

An Intertextual Reading of Torah and Māori Spirituality—from the Perspective of a New Zealander

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Affinities exist between the Māori and Jewish way of living life. Primary and secondary source texts are now readily accessible for both traditions in English. Jews live in contemporary society according to concepts of tamei (impure) and tahor (pure) and Maori live with concepts of tapu (what is forbidden and restricted) and noa (unrestricted or free from tapu). Both binary systems are God-centred and experienced with the human body in daily life.

When the human body or land becomes polluted, that is, in a state of negative noa or tamei, there are ramifications for the individual and the community concerned—psychological and physical. Both Māori and Jews are challenged to find ways of living and find meaning in these very old binary systems that impinge on their bodies in modern society. Aspects of Torah and Māori spirituality challenge us too, such as guardianship of the environment and financial ideals of social equitability.

“You are what you eat” is a comment that can sometimes be heard from Jewish colleagues in my workplace. The comment refers to antisocial and insensitive attitudes that come out of the mouth. Underlying the comment “You are what you eat” is the idea that if you eat pork, you behave like a pig.

In Māori contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand (henceforth New Zealand) you often hear, “Don’t sit on the table.”¹ Underlying the prohibition of sitting on tables used for food purposes is a complex binary cultural system. The comment “You are what you eat” and the practice of not permitting people to sit on dining tables concern food traditions, what goes in and what comes out of the human body, and how what enters and exits the body is regarded. Both the Māori and Jewish sayings originate in customs that lie deep within their cultures, and are based in social systems that are God-centred.

Method

This paper proceeds in three parts. In Part One, the validity of an intertextual study of Māori spirituality and Hebrew Torah texts is addressed. In Part Two, textual evidence on Māori spirituality and Hebrew Torah is presented. A general overview of each cultural system is given and expanded with examples relating to the human body and to the environment. In Part Three, the evidence presented is discussed, followed by a short conclusion.

Part One

The Validity of an Intertextual Study of Māori and Hebrew Texts

This paper is a study of Māori spirituality and Hebrew Torah concepts based on texts. The validity of such a study can be questioned as Māori spirituality is posited within Polynesian concepts of culture and Hebrew Torah texts are Semitic in origin. However, though the cultural heritages are very different, connections are made. On one hand, Māori scholars such as Tui Cadigan and Henare Tate draw on Hebrew biblical texts in

their research, and Maori Marsden observes links between the Māori concept of *tapu* meaning sacred and Hebrew Torah concepts of holiness. On the other hand, Jewish biblical scholars such as Baruch Levine and Jacob Milgrom refer to very varied cultures—from ancient Near Eastern to recent tribal cultures—in their biblical commentaries.

One might say, “Māori customs are orally transmitted. Torah is read and studied. The two traditions are different.” However, oral traditions precede not only Māori customs but also Torah. A. Alt (1966: 86) and Klaus Koch (1959: 5-6) are two biblical scholars who studied the pre-textual traditions of the Torah in the mid 1900s. They argue that Hebrew customs and laws were passed on orally prior to their being written down in the post-exilic period (6-5th century BCE), a generally accepted dating by scholars such as Rainer Albertz (1994: 437), also together with Oded Lipschits and Gary Knoppers (2007: ix-x), and Thomas Römer (2008: xiv, 10-12).

Sir George Grey and John White collected Māori manuscripts in the 1840-60s, and Sir Apirana Ngata collected Māori songs in the 1900s. Certainly over two thousand years separate the writing down of Hebrew and Māori oral traditions. Nevertheless, for over 150 years primary texts have been available in both Māori and Hebrew. In addition, substantial secondary literature for both cultural sources now exists.

Today the term, “text,” is primarily understood as written words on a page, and I use the word “text” in this sense. For this paper I work with texts published more recently than 1990. The texts are written predominantly by Māori about Māori culture and by Jewish scholars about Torah—these are the intertexts, the going between texts, within this paper. While texts about Māori customs and attitudes are increasingly added

to existing Māori written sources today, some contemporary Jewish scholars are peeling away the layers of rabbinic tradition that have accumulated for centuries around the written Torah.

