

Key books on Māori literature

A select bibliography

Alpers, Antony. *Māori myths and tribal legends*. 1964.

Grey, George. *Mythology and traditions of the New Zealanders = Ko nga mahinga a nga tupuna*. 1854. This standard work has been republished many times since in English and Māori. Other titles include: *Nga mahi a nga tupuna* and *Polynesian mythology*. In English and Māori.

Kapiti, Pita. *Nga korero a Pita Kapiti*. 1997.

McRae, Jane. 'Māori literature: a survey' in Terry Sturm (ed.). *The Oxford history of New Zealand literature in English*. 1991, pp.1-24.

Orbell, Margaret. *The illustrated encyclopedia of Māori myth and legend*. 1995.

A comprehensive coverage of the field. Brief accounts of most of the well-known stories and entries for natural phenomena, animals etc. Notes on sources and an index.

Ruatapu, Mohi. *Nga korero a Mohi Ruatapu: Tohunga rongonui o Ngati Porou = The writings of Mohi Ruatapu*. 1993.

Originally written down in two exercise books in the late 19th Century. Contains whakapapa and stories of tipuna and atua. In Māori and English.

Shortland, Edward. *Māori religion and mythology*. 1882.

Includes chapters on cosmogony.

Smith, S. Percy. *The lore of the whare wānanga*. 1913-1915.

Based mainly on material written down by Te Whatahoro Jury at a whare wānanga held at Papawai in the Wairarapa in the 1860s. In Māori and English. Includes creation myths and legends and also an account of proceedings at a traditional whare wānanga.

Te Rangikaheke, Wiremu Maihi. *The story of Maui*. 1975.

Edited with a translation and commentary by Agathe Thornton. Thornton's main studies have been in classical European myth and legend and she brings perspectives from this field to her study of Māori mythology.

Tikao, Teone Taare. *Tikao talks: Ka taoka tapu o te ao kohatu: Treasures from the ancient world of the Māori*. 1990.

Originally published in 1939, this work comprises traditional Ngai Tahu knowledge as told to Herries Beattie.

Mahuta, Robert T. *A Whaikoorero reader: Comparative perspectives for the study of waiata and other traditional Māori speech forms*. 1984.

White, John. *The ancient history of the Māori: His mythology and traditions*. 1887-1890.

In English and Māori. There are six volumes divided into Takitimu and Tainui canoe areas. A seventh volume contains engravings. Includes cosmology, myths, legends and more recent history. Notes for volumes 7-13 were never published, but are on microfilm. White's scholarship has been attacked (see Andersen, J.C. White's Ancient history of the Māori), but much of his material has not been recorded elsewhere. Indexed by Fletcher (see page 7.)

Bibliographies and inventories

The books listed below are some of the most important general bibliographies and published inventories. Bibliographies in other books may also prove useful. Books with bibliographies can be found by adding the words *and bibliography* to any keyword search.

Curnow, Jenny. *Nga taonga o Te Tai Tokerau*. 1998.

Bibliography listing manuscripts, theses and books about the history, traditions, language, genealogies, incantations, localities, proverbs and customs of Tai Tokerau

McRae, Jane. *Nga iwi o te Tai Tokerau: nga korero nonamata me naianei hoki...a catalogue of manuscripts...in the Māori language relating to the history and traditions of tribes in Tai Tokerau*. 1981.

Inventories some of the more important collections

Simmons, D. R. *The great New Zealand myth: a study of the discovery and origin traditions of the Māori*. 1976.

A careful investigation of the sources of the generally accepted versions of the canoe traditions. Includes an 82 page bibliography of printed and manuscript material, covering a much wider range of sources than the particular focus of the book. The entries for the more important collections, such as the Grey MS (pp.413-420), include an inventory of the individual items.

Taylor, C. R. H. *A bibliography of publications on the New Zealand Māori and the Moriori of the Chatham Islands*. 1972.

Covers books and journal articles published prior to 1970. It is classified by subject and includes sections on, language, pp.64-70, folklore, pp.71-77, traditional history, pp.77-81, music, songs, games, chants and recreations, pp.81-84, tribal and local Māori history, pp.85-91. Entries are not annotated and there is no access by iwi or region.

