

Io of the hidden face

H.T. Whatahoro, Te Mātorohanga,† Nēpia Pōhūhū,‡
Aporo Te Kumeroa,§ Percy Smith,** et al.*

I

H.T. Whatahoro, ‘Philosophy of the *whare-wānanga*’ (1913)^{††}

‘Now I, Te Mātorohanga, have another word to say so you may be clear on this subject. Be very careful in reciting these valuable teachings that your ancestors collected over past generations.

The teachings of the *whare-wānanga* are now mere shreds since they are no longer combined. Some remain while others are lost. Some parts diverge from the originals and additions have been made to others.

* Hoani Te Whatahoro Jury (1841-1923) recorded this story in 1865. He wrote on Māori traditions in *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*. Of the Ngāti Kahungunu tribe (henceforth *imi*), he was from Rakaukaka, Aotearoa New Zealand.

† Te Mātorohanga (c. 1836-1876) is the speaker in this text. He was a priest trained in a traditional Māori school or *whare-wānanga*. Of the Ngāti Kahungunu *imi*, he was from Te Ewe-o-Tiina, Wairarapa, Aotearoa New Zealand.

‡ Nēpia Pōhūhū (fl. 1860s) was a priest, who has been cited as another source of this material.

§ Aporo Te Kumeroa (fl. 1890s) assisted H.T. Whatahoro as another scribe for this project. He was a chief and corresponding member of the Polynesian Society. He lived in Wairarapa, Aotearoa New Zealand.

** Stephenson Percy Smith (1840-1922) is the editor and translator of this text. He was an ethnologist and a founding editor of *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*. He lived in New Plymouth, Aotearoa New Zealand.

†† This is an edited extract of Chapter 2, ‘The philosophy of the *Whare-wānanga*—the nature of matter, etc.’, of H.T. Whatahoro, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga: Or, teachings*

This happened due to the decaying power, authority, and prestige of rituals, abrogation of *tapu*,¹ and unbelief in gods. So that, at present, we have none of the ancient *mana* or power left. All things have changed. The *tapu* has ended. The true teaching was lost. As are the *karakias*, incantations whose meaning few people now know.

The *tapu* was all important, the first of things. Without it, the gods are powerless. And without the help of the gods, things are without authority and ineffectual.² Man's mind is cast in a state of confusion, like a whirlwind, as are all his deeds.

It is the same with the land. The *whare-wānangas*, the *karakias*, the *tuāhus* or altars, the *pures* or ways of sanctifying man, the baptising of men with water are all abandoned. So are the powers to attract fish and birds,³ to influence the growth of edible plants. Nowadays, people use different *karakias*, methods, and *tapus*. It's as if they spoke a different language. That's how much modern teachings diverge from those of the old priests.

I stress the way things were so that you may be clear-headed about why the divine powers, the *mana atua*, have declined. Even Io was affected by this, as were his *whatukura*⁴ and *mareikura* guardians,⁵ the *Apas* who relay the gods' messages, down to the forest-dwelling *patupaiarehe*⁶ and the *Turehu* fairies.⁷ Nowadays, those kinds of gods no longer exist. The present gods have been reduced to being reptiles, stones, and trees. Meanwhile, the original reptile, stone, and tree gods no longer exist.

Men now live in a wilderness. They are careless of these things, as of all things. That's why you'll no longer find any *mana*, the power to make use of this knowledge. Bear in mind, then, that what you are writing from my dictation are mere crumbs of truth, fragments of the sacred things. The anciently established and true teaching is

of the Maori College on religion, cosmogony, and history, written down by H.T. Whataboro from the teachings of Te Matorobanga and Nepia Pobuhu, priests of the Whare-wānanga of the East Coast, New Zealand, Part I. 'Things Celestial', transl. S. Percy Smith (New Plymouth: N.Z., 1913), 104-114. The text has been modernised. Paragraphs from section 'Io-Matua, the Supreme God' are included. This work is in the public domain.