Māori Contemporary Research

Of an estimated population of 4.4 million in 2011, approximately half a million New Zealanders call themselves Māori.² One in nearly every four Māori speaks Te Reo Māori. A key New Zealand document is the Treaty of Waitangi of 1840. In 1975 the Waitangi Tribunal was established by an act of parliament to address Māori claims to the government regarding breaches of the Treaty. The Tribunal has functioned like a writing catalyst as Māori tribes prepare extensive reports of their history and lodge documentation for their claims. Since 1975 too, the idea of New Zealand as a bi-cultural nation has developed—one nation, two peoples (Māori and non-Māori). The voice of Māori is heard in official communications, such as government and council documents on issues like health care or environment. The Māori contents of the official documents are prepared with Māori resources, verified by Māori, and accessible to all those who care to read them. Two documents used for this paper are “Tikanga Māori: A Guide for Health Care Workers” (henceforth “Māori Health Care Guidelines”) published by the Capital and Coast District Health Board in 2009, and the “Report on the Crown’s Foreshore and Seabed Policy” of The Waitangi Tribunal 2004 (henceforth “Foreshore Report”).

Jewish Contemporary Research

The Torah is explained through the writings of women scholars of the Jewish Reform movement. These women, while knowing the rabbinic traditions, are instrumental in

freeing the biblical text of what Charlotte Fonrobert (2007: 270) calls “the encrusted patriarchal traditions of Judaism.” In a different vein a German scholar, Hanna Liss (2008: 81) reminds us that the Torah texts are “literary artefacts,” the remains of what might once have been a larger collection of Hebrew instructions. What laws there are in the Torah are a glimpse of the whole, but not the whole.

Having established that there are primary and secondary Māori and Hebrew texts which can validly be used, I now proceed to present the evidence.

Part Two Evidence—an Overview of the Systems with Examples

The System of Māori Spirituality

Māori culture is holistic—the human person and the physical world are understood as spiritual. This holistic idea is demonstrated graphically with three fold connections between God, people, and land, shown in Diagram 1. The triad is used as a conceptual base in Henare Tate’s doctoral thesis, “Towards some Foundations of a Systematic Māori Theology,” (2010: 36) and also in Tui Cadigan’s essay, “A Three-Way Relationship: God, Land, People. A Māori Woman Reflects” (2004: 27).

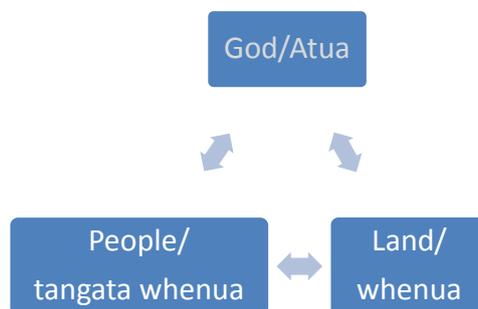


Diagram 1. The System of Māori Spirituality

Since the coming of Christianity to New Zealand in the 1800s, the one supreme Māori God is known as Io or Atua. The idea of one supreme God is sometimes debated and discussed by Tate (2010: 269-79) and Marsden (1995: 117). Māori creation myths tell of the beginnings of the world though details vary from one tribe to the next. There is dynamic movement in the nothingness and darkness as the parents, sky father (*Ranginui*) and earth mother (*Papatūānuku*), are forced apart. Light and enlightenment, the world we live in today, enters. Spiritual or guardian powers (*atua*) are born who are responsible for different spheres of creation (Shirres 1997: 26; Tate 2010: 269). Some of these guardian spheres are—the wind and weather (*Tāwhiri*), the sea and its inhabitants (*Tangaroa*), the forest and birds (*Tāne*). It is important to understand that the guardian spheres are imbued with spiritual being both in relation to themselves and also in relation to other spheres; they are *tapu*, meaning “with being” or sacred. The significance here is that in Māori spirituality not only people but also things are understood as having being or spirit.

Tangata whenua, people of the land, refers to the individual person though more importantly each person is a member of an extended family unit or tribe. Communal identity is significant and expressed in several ways, through belonging to ancestral land and knowledge of its features such as mountains and rivers, and knowledge of the names of ancestral canoes and ancestral leaders. The close connection between people and land is expressed through the word— *whenua*—which means placenta and land. A ritual still practised in Māori communities today is burial of the placenta and umbilical cord of the new born in the ancestral land. Similarly the dead, when possible, are buried in their ancestral land. The Māori focus is more on where you come from than your name.

