A Maori is not fortunate or unfortunate, he is *maia* or he is not. The difference is in the fact that *maia* includes both ability and good fortune, both courage and victory in one.

We may translate the word by “ability” when we are told of some fugitive people who saved their lives by their *maia* to run.¹

This ability, however, has a deeper perspective. When *Tane*’s wife had fled to the underworld, he wanted to follow her, but when the gates of the realm of the dead opened before him and he looked down into the dark, “then he feared and had no *maia* (*kihau i maia*) to follow his wife, and Tane returned home.”² *Maia* thus is an inner resilience, very close to courage. This is the quality which also manifests itself in the ability to run.

In the warrior courage extends into strength. “*Tumatauenga was thinking of his elder-brothers’ weakness and of the fact that he alone was maia.*”³ But *maia* is not only courage and strength, it is victory as well. When Paoa warned his eldest sons against picking a quarrel with their younger half-brother whom they had never seen, he said, “You two will not *maia*; your

¹. White 1890: 35.
². White 1887a: 118.
younger brother is a fish who tears nets.”\(^4\) Here we translate *maïa* as “be victorious,” but by doing so we break up the whole idea of courage-strength-victory. Defeat cannot be separated from insufficient inner resilience, just as Tane’s failing *maïa* in its turn is connected with the fact that actually he had no hope of carrying through his undertaking in the realm of the dead.

There is nothing strange in the fact that we may often be in doubt about the translation. What word are we to use when it is said that a “tribe’s *mana* and name is wiped out under the blows of the *maïa* tribe’s weapons?”\(^5\) Perhaps the word “victorious” will crop up at once, but if we consider more closely how *maïa* is contrasted with defeat, we shall soon find out that more deeply rooted qualities are concerned; for defeat is a sign of “low descent,” while *maïa* includes a noble and courageous mind.

In an inciting speech made with a prospect of meeting the enemy the next day, these words are used, “If you are *maïa*, then you will *maïa* (*ka maïa e maïa*); but if you are weak, then you will be wiped out like the *moa* (an extinct bird).”\(^6\) Indeed, we may translate: “If you are courageous you will be victorious” or the like; but we cannot bring out what an almost obvious commonplace the thought is to the Maoris.

The obviousness is due to the fact that the Maori speaks out of his experience. We recognize him in the integrity which is the basis of *maïa*. Man is whole; to fight with the mind full of fear and despair has no place in his culture; indeed he must consider it foolishness; for without courage there is no victory. The Maori hardly ever dreamt that this might be different; but when the English arrived in the country he saw strange things, such as their shooting of deserters. An old chief tells about such a case during some fights between soldiers, i.e. English-men, and Maoris: “One soldier, as I have heard say, was shot by another, because he was going to run away. I don’t think it right to do this. When a man feels afraid who is ordinarily of good courage, it is a sign that he will be killed, and he ought to be allowed to go away. It is bad to disregard omens. When a man feels courageous let him fight, and he will be fortunate.”\(^7\)

In order to have or be *maïa* a person must be of sterling integrity; but this is not sufficient. Even if courage and ability in fight go together, victory will not be the obvious result unless man extends into the surrounding world so that *his* will to victory determines and gathers the events to give victory to him. *Maïa* in a man must depend on his having *mana*;

\(^4\) Grey 1855: 171.  
\(^5\) White 1888b: 87.  
\(^6\) White 1888a: 135.  
\(^7\) Maning 1906: 315.
only then can he move his surroundings with the same assurance as his own body so that a straight and unbroken line passes from courage to victory.

_Mana_ and _maia_ thus are related concepts. The preserved enemy heads are “signs of the tribe’s _maia_ and _mana._”\(^8\) _Mana_ is a fellowship and as life it must manifest itself in prosperity and victory, thus in so far in _maia_; but in _maia_ activity, courage, and fortune are predominant.

_Maia_ then means something like that which Gronbech has called “luck” among the Teutons.\(^9\) Luck does not necessarily apply to fighting; a person may be _maia_ to various acts. Thus it is not only so that the warrior is _maia_ to use his weapons;\(^10\) one may also be _maia_ at something so peaceful as making dried _kumara_,\(^11\) which, indeed, is no poor thing since we hear that the mere rumor of such a _maia_ could make a woman completely enamoured of a man. When _maia_ is used adjectivally, in this way, the translation “able” is natural, only that it should not be forgotten that the word denotes not only ability to do something; but also a desire for it and luck in it.