Synkrētic

now erased. So is the science of the *tapu*, as are the true god-like powers that came from Io-the-great, Io-the-parentless. But enough of these words.

Now, you must clearly grasp the roles played by Tama-nui-te-rā our sun, Te Marama-i-whanake the waxing moon, and their younger brethren the stars. All worlds have their own earths and waters, rocks and trees, plains and mountains. The *hau*,⁸ the air, complements all things, be it the earth, heavens, sun, moon, or stars.

These things, four in all, give and sustain all life. With the earth, ocean, fire, or air alone, nothing would exist nor have shape or growth. Nothing would have life. Be clear about this: things only gain form and life by combining earth, water, fire, and air.⁹ The origin of all things is Io, who lives in the upmost of all the heavens. It is he who gained universal knowledge of the heavens.¹⁰

There is a reason for each of Io's names.

Io is his name for short, but we also say *Io-nui*¹¹ for he is god of all gods. He is *Io-matua*¹² the parent of all things, *Io-te-wānanga*¹³ who knows all things, *Io-tikitiki*¹⁴ whose name is exalted on earth, hell, and the heavens. He is *Io-mata-aho*¹⁵ when he visits other worlds as a flash of light. He is *Io-matua-kore* the parentless.¹⁶ Man never sees him for he is *Io-mata-ngaro*¹⁷ of the unseen face. He is *Io-mata-putahi*¹⁸ whose command all obey, the loving god *Io-mata-wai*,¹⁹ *Io-te-hau-e-rangi*²⁰ the ruler of all heavens,²¹ and *Io-tamaua-take*²² whose decree is unchanging. This ends the subject.²³

All matters of life and death come from Io of the hidden face. Nothing is outside or beyond him. All godships are his to decide. He appoints gods for the dead and the living. All things were created by this god. In every world and realm, each thing has its function. The smallest atoll, grain of dust, and pebble have their place, such as to hold the boundaries of the ocean.

You must also be clear on this fact: the god Io made nothing that will not end. Everything must end, whether from being injured by drought, fire, water, wind, land,²⁴ sun, or moon—leaving aside those deaths the god decreed should end in this and other worlds.²⁵

At this point of the audience, Rihari Tohi²⁶ exclaimed, ‘O Sir! How did the things you are teaching become known? Perhaps they are only things that you priests think?’

Te Mātorohanga replied:

‘I already told you that our knowledge of *wānanga* was brought down by Tāne-nui-a-rangi, the Great Tane of the Heavens. He begged that Io might give him the *wānanga* of Rangi-nui and Papatua-nuku, the Sky-father and Earth-mother. Io-the-father agreed, so this knowledge was brought down from heaven to earth. Enough already!

One thing do I ask of you: do not disclose these matters to strangers. Keep these words as a strengthening knowledge for you, your brethren, children, and grandchildren to hold your own in the *marae*²⁷ of strangers.

I would not disclose to you all the precious things of the *whare-wānanga* had you been a total stranger. But I see that you are bright and quick-witted, that you’ll retain what is taught. I am very pleased that you are preserving these things in writing.

One more thing do I ask of you. Learn these precious things but do not gossip about your ancestors or the messengers of the gods. Do not defile these things, lest evil befall you. I warn you of this as I see that, in our day and age, houses are only used for food. Our ancestors’ *tapu* houses have disappeared.’

II

Elsdon Best,* ‘The cult of Io’ (1913)[†]

Io’s name was deemed so sacred that it was never uttered, even by high priests. It was repeated only in secluded spots like a forest, river, pond, or other sheet of water, where nothing man-made like

* Elsdon Best (1856-1931) was an ethnographer in the Dominion Museum. He was a founding member of the Polynesian Society and wrote for *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*. He lived in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand.

† Edited extract of Elsdon Best, ‘The Cult of Io, the Concept of a Supreme Deity as Evolved by the Ancestors of the Polynesians’, in *Man*, Vol. 13 (1913): 98-103. This work is in the public domain.

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a roof separated speaker from the vault of heaven. At all other times, Io was alluded to as “the Beyond”, “the High One”, or some such term.