Land (*whenua*) refers to physical and geographical features and also to country or territory. Cadigan (2004: 313) writes that land can call people “home” especially tribal elders. When someone dies and their life force ceases, their spirit travels to the spiritual realm but some spirit remains with the body of the dead person. When they are buried in ancestral burial grounds they lie with their ancestors and the spirit of their ancestors. This explains why places where there are Māori burial grounds are understood as sacred and not to be entered without appropriate respect.

In daily life the three complexes of Diagram 1—God, people and land—overlap. When different spiritual powers meet, such as between two different Māori tribes or when a group goes fishing, dynamics arise which may be constructive or destructive (Shirres 1997: 38). The meeting between different spiritual powers is regulated by *tikanga* (laws and customs). These take the form of rituals, prayers, and concepts of *tapu* and *noa*. It is the concepts of *tapu* and *noa* that are of particular interest in this paper.

Tapu has a range of meanings; it refers to what is sacred, forbidden, or restricted. *Noa* refers to what is unrestricted or free from *tapu*. All things are created with *tapu* (sacred being or having power) in relation to self (inherent *tapu*) and in relation to others. Both women and men are *tapu* yet women have something that men do not have, they have positive *noa* in addition to *tapu*.

Positive *noa* is to be free from restrictions and therefore to be able to make pathways between two *tapu* powers. For example, when one group of Māori visit another group of Māori who are on their home territory at their *marae* (the communal centre on ancestral land), one *tapu* force is about to encounter another *tapu* force. The collective spirit of the ancestors is borne by each group. *Tapu* forces may clash between the groups and a

bridge is necessary to facilitate the meeting of the two. Women with their positive *noa* can *karanga* (call) the visiting group of Māori onto the *marae*, thereby lifting *tapu* restrictions and permitting the encounter between the two different forces. Positive *noa* opens the pathway between two *tapu* sources. Negative *noa* is to be in a state of violation or to lack freedom e.g., to be in prison; it also expresses a state of diminished *tapu* e.g., to be ill. Land when polluted is reduced to a state of negative *noa*.

The following quote from “Māori Health Care Guidelines” (2009: 6) demonstrates the Māori binary system of *tapu* and *noa* in the context of the New Zealand hospital system. The aim of the guide is to inform non-Māori care givers of Māori culture and spirituality so that non-Māori working in the healthcare sector can appropriately address the cultural needs of Māori requiring health care.

Tikanga guidelines mirror the intent of *tapu* and *noa*. In terms of everyday practice, food that is *noa* must be kept separate from bodily functions, which are *tapu*. For instance food should not be placed on any surface where containers containing urine or faeces may be placed. In some instances, behaviour and practices that are not consistent with Māori beliefs and values can cause distress and result in a lack of confidence and participation in health care services by Māori.

Put in practical terms, surfaces such as a bedside table where food or medication may be placed are not to be used as for sitting on. Different cloths are necessary for washing the head and washing the body. Combs, hats and brushes cannot be put on surfaces where there is food. Pillows used for the head (the most sacred part of the body) are not to be used for the feet.

The guidelines record that not following Māori customs can cause distress to a Māori patient and their family. For Māori, hospitalization is to be in a state of negative *noa*

and diminished *tapu* and therefore to feel disempowered. Not respecting Māori customs leads to a further sense of disempowerment in their illness and being. On the other hand, respecting Māori customs enhances the potential for well-being or *tapu* in a Māori patient. The guidelines warn of a possible negative outcome for the Māori patient and extended family if Māori customs are not respected.

Margaret Mutu, spokesperson for Ngāti Kahu and Professor of Māori Studies at the University of Auckland, also warns in the “Foreshore Report” of a negative outcome if Māori *tikanga* (law and order) is not followed in the context of environment. She speaks of tribes having guardianship over their ancestral lands and seas. If guardianship duties are not appropriately carried out then the tribe’s rights and potential for influence over that land and water may be removed, harm may even come to members of the extended family or tribe. Therefore Māori families or tribes who hold power in a particular area must take their responsibilities of guardianship very seriously.

