

JPS

The Journal
of the
Polynesian Society

VOLUME 128 No.2 JUNE 2019

THE POLYNESIAN SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND



HAU: GIVING VOICES TO THE ANCESTORS

AMBER NICHOLSON

Ngāruahine

Auckland University of Technology

ABSTRACT: Gift exchange within Māori society, underpinned by the notion of hau, is a favoured topic for anthropological research. Hau has become an international phenomenon due to its potential relevance to understanding gift economies in many non-monetary societies worldwide. However, the desire in anthropological and socioeconomic analyses to constantly redefine the concept of hau within the narrow context of gift exchange has led to a separation of hau as the life force from its Māori philosophical base and, moreover, to a separation of Māori from the philosophy of hau. This article attempts to provide an expansive, culturally grounded account of hau by bringing Māori voices to the forefront of this international discussion. The voices of Māori ancestors are privileged and kept alive through the oral literature of respected Māori leaders. Highlighted here is the dynamic interaction of hau with other life forces, and its interwoven philosophy that is nuanced according to a cosmological, spiritual and genealogically based worldview.

Keywords: hau, mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge), reciprocity, spirit of the gift, gift exchange

Gift exchange within Māori society is underpinned by the life force of *hau*, an energy that is part of an interconnected assembly of forces central to Māori metaphysics.¹ Hau has become an international phenomenon due to its potential relevance to understanding gift economies in many non-monetary societies worldwide. Hau, in relation to the notion of gift exchange, is well cited in anthropological circles and even has a journal named in its honour.² Furthermore, there have been a multitude of attempts to define this ambiguous energy. However, as Metge (2002: 320) has noted:

For a concept that has attracted so much international interest, remarkably little research has been undertaken into the meanings and use of the *hau*, through either the study of early Māori language texts or interviews with living experts in Māori language and culture.

From an ethical, cultural and *mana motuhake* ‘cultural integrity, self-determination’ standpoint, it is a cause for concern that Māori voices have not been at the forefront of anthropological and socioeconomic analyses of hau. Both the life force of hau and its associated knowledge are *taonga* ‘treasured

objects'. Despite some anthropological interpretations of hau coming very close to Māori understandings (Hēnare 2018; i.e., Mauss [1925] 2016), when taonga become separated from their people or lands, they become decontextualised and alienated from their rich *kōrero* 'discussions, narratives' (Tapsell 1997). To honour the customary value of taonga is to acknowledge its *whakapapa* 'genealogy'. It is time to reframe this fundamental Māori concept within a Māori worldview.

This article offers an expansive and contextual account of Māori understandings of the nature of hau. It shows that hau is a wide-ranging concept that encompasses individual personality, collective intention, reciprocal exchanges and human relations. Hau, therefore, can be described as a spiritual force impelling behaviour—an ethic of reciprocity (Hēnare 2018). Moving past a narrow economic framework that dominates many discussions of hau, this article highlights the dynamic interaction of hau with other life forces, and its interwoven philosophy that is nuanced according to a cosmological, spiritual and whakapapa-based worldview. *Kōrero* with esteemed Māori *tohunga*, *rangatira* and *kaumātua*, collectively 'community and spiritual leaders', provides the authentic cultural context that has been lacking in much of the hau literature. The insights of these Māori leaders are living voices of hau taonga that have been passed down through generations. It is through this exchange of Māori knowledge that Māori concepts are reclaimed, privileged and kept alive.

To begin this discussion on the Māori life force of hau, a review of the issues within the current literary conversation is provided, encompassing the narrow pool of overused sources and the search for an absolute definition. In order to move into a comprehensive description of hau, we must look back to the beginning to where it all began in the cosmic whakapapa, or birth story of the universe, before discussing the various meanings of hau. As hau is not an isolated force, its correlation to other life forces within the "family of energy" is then considered. Finally, the ritual of *whāngai hau* 'feeding the hau' is re-examined as an ethic of reciprocity.

Through the provision of descriptions of hau, based on ancient Māori wisdom, Metge's (2002) call to draw on the knowledge of living experts in Māori language and culture is addressed.

THE SPIRIT OF WHOSE GIFT?

Hau is widely recognised as the 'spirit of the gift', made popular by the work of French scholar Marcel Mauss ([1925] 2016). Mauss brought international attention to Māori (and other) gift economies and the concept of hau in a discussion that takes up only a few pages of his seminal work, *Essai sur le don (The Gift)* but that has "generated more debate, discussion,

and ideas than any other work of anthropology” (Graeber 2001: 152). However, much of the written literature regarding hau and gift exchange has been by a group of western anthropologists involved in circular critical discussions that do not reference any new sources of material. Mānuka Hēnare [Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kurī, Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi]³ (2018: 452) critiques the reflections of Firth (1959), Lévi-Strauss (1997) and Sahlins (1974) as being “utilitarian, materialist, secularist, psychological and rationalist critiques of Māori metaphysics as understood by a French scholar [Mauss]”. Thompson (1987: 63) charges Firth (1959), MacCormack (1976) and Sahlins (1974) of mere “reworkings of the same limited data” that “stems from Westerners’ ethnocentric separation of spiritual and secular realms”. Recent literature (Falcone 2013; Frank 2016; Godelier 1999; Graeber 2001; Rogers *et al.* 2004) still tends to (re)cite the same western anthropological sources, which reflect a particular description of nineteenth-century Māori society.

Literary debates regarding hau are largely based on the written works of colonial New Zealand settlers such as Best (1900), Gudgeon (1905) and Firth (1959); however, many popular writers rely on such authors solely as secondary sources (Graeber 2001; Lévi-Strauss 1997; Mauss [1925] 2016; Prytz-Johansen 1954; Weiner 1985). In most cases, these discussions stem from the writings of New Zealand settler ethnographer Elsdon Best (1900, 1942, 1982), who corresponded in written form in *te reo Māori* ‘the Māori language’ with Tamati Ranapiri of Ngāti Raukawa. Subsequent scholarly writings have been dependent upon, and influenced by, the transcription and translation of the letters from Tamati Ranapiri into English by Best himself. Yet, Best’s ethics, translations and edited written recordings of Māori ways of life are often questioned (Gathercole 1978; Harris *et al.* 2013; Hēnare 2003; Stewart 2017). Hēnare (2018: 452), working with the primary sources of the letters of Ranapiri, found that Best had significantly altered important phrases and consequently turned “Ranapiri’s hermeneutics about Māori metaphysics into a secular materialist version, thus reflecting Best’s view rather than Ranapiri’s own understandings”. As Georgina Stewart [Ngāti Kura, Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu] (2017: 5) has pointed out, “Ranapiri’s written words became verbatim scientific data in the archives of anthropology, which have been debated and theorized about ever since by many non-Māori scholars.”

