone a purificatory rite in the great edifice Hawaiki-nui, the meeting place of the four way path" (Best, 1924b:53).

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

— Yes

Notes: "It is interesting to find that the Maori of yore believed in the existence of two spirit worlds, the subterranean underworld and another situated in the uppermost of the twelve heavens, a realm known as the Toi o nga rangi (Summit of the heavens). It must, however, be understood that the popular belief was that all spirits of the dead descended to the underworld. This was the common belief, yet it is quite clear that another, and much less widely known belief, existed concerning a celestial spirit world. As it obtained among the Takitumu tribes I am much inclined to believe that the latter was an esoteric version of priestly teachings. There is some evidence to show that it was the aristocratic belief or teaching, and that ordinary people were either ignorant of it or had no precise knowledge of the concept" (Best, 1924a:314).

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined "above" space:

– Yes

Notes: This belief was present, but not wide spread (Best, 1924a:314)

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined “below” space:

– Yes

Notes: This was the most widely accepted belief (Best, 1924a:314)

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Notes: "We are told that those who go to the spirit world never return here, but this is meant in the sense of returning hither as living human beings, for we are also told that they return hither to protect their descendants, to guide the souls of dying relatives to spirit land, etc." (Best, 1924a:301).

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: "The body being trussed, a superior cloak was secured round it, the face was painted with a preparation of red ochre and oil, the hair was oiled, dressed, and adorned with plumes; ornaments, such as tufts of the white down of the albatross, were suspended from the ears, and so a gala-like aspect of the body was achieved. The body was then placed in a sitting position in the porch of the principal house of the village, which would be intensely tapu so long as the body remained there. A low platform was sometimes constructed on which the body was placed; it was known as an atamira...The lying in state continued for days, often much too long. Eventually the body was taken away and buried, or otherwise disposed of. This act was often performed at night" (Best, 1924b:54-55).

↳ Cremation:

– No

Notes: "Cremation was never a common or universal custom with the Maori. It was practised in some areas where no suitable places of concealment for bones of the dead were available, and also by raiding forces that had suffered in enemy territory. It was also occasionally practised in order to stay the spread of disease" (Best, 1924b:67).

↳ Mummification:

– No

Notes: "True mummification, the embalming of a corpse, was unknown..." (Best, 1924b:56).

↳ Interment:

– Yes

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– Yes

Notes: "The first task performed after the death of a person was the trussing of the

body ere it became rigid, for trussed burial in a sitting position was the common mode of disposing of the dead. This ancient practice, that hails from Polynesia, and Asia, and Europe, and early Egypt, seems to have been one of the widest known methods of burial. The old Peruvian practice of drawing the knees of the corpse up to the breast, under the chin, and securing the arms across them over the breast, describes the Maori usage" (Best, 1924:54).

↳ Cannibalism:

– Yes

Notes: There is ethnographic evidence for the occasional practice of cannibalism among the Maori (Best, 1924a:10, 15, 413, 425; Best, 1924b:21, 53, 55; Buck, 1952:102; Firth, 1959:109, 148).

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– Yes

Notes: "Ere proceeding to review the mourning customs of the Maori we will scan an old usage that was occasionally practised, though apparently not often. This is the subjecting of the body of a dead person to a drying process, one that was also known at Tahiti, as described by Captain Cook. True mummification, the embalming of a corpse, was unknown, the process being one of drying. The drying of the head only was a common Maori custom" (Best, 1924b:56). Also see Best, 1924b:61.

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for feeding corpses to animals.

↳ Secondary burial:

– Yes

Notes: "The hahunga or exhumation of bones of the dead was accompanied by much more ceremonial than was inhumation. In the first place burial in such cases was but a temporary affair: in the second place secrecy was considered desirable. In the exhumation of the bones of his dead, however, and the final disposal thereof, the Maori gratified his penchant for ceremonial performances" (Best, 1924b:70).