The System of Jewish Torah

The term “Torah” refers to the first five books of the Hebrew Bible or to the law and teachings of those five books. The most extensive collections of law within the Torah are the Covenant Code (Exodus 20-23), the Priestly Code (Leviticus 1-16), the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26) and the Deuteronomic Code (Deuteronomy 12-26). This paper works with the teachings of the Priestly and Holiness Code—Exodus 25–40, Leviticus 1–17 and Numbers 1–10—which I call, “The Tabernacle Code.”

God’s space in the Tabernacle Code is the tabernacle tent, a dangerous and holy zone. The effects of this zone are described as a “lethal aura,” or like an “electric charge” (Haran 2010:187-88). Plaut (2006: 723) writes “certain places, substances, and persons carried a sort of ‘high charge’ like an electric wire.” The tabernacle is even compared with a nuclear power plant which emanates a form of radiation and where periodically crises of contamination have to be dealt with (Propp 2006: 689-90).³

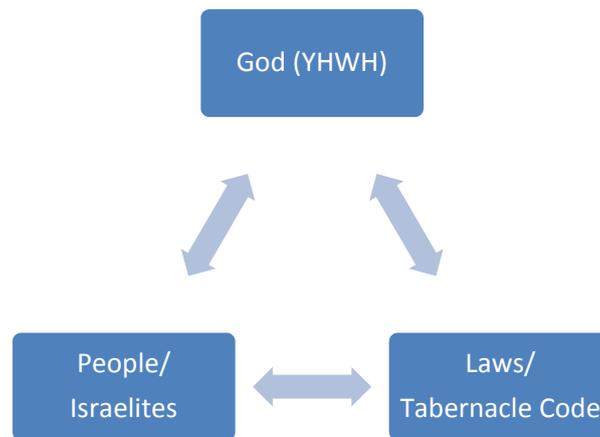


Diagram 2. The System of the Tabernacle Code

A triad of connections between God, People and Laws exists in The Tabernacle Code, graphically shown in Diagram 2. YHWH, the source of life, calls the Israelites to be a holy people. All of Israel is represented symbolically as twelve ancestral tribes which are camped round the tabernacle, the centre of holiness in the camp. Implicitly every member of each tribe has equal access to holiness and to YHWH. In the Tabernacle Code, the Israelites are not in a land but a liminal zone.

The divine laws are given by YHWH to the Israelites. They are not laws made by Israelites for Israelites. The laws regulate the relationship between Israelites and YHWH, and the Israelites with one another. As previously mentioned the laws are

fragmentary and a glimpse of a possible whole. The instructions on genital discharges are an example of the fragmentary nature of the laws. They focus on semen and blood; no systematic frame is given for other bodily discharges such as sweat, tears, spit, or urine (Liss 2008: 331).

Jewish Body Example

Several examples of the Hebrew understanding of the body could be given—from prohibited and non-prohibited foods to skin complaints. I take an example pertinent to women, menstruation. It is important to understand that the instructions on menstruation are set in a context of genital discharges which relate to both men and women. In the case of men it is the discharge of semen (*zav* Leviticus 15:1-18) and in the case of women it is the discharge of menstrual blood (*niddah* Leviticus 15:19-30).

Like many of the teachings of Leviticus the instructions on menstruation probably originated in the traditions of Hebrew communities centuries before the Common Era. This is explored in Anita Diamant's novel, *The Red Tent* (1997) which reads into the context of Hebrew tribal communities such as that of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob (Genesis 34:1-26). According to ancient lore the red tent is a place where women took refuge during menstruation or when giving birth, and where they shared their experience in solidarity with other women.

Instructions on menstruation in the Tabernacle Code are clearly concerned with purity in relation to holiness, not hygiene. (The idea that the purity laws grew out of ancient customs relating to hygiene is long standing and found for example in the writings of Maimonides (1135-1204) and Ramban (c.1194-1270), two Jewish rabbis who were both

physicians). Hygiene concepts are not mentioned explicitly or implicitly in the biblical text. The link between purity and holiness relates to cult not hygiene. This is clearly demonstrated with a refrain that occurs after many of the laws, “Be holy, for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44).