With a lack of firsthand accounts of Māori interpretations of hau, the Māori voice has been lost in this worldwide discussion (Stewart 2017). There are very few, if any, citations of Māori scholars in articles regarding hau, with the exception of Tamati Ranapiri and the occasional credit to Bruce Biggs [Ngāti Maniapoto]. On its home page, even the journal that owes its name to this Māori concept credits another for its title: “HAU takes its name from Mauss’ Spirit of the Gift” (see Notes 2, 3), further isolating Māori participation.

Furthermore, the use of hau is often confined within a narrow framework that omits many layers of meaning and cultural relevance. Falcone's (2013: 126) article on the hau of theory offers the following caveat: "I am not suggesting that the Māori hau and the academic hau are exactly the same." This implies that hau can be separated from its Māori philosophical base and appropriated into another context that distorts its meaning. In other examples, hau is used as a catchword, such as in the article "The Why of the 'Hau': Scarcity, Gifts, and Environmentalism" (Rogers *et al.* 2004), which dedicates only a few paragraphs to hau and refers only to Mauss and Sahlins in relation to hau. The disconnection between *mātauranga Māori* 'Māori knowledge' and scientific anthropology has led Stewart (2017: 1) to assert that "[t]he 'hau of the gift' is a clear example of Eurocentric appropriation of indigenous knowledge: a concept extracted by social science from its authentic cultural context and re-inscribed within the Western discourses of the modern academy".

It is this philosophy of working *with* Māori that is missing in much of the debate regarding the Māori concept of hau. There is a resounding demand for research about indigenous communities to be conducted *with* or *by* indigenous people, in contrast to research conducted *on* these communities (Bishop 2008; Smith 1999; Wilson 2009). This includes a research agenda set by the community. It is this research philosophy in which Māori are recognised caretakers of *mātauranga Māori*, and therefore active participants in the research, that can enhance and validate the arguments of those who are delving into Te Ao Māori 'The Māori World'. This does not imply that only Māori can undertake research involving *mātauranga Māori*. Indeed, esteemed Pākehā 'New Zealand European' authors including scholars Dame Anne Salmond, Dame Joan Metge and Dame Judith Binney have worked very closely with Māori over extended periods and produced exemplary texts for both the academic and popular presses. It is the research philosophy of these respected scholars, which recognises the wisdom held within Māori communities and seeks out living experts to discuss *mātauranga Māori*, that validates their work.

VOICES OF THE ANCESTORS

Offered in this article are descriptions of hau, as conveyed by contemporary Māori *tohunga*, *rangatira* and *kaumātua*, that draw on traditions handed down through generations. Each individual voice presented here represents the wisdom and voices of their ancestors—past, present and future (Hēnare *et al.* 2017; Kelly 2017). Māori oral history is privileged, in *te reo Māori* and *te reo Pākehā* 'English', through the insights provided by these *ngā pou herenga* 'wisdom holders' who are fluent in both languages. *Ngā pou herenga* share interpretations based on their own lived experiences, *whakapapa*-based understandings and revered teachings of both traditional and contemporary

whare wānanga ‘schools of higher learning’ (Appendix 1). Kōrero were conducted both one-on-one with me, a Māori researcher of Ngāruahine descent with an understanding of te reo Māori, and within group kōrero settings in which English semantics were orally clarified and debated.

Kōrero as a method (following Hokowhitu 2002) involves face-to-face, in-depth individual and group interviews. Semi-structured in-depth interviews as conversations enact the principles of hau through a reciprocal participatory approach that intends to create a mutual connection to the story and experience. Multiple interviews with some participants were necessary to clarify the nature of the spiritual energies discussed in these conversations, ensuring that their ancestral stories and whakapapa are told in their own collective voices. Eleven kōrero were conducted with eleven participants, with some being involved in up to four sessions over a period between 2016 and 2017. Māori *tikanga* ‘customs’ guided the research process.

I was solely responsible for recording and transcribing the rich data conveyed in these kōrero. Relevant themes within transcripts were identified and manually coded into collective themes that included other kōrero and literature. Certain themes would be queried in subsequent kōrero. Not only did this prompt further discussion of the theme itself but when I had permission to name earlier participants the ngā pou herenga that was being interviewed often responded as if the named person had posed the question themselves. This incited more thoughtful responses than had I asked the question myself, due to the associated *mana* ‘spiritual power and authority’ of the named person.

Māori literature, as Māori orator Sir James Hēnare [Ngāpuhi] described it, is the “oral form of transmitting knowledge” (cited in Hēnare 2001: 199). Thus, excerpts and citations of tohunga, rangatira and kaumātua are woven throughout this article alongside other published secondary sources, as a form of oral literature (Hēnare 2001; Hēnare *et al.* 2017). This chosen method of dissemination gives the oral literature of esteemed Māori experts the same level of recognition as published authors. The voices of participants in this research are in many ways more relevant, enlightening and encompassing than many of the written texts; that is, they are recognised authorities on Māori tikanga. This is due to their lived experiences in Te Ao Māori, their *mātauranga* and *mōhiotanga* ‘knowledge and wisdom base’ and their mana within the Māori community (Appendix 1).

Māori *whānau-hapū-iwi* ‘kinship groups’ have their own histories, dialects, tikanga, kōrero, whakapapa and place-based ecological knowledge (Harris *et al.* 2013; Ruwhiu and Wolfgramm 2006), what Salmond (1985) refers to as “tribal epistemologies”. These differences are a reflection of particular ancestral landscapes and sets of intertribal relationships. Competing accounts may all be accepted as *tika* ‘accurate’ if they are validated by reason and experience (Salmond 1985).

HAU: A DESCRIPTIVE TERM

Hau is a vital force in Te Ao Māori, interconnected with all other spiritual essences. According to Hēnare (2003: 51), hau is “essential to the totality of life as understood by Māori” but, he says, is one of the least understood essences in traditional Māori religion. Whilst many have attempted to define and describe this force, there exists little clear explanation (e.g., Best 1900, 1982; Firth 1959; Gathercole 1978; Godelier 1999; Graeber 2001; Gudgeon 1905; Hēnare 1988, 2003; McCall 1982; Mead 2003; Parry 1986; Prytz-Johansen 1954; Salmond 2000, 2017; Stewart 2017; Weiner 1985; Winks 1953). Prytz-Johansen (1954: 117) remarks that “hau is a word which offers considerable difficulties as there are no doubt several homonyms”; Gudgeon (1905: 127) finds hau “the most difficult to comprehend” due to the many abstract ways in which the word is used; and Winks (1953) lists 11 meanings of the word hau. Furthermore, as Metge (2002: 320) points out, “[k]ey texts in Māori cosmology and epistemology ... mention it indirectly or not at all”.

The enigma of hau stems from its nature as an all-encompassing life essence. Māori embrace ambiguity, which invokes deep thinking and wonder: Mika [Tūhourangi, Ngāti Whanaunga] suggests there is a “sense of mystery to the world”, where cognition alone is not enough to unravel enigma (2012: 1084). Rereata Makiha [Ngāpuhi, Te Māhurehure, Te Arawa, Rangitāne] (pers. kōrero, 2016) refers to hau as a *matangaro* ‘hidden face’ that cannot be seen from the material world. In order to describe it, he says, “you need to go cross over to Te Ao Wairua, to the spiritual realm. It can’t be explained from this side, can’t be seen from this side. That’s the difficulty.”