↳ Other intensive (in terms of time or resources expended) treatment of corpse :

– Yes [specify]: pakipaki mahunga

Notes: "Yet another old custom now claims our attention, and that is the process of drying and preserving human heads, known as pakipaki mahunga, the dried article being termed mokamokai. Unlike the drying of the whole body, this was a fairly common usage, and it included the heads of both friends and enemies" (Best, 1924b:61).

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– Yes

Notes: "Slaves were sometimes sacrificed at the death of such a person [a person of superior rank]. Suicide of widows was somewhat common" (Best, 1924b:54).

Specific to this answer:

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite



Human sacrifices present:

– Yes

Notes: "Slaves were sometimes sacrificed at the death of such a person [a person of superior rank]. Suicide of widows was somewhat common" (Best, 1924b:54).

Specific to this answer:

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite



Out-group humans are sacrificed:

– Yes

Notes: Best, 1924b:54

Specific to this answer:

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details.



Personal effects:

– Yes

Notes: "By the side of the body would be laid the weapons of the defunct, and any superior articles he might have possessed" (Best, 1942b:54).



Valuable items:

– Yes

Notes: "Any person who wished to honour the dead would bring some prized heirloom and lay it by his side" (Best, 1924b:54).



Significant wealth (e.g. gold, jade, intensely worked objects):

– Yes

Notes: "When placing remains of the dead in caves or elsewhere, prized articles were sometimes placed with them, such as implements, weapons, or ornaments such as pendants, etc. Highly-valued articles, such as greenstone weapons and pendants, are sometimes found in burial places. In other cases such objects were buried with the dead and reclaimed when exhumation of the bones took place some years later. These offerings were made in honour of the dead. Some ceremony was performed over reclaimed articles ere they were handed back to the owners. This was to remove any

harmful influence, such as pertains to the tapu of the dead" (Best, 1924b:66).

↳ Some wealth (some valuable or useful objects interred):

— Yes

Notes: (Best, 1924b:66)

Are formal burials present:

— Yes

Notes: See Best, 1924b:54-55 for a description of Maori burial practices, as well as questions below.

↳ As cenotaphs:

— Yes

Notes: "...cenotaphs erected elsewhere [from the burial site] were common" (Best, 1924b:55).

↳ In cemetery:

— No

Notes: "...in pre-European days, the Maori always practised secret burial, lest enemies desecrate the graves" (Best, 1924b:55).

— Yes

Notes: The dead were sometimes buried in a village burial ground if the village was fortified. "Burial grounds are termed urupa. A cave or chasm where bodies or bones of the dead were placed is styled a toma, whara, and rua koiwi" (Best, 1924b:62).

↳ Other formal burial type:

— Yes [specify]: In secret locations

Notes: "...in pre-European days, the Maori always practised secret burial, lest enemies desecrate the graves" (Best, 1924b:55).

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

— Yes

↳ A supreme high god is present:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 238 (note, identical to Ethnographic Atlas column 34) indicates that "a high god absent or not reported in substantial descriptions of religious beliefs" (Murdock, 1962-1971; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

— Yes

Notes: "We have been told by divers writers that the Maori had formed no conception of a Supreme Being, and that all his gods were of a malignant nature. Both of these statements are erroneous" (Best, 1924a:234).

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity:

— Yes

Notes: "Io tikitiki o rangi—He is the supreme one of the heavens, and above all" (Best, 1924a:87).

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good:

— Yes

Notes: "Io was viewed as a beneficent being who had no dealings with evil..." (Best, 1924a:234).

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

— Yes

Notes: "I would divide our atua maori, or native gods, into four classes, as follows:— 1. The Supreme Being. 2. The departmental deities, or tutelary beings. 3. Tribal gods, so called for want of a better term. 4. Family gods; familiar spirits, as the souls of defunct forbears" (Best, 1924a:234). Category 4 includes human spirits

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

— Yes

Notes: "These beings can only be seen by matakite, or seers; some assert that they are wairua tangata, human souls, spirits of the dead, but do not explain why those spirits are not dwelling peacefully in spirit land" (Best, 1924a:301).