Before Io was invoked, the priest uttering the prayer entered the water nude and stood in it breast deep. He would then stoop to immerse his upper body in the water. In Percy Smith’s translation, the priest’s opening prayer to Io would say:

Enter deeply, enter to the very origins,
Into the very foundations of all knowledge,
O, Io of the hidden face.
Gather in, in the inner recesses of the ears,
As also in the desire, and perseverance, of these thy offspring, thy sons.
Descend on them thy memory, thy knowledge.
Rest within the heart, within the roots of origin.
O, Io the Learned,
O, Io the Determined.
O, Io the Self-Created.²⁸

No prayers were made to Io on minor or trivial affairs, nor in connection with evil things like war.

No threat or form of punishment ever came from Io. He condemned none. The contest between good and evil was to be fought out in this world. No one was tortured in the afterlife, no soul rewarded for doing good.

‘I think’, an old Māori quaintly said to me, ‘that if your missionaries had sympathised with our people and patiently studied the cult of Io, instead of despising and condemning our belief, that it would have been incorporated with your Bible.’²⁹

A few months ago, I visited an elderly Māori³⁰ deeply versed in the occult lore. We chanced upon the topic of the origin of life, and of that of the spirit. I put this question to him: ‘Do the lower animals, trees, and stones possess a *wairua* or soul?’

The old man picked up a stone from the ground, and replied: ‘All things possess a *wairua*, otherwise they could not exist. Matter cannot exist without such a principle. This is undeniable. Were this stone not possessed of a *wairua*, then it could not be seen by you; it could not exist, it would disintegrate and disappear.’³¹

When the grey-haired old man stopped speaking, I looked up and saw before me a fair land teeming with the homes of an alien and intrusive people, my own, who discourse glibly of aeroplanes and race over the trails of neolithic man in flying motor cars. And yet I was talking to a man who had evolved these views ere Zenobia dwelt by the palm-lined city of the Orient, when Europe was held by savage tribes of bushmen.

Of what use to me was the cramped mind of the twentieth century for understanding this man's thought? Fifty centuries ago, we deserted the road he treads, long overgrown with the weeds of forgetfulness.

III

A.C. Haddon,* 'The hidden teachings of Māori' (1914)[†]

In the late 1850s, a great political rally of Māori was held in the Wairarapa district, North Island, when it was decided that instruction in the origin and history of their race should be given to the assembled tribes by three priests, whose words were to be taken down by two scribes, both educated in the mission schools.

One of the two, H.T. Whatahoro, carefully amplified his record subsequently from the dictation of certain learned men, who, in a building erected for the purpose, taught him the lore of the *whare-wānanga*, and subjected him to all the ancient forms and rituals.

Till recently these ancient traditions were considered too sacred to be imparted to Europeans. For fifty years, they were jealously guarded, but at length the tribal committee allowed them to be

* Alfred Cort Haddon (1855-1940) was an influential British anthropologist. He held a PhD in science from Cambridge University. In 1898, he carried out a famous expedition to the Torres Strait. He lived in Cambridge, UK.

† Edited extract of A.C. Haddon, 'The hidden teaching of the Maori [Review: *The Lore of the Whare-wananga*]', in *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. 23, No. 89 (March, 1914): 55-57. This work is in the public domain.

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copied and made known. The author had access to the original folio volumes.

The author, Percy Smith, believes that Polynesians may be traced back to India. He even suggests tentatively that ‘these Caucasian Polynesians are an early branch of the Proto-Aryan migration into India.’³² This is, of course, mere hypothesis and will probably remain so.