Williams, H. W. *A bibliography of printed Māori to 1900 and Supplement*. 1975.

Originally published in 1924. The 1975 edition includes a supplement compiled by A. D. Sommerville comprising emendations and additions to the original list and extending the period covered to 1947. The supplement is also available as a separate publication

Contemporary literature written by Māori in English

Some well-known authors (Alan Duff, Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera, Robert Sullivan, Apirana Taylor, Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, Briar Grace-Smith and Hone Tuwhare) are covered by the [New Zealand Literature File](#). This lists the author's own works as well as reviews, criticism and biographical material.

See also

McGregor, G., Williams, M. & Harlow, R. *Dirty silence: Aspects of language and literature in New Zealand: Essays arising from the University of Auckland Waikato Winter Lecture Series of 1990*. 1991.

Includes three essays on contemporary Māori writing and some useful bibliographies.

Wevers, Lydia. 'Short fiction by Māori writers' in *Commonwealth: Essays and studies*, Vol.16, No.2, pp.26-33 (Spr 1994).

Pearson. Bill. 'The Māori and literature 1938-1965' in *The Māori people in the nineteen-sixties*. 1968.

This covers writing by Māori as well as writing about Māori.

Anthologies

See also the anthologies of Māori writing edited by Witi Ihimaera and published as the *Te Ao marama* series.

Five volumes have been published to 1996:

- Te whakahuatanga o te ao: Reflections of reality. 1992.

- He whakaatanga o te ao: The reality. 1993.
- Te puawaitanga o te korero: The flowering. 1993.
- Te ara o te hau: The path of the wind. 1994.
Writing for children.
- Te torino: The spiral. 1996.

Specialised indexes

Barlow, Cleve. *He pukapuka whakataki kupu o te Paipera Tapu = A concordance of the Holy Bible*. Although the Bible has been translated from English it remains an important early text. This index includes proper names and ordinary words and can be used in conjunction with any edition of the Bible in Māori.

Fletcher, Henry James. [*Index of Māori names*]

Indexes names of people, hapu, iwi, waka and places from the most important early published sources. Covers early volumes of the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, John White's *Ancient History of the Māori*, Sir George Grey's *Polynesian Mythology and Proverbial and popular sayings*, Richard Taylor's *Te Ika-ā-Mauī*, S. Percy Smith's *Lore of the Whare Wananga*, the early bulletins of the Dominion Museum, Edward Shortland's *Māori religion and mythology* and *The Southern districts of New Zealand*.

Harlow, Ray. *A name & word index to Nga moteatea*. 1986.

Indexes the first three volumes of waiata published by Sir Apirana Ngata and Pei Te Hurinui Jones, many of which contain references to myth and legend

Harlow, Ray. *A name and word index to Nga mahi a nga tupuna*. 1990.

Indexes proper names and also all the general words used in the 1971 edition.

Kirtley, Bacil F. *A motif-index of traditional Polynesian narratives*. 1971.

"Analyses and classifies traditional Polynesian (including NZ Māori) myths, tales and legends by motif." Indexes Māori material from the JPS, TNZI, Anderson, Best, Cowan, Grace, Grey, Smith, White and Wohlers under the headings cosmology and cosmogony, animals, tapu, magic, ogres, tests, wise and foolish, deceptions, reversal of fortune, ordaining the future, chance and fate, society, captives and fugitives, unnatural cruelty, sex, religion, character traits. These categories are further broken down into sub-categories so that it is possible to search for myths about the moon for example.

Manuscript material

Māori literature stems from an oral tradition. The first appearance on paper was generally in manuscript form in a whakapapa book, in a compilation put together at the request of Pakeha researchers or in the field notes of the researchers themselves. Only later did collections of stories appear in published form.

Grey, George. [*Papers*], ca 1854-1890.

The originals are kept at the Auckland City Library (corner of Lorne and Wellesley St) but a photocopy is held in the Mātauranga Māori Collection in 100 bound volumes. The collection contains stories from many parts of New Zealand and has been extensively inventoried.

Whatahoro, H. T. [*Genealogies*], 8 vols.

Ngati Kahungunu and Whanganui history and traditions.