Thus forces such as hau have multiple meanings that are applied differently, yet with an overarching connection. The confusion surrounding hau results from a desire to define absolutely and individually this spiritual essence. In attempting to do so, the spiritual becomes separated from the secular, and the many interrelated facets of hau are compartmentalised. The principle of interconnectivity and inseparability of all things is paramount to a Māori worldview; therefore, to describe the nature of hau is not to identify a tidy secular definition but an attempt to capture the cosmic essence of this vital force. Towards such a descriptive approach, Patterson (1992: 98) concentrates on the values that are conveyed by Māori spiritual concepts. It is through the process of how these concepts have come to be regarded similarly that we can penetrate meaning.

THE COSMIC WHAKAPAPA: THE ORIGIN OF HAU

In Māori thought, to know the nature of something is to understand its whakapapa, that is, its place, origin and function in the universe. Whakapapa is a key tenet of the Māori knowledge system, the primary tool used by Māori to make sense of worldly experience. As a form of oral literature, whakapapa

conveys how and why things came to be (George 2010; Graham 2005; Roberts *et al.* 2004; Wolfgramm and Waetford 2009). The cosmological whakapapa shows that everything in creation can be traced back to the elemental energies of the universe (pers. kōrero: Te Poihi Campbell 2016, Rereata Makiha 2016, Robert Newson 2016; Salmond 2017). The reflections of ngā pou herenga all refer to whakapapa, and thus to explain hau, we must start at the beginning.

As told by Ngāpūhi *tohunga* ‘spiritual leader’ Māori Marsden (2003: 33):

The Breath of Life (Hau-ora) was infused into the Void and the veil was lifted to allow the Dawn light to enter. It shattered the darkness and freed the bounds of Night to release the richness of life conceived in the womb of Te Kore and Te Kowhāo to being, to emerge. Shape and Form came into being in Time (Wā) and Space (Atea). Thus, Heaven and Earth were formed.

Salmond (2000: 39) refers to the cosmological whakapapa of Te Kohuora of Rongoroa (cited in Taylor 1855) where from *hau tupu* ‘the hau of growth’, *hau ora* ‘the hau of life’ the material world was formed.

Naa te kore i ai	From nothingness came the first cause
Te kore tee whiwhia	Possessed nothingness
Te kore tee rawea	Unbound nothingness
Ko hau tupu, ko hau ora	The hau of growth, the hau of life
Ka noho i te atea	Stayed in clear space
Ka puta ki waho ko te rangi e tuu nei	And the atmosphere emerged

Ngāti Ruanui tradition, as recorded by Tony Sole [Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāruahine] (2005: 6–7), presents how hau (hou in Ngāti Ruanui dialect)⁴ begat Heaven and Earth:

Ko Hou-tupua	New growth
Ko Hou-ora	New life
Ora ki te whakatupua	Sustaining of life anew
Ora ki te whakatawhito	Sustaining of life at its beginning
Tupua nuku	Earth evolves
Tupua rangi	Heaven evolves

Te Poihi Campbell [Tāngāhoe, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Rauru, Ngāruahine] (pers. kōrero, 2016) offers another translation of hou from this whakapapa:

Hou-tupua	The impetus of growth and development
Hou-ora	The vitality of new life

Other oral traditions refer to Hauora as a child of the primordial parents, Ranginui and Papatūānuku (Sky Father and Earth Mother). Hauora presides over the life forces of hau and *mauri* ‘life essence’, which permeate all of creation. After the separation of Rangi and Papa, their children quarrelled with each other, attempting to destroy the hau of others in order to invalidate their power and authority (Hēnare 2003: 53).

Tribal variances in creation stories add to the depth of hau, which is universally presented as a spiritual essence that emerges at the beginning of creation. It is the interaction and exchange of hau with other vital forces that produces and animates all phenomena, from landscapes to human thoughts. To dispute a metaphysical explanation of hau is, therefore, contrary to whakapapa. It is through whakapapa that hau is instilled throughout the natural and spiritual realms, and it is hau that gives vitality to whakapapa (Mika 2007). Only in knowing the whakapapa of hau can we begin to describe it.

DESCRIPTIONS OF HAU

Locating hau within a Māori framework gives rise to a variety of interpretations. Whereas Māori are comfortable with such ambiguity, there exists no shortage of attempts in the academic literature to narrowly define hau. Table 1 offers descriptions of hau from Te Ao Māori contrasted against some of the anthropological discourse. Where some commentators reduce hau to a social transactional power (e.g., Firth 1959; Sahlins 1974), it can be seen that in Māori thought, the socio-cultural-economic system is not disembedded from the spiritual. These descriptions depict the nature, the breadth and depth of hau.

The Wind of Life

One direct meaning of hau is wind, referred to as the manifestation of hau itself (Hēnare 2003). As explained by Rangi Matamua [Tūhoe] (pers. kōrero, 2017), “When you feel the wind blowing on you, that’s actually feeling the power or the essence or the vitality of the environment.” Salmond (2000, 2017) refers to hau as the wind of life activating all human and non-human networks. The wind signifies movement, a sustainable motion that carries things across the intersection of Te Ao Wairua and Te Ao Mārama. As explained by Te Poihi Campbell (pers. kōrero, 2016): “I see the hau more of engaging with the other side and this side; I see that as the conduit between both worlds ... that’s the umbilical cord between that realm and this realm [Te Ao Wairua and Te Ao Mārama].” This interpretation is illustrated in the cosmic whakapapa, where hau begat material shape and form.

As a force that interacts and engages at the liminal and potent intersections between realms, hau must be in constant movement (Hareruia Aperahama, pers. kōrero, 2016). Hēnare (2003) purports that hau is always moving towards goodness. This is supported by Te Poihi Campbell (pers. kōrero, 2016) who explains that the ever-moving hau aspires to the ora, a healthy state of being.

Table 1. Māori and anthropological descriptions of hau.

