

From creation of the universe to a whale rider: Exploring traditional tales in the digital promotion of New Zealand

Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts (JTHCA)
2021, Vol. 13 (3) pp 297-312
© The Author(s) 2021
Reprints and permission:
UiTM Press
Submit date: 02nd October 2021
Accept date: 06th December 2021
Publish date: 30th December 2021

Norhanim Abdul Razak*

School of Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management, COLGIS, Universiti Utara Malaysia
norhanim@uum.edu.my

Proposed citation:

Razak, N. A. (2021) From creation of the universe to a whale rider: Exploring traditional tales in the digital promotion of New Zealand. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 13(3), 297-312.

Abstract

The paper applied a content analysis method to examine how myths and legends have been employed by the promotional organization in portraying New Zealand on the official tourism website. The assessment of the website uncovered six main legends which have been presented in the promotion of New Zealand to potential tourists. These traditional tales have been incorporated into the website chiefly as part of Maori heritage attributes in which purakau (the Maori term for legends) represents among crucial aspects in understanding their worldviews and cultural identities. Legends narrating fishing voyages involving demi gods offers a mythological explanation of the origin of the geological formation of islands of New Zealand were presented more than once on the website. Among legends presented to readers on the websites encompass stories of Tane Mahuta, which depicts the tale of the sky father, the earth mother, and the creation of the world of light that humans live in today. Another unique legend, Paikea the whale rider, is featured as part of the description of a whale-watching attraction in Kaikoura, Christchurch. The overall analysis uncovered that legendary tales are incorporated into the website as the part historical origin of Maori people and in the promotion of several tourist attractions in New Zealand. From a tourism perspective, the representation of these tales enhances the appeal of destinations and making them more outstanding to visitors. The inclusion of the purakau offers tourists a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage of this country. Furthermore, Maori worldviews on the creation of the universe and formation of the natural environment are transpired. It is noticeable through these legends that Maori people strongly respect their ancestors and highly appreciated natural resources. Finally, the emphasis on environmental conservation and sustainability as ingrained in the tales further supported the overall promotional tagline of 100% Pure New Zealand and the inclusion of Tiaki Promise on the official tourism website.

Keywords: Myths, legends, New Zealand, tourism promotion, content analysis

1 Introduction

Tourism is considered an important industry to New Zealand or Aotearoa (a Maori name for New Zealand). In 2019, the tourism industry directly generated NZD 16.2 billion, which equivalent to 5.8% of the country's Gross Value Added (GVA) (OECD, 2021). In fact, the total value contributed by the tourism industry is estimated to be even bigger, as other industries that are supporting tourism have created an additional income of NZD 11.2 billion on top of the direct income from the tourism industry (OECD, 2021). In terms of tourist arrivals, it is reported that New Zealand received more than 3.8 million tourists in 2019 (Camper Champ, 2021). In comparison to 2018, this number has observed a slight rise of 0.7%. However, the issue of over-tourism has started to surface in the country's tourism industry, particularly at selected destinations populated by tourists. The indication of over-tourism has been discussed as New Zealand is regarded as a fairly small country, with its population was just approximately 4.9 million in 2019 (Laird, 2021). However, the tourism industry in New Zealand is not entirely dependent on international tourists. As a matter of fact, the contribution of domestic tourists to the country is considerably large. It is reported that domestic tourists have spent NZ\$23.7 billion annually or NZ\$47 million per day (Seeler & Lueck, 2020). Moreover, previous studies conducted before COVID-19 revealed that around 65% of kiwis were interested in traveling within their own country (Seeler & Lueck, 2020).

From some perspectives, the spread of the COVID-19 health pandemic might be a blessing as tourism has been blamed for overcrowding problems and causing negative impacts to the environment. The focus on natural resources and environmental protection has been incorporated as part of the promotion to draw international tourists to New Zealand (Hall, Mitchell & Keelan, 1992). As a country that places great concern on environmental sustainability, Tourism New Zealand has introduced the Tiaki Promise in 2018 (Tourism New Zealand, 2021). The Maori word 'tiaki' denotes protecting and caring for people and places. For potential tourists who have visited the website of Tourism New Zealand, they will come across the Tiaki Promise in the form of textual and video. It has been featured on the website since 2018 to create awareness to tourists that they have to be mindful during their visits (Leedham, 2019). As presented on the website, Tiaki Promise involved the action of asking tourists today to take care of New Zealand's natural resources, particularly land, sea and to respect local culture for the enjoyment of future generations. Moreover, its determination for environmental protection is reflected through its effort in generating funds. Starting from July 2019, international tourists to New Zealand are required to pay a levy of \$35 as part of the strategies to collect additional funds towards the conservation and sustainability of natural resources, which include wildlife protection (Laird, 2021).