Tawhaki was _maia_ to play mad pranks,\(^12\) and a boy is mentioned who was _maia_ to all kinds of competitions and games, particularly to spin a top.\(^13\)

In the preceding sections, we have not attached particular importance to the question whether _maia_ is used as a substantive, verb, or adjective, as this difference in Maori is a purely syntactical question. However, there is reason to mention a small peculiarity about the substantival usage, _maia_ here denoting not only courage and victory, but also the person who is (or has) _maia_. Thus _maia_ is also nearly the same as “man of luck” in Gronbech’s usage.

A _maia_ then is the man who does deeds and has a correspondingly great mind. A small scene makes us share in a _maia’s_ view of himself. A message had come to some heroes, famous as dragon-killers, inviting them to kill such a monster: “The message came to the many _maias_; then they stirred, for they looked forward to this their deed, killing dragons.”\(^14\)

There is a special splendor associated with _maia_, both the idea and the person. It makes woman’s heart beat, as in the case of the woman who saw her future husband fighting: “And when I saw his _maia_, well,

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8. White 1887a: 36.
13. White 1888b: 142
then indeed I completely lost my heart to him and smiled at him.”

The women looked admiringly at Puhihuia when she had fled from home with her lover and declared that if her father tried to fetch her he would not see her until the realm of the dead, and they said: “Indeed, the noble person’s nature is far from insignificant. She will throw herself into death. This is the speech of a high-born woman, her heart is not empty, it is *maia* from heroes bearing arms, and like the women among the ancestors.” They admire her courage because they know that she will stand by her promise; for *maia* simply means that a whole mind realizes its decision. This is further illustrated when Puhihuia has conquered her mother’s female attendants in a kind of duel; for then her mother says: “Did you see your grandchild’s *maia*?.... The point of her ancestors’ words was never broken, and the same applies to hers this very day; she will not be conquered, it is in her nature to stand firm, she will not be bent...”

If a person is a man of luck, a *maia*, then he is always so, whether asleep or awake. This is the form of his life and must be so as long as it has not been broken definitively. Therefore a man of luck may also be a *maia* in a single situation which otherwise is not suitable for a hero. The story is told of Tama, who had carried off Rua’s wife that Rua in revenge threw him to the ground, rubbed him with lice and said that now he might keep the wife in return; but, it says, this *maia* did not hear one word; he was too busy scratching himself. On the other hand, the use of the word *maia* may here be ironical.

The word *toa* is almost synonymous with *maia*. This, too, ranges from being a quality belonging to man—Paikea saved his life by his *toa*—to the result itself, victory. The result of a fight may be summed up like this: “Ngaitahu were victorious (*toa*), Ngatitoa were defeated (*mate*).” *Toa* like *maia* may be specified in various directions. A proverb says:

| An army *toa* dies on an army expedition; |
| A *toa* who ascends rocks, dies on rocks; |
| A soil-tilling *toa* |
| Becomes the food of worms (i.e. he dies of old age) |

*Toa*, however, as compared with *maia* applies more to outward success; but

15. White 1888a: 150.
17. White 1888a: 156.
as courage and victory are so closely associated in the Old-Time Maori’s
experiences, it is in many texts felt only as a fine shade. History, however,
have made an experiment which brings out the difference by pressing the
gun into the Maori’s hand. The chief, Hongi, who first of all got guns on a
large scale knew their worth indeed. It might rightly be said about him that
he “had been victorious (toa) by his guns.”22 The association of toa—not
maia—with guns is not accidental; a Maori has commented on the events
in these words: “Hongi’s fight at Totare was courageous (toa), but it was not
the toa maia of the heart (maia “courage”, i.e. “true courage”); it was made to
go down by rifles combined with treachery.”23

The difference between toa and maia may be sharply defined, indeed
rather too sharply, by the statement that a maia man is victorious because he
is courageous, and a toa man is courageous because he is victorious.

There is to us a downright provocative boldness in the way of living
and experiencing which is expressed in maia. But however boldly the
Maori experiences and views his life, there must still be a concession to
the imperfection of human life; it cannot very well be either lived or thought
away. Indeed, there is a complement to maia, viz. aitua.