Māori descriptions of hau*	Anthropological descriptions of hau
<p>Wind of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind—the manifestation of hau (Hēnare 2003; Matamua 2017) • Conduit between spiritual and material realms (Campbell 2016) • “[C]arrier or mediator between the cosmic poles (including that of ora-mate [‘life-death’]) from which the Māori cosmos is constructed” (Stewart 2017: 7) • Moving force (towards ora) (Aperahama 2016; Campbell 2016; Hēnare 2003) • “Essential to the totality of life as understood by Māori” (Hēnare 2003: 51) • Matangaro—hidden face (Makiha 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic principle of exchange of goods • “[T]he ‘yield’ on a gift” (Sahlins 1974: 161) • General principle of productiveness (Sahlins 1974) • A passive force (Firth 1959) • Personal hau differentiated from the hau of things (Best 1942; Firth 1959; Gathercole 1978; Graeber 2001) • A negative phenomenon (Gathercole 1978) • Counter-gift (<i>utu</i>) (Prytz-Johansen 1954) • Intellectual spark; force of character; actual essence of a man’s life that can be bewitched (Gudgeon 1905)
<p>Breath of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocal flow of breath (Nicholson <i>et al.</i> 2015; Spiller and Stockdale 2012) • Reciprocal connection to the environment • <i>Kaitiakitanga</i> †: looking after the hau of the environment (Aperahama 2016; Matamua 2017) • “[H]eart of life itself” (Salmond 2017: 10) • Sustenance of life (Mihaere 2016) 	
<p>Vital essence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitality, vital essence (Best 1900; Matamua 2017) • Aura (Best 1982; Campbell 2016; Mead 2003) • <i>Ia</i> ‘flow’ (Milroy 2004) • <i>Ira</i> ‘life principle’ (Milroy 2004) • Intention (Aperahama 2016) • Personality (Campbell 2016) • “[A]ssociated with well-being and being in a healthy state” (Mead 2003: 58) 	

* Personal kōrero in this table comes from interviews with Hareruia Aperahama, Te Poihi Campbell, Rereata Makiha, Rangi Matamua and Awhitia Mihaere (see text and Appendix 1 for details).

† Kaitiakitanga can be glossed as ‘a long-term obligation to preserve the spiritual wellbeing of the ecosystem and its resources, including people’.

I see the hau as the moving component. It's got to move ... The hau can't sit still, it can't become stagnant, it needs to be ignited, and it needs some kind of energy to propel it, to keep it moving. So within words like hauora ... it has to be a moving and progressive hau that pushes the ora around so that it can aspire to the ora.

In this explanation, hau can be seen as intrinsic to the growth and development of being—it is the energy that strives towards meeting ora 'potential'. Stewart (2017: 7) likewise explains that in the case of hau ora, hau is the “carrier or mediator between the cosmic poles (including that of ora-mate ['life-death']) from which the Māori cosmos is constructed”. Figure 1 depicts hau as the conduit between Te Ao Wairua and Te Ao Mārama. It also shows the constant aspiration of hau towards ora.

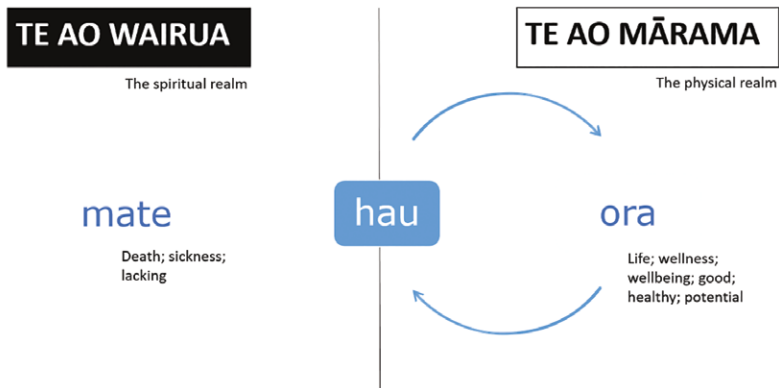


Figure 1: Hau aspires to ora.

The Breath of Life

Hau also means breath. Breath, according to a Native American Tewa view, “represents the most tangible expression of the spirit in all living things” (Cajete 2000: 261). Breath signals the beginning and end of life, and physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being is inspired and dependent on the rhythm of breathing (Aldridge 2001; Nicholson *et al.* 2015). In creation there is a continual give-and-take flow of energy and of breath, a gift exchange between elements where exhalation of one life force is inhaled by another (Makuini Ruth Tai [Tūhoe, Whakatōhea, Ngāi te Rangi, Ngāti Awa, Tūwharetoa], pers. kōrero, 2016; Nicholson *et al.* 2015; Spiller and Stockdale 2012). This is seen in the Māori greeting custom of *hōngi*, whereby noses are pressed together. Due to the close proximity, the breath

of each party is shared with the other, signifying the interconnected web of life (Salmond 2014). Hareruia Aperahama [Tūwharetoa, Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kuri, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Whātua, Ngāpuhi] (pers. kōrero, 2016) spoke of the human creation story in which Tane-nui-a-rangi breathed force into the first human, Hine-hau-one⁵ ‘Woman Created from Earth’: “He not only breathed force inside the earth and transformed the earth ... through the hau, humanity becomes the imprint, or the evidence of that hau.”

Awhitia Mihaere [Te Aitanga aa Mahaki, Rongowhakaata, Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti, Rangitāne, Maniapoto] (pers. kōrero, 2016) sees hau as a compound word of *hā* ‘breath’ and *ū* ‘breast’ as “the sustenance of all things given from the Atua [Spiritual Being]”. *Hā-ū-ora* is a respectful connection with the spiritual ecosystem, which creates reciprocal relationships that can be easily seen in the natural world: “The flowers [of the *kōwhai* tree] give sustenance to the tui [bird], and the leaves give sustenance to the *kererū* [bird].” She then expresses how Papatūānuku, the Earth Mother, gives life to humans:

Hā, ū and ora, the breath, the sustenance of the living breath and sustenance of Papatūānuku. And that’s where hau is: if it wasn’t for Papatūānuku we would not be returning and we would not come from her. It’s impossible. So hau for me is that we’ve always maintained, always look after Papatūānuku, otherwise we don’t have the breath, the sustenance, the rays of her, the continued oneness with Papatūānuku. She’s amazing. She is everything for us.

Hau ora denotes a spiritual and physical connection with the environment. Through reciprocal energetic exchanges, hau is linked to the notion of environmental sustainability (pers. kōrero: Hareruia Aperahama 2016, Rangi Matamua 2017).

If we were to talk about sustainability in the environment and the ecology, for me that’s hau, because hau continues ... [A]s *kaitiaki* and caretakers of the hau, the hau is fundamental and crucial to long-term sustainability for Māori thinking and Māori spirituality. Without hau we are stuffed: having lost that connection with the hau, we’re stuffed. (Hareruia Aperahama, pers. kōrero, 2016)

Māori understandings of sustainability are enclosed within the broader notion of *kaitiakitanga*, which is to preserve the essential life forces of hau, mauri, *tapu* ‘being with the potentiality of power’, mana and *wairua* ‘spirit, soul’ of the ecosystem and its resources, including people. The role of the *kaitiaki* ‘caretakers’ is not to care for the *whenua* ‘landscape’, as that will always survive, but to care for its hau—its sustainability and vitality (Rangi Matamua, pers. kōrero, 2017).