There are numerous cultural heritage attractions that have been incorporated into tourism promotion to enhance the appeal of New Zealand to potential tourists, and these attractions include the traditional tales of Maori people. This issue is revealed in several previous studies (e.g., Hall et al., 1992; Carr, 2004; Fang, 2019), which shows that mythological and legendary stories are features of the tourism attractions marketed in

New Zealand. For example, Fang (2019) argues that intangible heritage, including myths and legends, are components of contemporary tourism attractions in New Zealand. He further elaborated that Maori mythological stories are among the country's core cultural resources and tourism products. It is acknowledged that previous studies such as Hall et al. (1992) and Carr (2004) have touched on topics related to mythology as parts of heritage tourism and environmental tourism development and products in New Zealand. However, this paper aims to fill in the gap by exploring how the official tourism organization of New Zealand has incorporated myths and legends in the digital promotion of this country as a tourist destination. In particular, it focuses on the types of traditional tales which have been chosen to be featured on the website and how these stories have been projected to potential tourists.

2 Literature Review

By nature, human beings are always drawn to natural resources with exceptional qualities (Luck, 2008) since a long time ago. Different types of natural resources, including mountains, lakes, forests, islands, and wildlife, are among the main tourist attractions in many countries around the world. In the context of New Zealand, these natural features have become assets in luring international tourists as well as local tourists. Since the early days after the arrival of the European settlers in the 1840s, this country has been well-known for its natural attributes (Luck, 2008). For example, the dominant image of New Zealand as pictured by the famous Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw during his visit in 1934 was closely associated with its main natural resources. For example, when he was asked about his perception of this country, Bernard Shaw claimed that there are too many sheep in New Zealand (Carden & Murray, 2010). Additionally, during his visit to the geothermal area known as Tikitere near Rotorua, he asserts that this place appeared like a gateway to hell (Luck, 2008; Lonely Planet, 2021). Based on his statements, as reported by previous scholars, it appears that the image he painted about the country was not entirely appealing at that time. However, he already recognized its nature-based assets. Over time, these resources, such as thermal springs, particularly the Hell Gate and sheep, have transformed into tourist attractions and an icon for New Zealand. Until today, New Zealand is famous for its nature-based tourist attractions such as lakes, mountains, forests, and wildlife.

In addition to natural resources, New Zealand has utilized images of cultural heritage characteristics particularly associated with its indigenous population, i.e., the Maori, to attract international tourists (Hall et al., 1992). It is argued that features of Maori cultural heritage formed a major identity of this country (New Zealand Government, 2021). In general, Maori heritage can be classified into three main categories: i) physical, ii) natural, and iii) intangible (New Zealand Government, 2021). Maori cultural heritage attributes such as *hangi* (feast), dance, and music are commonly employed to be presented to tourists (Hall et al., 1992). This demonstrates that intangible heritage features, as mentioned above, are among the important parts of tourism attractions in New Zealand.

Although the concept of ‘oral tradition’ appears slightly outdated in the modern era, the value of mythology, including mythological and legendary tales, cannot be overlooked in the context of history (Martins, 2012). As one source of historical knowledge, oral traditions convey various types of information such as arts, social aspects, religious and ritual features, moral values from generation to generation (Martins, 2012). In several parts of the world, it is evident that past European explorers and administrators show interest in oral tradition, particularly the traditional tales of the local inhabitants. This fact is apparent in literature published earlier, such as in the context of Malaysia or formerly known as Malaya (Maxwell, 1881; Skeat, 1900) and New Zealand (e.g. Simmons, 1969). It is revealed through these early works that former colonials and Western anthropologists were attracted to investigate Malay and indigenous myths as they are traces of magical elements, which allowed them to enrich their knowledge of the local cultural and spiritual beliefs. Similarly, Simmons (1969) claimed that European settlers and administrators found traditional Maori tales captivating, especially those narrating their origins and migrations. During the early days, past administrators believed that knowledge of traditional tales could expand their understanding of the native population of New Zealand.

The review of previous literature identified that there are great myths and legends narrating stories of the “fishing-up” and “throwing-down” in the area of the Pacific Islands (Nunn, 2003, 2021). Two of the main tales associated with fishing are the stories of Maui fishing up Te ika o Maui or New Zealand and Kupe who encountered New Zealand during his journey to catch a fish (Best, 1982 as cited in Paulin, 2007). According to Buckova (2014), one of the leading mythological figures, Maui, who appears in the fished-up legend, is also present in the traditional tales of the Polynesia region. In many of these legendary stories, Maui is usually portrayed to have an exceptional origin, and he is believed to be partially divine and partially human (Buckova, 2014). On the other hand, throwing down mythological stories presented within the Pacific region tell tales of a god or a higher rank individual who throw down or sprinkle ‘earth’ up above from a basket or a hand to the ground below to produce islands (Nunn & Pastorizo, 2007). From a geological perspective, the myths of being thrown down can be inferred as events of pouring down volcanic substances after eruption happened. Furthermore, the rich mythological stories found in the area of the Pacific Islands expand the geological knowledge and the possible danger of the Pacific Islands (Nunn & Pastorizo, 2007). It is claimed that the throwing down tales which may have been originated in the area of active volcanic regions were then transported to the non-active volcanic part of the Pacific and have been utilized to explain the origins of many islands. There are several myths and legends found in Oceania, including New Zealand and Australia, which are characterized by cetaceans such as dolphins and whales (Cressey, 1998). It is claimed that the Maori have formed a sacred connection with dolphins and whales since a long time ago. This is understandable as the Pacific Island area is mostly inhabited by seafaring communities, and the Maori people are intimately associated with the sea. The presence of fishes and mammals in the myths and legends of the Maori can be seen