Aitua means the dependence on that which man does not control.
Provisionally, it may be translated by “fate;” but as in the case of many other
translations of this kind the European concept must undergo a lengthy
remodelling before it resembles the Maori meaning.

Just as maia is both the interior and the exterior, fortune both as potential
in courage and realized in victory, so aitua is both the potential and the real-
ized “fate.”

“Fate” is the most suitable word as a rendering of aitua before it has
achieved reality. In some text, there is a man who “invoked his god, taking
omens (matakite) in order to see its fate (aitua); then he saw that his god would
live...”24 Thus aitua as fate may be favourable; the same also appears at the
mention of the divining treasure Matukore: “The signs by which Matua-
kore’s aituas are known, are the red colours on the feather ornaments of the
weapon. If the weapon is unwrapped and the red colours gleam and flash,
then it is an omen of life (he tohu ora ) for the tribe who owns the sword
(taiaha); but if the red colour of the feather ornaments is pale, then it is a sign

23. White 1888b: 140 (he mea kinaki ki te pu; it was made to go down by rifles.
Kinaki is “relish, food which is eaten along with other food.” The expression plays on
this image from the meal; just as a relish helps the rest of the food to go down, so the
guns help the toa of the attackers so that they gain the victory).
of an *aitua* of defeat.”

*Aitua*, the uncontrollable element of existence thus is now favourable, now unfavourable; but we certainly hear most about the latter, and in itself *aitua* has an unpleasant ring because it interferes with the unfolding from within which is the soul of Maori integrity and altogether the Maori’s disposition. We cannot justly accuse him of exaggerating the dark aspects of life, but in *aitua* he collects what he fears most, the uncertain factor which deals with human beings just as it pleases. Therefore it is no real inconsistency that *aitua*, although it may be favourable, can still be used with the meaning “death” and “misfortune;” in its core it is a sinister phenomenon. We hear this ring in the word when the old chief pictures to Puhihuia that her position is dangerous, but that this is the lot of life: “Do you think that you are not going to die, also? But Tura’s infirmities have touched you; the *aitua* sits secretly in you, a slip (*tapepa*) is sufficient to realize *aitua* for you. My child! Death alone is the lot of this world.”

The same muffled and ominous tone of *aitua* is seen in the myth of Tawhaki who revolted against his older relatives. When his mother heard this “she felt sad and lamented, as she feared that her child should *aitua* because he had insulted the old men.”

After all, there need not be anything mysterious about *aitua*. The word may be used whenever a situation arises which one cannot control or completely make out. This may be less clear in a passage in which some *aitua* gales are mentioned which attack a canoe at sea because these gales have been conjured up by a sorcerer. It is more evident in a few other passages in which the whole situation is natural enough, only dangerous and difficult to make out. Uenuku was out with his brother-in-law, Rangapu, and left him in the lurch on a desert island.

When he came home to his wife he denied knowing anything about her brother; but she said: “You don’t? But Rangapu’s disappearance perhaps is an *aitua*, and you will not search for my brother?” “Dangerous situation” or “sign of danger” presumably is here the most obvious rendering of *aitua*. The same applies to the following passage in which Ponga and the others who have been on a visit to Puhihuia’s father, are leaving and see Puhihuia running after them. Hinting that he has made his comrades believe that an attack

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25. White 1888b: 42
26. Tura was a legendary figure who became very old and infirm before dying.
27. White 1888a: 139.
30. White 1888b: 36.
was imminent, Ponga said, “What is this? Let us hurry, all of us! This is probably an aitua.”

In these two cases, it is foreseen quite rationally that misfortunes are ahead. On the whole, it is an important point in the Maori art of life always to be able to foresee when extraneous influences menace existence and this art has been elaborated in a prolix knowledge of omens. The Maoris particularly considered involuntary twitchings in the muscles: “If it is a twitching in the thigh, then it is an army marching far away, i.e. the army will not get into fight close to the village where the person in question got twitchings in the muscles by the aitua.” The twitchings thus are a direct effect of aitua; therefore they are often called tohu aitua, “aitua signs.” “A muscle twitching (io-tahae) is an aitua sign either for death or deliverance.” At the same time we note that, like aitua, the sign may of course be favourable or unfavourable. “Aitua signs” is a common expression for a long series of omens. If e.g. a pupil in the sacral school falls asleep during the teaching, then “his sleep is an aitua sign for his death, and not long after he will die of illness.” A similar expression is used about some birds, who “show an aitua” if they get into a house.