↳ Human spirits have memory of life:

— No

Notes: Initially, the spirit will have memory of life, but "After a certain length of sojourn in that exalted abode the soul, we are told, loses all memory of this world" (Best, 1924a:321).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

— Yes

Notes: "I would divide our atua maori, or native gods, into four classes, as follows:— 1. The Supreme Being. 2. The departmental deities, or tutelary beings. 3. Tribal gods, so called for want of a better term. 4. Family gods; familiar spirits, as the souls of defunct forbears" (Best, 1924a:234). Categories 2 and 3 include non-human supernatural beings

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

— Yes

Notes: "Tane and two others were appointed supervisors of all realms, and all the Poutiriao, or guardians, to preserve peace and harmony among them and among all other things in all realms" (Best, 1924a:105).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

↳ These supernatural beings can punish:

— Yes

Notes: "...Tane's practical value to the people was his position as divine head of the department of forests and their products, timber for woodwork and birds for food. Before one of the tree children of Tane was felled for an important house or canoe, recognition of Tane's parenthood had to be made by some ritual chant or an offering. Non-recognition of Tane brought punishment in some form, such as obstruction to the work" (Buck, 1952:455).

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

"Indirect causal efficacy" refers to not being seen as consciously, directly and actively intervening in the human world, but their overall well being or general attitude has effects on, e.g., quality of harvest, success in war, health, etc.

— Yes

Notes: "Tawhirimatea, as head of the meteorological department, was appealed to by priests for favourable winds, to abate storms and to change unfavourable weather" (Buck, 1952:458).

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

— Yes

Notes: "The fourth class of atua maori [Maori gods] I would feel disposed to designate as "familiar," for "god" seems to be too dignified a term for them. In many cases these beings were the deified spirits of ancestors, and were placated and whangaia (had offerings made to them) in order to influence them to befriend, warn, and succour their descendants" (Best, 1924a:238). "Some tribal gods were deified ancestors whose elevation occurred in New Zealand" (Buck, 1952:461).

↳ These mixed human-divine beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

"Indirect causal efficacy" refers to not being seen as consciously, directly and actively intervening in the human world, but their overall well being or general attitude has effects on, e.g., quality of harvest, success in war, health, etc.

— Yes

Notes: "Rakeiora was the navigating priest of the Tokomaru canoe, according to the Taranaki account. He lived near the Mohakatino River where the Tokomaru landed. He became a kumara god, but I have no information as to when and how deification was

accomplished. The fertility of sweet potatoes in the Mohakatino district increased so that the fame of Rakeiora spread abroad and led to his material symbol being stolen by another tribe" (Buck, 1952:462).



These mixed human-divine beings possess/exhibit some other feature:

— Yes [specify]: Personifications of natural phenomena (such as thunder, the rainbow, the ocean, etc.)

Notes: See Best, 1924a:238

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

— Yes

Notes: "...the belief that wrongdoing, an offence against the gods, is punished in this world..." (Best, 1924a:357).



There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:

Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously "moral" or "ethical" norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

— I don't know

Notes: "To put the matter briefly, it may be said that tapu means prohibition, a multiplication of 'Thou shalt not.' These may be termed the laws of the gods, and they must not be infringed. The penalty for neglect of these unspoken commands is the withdrawal of the protecting power of the gods. This left the erring one in parlous plight, for it meant that his active life principle was seriously affected, and nothing stood between the innumerable evil influences that are ever active, and his defenceless body" (Best, 1924a:251).



Supernatural beings care about taboos:

— Yes

Notes: "Offences against the innumerable rules of tapu [taboo] were held to be a very common cause of illness, and in all such cases the illness was the punishment inflicted by the gods" (Best, 1924:34).



