

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 2700  
WAI 2872

IN THE MATTER OF

The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

a claim by **Dr Leonie Pihama, Angeline Greensill, Mereana Pitman, Hilda Halkyard-Harawira and Te Ringahuaia Hata** (Wai 2872)

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**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF PROFESSOR RANGI MATAMUA**

**Dated this 31<sup>st</sup> day of May 2022**

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## MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL

### Introduction

1. Tērā ngā hihi o te rā ka mahuta i te pae o Manawarū, maunga tipua, maunga whakarongo kōrero; Ēī ko Te Umuariki. Kei raro rā ko te awa o Whakatāne, ko te wai whakaika o ngā mātua tīpuna. Ko te manawa o te ika a Maui, ko te kōhanga o Tūhoe, ko te mārua o Ruatāhuna. Ko Te Urewera hapū, ko Mataatua marae, ko Te Whai a te Motu te Ōhākī a Te Matua Tangata. Ko au ko Te Urewera, ko Te Urewera ko au.
2. Behold the rays of the sun rising above Manawarū, the ancestral mountain associated with Te Umuariki. Below is the sacred waters of the Whakatāne river. This is the heart of the fish of Maui, this is the origins of Tūhoe, this is the valley of Ruatāhuna. Te Urewera is my hapū, Mataatua is my marae and Te Whai a te Motu that house that was erected in honour of Te Kōoti. I am Te Urewera and Te Urewera is me.
3. My name is Rangi Matamua and I am a Māori Astronomer from the tribe of Tūhoe. I am a descendant of the union of Hine Pūkohurangi and Te Maunga. Hine Pūkohurangi is the mist maiden and is an atua wahine for the Tūhoe people. My whanaunga Te Ringahuaia Hata presented the whakapapa of Hine Pūkohurangi in her evidence at Tūrangawaewae in February.<sup>1</sup>
4. My research fields are Māori Astronomy and star lore, te reo Māori and Māori research. I completed my Master's degree through Massey University on Tūhoe weaponry and a Doctorate through Victoria University on the role of Māori radio in Māori language revitalisation. Currently I am employed as Professor Mātauranga Māori at Massey University, and I am the Chief Advisor Matariki and Mātauranga Māori to government.
5. I find it culturally and personally difficult to talk about myself and what I do. Therefore, I have attached my CV (see Appendix "A") for the panel to read. It includes all my published papers, essays and my work history.
6. Most of my time is spent sharing knowledge on Māori astronomy through my research and via different platforms, to help people to better understand the importance of

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<sup>1</sup> Power Point presentation of Te Ringahuaia Hata, Wai 2700, #A030(c) page 14

Māori celestial knowledge and its influence on culture, the environment and our modern world. I share this knowledge because I believe it is central in our cultural practice and can help guide us in our daily lives supporting healthier lifestyles and over all wellbeing. The mantra I believe in is,

*“Knowledge that isn’t shared, isn’t knowledge”<sup>2</sup>*

7. However, the purpose of my evidence before this Tribunal Panel is to present kōrero tuku iho, connected to Māori astronomy the Māramataka Māori – or Māori Calendar and the celestial bodies.
8. I whole-heartly believe that there is empirical science embedded within traditional Māori knowledge. However, in order to make this knowledge base meaningful to all people, and for it to have purpose, our ancestors encompassed it within cultural narratives, spirituality and tribal specific belief systems. In this manner the knowledge itself wasn't just seen as this clinical part of society that was devoid of any other connection to our world, rather it was included into everything. This wider cultural element gives Māori science deep and rich layers of meaning and purpose.
9. My kōrero today relates directly to atua Māori, in particular atua wahine, and the ongoing interaction between these deity and Māori. Specifically, my evidence will examine the various atua wahine that are embodied by the different astronomical bodies and the influence they have on the Māori world.
10. You would have already heard a significant body of evidence in this Inquiry in relation to the whakapapa of Ngā Atua Māori – Ngā Atua Wāhine from former witnesses in the last three hearings. You also heard from Dr Ngahuia Murphy about *Te Awa o Te Atua*, or the female menstrual period and the tapu and noa surrounded in that special time of our wāhine Māori. I now wish to introduce the influence of cosmology from a Te Ao Māori lens and how that relates to us.

