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The Journal of the Polynesian Society

VOLUME 133 No. 3, SEPTEMBER 2024



The Polynesian Society

Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland, New Zealand

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THE JOURNAL OF THE POLYNESIAN SOCIETY

Volume 133 SEPTEMBER 2024 Number 3

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Published quarterly by The Polynesian Society (Inc.),
Auckland, New Zealand

Cover image: ’Ahu heva tūpāpa’u headdress, mask and breast crescent components. Photograph by Pauline Reynolds, 2022. Courtesy Perth Museum, Culture Perth & Kinross, Perth, Scotland.

Published in Aotearoa New Zealand by The Polynesian Society (Inc.)

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ISSN 2816-1599 (online)

Indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, Informit New Zealand Collection, Index New Zealand, Anthropology Plus, Academic Search Premier, Historical Abstracts, EBSCOhost, MLA International Bibliography, JSTOR, Current Contents (Social & Behavioral Sciences), ERIH PLUS.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

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Julie Field is an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology at the Ohio State University. Her research is focused on the prehistory of tropical Pacific Islands, specifically the engagement of human societies with island ecosystems. Using geosciences, zooarchaeology and geographic information systems, she explores how Pacific Islanders produced food and generated resilient socioecological systems. Her research has been funded by awards from the National Science Foundation and communicated widely via the publication of over 55 articles and books. She is currently engaged in a collaborative project that seeks to understand how Hawaiians used microbes to manage ancient fishponds, with the goal of applying that knowledge to modern restoration and management. She serves as co-editor for *Asian Perspectives: The Journal of Archaeology for Asia and the Pacific*.

Richard Hamasaki is a poet and independent filmmaker and producer who has been active in Hawai'i's literary and arts community for 50 years, collaborating with creatives locally, regionally and internationally. In 1976, he independently published seven issues of *Seaweeds and Constructions*, an art and literary magazine ending its run after the tragic death of his friend, mentor and co-editor, Wayne Kaumualii Westlake (1947–1984). After 40 years of teaching language arts in Hawai'i, Richard resumed producing and directing mostly poetry-based films. In 2024, Richard gifted Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum his extensive Hawai'i/Pacific library along with his and his brother Mark Hamasaki's silkscreens, printed matter, selected photographs and more from their 'Elepaio Press collective. Richard Hamasaki identifies as Sansei, a grandchild of Japanese immigrants to the US continent and the occupied Hawaiian Islands.

Lucy Mackintosh is a senior research fellow, and formerly curator of war and social history, at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum. Over the last 25 years, she has researched and written extensively on history, heritage and material culture in Auckland, New Zealand, and around the world, including publishing work on taonga (cultural treasures) acquired by American traders visiting the Pacific in the nineteenth century. She recently published the multi-award-winning book *Shifting Grounds: Deep Histories of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland* (Bridget Williams Books,

2021). Over the last year, she has been drawing on Auckland Museum collections to create digital resources that explore the long and varied histories of Auckland to help schools and kura (Māori-language schools) teach the newly introduced compulsory Aotearoa New Zealand history curriculum.

Terry Malinowski has dedicated much of his life to cross-cultural learning and healthcare. After earning a degree in engineering, he embarked on a transformative journey by joining the Peace Corps in 1970. For six years, he lived on the island of Pohnpei in the South Pacific, an experience that profoundly shaped his worldview. Immersed in traditional island culture, Terry became fluent in both the local language and customs, and served as a cross-cultural educator during two Peace Corps training programmes on the island. After Peace Corps, Terry relocated to Honolulu, where he earned three graduate degrees including in cultural anthropology, social work and business. In 1993, Terry moved to Columbus, Ohio, where he continued his healthcare career until his retirement in 2013. Currently, he is collaborating with Dr. Ken Rehg and Damian Sohl on expanding the online Pohnpeian–English dictionary and is pursuing further research on Pohnpeian feasting and magic and the island's sacred kava rituals.

Sarah McLean-Orsborn hails from the villages of Tapatapao, Moamoa and Papa Sataua in ʻUpolu, Sāmoa, but grew up in Mulifanua and calls this village home. Sarah is a lecturer in Pacific studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland. Sarah completed her PhD within the programme in 2023, and her thesis explored the global experiences of Samoan women and COVID-19.

Pauline Reynolds, adjunct fellow at Macquarie University, is a Norfolk Islander of Pitcairn-Hitiaurevareva-Tahitian and European descent. A Pacific scholar and tapa (barkcloth) maker, she is best known for collaborations with museums and curatorial teams and her replications of Tahitian and Pitcairn barkcloth clothing from the 1700s and 1800s. Recently she published a chapter in *Tupaia, Captain Cook and the Voyage of the Endeavour* (Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2023) and co-edited *Postcolonial Literatures of Climate Change* (Brill, 2022). She is currently co-writing a book about the Tahitian chief mourner's regalia collected by Cook (British Museum Research Publications series) and writing a biography of Pitcairn writer Rosalind Amelia Young (Brill).

Gail Romano is curator of war history at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum and a historian and researcher interested in often-overlooked fringe experiences and the personal, social and economic legacies of Aotearoa New Zealand's post-nineteenth-century conflict participation, including the relationship of the Auckland community to its war-related heritage. Gail works with the Museum's diverse collection of war-related memorabilia and with war-related display. She has co-organised international, interinstitutional conferences and has spoken and written on the material culture of conflict. Most recently Gail was a member of the New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust's development team realising the New Zealand Liberation Museum Te Arawhata in Le Quesnoy, France, which opened in October 2023.

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SECRETS IN THE RAFTERS: A TRADITIONAL CHIEF'S HOUSE IN POHNPEI

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the construction of an ihmwenei, a traditional chief's house, constructed from 1974 to 1976 in Wene, in the district of Kitti (Pohnpei, Micronesia). Such a house had not been built on Pohnpei since the late 1800s. Construction of the stone foundation and timber framing and manufacture of the roof, walls and floors are described, along with details pertaining to the acquisition of materials and the names and purposes of particular house features. The study of the construction of a Pohnpeian house also provides an avenue for the exploration of the sociopolitical role of chiefs on the island, as well as traditional ontological frameworks which privilege secrecy and protection as a critical aspect of the chief's dwelling.

Keywords: Pohnpei, Wene, lashings, traditional building practices, magic, chiefs

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Anthropological research on Pohnpei has benefited from the inquisitive attention of an Indigenous anthropologist (Mauricio 1987, 1993) and dedicated ethnographers and archaeologists (Ayres and Haun 1978, 1980; Hambruch 1932, 1936; Hanlon 1988; Haun 1984; Petersen 1990, 1999, 2006, 2009; Riesenberg 1968). Stemming from the collection of oral histories and archaeological research, these studies have emphasised the importance of Pohnpeian ideology in the trajectories of the five polities that developed on the island and in the inner workings of society over the previous centuries. As described by Mauricio, these items represent the sanctity of leadership institutions, which for islanders is organised into a complex system of chiefly titles that are delineated by inheritance and personal advancement (Mauricio 1993: 7).

The context of these titles is the island of Pohnpei itself, which has a rich record of habitation, as evinced by dense archaeological sites and deposits (Ayres and Seikel 2014; Falgout 1990; Morgan 1988; Seikel 2011), ranging through natural outcrops, earthen mounds, stone platforms used as the foundations for houses, and tombs constructed with prismatic basalt (Mauricio 1993: 222–74). Although under dense vegetation today, the archaeological remains of Pohnpeian society structure much of the physical

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Malinowski, Terry and Julie S. Field, 2024. Secrets in the rafters: A traditional chief's house in Pohnpei. *Waka Kuaka: The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 133 (3): 271–300.
https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.271-300

landscape. Some of the more important sites are stone platforms that are identifiable by modern Pohnpeians as the remains of dwelling houses (ihmw, imwalap) and meeting houses (nahs). As important locales of residence and social activity and spaces are tied to the succession of chiefs and titles, these "symbolized the sanctification of the power and authority vested in the title" (Mauricio 1993: 346).

This research explores the features of a traditional Pohnpeian chief's house, an ihmwenei, which was constructed by the author (TM) and the community of Wene from 1974 to 1976. This was the first such house to be constructed since the late nineteenth century, and its manufacture relied upon the memories of individuals whose parents and grandparents had built and lived in traditional imwalap. The construction of this chief's house employed their memories in its design, as well as their expertise in the sourcing and manufacture of traditional materials for the foundation, walls, floor and roof. This research examines how such houses were built and how the requirements for their location, design and construction sequence were embedded in, and served to renegotiate, Pohnpeian social structures and chiefly influence. It also explores via the modern construction of an ihmwenei the expression of Pohnpeian ideology, ontology and social processes.

POHNPEI = SAHPW SARAWI (THE SACRED LAND)

Located in the Eastern Caroline Islands, Pohnpei (Fig. 1) is a high volcanic island of approximately 130 square miles (~334 km^2) and is considered one of the rainiest places in the world with an annual rainfall of 200 inches (~5 m) in the coastal areas and up to 400 inches (~10 m) on the highest inland mountains. The island is the product of ancient volcanism and later subsidence; mangroves flank the shoreline, and the interior is densely forested. Archaeological evidence indicates that Pohnpei was colonised approximately 2,000 years ago as part of the expansion of populations into Remote Oceania from Western Micronesia and Western Polynesia (Athens and Stevenson 2012: 37; Ayres 1990: 189; McCoy *et al*. 2016; Rainbird 2004). These communities spoke Austronesian languages and likely had hereditary systems that allowed for social differentiation and stratification. They also relied on imported crops and animals to colonise distant Pacific Islands. As one of the few high islands in the region, Pohnpei could support the growth of a large population. It was also a critical node in a vast oceanic network of atoll communities (Petersen 2006, 2009).

Archaeological evidence suggests the growth of populations over time and the emergence of a stratified society that included chiefly lineages and aggregated communities by AD 1000. Oral histories described the rise and fall of the Saudeleur dynasty, a line of chiefs associated with the archaeological site of Nan Madol, an impressive residential complex constructed with columnar basalt (Ayres and Scheller 2003). After a decisive

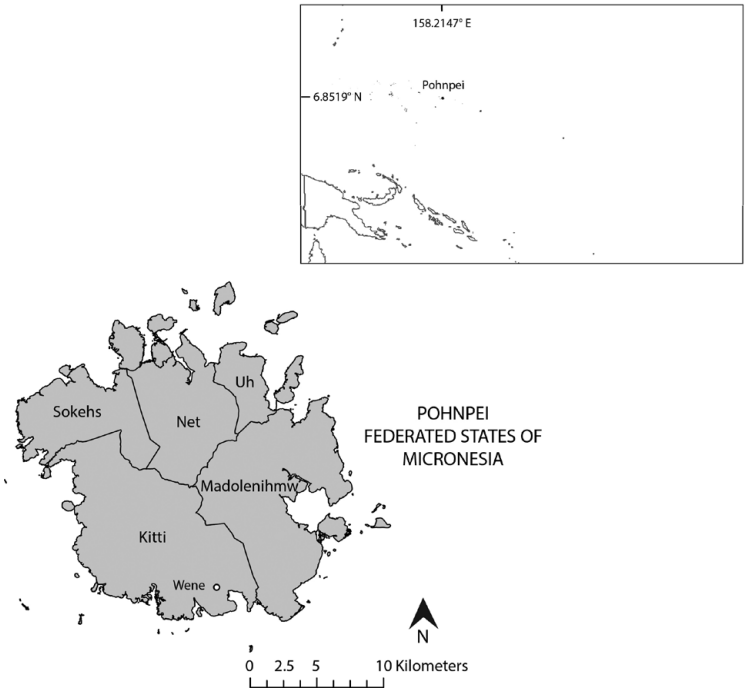


Figure 1. Map of the island of Pohnpei showing the district boundaries and location of Wene.

battle with the conquering chief Isohkelekel, who invaded Pohnpei from overseas around AD 1628 (Hanlon 1988), the land was divided into five ancient states; power struggles ensued between competing polities and chiefs on the island, resulting in conflict that lasted into the nineteenth century (Riesenberg 1968: 60).[1] Modern Pohnpei is organised into five municipalities that are descended from the ancient states, with Madolenihmw ranked the highest, followed by the municipalities of Uh, Kitti, Sokehs and Net. Pohnpeians also recognise two chiefly lines, which are descended from the time of Isohkelekel, and reflect the restructuring of society that occurred following his installation as the first Nahnmwarki, of the state of Madolenihmw, which by Pohnpeian custom is the highest title of all chiefs on the island. Individuals in the modern chiefly families can ascend in status via a succession of titles. Importantly, these lineages are connected to communities and land within the ancient states, and further to their ancient houses of dwelling.

Chiefly families on Pohnpei resided in a complex of houses, each of which had a particular function, such as for cooking, meeting, servants' dwelling and the high chief's residence (Riesenberg 1968: 67).[2] A Pohnpei high chief's house, ihmwenei, meaning a cherished or precious house, was a sign of wealth, power and prestige in Pohnpeian culture. According to Riesenberg, the dwelling of the Nahnmwarki was passed to the next Nahnmwarki (Riesenberg 1968: 33). The dwelling went by other names including tehnpas, ihmw en lapalap, ihmwalap and ihmw en soupedi (Hambruch 1932; Rehg and Sohl 1979: 13; Riesenberg 1968: 67; Roberts 1997). A chief's house would be significantly larger than any commoner's dwelling, standing as an imposing structure with an immense stone foundation and a high, steep roof. Combined, the house and foundation might reach 18 feet (~5.5 m), and was constructed like a fortress, with narrow doorways that limited entry and screen-like walls that could deflect spears. Photographs from the German South Seas Expedition from 1910 (Hambruch 1936, vol. 2: 2–8) and other sources (e.g., Christian 1967) show what these dwellings were like in the historic period (Fig. 2). In the Pohnpeian ontology, the ihmwenei's stone foundation is a metaphorical reference to the island itself, as "Pohnpei" is translated literally as "on the stone altar/structure" (Riesenberg 1968: 9). Pohnpeians also called their land sahpw sarawi, the sacred land; therefore the chief's house was the embodiment of the sacredness of the island itself.

Throughout much of Micronesia, kinship is organised within matri-lineages, with land tenure and political title tied to genealogy. On Pohnpei, chiefs are recognised as territorial leaders of a particular region, but social and political processes emphasised democratic, participatory and egalitarian attitudes, which restrained chiefly authority. Petersen describes social processes that on the surface appear to be contradictory: a chief could appear modest and humble and visibly participate in competitive gifting but also mobilise labour via subtle influence (Petersen 1999: 369–73). However obtained, titles were tied to particular places and landed kin groups. In the Pohnpei context, the construction of an ihmwenei was a mechanism of continuity for the local lineage and a renegotiation of social ranking for the chief. Its construction demonstrated that the chief could mobilise competing lineages and clans to produce the required labour and materials and show that he also had the ability to influence social processes. This is because the construction an ihmwenei required a large volume of raw material and labour. Massive amounts of stone for the foundations, a considerable number of trees for the house's superstructure or framing, many ivory nut palms for the thatching, thousands of reeds for the flooring and walls and several kilometres of handmade coconut twine for all the lashings would be produced by the community for its construction. At the chief's direction, a nanuolosom (master builder) would supervise the project (Hambruch 1936, vol. 3 (translation):

I–III). Once constructed, maintenance of and residence at an ihmwenei would store and protect the chief's wealth and be part of the perpetuation of the family line and the succession of titles (Riesenberg 1968: 33).

The construction project sought to build an ihmwenei using local Pohnpeian materials and techniques. Construction was organised by the first author (TM) and Salter Salvador, a chief with the title of Noahs, in the Nahnmwarki line of Madolenihmw district. The Noahs was greatly respected in Wene for his kindness, humility and generosity. He also had a deep interest and engagement in traditional culture (tiahk en saphw) and educated himself in meing (high language) and Pohnpeian chiefly protocol. In subsequent years he ascended the ladder of titles from Noahs to Doahk, and then Wasai. In 1980 he became the Nahnmwarki. TM was a US Peace Corps volunteer on Pohnpei from 1970 to 1976 and served as a teacher at the Ponape Agricultural and Trade School from 1970 to 1974, where he taught high-school mathematics, science and construction. He learned to speak the Pohnpeian language fluently (e.g., contributing to the *New Pohnpeian-English Online Dictionary* [Sohl *et al*.]) and was fully integrated into Pohnpeian culture, gaining the titles of Oundol en Pein Iap and Oun Pohnpei Wasai. TM's Pohnpeian host family had adopted one of the Noahs's older sons, Enter, and the Noahs and his wife, Nahnado, would periodically visit the host family to spend time with their son. TM and the Noahs developed a relationship during this time and frequently discussed Pohnpeian history and culture, leading to a shared desire to construct a traditional chief's house made completely of local materials. In addition, the Noahs and TM conceived of the construction project as a way to demonstrate and express Pohnpeian expertise and craftsmanship and as an opportunity to bring back a traditional dwelling for the community. In this modern case, the Noahs had the authority to undertake such a project and was also willing to permit the house to be built on his land in Wene, in the state of Kitti. Wene was also known as a community that served as a repository for traditional Pohnpeian culture (Malinowski 1976).

The Noahs was a critical component of the project's completion, as his wife, sons Alwis, Kenter, Linter, Sohder, Alson and Paulus, and extended family members provided labour for construction. Brothers-in-law (mwah) Loren Hepel and Soulik of Rehtu lent their expertise in lashing to the project. The Noahs's social network also allowed for the production of the raw materials used to make the ihmwenei, some of which required months of manufacture, in particular the coconut fibre sennit and the palm thatching. TM carefully recorded the construction processes, along with Pohnpeian recollections for the words, actions and magic that were required to properly build a house.[3] This information has not been preserved elsewhere and is an important (and now exceptionally rare) component of Pohnpeian culture (tiahk en saphw).

SITE SELECTION AND MATERIALS FOR CONSTRUCTING THE IHMWENEI

Wene was formerly known as Onohnleng, and it was one of three religious and political centres on Pohnpei. Wene served as the residence for the chief whose title is Soukise Leng, going back at least three centuries. It has a considerable density of archaeological sites, including nahs (feast houses), chiefly dwellings and other features (Falgout 1987). At the time of this project, Wene retained a community of elders and a high degree of cultural knowledge, as well as a structured chiefly system, which was also present throughout the municipality of Kitti.