Food:

— Yes

Notes: "Puhi-kainaonao and Kai-uaua are two demons whose special province it is to punish persons guilty of the crime of kairamna, which is the appropriation of foods protected by a rahui" (Best, 1924b:34).

↳ Sacred space(s):

– Yes

Notes: "To trespass on a burial ground, or a forest or stream under tapu, was a serious offence, and only a tohunga [priest] could save the offender from the anger of the gods" (Best, 1924a:252).

– Yes

Notes: "Any place where a fire has been kindled in connection with ritual functions remains tapu, in some cases for generations. Any desecration of such places would be severely punished by the gods; indeed the death of the offender would probably be the result, unless he hied him to a tohunga, who would, for a consideration, banish the danger and preserve the life of the credulous sufferer" (Best, 1924a:257).

↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:

– Yes

Notes: "During his recital the priest struck the post near him with his hand. This recital placed the house, its inmates, and the proceedings under intense iapu, so much so that, until it was lifted, the high gods of the Maori might be said to be present. It was an invoking of the gods and the God to come to the aid of the scholars. Any error committed by a priest in the recital of these intoned chaunts was an extremely serious matter, and would probably result in the death of the priest. Such was the Maori belief" (Best, 1924a:73).

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more specific details regarding supernatural punishment.

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on the agents and causes of supernatural punishment.

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: "Puhi-kainaonao and Kai-uaua are two demons whose special province it is to punish persons guilty of the crime of kairamna, which is the appropriation of foods protected by a rahui" (Best, 1924b:34).

– Yes

Notes: "To put the matter briefly, it may be said that tapu means prohibition, a multiplication of 'Thou shalt not.' These may be termed the laws of the gods, and they must not be infringed. The penalty for neglect of these unspoken commands is the

withdrawal of the protecting power of the gods. This left the erring one in parlous plight, for it meant that his active life principle was seriously affected, and nothing stood between the innumerable evil influences that are ever active, and his defenceless body" (Best, 1924a:251).

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

— Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

— Yes

Notes: "Any place where a fire has been kindled in connection with ritual functions remains tapu, in some cases for generations. Any desecration of such places would be severely punished by the gods; indeed the death of the offender would probably be the result, unless he hied him to a tohunga, who would, for a consideration, banish the danger and preserve the life of the credulous sufferer" (Best, 1924a:257).

↳ Done to enforce group norms:

— Yes

Notes: "To trespass on a burial ground, or a forest or stream under tapu, was a serious offence, and only a tohunga [priest] could save the offender from the anger of the gods" (Best, 1924a:252).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

— No

Notes: "...offences against the gods are punished in this world, not in the spirit world to come" (Best, 1924a:251).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

— Yes

Notes: See questions below for specific supernatural punishments that are meted out in this lifetime.

↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

— Yes

Notes: Tapu is a central feature of the Maori religious beliefs. "To put the matter briefly, it may be said that tapu means prohibition, a multiplication of 'Thou shalt not.' These may be termed the laws of the gods, and they must not be infringed. The penalty for neglect of these unspoken commands is the withdrawal of the protecting power of the gods. This left the erring one in parlous plight, for it meant that his active life principle was seriously affected, and nothing stood between the innumerable evil influences

that are ever active, and his defenceless body" (Best, 1924a:251).

↳ Punishment in this life consists of crop failure or bad weather:

— Yes

Notes: "Whenever the Maori suffers from such visitations as an epidemic, or a failure of crops, he looks to himself for the cause thereof. He must have committed the offence for which he is being punished" (Best, 1924a:231).

↳ Punishment in this life consists of sickness or illness:

— Yes

Notes: "In native belief illness is a condition brought about by such supernormal powers, either as a punishment for wrong committed, such as a transgression of tapu, or such beings were the agents employed by a magician who wished to afflict or destroy him" (Best, 1924b:32).