Menstruation is prescribed as seven days of cultic impurity (Leviticus 15:19). The instructions explain that “everything upon which” a woman “lies during her impurity,” and “everything upon which she sits” (Leviticus 15:20) become infected. The operative concept is “under”; anything that comes in contact with the lower part of a menstruating woman such as a bed or a chair becomes impure. Anyone in turn who touches the polluted chair becomes impure. Impurity is transferable and can be further transmitted. Herein is a psychological fear of contagion.

Provision is made for the length of impurity for those who contract defilement, e.g., it is until evening. Further purification requirements are the washing of clothes and bathing in water.

Rachel Havrelock (2008: 672) writes of the Jewish women’s experience of menstruation and cultic impurity as a process of the human body passing through stages. As the body moves from a state of ritual impurity to purity not only physical changes are experienced but also psychological changes from feeling in a kind of exile when impure, yet not abandoned in that exile, to re-joining the community. The body remembers and experiences the physical and psychological transformations which then become part of identity. Hanna Liss (2008: 353) also writes of the physical experience of living Torah. For her holiness and the tabernacle intrude into the actual life of women and men. Yet another Jewish scholar, Charlotte Fonrobert (2008: 673) writes that purity

and impurity are not a matter of morality but concern ritual status and the appropriate purity state in order to access the Jerusalem Temple.

A key sentence gives insight into the binary system of the Tabernacle Code:

“Distinguish between the holy (*qodesh*) and the common (*khol*), and between the impure (*tamei*) and the pure (*tahor*)” (Leviticus 10:10). What is holy is pure, dynamic and identified with life and order. God is the source of holiness. Human beings are in a state of purity unless polluted by some impurity such as eating forbidden meat, genital discharges, or touching a dead human body. The common denominator of these impurities is that the forces of death are symbolized. Corpses are obviously associated with death. Discharge of semen or blood means loss of potential life. Impurity is equated with the forces of death, and purity with the forces of life. Impurity is contagious. It defiles and pollutes.

The Land Sabbath (Leviticus 25:1-7) and the Jubilee Year (Leviticus 25:8-55) are examples relating to environment in the Tabernacle Code. Norman Habel (1995: 97) entitles them an “agrarian ideology”.⁴ God is the head of the agrarian structure, and landowner. Produce from the land is thanks to the goodness of God, the divine benefactor. The Israelites are tenants (*toshabim* Leviticus 25:23); they have land holdings which are described in Hebrew as acquired property (*'ahuzzah*). There is no right to human ownership of land in the Jubilee ideal. The relationship between God and Israelites is that God owns the land and Israelite families are tenants of ancestral land holdings.

It is the first section of the Jubilee Year ideals (Leviticus 25:8-34) that are pertinent for the purposes of this paper. The Jubilee year, every fiftieth year, allows families in financial distress a return to economic freedom. Family land holdings may have been

sold or transferred between Jubilee years because of financial strife. In the Jubilee ideal, land is associated with social economics. Economic amnesty is experienced in the Jubilee year, as Israelites who have got into financial strife

- have their debts forgiven and,
- return to the property where they were ancestral tenants.

No explanation is given how property was acquired from YHWH. The system builds implicitly on the idea that once upon a time each Israelite acquired a right to a land holding (Plaut 2006: 720). Habel (1995: 106) writes of the Jubilee year as a “planned recession.” The Jubilee year functions as economic amnesty in that it deters long term land monopolies, and reduces the divide between the rich and the poor. The focus of the ideals is the security of the traditional community, not a continual increase in productivity from the land.

Part Three Discussion

The three elements of the triad in the Tabernacle Code—God, people, and laws—are inseparable. Together the three are the essence of Israelite identity. God speaks the laws; the Israelites must live the laws in response. The laws intimately link the Israelites with YHWH. God is holy and God’s people must be holy. The laws of the Tabernacle Code are delivered in a context where the Israelites are land-less. God cannot be removed from the triad. To remove God from the triad would be to render the whole meaningless.

For Māori, the triad—of God, people and land— is inter-relational and each element linked with the other. Atua/Io does not speak but exists in the guardian powers of the

elements and land and people, all of which are *tapu*, imbued with sacred being. YHWH is the source of holiness and the laws of the Tabernacle Code in the Torah system, Io/Atua is the origin of land and people of the land in the Māori spirituality system.