The selection of the construction site in Wene was based on a series of considerations. Most importantly, the site was located on land that traditionally belonged to the Noahs. This paleien sapw (section of land) may have been called Luwak. The kousapw (greater section of land) in which all of these dwellings are located is called Pehs (D. Hanlon, pers. comm.). This was land that they had resided on and that they cultivated and gathered materials from. By constructing it on their land, the house was a part of the Noahs's family holdings. It was also a form of regeneration for themselves, and an activation of their right and privilege to construct the ihmwenei. The physical house site was also relatively flat and had good drainage and exposure to sunlight. This is important because in Pohnpei's rainy climate, thatch roofs tend to last longer when the thatch can be dried in the sunlight. One large mango tree and several smaller trees had to be removed as part of clearing the site. The house was also relatively close to a stream that the family used for bathing and washing clothes, and nearby were stands of mangrove and inland trees for the beams and posts, ivory nut palms for thatch and the two varieties of reeds needed for the walls (ahlek) and floor (lirau). There was also an abundance of larger stones, which were required to build a foundation for the house. Approximately 10 cubic yards (~7.6 m^3) of stone were hauled into place for this purpose.

The ihmwenei was constructed without milled lumber, nails, screws or any other Western materials. The tools used were all non-electric hand tools and would have been available on Pohnpei from the mid-1800s when trading began with visiting ships. The traditional tools, such as adzes, would have had blades of either stone or giant clam shell (Ayres 1990: 189), and the time and expenditure of energy required to bring down a tree was considerably more than metal tools. Pohnpeians would traditionally light a fire around the base of a tree to help cure the wood, which would then resist decay for much longer than green wood (Liwy 2018). For expediency, this project used modern (ca. 1970) steel machetes, hand saws, shovels, steel-bladed adzes, steel hammers, chisels and knives. Locally made wooden needles were crafted for thatching, and bamboo was used for scaffolding. Wild hibiscus

bark was also used to tie the bamboo scaffolding together. Measurement was done using a length of sennit cord, which had knots tied in it to mark off ngahp (a measure of length consisting of two arm-spans).

Perhaps the most important component of the ihmwenei was the use of coconut fibre (sennit) lashing, which wrapped and connected the wooden beams of the structure and also tied together the reeds used to make the walls and floors. This material was truly the binding that tied Pohnpeian society together, and it was doubly symbolic of a chief's wealth, power and influence. The warasap, the high chief's canoe, and the rohpapiso, a carriage used to transport a high chief, were made using elaborate coconut fibre lashings (NGO Pasifika Renaissance 2017; Riesenberg 1968: 69, 91; Thompson 2015: 45). In addition to the obvious functional role of lashings to hold joints together in the wooden beams, reed floors and walls, there was a decorative element added to show the status and wealth of the chief. Chiefly lashings were intricate and beautiful, and only the chief's possessions could be decorated in this manner. This included the use of natural dyes to enhance the patterns. The more sennit that was required, the greater the sign of wealth and status. The chief's house would also have many balls of sennit (koansop) hanging from the rafters of their house as a sign of his wealth.



Figure 2. Image of a Pohnpeian house, from a photograph taken in the 1890s. Image shows the high stone foundation, floor joists, narrow doorways and overhanging thatch roof (Christian 1967: 140–41).

Sennit production was time-consuming labour that was performed by the community. A chief's house would require miles of sennit, representing the culmination of many months of labour and hundreds of pounds of material. Traditionally, men would sit up nights around a fire making sennit while watching over their families for security.[4] Made from the husks of green coconut that had been soaked in seawater, the fibres would be separated and twisted on the thigh to make the cord. Good-quality sennit has to be elastic in order to tightly bind things together.

Over 10 miles (16 km) of coconut sennit was made for the ihmwenei, the manufacture of which spanned a period of nearly two years between 1973 and 1975. On Pohnpei sennit is sold by the ngahp, the distance between a person's outstretched arms; therefore, the length of a ngahp varied depending on the producer's arm length. TM purchased the sennit using his monthly Peace Corps allowance. This amount determined how extensive and elaborate the lashings were in the ihmwenei, as well as the lashing style used to tie the floor and the walls together. This is a very critical decision for building a traditional Pohnpeian house, as the more elaborate lashing patterns require two to three times the amount of coconut sennit. For this project, the Noahs was able to call upon the families of his brothers-in-law, Loren Hepel and Soulik of Rehtu, to undertake the task of lashing the majority of the beams in the house.

Another part of the social processes involved in house manufacture, the construction of an ihmwenei would have also involved a number of feasts, as well as magical spells, which by design would aid in construction and help to mobilise the required labour and materials.

> House building, which is considered a very honourable occupation, is the occasion for all kinds of festivals. The first takes place when the foundation is laid, the second when the posts are set up and the third at the consecration of the finished building by the priest. The house consecration lasts about three or four hours. The priest murmurs prayers, sings in a monotonous voice and carries out all sorts of conjurations. The following also belong to these prayers, which are spoken when the posts are set up.
>
> *Beams here, beams there,*
> *Beams from here, beams from there*
> *I try once, twice, three times,*
> *I try four times, five times, six times,*
> *I try seven times, eight times, nine times,*
> *I try it the tenth time!*
> *May your foot adhere fast!*
> *May your arm adhere fast!*
> *Your whole body, may it adhere fast!*
>
> (Hambruch 1936: I–III, translated from the original)[5]

In addition to magic, spirits were also associated with houses. Although not much is known about pre-Christian Pohnpeian religion, the spirit Nahnolosomw had jurisdiction over the construction, and Pwukien Kerele and Pwukien Kerelong were guardians of the threshold and the floor.

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE

Historic measurements of dwelling houses on Pohnpei suggest that that they seldom exceeded the dimensions of 40 by 20 feet (about 12 by 6 m; O'Connell 1972: 127). For this project the ihmwenei was planned to be 28 feet long and 16 feet wide (about 8.5 by 4.8 m). To begin construction on the prepared building site, stakes were placed in a rectangle to designate the locations of the four corner posts. To ensure 90-degree angles on all four corners, sennit cords were used to measure the diagonals. Traditionally, this was how Pohnpeian builders would ensure they had a rectangular structure and not a parallelogram. The rectangular design allowed for eight vertical support posts, which were arranged in two rows of four posts each. The trunks of katar (giant fern, *Sphaeropteris* sp.), which were cut down nearby, were used for the posts. In the past mangrove trunks were used for this purpose and might be charred to prohibit the posts from rotting. The posts were placed in postholes that were excavated to a depth of approximately two and a half feet (0.75 m).

Before the poles were put into the ground, the Noahs took a small rock and whispered a magic spell over it and then placed it into one of the postholes. The spell was winani en silasil, protective magic, and was meant to protect the project and ensure that we could see it through to completion.[6] After the posts were placed into the holes they were tamped in with soil and checked to make sure they were in alignment, vertical and the same height.[7]

The Foundation

Ancient stone house foundations are found in a number of locations on Pohnpei, including Nan Madol, Temwen Island, Sapwtakai, Wene and Nan Imwinsapw (Ayres *et al.* 2015; Esteban 2014; McCoy *et al*. 2015: 14; Thompson 2015: 41). The age of these sites suggests that stone foundations were a critical component of architecture on the island for many centuries. These foundations were practical in that they elevated the wooden structure from the saturated ground and reduced rot in the wooden beams. They were also durable and visible, manifesting the house and its related society as a permanent fixture on the land (Mauricio 1993: 7). On Pohnpei natural basalt prisms were used to make many structures, and these were considered to be sacred (Esteban 2014: 179). House foundations ranged from three to six feet (~0.9 to 1.8 m) in height and could also be made with stacked basalt boulders. Studying historic photos and notes suggests support for this range of height (Christian 1967: 141; O'Connell 1972: 125; Shineberg 1971: 184).

The building of the stone foundation for the ihmwenei was a massive undertaking that took several months to complete. Once the eight posts were erected, a water buffalo–drawn sled was used to haul the stones to the site. Prior to the introduction of draft animals the labour of an entire village would have been needed to create such a foundation. Approximately 10 cubic yards (7.6 m^3) of stone were raised to a height of three feet (0.9 m), and a large number of people assisted in this strenuous work. Many of the larger stones required two or more men to move into place. The stones were arranged in a truncated pyramid shape to form a foundation around the posts (Fig. 3). The corners were placed first to frame out the base and arranged in an interlocking fashion to make them secure and stable. This guaranteed that they did not move after the heavy floor beams were placed on them. The outer dimensions of the foundation was 30 by 18 feet (9.1 by 5.5 m). Smaller stones were used to fill in the spaces between the larger stones and to level off the upper surface. A final layer of gravel was brought from a nearby stream to further smooth the surface before the reed floors could be constructed.



Figure 3. The ihmwenei under construction. Photograph by Terry Malinowski, 1974.

Traditionally, the foundations of ihmwenei could have several features. At the centre commonly was found a sunken firepit (O'Connell 1972: 126) to be used by the household for cooking and light. A large sakau stone might have been placed in the corner and used for preparing the roots of *Piper methysticum* to produce the sakau drink. In some instances, under the floor in another corner was a hidden chamber called a lolong, which was meant for the burial of a chief (Ayres 1990: 201; Ayres and Seikel 2014: 129–35; Thompson 2015: 43). The deceased would be wrapped up in mats and placed in this vault. Similar to prehistoric burials elsewhere in the Pacific Islands in which the deceased were interred in the floor of a house mound (Abe 2001; Capell 1991; Kyle *et al*. 2009; Toren 1995), this practice physically merged the house and the family, making it the site of birth and death and the repository of the ancestors. It also allowed for Pohnpeians to communicate with their ancestors by verbal comments and questions posed to the deceased entombed in the lolong.

Ihmwenei foundations were also surrounded by a layer of loose stones, the purpose of which was to alert the occupants of the house that someone may be approaching as their feet trod on the clattering stones. Dogs also served this purpose, but Pohnpeians had a magic spell called kaukoan auwen kidi that could silence barking dogs.

Main Wall Beams and Roof Truss

In addition to the main posts, the wooden beams of the ihmwenei were hewn from mangrove trunks (weingal), which were the tallest and straightest trees available. Sourcing and transport of these beams was organised by the chief, who had his choice of best-quality wood. Many of these beams were very long and required a water buffalo to drag them to the build site. The construction is outlined in Figure 4, which also lists the beams by their Pohnpeian name. The sequence was dictated by the progress of the sennit lashing, which bound each beam to the next. Bamboo scaffolding was constructed and used as a ladder for the workmen, allowing them to reach the higher parts of the structure.[8] Two floor beams, ataut, that were 30 feet (~9.1 m) in length were laid on the foundation stones on the outer sides of the four posts that formed the long sides of the structure. Four other floor beams, lohpwu, were laid at the ends of the house and in the middle. A metal adze was used to notch the beams and fit them into place (O'Connell 1972: 125; Shineberg 1971: 184). Four smaller-diameter beams, lohlo, were then placed on top of the two rows of four posts, forming crossbeams that ran perpendicular to the main length of the house. These were lashed into place with sennit. The two ndape beams were then placed on top of the lohlo beams, running parallel to the floor beams (ataut) and extending the length of the house. Then the four lepin keidu beams were placed upright on the

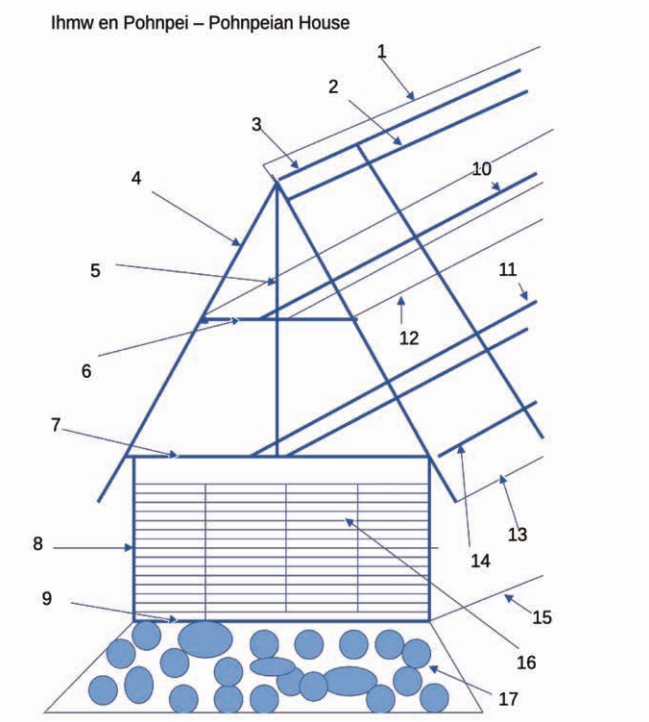


Figure 4. Diagram of the beams of a traditional Pohnpeian ihmwenei. 1. Kadingading; 2. Pwahla/pwahlala; 3. Soahrong; 4. Rehu; 5. Lepin keidu; 6. Lohlotik; 7. Lohlo; 8. Uhr; 9. Lohpwu; 10 and 11. Warong en mweleng; 12. Ndape pahn mwaramwar; 13. Kutoar; 14. Ndape; 15. Ataut; 16. Dihd; 17. Poahsoan, mwohn ihmw, pehi. Not shown: Pwarapwara; ahl en kitik (path of the mouse); sop kieil (path of the lizard).

centre of each of the four lohlo beams, forming the main support for the roof's structure. These beams were temporarily tied in place with bamboo poles beforehand to hold them steady.[9]

The ridgepole, the soahrong, was placed on top of the four lepin keidu and likewise lashed into place. Two beams, the longer rehu en disek (gables), were then placed between the soahrong (ridge-pole) and the lohlo (cross-beam), forming the triangular truss of the ihmwenei roof. Once the truss was stabilised, the main rafters, rehu, were attached on each side of the roof, extending from the ridge-pole (soahrong) to the cross beams (ndape)

along the length of the house. Then a small beam called a ndape pahn mwaramwar was attached to the rafters (rehu) to support the length of the roof, followed by the lohlotik, a series of beams that spanned the width of the roof on either side of the lepin keidu, and these rested on top of the ndape pahn mwaramwar. Next, the two warong en mweleng, lower beams that supported the roof, were added, and these ran on top of the lohlotik and the lohlo and on either side of the lepin keidu. Next to be added were the kutoar (eaves), which extended over the foundation and were attached to the bottom ends of all the rafters. Two pwahla, which run perpendicular to the underside of the rafters, were attached at the peak of the roof on either side of the soahrong. The kadingading is the final piece of the truss, which is used to fasten the pwarapwara, the woven baskets that cover the thatching at the peak of the roof.

The Lashings (Inou)

The lashing (inou) of beams for the ihmwenei was very time consuming and required master craftsmen with a thorough knowledge of the principles of lashing. Prior to their application, the craftsman prepared small bundles of sennit (kisin pwehl) called peioar, which supplied a manageable amount of sennit to work with and prohibited tangling. Lashings were started by fastening a closed knotted loop around one beam to anchor the sennit in place. Then depending on the joint, the craftsman decided what pattern of wrapping was appropriate to securely hold the beams together. A double strand of sennit was initially used to trace out the first complete lashing pattern, ending at the beginning and creating a closed loop. This pattern was then repeated, with the next layer of sennit placed on the outside perimeter of the first pass. This process was repeated until the craftsmen decided there was sufficient sennit in place to securely hold the beams. While the craftsman was lashing, tension had to be kept on the sennit so that the beams were snugly held together. Elasticity in the sennit was critical for this process, and this also added the quality of flexibility to the structure, allowing the ihmwenei to withstand the force of the wind.

Once the basic structural components of the lashing were laid out, additional lashing could be used for embellishment (Latu 2021). Criss-cross, diamond and geometric patterns are the results, and numerous patterns are known by Pohnpeians, including inou tehn pahr, inou Pahkin and inou iken arong. The visibility of patterns was enhanced by dyeing the sennit. According to Thompson (2015: 44–45), Pohnpeians used charcoal, red soil, burnt coral and ground turmeric to make the colours black, red, white and yellow. To highlight the lashing patterns for this project, a dye was made from shredded purple ditto paper, a common office product used by manual paper copying machines in the 1970s. This was a dramatic break from the natural

dyes used by Pohnpeians for centuries, but which were unavailable at the time (Fig. 5). The use of artificially dyed sennit added to the visual appeal of the lashings, and also served to highlight the social status of the Noahs.

During the lashing of the house, one of the master craftsmen died, leaving a considerable amount of work left to be done. TM was taught how to assist in completing the remaining lashings, and later reproduced all the lashings in a scale model of the house.

Roofing

Traditional Pohnpeian houses have thatched roofs, and thatching is made from the leaves of the ivory nut palm tree *Metroxylon amicarum* (auhs). Traditionally, ihmwenei had steep pitched roofs made with thick, mature leaves (Linton 1926: 74), which facilitated run-off from precipitation and allowed the thatch to dry quickly. Steep roofs also provided ample headroom for standing inside the structure, as the walls were traditionally around four feet (1.2 m) in height. Thatch production was usually initiated months ahead of house construction. The chief would assign a set number of thatch panels to be made by each household, using a length of reed as a measure. The lengths of completed thatch panels were stored under cover until they were needed.[10]

Roofing the ihmwenei began with cutting down the ivory nut palm and collecting the fronds. The leaves were then removed from the frond and transported to the site. At that point, the centre rib (nok) of each leaf was removed by biting through the fibres with teeth and lifting the rib off. These ribs then could be gathered into bundles later and were commonly used as a broom (kepennok).

A variety of reed called lirau (*Phragmites karka*) was gathered from wetlands to use as the support for each length of thatch. These were cut to a length of seven feet, and the palm nut leaves, which had been stripped of their centre ribs, were folded in half and placed over the reed. The row of leaves was made to overlap, and these were then held in place by stitching. On Pohnpei, a narrow strip of the outside bark of the ivory nut palm (ida) was used as the fibre stitching. The ida stitching was placed to run parallel and below the bottom side of the reed (Fig. 6).

The act of thatching is called ngkad in Pohnpeian, and it would only be done on a clear day. A magic spell called winani en ngkat was used to make the thatching go faster; Pohnpeians also believed that if the sennit tangled during the thatching of the roof, someone was casting malevolent magic and did not want the house completed. Indeed, the sennit did get tangled on more than one occasion in 1974. Bamboo scaffolding was erected so that the heights of the roof could be reached by the workers. Beginning at the bottom where the eave (kutoar) is located, each thatch panel is attached to



Figure 5. The lohlo and the lepin keidu with sennit lashing during construction. Photograph by Terry Malinowski, 1974.



Figure 6. Thatching in progress. Photograph by Terry Malinowski, 1974.

the rehu (rafters) using a wooden hooked needle (koahr). The needle is used to pull a sennit cord through the panel so it can be tied to the rafter. Once secured, the next panel was tied to the rafter immediately above, allowing for the ends of the leaves to overlap. From the inside of the house, the ida stitching can be seen. If the thatch panels are placed close on top of one another it is called mesen idatik or "small face of the ida". If the panels of thatch are placed farther apart it is termed mesen idalap or "wide face of the ida". The mesen idatik style roof will ultimately last longer but requires more labour and materials; thus it was rarely seen in commoner's houses.[11] A steep-pitched roof, which was more traditional, also required more thatch than a flatter-pitched roof. All of these elements are highly visible and further embed the status of the chief into the physical architecture of the house.

