TAPU AND NOA AS NEGOTIATORS OF MĀORI GENDER ROLES IN PRECOLONIAL AOTEAROA AND TODAY

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Abstract

Tapu and noa are often cited as fundamentals by which we enact tikanga, promote well-being and divide labour. However, exactly how tapu informed precolonial gender divisions of labour is difficult to examine, mostly because of the pervasive influence Christianity has had on cosmological narratives, from which tapu derives (Mikaere, 2017; Rewi, 2010; Te Awekotuku, 1994). This article outlines some commentary on the relationship between tapu, gender roles and colonisation, and tries to extend that scholarship. We posit that the tikanga around tapu and noa in contemporary times may be more rigid than it was before, potentially a negative effect of cosmological colonisation. Furthermore, we suggest that precolonial labour may have been divided by the fundamentals of tapu, whereas in contemporary times it seems gender is the primary consideration. The centring (or recentring) of tapu in such conversations may be a worthy decolonisation avenue as we seek to empower Māori of all genders.

Keywords

tapu, noa, mana, gender roles, tikanga

Introduction

The motivation for this inquiry formed at the beginning of a 2019 Summer Internship, funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga. It is one thread of a larger project currently under way with Māori men, examining leadership, te reo and mental health. A key issue in that project is the role of mātanga reo, who take on traditional, highly physically, emotionally and mentally demanding activities, but do not necessarily operate under the confines of traditional tapu when the activities are over. What do the complexities of tapu, gender and contemporary society mean for those people, the future echelons of highly proficient Māori whom we now call on to enact traditional roles of the tohunga? With this kōrero in mind, this literature review embarks on an opening to the conversation: the connection between tapu and gender. We are not concerned with dictating or asserting how gender roles should be enacted in Māoridom. Rather, we aim to shed light on how gender divisions of labour may have been considered in earlier times, through a critical reflection of tapu.

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Decolonial standpoints and early literature

Before discussing the literature, it is essential to acknowledge the harm that colonial anthropological and philosophical research has caused Māori, and that some of that scholarship is present in this article. It is no secret that early ethnographic work concerning Māori is deficient in its framing of our world, and that problem still exists today. The scope of this inquiry requires us to interrogate literature formed on unsafe ground, albeit with a keen critical eye. We are concerned with offering a decolonial application to this literature, where the validity of mātauranga Māori is upheld, and the power dynamics present between academia, research and mātauranga are critically analysed (Pihama, 2001; Smith, 2012). In this article, we dissect and examine historical literature from a standpoint that understands the audacious nature of early literature and intends not to perpetuate it. To examine it, threads of it must be present.

Limitations

There are key limitations for this literature review that should be noted. First, we are bound to not have caught all of it. In COVID-19 pandemic times, the inaccessibility of undigitised literature has been an ongoing limitation for this paper. Second, there is an innovative, changing, contemporary Māori world outside academia, and not all of that has been captured by scholars. The topics we examine here will have numerous tribal and regional specifics, which have developed locally over time to give an abundance of real-life application to tapu and gender roles. Given the authors only whakapapa to their own, they are not prepared to comment deeply on those local qualities. Further to the point, we assume some of the questions we raise could be answered by rongoā practitioners, Māori health experts and mātanga reo. We are delving into topics around tapu, and so there might well be a reason that those answers are not contained in the literature. Because of these limitations, this article cannot hope to be complete. At the least, we hope it will help to springboard future dialogue that works towards a more decolonised, intersectional way of theorising about our world as Māori.

Early ethnographers wrote much about Māoridom, but the romanticisation and ritualisation of those writings often leaves their work steeped in whim and fancy. To that end, many accounts appear incomplete and are less helpful as records of knowledge than they could have been. To analyse that literature, we have adopted a view that pragmatics and logic were present in early Māori society—no action was without rational purpose, even if that action arose as part of a belief system. It is upon this basis that we draw our critical understanding of such work.