Based on the explanation of Māori spirituality presented in this paper, a four-fold Māori system of God, people, land and *tikanga* (guidelines for law and order) might be proposed because of frequent references to *tikanga*. However, *tikanga* control the interaction between the *tapu* of different spheres—God, people, and land. The guidelines are not *tapu* or *noa*. The “Māori Health Care Guidelines” are about respect for Māori patients and their spirituality system when they are in healthcare. The “Foreshore Report” *tikanga* speak of Māori responsibility for the protection of the environment. Torah and *tikanga* are the how to do, how to practise life. However, law and *tikanga* are conceived differently and have different emphases in the Māori and Hebrew systems. In the Hebrew system YHWH speaks but in the Māori system through Io/Atua a holistic concept of land and people is communicated. In the Hebrew system the Torah is explicitly given by YHWH through Moses to the Israelites but in the Māori system, for lack of a better expression, *tikanga* is a regulatory vehicle of the system. *Tikanga* are not explicitly divine, but the means to the end rather than the end. Torah is not the end but the way to holiness in the Hebrew system.

Binary customary systems of *tapu* and *noa* exist in Māori spirituality and of pure and impure in the Torah. The systems impact on those who grow up within the culture of the systems and the effects of disregard for Torah and *tikanga* are very real in each community. The book of Leviticus is strewn with refrains about death threats such as, “Keep the people of Israel separate from their impurities, so that they do not die” (Leviticus 15:31).⁵ Elaine Goodfriend (2008: 671) associates the accumulation of

impurity with national suicide. She writes, the threat of death “is not the death of the impure individual, but the collective existence of the people among whom God resides.” Plaut (2006: 760) writes in a similar vein, that for Jewish communities, ritual defilement is perceived as a threat to community. The “Māori Health Care Guidelines” speak of Māori patients experiencing distress if things *tapu* and *noa* are not respected. For Mutu (“Foreshore Report”: 8), there is a negative outcome if Māori do not take guardianship responsibilities for the environment seriously. Not adhering to purity teachings in Judaism or not respecting *tapu* in Māori spirituality has psychological and even physical consequences for those communities.

For several years I have thought that there are similarities between the binary systems of Jewish Torah and Māori spirituality relating to God, food and the human body. This was the incentive to research for this paper. In the course of the research two points have arisen for me. The first point concerns the impact of Māori spirituality. The Māori voice is now in many official New Zealand documents. When Māori write they speak of the being of God and the sacredness of people and the environment. Their voice has become the counter voice to contemporary New Zealand secularism—financial gain, self-gratification, individual rights before the rights of the community. Māori spirituality has taken the voice that Christianity once had in New Zealand society. We must be grateful that there is an ethical and spiritual voice in the public arena today and it is predominantly the Māori voice.

The second point is that Torah and Māori values offer a social ideal to strive for regarding land. This is demonstrated with the recent case of the Crafar farms in New Zealand. The Crafar family extended their dairy holdings to 22 farms over several years. The acquisition of new farms was leveraged against existing farms and financed by a

series of bank loans. In 2009 the family business went into receivership. Meanwhile, they were also prosecuted for pollution offences and poor animal welfare. Receivers put a conglomeration of sixteen of the Crafar farms for sale on the international market. Few New Zealanders have the finance to purchase a conglomeration of dairy farms. Sale of the conglomeration of farms to the highest bidder in 2012, a Chinese overseas group, has been indirectly endorsed by a branch of the New Zealand government, the Overseas Investment Office thereby inculcating the government in the sale. The wider context reveals many capitalist and selfish attitudes.

It is pertinent to read the case of the Crafar farms in the light of Torah and Māori attitudes to land:

- land belongs to God,
- land holdings are not owned, they are an acquired right,
- land gives forth produce, but within limits,
- land cannot be sold in perpetuity.

More specific to Māori spirituality is the responsibility of guardianship over ancestral lands. Māori are obliged to care for their lands and protect the environment.

Furthermore ancestral Māori land cannot be sold. Land is not considered a sellable commodity. It does not belong to Māori living now— it is in their custodianship.

Ancestral land gives the Māori of today identity and livelihood as it did those who went before them and must do so for future generations.