Mr Smith’s method of working is an excellent one: he gives first a transcription of Māori texts, which is followed by careful literal translations of these, with brief explanatory notes and interpolations. Centre and core of the whole religious teaching is the doctrine of Io, ‘the supreme god, creator of all things, dwelling in the twelfth, or uppermost, Heaven, where no minor god might enter except by command.’³³

After death souls go to Hawaiki, the temple situated in the Fatherland, where they are divided. Those who showed love for Io ascend, after purification, to the twelfth Heaven to live in everlasting peace with the god. Those who chose Whiro, the evil spirit, went to Hades, where Whiro reigns together with the god of eruptions and earthquakes and the Great-lady-of-night, who ‘drags men down to death’.³⁴ There is no idea of judgment in the ultimate fate of souls. Rather, it is a matter of free choice during life.

There is abundant evidence that this high god is no modern introduction. The *karakias* or prayers to him contain many obsolete terms. There is a certain resemblance between Moses and the god Tāne, whom Io summons to give him the ‘three branches of knowledge and the two sacred stones,’³⁵ but the author disclaims all leanings to lost-ten-tribe theories.³⁶

In a passage of the book, the priest explains why his sacred knowledge was kept secret from Europeans, after whose arrival all became void of *tapu* and ancient teachings were lost. ‘We never wished that these [sacred] things should fall into the white man’s hands, lest our ancestors become a source of pecuniary benefit,’ he says. ‘All that the white man thinks of is money, and for these reasons this ancient knowledge of ours was never communicated to the Ministers and Bishops.’³⁷

IV

Te Rangi Hīroa,* ‘Creating the creators’ (1949)[†]

The discovery of a supreme god named Io in New Zealand was a surprise to Māori and Pākehā alike. For years, we had accepted that gods were co-equal gods and looked after their own domains.

While the literature had mentioned Io, the extent of his claims was not fully realised until Percy Smith and Elsdon Best furnished an extraordinary amount of detail by publishing copious extracts. They both enthusiastically accepted the Io material. But many were doubtful. Io’s separation of light from dark, division of the waters, and creation of the earth were too reminiscent of the first chapter of Genesis.

Doubts grew because the source of these claims, Te Mātorohanga, and his scribe H.T. Whatahoro, had been converted to Christianity before the detailed story of Io was written down. The discovery of a supreme creator in New Zealand led to a search for the same or similar ones in Polynesia. Incredibly, a mass of secret information allegedly locked up in the minds of cautious Christians was unloosed. The floodgates of memory broke open simply because they were asked about Io.

Io and his acolytes remained aloof from the masses. People had generally never heard of Io. The reason given was that the cult was supposedly too sacred for priests to divulge it to their own flock. The cult of Io did not interfere in any way with the popular religious system.

Unlike Whatahoro’s manuscript, there is some authentic evidence in support of Io in a long poem attributed to Tuhoto-Ariki, whose translation I have altered:

* Te Rangi Hīroa (1877-1951), a.k.a. Sir Peter Henry Buck, was a prominent Māori politician and doctor. He held an MD from the University of Otago. Of the Ngāti Mutung *ivi*, he was from Urenui, Aotearoa New Zealand.

† Edited extract of Te Rangi Hīroa, Chapter 5, ‘The Creation of Creators’, *The Coming of the Maori* (Wellington: Māori Purposes Fund Board, 1949), 526-536. This piece is in the public domain.

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*Whakarongo mai e Tama!
Kotahi tonu te hiringa,
I kake ai Tane ki,
Tikitiki-o-Rangi,
Ko te hiringa i te mahara,
Ka kītea i reira ko,
Io-matua-te-kore-anake,
I a ia te Toi-ariki,
Te Toi-urutapu, te Toi-ururangi,
Te Toi-uru-ora.*

Listen, O my Son!
One only was the incentive,
Why Tane ascended to,
The topmost-sky,
It was the incentive of the thought,
That there he would behold,
Io-the-parentless,
With whom was source of regal might,
Of sacred and divine control,
And power over life itself.³⁸

The composer of this poem was clearly acquainted with ideas surrounding Io from after the creation periods.

But there is no authentic proof that the concept of a supreme creator named Io existed among central Polynesians before their dispersal to various islands. The Māori concept of Io was a local development in New Zealand. It appears to have originated with the Ngāti Kahungunu tribe, from which rumours of the cult spread to a few other tribes.