Tapu as logic

We now turn to our examination of tapu in the literature. Fundamentally, tapu is generally described in the literature as the "intersection between the human and the divine" (Benton et al., 2013, p. 404). On the divine, Barlow (1991) regards tapu as an ultimate divine source connected to Io, while Mikaere (2017) links tapu to Papatūānuku, Ranginui and the natural world. Shirres (1982) supplies other absolutely accepted atua, Tāne, Tūmatauenga, Tāwhiri, Tangaroa, Rongo and Haumia, and recalls some activities linked to others, such as winds (Tāwhiri), kūmara (Rongo), sea and fish (Tangaroa), forest and birds (Tāne) and fernroot (Haumia). Mead (2003) shares many of these, and it will not be a surprise that tapu has these atua connections. Barlow (1991) also refers to another ultimate connection—humans (Tū)—and Mikaere (2017) explains that with tapu there is a "recognition of an individual's inherent value" (p. 24). Shirres (1979) crosses into the human as well, including the head (Tū), menstruation (Papatūānuku) and tūpāpaku (Hinenuitepō). The human body and the need to give life, eat and reach an end-of-life stage are inescapable extensions of tapu in real life and affect the gamut of rational human activity. This reality gives an understanding that tapu fundamentally affects all that we do and offers a complete understanding for how our actions affect the world, through an added divine connection of which all are a part.

Contemporary Western literature speaks of the cloudy relationship between pragmatics and divine faith (see Legg & Hookway, 2021, for this discussion). The lexical borrowing of Polynesian tapu for things *taboo* shows the attachment English-speaking colonies have towards the concept. There is a feeling that in the colonial context, something sacred cannot also be pragmatic, and something pragmatic cannot draw on the divine. We do not assume the same must then be true for all philosophical belief systems. Tapu informs the structure and pacing of society, guiding spirituality (Mikaere, 2017; Prytz-Johansen, 1958; Salmond, 2010; Shirres, 1979), organisation (Mahuika, 1972; Mikaere, 2017), the delegation of labour (Mikaere, 2017; Rerekura, 2008; Rewi, 2010) and health (Buck, 1949; Durie, 1994). Durie (1994) identifies tapu and noa as the primary mechanisms of a Māori precolonial health system, and that

their relationship was dynamic and flexible enough to accommodate seasonal, human and physical differences at the time. That provided a sufficient base for maintaining public health.

Tapu as a means of maintaining public health is predicated on classic Māori collectivism. Buck (1949) likens the use of tapu to the prevention of catastrophe, a declaration of tapu being like a public health notice, with the expectation that it should be respected for the safety of the whole community. Campbell-Knowles (2021) emphasises the purpose of collectivism, explaining that it demanded collective participation since "survival demanded a united approach to day-to-day existence [and] individual licence took second place to the interests of the group as a whole" (pp. 23–24). This is organised action; it is not based on whim and fancy, as some things *taboo* might be. Shirres (1982) discusses how when early Māori spoke of tapu, they were not preserving an abstract analysis of the idea and the logic of tapu but were describing tapu practices and the importance of intrinsic tapu in the actual life of people. Robinson (2005) asserts that there is logical reasoning to restriction via tapu, for "hygiene, environmental conservation [and/or] personal preservation" (p. 100). It is possible to say, then, that tapu is not a vague concept attached to divine belief, but a genuine protocol of life management. It is an organised, controlled and rational platform for activities carried out in the world of light. By regulating behaviour through any number of divine connections shared by all, people are kept safe.