from the tale of Maui fishing up the North Island and Paikea, who travelled to New Zealand on the back of a whale (Wehi, Cox, Roa & Whaanga, 2013).

Vitaliano (2007) argued that myths are closely linked to geology as human beings seek to justify or find answers for natural formations surrounding them. In illustrating his point, Vitaliano (2007) further provided evidence on how traditional local communities from around the world, including the Indian tribes in Wyoming to the Cook Islands in the South Pacific, offer mythological explanations for the unique geological formations found in their areas. Similarly, Hall et al. (1992) argued that the Maori offers an explanation of the natural occurrences through myths and legends based on their worldviews. One of the main characteristics of the Maori worldviews is that human has an intimate spiritual bond with the land and other natural elements such as plants, animals, water, air and minerals (Hall et al., 1992).

The significance of myths and legends has been hypothesized by past scholars and practitioners in the field of tourism marketing. For example, Boz (2020) proposed that the addition of mythological and legendary tales in tourism promotion enrich tourist experience and boost the appeal of destinations and sites. Moreover, it is argued that famous legends can play a major role in attracting tourists and can be used as a unique selling point to differentiate between tourist destinations (Reiss, 2006). From a tour guide perspective, myths and legends play crucial parts in their guiding task, especially in making storytelling lively (OURTOR, 2020). It is further argued that tour guides play significant roles in sustaining the myths and legends because visitors are usually more receptive and willing to listen to these traditional stories while touring their places of interest. It is easier to imagine these stories while they are present at the sites associated with myths and legends. Moreover, myths and legends are considered valuable to showcase the cultural heritage of a particular destination to tourists (OURTOR, 2020).

3 Methodology

A content analysis was adopted to assess how myths and legends have been presented and employed in marketing New Zealand on its official website. As posited by a number of distinguished scholars (e.g. Weber, 1990, Neuendorf, 2002, Krippendorff, 2004), this method is considered suitable and reliable to be used in examining communication or media content. This specific technique was selected as the assessment carried out in the paper involved studying the content of one category of promotional tools, a tourism website. The selection of this method is supported by a statement made by Hall & Valentin (2005), who claimed that content analysis could be employed to study the contents of the Worldwide Web. Previously, various communication and promotional means such as newspapers, magazines, brochures, videos, web pages and social media contents have been studied by researchers (e.g. Hou, 2017; Larmolenko & Schneider, 2016; Gillberg & Adolfsson, 2015) utilizing this method. From a holistic perspective, content analysis can be described as an assessment method commonly employed to analyze text (Duriiau, Reger & Pfarrer, 2007). Therefore,

it is suitable to be selected in the assessment of textual materials, either in the forms of printed or digital data available online. Although the content analysis was first started as a quantitative method, it has expanded to be applied in the qualitative analysis because it allows the researcher to understand particular issues better. This is possible as the technique required the researcher to carry out a systematic interpretation which creates structure even in the context of the considerable amount of data (Kleinheksel, Rockich-Winston, Tawfik & Wyatt, 2020). Identifying the structure of the data makes it more manageable for researchers to carry out their evaluation and allows them to uncover meaningful findings.

The process of content analyzing has involved undertaking several steps. Although there are some variations in the process of undertaking the content analysis method, several basic steps have been clearly mentioned by previous content analysts (e.g. Finn, Elliott-White & Walton, 2000; Neumann 2003; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The initial step was the selection of documents to be examined based on the research question formulated. In the context of this paper, the website of Tourism New Zealand has been chosen. The assessment of a tourism website rather than other modes of promotional tools is considered appropriate for the examination carried out in this paper, as many countries and destinations have developed tourism websites for national their official marketing purposes. It is notable that the use of the Internet, including a website, for the promotion and dissemination of destination images have been acknowledged and widely utilized in the tourism industry (Putra et al., 2018). Thus, it is timely to assess the content of the digital promotional material, particularly a tourism website. The second step was to determine the suitable unit of analysis to be analyzed in which the narrative of myths and legends presented on the website was selected. In the context of this paper, the unit of analysis formulated contains the narratives of traditional tales that featured supernatural beings and magical acts or events which happened in the past. These tales can be identified clearly in the promotional material through introductory statements.