Details seem to have been added after the Europeans arrived, when Māori acquired knowledge of the biblical story of creation.

The Io myth, for example, speaks of a clearing house for the spirits of the dead at Hawaīkinui. The righteous will go through the east door and ascend to the heavens. Sinners will enter the underworld through the south door. This is contrary to Māori concepts of the afterlife. It is too closely allied to Christian teachings of heaven and hell to have been taught before European contact.

V

Āpirana Ngata,* ‘Io’s only white adept’ (1950)[†]

Casting doubt on the value of Whatahoro’s work, some people have concluded that the cult of Io evolved in New Zealand rather than in the Pacific as he claimed. *I tupu ki konei.*³⁹ I agree, it evolved here.

* Sir Āpirana Turupa Ngata (1874-1950) was a Māori statesman. The first Māori to graduate university locally, he held an LLB from Auckland University. Of the Ngāti Porou *ini*, he was from Te Araroa, Aotearoa New Zealand.

The evidence of the coverage of the cult of Io in New Zealand shows that it is not confined to one district like the Wairarapa or even the East Coast. The East Coast is fairly uniform in its Io tradition. You find it in the Wanganui River and at Thames. Remarkably from my point of view, you also find it on the East Coast at Tolaga Bay, in the Rakeiora *whare-wānanga*.

As a young man not long settled in the Hokianga and quite unaware of the *tapu* and prohibitions, Judge Maning⁴⁰ one day chased after his horse, which had strayed. Suddenly, he heard a voice intoning something. He began to follow the voice and broke in on an old chap stark naked up against a cliff intoning the Io prayer.⁴¹ The old *tobunga* pulled himself up and spoke to the young Pākehā, saying: ‘Oh well, you have only got the alternative of death or becoming an adept of this cult.’⁴²

Maning chose to become an adept and he was the only Pākehā who made a complete study of the cult of Io. He absorbed it all, *karakia* and everything, and was even initiated in it. Well, in due course he had to go to London for medical advice. He had cancer and wrote down all this material while he was dying. Then his conscience began to prick him because one of the things that you do when you become initiated in the cult of Io is to swear secrecy, and he had taken the oath of secrecy.

Well now, would that obtain in the case of an oath made to a savage? He was arguing that point when he heard of Bishop W.L. Williams from Gisborne.⁴³ Williams was not a Bishop then but an Archdeacon. So, Maning sent for him and they discussed this question of conscience.

The Archdeacon said, ‘Well, your duty is clear. It does not matter whether the oath is given to a heathen or otherwise. Once it is given it is binding on your conscience.’ When the Archdeacon left, Maning ordered the housemaid to make a fire and he burned the manuscript.

† Edited extract of A.T. Ngata, ‘The Io Cult - early migration - puzzle of the canoes’, *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (1950): 335-346. This piece is in the public domain.

Synkrētic

Now, that story is well accredited. Bishop W.L. Williams told it to Bishop H. Williams,⁴⁴ who then told it to me. I said to Herbert, ‘What would you have done?’ ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘I would have had the manuscript saved in the interest of science.’

A cult like this couldn’t have continued to exist in seven different tribes if the secrecy around it had collapsed when the Pākehā came. But it didn’t.⁴⁵

VI

Jerry Flexer,* ‘Out of many gods, one’ (2015)[†]

The American mythology expert David A. Leeming recorded a version of Io’s creation story. ‘In the beginning,’ it says, ‘Io uttered words calling on darkness to become light-possessing darkness.’⁴⁶ And there was light.

The supreme god Io can perhaps be traced to New Zealand ethnographer Elsdon Best, whose primary source was H.T. Whatahoro’s 1913 manuscript, itself based on the teachings of Māori priest Te Mātorohanga.

As a result, many now believe that, although the Māori pantheon contained many gods, Io rules over all as the uncreated creator of the minor gods, universe, and man.