Tapu as *bad*

The scholarship often pitches negative connotations to tapu in regulating structure and pace, describing it as "restriction" (Robinson, 2005, p. 100), or "restriction and prohibition" (Benton et al., 2013, p. 404). Shirres (1979) outlines that "clashes" occur when a meeting of tapu occurs:

> the primary tension, the primary clash, is between tapu and tapu, not between tapu and noa. Noa is clearly in opposition to the extensions of tapu, but there is no case … of noa being in direct opposition to any intrinsic tapu. (p. 80)

Unhealthy or dangerous things, then, seem to be clashes of tapu (we will comment on noa later). Whether deliberate or accidental, Durie (1994) confirms that a clash of tapu is expected to earn "rebuke, ridicule or intense mental suffering", and that physical consequences such as "epidemics, bodily wasting or even death" are possibilities

(p. 9). However, Barlow (1991) notes there is a duality within tapu itself, that it can be good or bad—but that it is not *bad* in its totality (p. 128). Mead (2003) also gestures less towards a negative connotation, and more towards tapu as a control for "good and evil" (p. 45). Therefore, although organised, it might be too superficial to attach purely negative connotations to tapu. What might be *negative* for one person may not be so for someone else. It makes sense, then, to suggest that tapu is neither good nor bad. Instead, the handling of tapu is what may cause a negative outcome. Furthermore, those negative things may derive from clashes of tapu. Keeping individuals safe and healthy relies on an understanding that the community can comfortably traverse the pragmatics of tapu and assess or respond to breaches of tapu as required. This is an important point when we come to discuss noa, gender and the divisions of labour, below. There is also the question of what *noa clashes* might look like, but we feel ill-equipped to comment on that. It does not appear to have been covered in the literature.

Noa, tapu and kūmara

Relegating the negative connotation of tapu to the background, and instead focusing on how tapu itself has its duality between good and bad, leads to the obvious question of what noa might then be. Noa is not the absence or necessarily the negation of tapu (Mead, 2003, p. 32). Therefore, tapu and noa are not a dichotomy. We posit that they are on a continuum, and perhaps the most fascinating example of this continuum is evident in kūmara.

The cooked kūmara, as kai, surely often acts as a means of whakanoa. During the opening of a new wharenui, cooked kūmara is noted as being often thrown over the roof as a means of "lifting the tapu" (Mead, 2003, p. 64). However, the tapu of kūmara is also evident. Its whakapapa to Rongo is highlighted by scholars in a way other food sources are not, and the food is well described in conversations around tapu. Shirres (1982) describes the following:

> A man's hands can become tapu either from the tapu of the kumara, at the planting and harvesting of the kumara, or from another person's tapu, for example at the haircutting ceremony. The resolving of this clash of tapu is the central concern of much, if not all, Maori public ritual. (pp. 42–43)

Prytz-Johansen (1958) also describes the tapu of the kūmara through an explanation of the rituals performed in planting it. The ritual involves the

instruction and karakia of a tohunga, and the very specific and measured planting of the kūmara from a kete, which afterwards is torn and buried at the edge of the plot. Both the karakia and actions of the planters are meant to mimic Rongo, and the actions of Rongo and Pani in transporting the kūmara from the heavens to Te Ao Mārama (Prytz-Johansen, 1958, p. 147). Further noted is that the kete is intended to represent the uri of Rongo through which the kūmara were transported, and the whenua is to represent Pani, who received the kūmara. Such control and reverence for the kūmara is fascinating, in that it called for a deep understanding of tapu here to grow it, and this does not seem to be apparent for every food source. It required great care and a sense of reverence to grow kūmara (Rangi, 2020). What we can glean from the kūmara is the presence of a continuum between tapu and noa, and that full and final applications seem too rigid for at least this aspect of early Māori life.

Tapu and noa in the division of labour and gender roles

As mentioned before, noa is not the absence or necessarily the negation of tapu (Mead, 2003, p. 32). As the kūmara sits on a continuum of tapu and noa, so too might other things such as gender, as a dichotomy of male and female, which appears in contemporary Māoridom as a first and foremost deciding factor for labour distinction. This seems conflicting. For women, the literature shows that whakanoa responsibilities are mostly handled by our wāhine, as mediators. Mikaere (2016) gives numerous examples of women mediating the boundaries between tapu and noa to ensure the spiritual and physical well-being of their communities. Many of these instances involve the handling of life and death (Edwards et al., 2009; Rerekura, 2008), and in birth to protect the tapu of pregnant people, new mothers and newborns (Mikaere, 2017; Pere, 1982; Shirres, 1982).