It is not my intention here to try to muster the innumerable omens which occur among the Maoris; the examples are only to serve to illustrate the relation between aitua and omen, as they show that the omen is a direct manifestation of aitua or, in other words, what becomes fate in the future manifests itself as omen in the present. Properly the omen is only a special form in which aitua appears. As a matter of fact, the omen is often simply called aitua. Thus it says in a passage: “The actions and aituas of the right side refer to something good...” Here the reference is undoubtedly to omens, more definitely twitchings in the right side. It may be said both that a twitching gives omen (aitua) and that an omen “is twitched” (kua ioa te aitua), it means the same thing.

The various forms of omens are not otherwise to be discussed, but it is natural to point out that even if there is to us a great difference between the aitua which is an openly menacing danger and that which is an omen, we should not therefore believe that the Maori attaches importance to that

32. White 1887b: 5.
35. Whatahoro 1913: 74.
37. White 1887b: 5.
distinction. We shall also recognize some omens as rather rational, e.g. that it is a bad omen if one is dry in the mouth and nervous before a fight; others are evidently rational from the Maori point of view, thus the birds mentioned which are of ill omen in a house as they all originate from the realm of the dead or have its nature in them. The omens which to us seem quite arbitrary, should, however, be appraised with caution or not be appraised at all; they may still have had a reason to the Maori.

In spite of the fact that aitua as viewed towards the future as fate is a sinister phenomenon, it may very well be favourable in the individual cases. If, on the other hand, we look at the accomplished aitua it is only unfortunate. Tamatea had crossed the ocean to New Zealand, but there he was so unfortunate that his canoe was wrecked in a small river; he then said, annoyed: “Indeed! We had no misfortune (aitua) on Kiwa’s great ocean! But when we came to this river, which can flow through a lashing-hole (of a canoe), then we capsize!” The word is used in the same way in the elder brothers’ admonitions to Whiro to allow Tane to keep the lead: “It is enough. The things which you have decided from the beginning until now—they have all proved unfortunate (i aitua).”

Aitua can now be summed up as being an extraneous, uncontrollable influence, which in relation to the future is fate, in the present, omens, and in the past, misfortunes.

The shifting in aitua which takes place when it is accomplished, is characteristic enough to the Maori. He does not allow chance more room than required by strict necessity; a victory won is no aitua, it is not due to chance; it is the outcome of maia, thus a free unfolding of human will. The favourable aitua of the future for that matter does not create anything either; but actually only gives room for man’s unfolding. Still the Maori admits that a favourable aitua may occur; but when looking at the past, in which the uncertainty is gone, there will be no room for anything but one thing of two, either the victorious unfolding or defeat, aitua. All this is the basis of the Maori’s experience of man as of sterling integrity. He cannot imagine that man can be a split personality and make his own misfortune; no, misfortune comes from something extraneous.

Even if aitua is something extraneous, it can only be effective because it forces its way into life and leads it astray from within. “The aitua sits secretly

38. Best 1898a: 121.
39. Kiwa is the mythical master of the sea.
41. Whatahoro 1913: 30.
in you,” as was said to Puhihuia. This presence is what enables it to break out as an omen. After all it is not strange that the involuntary twitchings of the muscles are interpreted as evidence of a foreign and uncontrollable woof in life, since the involuntary is the very nature of *aitua*.

The extraneous element may steal upon a person from behind and only manifest itself in omens; but one may also by one’s carelessness get involved in its snares. Not least one should guard against all that has anything to do with the underworld, e.g. night. “Do not pound fern-root at night-time. A human head, an evil omen (*tohu aitua*). If you do so, then your head will soon be pounded by the weapon of an enemy.”\(^{42}\) Ritual errors as well may attract unwished-for consequences. When Rata had felled a tree without a ritual, he found it upright again the next morning. This was repeated; then he felled the tree once more, but hid in order to see what happened, and then he saw (in one of the versions) two birds. “These birds were an *aitua*, because Rata had acted wrongly with the tree.”\(^{43}\) This is to be understood as a sign that his will was thwarted; at any rate the tree was upright again the next morning.