Māori see the environment as ancestors and kin. Māori identity is deeply intertwined with the surrounding ecosystem (Kawharu [Ngāti Whatua, Ngāpuhi] 2010). Pa Hēnare Tate [Te Rarawa] (2010) speaks of the interrelation between *Atua* ‘Supreme being’, *tangata* ‘person or persons’ and *whenua*. If one relationship is positively or negatively affected, so too are the other relationships. Therefore, there is no differentiation between the *hau* of a person and that of the environment. Where some commentators reduce the *hau* of the forest to its material productivity and fertility (Graeber 2001; Sahlins 1974), Māori see these characteristics as the outward expression of its *hau*. The *hau* itself is the forest’s vital essence, just as it is in humans.

Vital Essence

Like the breath and wind that animates life, *hau* is perceived as the vital essence of a person. As it instilled life into the cosmos, *hau* is said to be imbued into the embryo and bound in humans when called up at birth (Gudgeon 1905; Hēnare 2003; Salmond 1997). Wharehuia Milroy [Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Koura] (2004) describes *hau* as the *ia* ‘flow’, the *ira* ‘life principle’ of a person. Rangi Matamua (pers. kōrero, 2017) sees it as “your vital well-being—it’s a vitality, it’s your sustainability”. To be *haumate* is to be “spiritless, lacklustre, unhealthy, weak, ailing (in body, mind or spirit), depressed” (Moorfield 2018).

Te Poihi Campbell (pers. kōrero, 2016) likens *hau* to aura and personality, explaining that people bring their own individual *hau* into each situation and leave an essence of themselves behind.

My understanding of *hau* is like the aura. I’m on the seat here, right? And so I’ve got my own aura around me. So if I leave this seat, my *hau* is still there; it’s like an imprint of my aura is still there. And so the longer I leave that *hau*, the less that *hau* will be recognisable or identified.

Hirini Moko Mead [Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Tūhourangi] (2003) also describes *hau* as an invisible aura, as does Best (1982). Furthermore, Te Poihi Campbell explains that rituals performed to clear space, such as *takahi whare*, which cleanses a house of the spirit of a deceased person after their burial, are used to settle the *hau* and bring it to a place where people feel comfortable again within that space.

An extension or imprint of one’s *hau* is left behind, purposely or unconsciously, when beings move from one place to another; as such, Mead (2003: 59) describes *hau* as “the most vulnerable part of a person”. These extensions are referred to as *āhua* ‘representations’, *ohonga* ‘material tokens’ (Best 1900) or *manea* ‘the aura of footprints’ (Best 1900; Mead 2003). It is said that *tohunga māku* ‘those trained in the arts of attacking life forces’ are able to scoop up the *āhua* and perform witchcraft in order to negatively affect the *hau* of that being. Rangi Matamua (pers. kōrero, 2017) tells of how his uncles used to attack the *hau* of ever-evading prey:

We would be chasing a pig all day, chasing its footprints, the dogs can't get onto it, we'll be tired and I remember sitting next to my uncles and the pig has walked past, and his foot marks are in the thing and one of my uncles will get up and take his knife out of his pouch and he will stick the footprint of the pig and he'll go "Anā! That pig will be limping for a week". What he is doing is he is impacting the hau of that pig, so that's a living object, and he is cursing the thing.

Robert Newson [Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi] (pers. kōrero, 2016) describes manea as "remembrancing of people, the hau" and connected to tapu, which can be purposefully used to mark an area.

Each person, object or thing has its own intrinsic hau, which is shaped, influenced and enhanced (or diminished) by the hau of others and the hau of the collective—of spiritual, natural and social ecosystems. *Rangatira* 'respected leader' carry the hau of their ancestors; thus, when the hau of rangatira is affected, so too is that of the whenua and its people (Salmond 2000). Like the wind, hau is only sensed when it moves: "[H]au is the detectable movement of spiritual force, carried by the acts, intentions and associated objects, of those with whom we interact" (Stewart 2017: 7).

It is the hau of a taonga that determines its identity, not its material form. This is demonstrated in heirlooms that are considered ancestors where it is the hau (as well as mana, tapu and kōrero) of the heirloom, not the materiality of the heirloom, that is, the taonga (Salmond 2017; Tapsell 1997; Tcherkézoff 2012). Hareruia Aperahama (pers. kōrero, 2016) explains that oral literacy—itself a taonga—is a way of focusing intention. It is the hau—carried by words and committed to memory—that is passed down through generations.

When the tohungas made something tapu, the object itself, while that might have power, the real power was the word that they spoke over it, the intention that was impregnated in it ... an heirloom or a taonga tūpuna ['ancestral treasure'] that's been passed down. It's not just the matter or the physical substance of the object.

As the wind, the breath and the spirit of life, hau is a vital essence imbued in and shared with all of creation. Hau, according to Spiller and Stockdale (2012: 164), "is a process of continuous receiving and giving, in which all of creation exists in a state of reciprocity through the exchange of life-energy". Hau, then, is a reciprocal force, an essence that is vitalised by its interaction with other hau. The energy of hau does not work in isolation; thus, to examine hau as a singular notion, in a singular context, is to provide an incomplete description of such a phenomenon (pers. kōrero: Rereata Makiha 2016, Rangi Matamua 2017). In this context the next section looks at some of the other interacting life forces.

ASSEMBLY OF FORCES

*Kahore he mea i hangātia i ahu noa mai rānei kia noho wehe i tēnei ao.
Ahakoā matangaro ka mōhiotia te mauri.*

*Nothing was ever created or emerged in this world to live in isolation. Even
the hidden face can be detected by its impact on something.*

Tukaki Waititi [Ngāti Hine, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui] as recited by Rereata Makiha

Hau, as a cosmic power and vital essence, is part of an “assembly of life forces” (Hēnare 2003: 211), a “family of energy” (Harerua Aperahama, pers. kōrero, 2016). Various elements have been said to make up this assemblage. Salmond (1985) attests that all things in the phenomenal world possess a *tinana* ‘physical body’, wairua, mauri and hau, whereby the mauri protects the hau in the same way that the wairua protects the tinana. Hēnare (2003) and Mead (2003) extend these powers of spiritual, psychological and social well-being to include tapu. “When considered as a unity mauri, hau and wairua appear to protect tapu and so maintain the mana of the person or group, the tree or forest, the dandelion or plants, the stream or ocean” (Hēnare 2003: 53). Ngamaru Raerino [Mataatua, Te Arawa] (1999) states that the balance of mauri, mana and hau are the most important aspects of individual well-being and wholeness.

There is much overlap between the life energies, and it is hard to tell where the function of one ends and another begins. It is thus very difficult to separate and define each essence. Whilst it is not necessary—or even possible due to tribal differences—to define a universal set of energies that interact with hau, it is agreed that hau itself can only be understood in relation to its counterparts (pers. kōrero: Te Poihi Campbell 2016, Rereata Makiha 2016, Rangi Matamua 2017). The following sections will look into the interactions between hau and the other cosmic elements of mauri, wairua and mana. These descriptions are not exhaustive or definitive, but rather paint a picture of the interconnected world of Māori in an attempt to describe hau.