In pōwhiri, there is the karanga, which Mikaere (2016) explains is the initial process through which the whakanoa of the manuhiri occurs. She explains that through the unique abilities that women have in facilitating transitions between tapu and noa states, the kaikaranga are responsible for initiating the balance that the group desires. Rerekura (2008) also mentions the whakapapa of wāhine Māori to Hinenuitepō within their role as kaikaranga, explaining that their welcoming of mourners onto the marae ātea for tangihanga is representative of Hinenuitepō welcoming her descendants into the spirit realm. All these things

hold particular meaning for women because they are able to do something tāne cannot. There is a relationship to the divine, with Papatūānuku and Hinenuitepō, which links to a rational idea that the tapu surrounding these events are safer when curated by our wāhine.

Additionally, women were able to both whakanoa men post war and whakatapu them for war (Mikaere, 2016; Salmond, 2010), and Shirres (1979) cites an example of this from George Grey's writings:

> Ka tomo na raro i nga huha o te kotiro o te kaumatua ranei, ara, o te iramutu. Katahi ka haere ki te riri. I peneitia ai kei hauhauaitu, kei haungaro. 'They go under the thighs of the elder's daughter, that is, the iraamutu. Then they proceed to battle. They do this lest they meet with a hauhauaituu, lest there is a haungaro, a loss of spirit' (GNZMMSS 31:28). (p. 155)

In this way, falling under the thighs of a woman ensures that those warriors fall under her protection, and further suggests that there is a close relationship to the ability of women to mediate tapu in a variety of situations.

Turning now to our tāne, the tapu of whaikōrero is without doubt (Rewi, 2010; Salmond, 2010; Victoria University of Wellington, 1969, and generally reserved for men (Mahuta, 1974). Rewi (2010) finds that this tapu originated from the whaikōrero of the atua, explaining that the first whaikōrero occurred between the atua when they were debating the separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku. This is said to be the case given that discourse, debate and whakapapa are all prominent features of whaikōrero. Rewi (2010) also includes the exchange between Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga and Hine-nui-te-pō wherein they argued over the permanence of death for humanity in this whakapapa of whaikōrero to the atua. Rerekura (2008) elaborates on this whakapapa when he explains that standing on the marae to orate is a right comprising three divine elements: first, by virtue of Tū, the orator can engage in robust debate, become angry and express emotions through word and body; second, the orator can seek resolution with enemies by virtue of Rongo; and last, the marae is where people are created in the image of Tāne, who created us from the earth. We would be remiss not to also add Hineahuone to that image of human creation.

The tapu nature of whaikōrero was heightened when there were extra risks to community safety because of an untested or hostile relationship.

The occasion would occur on the marae ātea, the domain of Tū. His presence prepared the tapu space for if or when war, another extension of tapu derived from Tū, broke out between the groups (Rewi, 2010). When whaikōrero occurred on the ātea, the intention was for the orators from both the visiting and the local group to act as a "tenu-ous bridge" (Rewi, 2010, p. 53) between each side while the intentions of the visitors were exposed—a management of clashing. Given the risks of violence, men often positioned themselves within the tapu of whaikōrero. Rewi (2010) explains that this allowed them to protect those who might not be safe in such environments and that women often fell into this category, because they had the ability to bear life.