There are obvious parallels between Genesis and the Io creation myth.⁴⁷ But, beyond this, Christian missionaries made a variety of religious material available to Māori from the 1830s. This included Māori versions of the Old Testament. Māori felt an affinity with Old Testament stories, studied them with enthusiasm, and often recited whole passages they saw as relevant to them.⁴⁸

This casts some doubt on the idea of the Io creation myth being authentic and predating European contact.

* Jerry Flexer is a PhD candidate researching the life and works of Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti. He holds an MA in Pacific and Asian studies from the University of Victoria. He lives in Victoria, Canada.

† Edited extract of Jerry Flexer, ‘From Many Gods to One God’, *Online Academic Community*, 27 August 2015.

Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal writes that early Māori mythological material contains no reference to Io before the late 19th century. While some scholars argue that Io was invented to bring Māori beliefs more into line with Christianity, the Io tradition, says Royal, was accepted by many tribal elders. Consequently, as Royal writes, today almost all tribes have a view one way or the other on Io.⁴⁹

Māori Christianity, another scholar suggests, absorbed the Io tradition in such a way that it now ‘identifies the Hebrew Jehovah with Io, allowing the genealogies of both traditions to be aligned and providing Māoris with both traditional and Christian identity.’⁵⁰

Regardless of whether the Io myth is a Māori tradition that existed before Europeans came to New Zealand or was invented later, it is a fascinating example of religious syncretism.

Elsdon Best seems to have wanted to use the Io myth to establish that Māori were capable of higher order thinking. At the time, Western scholars and Christian missionaries associated the concept of a supreme god with a high culture. Best believed that, if it had not been for the Io cult, Māori religion would be no more than shamanism.⁵¹

But for modern Māori, the question is moot. Many Māori tribes now accept Io as part of their traditional pantheon.

There is a lesson in all this for anthropology. As Allen Hanson writes, ‘anthropologists too are inventors of culture’ because ‘ethnographic research and writing inevitably produce cultural inventions’.⁵² Elsdon Best, in this case, seems to have been consciously trying to elevate Māori culture in the eyes of European colonisers.⁵³

What he may not have foreseen, however, was that his work would catapult the idea of a supreme god into wider Māori culture. Nor could he have predicted that Io would become an umbilical cord connecting the old Māori gods to their adopted Christianity.

Notes

I

H.T. Whatahoro, 'Philosophy of the *whare-wānanga*' (1913)

(Notes by Percy Smith and *Synkrētīc*)

- 1 *Synkrētīc* – *Tapu* may refer to holy and sacred objects, religious prohibitions, rules, and restrictions in Māori culture. It is the origin of the English word “taboo”.
- 2 *Waimēha*, without *mana*, powerless.
- 3 Many interesting *karakias* are still extant, the recitation of which with the proper ritual were held to have power to attract fish to the bait, birds to the snares, and other things, in which the old-time Māori had the firmest belief.
- 4 *Synkrētīc* – *Whātukuras*: male guardian spirits in the twelfth heaven who serve Io as loyal attendants, messengers, etc.
- 5 *Synkrētīc* – *Mareikuras*: female guardian spirits in the twelfth heaven who serve Io as loyal attendants, messengers, etc.
- 6 *Synkrētīc* – *Patupaiarehe* are pale-skinned supernatural creatures who, on some accounts, are hostile to humans because Māori pushed them off their lands. A version of the word's etymology suggests that Māori who first saw Europeans mistook them for *patupaiarehe* (also *pakehakeha*), thus calling them *Pakehā*, the term for white New Zealanders. In modern writings, the *patupaiarehe* and *Turehu* are sometimes treated as synonyms for the same mythological creature.
- 7 All knowledge of these matters was brought from the highest Heaven by the god Tāne, and through him became known to mankind. The names mentioned are those of the male and female guardians, gods, and goddesses of the various Heavens, the two last being the so-called Fairies, the Apsaras of Sanskrit Holy Writ.
- 8 *Whakatutuki*, is the word in the original. It ordinarily means 'to bring to a finish,' 'to effectually complete'.
- 9 This idea of the four elements is not Polynesian alone. Among the beliefs of the Yezidi, a people living in the Mosul district of Asiatic Turkey, on the Tigris river, will be found this statement: 'I have created four elements of the earth to fulfil the needs of men, which are water, earth, wind and fire.' This is the second verse of Chapter IV of the Holy Book of the Yezidis, called *Jelwet*, and is supposed to have been written by their god. Also on the same page as above, being the last verse of Chapter IV, we find: 'Ye must not utter my name, nor speak of my shape, for if ye do it is a sin...' This, also, is exactly the doctrine of the cult of Io. His name was never mentioned outside the inner circle of priesthood. Of course, the idea of the four was the common belief of our ancestors at one time. Did the Polynesians evolve the idea from their own study of nature, or did they learn it from some other race or nation? See W.H. Heard, 'Notes on the Yezidis', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society*, Vol. XLI: 217.
- 10 *Synkrētīc* – The following two paragraphs, beginning (1) '*There is a reason...*' and (2) '*All matters of life...*', are drawn from the next section of the same chapter, which is entitled 'Io-Matua, the Supreme God' in the original. Because these paragraphs