Mauri

Mauri is a well-described term that permeates much of Māori literature (Hēnare 1988, 2001, 2003; Hēnare and Kernot 1996; Marsden 2003; Morgan 2006; Pohatu 2011; Spiller *et al.* 2011; Spiller, Pio *et al.* 2011; Wolfgramm and Waetford 2009). It is seen as the spiritual essence or life force inherent within all that descends from Te Korekore ‘the void of endless potential’. Mauri is “the bonding element that holds the fabric of the universe together” (Marsden 2003: 44). As expressed by Mānuka Hēnare (pers. kōrero, 2016), mauri is the “nature of something”:

So the mauri of a tōtara tree is the nature of being a tōtara tree. It can’t be a mānuka tree or a kauri. So while mauri is common to all trees ... it expresses itself biologically in different species, but they all have mauri.

In the kōrero provided for this research, rangatira were very clear about a distinction between mauri and hau. Few comparative differences between these forces (and others) were offered; rather, all rangatira immediately pointed out the similarities and interconnections. To Rangi Matamua (pers. kōrero, 2017), mauri is the life force, and hau is the well-being or vitality of that mauri. When the hau is affected, so too is the mauri. Milroy (2004) suggests that damage of the hau is the pathway to harming the mauri. When referring to resources (such as rivers or land), to affect the hau and mauri of that resource is to affect the hau and mauri (and subsequently the mana) of the people connected to that resource (Rangi Matamua, pers. kōrero, 2017). Marsden (2003: 44) considers hauora the “agent or source by and from which mauri is mediated to objects both animate and inanimate”. However, he says, when applied to animate objects, mauri ora and hauora are one and the same. It is the indivisibility of mauri and hau that leads Hēnare (2003: 101) to state that they are “two life forces recognised as separate realities yet are so closely linked in effect and power that they can be considered in a symbiotic type of relationship”.

Wairua

Wairua is said to denote spirit, akin to a soul, and protector of the body (Hēnare 2003; Mead 2003; Salmond 1985). Mead (2003) relays how the wairua is bound to one human being for the duration of their life, and then allows that person to transcend death by living on in another plane. Marsden (2003: 47) refers to wairua and hau synonymously: “*Wairua* (spirit) or *hau* (the breath of the divine spirit) is the source of existent being and life.” However, other sources distinguish wairua from hau (pers. kōrero: Te Poihi Campbell 2016, Mānuka Hēnare 2016, Rereata Makiha 2016, Rangi Matamua 2017).

Hareruia Aperahama and Rereata Makiha, both well versed in traditional *karakia* ‘ritual chants’, agree that hau is used in the traditional pre-Christian *karakia* to convey the term spirit:

Once you see the word wairua appear in the karakias, you know that it’s been a Christian influence. Go before, pre-Christian, the word that they used instead of wairua for spirit was hau. And so you’ll find in a lot of karakia pre-Christian the word hau, hau-tapu, hau-nui, hau-roa. (Hareruia Aperahama, pers. kōrero, 2016)

Wairua, says Rereata Makiha, was a term used by the old people but in reference of Te Ao o te Wairua ‘The World of Spirits’. This realm is not a singular one-dimensional whole that separates itself from the material world; instead it is the wider dimension in which the material world of Te Ao Mārama operates (Te Poihi Campbell, pers. kōrero, 2016). Te Poihi Campbell describes wairua as an action: “a union taking place for something to come to fruition, or two opposites coming together to make something come to fruition”. As stated earlier, hau acts as the conduit and umbilical cord between Te Ao Wairua and Te Ao Mārama.

Mana

Mana is conveyed as “spiritual power, authority, and prestige and status” (Tate 2010: 84); the “ethic of power, authority and the common good” (Spiller *et al.* 2011); and “a potent human state with the profound ability to impact upon, affect and transform the lives of others” (Dell 2017: 89). Mana, expressed through action, is “directly related to human agency” (Mika 2007: 188) and “involves the wholeness of social relationships, wellbeing and integrity, as well as continuity through space and time” (Hēnare 2003: 49).

The relationship between mana and hau can be seen through environmental connections. “The hau of tribal land and forests is their vitality and fertility, which is also a sign of their *mana*, their honour, prestige and power” (Hēnare 2003: 52). The greater the ability to protect and maintain the hau of an environmental resource, the greater the mana of that resource and its people (Rangi Matamua, pers. kōrero, 2017). Mana, according to Tom Roa (Husband 2017), is vital in the ethic of reciprocity. Recognition of the mana of another demands a reciprocal recognition of mana. As explained in the following section, hau inspires reciprocal exchange.

Family of Energy

The observation to make regarding the interaction of energies is that Māori are not fixated with defining the differences between life forces. Instead it is recognised that they all work together. To affect the hau of something is to affect its mauri, mana, wairua and tapu. This interconnectivity hails back to the cosmic whakapapa, in which all forces coalesce to create form. The ethic of reciprocity that underpins a Māori worldview begins in and between the spiritual energies that guide life.

WHĀNGAI HAU: RECIPROCITY

Hau, the wind of life, thus emerges at the very beginning of the cosmos, animating exchanges of all kinds in the whakapapa networks (Salmond 2014: 292)

By concentrating on the values conveyed by hau, it can be seen that hau encompasses a complex ethical value system of reciprocity (Hēnare 2003; Nicholson *et al.* 2015; Salmond 2014, 2017; Spiller and Stockdale 2012). The claims that hau is “the heart of life itself” (Salmond 2017: 10) and “at the heart of being truly human” (Mānuka Hēnare, pers. kōrero, 2016) are supported by the many indigenous writings that place mutual reciprocity at the heart of all relationships (Archibald 2008; Cajete 2000; Husband 2017; Kelly 2017; Nicholson *et al.* 2015; Roberts *et al.* 1995; Spiller *et al.* 2011; Wilson 2009). In the letters of Ranapiri, it is explained that failure to uphold the obligations of exchange may result in harm to the hau, and in this sense

the hau can be seen as a “moral force” that inspires reciprocity (Mānuka Hēnare, pers. kōrero, 2016).

Rituals such as whāngai hau are to nurture and protect the hau of the human and natural world. Whāngai hau involves making offerings (such as the first catch of fish or birds, or the first potato of the crop) to the spiritual beings of waters, forests or the like (Hēnare 2003). Rangi Matamua (pers. kōrero, 2017) speaks of *whāngai te hautapu*, where *hautapu* refers to the sacred food that was used to feed the stars:

So as Matariki [Pleiades] brings a bounty back every year, so when it rises it'll tell you, yes, it's bringing back the food from the ocean, the food from the rivers, the food from the land, the food from the sky. And you honour and thank Matariki by feeding it. So actually, the symbolic food items, you cook them, and then let the steam rise and the star actually consumes the food. So you're feeding that, so that's hautapu, in that sense, or hau.