An *aitua* may concern the individual, such as the *aitua* that a pupil in the sacral school is asleep, which causes his own death. At other times, *aitua* in the nature of things must include several persons. We need only think of the case that the omen refers to a fight. Indeed, it has been said in so many words. When *Maui* was about to go down to Hinenuitepo to have it out with her who drags human beings down to the realm of the dead, his father said, “You two have an *aitua*, my karakia (incantation) miscarried, and I said (i.e. happened to say) it for your death.”\(^{44}\) The *aitua* thus belongs to both, Maui as well as Hinenuitepo.

Actually, *aitua* is presumably never strictly limited to the individual. The Maoris live so intensely in the fellowship that an influence on one of them must also influence the others, although perhaps in a less degree. This is stated downright when *Ponga* has carried off Puhihuia. A discussion arose in his kinship group as to what they were to do, and a young man thought—for reasons of his own—that Ponga himself had to take the consequences, to which another answered very realistically, “Ponga has been touched by *aitua* and we have all been touched.”\(^{45}\)

After all it is half-way accidental when *aitua* only concerns a single person. Indeed, the fact is that one man’s danger and death can be portended

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42. Best 1902e: 52.
44. Grey 1855: 22.
45. White 1888a: 146.
in quite another man within the kinship group. Te Rauparaha said to Te Pehi, “Be cautious when you enter the fortress in order that you shall not die; I have had an omen (aitua); I had a bad dream last night.”\textsuperscript{46} Te Pehi forgot the warning and was cut down with his people.

Many other instances of \textit{aitua} in kinsmen might be mentioned, but we have not reached the limit. Practically every extraordinary event in the country of the kinship group is an \textit{aitua}, a sign that life in the kinship group and the country no more unfolds itself undisturbed. Lightnings over the holy mountain, large trees that fall down in quiet nights, pigeons that coo by night, and many other things are \textit{aitua} and portend defeat to the kinship group or death to its most prominent men.

\textit{Aitua} may take effect because it permeates the Maori and his world, but it does not belong there, it comes from outside and may from a certain aspect be said to have its place in the underworld. Some figures in mythology, Te Potamako and others, are placed at the entrance to the underworld in order—as it characteristically says—to “sweep aituas from the world of life into the underworld.”\textsuperscript{47}

This indefinite power which interferes with man is too negative to obtain any real personality; still it appears a few times personified as \textit{Aitua}, but this figure is so poor that the myths know nothing else to tell about him than that he is the son of Rangi and Papa (Heaven and Earth).\textsuperscript{48} Otherwise he appears in an expression like “\textit{nga patu a Aitua},” “the blows of Fate,” i.e. misfortunes.\textsuperscript{49} We find him most personal in a speech made over the corpse of a dead chief: “Who is this person, Aitua? Had he but taken the form of man, I could fight him with this taiaha of mine! But he is intangible, and he cannot be conquered.”\textsuperscript{50}

\textbf{Muru}

When a man sinned in a less degree against the kinship group or had some stroke of bad luck, the kinship group reacted in quite a definite way, the man being made the object of a legitimate and regulated robbery, \textit{muru}.

In the good old days this was obviously a very frequent phenomenon. According to a piece of information in Maning, there must at a certain time have

\begin{itemize}
\item[46.] White 1890: 30; nearly identical with Timiraupeka in Graham 1943: 60 (from MS. by Te Rauparaha’s son).
\item[47.] Whatahoro 1913: 10.
\item[48.] Paraone 1907: 111.
\item[49.] Best 1905a: 168; Best 1926a: 21.
\item[50.] Cowan 1910: 217.
\end{itemize}
been at least six cases of *muru* in a month in the tribe where he was staying.\(^\text{51}\)

After receiving this information one may be startled for a moment at hearing that *muru* is practically not mentioned at all in the Maori’s own accounts, myths, and sagas. The only explanation is, first, that *muru* was too common to be mentioned for its own sake, next, that it was means of settling matters inside the kinship group, and so could neither be the beginning nor the end of the greater events that occupy the tellers of the sagas.