extend the priest's definitions of Io, they are inserted here to maintain narrative flow and clarity.

- 11 *Io-nui*: Io-the-great-god-over-all.
- 12 *Io-matua*: Io-the-all-parent, the omniparent.
- 13 *Io-te-wānanga*: Io-of-all-knowledge, the omnierudite.
- 14 *Io-tikītikī(-o-rangi)*: Io-the-exalted-of-heaven.
- 15 *Io-mata-aho*: Io-only-seen-in-a-flash-of-light.
- 16 *Io-matua-kore*: Io-the-parentless, the self-created.
- 17 *Io-mata-ngaro*: Io-the-hidden-face.
- 18 *Io-mata-putahi*: Io-the-god-of-one-command.
- 19 *Io-mata-wai*: Io-god-of-love.
- 20 *Io-te-hau-e-rangi*: Io-presiding-in-all-heavens.
- 21 The Scribe informs me that the meaning of this is that Io's presence is in all winds or air, the word *hau* meaning wind, air. Hence, perhaps, the name is better translated as 'all pervading', 'omnipresent'. The idea of the Deity being present in the wind is common to all old Māoris. I have often in former days heard them say as the wind blew through their hair, that the *atua* (god) was there.
- 22 *Io-tamau-take*: Io-the-immutable.
- 23 The name of Io was so sacred that it was rarely mentioned, and then only away from the contaminating influence of food and dwellings. The priests alone had a complete knowledge of him, and ordinary people knew nothing, or never heard his name, except when used in some rarely repeated *karakias*.
- 24 Unclear. Earthquakes, volcanoes, etc.
- 25 This is not very clear. Probably, the interruption following put the Sage off as he did not complete his explanation.
- 26 *Synkretic* – Possibly an attendant to the priest, Rihari Tohī's identity is not clear from the text and remains unclear.
- 27 *Marae*, the courtyard or meeting place in a fort (*pa*), where speeches and ceremonies were held.

II

Elsdon Best, 'The cult of Io' (1913)

(Notes by *Synkretic*)

- 28 Smith's translated prayer was inserted here, where it logically belongs, rather than at the very end of the article where Elsdon Best placed it in the original article.
- 29 No name or source has been given for this speaker.
- 30 No name or source has been given for this speaker.
- 31 Best clarifies this discussion on the nature of the soul or *wairua* with the following anecdote: 'Addressing his pupils, one teacher closed a session of the traditional Māori school or *whare-wānanga* with the same thought that all things possess a soul.'

Synkrētīc

“There is but one parent of all things, one origin of all things, one god of all things, one lord of all things, one spirit of all things, one soul of all things,” he said. “Therefore, O sons, all things are one. All things are one and emanated from Io the Eternal.” This may explain why the term *toiora* only refers to the spark of the divine, the portion of the god’s *wairua* that is in every man. It represents the spiritual and intellectual welfare of the *genus homo*, whose physical health or welfare is described by the common term *ora*.’