The next stage in the assessment process involved the action of identifying how many traditional stories have directly manifested on the website. Although the assessment performed in this paper involved chiefly a qualitative evaluation, it was started with a quantitative review. Then, the type of tales selected to be presented on the website was determined. This is followed by further analysis of the latent contents of the tales based on the selection of the stories and values embedded in the narratives presented. Lastly, the way these stories have been projected on the website from the perspective of tourism was also assessed. Thus, on the whole, the narratives of myths and legends projected on the website were examined from both manifest and latent contents.

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Overall Findings

The assessment of the website developed by the official tourism promotional organization of New Zealand uncovered that there are six major myths and legends which have been incorporated into its digital projection. Firstly, these traditional tales have appeared in the descriptions of background information such as history, origin, and cultural heritage of the local population of this country. One key legend is presented twice in two sections of the website. One particular legend has been incorporated into the description of Maori arts. Secondly, there are stories that have been employed as parts of the description of natural resources and promotion of places of interest for tourists to visit.

4.2 The myth of Origin: Maui Tale

One of the tales featured on the website of Tourism New Zealand is the story depicting the origin of the country. This particular legend is presented in the background projection of the history of New Zealand. This legend depicting an adventure of a demigod known as 'Maui'. Based on the traditional belief of the Maori and Polynesia people, 'Maui' was a smart and talented demigod who, through a fishing trip, created the islands of New Zealand. As stated on the website, the narration of this tale mentions that Maui secretly joins his brother's fishing trip by hiding under the floorboard of the canoe. He waited until they were far away from the shore before showing himself. During this fishing trip, with the help of his brothers, Maui had caught 'Te Ika a Maui', or Maui's fish which is the North Island of New Zealand. This is one of the well-known legends in New Zealand which narrates that the North Island was fished up from the sea according to Maori's belief. Additionally, it is described that the South Island of New Zealand was formed from Maui's canoe, and Stewart Island was the anchor of the boat. A fairly long narration of the origin of New Zealand was presented on the website. These descriptions offer a Maori worldview of the origin of this country. Affirmation statements are also included in the website to support this worldview by stating that if a person takes a look at the geographical appearance of New Zealand, it is possible to see that the North Island resembles a fish by detailing the areas which make it look like a shape of fish. Similarly, the South Island appears like a canoe, as narrated in the legend.

4.3 Purakau the Maori Legends

Under the section classified as Maori Culture on the website, there is a section pertaining to Purakau or Maori Legends. On the top part of this sub-section, it is claimed that Maori people have an abundance of Purakau or legends. The core stories of Maori legends are presented in this sub-section. One of the key legends presented here again is 'Te Ika a Maui'. This tale involves the formation of the North Island of New Zealand. Similarly, the description of a demi-god who was mischievous and fearless who secretly joined the fishing voyage of his brothers. He only shows himself after they sailed far away from shore. Maui then was able to catch the biggest fish, which is the North Island.

This tradition is presented on the website as part of the promotion of Mount Hikurangi, which is located on the East Cape of the North Island. It is claimed that this place was the first part of the fish caught by Maui, which appeared from the ocean. Furthermore, the website states the local tribe Ngati Porou regarded Mount Hikurangi as a sacred site. This is due to the belief that they are the descendants of Maui. Additionally, this mountain is regarded as spiritually meaningful to the Ngati Porou as it is believed to be the final resting site of the Maui canoe in which he and his brothers had used for their fishing voyage as narrated in the legend.

Other attractions connected to the legend which can be found here are Maui carvings. These carvings can be visited on the way to the summit of Mount Hikurangi, which represents Maui and his family members. There are a total of nine carvings, with Maui being positioned in the middle. Tangible objects in the form of artistic carvings have been constructed to honor Ngati Porou ancestors, who also demonstrate that the legend of the fishing trip of Maui is an important part of their heritage. It is recommended by the website that if visitors who like to experience a meaningful trip to the site, they would need to hire a local tour guide. By doing so, they will listen to local legends first-hand from a Maori guide especially relating to Maui. This statement shows that Maori have actively participated in the tourism businesses in New Zealand, and they would like to keep their traditions alive and share them with tourists.

In addition to Mount Hikurangi, the description of the Aoraki Mount Cook National Park integrated a traditional Maori tale. This national park is an important tourist attraction as it is home to the highest mountains and the longest glaciers in New Zealand. The tale featured as part of the description of this mountain narrates the traditional belief associated with its formation. Based on Ngai Tahu legend, after the canoe of Aoraki and his brothers were capsized, the cold wind of the south had transformed them into stone. The canoe turned into the South Island or Te Waka o Aoraki which means the canoe of Aoraki. Aoraki and his brothers then turned into the summits of the Southern Alps. This legend is also connected to the first tale discussed in the findings section.