When the thatch panels reach the peak of the roof there will be a small opening left, which is covered with the pwarapwara, a mat woven from coconut palm fronds. Sticks are then poked through the pwarapwara every three feet, sliding under the kadingading to help secure it. Several V-shaped tree yokes are lashed down over the peak to hold everything in place. The gables, which are triangular and located at either end of the house, are usually thatched last. There are actually two sets of rafters in the gables; one set that runs vertically to cover the entire opening and another at an angle to overhang the lohlo. This creates a V-shaped storage space called the mweleng, which is hidden from view from the rest of the house (Fig. 7). The mweleng are large enough to hold an adult who might want to hide from an intruder, if necessary. They are also analogous to Pohnpeian conceptions of knowledge and the concealment of private information. The proverb "Mweleng ieu ohl" translates to "a man is like the mweleng", meaning that just like items that are hidden from view, one does not know what is concealed inside another person. This concept also conveys the respect for hidden knowledge, and is a cautionary note to be respectful of others, as you cannot know what knowledge they hold.[12]

Walls and Floor

After the thatching is completed, the wall studs are constructed using beams of ais (*Parinarium laurina*) wood. The beams were cut into tapering studs and placed into holes drilled into the floor beams (ataut and lohpwu), which were two feet apart (~61 cm). At the top, these studs were lashed to the ndape and the lohlo, creating a firm joint. A wider spacing was created for the doorways and a single window. A stabilising beam was then lashed to the ais studs, on the inside, running horizontally along the middle of each wall. Smaller pieces of wood were also inserted horizontally into holes drilled into the sides of the studs, made from ketieu wood (*Ixora casei*), which is strong and flexible.

The walls were constructed using the stalks of ahlek or litok menger (*Saccharum spontaneum*) reeds, which are relatively strong when mature



Figure 7. The mweleng, the hidden space in the roof of the ihmwenei. Photograph by Terry Malinowski, 1974.

and have tissue that varies in colour between yellow, red and brown. Over 10,000 reeds were used to create the walls and the floors of the ihmwenei, requiring many hours of processing and labour to harvest, clean and install. After being cut and washed in a stream to remove the outer layer, the reeds were sorted out by length. The longer reeds were arranged vertically to create the inner layer of the wall, while the shorter ones were placed horizontally to form the outer layer of the wall. Construction commenced by placing a series of vertical reeds between two studs and tying them temporarily in place with a piece of sennit near their tops and bottoms, forming a solid screen. A series of horizontally placed sticks were wedged into holes drilled into the wall studs, and the panels would be tied to them during construction. The outer wall was then created by placing reeds horizontally, stacking them up to create the complete surface. Each vertical reed was tied individually to each of the horizontal reeds.

Traditionally, wall reeds were tied with sennit so that the lashing was interwoven between the vertical reeds on the inside, creating a firmly bound construction. According to oral accounts collected at the time of construction, the tightly lashed double wall was impenetrable to spear attack (Fig. 8). However, the amount of sennit required to complete the walls in this fashion was beyond the scope of this project. A Pohnpei elder suggested a more economical approach that used less sennit, resulting in a pattern of tying that was staggered, producing a diamond pattern on the wall where the fibres crossed. This method resulted in walls that were six feet (~1.8 m) in height. Traditional ihmwenei had walls that were approximately four feet (~1.2 m) in height.

There were three doors and a single window in the house. The doorways were left as a gap between two wall studs, intentionally very narrow (less than shoulder width), so that an adult would have to turn sideways to enter the house. The narrow opening blocked potential enemies from quickly entering and catching the inhabitants off guard and also limited the amount of light, obscuring the view of activities occurring inside the house. The door was also partially covered by the overhang of the thatched roof, which required a person to bow down while entering, thus showing respect for the chief inside. The extended overhang of the thatch roof also had the practical function of keeping the walls dry during storms. Since the reed walls are somewhat porous, windy weather can result in rain passing through the walls and into the interior.



Figure 8. The walls, showing the tying of the reeds together, resulting in a diamond pattern. Photograph by Terry Malinowski, 1974.

Lirau reed were also used to create the floor (taht) of the house. Straight tree branches about an inch (~2.54 cm) in diameter were laid out about a foot (~30 cm) apart to serve as floor joists. A layer of the lirau was placed across the branches forming a flat surface, which were then lashed at the ends to secure them. Like the walls, a second layer of reeds was laid down crossways and lashed in a staggered pattern to the floor joists and the bottom-layer reeds (Fig. 9). The resulting diamond pattern extended across the floor panel and abutted the other panels that were lashed together in a similar fashion. The entire floor would be covered in this fashion, leaving gaps for the fire pit embedded in the stone foundation, and abutting the sakau stone. The stone crypt (lolong) would be hidden beneath the panels of the floor for later use.[13]

CHIEF'S HOUSES THEN AND NOW

The interior of the high chief's house would be rather dark by today's standards, with the only light sources being the doorways, the window and the light from the fire (O'Connell 1972: 75).



Figure 9. The interior of the ihmwenei, showing the lohpwu (centre) and ataut (background), both floor beams and the diamond pattern of the floor reeds. Photograph by Terry Malinowski, 1975.

Due to the lack of a chimney the interior of the house could also be smoky and coated with soot. The smoke served to obscure the view of the inhabitants to outsiders, deter mosquitoes and also keep the thatch dry and free of pests. The reed walls screened the occupants from being seen by anyone outside but did allow a low level of visibility for viewing out. The reed walls also provided ventilation, and the thatch roof and reed floor kept the house cool and comfortable. The reed floors were comfortable to walk or sit on, acting like a cushion. With the addition of a pandanus mat, the floors were comfortable enough for sleeping.[14]

A variety of items would have been found in a traditional house, and a chief's house would visibly display items that were the product of community labour and symbolic of his wealth and privilege. It would have been common to see balls of sennit (koansop) hanging from the rafters of the house, as well as beaded necklaces and kilts, as a sign of wealth. A traditional backstrap loom used by the women for making banana fibre cloth would have also been attached to a rafter.[15] Other items may have been more mundane. The literature also describes sleeping mats, gourd calabashes for carrying water, polished coconut shells for cups, and baskets as common household items (Hambruch 1936: III–5; Riesenberg 1968: 66–67, 71). There might also have been spears, clubs, bows and arrows and dance paddles. By the 1840s, however, muskets had replaced many of the traditional weapons on Pohnpei.

Access to the chief's house was restricted to certain family members, and it was treated as a private space for the chief's residence. In contrast, the nahs (meeting house) was a structure that was used for community events, such as feasts, funerals, kava drinking and other social gatherings. The nahs also has space reserved for the chief, located in the upper platform, near the back of the meeting house. Access to that space was through two back doors, one for the Nahnmwarki and the other for the Nahnken, a parallel chiefly lineage comparable to the Samoan tulafale (talking chief) (Riesenberg 1968: 49). The use-life of an ihmwenei would have been determined by the quality of the roof, which protected the rest of the structure from the elements. A roof that was steep pitched, was made with thick, mature leaves, had a high degree of overlap of the sections (mesen idatik) and was routinely treated with smoke from the interior fire tended to last the longest. With maintenance, a quality roof would have lasted 10 to 15 years. Modern chief's houses are made with concrete, milled lumber and metal roofs, which are cheaper and last much longer.

This research examined the expression of cultural memory in the construction of a traditional Pohnpeian house. Even though a traditional house had not been constructed in living memory on Pohnpei (ca. 1974), the process of acquiring materials, organising labour and directing the design and construction sequence for an ihmwenei, a chief's house,

had been retained. In building this structure, particular components of Pohnpeian culture and heritage were expressed, regenerating Pohnpeian ideology and ontology. These components included intimate knowledge of materials and construction and the reasons behind their use, including the correct sequencing of tasks, how each is related to the other, and the names, purposes and relationships of house elements. Just as importantly, particular Pohnpeian concepts (such as the mweleng) were re-created via construction, and the inclusion of proper rituals required to provide protection and ensure completion of the project were given a regenerative social role. Throughout the project, networks and social processes that are particular to Pohnpeian society were critical to obtaining materials, coordinating tasks and providing labour.

Serving as both a residence and a manifestation of chiefly power and influence, the ihmwenei of Pohnpei was also an expression of clan and lineage, connecting the individual to a social unit that endures over time. Its foundation—which also serves as a crypt for the deceased chief—also has an element of durability, using stone that retains its shape and is relatively fixed on the landscape. The newly constructed ihmwenei at Wene was also an expression of the Noahs's social position and networking, which stretched beyond the house and neighbourhood to the extent of the island (Fig. 10). It



Figure 10. The completed ihmwenei with the author Terry Malinowski and Onis, the oldest son of the Noahs, 1976.

endured for many years, leading up to and including the time when he was the Nahnmwarki. As demonstrated by this project, the construction of the ihmwenei using local materials reconnected different aspects of Pohnpeian knowledge and culture, preserving and perpetuating information for a subsequent generation. Similar reconstruction efforts could revitalise other aspects of Pohnpeian language and culture, e.g., canoe construction and navigation, oral history and political history, or magic and traditional religion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We owe a great debt of gratitude, especially to Salter Salvador, the former Nahnmwarki of Madolenihmw, and his family for the opportunity to conduct this project. We also thank the people of Wene, Kitti, who made much of the coconut sennit and helped in the construction of the ihmwenei. The students of Ponape Agricultural and Trade School also provided labour for the heavier components of construction. Without all of their contributions this project would never have happened. T. Malinowski would also like to thank the Peace Corps for affording him the opportunity to volunteer his service on Pohnpei for six years, from 1972 to 1978. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Ken Rehg and Damian Sohl, who provided precise linguistic information and terminology. J. Field thanks the editors of *Waka Kuaka: The Journal of the Polynesian Society* and the anonymous reviewers.

NOTES

1. TM was often told that in the past, the only thing a man could consume before battle was sakau (kava). It would be considered shameful to die in battle and be disemboweled and find food in the stomach. Pohnpeians also said it was pelsuwed (taboo) to have sexual intercourse before battle.
2. Possessing many pigs, sakau plants and yams (kehp) are all important signs of wealth, status and being a man in Pohnpei today. Added to this historically, having pits of aged, fermented breadfruit (mahr) and a considerable amount of sennit was also prestigious. The mahr was important to survival outside of breadfruit and yam season, and the sennit was used for a variety of purposes. Only more recently with the introduction of outside Western goods have sennit and mahr somewhat lost their place in Pohnpeian culture.
3. The task of collecting information was challenging for a several reasons. First, it took a couple of years for TM's Pohnpei language skills to be adequate for communication. Secondly, Pohnpeians can be reluctant to share information about their culture with outsiders. Petersen, an anthropologist who did research on Pohnpei, describes this as well: "Among the central tenets of Pohnpeian social life is the concept/value/practice of kanengamah. Nothing about kanengamah is straightforward; indeed, when Pohnpeian storytellers and historians speak, they sometimes state quite explicitly that their words are 'twisted.' In doing this they invoke one of the concept's principles: Kanengamah is about concealment and constraint, about not revealing more than a limited portion of what one thinks or feels or knows" (Petersen 2022; see also Petersen 1993). According to TM's informants, some Pohnpeians believe that if they tell someone everything they

know they will die. Petersen (1993: 343) likewise states, "Many believe that full disclosure of all that a person knows about a given topic (audepen aramas) is life-threatening." Given kanengamah, TM's challenge was considerable in trying to piece together how these homes were constructed and why they were constructed in this matter. As much as possible, he tried to verify what an informant shared by confirming it with other sources.

4. Riesenberg (1968: 85) mentioned a feast held around the making of coconut sennit, which further points out its important role in the culture. It was the largest feast of the season, with the elder men making the sennit and the younger men involved in the making of sakau. Making sennit was a routine activity done especially by older men and women. The Samoan and Tongan literature also describes making coconut sennit as an important social activity (Nonu 2016: 64; Te Rangi Hiroa 1930: 248). Sennit was also used to wrap adze handles and create grips for spears, clubs and bows, construct fishing nets and slings, string membranes on drums, and create holders for water gourd or coconut shells (Hambruch 1936, vol. 2: 358–61, 363; O'Connell 1972: 129).
5. The consecration festival ends with a kava feast at which roast pig and dog, dishes of yams and breadfruit are eaten. Frequently the district chief is present. In the past, however, women did not take part.
6. Riesenberg wrote a fascinating article in 1948 entitled "Magic and Medicine in Ponape". He describes a number of examples of magic spells used for a variety of purposes. Riesenberg mentions that there are two principal ways to send kaw or black magic to someone: to bury a peioar (a bundle of sennit used in lashing) or one or two river pebbles under a corner of the enemy's house; and to burn dried coconut palm leaves or stems of coconuts and send the flame to the enemy. Stones or pebbles seem to be a commonly used item when someone wants a vehicle to either hold or transmit magic. Magic also played a role in the construction of a Pohnpeian house and canoe; both benevolent and malevolent spells might be used. Hambruch (1936, vol. 2: 301) discusses some of these chants or spells in his volumes from his South Seas expedition. The Noahs Madolenihmw who spearheaded the project in Wene, Kitti, was aware of some of these spells.

   Stories about magic to both protect the house or prevent its completion were common. For example, the sennit tangling up repeatedly during the thatching of the roof raised some people's concerns that someone did not want the house completed.
7. In some cases the main vertical posts may have been secured on top of the main floor beams using a mortise and tenon joint, rather than being placed in a posthole (Shineberg 1971: 184). In other words, the weight of the beams in the house would rest on the main floor beams.
8. Bamboo scaffolding is safer to use than wooden timbers, as it slowly sags rather than quickly breaking. While working on the house, TM experienced the bamboo fail and had time to grab something to avoid a fall onto the rocks below.
9. Early in the lashing of the main beams, there was a very experienced individual, Kaniki, who masterfully lashed some of the upright posts to the lohlo and then to the ndape. Unfortunately, he decided to leave the project before it was completed. Another man, Riting, also an expert lasher, decided to attempt to learn what Kaniki had started doing. Kaniki was the most experienced in house lashing;

Riting had previously only done lashing on outrigger canoes. So, in an effort to learn Kaniki's lashings, Riting partially unravelled some of Kaniki's lashing to see how it was done. Later on Riting developed numbness in one of his arms. Some people believed that Kaniki had played magic on his work to prevent anyone from undoing his lashings later on.

10. Only a high chief could have a house with four sections of thatching, called pakis. The number four is critically important in Pohnpeian culture. In the state of Madolenihmw, the first four cups of sakau are presented to the most important people present. Traditional medicine is also administered for four days, and magic spells employ the number four.

    Traditionally, the gathering of the reeds would be delegated to people in the village, similar to the assigning of making the thatching for the roof. The master builder would likely have the job of coordinating the delegating of tasks and timing of completion. In our project, TM worked closely with the Noahs in determining how to address each phase of the project. Many times these discussions took place in the evening while drinking sakau.
11. Over time one may need to go back to repair the thatch by straightening out the leaves or replacing some rotten thatch. This is called dilip.
12. Respect or wahu is a very important concept in Pohnpeian tradition. Another saying related to homes and respect is as follows: "Sohte me kin pahdok ohl likin ihmwet" (No one can plant a man outside this house). This is a metaphor that explains the importance of respect; showing respect requires acknowledgement and greeting a visitor, including inviting them in and offering them food.
13. TM lived in the house for about six months after it was completed. It was generally cool inside because the reed walls allowed a gentle breeze to pass through. The thatching being made of palm leaves gave the impression of lying under a tree's branches. The steep pitched roof made for a cathedral-like ceiling, making the house feel very expansive. The reed floors with a pandanus mat were always comfortable for sleeping at night. The proximity to a stream made it convenient for bathing in the evenings.
14. In the evening, a kerosene lamp cast dancing shadows on the thatched ceilings. In the past, the fire pit in the centre of the house would likely have had the same effect. TM noted that at the time he revelled in the thought that the house was made entirely with local materials, the way Pohnpeians had built for centuries prior. He felt a tremendous sense of history with the stone foundation, the wood timbers and the palm thatching, as though he had been transported into the past. He wondered what daily life would have been for the occupants, and the artistry and aesthetics of the lashing constantly stirred the imagination. As a keepsake and record of the work, TM spent the last months in Wene building a 10:1 scale model of the house, complete with thatched roof and lashed beams.
15. Backstrap looms were common in the Caroline Islands. In the summer of 1974, when TM traveled to Woleai atoll in the Western Carolines, he observed women still using these looms to make skirts from banana fibre.