## **TE WHĀNAU MĀRAMA**

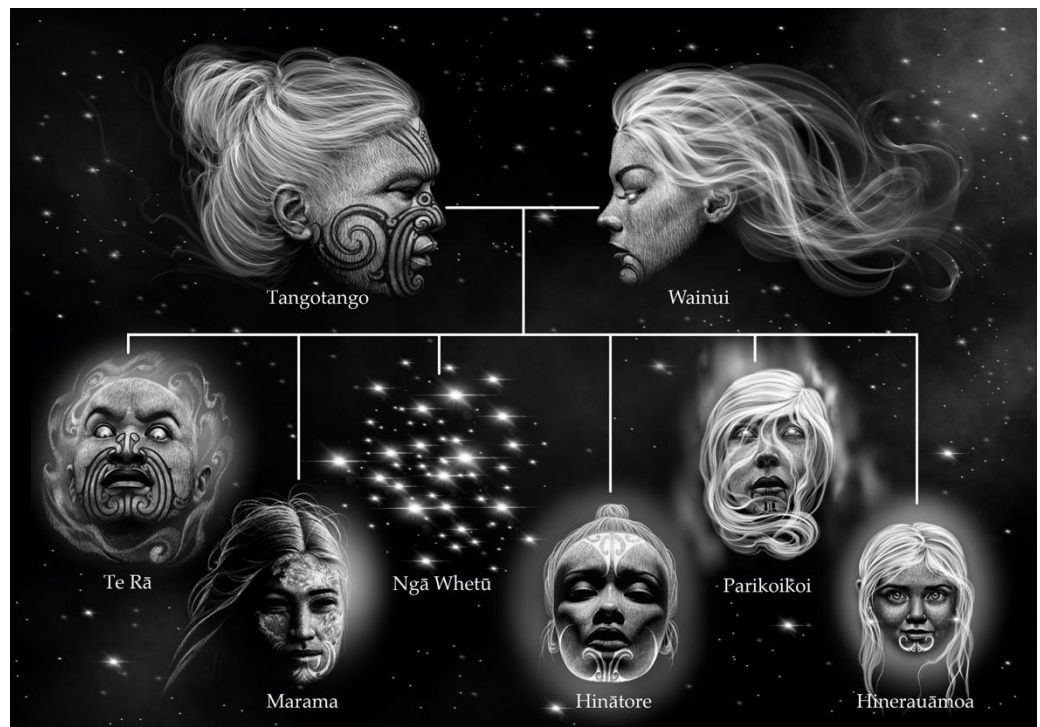
11. While there are variations in tribal records, my understanding is that the celestial objects are the children of Tangotango and Wainui. Tangotanga is male and is

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<sup>2</sup> My grandfather Jim Moses (Timi Rāwiri Matamua)

personified in the blackness that exists between the stars. Wainui is female and is embodied in all forms of water. Their children are the Te Rā (the sun), Te Marama (the moon), Ngā Whetū (the stars), Hinātoke (phosphorus light), Parikoikoi (gloomy light) and Hinerauāmoa (a small star). Collectively these beings are known as Te Whānau Mārama or the family of light, and all light in the universe emulates from these beings.

12. Whakapapa of Te Whānau Mārama



13. This genealogy clearly shows that the cosmos and all its objects is the result of a union between male and female elements, and a significant number of the Te Whānau Mārama are female, ie Wainui, Marama, Hinātoke, Parikoikoi, Hinerauāmoa and many of the stars themselves.