A legend connected to Tane Mahuta, who is the Lord of the Forest, is another tale projected on the website. This tale is added in the promotion of the Waipoua Forest, located in the Northland region. It is believed that Tane Mahuta is the biggest Kauri tree in the world. The story of Tane Mahuta is a widely recognized legend in New Zealand as it is believed that he created the world of light. As depicted on the website, Tane Mahuta is an outstanding mythological figure in the worldview of Maori. Legend says that Tane Mahuta, the eldest of six siblings, was weary of living in the darkness locked in between Ranginui (i.e., the sky father) and Papa-tū-ā-nuku (i.e., the earth mother). He then pushes them from each other. By separating them apart, he produced the world of light. The world of light is actually the world we as humans live in presently. As reflected in the description of the forest, the main attraction associated with Tane Mahuta is actually the largest kauri tree that can be found there. Some of the kauri trees which can be found here are estimated to be more than 2000 years old. It is maintained that

among the oldest and highly valuable trees are referred to as Tane Mahuta, who is considered the well-known God of Forest. The tale of Tane Mahuta is a type of legend depicting the creation of the universe.

Another story featured on the website is the renowned love tale in the country. This legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekai is considered the New Zealand version of Romeo and Juliet. This tale is included in the description of the Island of Mokoia, which is situated in the middle of Lake Rotorua. The website claimed that this island is the best location to hear this love story, where the actual event took place a long time ago. This legend tells a story between a beautiful young lady named Hinemoa who lived on the eastern side of Lake Rotorua and Tutanekai, who stayed with his family on Mokoia Island. She was the daughter of a powerful leader and therefore considered as sacred or pūhi in which a suitable partner for her would be chosen by her tribe. However, Hinemoa fell in love with Tutanekai, a good-looking young man who was skillful in using the weapon. Yet, Tutanekai was not suitable to marry Hinemoa due to his lower social status. As a way to express his sorrow, Tutanekai would play his flute at night from the shore of Mokoia Island. As Hinemoa people realized the love between these two, they placed the heavy canoes further up the beach to prevent her from using them to go out and meet Tutanekai. Due to her strong love, Hinemoa used empty gourds to help her swim to Mokoia Island, guided by the sound of the flute played by Tutanekai. When she reached Mokoia Island, she warmed herself at the hot pool located on the island after swimming in the cold water. These two lovers finally met, and this legend had a happy ending after the Hinemoa tribe finally accepted Tutanekai as her husband.

One of the places of interest marketed in the promotion of Lake Rotorua is Mokoia Island. It is stated that visitors will be able to visit this island on a guided tour. During their visits to this island, visitors will have the opportunity to soak into a Waikimihia, which is also widely known as Hinemoa's pool today. It appears that this famous legend in New Zealand has been presented elaborately on the website by Tourism New Zealand. This love story can boost the attractiveness of Lake Rotorua and Mokoia Island in luring tourists as they will be able to visit sites associated with the legend. Moreover, the legend between Hinemoa and Tutanekai has been incorporated into promoting a destination commonly associated with Maori, which can accentuate their competitive edge in attracting tourists interested in experiencing Maori cultural heritage.

Another tale that is manifested as part of Maori cultural heritage is the story of Paikea the Whale Rider. This legend offers an explanation of how the ancestor arrived at the new world. "Māori legend tells the story of the ancestor Paikea who journeyed to a new life in New Zealand on the back of the whale Tohorā" (Tourism New Zealand, 2021). Advertisement for tourists who are interested in going for a whale watching experience is also included. It is mentioned that tourists can go whale watching at the Coast of Kaikoura located on the South Island. If tourists join the whale watch tour in Kaikoura, they would be able to observe the importance of the sea to the local Maori and watch up close the wildlife attractions and listen to the stories of Paikea and other tales directly. This unique tale exposes the intimate relationship between humans and

their ancestors and the world of nature. It is further explained that the natural environment should be respected rather than manipulated for the sake of profits.

4.4 Maori Arts

A legend associated with Pounamu is also featured on the website. Pounamu is the greenstone of New Zealand, which can be found on the South Island. It is an important art form and presented as part of Maori cultural heritage in the promotion of this country. A legend incorporated as part of this precious stone recounted a story of Taniwha Poutini, who was the protector of pounamu. Legend says that he was in love with a married woman named Waitaki. He then ran away with her. As he was afraid that he would be caught by her husband and his people, he turned her into pounamu and placed her in the river located at the intersection between the Arahura River and a stream named Waitaki. Until today, these streams are famous for pounamu stone. In illustrating the significance of this stone, it is added on the website that the Maori really treasured Pounamu as it carries spiritual meaning to them. For Maori, Pounamu carries symbolic values linked to their ancestors, natural environment, or specific features such as power, wealth, status, love, and peace for wearers. These valuable stones are often carved and designed as a necklace or a pendant. Beliefs associated with these precious stones are also mentioned on the website. It is reminded that people should not be buying these stones or design them for themselves as pounamu should be gifted between two persons. These stones show the relationship between the natural environment and ancestors. As part of an image to showcase a river on the west coast of New Zealand, an aspect of mysticism and adventure has been added. It is claimed that the river appears mysterious and wild, and therefore it is not surprising this treasured greenstone can be found here. It is common to inject element mysticism in the portrayal of myths and legends. Refer to Table 1.1 for Summary of Classification of New Zealand Myths and Legends.

