In a people like the Maoris it is questionable, if not impossible, to separate religion from the rest of their culture and treat it separately. We not only come up against great difficulties when religion is to be defined, but it is still worse that the religious phenomena become meaningless when isolated. The present work therefore brings a wide field of social culture into the investigation. It has, however, been possible to omit certain aspects of it, as they have already been discussed in Raymond Firth’s valuable work *Primitive economics of the New Zealand Maori*.

The core of the subject is what might be termed the Maori’s culturally determined personality as it was before European culture had interfered decisively. I hope that the fact that my description is still made in the present tense will not offend the modern highly civilized Maoris. Great importance has been attached to the Maori’s own cultural ideal, and the presentment is first of all based on the texts, the objectivity of the work being secured to the best of my ability by having the interpretation pass through the Maori’s own formations of concepts. In this way important aspects of religion are illustrated, but the work has many loose ends. Some of these will be taken up for investigation in papers which I hope to publish later, dealing with religion in a strict sense of the word, its rites and myths.

From recent and earlier research I have received many impulses and inspirations. This is not expressed in the references unless in the case of works concerning the Polynesians, as I am of opinion that such spo-
radic references would be of no interest to the reader. I should, however, like to emphasize here the great importance of Vilh. Grønbech’s teaching and research for the whole design and fundamental view of my work.

With some regrets I have made the reference to the texts, not to the translations, as reference to the later cannot be carried through consistently. Most of the texts published are accompanied by translations; Grey’s *Nga Mahi a nga Tupuna* has in part been translated in his *Polynesian Mythology*, the section *Paoa* in the *Journal of the Ethnological Society*, London 1869, N. S. 1, pp. 333-364. I hope that interested readers who have no knowledge of Maori will without too much inconvenience be able to find in the translations the passages which are of interest to them.

It is a great pleasure to me to have an opportunity here to offer my best thanks to my chief, Dr. J. Anker, Chief Librarian, for the great sympathy always shown by him for my work on the book. Furthermore, I thank my translator, Mr. Niels Haislund, M.A., for the care taken by him over the work, not least when my Danish translations of the Maori texts were to be retranslated into English. Special thanks are due to my colleague, Dr. A. G. Drachmann, who has read the work in its translated state and offered many valuable remarks. Further, I most cordially thank Mr. Georg Jensen, B.A., for the indefatigable helpfulness always shown by him, both at registration work and at proofreading, and finally Mrs. Johanne Kastor Hansen for reading the proofs.