As the texts only touch on the subject of *muru* we are mainly referred to English descriptions and information. They are not infrequent, but I know only two full descriptions, viz. an anonymous article “The Great *Muru*” and a section in Maning.\(^\text{52}\) Of these Maning’s description is greatly to be preferred, partly because he is an excellent observer and partly because he describes conditions which are not far from the Pre-European ones. “The Great *Muru*” is both lucid and full of details, but it describes a case which took place much later. The main characters actually bear Christian names.

Maning describes *muru* in the way that he concentrates his knowledge in a typical but imaginary case. One cannot find it in one’s heart to change his vivid description into a summary; therefore the most important section will be rendered in Maning’s own words, introduced only by some orientating remarks.

The principal character of the tale is a man whose son had fallen into the fire and been badly burnt. The mother’s family is the proper party to undertake the legitimate robbery, and their thoughts are rendered as follows:

> The child was...a promising lump of a boy, the making of a future warrior, and consequently very valuable to the whole tribe in general, but to the mother’s family in particular. ‘A pretty thing to let him get spoiled.’ Then he is a boy of good family, a *rangatira* by birth, and it would never do to let the thing pass without making a noise about it. That would be an insult to the dignity of the families of both father and mother.... They are all in a great state of excitement, and trying to remember how many canoes, and pigs, and other valuable articles the father has got; for this must be a clean sweep. A strong party is now mustered, headed probably by the brother of the mother of the child. He is a stout chap, and carries a long tough spear. A messenger is sent to the father, to say that the *taua muru* is coming, and may be expected tomorrow or the next day. He asks, ‘Is this a great *taua*?’ ‘Yes; it is a very great *taua* indeed.’ The victim smiles, he feels highly complimented; he is then a man of consequence. His child is also of great consideration; he is thought worthy of a large force being sent to rob him! Now he sets all in motion to prepare a huge feast for the friendly robbers his relations. He may as well be liberal, for his provisions are sure to go, whether or no. Pigs are

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killed and baked whole, potatoes are piled up in great heaps, all is made ready; he looks out his best spear, and keeps it always ready in his hand. At last the taua appears on a hill half-a-mile off; then the whole fighting men of the section of the tribe of which he is an important member collect at his back, all armed with spear and club, to show that they could resist if they would—a thing, however, not to be thought of under the circumstances. On comes the taua. The mother begins to cry in proper form; the tribe shout the call of welcome to the approaching robbers, and then with a grand rush, all armed, and looking as if they intended to exterminate all before them, the kai muru appear on the scene. They dance the war-dance, which the villagers answer with another. Then the chief’s brother-in-law advances, spear in hand with the most alarming gestures. ‘Stand up!—stand up! I will kill you this day,’ is his cry. The defendant is not slow to answer the challenge. A most exciting, and what to a new pakeha would appear a most desperately dangerous, fencing bout with spears instantly commences. The attack and defence are in the highest degree scientific; the spear-shafts keep up a continuous rattle; the thrust, and parry, and stroke with the spear-shaft follow each other with almost incredible rapidity, and are too rapid to be followed by an unpractised eye. At last the brother-in-law is slightly touched; blood also drops from our chief’s thigh. The fight instantly ceases; leaning on their spears, probably a little badinage takes place between them, and then the brother-in-law roars out ‘Murua! murua! murua!’ Then the new arrivals commence a regular sack, and the two principals sit down quietly with a few others for a friendly chat, in which the child’s name is never mentioned, or the inquiry as to whether he is dead or alive even made. The case I have just described would, however, be one of more than ordinary importance; slighter ‘accidents and offences’ would be atoned for by a milder form of operation.

The background of this institution is that a man is not only, as shown in the case of maia, responsible for his own actions in their whole range, but for everything at all happening within the sphere of his mana, because his life is dominant as far as the mana reaches. Only in this way is it intelligible that mere accidents are answered by muru. At the same time, we understand how it may be a source of pride to the victim; for indeed it involves a recognition of his mana’s greatness.

In spite of the difficulties and the uncertainty connected with the interpretation of the various aspects of muru because we lack original documents, I think it is possible, by means of the picture drawn of the Maori here, to have this background corroborated and furthermore to attain to a certain understanding. The most important means is that of studying the known variations of the muru custom in connection with the various causes.