GLOSSARY

The terms in this glossary are Pohnpeian unless otherwise stated. They are inspired by Sohl *et al*.'s *New Pohnpeian–English Online Dictionary*, which can be accessed at https://www2.hawaii.edu/~rehg/NPED.html.

ahlek	type of reed (*Saccharum spontaneum* or *Phragmites karka*) used as a building material
ahl en kitik	piece of wood that runs across the bottom of a wall, lit. path of the mouse
ais	type of wood (*Parinarium laurina*)
ataut	type of floor beam
audepen aramas	knowledge one has about a given topic
auhs	ivory nut palm tree (*Metroxylon amicarum*)
dihd	wall
dilip	the repairing of thatch
ida	outer bark of the ivory nut palm
ihmw	dwelling house
ihmwenei	traditional chief's house
ihmw en lapalap	traditional chief's house
ihmw en soupedi	traditional chief's house
imwalap	dwelling house; traditional chief's house
inou	lashing
inou iken arong	pattern used in lashing inspired by the tail of the bluefin trevally fish
inou Pakhin	pattern used in lashing originating on the island of Pakhin, near Pohnpei
inou tehn pahr	pattern used in lashing inspired by the leaf of a sprouting coconut palm
kadingading	type of beam
kanengamah	patience, restraint
katar	giant fern (*Sphaeropteris* sp.)
kaukoan auwen kidi	magic spell able to silence barking dogs
kaw	black magic
kehp	yam
kepennok	broom
ketieu	type of wood (*Ixora casei*)
kisin pwehl	coconut sennit
koahr	wooden hooked needle
koansop	ball of sennit
kousapw	greater section of land
kutoar	eave
lepin keidu	type of beam
lirau	type of reed (*Phragmites karka*) used as a building material
litok menger	type of reed (*Saccharum spontaenum*) used as a building material

lohlo	crossbeam
lohlotik	series of crossbeams
lohpwu	type of floor beam
lolong	burial chamber for a chief
mahr	aged, fermented breadfruit
meing	high language
mesen idalap	thatch panels spaced apart, lit. wide face of the ida
mesen idatik	thatch panels closely placed, lit. small face of the ida
mwah	brother-in-law
mweleng	hidden storage space in a roof
mwohn ihmw	foundation
nahs	meeting house; feast house
nanuolosom	master builder
ndape	type of beam
ndape pahn mwaramwar	type of small beam
ngahp	the distance between a person's outstretched arms
ngkad	act of thatching
nok	centre rib of a leaf
pakis	four sections of thatching
palein sapw	section of land
pehi	foundation, altar
peioar	bundle of sennit used in lashing
pelsuwed	taboo
poahsoan	foundation
pwahla/pwahlala	type of roof beam
pwarapwara	woven basket or mat made of coconut palm fronds used to cover roof thatching
rehu	main rafter
rehu en disek	rafter in a gable
rohpapiso	carriage used to transport a high chief
sahpw sarawi	the sacred land
sakau	kava
soahrong	ridgepole
sop kieil	a piece of wood that runs across the top of a wall, lit. the stomping path of the lizard
taht	floor
tehnpas	traditional chief's house
tiahk en saphw	traditional culture
tulafale	talking chief (Samoan)
uhr	post
wahu	respect
warasap	high chief's canoe
warong em mweleng	lower beam supporting a roof
weingal	mangrove trunk
winani en ngkat	magic spell to make thatching go faster
winani en silasil	protective magic

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GENDER INHIBITS EMBODIMENT FOR INTERSEXUALITY AND IN TE AO MĀORI

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ABSTRACT: An important worldview in traditional cultures, especially within te ao Māori (the Māori worldview), is that embodiment concerns personhood and relationality, as persons are bodily situated within the environment including in all things between the earth and the heavens. However, the social theories and background of the 1930s–1950s have had a significant impact on the idea and foundations of embodiment. These theories relied on ideas of sexism, though were also linked with racism. Gender was established by medicine as an apparatus of power and control over bodies and beings. Intersexuality was at the heart of the establishment of gender, with its invisibility ensured as a means of maintaining the status quo of the West. Gender was appropriated by Western feminists, disguised as an ahistorical and acultural signifier, to universalise the Western liberal worldview. This article traces the history and purpose of the concept of gender and the way it has been understood and deployed as an apparatus in society. It then illustrates how the deployment of gender has affected the embodiment of intersexuality and te ao Māori (such as on wāhine (women) and takatāpui (sexual diversity)). Lastly, the article sets out the importance of decentring gender to enable a culturally accountable embodiment with a sexuality of dignity that is not limited and disembodied through gender.

Keywords: intersexuality, colonisation, dehumanisation, medicalisation, history of gender, Māori

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Intersex spiritual guardians, we call
The life essence you provide us all
And ensure our social role and place

Society desires only males and females, intersexuality abhor
No social respect: we cannot come beyond the door
Society deems intersex, no space

They attempted to make us the "right" version
The trauma imposed on life, body, and person
Socially born wrong, medically fixed to male or female: intersexuality replace

We do pray for those who have harmed us so
We reclaim recognition, respect so we can grow
Guardians, hear our call to protect our person, our place.

—Rogena Sterling (2023)

Sterling, Rogena, 2024. Gender inhibits embodiment for intersexuality and in te ao Māori. *Waka Kuaka: The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 133 (3): 301–324.
https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.301-324

Since the beginning of the Roman Empire, the West has set as the standard that the parameters of sex consist of only male and female, and has often prioritised the male. In any of its territories, Western authorities marginalised anything that disrupted their conceptualisation of sex as a male–female binary (Dreger 1998; Lugones 2016). An example of this was when the Spaniards invaded the Antilles and Louisiana. When they came across "men dressed as women who were respected by their societies[,] [t]hinking they were hermaphrodites, or homosexuals, they slew them" (Guidotto 2007: 50). Referring to Indigenous peoples with various sexual presentations as "hermaphrodites" was a means to dehumanise them as monstrous and class them in the same way that intersexuality had been considered in Western Europe—as pollution of the human population—for several millennia (Foucault 2003; Gilbert 2002; Sharpe 2009).

As the poem at the outset of the article notes, hermaphrodites, now referred to as intersex persons (or holistically intersexuality),[1] have lost their personhood and have been made invisible. The colonisation project, from its early Roman origins, involved the disciplining of bodies not complying with the ideals of the imperial project (Mbembe 2001). The West has considered them as monsters since its birth in the Roman Empire, the latter's imperialisation of Europe and the colonising of the rest of the world (Gilbert 2002; Mowat 2022; Nedobity 2020; Resnick 2019; Sharpe 2009). Sexism socially controls bodies, desires and identities (Behrensen 2021). Paradoxically, although intersexuality has been at the centre of determining the "true" nature of sex roles and what sex can, should or must mean in the West (Dreger 1998), they were at the same time made invisible as part of the imperial project. Intersexuality has been used to shore up the male–female binary through exclusion and invisibility (Behrensen 2021). At best, there has been an enforced assimilation as either male or female that has disembodied any personhood as intersexuality for millennia or sometimes even killed them to eradicate their existence (Gilbert 2002; Mowat 2022; Nedobity 2020; Resnick 2019; Sharpe 2009). Although few use the term "monster" now to refer to intersexuality, they have been completely medicalised, bodies and beings normalised to conform to heterosexuality in the name of humanism. John Money introduced the standardisation of assimilation through medicalisation for intersexuality as male or female (as will be described later), a practice that has now been fully absorbed within society. Assimilation is one of the "humane" tools of the colonial project and embedded in the "isms". Sexism as the exclusion of intersexuality has been core to the West since Roman imperialism and from the time of European colonisation, including in Aotearoa New Zealand, along and in conjunction with racism. Together they are a means of dehumanising and disembodying the other.

Although gender has been equated with bringing equality and portrayed as a neutral social descriptor, the mainstreaming of gender will never overcome the oppression and discrimination of sexism, especially for intersexuality, and its colonising impact on te ao Māori (the Māori worldview). Gender was imbued with sexist and racist Western foundations, and it has become a process of disembodiment and relegating sex to a mechanism outside of who we are as persons. However, not all societies disrespected intersexuality as such. Many have recognised and respected them, even if they did not always name them.

The thin space between heaven and earth, a space of herm-bodiment as we reclaim our relationality and place in this world.

—Rogena Sterling

Herm-bodiment reflects the existence of embodied beings—hermaphrodites as they were once known, or intersexuality—with personhood and dignity. Embodiment indicates the respected relationality as persons (personhood) through the body—the essence—who are connected, functioning and accountable to one another. It situates them within the environment between the earth (Papatūānuku) and the heavens (Ranginui). Such an understanding is familiar for Māori and other traditional societies as it is core to the fabric of te ao Māori.

Western feminists in particular and Rainbow advocacy organisations have embraced gender. They have adopted the concept to explain their relations and place in the world. They conceive of "gender embodiment" as reflecting their being as gendered subjects without presuming either self-mastery or compliance to the other's wishes (Farley and Kennedy 2016). Although intersex and trans persons share a similar medicalised history, this article focuses on the intersexuality perspective and does not unpack from a transgender perspective.

What is forgotten is the history and foundation of the implementation of gender and the effect this has had on intersexuality. Gender continues to render intersexuality invisible and disembody them, as it did when it was established. Furthermore, there is a gap in memory in acknowledging the ways gender enhances a cultural disconnect by conceiving of the body as something within which the self is embedded, a disembodiment.

This article is the story of how sexuality[2] (including the physical, psychosocial and cultural elements combined) could no longer hold a Western conceptualisation of life, especially as a male–female binary, and that "gender" was established as a disembodied form to maintain the Western

ideals of the male–female binary. It outlines how intersexuality was at the very heart of the establishment of gender, but, by the 1980s, its connections had all but been read out of history. Gender became mainstreamed by feminists in the 1980s, taking on a form as "acultural" and "ahistorical". The article aims to highlight the continuing impact of gender on intersexuality and te ao Māori. It aims to decentre gender as a universal (Sterling 2022) and provide a foundation for others to build upon in reclaiming an embodied personhood.

I come to this article as an intersex person, an academic, a human rights expert and a person working in the area of data sovereignty, privacy and personhood. I document how intersexuality is rendered invisible as an inconvenient truth to the imperial project. I have drawn on the historical documentation of intersexuality/hermaphrodites from the early Roman times to the present. The historical contextualisation has enabled the unpacking of the alienation from cultural identity on intersexuality and its personhood. Moreover, I have been able to centre my past and understand my genealogical roots. For me, this work is a recentring of sexuality to reclaim my being and belonging in the world.

HISTORY OF GENDER

Gender has assumed a ubiquitous and universal status and has become so naturalised that few understand it differently (Germon 2009; Repo 2016). It has been attributed to feminism and assumed that it has no history outside of that tradition (Germon 2009; Radačić and Facio 2020; Repo 2016). The United Nations has adopted a truncated view of the history of gender, that is, one that holds that it began with the Western feminists (ECOSOC 1997; Madrigal-Borloz 2021). However, before the 1950s, the concept of gender was nowhere to be found, except in one article on sex roles (Bentley 1945) and its use in philology (linguistics).

Gender has a short and controversial history (Gill-Peterson 2018). Although Western feminists were central to advancing gender into the public sphere in the 1970s–1980s, they did so by appropriating the medical concept of gender from Money and Robert Stoller and applying it to the wider public sphere (Cortez *et al*. 2019; Downing *et al*. 2014; Germon 2009; Repo 2016). Money and Stoller added credibility to the liberal feminist political agenda. The political objectives and the current definitions and usage of sex and gender fail to account for how and why gender came into being. They also fail to account for the impact of gender on other worldviews, such as te ao Māori, and the very population, intersexuality, for whom it was established to render them invisible (Cortez *et al*. 2019; Repo 2016).

The first circle in Figure 1 highlights the social theories and concepts of the 1930s–1950s that were very influential in the establishment and application



Figure 1. History of the establishment of gender as the standard.

of the concept of gender. These theories included behaviourism, structural functionalism, human malleability and social constructionism. *Behaviourism* theorises that humans learn through processes of conditioning (imprinting) rather than knowing through innate truth or embodied experience (Repo 2013: 230). *Structural functionalism* is the socialisation of normative behaviours through social control, including through institutions (like family, education, law and religion), to ensure children are socialised into being productive and reproductive citizens (Dew 2014; Kingsbury and Scanzoni 1993; Repo 2013: 229). *Human malleability* rejects genetic/biological determinism and conceives that the most evolutionary aspect of human beings is their plasticity or malleability (UNESCO 1952). To add to this, a theory developed in the 1950s was *social constructionism*, which suggested that "reality is socially constructed" and does not have any "biological" basis (Berger and Luckmann 1966).

Along with the theoretical concepts, the social and political environment demanded action to maintain Western legitimacy in the liberal world order (Fig. 1, top-left circle). In the early 1950s, society was beginning to reestablish its social, political and economic order after World War II (Repo 2013). While women had increasing freedoms and equality, there was also a decrease in infertility and an increase in divorce rates (Germon 2009; Repo 2016). At the same time, there was a conservative backlash to the changing

liberal world demanding the preservation of social order (Repo 2013). Within such an environment, the continued demand for intersex invisibility had to remain and be enforced (Repo 2013: 240).

Circle 2 of Figure 1 takes us to John Money. Up to the time of Money, transsexuals and hermaphrodites (as they were known) were believed to originate in biology, not psychology, a belief still held by some (Germon 2009; Morland 2014; Repo 2016; Rubin 2012; Stoller 1994). However, Money refuted the early-twentieth-century sexology evidence that sexuality, especially masculinity or femininity, had a bodily origin in terms of a person's sense of self (Money *et al*. 1955; Repo 2013). Furthermore, he believed biological factors were not reliable markers of a person's psychosocial and psychosexual orientation or their "psychological sex" for intersexuality (Germon 2009; Repo 2016; Rubin 2012). Regarding intersexuality, he believed that socialisation as a male or female was key to a successful life and that this should be imprinted before the age of two (Money 1952, 1955, 1995). He borrowed the philological concept of gender to reflect this psychosocial and psychosexual orientation (Money 1985, 1995) and consistency between the assigned sex and the sex role that would be permanently imprinted (Repo 2013).

As intersexuality could undo the structure and stability of male–female dimorphism (Rubin 2012), Money saw gender as a way to conceal the possibility of the existence of intersexuality (Money 1952, 1955, 1995). Although medical treatment had already existed for intersexuality, Money's protocols established a regulatory gesture for intersex medicalisation—surgical, hormonal and psychosocial normalisation—and literally fashioned the "sex" as it was "supposed to be" all along (Repo 2016; Rubin 2012). Money's work medicalised and structured the spatial and temporal logic of human development along the heteronormative and sexually dimorphic ideological biases (Rubin 2012).

Turning to circle 3 of Figure 1, we come to the other main figure in the establishing of gender—Robert Stoller. He is known as the "father of modern American transgender medicine", drawing on Money's notion of gender (Germon 2009; Repo 2016; Stoller 1994). He followed the work of Arrigo Tamassia in 1878 to take the idea of gender identity as the conflict between psychological gender identity and physical sex appearance in his work with transsexual/transgender persons (Rubin 2012). He insisted that gender identity was the psychological, not cultural or biological, sense of knowing what sex one belonged to (Stoller 1994). It was the unalterable sense of "I am male" or "I am female" (Germon 2009). It followed the Cartesian philosophy—"I think, therefore I am". It enabled a nuanced focus on psychological gender and access to a subject's mind and how it formed through experience, familial intimacy and trauma (Repo 2016). For Stoller, gender identity could fluctuate within any given individual irrespective of biology at birth

(Germon 2009). This laid the foundation for the current protocols of US transsexual/transgender medicine (Gill-Peterson 2018) and upheld Money's medical protocols on intersexuality. Money and Stoller set out the formative mechanisms required to discover, examine, cure, placate and also normalise sexual deviancy as "gendered subjects" with stable mental conditions (Repo 2016). Allowing any intersex existence outside such a normativity would risk a bleak existence in society (Germon 2009; Repo 2016).

Stoller's second core contribution was his sex–gender split. The concept was adopted from the nature–nurture split of earlier Western thought. Stoller believed that nurture outweighed any importance of biology and that culture was the regulator of sexual behaviour and a controller of the unconscious and emotional lives of human beings (Repo 2016; Stoller 1994). The gender established, assigned or recognised at birth would be socialised into the person's core gender identity and could account for psychological phenomena without direct biological connotations (Germon 2009; Repo 2016; Stoller 1994). Gender only became dangerous when incorrectly learned and performed by children and adults (Repo 2016), whether intersexuality or transgender. His contribution of the sex–gender split to the gender apparatus continues to influence medicine, feminist studies and public policy (Germon 2009; Repo 2016).

Circle 4 in Figure 1 represents the period from the late 1960s to the beginning of the 1980s, when Western influential feminists including Germaine Greer, Kate Millett, Ann Oakley, Harriet Holter, Jessie Bernard, Rhoda Unger, Nancy Chodorow, Dorothy Dinnerstein, Gayle Rubin and Marilyn Strathern appropriated gender from medicine. The apparatus of gender enabled feminists to focus on changing systems without any biological restrictions (Rubin 2012: 899). Sex was relegated to a passive mechanism, a "raw base" upon which to build gender, and was superfluous except to medical professionals (Germon 2009; Repo 2016). Once stripped of all connotations of sex, gender was ready to be harnessed for its political utility—women's equality with men—by the women's movement (Germon 2009). These feminists were well aware of its origins and history as they introduced the apparatus into the public sphere. Gender became the construction of self and of identity, and the basis of social interaction as an individual and within society. The notion of embodiment was minimised in the acknowledgement, discussion and provision of feminist thought. Moreover, what is left out from much of the history of the feminist introduction of gender is that many postcolonial feminists, scholars and advocates initially rejected gender due to its imprecision, perpetuation of mind–body dualism, biological foundationalism, heterosexism and racial and cultural bias (Repo 2016).

Circle 5 in Figure 1 represents the mainstreaming of gender into public policy, public analysis and international law (Bacchi and Eveline 2010; Daly 2005; Dhamoon 2011; Rees 2006). This continued with the feminist theme

that gender would help achieve equality (Cortez *et al*. 2019; Germon 2009; Repo 2016). At least in theory, gender is free from the constraints of biological determinism (Germon 2009; Gill-Peterson 2018). Feminists argued that the concept of gender could explain and challenge the systematic oppression of women (Radačić and Facio 2020) and could overthrow the patriarchal power of reproduction and revolutionise contemporary life (Germon 2009; Repo 2016). However, structural discrimination and oppression were not because of sex but because of the Western patriarchal, andro-/heterosexual interpretation and its deterministic organising principles (Laqueur 1990; Valdes 1995, 1996). Gender did not break from these organising principles but has only removed the relevance of sex within the structure. It is worth noting that many of the advances in women's rights and equality were due not to gender but rather to the continuing women's organising and advocacy.

Gender has been deployed through a hierarchical, heterosexual binary (male–female, life–nonlife, human–nonhuman world) along with capitalism (Altamirano-Jiménez 2020; Lugones 2007). It takes for granted or as inherent that sexual and racial differences and corporeal qualities fit the universal categories (Price and Shildrick 1999). It cannot be understood outside of its colonial production of sexism and racism (De Chiara 2015). Sexuality outside of the Western worldview has been dealt with through elimination or assimilation (Edenheim 2003; Guidotto 2007). Gender became a means to break down the social bonds and structures (Grey 2004; Mohanty 2003).

Circle 6 of Figure 1 represents the final shift in gender within feminism that occurred from the 1990s onwards, although not fully accepted within wider Western feminism. The focus of the subject changed from women to gender (Butler 2008). Sex reflected the sex characteristics of the sex assigned at birth and had no bearing on identity (Butler 1993). Gender determines how one relates to the masculine and the feminine along with other various qualities; who we are; and how we live as "bodies in the world" (Butler 1993, 2008). The feminists and theorists argued that liberal feminism had lost the capacity to be subversive if women's sexed bodies were viewed as primary sites of agency and attached gender to self-defining acts that confront punitive and exclusionary social conventions (Popa 2021). Gender as performativity was the spearhead of these theories through its social constructionism following on from those before, including Money, Stoller and the Western feminists (Butler 2008). The idea was to break the binary while maintaining the medical and social constructionist foundations upon which gender was established (Butler 2008; Marcus 2005; Thoreson 2009; Vasterling 1999). Gender under this paradigm was individual and self-defined. It has been based on the psychological sense of the self and formed on the body which is mouldable to that of the self. For Butler, gender is a discourse of identity, a way of "existing in one's body", and not a discourse, an apparatus, of itself (Butler 1985: 510). As Jemima Repo argues, Judith Butler "de-historicises

gender as a form of existing in and experiencing the world, whereby we can discursively trace subjectivation as it appears as different kinds of this or that form of identity, this or that mode of existing" (Repo 2014: 75).