Does this mean, though, that different genders can do things that others cannot? Demarcated gender roles may not be clear-cut, as Rewi (2010) explains. Rewi (2010) outlines how many wāhine were welcome to deliver whaikōrero, although he notes that it generally happened post meno-pause because the life-bearing element was then no longer at risk. Without wanting to speak for other iwi, some scholars have commented on this topic, as it applies to their own people. Mahuika (1972) describes that wāhine assuming the whaikōrero role in Ngāti Porou "had the necessary personal qualities" to command the respect and confidence of the people (p. 30). We have seen this occur in Kāi Tahu (Revington, 2015), and heard of instances like this in the Far North region. There absolutely are pockets of the country who have ways of carrying out their everyday lives safely, with the people they have. To us, that seems quite logical, rational and pragmatic. If things are not merely gendered, or there are multiple correct ways of negotiating tapu, that seems to speak well to the fundamental logic of tapu we have observed in this article.

We wonder if it was the nature of tapu involved in a task that was a pivotal determinate for our tīpuna, and not gender. While that might have leant towards a gender division in some things, we are not satisfied that gender is the overarching demarcation of labour. It makes sense to suggest that the division of labour was set by a kind of principle whereby either the safest person could take on the task or, at the very least, the task could be taken on by someone skilled enough, or possibly emboldened enough, to manage the risk it posed. The choice of who would be most appropriate to undertake a task was not necessarily predetermined by anything other than an understanding of tapu, and within that, their experience and requisite knowledge.

Colonisation and gender

As will be clear by now, the authors struggle with that idea that gender divisions in traditional Māori life were gendered as the primary consideration. Our fundamental concern is that the relation-ship between gender and labour has mostly been accepted at its final face value as the rule, and not at its inherent beginning, in tapu. While some labour divisions may have eventuated for logical reasoning by way of tapu, gender itself was not the rule.

We have further noted in this paper that tapu and noa are not binary, and that tapu has its own duality of good and bad. It is well accepted that colonisation has affected our understanding of gender roles, and much of that colonisation occurred in our cosmology. We feel that another thread we can add to that conversation is the effect colonisation has had on how we perceive knowl-edge around tapu—which has been deconstructed, and reconstructed, through colonisation. Once this sits alongside gender, we can see an uncomfortable binary emerge.

Primarily, tapu and noa are not things to create a dichotomy from, but there is evidence to suggest colonisation has equated these things into a dichot-omy. Mikaere (2017) details that the patriarchy first started taking hold of tikanga as missionaries colonised Māori cosmogony, and a womb-like space (Te Pō), which saw their female and male children who existed as autonomous equals, was now centred on a supreme male god who sat at the top of a hierarchical system of gods in which female entities occupied the lowest status. Citing Best (1995, pp. 124–125), she recalls:

> The seed (or fruit) of the god is with the male because he is the offspring of the gods. The female sprang from the earth, and with her are the nurtur-ing waters. The blood and vital essence emanated from the gods. The female is the shelterer, the one who nurtures, and by whom all things are caused to acquire form and growth. Woman was fashioned after the image of the male, and the seed of life came from Io-matangaro. (Mikaere, 2017, p. 78)

As well as a potential shift to an ultimate male supremacy, Mikaere (2017) further outlines that tapu and noa were equated to the good and evil found in Christianity—in which the female ele-ment represents destruction, that is, the biblical representation of Adam and Eve, with Eve casting

the first sin. This culminated in a rigid, inflexible gender role demarcation of women being destructive or bad, and men being closer to God and goodness. This had a flow-on effect for things such as menstruation, which, once held as tapu (see above), was now glossed as unclean, as it was termed in the Bible (Mikaere, 2017). Something unclean probably is not well equated to tapu. At the same time, tapu had acquired a new meaning: "holy" (Benton et al., 2013, p. 404). There is a binary emerging here, and while it might have matched with some activities in early Māori life that were tapu, such as karanga and whaikōrero, it conflicts with others, such as menstruation. There is a cloudy space emerging between good and bad, male and female, and tapu and noa.