III

A.C. Haddon, ‘The hidden teachings of Māori’ (1914)
(Notes by *Synkrētīc*)

- 32 Smith, cited in Whatahoro, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga*, iv.
- 33 Smith, cited in Whatahoro, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga*, xiv.
- 34 Smith, cited in Whatahoro, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga*, xvi.
- 35 Smith, cited in Whatahoro, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga*, x.
- 36 The author is referring to the theory, popular among missionaries, that Māori descended from the said Lost Tribes of Israel. Some proponents described Māori as Semites. The theory was at times bundled with the Io myth.
- 37 Cited in Whatahoro, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga*, 160.

IV

Te Rangi Hīroa, ‘Creating the creators’ (1949)
(Notes by author)

- 38 Tuhoto-Ariki, ‘An Ancient Maori Poem’, *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1907): 43.

V

Āpirana Ngata’s ‘Io’s only white adept’ (1950)
(Notes by *Synkrētīc*)

- 39 The original gives the English translation of these words in brackets as: ‘It was evolved here.’
- 40 Frederick Edward Maning’s (1812-1883) manuscript on Io has not been found or published. He had lived among Māori and written under the pen name “Pākehā-Māori”. Some suggest he experienced mental breakdown, paranoid delusions, and became alienated from Māori friends and family in the three years leading to his death in London.
- 41 Ngata uses the term *karakia*, a prayer or incantation.
- 42 No name or source has been given for this speaker.
- 43 William Leonard Williams (1829-1916) was an Anglican bishop in the Diocese of Waiapu. He was a prominent scholar of the Māori language. From 1877-1894, he lived in Gisborne where he ran a Māori theological college.

- 44 Herbert William Williams (1860-1937), William L. Williams' son, was the Anglican bishop of Waiapu and a scholar of Māori. He campaigned with Sir Ngata for Māori to be a recognised academic subject in New Zealand universities.
- 45 This is an interpretation of Ngata's ambiguous: 'You can't have a cult obtaining amongst seven different tribes unless you were to say that the secrecy which hedged round it had collapsed when the Pakeha came. It did not.'

VI

Jerry Flexer, 'Out of many gods, one' (2015)
(Notes by author)

- 46 David Leeming, *Creation Myths of the World: An Encyclopedia*. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 184.
- 47 Leeming's story reads as follows: 'In the beginning there was darkness and water, where Io lived alone and was inactive. In order to become active, Io uttered words calling on darkness to become light-possessing darkness. So came light... Day and night were born. Io continued creating with words, calling on the waters to separate and the heavens to be formed. Then Io became the gods. Most important, he created Sky Father and Earth Mother.'

Genesis is the first book in the Hebrew Old Testament, where we find the creation myth that forms the basis of the Judæo-Christian tradition. Genesis 1:1-2:4a reads: 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth. All was empty, chaotic and dark. And God's Spirit moved over the watery deep. God said, let light shine and it did. And God observed the light, and observed that it was good: And God separated the light from the dark...'

Cited in Leeming, *Creation Myths of the World*, 184-185.

- 48 Bronwyn Elsmore, *Like Them That Dream: The Maori and the Old Testament* (Auckland: Reed Publishing, 2000).
- 49 Charles Royal, *Māori Creation Traditions. Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, 2012, available at: <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/Māori-creation-traditions/> accessed June 19, 2015>.
- 50 Lynne Hume, 'Indigenous Traditions of Oceania and Australasia', in *The World's Religions: Continuities and Transformations*, eds. Peter Clarke and Peter Beyer (London: Routledge 2009), 290-302.
- 51 Elsdon Best, *Māori: Volume 1, Memoirs of the Polynesian Society* (Wellington, NZ: H.H. Tombs, 1924).
- 52 Allan Hanson, 'The Making of the Māori: culture invention and its logic', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (December 1989): 895.
- 53 James Cox, *The Invention of God in Indigenous Societies* (Durham: Acumen, 2014).