↳ Other [specify]

— Yes

Notes: "In all cases of important formulæ it was absolutely necessary that such be repeated without any mistake; an error made in the delivery might result in the death of the reciter. The gods were supposed to punish him by inflicting the death penalty; certainly his fears of such a fate would affect him deeply" (Best, 1924a:265).

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

— Yes

Notes: "The Maori gods rewarded or punished in this world..." (Buck, 1952:516).

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in the afterlife:

— No

Notes: "Rewards and punishments in a future state were not known to the Maori until after the coming of the white man. The Maori concept did not include the reward or punishment of the soul in the next world for what its body had done in this world. The Maori gods rewarded or punished in this world and were strangely apathetic to what occurred in the next" (Buck, 1952:516).

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in this lifetime:

— Yes

Notes: "The Maori gods rewarded or punished in this world..." (Buck, 1952:516).

Norms and Moral Realism

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: Tapu reflects the importance of the moral norms based in religious ideology. It is unclear how distinct these norms are from conventional norms. "To put the matter briefly, it may be said that tapu means prohibition, a multiplication of 'Thou shalt not.' These may be termed the laws of the gods, and they must not be infringed. The penalty for neglect of these unspoken commands is the withdrawal of the protecting power of the gods. This left the erring one in parlous plight, for it meant that his active life principle was seriously affected, and nothing stood between the innumerable evil influences that are ever active, and his defenceless body" (Best, 1924a:251).

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the requirement of celibacy.

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the requirement of castration.

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– Yes

Notes: "Fasting was practised by the Maori on a number of other occasions, for many tapu functions were marked by fasting. Thus the teaching of all high-class matter was a tapu function, and so neither scholars nor teachers might partake of food until the teaching was over for the day. Again, crops were planted in the same way, hence, as may be imagined, the workmen did not work long hours. In brief, many functions and activities were marked by fasting, and faith in its efficacy was founded on the belief that fasting means purity" (Best, 1924a:266).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– Yes

Notes: "Human offerings, though not so common as in central Polynesia, were made to placate the gods in war and in the construction of important works, such as a new house, canoe, or fort. Other isolated instances occurred which did not establish a custom. Some slayings termed human sacrifices were connected with social matters and had nothing to do with religion"(Buck, 1952:486).



Foreign, slaves:

– Yes

Notes: "The victims, whether for religious or for social reasons, were obtained from among the

slaves captured in war and spared to perform menial duties in the service of their captors. Another source was from a neighbouring subjugated tribe which was allowed to remain in occupation of their land by paying tribute in preserved birds or other foods" (Buck, 1952:486).



Other:

— Yes [specify]: Members of a neighboring subjugated tribe

Notes: Buck, 1952:486

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the requirement of child sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the requirement of self-sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

— I don't know

Notes: Private rituals and magical acts are practiced among the Maori, but it is unclear how mandatory this practice is. "Every man practised many simple ceremonial acts in order to bring him good fortune, or avert some feared misfortune. Many simple charms were also used for like purposes. The innumerable superstitions of the people prompted them to rely on these means to preserve life and welfare" (Best, 1924a:262).

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."

— I don't know

Notes: Large-scale rituals (usually led by high priests) are clearly present among the Maori (see Buck, 1952:353, 505-506), but it is unclear whether or not participation is required.

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

This question refers to the wider society in which the religious group is located.

– A chiefdom

Notes: The Maori have one level of jurisdictional hierarchy beyond the local community, which is indicative of a petty chiefdom (Ethnographic Atlas column 33, Murdock, 1967; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– Yes

Notes: Education took place in the House/School of Learning, or Whare wananga. Students were taught religious beliefs, as well as topics such as history and cosmology. Because the religion is coterminous with the society at large, it is difficult to separate religious and secular knowledge. "The expression 'Where wananga' denoted all high-class knowledge, esoteric lore, the higher forms of religious teachings, such matter as comes under the term of kauwae runga, and the more important matter pertaining to the kauwae raro. All ceremonial connected with the enlightenment of the human mind, with the preservation of the physical, intellectual and spiritual welfare of man, was here taught" (Best, 1924a:69).