The deployment of gender fails to account for the historical and material specificity of traditional/Indigenous being and belonging or identity (Grey 2004: 9). Western feminists feared that "decolonising politics" would hold Indigenous women within the patriarchy (Burman 2011). Gender has had to be shoehorned onto colonised societies and does not reflect them as an organising principle (Oyěwùmí 1997). It does not capture the Indigenous embodiment (Mohanty 2003) and the acceptance of diverse sexuality within their personhood (Epple 1998; Farran 2010; Hill 1935; Kerekere 2017; Opler 1960). Many traditional societies did not force their people to compartmentalise their bodies, desires and experiences—their sexuality (Osorio 2020). The apparatus of gender affects the sense of well-being and disembodiment (Mack-Canty 2004).

While the feminists argued that they were debasing biological determinism, in reality, they only debased the embodiment of being and not determinism itself. What they have done is universalise gender as a social "ahistorical", "acultural" descriptor and disguised its foundations (Germon 2009; Repo 2016). The mainstreaming of gender fails to account for the in-built sexism, along with racism, in the governance of life and individuals (Repo 2013). The apparatus of gender was contested from its introduction into the public sphere as it was appropriated from medicine (Germon 2009; Repo 2016).

While references to intersex were everywhere in the early stages of Anglo-American feminism in the discussion of gender, by the 1980s intersexuality was almost nowhere to be found in the feminist literature (Germon 2009). The denial of intersexuality was not new to Western advocates advancing women's rights. One author, even in advocating women's rights in the 1600s, wrote that hermaphrodites "should come no nearer then the post at my doore", that is, they shall not be part of public life (T.E. 1632: 5–6). The Western feminists were clear on the need to erase sexual diversity—intersexuality and transgender people—as they debased biology (Gill-Peterson 2018). They, like those in medicine, reinforced the view that without medical help, sexual minorities would live unfortunate, miserable lives (Germon 2009; Repo 2016). The tension went unrecognised as, on one hand, they attempted to "dismantle sex" and, on the other, intersex and transgender people were shoehorned into male and female categories (Downing *et al*. 2014; Germon 2009). Universalising gender ensured that a subjectivity as intersexuality remains a non-possibility (Edenheim 2003; Guidotto 2007; Lugones 2016).

As gender replaced sex, it did so as an apparatus with specific intentions. It marked a shift in history. For that reason, it is possible to examine gender before it came into existence in the 1950s (Repo 2013). It has a short history, and a contested one at that (Germon 2009; Repo 2016).

IMPACTS OF GENDER THROUGH DISEMBODIMENT

Human beings are embodied personalities (Grear 2007). Personhood has both individual and dividual modalities or aspects of personhood (LiPuma 1998). A dividual is a socially embedded person who is cultural and sociocentric (as opposed to an individual who is an atomistic, egocentric, autonomous social actor) (Smith 2012), understood through embodiment.

Embodiment includes the innate experience of living in, perceiving and experiencing the world directly from the very specific location of the sex(ual) body. Sexuality here includes the cultural, physical, social and even sexual relations (Shively and De Cecco 1977). Embodiment also encompasses agency (personhood) and dignity in cultural custom (Strathern and Stewart 2011; Tolman *et al*. 2014). The experience does not need cognition to give it meaning because the body is forever entangled with the world (Tolman *et al*. 2014). The body is not just a passive sensory-data receptor that is socially constructed but a dividual, a part of the consciousness and cognition that perceives and experiences the world (Tolman *et al*. 2014). Embodiment recognises that dividuals anywhere experience the world and relations from the location of their bodies that enable agency and dignity in their cultural/spiritual being.

Gender, however, is a disembodied, individual apparatus. It is imprinted onto passive bodies as fragmented sexual objects and disembodied gender identity (Holland *et al*. 1994). It maintains the ideal masculinity or femininity while rejecting any biological basis of sex (Price and Shildrick 1999). It is gender performativity on one hand and a production of identity possibilities on the other (Butler 2008). Gender emphasised the internalised normative mechanisms and discourses that shape our relationality (Mason 2018; Tolman *et al*. 2014). The discourse was made understandable by the sex–gender split deriving from Stoller.

Gender has affected intersexuality through their erasure not only of their physical bodies but also their cultural being, a disembodied being, that is only recognised as an assimilated gendered being—male or female. Though not initially accepted, it has now assimilated within much analysis and discussion of te ao Māori in discussing wahine (woman) and takatāpui (sexual diversity). Sexuality in the broader, unifying basis is a central part of embodiment or whakatinanatanga, even when sexuality, such as intersexuality, is not necessarily named by society.

Intersexuality

Many cultures have treated intersexuality as sacred (Costello 2014). Yet Western society alienated embodiment and personhood from intersexuality. The West has never recognised them in such a way since the beginning of the Roman Empire. It has dehumanised them—considered them as aberrations

of society, monstrous, a breach of nature (Dreger 1998; Karkazis 2008; Meyerowitz 2004; Parsons 1741; Rubin 2012).

As their bodies defy the sex binary (Davis *et al*. 2016; Foucault 1998), they are considered defective socially, and as such they have been forcibly assimilated socially as either male or female, or eliminated (Dreger 1998; Foucault 2003; Reis 2005, 2009). Since the 1900s, their "defective bodies" have been medically rehabilitated through diagnostic, corrective and/or normalising mechanisms of intersexuality into the normativity as males or females (Dreger 1998; Karkazis 2008; Rubin 2012; Topp 2013). The goal of gender was to maintain social order by rehabilitating intersexuality into the heterosexual framework of girlhood/boyhood and womanhood/manhood (Downing *et al*. 2014; Germon 2009; Gill-Peterson 2018).

Gender, as the Western feminists appropriated from medicine, continues to render the intersex body elastic and malleable, and hence, more governable as a site upon which to construct heterosexuality (Repo 2013). It has resulted in unnecessary violence done to intersex bodies based on Western sociocultural imperatives (Arana 2005; Davis 2015; Dreger 1998; Holmes 2016; Karkazis 2008; Knight 2017; Roen 2009; Warne n.d.), violence that is recognised as torture and ill-treatment (Méndez and Human Rights Council 2013).

Gender is a structural system to normalise and coerce intersex bodies and beings and embed it in the foundations of Western, heteronormative society (Adkins 1999). Through biopolitical discourses, practices and technologies of normalisation (Rubin 2012), the gender apparatus results in the denial of agency and disembodies and alienates them from their personhood as intersex people/intersexuality (Breu 2016). It results in the dehumanising disembodiment of the intersexual dividual that challenges the structures by disrupting ideas about sex and gender correlation (Davis *et al*. 2016). For intersexuality, gender is the story of shame, secrecy and coerced bodies, leaving stigma and trauma (Rubin 2012).

New Zealand government processes still enforce the disembodiment and medicalisation of intersexuality. For example, a government discussion document on a regulation change for self-identification defined gender as

> a person's social and personal identity as male, female or another gender, such as "non-binary". A person's gender can be different to their sex. (Department of Internal Affairs 2022: 5)

Their definition of sex was as follows:

> Sex refers to a person's physiological features that characterise people as male, female or intersex. A child's sex is generally assessed by a medical professional who is present at the child's birth and is listed on the child's birth record when they are first registered. (Department of Internal Affairs 2022: 5)

The definitions above acknowledge the existence of individuals as having a gender beyond the male–female binary; however, a critique remains in how the medicalisation of sex, as determined by physiological features, still frames a person's identity within a restrictive system. The assignment of sex at birth embeds an individual's identity within a framework that may not accommodate the complexities required within intersexuality, thus reinforcing a dichotomy through the reliance on a medical basis for identity formation. In that framing, sex is considered a physiological feature of the body and no longer core to a person's identity. Social and personal identity may still be considered by the apparatus of gender as it is defined, sidelining the autonomy of individuals to define their own sex identity beyond medical and institutional boundaries. This is a continuation of the dehumanisation of intersexuality and maintains the medical foundation in the establishment of gender.

Even though there is a growing acceptance of the phrase "innate variation of sex characteristics" (IVSC) as a physical feature for intersexuality, it is still retained within the idea that everyone has a gender (identity)—masculine, feminine, nonbinary—with references to sex characteristics that may include "variation of sex characteristics" or "difference of sex development." Nonbinary here does not mean intersex. It is still the gendered framing as was noted in circle 6 of Figure 1. Under the IVSC notation, it is a physical feature but not core to your embodied being. Those who identify as "intersex", or those reclaiming "hermaphrodite", are minimised or even negated as harmful to the community. There is pushback from intersex activists on anything that could infer a "third" or other sex as it "do[es] not respect our diversity or right to self-determination" (UN Human Rights Office 2019). This continues the disembodiment of intersexuality.

Some transgender advocates believe gender and gender identity are liberating and important for affirmative gender care and for validity for themselves and their communities (Coleman *et al*. 2022; Oliphant *et al*. 2018). This article does not deny them that validity; however, universalising gender (and gender identity) will continue to affect intersexuality under a medicalised concept of being and, at the same time, continues to alienate and disembody them.

Intersexuality embodiment enables dividuals to perceive themselves as their cultural, physical beings, with genealogical roots. Embodiment emphasises resistance and agency (Breu 2016). Human rights enable the development of an embodied life in dignity, that is, with diverse sexuality as part of the embodiment (Sterling 2018).

Te Ao Māori and Whakatinanatanga

Knowing the foundations of gender, it is substandard as an apparatus to explain te ao Māori. Māori are not patriarchal in the Western sense (Hokowhitu 2008). As an apparatus, gender does not enable Māori to

challenge the (Western) category of women and sexuality (Altamirano-Jiménez 2020; Burman 2011; Simmonds 2011). Western patriarchy is a product of colonialism (Burman 2011). Although gender has been portrayed as a contributing key descriptor of Māori society and its roles, in reality, it is an imposition of Western, liberal concepts of social organisation. As such, it has had a reductive, assimilating effect on te ao Māori and its tikanga (ethical principles).

Whakatinanatanga, embodiment, situates the dividual between Papatūānuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father), among the human ancestors, and all within, including mountains, rivers, oceans and the collective (Pihama 2020). It shapes dividuals both individually and collectively (Altamirano-Jiménez 2020). It is embedded through ceremonies, legal and political orders and languages based on their social relationships (Marsden 2003). It is core to various Māori health models such as Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā (four sides of the house) (Durie 1985) and the late Rose Pere's Te Wheke (octopus) (Love 2004; Pere 1997, 1988).

While sexuality was not always named in te ao Māori, it was respected as something inherited from the ancestors. It was not just biological essentialism or a social construction (Kerekere 2016). As Leonie Pīhama explains:

> Māori perceptions of sexuality were underpinned by the foundational concept of whakapapa [genealogical connections], which connected all living things and which demanded the maintenance of balance between human and atua [god, deity, ancestor], between human and the environment, between male and female, and between the generations living, deceased and unborn. (Pīhama 2015: 7)

Each person carries masculine and feminine qualities, indicating balance, which is recognised by the genderless pronoun "ia" rather than he or she. Carl Mika refers to "ira", an essence or "gene" that embodies what it means to be human and grounded (Mika 2023). Sexuality in its diversity is still embedded within ira through the kaupapa (purpose) and tikanga, and reflected their whakapapa (Aspin and Hutchings 2007; Pīhama 2015).

Mana wahine illuminates and recognises the authority, dignity and power (the mana) of Māori women (Simmonds 2011). It acknowledges what it means to be Māori first and a woman second. Mana wahine indicates a Māori woman's lived and embodied reality (Simmonds 2011). Unlike Western feminism, mana wahine does not situate women against men on an oppositional basis. Mana tāne (male), mana whānau (family), mana whenua (land) and mana atua (gods) are all central to the embodiment of mana wahine (Simmonds 2011). Mana wahine are respected as nurturers and nourishers of the future generations by the family, whānau and hapū (subtribe) and the community (Altamirano-Jiménez 2020; Burman 2011; Chant 2011; Simmonds 2011). Reproduction is viewed with status, as bringing forth

future generations, rather than as a symbol of oppression (Pihama 2020; Simmonds 2011). This notion is also reflected through whānau ora (family well-being) to honour their ancestors (Chant 2011).

Mana takatāpui refers to the authority, dignity and power (the mana) of sexual diversity within te ao Māori. Takatāpui describes non-heterosexual forms of sexual expression deriving from historical Māori society (Aspin and Hutchings 2007). Sexuality was not restricted to a binary view of sex in their communities, where diversity was the norm, not the exception (Kerekere 2017; NZ House of Representatives 2021; Pīhama 2015; Pīhama *et al*. 2015). More recently, Tu Chapman has described ira tangata as part of a reclaiming of intersexuality space within te ao Māori. Tu refers to ira as genes and whakapapa, and tangata to person(hood) (Intersex Aotearoa 2021). It acknowledges that a dividual is Māori first and not defined by any single characteristic or variation. The acceptance of and respect for sexual diversity for Māori is still through whakatinanatanga. As gender denies cultural embodiment, it cannot explain or hold the values and foundations of sexuality or sexual diversity in te ao Māori through whakatinanatanga (Kerekere 2017).

As a result of the universalising of Western, liberal "Rainbow" or "LGBTIQ+" worldviews, traditional understandings of Māori sexuality have become blurred, misinterpreted or lost completely (Aspin and Hutchings 2007: 420). The universalising of gender (identity) since its establishment by medicine has been part of this blurring process deriving from a Western and not a te ao Māori foundation.

Using gender is a disservice to the role of mana wahine and mana takatāpui and relationality within their whānau, hapū and iwi (tribe) (Pihama 2020). Gender does not have the capability to hold the values, ethics and relationality of whakatinanatanga through ira. Gender limits the discussion and understanding of whakatinanatanga in te ao Māori, especially around sexuality. Sexuality is not another identity but simply part of being Māori (Aspin and Hutchings 2007; Pīhama 2015) and was not a concern as long as whakapapa was protected and nurtured (Pīhama 2015).

AN EMBODIED LIFE

As Repo reminds us, "we cannot examine the history of gender before gender itself came into existence" (Repo 2013: 229). Using gender for analysis of societies prior to its introduction simply imposes a Western worldview on different societies. To understand sexuality in historical accounts, they must, as David Halperin, argues, "recover the terms in which the experiences of individuals belonging to past societies were actually constituted, and, second, … measure and assess the differences between those terms and the ones we currently employ" (Halperin 2012: 28–29).

Sexuality in its unitary basis, not biological determinist basis, is more useful in the measuring and assessing of such differences. Attention must be paid to understanding the uses of terms in terms of their cultural meanings (Epple 1998; Halperin 1990).

Although gender is mainstream now, women from the Global South and Asia and Indigenous women from other areas contested the idea of gender (Repo 2016). Western structures have not only continued to dismantle cultural social structures that maintained societies through values but also removed the meaning of relations through erasing or assimilating understandings of social beings such a women or intersexuality into non-definite sites of positioning. Rather than enhancing human rights, this has resulted in advancing the liberal, colonial system and destroying Indigenous and traditional ways of life. Gender continues to perpetuate the mind–body dualism, determinist biological foundationalism, heterosexism and racial and cultural bias (Repo 2016).

While some populations consider gender as explaining their identity (Western feminists and transgender/nonbinary populations), the universalising of it is a continuing colonising project that disembodies cultural identities. While some may find liberty in "gender", for other groups, it leads to further impacts of alienation from their embodied, cultural being.

To overcome oppression and discrimination, it is critical to decentre gender (Sterling 2022), especially for intersexuality, and to avoid further colonisation of te ao Māori for wāhine and takatāpui. Decentring gender enables a recognition of sexuality as an embodied experience in the dividual cultural backgrounds that is equally valid with gender/gender identity. Acknowledging the embodiment of personhood upholds human rights in an inclusive and participatory world (Sterling 2021) and cultural rights (UNDRIP 2007).

Reclaiming these particular traditional understandings enables their embodiment and personhood. Embodiment is a symbol of living in, perceiving and experiencing the world from the location of a person's body, including the experiences of agency and dignity in the custom of a particular society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my peers listed for reviewing and proofing the paper: Dr. Lydia Jennings (Pascua Yaqui), Talia Anderson, Adrienne Paul (Ngāti Awa, Tūhoe, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te Arawa, Ngāti Pūkenga, Ngāti te Rangi, Ngāti Ranginui), Natalie Kusabs (Tūwharetoa, Te Arawa, Ngāti Maru), Mitchell Head (Waikato-Tainui) and David Paterson.

NOTES

1. Previously known as hermaphrodites, intersex people (or people with variations of sex characteristics) have sex characteristics that do not fit "typical definitions of male and female"—variations of one or more traits in their chromosomes, genitals, hormones or internal reproductive organs (Pfuntner 2020). Intersexuality is used here to indicate the embodied form rather than a Western-based understanding of sex, gender and sexuality as independent separate, parts of autonomous choice. It is a concept that had been previously used prior to the focus on and popularising of the phrase "variations of sex characteristics".
2. Not all languages have reductionism of sex, gender and sexuality as the liberal notion. For example, "The Finnish language does not have a separate word for 'gender'; rather, the term *sukupuoli* is used to refer to all definitions of sex or gender—biological, socially constructed, and identity based. … [W]here it is clear from the context of a text that reference is being made to *sukupuoli-identiteetti*, the equivalent of 'gender identity', or to self-identification or sense of self, it has been translated as 'gender' or 'gender identity' for the sake of clarity" (Repo 2019: 87).

GLOSSARY

The terms in this glossary are te reo Māori.

atua	god, deity, ancestor
hapū	subtribe
ira	essence, gene
iwi	tribe
kaupapa	purpose
mana	authority, dignity, power
mana wahine	authority, dignity, power of being a female
tangata	person(hood)
takatāpui	nonheterosexual forms of sexual expression
tāne	male
te ao Māori	the Māori worldview
tikanga	ethical principles
wahine	female
whakapapa	genealogical connections
whakatinanatanga	embodiment
whānau	family
whānau ora	family well-being
whenua	land

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CURATORIUM

REFLECTIONS ON RE/CREATING MISSING COMPONENTS OF THE ’AHU HEVA TŪPĀPA’U FOR THE PERTH MUSEUM (SCOTLAND)

PAULINE REYNOLDS
Artist

ABSTRACT: This piece is an exploration of thought processes, logistical planning, research and creative practice involved in conceptualising and making the missing barkcloth components of an ’ahu heva tūpāpa’u (chief mourner’s regalia) that went on permanent exhibition for the opening of the new Perth Museum in Scotland in March 2024. The regalia is possibly one of around ten collected in Tahiti by Captain James Cook during his second Pacific voyage, with one of these ending up in Perth via the collections of Dr David Ramsay. During the voyage, or possibly during its life in Perth, the regalia became separated from some of its barkcloth components. This paper is a record of the process that went into making the replica pieces.