We then find that the causes of muru fall into two groups, to which correspond two functions of muru. It should, however, be added at once that

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this bipartition is more essential to us than to the Maori, and that it is rather a question of two poles of the same thing than of a mixture of two different things.

The one main cause of muru consists of a minor insult to the kinship group on the part of an individual or a family. A frequent cause was a marriage against the wishes of the kinship group\textsuperscript{54} or one which took place without any ceremony\textsuperscript{55}—only ordinary people married quite informally, but of course they were not honored with a robbery either. Adultery invariably gave occasion to muru unless a slave was concerned.\textsuperscript{56} Other disobedience to the kinship group as well, or, what amounts almost to the same thing, to the chief, is answered by muru.\textsuperscript{57} (On tapu insults as cause see below, p.194 f.).

In these cases, the main contents of muru were those of providing redress for the kinship group, indeed, there are examples of muru where this openly functions as vengeance or rehabilitation, only within fixed limits as is meet and proper within the circle of the kinship group or allies.\textsuperscript{58} Knowing the enormous importance of the active attitude to the Old-Time Maoris’ mental health, we also understand how they could find redress in the legitimate robbery. For the same reason material importance must be attached to the form, the robbery; it seems quite unthinkable that the Maori should feel anything like the same rehabilitation by accepting a voluntary penalty, as it is found among other peoples, even if the chattels that change hands through the robbery are not at all immaterial to the rehabilitation. In this connection, it is worth noting the following item in Tregear’s list of ill omens: “If, when on a plundering party (taua muru), you stood by idle while others loaded up with booty. It was unlucky for you.”\textsuperscript{59} Completely universal as a motif is the rehabilitation at the single combats and invective of muru. Single combat is mentioned in detail in the passage quoted from Maning, but invective played no significant role and obviously was especially attended to by the elderly women of the kinship group, who made their appearance naked and smeared with mud.\textsuperscript{60}

The significance of rehabilitation is emphasized by the fact that single combat might occur without an attending robbery. In this case, the word muru cannot very well be used, nor is it used. This variety of muru is found in the saga of Puhihuía and Ponga. Puhihuía’s mother and some female

\textsuperscript{54} Anonymous 1919: 97 ff.; Yate 1835: 237.
\textsuperscript{55} Grey 1855: 167.
\textsuperscript{56} Best 1903d: 52.
\textsuperscript{57} Whatahoro 1909:91; Maning 1906: 65.
\textsuperscript{58} Maning 1906: 65-69; 259.
\textsuperscript{59} Tregear 1926: 216.
\textsuperscript{60} Anonymous 1919: 97-102.
attendants have sought out Puhihuia, in order to fetch her home, because she has eloped with Ponga without the consent of the kinship group. When Puhihuia refuses to return a number of duels are enacted between her and the female attendants of her mother, who are one by one defeated by her. In this way, Puhihuia is somewhat abruptly—so it seems to us—reconciled with her kinship group and the wedding takes place in optima forma.\footnote{White 1888a: 154 f.}

These single combats were fought in definite forms. We hear about another case in which a chief, Utu, had run off with another man’s, Tua’s wife. The rehabilitation is described as follows:

\begin{quote}
Utu sat before...five adversaries on the sand, unarmed, provided only with a short stick called a \textit{karo}, with which to ward off any spears thrown at him, or blows from other weapons that might be used...
\end{quote}

All being ready the duel began. Tua remained inactive while each of the four men who had accompanied him advanced in turn and threw a spear at Utu, who managed to \textit{karo}, ward off, the four darts without hurt to himself. The rights of the four were now exhausted.\footnote{Wilson 1907: 224 f.}

There is probably not the least thought of punishment in this; the whole matter revolves on the great cardinal point: life as honor—the insult to life and its rehabilitation. Still, the matter has yet another aspect, which is brought out more clearly in another group of causes of \textit{muru}. Collectively they may be characterized as “lacking control of the world.” It may be accidents:\footnote{Best 1924b: 360; Yate 1835: 236; Earle 1832: 96; Polack 1838: II, 58.} a man tumbles off his horse or wounds himself with an axe,\footnote{Gudgeon 1904a: 191.} happens to violate a \textit{tapu},\footnote{Maning 1906: 100; 106. See further p. 194 f.} his child falls into the fire or into the water, his canoe capsizes,\footnote{Gudgeon 1906a: 51; Best 1905a: 206; Maning 1906: 100.} his wife runs off with somebody else.\footnote{Best 1924b: 306.} Relatives of deceased people were sometimes robbed;\footnote{Best 1924b: II, 59; Polack 1838: 58 f.} but