**THE SEASONS**

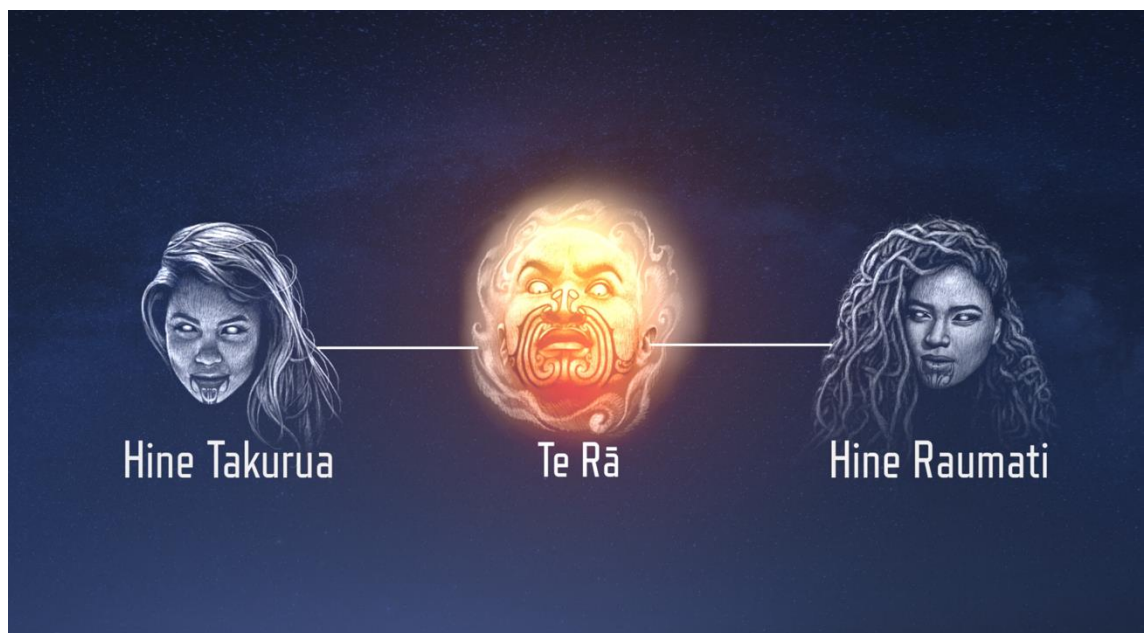
14. The seasons themselves are ruled over by atua wahine. Māori have 2 main seasons, summer and winter. The Māori word for season is tau, and while we often apply that word in a modern context to denote year, its origin is season.

15. The sun is said to have two wives, their names are Hineraumati (the summer maiden) and Hinetakurua (the winter maiden). These two beings are sisters and are the

daughters of Tangaroa akiukiu. They give their names to the seasons that they represent, raumati means summer and takurua means winter.

16. The sun is said to move between his two wives spending half the year with each. Hinetakurua lives far out in the ocean, and in the winter the sun rises in the nor'- east when Hinetakurua is seen in the morning sky. Hinetakurua is the star Sirius and the children of Hinetakurua and Te Ra are the different afflictions of winter including snow, hail and frost. Then in the summer the sun rises sou'- east and spend his days with Hineraumati. This atua wahine lives in the earth and her hair is said to be the tap roots of various root crops such as the kūmara. She provides water and nutrients and the sun gives light, and together they cause plants to grow. The children of Te Rā and Hineraumati are some summer phenomenon such as heat waves and even pollen.

17. Te Rā with Hinetakurua and Hineraumati



18. From this perspective the seasons occur because of the union between both male and female elements, with the sun being the central figure moving between his two wives. However, it is the atua wahine who rule over the actual seasons, determining the cold of winter and the heat of summer. Therefore, the Māori seasons are named after the atua wahine and not the sun.

## **THE MĀORI NEW YEAR**

19. Across Aotearoa, Māori tribes and communities celebrate the beginning of Te Mātahi o te tau, or the New Year, in conjunction with the heliacal appearance of certain stars, in particular Matariki and Puanga. Both of these stars appear in the pre-dawn sky around the same time during winter and different regions associate the visibility of these stars with the New Year. Both Matariki and Puanga are female stars, and they determine the bounty, productivity and major activities for the impending year.
20. Matariki and Puanga in the morning sky during winter marking te mātahi o te tau.