By returning the offering back to its source, intentions are set and the principles of reciprocal gift exchange are established (Hēnare 2003). Whāngai hau rituals were seen to maintain the ora—hauora—of both the entity to which the offering was made and the donor. “When the exchanges are in a state of balance, hau flows unimpeded and the networks of relations (families, communities, and ecosystems) are in a state of ora—healthy, prosperous, and in good heart” (Salmond 2014: 293). It is in this purposeful movement towards ora that hau is also understood as intention—the intention to protect, maintain and feed hau (pers. kōrero: Hareruia Aperahama 2016, Rangi Matamua 2017) and to provoke reciprocal action (Mānuka Hēnare, pers. kōrero, 2016).

A gift economy is another process that aims to revitalise the hau of human relationships. The gifting process has broader parallels to Polynesian and other indigenous economies: Tcherkézoff (2012) links hau to the Samoan concept of sau, while Kelly and Hēnare (2018) write of the comparable philosophies underlying Stó:lō and Māori economies. In worldviews that see the socio-cultural-economic system as intertwined with the spiritual, it is not merely the exchange of material things that must be reciprocated but the energies impelling the exchange (Kelly and Hēnare 2018). Stewart (2017: 7) explains that “the thing someone gives us, in return for a valuable we were given in the first place, carries the spiritual force or memory of those relationships, and is referred to metaphorically as the hau taonga”. Reciprocal acts are bound with social, economic and political complexities, whereby the gifting of taonga between kinship groups creates both an indebtedness to return an offering and an obligation to care for the total well-being of the taonga (Kelly and Hēnare 2018; Tapsell 1997). Hēnare (2003: 53) explains the connection between hau and the gift economy:

Over the millennia, hau was established as a complex totalising system of obligatory gift exchange. The exchange followed some basic principles where the intrinsic hau of the taonga and the hau belonging to the donor are imbued in the taonga; these in turn infuse Māori social, economic and religious life with profound implications for the management of social relations and guardianship of the natural world.

For Māori, hau is a way of life, a philosophy that guides behaviour. Hau illuminates reciprocal relationships between the spiritual, natural and human worlds. The hauora of natural resources affects all those to which it provides sustenance. To privilege human needs over that which sustains us is not respecting whakapapa. This article articulates the link between the vital essence of hau and its practice as a moral force that is fundamental to a Māori economy, which services both material and spiritual needs (Hēnare 2003). The modern economy is beginning to turn towards a more sustainable, holistic approach where its function is to reflect and enhance the well-being of society. The reintroduction of hau as a supreme virtue and economic practice reinserts the human–spiritual connection into economic transactions. To understand hau is a pathway towards understanding what is needed to achieve hauora. Achieving hauora, a balanced state of well-being, will lead to a more inclusive and prosperous society.

* * *

There is a multitude of voices weighing in on the Māori notion of hau, as made popular by Mauss ([1925] 2016). The lacuna of Māori knowledge relevant to a Māori concept that has become fundamental to social science understandings of non-western economies, relations and worldviews highlights the disconnection between the discourses of scientific anthropology and mātauranga Māori (Bishop 2008; Salmond 1983; Smith 1999). European writers, as argued by Salmond (1983: 314), “gained far more public acclaim than the Māori authorities with whom they worked, and their attitudes often reflected as much patronage as respect for Māori thinking”. For too long, Māori have been regarded as passive receivers of knowledge. The simplification and commodification of mātauranga Māori has displaced and misrepresented Māori lived experiences (Bishop 2008).

The life force and whakapapa of hau, and the associated knowledge, are taonga. Tapsell [Ngāti Whakaue, Ngāti Raukawa] (1997: 342) notes that taonga are indicators of the wealth of a kinship group; the “potential value of any *taonga* cannot be fully realised, however, until it is reunited with the descendants of the original possessors upon their ancestral lands.” In the spirit of the gift, in the ethic of reciprocal exchange, questions then arise: How are Māori benefitting from this intellectual exchange? Where is the return gift

of the knowledge that has been shared with the international community? I argue that to honour the gift of hau is to return to its source and address the lack of Māori ancestral knowledge in the literary arena. This in turn ensures its spiritual essence is maintained for future generations.

Hau as defined by much of the anthropological literature is not necessarily wrong, but it is too narrow and leaves out Māori voices. Many interpretations fail to recognise the spiritual whakapapa of a Māori worldview in which the physical emanates from the spiritual. In doing so, they are unable to convey any deeper understandings of such a vital force of Te Ao Māori. As argued by Kelly and Hēnare (2018: 12):

A Māori understanding of reciprocity in terms of *hau* derives from a deep understanding of energetic relationships that exist at a cosmological level as opposed to an understanding of economy that accounts only for what is exchanged in the human-to-human experience of economic interaction.

This article has moved the debate past a transactional economic framework and offered an expansive and contextual account of the human–spiritual connections of hau using the knowledge of ngā pou herenga. The implications of understanding a philosophy of hau can reach into modern societal interactions through the recognition of hau as a moral force at the heart of all relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the wisdom shared with me by all those who participated in this research: Hareruia Aperahama, Te Poihi Campbell, Mānuka Hēnare, Hohepa MacLean, Rereata Makiha, Rangī Matamua, Awhitia Mihaere, Robert Newson, Makuini Ruth Tai, Hēmi Whaanga and Nikora Wharearau.

NOTES

1. There is a tendency for those unfamiliar with te reo Māori ‘Māori language’ to pronounce hau as the English word “how”. The correct pronunciation can be heard here: <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?idiom=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&histLoanWords=&keywords=hau>
2. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* “takes its name from Mauss’ Spirit of the Gift” (<https://www.haujournal.org/index.php/hau/index>) but fails to acknowledge the Māori origins of Mauss’s hau.
3. When known, kinship affiliations are provided for Māori authors and authorities at first citation in square brackets.
4. Ngāti Ruanui are an *iwi* ‘tribe’ affiliated with the Taranaki region of Aotearoa New Zealand. In many Taranaki narratives words are spelled or spoken using the vowel “o” as an alternative to “a”.
5. Also referred to as Hine-ahu-one.

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APPENDIX I: NGĀ POU HERENGA¹ (WISDOM HOLDERS)

Hareruia Aperahama

Ngātipikiahu, Ngātiwaewae, Ngātitūtemohuta, Tūrangitukua, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Kurī, Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Whātua

Hareruia (Ruia) Aperahama was bought up at Rātana Pā and raised in the Rātana Church² in a rural area in the lower west coast of the North Island. Te reo Māori is his first language and he is respected for his knowledge of Māori custom and lore. He is a superb and passionate vocalist as well as being a gifted singer-songwriter who is comfortable in traditional Māori or contemporary musical environments. Ruia is an internationally acclaimed song artist and a recipient of many New Zealand music industry awards. Ruia's career has also included work as a Māori and Japanese teacher, illustrator and writer for a te reo Māori children's magazine, radio host, te reo Māori translator and university researcher. He also works with youth at risk and inmates in the hope of inspiring alternative choices in life.