\footnote{White 1888a: 154 f.}
\footnote{Wilson 1907: 224 f.}
\footnote{Best 1924b: 360; Yate 1835: 236; Earle 1832: 96; Polack 1838: II, 58.}
\footnote{Gudgeon 1904a: 191.}
\footnote{Maning 1906: 100; 106. See further p. 194 f.}
\footnote{Gudgeon 1906a: 51; Best 1905a: 206; Maning 1906: 100.}
\footnote{Best 1924b: 306.}
\footnote{Best 1924b: II, 59; Polack 1838: 58 f.}
when? Was it a condition that the decease took place by an accident?69 A man who shot another by accident was robbed together with his whole family.70

In these cases, too, it is a question of rehabilitation to the kinship group, but the fact that something special is involved in the “robbery” is suggested by a paragraph in Gudgeon: “There was a time in the history of modern New Zealand when if a Maori had been thrown from his horse and injured by the fall, his justly indignant friends would have seized the animal. Again had a man’s axe slipped and wounded him ever so slightly, the axe would have been demanded in payment by his relatives.”71 Probably it is not by chance that exactly the “unfortunate” thing is demanded by the relatives; for the accident is an aitia, an extraneous and uncontrollable element of things. The whole procedure suggests that this aitia is also a piece of evidence that the man’s life has not been able to fill out his world, so the extraneous influence has been able to assert itself and has manifested itself in the axe or the horse. By the mūru they change owners and are inspired by fresh kinship life, which may chase the extraneous element out before it has infected its owner seriously. Here, perhaps, we are faced with the profoundest reason for the satisfaction of the victim with the mūru of which he is made the object. It is worth comparing this with the custom that everything that drifted ashore belonged to the owners of the shore, even if it was a canoe of visiting relatives and friends which capsized. The significance of the comparison is brought out in Colenso’s amazed added note: “Strangest of all, the (unfortunate?) people in the upset canoe would be the very first to resent—even to fighting—any kind of alleviation of this strange law!”72

After all, these cases are not so strange as they might seem on the face of it. We need only lengthen the lines in the picture of aitia already in our possession in order to understand that what happens is a reorganization of polluted life and therefore a source of general satisfaction.

In the ordinary form of mūru, the robbery is not only of a single thing, but of all the possessions of the family. The idea is probably the same at bot-

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69. Te Rangi Hiroa seems to incline towards this view (Rangi Hiroa 1950: 421); but it is not certain that he is of this opinion if the dead man has been killed in war. If the assertion that the family might be subject to mūru just because a member of it had been killed in war is based only on Polack’s information (loc. cit.), which, as far as I can see, is the case, there is reason to ask if Polack has understood the matter correctly, for in all similar cases the basis of mūru is an abnormal event.

70. Maning 1906: 108.


72. Colenso 1868: 363 f.
tom. An accident to the child means that the father’s mana on the whole is not quite healthy, and when it is not possible to get hold of the germ itself (as in the case of the axe and the horse), it is at least possible to clear the whole immediate surrounding world of himself and his family (or near kin) and thus clean out the aitua as well as possible under the circumstances. It should also be kept in mind that the distance from the unfortunate man to the disobedient and insulting man to the Maori view is not great; responsibility has no necessary connection with intention; both misfortune and disobedience are failure of the kinship life in the man, whether his will is infected or not.

The two purposes to which we have traced our way, rehabilitation and purification from aitua, have not been associated by chance. Not only will rehabilitation be incomplete without the purification, but the purification will also easily require the extra unfolding of life inherent in the rehabilitation so that aitua is really conquered and does not, on the contrary, corrupt the kinship group further.

With the reserve necessary when more direct evidence is missing, we may thus say that muru has always two closely associated aspects supplementing each other: in robbery as activity rehabilitation is involved, while robbery as change of possessions is a restoration to health, as the things change owners. Both aspects are required even if one or the other may be predominant according to circumstances.