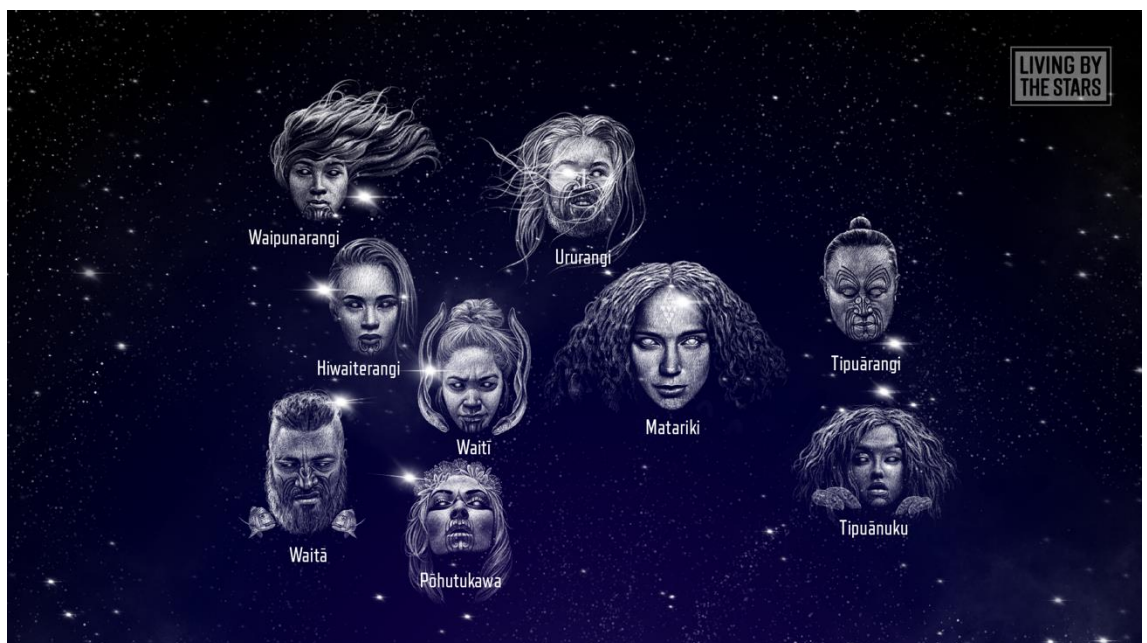


## **MATARIKI**

21. The name Matariki is an abbreviation of ‘Ngā mata o te ariki Tāwhirimātea’ – the eyes of the god Tāwhirimātea. Tāwhirimātea is the Māori god of the winds and weather and was close to his father Ranginui. When Ranginui, the sky father, and Papatūānuku, the earth mother, were separated from their dark embrace by Tāne, Tāwhirimātea was distraught and swore revenge. In an act of defiance, he tore out his eyes, crushed them in his hands and threw them skyward where they stuck to the chest of Ranginui. Therefore, Tāwhirimātea is the blind god, and he uses the winds to feel his way around the earth.
22. In my tribal narrative there are nine stars within the cluster of Matariki, while in other tribal versions there are seven. They are often described as seven sisters, or the six daughters of Matariki, yet I think this narrative originates from the Greek tradition of

the constellation, and there is no traditional evidence that endorses this position. The following are the names within the cluster as I understand them to be.

- a. **Matariki** (Alcyone) – the mother of the other stars in the constellation. Rehua (Antares) is the father but is not part of the Matariki constellation. She is connected to the wellbeing of all people and is a healer.
- b. **Pōhutukawa** – is the star the leads the dead of the year across the night sky (Sterope/Asterope).
- c. **Tupuānuku** – is associated with food grown in the ground (Pleione).
- d. **Tupuārangi** – represents food that comes from above your head such as birds and fruit (Atlas).
- e. **Waitī** – is fresh water and all the creatures within this domain (Maia).
- f. **Waitā**– means salt water and is associated with the oceans and its bounty (Taygeta).
- g. **Waipunarangi** – is rain (Electra).
- h. **Ururangi** – is wind (Merope).
- i. **Hiwaiterangi/Hiwa** – is the youngest star in the cluster, the star you send your wishes to (Celaeno).