Rewi (2010), in his work, crosses us over from divine definitions to real-time contemporary action, where this binary is used to explain seating arrangements on a marae:

> When host or visiting groups seat themselves on marae, men occupy the front benches and women sit at the back. This gender division relates to the principle that men are tapu and are therefore qualified to perform tapu activities such as oratory, and women are noa. (p. 67)

We doubt this means that men are always tapu, and women are always noa, but it indicates that in the instances of pōwhiri, that is the gender designation. That might not be the case, however, as Rewi (2010) contrasts the statement and centres it around colonisation:

> Whereas in traditional Māori society, women had roles of knowledge and power, the changes brought about by the dominant European social model upset the complexity of the noa and tapu system described by Shirres and replaced it with a dualistic system that was also hierarchically ranked. (p. 75)

Mikaere (2017) agreed, arguing that such viewpoints had pervaded te ao Māori throughout colonisation and that, over time, Māori have begun to consider these perspectives as authoritative. Taking these standpoints together, women have been linked to things that are bad, but also things that are noa. Men have been linked to things that are divine or superior, and things that are tapu. The space between good tapu and bad tapu has been totally lost, and tapu and noa have been placed in binary opposition to each other, which they are not.

We feel that this has created dichotomy resulting in the place of women overall being understated.

Rewi (2010) cites another research participant, who notes that:

> Much of our dignity and our significance [as wāhine] has been downplayed, so that today we witness the truly heart-breaking arguments that occur in certain tribal regions [...] regarding the rights of women to speak on the marae, and the mana and authority and status invested in the male voice. (p. 75)

Here, two important aspects are at play: karanga— a typically designated female role—is often disregarded in comparison with whaikōrero, and powerful female voices may have been excluded in whaikōrero. Given the potential link here to an imposed colonial, patriarchal binary, and possibly too much leaning towards dividing the roles of women into those that are noa, such divisions should be questioned. Such decision-making feels too close to a dichotomy, too rigid for a continuum of tapu and noa, and too distant for a worldview in which there is good tapu and bad tapu.

There is one more aspect to consider with respect to colonisation and gender. In contemporary times, feminism is an important line of thought to include. Though crucial, Smith (1992) speaks of modern gender divisions being too frequently reduced to the context of Pākehā feminism, rather than building up the mana of Māori women. This is problematic. A typical example is the furore created by politicians wanting to speak on a marae during Waitangi Day celebrations, such as Judith Collins's insistence on speaking at Waitangi recently. Western feminist thought is often concerned only about who is able to speak on a marae, as if it is the only thing that happens on a marae. It is not. The idea of the male-dominated whaikōrero as the pinnacle of pōwhiri is a degradation of other roles, notably the female-dominated karanga, as if it is totally irrelevant to the proceedings. A marae will not struggle as much without whaikōrero as they will without karanga. If politicians wish to be heard on the marae, surely all they must do is learn to call. Meanwhile, the same scrutiny has not been applied to Pākehā men, who are allowed to whaikōrero:

> To suggest that women must be excluded from whaikōrero simply on the basis that tikanga Māori requires it does not sit easily with the constant breach of tikanga that occurs due to the loss of language, the loss of skilled orators or the desire to be polite to Pākehā men. There is nothing wrong with change, so long as it has been carefully worked

through. But change that is simply thrust upon us in a way that arbitrarily chooses to privilege males—any males—over Māori women should be a cause of concern for all Māori. (Mikaere, 2017, p. 217)

The authors agree. By our interpretation, there is not enough evidence to support a full and final gender split in the activities discussed above through a Māori worldview. This is especially so because the same has not been applied to, say, Māori and non-Māori, and the ability of non-Māori to claim space in the Māori world. Tikanga Māori, too, are flexible and ever-changing, just as logic and the rationality of tapu requires. The stagnancy of a hard-and-fast rule does not seem to equate with that flexibility, and if we are able to change them enough to allow non-Māori to carry out these roles, surely that flexibility should extend to gender as well.