Te Poihi Campbell

Tāngāhoe, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Rauru, Ngāruahine

Te Poihi Campbell is a strong cultural advocate for and supporter of his Taranaki community. Te Poihi is regularly summoned to provide guidance on te reo, *tikanga* 'customs' and other cultural matters. His grassroots leadership in the community and in the many *marae* 'community organisations' of Taranaki is significant. Te Poihi is a trustee of Meremere Marae, Pouwhakakori (programme manager) at Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa Trust, on the board of Te Korimako o Taranaki, and chair of Te Reo o Taranaki. Formally, Te Poihi was a broadcaster at the radio station Te Korimako o Taranaki, where he worked to promote and preserve the use and integrity of te reo Māori in the organisation's programming and in the community. Over the years he has been involved in the facilitation of many cultural activities and te reo Māori revitalisation initiatives throughout the Taranaki region. He is a family man devoted to his wife and three *tamariki* 'children'.

Mānuka Hēnare

Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kurī, Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi

Associate Professor Mānuka Hēnare is a respected *kaumātua* and *rangatira* 'community elder and leader', husband, father and mentor in Te Ao Māori. He has over 40 years' research and consultancy experience in the field of Māori and Indigenous business enterprise and development economics. Mānuka's leadership in collaborative research has seen him head a number of multidisciplinary research project teams, advise government departments, hold ministerial appointments and serve as an expert witness for the Waitangi Tribunal, a national standing commission of inquiry related to Māori Treaty of Waitangi claims. As an associate professor at the University of Auckland Business School (UABS), Mānuka is called upon for spiritual, cultural, academic and pastoral care of University staff and students. He teaches Māori business and economic history, strategy and management of tribal enterprises.

Rereata Makiha

Ngāpuhi, Te Māhurehure, Te Arawa, Rangitāne

Tohunga ‘spiritual leader’ Rereata Makiha is a renowned Māori astrologer and a leading authority on the *maramataka* ‘Māori lunar calendar’. Raised and immersed in the traditions of the *maramataka*, Rereata has been a student of his ancestral *whare wānanga* ‘school of higher learning’ from a young age. Rereata is widely sought after and involved in bringing *mātauranga Māori* ‘Māori knowledge’ of science and astrology to Māori communities, frequently speaking at marae and school functions. His research projects look to recover, revive and pass on knowledge around star lore and the *maramataka*. Rereata is a member of the Society of Māori Astronomy Research and Traditions and co-founder of Te Potiki National Trust, which administers the Māori Maps website. Rereata has 30 years’ experience as a reporter, news editor, director and presenter and has held senior positions in media organisations. He has worked as a Māori cultural advisor for Auckland Council and the University of Auckland Business School.

Rangi Matamua

Tūhoe

Professor Rangi Matamua is fifth generation in a long line of Māori astronomers. He has extensive knowledge relating to celestial bodies and space, passed on to him by his *tipuna* ‘ancestor’ Rāwiri Te Kōkau. By day, Rangi is a professor at the University of Waikato, lecturing, researching and inspiring Māori academics. His research fields are Māori astronomy and star lore, Māori culture and Māori language development, research and revitalisation. By night, he is a star gazer, reading, watching and translating the messages left to us and written in the skies. He is the author of the critically acclaimed book *Matariki: The Star of the Year* (2017), which represents an authentic Māori view and understanding of this culturally important star cluster (the Pleiades) and associated traditions. Rangi is passionate about genuine Māori star knowledge and disseminating such knowledge broadly.

Awhitia Mihaere

Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Rongowhakaata, Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti, Rangitāne, Maniapoto

Awhitia Mihaere is an indigenous traditional practitioner of *rongoā* Māori ‘traditional Māori healing’ and *romiromi*, *koomirimiri* and *mirimiri*, collectively ‘bodywork’, whose experiences derive from her whakapapa. Her grandparents were traditional *rongoā* Māori healers and midwives to their *whānau* ‘family’ and *hapū* ‘kinship group’. Awhitia re-awoke to her calling under the tutelage of renowned *tohunga* the late Hōhepa Delamare. Awhitia is a restorative justice facilitator and works tirelessly to deliver positive health outcomes for Māori, including advocating for traditional healing methods to be applied alongside mainstream medicine. She is responsible for implementing *romiromi* and *hapūtanga* ‘pregnancy’ practices and cleansing ceremonies in correctional facilities. Her work with marae justice panels for urban Māori authorities has seen these elevated to a national level. Awhitia teaches *rongoā* Māori at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and has worked as a government cultural advisor in education. She is studying towards a PhD in *rongoā* Māori healing.

Robert Newson

Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri, Ngāpuhi

Robert (Bobby) Newson has over 40 years of public service, beginning in Māori Affairs and the Māori Land Court, followed by service in the New Zealand Army, 17 years with the New Zealand Police, and 20 years as a cultural advisor to various organisations including the Human Rights Commission, the Families Commission and the Auckland City Council. He is currently the Tumu Here Iwi Relationships Manager at the Auckland Museum. Robert holds a Bachelor of Māori Studies from Auckland University of Technology and has lectured in Māori theology and spirituality. As a certified translator and interpreter of te reo Māori he has worked in the District and High Courts in Auckland and on Treaty of Waitangi claims. A Justice of the Peace, he currently serves on a diverse range of boards and committees, including Unitec Council, Mercy Charities, Waitakere Community Law Centre, Sport Waitakere and Te Rūnanga o Te Haahi Katorika. Bobby is married to Gemma and has three children and four *mokopuna* ‘grandchildren’.

Makuini Ruth Tai

Tūhoe, Whakatōhea, Ngāi te Rangī, Ngāti Awa, Tūwharetoa

Makuini Ruth Tai was raised when *papakāinga* ‘ancestral home’ living was still the norm and old-time spiritual practices were still very much alive. Today unconditional *aroha* ‘love’ provides the guidance for all that she does. Makuini is a te reo Maori scholar and an author. She facilitates REO (Rich Earth Oratory) communications workshops and online seminars, and hosts international programmes aimed at well-being and peace. Her REO philosophy recognises that spirituality, performance and voice tone are inherent in the words, expressions and communications of the old-time orators. Formerly, Makuini was a teacher trainer for the New Zealand education system and a lecturer at the Hamilton Teacher’s Training College. She left in late 1990 to explore learning and teaching methodologies that were not used in the system at the time, travelling widely and participating in various well-being and cultural activities. In 2011 Makuini returned with her husband, Wayne, to his papakāinga at Tapapa to support the revitalisation of the marae and implementation of eco-sustainable principles.

Appendix Notes

1. Literally “authorities or repositories of knowledge”.
2. The Rātana Church was founded in early twentieth century Aotearoa New Zealand as part of a trans-tribal interdenominational and political movement under the leadership of Tahupōtiki Wiremu Rātana; it remains an important religious and political force in Te Ao Maori.

AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Amber Nicholson, Management Department, Auckland University of Technology, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. Email: amber.nicholson@aut.ac.nz