Table 1: Classification of New Zealand Myths and Legends

	Myths & Legends	Location	Type of Story	Values Ingrained	Tourist Attraction
1.	Maui	Background information on New Zealand	Fishing adventure involving supernatural beings	Traditional values depicting formation of the natural resources	Origin of New Zealand
2.	'Te ika a Maui'	Mount Hikurangi, Northland	Fishing adventure involving supernatural beings	Traditional values depicting formation of the natural resources	Mountain & carving
3.	Tane Mahuta	Waipoua Forest, Northland region	Tale of the Lord of the Forest	Creation of the universe. Human relationship with past ancestors	Forest

					and the spiritual world
4.	Aoraki and his brothers' legend	Aoroki Mount Cook	Sea voyage involving supernatural beings	Traditional values depicting the formation of the natural resources	Mountain
5.	Hinemoa and Tutanekai	Lake Rotorua & Island of Mokoia	Forbidden love story	Love story depicting courage and bravery Social status value	Island and lake
6.	Paikea the Whale Rider	Coast of Kaikoura, South Island	Human & whale	Relationship between human and a whale. Respecting nature, including wildlife	Wildlife tourism
7.	Pounamu	Arahura River and Waitaki West Coast of South Island	Forbidden love story	Relationship with ancestors and natural environment	Maori arts a river and a stream

4.5 Discussion

One of the key findings of this paper is that fishing up legend has been incorporated into the official website in supplying background information of the origin of New Zealand to potential tourists. Indirectly, this finding revealed the significance of fishing to the traditional communities of New Zealand. The finding confirmed the previous claim that various traditional tales in New Zealand revolved around fishing expeditions, including voyages made by Maui and Kupe (Best, 1982 as cited in Paulin, 2007). Furthermore, this core legend was represented on the website more than once, thus supports the statement made by Nunn (2003) that among the common mythological stories found in the South Pacific region are 'fished up' and 'thrown down' tales. Therefore, a legend narrating a fished-up story appeared as one of the primary tales recounted in New Zealand, particularly among the Maori. In the past, fishing was not only an important activity to acquire food for the local Maori, but it is a spiritual act in which fish were viewed as the descendants of the god of the sea (Meredith, 2006). Due to this reason, it is reasonable that a tale recounted a fishing voyage involving demi-gods had been part of their intangible heritage, explaining the origin of New Zealand. This finding supported the claim made by previous scholars that oral tradition, including myths and legends, have formed parts of historical information (Martins, 2012). Furthermore, fishing tales appeared as part of the Maori legendary stories as New Zealand is an island country where fishing is one of the main traditional activities for the locals since a long time ago. This finding is parallel with the statement that the

indigenous population of New Zealand has been strongly attached to the sea for ages, and it is customary for seafaring communities to have traditional tales involving fishing voyages (Wehi et al., 2013). Thus, findings of this paper in which the main legends featured on the tourism website depict stories involving fishing journeys are well supported by previous scholarly studies.

As implied in the legendary tales, Maori cultural heritage attributes appear relatively significant in forming the identity of New Zealand. Despite its modernization as a Western country, elements of Polynesia traditions are obviously presented as part of New Zealand culture. This is supported by a point made by Martins (2012), which states that Maori social and artistic values are often noticeable with mythological and legendary tales narrated in the country. For example, the importance of social status in the traditional Maori marriage is evident in the legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekai. It is shown that the marriage of high-rank maiden will be arranged and decided by their people. Moreover, the value of *Pounamu* as Maori arts is demonstrated in the description, which accompanied the narrative of this legend. On the website, tourists are advised not to buy these stones as they have spiritual beliefs attached to them. Although these stones are commercially sold to be used as jewellery in New Zealand, culturally, they should be gifted or inherited.

As mentioned in the literature review section, natural resources are among the main tourist attractions promoted in New Zealand, as presented on the website. In fact, since the early days, the association of tourism with nature was strong, as shown by the remark made by Bernard Shaw during his visit in 1934. It appears that that the presence of myths and legends associated with these natural resources act as a bonus in their promotion. Places or sites with rare tales have a competitive advantage as they possess more power to attract tourists. Moreover, it is stated in the literature section that tourists are more interested in listening to stories than facts and figures during their visits. This is because their tours will be livelier and more memorable with the inclusion of myths and legends, as many of these tales contain supernatural and magical aspects. In fact, well-known myths and legends can stimulate further development to places and sites associated with tales, as evident in the context of Maui and Hinemoa and Tutanekai legends. From a holistic viewpoint, the inclusion of rare myths and legends on the website to market tourism in New Zealand boosts the current tagline of 100% Pure New Zealand by highlighting its uniqueness as a tourist destination. These traditional tales also further supported the Tiaki Promise which is recently adopted as part of the promotional effort as some legends promote environmental protection and sustainability.