Is formal education restricted to religious professionals:

– No

Notes: Students of the most elite schools are members of the higher class, and become religious professionals upon completion of their education. Education does not always equate with religious professionals. "The ordinary term for a scholar is akonga, but other terms are employed to denote those who enter the School of Learning. Thus a beginner, a neophyte, is called a pia, one further advanced a taura, and he who has fully acquired the wananga is termed a tauira. A person possessed of much knowledge of occult lore and tribal traditions is known as a pu (receptacle or repository) or pu korero, or a putea (■)aur(■)a. The tauira automatically becomes a tohunga, because the latter term simply denotes an expert, an adept, not necessarily a priest" (Best, 1924a:71).



Is such education open to both males and females:

– No

Notes: The principal ethnographer (Best, 1924a) only refers to students as "he" and "young men" (71).

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– No

Notes: Because the society is coterminous with the religious group, and this entry focuses on the Maori prior to European contact, there is no other institution that would provide formal education.

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20 (Food Storage) indicates that food is stored in individual households (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20 (Food Storage) indicates that food is stored in individual households (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

— No

Notes: It can be assumed that transportation infrastructure is not present, as routes of land transport are "unimproved trails", according to Murdock and Morrow (1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004; SCCS Variable 14).

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: Because the Maori religious group is coterminous with society at large, and this entry focuses on the time before European settlers and influence, there is no other institution to provide transportation infrastructure.

Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1736 (Tribute, Taxation, Expropriation) indicates that there is "no tribute or taxation" (Lang, 1998; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

— Yes

Notes: The superior chief (ariki) had the power to levy tithes on harvests as well as the fruits of hunting and fishing expeditions (see Firth, 1959:294).

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

— No

Notes: A word for "police" was not in the Maori vocabulary until the influx of English culture (see Buck, 1952:81). Additionally, SCCS Variable 90 (police) indicates that police are not specialized (Tuden and Marshall, 1972; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: Because the Maori religious group is coterminous with the society at large, and this entry focuses on the time before European influence, there is no other institution to provide an institutionalized police force.

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

— No

Notes: Among the Maori there was, "the absence of civil law. This corrective power, as we know it, was lacking in the Maori social system, and yet social life was well ordered and the people lived in amity as a rule. Certain scenes of turbulence witnessed occasionally were often really part of the forces that replaced civil law. The forces that controlled the social system were the institution of tapu, public opinion, the influence of respected chiefs, and, to some extent, the custom of muru" (Best, 1924a:356).

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: Because the Maori religious group is coterminous with the society at large, and this entry focuses on the time before European influence, there is no other institution to provide a formal legal code.

Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

— No

Notes: "We are aware that the Maori folk possessed no graphic system, no form of script by which accumulations of knowledge might be recorded and handed down" (Best, 1924a:65).

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: A Maori alphabet was constructed after the arrival of missionaries of 1814 (Hawthorn, 1944:13).

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

— Yes

Notes: The Maori subsistence depended upon agriculture (shifting cultivation), gathering, and fishing. Hunting provided a supplemental contribution to the diet. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.

↳ Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Gathering
- Hunting (including marine animals)
- Fishing
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards

Notes: "Maori subsistence depended on fishing, gathering, and the cultivation of sweet potatoes, or kumara (*Ipomoea batatas*), some taro, yams, and gourds. Fishing was done with lines, nets, and traps, while fowling was done with spears and snares. Items gathered include shellfish, berries, roots, shoots, and piths. Rats were also trapped and eaten. In infertile areas or in harsh seasons uncultivated fern roots provided an important starchy supplement. Kumara was planted in October and harvested in February and March; winter was the most important hunting season. Getting food was a time-consuming and arduous business" (Latham, 2009).