23. There are both female and male stars within the cluster, and they bring balance to the different domains. For example, Tupuarangi is male and Tupuanuku is female. He is above her because the sky (Rangi) is above the earth (Nuku). Waitī is female and Waitā is male. She is above him because fresh water flows down to salt water.

Waipunarangi and Ururangi are female and male respectively and are situated above all the others because the rain and wind come from above. The two sacred stars in the cluster are Pōhutukawa and Hiwa-i-terangi. These two final stars are both females and are acknowledged as the sacred stars within the cluster. Pōhutukawa is responsible for carrying the spirits of the dead across the night sky night after night, month after month before they become stars in the cosmos at the rising of Matariki in the New Year. Hiwaiterangi is said to bless all people with wishes and represents the hope and promise of a new season and a new year. These crucial roles were entrusted to these atua wāhine and for this reason these two stars are tapu.

24. Our tīpuna/ancestors would look to Matariki to determine the bounty of the impending year. They would read the appearance of all the stars at the correct time and decide what the year ahead would bring. If one star is brighter than the others, food from that source would be plentiful or the weather would be good, but if a star is dim or missing, the outcomes represented by that domain associated with that star will be less productive in the coming year.
25. In my calendar system the Māori New Year starts when Matariki is visible during the Māori lunar month of Pipiri when the moon is in the last quarter phase (Tangaroa). These factors all come together to inform the Māori division of time, and at the heart of this system are the stars Matariki
26. Matariki is a framework for how people interact with the natural world. The different stars are associated with the various parts of the environment that are critical in our wellbeing. There are the food stars that represent kai from the earth, from trees and above our heads, from fresh water and salt water. There are stars that are related to wind and rain our main weather factors. There are also stars that are symbols for both life and death, that also represent the end of one year and the beginning of another. All these stars surround their mother, the atua wahine that is Matariki. She is the central star that holds the entire cluster together, supports the wellbeing of the stars in the cluster and of people on earth.