Overall, the findings of this paper contribute to expanding the knowledge in the field of tourism mythology by detailing how myths and legends have been featured in the fairly new means of tourism promotion, the website, particularly in the context of New Zealand. The type of stories that have been chosen and how these tales have been presented in the promotion of tourism attractions have been discussed in the paper. From a practical point of view, the findings reveal to destination marketers how Tourism

New Zealand effectively integrated Maori legends or *purakau* into the official tourism website. Interestingly, the inclusion of traditional tales suits the overall image of this country as a tourist destination and the recent pledge for environmental sustainability via Tiaki Promise.

5 Conclusion

This paper analyzed how myths and legends have been employed in promoting New Zealand as a tourist destination by its official tourism organization in the current website. The assessment of the digital content of the website was carried out using a content analysis method. The findings of this paper uncovered that there are six traditional Maori tales that have been selected and presented on the website of Tourism New Zealand. Legends depicting tales of Maui, Aoroki, Tane Mahuta, Hinemoa, and Tutanekai, Paieka the whale rider, and *Pounamu*. The legend narrating the fishing adventure of the demi god, Maui, which appeared more than once on the website, reveals the significance of the traditional worldviews of the geological formation of this country. As the country is surrounded by sea, the importance of fishing and canoes to local communities in the past is indirectly projected via this tale. Some of the legends manifested on the website are well-known traditional stories often narrated in New Zealand. From a tourism perspective, the inclusion of legends or *purakau* improves the appeal of several nature-based destinations such as national parks, mountains, and lakes in the country. Some of the core Maori worldviews and values reflected through the narratives of the legends include upholding respect to their ancestors and maintaining a good relationship with the natural world. The importance of environmental protection and sustainability of natural resources is integrated into the description of a few legends parallel with the Tiaki promise that has been added to the website. All in all, it is apparent that Maori cultural heritage features, including legends, have been utilized by Tourism New Zealand to enhance the portrayal and the identity of this country as a tourist destination on its current website.

6 References

- Boz, M. (2020). Myths and legends in destination tourism marketing: The story of hero and leander-Canakkale, Turkey. In: I. Coskun, A. Lew, N. Othman, G. Yüsek, & S. Aktas (Eds.), *Heritage tourism beyond borders and civilizations*. Singapore: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-981-15-5370-7_1
- Buckova, M. (2014). Analysing the origin of Māui the semi-divine trickster in Polynesian mythology. *SOS* 13(2), 155-174.
- Camper Champ (2021, March 30). *New Zealand Tourism Statistics*. <https://camperchamp.com.au/statistics/new-zealand/>
- Carden, S. & Murray, C. (2010). *New Zealand unleashed: the country, its future and the people who will get it there*. Auckland: Penguin Random House.
- Carr, A. (2004). Mountain places, cultural spaces: The interpretation of culturally significant landscapes. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 12 (5), 432-459.

- Cressey, J. (1998). Making a splash in the Pacific: Dolphin and whale myths and legends of Oceania. *Rapa Nui Journal*, 12: 75-84.
- Duriau, V. J., Reger, R. K. & Pfarrer, M. D. (2007). A content analysis of the content analysis literature in organization studies: Research themes, data sources, and methodological refinements. *Organizational Research Methods*, 10(5), 5-34. doi: 10.1177/1094428106289252
- Fang, Y. (2019). 'Kia Ora': Cultural tourism, language revitalization & 'Te Reo Māori'. (Unpublished master's thesis) Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Finn, M., Elliott-White, M. & Walton, M. (2000). *Tourism & Leisure Research Methods: Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation*. Essex: Pearson.
- Gillberg, N. & Adolfsson, P. (2015). Proud to be pride: A content analysis of city websites. *The International Journal of Community Diversity*, 14(3), 1-13.
- Glastonbury and the legend of King Arthur* (Unpublished master's thesis). Bournemouth University, United Kingdom.
- Hall, C. M. & Valentin, A. (2005). Content analysis. In: B. W. Ritchie & P. Burns, P. (Eds.), *Tourism research methods: Integrating theory with practice* (pp. 191-209). Wallingford: CAB International.
- Hall, C. M., Mitchell, I. & Keelan, N. (1992). Maori culture and heritage tourism in New Zealand. *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 12, 115-128. doi: 10.1080/08873639209478414.
- Hou, Z. (2017). Comparison study of advertising videos of tourism city image-based on the content analysis method. *EURASIA Journal of Mathematics Science and Technology Education*, 13(10):6837-6846. doi: 10.12973/ejmste/78521
- Hsieh, H. F. and Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.
- Kleinheksel, A. J., Rockich-Winston, N., Tawfik, H., & Wyatt, T. R. (2020). Qualitative research in pharmacy education: Demystifying Content Analysis. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 84 (1).
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Laird, S. (2021, March 29). New Zealand readies tourism industry for sustainable return. *Travel Pulse*. <https://www.travelpulse.com/news/destinations/new-zealand-readies-tourism-industry-for-sustainable-return.html>
- Larmolenko, S. & Schneider, P. (2016). Destination image representation online: Content analysis of Ukraine travel related websites. *Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally*. 10. <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ttra/2010/Visual/10>
- Leedham, M. (2019, April 29). Show your love for NZ: Will you take the 'Tiaki Promise' before you arrive? *Travel to Change the World*. <https://traveltochangetheworld.com/love-for-nz-will-you-take-the-tiaki-promise-before-you-arrive/>
- Lonely Planet (2021). *Hell's Gate: Natural feature in Rotorua Lakes*. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/new-zealand/rotorua-lakes/attractions/hells-gate/a/poi-sig/1173131/1320077>