More specific to the Torah is the idea of a social economic amnesty with the redistribution of wealth in Jubilee years. Effects of an enforced economic amnesty are—deterrence of long term land monopolies, reduction of the divide between the

advantaged and less-advantaged members of society, and also control of the human drive for ever increasing productivity from the land for financial gain.

Five points follow, reading the case of the Crafar farms in the light of Torah and Māori spirituality.

1. The idea of God as creator and owner of land is far from contemporary New Zealand government policy. (Land understood as something on loan or under the custodianship of people is a concept foreign to many New Zealanders. Rather, land is regarded as a major form of capital investment.)
2. By issuing loans and thereby permitting a conglomeration of dairy farms, the New Zealand banking system implicitly promotes land monopoly. (Land monopolies do not encourage the equal distribution of wealth.)
3. The sale of the Crafar farms to the Shanghai Pengxin Group robs future New Zealanders of an acquired right to the land sold. Land sold to overseas investors is no longer under the custodianship of people who live in this land. (Those selling the land have no right to sell the farms as it is an entitlement of future New Zealand generations as it was of past New Zealand generations.)
4. The bankruptcy of the Crafar farms was an ideal moment for the New Zealand government to implement a Jubilee year—that land is returned to its original tenants. (Two of the 16 Crafar farms are ancestral lands of Ngāti Rereahu. The government did not facilitate return of the farms as ancestral lands to Ngāti Rereahu in the good will of The Waitangi Tribunal for example. Leaders representing Ngāti Rereahu were prepared to pay for two farms, but the receivers and by implication the New Zealand government refused their offer.

Meanwhile, Ngāti Rereahu have attempted to purchase the two farms from the Shanghai Pengxin Group but their offer has been declined.)

5. Crafar farms were prosecuted several times for pollution offences. Discharging dairy effluent into waterways is not an example of environmental care.

Furthermore, poor animal welfare such as overstocking, resulting in inadequate feeding and underweight animals, is not responsible guardianship of the resources of the land.

A national awareness of land as something living and spiritual, that needs to be protected and cared for, is in its early stages in New Zealand. Māori spirituality and principles are a leading voice for issues related to land and environment in New Zealand.

Conclusion

To summarise, both Māori and Jewish ways of life originate in very old customs. Both ways are sensitive to what goes into the body and what comes out of the body, expressed through phrases such as “You are what you eat,” or “Don’t sit on the table.” Those who live and practise these ways do so physically. Māori experience different states of being with their body—from diminished being as a state of *noa* to *tapu*, the restoration of empowered being. Hebrew communities experience the state of purity or degrees of impurity with their bodies until the appropriate period of time has passed. God is experienced in a physical sense through the practice of Torah and *tikanga* laws. Some of these very old customs may seem antiquated to the logic of the Western mind—the counter energy between holiness and menstruation as impurity in Judaism,

or distress that a comb and an apple are on the same table in Māori spirituality.

Adapting these customs into relevant practices in the modern world is an on-going task for Māori and Hebrew communities. Having said that, some areas of Torah and Māori spirituality challenge us in today's society. Financial ideals of social equitability are proposed that we can strive for as citizens of our land. The environment needs to be protected so we can continue to breathe the air, drink the water and eat the food of our lands. These spiritualities open up to us the idea of a physical way to holiness and God.

Endnotes

¹ The use of macrons in Māori transliterations is based on John Moorfield ed. *Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary* (Auckland: Longman/Pearson Education, 2005).

² From Statistics 2009 New Zealand website:

www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/Māori/census_snapshot/Māori.aspx

³ Breaches of cult and holiness regulations can be disastrous in The Tabernacle Code. This is demonstrated with the death of two of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu who did not strictly adhere to cultic regulations (Leviticus 10:1-3).

⁴ The Land Sabbath and Jubilee instructions are often regarded as idealistic. See *The Torah: A Modern Commentary* edited by Gunther Plaut, 856, or *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* edited by Tamara Cohn-Eskenazi, 749.

⁵ The threat of death often follows collections of teachings in The Tabernacle Code with a refrain such as “shall be put to death” found in e.g., Exodus 31:14-15; 35:2; Leviticus 20:2,4, 9-16; 24:16-17, 21, 23, 29.

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