

# waka kuaka

The Journal of the Polynesian Society

VOLUME 132 No. 4, DECEMBER 2023



The Polynesian Society

Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland, New Zealand

kīkau	coconut frond (Cook Islands Māori)
mana	spiritual power
māpū	young woman (Cook Islands Māori)
pe‘a	flying fox
talanoa	discussion
tama‘ita‘i Sāmoa	Sāmoan woman
taupou	village maiden
tausi matua	caring for your elders
tautalaitiiti	talking above your age, status, experience; implies a form of rebellion or independence, suggesting a departure from expected norms and a willingness to assert one’s own thoughts and opinions
tautua	service
Teine Sā	spirit women
vā	relational space

<https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.132.4.519-523>

MACKINTOSH, Lucy: *Shifting Grounds: Deep Histories of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2021. 300 pp., ack., ed. notes, gloss., illus., image sources, index, maps, notes. NZ\$59.99 (hardcover).

HONE THORPE

*Nō Puketapu o Te Āti Awa ki te Tonga*

*Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland*

*Shifting Grounds* by Lucy Mackintosh is a meticulously crafted exploration of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland’s history that delves into intricate layers of detail and nuance. Mackintosh adroitly unwraps the complexity within the interactions between Māori, missionaries and colonisers, revealing a narrative that evolves over time. The initial optimism of the meeting between colonisers and tangata whenua (Indigenous people) transforms into a web of challenges and conflicts, leaving a lasting imprint on the landscape, both obvious and subtle.

The book conveys a profound theme of interconnectedness, aptly echoed by a tauparapara (incantation to begin a speech) shared by Rāpata Newson, a respected figure at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum. The essence of “tūi tūi tui-tuia / tuia i runga, tuia i raro / tuia i waho, tuia i roto” (sew, sew, sew-to be sewn / to be sewn above, to be sewn below / to be sewn from the outside, to be sewn from the inside) reflects the binding thread that ties all individuals and communities to the historical fabric of Auckland. This theme resonates as Mackintosh expertly exposes the many

narratives concealed within the layers of the city's history, voices left behind by generations etched into the land itself.

From the ancient terraces and rock walls to the stories and artefacts that echo through time, Mackintosh reveals the silent voices of successive communities spanning seven centuries. Each layer tells a story of survival and adaptation within the volcanic landscape of Tāmaki-makau-rau. While some tales are uplifting, others carry a sombre note, unveiling the struggles faced by marginalised communities that didn't neatly fit into Auckland's collective identity.

The narrative follows key figures such as Te Rangitāhua Ngāmuka, a highly respected chief from the Ngāti Tamaoho tribe who moved from the far shores of the Manukau Harbour to Ihumātao and welcomed Wesleyan missionaries to set up their village. He was christened Jabez Bunting or Ēpiha Pūtini. His ethical leadership and commitment to justice reveal a complex and compassionate approach to navigating colonial influence. Mackintosh takes the reader through pivotal moments, such as the use of Christianity for personal dignity and empowerment and the gradual disillusionment of Māori leaders like Pūtini with the colonial promises of unity.

Pūtini saw the Queen (Victoria) as being from a "straight" place but her children, the colonial administrators, as being from a "crooked" place. He had personally experienced the breaking of te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) on more than one occasion. Initially hopeful, his aspirations of harmony and oneness with the colonisers were dashed.

The book also poignantly highlights the gradual erosion of te Tiriti on Auckland's very soil. The breaches of the treaty are engraved into the land, where promises were broken and attitudes toward Māori reflected in the later treatment of the Chinese community. Mackintosh masterfully weaves these layers, uncovering a profound and interconnected history.

Numerous other prominent individuals lend their weight to the diverse array of narratives within this historical tapestry. Among them are figures of considerable significance, including governors Fitzroy and Grey and esteemed chiefs like Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, Āpihai Te Kāwau and Pāora Tūhaere. Noteworthy contributions also stem from individuals such as market gardener Chan Ah Chee, whose legacy extends through a descendant who laid the foundation for the renowned Foodtown supermarket chain, and the enterprising property developer John Logan Campbell. This is but a mere glimpse into the constellation of influential figures. Many more iwi (tribal) representatives and settlers also play pivotal roles in shaping the intricate stories that unfold.

The production quality of the book itself is exceptional, mirroring the depth of its content. The sturdy paper and intricate maps not only support the

narrative but serve as treasures in their own right. The photographs punctuate the historical journey, capturing the essence of the eras they represent.

*Shifting Grounds* is a captivating read that demands revisiting. Each reading uncovers new layers and nuances, enriching the understanding of Auckland's intricate tapestry of history. Lucy Mackintosh's work stands as an enduring resource for scholars, educators, local historians and policymakers alike. Through her meticulous research and thoughtful presentation, she has created a work that will undoubtedly educate and enlighten generations to come. This book is a must-have for all bookshelves.

<https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.132.3.523-525>