Keywords: tapa, barkcloth, dyes, Captain James Cook, replica, Tahiti, mourning ritual

I came to my creative tapa (or ’ahu) (barkcloth) practice as a means of conducting research: after years of searching through museums—thanks to a Churchill Fellowship and various overseas museum projects—I then took the next step of learning to make tapa. My first lesson was in the Marquesas Islands after cutting an aerial root of a banyan tree that grew near a fast-flowing creek with my friend Kiki Barsinas. We made a lovely length of fibrous brown tapa that day. Some years later, with my ’Ahu Sistas,[1] I made tapa from the bark of a breadfruit tree growing in my backyard on Huahine (in French Polynesia/Mā’ohi Nui). A devoted practice, however, began much later, during my PhD when I received an Indigenous seed grant to travel to Hawai‘i and learn from such masters as Dalani Tanahy, Reni A‘ia‘i Bello, Wes Sen and Verna Takashima. My PhD by creative practice is an exploration of the lives of my tupuna vahine (foremothers) and their friends: 12 women who travelled on the *Bounty*, some of them kidnapped, and who founded the culture I belong to. The PhD and the tapa practice was a way of trying to understand the world those women were born into. With this newfound

Reynolds, Pauline, 2024. Reflections on re/creating missing components of the ’ahu heva tūpāpa’u for the Perth Museum (Scotland). *Waka Kuaka: The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 133 (3): 325–336. https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.325-336

skill, I then began replicating examples of historical barkcloth clothing from the 1700s and 1800s that those women made and wore, today held in museum collections throughout the world. The first replicas I created are a series of Pitcairn Island tīputa (ponchos) from the 1800s: one made with cotton, silk and calico which I dyed with natural dyes, now in the collection of the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Reynolds 2018); another made during a workshop on Norfolk Island that I conducted with my daughter, Mauatua, now held in the Norfolk Island Museum Trust collection; three miniatures (created during the ’Ahu: Ngā wairua o Hina workshop in 2023 in Tahiti; see Te Awa and Reynolds 2024) that are within the collections of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Te Fare Iamanaha Museum of Tahiti and the Islands; and another titled “My Grandmother is a Tīputa” that will be on exhibition at Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery in Wellington in October 2024.[2] I am currently in the process of making enough tapa with my son, Oihanu, to re-create the clothing worn by Mai (who, like my children, was born on the island of Ra’iātea) in *Portrait of Mai (Omai)* painted by Joshua Reynolds in the 1770s in England.

The process of replication can serve as a form of research that allows for a new set of understandings of the original: how it was physically made, what it is composed of and the efforts that were made by the artists who worked on the original. The process of making can help us understand the epistemological world of the makers and of the wearer of the original work. Replication of original treasures/objects (tao’a) can bring life to the original. While writing about, or discussing, an object is generally theoretical, the act of remaking and replicating can be a way of honouring the work of those who made the original elements. The process can offer insights that might not have been evident otherwise.

In Tahiti in the 1700s, my Tahitian ancestors witnessed the heva tūpāpa’u (mourning ceremony) and the mesmerising sight of a high priest wearing an ’ahu heva tūpāpa’u (mourning regalia). Our oral and written histories tell me that at least one of my Tahitian tupuna vahine was of a standing that would have allowed her to get close enough to James Cook in Tahiti to watch him suffer through a painful massage to help relieve his rheumatism during his first Pacific voyage. My ancestress was probably also there when Cook witnessed, and Joseph Banks participated in, a mourning ceremony. On his following voyage, Cook was determined to obtain some sets of ceremonial mourning regalia to take home. He eventually procured around ten complete sets, and today, like many of our ancestral treasures, they are scattered around the world. The most complete ’ahu heva tūpāpa’u is held in the British Museum collections, and considerable time and effort by the museum’s curatorial, conservation and scientific teams have been poured into understanding and studying it as well as any remaining documentation.

I was glad to be asked to help with the analysis of the tapa components and then later to help track down the remaining examples collected by Cook. I am not ashamed to admit that I no longer consider this work. It has now become a bit of a personal obsession, taking me further into the world of my ancestors of the 1700s, like a portal into their understandings of life and spirituality. There is barely any information remaining about the intricacies of meaning of the regalia, which is humbling. I know so little, yet I intimately and intensely know the splendour of these ensembles.

One ʼahu heva tūpāpaʼu is at the Perth Museum, Scotland, and the components, because of their sheer size and range of materials, had been stored separately in the Perth Museum's storerooms, as in Figure 1. It is perhaps due to this, or perhaps in transit between collectors and delivery, that the original barkcloth components are no longer with the rest of the regalia.

The existing elements are exquisite. On reflection and in discussion with the Perth and British Museum teams, I jumped at the chance to re-create some of the tapa so that a more complete regalia might go on exhibition in the Perth Museum's new galleries. This is part of a ground-breaking wider project to bring Indigenous people to the table to consider how galleries are curated. I could not be sure of the size of the original components, so I based my work on the carefully documented information by Monique Pullan and her conservation team at the British Museum.

The British Museum's mourning clothing consists of many layers: two tīputa, a barkcloth apron supporting rows of carved coconut discs sewn over finely woven pandanus matting, a barkcloth sash and belt, a feather cloak, a head cape and head cap, coils and a crown of feathers; then at the front, a breastplate and apron of tiny mother-of-pearl shells, and a mask and crown of large polished mother-of-pearl shells topped with a semicircle of long tropicbird feathers. All these elements cover every inch of the chief mourner except perhaps for the hands and feet.

As well as the absence of the tapa elements, the Perth regalia is also missing the mother-of-pearl shell apron and the feather cloak. By adding the missing tapa, it was envisaged that the existing original pieces would be better represented and placed in context. For this project I decided to use only aute (paper mulberry; *Broussonetia papyrifera*), the plant used to make the original tapa. Paper mulberry trees are cultivated to grow straight with as little branch growth as possible, so that long lengths without knots might be obtained. When the trees are tall enough they are cut, and the bark is pulled away from the inner bast. At the beginning of the project, I was living in rural Australia (where aute is considered a weed), from where I made two large orders of aute from my supplier on the island of Vatulele in Fiji. The aute arrived in strips of dried bast, which I reconstituted by soaking in salt water and then pounded into sheets.



Figure 1. Headdress, mask and breast-crescent components, Perth, Scotland, 2022. All images in this article have been photographed by the author.

Even in segments,
Dazzling your crest of polished
mother-of-pearl shells,
towering mask,
turtles on coconut discs,
and spray of tropicbird tail feathers.
All in fragments,
even in fragments,
your mana is whole

To begin with, I created a tīputa from three large sheets glued with a paste I made from arrowroot powder and water. The tīputa measured 300 × 165 cm and was made with layered barkcloth, and the size created several problems: that of finding the space to lay it out flat, and then how to transport it to Perth. In addition, the original was decorated with stripes of red ochre—I decided it was not worth the risk of colour transferring or smudging during shipping, so I decided to leave it undyed.

I was also asked to create a plain backing for the coconut disc apron as well as a cape and a belt. I decided to gift a set of head coils. A great deal of thought and experimentation goes into working out how pieces were made 250 years ago, and some are easier than others. For example, I loved the challenge of making the twisted belt from dyed and undyed barkcloth (see Fig. 2). Dyeing with natural dyes is a challenge but a joy, particularly if it involves foraging!



Figure 2. Replica belt made with aute and dyed with re'a or turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), 2023.



Figure 3. Dyeing aute with re’a in Tahiti, 2023.

It seems like a lifetime ago when I operated a small gallery from my front garden on Huahine where I sold printed and dyed pareu (sarongs) and ’ahufara (shawls) made from silks and cottons. In those days I used roots of nono (*Morinda citrifolia*) dug from the sandy soils near the lagoon, or otherwise re’a or turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), which from my experience is a richer orange in Tahiti than dried commercial turmeric (see Fig. 3). After washing, peeling and grating the root I would add water and alum as a mordant when dyeing Western fabrics, but with barkcloth I use less water and massage the colour through the denser fibres, leaving my fingers stained yellow.

The two most complex pieces to complete were the head coils and the cape. The original elements were dyed yellow, black and red. In Tahiti, a true deep black was obtained by burning the oily nuts of the tutui (candlenut tree; *Aleurites moluccanus*). After burning the nuts and capturing the resulting fine black soot, a paint can be made by mixing the soot with coconut oil. Red tapa from the regalia’s cape and the head coils was tested by Diego Tamburini, a scientist from the British Museum, and both samples were found to be rubbed with red ochre. Here I was faced with a dilemma—should I obtain these traditional colourants or use synthetic dyes? Living on Norfolk Island, I did not have access to enough candlenuts (some trees grow, but not enough for the purposes of making enough paint). There was another problem to think through: would these colorants transfer during the long transport to Perth and ruin the work? Could I run that risk?

I eventually erred on the side of caution and bought a deep red and black commercial dye. Living on an island means that access to things such as dyes can be sporadic, so I bought the last available packets and started testing the tapa to ensure the colours would take (see Figs 4 and 5).





Figures 4 and 5. Dye testing, 2023.

Figure 6 shows how I worked from a printed a photo of the British Museum cape to understand how it was put together. The British Museum head cape is composed of several different elements. A woven cap was designed to support and secure the cape which hung down to cover the shoulders. Moreover, the cape itself was made up of separate strips of red, yellow and black coloured tapa of different sizes that were pasted together. I was unsure what effect the transport might have on the cape: for example, would rows pasted together come unstuck? I decided the safest practice would be to cut strips to the same width as the original cape, then the triangles as can be seen in Figure 7, but to adhere them to a thick base of barkcloth.

Using the same colours, and offcuts of the stripes, I worked on the head coils. The original coils are visually stunning, despite the faded colours. I was surprised, for the effect they had, how straightforward they were to replicate by rolling small amounts of tapa and twisting and wrapping tiny, blackened strips of pandanus around the tapa to create coils (see Fig. 8).

All the elements, except for the head coils, were sent to Scotland via my father, who accompanied the suitcase to Sydney and from there sent it via



Figure 6. Constructing the cape, 2023.



Figure 7. The completed cape, 2023.



Figure 8. Head coils, 2024.

courier. A few days later, the suitcase arrived safe and sound, with no damage or loss. The challenge then, for the curator, conservator and their teams, was to put it all together on a mannequin that I had not had access to. Figure 9 is a photograph I took when I arrived in Perth for the opening in March 2024. I was stunned at the work achieved by the Museum's team. So much careful planning and thought had been put into this reconstruction, and I was honoured to place the coils (just visible in Fig. 10), which I finished the night before the long trip, on top of the mannequin. Seeing the completed project and the realisation of our combined visions has left me grateful for the way many museums are now opening themselves to the opportunities created by working with Indigenous knowledge holders.

This was a project that defied the confines of time and space—the materials came via Australia from Vatulele and Tahiti and transformed into cloth on Norfolk Island, while in Perth, Scotland, the original and replica components were assembled and brought together to embody the 'ahu heva tūpāpa'u.

NOTES

1. The 'Ahu Sistas is a collective of Pitcairn and Norfolk Island women—Meralda Warren, Jean Clarkson, Sue Pearson and Pauline Reynolds—who work both separately and in collaboration to highlight their foremothers' culture and history (see Reynolds and Clarkson 2020).



Figure 9. Perth's regalia on display, 2024.



Figure 10. Perth's regalia on display, 2024.

2. “My Grandmother is a Tīputa” was exhibited as part of the *Hina Sings…* exhibition with Sue Pearson at Brookfields Gallery at the Whakatāne Museum and Arts, Aotearoa New Zealand, in 2022; it will also be exhibited at Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery in Wellington, Aotearoa, from 4 October 2024.

GLOSSARY

The terms in this glossary are Tahitian.

’ahu	barkcloth
’ahufara	shawl
’ahu heva tūpāpa’u	chief mourner’s regalia
aute	paper mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*)
heva tūpāpa’u	mourning ceremony
mana	prestige, authority
pareu	sarong
re’a	turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)
tao’a	treasures, objects
tapa	barkcloth
tīputa	poncho
tupuna vahine	woman ancestor
tutui	candlenut tree (*Aleurites moluccanus*)

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REVIEWS

KAHUNAHANA, Christopher (director): *Waikiki*. Island Film Group, Hula Girl Productions, Kinetic Productions, 2020. 1 hr, 17 min.

RICHARD HAMASAKI
Poet, Independent Filmmaker, Producer

DREW KAHUʻĀINA BRODERICK
Artist, Curator, Educator

It is not without profound irony that writer, director, producer and editor Christopher Kahunahana's *Waikiki* (2020) is one of the first feature-length narrative movies by a Kanaka ʻŌiwi (Native Hawaiian) filmmaker. *Waikiki* is a long-awaited, seminal work that liberates its viewers from Hollywood's century-old shackles on cinema of and about Hawaiʻi. Sexualized Native characters of purported Hawaiian ancestry are absent: in Hollywood these have included endless close-ups of buttocks, busts and torsos, along with ubiquitous stereotyped portrayals of characters dominated mostly by white movie stars, obsequious Asian servants or morticians, along with ridiculously accented dialogue in which proliferate butcherings of at least three languages: English, Hawaiʻi Creole English (a.k.a. "Pidgin") and the Hawaiian language itself. Frustrating, yes, but such images continue to appear in movie theatres, on network TV and on streaming platforms despite pushback from a vibrant Kanaka ʻŌiwi and local film community of practice.[1]

Alternatively, Kahunahana's *Waikiki* is the go-to feature movie of Hawaiʻi that viewers, teachers, students and every aficionado of film should respect, appreciate and study. Cunningly resisting such stereotypes, Kahunahana purposely removed the diacritical kahakō (macron) from Waikīkī in the title of his film. Upon analysis of this strategy, we learn that wai in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi (Hawaiian language) refers to fresh water; kīkī evokes the abundance of freshwater springs of ancient Waikīkī. Significantly, kiki without this diacritical spelling or pronunciation can not only refer to a plug or to the filling in of a hole—something to patch, such as a canoe or calabash—but also evoke images of stinging, pecking and making disagreeable remarks. Indeed, *Waikiki* is brimming with discomfort.

The *Waikiki* movie poster (Fig. 1) prominent on many websites reveals the lead character, Kea (Danielle Zalopany), arrayed with a dazzling if not ostentatious headdress of exotic tropical flowers. Her face is overly made up, lips crimson, shadows concealing nearly half of her face. Rather than an enticing smile, Kea's eyes are averted. She's looking away from the camera



Figure 1. *Waikiki*, 2020, movie poster. Courtesy of the filmmaker, Christopher Kahunahana.

lens, her face wary, worried, as if in the presence of a threatening wave or ominous power. As the film progresses, Kea's worried state of mind grows increasingly afflicted by circumstances beyond her control. And she is far from alone, as just about everyone from Hawai'i knows from experience the challenges that countless residents relentlessly face, day after day, year after year, generation after generation.

Over the course of the film, Kea endures a series of compounding struggles, her character mirroring the dire plight of being unable to qualify to rent her own place due to credit checks, low pay stubs and gate-keeping rental property managers. Even as a teacher at a Hawaiian-language-based school, having

ample cash from her part-time job as a hostess in a Chinatown bar as well as occasionally performing "hula" in a Waikīkī hotel, she cannot rent her own apartment. Kea refuses to go back to her abusive boyfriend, Brandon (Jason Quinn), which means, however, that she cannot see their child or their child's grandmother. For now, she must sleep in her old Toyota minivan.

While fleeing in her minivan from Brandon's violence and abuse, she desperately calls him in a state of panic after she hits a stranger on the street, Wo (Peter Shinkoda), knocking him unconscious. Brandon begs Kea to drive away from the scene, leaving Wo unattended in a hit-and-run. Stubbornly, Kea refuses to listen, hangs up on Brandon, climbs out from her van and renders aid to Wo, who is not only homeless but virtually muted by past traumas.

A basic Chinese-to-English app translates "Wo" as "I" or "me." Kahunahana, who has experienced his own share of poverty, has on one hand perhaps cast an imagined version of himself. Even more significant, however, "Wo is us" (pun intended)—and if not us, Wo could well be one of our siblings, an extended family member stricken by bad fortune exacerbated by mental illness and the ongoing legacies of colonialism; Wo could also be a friend or neighbour, as Kahunahana poignantly reminds viewers in any number of his online interviews.

Ironically, Kahunahana's film takes place just about everywhere in Honolulu *except* Waikīkī, which makes his title impactfully significant. Through Kea and Wo, viewers are not introduced to the false illusions of Hawai'i's tourism industry. Rather, we're seeing the other side of "paradise". With the exception of a few scenes where Kea is performing hapa-haole (hybridised) hula in a hotel setting and much later riding in a taxi cruising down Kalākaua after a night of working in a hostess club, almost all of Kahunahana's scenes are filmed outside of the usual tourist zones: in Chinatown's back alleys and bars, in flood-prone Kaka'ako, on Sand Island (an artificially dredged island, formerly named Quarantine Island[2]), or on (US Navy Admiral Chester William) Nimitz Highway, a major traffic corridor that leads to and from the Honolulu international airport, named in honour of (yet another) US military veteran, the late US Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

Recently, several locally based filmmakers of both Native and non-Native ancestry have released notable features set in Hawai'i; however, as of this writing, in both reviewers' opinions, to date there is no feature, here or abroad, that comes close to evoking such emotions, images, actions and dire circumstances as *Waikiki*.[3] Interviews reveal that Kahunahana cut his teeth watching an international array of directors thanks to the Hawai'i International Film Festival's once free admission policies; to Kahunahana's mother, who would borrow videotapes from his maternal aunt; and to the proprietor of the Honolulu Movie Museum, who would loan Kahunahana videos with no strict return due date.

To quote Native Hawaiian activist and musician George Helm (1950–1977), Kahunahana has done "his homework", and *Waikiki* attests to this director's eclectic filmic tastes. For instance, there is a setting in Michelangelo Antonioni's 1964 film *Red Desert* featuring a woman lead, Giuliana (Monica Vitti), who is surrounded by wealth and business suits. She is distraught with and disconnected from her superficial society. Her confusion is juxtaposed by an ever-transitioning Italy, environmental pollution, architectural structures imposed upon once natural landscapes, and the pervasive presence of capitalist, hedonistic and superficial values. Over a half century later, midway around the globe, Kahunahana's character Kea struggles to survive the brutality of a failed relationship and abandonment as a child, an inability to find her own dwelling, and a growing sense of desperation, confusion and alienation (Fig. 2).