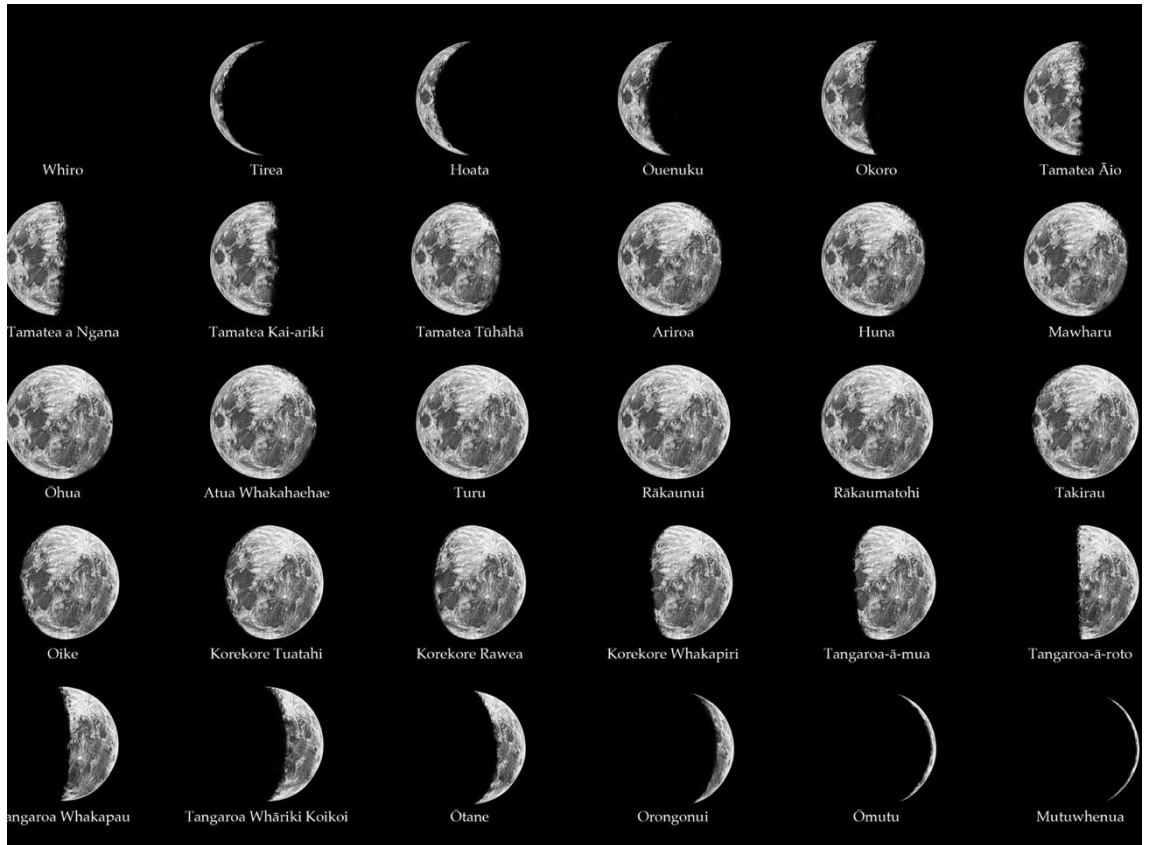
## **MARAMATAKA**

27. Often described as the lunar calendar, maramataka are more correctly defined as environmental calendars that use the lunar phases as a base line. Many factors feed



into this system including the position of the sun, helical stars, blooming of trees, spawning of fish, migration of birds as well as the changing phases of the moon.

28. For Māori the moon influences all activities including gardening, hunting, fishing, travel, birth and even death. Its influence on the environment and even the moods of people was noted by the ancestors of the Māori and was applied by communities to their unique region. These systems informed the community when they should be active or passive and what they could expect during the month.
29. There are many maramataka as they are founded upon the local environment, resources and climate. To date around 500 different maramataka have been recorded, and even the application of the systems, names for the phases and the meanings can vary. Most maramataka have 30 phases but there are variations from 28 to 32. The maramataka is built on a 354-day year and a 29.5-day lunar month. This means there is an 11-day difference between a lunar year and a solar year. Therefore, Māori applied the practice of intercalation, where an additional month was added into the calendar every 3 or so years to keep pace with the solar.
30. The moon is nearly always described as a female. There are a few times when the moon is said to portrays male behaviours, but this for the most part is uncommon. The names Marama, Maramahauakea, Hina, Hinapouri, Hinauri, Hinakeha, Māhina, Māhinarangi, Rona, Rongo and Hineteiwaiwa are at times used for the moon, and apart from Rongo, all of these names are female. They are also personifications of the various female deity who have a massive influence over the earth.
31. The influence of this atua wahine should not be underestimated. She rules over all day-to-day activities and events of men and women. Māori understood that Tangaroa is the guardian of the ocean, but it is the moon that controls the tides hence the proverb, Rona whakamau tai, Rona the controller of the tides. The impact of the moon further extended to all parts of the environment and on flora and fauna. Even the behaviours of people are influenced by the ever-changing cycle of the moon.
32. Lunar calendar with phases and names



## FEMALE STARS

33. The following is a small selection of atua wahine that are personified by stars. This list also includes the areas over which these stars hold dominion. The appearance of these stars and planets in particular parts of the sky during the year would determine the activity of the corresponding weather phenomenon, ecological event, or cultural and spiritual practice.

Whetū	Star	Domain
Kōpū	Venus	Marker of the 5 <sup>th</sup> month of the Māori year Sign of peace
Pareārau	Jupiter	Sex
Takero	Mercury	Migration and spawning of fish
Pani Tīnaku	Deneb	Germination of plants
Hinemataiti	HR 8079	Kiore (rats)
Takurua-whareana	Murzin	Snow
Takurua-parawai	Wezen	Frost
Takurua-āio	o Canis Major	Clam winter
Ngā whata	Alnilam	Food storage
Ruhi	Alniyat	Ripe food

Whakaongekai	τ Scorpius	Wilting crops
Taranga	υ Libra	Mother of Maui
Matitikaiwai	Mufrud	Evaporation
Hineraukatauri	γ Centaurus	Music and entertainment
Hineraukatamea	ο Centaurus	Music and entertainment