In summary, the literature seems to support the idea that tapu and noa were placed in binary against men and women, superior and inferior, and good and bad. This idea runs in parallel with Western patriarchal ideals, which regularly see women as oppressed. As it stands, there is no space left for a continuum of tapu and noa, or good tapu and bad tapu, under these conditions. This has affected our ability to divide labour through tapu in and of itself and places gender, which is an output of tapu consideration, as the primary consideration. Yet, the dichotomy conflicts with logic and pragmatics—it makes things hard. Making life more difficult seems to be the antithesis of rational thought, but such is the pervasiveness of the colonial grasp. That does not mean we did not have gender division in place. What it does mean is that a dichotomy of two extremes does not necessarily fit in our understanding of traditional life.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to examine the literature surrounding tapu, noa and gender division. When it came to role delegation, gender division may have come off the back of consideration for tapu, but this was due to the practical needs of tapu, and not because of a full and final gendered tradition.

Today, it appears that gender has become the primary, rigid decision-maker, without necessarily considering tapu, likely because of cosmological colonisation. This has had a negative impact on the appreciation of wāhine Māori, and the roles they are more likely to enact.

There are several implications of this paper for the future. First, it is worth discussing whether the current gender divisions we employ as tradition are worthy of being kept, are even traditional or are still desired. Given the attachment to the patriarchy, it makes sense to see whether dividing labour by gender (and not by tapu) has a mandate from our wāhine in the community—in our scholarship review, we assert it does not. Second, there is a great need for dialogue about how to better provide for non-binary people in Māoridom; this is something this article did not aim to examine, but it is also a necessary topic of conversation. We assert that the binary was not created by Māori, and therefore does not adequately cater to all genders present in te ao Māori. Finally, there is a noticeable gap in research as to how the colonisation of tapu and noa has affected our tāne. These are all aspects worthy of future exploration, if we are to seek a more empowering contemporary life for Māori people.

Glossary

atua	deities, gods
Haumia	Māori god of the fernroot and uncultivated foods
Hineahuone	first human woman made from dirt and clay by Tāne
Hinenuitepō	Māori god of the underworld, daughter of Tāne
Io	supreme Māori god, potentially a reference to the unity of all Māori gods
Io Matangaro	Io of the Hidden Face
iwi	tribe
kai	food, meal
kaikaranga	person making a ceremonial call of welcome
Kāi Tahu	iwi native to the South Island
karakia	incantation or prayer
karanga	call, formal call intended to navigate a tapu space
kete	basket made of flax strips
kōrero	discussion
kūmara	a variety of sweet potato
mana	prestige, status, authority, influence, integrity; honour, respect
manuhiri	visitor
marae	courtyard
marae ātea	courtyard, domain of Tū
mātanga reo	language consultant
mātauranga	Māori body of knowledge
Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga	Māori demi-god, attempted to conquer death by crawling up into Hinenuitepō

Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga	New Zealand Māori Centre of Research Excellence based at Auckland University
noa	unrestricted, absence of tapu
Pākehā	a person of predominantly European descent
Papatūānuku	Māori god of the land, Mother Earth
Pani	accredited with bringing the kūmara to earth through birth
pōwhiri	ritual of meeting
Ranginui	Māori god of the sky, husband of Papatūānuku
Rongo	Māori god of the kūmara and cultivated foods
rongoā	Māori medicines
Tāne	Māori god of the forests
tangihanga	Māori funeral rites
Tangaroa	Māori god of the sea and fish
tapu	restriction/existence of a potential danger.
Tāwhiri	Māori god of the wind and storms
Te Ao	The world
Te Ao Mārama	world of life and light, Earth, physical world
Te Pō	The world of darkness
te reo	the Māori language
tikanga	Māori custom and laws
tīpuna	ancestors
tohunga	esteemed expert in tapu
Tū	Māori god of war and humans
Tūmatauenga	Māori god of war and humans
uri	descendant
tūpāpaku	corpse
wāhine	women
whaikōrero	formal oratory
whakanoa	to make noa
whakapapa	genealogy
whakatapu	to make tapu
wharenui	meeting house
whenua	land

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