Director Akira Kurosawa's film of poverty *Dodes'ka-den* also sports a character, Rokuchan, who is apparently in bliss despite his family's lack of material possessions and happily transforms his junkyard world into a make-believe trainyard. Unlike Rokuchan, however, who is confined to the dumpsite where he and a handful of the abject poor live, Kea literally roams through the hard streets of Honolulu. Soon, viewers begin to wonder if she's ever going to survive and find stability despite her heartfelt flashbacks of her grandmother (Fig. 3) along with her nightmare memories of being abandoned and assaulted as a youth. Not once in Kea's adulthood does she find solace sunbathing at the beach or swimming in the ocean. Nor do we see her with friends and family. Instead, viewers confront images of rampant construction, aerial footage of Waikīkī's concrete jungle, endless traffic and local bullies in a restaurant who try to humiliate Wo, whom Kea passionately



Figure 2. Film still. Christopher Kahunahana, *Waikiki*, 2020. Courtesy of the filmmaker.



Figure 3. Film still. Christopher Kahunahana, *Waikiki*, 2020. Courtesy of the filmmaker.

defends, a nonviolent teachable moment directed at all who dared to belittle her vulnerable friend. Soon, one is not sure whether Kea—whose name can be translated in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi as "pure" and "clean" or could be a play on words in Hawaiʻi Creole English to mean "care"—is hallucinating, dreaming or literally moving through heavy traffic riding on the handlebars of a wobbly bicycle that Wo is pedalling.

One can also see the powerful influences of Māori director Lee Tamahori's 1994 film *Once Were Warriors*. In that film, fleeing a broken-down family and horrific abuse, a 14-year old Māori daughter, Grace Heke (Mamaengaroa Kerr-Bell), escapes to a destitute camp where her friend Toot (Shannon Williams) lives under an overpass in a wrecked shell of a car. Grace had been raped by her abusive father's brother, her Uncle Bully (Cliff Curtis),[4] and she seeks refuge there in Toot's shelter. Toot offers sincere respite, but when he attempts to gently kiss her, she is enraged. Darkness will be met by darkness, and her mother (Rena Owen) will find her hanging from a tree. In a loop that reverberates and echoes filmic themes within *Waikiki*, Kea is, at the end of Kahunahana's film, far from suicidal, but wholly enveloped in a cityscape-like net that offers no escape from her deepening crisis (Fig. 4).

Kahunahana notably secured music rights to include Brother Noland Conjugacion's song "Look What They've Done", composed when Brother Noland was in high school (Kamehameha Schools, Kapālama, class of 1975) and hitting the airwaves in 1980, exactly 40 years before *Waikiki* was released.[5] Noland's song, timely cultural commentary on the underside of reality in Hawaiʻi, tracks twice during the film and is especially poignant during the film's outro when the credits are rolling:



Figure 4. Film still. Christopher Kahunahana, *Waikiki*, 2020. Courtesy of the filmmaker.

Come down with me
Have you ever tripped through reality?
Come down with me
Come down and see
Come see what they've done to Waikiki

And ask me why?
Won't you open your eyes?
Can't you see we lost our paradise?
There's too many people
Not enough sand
Can't they see we want our land?[6]

The film's end foreshadows profound concern. Brandon, eyes watery—sitting in her van that he apparently recovered from the towing company—watches Kea helplessly from a distance. She is sitting on the ground in public view, facing the waterfront with Aloha Tower in the distance surrounded by office buildings and towering condominiums. Kea is performing a hula noho (seated hula) quietly, almost feebly, uttering a chant, "Ke Ao Nani", that she was taught in childhood, a singing version originally composed by Mary Kawena Pukui (1895–1986). More like a lamentation than a lovely chant or song "for the children", Kea's hand is seen grasping bone-dry dirt that falls from her outstretched palm (Fig. 5). Kea herself is transfigured into the impoverished ʻāina (land) itself, a land bereft of its Native people, food gardens replaced by concrete, steel, and now, infertile earth: "Haʻina mai ka puana / A he nani ke ao nei" (Tell the refrain / Of this beautiful world).[7]



Figure 5. Film still. Christopher Kahunahana, *Waikiki*, 2020. Courtesy of the filmmaker.

The movie poster now seems to speak volumes. Kea, the child once pure and innocent, a beauty in adulthood, is a woman abused, abandoned, alone, houseless, robbed of her dignity, grace and livelihood. This scene plays out powerfully in contrast to the film's title. What hath the tourist mecca of Waikīkī wrought? Who is Kea? Why is this happening to her? She cares deeply, but who will care for her? The Native Hawaiian ʻōlelo noʻeau (poetic proverb) referenced throughout the film is: "He aliʻi ka ʻāina, he kauwā ke kanaka" (The land is a chief, man is her servant). Kahunahana cinematically transposes this proverb, and Kea's circumstances manifest a five-alarm metamorphosis, not just for herself but for her Native people and the ʻāina itself.

Contemporary Native Hawaiian poets from Wayne Kaumualii Westlake (1947–1984) to Haunani-Kay Trask (1949–2021) to Hawaiʻi's poet laureate Brandy Nālani McDougall have portrayed Waikīkī as a monster of neglect, feeding an insatiable, land-eating military, perpetuating a deafened and corrupt government exacerbated by a pervasive tourist-based industrial complex. Countless Kānaka ʻŌiwi continue to face increasing poverty, alienation from the ʻāina and struggle in ever-worsening conditions, while visitors by the millions perpetually stream into one of the world's most famous tourist destinations. Arriving by the jetload, by monstrous passenger ships or by simply turning on their electronic devices and watching endless images of a paradisiacal Hawaiʻi, we hope this film will remind tourists and viewers alike that there are more Native Hawaiians who have been forced to move away from the so-called "50th state" than are living and working here in Hawaiʻi nei, the Motherland, itself. Most significantly, Kahunahana's *Waikiki* reveals that aloha ʻāina (love of the land) is paramount to caring for society's mental, physical and spiritual health.

Notes

1. While *Waikiki* was in postproduction, Kanaka ʻŌiwi filmmakers Justyn Ah Chong and ʻĀina Paikai released their short narrative film *Down on the Sidewalk in Waikīkī* (2019). Departing from a collection of poems of the same name that Hawaiian poet, journalist and activist Wayne Kaumualii Westlake (1947–1984) wrote while working as a janitor in Waikīkī from 1972 to 1973, the film follows a soft-spoken janitor named Kealiʻi as he works through the struggles of daily life in "paradise", cleaning up after an endless parade of tourists with no regard for the land they are visiting or its caretakers. Like Kahunahana, Ah Chong and Paikai lend their vision to one of Hawaiʻi's most devastated and beloved places, where a spirited battle of narratives continues to unfold daily.
2. "The dredge sediment from deepening the channels was deposited on the shallow off-shore reef, creating an island called Quarantine Island, now known as Sand Island. Quarantine Island was used to isolate ships with contagious diseases on-board" (Department of Transportation, Government of Hawaii). https://hidot.hawaii.gov/harbors/history/
3. *Molokaʻi Bound*, a new feature by Kanaka ʻŌiwi director Alika Tengan, is slated to open for its Hawaiʻi premiere during the 44th Hawaiʻi International Film Festival in 2024.
4. Kahunahana also includes an Uncle Bully (Kimo Kahoano) in his film.
5. Interview with Brother Noland, 13 June 2024: https://alohagotsoul.com/blogs/stories/interview-with-brother-noland-part-2
6. A recent interviewer asked Brother Noland: "Tell me what the song 'Look What They've Done' is about." Noland responds: "If you listen to it today, if you're familiar with Waikīkī, you're gonna relate it to something, like 'wow, I've seen that', lyric-wise. The whole thing about it is, I wrote that in 1970-something and it's still relevant. When I wrote it, I was in middle school or high school. I was just becoming one man and noticing things and you like scrap; and I'm a native and I'm indigenous, like 'look at this shit!'. You radical, yeah? All my friends, because we grew up in the projects, we were all radical. I would play that song for friends, and they all loved that song, because it's talking about us, 'look what we gotta deal with', you know? Because we come from this place. Like, are you willing to die in this place? And that's how we feel afterwards: we're being displaced." https://alohagotsoul.com/blogs/stories/interview-with-brother-noland-part-2
7. The song's full lyrics are available here: https://www.huapala.org/Ke/Ke_Ao_Nani.html

Glossary

The terms in this glossary are Hawaiian.

ʻāina	land, that which feeds
aloha ʻāina	love of the land
hapa-haole	part white and part Hawaiian, hybridised
hula noho	seated hula

kahakō	macron
ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi	Hawaiian language
ʻōlelo noʻeau	poetic proverb
wai	fresh water

https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.337-345

DAVIDSON, Jared: *Blood and Dirt: Prison Labour and the Making of New Zealand.* Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2023. 296 pp., ack., bib., ed. note, images, index, notes, prologue. NZ$50.00 (hardcover), EPUB, PDF.

LUCY MACKINTOSH
Tāmaki Paenga Hira | Auckland War Memorial Museum

The title of Jared Davidson's book *Blood and Dirt*, taken from the well-known Marxist quote that capital "comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt" (p. 34), tells us from the outset that this history of prison labour is about class, capital, labour, power and violence in the making of Aotearoa New Zealand. Beginning with the first permanent Pākehā (New Zealand European) settlement in New Zealand, Davidson retells the recent history of New Zealand through the prism of prison labour, leaving the reader with new perspectives on the colonisation of New Zealand and the ways that unfree labour has shaped this country's human and physical environment.

Davidson argues that unfree labour has been core to the colonial project from the very beginning of European settlement, in ways that have not always been recognised. Historians have largely focused on the work of the missionaries at Hohi mission station, established by Samuel Marsden in 1814, but Davidson recentres the narrative around the convict labourers who helped build the mission station and the detained offenders who were used for ongoing labour. Davidson places the origins of prison labour in New Zealand within the context of capitalist imperatives of improvement, or making profit from the land, a concept that was central to the economic and social changes in Britain from the sixteenth century. While the links between work and the concept of improvement on mission stations have been discussed before, notably by Tony Ballantyne in his 2015 work *Entanglements of Empire*, Davidson expands the discussion into the origins of incarceration and forced labour in Britain, linking the genealogy of prisons with the origins of capitalism and documenting how prisons, as both places and a set of social relations, arrived in New Zealand with the first missionaries. "Hohi was more than a state-sanctioned religious settlement", writes Davidson. "It was a prison wing of New South Wales, a local lockup and a house of correction all in one" (p. 38).

When New Zealand became a colony following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) in 1840, the British Government decided, after some consideration, not to make New Zealand a penal colony. Instead, Davidson argues, the state used prison labour to help build the basic infrastructure required for the new colony. He documents the work of prisoners in building many of the roads, bridges, retaining walls and buildings in our cities, as well as their work in some of New Zealand's more remote and picturesque settings such as Milford Sound and National Park. All the while, he keeps the focus on the stories of the prisoners, the power relationships of class, gender and race at play, and the environments in which they worked. "In a workscape such as Milford Sound", he writes, for instance, "the class antagonism and different interests of prisoners and warders increased with each violent storm" (p. 60).

In a chapter on industry, Davidson outlines the collective experience of incarceration in the nineteenth century, in which prisoners slept, worked and resisted authority by escaping, striking or mutinying together. Most prisoners were working class, and Davidson argues that their histories are important for understanding colonisation and its progress industry. In later chapters, Davidson documents the replacement of the hard-labour gang working on infrastructure with remote forest plantations, road camps and prison farms, all of which were forerunners of prison work today.

Davidson points out that while Māori used captive labour within the context of Māori law, prisons were completely alien to Māori, and they preferred to be judged by their own people and according to their own tikanga (protocols). While Māori imprisonment rates were initially very low, many were imprisoned during the New Zealand Wars, and put to work across the country or exiled to places like the Chatham Islands. Davidson outlines the harrowing experiences of many who were sent to prison or incarcerated on hulks for many months and either died on board, attempted to escape or were transferred to different parts of the country to undertake forced work on the schools, gardens and roads in the developing towns. In the twentieth century, Māori imprisonment increased dramatically, which Davidson links to Māori dispossession and land enclosures.

Blood and Dirt also considers the role of forced labour in what Davidson describes as "the penal triangle of New Zealand's Pacific" (p. 170). Davidson argues that "imprisoned workers were essential to creating the basic infrastructure of New Zealand's Pacific empire" (p. 174). On the islands of Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean), free and unfree labour mined phosphate-rich guano for New Zealand and Australian farms, built roads, maintained government properties and worked on plantations. His archival research in this chapter surfaces the individual hardships of prisoners on these islands, but he also describes instances of resistance to prison labour regimes and recounts, as other historians have, the messiness of empire on the ground.

Davidson's storytelling capabilities are evident from his opening words: "It wasn't by choice that Harry Brown was up and working so early" (p. 12). Throughout the book, he skilfully weaves personal stories through the facts and figures, and his punchy, confident writing style deftly handles weighty methodological topics. "Yes, manure has agency" (p. 168), he writes at one point, commenting on the mining of guano at Malden Island. "Never judge a prison by its annual report" (p. 150), he writes on another occasion, taking issue with the official records of one of the prisons in New Zealand. His writing style makes for a lively, vivid and dynamic read, something that can't always be said about New Zealand histories. Davidson sometimes turns the lens on himself, reflecting on his own interactions with the archives and the places he writes about. "As an archivist", he writes, "I am forever wondering if the register I am flicking through was printed or bound by a prisoner, adding further meaning to the idea that the marginalised suffer the violence of archives" (p. 84). This first-person narrative, which is being increasingly used by historians, creates a more personal and contemporary history, one in which the author's own reactions to and interpretations of the sources, and their complicated relationship with the past and the present, becomes part of the story. The book has been beautifully produced, illustrated and designed by Bridget Williams Books, which, along with the engaging writing, makes it accessible and appealing to a general audience as well as a specialist reader.

Blood and Dirt provides a fascinating insight into New Zealand's history, shining a new light onto familiar events and places throughout the country by making visible the extent to which forced labour has been part of, and shaped, almost every aspect of New Zealand's recent history. By focusing on prison labour, Davidson brings the stories of the poor, dispossessed and incarcerated into view, particularly those of Māori, who are disproportionately represented in our prisons. Further, he places these histories into the longer and wider context of empire, capitalism, progress and improvement. There is the question of whether the book overstates the significance of prison labour in New Zealand's history, a question which Davidson himself raises at one point, "Prison land? A fair description or hyperbole?" (p. 221), and leaves it for the reader to decide the answer. But he leaves us in no doubt about the impact that forced and unpaid labour has had, and continues to have, on our country. Davidson himself says it best: "The more I thought about these spaces, the more connections I was able to draw between unfree labour and the places I take for granted. That is a heavy inheritance" (p. 228).

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https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.345-347

BRYDER, Linda: *The Best Country to Give Birth? Midwifery, Homebirth and the Politics of Maternity in Aotearoa New Zealand, 1970–2022.* Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2023. 400 pp., bib., index, notes. NZ$59.99 (softcover).

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Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland

Linda Bryder's *The Best Country to Give Birth? Midwifery, Homebirth and the Politics of Maternity in Aotearoa New Zealand, 1970–2022* is a literary road map tracking the political development and evolution of maternity care in Aotearoa New Zealand. This book represents significant research and is the first study to explore the history of Aotearoa's childbirth policies and services as well as the debates underpinning them.

The book begins with a question posed by Gordon Matenga, following his 2012 coronial investigation into two babies who died during childbirth at Waikato Hospital: "Does New Zealand have the safe, world-leading system the Government says we do, or are we losing babies because the balance has swung too far towards the idea that because childbirth is natural, then the philosophy of 'non-intervention' is best?" (p. 1). This question, particularly the last part, will be a recurring philosophy that is mentioned, questioned and reexamined throughout the book.

The first half of the book focuses on the origins of the 1990 Nurses Amendment Act, which is central to the book. To provide context for readers, Bryder focuses the first two chapters on the 1970s homebirth movement, introducing readers to women, practitioners and activists who championed homebirths, such as Joan Donley. While it was unsurprising that during the 1970s and 1980s, almost all the homebirth parents were Pākehā (New Zealand European), it was a startling insight to learn that the Home Birth Association's perceived profile for a woman "suitable" for homebirth included being in a stable relationship, politically aware, a yoga practitioner, a user of alternative therapies and ideally a person rejecting modern technologies such as ultrasounds (pp. 19–29).

As the book progresses, Bryder reviews submissions and findings of government inquiries as well as specific sections of the Nurses Act to present the debates around the inclusion of homebirth within maternity services during the 1970s and 1980s.

Chapter 4 explores the autonomy sought by homebirth midwives during the 1980s. Māori and Pacific women are discussed in this chapter, firstly in relation to the Save the Midwives Direct Entry Midwifery Task Force's explanation of why they felt midwifery training should not put the emphasis on science and academic excellence (p. 81). The Task Force stated that Māori and Pacific women were "often overwhelmed by the theoretical structure

of the course and ultimately by having to partake in tests and examinations in a language that is not their own" (p. 81).

Despite the Task Force and others' attempts to increase Māori and Pacific participation in the homebirth movement as participants and practitioners, Pacific women were opting to have medical support and assistance from their general practitioners throughout their pregnancy (p. 97). Bryder explores the Home Birth Association's lack of cultural awareness as a key contributor to this disengagement and disconnect (pp. 96–97).

Chapter 5 unpacks pro-homebirth strategies and their success due to the receptive social and political climate of the 1980s. Chapter 6 tracks the journey of the Nurses Amendment Bill through Parliament. Chapter 7, titled "Midwifery Autonomy and Partnership in the 1990s", provides a perspective of mothers who did not feel their relationship with their midwives was equal—often when things had gone wrong. While this chapter includes a section exploring the partnership between Māori and the College of Midwives (pp. 153–56), it lacks the voices and experiences of Māori mothers and other mothers who did not feel like equals and remained unheard.

The politics of primary maternity care after 1990 is the focus of Chapter 8, with a discussion on the new funding system and the growing tensions between general practitioners and midwives. Chapter 9 examines the New Zealand College of Midwives's midwifery model of childbirth, which became the foundation for new midwifery qualifications, replacing the medical model.

The final three chapters review early 2000s maternity care to determine whether the 1990s tensions had been resolved after the establishment of the Midwifery Council in 2004. Bryder also explores the findings from the coroner's and health and disability commissioner's investigations into homebirths that went wrong and also examines the systemic issues that contributed to these failings. The book concludes by highlighting the academic research and government reports that have identified inequities across population groups, including Māori.