- Luck, M. (2008). Tourism in protected areas: A New Zealand perspective. In: In C. Eilzer, B. Eisenstein, & W. G. Arlt (Eds.). *National parks and tourism: Answers to a global question from the international competence network of tourism management (ICNT)* (pp.101-119). Martin Meidenbauer Verlag.
- Martins, N. U. (2012). The positions of oral tradition (myths, mythology and legends in historical records). *International Conference on Humanity, History and Society*, IPEDR, 4, 159-161.
- Maxwell, W. E. (1881). The folklore of the Malays. *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (7), 11-29.
- Meredith, P. (2006). Te hī ika - Māori fishing - Tools, grounds and methods. *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/te-hi-ikaMāori-fishing/page-2>
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Neumann, W. L. (2003). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 5th edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- New Zealand Government (2021, June 8). *Māori culture and heritage*.
- Nunn, P. D. (2003). Fished up or thrown down: The geography of Pacific Island Origin Myths. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 93(2). doi: 10.1111/1467-8306.9302006
- Nunn, P. D. (2021). O cei na vulavula? Insights and regrets of a foreign geoscientist in the Pacific Islands. *Geosciences*, 11, 182. doi: org/10.3390/geosciences11050182
- Nunn, P. N. & Pastorizo, M. R. (2007). Geological histories and geohazard potential of Pacific Islands illuminated by myths. In: L. Piccardi & W. B. Masse (Eds.), *Myth and Geology (143-163)*. London: The Geological Society of London.
- OECD (2021). *Tourism Trends and Policies 2020*. <https://www.oecdilibrary.org/sites/e9d9a2e0-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/e9d9a2e0-en>
- OURTOR (2020, July 30). The importance of myth and legend while travelling. <https://www.ourtor.com/post/the-importance-of-myth-and-legend-while-travelling>
- Paulin, C.D. (2007). Perspectives of Maori fishing history and techniques. *Tuhinga*, 18, 11-47.
- Putra, F. K. K., Saepudin, P., Adriansyah, E., & Adrian, I. G. A. W. (2018). Digital tourism: A content analysis of West Java tourism websites. *Journal of Indonesian Tourism and Development Studies*, 6(2), 73-84. doi: 10.21776/ub.jitode.2018.006.02.02
- Reiss, S. (2006). *Legends as unique selling proposition for the marketing of destinations: The case of Glastonbury and the legend of King Arthur*. (Unpublished Master thesis). Bournemouth University.
- Seeler, S. & Lueck, M. (2020, May 4). The coronavirus survival challenge for NZ tourism: affordability and sustainability. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/the-coronavirus-survival-challenge-for-nz-tourism-affordability-and-sustainability-137256>
- Simmons, D. R. (1969). A New Zealand myth: Kupe, Toi and the 'Fleet'. *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 3(1): 14-31.
- Skeat, W. W. (1900). 74. Report on Cambridge Exploring to the Malay Provinces of Lower Siam. *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 73-77.
- Tourism New Zealand (2021, July 2). *Tiaki – Care for New Zealand*. <https://www.tourismnewzealand.com/tools-for-your-business/tiaki-care-for-new-zealand/>
- Vitaliano, D. B. (2007). Geomythology: geological origins of myths and legends. *Geological Society*, 273 (1): 1-7. doi: 10.1144/GSL.SP.2007.273.01.01
- Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic content analysis*. London: Sage.

Wehi, P., Cox M., Roa, T. & Whaanga, H. (2013). Marine resources in Maori oral tradition: He kai moana, he kai ma te hinengaro. *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures*, 2, 59-68.