## WHITE NOISE IS RACISM

34. With the mass arrival of European settlers to Aotearoa in the 1800s and the ensuing onslaught of colonisation, many aspects of Māori culture were superseded and eventually lost to time. During this period, traditional Māori star lore ceased to be practiced to any great extent, and the final generation of tohunga kōkōrangī passed from this world, joining their ancestors to become stars adorning the night sky. During this time early New Zealand ethnographers such as Tregear, Cowan and Best spent time with a number of remaining astronomical experts recording pockets of information. Often these individuals were viewed as the experts in mātauranga Māori and used their research to determine the field of study and its contents.
35. In particular, Best's publication 'The Astronomical Knowledge of the Maori', was compiled from interviews with tohunga such as the revered Tūtakangahau of Maungapōhatu, and for nearly 100 years this work has remained as the most comprehensive collection of Māori astronomical knowledge available. Still, only fragments of the total knowledge base was chronicled, and Best himself stated that the entire information collected on Māori astronomy was 'meagre and unsatisfactory and the record on the subject should be closed.'
36. While the intent of these individuals may have been noble, they did have a significant impact of changing the traditional narrative based on their Eurocentric ideas and their individual opinions. One prime example of this is the translation of the name Matariki. As shown above Matariki is a shorten version of the name Ngā mata o te ariki Tāwhirimātea. Yet, Best translated this to mean little eyes, mata = eyes, riki = little. This translation is not supported by any evidence or referenced to any Māori source, and there is not a Māori narrative that affirms this translation. To this day the idea of

Matariki meaning little eyes continues to be promoted and endorsed across the country as the meaning of Matariki.

37. In these early publications the notion of female stars and the roles of atua wahine was somewhat dismissed. Important subjects like sex and sexuality, roles of female deity and their impact, the worship of the sun, moon and stars and the role of atua wahine in informing and influencing the community was often not recorded. Combined with the patriarchal nature of Christianity that took hold of Māori society during this era, all impacted on the traditional understanding of atua wahine who are personified in the stars.

### **RESTORING THE BALANCE**

38. The mana of atua wāhine and their importance in Māori society is clearly evidence within the Māori astronomical record and its related practice. From an astronomical perspective atua wāhine held mana over the seasons, weather phenomena, crops, fresh water, rain, the afterlife, the promise of a new season, the tides and so much more. The entire Māori division of time was driven by atua wāhine, in particular the moon which drives the maramataka and the stars Matariki and Puanga that mark the beginning of the Māori year. Many female stars were connected to different flora and fauna and influenced all human life and day to day activities. Atua wāhine informed Māori when they should work, rest, plant, fish hunt, how bountiful the impending season would be and even when they should engage in sex in order to conceive. Atua wāhine were tapu, held mātauranga and mana over various domains and they were an example of how life should be conducted here on earth
39. The saying 'kāore te Whānau Mārama e totohe i a rātau' means the astronomical bodies have no conflict but live in harmony. It is a saying that forwards the proposition that as a society we should live and behave like the sun, moon and stars. Key to their existence is balance especially between male and female elements. While the stars are different colours, sizes, are positioned in different parts of the sky and have their own gender, roles and responsibilities, they live in unity and peace because they have balance. There is respect for each other, there is respect for te mana o te wahine, there is respect for atua wāhine, there is respect for the female element and with this respect there is balance. This is a framework for how we should behave on earth. No one

gender or group should hold dominance over another, and all should be celebrated for the roles that they undertake that ensures the survival of the collective. The night sky is the example that we should strive to achieve.

## **CONCLUSION**

40. Atua wāhine and te mana o te wahine is an undeniable force within Māori society, and its influence is universal. This is very evident within the study and application of Māori astronomy where atua wāhine touch every single element of life and activity on earth. The astronomical bodies determined life on earth and even our understanding of the afterlife.
41. Te Whānau Mārama is an example of how we should conduct our lives in balance in order to live in peace and harmony. Respecting gender roles and the mana of everyone underpins this example. The stars do not know violence, disrespect, hate, oppression, segregation, inequality or conflict. These are human traits when we live without balance and understanding.

**Dated this 31<sup>st</sup> Day of May 2022**



Professor Rangi Matamua