Bryder effectively maps the political landscape and tracks the evolution of Aotearoa's childbirth policies and services over the decades. While the research Bryder has undertaken is substantial, the book is heavily focused on the Pākehā experiences of midwifery and homebirth. While this may be due to the limited research or writings about Māori and Pacific women's experiences of midwifery and homebirth, Bryder could have undertaken empirical research as part of this project to help contribute to the literature gap.

https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.348-349

SALMOND, Anne: *Knowledge Is a Blessing on Your Mind: Selected Writings, 1980–2020.* Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2023. 608 pp., appendix, bib., gloss., index, notes, photos, refs. NZ$65.00 (hardcover).

PAULINE REYNOLDS
Independent Researcher

Anne Salmond's *Knowledge Is a Blessing on Your Mind: Selected Writings, 1980–2020* is a large and impressive book. The preface begins with a description of the concepts of te ao Māori and te ao Pakehā, "Māori and European 'worlds' or ways of living" (p. 1), and this is the ongoing theme throughout Salmond's years of navigation through different kinds of knowledge. Reading through this volume, pulled in by Salmond's beautiful use of language, both English and te reo Māori (Māori language), I was continually reminded of the quandary around traditional knowledge: when, where and how it is best shared, and by whom. Perhaps for this reason I was unsure of how to write this review—I am not Māori, nor do I live in Aotearoa New Zealand—I write this from the perspective of a Norfolk Islander with genealogical links to Pitcairn-Hitiaurevareva, Tahiti and Huahine.

This volume presents a vast array of work written between 1980 and 2020 in varying styles on Pākehā (New Zealand European), Māori and Pacific history: their stories, people and ways of being and seeing the world. The chapters are arranged chronologically, and preceding each one is new autobiographical text which provides context and insights into Salmond's journey: through her personal life, activism, professional life and resulting publications; but we also witness the way her thinking has developed. It is fascinating to travel by her side as she ushers us through the years of her writings, which mostly focus on the Aotearoa story, and essentially, discussions around Te Tiriti (the Treaty of Waitangi) and governance.

It is important to note here that some of Salmond's work around te ao Māori is sometimes judged as controversial and divisive. Nonetheless, for anyone who has not yet engaged with her work, within the pages of this book are some of her most captivating and thought-provoking writings.

I was glad to read Chapter 9, "The Trial of the Cannibal Dog, or, Why Did Captain Cook Die? (1996)"—a paper for the Reimagining the Pacific conference in Canberra—especially because it highlights some of Salmond's process: as she notes, "the argument of a book appeared in full sight before the book itself was written" (p. 195). *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog: Captain Cook in the South Seas* came into my hands as a young mother living on Huahine, French Polynesia, and I was thrilled at references to my surrounds in such vivid detail. I was equally delighted in 2009 when *Aphrodite's Island: The European Discovery of Tahiti* was published. In 2011, the release of

the last in the trilogy, *Bligh: William Bligh in the South Seas*, left me glad for Salmond's sharp writing style. However, *Bligh*, while still dazzling in parts, was formulaic in areas and, perhaps due to publishing requirements, missing some of the excellent referencing that Salmond is renowned for. In saying this, *Bligh* is still the best account available on the *Bounty* story and its aftermath. In a world where my people's story is written over and over by Western males with little to no insight into the Polynesian mindset, *Bligh* stands above the rest. This trilogy has travelled and lived with me in my three island homes. Now this book, of similar size, sits alongside that trilogy, a reflection of the scope of Salmond's work, which continues to provoke and inspire. My hope (I imagine it might be hers too) is that her scholarship will inspire and provoke future Māori writers and those from across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean) to write from their own worlds, to push against the borders of present-day knowledge and voyage out into the unknown, and bring us with them too.

Finally, I wonder if Salmond's longest-lasting reflections will be those around her activism, particularly around conservation and climate change, bringing these issues back to Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding the environment. I believe this is where her real power lies. Chapter 15, "On Environmental Questions", includes "Afterword: Think Like a Fish: Pacific Philosophies and Climate Change", originally published in *Pacific Climate Cultures: Living Climate Change in Oceania*, and is enlightening and full of hope. She writes of how Pacific people are using frameworks steeped in Indigenous ways of seeing the world and contemporary science, and expressing these through such outlets as artistic, political and legal arenas: "In the face of apocalyptic visions that engender helplessness and despair, these offer new ways of thinking, a sense of resilience and hope, and a will to take practical action' (p. 490).

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https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.133.3.350-351

CUNNINGHAM, Matthew, Marinus La Rooij and Paul Spoonley (eds): *Histories of Hate: The Radical Right in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2023. 444 pp., ack., bib., index, intro., notes. NZ$50.00 (softcover).

GAIL ROMANO
Tāmaki Paenga Hira | Auckland War Memorial Museum

I remember where I was and what I was doing at the time the news began to come through about the terrorist attack on the Ōtautahi Christchurch mosques. It was late afternoon, warm and sunny, and I was just leaving work to walk into the city to meet my son and his partner for dinner before going to a performance at Spark Arena in downtown Auckland. It came to me first through text message from a work colleague saying something awful was happening in Christchurch. Then, gradually, over the next few hours the news grew. The disbelief and horror at what we were reading on our phones overshadowed the show we had gone to watch and occupied our conversation all night. And now, beyond the fact of it, I can't remember anything about the show itself. The date 15 March 2019 is thus indelibly imprinted on my memory. Many of us may share similar imprints, the way our brains respond to traumatic or significant events which mark our life trajectory as immutable timestamps.

Histories of Hate is a reaction and a response to that attack and, through a scholarly lens, situates the event itself squarely within a nonlinear timeline of hateful history that has been woven into this country's story since the earliest days of European colonisation. It is important to understand the concept of this timeline for three particular reasons.

Firstly, although our past is littered with "uncomfortable aspects", no unidirectional line can be drawn through the previous two centuries to today: the story "twists and turns; it branches, ruptures, finds unexpected dead ends or reaches a certain outcome through design or chance" (p. 10). The 15 essays that chart this history show that the intolerance and extremism that have accompanied Aotearoa New Zealand's development have been, and still are, broad in scope. Secondly, the time-based treatment shows how deeply intolerance seems embedded in our social DNA. While ebbing and flowing in different versions through the years as it morphs in response to new social conditions and prevailing attitudes and definitions, it remains a constant, at odds with a feted New Zealand character that now feels a little like self-fantasy. Lastly, and critically, definitions are an important part of the frame. Terminology has not always meant the same thing to actors in different time periods, and this question is addressed in several places within the book. Organised into five broadly time-based parts, the chapters chronicle this diversity of intolerance which forms the backstory of our present moments, "a complex multifaceted phenomenon" (p. 11).

The four chapters in Part One consider not only the development and application of scientific racism which supported "the notion of British superiority" (p. 18) but also the "moralistic as well as economic … anxieties" (p. 19), discussing the ways in which these complex notions drove colonisation and affected responses both to Māori and to immigrant populations with effects that have lingered through the years.

Part Two considers radical groups that emerged from the crises that created social distress and change during and following World War I. These groups manipulated the suspicion with which emotionally vulnerable New Zealand communities regarded alternative forms of social organisation postwar and leveraged the economic stress through which families struggled over the years following the 1929 stock market crash.

Part Three considers post–World War II radicalism, the war identified as a break point in Aotearoa's social, political, demographic and economic development when ideas and attitudes shifted, with previously accepted extremes becoming less palatable and acceptable.

There is much to digest and reflect on in the two chapters that comprise Part Four, which address respectively the role of religious conservatism in understanding moral authoritarianism and, in an absorbing and meaty review of the arguments and attitudes embraced by the anti-Treatyism movement, Pākehā (New Zealand European) "anxiety about power sharing" (p. 261).

All of this delivers us into Part Five and the first quarter of the twenty-first century with an analysis of the contemporary outcome of ideological porosity, the "mixing of traditional far-right politics and conservative populist movements" (p. 306) which has given rise to the phenomenon of the alt-right, a term coined in 2009, the seeming incubation and accelerated spread of these beliefs during the COVID-19 lockdowns, and the promotional advantages that online platforms now provide to the likes of the mosque terrorist.

The sweep of *Histories of Hate* is vast, and the contributory nature means it can only land as a sampler. In this way the editors achieve their goal of providing a jumping-off point in a "sparsely studied area" to help others to approach the question: "'How did it happen here?'" (p. 12). The multiple perspectives offered by authors who represent a range of disciplines support that goal of stimulating discussion and debate.

But the chapters are not mere standalone mini-studies of New Zealand intolerance over nearly two centuries, connected only by way of their relevance to the collection's general theme. Several clear threads weave their way through the book.

Most obvious is the underlying race-based component, sometimes disguised but often overt, and the ways that groupthink has evolved. Discussed by Leonie Pihama and Cherryl Smith in their opening chapter and later by Peter Meihana, a critical aspect is the pervasive impact of

Aotearoa's imperial attitude and approach to Māori which has been quietly absorbed over the last century into systems, policies and procedures. This structural and institutional racism usually presents a benign face and is experienced in daily life in ways which generally continue to be unexamined or understood by the population at large, with the experience of COVID-19 a contemporary example.

Other evolutions in racist-based thinking have perhaps been more compressed in time and have therefore intruded more loudly in middle New Zealand's headspace. The pro–South African New Zealand right, for example, "[m]ore recently, with the fight to keep white rule lost, … has picked up on the post-apartheid 'white genocide' hysteria linked to a spate of farm killings" (p. 217). Sebastian Potgieter and Tyler West note how the themes in these debates "displayed a historical continuity" with those from earlier in the twentieth century: "In this world-view [*sic*], New Zealand remained a key ally bound by ties of race and imperial loyalty to the white governments of southern Africa" (p. 207). Reframed justifications for anti-Chinese discrimination reflect the reboot of another partially underground but enduring current of intolerance. Having "largely drifted to the political fringes" since the middle of the twentieth century, "[i]t was picked up by the radical right from the 1990s as the government's enticement of wealthy immigrants led to a significant increase in Asian immigration" (p. 76).

Examinations of local individuals, their motivations and their power to influence swathes of the population is another obvious thread that offers interesting insight. A discussion of the differing attitudes to Chinese migrants by respective champions of the privileged and working classes provides an example of "the evolution of racism in relation to changing class politics" (p. 61), and a look at the genesis, drivers and associated concerns of the "new white supremacist … gangs" (p. 221) from their rise through the 1990s, including the role of "the controversial Kyle Chapman" (p. 224), considers the activation of community groups who feel disenfranchised.

Also notable is the use of publication opportunities by radical proponents of a certain view to support calculated actions, and how often a single text can become a central document that legitimises or at least bolsters the argument of an entire organisation. Lionel Terry, the daylight murderer of elderly Joe Kum Yung in Wellington in 1905, wrote a manifesto. Arthur Desmond, the subject of Chapter Four, appears to have done the same. A labour organiser with aspirations as a labour journalist, a propagandist and a would-be MP, Desmond was the likely author of *Might Is Right: Or, Survival of the Fittest*, a politically motivated document that has resurfaced in the last 40 years as "an urtext for elements of the extreme right" (p. 99).

Other influencers who found wide, receptive audiences included Arthur Nelson Field, a founding journalist with the *Dominion* a newspaper and author of the 1931 publication *The Truth About the Slump*. Marinus La Rooij credits Field as largely responsible for the popularity of a widespread belief in a (Jewish) bankers' conspiracy in the 1930s and its role and reputed goal in creating the Depression, even minister of education Harry Atmore declaring "the author has put forward the truth" (p. 166). Likewise, the comprehensive history of New Zealand to the late 1890s written by politician and intellectual William Pember Reeves was influential for almost 50 years. The British Imperial views of paternalistic superiority which underlie his *The Long White Cloud: Ao Tea Roa* are recognised today, although Meihana acknowledges that the book might be considered a "classic".[1]

Several studies in *Histories of Hate* illustrate the human predilection for conspiracy thinking, something well discussed in the last few years but not a unique feature of our times. Many of these conspiracy beliefs seem to be based on one version or another of the "great replacement myth" (p. 77), theories identifying "an existential threat facing the 'white race' or European civilisation" (p. 305). New Zealand conspiracists have mirrored overseas thought trends, and the book shows our connectedness to international influences throughout our history, even before this technological age. In the concluding chapter Michael Daubs notes: "Rather than operating independently, white extremists, including those who operate in Aotearoa, are situated within this informal but global international far-right network and contribute to a 'global white identity that transcends local and regional ties' … [operating] in an era of near-ubiquitous connectivity' " (pp. 325–26, quoting Daniels 2009).

There is a last but important consideration: how accessible is this book? I regard *Histories of Hate* as a work of public history, which implies a degree of accessibility. If we are to talk definitions, being accessible is not interchangeable with being popular, but to achieve wide readership a publication probably needs to be both accessible and popular. At its core, accessibility is about inclusiveness. History can be written or interpreted for an audience of nonhistorians, or even nonacademics, who nevertheless share a common though niche interest. Popular history is written in a style, usually narrative-based, which is aimed at a wide public readership and is therefore intended to pose fewer barriers to entry for any individual reader, appealing to the widest possible range of backgrounds, abilities and attitudes. Quite apart from the high interest we might expect the book's topic to attract, two things in particular suggest the editors had a wide readership in mind. Firstly, the editors' acknowledgements foreground the survivors of the attacks

and record the intention to "donate our royalties to the Sakinah Community Trust: a group of widows, mothers and daughters of the *shuhada* (martyrs) who have come together to 'fund community initiatives that focus on well-being and bring communities together for a better future in which we all belong'" (p. 7). Secondly, the editors made an effort to engage directly with diverse representative community organisations and invited the participation of expert contributors from a range of disciplines and positions to present multiple perspectives on intolerance. A collection by contributing authors is by nature seldom fully consistent, but while *Histories of Hate* does include narratives, it is largely still a scholarly review. So, will it achieve the wide readership it deserves? Two subjective and nonscientific gauges are whether it can be found on airport bookshelves and whether a book club would pick it up. Nonfiction offerings at an airport bookseller generally focus on interesting books that are readily digestible in travel environments, and they include history, political and business works. Certainly, New Zealand's biggest provider of books for reading clubs, the excellent Book Discussion Scheme, whose mission statement is "Reading together for a fairer, kinder, more connected Aotearoa New Zealand", did not list *Histories of Hate* in its catalogue of 1,150 books as of June 2024 (see https://bds.org.nz/books).

There is no doubt the topic deserves a wide audience and widespread debate. It is a social canker that has been seeing an eruption the world over. However, the book's academic genesis and framing may limit the readership, and that will be a loss for us all.

To conclude then. This publication is at once surprising and sobering. The broadly time-based arrangement of the case studies is an inspired way to bring home the breadth and longevity of intolerant attitudes and activities in Aotearoa New Zealand. The diversity of hate examples, the degrees of acceptance in our communities over the past two centuries, the slipperiness of their evolution, and the sheer stickiness these ideas have enjoyed thanks to that ongoing development could feel overwhelming. Are various intolerant attitudes more numerous now, or are they simply no longer underground? There is no way to be confident of any scenario. Certainly, within my own circles I had never previously heard views expressed of the kind that I have in the last five years. It raises questions about our social structures, about education and socialisation and the "naturalising" of attitudes and thought processes in families and communities. Perhaps an ultimate irony has been the way that Jacinda Ardern, who led a strong, compassionate and appropriate response to the mosque attacks, became a target of extremism herself, trapped by the COVID-19 conspiracy morass and the resulting spin. There is room in any revision of the book for another chapter on how narratives can be hijacked.

In his chapter on anti-Treatyism, Peter Meihana notes the Aotearoa New Zealand histories curriculum is "an opportunity to retell the country's past divested of its colonial frameworks" (p. 263). But a curriculum is only as good as its delivery. Not too long ago, a recently retired history teacher shocked me with comments he made regarding the interpretations of our war history he imparted to his students. As unsettling (possibly even despairing) as this next thought is, perhaps there is no meaningful solution, because while forms of antipathy and discrimination in all their degrees may be dampened or change their expression, they can never disappear, as they are just part of the human condition. Yuval Noah Harari thinks so: "Tolerance is not a Sapiens trademark. In modern times, a small difference in skin colour, dialect or religion has been enough to prompt one group of Sapiens to set about exterminating the other group. Would ancient Sapiens have been more tolerant towards an entirely different human species? It may well be that when Sapiens encountered Neanderthals, the result was the first and most significant ethnic-cleansing campaign in history" (Harari 2015: 19). Food for thought. If you haven't read Harari, perhaps try Chapter Eight ("There Is No Justice in History") in *Sapiens*. It is particularly relevant to *Histories of Hate*.

Notes

1. *The Long White Cloud: Ao Tea Roa* (1898) is digitised and available online via Project Gutenberg: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/12411/12411-h/12411-h.htm

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED *

June to September 2024

BAKER, Kirsty: *Sight Lines: Women and Art in Aotearoa*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2024. 444 pp., biblio., contrib., gloss., index, notes. NZ$69.99 (hardcover).

BELL, Avril: *Becoming Tangata Tiriti: Working with Māori, Honouring the Treaty*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2024. 168 pp., ack., biblio., index, notes. NZ$29.99 (softcover).

CATTERMOLE, Jennifer: *Echoes from Hawaiki: The Origins and Development of Māori and Moriori Musical Instruments*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2024. 246 pp., appendices, audio links, biblio., gloss., index, ngā mihimihi (ack.), notes. NZ$49.99 (softcover).

DROESSLER, Holger: *Coconut Colonialisms: Workers and the Globalization of Samoa*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022. 287 pp., ack., biblio., index, notes. AU$75.59 (hardcover).

HAMMOND, Catherine and Shaun Higgins (eds): *A Different Light: First Photographs of Aotearoa*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2024. 284 pp., ack., biblio., chron., contribs., notes. NZ$65.00 (hardcover).

LIGHT, Rowan: *Why Memory Matters: "Remembered Histories" and the Politics of the Shared Past*. BWB Texts 104. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2023. 155 pp., ack., notes. NZ$17.99 (softcover), EPUB.

NEWMAN, Janet and Robert Sullivan (eds): *Koe: An Aotearoa Ecopoetry Anthology.* Dunedin: Otago University press, 2024. 315 pp., ack., bios, notes, sources. NZ$50.00 (softcover).

PEREZ HOWARD, Chris: *Juanit*. Second of the Mariquita novel series. Mangilao: Taiguini Books, University of Guam Press, 2023. 294 pp., ack., map. US$17.00 (softcover).

SCOBIE, Matthew and Anna Sturman: *The Economic Possibilities of Decolonisation.* BWB Texts 106. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2024. 155 pp., ack., notes. NZ$17.99 (softcover), EPUB.

SHAW, Richard: *The Unsettled: Small Stories of Colonisation.* Wellington: Massey University Press, 2024. 223 pp., ack., notes. NZ$39.99 (softcover).

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* The inclusion of a publication in this list neither assumes nor precludes its subsequent review.

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